

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND SPORT

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL		
DATE:	12 JANUARY 2010	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	CYCLING STRATEGY PROGRESS AND 2009-10 ACTION PLAN		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORT	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	HANNAH BUDNITZ	TEL:	0118 9372653 (x72653)
JOB TITLE:	SENIOR TRANSPORT PLANNER	E-MAIL:	Hannah.Budnitz@reading.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the progress of the Cycling Strategy this financial year so far and detail how proposed actions have progressed or changed since they were proposed to the Traffic Management Advisory Panel in March 2009. The report seeks approval to carry out consultation and statutory procedures as necessary to implement revised and further proposals as described below. The report also highlights the intentions for the 2010-11 financial year.
- 1.2 For background information, please see the Cycling Strategy September 2008 and Report to TMAP March 2009.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Panel notes the Report.
- 2.2 That the following recommendations be made to Cabinet:
  - 2.2.1 That the progress in implementing the Cycling Strategy proposals in the last nine months be noted.
  - 2.2.2 That the updated list of actions to implement Cycling Strategy detailed measures be agreed, and that in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out consultations and statutory procedures for the proposals and subject to no objections being received that the Head of Transport implement the schemes.

2.2.3 That any objections received following statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Advisory panel.

2.2.4 That the initial action plan to further progress the Cycling Strategy in 2010-11 be noted.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Reading Borough Council adopted the document entitled *Cycling Strategy: September 2008* at full Council on 14 October 2008 as a supporting strategy under the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011. The document includes an action plan setting out the implementation of proposals over the short, medium or long-term (and ongoing). The short term was described as broadly the 18 months after the approval of the document, so progress listed within this report relates to the short-term (or ongoing) implementation of the Cycling Strategy. Actions proposed in the 2010-11 financial year will be within the medium term implementation of the Cycling Strategy.

### 4. THE PROPOSAL

#### (a) Progress on the Cycling Strategy Short Term

Over the past 9 months, significant progress has been made in developing the short-term and ongoing proposals of the Cycling Strategy.

'Soft' measures to encourage cycling were particularly concentrated in the short term or are ongoing, and work underway or completed this financial year includes:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> editions of Network map and Town Centre map designed, produced and published (print and online);
- 1<sup>st</sup> editions of 4 route maps for the routes to south and west Reading (R1/10-green, R5-light blue, R50-dark blue and R6/60-light pink) have been designed, produced and published (print and online);
- Branded signing has been designed, produced and installed on routes in south and west Reading (R10, R5, R50, R6 and R60);
- Variable Message Signs utilised for messages about the benefits of cycling;
- Ongoing support for relevant events and marketing campaigns;
- Healthy Workplace Challenge;
- A new cycle development officer has been hired to progress the CTC Cycling Champions Programme to progress cycling in communities and hard-to-reach groups such as women, minority groups and the disabled;
- 51 schools of 63 have travel plans, existing travel plans are being reviewed and a school-oriented travel website is being developed; and
- funding has been awarded for Bikeability cycle training for 500 children in addition to voluntary cycle training administered by Reading Borough Council, and 115 children have been trained to date.

Following the development of the list of measures on the routes to the south and west of Reading as described in the March 2009 report, cycle route audits have been undertaken on all these routes (green, light blue, dark blue and pink). This

has resulted in some measures being progressed, others revised and others replaced by other proposals.

The measures completed so far include:

- cycle parking installed at Whitley Wood local centre;
- cycle parking installed at Prospect Park;
- cycle directional signing on routes R10, R5, R50, R6 and R60;
- cycle links through Kennet Island development;
- cycle links through Battle Hospital development;
- improved access to Tilehurst Station;
- dropped kerbs and road markings at Kentwood roundabout (on Oxford Road) to access shared path;
- cycle road markings linking to shared path on Oxford Road between Kentwood roundabout and Norcot roundabout;
- pinch point between Gower and Lorne Street on Oxford Road removed;
- cycle lane on Bridge Street across Fobney Street repainted;
- road safety scheme at Duke Street/London Street junction, including advanced stop lines, wider bus/cycle lanes and updated signing;
- Links to Schools application for route between Coley and Southcote (R6) submitted and approved;
- creation of a segregated cycle/footway along Bath Road between Berkeley Avenue and Downshire Square;
- Traffic Order to reduce speeds on Shinfield Road through the local centre to 20mph advertised (30mph Order for Shinfield Road in Reading to be sealed);
- Traffic Order to allow two-way cycling on Friar Street, Greyfriars Road and West Street advertised;
- detailed design plans for the local centre enhancement on Shinfield Road, including cycle parking and signals with advanced stopped lines are out to tender; and
- early phases of construction of the pedestrian/cycle route across M4 junction 11.

