

Bicycle Loan Schemes

– a how to guide for schools



Key facts

- 66% of children own a bicycle
- 45% of children would prefer to cycle to school
- 1.8% of S1-S3 pupils cycle to school
- 1.2% of S4-S6 pupils cycle to school

Introduction

Setting up a bike loan scheme is a great way to overcome the barrier of access to bikes for pupils. For various reasons pupils at secondary school may not have access to a bicycle. A school bicycle loan scheme is where a school buys a fleet of bikes and pupils borrow a bike, can bring the opportunity to ride to school for those without bikes.

Such schemes engage pupils with cycling for both school travel and recreation, providing an opportunity to participate in a healthier, more active lifestyle and develop independent travel habits which are key life skills.

This information guide aimed at secondary schools describes what your school needs and gives practical advice about how to set up a bicycle loan scheme.

Introduction

The **School Bicycle Loan Scheme** was pioneered by Glasgow City Council in 2005 with the support of Strathclyde Police and Sustrans. The Council had low bicycle usage on the school journey, with only 1.5% of school pupils choosing to travel by this mode. With high social deprivation, making bicycle ownership too expensive for many young people the project was initially set up in schools where some pupils did not have access to a bicycle.

Fleets of high quality mountain bikes were purchased and distributed to various secondary schools. The schools then administered the loan scheme, in some cases the pupils applied for a bike by filling in a form, in others a small returnable deposit was paid. As part of the scheme pupils commit to regular basic bicycle maintenance lessons ensuring they look after their bike.

The initial pilot bike loan scheme showed a good uptake (136 pupils applied to take part) and other pupils started using their own bikes. The scheme continues to run with more schools in Glasgow. For further information see the case study on <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/safe-routes-to-schools/resources/case-studies> on our website.

The sections that follow deal with these areas step by step ensuring the smooth-running of your project.

Things to consider

What you will need to consider before you set up a bicycle loan scheme at your school.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Funding | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Staffing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Insurance and legal | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Number/types of bikes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| How pupils will access the bikes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Record keeping | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Monitoring | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| cycle parking | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Set up a bike club | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bike maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Links to other school activities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Links to primary schools | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Setting Up

Funding

At important consideration is how are you going to fund a bike loan scheme?

Costs

Approximate costs (per school)

Bikes	£4,500 (15 bikes at £300 each)
Maintenance equipment	£2,000
Training for 2 staff	£1,200

Optional

Container-style shelter	£3,000
Dome-style shelter	£12-20,000 (including installation)

Sources of funding

Your local authority may be able to apply for funding to set up a loan scheme for your local school travel contact see this link on the Sustrans website; Look under **_Who to Contact** on this page

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/safe-routes-to-schools/whats-in-your-area/scotland>

The CTC Bike Club programme can provide small grants that could help you set up a loan scheme (<http://bikeclub.org.uk/>).

For other potential sources of funding see Sustrans information sheet for schools on finding funding, http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/Safe%20Routes/resources/toolkit/srs_finding_funding.pdf

Staffing

Enthusiastic staff involvement is vital to the success of the school bike loan scheme. In some schools the staff member involved has become the School Travel Champion and has also been loaned a bike from the scheme. This has allowed them to set a good example and act as a role model for the young people at the school.

The strong support of the head teacher is required as the loan scheme involves significant staff time and resources. Training for staff on leading rides and bicycle maintenance can be accessed if required. For more information on available training courses Cycling Scotland's webpage <http://www.cyclingscotland.org>

At St Mungo's Academy in Glasgow two staff and a number of pupils were trained in Weldtech Gold standard.

Insurance and legal

The loan bikes require insurance the same way that musical instruments are insured when on loan to pupils. Your school will need to get insurance for each bike that is loaned out.

Practical delivery

Number/types of bikes

Ideally you will need a fleet of 15 bikes per school to start a loan scheme, the bikes should be high quality mountain bikes. Budget £300-400 per bike and select a range of frame sizes (from 13" to 16"). Select the bikes in a neutral colour and for each bike purchase; helmet, reflective clothing, lock, mudguard and lights. The best kind of lock to purchase to keep the bikes secure are D-locks.

You could keep costs down by buying bikes from a recycling project see list on page 6 to find your local bike recycling scheme.

How pupils will access the bikes?

Your school needs to decide a fair distribution method for the pupils to gain access to the bike. This needs to ensure that those pupils without access to a bike are able to apply through the loan scheme. In some loan schemes pupils apply in writing and explain why they would like a loan bike. In addition some schools a returnable deposit is paid which is returned when the bike comes back at the end of the loan period. There is

a sample application/loan agreement form on our website—detailing what the pupil agrees to when they take charge of the bike; for example attending regular bicycle maintenance club.

