

Spokes Summer Competition 2023

Bike Storage at Home

results & prizewinners

Competition description: www.spokes.org.uk/2023/08/spokescomp-2023-bike-storage-at-home

We asked: “Storing your bike, or family bikes, is impossibly hard for some people and a doddle for others (until a thief calls!) depending where and how you live, and what bikes you have. We want to hear your experiences, ideas or handy hints – anything related to **domestic bike storage**. ... Your entry needn’t be about equipment, though it could be. It might be an amusing incident, or how your much-loved bike was stolen whilst you slept, or how having children suddenly brought new storage dilemmas, or how the arrival of Bike Hangars changed your life, or how swapping car for bikes gave you *more* storage space.”

Judging: This was done anonymously as far as possible, with only one of the five judges knowing the names or any details of the entrants. Judging was by three members of Spokes Resources Group, one from Planning Group and an external judge, Cllr Chas Booth, who has Council experience of domestic bike storage issues. Judges independently scored each entry, and then discussed the scoring to determine a final agreed outcome.

Themes from the entries

- Overall - the difficulties, complexities, and some ingenious solutions. As our top prizewinner said, *“One thing is for sure - retrofitting bike storage isn’t an easy problem to solve!”*
- Bike storage inside a flat
- Bike storage within the building - e.g. tenement stairwell
- Bike storage outdoors – e.g. sheds
- Bike storage in garages
- Owning lots of bikes
- Theft from home (& recovery)
- Bike storage for families/ children
- Comparisons with car storage

First prize, Karen Esslemont

Getting bike shed permission in a Conservation Area

We live in an upper flat, with our own front door, but steep steps to the flat immediately on entry and with one of the smallest front gardens in the city. Back in 2016 we were enjoying sustainable living: the kids walked to school and my husband and I cycled to work. But the bikes! My husbands' lived inside in splendid shelter on a high hook which we banged into everytime we went up the stairs carrying big packages. Mine was outside in the cold and rain, strapped to some remnant railings with a cover which frequently came off, and was accelerating deterioration not to mention the frequency of cycling with a wet seat.

We needed an alternative solution. We investigated bike shelters, and realised that by filling the space next to the path we could fit in a Tri-Metals storage shed. The perfect answer. At that time we needed planning permission so (being a landscape architect) I drew up some plans and submitted them. This seemed slightly ridiculous given emerging Council policies on active travel, climate challenge and clean air but went ahead. I couldn't believe it when we were knocked back at the first informal submission stage – the glitch was we are in the Plewlands Conservation Area. We needed to supply more information which showed that we could enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

This became a challenge and we decided to go all out and treat this as a project. We had other issues of dogs wandering up our path on the walk up the hill next to us so had long thought about restoring the long-gone railings, putting on a gate and cleaning up and restoring the very mossy low wall defining our boundary - but this was earmarked for a "wealthier" future. It was clear however that we had to bite the bullet and up our game. We calculated the cost (and time) savings in not using buses or the car. It added up! So we secured prices for railings, stone restoration, and the bike store and I wrote a Design Statement analysing the character of Plewlands, how our street fitted within this context and the positive impacts of our works on the street. My lovely colleague at work prepared photomontages for the price of some bottles of wine. Spokes picked up on the application, were really supportive. In fact that's how we joined.

So we secured permission easily in the end, and delivered the proposed works. Whilst frustrated that the city didn't (at that time) provide more support to people like us we are very pleased with how it all turned out. Despite our front space being filled by a bike store it is a smart approach to the flat and we even managed a small native species hedge at the front too - more CEC policy compliance! The Tri-Metals bike store is great - doesn't take the three bikes I am sure it advertised itself as, but our two bikes are easy to access, are dry and we have had no issue with security.

We laugh about it now but it was a hard won and costly process which for a young family, wanting to do the right thing, should have been much easier. But there is no doubt that – quite apart from the ease I now have of cycling - when I walk around our local Conservation Area and see other more recent examples of storage I can see that something really positive came out of it. One thing is for sure - retrofitting bike storage isn't an easy problem to solve!



How it was



Photomontage of proposal



How it is now

Second prize, Rosanna Rabaeijs

Bespoke bike shelter, practical and upcycled

As I use my bike every day, I like the convenience of having it near the house but our garage is about 100m away, and so I have made myself this flexible waterproof shelter against the fence at the side of the house, where there is not enough space for a shed.

I also have a bit of an OCD about picking up litter, including all sorts of things which have been lost or abandoned, and I usually put everything into the correct stream for rubbish, but if things can still be useful then I re-use them.

I have made and re-made this shelter several times over the years we have lived here, and the current version is lasting very well, being made from an abandoned playmat and a plastic shower curtain, mended and reinforced with umbrella skins as these are very strong.



Previous, more stylish, versions have used tablecloths, but no-one sees it at the side of the house, so it does not need to be attractive. I have given it a handle, and hooks to hold it up out of the way when getting the bike in and out, and also since the bike was once stolen I added a combination lock fixed to the fence. Two bikes can fit under it ok, but if we need to move bulky things, or a wheelbarrow, around to the back of the house then there's no fixed bike shed in the way. I find it very practical, and so am taking this opportunity to share my solution.

It then occurred to me that actually it's not a bad prototype for areas where space is limited.

If being installed in an area where it would be seen, and maybe by an organisation or group, or the Council in a residential area, it could be made from the strong plastic sheeting that is used for making display banners, and attractively decorated, used for example to display positive messages about cycling, or other advertising. Obviously the drawing skills would need to be better than I can manage, but here's what I've now drawn.



Third Prize, Paul Ince – Simple Homemade Wooden Shed

I used to store my bikes in our garage but it became more and more of a problem as the amount of stuff in there grew. In addition, it was sometimes tricky to manoeuvre a bike past the car on the drive when I wanted to use it. There was a space by our back door, next to the bins so I decided to build a store for two bikes using timber I had plus some new. I sketched out a basic plan but there was an element of making it up as I went along. There wasn't enough room for sideways hung doors so I used a door hinged at the top and supported with a pole which as a bonus created an undercover area for working on the bikes. I also bolted a ground anchor into the concrete floor, with a heavy duty chain to secure the bikes.

I subsequently bought a third bike which can still be accommodated with careful positioning. There is also space to store my car bike carrier at the back plus a shelf for tools, pump, workstand etc.