#### **(b) Further Proposals for the Cycling Strategy Short Term**

A number of further measures previously identified, such as removing barriers, additional road markings and new toucan crossings were identified in the March 2009 TMAP report and are programmed for implementation before the end of the financial year. Following cycle route audits and consultation, however, it was found that some facilities were already adequate, such as the toucan crossing of Basingstoke Road by Cradock Road or the dropped kerb onto Southcote Lane, or the routes were changed slightly, so that certain proposals are no longer identified as part of the route. This is the case with R60, for example, which is now proposed to turn north at Downshire Square, rather than continuing to Castle Hill before turning.

Since R60 has been revised, the shared path along Bath Road has been reduced in length and the conversion of a pedestrian crossing to a Toucan on Bath Road specified at the crossing by Downshire Square. A new dropped kerb off onto Downshire Square and an additional advanced stop line at the junction of Great

Knollys Street with the IDR were added to the list. Reading Borough Council also put forward a Links to Schools funding application (for improvements to walking & cycling routes) to Sustrans and in negotiations with them, some additional work has been agreed, which will be confirmed once a funding agreement is formalised. Other additional work has also been identified through the cycle route audits and consultation with cycle groups, such as a toucan crossing to link into Salisbury Road from Oxford Road and the right turn ban to be lifted for cyclists coming out of Cranbury Road. Smaller local centres along the routes, such as Wensley Road, are also being targeted for cycle parking.

Overall, the additional scheme proposals that will require authorisation and consultation are:

- designate a section of shared path on Oxford Road north and south between Reading West Station and Salisbury Road to allow for a Toucan crossing and connect Oxford Road to Salisbury Road;
- allow cyclists to cross footway between Elm Park and Suffolk Road;
- convert footways to shared paths either side of the proposed toucan crossing of Berkeley Avenue at St. Saviour's Road (between Rodney Court and St. Saviour's Road); and
- convert footway along the north side of Bath Road to a shared path between Honey End Lane and the Prospect Park entrance near the Circuit Lane pedestrian crossing.

Furthermore, a Traffic Regulation Order is required to allow right turns out of Cranbury Road for cyclists (exemption from ban) and authorisation for this is requested. A Cycle Tracks Order, including statutory consultation is required to convert the public footpath between Wensley Road and Southcote Farm Lane to permit cycling.

These works, along with those already completed or underway, will enable the branded and signed routes in South and West Reading to meet the criteria set for these routes in terms of safer crossing points and priority at junctions as well as safer route options.

### **(c) Proposals for the Cycling Strategy Medium Term**

In 2010-11, a similar programme will be produced for routes in Southeast and East Reading (the orange and red routes) as has been undertaken for the blue, light pink and green routes this year. This programme is intended to include the following measures, subject to confirmation of LTP funding for the financial year 2010-11:

- branded signing;
- cycling facilities incorporated into the Shinfield Rise Local Centre Enhancement;
- improved road markings and signing along London Road;
- cycle facilities along Redlands Road;
- cycle facilities between Kennetside and Kings Road bus lanes;
- cycle facilities at/through Cemetery junction;
- cycle links to and from Palmer Park;

- design of cycle facilities through Christchurch Green junction as progress A327 study;
- Napier Road underpass and links to it; and
- link through from Three Tuns to University of Reading Earley Gate.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 To Develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley.
- 5.2 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.
- 5.3 We have committed through the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement to encourage more cycling for local journeys and more sustainable travel to school.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Full consultation on the Cycling Strategy was undertaken in January to March 2008, and presentations on the progress of the final Cycling Strategy were discussed at the Transport Users Forum in July and September 2008. Cycle Liaison Meetings are held quarterly with Councillor attendance since October 2008 and drop-in sessions were held to discuss a draft version of the network map. Marketing campaigns accompany Bike Week, and other organisations, community groups, schools, etc are contacted as appropriate. Marketing of Bikeability is ongoing and is also planned for the launching of new edition of the network map and of the route maps. Notices of key proposals, such as a new shared path are put up on street even where statutory Orders are not required to improve awareness among other local road users.
- 6.2 Statutory procedures are subject to statutory consultation requirements.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Statutory procedures are subject to statutory consultation requirements.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 All proposals are within the existing LTP budget, although the conversion of the footpath is dependent upon a funding agreement with Sustrans for a Links to Schools route. Ongoing maintenance is the responsibility of the highways or parks maintenance teams.

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 Cycling Strategy: September 2008
- 9.2 TMAP report from 24 March 2009 entitled Cycling Strategy progress and 2009-10 action plan.