NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CYCLING STRATEGY 2006/7-2010/11



INTRODUCTION

This document details Nottinghamshire County Council's vision for cycling within the county for the period 2006/07 – 2010/11 and complements the information contained in the Greater Nottingham and North Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plans 2006/07 to 2010/11.

The County Council recognises that cycling is a mainstream, everyday form of transport that can play an important role in ensuring people are able to move around the county so they can enjoy the benefits of living and working in Nottinghamshire.

The Council introduces measures that encourage people to cycle and not only promote the right of a cyclist to use their chosen form of transport safely and conveniently but also ensure they behave responsibly and legally in their dealings with all other road users.



AIMS OF THE CYCLING STRATEGY

Cycling has a role to play in all of the aims of the County Council's Community Strategy 'All Together Better' (2005-2009) but particularly the objectives aiming to make Nottinghamshire:

- safer and stronger; making Nottinghamshire safer, building a sense of community and enriching lives
- healthier; improving health and wellbeing
- cleaner and greener; protecting and improving the environment
- travel and access; travelling easily and safely and being able to access all the services people need.

Cycling also helps to meet the four transport objectives determined nationally and three locally determined transport objectives detailed within the second local transport plans (LTP2), namely:

- improved accessibility (national objective)
- improved air quality (national objective)
- reduced congestion (national objective)
- safer roads (national objective)
- improved quality of life (local objective)
- regeneration (local objective)
- making best use of the existing highway infrastructure (local objective).

The Cycling Strategy aims to help the County Council meet these corporate and transport objectives through:

- enhancing accessibility to services through improved cycling conditions
- promoting sustainability through reducing the reliance on the private car
- improving the public's quality of life by contributing towards a healthier population through encouragement of cycling as regular exercise and a leisure pursuit
- widening transport options for cyclists by producing extensive, coherent cycle routes to form a complete network
- improving the road safety of cyclists and the positive effects this has on accessibility, quality of life, social inclusion and safer communities
- promoting interchange with other modes of transport for longer journeys where feasible
- reducing levels of cycle theft by installing more cycle parking and education of security measures through publicity and promotional events
- benefiting children and young people by providing cycle training and education.

To help achieve the aims of the strategy an action plan has been prepared for developing cycling in Nottinghamshire (see Appendix D). This details the core activities required for encouraging cycling in accordance with the strategy and highlights key players who will be responsible for ensuring these actions are taken forward. The action plan will be monitored and reviewed on a six monthly basis.

OWNERSHIP AND USAGE

Surveys in Nottinghamshire have shown that there are relatively high levels of cycle ownership throughout the county. In a 2005 personal travel questionnaire, approximately 40% of respondents in Nottinghamshire declared that they owned a bike. Levels of cycling, however, differ greatly between areas of the county.

The Newark and Sherwood district traditionally has the greatest number of cyclists present. Up to 10% of journeys to work take place by bike in the Newark area (North Nottinghamshire LTP 2001-2006) which is significantly greater than the national and regional average of 3% (2001 Census).

Beeston, in the Broxtowe area also has a culture of cycling, probably boosted by its high student population and the nearby university, along with a sympathetic topography and satisfactory level of dedicated infrastructure. And despite a relatively sparse overall network, cycling accounts for 4% of journeys to work in Retford and Worksop (2001 Census) in the Bassetlaw district. The more urban areas of Rushcliffe borough have above average levels of cycling, encouraged by a comprehensive network of dedicated infrastructure.

By contrast levels of cycling in Ashfield, Mansfield and Gedling areas remain low. It is thought that a mixture of a traditionally low number of cycling trips and, particularly in Gedling's case, a hilly topography proves to be a burden in encouraging new cyclists.

MONITORING

As part of the monitoring of the progress of LTP2s Nottinghamshire County Council has selected 35 sites throughout the county for monthly counts to be carried out over the five years of the plan. Seven sites are monitored in every calendar month with the other 28 sites monitored monthly between April and September inclusive. These sites have been chosen to represent different types of users (i.e. urban, commuter routes and rural, recreational use) and locations (on/off-road and urban/rural) and cover each of the districts in the county.