It has been in place now for nearly 10 years and is still watertight.

The photographs show an external view of the store, the store with the door raised and propped and a view of the bikes inside the store.

All in all I was very pleased with the outcome, particularly as it was substantially cheaper than purchasing a ready made unit.



Fourth Prize, Will Whiteley – Bike Shed Campaign

We had commuting bikes in the hallway, mountain bikes in the garden shed, and kid's bikes in the kitchen. We had damaged doors, scratched hallway and mud on the carpet. We needed a bike shed!

Because we live in a terraced house, the shed had to be in the front garden. It seemed simple! But we were living before Spokes' successful bike-storage campaign, so planning permission was needed.


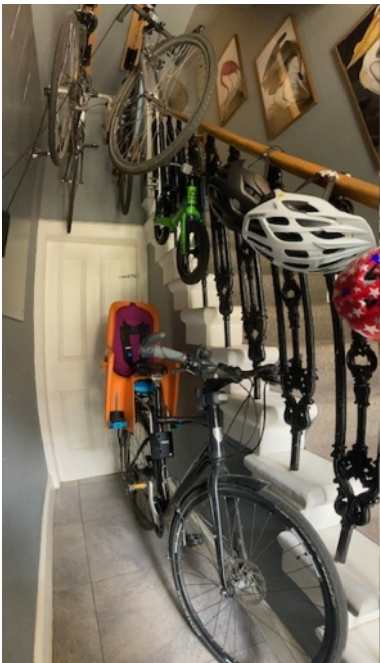

We had to spy our neighbourhood for other bike sheds; canvas our neighbours; and sharpen our drawing pencils to design a bike shed hidden from the street. We had to pay our fee to the council – then redo our drawings - and wait for permission. Once we had it, putting the shed up was easy, just a matter of a couple of hours work with a screwdriver.

We were lucky – we were allowed to build our shed but only after a considerable effort. Spokes put us in touch with others who had successfully applied, and Edinburgh's cycling community stepped up with helpful advice. A solid metal Asgard now protects our bikes, and keeps mud out of the house.

So, thanks to Spokes' campaign, you probably won't need to negotiate planning permission to build your shed like us. Another success for Spokes! However, Spokes can't cure you of a bike addiction – where are we going to put the road bikes and a tandem?!



Position	Entries in positions 5-14 [prizewinners]
<p>5 Anony- mous</p>	<p>Bike storage problems in a rented property</p> <p>I moved into my ground floor flat in the west of Edinburgh in the middle of the pandemic, taking over from a group of three young men, all of whom owned bikes. Only one was on the contract. I think the landlord understood what was going on, but she turned a blind eye to it to take advantage of a key perk of property ownership: plausible deniability. By not directly sanctioning their living arrangements, she washed her hands of the requirement to apply for a house in multiple occupation license whilst retaining the option of evicting her tenants for essentially any reason, under the pretence of having just discovered their deception. She also refused to let them store their bikes in the flat, so they kept them outside under a tarpaulin, locked together with a single chain (the landlord also refused to pay for the expense of a bike shed).</p> <p>Storing a bike indoors can bring dust and dirt into a property over time, damaging floors, walls and fittings, but this can be prevented with minor adjustments like adding protective coverings to key areas. In my fifteen years' experience of renting, landlords tend to view modifications that would improve the life of a specific tenant as an unnecessary expense. In discussion they often reframe such potential changes as damage they would expect to be covered by the tenant, rather than improvements that would make their property more conducive to health and happiness. Storing a bike outside in the manner described above is an invitation to rust and theft.</p> <p>I can afford to live alone. That means I can afford to rock the boat a little more than the previous tenants were able to, but not by much. I lobby my landlord politely but forcefully on a very narrow set of issues that affect me and which I have a clear legal right to, but I am only ever partially successful in this (and I feel I should be entitled to much more, legally, than I am). I am a member of Living Rent, a brilliant local tenants union, but I don't have the capacity at this point in my life to engage in an open confrontation, despite the draughts, the woodlice, the damp in the cupboard and the cumulative effects on my comfort and heating bills. And I break some rules to make my life more manageable. I have been warned to keep my bike outdoors, but I can't afford the risk of losing it or the damage that would entail, so I have attached a covering against the wall that might otherwise be scratched by my pedals, and around an internal door. At the end of my tenancy, if it comes to it, I'll have to argue the toss as to whether these mitigations that improve my well-being by enabling my cycling are in fact, damage for which I should be liable.</p> <p>Owning a bike brings many personal health benefits and contributes to the energy transition and by extension public health. In our current housing system, where renting is not a choice for many and landlords are poorly regulated, those potential benefits are too easily outweighed by the profit motive. We should support any and all progressive measures to reduce the cost of living, oppose the inequality that gives rise to precarious housing situations, and give tenants more rights to choose how to live their lives while living in rental accommodation.</p>

