



POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SETTING UP A WORKPLACE BIKE POOL

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INTRODUCTION

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER ONE

CYCLING IS THE
FASTEST,
CHEAPEST, MOST
HEALTHY AND
ENVIRONMENTALLY
FRIENDLY WAY
TO GET AROUND
LONDON.

BICYCLES ARE
AN
IDEAL
FORM OF
TRANSPORT FOR
JOURNEYS
UNDER 3 MILES

Increasingly, organisations are looking to improve transport options for their employees. Changes in how employees travel to and from work and make journeys during the working day can save time and money for them and their employer, and provide social and environmental benefits.

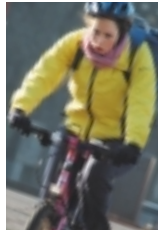
One form of transport in London that is rapidly becoming more popular is cycling. The Mayor, Ken Livingstone, has said, “Cycling is the fastest, cheapest, most healthy and environmentally friendly way to get around London. Bicycles are an ideal form of transport for journeys under 3 miles... The number of cyclists on our roads [in London] has doubled since 2000 and we’ve already exceeded our cycling targets five years ahead of schedule”.ⁱ

There are a number of ways that employers can encourage their employees to cycle, including installing high quality facilities, offering interest free loans to buy bikes and providing a bike pool for employees to use for work related journeys.

This guide shows how to set up a bike pool, based on Bikes for Business, a major pilot scheme undertaken in the London Borough of Southwark, which enabled 24 organisations to try out free bike pools for six months.

i. TfL press release (October 2005)





WHAT IS A BIKE POOL?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER TWO

A workplace bike pool provides bikes, which are well-maintained and safe to ride, and safety equipment for employees to use. Pool bikes can be offered to employees for any kind of journey, but are typically used for work related trips, such as local meetings, travel between sites and visiting clients.

Generally pool bikes are kept in a central location and can be booked out by any staff member who is competent to cycle safely on public roads.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

Many different kinds of organisation can benefit from introducing a bike pool for employees, including private businesses, public sector bodies, primary care trusts and universities. This guide is designed to help any organisation interested in setting up a workplace bike pool. It is written for London-based organisations, and contains references to information and resources available in London. However, much of the content of this guide applies to organisations based elsewhere.



"Fantastic initiative, very pleased to be part of it."

Tate Modern

"Very well organised and well supported scheme."

Bede House Association

"The scheme encouraged staff to take the first step of trying cycling."

St Jude's Primary School

"As an existing cyclist I did not need to access the pool bike very often, but in the six months we had the bike it has encouraged more members of staff to give cycling a go."

Victim Support Southwark

"I loved it – it got me cycling, and I'm a convert now!"

Recollective



WHAT WAS THE BIKES FOR BUSINESS SCHEME?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER THREE

The pilot Bikes for Business scheme offered pool bikes to organisations in the London Borough of Southwark on a six-month trial period, to find out if this would result in a long-term change in the travel choices made by the organisations and their employees.

24 organisations in Southwark, with between 5 and 900 employees, signed up to receive free pool bikes, equipment and training. 60 bikes were allocated between the organisations, which included Cable & Wireless, Southwark PCT, the Association of London Government and Allies & Morrison Architects (for a full list of the businesses involved, please see the *Acknowledgments*).

The scheme allowed organisations to trial a bike pool of between one and five bikes. Organisations were given time and support to overcome any issues with providing and promoting the bikes, without the usual associated costs. At the end of the six months the bikes could be kept on a hire basis, bought by the organisation or bought by employees.

Of the 24 organisations involved, over half paid to keep some of their pool bikes at the end of the free trial, whilst individual employees of another four organisations bought the bikes themselves. Those companies returning their bikes found that employees did not make enough work-related trips to justify them, that public transport provision was so good that bikes were not needed or that employees who were interested in cycling already had their own bikes or had now decided to buy one. All participating organisations praised the scheme, regardless of their ability to retain the bikes.

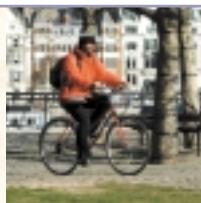
Organisations reported that the pool bikes allowed staff to get to meetings more quickly and use their time more efficiently, saving money and boosting morale.

Most organisations cited cases of employees who were initially nervous or who had never got around to cycling, who started cycling regularly as a result of the scheme. Providing bikes in this way allows individuals to have a go, without the commitment of actually buying a bike immediately.

At the start of the scheme, 8% of those surveyed cycled for work related journeys at least once a week. By the end of the scheme, this had risen to 21%. Amongst those with a commute of five miles or less to work, 9% cycled every day and 16% at least once a week. Both figures had risen to 22% in the final survey, with people either using their own bike or borrowing a pool bike for the journey. Over the same period, the number of people surveyed who drove to work decreased from 11% to 6%.

When employees were asked if they would cycle in the future, 36% of respondents said they would use a pool bike weekly, and a further 15% said they would use one occasionally.


Bikes for Business was developed by SEA/Renue, on behalf of Southwark Council, and is the first of a number of travel planning tools developed for organisations in the area as part of the Optimum² project (see *Acknowledgments* for further information). The scheme was supported by Transport for London's good going travel awareness campaign.



“One of the joys of cycling is that you can take the routes that let you appreciate what London’s cityscape has to offer. A look out across a river, park or heath can bring a moment’s peace and help to recharge your batteries during a hectic working day.”

