

Environment and Planning Review Committee: Development of Cycling - Progress Report – February 2009 Appendix 1

Recommendations	Comment
<p>1. The Council should continue to improve the cycle infrastructure and develop both on road and off road facilities that are safe and attractive to cyclists. Measures could include improvements to maintenance and signage, the continued growth of secure cycle parking and the development of disabled friendly infrastructure.</p>	<p>Off-road and Maintenance Improvements:</p> <p>2008-2009 has been a busy year for the cycle network in Sunderland. Basic route retention maintenance has included 180km of strimming, 40km of spraying off encroaching weeds at route outer edges, and 10km of trailblazing.</p> <p>Following successful funding bids, we will be spending £300,000 during 2008-10 sprucing up the cycle network across Sunderland – hard tree overhang cut backs on 50km of route, deep cleaning accumulations of litter etc. on many km of route sides, and upgrading access control barriers. The latter will enable better control of illegal vehicles, and easier access for sweepers to sweep routes for which we have also secured an additional £50,000pa in base revenue funding, year on year. This will cover higher frequencies of sweeping, arterial routes weekly, and a greater ability to respond to hot spot cleaning needs. Graffiti is to be cleared in many areas. Sustrans and One North East have joined the project, and are funding additional trailblazing and monthly sweeping on their stretches of cycle route in Sunderland, to be carried out by the City Council. This will hopefully make life easier for hard working Sustrans Voluntary Rangers, who have again this year provided a substantial contribution to keeping the network clear of deposits, particularly glass, and whose inspection reports greatly assist the management of the network.</p> <p>The same funding stream will also be providing £300,000 to clear the slate on fly tipping in Sunderland, with £50,000 base revenue funding to deal with tipping year on year. This covers the whole of Sunderland, but will pick up tipping hot spots on the cycle network. Some of the combined £600,000 will be used to install surveillance capability in areas most affected by fly tipping and persistent anti-social behaviour, including several on the cycle network.</p> <p>Links to Herrington Country Park have been improved with a large resurfacing scheme</p>

connecting from Foxcover Lane, Middle Herrington, over the A19 to the south-east entrance to the park and to West Herrington, and improvements to the southern approach to the park from West Herrington.

In early spring 2008, 2.5km of the Walney to Wear (W2W) route between Hetton-le-Hole and the city boundary towards Pittington, together with a link north towards East Rainton were resurfaced. Unfortunately some of this work was undone in autumn 2008 when repairs were carried out to a 12" water mains burst in a remote field, but this damage has been repaired and additional improvements made to drainage.

The storms and flooding in autumn 2008 caused a lot of damage to routes, necessitating major repairs to the C2C in Washington and the Northern Boundary Route at Downhill. Additional bitmac resurfacing work was carried out on storm-damaged slopes to reduce future vulnerability, and at the western end of the NBR to provide a high quality approach from the residential area to football pitches and the Downhill Sports area.

The Metro Cycle Route between Pallion and South Hylton was trailblazed and resurfaced with 1km of new bitmac, resolving a long standing problem from when the route was displaced by the Metro Extension onto an adjacent footpath. The Metro Cycle Route now has a bitmac surface from Hylton Bank in South Hylton, right into the City Centre, providing an excellent all purpose route.

A major shared pedestrian/cycle route should be completed by April 2009 centred on the Queen Alexandra Bridge. The *Queen Alexandra Bridge Cycle Route* connects north and central Sunderland with sustainable cycle travel options between residential / retail / employment areas, with added network improvement value by connecting the arterial east-west cycle routes on the north and south side of the river – the C2C and Metro cycle routes. It will connect The Green in Southwick to and across the QA Gyratory and bridge, signal heads altered across the gyratory, bridge parapets being lifted to 1.4m with consent from English Heritage, and the route then links from the south end of the bridge along Pallion New Road/Trimdon Street to Hylton Road and the Stephenson Trail, and to Lisburn Terrace underpass and the Metro Cycle Route. This project is particularly exciting because

it is responding to existing huge demand: of the 100,000 annual QA bridge crossings on the footways, 55,000 are by cycles, with 40% of these being trips to/from work. The levels of use are steadily increasing, and adapting the infrastructure will make the routes better for use, with bus shelters replaced with see through shelters, extensive resurfacing / widening, and some 56 dropped kerbs being reconstructed to less than 6mm.

We have doubled the number of automated monitoring sites from 9 to 18, with additional counters located to record levels of cycle use on key routes, and key prospective routes such as the east side footway of the A19 Hylton Bridge. Recorded cycle activity has increased dramatically, with the C2C in Washington recording over 40% increase in three years, and the riverside promenade below the Wearmouth Bridge a 100% increase in three years.

The eastern end of the C2C/W2W from Wearmouth Bridge to the North Sea at Roker is to have a new chain of art work (see section 3).

An Advisory Cycle Lane will be provided on Leechmere Road around Tunstall Road. It is anticipated that work will commence in mid February 2009 and finish in April 2009.

Only four cycle parking locations were created in the city last year, as opposed to 25 new locations the previous year.