<div data-bbox="145 495 247 595" data-label="Text"><p>6 Daniella Ross</p></div>	<div data-bbox="301 112 550 143" data-label="Section-Header"><p>Tenement Tetriss!</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 163 1066 338" data-label="Text"><p>Everyone knows children come with an ever-increasing amount of equipment – the arrival of our two little ones, meant no exception to this. Space for storage in an Edinburgh flat is always a challenge, let alone for our beloved bicycles given they are our main mode of transport to and from work/nursery.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 353 1066 492" data-label="Text"><p>As demonstrated in our attached photo, we'd like to share our innovative domestic bike storage system (!) using our ceiling height to our advantage. We installed two fantastic bike pulleys (top and tailed) to maintain corridor passageway access and</p></div> <div data-bbox="309 504 691 963" data-label="Image"></div> <div data-bbox="705 495 1066 810" data-label="Text"><p>have utilised a number of bungee cords to attach the children's bikes to the railings and keep them out the way. The pulleys are safe, easy to use and have transformed our bike storage allowing my husband to even keep his treasured road bike!</p></div> <div data-bbox="1082 138 1463 799" data-label="Image"></div> <div data-bbox="705 828 1457 967" data-label="Text"><p>When funds allow, we've got our eyes set on a cargo bike to ease the family commute and now just need to work out how we could possibly suspend this from the ceiling too! Additional photo of two of the family commuters.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="145 1525 247 1626" data-label="Text"><p>7 Malcolm Bruce</p></div>	<div data-bbox="301 1010 735 1046" data-label="Section-Header"><p>Discouraging theft from home</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1066 1262 1097" data-label="Text"><p>Here are a few tips for discouraging bike theft while your bike is stored at home:</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1113 1457 1178" data-label="Text"><p>Lock your bike always, even if in a secure shed or close. If you have more than one lock use them all, this is a hassle but makes theft much more difficult.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1193 1197 1225" data-label="Text"><p>Lock it to another bike or, better, something really solid like the shed itself.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1240 1337 1272" data-label="Text"><p>Make sure your shed door is secure and the slip bolt is as big and beefy as the padlock.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1285 1457 1388" data-label="Text"><p>Think about cameras, motion detectors, security lights, even tin cans on strings tied to your bike, all help alert you to your pride and joy's safe and secure storage, and can provide evidence for police or insurance company.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1402 1372 1433" data-label="Text"><p>Photograph your bike, note down its frame number, think about getting it security coded.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1447 1457 1514" data-label="Text"><p>Put a slip of paper inside the seat tube or handlebars with your contact details (not address!!) so any buyer or honest cycle mechanic can get in touch if they find it.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1527 1465 1559" data-label="Text"><p>Put a wire through your saddle and round a frame tube, this prevents seat and post being nicked.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1574 766 1641" data-label="Text"><p>Remove lights, computer, panniers etc when parking for any length of time.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1655 770 1935" data-label="Text"><p>Covering your bike in stickers, tape and paint (see picture) makes it very unattractive to thieves. When our shed was broken into they left my bike but stole my wife's rather nice, pristine Whyte hybrid. I can particularly recommend the SPOKES stickers as a deterrent!</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 1951 751 2089" data-label="Text"><p>Insure your bike if you can. Heavily. This ensures some peace of mind and means you'll be back in the saddle soon if your bike is stolen.</p></div> <div data-bbox="301 2103 496 2134" data-label="Text"><p>Keep on cycling!</p></div> <div data-bbox="788 1581 1473 2110" data-label="Image"></div>

Varied locations inside and outside the flat

Like many Spokes members, I have too many bikes. I have, however, developed cunning plans to store them all.

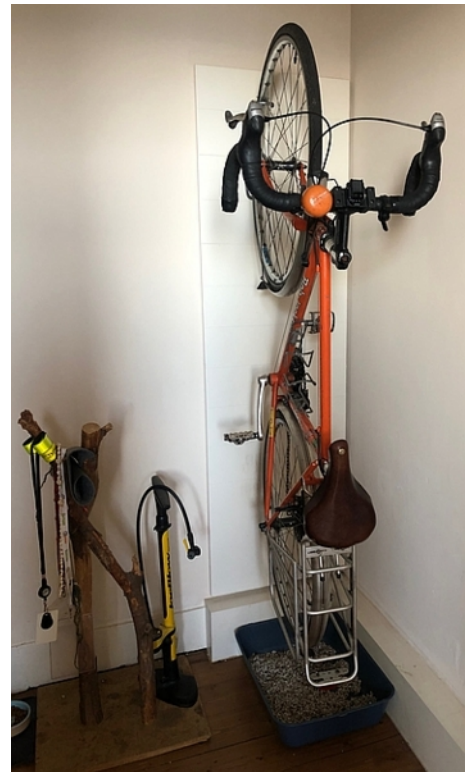
After an epic campaign to get a Cyclehoop hanger in my street, my ebike is now in that hangar. There is no chance of lugging a 26 kilo bike up to the top floor of an Edinburgh tenement. It costs £6 a month and is well worth the expense. Of course it's not fair that it's free to park a car in the same street but apparently we will get a controlled parking zone in the area in my lifetime. So that's one bike, what about the rest?

Bob, my touring bike, gets pride of place above the cat litter in the hall. My neighbour, a cabinet maker, built a wooden frame to protect the wall, attached a basic hook to it, and I hang Bob from that. The cat does have to duck her head but she's yet to protest.



Brompton disguised as laundry

I normally store my Brompton folded up under the window in my study. However I'm off to Portugal with it shortly via train, ferry and bus and I've been experimenting with turning it into ordinary luggage (protected by a yoga mat). It's currently in a laundry bag and looks pretty smart! There's another fold-up bike in the wardrobe but we don't talk about that.



Bob hanging on the wall.