The table in appendix C details the sites that will be monitored.

PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Problems

Some of the problems that people feel deters them from cycling more are:

- High traffic levels
- Poor maintenance of routes
- Danger of cycle theft/ not enough secure cycle parking in the most convenient places

- Poor image of cycling
- Real or perceived risk of injury
- General ease and attractiveness, and perceived low cost of car use
- Geography of certain areas e.g. hills, spacing between facilities
- Length of journey may require interaction with public transport over longer commuting journeys
- Severance of direct and attractive routes
- Lack of rural links resulting from the cost (due to length) verses lower benefits through smaller populations
- Lack of designated facilities in smaller towns to main towns resulting from cost versus benefits issue
- Air and noise pollution
- Poor weather

Opportunities

Due to high levels of cycle ownership throughout the county there is a realistic opportunity to increase the number of commuter and leisure journeys that are made by cycle.

People do also generally feel that cycling is worthwhile, whether or not they regularly do it. For example, in a Department for Transport (DfT) 2003 attitudes to walking and cycling paper, 68% of respondents said that cyclists should be given more priority and almost the same number felt that more public money should be spent on cycling facilities. There is also support for cycling within the county as two thirds of those surveyed in North Nottinghamshire as part of the development of LTP2 considered that cycling facilities were important in helping deliver the plan's objectives.

Detailed below are some of the opportunities which have been identified to promote cycling, as well as increasing the numbers of people cycling regularly.

Health

Insufficient levels of physical activity are contributing to poor levels of public health and deterioration in individuals' quality of life. The Department for Health recommends that each person should do 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times each week, but the 2005 personal travel survey results show that only 10% of adults in Nottinghamshire reach this level. Historically much of this exercise would have come from cycling and walking.

With current fears over obesity levels, as well as helping to tackle coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes and hypertension, there is a real opportunity to promote cycling to a wider audience in connection with the health benefits it provides. In a 2003 Best Value survey for Nottinghamshire County Council, 5% of residents said that they cycled on a regular basis, however 7 in 10 admitted to never cycling. Therefore, there are a huge number of people who could be targeted to cycle more often through effective marketing. In 2004 and 2005 a number of short 'Easy Rides' were carried out in Rushcliffe borough as an extension of the Council's full 'Rural Rides' programme. The feasibility of rolling this type of opportunity out in conjunction with other

primary care trusts will be investigated, in order to introduce people with health problems to short spells of exercise through cycling.

Congestion

Cycling can play a role in reducing congestion. Reducing congestion and/or arresting traffic growth also has an impact on several other Council objectives such as improving accessibility, the quality of life for local residents, air quality, reducing severance caused by congestion, and helping to make best use of the Council's existing network (particularly relating to the Council's statutory network management duty as set out in the Traffic Management Act 2004). There are targets in both local transport plans in relation to reduction of congestion, which sustainable alternatives such as cycling can assist with also.

Cycling will be promoted as an alternative to using the car as part of travel plans both in schools and the workplace (supported by complementary infrastructure where appropriate – cycling infrastructure is detailed later in the strategy).

School travel plans offer the opportunity to promote cycling to young people in a safe way in order to improve their health, reduce congestion at peak times by reducing the numbers of children driven to school and to develop enthusiasm for this mode of transport amongst children for the future. The Council will work with Sustrans, the charity that created the National Cycle Network (NCN), to identify and secure funding for schemes to further connect schools to the NCN, as well as other routes away from the NCN, which will promote cycling to school in connection with the Local Transport Plan.



Workplace travel plans will promote cycling in much the same way only to adults through the Smarter Choices strategy. The Smarter Choices strategy also includes a commitment to an annual programme of local and national campaigns to promote alternatives to the car over 2006/07 to 2010/2011 including, for example Bike Week in June.

