

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	16 SEPTEMBER 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	14
TITLE:	CYCLING SCHEMES - UPDATE REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
LEAD OFFICERS:	CHRIS MADDOCKS	TEL:	0118 937 4950
JOB TITLE:	TRANSPORT PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	chris.maddocks@reading.gov.uk

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the significant programme of cycle improvements in Reading over the past 12 months and resulting increased levels of cycling in the borough. The report also advises of future cycle schemes that are currently being progressed.

**2. RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the contents of this report.

**3. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 3.1 Reading's Cycling Strategy: Bridging Gaps, Overcoming Barriers & Promoting Safer Cycling, was adopted by the Council on 19 March 2014 as a sub-strategy to the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The strategy includes detailed policies regarding the design principles for delivering infrastructure and route improvements for cyclists on the public highway, as well as policies to encourage and promote cycling to different demographics.
- 3.2 The Cycling Strategy is aligned with wider local policy documents such as the Sustainable Community Strategy and Climate Change Strategy, contributing towards wider public health and air quality objectives.

## 4. CYCLING SCHEMES - UPDATE

- 4.1 A significant programme of cycle schemes is currently being undertaken in Reading to help contribute towards achieving the overall objectives of the Cycle Strategy. The success of this work to date is reflected in the latest figures from the LTP annual cordon count which shows that levels of cycling into the town centre have increased by 40% over the past two years (from 5,176 over a 12 hour period in 2013 to 7,258 in 2015). This recent increased level of cycling is also highlighted by the latest data from central Government which shows that 19.5% of people living in Reading cycled at least once a month in 2013/14, which is the sixth highest local authority area increase from 2012/13 in the country.
- 4.2 A number of infrastructure schemes have been implemented over the past 12 months, including a new raised section of cycle route R1 between Rose Kiln Lane and Bennet Road to ensure it remains usable during times of flooding; a comprehensive shared path scheme on London Road from Cemetery Junction to Southampton Street which includes raised tables at junctions; advisory cycle lanes on Berkeley Avenue; and new cycle parking facilities provided at Reading Station, Moorlands Primary School in Tilehurst and Grace Church in Emmer Green.
- 4.3 The ReadyBike cycle hire scheme was launched in June 2014, consisting of 200 bikes at 29 locations. The scheme has been in operation for over a year and usage figures show that it is continuing to be popular, enabling people to cycle who would otherwise not have access to a bicycle. The latest usage figures show the scheme has had over 30,000 rentals up to the end of July, covering an estimated 163,000 miles with an ongoing mix of leisure, commuter and student use.
- 4.4 Revenue support has been provided for a range of initiatives being undertaken by third parties aimed at encouraging cycling, including the Reading Bicycle Kitchen bicycle maintenance workshop in the town centre, Launch Pad's cycle initiative to help homeless people and Reward Your World's 'BetterPoints' travel incentive phone app.
- 4.5 A comprehensive programme of cycle training courses and events has been undertaken including Bikeability cycling proficiency training, the Bike It programme aimed at increasing levels of cycling and walking to school, and the CTC cycling development programme including a range of community events, cycle training and Dr Bike maintenance sessions.
- 4.6 Our future programme of cycle enhancements includes the opening of the new pedestrian cycle bridge over the River Thames which will provide a new route for cyclists from Caversham to Reading Station and the town centre; a new cycle parking hub at Reading station with a minimum of 300 racks; and the opening of the Napier Road underpass to provide an additional north-south link under the Great Western railway line between Napier Road and Kenavon Drive.

4.7 We will continue to undertake partnership and community engagement during the development of cycle schemes to build on the significant consultation which was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Cycling Strategy in 2014. This will include working with cycling organisations including CTC and Sustrans to deliver a range of cycling initiatives, and engagement will be undertaken with local cycle groups through area based workshops, focused on developing deliverable scheme proposals in line with the principles established by the Cycling Strategy. It is proposed that the next workshop will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 6pm at the Civic Offices.

4.8 Monitoring of the success of cycle schemes will continue to be undertaken as part of the overall LTP monitoring programme. This includes analysis of census data, annual 12-hour cordon count surveys to measure mode split on all approaches into the town centre, off-carriageway cycle counters, review of accident data and ad-hoc surveys undertaken as part of scheme development work.

4.9 Members of the Sub-Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

5.1 The delivery of the cycle schemes outlined in this report help to deliver the following Corporate Plan Service Priorities:

- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

6.1 A significant consultation was undertaken between October 2013 and January 2014 as part of the development of the Cycling Strategy. Individual projects have been communicated to the local community through Council meetings and local exhibitions as appropriate.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no legal implications relating to this report.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 The Council has carried out an equality impact assessment scoping exercise on all projects, and considers that the proposals do not have a direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The schemes set out in this report are funded through existing transport budgets.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 Cycle Strategy 2014: Bridging Gaps, Overcoming Barriers & Promoting Safer Cycling, Reading Borough Council, March 2014.

10.2 Cycling Strategy Implementation Plan 2015/16, Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee Report, July 2015.

10.3 Traffic Management Sub-Committee LSTF Update Reports, from March 2014 onwards.