Derek Gadd
Association of London
Government





Possible Objectives

Saving time and money on work journeys

Encouraging more employees to try cycle commuting

Presenting a positive public image

Improving staff travel options and morale

Improving fitness levels of staff

Relieving car parking problems



WHEN IS A BIKE POOL A GOOD IDEA?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER FOUR

The Bikes for Business scheme showed that pool bikes could be used in many different types of organisation, in combination with other sustainable transport initiatives or as a stand-alone measure.

In order to judge if a bike pool will be effective, an organisation should decide what they would like to achieve from it. The objectives might include saving time and money on work journeys, encouraging more employees to try cycle commuting, presenting a positive public image, improving staff travel options and morale, improving fitness levels of staff and relieving car parking problems. To determine how useful a bike pool would be in achieving those objectives, an assessment should be made of the number of work related journeys that are made and by whom, and how many of those journeys could be made by bike.

Specific things to consider when deciding if your organisation should provide a bike pool include:

- **How many journeys employees make**, e.g. employees attend regular meetings
- **How far employees travel on work related journeys**, e.g. regular journeys are made to destinations within 5 miles of the office
- **What employees need to take with them**, e.g. journeys are made that do not require transport of bulky or heavy goods
- **How the journeys are currently made**, e.g. a high proportion of journeys are made by car, taxi or public transport, which could reasonably be made by bike



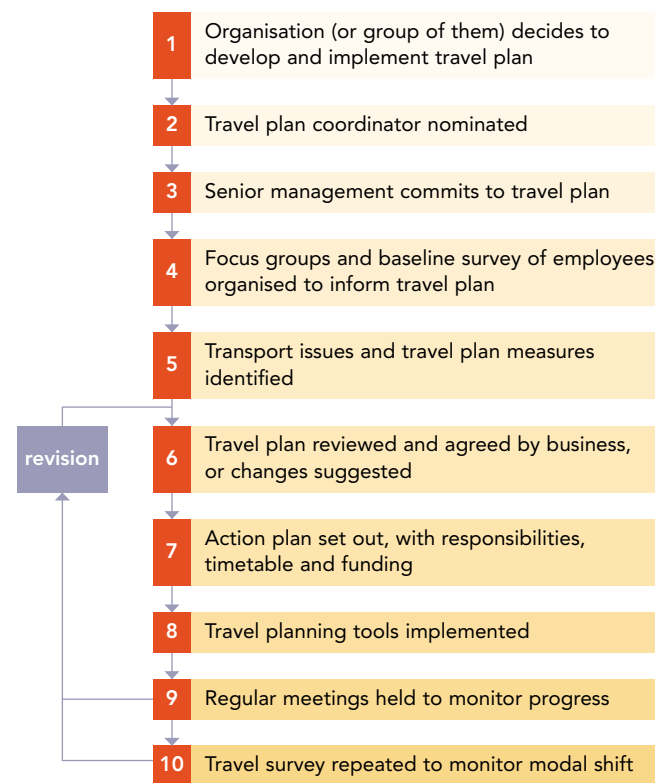
- **Where the organisation is located**, e.g. there is limited accessibility by public transport and/or private car
- **Whether the cycling infrastructure is suitable**, e.g. there are good bike routes to and from the workplace, and space for bike storage on site
- **Whether employees are able and willing to cycle**, e.g. employees already know how to cycle, or would be interested in learning
- **If employees were willing to cycle, would they use the pool bikes**, e.g. they would use the pool bike regularly, or they already bring their own bikes to work





HOW DOES A BIKE POOL RELATE TO A TRAVEL PLAN?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER FIVE



Ideally a bike pool is set up as part of the travel planning process, and complements other aspects of the travel plan. However, bikes may still be introduced with good results if an organisation lacks the resources to develop and implement a full travel plan.

A workplace travel plan can be undertaken by an individual organisation or a local travel plan group, comprising a number of organisations – an initiative which is also being promoted through the Optimum² project.

Developing a travel plan usually involves the stages illustrated (left).

There are several things that can be done during the travel planning process to help establish a bike pool:

- The travel plan survey could be used to identify the number of employees who would be willing to try cycling
- If targets are set to reduce single occupancy car journeys, or trips by taxi or public transport, the bike pool could be promoted as an alternative, helping to meet travel plan targets
- Monitoring of modal shift through the before and after survey could be used to monitor use of the pool bikes, while information on the pool bike booking forms could also be a useful input to travel plan monitoring



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A BIKE POOL?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER SIX

FOR PEOPLE
SURVEYED FOR
THE BIKES FOR
BUSINESS SCHEME

38%

AVOIDED
PARKING
PROBLEMS AND

24%

SAID TAKING A
POOL BIKE
MEANT THEY
AVOIDED THE
INCONVENIENCE
OF DRIVING

By implementing a bike pool, organisations can benefit from:

- Reduced travel expenses
- Time savings and convenience
- Health and fitness improvements
- Improved accessibility
- Environmental benefits
- Enhanced reputation

Further details on each of these benefits is provided below, including examples of the benefits experienced by the organisations that took part in Bikes for Business.

REDUCED TRAVEL EXPENSES

A number of direct financial benefits are associated with the use of pool bikes, including direct savings on taxi and public transport fares, mileage and congestion charge costs for personal cars and costs associated with running company cars.

There are also indirect savings to be made, for instance where the use of pool bikes makes car-parking spaces redundant. Removing one car parking space could save up to £2,000 per year in high-density urban areas such as Central Londonⁱⁱⁱ. Other benefits of pool bikes include quicker journeys enabling employees to work more efficiently, and improved health and fitness, which could reduce the number of days lost through sick leave, and reduce the amount of cover required from agency or temporary staff.ⁱⁱ

Savings will vary from one organisation to another, depending on how many journeys are made, the level of use of the bikes and what

modes of transport employees had used previously. For instance, if someone is cycling instead of walking they may not save money but could be saving a great deal of time.

