



# BIKE LIBRARY

## INTRODUCTION

Bike libraries are an increasingly common feature of cycling projects, ranging from community cycle hubs to high schools in remote areas. They give users the opportunity to borrow a bike for a period time, from a few hours to days, weeks or even months. In most cases locks, helmets and mapping resources are also offered by the organisation running the bike library.

Bike libraries can serve many purposes depending on the aims of a group. Bike libraries can potentially increased access to bikes and opportunities to cycling in the following areas, among others:

- High level of visitors to an area
- Area of deprivations
- Regions with minimal/unreliable public transportation
- Projects looking to boost physical activity

## PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Location

The location of the library should reflect its stated purpose. This can be within the specific community the project is targeting or an area of high visibility such as a nearby transports hub.

### Type of bike

These could be new, used, or even reconditioned by the organisation running the library. The style of bike will reflect the location and purpose of the library overall. There may be some variation in the types of bikes available through the library to cater to a range of cycling needs:

- Mountain bikes may be useful for a rural locations, but could be less appropriate in an urban setting due to increased maintenance considerations
- Hybrids will be suitable for a wide range of journeys likely to be undertaken by bike library users
- Road bikes are less common in bike libraries due to the lower level of versatility they offer, but can provide opportunities for exposure to different types of cycling
- E-Bikes are becoming more commonplace within bike libraries. They can make cycling a realistic option for people who haven't previously been able to engage with cycling for health, age, mobility or other reasons

### Maintenance

Maintenance of the fleet should be considered and costed out in the project plan. To support sustainability of the project, at least one member of the project team should have received maintenance training and have responsibility for ongoing maintenance and servicing. Maintenance classes may be offered as part of the bike library engagement strategy, but any substantial work on fleet bikes should be supervised and inspected by a qualified mechanic.

### Accessories

It is advisable that helmets and sturdy bike locks are made available. Lights and maps of the local area are also worth considering if practical.

### Requirements for borrowing

A membership is optional but offering this 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. The 'Bike Loan Membership Conditions' section of the tool kit outlines some conditions you may wish to consider when providing sign up information.

### **Data Capture**

Retention of email addresses of service users allows the organisation to highlight events of interest and gather feedback from users which may aid in reporting outcomes to funders. All data processing needs to be compliant with GDPR, with clear indication of how their data is used. Most people engaging with the bike library will be keen to hear more about relevant events.

### **Cost**

The cost of using the bikes should be a nominal fee. In some cases, this may be waived but charging for the loan avoids devaluing the service. This covers the admin and maintenance and shows the user is invested in the scheme.