Training

Adult and child cycle training is included within Nottinghamshire County Council's Cross Service Road Safety Improvement Plan 2003-2010. Cycle training is currently offered free of charge to children aged 9 and over throughout the county and is made up of:

- a foundation course carried out off-road aiming to develop cycling skills and control amongst younger children aged 9 and 10 years old.
- an intermediate course carried out on-road with children aged 10 and over aiming to teach trainees how to carry out cycle manoeuvres and to develop their road user skills.

Child cycle training is currently available through schools and may be developed at other venues such as leisure centres, thereby making it more accessible. Further development of the training scheme is being considered, to include young people at secondary school.

Adult cycle training is available through the RideWise partnership. As this scheme grows, it is hoped that this initiative will be expanded to cover the entire county. Cycle training could be particularly useful for adults new to the Country, who may have problems with access to transport, yet may not be familiar with riding a bicycle in the UK. One of the largest complaints the Council receives in connection with cycling is users being present on footways where there is no allowance for cyclists to do so. The education through RideWise and other promotional initiatives, along with the reduced prominence of shared paths for pedestrians and cyclists in new schemes in favour of on-carriageway solutions should have a positive impact upon this issue.

<u>Safety</u>

Road safety education is delivered mainly in primary and secondary schools across the County, with almost all of the primary schools (around 38,000 children) participating in the annual road safety quiz, which always includes elements of cycle safety.

The County recommends that only children who have received appropriate training should cycle to school under the guidance of their parents/ carers and approval from their school.

Nottinghamshire County Council promotes the use of cycle helmets for all cycling journeys and encourages the use of dedicated cycle facilities, both on and off road, wherever possible.

Partnerships

The cycling network is also developed through schemes with partners such as the Highways Agency, district and borough councils, British Waterways, East Midlands Development Agency and Groundwork Trust. Partnership working has the benefit of using the specific skills of associate organisations in order to develop projects more efficiently. Funding can also be shared, which in turn can provide a more comprehensive scheme, due to the additional money that is often available in these instances.

New development proposals are carefully appraised to ensure suitable access is provided to the site for all means of transport. Larger developments are expected to provide cycling links in the site and cycle parking provision must be installed in accordance with Nottinghamshire County Council's Parking Provisions for New Developments document. In many cases additional integrated transport measures, including cycling, are funded by the developer in the vicinity of the site as part of the agreement for the development. This allows the opportunity to link in with and upgrade existing routes at no or reduced cost to the highway authority, which in turn permits LTP and other funding to be used on further cycling schemes elsewhere.

Accessibility

Low car ownership in some areas offers the potential to increase reasonable levels of cycling in order to solve some accessibility problems through the provision of adequate infrastructure and effective promotion and marketing.

The comprehensive review of the network as part of the Authority's cycling action plan is also likely to provide locations where existing features can be altered or enhanced to produce more effective cycling links.

The opportunity to develop links whenever possible will be explored to promote sustainable travel. For example, the proposed NET Phase 2 will also allow the opportunity to make improvements for vulnerable road users.

In areas where there is a limited network, the opportunity of unearthing attractive, coherent new routes to develop cycling alongside suitable promotional measures will be explored and delivered subject to meeting value for money costings.

In areas where the topography of the district as a whole poses a problem for providing a cycle network, opportunities to provide some more localised signed routes in order to encourage trips to work and leisure will be explored.

Enhanced effective marketing

In areas where a strong culture of cycling already exists, this will be maintained and enhanced through further investment and promotion.

In locations where there is a good range of physical infrastructure present but cycling levels have not increased as a result of this, targeted promotion is essential in order to make more out of the capital investment on the ground. In such locations, investment will be made in more 'soft' promotional activities to complement the engineering works.

Similarly, in areas which boast an extensive cycling network, including advance cycle stop lines at most signalised junctions, the opportunities to

increase the levels of cycling further will be investigated through effective promotion and marketing.

The County Council is also currently investigating the feasibility of adopting a similar marketing concept to the Greater Nottingham Plan area 'Big Wheel' branding in North Nottinghamshire. Whilst any such branding would be associated with all modes of transport, it could be utilised to convey the importance of the link between the way people travel and health benefits.

