

Making your business cycle friendly

Encouraging staff to cycle more has benefits for both employers and employees. With the amount of time we spend at work and our increasingly sedentary lives, it is important to integrate physical activity in and around the workplace and during our commutes.

This toolkit contains guidance on how your organisation can become a workplace that encourages and supports cycling to work.

Strategy and governance

To start becoming a cycle friendly workplace and introduce the necessary changes, the support for cycling to work will need to be embedded within your organisation. The questions below provide an overview of what to consider when getting started:

- Are senior management engaged in and committed to implementing measures that increase cycling as a means of travel?
- Is senior management engagement and commitment translated into a budget allocated to increasing cycling or active travel?
- Does your organisation have an active Bicycle User Group (BUG, please see below for more info), and are staff consulted in shaping provision for cycling at your workplace?
- Is a travel survey undertaken yearly? Are regular parked bike counts taken?
- Are current cycling facilities reviewed to identify any gaps or opportunities to improve?

Bicycle User Group (BUG)

A BUG is a group that can be set up to champion cycling within your organisation. Members can support staff who cycle to work, as well as encourage other employees to start cycling to work too. This ensures that people who have direct experience of any barriers to cycling to work can feed their knowledge and experiences into your activities. BUG members can also help you share messages and circulate resources to the various departments or teams within your workplace.

The group could discuss a range of topics:

- Facilities such as cycle parking, shower and locker facilities etc.
- How to promote cycling at your workplace
- Promotion of local cycling infrastructure such as cycle routes
- How to overcome any barriers to colleagues cycling to work

If you're hosting a first group meeting, an agenda could be:

- Discuss the challenges members personally face when cycling to work
- Also discuss the benefits people find on their commute; people can be more likely to change their habit based on what's good about another mode of transport as opposed to being told what's bad about their current one
- Discuss an action plan; work out what could be improved, determine short- and long-term actions, and assign people achievable tasks for the next meeting.

TIP: The [ISM model](#) can provide a structure for these conversations and can help identify key areas for action. ISM is a tool to help inform behaviour change interventions based on the assumption that factors in people's Individual, Social and Material context influence people's behaviours.

Facilities

Cycle parking

By offering cycle parking, you are offering staff a safe and secure place to lock up their bikes. This can range from steel cycle stands to covered or secured cycle shelters.

When installing cycle parking, it is important to consider the following:

- Visibility- will the cycle parking be easy to find? Do you need signage to guide staff and visitors to the facilities?
- Security- is the cycle parking well lit, covered by CCTV or under surveillance?
- Capacity- is there enough parking for everyone that cycles to work? We recommend including 25-50% more spaces than immediately needed to allow for an increase in people cycling to work.

For additional information on cycle parking design, please see our separate [‘Cycle parking design guidance’](#).

Showers, changing and drying facilities

If staff are cycling in for more than a couple of miles, or if your area is particularly hilly, it’s great if people can have a shower and change into clean clothes.

If your office has enough space, you could also consider offering drying facilities. These are especially a welcome addition during the wetter months of the year and will help keep bad smells down. Drying cabinets have a similar footprint to a cupboard and can be set to dry clothes during the day, so they will be dry by the time staff leave for home.

Secure lockers are an easy way for people to store their personal belongings or an extra change of clothes.

To establish what capacity you need to cater for, we recommend consulting with your staff or Bicycle User Group (see above for more information).

Maintenance tools and equipment

Equipping staff with bike maintenance tools and skills can help them to stay safe through regular bike servicing and maintenance and increase their personal cycle confidence. Repair facilities could also help staff with unused bikes to repair them and start cycling again safely, for work or for leisure.

To make sure that staff are able to make minor repairs to their bikes, such as fixing a puncture or adjusting brakes, you can offer a range of maintenance tools and equipment. We recommend that the following essential items are included and kept ‘topped up’:

- Track pump
- Puncture repair kits (make sure these include tyre levers!)
- Spare innertubes (have a range of sizes available)
- Allen key set and folding multi-tool (you will need a set of different sized Allen keys for adjusting saddle height, brakes etc.)
- Chain oil
- Water displacement sprays (e.g. GT-85, WD-40 or similar)
- Disposable latex gloves

Additional items could include a spare front and rear lights set. This could help staff to get home safely (and legally) if their batteries run flat. Some bikes may have hex nuts rather than quick release. It may be useful to include an appropriate spanner in your maintenance kit so people are able to remove the wheel and fix a puncture.

We would recommend consulting your Bicycle User Group (BUG) on what sizes of innertubes need to be available.

TIPS:

- Rather than buying new puncture repair kits when all the patches have been used, you could buy the patches separately. This helps to reduce waste.

- The same is true of the glue, which might dry up over time. Alternatively you could buy self-adhesive patches.
- ‘Green’ or ecologically sensitive bicycle oils are available.

To help make people aware of your maintenance kit you could organise:

- a lunch time session or a cycle to work breakfast to talk through the contents of the kit. This could include watching a ‘how to’ video guide for repairing a puncture. [Cycling UK has produced five simple guides on bike maintenance](#), designed to be downloaded to your phone for reference for wherever you travel.
- maintenance skills sessions, either in the form of Q&A or a hands-on workshop with a qualified bike mechanic. Ask your nearest bike shop or have a browse online to see what is offered locally.

TIP: It might be worth putting together cycle maintenance picture guides for novice riders.

