

Guidance for Community Bike Share Schemes



SECTION 01

The “what” and “why” of bike share



01: The “what” and “why” of bike share

This section provides an overview of what we mean by bike share and the benefits that schemes can bring to a community



What is bike share?

Bike share is the pooling together of bikes for multiple users in a particular setting. See our [Models of Bike Share](#) document for detailed information on the different types of bike share models and approaches. These can all be applied within a community run setting, however some require a high density of people, funding and staff to operate.

Most community-run schemes involve bikes being hired and loaned out from a community building for residents and local groups. Some will be kept in other types of storage where people have the ability

to access the bikes without having to be handed one by someone else.

This guide will focus on community schemes running bike pools and loans (not schemes such as universities and councils that are only available for their employees or students).

Cycling Scotland's [Access to Bike Schemes in Scotland report](#) also provides useful information on some of the common approaches communities have taken when running bike share schemes.

The benefits of bike share

Sharing bikes can provide many benefits, which will vary from scheme to scheme, depending on what the project has set out to accomplish. Bike share schemes can support:

- Healthy lives through active travel
- Low carbon travel
- Low cost travel
- Links to existing public transport (facilitating first and last mile journeys)
- Creating a nicer place to live by replacing and reducing car journeys
- Bikes can help people access places and opportunities they may have not been able to before

- Bike share attracts a higher proportion of female riders than traditional cycling
- When e-bikes are used these can attract more older riders, those with health issues and they also encourage more use in hillier areas
- Bike share can re-engage lapsed cyclists
- Bike share can encourage users to buy their own

Check out our the main [bike share](#) pages on our website for more evidence on the benefits of bike share, case studies and impact studies.

Next steps:

Now you have a better idea of what we mean by bike share and the benefits, head to the next section - **Planning for success** - which covers some key areas to think about, for creating a successful scheme.



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- Sign posting you to other parties and relevant organisations
- Providing advice on potential sharing solutions for your scheme (such as booking and billing)

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SECTION 02

Planning for success



02: Planning for success

This section will consider some important aspects for developing a bike share scheme, putting you in good stead for setting up and running a successful one



Key ingredients

The success of a scheme will be determined largely by the extent to which its objectives have been met. The advice we provide in this document can help create a successful scheme, but underpinning many of the factors mentioned, CoMoUK believes three things are important to consider:

- **Access to bikes**

Ensuring bikes are conveniently located, in plenty supply and have a simple process that enables as many people as possible to use the bikes. This could also involve having options for booking out bikes for those without bank accounts.

- **Confidence boosting activities**

A package of support on offer to help participants confidently use the scheme and continue to cycle in their everyday lives.

- **Cycle lane infrastructure**

Considering how the bike share scheme can sit with existing safe cycling infrastructure and that the project works alongside other organisations improving active travel routes and facilities in the local area.

These factors are covered in more detail in this guide.

CoMoUK has produced a [separate guide](#) on the further factors needed for successful bike share schemes in cities, some of which can also apply to community groups.

Monitoring and evaluating

Monitoring and evaluating your scheme is vital as it can help improve your service, build ridership, and provide useful information to show funders of the need for, and impact of, your work.

The initial question to ask is what do you want to measure?

Consider why you are setting up the scheme and how these reasons can translate into benchmarks for measuring success. Typical things communities can monitor include:

- Satisfaction levels with the scheme
- Journey types e.g. leisure / commuting
- Number of journeys
- Has joining the scheme led to any behaviour changes – e.g. no longer using a car?
- Carbon savings through modal shift
- Social and health impacts such as improved health amongst scheme users
- Weekly / monthly mileage
- Seasonal differences in bike usage
- Your initial objectives (for example maybe you wanted tourists to use bikes instead of cars)
- E-bikes purchased as result of a trial
- Are there reasons the bikes aren't being used e.g. costs are too high / users are not comfortable making certain routes by bike?

How to monitor and evaluate

Once you know what you want to measure, you need to decide how best to measure it. Some suggestions:

- Pre and post-use questionnaires for riders to complete
- If you've received funding from organisations, make sure you are collecting what you have said you will in applications
- The reality is collecting the data can be time consuming and often onerous for participants - think of simple and creative ways you could get the data and make it easy for participants to respond
- Some of the more high-tech options for managing your scheme can collect data for you, but this will be more expensive - see **Section 6: Bikes and how to share them** for more information
- See [Sustrans guidance](#) for collecting mileage data for e-bikes
- Be flexible - in a [HITRANS](#) led project people started cycling for leisure, then they discovered it was useful for other journeys, so while you may want to aim for a project that facilitates modal shift, leisure journeys could lead to this

Further support for monitoring and evaluating

- CoMoUK runs an accreditation scheme which provides quality standards to help guide your scheme's development - email scotland@como.org.uk for more information
- [Bikes for All](#) partnered with [Glasgow Centre for Population Health](#) who provided the monitoring and evaluation support for their scheme (producing reports / questionnaires and collecting participant feedback) - depending on your budget or scale of scheme, you could source extra support to help with this aspect of the project
- You could participate in CoMoUK's Annual Bike Share Users Survey - email scotland@como.org.uk for more details
- [Example](#) of a follow up survey to capture changes (Arran Eco Savvy)
- [Example template](#) detailing outcomes and indicators



Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council bike share project

Timeframes

Timeframes for setting up and launching a scheme will depend on your existing set up, resources, capacity and fleet size amongst other factors.

The list below is designed to help you think through tasks that could impact on your scheduling and timeframes. Please note, we provide a longer task list as a tool to help with overall project planning further on in this section.