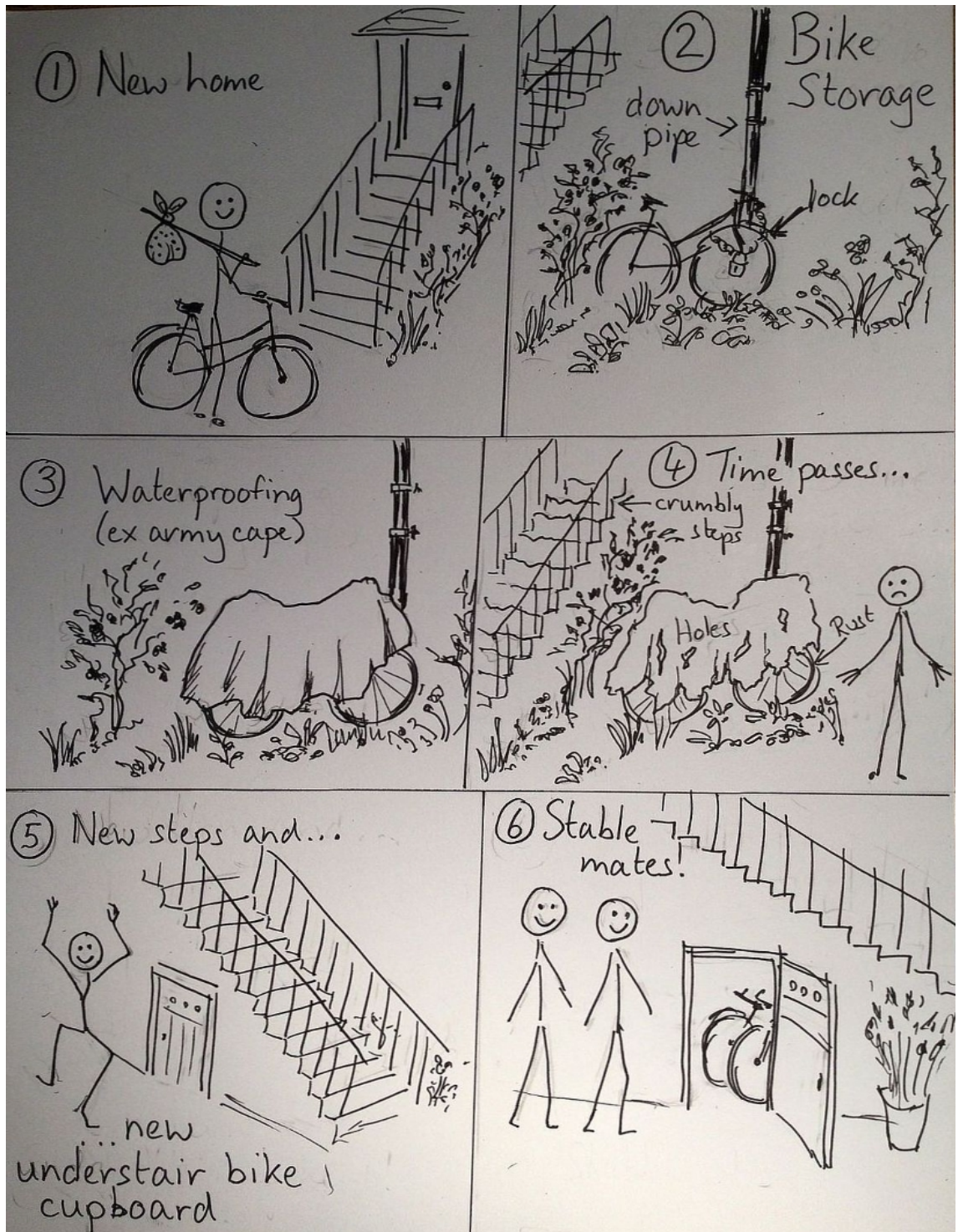
Finally, there's the 23 year old pink Cannondale. I haven't yet got round to finding a space on a wall to hang it on (maybe beside Bob?) so I prop it up against the bookshelf in my study in front of my collection of Spokes maps.

Carrying these bikes up and down the stairs was tricky when my knee was bad, but it's fine now and keeps me fit.



Cannondale hanging out with books and maps

The successful hangar campaign not only benefited me, but my neighbours. My neighbours are now able to cycle as a family because they can use the local hangars. With two adults and two children in a smallish flat there's no room for bicycles.



Family with four young kids

With new six week old twins bringing our family up to four under-5 year olds, storage space is at a premium!

What we love with our storage is having a garage where we can store adult bikes, kids bikes, bike seats and bike trailers! Bikes on the wall give us a bit of extra floor space but once the bike seat is on they're too heavy to lift up..

What we don't like so much in our storage is the kids leaving Pom bear crumbs (other brands available) and unloved raisins in the trailer after each trip so that mice have enjoyed nibbling through all the pockets!



Our next storage challenge is finding somewhere to fit in these next two budding cyclists once they're old enough to travel by bike in a few months!

De-biking

It's a funny thought that garages were designed to have cars in them. To start with, you can't get modern fat cars though the door of most garages, but even if you did, where would you put all that stuff that's in the garage?

Our garage has an eclectic mix of things that we don't have room for in the house: a freezer, garden tools, kindling, jars of preserves, skis for the snow that hardly ever comes any more.....oh, and bikes.

How did we end up with 8 bikes? It's a bit of a mystery, but I'm sure it wouldn't have happened if we didn't have a garage to put them in. And they all got used, for different purposes, real or imagined. Getting the right one out at any time normally involved moving most or all of the others. And then they invented gravel bikes!

But something inside me clicked: perhaps like an addict realising another drink/bet/fix isn't actually going to help.

So some had to go.

Trouble was, each bike was store of precious memories. Could I really part with the one I cycled to North Cape on? What about the one I cycled round the coast of Scotland and then to Spain? What about the titanium frame I designed myself and got built to measure?

And then I thought about what experiences they could give other people, rather than just me. And what cycling am I actually going to be doing in the future? And could one bike do the purpose of 3 or 4 well enough? Of course it could!

So my titanium bike is now a town/tourer/gravel bike, and my winter bike is just a road bike with mudguards that can go on and off. I sold one bike and gave two to the Bike Station for onward use. So I'm down to 2 bikes; I still have and love the memories of the trips I've done on bikes, even though I don't have the bikes anymore. And it's so much easier to find things in the garage!

10
Angus
Ramsay

11
Ken
Morrison

Space versus N+1

I have a problem.

I need a new bike. That's not the problem (though that is a problem, N+1 etc etc). The problem is that I have nowhere to store a new bike.

"You have a whole garage!" my wife says.

And whilst I agree to an extent, its only technically half a garage as there's the forlorn gym equipment in one half (an optimistic lockdown investment and now gathering dust), which leaves the "bike" half.

Now this already has my wife's and daughter's bikes (1 each), my sons' bikes (2 off) and my bikes (of which there are now more than 7, but less than 10. And a unicycle, but that doesn't count). And each and every one has its own absolutely required purpose which none of the others can fulfil so no, I can't just sell one!

I've currently got 2 on floor stands, 2 in a "floor to ceiling" stand one above the other, one literally tied horizontally to the ceiling with pulleys holding the seat and large "U" hooks holding the wheels, the majority are suspended by ladder hooks, painstakingly measured out to fit seat to bars to seat to bars. Unicycles also fit between rafters almost perfectly too by the way. And the most used commuter bike is leant against the wall.



"Aren't you worried about theft" says my neighbour? Well, for the would-be thieves they're all fully locked with muckle "gold secure" chains and ground anchors, because Insurance companies have been known to be tight, even when expensive bikes are listed separately in the house insurance.

Plus there's a proper burglar alarm, and a few other things which I can't reveal (but if you've seen Home Alone you'll get the gist). I've had a bike stolen previously when I naively chained it to a tenement iron banister rod which only required one kick to shear off. Don't do that. Take it inside if you can.

So. I have a problem. I tell my wife that I've decided that the only way forward is to get a new job, which means more money, which means a bigger house, which means a bigger garage, which means more space for bikes.

Sorted!

"Why don't you get rid of the gym equipment" she says. "You don't use it anyway".