Employers involved in the Bikes for Business scheme estimated the average savings to the organisation as around £25 per month per bike, with some saving as much as £80 per month per bike on taxi and public transport fares. Even without any other benefits, a saving of £25 per month, or £300 per year will more than re-coup the cost of buying a bike and equipment. Individuals using the pool bikes for commuting also recorded personal savings of approximately £50 per month thanks to reduced transport costs.

TIME SAVINGS AND CONVENIENCE

One of the greatest assets of cycling is the speed and convenience with which short journeys can be made. Even when cycling at a moderate pace a journey of three miles can be made in an average of just 20 minutes.

46% of all trips made by London residents are under a mile and nearly 85% are less than five miles. 55% of all car trips are less than two miles long.ⁱⁱⁱ

Pool bikes allow employees to go from door to door with the maximum efficiency, without having to find parking for a car, sit in a traffic jam, or walk to and wait for public transport. For many employees and employers, time is an expensive commodity and the value of saving time should not be underestimated.

ii. TfL press release (November 2005)

iii. *Creating a Chain Reaction*, The London Cycling Action Plan, TfL (February 2004)



“Riding a bike has increased my productivity at work because it saves time and allows me to move round very quickly without any form of delay.”

Aylesbury New Deal for Communities

For pool bike users surveyed as part of the Bikes for Business scheme, the greatest perceived benefit of using the pool bikes was saving time, with 79% saying this was one of the benefits. In addition, 38% avoided parking problems and 24% said taking a pool bike meant they avoided the inconvenience of driving.

HEALTH AND FITNESS IMPROVEMENTS

It has been clearly demonstrated that regular exercise is important for health and fitness – the Government’s Chief Medical Officer has recommended that adults take 30 minutes moderate exercise, five times per week. Cycling is an excellent means of taking this exercise and will not only keep employees healthy but also save time otherwise spent on fitness routines.

In addition, workplace physical activity programmes in the USA have been shown to reduce short-term sick leave by between 6% and 32%.^{iv}

69% of the pool bike users surveyed for Bikes for Business said that improved fitness was a benefit, whilst 52% appreciated the opportunity to get out in the fresh air during the day.

IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY

While public transport is constantly improving there are still some short journeys where no convenient, quick public transport link is available. Pool bikes can efficiently fill this gap where employees would usually bring their own car to work or take a taxi.

A number of organisations within the Bikes for Business scheme, including a housing association, a voluntary organisation and a primary school, highlighted the improved workplace accessibility the bikes offered employees. This is especially relevant to organisations based some distance from major public transport interchanges, or providing services to clients who are not located conveniently for public transport.

Of those that completed surveys for the Bikes for Business scheme, 24% said that one of the benefits was being able to use a bike when there was no public transport to where they needed to go.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

The environmental benefits of reducing the use of motor vehicles should not be underestimated. By cycling, employees will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contribute to improvements in air quality, reduce congestion and improve their local environment by reducing the amount of space needed for car parking spaces.

In 2003, road transport was responsible for 25% of UK emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), 43% of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and 28% of particulate matter (PM), based on recent figures from the Department for Transport (DfT) and Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).^v

Average CO₂ emissions from different modes of transport are compared in the following table, in terms of kilograms of CO₂ produced per passenger per kilometre travelled (kgCO₂/pkm).

Mode of transport	CO ₂ emissions (kgCO ₂ /pkm) ^v
Car (fleet weighted average)	109
Motorcycle	94
Moped	75
Bus	76
Passenger rail (UK average for electric and diesel)	49

Avoiding just a few of the journeys made by employees using these modes of transport will assist an organisation in reducing their fuel use and emissions.

ENHANCED REPUTATION

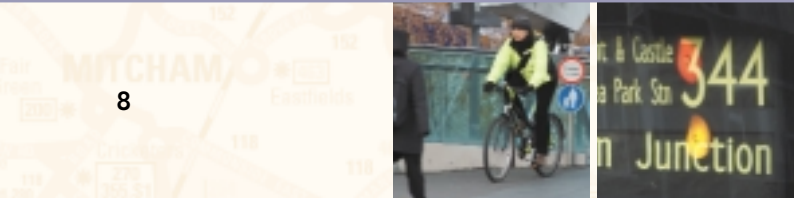
Corporate social responsibility and environmental policy are increasingly recognised as making good business sense. Running a bike pool demonstrates commitment to positive social and environmental management. This can help relationships with employees, customers, investors, and other stakeholders such as a local authority.

iv. WHO (2003) www.who.int
v. Energy Saving Trust, Frequently Asked Questions www.est.org.uk



“Bikes for Business was an excellent project for us to participate in, as we were able to help so many different businesses to increase their levels of cycling and appreciate the benefits it has to offer.”

Helen Pearce
SEA/Renue





WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO THE SUCCESS OF A BIKE POOL?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER SEVEN

A BIKE POOL
NEEDS
INTEREST
FROM EMPLOYEES
AND THE
SUPPORT
OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TO
SUCCEED

A bike pool needs interest from employees and the support of senior management to succeed. Personal resistance or institutional barriers must be dealt with to make the bike pool a lasting success.

