

Amanda Brobyn Recumbent tricyclist and ICE participant, Inverness

AMANDA INITIALLY WANTED a trike to support weight loss ahead of knee surgery. What she found after trying some was freedom, reduced pain during rides, and a new way to get around locally.

Amanda first came to Inclusive Cycling Experience with a clear goal. She hoped cycling could support weight loss so she could reach a weight considered suitable for surgery on both knees. Walking with crutches is slow and painful, so she needed an option that would let her be active without worsening her joint pain.

At her first session she tried several trikes. A semi-recumbent trike felt practical but she also found it uncomfortable. A fully recumbent trike seemed too difficult to get on and off. Over time, and after seeing other people using different cycles, she decided to try the fully recumbent ICE trike again.

A key part of that decision was making access easier. Amanda used Helping Hands supports (icletta.com/en/products/ice-helping-hands) for help with getting on and off the trike. She was keen to do the work of pedalling herself and wanted to avoid power assistance. The team talked through how assistance would still involve plenty of effort, while helping on hills and reducing stress through painful joints. She was convinced.

Amanda took the trike out on short loans as often as her work and family life allowed. She started with loops of the local campus, then built up to longer rides as her confidence

and route knowledge grew. Sometimes her mum came along and enjoyed the café while Amanda rode. When Amanda's adult daughter visited, she came too.

"Ohh, she loves it. Absolutely loves it," Amanda says. "Just getting out on a bike with me. Whenever she's home, she's like, 'Can we go on the bikes?'"

To take the trike home on loan, Amanda needed somewhere secure to store it. She bought and built storage specifically for the trike. Once that was in place, she could take the cycle on two-week loans and ride as and when it suited her.

"Just being able to get out and about whenever I want, it's been great," she says. Having the trike at home changed what was possible. Amanda could ride from her front door on circular routes, including to a local nature reserve and trips to visit friends. She says she has used her car less and spent less on fuel.

Cycling has also changed outings with her dog. Walking is difficult, but riding means they can go further and faster.

"Especially with the dog. I mean, I'm going 7mph on the bike and he's still in front of me," she says. "He likes to run, so he gets his chance now."

Amanda has been surprised by the effect cycling has had on her knee pain. She expected it to be worse but often finds the opposite by the end of a ride.

"My knee pain was a lot worse," she says. "Cycling, when you start off, my knees are really painful, but by the end they're nowhere near as bad. Without cycling the pain was a lot worse, and there was no break from it."

After one ride delivering the trike



Amanda walks with crutches but is pain free on her ICE Adventure HD with electric assistance

Amanda's trike

Bike: ICE Adventure HD Electric (icetrikes.co), leased.

Price: from around £6,000 with electric assist (subject to spec choices).

Key features

- A fully recumbent position helps take pressure off her painful knees, making riding feel more manageable than walking with crutches.
- Helping Hands supports (not shown below) enable her to get on and off the trike independently, which has been key to riding regularly.
- The stable three-wheel design gives her confidence on local routes.

back, she noticed a moment of complete relief. "At this moment in time, I have no pain at all in my knees," she says. "It will come back, but when I'm cycling I'm not really in pain with my knees."

There have been mental health benefits, too. "It's probably improved my mental health because I'm not stuck indoors all the time," she says. "I don't snap at my mum as much."

Amanda has also been introduced to the HiTrans Inclusive Cycling Scheme, which can organise a specific adapted cycle for longer-term loan at a low monthly cost. Working with the scheme and the cycle supplier, she has moved to an e-trike setup that is even more user friendly, including integrated lights.

For Amanda, adaptive cycling has been about independence. It has given her a way to be active, spend time with family, and make everyday journeys that she couldn't do on foot. 🌟

