

“Dr Bike at the Slaughterhouse”

The Parish Council has very kindly allowed a small volunteer group to offer free ‘Dr Bike’ cycle checks using the Slaughterhouse in Church Street as our base. In our six months we’ve managed to put lots more life into lots of bikes. It has been rewarding to give 30yr old quality bikes a new lease of life. Seeing the owner returning from a test ride with a big grin on their face is especially rewarding.

Often a bike is brought in with a single obvious fault, but we do a 22 point ‘Dr Bike’ check. Usually there are a few other faults. It is fixing all those that makes a bike a pleasure to ride rather than a pain.

The donations we've received have enabled us to get numerous small spares needed to fix those common problems. Between us we've a collection of most of the special tools needed, as well as lots of tricks to solve common problems.

We've a number of skilled volunteers, without whom the scheme would fail, and John Seton needs a specific mention for buying the spares in bulk, and working beyond the call of duty with some problematic fixes. We've also been able to offer help for a number of Ukrainian Refugees who have been given bikes.

We had a slow start as we needed to ensure we had appropriate 'third party liability insurance' which we get via the 'Green Groups in Stapleford, Shelford and Sawston' repair café banner. Even repairing bikes has admin overheads, and those below zero days before Christmas did not encourage trade!

*** We are now working on each Tuesday from 15:00 until 17:30. ***

If you've got a bike that seems difficult and even discouraging to ride, please bring it along. With properly inflated tyres, adjusted brakes and all gears working, we hope it will again be a joy to cycle, or at least it will be when all those pot-holes are repaired.

With no bike shop within 3 miles, we hope this service can help all those locally who would like cycling to be easier, but don't have the time, transport, knowledge, or money to get those little things fixed. We do ask that you stay with the bike as we do checks, minor adjustments and repairs as required. That should help you to keep the bike in good condition for the future.

We could also do with a few more volunteers. It would be great if running this local service meant volunteering only once each month. We expect to have at least two volunteer helpers each week, but if we are very busy and you have a difficult issue we may ask you to return later or the following week.

Thanks are due to the Parish Council for making the Slaughterhouse available, and to all our volunteers, and to those giving us donations for the (usually!) rewarding task of bringing a bike back into fine fettle.

Jim Chisholm