

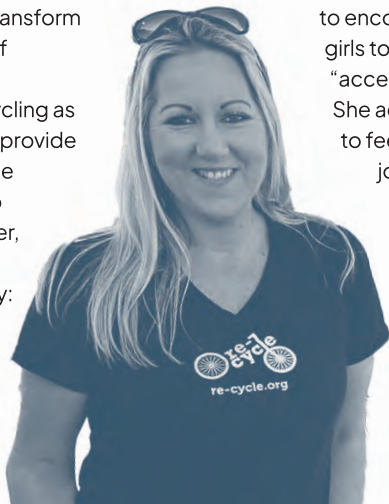
Over to you

CHARLOTTE WARD Charity leader transforming lives in African communities

As Director of Re-Cycle, a charity based in Colchester that repurposes old bikes and sends them to rural communities in Africa, Charlotte has been changing lives for more than a decade.

She joined the organisation because she wanted to make a difference: "I wanted to be part of something that made an impactful and meaningful change to people's lives." Under her leadership Re-Cycle has expanded its reach, sending more than 160,000 bikes to Africa, "to help transform hundreds of thousands of people's lives".

Charlotte describes cycling as "a tool for good". Cycles provide "opportunities that enable people to have access to education, food and water, and employment". They also drive gender equality: bikes are a vital means of transport that helps ensure that women and girls can access schools and jobs, providing life-



Re-Cycle has sent more than 160,000 bikes to Africa, where they transform lives

changing opportunities.

Charlotte recognises the importance of safety when it comes to encouraging more women and girls to cycle, but she also highlights "access, confidence and culture". She advises: "Women and girls need to feel safe while cycling, therefore joining a club or liaising with their school to see how they can support will help." Why is this important? "Cycling provides a great sense of freedom and has very positive effect on your physical and mental wellbeing."

When asked what being a winner of this year's 100

Women in Cycling means to her, Charlotte says: "I am very honoured and humbled to be one of Cycling UK's 100 Women in Cycling for 2025. It's a great privilege to be recognised for the work that myself and everyone at the charity does to empower lives through bicycles. Thank you for the opportunity to tell our story and show how the work of the charity changes lives."

She goes on to say: "I am inspired by the cyclists that have achieved success through adversity. Biniam Girmay is someone who is truly inspirational for myself and millions of African people, and his success shows that dreams can and do come true." cyclinguk.org/charlotte-ward



Robina on a refurbished Pashley Mailstar

ROBINA IJAZ Refugee bike mechanic

Robina first came to London's Bike Project – a charity which collects secondhand bikes, refurbishes them and donates them to refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK – when she was in need of her own bike. At the time she was seeking asylum and so was unable to work; she was living on just £35 per week.

She had never learned to ride a bike, so she joined the charity's Pedal Power Programme to discover how. She quickly learned to ride and to access the many benefits that cycling brings. She says the project gave her "happiness, confidence and freedom". She adds that she was suffering from depression and anxiety before learning to ride: "Then I started cycling. I feel

better when I ride. I feel happier."

Robina has become an advocate and volunteer for the Bike Project. She has volunteered as a mechanic, fixing bikes for other refugees. She has supported the charity by sharing her story at events, in videos and in the press to help raise awareness of the issues refugees face in accessing cycling and more generally.

To her, cycling means "happiness, good health conditions and saving money with confidence". Her advice to other women and girls is: "If you want to your life to be healthy and to be more confident, go cycling. Go riding with your friends and family or alone. But you must go riding just for you!"

cyclinguk.org/robina-ijaz