Time considerations for key scheme tasks

Task area	Set up considerations	Examples of ongoing aspects
Admin	Funding timelines Setting up processes such as booking platforms (if you do not already have this) Creating all the necessary bike hire forms Getting insurance in place	Funding reports Servicing records of bikes Checking payments
Hardware	Lead in times for purchasing storage / equipment (bikes, locks etc.) Getting permission for storage Testing equipment for any issues	Regular bike checks and annual maintenance checks Replacement of bikes Collecting bikes if they require transporting back to where they are stored Rescuing bike users with a puncture or other mechanical issue
People	If you are working with partners, putting all necessary agreements in place Training staff Recruiting, signing up and inducting riders / members	Recruitment of staff / riders / volunteers Ongoing training for members and staff
Engagement	Creating engagement materials Organising events Setting up social media platforms	Regular drop-ins Monthly events See below for community engagement strategy One to one contact - re-engage lapsed users - without being pushy
Monitoring and evaluating	Setting up data capture systems	Reviewing processes Collecting customer feedback

Timing of the project launch

It is recommended to launch a scheme spring time onwards due to a higher chance of better weather to attract riders.

This is not always possible, and some schemes have successes without that timeframe, especially if there is a tailored support package in place.

Supporting documents

Cycling Scotland's [project planner](#) can also help you think through timeframes.

We have produced a [task list template](#) for general points to consider when setting up a scheme.

Community engagement strategy

Communities may have their own strategies and ideas for engaging stakeholders and promoting their projects. In this section we have provided some thoughts for spreading the word about your scheme and getting good buy-in within your area.

Pre-launch activities

Early community engagement with all key stakeholder groups is a key component to the success of schemes. Making sure community groups and the local media are well informed and consulted with, will help to galvanise support. This will allow for the development of a common positive narrative, and the opportunity to continue to build awareness and excitement through regular updates. It is recommended that you nurture a strong communications network, who can share good news stories as well as keeping potential users informed of progress. A study carried out by consultant Beate Kubitz, highlighted the benefit of early engagement for the development of the [Cardiff bike share scheme](#).

You could also involve stakeholders and communities in the design and development of your scheme, ensuring a sense of ownership from the beginning.

- Surveying potential interest and demand among users
- Mapping possible cycling routes
- Focus groups

Launch

The launch of the scheme is an opportunity to maximise interest through a range of promotional activity.

This gives an opportunity to explain to people how the scheme works and provide them with a test ride. Offering a quick trial is a fun thing to do but it also provides a key opportunity to share safety tips.

You could team up with an active travel organisation such as [Sustrans](#) to help run activities and hand out freebies etc.

Ongoing activities

Once the scheme has launched, there is an opportunity to widen the audience of users from residents, commuters and businesses. One key market could be visitors to the area. These can be reached through links with accommodation providers and visitor attractions. Current users could also be offered promotional codes to give to visiting friends.

There are examples of projects which have increased take up by lower income and marginalised groups. Often these are the people who can most benefit from low cost, low emission transport but face barriers to using the systems. Projects such as [Bikes for All](#) in Glasgow and [Better Bike Share](#) in North America have deployed a range of practical and engagement measures to overcome these barriers. These include:

- Investing time to build relationships with key community groups who have strong links to target groups such as charities, faith groups and housing associations
- Hosting engaging activities to raise awareness where the focus may not be on cycling alone e.g. drop-in sessions, talks, mystery tours or a pedal and picnic

- Using images that reflect the people you are trying to attract in marketing materials
- Offering women-only trips and training
- Offering free or low cost use alongside cash payment systems for those without bank accounts or smart phones
- Adding a budget for insurance to take away fears about fines if a bike is damaged (NB: experience has shown that misuse is rare in these contexts, particularly as the users are well known through the project partners)
- Getting creative online as Social media is a common approach to promoting bike share projects e.g. run a competition to get people to name your bikes

Cycling Scotland have an [excellent guide](#) with many more ideas for engaging audiences.

Click [here](#) to see Moray Car Share's example of how they promote their e-bike project on their website.

Operational sustainability

The advice we provide in this document will help pave the way to achieving project longevity. However, how you view the sustainability of your project depends on your vision and objectives. For example, are you setting out to have a two year provision or is this a scheme you want to keep going for many years as a viable transport operation?

Perhaps you are running a volunteer led scheme where people can borrow bikes on an ad hoc basis or as a way to try a bike before purchasing one. This distinction will impact how you view sustainability.

On the next page we have provided an overview of outcomes we think that, when addressed, lead to greater longevity and overall sustainability of a project.

Suggested Outcomes to Help Achieve Sustainability

Desired Outcomes	Required Outputs	How
Happy people	Understanding the needs of your users Getting feedback on customer experience Confidence boosting activities	Surveying at the beginning of the project Regular checking in - formal and informal feedback methods Buddy rides (read Section 4: People and places)
Demand & satisfaction	Monitoring and evaluating	Understanding bike usage (when is demand high / ridership numbers etc.)
Financially sustainable	2 - 5 year business plan	Diverse revenue streams (see revenue income ideas in Section 5: Money, money, money)
Adequate resourcing e.g. people to manage it	Ambitions of scheme should match available resources Be realistic - if volunteer led, make sure tasks are not too onerous	Start small and grow your project based on demand, learning year to year Speak to existing projects about what it took to run theirs Have a steering group to oversee the project A maintenance partner is very useful
Wider connectivity	Integrate your bike share scheme into existing transport schemes such as a car club or bus service	Speak to transport providers in the local area or Regional Transport Partnerships to understand how bikes could complement existing provisions e.g. could bikes be located at a local bus terminal Example: Hooky Car Club in Oxfordshire

Contact: scotland@como.org.uk

Next Steps:

You should now have some ideas for ensuring the sustainability, success and buy-in to your project. With these covered, it is time to consider what sort of scheme might work in your area and what type of journeys your bike could be used for in the next section: **What type of scheme?**



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SECTION 03

What type of scheme?



03: What type of scheme?

In this section we help you to think through what elements to consider when trying to decide what kind of scheme may be best suited to you.



Community bike share approaches

Common approaches to running a community bike share scheme can see them categorised as bike libraries or bike loan schemes. The two types can overlap but in general the distinction is:

Bike loans:

- These offer longer term loans of bikes such as 1-6 weeks
- Alongside this model there may be trial sessions or the opportunity to borrow a bike to try it out before signing up to a longer loan
- Examples: [Applecross Community Centre](#) and [Dunblane Development Trust](#)

Bike libraries:

- These have bikes available for people to access on a shorter term basis, such as hourly or daily, for a fee (or free) and from one or more locations
- Some can be run from fixed locations such as a shipping container
- Others may be stored in vehicles that move from one place to another
- Example: [Edinburgh and Lothian's Regional Equality Council](#)

Both may also be described as bike pools; ultimately it is up to you what you want to call them.

