

## A Guide to Workplace Cycling







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## Introduction

This guide to workplace cycling explains how businesses in Greater Manchester can encourage their employees to cycle more. You will find a wealth of advice on creating a cycle friendly organisation, no matter the size of your business or type of work you do.

## Introduction



### Purpose

This guide summarises information to help you deliver cycling initiatives in your workplace. It will provide ideas and challenges to engage your employees in a way that will achieve far-reaching, measurable, direct and indirect benefits for your company and employees.

### Using the guide

#### Who should use this guide?

If you have any responsibility for promoting travel planning or employee health and wellbeing in your organisation, if you want to reduce running costs for your company car park, or want to lower your business's impact on the environment, you will find this guide useful. It doesn't matter what your job title is, this area of responsibility might just be a small part of your main role. You may even be someone who is passionate about cycling and keen to get your colleagues out cycling more, and your organisation is supporting you in taking on this extra challenge.

For ease, we have used the term 'Cycling Champion' as a catch-all term for whoever has responsibility for, or interest in, promoting cycling.

This guide refers to a number of tools such as surveys and site audit documents. Details of how to order these can be found on page 31.

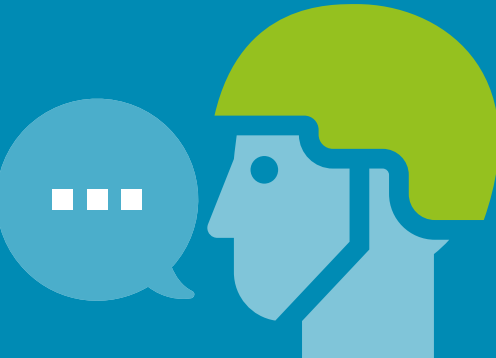




Cycling is a fun form of exercise. It can also help to boost people's confidence, reduce associated business costs and is far better for the environment than other modes of transport.

Business benefits

Encouraging your colleagues to cycle to and from work can bring many business benefits:



Reduced car park maintenance costs

The annual cost of maintaining one car parking space can range from £400-£2000. A bike takes up far less space than a parked car – almost eight times less. Parking spaces could be put to more efficient use by swapping cars for bikes.

Reduced travel costs for employees

Transport and car maintenance costs are increasing on a yearly basis. Cycling is one of the cheapest ways to commute to work or travel for work purposes.

Make your business more accessible to potential new staff

By making cycling a more attractive and accessible way to travel, you could attract greater numbers of like-minded people interested in working for you.

Less time sitting in traffic

Cycling to work is often faster than other modes of travel, especially during peak times. Journey times will only improve as we begin to see more cycle lanes built across Greater Manchester.

Increase employee productivity and reduce sick leave

Businesses can enjoy greater productivity from employees who travel by bike. Studies have found that commuters who travel by car have more health issues, lapses in concentration and difficulty sleeping, compared to those who cycle.

Corporate social responsibility

Cycling reduces congestion on the roads and in turn helps to minimise noise pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. By encouraging sustainable commuting, businesses can boost their reputation amongst staff, key stakeholders and the local community and are more likely to attain environmental certifications.



## Health benefits

**The NHS recommends that adults should be active every day and engage in at least two hours of moderate physical activity over a week, in sessions of ten minutes or more.**

**Cycling is the third most popular recreational activity in the UK and is great for people of all ages and abilities.**

**There are many cycling health benefits:**

- Even short rides can help with weight management
- Cycling is a low impact exercise and easier on joints than running or other high-impact aerobic activities
- Cycling can burn more than 650 calories in one hour and helps to tone the whole body
- Cycling has been shown to reduce stress, fatigue, and anxiety. It can also help to boost mood
- Regular cycling can increase muscle strength and help to keep bones strong. It can also reduce the risk of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma and certain types of cancer.

## Environmental benefits

**Cycling is almost entirely carbon neutral and as the most sustainable form of travel can help in the fight against global warming and climate change. By reducing the number of cars on the roads, cycling can reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and noise pollution.**







### Data collection

#### Collecting data and assessing your existing offer is the first step to developing a robust action plan.

##### Site audit

On-site infrastructure can play a key part in helping people to cycle to and from work. You need to take a good look at the facilities on offer, or just as importantly, those not on offer across the site.

