



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(WOKING)**

**Woking Cycling Town – Cycle Woking
Progress Report and Shared Use Routes**

22 October 2009

KEY ISSUE:

To note the progress of the Cycle Woking Project and agree the proposed shared use routes.

SUMMARY:

This is a progress report to update members on the Cycle Woking Project.

Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council, supported by a partnership of authorities submitted a bid for Cycling Town status to the Cycling England Board on the 31 March 2008.

Following short listing and an interview, the Woking Cycling Town bid was successful and has been awarded £1.82 million as 'match funding' on the 19 June 2008.

The Local Committee approves the annual programme of schemes but from time to time certain additional schemes require specific approval of this committee. The Local Committee also receives updates during the year.

The Transport for Woking Board has set up a Cycle Woking Project Board to oversee this particular project.

It should be noted that the Cycling Town Status continues until 31 March 2011.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Note the progress of the Cycle Working Project (up to 30 September 2009).
- ii. Agree the proposed Kiln Bridge, St Johns, cycle link to Barrack Path
- iii. Agree the proposed Brookwood Country Park to Winston Churchill School link
- iv. Agree the proposed Albert Drive to Basingstoke Canal link.
- v. Agree the proposed link to Sythwood School via Brookfield
- vi. Agree the proposed Basingstoke Canal to rear of 35 Fenwick Close link and make an appropriate Order under the Cycle Tracks Act 1984.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On the 20 February 2008 Cycling England formally opened the bidding to find England's first Cycling City and ten new Cycling Towns. The 11 new towns and city would join the existing 6 Cycling Demonstration Towns, which have pioneered local initiatives such as redesigning and building new cycle routes and training people to cycle safely. By 2012 the expanded network of cycling towns and city is expected to save 16 million car journeys a year and create an extra 47 million cycle journeys – equivalent to a seven percent increase in national cycling needs.
- 1.2 The County Council / Borough Council partnership branded as Cycle Woking, submitted a bid for Cycling Town Status for Woking on the 31 March 2008. This bid was a partnership and supported by several authorities, including Woking Cycle Users Group, the Basingstoke Canal Authority, Surrey Police and South West Trains.
- 1.3 74 Local Authorities in England made a bid for Cycling Status. The Woking bid was short listed and requested to carry out a presentation and interview on the 28 May.
- 1.4 The Transport Secretary announced on the 19 June that Woking had been one of ten successful Cycling Towns and would be awarded £1.82 million in 'match' funding from Cycling England.

2 ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

- 2.1 The bid was based on six objectives for the period 2008/09 to 2010/11, which are as follows:
 - Further improvements to the existing Woking Cycle Network to make it even more cycle friendly.
 - Upgrading of the Basingstoke Canal towpath to provide a high quality east – west off road walking and cycling route via the town centre with links to schools and neighbourhoods.
 - An improved north / south cross town route to link to National Cycle Route 4 (Chertsey) and National Cycle Route 22 (Guildford)
 - Increase cycle parking within the town centre and at the railway stations.
 - The creation of a Work place Cycle Challenge
 - Schools – it is intended to establish more cycle clubs and complete the migration to Bikeability and ensure that all schools have a travel plan by 31 March 2011.

Walking and Cycling

2.2 Although Woking has been designated a Cycling Town, the improvements planned will both assist walkers (up to 2 miles) as well as cyclists (up to 5 miles) through the planned infrastructure improvements, Work place Challenge and work with schools.

2.3 Using European research by the Dutch research centre CROW and corroborated by similar institutes in Denmark, USA and Britain routes for people to use must meet the five Core Design Objectives to ensure that cycling targets are met. These Objectives are as follows:

- **Safety:** Design should minimise actual and perceived risk for cyclists/road users. It is important to avoid ambiguity in design.
- **Coherence:** Cycling infrastructure should form a coherent unit, which links origins and destinations. Routes should be continuous and be of a consistent standard, integrating with local roads and paths.
- **Directness:** Routes should be as direct as possible and be based on known or modelled desire lines. Detours and delays will deter use.
- **Attractiveness:** The perception of a route is important, particularly if it is to attract new users. The designer should take into account the total experience of the cyclist on the journey. Attention should be paid to the environment quality of the route combined with appropriate engineering detail. A route should complement and, where possible, enhance the area through which it passes. Appropriate treatment of sensitive issues such as lighting, personal safety, aesthetics and noise should be fundamental considerations.
- **Comfort:** Cyclists prefer smooth, well-maintained surfaces, regular sweeping, gentle gradients and sheltered where possible. Routes should be convenient to use and avoid complicated manoeuvres, allowing a comfortable flow of cycle traffic.

