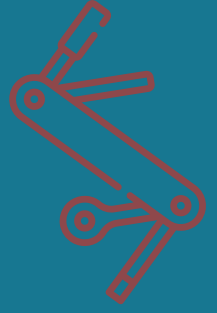
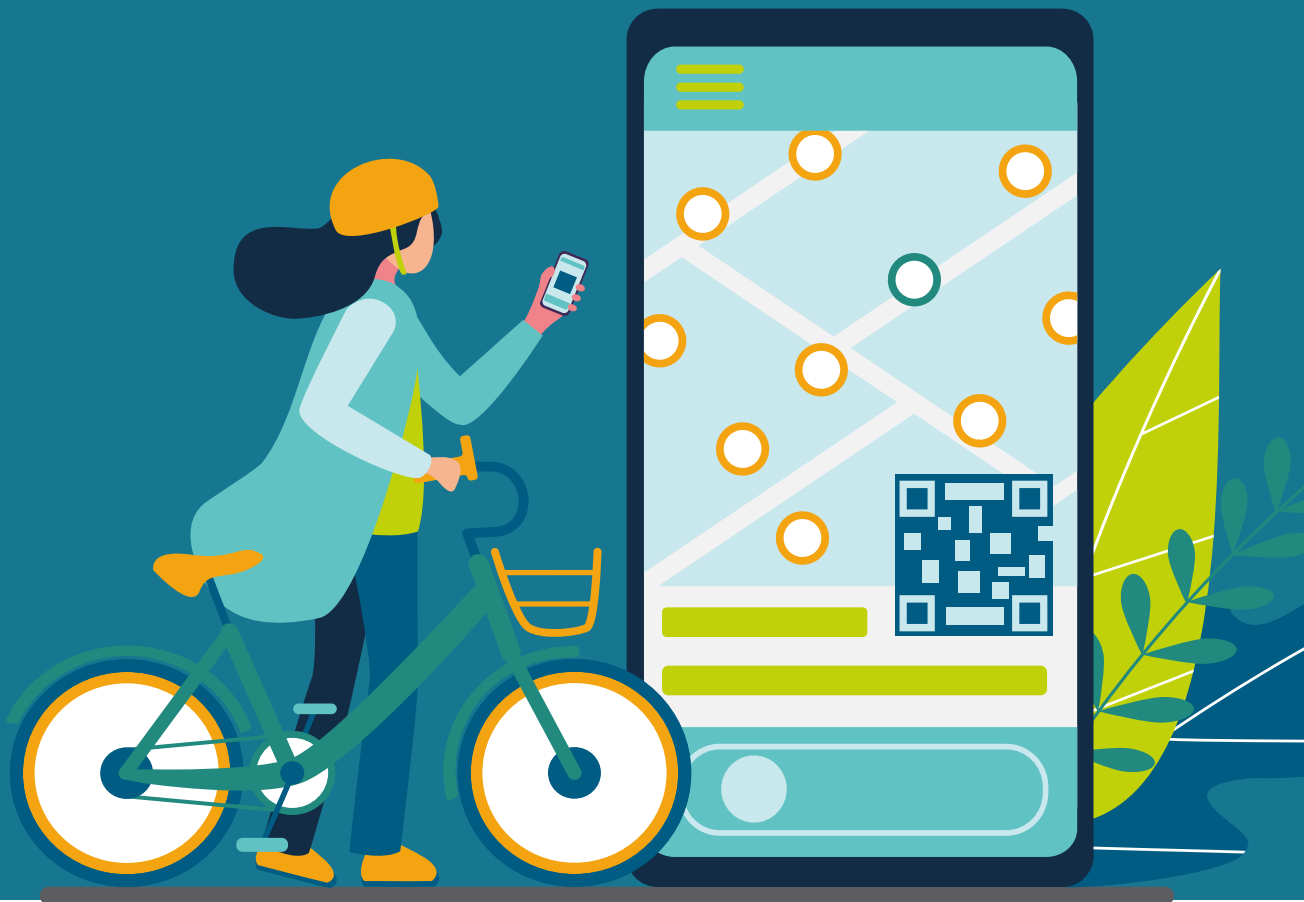


Guidance for Community Bike Share Schemes



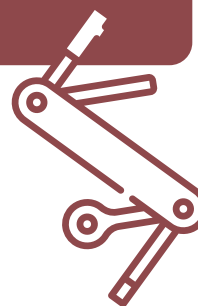
SECTION 07

Looking after your bikes and riders



07: Looking after your bikes and riders

This section guides you through the things you need to think about for keeping your bikes and riders safe, and ensuring you as an organisation are protected.