Our site audit can be used as a guide. This is not a one size fits all resource but it should help you to identify where there are opportunities to improve facilities.

The data collected during this process will help to secure buy-in from key stakeholders and inform the development of an action plan.

##### Staff survey

The level of employee support you are likely to get can be determined by conducting a survey asking employees why they travel as they do and encouraging them to share their attitudes towards cycling. This will allow you to design initiatives around your employees' needs, helping them to feel more engaged with the process.

Our staff survey can help you capture this data. The more people surveyed, the more reflective the data will be of the entire workforce.

Proven, tried and tested methods should be used to encourage staff to complete the survey. You should decide what methods are appropriate for your organisation.

##### Examples include:

- Posters and flyers promoting the survey
- Ensuring staff are allocated work time to complete the survey
- Communicating a clear, positive message as to why the organisation is seeking this information
- Making all managers aware of the survey and its importance
- Constructing emails in a format fitting with other corporate communications
- Linking to the survey via the intranet
- Devising an incentive to encourage participants to complete the survey.

Transport for Greater Manchester can assist with the process of analysing and summarising the data collected.



## Internal buy-in

**In order to create a cycle friendly workplace, it's important to have a strong support system in place. There are three key stakeholders that need to be involved in the process to ensure success:**

- **Cycle Champion(s)**
- **Managers**
- **Employees**

### **Cycle Champion(s)**

Cycle Champions are the driving force behind cycling initiatives and participation from management and employees.

In larger companies, it may be suitable to have more than one Cycle Champion and Cycle Champions can also sit on wider groups, for example an employee forum, travel plan group or facilities team.

### **Managers**

It is vital that managers within your organisation commit to supporting any cycling initiatives. With their encouragement, cycling schemes have a higher chance of success.

Most management teams want to see a productive workforce, retain staff and hold a reputation for being a good employer. Cycling and wellbeing initiatives can have a positive effect on a variety of business needs and subsequently help managers achieve their objectives.

It is important to keep the management team involved every step of the way, from the initial site audit to staff survey results, sharing relevant case studies that highlight the benefits of promoting cycling in the workplace.

### **Employees**

If there is a clear appetite for cycling support in your organisation, the best way to involve employees in the process is via a Bicycle User Group or BUG, a workplace forum for cyclists of all levels that supports and encourages cycling. Our BUG guide has all the information you'll need to establish a user group in your organisation.

## Pulling the action plan together

**A good cycle action plan will consider the results of the site audit and staff survey along with the level of support from senior management. It will offer a number of measures aimed at increasing the number of staff cycling to and from work.**

**In all cases the action plan will need to be bespoke to your organisation. We can help you develop a plan that works for you.**

**Most action plans will span a three-five year period, with a short annual review. At the end of its lifespan, a more formal review is recommended.**

### **Ongoing monitoring**

Throughout the lifespan of an action plan it is essential that data is collected to evaluate initiatives.

Consider monitoring:

- Cost of measures implemented
- Time spent by staff involved in implementing the initiatives
- The number of people who attend events, undergo any cycle training, use pool bikes, claim cycle mileage, make use of the salary sacrifice scheme or receive emails relating to cycling.

### **Setting targets**

You should set your own targets for your organisation. The data collected from the site audit and staff survey will help establish them. We can offer support and advice during the development of your cycle action plan.



## Establishing an activity programme



The Cycle Champion, members of the BUG and senior management should agree on specific measures and timescales for an engaging programme of activity.

## Establishing an activity programme

### Getting started

**Your activity programme should be ambitious but deliverable within the timescales and budget. Activities should involve and engage all parties, and inspire them to give cycling a go.**

#### Ideas include:

- Regular engagement via emails/e-newsletters
- Corporate inductions and presentations
- Establish a cycle to work scheme, pool bikes, and business travel mileage agreements
- Annual events, challenges and cycling pledges, usually in line with other regional or national events
- Deep cleaning and tidying of existing facilities (short term projects)
- New or improved cycle storage or replacement lockers (medium term projects)
- New shower/changing facilities. High quality cycle storage and/or CCTV (long term projects).





