

# Bikes for All:

## A guide to setting up an equitable bike share scheme



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Bikes for All is a Glasgow-based project which aims to increase access to cycling by breaking down barriers related to ability, lack of confidence or low income. This has been achieved through the provision of shared bikes and personal support to use them.

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The initiative has been very effective in encouraging participation in cycling among under-represented groups and minority communities. In its first year alone almost half of Bikes for All users identified as BME and 61% were from the most deprived communities in Scotland.

Bikes for All offers annual membership to the city-wide bike hire scheme, nextbike Glasgow, at a discounted annual rate of £3. Additional support is offered through one-to-one advice, group rides, route-finding tips, road skills and general advice on cycling.

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## About this Guide

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This guide is aimed at local authorities, third sector organisations and communities who are interested in developing a Bikes for All style project. It contains a detailed case study on the Bikes for All initiative in Glasgow and provides a range of practical information designed to help organisations create a successful, equitable bike share scheme. This includes:

- An overview of Bikes for All programme management
- Funding overview
- Case studies from Bikes for All partner organisations and users
- Key aims and objectives
- Barriers and challenges
- Key success factors and outcomes

The project was instigated by CoMoUK in 2017 and was based on the [Better Bike Share Partnership](#), which delivers programmes to increase access to cycling for low income and communities of colour in the US city of Philadelphia.

Bikes for All is delivered by Glasgow cycling charity, Bike for Good. The initiative was initially managed and evaluated by a partnership of CoMoUK, Bike for Good, the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, Cycling Scotland and nextbike.

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## About CoMoUK

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CoMoUK is the national charity dedicated to the public benefit of shared transport. We are funded by Transport Scotland and play a collective role with shared transport operators across the car share, bike share, ride share, e-scooter and flexible bus sectors.

We work closely with communities and local, regional, transport and national authorities to develop high-quality shared transport schemes. We accredit car clubs and bike share schemes, which provides a set of standards for operators and assurances for local authorities when procuring services.

We want transport to be cleaner, safer, healthier, greener, cheaper, more convenient, and more inclusive.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



# An overview of Bikes for All

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Bikes for All is a Glasgow-based bike share project run by Bike for Good in partnership with nextbike. It provides annual memberships at £3 to those on a low/no income to create an inclusive bike share scheme, reduce transport poverty and improve health and wellbeing through cycling.

## The membership has several features ensuring accessibility for all:

- Accounts are activated without the need of a bank card
- £3 is credited to the user's account
- 60 minutes free per ride, then 50p per 30 min

- Membership valid for one year
- Accounts can be topped up by cash at Bike for Good West and South
- For now, e-bikes are not included in this membership and cost £2 for 20 minutes

In addition, the Bikes for All mentoring programme provides confidence building lessons and led rides, in which participants are shown cycle routes across Glasgow to build their cycling confidence and create connection with their community. The project offers sign up and nextbike specific technical support to keep everyone cycling.

## Programme management

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- The project is managed by the Health and Wellbeing team at Bike for Good
- Two members of staff work on the project on part-time basis to fulfill various roles including:
  - Admin and support: account creation and troubleshooting, Bikes for All sign up sessions and being a point of contact for the service users
  - Cycle training: delivering groups and 1:1 sessions for participants who want to improve their cycling confidence
  - Development and management: building community partnerships, events coordination, nextbike relations, reporting, funding and project development

## Project funding

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In partnership with CoMoUK, Bike for Good developed a strong partnership with nextbike and secured funding from the European Social Fund for an 8 week pilot project. Due to the success of the pilot, the European Social Fund confirmed 1 year of funding to continue and develop the project. We then applied for Paths for All's Smarter Choices Smarter Places Open Fund and secured a 2nd year of funding. The successful impact and the increasing demand for the project enabled us to secure a third year of funding.

Bike for Good are now looking at a different approach to ensure the sustainability of the project. Their Health & Wellbeing Team delivers various other programmes that are aimed at the same target audience and similar outcomes around active travel for those underrepresented in cycling, health and social equality and social isolation. When applying for funding for those programmes, Bikes for All is integrated as one of the funded services they will deliver which focuses on creating legacy by providing long term bike access.



