

## Form a cycle campaign group

Bear in mind that no two groups will form and grow in the same way. The following is a rough guide, based on experiences of existing groups and designed to lay out how Cycling UK can support you.

### Getting started

Many groups find it easiest to start small – e.g 2-4 people. There are some key decisions about the group's direction that you may find are easier to make in a small group of well-informed people that you know you can trust.

There have been cases in the past of strangers getting together to form groups and finding that certain members become troublesome (this is rare). As mentioned before, Cycling UK can put you in touch with local likeminded people – just ask us.

Some things you may want to consider in your core group are:

- What is your ultimate vision? (Think big but be realistic)
- What shorter-term aims do you have? How will you hit those aims?
- Producing a timeline (or Gantt chart) can be a useful way of providing focus over a longer period of time, in which you highlight milestones and actions against a timeline and tick them off as you go. (You may also wish to do this later on once you have attracted a larger group).
- What geographical area will your campaign cover? Go back to the list of guides and see the 'What geographical area to campaign in' guide for more info.
- What is the name of your group? Try to use a name that says exactly what you do in the title, like [place name] Cycling Campaign
- What jobs need doing first (i.e before reaching out to other people)? A website or social media profiles are good things to start with.

Be flexible! As your group grows, so will your plans.

### Attracting supporters

Set up an open meeting to attract wider support. Book a venue about a month in advance and let us know about it as soon as possible. We can email all our members in your area and invite them along.

Your venue could be a small room at a pub (though be aware that this could cause problems for people who don't drink) or a community centre – ideally somewhere free.

To maximise turnout, make the event something fun. Invite a speaker or organise a ride & social aside to make campaign plans. Weekday evenings or events that aren't child-friendly may prevent parents from coming along.

If you are a Cycling UK member, you can publicise the event on our events listings page, the largest cycle event listings in the UK.

Let other similarly minded local groups know about the meeting. Eg environmental groups, sports cycling groups, health groups, parents, pensioners etc.

Publicise the meeting on social media, relevant local forums or local press.



For those that can't make it along to the first meeting, see if they want to be added to a mailing list for your campaign so they can stay up to date.

## First open meeting

You want your first meeting to be relatively informal but also focused. Don't put people off by being overly technical. Allow everyone to be heard and decisions to be made by the group as a whole. Have fun but make sure all agenda points have been discussed.

Use the below as a draft agenda if you wish, or just take some inspiration from it.

- Introductions
- Who has come along? Get email addresses (and phone numbers?) of everyone.
- Why do they want to start campaigning?
- A little background – what skills can they bring to the group?
- How much time can they offer?
- Give a brief introduction to the group so far and ask for feedback – this is your chance to review your aims/timeline etc

Ensure there are a list of actions at the end of the meeting and that everyone knows who will be doing what. Below are a few suggestions:

- Create social media accounts – Facebook/Twitter/Instagram (you can link accounts to keep them regularly updated)
- Set up a webpage – all Cycling UK affiliated groups get a free webpage on our site.
- Start getting local community support. (Go back to list of guides and see 'Getting and demonstrating local support')
- Open up a dialogue with your council. (Go back to list of guides and see 'Working with your local authority')
- Start work on a 'cycle tube map', these are easy to make and can inform a council's cycle network plan.

You may want to start thinking about a launch event of some kind (eg a cycle ride that ends outside the council's office) and tell local press/politicians. Get in touch with Cycling UK for assistance. Perhaps you are forming in response to current events. Eg a proposed new road or housing development or an election. If so, respond to relevant consultations and attend meetings.

Ensure by the end of the first meeting, everyone knows:

- When the next meeting is
- What jobs everyone is doing (and what they are meant to be doing!)
- Contact details of each other. You may want to set up a forum for regular conversation A forum for keeping in touch such as a Google Group, or Cyclescape for computers or Slack and Whatsapp for mobile phones.

## Follow up

As time goes on and you ramp up your activity, you may want to be more prescriptive with your roles, some roles you may need are:

- Press officer
- Social media / website content officer



- Events officer
- Campaigning/lobbying coordinator
- Someone to respond to consultations

Some groups make a constitution but others feel it is counter-productive. They can be quite time consuming to make but can be useful if you need a clear definition of what your group is and does. The choice is yours. See the [Dorset Cyclists Network's constitution](#) as a useful example.

You may want to set up subgroups within your campaign group (e.g one that focuses on Space for Cycling, another which focuses on Road Justice etc).

[Affiliate your group](#) to Cycling UK – there are a range of benefits but immediately the most useful are:

- A ready to go webpage on the Cycling UK website and a place to list your meetings/events. This means your page/events will appear in Google searches and will be seen on a website that has annual traffic of over one million people.
- Our dedicated and experienced campaigns team are on-hand to help you get up and running
- £10 million Third Party Organisers' Liability Insurance for events
- Up to £5,000 cover for group or club house items
- Discounted membership of Cycling UK for your members

Let us know how it's gone and keep us in the loop as your group progresses. We would welcome feedback about what kind of support would be helpful.