Personal concerns that may arise include:

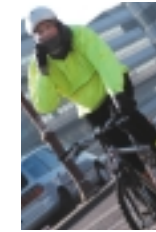
- Fears over safety
- Lack of interest in cycling
- Insufficient ability or confidence to ride a bike
- Long established travel habits, and the feeling that it is too late to make a change
- Poor health and fitness, or hilly terrain, making cycling difficult or strenuous
- Worries about appearing sweaty and untidy when arriving at the office or a meeting, even though cycling can be as low intensity a form of exercise as walking
- Concerns that work clothes are unsuitable for cycling and will get damaged
- Inconvenience of carrying accessories, such as helmets and lights and other equipment needed for work



Institutional barriers that may need to be overcome might include:

- Lack of funds for the scheme, or unwillingness to allocate a budget
- Insufficient space on or near the site for bike storage and other facilities
- Concerns over insurance cover and potential liabilities

Every opportunity should be taken to understand and address the resistance and institutional barriers to pool bikes in an organisation. With careful planning they can be overcome. The following chapter explains how this can be achieved.



HOW SHOULD A BIKE POOL BE SET UP?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER EIGHT



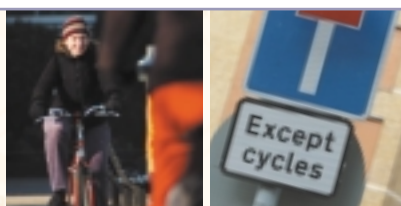
This chapter provides a step-by-step guide to setting up a bike pool, with practical advice on what needs to be considered. If your organisation is large, for instance a local authority, you may find it is worth setting up a pilot scheme for one department or site first, before setting up a full bike pool for all employees to use. Whether you are setting up a pilot scheme or a full bike pool, the approach illustrated (left) is recommended.

As you work through the process, you may find you want to revisit some of the steps, or your organisational structure requires you to approach them in a different order.

SURVEY EMPLOYEES TO ESTABLISH POTENTIAL USE AND SCOPE OF BIKE POOL

Once senior management has agreed there may be a case for setting up a bike pool, the first step should be to survey employees to assess its potential use and scope. A decision can then be made as to how many bikes will be appropriate, and what the running costs will be. An employee survey should ask the following questions:

1. How often do you make work-related trips?
2. What forms of transport do you currently use?
3. What proportion of these trips could reasonably be made by bike?
4. How much money do you spend on current trips? And how much of this do you claim back as travel expenses?



- 5. Do you think a bike pool is a good idea?
- 6. Would you be willing to use a pool bike? Why?
- 7. Would you use a pool bike for any other reasons e.g. commuting to and from work or for lunchtime rides?
- 8. Would you like training on how to use pool bikes?
- 9. Would you prefer particular bikes, e.g. ladies or folding bikes? Why?
- 10. Is there anything else that would encourage you to use a pool bike, for instance, assistance with route planning?

If a travel plan is already being prepared then these questions can be incorporated into the travel plan survey. Otherwise, a version of the questions listed above could be emailed to staff, posted on the intranet, or asked during regular team or one-to-one meetings. At this stage it may also be helpful to check the site for existing facilities such as cycle parking, and consider what additional facilities will be needed.

Transport for London (TfL) has a standard travel plan survey which it encourages

organisations to use – contact TfL for further information, including travel plan incentives (see *Relevant Organisations* for contact details). For the purpose of setting up a bike pool, the questions listed above can be added to the TfL survey.

REVIEW COSTS AND DEVELOP THE BUSINESS CASE

While the exact costs of providing a bike pool depend on the number and type of bikes, and how often they are maintained, it is possible to determine an approximate initial figure. Once costs have been predicted it will be easier for senior management to decide on the viability of the scheme, and it will also provide a basis for researching external sources of funding. These could include incentives from TfL or the local authority. While these organisations are not likely to fund every aspect of a bike pool, they may be able to assist with provision of bikes, cycle parking or another aspect.

The items listed below should be considered when estimating the costs of setting up a bike pool. The figures provided here are based on the

Item	Cost per bike (ex. VAT)
Buying bike outright - one off cost	Full size £300+ Folding £450+
Hiring bike - per annum – including call out for repairs	Full size £200+ Folding £300+
Price shown is for mid-range bikes and may include essential equipment	
Essential equipment if not included with bike – lights, lock	£70
Other equipment – helmet, high-visibility vest, waterproofs	£80+
Basic service (services should be at least every 3 months, but will depend on level of use)	£35 for first bike, plus £20 for each additional bike
Theft insurance (per annum) if not included in own premium or added as excess	From £40
Public liability insurance, if not covered by existing policy	Variable
Launch event, incentives or extra publicity	£150+
Cycle training (per two hour individual session)	£55
Optional theft contingency	Replacement cost of bike
Parts contingency	£50
Cycle parking (per Sheffield stand)	£150
Health and safety training	Free video from TfL



costs of the Bikes for Business scheme and quotes from several suppliers. Figures assume a standard full size city bike with basic accessories such as mudguards, or a mid-price folding bike – both should be sufficient for a bike pool. Costs are likely to vary with supplier, location and bike type, so these are only indicative. Also, not all of the items listed will be required in all situations.

A business case should be developed, setting out anticipated costs against the potential benefits for the organisation, and including some salient points from the survey.

SECURE SENIOR MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

Delivering a well-developed business case will help to achieve the support of senior management. It may be helpful to talk to managers individually, present the bike pool proposal at meetings, show how pool bikes fit in with the organisation’s policies and/or find a cycling “champion” amongst the management team to help put the argument across. For the Bikes for Business scheme, the approach to securing commitment from senior management varied between organisations.

DECIDE HOW MANY BIKES ARE NEEDED AND ASSESS ACTUAL COSTS

Generally the number of bikes should reflect the number of employees, the proportion that think they would use the bikes, and the number of work related trips they make. For example, some smaller organisations may have more staff making journeys during the working day than larger organisations, and might find a larger pool of bikes is required.

