



## Case study – Cargo bike hire

### Introduction

In line with London Bike Hub's ethos of embedding the bicycle into the heart of the community, the company has used cargo bikes whenever possible to transport goods and deliver our services from day one. London Bike Hub started a scheme to allow both individuals and businesses to hire cargo bikes as the high cost of cargo bikes as well as their relatively newness is a deterrent to many people.

### Challenges & issues

London offers an attractive environment for the use of cargo bikes and to the shift to cargo bike usage.

- High number of short trips
- Increasing air pollution
- Relatively flat
- Decreasing desire to own a car

However to counter this there are a number of issues.

- Perceived high risk with cycling
- High cost of purchase
- Difficulty with storage

## Operation

London Bike Hub employs two models of operation in different boroughs.


Working on our own initiative in Hounslow a membership scheme allows users to try a cargo bike for a short period of time and then join a membership scheme for a yearly fee and this allows a set number of hires for the next 12 months.

In Ealing we work in partnership with the local council and act as an operator for their own cargo bike. This is a free service with residents and businesses allowed to borrow a bike requiring proof that they live or work in the borough.

## Booking process

Users can reserve a bike either on-line, via email or telephone and in person, London Bike Hub already runs a bike hire system and the operating processes and procedures are also employed for cargo bikes. The most obvious aspect of this is the on-line reservation system allowing the availability to be checked and the actual reservation:

View products

 Shopping Cart (0)

Availability & Rates

<

9



▼

July

▼

2016

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	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
 Cargo trike - small	From:0.00	N/A	From:0.00	From:0.00	From:0.00	From:0.00	From:0.00	From:0.00
 Cargo trike - large	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

The bulk of new users email or telephone first to arrange the initial hire but subsequently many prefer the on-line system for ease of use.

First time users are asked to arrive earlier prior to a hire for a short induction process on how a cargo bike handles, go through security arrangements and confirm proof-of-ID etc.

Uptake of the scheme has been high without marketing, both schemes had a small printed flyer campaign and these flyers are also given to each hirer to hand out to interested parties.



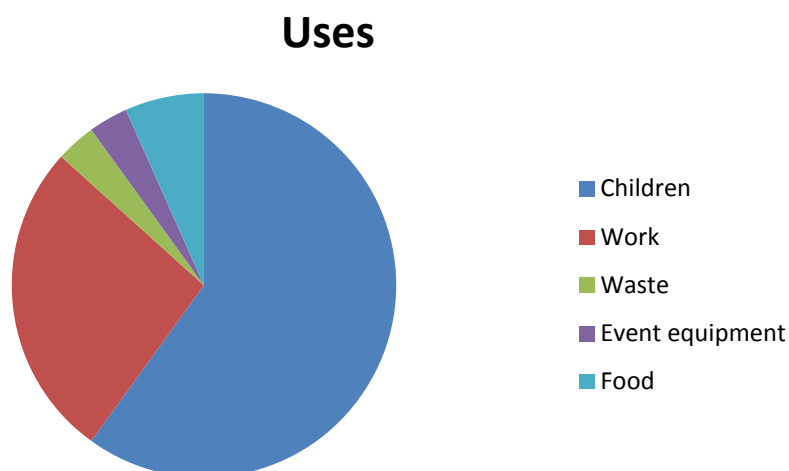
We also run a social media campaign on Twitter and Facebook to continually promote the schemes and attend community events with bikes.

## Business use

The original Hounslow scheme was aimed at SMEs to use the cargo bikes themselves – for example delivering their products and services or offering new client options. In reality most small businesses do not have capacity to use cargo bikes in this fashion and in some circumstances they now use our existing cycle logistics offering.

## Uses

The cargo bikes are used for many different applications.



## **Feedback**

Every new hirer is requested to fill in a survey to answer a number of key questions. Highlights include:

Over 80% of respondents would hire again

22% expressed an interest in purchasing a cargo bike

85% expressed an interest to a wider roll-out of the scheme

The biggest problem faced by users was parking at home or local storage.

## **The Future**

The scheme lends itself to mass roll-out with cargo bikes at other locations. There are a number of issues as without infrastructure to support this in terms of docking stations etc then locations would need to be manned. London Bike Hub has investigated several systems and they are still in the early stages of development. Until then London Bike Hub is researching in working with local shops that could host a bike, providing marketing opportunity both on the bike and also on promotional material for users and potential users interested in where to find bikes.

## **About the company**

London Bike Hub is an established, not-for-profit organisation based in West London and currently operating across the capital and beyond. Providing a wide range of bicycle related services from maintenance and cycle training, to community projects and school activities.

In regard to cycle logistics, London Bike Hub is a founding member of the European Cycle Logistics Federation and plays an active role in this arena. The company employs a fleet of cargo bikes and uses a dedicated proof-of-delivery system and routing software, as well as holding full goods-in-transit insurance. The company also provides training and support to staff, particularly in transferable skills such as bicycle maintenance and proudly supports the London Living Wage.