That's a brilliant idea. Sometimes the easiest way to store a bike is move other things out the way, or get rid of something (not a bike though, I'm not a monster) if you've already using all the available floor space. Or wall space. Or ceiling space.

I think I'll buy her a new bike as a thank you. Just after I've got my new one first, of course.

Looks good!

Mounting a bike on a white wall.

Was it a good idea? No.

Do I have to repaint the wall every 6 months? Yes.

Did adding a rubber door stop help? A little.

Can I fully open my front door? No.

Should I have cleaned my bike before sending pictures? Yes.

But most importantly, does it look good? I'd say so!

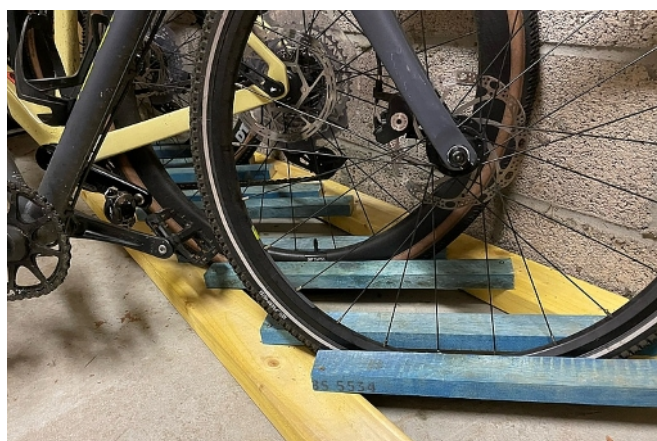
13
Chris Hall



Home made rack

Here is a photograph of the bike storage that my son Charlie (age, 11) and I designed and made ourselves recently.

Since moving to Edinburgh, bikes are our main mode of transport (other than foot and bus/train) and so we needed to be able to store our bikes in a way that allows us quick access to them as we use them every single day, sometimes in a hurry when I have to zoom to work for an emergency when on call.



14
Kate
Thomas

We are lucky to have a garage as part of our home rental, but being a rental also means we cannot attach anything to the walls.

Further, we needed the storage to be cheap to make, straightforward to assemble (in the end, my son did all of the drilling and screwing with my supervision) and all materials needed to be easily accessible within Edinburgh by bike or on foot.

We did a simple design for a floor stand for five bikes and took our drawing to Jewson's Timber yard. They were then able to cut pieces of wood exactly to size for us! We used screws we already had. This kept the costs down further.

We hope that you like it! It doesn't take up too much space, it was cheap and easy to assemble and is easily transported if we move to a different rental accommodation.

RUNNERS UP, MAP WINNERS

15
Martha
Koerner

“Safe space for bikes is very sparse”

My bikes are my love - but they're dirty a lot;
Filthy and manky, and covered in mud,
Dripping wet after rain or sleet
And leaving black puddles with muck from the street.

I need to keep them safe and sound
To go to work, and get around,
To help me bag remote hills up north
Or cycle around the Firth of Forth.

My flat's only small, my bike collection expanding,
Not enough space inside, so I keep some on the landing.
But the tenement stairwell is narrow, not spacious
And keeping them there feels pretty audacious.

Storing bikes on the street invites the thieves,
My friend had hers nicked last year and still grieves.
I don't have a garage, a cellar nor a shed
And neither a bike hangar close by instead.

So much of our public room belongs to cars
But safe space for bikes is very sparse.
I really wish it would be more extensive
And also rather inexpensive!

Affordable bikes are only half of the equation
For active travel facilitation.

We also need safe cycle infrastructure and secure bike storage
And sadly for both of those Edinburgh still has a big shortage.

16
Rupert
Nash

Car-less garage

We have the
luxury of a
garage that
doesn't
contain a car!

A simple bit of
DIY using
some wood
reclaimed
from a skip
and some
screw in hooks
gives us tidy
storage for 8
bikes.

Lots of space
left over for
storing all the
other junk



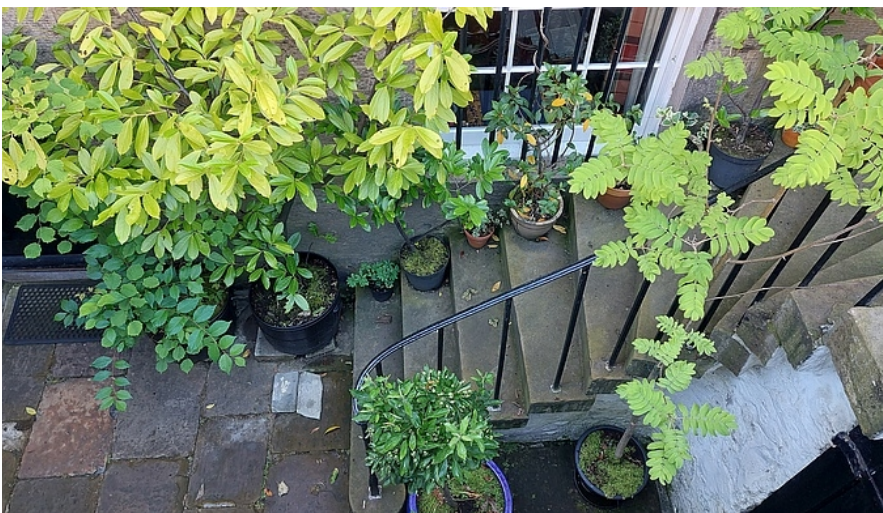
Bike storage history

Storing my bike has always been a challenge...

For some years, in my teens, I kept my bike in a neighbour's garage. One day she left the garage open for an afternoon, and went away – and the bike was stolen.

