

WOKING



The Planet Trails

Draft Plan & Programme (2008-2011)



Version December 2008



BACKGROUND

Surrey County Council (S.C.C.) and Woking Borough Council (W.B.C.) are well placed to deliver the programme of activities as described in the Cycling Town bid.

The emerging South East Plan identifies Woking as one of three regional hubs within Surrey. This relates to the role of the town centre as an attractive destination in its own right for people to live, work and spend their leisure time in, as much as its role as a transport focus and interchange. Modern Woking grew up around its railway station, which is now the second busiest in the county with approximately 6.7 million (2006/07), passengers using it annually. Good public transport provision and existing pedestrian and cycle routes make Woking town centre one of the most accessible locations in Surrey and therefore one of the most sustainable locations for new development. Woking Borough Council's emerging Local Development Framework, which is prepared within the context of the South East Plan, sets out the town centre's potential as a focus for new development and recognises that the provision of an adequate transport network is a key component in the realisation of this strategy. In turn, the provision of safe and convenient cycle routes – spokes that radiate from the hub - and improved cycling facilities is an important part of the vision for the transport network and in providing attractive alternatives to the car.

Over recent years S.C.C. has been successful in working in partnership with local groups in delivering schemes that have brought about increased levels of cycling. In 2003 and 2004 the English Regional Cycling Development Team judged S.C.C. to be the top performing local authority in the southeast on performance on cycling.

A regular programme of monitoring cycle journeys using automatic cycle counters at over 30 locations across Surrey (6 in Woking) and the counting of bicycles at eleven key railway stations (2 in Woking) commenced in 2004/5. The latest figures show increases over those in 2004 of (a) 14% in cycle journeys being made in general and (b) 25% of cycle commuting to railway stations. This monitoring will continue during the period of the cycling town award and will be supplemented by cordon counts into the centre of Woking.

Woking's size, compact nature, and the location of its outlying residential areas in relation to the town centre and topography make it an ideal candidate to be a cycling town.

Woking Borough stretches from Brookwood in the west to Byfleet in the east a total distance of about 8 miles with Woking town centre approximately in the middle. From north to south the maximum distance is about 4 miles. The maximum distance anyone has to travel to the town centre or main railway centre is therefore about 4 miles, a distance well suited for cycling.

The topography is also very kind towards cyclists with very few hills. The Basingstoke Canal is a main artery that runs through the Borough from east to west. Almost everyone in the Borough lives within two miles of the canal's towpath and with links, this would provide an excellent off-road route into the town centre and beyond.

Woking Borough Council has received accolades for leading the field in its approach to sustainable development, creating sustainable communities and addressing the challenges of climate change, including being the most energy efficient local authority in the country. This is an important part of the Council's plans for Woking's future. Further studies are being undertaken by the Council that includes one by Meyer-Brown for a station interchange. Cycle Town status will help to realise the vision of making Woking the most sustainable, travel conscious town in the country.

Finally, although outside the timeframe for the 2008-2011 programme, we are developing a major transport scheme bid for Woking for Regional Transport Board funding. This is likely to include a substantial cycling element. This scheme will be developed to take forward the concept of Woking as a regional hub. The County has been successful in securing agreement from the Regional Transport Board for similar schemes at the County's other hubs of Guildford and Reigate/ Redhill.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The existing network, consisting of 43.6km, in general, generates from Woking Railway Station and radiates out to the neighbourhoods and villages within Woking as well as connecting to other locations outside of the district, such as Chertsey and Guildford.

The routes in general, are well signposted and have seen a 14% increase in cycle journeys since monitoring commenced in 2004. However, there are some problems that have been identified by users of the network through the Woking Cycle Users Group and work to rectify these commenced during 2007/08 and the remaining high priority sites have been included within the Infrastructure Programme.

The upgrading of the Basingstoke Canal towpath and its links from Pirbright Bridge to the Wey Navigation is the key objective within this programme. Survey work undertaken during 2007 by *Sustrans* indicated that the vast majority of people using the canal route at that time were on local journeys. Postcode plot information indicates that 91,083 people live within 1 mile (1.6km) of the towpath and the improvements planned will enable more people to use this route for journeys. The towpath has now been designated part of the National Cycle Network (NCN).

