



## Participant Frequently Asked Questions

Shifting Gears is The Bike Station's new community programme in Perth and Edinburgh. Beginning in April 2021, we will be running year round opportunities to get involved with cycling and cycling-related activities. We are working together with partner organisations in the two cities who will refer people to the programme. Once you are a participant you have access to the range of services that make up Shifting Gears and can choose which ones you wish to take part in. Please note that places on all Shifting Gears services are limited

### Q: Can I apply to Shifting Gears?

Yes, so long as you are a member of one of our partner organisations for year one (listed below) then you can get in touch with your representative there to sign up.

#### Edinburgh:

[The Social Bite Village](#)  
[SCOREscotland](#)  
[Shakti Women's Aid](#)

#### Perth:

[MoveAhead](#)  
[PKAVS Carers Hub](#)  
[Perth Autism Support](#)  
Perth Syrian Support Group  
[PKC Throughcare Aftercare Team](#) (Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children)

### Q: I have a child, do you have creche facilities?

Yes, we have the ability to provide creche support, availability may be limited. Please get in touch if you know that you will be needing creche support to attend your chosen activities.

### Q: Are there any costs for Shifting Gears activities?

No, all services and activities offered through the programme are free of charge to participants.

## Referral bikes

Our referral bike service gives you the opportunity to get a refurbished bike, along with a lock, lights, and helmet so that you can get riding straight away! When we receive your referral our mechanics will match a bike of the correct size based on your height and set it up just for you. Once ready, you will be given the option of collecting your bike from us at the shop or, in Edinburgh only, collecting it from one of our partner hubs on selected days. Please note that this service primarily offers adult bikes for ages 16 and up.

### **Q: Is it a new bike?**

At The Bike Station we specialise in refurbishing second-hand donated bicycles. All of our bikes are different, but they are all built to the same high standards. We pride ourselves on our work and in giving bikes a second chance!

### **Q: Can I choose my bike?**

While we strive to match your needs to a suitable bike, we will not always be able to give you a choice of bike.

### **Q: Can I swap my bike?**

If you think that your bike is not the correct size then we can arrange a swap. Please get in touch with us as soon as possible using the appropriate email address below and we will arrange to get you a more suitable bike.

Edinburgh: [calumg@thebikestation.org.uk](mailto:calumg@thebikestation.org.uk)

Perth: [jrogers@thebikestation.org.uk](mailto:jrogers@thebikestation.org.uk)

### **Q: What if something goes wrong with my bike?**

All of our bikes are covered by a 3 month warranty which covers any mechanical fault that occurs or adjustments that need to be made to the bike during this time. The warranty does not cover crash damage, punctures, or wearable components (such as brake pads). You will be given a yellow warranty card with your bike which you must present to a member of staff when returning with your bike.

See our website for [more information](#) about our warranty.

### **Q: Do you have bikes for children?**

Shifting Gears is focused on adult participants (16+) but we do have a limited number of children's bikes available on a first come first serve basis.

### **Q: I don't live close to The Bike Station, can you deliver my bike to me?**

Arrangements are different in Edinburgh and Perth:

**Edinburgh:** While we can't deliver directly to you, we will be arranging collection sessions on selected days from our partner hubs. If you are unable to do this and don't have anyone who could help with transport, please speak to your contact at one of our Shifting Gears partner organisations (see above for a list).

**Perth:** The standard arrangement for getting a bike is to pick it up from our shop. If you are unable to do this and don't have anyone who could help with transport, please speak to your contact at one of our Shifting Gears partner organisations (see above for a list). We don't want this to be a barrier to getting a bike.

### **Q: Do I have to give the bike back?**

No, the bike is yours to keep. You can donate your bike back to us if you want to but this is completely optional.

### **Q: What about accessories?**

As part of the referral bike service we provide you with a helmet, lights, and a quality lock to make sure you have all the things you need to get you moving.

## Cycling lessons

Get moving and build your riding confidence with group cycling lessons for people of all abilities. Through the summer our trainers will be organising a series of lessons to teach you the skills you need to ride a bike and feel confident to make the journeys you want to make. Sessions will be run with small groups and the activities and progression of the course will be tailored to the participants. The first sessions will always be in a safe, off-road environment (such as a playground or carpark) and you will only progress to riding on the road when you are ready.

### **Q: I have never ridden a bike before, will there be a class to suit my level?**

Shifting Gears has been designed to accommodate people of all abilities. If you have never ridden or haven't ridden in many years, we can teach you from the start. If you can ride but want to improve your skills to give you more confidence on the road then we can help too.

### **Q: Can I join anytime?**

In the case of cycling lessons we encourage participants to join a block of lessons from the start. This is because the lessons are structured as a course and so it would be difficult to jump in later.

### **Q: I don't have a bike, how can I get involved?**

As a participant in Shifting Gears, you can apply to get a bike and any accessories that you need to get you started.

### **Q: Do I need to wear a helmet?**

It isn't compulsory but we do advise wearing a helmet if you have one.

## Group rides

Running at the same time as our cycling lessons service will be group rides. These will be guided social rides in larger groups along quiet routes in Edinburgh and Perth. They are a great opportunity to practice your cycling skills and to explore new routes and places in your area. As part of this service we hope to run interactive planning sessions in which you will have the opportunity to discuss places you would like to visit and design the routes which we later ride.