Other organised activities that will encourage people to try cycling include:

## Cycling challenges

**Cycling challenges are a tried and tested way to encourage people to 'give cycling a go'. Taking part should be simple and fun with the hope that many people will continue to cycle after the challenge is over.**

A workplace cycle challenge is a behavioural change programme, designed to encourage more people to cycle more often.

It allows organisations and the departments within them to compete against each other to see who can encourage the most staff to cycle for a specified amount of time, for example, at least 10 minutes over a three-week challenge period.

A workplace cycle challenge focuses on participation rather than mileage, to create a fair competition that engages new and occasional cyclists as much as regular cyclists.

Challenges can also be used to reward those who already cycle or encourage them to cycle more often.

## Pledges

**A cycling pledge can involve the whole company or can reflect an individual's own cycling achievements. On an organisational level, staff can collectively pledge to:**

- Cycle once a week
- Cycle a certain number of miles
- Save a certain amount of car driven miles
- Save a particular amount of CO<sub>2</sub>
- Replace a number of car journeys with cycled journeys.

A cycling pledge, just like a cycle challenge, can help bring staff together as they have fun working towards a common goal.

When other members of staff see their colleagues enjoying themselves, they will be encouraged to take part and give cycling a go.

A cycling pledge can be tailored and scaled to your organisation and the needs of your employees.



## Events

**Events can be used to launch or celebrate cycling challenges and align with regional and national cycling events.**

**Here are a few tips and some ways Transport for Greater Manchester can help make your event a success:**



- **Time of year:** Events work well when timed to coincide with wider regional and national events such as Cycle to Work Day or Bike Week
- **Time of day:** Pick a time that is likely to suit the maximum number of staff. Lunch time rides or a 'biker's breakfast' event usually work well
- **Location:** Whatever your event involves, choose a location that gets the most footfall at that specific time
- **Promotion:** You want as many people as possible to know what the event is and why they should attend. Remember to seek permission from internal communications teams and encourage them to promote the event too
- **Materials:** We can offer you free materials to help make your event a success including; cycle maps, hi-vis vests and slap bands, branded pens and stationery
- **Cycle instructors:** We have a network of qualified cycle instructors and can arrange for someone to visit your workplace to help with route planning, training and bike maintenance
- **Refreshments:** Free tea, coffee and biscuits can encourage staff to attend the event and stay a little longer than they might otherwise
- **Safety first:** Before holding any events on or off site, organisations should undergo a risk assessment to enhance the safety of those involved. Transport for Greater Manchester can help with risk management
- **Collect feedback:** Remember to collect feedback from the events, as this is likely to influence the nature of future events
- **Photographs:** Be sure to take lots of photographs and show them to staff following the event along with any feedback, further information and plans for future events.



## Led rides

**Led rides offer a more relaxed cycling experience and are ideal for people who may not be that confident on a bike. Led rides involve a ride leader taking a group of staff out on bikes, perhaps over lunch, to get a feel for cycling. There are routes to suit all abilities.**

Be sure to promote the led ride early enough to give people enough time to sign up and prepare. Transport for Greater Manchester can also provide ride leader training too.



**If you are delivering a led ride, consider the following:**

- Events work well when timed to coincide with wider regional and national events such as Cycle to Work Day or Bike Week
- Review potential routes online and consider the needs of users. Google Maps, Sustrans and mapmyride.com are good places to start. Circular routes starting and finishing at your workplace are best
- Measure the distance and estimate the time it will take to complete the ride
- Traffic free cycling routes or those with little traffic for a more pleasant cycling experience
- Encourage early sign-ups so that you can gauge the level of interest
- Led rides offer great opportunities to explore new and different neighbourhoods. It is important to keep your colleagues entertained and enthusiastic throughout the ride
- Before holding any events on or off site, organisations should undergo a risk assessment to enhance the safety of those involved. Transport for Greater Manchester can help with risk management.







Ways to increase cycling in your workplace



Improve facilities

We can help your Cycle Champion to understand where any investment in cycling infrastructure may be best spent. The site audit and staff survey will also inform the recommendations.