In some cases it may be more economical to provide individual staff members with their own bikes for work purposes if they are making a large number of trips. The length and duration of trips being made may also influence this decision.

The following table provides an indication of what might be appropriate as a starting point for a new bike pool. Once the bike pool is established it may be necessary to order more bikes or return those that are not being used regularly.

Number of employees	Number of bikes
<100	1
100 – 300	2
300 – 500	3
500 – 700	4
700 – 1000	5

Alternatively, the number of bikes could be calculated from the number of journeys being made by all employees, for instance one bike could be provided for every 15 trips made per week. Levels of use varied between organisations in the Bikes for Business scheme with almost all the organisations reporting core users who would take a bike out regularly, with other individuals borrowing bikes occasionally. It seems that use was highest in the summer, with between ten to fifteen trips made per month per bike, and dropped considerably in the winter. Most organisations chose to keep fewer bikes than initially allocated as a result.

FULFIL HEALTH & SAFETY REQUIREMENTS, PROVIDE TRAINING AND ORGANISE INSURANCE

Cycling need not be any more risky than other activities carried out during the working day. In fact, the British Medical Association has stated that the benefits of cycling outweigh the risks. However, employers still have a responsibility to provide public liability insurance and safe equipment, and make sure their employees know how to use it.

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HAS STATED THAT THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF CYCLING OUTWEIGH THE SAFETY RISKS BY 20:1



- Legal requirements include:
- Bikes must be safe to ride
 - Riders must be competent to ride the bikes
 - Appropriate safety equipment must be provided and maintained
 - The employer, riders and bikes should have the correct insurance cover

The relevant regulations include the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (1998), and Employers’ Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

- The legal requirements include the following:
- Bikes must be safe to ride
 - Riders must be competent to ride the bikes
 - Appropriate safety equipment must be provided and maintained
 - The employer, riders and bikes should have the correct insurance cover

Legal requirements do change from time to time, so it is important to check with the organisation’s legal department or the Health and Safety Executive to ensure that this information is up to date and that the proposed bike pool arrangements are appropriate. The organisation’s insurance provider or the supplier of the bikes may also be able to give advice on these issues.

Keeping the bikes safe to ride
Bikes need to be maintained regularly to ensure they are safe to ride. A maintenance schedule should be set up, in consultation with the supplier of the bikes and the maintenance service, to reflect the anticipated level of use of the bikes. It may be worth having the bikes serviced more regularly in the summer months when use is likely to be higher, and revising the maintenance schedule after a set period once a pattern of use has been established. Some suggestions are provided in the following table.

Level of use (miles cycled per month)	Frequency of maintenance
<50	Every 3 months*
50 - 150	Every 2 months
150+	Monthly

* Even with little use tyres will go down and moving parts may need lubrication

It is also important to ensure that all users of the bikes check that the brakes work, tyres are not flat and there are no other obvious problems with the bikes before use. If the bike does have any mechanical problems it should not be ridden and all problems should be reported to a designated contact person within the organisation so they can be recorded and dealt with quickly. Bikes should not be ridden until they have been promptly, and it is important that they are fixed quickly as people will quickly dismiss the bike pool as an option if the bikes are regularly out of order.

Ideally there should be someone in the organisation able to check the bikes between services to see that they are roadworthy, or report any problems. The Bikes for Business scheme offered free training to representatives from the organisations involved on how to check bikes for faults and undertake basic maintenance or repairs. The London School of Cycling has created a CD ROM for Transport for London and Central London Partnership called “Ready to Ride”. This demonstrates how to identify problems with the bikes between services and ensure they are safe to ride at all times. See the *Relevant Organisations* chapter for contact details.

Safe and competent riders
People who use the pool bikes must be capable of riding safely. See *Bike User Forms* on page 19 for details. It is recommended that organisations provide adult cycle training free of charge and at a convenient time to anyone who cannot ride already, is out of practice, or lacking in confidence. Free cycle training was offered to employees of organisations taking part in Bikes for Business, although most of the pool bike users felt confident enough to ride the bikes without taking up this offer. Cycle training providers are listed in the *Relevant Organisations* chapter.

Safety equipment
All bikes should have the correct reflectors and front (white) and rear (red) lights. It is a legal requirement that lights are used when cycling at night. For more information on the legal





insurance

Pool bike policies are available with the following elements:

- £5 million indemnity cover
- Protection for employers against claims from employees and third parties, and for employees against claims from third parties
- Cover for cycling to, from and between workplaces, including regular commuting
- Cover for non-work use of the bikes by employees, e.g. leisure rides at evenings and weekends

requirements, see the cycling section in the Highway Code (www.highwaycode.gov.uk).

At the time of publication, there is no legal requirement for cyclists to wear special safety equipment (for example helmets or high visibility vests) while riding a bike in the UK.

If an employer is providing a helmet they must make sure that it is in not damaged and each user should ensure a good fit. Ideally, adjustable helmets of different sizes should be provided so that employees can choose one that fits properly with only minor adjustment.

The material inside helmets is designed to crush on impact, so damage to a helmet may not be visible externally. After any impact, including dropping, a helmet should be replaced. Helmets should also be inspected when the bikes are checked to look for signs of damage, that they are clean, and remain hygienic.

Some organisations choose not to provide helmets or insist that they are worn, instead suggesting to employees that they provide their own if they prefer to wear one. In other cases organisations have offered to buy helmets for individual employees to use on request. In the case of the Bikes for Business scheme, a helmet was provided with every bike.

Other accessories such as waterproofs and cycle clips for trousers could also be provided, to make cycling as convenient as possible, whatever the situation.



