



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (WOKING)

CYCLE WOKING – ALLOWING CYCLING IN WOKING TOWN CENTRE

2 SEPTEMBER 2010

KEY ISSUE

To agree to make the Experimental Order allowing cycling in certain streets within the town centre permanent or not.

SUMMARY

The Town Centre within Woking has been the subject of a 17-month Experimental Order allowing cycling within certain designated streets without any reported incidents.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Woking) is asked to agree:

- i. That the experimental order is made permanent allowing cycling (dual use with pedestrians) within the town centre on designated streets as attached in **Annex A**.
- ii. That a report is presented to this Committee twice a year indicating any reported incidents and their findings.
- iii. That the Local Committee delegate authority to the Cycle Woking Programme Manager in consultation with the Local Member and Chairman to proceed with traffic orders, advertisements and notices of intent in order to deliver these projects.

ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

1. Woking town centre

History/Background

- 1.1 As part of the joint Surrey County Council / Woking Borough Council Cycling Town bid to Cycle England in March 2008 one of the main objectives was to improve the routes to and through the town centre in Woking for cyclists by improving the then two crossing facilities across the A320 Victoria Way and the one across Cawsey Way allowing cycling and creating a substantial increase in cycle parking.

Progress to date

- 1.2 An Experimental Order allowing cycling within the town centre was introduced on 3 April 2009 in the areas coloured YELLOW in Annex A and cycling continued to be prohibited within the areas coloured RED, due to these areas either being within the 'closed' shopping area' or the streets being too narrow to allow shared-use. It should be noted that roads that allow access with a motorised vehicle also allow cycling, such as Chertsey Road, Church Road East, Christchurch Way etc.
- 1.3 Concern was raised by certain groups representing the disabled prior to the introduction of the Experimental Order, however these concerns were based on perceived issues and an Experimental Order allows for a 'rehearsal' of making a Permanent Order and allows for any alterations to be made. If issues are reported, these can be investigated and possible solutions found or amendments made.
- 1.4 The Experimental Order has now been in place for 17 months without any reported incidents and it has acted as a lengthy consultation period for people or representatives of groups to report issues and incidents. To date no incidents have been reported.
- 1.5 Around the country many towns and cities, such as Darlington, Exeter and Brighton have amended Traffic Regulation Orders to allow cycling in certain areas to improve permeability, especially in town centres where increased cycling can assist by improving the economy.
- 1.6 The A320 Victoria Way / Goldsworth Road two phase pelican crossing has been replaced by a single 'straight across' toucan allowing pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility impaired to cross in a single signal phase without having to wait within the 'sheep pen' for a second signal phase. The Market Square area has been widened to the highway boundary by relocating the market traders onto Borough Council owned land thus creating a wider and much safer route in front of the former Post Office building. At Cawsey Way the original pelican

crossing has been improved to a toucan crossing which is wider than the original.

- 1.7 Within Commercial Way (western end) a 'contra-flow' cycle facility has been created to allow cyclists to travel against the normal traffic flow, making it much easier to gain access into the town centre and railway station. It should be noted that all traffic can use the one-way system in Commercial Way from Chapel Street to Cawsey Way outside of the restricted hours (1030-1600 hour Monday to Saturday).
- 1.8 Construction of the A320 Victoria Way / Victoria Bridge crossing is planned to start on 6 September 2010 and the finished scheme will allow cyclists to cross the A320 in one single signal phase. Unfortunately, the 20-metre carriageway width does not allow for an improvement for pedestrians, as guidelines will only permit up to 15 metres to be crossed in any one phase. However, it should make the crossing for disabled people easier as the crossing will be 'flatter' with a slightly raised eastbound carriageway therefore removing some of the steeper gradient on the canal side.

Town Centre Cycle Network

- 1.9 Annex B indicates the *Planet Trails* that are located within the vicinity of the town centre including the National Cycle Routes 221 (Chertsey – Woking – Guildford) and 223 (Wey Navigation – Woking – Pirbright Bridge). These routes allow cyclists access into the town centre area connecting people with places, such as local businesses, the railway station, shopping and leisure facilities. Additional cycle parking has been created within the town centre to enable people to leave their bikes when they have reached their destination or connect with another mode of transport such as rail.

Basingstoke Canal Survey (Town Centre)

- 1.10 As part of the monitoring and evaluation of the cycling town a 4-day (12 hour) survey on the Basingstoke canal was undertaken during April (2 days in term time, 1 weekday and 1 weekend, and 2 days within school holiday period, 1 weekday and 1 weekend).
- 1.11 From this data the mode type can be analysed, together with gender and the annual usage can be calculated.

Table 1 – Mode Type and Gender.

Mode Type	Percentage	Annual Usage
Cyclists	29.7	163,778
Pedestrians	64.8	357,120
Other users	5.5	30,070
Gender	Percentage	Annual Usage
Male	54.2	298,666
Female	45.8	252,302

Note; Other users were joggers, wheelchair users etc. 5.0% of all users were aged 65+ with 45.2% of cyclists aged 55-64.