We can provide grants and match funding of up to £10,000 towards the cost of providing cycling facilities at your workplace, such as cycle storage, showers, changing facilities or a drying room. We can also help you with the cost of setting up a BUG or training for a dedicated cycle co-ordinator.

Implemented measures should be appropriate to the business and the scale of your ambition to become a cycle friendly employer.

Any issues?

Your Cycle Champion should seek input from facilities management/building management or your landlord as to what potential there is for improvement.



**Most medium to large businesses and employment sites, particularly offices, should seek to provide the following:**

**Cycle parking spaces:**

- Appropriate number of spaces
- Conveniently located
- Correctly designed to support bike frames
- Secure.

**Storage facilities:**

- Secure lockers tall enough to hang a shirt/suit
- Large enough to store toiletries and other small items including cycling gear
- Located close to both the shower and changing facilities.

**Shower facilities:**

- Located within a short walking distance of any cycle storage and the main workplace
- Fully operational and regularly maintained
- Complemented by a mirror and sink
- Should have somewhere for users to store belongings while they shower
- Located either in the same room as, or next to changing facilities.

**Changing facilities:**

- Should have at least one hair dryer or a power socket
- Should have somewhere for users to hang clothes and/or a towel if separate to the storage facilities
- Should offer seating.

**Drying facilities:**

- Staff need space to dry wet cycling gear and/or towels used when showering
- Should be located close to both the shower, changing and storage facilities.

Any issues?

If you come across any cycle infrastructure issues, please let us know at [cycling@tfgm.com](mailto:cycling@tfgm.com)



## Promote cycling and its benefits

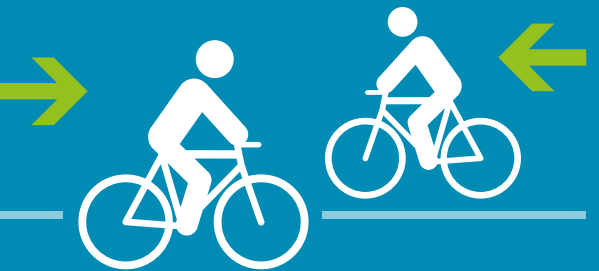
As we have already covered, the benefits of cycling and living a healthy lifestyle are well documented.

In terms of how to promote the benefits of cycling, the following channels should be explored:

- **Information for new starters:** Evidence suggests that we are most likely to change our travel habits when going through a significant period of change in our lives. Promotional materials should be sent to new starters before they begin work, ideally with a copy of their contract agreement
- **Corporate inductions:** A good opportunity to reinforce the information sent prior to staff starting
- **Intranet:** If you have an Intranet, information on cycling should be visible to all those who use this resource
- **Posters/leaflets/flyers or guides:** Not everyone has access to a computer and people are still used to receiving information via more traditional means, especially in communal work areas
- **Emails/e-newsletters:** BUG members may wish to circulate well written, simple and informative emails to all staff at regular intervals throughout the year
- **Presentations/events:** A short, well-delivered presentation can help create a lasting impression and encourage people to change their travel habits. Cycle Champions or BUG members could present something to their teams/departments or senior managers could deliver something on a wider scale.

## Training opportunities

We recognise that for many people, a lack of confidence represents a barrier to cycling. In order to help encourage people to give cycling a go, we deliver a range of training courses for different skill levels.



### Cycle Training

Transport for Greater Manchester offers a variety of free cycle training classes for those aged 16 and over and of all abilities. They include:

- **Learn to Ride:** A course which covers the absolute basics for those who may not have ridden a bike in a long time, or are completely new to cycling
- **Road Rider Ready:** A course for those who are fairly confident off-road but are not sure about the rules of cycling on the road
- **One to one:** Personal coaching on the road to help develop riding and communication skills, tailored to specific needs
- **Ride leader:** A course for those who cycle for fun and are keen to get their community on two wheels.

### Cycle maintenance classes

We also offer a range of maintenance courses to help build cycling confidence and knowledge. We can arrange for the following courses to take place at your workplace:

- **Basic Maintenance:** Learn how to check your bike for safety, adjust brakes and gears and how to mend a puncture
- **Intermediate Maintenance:** A full day session looking in practical detail at brakes, gears, cables and chains and routine servicing
- **Dr Bike Cycle Health Checks:** A free bike health check. These sessions work well when held before work as part of a 'biker's breakfast'.