The town centre in Woking has access difficulties by cycle, with some streets currently having "No Cycling" status. Access across the A320 Victoria Way and Cawsey Way is not made easy by the existing standard pelican crossings. The programme includes removing the "No Cycling" status of many of the streets within the town centre and the upgrading and widening of the existing pelicans to toucan crossings.

The existing North / South route has also been designated as a NCN route and will link to NCN route 4 at Chertsey and NCN route 22 at Guildford via Woking thus making Woking a local hub of national cycle routes. The routes from Woking to Guildford and Woking to Chertsey already feature on Woking's cycle route network and are scheduled for improvements with an off road route planned through the Hoe Valley.

A substantial increase in cycle parking at Woking railway station is planned, together with Woking town centre. Woking railway station can boast 6.7 million passenger journeys per annum (2006/07), based on entry / exits, making it the 35th busiest station in the UK and within the top 1.5%. Cycle parking at the station has seen continued increases over recent years, despite the loss of stands on the north side through development. On most days all the available stands will be full with cycles locked against other street furniture. The aim is to increase the available cycle parking at or close to the station from the current 300 stands to close to 1,000.

As the infrastructure is completed the routes will be re-branded on the Planets Theme, based on "*War of the Worlds*" by HG Wells who was a resident of Woking during the late 1800's. The Basingstoke Canal towpath could be known as the *Saturn Trail* with links off the route named after its moons, such as Titan, Calypso and Atlas. It is planned to launch each route using the re-branded theme on completion of that route, or phase in the case of the Basingstoke Canal. It is also intended to sign the routes with times in minutes instead of miles, such as Knaphill 20 minutes instead of 3 miles. This concept has been very successful in a number of the existing Cycle Demonstration Towns where

further evidence on re-branding will be gathered in the near future. A detailed map of the planned branding has been attached as Annex B.

Negotiations are currently underway to install a Mountain Bike Track within the Woking area.

SOFT MEASURES

The soft measures programme has been created to compliment the infrastructure programme in order to provide a fully integrated approach. It includes measures that will not only lead to more people cycling but also to increased usage of all sustainable transport modes. The programme is also designed to integrate with existing sustainability strategies such as Woking Borough Council's Carbon Reduction programme and health promotions.

A 'Smarter Choices Co-coordinator' would be employed to co-ordinate the soft measures programme.

The main elements to the soft measures programme are

ENCOURAGING CYCLING TO SCHOOL

TRAINING

Bikeability level 1 and 2 is already offered to all pre-secondary schools for years 5 and 6 pupils, respectively. Level 3 will be introduced to secondary schools during 09/10.

CYCLE STORAGE

All schools will be provided with sufficient cycle storage for students and staff in order that the targets for cycling to school can be met (8% pre-secondary, 15% secondary).

BIKE CLUBS

Fourteen schools already have active bike clubs. Assistance will be offered to the remaining schools in setting up bike clubs.

TRAVEL PLANS

27 out of the 31 state schools already have travel plans. Assistance will be provided to the remaining schools so that all schools will have travel plans.

SMARTER TRAVEL

This will be focused on targeting groups that have the greatest potential for changing to more sustainable travel modes. The main priority will be for journeys into and out of the town centre, to/from the Woking railway and other stations and local businesses.

Use will be made of the Cycle Woking website to publicise and promote its initiatives and incentives. These include:

- New cycle maps showing the Planet Cycle/Walking Trails
- Bicycle recycling
- Grants for the provision of cycle parking
- Free Bikeability training

- A free calorie expenditure calculator
- Free membership of the Woking Cycle Users Group (for one year)
- Travel vouchers
- Free Fitbug membership (for one year)

TRAVELLING TO WOKING RAILWAY STATION

Substantially increasing cycling to Woking railway station is one of the key objectives of the Cycle Woking programme. The existing storage arrangements at the station are not ideal and all the existing cycle stands are at capacity with cycles strapped to guard railing, trees, lamp columns etc.

