



METRO EAST BICYCLE USER GROUP INC.

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MeBUG Matters No.1 December 2017

It has been an industrious three months. Following an initial meeting on the 19th August 2017 a five-person committee was formed consisting of David Simm as President, Michael Hassett as Secretary, Elaine Hopper as Treasurer, and David Blom and Mike Wellard as Committee members.

As a committee we bring many years of successful advocacy experience to the task. Our fundamental belief is that [rider](#) safety is critically important and is best achieved through improvements in cycling infrastructure. This requires advocacy by those most at risk, the cyclists and of course potential cyclists, with a focus on thinking globally but acting locally.

Despite recent successes and a hopefully increased tempo in constructing new infrastructure there remains much to be done. We have decided that rather than taking a scatter gun approach, we will be most effective by concentrating our efforts in our home area, Melbourne's Metro East – putting the ME into MeBUG!

Our initial efforts have concentrated on setting up the fundamentals of an efficient organisation including registration as an incorporated association with the ATO and as a charity, with a bank account with the Bendigo Bank. Thanks to Michael and Elaine, our Secretary and Treasurer for their efforts in building a firm foundation for our future.

Communication and visibility is fundamental to any advocacy group and we now have an all important online presence with our website mebug.org.au. and email mebug@mebug.org.au. David Blom has ensured we can also communicate efficiently with the younger cohort via FaceBook and Strava, whilst Elaine and Michael have also contributed their experience in setting up the website and email account, and by designing the logo and our office stationery.

Our membership now stands at 26 and heart warmingly includes many of our friends from WCI – we thank you for your support. Whilst believing that we must have a critical mass to establish credibility, we do not have a target in mind as our effectiveness is not subject to size alone.

We have built extensive contacts over more than 10 years of advocacy and we are currently re-introducing ourselves as MeBUG. We met with Shaun Leane MLC, Eastern metro Region in mid October and briefed him on our various projects of interest. He undertook to make sure we will be included in future consultation groups on cycling projects in our region of interest.

Our advocacy has continued with submissions being made on the Laburnum section of the Box Hill to Ringwood Shared User Path (BHRSUP/BHRRRT), the state government's Cycling Corridors Proposal (part of \$100M safer cycling and pedestrian program) and increasing safety and connectivity in Nunawading and Mitcham via connections to

BHRSUP via the lane at Harvey Norman, and McGlone and Richardson Streets. You can read more about these proposals on our website.

In related matters, it's also been a real pleasure to get out and about on the bike participating in some organised activities, especially with the next generation of enthusiasts. In November we were invited by Whitehorse and Boroondara Councils to take part in their *Bike It Day*. We had an enjoyable half day taking literally dozens of primary school children in small parties along a short distance of the Koonung Creek Trail, demonstrating the etiquette and techniques of riding along bike paths. This was one of many activities of Bike It and a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the bike education of the young.



Bike It, November 22nd

We also took part as 'counters' for the Bicycle Network Super Sunday Recreation Count, which not only contributed to building the bank of knowledge on which many councils base their infrastructure priorities, but also made an important contribution to our finances.

And of course it's not all business, we enjoyed our first official MeBUG social function thanks to Mike Wellard who organised an excellent dinner at "Zest" the restaurant at Holmesglen Institute's Hospitality School. I'm informed that there will be more social functions to follow...

So as 2017 draws to a close, the MeBUG team is now firmly established as your cycling advocates and looking forward to a productive and successful 2018, slowly but surely turning more sods!

From everyone in the Committee we wish you and your families a happy Christmas and fun and safe riding over the holidays.

David Simm
President