Public Transport

2.4 The improvement works for the Cycling Town include significant increases in cycle parking and access to the Woking railway stations, namely Woking, West Byfleet, Brookwood and Worplesdon. Through these improvements and the Work place Challenge, it is envisaged that there will be a significant increase in travel by bike to these railway stations, especially for the people living within a short distance (up to 5 miles) from one of these local stations.

2.5 It should be noted that Cycle Woking does **not** target any mode shift from local bus services to walking and cycling.

Re-branding

2.6 As the infrastructure is completed the routes will be re-branded on the *Planets Theme*, based on “*War of the Worlds*” by H G Wells who was

resident in Woking during the 1890's. The main cycle routes would be named after planets with a main link named after that planets moon, such as Saturn Trail with links off that route Pandora, Calypso and Atlas. The new signing would also include timing instead of distance. This has been very successful in some of the existing Cycle Demonstration Towns, such as Aylesbury.

3 Progress to 30 September 2009

- 3.1 The original Plan and Programme, approved by Cycling England in December 2008, together with the supplementary Plan and Programme for 2009/10 are attached as Annex A.
- 3.2 Progress from June 2008 to 30 September 2009, has been generally on programme and Annex B provides details for individual projects.
- 3.3 Within the Cycle Woking area there are 31 state schools and 5 private schools. All Junior schools now use Bikeability training at Level 1 (year 5) and Level 2 (year 6). Level 3 (year 7 plus) is carried out outside of the school grounds on specific routes tailored to individual needs.
- 3.4 Cycle Woking has also been approached by Cycling England to bid for additional funding, where the works must be completed by 31 March 2010. Details of the bid are indicated in Annex C. However, at the time of writing this report, Cycling England is awaiting approval from DfT. An update will be presented at the meeting.
- 3.5 The Cycling Town status currently runs until 31 March 2011. The original six Cycle Demonstration Towns are now in their second stage of funding that also runs until 31 March 2011. At the time of writing this report it is unknown if an extension to the existing agreement with Cycling England will be made.

4 Governance

- 4.1 The Cycle Woking structure has been set out within the Plan and Programme towards the back of Annex A. The Local Committee (Woking) is asked to approve the Plan and Programme on an annual basis (normally at its February meeting) for the forthcoming financial year, and authorise that officers proceed with any necessary actions, including traffic orders, advertisements and notices of intent in order to deliver these projects.
- 4.2 The Local Committee will also be asked to approve certain schemes that develop during the year that require committee approval, such as the creation of existing footways to shared-use (pedestrian and cycle).
- 4.3 The Cycle Woking Board a sub group of Transport for Woking, provide general direction, agree on changes to the programme, matters of detail on schemes, events, marketing etc.

- 4.4 The Cycle Woking Programme Manager liaises with Cycling England Board and their representatives.

5 Schemes Requiring Local Committee Approval

- 5.1 From time to time, as schemes are developed and discussions with local schools identify 'barriers' to walking and cycling, schemes may require Local Committee approval for legal reasons. There are five locations that require approval to allow the footway to be converted to shared-use (pedestrian and cycle). Annex D provides details of these proposals.

- a) Kiln Bridge, St Johns, Proposed Cycle Link to Barrack Path.

This will allow people to cycle between the Basingstoke Canal (*Saturn Trail*) and Barrack Path (*Pluto Trail*) without having to cross St Johns Road (twice). School students attending local schools heavily use this route. (Plan No. 12826).

- b) Brookwood Country Park to Winston Churchill School Link.

This route is an extension of the newly created *Hyperion Trail* that runs across Brookwood Country Park from the Basingstoke Canal to Hermitage Road / Guildford Road roundabout, where it links into the existing off road cycle routes adjacent to Redding Way. However, there is no off road link from the roundabout along the north side of Hermitage Road to Winston Churchill School. This route will serve five local schools. (Plan No. 12828).

- c) Albert Drive to Basingstoke Canal

This off road route links the existing off road route in Albert Drive (*Ceres Trail*) with the recently improved Basingstoke Canal towpath (*Saturn Trail*). (Plan No. 12829).

- d) Link to Sythwood School via Brookfield.

This link connects Sythwood School to the off road *Triton trail* that runs on the eastern side of Sythwood. (Plan No. 12827).

- e) Basingstoke Canal to rear of 35 Fenwick Close link.

This is a route that is currently used by many residents, as it joins an existing route from Goldsworth Park shopping area to the Basingstoke Canal. However, the existing shared route stops at the rear of 35 Fenwick Close, where the route divides and the shared use route turns east. Cyclists and pedestrians use the surfaced public footpath and join the Basingstoke Canal Langmans Bridge.