Insurance

Public liability insurance

It is important that organisations provide public liability (third party) cover for users of pool bikes.

This is normally provided through the organisation's general public liability cover and is the same as provided for walking while on work business. The level of cover provided should be checked prior to setting up a bike pool, and any exclusions, for instance regarding use of the bikes outside of working hours, should be discussed.

In some cases it may be necessary to arrange further cover. Pool bike policies are available with the following elements:

- £5 million indemnity cover
- Protection for employers against claims from employees and third parties, and for employees against claims from third parties
- Cover for cycling to, from and between workplaces, including regular commuting
- Cover for non-work use of the bikes by employees, e.g. leisure rides at evenings and weekends

Personal accident insurance

Personal accident insurance can be taken out on an individual basis by employees to cover them if they are injured and no one else is at fault. This will compensate employees, providing some contingency for medical fees or loss of earnings if unable to work after an accident.

Theft insurance

Many insurance providers will add theft cover for pool bikes to the organisation's existing policy. This should be checked prior to setting up a bike pool. If the existing insurance does not cover the bike pool it may be possible to insure bikes through a separate policy. In some cases it will be more economical to put aside a contingency fund and write off any losses. The organisation may decide to only write off a loss if the bike is used for work purposes, making it clear that it will be the responsibility of the employee to replace bikes stolen when used for leisure or commuting.

It is important that bikes are locked securely when not in use. During the Bikes for Business scheme four bikes were stolen out of a total of 60, during the six-month period of the trial. These thefts resulted from bikes being left unattended and unlocked for a brief period, or locked but not attached to anything. Bikes should always be locked through the frame to a secure, immovable object. Ideally wheels should also be secured. It should be made clear to employees that if bikes are not locked correctly then the user will be responsible for replacing the bike.

ORGANISE BIKE SUPPLIER, ORDER BIKES AND EQUIPMENT

The first decision should be to whether to hire or buy bikes. If bikes are hired, a package including regular maintenance, call-out for repairs, periodic replacement with new bikes, and even third party and theft insurance can be negotiated, such as that arranged for Bikes for Business. This may be the simplest solution, as the bikes will be regularly checked, so the organisation can be confident it will fulfil health and safety requirements, and the bikes will not sit unused for long periods due to punctures or other problems. Selected bike shops offer bike pool services. The London Cycling Campaign provides a list of London hire shops on its website (www.lcc.org.uk), or you may be able to negotiate with a local bike shop to set up a hire contract.

Buying the bikes could be cost effective if the organisation keeps them for a couple of years with moderate levels of use, though as bikes get older maintenance costs can increase. The costs of maintaining bikes and keeping them in good condition between services should be taken into account – information given in the previous sections on Developing a Business Case, and Health and Safety Requirements should be useful. If an organisation buys bikes for a bike pool they should be able to reclaim VAT and make use of capital allowances.

There are a number of options when choosing where to buy bikes:

- Bikes bought through a local bike shop will often come with a year of free maintenance

and a full warranty. It may also be easier to arrange ongoing maintenance through a local bike shop, and it will be convenient to visit if there are problems.

- Bikes can often be bought cheaply through online providers. If buying a large number of bikes it may be possible to negotiate with a local bike shop to assemble and regularly service them, at an agreed price. However, bikes bought on-line, even when assembled through a bike shop, may no longer be covered under the manufacturers warranty.
- TfL is currently running a scheme where bikes can be bought at trade prices if a staff travel survey is conducted as part of a workplace travel plan. Contact TfL for more details, using the contact details provided in the *Relevant Organisations* chapter.

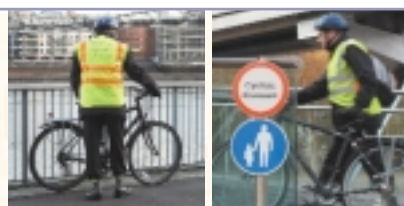
Choosing appropriate bikes

When choosing bikes, it is important to consider where they will be stored, the needs of users and what trips will be made. There are many bikes on the market, but broadly speaking there are four general categories most suited to a bike pool:

- A hybrid or town bike, with an upright sitting position for improved sightlines. These normally come with a rack on the back and mudguards and are ideal for getting around in the city.
- A women's bike has a slanted cross bar which can make mounting and dismounting easier, especially when wearing a skirt.
- A folding bike may be very convenient to store and transport, and can be taken on all forms of public transport and stored inside.
- Other models such as mountain or all-terrain bikes and racing bikes are intended for specific conditions. Good quality brands tend to be more expensive and can be over-designed for city riding.

If there are no overwhelming reasons to choose one over the other (such as storage constraints) then it may be best to ask staff to vote for their preferred model, choosing a selection to suit as many people as possible. It is also worth discussing options with the chosen supplier.

BIKES BOUGHT
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INSTALL CYCLING FACILITIES

Bike theft can be a big issue, and being able to store bikes securely is important to the long-term success of a bike pool. Bikes should always be locked to a secure immovable object when not in use.

Appropriate arrangements should therefore be made for cycle parking and other facilities should also be considered. to make it easier for employees to make use of the pool bikes.

Indoor cycle parking

Storing bikes inside at night, over the weekend and when not used for long periods, will help prolong their life and reduce the likelihood of theft. In some cases it may be possible to store a pool bike inside the office, and a folding bike may be chosen for this reason where there is limited space and other options are insecure.

If there are a number of regular cyclists a room could be set aside or a bike shed built.