Other:

Our [Models of Bike Share](#) sheet details other types of approaches which can be implemented by communities. However, many of these require a larger number of users to ensure viability and a greater source of funding – both for set up and operational costs. There is the potential for blended approaches as well. Please email scotland@comouk.org.uk if you have more questions regarding these.

While most community approaches in Scotland tend to be bike libraries / loans, there is one larger scaled scheme run by a community organisation which involves on-street docking stations:

Forth Environment Link run [Forth Bikes](#) in partnership with the operator [Bewegen](#). The former are a community development organisation who received a large amount of funding to set up a scheme covering a broad geographical area.

You can get in touch with them for their guidance document which includes learning from setting up a scheme like this and the associated costs.

Their objectives include providing a sustainable, low cost, regular transport option for the Forth Valley and its large population, which is why on-street docked bikes were suitable

Understanding what might be right for you

You may already know what you want your scheme to achieve and how you are going to go about it. If you are not sure though, or you have an idea and still want to do a bit more thinking, we recommend the following points to consider. They are not all necessarily relevant to you, and as many communities are different, with bike share ideas at different stages, there is no one way of doing things. The below can be seen as a pathway to fleshing out your planning process and understanding the needs of the area.

1: Understanding how objectives of your scheme can impact the approach

Even if you have a clear idea of what you want your scheme to achieve, it is important to remember that many adapt and change to fit the local needs and context of the location. Therefore, being flexible and receptive to new ideas and demand for the scheme is useful.

For example, you may have started up with 4 e-bikes based in a community centre for local residents to use. However, when word gets out about their availability, various people come to the project and ask if you have child seats so they could use the bikes while doing their nursery drop off and pick up. Therefore a strand of your work could change and look to expand who your users may be.

2: Understanding the context of your local area

Where you live may hold some clues as to whether a bike share scheme could work and if it can fulfil a particular purpose.

For example, in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, 25% of the population is over 65, which you could say would favour e-bike users. It is also low in the index of multiple deprivation, with ever reducing public transport links. This highlights a need for improved transport options which Huntly Development Trust factored in when considering how to improve the area and led to the development of a bike loan programme.

3: Survey potential users to gauge demand

While this may not be a determining factor of the long-term success of your scheme (as many users emerge through word of mouth etc.), gauging initial demand can be helpful for funding applications, as well as providing ideas for how your scheme could operate. In our community engagement strategy piece in **Section 2: Planning for success**, we talk about surveying as part of a wider effort to secure buy-in to your project. See our [template](#) for suggested survey questions.

4: Plotting routes

Get a map of the local area and see what routes are cycle friendly and the distances between amenities. Sustrans and Cycling Scotland will have supplementary information on what makes cycle routes safe. By playing with a map, it can help you work out such thing as:

- Which local journeys are practical by bicycle
- Whether there are any potential hubs that bikes could be located in due their popularity or high density location
- Popular car journeys that could be undertaken by bike instead – such as from the ferry terminal to a local village
- Whether a main employer in the area could be accessed more by shared bikes rather than car

5: How many bikes?

Staff / volunteer capacity: depending on your project capacity we recommend starting off small and then growing as you develop skills and have tried and tested systems to run the project.

Population: it is useful to have an idea of how many people you want the bike share scheme to serve, if possible. If you are setting it up with a specific group in mind, such as job seekers in your local area, you may have a better idea of how many are required.

Use your survey results to guide the initial number of bikes purchased.

6: Feasibility

If you want in-depth support in working out the type of scheme and its viability in the local area, you could get a consultant to undertake a feasibility study for you. As there is likely a cost to this, it is probably only cost-effective if you are considering a larger scale bike share scheme (e.g. 10 or more bikes).

Considerations for rural areas

In dispersed communities with less public transport, there is an opportunity to explore the role of e-bikes and community sharing schemes to support rural communities with their accessibility needs. But in general, unless you have high pockets of density in a rural area, it is probably best to have a loan or bike library model.

Disparate cycling trips and no clusters where a lot of people could benefit from a pool of bikes for short journeys, lends itself to using shared bikes to encourage ownership rather than placing them for ongoing communal use. This can be done using a loan / 'try before you buy' scheme.

If you imagine someone living in a village and the community hall has a fleet of bikes to share 3 miles away, it is unlikely a resident would walk three miles to borrow the bike for a day, return it to the community hall and then walk three miles back home. Borrowing the bike for a longer period of time is probably a better option.

Considerations for loan models

Research by the Energy Saving Trust suggests that behaviour change comes when people try a new habit for up to 4 weeks. The CoMoUK [Shared Electric Programme](#) in 2016 found that people were more likely to go on to buy a bike if they had the longer 3 month loan than a 1 month option. This gave the user more time to embed the behaviour into their lifestyle.

Long term loans or day loans?

If you are using a loan model, bear in mind that if you have, for example, 5 bikes, only 5 people will be able to have them at one time – and for as long as the loan period you have set. If someone does want to borrow a bike for a day or just one short trip, and you have the means and capacity to oversee this, it could be a good idea to keep a couple of the bikes for this type of use.

Bike loan schemes packaged with cycle training and accessories have previously been proven to be a good method for converting potential cyclists, and the addition of e-bikes into fleets appears to widen the pool and increase success.

Comments from a scheme:

“Day hires can be a strain on staff resources. It is important schemes have resources in place to ensure maintenance, cleaning, meeting people to hand over the bikes and admin. If a bike goes out for half a day through the forest in the rain, the work required for that hire is the same as if the bike is out for a week or a month (assuming no maintenance issues during the hire period).”

Considerations for on-street:

On-street docks really do require higher density or routes, popular with enough people, to justify operational costs of the scheme. Given this is an unlikely scenario for a community run scheme, we have included information where relevant but mainly signpost readers to existing examples to follow up with. See [Forth Environment Link's](#) guidance for this.