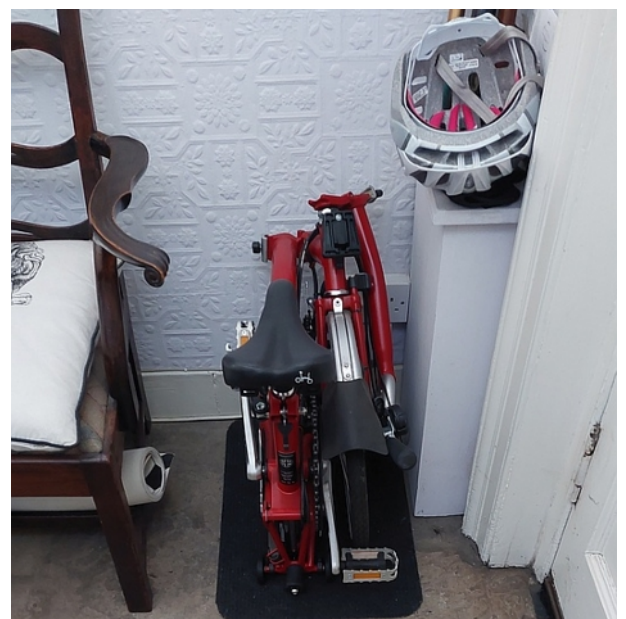
As a student in Edinburgh in the 1970s, for a couple of years I kept my bike at the bottom of our tenement stair during the day (as you can see in my murky old photo, taken around 1980). In those days fewer thieves were attempting to steal bikes from tenement stairs, and I never had a problem. This was in South College Street, which runs along the south side of Old College, in a building sufficiently historic to have a narrow spiral staircase. It meant that carrying the bike upstairs each night was a slow and Very Careful business!

I then moved south, living in one terraced house after another, where my bikes were kept in back sheds, or in hallways where they were often something to squееееееze past. Then I returned to Edinburgh, to a tenement flat with a wide staircase and a good third floor landing, where I chained my bike with two locks outside the front door each night. This certainly provided me with good weight-bearing exercise as I took it up and down.



Next I moved to a main-door flat with outdoor cellar storage in the front basement area. But after a decade my progress down the steps to the basement became increasingly difficult due to the growth of all our greenery, as it was becoming hard to carry the bike down without knocking pots over.

Our hallway was simply too narrow to take a bike, but the problem was solved by a birthday present from my husband – a Brompton, which folds up wonderfully behind the front door (see photo). The space behind the door has been named The Brompton Oratory, after the famous church near the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, and the bike itself has been named Thurloe, after the Square nearly opposite.



17

Patricia
Andrew

Living high up

I have lived the last 30 years four storeys up in Lawnmarket. At the moment I use a folding bike for the stairs.

I'm always on lookout for how other people cope (having a bike shop helps in my case!)

I saw these Leith flats with maybe 13 bikes on balconies. People fear bike theft so much that taking them to the balcony feels safest – let's hope the residents have a lift in that block!



In theory on-street secure storage should be everywhere.

Meanwhile new build Leith, such as Ropeworks Salamander, is festooned with cars even though off-street parking is available (also with bike spaces).



When Scottish Historic Building Trust refurbished Riddles Court we got new mood lighting and there was talk of covered bike storage. Instead I have to use the security barriers to park the cargobike during the day and lock to railings with a big cover overnight.



Zoom background

Keeping a car free household in an Edinburgh flat is tough at the best of times, not least with a growing family which puts a strain on the limited storage space available.

I love this wall mount as it's not only practical but stylish too and we've had lots of compliments from guests. It even works great as a zoom background for work!

P.S. the hats are a critical part of the operation, acting as a small counter balance



Garage efficiency

We store our bikes ... in the garage!

Ok, it might seem that's the obvious answer if you are fortunate enough to have a garage, but so many people even with garages waste masses of wall space leaning bikes against the walls or they end up with bikes that are hard to use because of other junk that has to be moved.

So my tips are as follows:

(a) Get a prop stand on *every* bike - so they can stand on the floor without taking up wall space or needing fancy bike hangers. This also allows you to store several bikes side by side fairly close to each other without using a lot of floor area.

(b) Put bikes at the front, just inside the garage door, facing forward, so they are easy to get out and ride (and so each bike can come out without moving the others).

(c) Keep panniers and lights on the bikes, ready for use. (And have a decent pump nearby.)

(d) If you can afford it, invest in an automatic garage door - they are not just for cars! If you can just press a button to open the door to access your bike it's so quick to use.

The picture shows a tandem and a normal bike and a folding bike with a bike trailer behind (stored vertically) all in about 3.5 sq metres of floor. (A typical single garage is around 14 sq m.)



RUNNERS UP CONTINUED, MAP WINNERS

[in random order]

Phillip Jurczyk - Stolen & recovered

I rose quite early, a little nervous about a Scottish History exam later in the day and wandered out to the garage looking for something I can no longer remember what. I immediately noticed that two of our bikes were missing. Both were well loved road bikes, one ladies and one gents with lots of good Campag and Shimano equipment. I was devastated and even more so when I discovered that several bottles of my home brewed beer were also gone. Perhaps the thieves had put them in the bike's bottle cages when they rode away.

Early that afternoon I rode down on my other bike, an old Post Office bike I had purchased for two pounds, to sit my exam. About a mile from home I noticed two lads on bikes that were both a really lurid pink colour and immediately realised they were my bikes with a very rapid paint job as they were only stolen a matter of hours before. I challenged the lads and grabbed hold of both bikes and started yelling for help and for someone to call the police.

Shortly afterwards a man arrived on a motorbike much to my relief I thought help had arrived. I was mistaken as he pulled the thieves from my grip and they all somehow got on the motorcycle and sped off.

Eventually the police turned up but too late do anything other than organise a patrol to scour the locality. I made my way to the police station which was very close to Kings Buildings, gave the officers all the bikes details, phoned my tutor to explain why I was missing my exam. He said "I haven't heard that reason before".

Next I was given the opportunity to look through the mug books and on doing so I exclaimed "I recognised him" on seeing a man who looked as if he had fallen in the Police Station and sported two beautiful black eyes. "Was that one of them?" the officer asked". "No I replied. He was the chap who did some plastering in our house a few weeks ago."

I was really glad to get the bikes back and I remember spending hours stripping them before having the frames repainted.

