

# The Bristol Bike Project

## Volunteer Handbook

### Welcome!

Thank you for signing up to volunteer with The Bristol Bike Project! Volunteers are the heart and soul of this Project. Your time, energy and skills keeps the wheels of the Project turning.

Before you start volunteering, please read this document in full and complete the online volunteer agreement form. This confirms that you have read, understood and agree with its contents. You will then be given a tour of the premises and directed to a task you feel comfortable doing.

If you have any questions about the contents of this handbook, the workshop, or anything else related to the Project, please ask for guidance from a workshop coordinator. If they can't answer your question, they will direct you to someone who can!

### About Us

We aim to help people from all walks of life get out on two wheels and for it to be an inclusive and empowering experience. We divert unwanted bicycles from landfill, repair and rehome them with people within our community whose lives would greatly improve through accessible, affordable and sustainable transportation. We promote skill-sharing and independence, helping everyone here build bicycle maintenance and mechanics skills in an inclusive, non-judgemental, vibrant and supportive workshop environment.

Our community work is funded almost entirely by our shop, staffed by brilliant mechanics who work to overhaul donated bikes for sale, carry out services and repairs, and run maintenance courses amongst other things!

We are proud to operate as a co-op, putting members at the heart of decision-making here at the Project. Anyone who volunteers regularly can become a Member in order to become more involved in the running and the direction of the Project.

### The Premises

**Toilets** are down the corridor, to the right.

**Lockers** in the corridor are provided for your belongings.

**Sofas** behind the shop till are for everyone's use.

**Refreshments** such as tea, coffee and snacks are by the sink in the workshop. Please help yourself.

**The shop.** The workstations and tools in the shop are for use by staff only.

**Fire exit** is immediately to the right of the workshop's back door. Or use the main entrance and exit out into the car park and on to City Road.

**Drugs** will not be tolerated on BBP premises at any time.

**Alcohol** is not permitted at BBP when a workshop is in progress.

**Smoking** is outside only.

### Who does what?

**Volunteers:** Work on various aspects of the project, fixing bikes, coordinating workshops, maintaining the premises, youth work, admin tasks, as well as promoting BBP at events. Our Directors and Ops Group Representatives are also volunteers.

**Workshop Coordinators:** Are responsible for the safe, effective running of the workshop sessions. Please go to your Workshop Coordinator with any queries or problems.

**Members:** Comprised of volunteers, staff and other stakeholders. Attend regular meetings and vote on important decisions affecting the future of the project. If you volunteer regularly, you are welcome to become a member of our co-op.

**Directors:** Share overall legal and financial responsibility for the Project, act as a protector of our values and purpose, and bring valuable expertise and experience to support the overall smooth running of the Project.

**Ops Group Reps:** Made up of representatives from across the Project who take decisions and lead on the operational activities of the Project, in line with the direction set by members.

**Staff:** We have a number of trading arm staff working on bike sales, repairs and services, and office staff working on coordination of various aspects of the Project.

## Volunteering with us

As a workshop volunteer, you will be expected to carry out the following tasks:

- Stripping down, preparing and repairing bicycles.
- Sorting through and assessing the stock of used parts.
- Maintaining a tidy workshop, returning unused tools, cleaning at the end of the session.
- Working within health and safety practice.
- Working alongside our project users (not applicable to all workshops), ensuring they have an enjoyable and valuable experience mending their bike. You will need to be mindful that they may not speak English well, or they might have mental or physical health issues.
- We also encourage volunteers who are able and willing to get involved in sharing responsibility for how things are run here at the Project.

We encourage you to commit to a regular volunteer session every week. This helps us to provide a consistent service and allows you to get the most out of being part of our community. Please arrive at the beginning of the session (morning or afternoon) and stay until the end, helping to clean up the workshop. As a workshop volunteer, you can help out at any of the following sessions:

**Women's Night.** Monday 6-9pm: Women's only, skill-sharing session open to the public. We welcome volunteers of all abilities to come and take part, helping the women who drop in to mend their bikes

**Volunteer Nights.** Tuesday & Wednesday 6.30-9.30pm: Preparing bikes for the Earn-a-Bike scheme.

**Fix-a-Bike.** Wednesday 10am-1pm and 2-5pm: A busy drop-in session, helping project users to mend bikes that they have previously received through the Earn-a-bike scheme. Anyone wishing to volunteer at these sessions must first be inducted at one of our other workshops.

**Earn-a-Bike.** Thursday 10am-1pm and 2-5pm: Involves three hour long, one-to-one workshop sessions working with marginalised people from within our community. Volunteers work with individuals on their donated bikes, or to prepare bikes ready for future Earn-a-Bike sessions.

**After-School-Bikes.** Friday 3.15-6pm: A drop-in repair session for people aged 8 to 18. Volunteers supervise and support the young people, teaching them bike repair skills. Some previous experience in bike mechanics and/or working with young people is advisable.

We also welcome volunteers to take on all kinds of other activities such as finance, communications, even gardening! If you have a skill you think would be helpful, please let us know! We are currently looking to develop the following areas in particular: fundraising, marketing and business development,

overseeing improvements to the premises and facilities.