Maintenance

Keeping the bikes maintained is essential not only to ensure the health and safety of your riders, but also maintain the condition of your bikes and reduce the need to replace the bikes.

Some things to therefore think about include:

- How will the bikes be maintained?
- Who will be responsible for them?
- How often should the bikes be checked?
- How will criminal damage be managed / mitigated? (see our comments on criminal damage later in this document)
- How will you pay for all of the above?
- Look at ways to reduce wear and tear, such as kevlar lined tyres to reduce the chance of punctures
- Different bikes may require different levels of maintenance such as cargo and adaptive – or e-bikes versus pedal cycles

Tips for ensuring good maintenance practices

Warranty

First of all, consider the length of warranty you need for the bikes, bearing in mind at what point you intend to replace the bikes and weigh this up with the option of using local partners for maintenance support. If you sell off and refresh the fleet at end of year two, then the bikes should retain, approximately 50% of their original RRP at resale.

Servicing and bike checks

For regularly used bikes it is advisable to carry out servicing every 6 months with a schedule of regular weekly checks. Contact local bike shops and mobile mechanics for quotes and enquire amongst staff for knowledgeable volunteers willing to take on the task of basic weekly checks. It is a good idea to provide staff with a track pump for inflating tyres and a puncture repair kit somewhere accessible. Guiding users through an 'M-check' is common practice among projects. Sustrans have a good [guide](#) on how to do this.

Charging electric bike batteries

For electric assist bikes the batteries will need to be charged either by users or by a designated person taking on the responsibility. The batteries typically have a long range of up to 160 miles in eco and 50-80 miles in fast mode. This could be done on a regular basis overnight with a system in place for the project team to keep an eye out for battery levels. Modern batteries prefer to be topped up rather than being run down to empty. The electrical components of e-bikes should not wear out or require any specific maintenance within the warranty period at least, typically 2 years. Batteries should still hold a good proportion of their original capacity after 2 years, at which point, as above, it is probably time for resale.

Repairs

The number of repairs required will depend heavily on the intensity of use, treatment by riders and the design of the bike. Punctures can be avoided by opting for certain tyres such as kevlar lined tyres. A contact should be put in place with a local bike shop or mobile maintenance supplier to provide an ad hoc repair service. It is not reasonable to expect users to fix a puncture. If your key on-site contact is willing and able to fix a puncture, decide whether that is acceptable or whether you will call in a local bike shop to do it. Punctures are a nuisance: buy the best tyres available.

Fault reporting

As well as organising repair of the fault, this process should include taking the bike out of the booking system until it is fixed, then adding it back once it is available again. It is advisable to consider who will handle this.

Maintenance log: keep a log of what maintenance your bikes have had, including minor problems that have been fixed. This can be useful if you need to prove you have looked after your bikes to support any insurance claims. See our [supporting document](#) on these checks.

Common project approaches to managing maintenance:

- Some bike share schemes form partnerships with local bike shops and agree an annual costs to cover maintenance - this can help manage the specific requirements of adaptive and cargo bikes
- Some, such as [Velotech Cycling Ltd](#), train volunteers to be able to fix the bikes in house and at low cost
- Maintenance classes: to support both new and current cyclists a bicycle maintenance class is a brilliant way to address barriers that may be stopping or discouraging riding - these can generally be aimed to suit the audience, with puncture repair, brake and gear adjustment commonly demonstrated
- It can be useful to have an schedule for when bikes need to be checked before and after use – recording this week by week



Arran Eco Savvy

Health and safety

Health and safety is an important aspect to your scheme. Here are some things that can help you with following best practice:



Registration

Before riders take out a bike it is important to provide a form for them to complete and sign which states that they will take responsibility for their own safety once they take the bike. This would include a box for them to declare that they can ride competently, and that they have been offered cycle training; this is the [example form](#) example form we have. The form would also ask them to take responsibility for an initial ‘**M-check**’ of the bike before use or at least the brakes, tyres and steering.