In the short term the Cycle Woking partnership will look to extend the existing cycle racks on the south side of the station along Oriental Road and other adjacent locations. The medium term could see the creation of a Cycle Centre, for more secure cycle parking, sale of equipment, cycle repairs, cycle information and possibly cycle hire. Discussions with South West Trains (SWT) are already taking place about this. The extension of CCTV coverage is also under investigation.

On the northside of the station, there are initial draft plans to remove the existing outer wall on Platform 1 and create cycle parking accessed from the Broadway, with a transparent 'glass' wall installed between the new cycle stands and the remainder of the platform which would all be undercover. There could be possible special access to the station for people arriving by bike.

Marketing of the new cycle stands would be carried out using the Borough Council's magazine delivered to all households, use of the local press, events at the station (e.g. bicycle breakfasts) and SWT's regular magazine.

TRAVELLING TO AND THROUGH WOKING TOWN CENTRE

The infrastructure programme includes many schemes that will make it easier and safer to cycle into and through the town centres. Cycle parking will also be significantly increased. As with those travelling to Woking railway station information and incentives (e.g. bicycle breakfasts) will be arranged to encourage people to cycle in.

WORKING WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

Woking contains a large number of small organisations and we will look to work more closely with businesses in order to target those where there is greater potential for travel change. Six companies have so far implanted travel plans and more are in the pipeline.

Woking has relatively few very large employers compared with other towns in Surrey such as Guildford, Reigate and Epsom. The largest employers in Woking (over 500 staff on site) are **Woking Borough Council, Cap Gemini and Sainsbury's**. There are a further 34 'medium-size' companies with between 100 to 500 staff on site, making a total 37 companies with 100+ staff.

As part of Cycle Woking, we will aim to engage with the three largest employers, a further 25 out of 34 of the medium sized companies and an estimated 60 smaller employers (less than 100 staff). Further ideas for this are set out in Appendix 3. We aim to engage with over 80 employers in total by end of 2010/11.

There are four elements to the programme:

- Capital grants programme for cycle parking improvements, showers and clothing lockers or other on-site facilities to encourage cycling.

- Web-based 'Cycle challenge', similar to Swindon and Colchester's schemes. Initially for workplaces and later in year for friends and family (following cycle showcase event)
- Intensive support with in-house road-show, free 4 week bike loan, free maintenance and optional bike purchase after 4 weeks (our current "Cycle 50% Challenge")
- Cycle showcase event - a one day event featuring to showcase cycling with bike shops, cycle training sessions, Dr Bike etc. and other Smarter Choices. To be timed after initial web-based 'Cycle Challenge' for employees, but before 'friends and family challenge' – to generate interest in this scheme.

We have 2FTEs as 'Community Travel Advisors' who monitor the implementation of Development Related Travel Plans, the majority of which are workplace sites, across the 11 boroughs of Surrey. For the next two years priority will be given to Woking.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

We will seek partners who will work with us to promote and encourage cycling to their members as part of their regular routine.

BICYCLE RECYCLING AND OTHER COMMUNITY BASED PROJECTS

The Cycle Woking partnership will look to create one (or possibly two) community based bicycle-recycling enterprises. It is intended to locate these in deprived areas of Woking, possibly Lakeview and Sheerwater.

Bicycle recycling will enable people on low income to obtain a bicycle at little or no cost. The scheme will consist of setting up of two local enterprises that will source unwanted bikes in order to produce roadworthy bikes at low or no cost. The scheme will also provide low cost maintenance facilities.

Other community-based projects will include a continuation of the provision of cycle stands at doctors, dentists and Health Centres etc and at local shopping areas.

