



What is a Bicycle User Group?



A Bicycle User Group (BUG) is a group of people who are keen to improve cycling conditions and opportunities in their local area. A BUG works closely with Local Government to make it safer and more convenient for cyclists to navigate the local area.

BUG members range from the regular commuter cyclist to the more occasional recreational bike rider. BUGs vary in size and purpose. They may meet on a regular basis to work out strategies to improve cycling in their community, building or campus. Some BUGs organise 'Bike to Work' days or other promotional activities.

BUGs can be a valuable resource for Local Governments. They help to promote and improve cycling facilities. BUGs help foster enthusiasm for cycling in their local community.

What do BUGs do?

BUGs engage in a variety of activities that promote cycling. Some of these activities include:

- Organising rides for their group and the public;
- Participating in local community events – BUGs may like to promote cycling at festivals and events by running bicycle repair clinics, cycling displays and skill testing circuits;
- Reporting safety issues such as glass on roads, overhanging branches, damaged paths, dangerous drainage gates and potholes to their Local Government;
- Influencing attitudes to cycling by talking with Local Government councillors, engineers, planners and other State and Local Government officials;
- Advocating for cycling and cyclists in the media by writing letters to the local paper;
- Identifying missing links in the existing cycling network; and
- Suggesting locations for new cycling infrastructure, e.g. where new bike parking facilities or cycling paths are most needed.

How can Local Government support their BUG?

Local Governments can support BUGs by providing a meeting space, e.g. a community hall or by hosting a web forum. Some Local Governments have formalised their relationship with the local BUG by inviting a BUG member to sit on relevant council advisory committees. If there is no BUG in their area, a Local Government can help establish one.

How do I start a BUG?

BUGs form because an individual or a group of like-minded people believe more could and should be done for cyclists. In forming a BUG, some careful planning is needed to ensure initial involvement and ongoing support. A successful formula for BUGs has been:

Step 1 – Get in contact with local cyclists.

This first step is to gain initial support from local cyclists and inform them of the intention to start a BUG.

Step 2 – Hold a small (initial) meeting with key supporters, also called the ‘core group’ meeting. This meeting is to establish a core group of members that will develop the BUG and to decide on the fundamental elements of the group, in preparation for the public meeting.

Step 3 – Hold a public meeting with many members of the community attending.

The second meeting is a public meeting for which widespread advertising is done to attract as many interested cyclists in the local area as possible.



Step 4 – Establish ongoing BUG meetings.

The third meeting will be the first ‘real’ meeting of the BUG. It will be attended by those who attended the original ‘core group’ meeting, plus others who have signed up to the BUG as a result of the public meeting. This meeting will establish the ongoing structure and core activities of the BUG.

What if I live in a country town or a regional centre?

BUGs are not limited to the Perth metropolitan region. The issues in bicycle planning and use in country towns and regional centres are similar, and the potential for increasing cycling exists. BUGs can easily be formed in country towns and regional centres using the same process described above.

“When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race.”
HG Wells

Where do I find out more?

The Cycling Unit at the Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the Bicycle Transport Alliance can help you establish your BUG. They have extensive knowledge about local cycling facilities and resources. To find out more, contact:

Department for Planning and Infrastructure, Cycling Unit

Email: cycling@dpi.wa.gov.au
Phone: (08) 9216 8000
Website: www.dpi.wa.gov.au/cycling

Bicycle Transportation Alliance Inc

Email: bta_wa@hotmail.com
Phone: (08) 9420 7210
Website: www.multiline.com.au/~bta