Establishing a salary sacrifice scheme

A salary sacrifice scheme, commonly known as a ‘cycle to work’ scheme, enables your employees to get bikes and accessories tax-free. This allows them to save on the cost of a new bike and spread the cost of a purchase over 12 months.

Transport for Greater Manchester can support you in implementing such a scheme. Details on how to request more information are on page 31.



Getting around by bike



Journey Planning

Planning a cycle route can help people feel comfortable and confident when travelling by bike, whether that’s on the daily commute or on a longer, leisurely ride. Our free online and paper maps are a great way to plan journeys. They highlight quieter streets, or roads with cycle lanes, if riders are looking for more relaxed ways to travel. Our one to one training sessions (page 23) also offer help in planning a route and riding it.

Cycleways

Greater Manchester’s six new Cycleways offer a quick and easy way for cyclists to get around. The routes connect key areas of Greater Manchester and give cyclists more space. Some are separated from traffic whilst others are completely traffic-free, making it easier to get around.

Bikes and public transport

**Trains:** Bikes are allowed on the majority of trains at most times of the day, completely free of charge, although sometimes a reservation is required. Folding bikes are classed as luggage and do not require a reservation. The number of bikes allowed on one service may be restricted on busy services at the discretion of station or train staff. Call your network provider to find out more.

**Trams:** Metrolink only allows folding bikes onto its trams, however many of our tram stops have cycle parking. To find out what cycle parking is available at your nearest stop visit the Metrolink website: [www.metrolink.co.uk](http://www.metrolink.co.uk)

**Buses:** Bikes are not allowed on buses, although folding bikes are normally accepted. A number of bus stations and interchanges have bike parking facilities on site.

Cycle Hubs

Greater Manchester has a growing network of Cycle Hubs – secure, dry places where you can park your bike with confidence. Sited at major transport interchanges and busy locations, Cycle Hubs make it more convenient than ever to use a bike for part, or all of a journey to work.

Joining the Cycle Hub community is quick and easy with membership starting at just £10 a year. This allows access to all Hubs, apart from the City Tower and MediaCityUK Hubs, with membership starting there from £10 per month.

BLUC lockers

You can also join the BLUC parking scheme to access any locker in the club and use your bike to travel to train stations, bus stops and Metrolink stops in Greater Manchester.

Find out more

For more information about journey planning, maps, Cycle Hubs and other parking facilities in Greater Manchester, visit [www.tfgm.com/cycling](http://www.tfgm.com/cycling)



## Travelling for business by bike

### Bikes for business

Another way to encourage staff to cycle to work is to take advantage of our 'Bikes for Business' programme.

Through the scheme, we offer bikes that your business can borrow, at no cost, and lend to staff for journeys to meetings or travel to and from work. All the equipment needed to get on the road is provided, like helmets, locks and lights.

### Pool bikes

Staff can use pool bikes for short, business related journeys, for example when travelling to nearby meetings. Evidence suggests that journeys by bike in urban areas can be faster than any other mode of travel. The increasing number of inner city and town centre cycle lanes and priority measures being delivered across Greater Manchester will make such journeys even faster.

Cycling to a meeting is not only a cost efficient means of travel but can also provide a relaxing environment for staff to gather thoughts and prepare mentally.

By having a pool of maintained bikes, an organisation can make such journeys an option for many of its staff. Here are some ways you can make sure your pool bikes benefit your business:

- **Choose the right bikes:** You want the bikes to be used by as many people as possible. Hybrid bikes in a selection of sizes will suit a variety of people. Folding bikes may be best if staff need to combine short trips with public transport
- **Safe and sound:** Keep the bikes secure and well maintained
- **Well managed:** Much like a pool car fleet, you should try and implement a basic booking system for the bikes
- **All the gear:** If you are providing bikes you need to provide helmets, lights and bike locks
- **Training:** Staff should be offered the opportunity to undertake cycle training.

### Mileage claims

Most organisations pay for the cost of driving to meetings during work hours. This is usually anything between 10p and 50p per mile travelled. If staff are using their own bikes to cycle the same journeys then they too should receive an agreed sum per mile travelled.

