A use case: an ellipse labelled with the name of the use case. Conventionally we start each use case name with a verb to make the point that use cases represent processes. So we have 'Maintain customer list' rather than 'Customer list', 'Handle enquiries' rather than 'Enquiries'.

An actor: a stick figure labelled with the name of the actor. We capitalize actor names so that they are easy to identify as such (e.g. Administrator, Receptionist). The stick figure icon is used even when the actor is non-human, e.g. another computer system or an organization.

A use case relationship: a line linking an actor to a use case. The line shows us which actors are associated with which use cases. This relationship is also known as a communication association.

The boundary: a line drawn round the use cases to separate them from the actors and to delineate the area of interest. Can be labelled to indicate the diagram domain. The boundary is often omitted.

Figure 3.1   *The UML symbols for use case diagrams*

cases: 'Maintain bike list', 'Maintain customer list', 'Handle enquiries', 'Issue bike' and 'Handle bike return'. Conceptually a use case diagram is similar to a top-level menu which lists the five main things that the system does. Each use case is linked by a line to an actor. The actor, represented by a stick figure, is the person (sometimes a computer system or an organization) who uses the system in the way specified in the use case or who benefits from the use case.
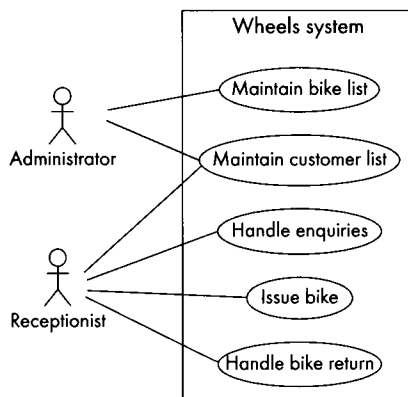

Figure 3.2   *Use case diagram for Wheels*