1.12 From detailed questionnaires completed over the survey days, travel behaviour of users can be ascertained.

Table 2 – Travel behaviour.

Respondents were asked if they used or will use any other form of transport during their journey.

Answer	Percentage
Have not/will not	73.1
Car or van	11.4
Train	7.8
Bus	5.1
Jogging	2.7

Table 3 –

Respondents were asked if they were unable to access the route would they still have wanted/needed to make their current journey

Answer	Percentage
Yes	71.5
No	25.9
Don't know	2.6

Table 4 – Journey Purpose

Answer	Percentage
Commuting	21.9
Education	3.1
Shopping	32.6
Personal Business	7.7
Leisure	34.0
Other	0.8

1.13 The overall survey data above indicates that a large percentage of the Basingstoke Canal users (mainly walkers and cyclists) use the route to gain access to the town centre for shopping (32.6%), commuting (21.9%) and a percentage of the Leisure and possibly all the personal business (7.7%).

1.14 The majority of users did not or will not use any other mode of transport on their journey (73.1%), with a further 7.8% linking to rail and 5.1% to bus.

1.15 A substantial majority of people (71.5%) would still need to make the journey even if the route was not available.

New Road Brighton (National Cycle Route 20)

1.16 New Road Brighton is a road with shared-use for all vehicles. Before the scheme was introduced there were several vacant shops in this road, since the scheme was completed around 18 months ago there is now a vibrant economy with other streets requesting a similar treatment. A visit to Brighton 12 May 2010 included observations at

this location and pedestrians mixed happily with cyclists, cars/vans and HGV's who delivered goods to the adjacent shops. New Road forms part of National Cycle Route 20 and can only be described as 'busy' being adjacent to the Pavilion Park with higher numbers of pedestrians and cycles than in Woking and with the added motorised vehicles.

National Cycle Route 4 – The Oracle Reading

1.17 National Cycle Route 4 (London to Pembroke via Reading and Bristol) is routed along the Kennet and Avon canal through the centre of Reading and runs on the southern embankment through the major Oracle shopping complex. Cyclists mix with pedestrians and disabled people.

Darlington – Cycle Demonstration Town

1.18 Darlington in County Durham is one of the original six Cycle Demonstration Towns. The town centre used to have a ban on cycling, but the council agreed to an Experimental Order similar to the situation in Woking. At the end of the experimental period the council made the Order permanent allowing cycling, but requested monitoring to continue with any reported incidents to be investigated and a report brought before the equivalent of the Local Committee (Woking). Since the making of the permanent order, no incidents have been reported.

Consultations

- 1.19 A process of consultation has been in operation since the introduction of the Experimental Order on 3 April 2009 and no incidents have been reported.
- 1.20 A survey form has been made available for people to fill in during Cycle Woking events and the Surrey Police 'Lock it or Lose' it events that have been held since the start of the Experimental Order. Summary details have been included in Annex C
- 1.21 However, the Older People's Forum has reported back the following positive comment: "Present street markings and signs do not always make clear where the priorities lie. In a continental country blue/green paths are marked for cyclists in pedestrian areas. These might be useful in Woking a cycling town".
- 1.22 A representative of Woking Access Group has also requested signing marked on the ground where shared-use commences as partially sighted people tend to look towards the ground rather than up at signs on posts.
- 1.23 In response to the marked routes, evidence within the UK has found that these are not suitable in certain town centre streets, such as Town Square as pedestrians need to cross the 'cycle path' continuously with cyclists riding around them within the 'pedestrian area'.

- 1.24 Further consultation has taken place during August with a 'closing date' of the 27 August for any further comments, including the suggested signs affixed to the ground. Any feedback will be reported to members on the 31 August, prior to the meeting on 2 September 2010.
- 1.25 It should be noted that Clive Wood Director of the former NWASDP (now Surrey Disabled People's Partnership) and Chairman of Woking Access Group stated on 3 November 2009 the following, in a letter to Surrey County Council, "I should state now that NWSADP would not be prepared to be involved in a consultation process until the pilot shared use facility in Woking has been stopped and a full and meaningful consultation process has been carried out. However, documentation as stated in 1.24 above has still been sent to Clive Wood.

Cordon Counts

- 1.26 The number of cycles accessing the town centre has been counted every three months since May 2009 as part of the Cycling England monitoring requirements. See Annex D for details.

Bike Breakfasts

- 1.27 Since January 2010, the last Friday in each month has seen an event held known as the Bike Breakfast (see Annex E). If a person cycles into the town centre between 7am and 9am they are entitled to a free breakfast. Although every Friday when it has been held has been cold and normally wet, the numbers of cyclists has seen a steady increase of around 10% on each occasion. The number of people cycling into Town Square where the event has been held can easily be doubled if the people who cannot stop are counted as they are either late for their train, late for work, already had breakfast etc.
- 1.28 Following the Bike Breakfasts the number of cycles parked in the town centre has been counted and again these have risen steadily (see Annex E), from January 2010 (taken prior to the first Bike Breakfast) to the latest data collected for July 2010. It should be noted that July event was at the start of the holiday season with all schools on holiday.