Case study

At Bannerman High School in Baillieston, Glasgow pupils apply in writing for the bikes and once they have signed a Loan Agreement they get to keep the bike for a year. The pupils use the bikes to get to and from school and for improving their health and making the journey independently and more sustainably. At the weekly bike club run by the campus police officer and a member of staff, the pupils learn basic bike maintenance and also work to improve their mountain biking skills by training on the purpose-built mountain bike circuit round the school grounds.

Record keeping

Keeping a record of which pupil has been loaned which bike is vital in keeping track of the bikes. Using the unique frame number is the most practical method for identifying the bikes. Bikes can also be registered with the bike register (<http://www.bikeregister.com/>) to improve the chances of recovery if they are stolen.

Monitoring

Monitoring the scheme is important to allow a review of progress, achievements and demonstrate success. Measure the impact on the number of young people cycling to school.

This involves keeping a record of the numbers of pupils travelling to school by bike. Training undertaken, attendance numbers of the bike club and record any excursions.

In addition to taking part in the annual Hands Up Scotland Survey carry out a pre-survey of the cycling levels before setting up the bike loan scheme and monitor at intervals. Pupils can be encouraged to undertake the monitoring as part of development of your school travel plan. See www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel for a template recording form.

The form is titled "Bike Shed Monitoring Form" and includes the following sections:

- School name:** [Text box]
- Week commencing (dd/mm/yyyy):** [Text box]
- Number of cycle parking spaces available:** [Text box]
- How many bikes were counted?** [Table with columns for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday]
- Weather conditions:** [Text box]
- Cycling events:** [Text box]
- Other notes:** [Text box]

Cycle Parking

Consider the facilities your school already has for storing bikes? You may require more storage. Cycle parking can be a major investment and it is important to get it right for your school. To find the most appropriate cycle parking for your school follow the step by step guide in our information sheet “Cycle parking for schools”.



We have also compiled a list of cycle parking suppliers; see www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel



Castlemilk High School in Glasgow converted an old shipping container into a bike store and maintenance workshop

You might like to consider a more locally sustainable eco-shelter– built using, for example locally sourced timber or by a local blacksmith, see photo.



Photo showing a commercial dome-style shelter

Set up a bike club

A bike club is important as it provides a starting and focal point for the cycling activities in your school and can be set up at the same time as the loan scheme. An enthusiastic member of staff or a parent is important for success but the volunteer does not necessarily have to have a high level of bicycle mechanical knowledge as training courses can be accessed. Careful scheduling needs to take place in advance, perhaps organise the bike club activities during lunch time.

The bike club should meet on a regular basis either weekly or fortnightly. As a condition of being loaned a bike the pupils should commit to attending the bike club. If numbers permit other pupils with access to bikes could be encouraged to join the bike club. Route planning is a useful and fun activity for the bike club to undertake, this can be done both theoretically and practically.

Bike maintenance

To ensure the pupils can look after their loan bikes basic bike maintenance should be taught as part of the regular bike club. The member of staff/volunteer can be trained in Weldtech, a bike mechanic standard and become qualified to do their own bike servicing. For training providers near you Google “Weldtech bicycle mechanic”. Basic maintenance equipment/tools should be included in the costs of setting up the scheme.



Photo showing an eco-cycle shelter

schools performing checks on pupils' bikes and have a session to help them plan their cycle routes to your school.

Summary

A bicycle loan scheme supported by an enthusiastic member of staff and a regular bike club can help pupils without access to a bike become regular cyclists. A significant commitment is required from the school as the loan scheme needs considerable time and resource especially when it is being set up. In addition to staffing the school needs to consider how it is going to fund the scheme, whether new cycle parking is required and where the bike club will meet. Once up and running the bicycles from the loan scheme can be used in a diverse range of lessons including; PE, Technologies, Sciences, Social Studies, Mathematics, Languages and Expressive Arts.

Case study

At **St Mungo's Academy** staff and pupils attended a Weldtech training course as a result not only do they service their own bikes but they have set up a bike recycling social enterprise. Using their bike mechanic skills old bikes were refurbished and sold to pupils and the local community. Through this process the students learn practical bike maintenance and business skills. This made the scheme sustainable providing the young people with new skills and a source of cheap bikes.