PARTNERS

The Woking Cycling Town project consists of key partner organizations, which is attracting new members as the project progresses, such as local Cycle shops. The key partners at present include:

- Surrey County Council
- Woking Borough Council
- Basingstoke Canal Authority
- Woking Cycle Users Group
- Surrey Police
- Surrey Primary Care Trust
- Active Surrey
- Local Schools (42 state and independent schools within Woking)
- South West Trains

- Sustrans
- Local dentists and doctors
- Age concern Surrey
- Local Cycle Shops based in Woking

EVENTS, PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

A vital ingredient of the programme's delivery is that of publicity and promotion.

It is intended to make full use of the local press, the Woking Magazine, the Woking Cycle Users group newsletter and local radio stations for publicising latest developments, future events and activities.

A range of promotional material, including an updated Woking Cycle Map, will be developed and made available. Events such as organised bike rides, cycle maintenance sessions and promotional stands will also be arranged.

A Cycle Woking website has been created to provide comprehensive information on all aspects of the project.

A media officer has been attached to the project for dealing with press and media enquiries (see Annex C)

INCREASING CYCLE JOURNEYS

The programme that has been developed is intended to increase cycle journeys at a substantial rate over its current rate to the following:

Primary Schools: Increase cycling from its current 4% to 8%

Secondary Schools: Increase cycling from its current 10% to 15%

Commuting journeys to railway stations: 50% increase on 2004 levels

Cycle journeys: 40% increase on 2004 levels.

TARGET GROUPS

Woking Cycling Town partnership have identified key target groups and a summary of the messages and actions we will use has been provided below:

Target Groups	Target Journeys	Key Messages	Cycle Town Project Actions
Children 5 to 11 year olds	School Leisure	Fun, independence, healthy, cool, environment	School Cycle promotion, Bikeability, Safe Routes to School, Events – Cycle Clubs
Students 12 to 18 year olds	School / College Leisure Shopping	Healthy, cool/funky, independence, sociable, convenience (quicker than other modes), training, environment, fun.	School / College promotion. Safe Routes to school, Events – Cycle Clubs, Bikeability
Adults	Utility Trips Leisure School	Healthy, fun, sociable, convenience, fun for all the family, excellent cycle facilities	Workplace Cycle promotion, Cycling for Health, Leisure Rides, Skills and maintenance courses, Cycle Routes linking to other networks (NCR).
Commuters	Work Business Trips Leisure Trips	Convenient – quick, low cost, practical, healthy, fun, and sociable.	Workplace Cycle promotion, Leisure Rides, Skills and maintenance courses, Cycle Centre (Woking Station), Cycle Routes linking to other networks (NCR)

MONITORING

Regular monitoring of cycle journeys is already taking place at 6 locations in Woking. Sites on the Basingstoke Canal Towpath and other cycling corridors will supplement these.

Quarterly counts of bicycles left at Woking and West Byfleet railway stations are already taking place. Brookwood and Worplesdon railway stations to complete coverage in Woking will join these.

Regular counting of bicycles at the 32 state schools in Woking will commence.

The need for cordon counts around the center of Woking will also be considered.

MAIN OBSTACLES TO INCREASING CYCLING

1. Limitations on cycle storage at Woking railway station are seriously affecting the potential for cycling. Significant improvements have recently been made but a lot more needs to be done in order to unlock its latent potential. Partnership working with South West Trains is proving successful in overcoming this issue.
2. There is currently a ban on certain cycling movements through the town centre, which is inhibiting cycle usage. Woking B.C. and Surrey C.C. are working together to overcome this issue and provide a route through for cyclists.
3. The six crossroads roundabout (Route 4) one mile to the north of the town centre is a major obstacle for cyclists coming from this direction. This will be overcome through the minor improvements at this site.
4. The main line railway crossing the town centre is a perceived obstacle to a north / south walking and cycling movement. There are three options available at present, a) the use of subway at Woking railway station, b) Victoria Arch where tunnels are planned (partnership working with Woking Borough Council) and c) Monument Road (possible new link route but significant de-tour).
5. The view that cycling is dangerous. We will further publicise dedicated cycle routes and encourage the use of cycles by providing subsidised Bikeability training (there are now 4 Bikeability instructors able to cover Woking), lead rides (Woking Cycle Users Group) and offering cycle maintenance workshops (W.C.U.G. with assistance from local bike shops and Woking Borough Council).

