**Bike Library Grant Guidance Notes**

**Are you an organisation in Greater Manchester and interested in setting up a Bike Library? If so, we want to hear from you!**

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| **Before completing the Bike Library application form, please read these guidance notes.** **If you need advice on how to complete your application, please contact the TfGM Active Travel team at** [**active.travel@tfgm.com**](mailto:active.travel@tfgm.com) |

1. **Introduction & Background**

A bike library is a simple concept. It’s a location where people can go to borrow a bike for free. Access to a bike is an issue in Greater Manchester (GM) with up to 75% of households not having one available. Therefore, even with the high-quality infrastructure being installed in many areas, if individuals do not have the ability to try it, maximum usage will not be achieved. The intention of this project is to provide a number of new bike library locations, to fill gaps in provision, near to quality cycling infrastructure, where the local community can easily loan a bike and see if cycling is for them. Loan periods can vary in time depending on local and personal circumstances and the intention is to expand the network of libraries co-ordinated by TfGM with high level consistent branding and core values, but flexibility to operate to meet the specific needs of the local community on their doorstep.

Libraries will ordinarily be in the heart of the community, within easy reach by foot; be it community centres, schools, village halls or local business premises. Indeed, there are already examples of these across GM, TfGM’s role is to support expansion and to help set up where libraries will work best. Grants of up to £5,000 are available via an application process.

**TfGM’s role**

TfGM wishes to develop and support a network of bike libraries across GM and has secured funding from the Government’s Capability and Ambition Fund.

**Grants**

TfGM will co-ordinate and administer grants of up to £5,000 per library. It will also look for opportunities to help deliver support or activity where it is viable to do so and helpful to the libraries. An example of this is the provision of appropriate cycle mechanic training.

**Oversight**

TfGM will provide staff resource to ensure the libraries have a point of contact to support them through the grant process and the initial stages of set up. This will not only ensure the grants are utilised as intended but also to support successful delivery and information sharing.

**Marketing and Communications**

TfGM will provide a branded marketing and promotional pack of materials to ensure visual consistency across all the libraries. It will also create a webpage compiling locations and details of all libraries to help raise awareness. Social media channels, in particular, will be used to generate further interest and usage. Support will also be provided for any local publicity opportunities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Regular submission of basic monitoring metrics, such as Bike Library member numbers and number of bike loans issued, is essential to demonstrate the outcomes achieved and the impact of the project funding. Award of the funding will be conditional on this being completed. The submission process is tried and tested and will only take a few minutes each month.

Additionally, there will be an annual user survey, and key contact survey which we require all Libraries to provide supporting data and input into.

TfGM will provide specific guidance on monitoring metrics and provide a ‘dashboard’ to allow for consistent output data. It will also produce, distribute, and report on the results of evaluation surveys.

**Bike supply**

To help with bike provision for the libraries, TfGM will promote the ability to donate bikes and look for opportunities to set up agreements with organisations to provide bulk bike donations.

**Sustainability**

TfGM will continue to aim to support a sustainable delivery model that allows libraries to continue beyond the funding period and for new libraries to be created. This may include securing additional funding.

1. **Application Process**

Applications for grants can be made by completing the separate application form and by following the timescale guidance provided in the invitation to apply. It is vital that these guidance notes (including Frequently Asked Questions below) are read in advance. Any additional queries can be sent to [active.travel@tfgm.com](mailto:active.travel@tfgm.com). There will also be the opportunity to speak with Active Travel Officers via online “drop-in” sessions to support those applying or considering applying, as detailed in the application invite.

1. **Who CAN be funded?**

* An organisation based or working in Greater Manchester.

1. **Who CANNOT be funded?**

Applications will not be accepted from groups/organisations that:

* Are aimed at increasing the membership of a particular Political party
* Are aimed at the promotion of one religious belief

1. **What CAN be funded?**

* Revenue costs that assist the project
* Equipment, tools and parts
* Relevant events
* Training costs
* One-off Transport costs, e.g. to fund delivery/collection of a batch of donated bikes
* Volunteer expenses
* Storage costs
* Reasonable capital costs (quotes required)

1. **What CANNOT be funded?**

* Ongoing running costs of an organisation - e.g. salaries, rental costs, electricity, water etc. Existing activity; where the Bike Library is an expansion of your current enterprise, please confirm how this funding contributes to activity over and above what you already do
* Activities that the government has a legal obligation to fund
* Retrospective costs (i.e. money that’s already been spent or project already taken place)
* Sponsorship / fundraising events or contributions to larger/major appeals
* Activity that is unlawful, discriminates against people, or is illegal
* Attendance at conferences and mandatory training which organisations are required by law to provide
* Any activity that does not contribute to the bike library

1. **Who awards the grants?**

Decisions will be made by the Active Team at TfGM. All grant applications will be reviewed using a scoring system and successful applicants will be notified via email.

Please Note:

* Panel members will check applications and ask for more information if needed
* All groups will receive a decision and feedback on their application as soon as possible
* Successful groups will sign a jointly agreed grant agreement with clear terms and conditions

1. **Evaluation process**

Applications will be assessed and prioritised based on an established criterion. This includes:

1. Near existing, high quality cycling infrastructure
2. Areas of deprivation/low income
3. Bike ownership levels in the locality
4. Proposal viability
5. Ability and readiness to deliver
6. Sustainability of the proposal
7. That the request for the grant meets the criteria for agreeable expenditure
8. **Frequently Asked Questions**

Below are answers to expected questions on the role and operation of a bike library. This ongoing project continues to use a trial, improve and increase approach. Whilst this means there is some flexibility, it is also important to have a framework and parameters to work within in order that applicants know what is expected, can commit to it and the outcomes aimed for are achieved.