However, there are ways to run on-street schemes in smaller areas which you can find in our [Models of Bike Share](#) document:

- [Brompton Bike Hire](#) have schemes in tiny places where bike lockers are situated in different places and anyone can borrow a bike through their app. A community could run this version by paying Brompton to operate it.
- Pocahantus, Iowa is a town of 1000 people where a not-for-profit on-street bike share scheme called Koloni was run successfully and whose lessons have been shared via their [case study](#).



Next steps:

This section has hopefully provided you with some ideas for working out what type of sharing scheme you will run, and the types of journeys it could assist with. For more planning around your users, the project team and the location of your scheme, head to **People and places**.



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SECTION 04

People and places



04: People and places

This section helps you think about who could be involved in your scheme and their roles, ways to support your riders and how knowing your area can help with project development.



Know your area

Integration with other provisions

It can be useful to know how your scheme may complement or integrate with existing provisions in the area, depending on your scale or objectives. It might be worth researching whether the bike share scheme could integrate with existing transport provisions to cater for first and last mile journeys (such as from the users' home to a train station).

Community assets

Are there local suppliers you could use for different aspects of the scheme? For instance, supplying equipment, running training or providing storage space if required. This could make it easier when setting up the scheme, drawing on local skills and securing community buy-in. It is a good idea to build positive relationships with local suppliers as they can support and be part of the delivery of your scheme.

Useful partnerships

Establishing a project partnership can help with the success of a scheme. They can take different forms, such as a formal partnership between a community group and a council, with an official sponsor or local business. Some of the reasons for this include:

- Community development often faces capacity challenges so partnerships can provide more resources
- There are many components to running a scheme and you might not have all the skills and resources at your disposal
- Engagement and publicity are critical to a scheme's success, so partnerships can expand the reach of your advertising
- Any bike recycling centres, remakery type organisations are useful to partner with where skilled people are involved in these organisations and are a great ally for cost effective maintenance
- You may need permissions for certain aspects of the projects such as storage
- Partnering with other organisations can help expand ridership through promoting to specific organisations, and partners then becoming advocates for the project

What partnerships are useful depends on your objectives. We recommend you think about who you need to make your scheme happen. Creating a list of tasks so that resource and capacity requirements can be established is helpful. For example, would officially partnering with a Business Improvement District help your scheme, if you are keen for the scheme to sometimes be used by tourists? If you want to provide bikes as an option for people travelling to an island without your car, it might be useful to advertise this through Visit Scotland.

However, be aware of spreading yourself too thin. Engaging a broad range of partners may seem great on paper, but adapting to multiple partner processes and working styles can be challenging.

See Cycling Scotland's [Access to Bikes report](#) for typical partnership approaches.

Making it official

If you do pursue a partnership, you will more than likely require a memorandum of understanding and/or partnership agreement to be written up, in which you outline the expectations, roles and responsibilities of everyone involved. More information on this can be found on the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations [website](#).

A note on ownership of assets

This refers to the physical elements of your scheme, for example storage, bikes and related equipment. Because some community schemes might have multiple partners, being clear on who owns the assets is an important part of setting up your scheme. Ownership has implications for insurance, liability and what happens if the bikes get damaged, and who covers any potential costs. Always keep receipts and records relating to asset purchase and management. Be aware of funding conditions that may be attached to assets.

The team

It is important to consider who will have responsibility for different aspects of the scheme and this can help with planning and budgeting. Fleet size, budgets and your agreed outcomes and objectives can help determine who may be required. For example, if you are setting up a bike fleet of 4 within a volunteer led organisation, capacity requirements and tasks for running the scheme may be simpler than a large community hub's fleet of 16 e-bikes.

The below table provides a snapshot of the capacity allocated to different approaches of running schemes in Scotland as of December 2020. Sometimes it is difficult to establish true capacity requirements if a scheme is integrated into a larger operation and therefore tasks get absorbed into existing systems of the governing organisation.

Example of resource capacity of schemes

How	Example / type of organisation running the scheme	Scheme details	Jobs required	Staff capacity
Volunteer led	Dunblane Development Trust - small voluntary based organisation with grant funding	5 e-bikes loaned out to the community Kept in a community hall Access is via an online booking system then physical handover of bikes	Taking bookings Maintenance of bikes Road cycling training through guided rides	7x volunteer trustees
Employed project coordinator	Huntly Development Trust - Green Travel Hub Bike Shack (bike recycling centre) for maintenance	14 (22 by 2022) e-bikes and 4 individual lockers with power Facebook page, email or phone call to book - booking system is work in progress Physical handover of bikes or padlock keys to the 4 lockers	Bookings Scheduled maintenance Marketing Events Procurement Reports	2.5-3 days a week*

*A note from their Project Coordinator: 2.5-3 days a week dealing with bikes specifically, but important to note that they work flexitime, so one week could be a full day doing admin, then a hire in an evening, a Sunday morning, a Thursday afternoon, then meeting with maintenance team once a week. Then general email responding etc.

This approach is adapting to the need of users e.g. as most want to borrow bikes after 4pm, the Project Coordinator makes this possible. However some projects may need to provide set times if they have little capacity / funding to provide this flexibility.

Task list

To help think about capacity required for running your scheme, we have developed a [template task list](#) that should be considered. You can use this as a planning tool for your project.

These tasks are arguably as important in small size schemes as larger fleet schemes. How you undertake each task may differ though, for example having a more advanced integrated booking system for a large fleet with different payment structures compared to a simple Google Calendar process.

TOP TIP:

For volunteer run projects you might want to consider having a bike project steering group to ensure an extra layer of responsibility, task distribution and guidance on how to develop the scheme

Users of the scheme

Understanding the potential needs of your users can impact the way you develop your scheme, which should come from your feasibility work. You may already have an idea of who your target audience will be, or you may be setting up a scheme for anyone in the general area to use a bike.

For both scenarios, the inclusion of questions in your early engagement surveys or focus groups can help to determine who potential users may be. See our [survey template](#) for examples of survey questions.