ANALYSIS OF THE NETWORK

Built infrastructure

The Department for Transport's Local Transport Note 2/04 'Adjacent and Shared Use Facilities for Pedestrians and Cyclists' advises that when considering new cycling facilities "the evaluation should be exhaustive to ensure that all possible on-carriageway solutions have been thoroughly considered" before off road provisions are contemplated.

This statement has been embraced in Nottinghamshire through the Council's Cycling Design Guide. Where appropriate, the guide advocates carriageway reallocation to create cycle lanes, as this allows cyclists to retain priority at side road junctions. In some instances off-carriageway designs will be more appropriate, particularly where there is likely to be a high demand from inexperienced or more vulnerable cyclists to use the cycle route. Furthermore, in more rural areas off-road routes will be potentially attractive to leisure as well as commuter users. Thus full consideration is given to both types of facility on a site specific basis, along with a range of other measures, in order to encourage less confident cyclists as well as enhancing provision for regular, experienced users across the county.

The County Council accepts that it is important that cycle facilities are designed and built to standards that allow continuous use, are wide enough to allow cyclists and pedestrians and other legitimate users to pass each other safely. Cyclists have to be given space to allow cars to pass them safely at road narrowings.

Junctions and roundabouts can provide a hazard for cyclists and therefore measures are implemented to assist crossing certain locations. Enhanced priority measures for cyclists are considered where appropriate at new and existing signalised junctions. In densely used locations with signal crossing facilities, controlled facilities such as toucan crossings are used if feasible, and in accordance with national and local design guides.

In accordance with national best practice, advanced cycle stop lines (ASLs) are considered for installation at new traffic signal controlled junctions or when carriageway resurfacing takes place at signal junctions. A series of ASLs have been installed at all suitable existing junctions in Rushcliffe and Gedling over

the last two years. Where appropriate, the Council will continue to upgrade signal locations to incorporate ASLs.

Continental style roundabouts are considered to assist cyclists where they will offer a significant casualty reduction benefit. Cycling facilities will also be provided by converting footways to shared-use facilities on heavily trafficked cycling routes where it is not suitable to have cycle lanes on the carriageway. The Council uses signing and speed reduction measures in order to improve safety for cyclists at junctions it is felt appropriate to.



Cycle parking

The level of cycle parking at all town centres and passenger transport interchanges is investigated and reviewed as part of an overall integrated parking strategy. New or updated facilities are provided on an area wide priority basis, along with adequate directional signing to these resources.

A balance of short term, visible parking and longer term secure parking (i.e. lockers) is provided depending upon the type of journeys likely to the particular destination.

Cycle parking and storage facilities are also often a key feature of both workplace travel plans and school travel plans. Provision will also be provided at other key trip attractors such as leisure facility sites and shopping precincts too, in-line with the Council's Parking Provisions for New Developments guide.

Continuity of routes

In order to expand the network in the county, the County Council will investigate developing new high quality routes to link the urban fringe to the countryside and leisure routes. This will help to promote more rural leisure rides and may assist with encouraging more long distance rides to work and leisure from satellite communities to towns. Future connections to the national cycle network will also provide benefits for cycling and walking to schools, workplaces and leisure. It is vital that when planning extensions to the cycling network coherent route strategies are produced rather than stand alone adhoc schemes.

Aspirational cycling map



Through cycle working group meetings and other consultation exercises officers receive requests for new cycling facilities throughout the county. Cycling 'masterplans' were produced for the Greater Nottingham boroughs in 2003 in conjunction with cycling groups and similar exercises are carried out regularly at cycling meetings in the North Nottinghamshire districts. Α long-term aspirational map will be produced for the next five years to link realistic suggested schemes effectively to the existing network. Feasibility studies will investigate whether potential routes are coherent. attractive, safe and comfortable for cyclists.

Civil parking enforcement & The Traffic Management Act

Nottinghamshire County Council in partnership with the district councils is progressing towards taking over parking enforcement from the Police in 2007. As a consequence of this, enforcement of Traffic Regulation Orders such as waiting and loading restrictions will be given a higher priority. Better enforcement of the existing restrictions will result in less obstructions to cyclists from parked cars and will allow the County Council to introduce more effective traffic management measures including further dedicated cycle lanes in the future.