Pool bikes

Offering pool bikes will enable people who don’t cycle to work to use a bike for travel to meetings or during their lunch breaks, and even for staff whose bike is out of action for maintenance. A few things to consider are:

- Buy or hire- some local bike shops offer pool bike hire to businesses
- Provision of kit and accessories (helmet, bell, lights etc.)
- Maintenance of the bikes- is someone at the business responsible for regularly checking over the bikes, or do you have a maintenance agreement e.g. with a local bike shop?

Please see our [‘Pool Bikes’ toolkit](#) for further guidance for setting up a pool bike scheme at your workplace.

Schemes and incentives

Cycle to Work schemes

Cycle to Work schemes are employee benefit schemes that enable employees to hire bicycles and cycle equipment for their commute to work from their employer, or third party. This is paid for through salary sacrifice.

If the scheme meets the relevant criteria it can provide financial benefits to both employers and employees. It will save the employee money through reduced tax contributions and the employer will save money on National Insurance contributions.

Through a simple Google search, you will be able to find various companies who can set up a cycle to work scheme for you and advise on issues such as tax implications and compliance.

Detailed guidance on Cycle to Work schemes can be found on the [Department for Transport website](#).

Cycle mileage on business

Consider allowing employees to claim their cycling mileage for journeys made for work. This can help support the message that cycling is considered as a fully accepted mode of transport.

You can check the permitted amounts for [Mileage Allowance Payments on the HMRC website](#).

Work time to get changed

If staff are cycling in for more than a couple of miles or if your area is especially hilly, people might want to have a shower and get changed to start work in fresh clothes. Allowing people to use work time to change can help encourage more people to cycle in, as they may otherwise worry about fitting cycling into their day.

Third Party Liability Insurance

Membership of cycling organisations like [British Cycling](#) or [Cycling UK](#) can offer staff individual benefits like discounts at cycle shops but also access to free or cheaper cycling related insurance. You could consider contributing to membership costs.

Information, promotion and events

Information

To increase awareness about your facilities, schemes, incentives, and other support that you offer, you can inform staff through a dedicated intranet page or add information to a travel information pack.

To let visitors know about your cycling facilities, we recommend you include information on how to travel to your site by bike in the 'how to find us' section of your website. We recommend that you place this information in order of the sustainable travel hierarchy:

1. Walking
2. Cycling
3. Public transport
4. Car

It can help visitors to choose cycling to get to your site if you offer them access to [cycle maps](#) and give them clear instructions where to park their bike. Please check the '[Travel information for organisation website](#)' toolkit for more ideas to share information with visitors.

Group cycle confidence sessions

You can enable more staff to cycle by organising group [cycle confidence sessions](#). These sessions can be organised free of charge and are offered by Devon County Council. Please email cycletraining@devon.gov.uk to express your interest and to find out more.

If staff do not have their own bikes to bring to the session, you could consider hiring a few bikes from a local hire shops.

To increase uptake, you could consider offering these sessions (partially) during work time.

Regular cycling related events

Please see our '[Promoting cycling](#)' toolkit for ideas to run cycling events run throughout the year.

Ride leader

If your staff are engaged in regular social rides, you could consider training a few people to become ride leaders. Cycling advocacy organisations like [British Cycling](#) and [Cycling UK](#) offer courses to train people in leading a group safely, route selection, risk assessment etc. Please check for any requirements for staff to attend separate first aid training to become a fully qualified ride leader.

Further information and support

This toolkit was put together partially based on the Travel Devon Audit, the [Cycling Scotland 'Cycle friendly campus handbook'](#) and the [City Connect 'Bike Friendly Business Best Practice Guidelines'](#).

[Active Devon](#) is a community-focused, non-profit organisation dedicated to inspiring and supporting people in Devon to be active. They can help you get your workplace more active and support you with behaviour change campaigns, workplace challenges, programme management, design, consultancy and more. Please contact Active Devon via 01392 925 150 or hello@activedevon.org.

Want to encourage smarter travel to work at your workplace? Devon County Council can offer support* to organisations who want to enable their staff to travel more sustainably and actively. Please get in touch via traveldevon@devon.gov.uk for more information.

*Support offered will depend on availability of funding and engagement and commitment of your workplace.

URLs

- ISM model: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/influencing-behaviours-moving-beyond-individual-user-guide-ism-tool/pages/2/>
- Cycle parking design guidance:
- Cycling UK simple guides on bike maintenance: <https://www.cyclinguk.org/article/simple-bike-maintenance-guides>
- Pool Bike toolkit: <http://www.traveldevontoolkit.info/pool-bikes/>
- Guidance Cycle to Work schemes DfT: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-to-work-scheme-implementation-guidance>
- Permitted amounts for Mileage Allowance Payments: <https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-business-travel-mileage/rules-for-tax>
- British Cycling membership: <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/membership>
- Cycling UK membership: <https://www.cyclinguk.org/join>
- Cycle maps: <https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-routes/>
- Travel information for organisation website toolkit:
- Adult cycle confidence sessions: <https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-training/adults/>
- Promoting cycling toolkit:
- British Cycling ride leadership: <https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/rideleadership>
- Cycling UK club ride leader: <https://www.cyclinguk.org/courses-and-training/leading-instructing-and-training-others/courses-for-leaders/club-ride-leader>
- Cycling Scotland 'Cycle friendly campus handbook': <https://www.cycling.scot/mediaLibrary/other/english/1012.pdf>
- City Connect support for businesses: <https://www.cyclecityconnect.co.uk/get-cycling/support-for-businesses/>