The below table provides an overview of ideas for supporting your riders so they have the best experience possible.

Ideas for supporting your users

	How	Suggested supporting documents
Access	Multiple contact and payment options (phone, email, in person) Extra offerings for users: e.g. child seat, bike racks, adult stabilisers, trailer etc. Low income areas might require free or low cost access to the bikes See this specific guidance on adaptive bikes	Welcome pack including simple instructions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- using the bikes- hiring process- pricing structures- useful contact information
Cycling Support	Offer training through group or one-to-one led rides Offer users to be accompanied by a 'cycle buddy' to boost confidence If community members do not speak English, marketing materials may need to be in different languages e.g. ELREC and Bikes for All have created a range of materials in different languages Provide discounts / free bike rides / free membership	Route advice, for example an active travel map highlighting key routes Provide info on cycling skills e.g. through Cycling Scotland's Essential Cycling Skills booklet Signposting to other sources of support
Community involvement	During early phase workshops or surveys ask community members how they want the scheme to be developed	Surveys / focus groups / meetings Advertise workshops and hold engagement days (see community engagement strategy in section 2)

If you want to find out more about how and why to support your riders, the successful project Bikes for All has detailed their learnings in a [summary report](#).

For a project example find out more about [Dunblane Development Trust](#).



Dunblane Development Trust

Managing membership

When setting up your scheme it is useful to think through how you will manage and communicate with your members. It is important not to bombard them with too much information, but you may want regular communication to update them on the scheme, let them know of any upcoming events, remind them about practical issues e.g. doing the '[M-check](#)', and inform them of any changes such as pricing. If you have an annual membership fee, you will also need to contact them at its renewal time.

When deciding how to communicate with your users, it is important to consider the following:

- What is the best way of communicating with them? For example, will you do things through email or phone? Consistency is important but so is potentially using different channels for different types of users.
- You may have a different strategy for engaging new members as opposed to communicating with existing members.

- Data protection and storage: Decide what data (if any) you will you keep hold of – and make that clear to users. It is useful to keep email addresses of users to collect feedback and advertise upcoming events. All your data processing needs to be compliant with GDPR, with clear indication of how their data is used and stored. For more information on setting membership fees see the **Money, money, money** section.

Supporting documents:

- It can be useful to have a record of who has become a member - [click here](#) for a template of a membership application form
- User agreement form (which users sign before taking out a bike) [example](#)

Next steps:

This section has hopefully given you some ideas for developing the scheme to suit your users and your area, as well as outlining who will be involved and what they will be doing. You are now ready to head over to **Money, money, money** to find out how to fund it!



Further help and support from CoMoUK

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- 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)

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Guidance for Community Bike Share Schemes



SECTION 05

Money, money, money



05: Money, money, money

Setting up and running a scheme needs money. Here we guide you through what you need to think about, potential funding options, and considerations for revenue generation and the sustainability of the scheme.



Capital costs

Capital costs are those costs related to the assets and equipment you will use for your scheme:

- Bicycles
- Accessories
- Storage
- Software to manage the scheme (if required)

The exact costs of providing a bike pool will depend on the number and type of bikes, and how often they are maintained. The table below provides some indicative costs for equipment. Costs are likely to vary with supplier, location and bike type.

Table of example costs for bike share equipment

Item	Cost per bike (excluding VAT)
Hybrid or comfort bike	£200 - £300 per bike
Folding bike	£300 - £400 per bike
Electric bike (including the battery charger)	£1,000 - £1,200 per bike suitable for lighter use designed for a try before you buy project £2,000 - £3,000 per bike for a model suitable for regular use and on rougher terrain
Spare battery for ebike	£200 - £500
Lights	£50 per bike
Lock (D Lock preferable) If not using smart locks	£50 per bike
Smart lock options	£100 (see Smart Locks under Storage section)
Panniers. Bikes will need to have a pannier holder on the back of the bike fitted.	£50 for a pair (could be used on one or two bikes)
Quick releases fitted to saddles (allows riders to quickly adjust the saddle height themselves)	£20 per bike
High visibility jackets	£20 per item
High visibility waistcoats	£5 per item
Waterproof trousers	£25 per item
Helmets*	£25 - £40 (you could try and negotiate free ones with sellers)
Storage	See the paragraph on storage in Section 6: Bikes and how to share them for options
Software	See our thoughts on booking in Section 6: Bikes and how to share them – but this can involve a free booking platform such as Google Calendar or a more sophisticated package that could have more functions

*Some projects supply helmets and others do not. If you do, ensure you have a cleaning plan in place in between uses.

Landor LINKS have compiled an [A to Z of accessories and infrastructure](#) that you may wish to browse.

In the **Bikes and how to share them** section we provide an overview and further examples of the types of approaches to sharing bikes and associated costs.

Ongoing operational costs

Below is a list that will require resource and funding in relation to running the scheme:

- Staffing: This could be combined with someone else's role / local bike shop / bike hire
- Subscription costs for high-tech management systems e.g. App Bike / booking software you may be using
- Rebalancing (this means if you have a scheme where bikes are at different locations and publicly available, making sure they are available to meet demand)
- Maintenance - a local mechanic to do both routine regular as well as and more comprehensive annual ones
- There may be additional costs associated with e-bikes - including batteries
- Marketing and customer information: social media, press, attending events, distributing marketing materials

- Insurance (anti-theft, accidents, criminal damage) - see 'Insurance and liability' in **Section 7: Looking after your bikes and riders**
- Administrative support for the scheme: see our [task list template](#) for what this could entail
- Training staff and volunteers in bike maintenance (see [Velotech](#) for prices)
- Training staff and volunteers in cycle leader training (£120 for 4 people for a 2 hour course - see [Cycling Scotland](#) for updated prices)

N.B: The above list does not include overheads such as the costs of the building that the scheme may operate from.

Advice from Applecross Community Company's bike share project:

"Don't underestimate how taxing and time-consuming maintenance could be for your project!"

Revenue streams

If you are hoping to generate any income from the scheme to help contribute to your running and operational costs (aside from grants and funds) it is worth considering how you could do this - depending on the size and type of your scheme.