### **Q: I don't have a bike, how can I get involved?**

As a participant in Shifting Gears, you can apply to get a bike and any accessories that you need to get you started.

### **Q: Are these rides family friendly?**

Yes. There will be some rides which are suitable for families and all rides will be accompanied by trained members of staff. While the rides are guided, we remind parents that they are responsible for their children.

### **Q: Can I bring my friend?**

Unfortunately, rides are only open to members of the Shifting Gears programme and we cannot accommodate others.

### **Q: How often are the rides?**

We will provide a calendar of rides nearer the time.

### **Q: Do I need to bring anything with me?**

It's a good idea to bring any drinks or snacks you may need to keep you going on the ride. Dress appropriately for the weather and consider bringing an extra layer or waterproof.

### **Q: Do I need to wear a helmet?**

It's not compulsory but we do advise wearing a helmet if you have one.

## **Bike care + repair**

In the autumn we will be offering our Bike Care + Repair service where you can learn how to look after your bike and gain confidence in talking about it and identifying problems. We understand that bike maintenance can seem messy and daunting, so we have designed these classes to be inclusive and straightforward. By the end, you will be able to name the parts of your bike, check that it is safe to ride, know how to clean and lubricate your bike, and be able to fix a puncture.

### **Q: Is this course open to beginners or is it only for mechanics?**

Our Bike Care + Repair courses are designed as an introduction to looking after your bike, and so are beginner friendly.

### **Q: Where will the classes take place?**

Classes will be hosted at locations in the community by our partner organisations or at The Bike Station.

### **Q: Do I need my own tools or equipment for the sessions?**

No. All equipment and tools will be provided by The Bike Station on the day but please bring your own bike to work on.

### **Q: I don't have a bike, how can I get involved?**

As a participant in Shifting Gears, you can apply to get a bike and any accessories that you need to get you started.

## **Velotech**

Velotech training courses are industry recognised qualifications in bicycle maintenance and repair. As a participant in Shifting Gears you have the opportunity to gain these qualifications and take your knowledge of bikes to the next level. The courses are arranged into three distinct levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold - which go from making adjustments and addressing simple issues on a bike to being able to completely strip and rebuild a bike. Courses will run in the autumn and places are limited.

### **Q: Are there any prerequisites to joining?**

The requirement for the Bronze qualification (where you must begin) is a reasonable understanding of the basic functioning of a bicycle, how to address minor issues, and make adjustments. We will cover many of these themes in the Bike Care + Repair service, so if you don't have this knowledge already we recommend signing up for that.

### **Q: Do I need to go through all three levels?**

You must complete the levels in order (from Bronze to Gold) but it is completely up to you which level you want to reach. If you only want to complete Bronze then that is okay, if you want to go all the way and become Gold qualified then we will support you all the way!

### **Q: Is there a minimum age requirement for joining?**

Yes. You must be at least 16 to complete the course.

### **Q: How long are the courses?**

Bronze is a one day course, Silver is a two day course, and Gold is a four day course.

## **Work placement**

Over the winter months there will be opportunities to learn more about what we do at The Bike Station and gain experience alongside our mechanic teams in-branch. If you have fallen in love with bikes, like we have, and would like to explore a career in the bicycle industry then this could be just the thing for you!

### **Q: Who can apply?**

Anyone can apply but you must either already possess or have completed the Velotech Gold qualification.

### **Q: How long does the placement last?**

The placement is 5 months starting towards the end of the year. More information will be available close to the time.

### **Q: How many placements are there?**

There is currently only 1 paid work placement available in each of our branches (1 in Edinburgh and 1 in Perth), however there will also be volunteering opportunities.

### **Q: Is this an internship or is it paid?**

This a fully paid, part-time work placement.

## **Cycle Trainer Qualification**

If you enjoyed taking part in our cycling lessons and feel that you would like to teach others there is the opportunity as a participant in Shifting Gears to become an instructor. The course is run by Cycling Scotland and once qualified would enable you to run your own cycling lessons using the Essential Cycling Skills syllabus. Places for these are limited and will be available in the autumn.

### **Q: Are there any prerequisites to joining?**

You should be a confident and competent rider with experience of riding on busy roads. You also need good communication skills and knowledge of basic bike maintenance. For more details about this course, see the [Cycling Scotland](#) website.

### **Q: Is there a minimum age requirement for joining?**

Yes. You must be at least 16 to join the course, 18 if you wish to teach independently.

### **Q: How long is the course?**

The course takes place over 4 days.

### **Q: Do I need to have the qualification to teach someone to ride a bike?**

No. Anyone can teach someone else to ride a bike, but this course enables you to offer Cycling Scotland's nationally recognised syllabus and provides you with many skills and techniques which can help you when teaching someone.

## **Ride leader qualification**

Designing and leading bike rides can be great fun and is a good skill to learn. Through Shifting Gears you can get your Cycle Ride Leader qualification from Cycling Scotland and start leading rides of your own! Places for these are limited and will be available in the autumn.

### **Q: Are there any prerequisites to joining?**

You should be a confident and competent rider with good communication skills. For more details about this course, see the [Cycling Scotland](#) website.

### **Q: Is there a minimum age requirement for joining?**

Yes. You need to be at least 18 to join the course. Candidates over 16 can arrange to train as a Led-Ride Assistant.

### **Q: How long is the course?**

The course is 1 day.