Sunderland Plans for 2009-2010:

Larger schemes of work for 2009-2010 will hopefully include:

- commencing development of the Barnes Park Cycle Route from the City Centre to Grindon/Hastings Hill, with links in from adjacent residential areas and existing continuation through Middle Herrington and on to West Herrington and Herrington Country Park.
- Extension of designated cycle facilities on the final eastern 1km of Dame Dorothy Street to the coast road and National Route 1.
- Infill of a former railway cutting in Silksworth to lift the cycle route to surrounding ground

	<p>level and alleviate persistent anti-social behaviour problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapting Cox Green Footbridge (which has a concession to allow cycles) by removal of steps – to benefit cycle and wheel chair access. - Further development of the Washington Cycle Network. - Consolidation of the Northern Boundary Route through resurfacing - Exploration of north-south link development options to South Tyneside from North Sunderland. - We will be installing reflective tape on two arterial routes as a trial in early 2009, preparatory to adopting this as a standard for all cycle barriers in the City. - During 2009 likely major land ownership transfer deal will fund a new full specification route construction connecting the Queen Alexandra Gyratory to Sunderland Enterprise Park along the C2C, continuing a new bitmac surface for 3km to Grange Road North Hylton.
<p>2. The Council should consider what further actions could be taken to curb the problem of underage drinking and anti social behaviour at off road cycle paths.</p>	<p>Reports received throughout the year by Sustrans Rangers confirm that anti-social behaviour at key hotspots in the city remains a major issue to cycling and walking.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour around cycle routes is regularly discussed with the Community Safety Co-ordinator, local Police and key youth and community officers, and this has enabled swift and coordinated action to take place. The agreed maintenance regimes (identified above) will also make a huge contribution throughout the year. Specific physical action has included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steel work has been installed/upgraded at several locations to reduce problems with illegal vehicle activity and antisocial congregation. - In one area a woodland that had been very industriously turned into an off road motorbike facility was deconstructed, alleviating cycle route damage on c. 2km of routes used to get to the woodland by trials bikes, often by the van load. - Deep thickets adjacent to another length of route have been thinned out to expose and remove 'dens' used for illegal activities, often associated with glass on the route.
<p>3. We support the aims of the Officer</p>	<p>Following considerable work by the Culture & Tourism and Planning Policy teams, the City</p>

<p>Working Group investigating measures to improve the attractiveness of the finishing point of the C2C route and look forward to the council receiving a report on its findings.</p>	<p>Council has successfully been awarded £160,000 Single Programme funding for artwork and infrastructure improvements to the end of the C2C/W2W. The Local Transport Plan and the Service Improvement Plan will provide additional funding and together with a private contribution (£10,000 from Alex Smiles) the scheme total is £245,000 (which includes in-kind support and maintenance). Works will include surface improvements, artwork/sculpture beneath the Wearmouth Bridge / Bonnersfield and an End of C2C artwork on the Seafront, plus liaison with local service providers and residents.</p> <p>Planning permission has been granted and works will be complete during 2009.</p>
<p>4. The Council should continue to support the development of urban games facilities and the sporting infrastructure to maintain the regional and national standing of Sunderland.</p>	<p>Hetton Hawks Cycling Club continues to use Hetton Lyons Country Park as their main weekly training and events venue.</p> <p>Hetton Lyons CP also hosts the Sunderland Council for the Disabled People's Pedal Power (PPP) project and their use of the site continues to grow.</p> <p>Springboard have been managing the site for the past three years and have recently secured £217K from Urban II to expand their programme and to appoint 2 Park Rangers who will staff the site on week days, evenings and weekends. This will enable further activities to take place and PPP to extend the programme for disabled people.</p> <p>Following earlier setbacks relating to the BMX track, works have been carried out to correct the faults identified. The BMX track is now open to the general public for casual use and used by Hetton Hawks for BMX coaching.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to the removal of the byelaws affecting a number of parks in Sunderland, restricting all cycling, including the whole of Barnes Park, for example.</p>
<p>5. We feel that there is a need to develop the promotion and marketing of cycling within the city.</p>	<p>The most significant achievement in 2008 was the creation of an updated cycle map for the city, together with adjoining cycle maps in Tyne and Wear. These have proved to be hugely popular and very well received.</p> <p>The Tourism team is working with a number of parties to ensure that the C2C and W2W is</p>

	<p>included in tourism marketing activity at a regional, sub-regional and local level where relevant. The team has also sought out opportunities through PR and media channels. Activity includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cycling piece filmed for the BBC around summer holidays • Included in City Breaks activity • Supported journalist trips for specialist magazines • Included in the Sunderland Visitor Guide and www.visitsunderland.com. • Included in sub regional activity including the Pocket Guide, individual campaigns and the sub regional visitor website www.visitnewcastlegateshead.com • Included in regional campaigns and marketing material including www.visitnortheastengland.com/cycling. Two Rivers ride included in the printed cycling guide and listed in regional guides. <p>The C2C is also included in the 'England's North Country' Guide which is distributed throughout the world. Guides are translated into 3 languages (English, German and Dutch) and used across 12 core markets; Ireland, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Spain and the USA.</p>
<p>6. The Council should continue with plans to establish a City Cycling Forum in order to allow cycling officers and local cyclists to work together on matters of cycleway development, maintenance and promotion.</p>	<p>There have been no Cycle Forums held for the past 2 years. The option of holding Cycle Forums with the Wearside Family Cycling Group and other interested cyclists would be a good option, though the absence of a dedicated Cycling Officer means that staffing resources are very limited to undertake such activity.</p>
<p>7. There needs to be a greater level of joint working both between Directorates of the Council and neighbouring health and local authorities in order to develop joint standards and cross boundary links</p>	<p>Inter-departmental working is limited by the absence of a dedicated Cycling Officer who could coordinate work between different Directorates including the Chief Executive and C&CS on local area planning, regeneration frameworks, health and wellness initiatives, active sporting/leisure activities, play provision, access to greenspace and grounds maintenance.</p> <p>Cross-boundary links are progressing in Washington and South Tyneside. In Washington,</p>

<p>to maximise the use of available resources.</p>	<p>a cycle link has been created between Leam Lane and Heworth from Usworth, and a new national cycle route is being developed that crosses through Springwell Village. A new cycle route is being created along the South Tyneside and Sunderland boundary, including new works in the vicinity of the Sunderland Academy.</p>
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