1. **Where should a bike library be located?**

The intention of a bike library is that it is situated within easy walking distance (up to 10mins approx.) of the community it serves and is ideally close to good quality cycling routes. The library can be in a variety of locations e.g. community centre, school, college, village hall, business. It is appreciated that these may be locations that do not have any sort of cycling activity currently. Indeed, applications are encouraged from locations that are looking to diversify from their usual activity.

1. **Do loans and maintenance have to take place all in one place?**

No. It is appreciated that some scenarios may involve an approach where groups and organisations work together in order to achieve the best solution. For example, a community hall might be the best location for loans to take place but a local bike supplier or organisation may carry out the refurbishment of the donated bikes and ongoing maintenance.

1. **Who can maintain and repair the bikes?**

The bikes must be maintained and repaired by an appropriate person, so as to be fit for purpose at the point of each loan. Note that training can be paid for by the grant and TfGM may put on group training sessions.

1. **Is cycle training for users provided?**

Users will need to self-certify their ability to cycle. If anyone does require training, they can be signposted to TfGM’s cycle training offer at https://beeactive.tfgm.com/cycling/courses-and-bike-maintenance/

1. **Can existing bike libraries be included?**

Yes. If an existing library or similar needs support to meet growing demand and can evidence clearly how this will further grow the existing provision, then applications are welcomed. If an existing library does not require or meet the criteria for a grant, they can request to be added to the network to support profile raising.

1. **How many bikes should there be at a library?**

A minimum fleet of 6 bikes is suggested but we are aware that circumstances will vary. It is appreciated it may take a few weeks from the award of the grant to receive donated bikes and prepare for usage.

1. **How long should the loans be for?**

Different communities will have different usage requests. However, in order to have some form of commonality, bikes should ideally be available to loan for periods of 1 hour up to 2 weeks or even longer depending on circumstances. It is appreciated that the bikes can used for a variety of purposes e.g. family rides, commuting to work, trips to the shop, health rides etc. However, what must be avoided is a sense that the bike belongs to an individual. There must be an emphasis on loans. If circumstances allow, you may wish to consider some form of process to allow loanees to purchase the bikes for a nominal fee at the end of an extended loan period.

1. **Who can use a bike library?**

There should be a membership process in place (in a similar way to a normal library) in order to manage the bikes and usage. Generally, it’s expected that these will be people who live within a short walking distance. It is also acceptable that if a library is at a school, for example, loans could be restricted to pupils, parents and staff.

1. **What should the opening hours be?**

There will often be a voluntary aspect to loans and building access may be restricted. However, as a minimum, availability would be recommended across four days a week or more between 10am and 4pm. Community locations should be available for loans at weekends where possible but it is appreciated weekends may be an issue for schools, for example.

1. **How will we know if a library has been a success?**

By becoming part of the GM bike library network, libraries will commit to a minimum level of monitoring support in order to understand how successful this new project is. TfGM can provide advice and guidance, including on data protection. Example processes include membership and loan record keeping, key outputs provided to TfGM each month and supporting evaluation led by TfGM. The overall aim of the libraries is to increase cycling levels for those that do not have access to a working bike. Ideally the intention is to encourage those that enjoy using the cycles to get their own bike which then allows others to use the library ones.

1. **Can TfGM help with the promotion of a bike library and bike donations?**

Yes. Our network of live bike libraries are publicised on a webpage at <https://beeactive.tfgm.com/cycling/bike-libraries/> although this requires a landing page on each libraries own website that we can direct people towards. Also, to support communication and awareness raising of the libraries and the ability to donate bikes, contacts will also be sought to encourage regular bike donations. It is also intended to provide TfGM branded marketing support packs including items such as outdoor banners.

1. **Can libraries work together to ensure bike donations and loan bikes?**

Yes, if libraries can work together in an agreeable way, it is actively encouraged. There is a library Whatsapp Group that can be used to network and exchange ideas within.

1. **Can an organisation just help with bike donations?**

If you would like to get involved but are not able to set up a Bike Library, you could consider becoming a so called ‘Donation Station’ instead. Donation Stations are essentially allocated drop-off points where members of the public can donate their old or unused bikes. Anyone can become a Donation Station, you just need:

* Space to securely store donated bikes
* A regular time-slot for people to drop off their bikes (this will be advertised on the website)

We will provide you with branding (a banner, postcards etc.) and you will also be publicised through a new webpage. Once you have reached capacity, you can contact the Active Travel team who will arrange for a bike library to collect the bikes. Please note that a grant cannot be provided purely for a Donation Station.

1. **Can the grant be paid upfront?**

The maximum that will be paid upfront is 50% of the awarded grant amount. If TfGM is satisfied that this is a requirement to proceed, then it is possible. TfGM will process the grant payment as soon as possible. Any costs incurred in advance of the initial payment or subsequent remainder of the grant being agreed and reimbursed are at the applying organisation’s risk.

1. **When will the remainder of the funds be paid?**

The remaining balance will be paid once evidence has been submitted (via receipts etc) that the spend has been incurred in line with the grant application.

1. **What costs can the grant be used for?**

Please see detail on this in section 5 above.

1. **What liability insurance needs to be in place?**

It is a requirement that appropriate public liability and employer’s liability insurance is in place which covers the activities undertaken, with copies submitted with your application.

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