Cycling over the footpath section is not legal unless the landowner has given permission. It is much simpler to allow cycling on this important link by making a Cycle Track Order.

Overall, the width is acceptable for shared use over all of its length, with the exception of the 40 metre span bridge over Lockfield Drive, where the width is reduced to 2 metres. However, the sight lines are good overall and additional signing could be installed stating 'Pedestrians have Priority' over the bridge section. With this in mind, the creation of a shared use route will be a great benefit to local residents.

Plan No 12831 provides details.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The 'match funding' allocation from Cycling England has been based on the population of Woking at 91,000 (to the nearest thousand), with an allocation of £4 per head for 2008/09 (as it is a half year from commencement of the Cycling Town), £8 for 2009/10 and £8 for 2010/11. This will provide a total of £1.82 million of 'match funding' for the Woking Cycling Town. This sum is dependant on the Cycling Town partnership providing at least equivalent funding. This funding can be made up of Local Transport Plan / Local Allocation, Section 106 and Section 278 (development) or other contributions.
- 6.2 The schemes scheduled in 5.1 (a to e) have been budgeted for within the 2009/10 financial allocations and therefore no additional funding is required.
- 6.3 The 2009/10 budget was determined at the Local Committee meeting held on 16 February 2009 (minute 09/09 refers). As the County Council determines its budget on an annual basis, any funding for the final financial year 2010/11 has not yet been identified. However, there has been significant Section 106 funding identified towards the Cycling Town, which has enabled the project to make good progress towards its objectives.

7 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Following being awarded Cycling Town status, an exhibition was held on the 22 September at the Woking 'Cycling Town' launch held at the Lightbox Woking to obtain peoples views and again at the Tour Series Launch on 8 December 2008. However, as schemes are developed, separate consultations will be undertaken as appropriate. Woking Cycle Users Group and local schools (where appropriate) have been consulted on the five proposals scheduled under paragraph 5.

8 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Surrey has embraced the concept of sustainable development, which is the foundation of Surrey's Local Transport Plan and is committed to the vision of making Surrey a better place. Funding for the Cycling Town will be in line with this vision whilst fulfilling its key commitments.

9 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report, but improved cycle security will be a key target for the partnership.

10 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The programme should raise no equality implications, as all the proposals will seek to eliminate any perceived and or actual inequalities.

11 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The original draft Plan and Programme had been developed in consultation with other key stakeholders, based on the successful framework bid that was submitted to Cycling England on 31 March 2008.
- 11.2 Cycle Woking must not deviate away from the framework bid and not spread out' improvements across the district whereby the impact of the improvements would be much reduced together with the continuity of routes would be lost. The six key objectives must be adhered to and therefore the concentration of the improvements will remain focused on these elements to ensure that 'gold plated' routes are established commencing from Woking railway station which now has around 7.5 million passenger journey movements per annum (2008 data).
- 11.3 The Programme may require amending from time to time to reflect changing circumstances and members would be informed using regular updates.
- 11.4 The awarding of Cycling Town status for Woking is a great opportunity for the partnership to make a real step change towards cycling (together with walking) with significant funding focused into the area in a short period of time.
- 11.5 Cycling within Woking, based on the six permanent monitoring sites, has seen a 14% increase since 2004 (2004 to 2007 data) and a 6% increase between 2007 to 2008 comparable data. This must go some way towards the investment that has already been placed on cycling within the town by key partnership members.
- 11.6 The Local Committee is therefore requested to approve the recommendations set out at the front of this report.

12 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 12.1 As one of the new Cycling Towns, Woking will attract much media attention, such as the recent South Korea TV visit, articles in the Cycling, transportation press and national media coverage as well as interest from other Local Authorities nationwide. Cycling England have set up 'Cycling Town/City Conferences' where it has been an opportunity to exchange data and ideas with the original Cycling Demonstration Towns as well as the new cycling towns/city.

12.2 The Cycling Town status and funding from Cycling England will continue until 31 March 2011. Beyond that date, funding is uncertain, however it is likely that Cycle Woking will be required to submit a formal bid for continued Cycling Town status, but would certainly need to have met most if not all of the objectives and targets set in the original bid. Similar reports relating to the Cycle Woking will be presented to the Woking Borough Council Executive (4 September) and the County Council Executive (23 September). Provided that these are all approved, the draft Plan and Programme will be presented to Cycling England to be 'signed off' together with a Management Agreement between Cycling England and Surrey County Council.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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