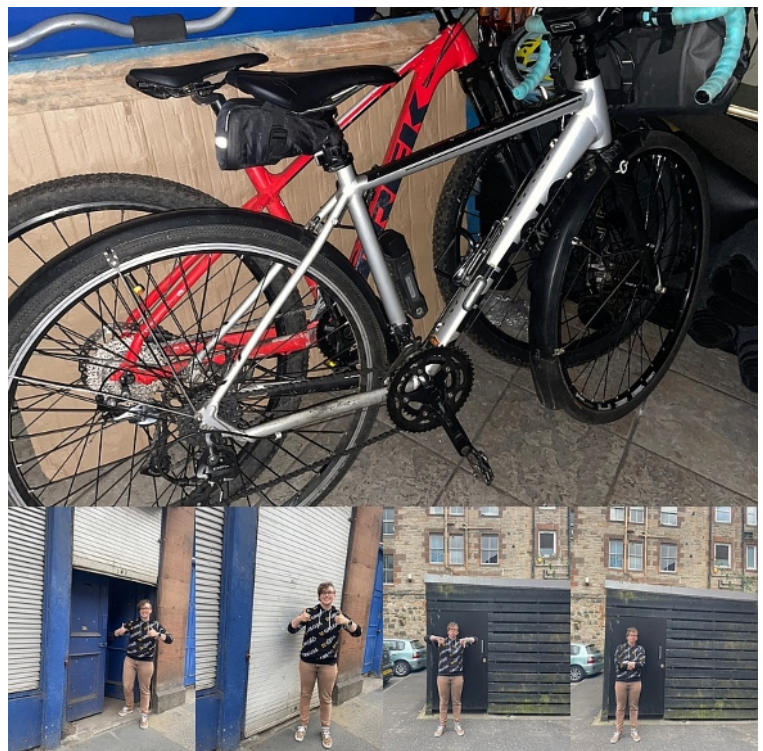
Rebs Curtis-Moss - Asking neighbours

Back in the day before we had council funded bike hangars to store our precious steeds in, I was desperately trying to find somewhere to store my bike. Having had my front wheel stolen (and feeling lucky that the rest of the bike hadn't been taken too), I decided that I didn't want to lock it up outside overnight again.

We have a small flat, so inside storage was also proving challenging. I tried to use the bike storage facility of the block of flats opposite me, putting a note on the door and asking if someone would allow me access to use it. However, this was then revoked by the 'residents council' because I didn't technically live in the block... Back to square one!

Luckily, I have some really lovely neighbours, one of whom owns a newsagents a couple of doors down from me. By chance, he had a storage facility elsewhere in the street, and let me use it; and I still do to this day.

Hooray for secure bike storage!



Benedict Bate - Quatermile good

My wife and I live in a modern flat in the Edinburgh Quatermile development. Between us we have six bikes so where store them?

Well, the development has an underground car park with Sheffield Racks for cycle parking with a secure lock. If you live in one of the flats you have a key to access the interior of your building direct from the car park.

Access is down the ramp and the car park is fairly secure with the concierge office, staffed 24/7, just above it. In addition, the roller shutters are lowered at nighttime. I have not heard of any theft, and lights or pumps left on bikes seem safe from petty theft.

The downside is the cycle parking area is popular and with a transient population (around half the flats are let rather than owner occupied) bikes get abandoned. The Factors have started a process to remove abandoned bikes but as you see from the recent photo they are slow to act!

Overall, however, a very satisfactory arrangement.



Lesley Reid – Saved by postcode!

My father gave me the key of the garage. He said "There is an RSW 16 there for you". I had no idea what he was saying!

I found it...



I had great summers with it and took it with me when I headed to Edinburgh to study. It was stolen at the end of my fourth year in the last week of term. I was getting married on the Saturday and was scooting around doing tasks.

The next day I saw it. It was on the wall of a small auctioneer's in Tollcross. I went and got a Policeman.

We stood looking up at it. He said it was difficult to prove it was mine.

Then I remembered that my father put my name or our postcode on most things. I moved closer and looked up. My home postcode was scored on the bottom!

My husband told the story in his speech at the wedding.

Dave Sorensen – Car storage comparison

My street is basically owner-occupiers, in South East Edinburgh, with each house having a front-door and a sizeable area directly off street. Perhaps the neighbours and I should consider how the storage methods below

- ❖ Use public or private space
- ❖ Provide security
- ❖ Offer convenience



Here is my vehicle stored at home



And here is one of my neighbours' vehicles



And my other neighbours' vehicles



And vehicle storage for many other neighbours

Sarah Komashko – Roofing

I had a gap between my home and my neighbour's, so I asked nicely if they minded me fitting a roof to keep our bikes dry.



Thankfully they agreed and useless empty space was transformed to a 3-bike shed!

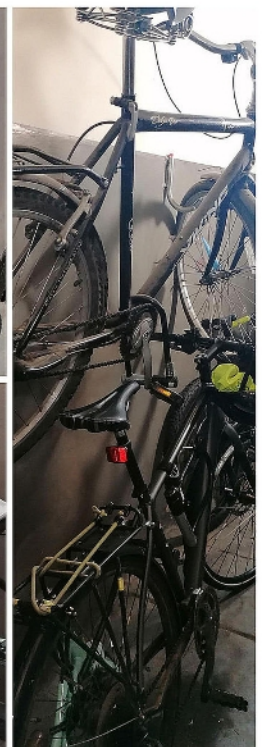
Daniel James-Watling - Stairwell storage

When we moved in 6 years ago there were 2 bikes. Now there are 14 bikes, with multiple families trying to find solutions.

We're strangely proud to have so many!

We muddle together and borrow each other's keys from time to time. And, of course, we fall out about access and safety.

We will carry on, but we all hope for better.



SELECTED OTHER INTERESTING ENTRIES

in random order

Bike room

Your competition reminded me of our "bike room". I live in a two-bed tenement flat (thankfully only on the first floor!) and the spare room has largely been relegated to bike storage / maintenance area, given me and my partner's keenness for cycling. It's right by the front door so we (and guests) can easily wheel bikes in and out. Our record is 16 bikes in the 2.5m x 3.5m room.

One of the things I think is so great about cycling is the space efficiency. A tenement of 8 households has room for *maybe* 2 cars outside - not enough for every household, let alone guest parking. But when your friends all cycle, you can squeeze a dozen of them inside for dinner with minimal vehicle storage problems. The best solution of course would be for every tenement to have a cycle hangar immediately outside.

I had experimented with wall mounts for the bikes, but the old Victorian plaster didn't like it and they were quite unstable. (You can see our attempts at plaster renovation in the photo). As such, we usually just resort to piling them up - alternating orientation of each bike. Any tips from other entrants on tenement bike storage would be much appreciated!



Bike bits stolen

I used to live in a tenement in Leith and had to keep my bikes locked up in the common stair. Every Feb 20th I get a Facebook reminder of the time someone stole BITS off my bikes.