## Case Study



Mohamed on a nextbike, summer 2020

Mohamed accessed Bikes for All in August 2020 through Bike for Good's partnership with Migrants Organising for Rights and Empowerment (MORE) cycling club. His Bikes for All account was generated remotely with support from MORE.

MORE have funding to purchase a number of Bikes for All accounts for their participants and have been referring and supporting people to access the service.

Before having access to nextbike and Bikes for All, Mohamed found getting around the city "very challenging and stressful." He would miss appointments as walking would take hours.

Mohammed didn't move far outside of the city centre and rarely accessed any green spaces. He lives not far from one of Europe's most polluted streets and he was feeling unfit, stressed and unhappy.

With the addition of lockdown and having been placed in hotel accommodation, Mohamed's sense of autonomy was low.

Now, thanks to MORE and Bikes for All, Mohamed has been feeling a lot better. "Cycling on a nextbike with MORE on Sundays has made me feel happy and to be social". Friends have been made and the city has started to open up to him. "I have been to Pollock Park, Glasgow Green and the Kelvin Way, I can visit these green spaces easily on the bike. It makes me feel so much fitter and I have more joy."

When there are technical problems with his account Mohamed "feels stressed again" but he states that the problems are normally fixed quickly and then he can resume cycling.

## Case Study



Glasgow City Mission exploring the city

In 2019, Bike for Good partnered with Glasgow City Mission (GCM) an organisation who supports those experiencing homelessness. They provide emergency accommodation, employability training and run programs to improve mental and physical health.

During lockdown GCM referred people to Bikes for All to enable them to safely travel through the city for appointments, to access work and improve their mental wellbeing. In addition to the membership, Bike for Good also organised a led ride to show new cycle routes in the city, build confidence using the nextbikes and as a social activity to combat the feelings of isolation that participants may have been facing.

### Here is Adam's feedback, Men's International Worker at GCM:

"Glasgow City Mission has greatly appreciated renewing the partnership with Bikes for All. It has been of great benefit to our guests, particularly those who are in the asylum system at the moment. It has been so helpful to have Bike for Good staff as contacts to make referrals to. We've found them to be easily contactable, professional and supportive in explaining the workings of the scheme.

We had an amazing time the Friday before last when Bike for Good cycle trainers took out two cycling groups. It was brilliant for our guests to discover parts of Glasgow that they hadn't seen before and find new cycle-safe routes around the West of the city. As well as that, it was a great day for community connection for some of our guests who are really isolated and disempowered by their circumstances. Some of them are struggling with poor

mental health and lack of connection at the moment so it was a vital morning. We are hoping for more of the same.

Taken on our first nextbike after the first 2020 lockdown, we rode to Victoria Park with service users from Glasgow City Mission."

As part of our Covid relief GCM were awarded the Wellbeing Fund to supply children from low income families with their own bikes. To allow families to cycle together we generated Bikes for All accounts for the parents.

### The following quotes are from parents who received bike access through the Wellbeing Fund.

"It makes us get out everyday for fresh air and exercise. We have been happier and slowly starting to feel fitter. In the future I see us cycling together for both transport and exercise."

"As a single mum it has been such a help, to have happy kids who are excited about exercise and doing something outside all together."

"We both feel confident on the bikes but it would be good to use it as transport. It will save me money as well!"

For further case studies please visit the Bike for Good [website](https://www.bikeforgood.org.uk).





## Identifying project needs and barriers faced by participants and how they were identified/overcome

### How barriers were identified:

- Focus groups were held with people from:
  - Areas of deprivation
  - Areas with poor transport links
  - Those seeking asylum
  - Refugees
  - Community organisations representing those above
- 8 week pilot project
- Ongoing feedback survey

Bike for Good were also aware of the need for affordable bike access from their existing work. Regular requests came from financially vulnerable groups to borrow bikes, so they could access other services, job opportunities, volunteering, health care appointments and for leisure time.