Cycle training

It is good practice to provide staff with links to cycle training locally and ideally find some funding to make it free of charge or run group sessions on site. Beginner led rides can be used as training in disguise or keen cycling staff will often volunteer to help new riders get going if you advertise for helpers. Ask your local authority for advice on local provision. You may also wish to offer details of the [highway code](#) and key rules of the road.

Buddy rides - thinking about accompanying users on the journeys they wish to make can be a useful offer (see ideas for supporting your users in section 4).

Reporting

Accidents and injuries may happen to people using the bikes or to third parties. Having the appropriate paperwork in place to begin with is important. This may include a risk assessment and making people aware of the organisation’s accident reporting procedure and insurance cover. Much of this will be standard working practice.

Cleaning bikes

Given Covid-19, projects are taking a more rigorous approach to cleaning bikes in between use. Some use the [Zoono](#) spray.

Other things to think about

- A [risk assessment](#) can provide a checklist for managing health and safety of your scheme
- It is wise to have plans in place for collecting a bike if a user has a puncture far away from the storage location
- Whether you supply helmets or not is up to you, but if you do then make sure they are thoroughly cleaned between use

Criminal damage

The reality is criminal damage and theft can sometimes happen, although reports have been minimal among Scottish bike share community projects. If your project is about making sure the bikes are visible to people walking by, then there is probably a greater risk.

CoMoUK have published advice on [criminal damage](#).

Tips for protecting your bikes

It is possible to purchase insurance to protect against vandalism but there are also things you can do to mitigate the risk:

- Use secure storage
- Install tracking on the bikes (if you have an e-bike, the police can add a logged code inside the seat post or to the frame which can be read by their scanner and traced back to the owner - for more formation see www.bikeregister.com)
- Promote positive campaigns around the bikes being for the use of the community to ensure a sense of belonging and ownership
- Branded stickers make it hard for thieves to sell on as hard to remove
- CCTV can be a deterrent
- If you use key safes or combination locks, make sure you change the codes regularly when giving them out to bike users
- There are many imaginative ways to deter thieves – for example the [Skunk Lock!](#)
- Collaborative working has been found to be beneficial for all sides, as often capturing those responsible for bike share damage can uncover more serious organised crimes

Insurance and liability

Purchasing insurance could help protect your organisation against the cost of damage and theft of bikes. You can also buy insurance to cover your liability in the event of an accident, as long as safety protocols are followed. Please note it is important to take advice from an FCA authorised insurance specialist.

The below table provides an overview of the scenarios you may need insurance for and the common terms used to describe them.

Insurance terms

Types of cover	Details / scenarios	Any documents / processes to help with this
Damage and theft	Covers 'all risks' including accidental damage, theft and malicious damage	Tracking devices on bikes / security measures in place such as locks and CCTV - cover excludes theft by the hirer themselves so important to have ID and/or deposits
Public liability	Covers the legal liabilities of your organisation in respect of injury to any third party or damage in respect of third party property	To have a chance of successfully defending a claim, insurers require paperwork such as service / maintenance records of the hire fleet
Employer liability	Covers the legal liabilities of your organisation in respect of injury to any employee or damage to their property	It is a legal requirement to carry employers liability insurance (unless exempt) if you employ anyone or have any volunteers

The cost of insurance varies due to different types of schemes and different types of providers, so it is best to speak to a few to get quotes and talk through what you need.

As of 2020, these insurers are currently used by some communities (please note these are not recommendations just examples):

- [Butterworth Spengler](#)
- [Yellow Jersey](#)
- [ETA](#)
- [Keegan and Pennykidd](#)

Next steps:

You now know what you need to do to make sure your scheme and riders are safe. There is always more you can be doing but we have covered the basics to get you started. You are now ready to get going!

Contact: scotland@como.org.uk



Further help and support from CoMoUK

CoMoUK is the national charity for the public benefit of shared mobility. Founded in 1999, CoMoUK enters its third decade with a depth of expertise and research into shared transport and the built environment.

CoMoUK can provide bespoke information and support on how to set up and develop your community bike share scheme. This includes:

- Helping you to think about business cases and project plans
- Providing examples of best practice and case studies
- Sign posting you to other parties and relevant organisations
- Providing advice on potential sharing solutions for your scheme (such as booking and billing)

To find out more about how we can help you, please contact scotland@como.org.uk for details.

Please also see our website como.org.uk for further information and to sign up to our newsletter and forums.

Find out more about CoMoUK and collaborative mobility online at como.org.uk

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