Some options are in the table below.

Potential revenue streams

Method	Details	Things to think about
Ridership income / membership fees	Charging for use of the bikes can cover on-going costs such as maintenance and insurance	Let local bike shops know your plans so they do not think you are competition (See membership costs below)
Sponsorship & advertising	You could sell advertising space to companies (e.g. on your bicycle storage if visible) or develop a more substantial partnership with a sponsor who can offer longer term funding	To get buy-in from a sponsor, demonstrate the reach they will get and the impact of the scheme Think about what they can get back for their investment (reputation etc.) Examples of scheme advertising sponsorship opportunities: Pocahontas, Iowa and Green Apple Bikes

Potential revenue streams

Method	Details	Things to think about
Crowd funding	An increasingly common way to raise finance for a scheme, in full or part, is through crowd funding. E.g. this could be used to fund staff and insurance costs	Tips for successful crowd funding campaigns
Selling on the bikes	You could buy the bikes at trade price and then at the end of the year, sell them on for same price	Be aware if funding conditions change for selling on the bikes - there is usually a time limit attached, or some funders request to be notified in writing if a sale is planned even after 'x' years have elapsed
Selling / using refurbished bikes through donations	To keep costs down you could purchase second-hand bikes from an operator who no longer needs them e.g. Pocahontas bike share project in Iowa did this through the operator Spin	Example: Shetland Bike Project

For more information on the financial sustainability of a bike share project, read page 49 of our [Shared Electric Bike Programme](#) report.

Membership costs

Whether to charge for the bikes, and by how much, depends on the objectives of your scheme and funding set up. For example, if you want to enable access to all, then loaning bikes out for free may be essential for your scheme.

The [Bikes for All](#) project was able to do this by subsidising nextbike membership through [Paths for All](#). However, you may wish to get revenue from charging a small fee or through a blend of different types of fees.

The amount you set may also depend on what you are trying to cover – for example if you want to use the fees to cover your annual insurance costs, you can work out how much is needed to do this.

Thinking about different ways to fund your project, so you are not reliant on a particular grant, can be beneficial. Some ideas for approaching membership fees if you decide to charge, are on the next page.



Suggestions for types of membership fees

Approach	Things to think about
Corporate membership fee	It may be possible to lend your fleet out to corporate organisations to trial the bikes, for a certain fee, in addition to loaning the bikes for free community members
Subscription fees	You could charge users a certain amount per month for them to have access whenever they want, providing you with a reliable income, although you may need to find a way to manage expectations about availability of bikes for the riders
Seasonal charges	If summer is likely to increase demand you could have a higher summer rate
Higher membership fees for ebike loan as opposed to pedal bikes	As e-bikes often incur more operational costs than pedal (maintenance and charging), those with a mixed fleet of bikes you could include a different pricing structure
Free membership for volunteer time	This helps minimise resource costs
Tourist charges	You could have a higher rate for tourists to subsidise loans or daily hire for locals

Example projects and their membership costs (as of November 2020)

Company	Type of scheme	Per hour	Per day	Per week	Per Month	Comments	Aim to cover costs?
Huntly Dev. Trust (standard pricing)	E-bikes stored in a building	N/A	£10	£30	Summer tariff - £84/mth Winter tariff - £60/mth		Yes
Huntly Dev. Trust (special offer)		N/A	£10	£20			Yes
Co-bikes (Exeter)	Docked, integrated	£3	£24	N/A	N/A		No
Applecross Community Company	E-bikes in community centre	N/A	N/A	Free two week trial	Then £20 for anything longer		Yes
Cambridge Co Housing	One cargo bike for families (18 families share it)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	This scheme charges £40 per year which covers insurance	Yes

Advice from community groups

“Whatever you decide, just make sure these are clearly communicated and processed.”

“Do not make them too expensive, be flexible and adjust to demand.”

“If you are charging a day rate you may want the weekly rate to look attractive, and the weekly rate so it makes the monthly rate look attractive. But conversely if you want bikes to be booked out by the hour, due to your bike scheme set up and trip purpose you may wish to have a rate which makes this attractive.”

Managing membership costs / payments

If the bikes are not free, you will need to have a process in place to manage the payments. This will depend on:

- Setting membership fees - this has been covered in an earlier section but thinking how and where these will be communicated to your audience is important
- Making payments - some schemes encourage users to pay by PayPal or bank transfer prior to the hire to avoid cash
- Deposits - will you have a deposit? If so, consider how this be collected and accounted for - Huntly Development Trust do not because they say they don't want users to be too scared to scratch or break the bikes, believing that trust is the key here, while some other groups have deposits to ensure riders take good care of the bike.

You would need to decide whether this would only apply to a longer term loans as it could be tricky to manage for shorter rides

- If money is stored in your premises overnight, does this have implications for security and what measures do you have in place, e.g. safe storage box for example
- It is useful to set up a way to review this process periodically
- While membership is optional, offering it can speed up repeat rentals - a credit card and valid photo ID (driver's license, student card, passport) should be retained or photocopied for the duration of the loan.

See Cycling Scotland's '[Bike Loan Membership Conditions](#)' in their tool kit for further useful information.

Funding options

Most community shared bike schemes are reliant on grants, fundraising and/or public sector funding, rather than being financially sustainable and self-financing. The most common source of funding for recent community projects has been grants and fundraising to cover core and capital cost.

Funding streams change, so we suggest you regularly check the following websites for general project funding (this is not an exhaustive list, just a few to get you going):

- [SCVO Funding Scotland](#)
- [Foundation Scotland](#)
- [National Lottery Awards for All](#)

Specific cycling / transport related funds:

- [Cycling Scotland](#)
- [Foundation for Integrated Transport](#)
- [Energy Savings Trust e-bike grant](#)

Other:

- Some schemes get funding from their local windfarms or energy companies operating in the area, such as Scottish Power

Next steps:

You now have a better idea of the costs associated with your project, and ideas for making some money from the scheme. We can now find out how to actually share your bikes!