The Traffic Management Act also allows local authorities to enforce a limited number of moving traffic offences. This legislation will further benefit cyclists by improving the enforcement of, for example, bus lanes where cyclists are exempt.

Maintenance of routes

The maintenance of cycle routes to ensure that they continue to be usable is as important as providing new facilities. Accordingly, the County Council will continue to review its policies and strategies to ensure that effective repair, gritting, cleansing/ removal of litter and the cutting back of vegetation is undertaken to ensure that routes remain accessible and attractive. These policies are detailed within the Council's Highway Network Management Plan.

An action in Nottinghamshire County Council's Cross-Service Road Safety Plan 2003 – 2010 is to review the implications of gritting on-highway cycle routes.

Type of facility	Safety Inspection	Service Inspection
	Frequency	Frequency
On highway cycle facilities – cycle	As per carriageway	As per carriageway
lanes, gaps for cycles in road	where facility is based	where facility is based
closures and at signals etc		
Cycle tracks or shared paths on	6 months	1 year
highway land		
Cycle trails and off highway tracks	1 year	2 years

Table 1 Maintenance regimes for cycle facilities in Nottinghamshire (from Highway Network Management Plan, correct at February 2006)

Cross boundary issues

Nottinghamshire County Council works closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure that routes continue across administrative boundaries. An example of this is the Worsop Vale cycle route, which was completed in 2006. This project was programmed to coincide with a scheme being developed further west by Derbyshire County Council.

A close working partnership is present with Nottingham City Council for cycling. This is shown through the joint Local Transport Plan for Greater Nottingham, the area south Cycle Working Group and joint schemes such as the recent Beeston canal towpath improvements. The City Council shares our commitment to the provision of more on-carriageway cycle lanes in preference to shared-use paths as shown in their cycling strategy. There is also a pledge to include cycling improvements where feasible in all major highway schemes. By working towards similar goals for cycling, neighbouring authorities in Greater Nottingham are producing a larger, more coherent cycling network for users.

Nottinghamshire County Council Cycling Design Guide



The Council launched a Cycling Design Guide document in 2004. This is supplied to both internal practitioners and external partners such as district/ borough council engineers, developers and consultants. A feedback questionnaire in January 2006 showed that over 70% of respondents felt that it improved their awareness of designing for cyclists. Nearly 6 out of 10 also feel they produce better cycling schemes in 2006 than in 2004 before the guide was first launched.

The guide was created to ensure a consistency of approach across the county for cycling infrastructure. As a direct consequence of the guide, greater

numbers of cycle lanes and Advanced Stop Lines have been provided in the last 2 years. To supplement the Cycling Design Guide, a new non-motorised road user audit system is also in place to consider cyclists' needs during the development of new highway and planning projects.

It is intended that the guide will be updated in 2006/7, expanding on some areas of guidance on cycling policy and updating certain sections where focus may have changed locally or nationally since the launch. There are also certain cycling themes that the authority has learnt more about since 2004 and therefore, this experience will be noted in the new guide in order to continue to progress innovative solutions for cycling. The publication of the Department for Transport's 'Cycle Friendly Infrastructure 2' document is likely to have a positive impact upon cycle design guidance and this will be closely considered during the course of the updating of Nottinghamshire County Council's standards.

OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

As part of the development of LTP2, the Department for Transport has set 17 mandatory indicators against which the council must show progress over the course of the plans. One of these targets is a 1% year on year increase in the number of cycling trips countywide (based on an annualised index).

The County Council also intends to continue to expand the cycle network annually, through a combination of new engineering, signing, maintenance and improved promotion of routes.

A list of the key core activities to meet the objectives is detailed in Nottinghamshire County Council's cycling action plan 2006/07 – 2010/11, contained in Appendix D of the strategy.

