Pool bikes

This guide is designed to help you to select, manage, maintain and promote your pool bikes to help you get the most from them.

Why set up a pool bike scheme?

A pool bike is an excellent way of reducing local car journeys. Workplaces provide bikes and safety equipment for employees to use free of charge typically for business travel. Many employers also allow staff to use the bikes for leisure use e.g. for lunchtime rides.

Offering pool bikes will enable people who don't cycle to work to use a bike for travel to meetings, during their lunch breaks, and even for staff whose bike is out of action for maintenance.

Having a pool bike scheme also provides the following benefits:

- Reduced travel expenses for workplaces (companies have reported savings of between £25-£80 per bike, per month);
- Improved accessibility (allows employee to travel door to door);
- Avoidance of parking problems for staff;
- Healthier & fitter staff who take fewer sick days;
- Often results in reduced travel time for staff;
- Reduced local congestion; and
- Demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

The right bikes and equipment for your staff

It is vital to ensure you offer the right bikes for your staff to ensure you get the most out of your investment. Important points to consider are:

- What will your staff use the bikes for?
- Is it worth getting a range of different types of bikes?
- Provide a range of sizes to suit all staff;
- Ensure the bikes you choose are easily adaptable – quick release seat post clamps are essential; and
- Consider including an electric bike, to assist those that are less mobile or fit, for longer or hillier journeys, or when needing to carry equipment.

Sustrans provides guidance on various kinds of bikes and what to consider when selecting a bike.

It is essential that your pool bikes come with some standard equipment, but you may also like to consider some other options that will be useful for your employees.

Essential	**Desirable**	**Optional**
Helmet	Panniers / rucksack	Trailer
Lock	High vis jacket / belt	Track pump
Lights	Trouser clips / snapband	Waterproof jacket & trousers
Bell	Pump & puncture repair kit	

Cycle map	Emergency contact number (taxi number)	

Running your scheme, servicing and storage

You can run your scheme using an online booking system. For servicing, the easiest thing to do is to set up a maintenance contract with a local bike shop to make sure the bikes are regularly serviced. However, it is still essential to have someone who is responsible for regularly checking the bikes and equipment (once a week ideally) to make sure they are in good working order.

The bikes will need to be securely stored and protected from the elements, as will the accessories and safety equipment. This all needs to be in a centrally located position, to ensure it is easy for staff to access. You may want to think about putting a sign on the storage, to act as an extra advertising tool.

Promotion and support for staff

This is the easiest part of your pool bike scheme but probably the most important as if your staff don't know the bikes are there for them to use, they won't use them! How to promote your pool bikes:

- Display posters
- Add information to your staff web pages relating to business travel
- Include reference to the pool bikes in new staff induction packs
- Ask line managers to make the information available to their staff
- Create a customised Cyclestreets widget on your staff intranet pages or company website.

The final thing to do is to support your staff to use the bikes:

- Ensure the information on your web pages includes links to cycle routes and maps and our free cycle confidence sessions for adults
- If there is a regular journey that staff make for business travel (between two offices for example), plan the journey using the cycling journey planner cyclestreets.net

Further information and support

For further guidance on setting up a pool bike scheme, please see the CoMoUK Workplace Pool Bike Guide and the Pool bikes for business guide from Transport for London.

Want to encourage smarter travel to work at your organisation? Businesses in Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot are eligible for free business support to start travel planning, including support offers for individual members of staff. Email traveldevon@devon.gov.uk to find out more.

Please note: When following our toolkits, please also refer to the government guidance for safer travel.

This page was last updated November 2020.

URLs

- Reduced travel expenses for workplaces: https://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/trainingmaterials/pool-bikes-for-business.pdf
- Sustrans guidance for selecting bikes: https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/get-active/2019/everyday-walking-and-cycling/how-to-choose-the-right-bike-for-you/
- Cyclestreets widget: www.cyclestreets.net/link
- Travel Devon cycle routes and maps: https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-routes/

- Free cycle confidence sessions for adults: https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-training/adults/
- Cyclestreets journey planner: https://www.cyclestreets.net/
- CoMoUK Workplace Pool Bike Guide: https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Workplace-Pool-Bikes-A4-AW.pdf
- Transport for London Pool bikes for business guide: https://www.eltis.org/sites/default/files/trainingmaterials/pool-bikes-for-business.pdf