## What can you expect from volunteering with us?

Volunteering with BBP means becoming part of our lovely, extended family of people passionate about the Bristol community and the difference having a bicycle can make to people's lives. But that's not all, here's a run down of the many benefits we offer our volunteers. Please keep an eye out in the volunteer e-updates, Facebook and Whatsapp groups, and workshop notices for news and updates!

**Training and support.** You will receive ongoing training and support in each session from the workshop coordinators who can demonstrate particular tasks and answer questions. We also encourage skill-sharing between volunteers by buddying-up to work on bicycles in pairs. After you have been volunteering regularly for two months, you will be eligible to apply for our dedicated training sessions which cover mechanical skills and wider understanding of the Project.

**Role development and paid work.** We regularly have openings for Workshop Coordinator roles - both paid and unpaid - which we advertise first to volunteers and members. We are always happy to provide job references for work outside of the Project for committed volunteers.

**Socials.** We aim to provide a welcoming and sociable space at the Project, where we hope you will meet and make friends with lots of lovely people who share your love for bikes. We also organise a number of socials throughout the year to which all BBP family and friends are invited!.

**Membership Benefits.** When you have been volunteering regularly for two months you can become a member of our co-op. This gives you the opportunity to get more involved in the running and the direction of the Project and to attend our members' meetings where you can vote on important decisions. You will also receive discounts in the shop and on second-hand parts, a free BBP t-shirt or cap, and free entry to our Women's Night and Bike Kitchen if you want to work on your own bike. Please refer to our governance handbook for more information on how the co-op works, which can be found online at <http://www.thebristolbikeproject.org/about-us/join-the-co-op/>

**Feedback.** The Project belongs to all of us - if you have any feedback on the way we do things or ideas about how to improve it, please do let your Ops Group rep know or email [hello@thebristolbikeproject.org](mailto:hello@thebristolbikeproject.org)

## Our Policies

To ensure the workshop is a safe space for all, it is vital that everybody understands and commits to our Safer Space and Health & Safety policies.

### Safer Space Policy

The Bristol Bike Project is a space for learning, skill-sharing and empowering yourself and others around you. This workshop is an inclusive, safe space for all, where everyone will be treated with equal respect. We require that all people entering this space respect this and treat each other accordingly.

We will not tolerate any form of discrimination, or any behaviour which makes other people feel excluded, vulnerable or threatened. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on race, age, gender, sexuality, faith, disability, and social background. We reserve the right not to work with anyone who acts in a threatening way or we believe to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

If you encounter such behaviour, please speak up! It is everyone's responsibility to keep this space safe and welcoming to all. If you don't feel comfortable challenging certain behaviour, ask the Workshop Coordinator.

You may be asked to leave the premises if it is felt that you are violating this safe space.

The workshop is also a no swearing zone.

## **Our Health and Safety Policy**

In case of a fire: activate the fire alarm (on the right hand side of the door to the back bike storage area) and evacuate. Do not fight the fire unless you are trained to do so. Our Muster Point is the junction between City Road and Stokes Croft. Do not return to building until you are given the all clear to do so by the building manager or fire brigade.

First aid kit: Should you happen to have an injury whilst in the workshop, please inform one of the workshop coordinators who will direct you towards the first aid kit. The kit is on the shelf under the workshop computer. Also make a note of it in our accident book. In case of serious accident, the nearest A&E is the BRI on Marlborough Street.

Hazardous substances: Oils, and cleaning fluids may cause skin cracking after prolonged exposure. Gloves and aprons are available.

Hand tools: The tools are here to be used by all. However, if you are unfamiliar with any of the tools and the way in which they are used, you must ask for assistance. Misuse of these tools can result in possible injury and damage to the tools.

Slipping tools: Injury can easily occur when tools slip. Always make sure that tools are firmly in place before applying force. If a part that you wish to remove seems to be seized, ask the Workshop Coordinator before risking injury or damaging the tools.

Using the work stand: Injury can occur if bikes are not correctly and firmly placed in the workstand. If clamping by the frame, make sure frame has standard round tubing. If using the seatpost, make sure the seatpost clamp is tight. Make sure the stand clamp is as tight as you can make it.

Power tools: electric drills, grinder, welder, etc, and blowtorch MUST NOT be used without authorised supervision and proper personal protective equipment. Please ask the workshop coordinator if you need to use these.

Slips, trips and falls: Please ensure that walkways are kept free of obstructions (boxes, bike parts etc) at all times. Roller cabinet drawers must be closed after use. Please ensure that all spilt liquids are cleaned up immediately.

Wear appropriate footwear: Open sandals and flip-flops are not permitted in the workshop.

Manual Handling: There should be no need to lift heavy items in the workshop. Please only lift items which are within your capability and always ask for help if you feel unsure whether you can lift something easily.

Name Badge and work aprons: Please write your name on a strip of masking tape to stick on your apron, so we all know who's who.

## **Thank you!**

...for joining The Bristol Bike Project family and helping us to get more people out on two wheels :)