Outdoor cycle parking

There are a number of inexpensive cycle parking stands, the most common is the Sheffield stand (an inverted U shape) which may be bolted or laid in concrete into the ground. These stands are very simple in design, easy to install, use a minimum of space and are convenient for locking bike frames to. If they are installed with the correct spacing two bikes can be locked to each stand. The London Cycling Campaign provides advice on spacing and installation on its website (www.lcc.org.uk).



If an organisation will be installing cycle parking on its own grounds, and undertakes an employee travel survey as part of a workplace travel plan, they may be able to apply to TfL for stands free of charge. Otherwise Sheffield stands can generally be bought and installed for around £150 per stand. Cycle stand providers are also listed on the London Cycling Campaign website.

If there is insufficient space for off-street parking on the site of the organisation, then on-street cycle parking may be an option. Contact the local authority to find out whether this will be possible. If neither is possible, it may be that folding bikes could still be accommodated, as they can be stored inside with a minimal requirement for space.

Other facilities for cyclists

Other facilities could include lockers for storing cycling accessories or a change of clothes, showers, a changing room, or an iron and ironing board. The scope of facilities that can be provided will be limited by the space and budget available, but it is worth considering such measures if requested by employees.

ESTABLISH SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING THE BIKE POOL

Pool bike manager/main contact

It may be easiest if one person is nominated to manage and promote the pool bike system. This could be the same person that checks the bikes

A VERY
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TATE MODERN
WHICH ATTRACTED
NATIONAL
PRESS

regularly, handles bookings, and is the main contact for any problems with the bikes and equipment. Having a single point of contact between each organisation and the supplier of the bikes and maintenance services proved useful for coordinating the Bikes for Business scheme.

Bike user forms

To make sure that people using the bikes are capable of riding safely, all users should be required to sign a form stating that they are competent to ride a bike on public roads with other traffic, and understand the Highway Code and how it applies to cyclists. A sample form similar to that used for Bikes for Business is provided in Annex 1.

Booking system

The booking system can be very simple – a form with spaces for the date, the name of the person borrowing the bike, a signature for when the bike is returned, and any problems that have arisen with the bike or equipment. This should include whether the helmet has been dropped or damaged during use, or the user has been involved in an accident. A basic sample form is provided in Annex 2.

This form could also record information that might help the organisation assess the success of the scheme, and improve it in the future. This could include the purpose of the journey, an estimation of distance (or destination address), and suggestions for improvements.

PUBLICISE THE SCHEME

Publicising the scheme is important to help raise awareness of the bikes and encourage people to use them. This could include a launch event to promote the bike pool, such as a lunchtime “how to” session. The organisation might also choose to run other events that generally encourage cycling, such as a cyclists’ breakfast (which can now be offered tax free as part of a ‘cycle to work’ day), open to everyone arriving at work by bike, or a Dr. Bike maintenance session.

Other promotions could include the organisation making a donation to charity for every trip employees make on a pool bike

(to make this a little more inclusive it could also include trips made on foot or on employees’ own bikes).

If there is sufficient interest, lunchtime or after work cycle rides could be organised – these could have a local history or fitness focus.

Regular reminders will help to maintain use of the bikes, such as email promotions, items on the intranet, articles in staff newsletters, and placing the pool bikes on the agenda for staff or team meetings. As cycling may not seem the most obvious mode of transport for many people, frequent reminders will help people to keep the bikes in mind.

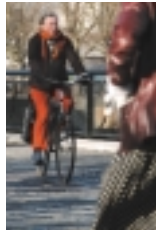
Generally, the organisations involved in Bikes for Business arranged their own internal promotion of the scheme, with a small number of events and rides organised centrally for all the organisations. A very successful launch event was held at the Tate Modern, which attracted national press. There was however a very low turn out for lunchtime rides, with very few employees able or willing to take time out of their working day.

PERIODICALLY MONITOR USE

Monitoring the bike pool will help identify potential improvements to the scheme. The simplest monitoring tool will be the pool bike booking records. These should show the level of use and what the bikes are being used for. Depending on the requirements of the booking system it could also show destinations or distance travelled, from which financial, time and emissions savings can be calculated.

If the organisation is preparing a travel plan, ongoing monitoring of the bike pool could be incorporated into the monitoring of the travel plan. A survey could be carried out to find out how successful the bike pool is.

Results from this survey can then be used to help decide whether additional or fewer bikes are needed, whether further publicity is required, and whether there are other factors that would help to encourage greater use. These results will also allow the organisation to calculate and promote the ongoing benefits, both to the organisation and more generally, such as those quoted for the Bikes for Business scheme, above.



WHAT ONGOING MANAGEMENT WILL BE REQUIRED?

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER NINE

Requirements for managing a bike pool once it has been established will include:

- overseeing the maintenance schedule
- checking bikes between services
- ensuring all users complete bike user forms
- maintaining a booking system
- regular publicity
- periodic monitoring of usage

Once systems are in place to cover these issues and people are familiar with the scheme, it should take very little time to administer.

Depending on the level of use and quality of the bikes they may need replacing periodically. It is best to discuss the need to replace the bikes with the party responsible for servicing the bikes.



ADDITIONAL HELP AND RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS

POOL BIKES FOR BUSINESS: CHAPTER TEN

Below are a number of organisations promoting travel plan solutions that may be able to offer advice or financial incentives, or provide links to other organisations that are setting up bike pools. It may also be worth contacting your local authority to see what they can offer.

Association for Commuter Transport

www.act-uk.com

ACT provides support to organisations that need to reduce the number of employees and visitors driving their cars onto site, through the introduction of a travel plan.

Bike for All

www.bikeforall.net

Bikeforall.net is a joint initiative of the Bicycle Association and the Department for Transport via the National Cycling Strategy Board, providing listings of interesting and useful bike information on the Internet.