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Guidance for Community Bike Share Schemes



SECTION 06

Bikes and how to share them



06: Bikes and how to share them

This section details all the things you need to think about when it comes to choosing the equipment you want and then how to share your bikes, so they are available to users.



The bikes

There are of course many options regarding bikes, and within each kind (e-bike, adaptive, cargo or pedal) there are lots of different varieties.

This section provides an overview of some of the things to think about to help you make your choice. We have also included links and contact details of sources of more in-depth technical information.

View our [bike share comparison table](#).

Which bike is for you?

Above we have provided a link to a list of suppliers and third parties who can give you advice on which bikes are suitable for your project. To help with these decisions, we have provided some points for you to consider.

Once you know the answer to these, the bike provider can then help you think through which bike type may be most appropriate:

- What kind of journeys will be made? (short / long / uphill)
- What is the local topography / terrain? (coastal / cobbles / tracks)
- Do you have battery swap capacity?
- Will you be providing training for riders?
- Are you wanting to appeal to older audiences?
- Will your fleet be used to transporting goods?
- Do you want to make the scheme accessible to people with certain disabilities?
- What maintenance support will you have?
- For users that will require a specific bike, what needs do they have?
- How frequently will the bikes be used?
- Are the bikes being used as 'try before you buy'?
- What is your budget?

TOP TIPS:

- Whichever you go for, it is very useful to build a relationship with your local bike shop, as they can help you with maintenance, training and provide ongoing support
- Advice from a community group: "My main advice would be to make sure you get bikes that suit your target usage. E.g. if bikes are going to be in cold conditions some times, e.g. cold conditions such as under zero temperatures, then you need bikes that can tolerate this. Bike loans can get around this problem if someone has loaned one for the winter and using them more."
- Think about light versus heavy duty use and how this could affect bike choice
- The [Active Travel Suppliers Directory 2020](#) covers a thorough list of active travel services and products that could be useful for groups
- Check out the [Halfords guide](#) for information on charging e-bike batteries



The storage

The type of storage you will need for your scheme will depend on the approach you are taking to running it and how you would like people to access the bikes.

[Cycling Scotland](#) and [Spokes](#) have produced thorough guidance on cycle parking.

This section applies storage to a sharing scenario, helping you think through how different approaches can impact how you share your bikes. We have not provided an exhaustive list of the different options, but examples of ones you could consider.

For example, if you are a community group operating from a community centre where people come and pick up the bikes at set hours, you could simply store them in the building.

But if you want to provide access for any time of the day, without someone having to do the actual handover of the bike, a more contained and secure storage solution might be required.

Types of storage

Type	Access options	How to enable self service (at certain hours or if the bikes are to be available 7 days a week 24 hours)	Approximate costs for one unit
Cycle lockers	Users would access the bikes by unlocking: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smart locks depending on some types of bike lockers• Padlocks• Keypad lock• Combination lock	Users would need to know codes or have the key depending on lock choice	£2,000-3,000
Shipping container	Padlocks	As above but could be cumbersome for users to open	£8,000 – prices vary depending on size and whether new or second hand
Sheds / garages	As above	As above	Wide price range – see Cycling Scotland guidance
Bike lockers E.g. Brompton for folding bikes and Bikeaway	Specific requirements depending on models	Brompton Bike Hire would provide a whole service for you - not just the lockers Contact scotland@como.org.uk for more information on these types of solutions	£600 For standalone lockers such as Bikeaway
Informal (e.g. in a community centre / in a building)	Someone would need to oversee entry into the building	For self-service, a user would need the key to the building	

Types of storage

Type	Access options	How to enable self service (at certain hours or if the bikes are to be available 7 days a week 24 hours)	Approximate costs for one unit
Smart locks (sometimes no storage required)*	Smart lock on each bike and users would unlock it via a smart phone	Users would need the smart lock app We have included smart locks in storage as it may be you use those within a certain location (although storage to protect the bikes is advised)	£100 - depending on make
Hosted elsewhere e.g. a local bike shop	Would depend on the local bike shop	Would depend on the local bike shop	You could agree an annual fee with the shop
Docks	You would get an operator to put docks in a specific area	This is the integrated option and you would bring in an operator to partner on running the scheme - unlikely for a small scheme but potentially useful for 50 bikes or more	Contact scotland@como.org.uk for associated costs and more info on these options

*A smart lock is one which requires a smart phone to unlock it, via a downloadable app. There are many different brands and costs.

The potential limitation is that only users with smart phones could access this type of lock.

The benefits include extra security as you have to have a unique code to unlock them (through the app) and that they can be stored more flexibly.

To further help decide what type of storage suits your scheme, the below table includes some considerations.

Bike storage considerations

Type	Things to consider
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multiple locations may require redistribution, unless it is just 2 sites which naturally balance - 24 hour access - 9-5 weekdays - Just weekends - Specific times - If you are providing long term loans, you may wish to check that the person borrowing it has suitable storage themselves
Where to place storage	<p>Consider the immediate environment – such as how well it is overlooked, whether it has reasonable footfall, good lighting or CCTV (and ensuring there is access to the footage)</p> <p>Make sure the location is convenient for the user and for those needing to check battery levels on e-bikes</p>

Bike storage considerations

Type	Things to consider
Size	<p>A small fleet may require small sized storage</p> <p>Storage varies in capacity, security rating, quality and ease of use, e.g. a locker where you have to take out an e-bike to get to the one behind it is less user-friendly; having plenty of space for accessories, cleaning kit and so on, is a real help</p> <p>Cargo bikes and adaptive bikes may require more space</p>
Promotion	<p>Storage could help promote the scheme by being placed in an obvious location and using the surface to add marketing posters. but if this is the case, you may wish to ensure they are extra secure</p>
Budget	<p>Cycling Scotland can provide funding for storage - it is a question of working out what you need and therefore what the expense will be</p>
Security	<p>CCTV could be necessary</p> <p>Advice from Police Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Consider fitting ground anchors to secure all bikes and valuable items- Use a hardened steel chain (endorsed as 'Sold Secure' or 'Secured by Design') and closed shackle padlock- All bikes and valuables should be security marked- All padlocks should be endorsed as 'Sold Secure' or 'Secured by Design' standard
Storing e-bikes	<p>Consider where users or the bike share project will charge the e-bike batteries - options for this include providing power in the locker</p> <p>On some models of e-bike the battery doesn't have to be removed from the ebike for charging, which may suit your situation, otherwise, the battery has to be unlocked, removed and charged in a suitable place</p> <p>Moray Carshare was informed due to the northerly location of the project, that the batteries shouldn't be stored in cold temperatures - as a result, thermal blankets were recommended</p>