Links to other school activities

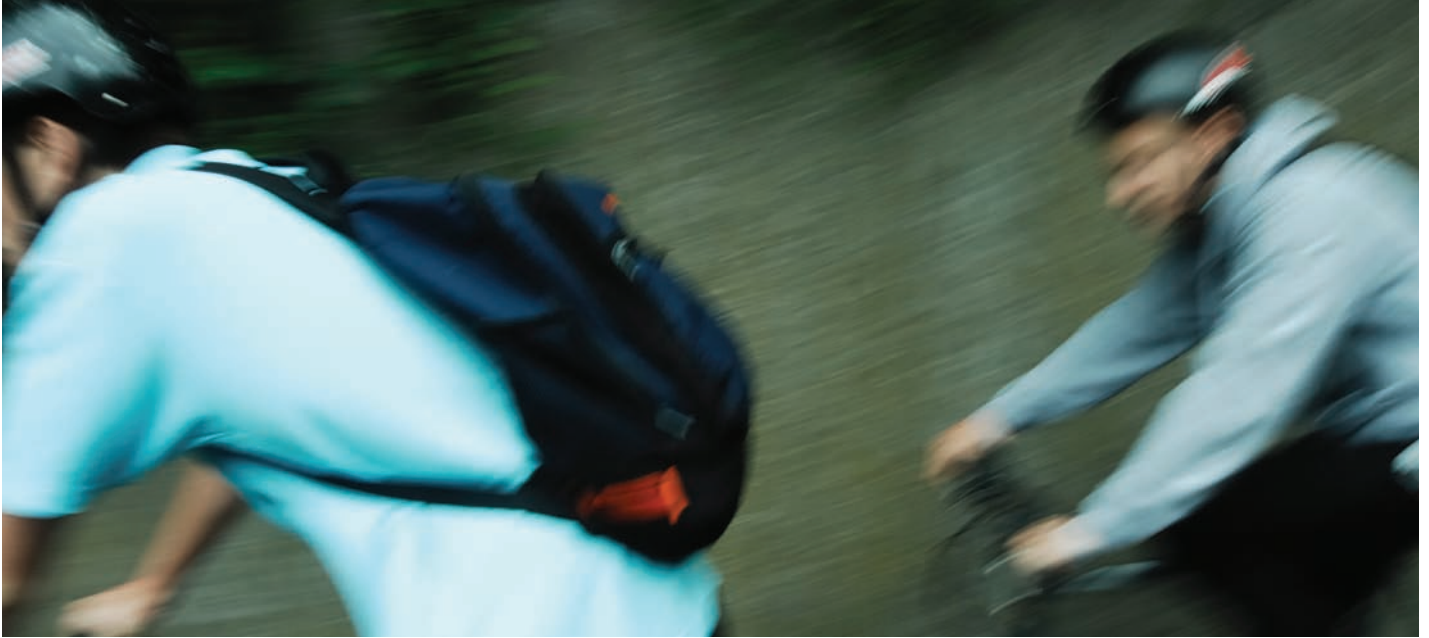
Bikes can be used as part of PE sessions at your school for example doing mountain biking in PE on local off road tracks and can also be used to engage pupils in other aspects of the curriculum. Cycling has links to the experiences and outcomes of Health and Wellbeing, Technologies, Sciences, Social Studies, Mathematics and Numeracy, Languages and Expressive Arts. For more ideas about activities see our website and the information sheet- Active travel – a guide to getting more secondary school pupils walking and cycling.

At Castlemilk High School in Glasgow the Enterprise Officer has used the bike club for management and finance lessons. There are other skills such as map-reading which link with a number of the objectives of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Princes Trust.

Links to primary schools

Engage with your new school intake to promote cycling to school and the loan scheme. Consider linking the bike club to the transition from primary to secondary school; members of the club could work with the feeder primary





Further support

Bicycle recycling schemes around Scotland

Edinburgh www.thebikestation.org.uk/repair

Stirling www.recyke-a-bike.co.uk

Aberdeen www.becycle.org.uk

Glasgow www.commonwheel.org.uk and
www.bikestation.org.uk/glasgow

Fife www.fifebikeworks.org.uk

Inverness www.mp33.org.uk/bbcp.html

There may be local schemes in your area, Google bicycle recycling in your area.

Other helpful links

www.bikeregister.com

www.bikeclub.org.uk

www.cyclingscotland.org

www.chooseanotherway.com

www.ecoschoolsscotland.org

Sustrans Scotland contact details

The School Travel team in Sustrans have an array of resources including inspiring case studies and useful information sheets. Visit the website and be inspired to take action.

Rosebery House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5EZ

W: www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel

E: schools-scotland@sustrans.org.uk

T: 0131 346 9777

F: 0131 337 3727

About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today. www.sustrans.org.uk

Head office: Sustrans, 2 Cathedral Square, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5DD
www.sustrans.org.uk

Photography: ©Sustrans staff, North Muirton Primary School, Perth Stuart Munro, Castlemilk High School, Glasgow, Geoff Smith, St Mungo's Academy Glasgow, Glasgow City Council
<http://www.grassroofcompany.co.uk/>

This information sheet may be freely photocopied for use in schools and local authorities. For reproduction in other publications, please contact the School Travel team at Sustrans for permission.

Sustrans is a Registered Charity no. 326550 (England and Wales) SCO39263 (Scotland).