PROJECT STRUCTURE

The Transport for Woking Board (TfWB) was set up following the approval of the County Council Local Committee for Woking on 20th February 2008. This Board, consisting of representatives from the County and Borough Councils together with private businesses including transport operators, will meet on a quarterly basis.

The TfWB is an advisory officer / stakeholder multi-agency partnership. Its aim is to coordinate transport strategies and measures to improve movement in and around the Borough of Woking. The primary goal is to improve the quality of life for the residents of the Borough and surrounding areas.

It is proposed that the TfWB act as the steering group for the Cycling Town project.

The TfWB will set up a Cycling Town Project Board consisting of representatives from the County and Borough Councils together with South West Trains and Woking Cycle Users Group. The County Council will also provide an officer to act as chairman and interface between the two boards. The Cycle Town Project Board will meet at key milestones during the project lifespan.

The County Council Local Committee for Woking will be responsible for approving funding for elements of work including schemes, traffic orders etc in line with County Council Policy.

Cycle Town Project Board

Surrey County Council's Head of Transport for Surrey (chairman)

Chief Executive of Woking Borough Council

Surrey County Council's Local Highways Manager for Woking who will be responsible for Infrastructure schemes

Surrey County Council's Cycling Officer who will be responsible for non-infrastructure measures including Schools.

W.B.C.'s Senior Policy Officer (Climate Change)

W.B.C.'s Marketing Communications Manager

A representative from the Woking Cycle Users Group

Attached to the board will be other officers as required

The Project has been subdivided into work element 'Teams' and these are indicated in Annex C

SUMMARY

It is envisaged that by 31 March 2011 Woking will be a more cycle friendly town consisting of:

- A network of cycle friendly routes
- Plentiful cycle storage at key locations including railway stations
- Greater integration between cycle and public transport use
- Improved information for cyclists e.g. on hire, routes, maintenance
- Schools with bike clubs, ample cycle storage and Bikeability training
- Company travel planning widely available
- Cycling referral widely available

As mentioned above, Woking is identified as a regional hub in the emerging South East Plan. In three years' time, the hub concept will be developed as a fully integrated transport strategy which will include the role that cycling can play in promoting both healthier non-car travel and more local journeys.

The full 2008-2011 programme is attached as Annex A with plans for future years beyond 2011 should funding becomes available.

PROJECT FINANCIAL PROFILE

The outline budget for the different elements of the work programme has been set out below. A detailed work programme for 2008/09 and outline programme for future years has been set out in Annex A.

Project Element	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Total	Comments
Basingstoke Canal	£163,100	£350,000	£474,000	£987,100	
Upgrading Woking Cycle Network	£215,655	£50,000	£0	£265,655	
Cycle Parking	£160,000	£130,000	£115,000	£405,000	
Woking Town Centre Access & Horsell Links	£187,000	£380,000	£0	£567,000	
Upgrade to North / South Route	£100,000	£78,000	£534,000	£712,000	
Knaphill Improvements	£0	£0	£0	£0	Works planned 2011/12+
Byfleets Improvements	£18,000	£470,000	£0	£488,000	
Safe Routes to School	£55,000	£90,000	£180,000	£325,000	
Rebrand Network	£15,000	£20,000	£10,000	£45,000	
Working with Schools	£49,000	£90,000	£90,000	£229,000	
Smarter Choices Co-coordinator	£8,000	£30,000	£30,000	£68,000	
General Publicity, Promotions, web	£26,400	£92,500	£92,500	£211,400	
Special Projects incl. the Tour Series	£15,000	£55,000	£55,000	£125,000	
Community Based Projects	£25,000	£50,000	£50,000	£125,000	
Project Management	£20,000	£40,000	£40,000	£90,000	
Bike Recycling	£10,000	£60,000	£20,000	£90,000	
Total Project	£1,067,155	£1,985,500	£1,690,500	£4,743,155	