### Safety first

Safety is the highest priority and before staff begin cycling for work purposes you may wish to undergo a risk assessment.







Ongoing data collection

**The Cycle Champion and others involved in the delivery of the action plan should collect as much data as possible throughout the lifespan of the plan.**

**Once a year, an exercise should be undertaken to ascertain the following:**

- How much money was spent on delivering each measure
- How much staff time was spent on delivering each measure
- How many people engaged with/made use of/benefited from each measure
- General opinions on the effectiveness of the measures in encouraging cycling.

The above could form the basis of a basic report and be used to secure on-going support from senior management.

**Annual site audit**

The site audit undertaken at the data collection stage must be repeated annually to assess whether trends have changed as a result of measures being introduced.

**Annual staff survey**

It is essential to regularly assess staff opinion on the implemented measures and initiatives in order to adapt and best suit their needs.

Questions posed on an annual staff survey could include:

- Q Did you attend any of the cycling related events on site and if so did it help encourage you to start cycling or to cycle more often?
- Q Have you made use of the new and improved shower facilities? If so have they encouraged you to start cycling or cycle more often?



## Action plan review

### Annual action plan review

An action plan will grow, change and adjust over time. Action plans should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are still appropriate and feature measures that make best use of the available budget.

Data collected over the course of the previous 12 months, during site audits and from staff surveys, should be analysed to establish whether anything needs to be amended or changed.

Examples of information gathered and subsequent changes include:

- **Emails:** A very effective means of communication that many people respond to. Emails may negate the need for investment in other forms of engagement such as posters, flyers and leaflets
- **Events:** If attendance is lower than expected, you may wish to change the format or number of events
- **Pool Bikes:** If they are well used, you may want to consider expanding the fleet.

If your initial action plan featured targets for each year, then there will be a need to review the latest data to establish whether the targets were met. Effort should be taken to understand why targets may not have been met and also, when and why targets were exceeded. Targets can then be adjusted if necessary.

It may be beneficial to hold a workshop with relevant parties to share ideas as to what worked well and what didn't work well. A special BUG meeting would offer the perfect forum for this. A reviewed action plan should then be circulated for comments in the same manner as the original. As with the original, it is essential that buy in is secured from each of the key stakeholders.

### Final action plan review

When the plan has reached the end of its lifespan (usually three to five years) a more thorough review may be required. Senior leadership within the organisation may request data on how successful the investment has been before starting the process of creating a new plan with new targets.

## Further information

### Transport for Greater Manchester

For more information about engaging your employees and increasing cycling in the workplace, visit [www.tfgm.com/cycling](http://www.tfgm.com/cycling).

Cycling isn't restricted to business hours of course; we want to see people getting around by bike in their spare time too. If you or your colleagues are looking for inspiration for a day out on two wheels, from relaxing canal side routes to exhilarating mountain bike trails, the TfGM website can point you in the right direction.

TfGM's Travel Choices team work with employers to promote sustainable travel; offering grants, cycle training and free support.

Contact [business.travel@tfgm.com](mailto:business.travel@tfgm.com) or visit [www.tfgm.com/businesstravel](http://www.tfgm.com/businesstravel) to find out more.

### Cycling Organisations

There are many other cycling organisations, groups and clubs that can help your business on its way and offer rides, activities, support and assistance.

National organisations include:

- British Cycling  
[www.britishcycling.org.uk](http://www.britishcycling.org.uk)
- Cycling Embassy of Great Britain  
[www.cycling-embassy.org.uk](http://www.cycling-embassy.org.uk)
- Cycling UK  
[www.cyclinguk.org](http://www.cyclinguk.org)
- Sustrans  
[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

A list of regularly updated regional and local cycling groups and clubs can be found at [www.tfgm.com/cycling](http://www.tfgm.com/cycling)

### Useful documents

Email [business.travel@tfgm.com](mailto:business.travel@tfgm.com) to receive these useful documents:

- How to run a pledge scheme
- Site audit sheet
- Staff survey sheet
- Salary Sacrifice Cycle Scheme guidance
- BUG guide