"Livia is calling down the wrath of the Gods of Vengeance upon the evildoer who has stolen small, petty, IMPORTANT bits from BOTH her bikes in the stair yesterday."

They took the rear skewer and stem bolt from one bike, and removed handlebar grips and dismantled rear disc mech on the other bike. ARGH!

When we moved in 2013, our top housing priority was to have a garage to store our bikes so this sort of thing wouldn't keep happening.

Of course, bikes are like gases - the number of bikes increases to fill the space available. Especially when you have a small child who keeps growing and a sentimental attachment to old bikes - witness the old Peugeot bike I cycled at age 7 ish on a family holiday in France, which I found in my aunt's back garden a few years ago and had to reclaim.



Red hooks over yonder as Jimi Hendrix nearly sang

I moved to Balerno in 2001. St Patrick's day. Bright sunshine that Friday and then snow on Saturday.

The house came with a garage I somehow managed to fill with bikes. Using big red hooks I screwed into the rafters of the garage. I loved my red hooks so much I also later bought some black ones, which were nearly as good.

A tank of a bike from EBC called a Cove, it actually lasted for fifteen years until a social worker convinced me to donate it to a lad locked up in Rossie Government Farm. Montrose.

A red version of the above that my wife liked the colour of. She has cycled it three times, in 22 years. Every so often I take it down from its hook and pump up the tyres.

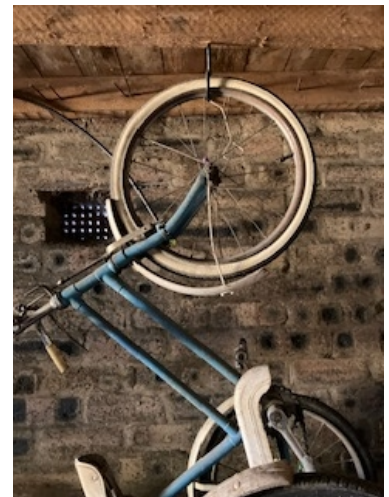
A Specialized Tricross that I have commuted on for nearly twenty years, A specialized Secteur Elite (I gave to my mate Broonie for building a bike further down this list). A specialized allez comp that is pretty nippy, A Specialized Crossroads Pub Bike with a Nexus 7;hub gear set up that was total pants. Now has three speed Sturmey Archer. This is the end of my Spesh habit.

A Shand Slinkmalinkyin pigeon blue known as The Cushie Doo that my mate Broonie built me. Frame and forks from Shand, built by Stew Allan in Livi, I cycled it to Ayr today with spuds from my garden for my wee Mum and stopped at the incredible Douglas Bakery to buy her some treadle scones too. She loves treacle scones from the Douglas Bakery.

An ancient Brompton that folds the second you get off it (it doesn't need a hook it has an IKEA Bag)

And a tricycle from the 1950s that a wee girl cycled with her wee Brother standing on the back and which has a vertical rod braking system that the pad fits exactly to the rim but without touching it so you have to crash it into a wall to stop it. It actually can take an adult cycling it,

Some say that is too many bikes but what use is a garage if it can't store as many bikes as you desire?



Two bike thefts from home – and recoveries!

I have twice had my bike stolen from my home, which is a bit disconcerting as the house is 50m from the road at the end of a cul-de-sac which is off a no-through road: opportunist thieves taking a bit of a risk, it seems. However on each occasion the police at Drylaw have proved themselves excellent crime solvers.

Once I had just parked the bike, not locked it, and I realised quickly that it was gone, so that the call to the police was made within an hour or so, and soon that same evening officers came to the house and looked at a photo, for which I was really grateful to Spokes as I had recently taken one and submitted it for a competition! They then spotted someone suspicious riding the bike, and later recovered it. Their comment was that they had noticed a "mismatch" between the bike and the rider – my interpretation: young man in a hoodie on an 'old lady's bike'. The bike was stripped of everything – baskets front and rear, lights, and the lock, which of course I should have used.

On the second occasion the thieves did not get very far at all, as by chance I'd had a puncture that evening, and had wheeled the bike home and left it on the patio behind our house, for my dear husband, aka my personal bike mechanic, to mend in the morning. I found the bike abandoned against a neighbour's house the next day, but the helmet which I'd left in the basket had been taken: it was later recovered, and the police said that it had been 'associated' with another crime scene.

Moral – ALWAYS lock your bike, even for just a few minutes, even outside your own home! And the more distinctive the bike, the better the chances are that 'joy-riding' thieves will be noticed.

Storing a tandem Circe Helios

We love our marvellous Circe Helios tandem (from Laid Back Bikes) which means our whole family can cycle together.

BUT, we hadn't thought about where to store it. Luckily for us it just happens to fit snugly inside the front door. The architects of our 1970s semi must have foreseen this exact scenario! And as a bonus we see it first thing when we come downstairs each day.



The tandemtastic way to start your day!



Shed dimensions

Its a small point, but significant - I have a green metal Asgard bike store, which has proved very secure and convenient, and looks good. But I nearly didn't buy it, because they are built to standard lengths, this one being 6ft long.

My bike is 73 inches long - problem I thought! But no. The bike naturally goes in and out on the diagonal, and the diagonal length is 80 inches - no problem. That leaves space neatly in the other two corners for your other stuff.

So when planning a bike store, think (just like for a television) of the length as being the diagonal.



Cardboard protection

This is a low cost solution for indoor bike storage.

I just used a large cardboard box to protect the wall.

It's been a life saver given I'm renting my flat so I need to make sure I don't leave any marks.



Interior design

In our flat its not about security it's about interior design.

The rule is, 'as long as they can't be seen'.

I hide my bikes, they sit tightly together in the boxroom and the door stays shut.

Anyone's bike can be extracted on request and will be presented in the hallway with crash hat, lock, lights and tyres at pressure.

By keeping everything secret including numbers, (there's one more hidden in the shed and two in the metal street store) combined with a smooth maintenance and delivery service everyone's happy.



Interior design - no bikes visible



Secret storage

Bikes outside!

I found this picture on the Asgard bike sheds website and thought it fantastic!

The caption was..

If you are short on places to store your bike, don't resort to drastic action like this!



Hanger in door cupboard



After 2 bikes stolen from shed went for cupboard at the door – easy just a hanger needed!

Still loads of room in the cupboard and easy access to getting out on the bike.

Only problem was clearing out the cupboard!