Bike Week & Bike2work

www.bikeweek.org.uk

Bike Week is the UK's only annual 'celebration of cycling', and incorporates Bike2Work, providing a great opportunity for employers to encourage more staff to cycle to work.

Boost

www.boost.uk.com

An independent company working with organisations to take advantage of the Government's tax exemption scheme for bikes.



Butterworth Spengler Pool Bike Policy

www.cycleinsurance.info/index.php

An insurance broker offering public liability insurance for bike pools.

CTC – The UK National Cyclists' Organisation

www.ctc.org.uk

The country's largest cycling organisation, working 'to make cycling enjoyable, safe and welcoming for all.'

Cyclescheme

www.cyclescheme.co.uk

An independent company working with organisations to take advantage of the Government's tax exemption scheme for bikes.

Cycle Training UK

www.cycletraining.co.uk

Independent providers of on-road cycle training and cycle maintenance training in London.



Cycling England
www.nationalcyclingstrategy.org.uk

Cycling England is a new national body that helps to plan and co-ordinate the development of cycling across the country. This website provides a number of useful cycling resources.

Department for Transport
www.dft.gov.uk

Provides information and resources on all aspects of transport in the UK. Including a wide range of cycling and travel planning information.

ETA
www.eta.co.uk
The ETA provide a theft insurance policy which can be used for bikes within a bike pool.

Halfords
www.halfordsb2b.com
Organisations can take advantage of the UK Government's tax exemption scheme for bikes through Halfords.

London Cycling Campaign
www.lcc.org.uk
The London Cycling Campaign exists to increase cycling in Greater London for the benefit of individuals, local communities and the wider environment.

National Travelwise Association
www.travelwise.org.uk
NTWA is a network of sectors, including local authorities, health sector, academic sector and passenger transport executives working together to promote healthy and sustainable transport.

Sustrans
www.sustrans.org.uk
Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so people can choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment.

Transport for London
www.tfl.gov.uk
Provides information and resources on all aspects of transport in London, including offers and advice for organisations based in London. Contact the Travel Demand Management Team for more information, on 020 7918 2929 or TravelDemandManagementTeam@tfl.gov.uk.



ANNEX 1 – POOL BIKE USER FORM

POOL BIKE CLUB
Joining the pool bike club allows you to borrow bikes for work purposes, for leisure and for fitness. All users need to join the bike club and read and abide by the guidelines below.

- Cycle Safety**
- Follow the Highway Code. The Highway Code applies to all vehicles including bicycles. You can look up the Highway Code at: www.highwaycode.gov.uk.
 - When cycling in traffic be aware of other road users so you can anticipate their movements. If possible make eye contact with other road users so you know they've seen you.
 - It is important to clearly indicate your intentions by signalling. Always look behind you before moving out into traffic or turning.
 - Take care when cycling near lorries, trucks and buses as they have blind spots and may not be able to see you. Never cycle on the inside of a lorry or truck.
 - Whilst riding a bike you should always be respectful of pedestrians.
 - It is illegal to cycle at night without a front white light and a red rear light.
 - Cycle with care and don't take unnecessary risks.

- Bicycle practicalities**
- Check the brakes and adjust the height of the seat to fit you before you set off. If there are any problems with the bike then don't use it; report any problems to the main pool bike contact.
 - Helmets are supplied. If you wear a helmet, adjust it to fit you properly before you set off.
 - Each bike has a lock. Never leave the bike unlocked when you are not using it. Lock the frame and if possible the wheels to a secure immovable object. You will have to pay for the loss of the bicycle if you used it and did not lock it securely following this guideline.
 - When you return the bike hand the key back. Make sure that the booking card is marked to say that the bike is returned.
 - If you are unsure about cycling then have cycle training – ask your main pool bike contact for further information, or call Cycle Training UK on 020 7582 3535
 - You can order copies of free London Cycle Guides on the Transport for London website (www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/cycle_guide.shtml) or by calling the Transport for London travel information line: 020 7222 1234.
 - You can plan a route for your journey by visiting www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/

I have read and understood these guidelines. I have cycled before and am confident and competent cycling on the road with other traffic.

I understand the risks involved with cycling and will not hold either my own employer, or the organisation supplying the bicycles responsible for any injuries or collisions whilst using the bicycles provided. I confirm I am in good physical health and my employer cannot be held liable for any medical condition that might be aggravated by physical exertion.

Signed _____ Date _____

Safe and Happy Cycling!



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Bike identification number

[illegible]

This good practice guide was written and produced by:

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Photography by David Parmiter

Optimum² is a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund Interreg IIB programme for North West Europe, which aims to provide an effective approach for using travel planning to tackle the accessibility and mobility problems caused by congestion in urban areas. As a partner in the Optimum² project, Southwark Council is leading a pilot project to research and develop means of working with businesses to solve these problems, focusing on establishing local travel plan groups and developing travel planning tools such as bike pools. The Southwark pilot project team also includes SEA/Renue, Loughborough University and University of Westminster. More information on the project can be found on the project web site, www.optimum2.org. We are particularly grateful to the following organisations for participating in Bikes for Business, and providing their valuable input to the information within this guide:

ABS Consulting	Peabody Trust
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Bede House Association	Southwark Action for Voluntary Organisations
Better Bankside	Southwark Primary Care Trust
Bankside Open Spaces Trust	Southwark Playhouse
Cable & Wireless	St Judes Primary School
Choice Support	Tate Modern
International Workshop Festival	Time and Talents Associated
Jerwood Space	Victim Support Southwark
Lotus Leisure Group	



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