### The main barriers that were identified through their work before the start of the project were:

- Need for a bank account
- Need for a permanent address
- Need for an email account
- Language
- Confidence
- Affordability

### Bikes for All overcome these barriers by offering various services and membership features such as:

- Account purchased with cash, no bank account necessary with the option for the fee to be waived
- The cost of a year's membership is £3 instead of £60, offering 1 hour of free transport per journey enabling a way out of transport poverty for many
- Hotels, hostels and night shelter addresses are able to be used to register accounts
- Partner organisations or Bike for Good can use their email to register participants accounts
- Sign up information is translated into 6 languages: Farsi, Kurdish Soriani, Kurdish Kurmanji, Pashto, Spanish and Arabic
- All information in English is written with simple language and the information on how to use the nextbikes has pictures and illustrations alongside the words
- Bikes for All are looking into further translated documentation
- nextbike taster events are run which include how to use their bikes, a led ride and a sign up session - these are run in partnership with community organisations who have identified people who would benefit from a Bikes for All membership

# Timeline of Bikes for All's development

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## Inception, launch and development

### 2017 - 2018:

- Pilot launched in July 2017 funded by European Social Fund secured by CoMoUK
  - Target of 100 people exceeded
- Funding renewed for 2018/19 with an experienced evaluation and monitoring partner 'Glasgow Centre for Population Health'
  - Bike for Good builds a strong database of partners - accounts created grows by 82% from July 2017 to July 2018
  - Target of 200 new participants exceeded
  - Renewal rate of 50% from stage 1 (pilot)

### 2018 - 2019

- Funding secured for 2019/2020 (Paths For All SCSP Open Fund)
  - Creation of various tools to support participants including translation of documents and 'How to use a nextbike' illustrations for those experiencing language barriers
  - Target of 250 new participants exceeded
  - Renewal rate of 40% from stage 2

### 2020 - 2021

- Funding secured for 2020/2021 (SCSP Open Fund and Local Authority Fund)
  - April 2020 Covid crisis takes service online
  - In August 2020, 110 new participants sign up and in September 2020 a record 3944 journeys were made by Bikes for All account holders - in total since April 2020, 393 new accounts have been created, reaching the target of 300 at the end of July 2020
  - Drop in renewal rate (20%) - the reasons are varied including the Covid-19 crisis and the move to an online service,

participants moving to other cities or  
participants purchasing a bike

- 2021/2022: adoption of a new approach to the financial sustainability of the programme - Bikes for All is funded partly by Glasgow City Council's Communities Fund, SCSP local authority fund and SCSP Open fund

## How it evolved

In the first few years of the project, Bikes for All actively approached community groups and organisations who were supporting service users who would benefit. Together they organised regular drop in sessions on site. As the project grew, Bike for Good started a weekly drop in session at both their south and west premises. The project started to gain recognition across Glasgow and the demand was continuously increasing. During lockdown the drop in sessions could no longer. The decision was made to take the process online.

The project ensured that this was still available to those without access to the internet, by working with their community partners. They trained up staff from these groups to become Bikes for All ambassadors, working on the ground to help people fill out our forms and explaining how to use the bikes. These partners would then contact the project on behalf of the participants and the accounts would then be generated.

Bikes for All also circulated their direct phone number and email to community partners so that individuals could contact them directly.

The Health and Wellbeing phone number was circulated within the refugee community and currently 71% of this year's memberships are held by those seeking asylum.

Alongside this a video was created to show new Bikes for All participants how to use the nextbikes. This has been a very useful tool to ensure all participants know how to use the scheme.





## Key success factors

Partnership working, effective community engagement and establishing a flexible service that met the needs of users, were key factors driving the successes of this scheme.

At the start of Bikes for All, full support came from CoMoUK to secure funding and develop a strong partnership with nextbike. This collaboration has been invaluable to the creation and further development of the project.

