

Forming & Running a Successful Bicycle User Group (BUG).

A successful BUG:

- generates interest & commitment in the community
- builds & maintains strong, positive & complementary relationships with development partners
- works towards (& achieves) a clearly defined set of goals & objectives.

There must be a Bike Plan!

The Plan:

- needs to fit the existing circumstances
- can be the BUG's, the Council's, a 'shared Plan', part of a larger Transport Plan...
- ...but eventually needs to be developed by Council & community, & supported by elected members
- must have overall objectives/outcomes
- must have short/medium/longer-term targets
- should address a representative & inclusive cross section of the community
- should be integrated with a broad range of Council's goals (ie; youth, aging, health, climate adaption, equitable access, sustainability etc etc)
- should outline key issues (a hierarchy of bicycle/active transport routes, identification of cycling-safety black spots & predictive hazards, appropriate speed limits, investment in protected & off-road pathways where necessary etc)
- should provide graphic as well as written content
- should act as an information resource as well a reference for works & activity planning & investment
- if provided by Council it should report regularly (at least annually) to both Council & Community - accountability for outcomes!

BUG Structure: There needs to be a 'minimum' structure in place. PortBUG would suggest that - at a minimum - there be:

- a **Convenor** (arranges & chairs meetings)
- a **Secretary** (keeps & disseminates minutes, acts as liaison & contact person, takes care of meeting agendas)

- possibly a **'Project' or Development Officer** (various members might like to share this role - liaising & attending meetings with Council Staff.
- a **'web person'** (with PortBUG seems to be the lot of the Secretary!)
- a core **BUG Coordinating Group**. PortBUG's 'Coordinating Group' is largely 'historical' in that we have been at it for over 30 years (we're all getting on a bit!)
- a **Broader Membership**.

We have developed our Broader Membership by:

- first, building a simple wordpress web site (<https://portadbug.org>) & inviting people to follow our semi-regular blog posts (<https://portadbug.org/port-bug-blog>)...
- and then developing a facebook presence (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/portadbug>).

We refer to our blog & f/b forum 'followers' as Members & liaise with them quite regularly. It seems to work...

BUG Activities.

- our Coordinating Group meets together regularly
- we report key issues, events & outcomes to members as regularly as we can
- we try to meet with Council officers regularly (currently 3-4 times per year) & liaise with them on a continuing basis re current issues.

Key Tenets...

- 'working with...' rather than 'working against...'
- representing the community
- giving community-based 'permission' for innovation, supporting creative &/or innovative approaches, maintaining a pragmatic approach
- providing informed & 'ground-up' leadership, innovation & solutions
- advocating for bottom-line standards & outcomes (eg; best-practice safety measures, '8-80 Cities' approach etc)
- taking our cues from consultations with & comments from fellow community members (ie; need for transport access)

equity, growing economic stress, developing traffic safety issues - heavy vehicles, speed etc).