

## **Bristol Bike Café Community Interest Company (trading as Roll for the Soul)**

**CIC registered in England 08205951**

**Year from April 2015 to March 2016**

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### **Part 1: General description of the company's activities and impact**

The company's core operations are running a café, bike repair workshop and event space.

The most obvious direct benefit of company operations to Bristol's cycling community is servicing and repairing bicycles. In the year April 2015 to March 2016, Roll for the Soul's mechanics serviced and/or repaired 1,242 bikes. This number includes 27 formal (paid for) one-to-one maintenance tuition sessions where a customer worked with a mechanic to learn the skills to maintain their own bike. We also try to be flexible about tuition and skill-sharing and try where possible to work with a customer wishing to help repair their own bike even when this service is not paid for.

While we normally charge for servicing and repairs, we differ from conventional bike shops in having an open workshop, where customers are able to watch repairs and talk to mechanics while they work. We also try to be more accessible in terms of dealing with walk-in and emergency jobs on the spot, and allowing people to borrow tools for their own repairs.

Although we do not keep records of people helped in this way, we estimate that an average of six people per week borrow tools for their own repairs, equating to 306 people during the period covered by this report (we close for one week over Christmas).

The retail side of our workshop operation focuses on practical everyday cycling items such as locks (which are always sold at 20% below recommended retail price), lights, pumps and mudguards. Decisions about what to stock are guided by the principle that we want to make cycling safer, more comfortable and more enjoyable so that people will ride their bikes more often and with more confidence. We stock nothing that we would not use ourselves and we are keen to impress upon customers that the cheapest product is not always the best value.

As well as one-to-one maintenance sessions, we deliver basic maintenance courses for organisations wishing to equip their staff or members with bike maintenance skills. We do not offer public maintenance courses as we avoid activities which might take business away from our partners at The Bristol Bike Project (CIC registered in England 07578755). During financial year 15/16 we were paid to deliver five courses for University of Bristol and University of the West of England, with a total of 19 participants. We also delivered one course free of charge for Bristol Cycling Campaign as a form of in-kind support for their activities, as well as one free course for the University of Bristol Cycling Club.

In addition to delivering our own bike-related activities, we seek to support other cycling organisations in Bristol, especially non-profits, charities and voluntary groups. While we did not generate enough surplus in financial year 15/16 to pass any money to other organisations to fund their work, we provided in-kind support in the following ways.

- Providing free meeting and event space to Bristol Cycling Campaign, amounting to 55 hours (valued at £1,100 had we charged).
- Providing free meeting space to The Bristol Bike Project, amounting to 20 hours (valued at £400 had we charged).
- Providing a free mailbox and storage space to Bristol Cycling Campaign and Bristol Cycle Festival.
- Providing free space for a number of events run by Lifecycle UK for its Bike Minded project (which uses cycling to provide support to people suffering from mental health problems) and Two's Company project (which pairs sighted riders with partially-sighted or blind riders on tandems, so that the latter can enjoy cycling).
- Providing signposting and information about volunteering opportunities at The Bristol Bike Project and Lifecycle UK, as well as promoting their trading activities.
- Providing information about cycling events in Bristol and the West Country, and publicising on behalf of Bristol City Council consultations on infrastructure projects likely to affect cyclists.

Although the company was established primarily to serve Bristol's cycling community, its Articles of Association also refer more broadly to "the people of Bristol". During financial year 15/16, we sought to benefit this broader community in a number of ways.

- We paid all employees at least the living wage (£7.85 per hour at the beginning of the year, rising to £8.25 from November 2015).
- We host a memory café for Bristol Alzheimer's Society (a monthly informal drop-in session for people with early-onset dementia and their carers).
- We provided free venue space for fundraising events (e.g. live music shows raising funds for Calais Refugee Action and taking donations for local food banks). We have provided free meeting and/or event space for Positive Money Bristol, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Fin Fighters (a marine conservation charity), See It From Her (an organisation working with women who have suffered trafficking), and No More Taboo (an organisation seeking to address stigma around menstruation).
- We accept and actively promote the Bristol Pound (£B), a complementary currency which keeps money in the local economy and helps local businesses to support each other. We also actively seek suppliers who accept £B.
- We seek to provide an inclusive environment where anyone feels welcome and nobody is discriminated against. This is reflected in our events programme and in the organisations with whom we work.
- We buy produce from local non-profit growing projects (e.g. Edible Futures CIC, registered in England 08010554). We have also provided free meeting space to local food projects (e.g. FoodCycle, registered in England charity 1134423 and Sim's Hill Shared Harvest (a local Community Supported Agriculture project).
- We always respond positively to requests for assistance in setting up social enterprises similar to our own. During the period covered by this report, we met with seven people from different parts of the UK who were seeking to open bike-based social enterprises, and had long email exchanges with four others, providing our financial model and sharing our learning.
- We have given time to present at Bristol and Bath Social Enterprise Network and School for Social Entrepreneurs events. We seek to demonstrate and promote the idea of social enterprise and people's understanding of it.
- We provide an environment in which informal social enterprise meetings happen on a daily basis, providing an environment for creativity and positive social change.
- We provide a platform for local music and musicians, offering free performance space for people wishing to promote all-ages, fully-accessible, free-entry shows.

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- We have become increasingly aware of and involved with rough sleepers in Bristol city centre. We have sought to look after everyone sleeping near our premises, offering use of our toilets for washing, free food and drink and shelter. We offer a 'suspended coffee' scheme, where customers can pay for a (discounted) hot drink which can later be redeemed by someone who cannot afford one.

## **Part 2: Consultation with stakeholders**

The company's main stakeholders include Bristol Cycling Campaign, The Bristol Bike Project, Bristol Cycle Festival and Lifecycle UK: all non-profit/voluntary cycling organisations in Bristol. We work closely with each of these groups - often seeing their members on a daily basis - to ensure that we support them where we can. We actively promote their projects and services in our premises and via social media. We have also worked with Bristol City Council and Sustrans to publicise local sustainable transport initiatives and consultations to which cyclists may like to respond.

We maintain active social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) via which we engage with customers and other stakeholders. We always respond to constructive feedback - positive or negative - and act upon it where necessary.

## **Part 3: Directors' remuneration**

Total payment to directors during the year was £18,086.84, which was paid entirely as salary.

## **Part 4: Transfer of assets**

No transfer of assets other than for full consideration has been made. (This means that we have not made any donations to outside bodies and that anything we've sold has been sold at the full market value.)