The partnership with nextbike is at the heart of Bikes for All. They are working together to make Bikes for All a successful and valuable service. Monthly catch-ups and regular email communication mean they have been able to have a clear understanding of all parties' needs and how best to keep the wheels turning. There has been a flexible approach to the project ensuring that if changes or issues arise they are collaboratively able to find a solution. Bikes for All is bespoke and tailored to the Glasgow community they are part of, and the partnership between Bike for Good and nextbike has enabled them to grow and support so many people in need of affordable transport.

Thanks to the extended community work of Bike for Good across Glasgow and their experienced community engagement team, they are able to target the right communities and build lasting and relevant partnerships with them. By using the feedback from the focus groups, they initially partnered with the most relevant community groups and supported those most in need.

Cycling can be daunting, especially for those who have never cycled before or haven't cycled in a long time.

Providing a bespoke flexible service to community groups has enabled them to raise awareness of the benefit of cycling for people of all abilities.

Of late more organisations have contacted the project directly to engage with them. Glasgow Women's Aid has recently worked with them to create Bikes for All accounts for their service users. Through this partnership service users have participated in other areas with their community outreach team such as attending cycling lessons. They were also able to provide Glasgow Women's Aid with a childrens bike library thanks to the Wellbeing Fund. Partnerships are vital to the ongoing success of Bikes for All. The support of the community partners has been key to the success of Bikes for All. It has enabled them to reach those most in need and provide guidance and support at the required level.

They have established successful community partnerships by listening to the community's needs and providing them with a bespoke delivery approach. For example Central and West Integration Network (CWIN) run a weekly lunch for their community. This was the best time to reach the community and to run a Bikes for All sign up session. It soon became clear that once a week was too often and it was reduced to once a month which worked well.



## Challenges and how they were overcome.

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One of the biggest challenges was identifying if someone is eligible for the membership. They created a self-referring eligibility form. This removed the pressure from staff to make the decision as well as removing any unconscious bias staff may have as to who is eligible for the service. A lot of the work they have done internally has been to simplify the sign-up process and to ensure that technical issues with accounts are dealt with fairly and consistently by creating a protocol.

Working closely with nextbike has made this possible, enabling them to act as a point of contact for their services users to resolve issues with their accounts. This has been especially helpful for those without credit on their phone or with language barriers unable to call the nextbike help line.

Having local knowledge of the city and the socio/economic issues that are present is helpful when assisting Bikes for All account holders. This is still not a full-time contact line as they do not currently have the funds to run the support service at all times.

Securing multi-year funding for the programme has been another significant challenge. This is due to active travel budgets confirmed on a year-by-year basis. The need for an inclusive bike share scheme will always be required and this is why, to ensure the sustainability of the project, they are looking to integrate Bikes for All into their wider community outreach programmes where the target audience and outcomes are the same. This ensures participants from those programmes are offered an affordable option to bike access.

## Project outcomes

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To enable progress of the project to be tracked Bikes for All ask all participants to fill out a feedback form. This reflects the questions asked in the baseline forms that are filled out when accounts are created. They use a bulk message service to send out texts to all participants with the feedback form link. The response rate for the feedback survey is currently at 20%. This year's results show the successful social impact of the programme after 3 years of delivery:

- 77% of participants have increased mental health and wellbeing
- 63% feel fitter
- 70% feel less socially isolated
- 51% use the bikes to access health and social care appointments
- 54% use the bikes to get to work/study
- 63% found the low cost of the membership useful

- 30% of participants still have barriers to using their membership, with one of the main reasons being the location of the nextbike stations being limited

In September 2020, 10.19% of all nextbike journeys in Glasgow were made by Bikes for All account holders. With an average nextbike journey being 1.7km, around 5,800km of rental distance was made by Bikes for All users in August 2020. Since April 2020 they have created 404 new Bikes for All accounts and 26 renewals. 7% of nextbike rentals from April 2020 to December 2020 were made by Bikes for All account holders, a total of 19,394 out of 276,240.

Renewals are low for Bikes for All due to the transient nature of the participants.

You can find Bikes for All impact report created by Glasgow Centre for Population [here](#).



Find out more about CoMoUK and Collaborative Mobility online at [www.como.org.uk](http://www.como.org.uk)

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