Disabled People

- 1.29 Many disabled people can regain their mobility with adapted or bespoke cycles, often a trike (a cycle with three wheels). This enables them to cycle from home to their chosen destination, and by allowing cycling within the town centre this provides access to areas that they may well be excluded from if cycling was prohibited.
- 1.30 Within *Cycle Magazine* August/September 2010 edition page 20, there is an article relating to someone who has multiple sclerosis but has been able to become mobile again by using a tricycle.

Experimental Order

- 1.31 The Experimental Order has been in place for 17 months. It can only be in place for a maximum of 18 months and cannot be extended. It must be replaced by a permanent Order allowing cycling or allow the Experimental Order to lapse and therefore revert back to the original Order banning cycling in designated streets within the town centre.
- 1.32 With the above in mind, and given that there have not been any reported incidents, it has increased the amount of cyclists entering the town centre which in turn can generate economic, health, environmental as well as road safety benefits. Some disabled people can gain mobility with the use of a bicycle and older people can rediscover the pleasures of cycling and allowing them to be more mobile.

2. Walking and Cycling

- 2.1 Although Woking has been designated a Cycling Town and looking at the whole town area, the improvements already introduced and planned will both assist walkers as well as cyclists and disabled people through the improved travel planning and work with schools.

3. Public Transport

- 3.1 The improvement works for the Cycling Town have included significant increases in cycle parking and access to the Woking railway stations, namely Woking, West Byfleet, Brookwood and Worplesdon. Through these Improvements and the behavioural travel changes brought about through travel plans, Woking Cycle Challenge, cycle events and marketing, 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 5km) from one of these local stations.
- 3.2 Local bus services will also be highlighted as a possible mode of travel, when any travel plans are agreed, with possible links to walking and cycling.

4 Darlington

- 4.1 As stated in 1.18 above, around 18 months ago, within the Cycle Demonstration Town of Darlington, after a similar period of an experimental order the Council made the decision to make a Permanent Order allowing cycling but requested that a report was received at their equivalent of the Local Committee twice a year on any incidents reported within the shared-use area. To date, I understand there have been none.
- 4.2 With the above in mind, and given that there have not been any reported incidents, it has increased the amount of cyclists entering the town centre which in turn can generate economic, health, environmental as well as road safety benefits, including benefits for the disabled and older people by becoming more mobile by cycling.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The estimated cost to make the Experimental Order permanent is £1,500, including additional signing on the ground.
- 5.2 However, if members decide not to make the Experimental Order permanent, therefore ban cycling from designated streets within the town centre, there will be a cost to remove all shared-use signs, install 'No Cycling' signs on posts and on the ground and this has been estimated to cost £4,000.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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.

7. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

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

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Cycle Woking partnership 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. The six key Objectives as indicated in Annex F must be adhered to and therefore the concentration of the improvements will remain focused on these elements to ensure that 'cycle user-friendly' routes are established commencing from Woking railway station, the 'hub' of the network, which has seen passenger numbers increase from around 6.7 million passenger journey movements per annum (2006) to 7.5 million (2009).
- 9.2 The awarding of Cycling Town status for Woking is a great opportunity for the Cycle Woking partnership to make a real step change towards sustainable transport including cycling (as well as assisting walking and disabled people) with significant funding focused into the area in a short period of time.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.3 Taking into account the experience of Darlington as well as Brighton (New Road), it is therefore recommended that the Local Committee approve the making of a Permanent Traffic Order allowing cycling within the town centre on designated routes, coloured YELLOW in Annex A, with the town centre of Woking to be the subject of continued monitoring and a report submitted to the Local Committee twice a year, indicating any reported incidents and their findings.
- 9.4 With this in mind the Local Committee will be able to review the success or otherwise of allowing cycling within the town centre and take appropriate action on any section that has any repeated incidents.
- 9.5 The Local Committee is therefore requested to approve the recommendations set out at the front of this report.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 If members agree with the recommendations as set out at the front of this report, the Experimental Order will be made Permanent and additional signs will be placed on the ground as suggested in paragraph 1.24.
- 10.2 Cycling England will continue to monitor the work carried out as well as the levels of cycling being achieved within the Cycling Town.
- 10.3 As one of the new Cycling Towns, Woking has already attracted much media attention as well as interest from other Local Authorities nationwide and internationally, including ten countries across Europe, including the high level cycling countries of Denmark, Holland and Germany as well as South Korea and Australia and has exchanged data and ideas with existing and new cycling towns.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Approved Cycle Woking Plan and Programme
 Local Committee minutes 08/10
 Sustrans Route User Survey Report 2010 – Canal Towpath
 Woking – Cycling Towns & Cities Published July 2010.
 Cycle Magazine – August / September 2010 edition (page 20).

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