

Pool bike schemes

Training, maintenance and storage

Cycle training

Cycle skills training

Participating in cycle skills training provides knowledge and confidence for riding on roads to those who are new or returning to cycling. Experienced cyclists may also benefit from training as new skills can always be learnt.

Best practice training generally follows the National Standard which consists of 3 levels: level 1 covers basic skills; level 2 covers cycling on quiet roads and level 3 covers cycling on busy roads. National Standards are now being introduced in Wales. In Scotland, Cycling Scotland, Ready Steady Bike and Go By Cycle train at levels 1 and 3 and Road Safety Scotland has developed the Scottish Cycle Training Scheme at level 2.

Cycle instructor training

Some organisations may find it effective to train a member of staff as a qualified cycle instructor. In England, Cycling England offer bursaries to help with funding, and in Wales, Cycle Training Wales offers instructor training courses. In Scotland, Cycling

Scotland has been providing free instructor training to all local authorities and associated groups.

Ride leader training

If employees use the pool bikes for leisure purposes a volunteer may like to qualify as a cycle ride leader. It is not a legal requirement for social rides to have a qualified leader, but having someone with additional skills may enable them to assist those who are new or returning to cycling and deal more effectively with emergencies, especially for mountain biking.

Maintenance training

A one-day maintenance course should be sufficient to enable a member of staff to become proficient in carrying out maintenance checks and minor repairs to pool bikes.

Further information

CTC the national cyclists' organisation

www.ctc.org.uk/cycletraining

Cycling Scotland

www.cyclingscotland.org/educationandtraining.aspx

Cycle Training Wales

www.cycletrainingwales.org.uk

Maintenance

To enable a pool bike scheme to run smoothly, keep costs minimal and adhere to health and safety policies, a maintenance plan must be implemented and a member of staff trained to carry out maintenance.

The better quality and simpler the bike, the less maintenance it will require.

Basic safety check

Each user of the pool bikes should be instructed how to carry out a basic safety check, or 'M' check. With practice this should take no more than one to two minutes per bike.

- Is the saddle secure?
- Is the seatpost beyond the minimum level?

- Is the front stem tight on the frame?

- Is the rear wheel secure?
- Does it run straight?
- Is the quick release level firmly tightened?
- Are the brake pads worn?
- Are the brake pads aligned correctly on the wheel rim?
- Is the tyre pressure correct?



- Are the cranks loose?
- Are the pedals loose?

- Is the front wheel secure?
- Does it run straight?
- Is the quick release level firmly tightened?
- Are the brake pads worn?
- Are the brake pads aligned correctly on the wheel rim?
- Is the tyre pressure correct?

Basic maintenance

If the 'M' check shows a basic fault with a bike, minor repairs can be carried out by a trained member of staff. Ensuring more than one member of staff is trained to this standard will cover any periods of annual leave, etc.

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Major repairs

If the 'M' check highlights a more complex fault with a bike it will need referring to a cycle repair shop.

Bike suppliers often offer free bike servicing for the first year after purchase and while this is worth accepting, it may be advisable to negotiate the timing of the free service as the bikes may be used infrequently while the scheme is still being established. A minimum one-year warranty is useful as it is not uncommon for minor faults to occur soon after purchase as the bike parts 'settle in'.

On site maintenance

Ideally a maintenance area should be situated close to where the bikes are stored and should be large enough to turn a bike upside down and possibly placed on a maintenance stand, as well as allowing space to store tools and spare parts.

To perform basic repairs the following tools are essential:

- **allen keys and spanner sets**, to adjust fittings such as brakes and non-quick release settings
- **bike chain oil**, to lubricate chains periodically, especially if the bikes are getting wet a lot
- **cleaning rags**
- **tyre leavers**, to help ease the tyre away from the wheel rim
- **tyre pumps**, small individual pumps for each bike and a larger pump for use in the maintenance area
- **puncture repair kits and spare inner tubes**, small kits can be attached to individual bikes and more extensive kit can be used in the maintenance area.

As well as encouraging users to check the bikes, a maintenance regime should be established, checking the bikes for a certain amount of time each week.

Further information

The Department for Transport provides further information about cycle parking and storage:

www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/tal/cyclefacilities/cycleparkingexamplesofgoodpr4076

Transport for London provides information about cycle parking and pool bike schemes in general:

www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/projectsandschemes/workplacetravelplanning/2459.aspx

Storage

Pool bike storage should be accessible, well lit and secure. Pool bikes may be on site overnight and at weekends meaning the storage area needs to be more secure than simple bike racks. Bike parking and storage which is situated near the entry to a workplace gives a clear signal that the organisation values cyclists and active travel. The more convenient cycle parking and storage is, the more likely it is to be used.

Types of storage

Sheffield stands: simple and reliable racks. They allow bikes to be locked to them but provide no protection from the elements or additional security over nights and weekends.

Lockable container unit: a secure type of storage, relying either on a member of staff being available to unlock and lock the container each time a bike is used or a combination lock being used so each user has access without the need to distribute keys.

Purpose built cycle storage compounds: within these lockable compounds bikes are usually additionally locked individually to a Sheffield stand. Although the bikes are protected from the elements they are visible at night and during the weekends.

Shelters: provide protection but not security. Designed to be situated within a secure area with Sheffield stands installed inside.

Large storage cupboard: ideal for folding bikes.

Limited space

There are various options to consider if space for bike storage is limited. Car parking spaces can be re-allocated as at least six bikes fit in one car parking space, bike lockers which store bikes hanging vertically can be useful or other types of bike storage such as double-decker stands could be used. Types of storage which require bikes to be lifted or up-ended may not be suitable for all users, and if installed, guidance should be provided on safe lifting techniques.

Bike racks which secure only the wheel of a bike are often cheap and take up less space, but unfortunately make poor parking facilities as they can damage bikes.

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