TOP TIPS:

- Check lead times for orders and take them into account when planning delivery
- Delivery charges might add substantially to costs, and some suppliers may not deliver to certain locations

Booking the bikes

If you want to share your bikes, then there needs to be a mechanism for users booking them out. This ranges from very simple methods to more high-tech options, depending on your budget / users / capacity. For each approach, make sure you think about how easy it will be for someone to book the bike out, and where you will promote the option.

Simple method:

- Users book via email / phone / in person or Google Calendar for example

Software packages / sharing solutions:

You could pay for an online package that can handle the bookings for you. There are many available on the market, below are a few examples:

- **SuperSaas**
- **Bike Rental Manager**

Some software solutions may include other functions such as handling payments and processing billing, or enabling you to record maintenance checks etc. For example, Bike Rental Manager covers inventory, reservations, payments, maintenance, waivers, deliveries, tracking and reporting.

High-tech options (booking / billing / unlocking and locking of bikes):

There are more high-tech approaches to running your scheme where the provider will take care of both booking, billing and other functions via their operations (at a higher set up and running cost).

Again there are a number systems available on the market, but here are two examples:

- **App Bike**
App Bike combines smart phone and smart lock technology to provide a bike sharing and rental solution. Please note App Bike will only operate a scheme with a minimum of 6 bikes.
- **Zemtu**
Zemtu software support the **I LOCK IT** bicycle locks. With the smart phone app you can unlock and lock the bike locks via Bluetooth just as you unlock and lock cars. These locks have GPS functionality and will also provide the geographic location in case of a theft. They can be easily mounted on any bicycle and are very robust.

Please email scotland@como.org.uk for more examples.

TOP TIPS:

- It is useful to think what you need before you choose an option – as well as considering whether it will make your life easier and what the costs are
- Users may not always book the bikes out correctly - this may be a simple case of sending a reminder to one individual or a blanket reminder to all users, while having a physical reminder, such as a poster where the bikes are stored asking 'Have you booked this bike?', can be helpful
- Some solutions may only be applicable to e-bikes
- Most of the above options include cargo and adaptive bikes, but for more options of specific solutions for those – get in touch via scotland@como.org.uk

Sharing the bikes

It is useful to think about how the different physical components of your scheme work together, when sharing your bikes (storage, access and booking etc). There are some organisations you can pay to take care of everything, and others that do a bit and you can take care of the rest. Alternatively, you can do it all yourself (which is what most community schemes do). Email scotland@como.org.uk for more information on the different options.

For sharing cargo bikes you can find out more from one of our pilot projects: [Outspoken Delivery, Cambridge & Norwich](#) (now known as [Zedify](#)).

For information on sharing adaptive bikes check out: [Adaptive Bike Share: Expanding Bike Share to People with Disabilities and Older Adults](#).

Below is a table detailing how some of these components work together in current schemes.

Approaches to sharing bikes

Scheme	Type of sharing scheme	Storage	How bikes are booked	How they access/unlock the bikes	Challenges / things to consider	How do participants sign their user agreements / any relevant documentation prior to borrowing a bike
St Andrews University Go E-bike While this scheme is more relevant to the Sustrans Workplace Bike Pool Guide , it provides an example of how a community can run a scheme using an app / hi-tech solution	Bikes owned by the university Software package provides the sharing solution (this doesn't cover maintenance and redistribution)	Bike shelter (Broxap Cycle Drum)	Users have to download the app: App Bike	Staff attend a 1 hour induction, they are then given access to the App Bike system and code for the bike lockers Smart locks on the bike are unlocked using App Bike app	Users need a smart phone to access No one needs to be there when bikes are used / booked out Weekly or biweekly battery swaps and bike checks	Staff only, via the app sign up
Forth Bike	Integrated - which means an operator helps run the scheme and takes care of the booking, billing, docking stations and access to bikes	On-street	People can register either in advance via the website or through the app	A fob is sent to the member once they have joined (free of charge, upon request) Or they can download the app when at the bikes and access via that	This option requires more funding and operational capacity - see their website for updates on their current guidance	Website or app

Scheme	Type of sharing scheme	Storage	How bikes are booked	How they access/unlock the bikes	Challenges / things to consider	How do participants sign their user agreements / any relevant documentation prior to borrowing a bike
Huntly Development Trust	Physical handover of the bikes, no tech required	Hub building	No online system - bookings are made via Facebook, email, face to face or by phone	They are handed over the bike by the project coordinator	Staff member needs to give the bike to a participant which may be outside of normal working hours	Paper documents either emailed out and returned, or picked up in person at the hub
Cambridge Cohousing 1 x e-cargo bike	Cambridge Cohousing has an electric cargo trike with an extra battery	Former bin store	Via Slack and Google Calendar	A combination padlock and within the storage a ground anchor with a similar padlock	Not many challenges as informally arranged among one group of residents	In person

Contact: scotland@como.org.uk

Next steps:

This section has hopefully given you some ideas for what type of bikes and storage may suit your scheme, as well as how to then go about sharing them. Now you are in good stead to read our next section on how to take care of all these assets and the people using them!



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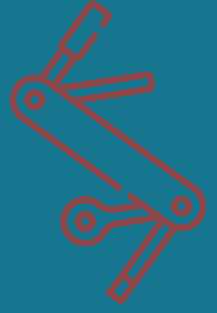
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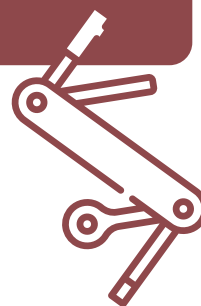
SECTION 07

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!



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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