APPENDIX A – LINKS TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Greater Nottingham Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/traffic_and_travel/strategy-policy.htm
- North Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/traffic_and_travel/strategy-policy.htm
- Cycling Design Guide*

http://web.nottscc.gov.uk/environment/publications/cycling_design_guide/index.htm

• Highway Network Management Plan

Summary at: http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/hnmpolicysummary.pdf

 Department for Transport – Cycling & Walking Action Plan, Encouraging Walking & Cycling: Success Stories

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_about/documents/page/dft_about_028946-04.hcsp#P81_3317

• Department for Transport – LTN 1/04 and LTN 2/04 http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.h cst?n=10382&l=2

^{*} This document is available through the link shown for NCC staff only. External bodies can request a copy or CD version by contacting NCC Cycling & Walking Officer.

APPENDIX B - LIST OF CONSULTEES

The strategy has been compiled through consultation with the following within Nottinghamshire County Council:

Traffic Services
Access/ Rights of Way
Transport Strategy
Local Transport Plan
Network Management
Area Highway Managers
Accident Investigation Unit
Road Safety
Road Safety Travel Plan Co-ordinator
Staff Travel Plan Co-ordinator
Traffic Signals
Highways Development Control

The following external groups have been consulted on a draft version of the strategy for comments:

Nottinghamshire County Council Cycle Working Group members

Pedals

Sustrans East Midlands

Cyclists' Touring Club

Primary Care Trusts

Nottinghamshire District and Borough Councils

Nottingham City Council

Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum

Groundwork Trust

Ridewise

Greater Nottingham Transport Partnership

Environment Agency

British Waterways

Highways Agency

EMDA

Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance)

Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils

Nottingham Coalition of Disabled People

Disabled Peoples' Movement

Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum

Nottinghamshire Transport 2000

University of Nottingham

APPENDIX C – List of cycle count sites 2005-2010

Site	Dedicated cycle facility?	
A60 Woodhouse Road, Mansfield *	N	
NCR 64 Sustrans Track, Newark *	Y – off road track	
Bridgegate, Retford *	N	
Bridge Place, Worksop *	N	
A60 Mansfield Road, Woodthorpe *	Y – inbound bus lane	
B6464 Broadgate, Beeston *	Y – cycle lanes	
Gordon Road, West Bridgford *	N	
A38 Sutton Road, Mansfield	Y – shared use	
Bleak Hills Lane, Mansfield	Y – shared use	
B6023 Lammas Road, Sutton in Ashfield	N	
B6326 London Road, Newark	Y – segregated shared use	
B6166 Lincoln Road Bridge, Newark	Y – shared use	
A1133/Station Rd/Bell Lane, Collingham	N	
A6075 Forest Road, Ollerton	Y – cycle lanes	
NCR 6 Vicar Water Country Park	Y – off road track	
A638 London Road, Retford	Y – segregated shared & cycle lanes	
Chesterfield Canal, Retford	Y – off road track	
Valley Road, Worksop	Y – cycle lanes	
NCR 6 Chesterfield Canal, Worksop	Y – off road track	
Scrooby Road, Harworth	N	
NCR 6 East of B6034, Clumber Park	Y – off road track	
NCR 6 Linby Trail	Y – off road track	
Nottingham Road, Hucknall	Y – cycle lanes	
B683 Moor Road, Bestwood Village	N	
NCR 6 over Moor Road, Bestwood	Y – off road track	
Beryldene Avenue, Kimberley	N	
A612 Burton Road, west of Burton Joyce	Y – shared use	
Cotgrave Bridge & Grantham Canal (interchange)	Y – track/ shared use	
Nottingham Road, Bingham	Y – cycle lanes	
NCR 64 Old Grantham Road, Near Aslockton	N	
A52 Radcliffe Road, Holme Lane	N	
Adbolton Lane, Adbolton N		
B680 Wilford Road, north of Ruddington	Y – shared use	
A6005 Bypass Road, Chilwell	Y – shared use	
A6007 Ilkeston Road, Stapleford	Y – shared use	

^{*} Denotes all year monthly count site. Rest are monitored monthly between April and September inclusive