HARROGATE AND KNARESBOROUGH CYCLING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2

October 2009

CMG32275 Implementation Plan
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1.0 Introduction

Harrogate Borough Council adopted the Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycling Implementation Plan in July 2000. It identified a proposed network of radial and orbital cycle routes in the urban area of Harrogate and Knaresborough which would form the basis for the allocation of funding from the monies made available by the Department for Transport to cover the implementation of that element of the North Yorkshire County Council Local Transport Plan covering the urban area during the period 2001 to 2006.

The Local Transport Plan advocated the introduction of such a network of cycle routes (and the associated investment in cycle infrastructure) as a means of encouraging the use of alternative means of transport to the motor vehicle, persuading lapsed cyclists to ‘return’ to this mode of transport and giving parents the confidence that safe cycling facilities would be provided which would enable them to allow their children to cycle to school.

The Cycling Implementation Plan was developed with the assistance and support of the Harrogate Cycle Group who share the County and Borough Council’s aspirations for the creation of a comprehensive cycle route network inter-linking residential areas, schools, shopping facilities, health care facilities, employment areas and leisure sites. A further objective endorsed in the plan was to promote and progress the delivery of off road cycle routes to Spofforth and Ripley (within the areas directly controlled by the County Council) that would connect Harrogate and Knaresborough to the National Cycle Network and provide onward links to the remainder of the District and Nidderdale.

Regular consultation meetings involving Cycle Group members and officers of the Council continue to be held to discuss progress on individual cycle route projects and other cycle initiatives as well as the overall delivery of the Cycling Implementation Plan. The Cycling Implementation Plan is being reviewed and revised to coincide with the publication of the second NYCC Local Transport Plan (LTP2), which will cover the period 2006-2011, and to incorporate changes to the original plan where these are appropriate.
2.0 Policy Context

The main policies which impact upon and give meaning to the Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycling Implementation Plan are the NYCC Cycling Strategy, the NYCC Local Transport Plan and the Harrogate and District Local Plan (which will shortly be succeeded by the Local Development Framework) The promotion of alternative more sustainable modes of transport is a key theme of LTP2 which also emphasises that improved cycle provision is necessary to deliver increased cycle usage. The Cycling Implementation Plan is endorsed as the primary means of identifying potential cycle routes and improvements which best meet the needs of existing and potential cyclists and, thereby, encourage modal shift.

Policy T22A of the Harrogate and District Local Plan (Measures to Promote Cycling) advocates the provision of a safe, attractive and convenient cycle route network to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes. The routes shown in the Cycling Implementation Plan are afforded 'protection' from development under this policy and similar safeguards for the revised Cycling Implementation Plan will be given by the Local Development Framework. The NYCC Cycling strategy, which was produced before the original NYCC Local Transport Plan, first propounded the construction of an interlinked system of cycle routes in urban areas to encourage increased cycle usage.
3.0 Progress To Date

A total of £2.14 million (provided mainly through the LTP funding process but also in the form of grants and contributions from other centrally funded initiatives) has been expended to date on the development of new and existing cycle routes in the Harrogate and Knaresborough urban area during the period covered by the first (2001 to 2006) and second (2006 to 2011) NYCC Local Transport Plans (2001 to 2006). This has delivered approximately 19.5 kilometres of off road cycle route which has in turn brought into useful operation substantial lengths of on road provision included in the plan. The construction of a new cycle/pedestrian bridge at Dragon junction, which was a ‘turnkey’ project at a particularly important confluence of routes and a similar facility at Hookstone Road Railway Bridge together accounted for approximately 40% of this total. LTP funding has also been allocated for two further schemes (one of which is The Stray Cycle Route) which have been approved in principle but are still awaiting the resolution of legal and planning issues.

Further cycle routes (with an approximate value of £350k) have also been delivered through the development control process. These schemes have been implemented as an integral part of individual developments or constructed by the Council using commuted payments from the developers. Other improvements of this type have also been secured as part of developments which have received planning approval but have not yet been implemented.

The individual projects/schemes which have been completed and their context in respect of the overall Cycling Implementation Plan are listed in Table 1 at the rear of this document.
4.0 Cycle Route Network

4.1 Radial and Orbital Routes

Figure 1 at the end of this document indicates the route network advocated by the original Cycling Implementation Plan. Figures 1a and 1b show the routes that have so far been completed. Table 1 provides updated details of individual routes and a commentary on progress, impediments or proposed changes which are proposed.

4.2 Links to the National Cycle Network

The possibility of forging links between the proposed urban cycle network envisaged by the Cycling Implementation Plan and the National Cycle Network via routes to Spofforth and Ripley have proven difficult to progress. Although the Borough Council successfully resisted an appeal against planning enforcement action by landowners who had demolished the former railway embankment which was protected as part of the Ripley route and substantial funding towards the cost of delivering the route has been secured from Sustrans as part of their successful Connect 2 bid. A Bridleway Creation Order, which legal advice indicated was the most appropriate means of delivering the route has been promoted and this has generated a number of objections to the proposals. A submission to the Secretary of State seeking confirmation of the Order (and addressing the objections) is currently being prepared.

The absence of funding and lack of 'protection' for the potential cycle route from Harrogate to Spofforth makes this a more difficult route to deliver but some progress has been achieved through discussions between Sustrans and the Yorkshire Agricultural Society who have agreed to the establishment of a permissive cycle route over their land which will link the cycle path through their site (delivered through the planning process) with Crimple Lane.

Measures were implemented to improve the safety of cyclists using the existing road network to connect to the National Cycle Network at Spofforth particularly at Collins Bridge on Rudding Lane some time ago.
5.0 Cycle Route Design and Maintenance

5.1 Design Guidelines

The North Yorkshire Council produced Draft Design Guidelines for Cycle Facilities (based on the Sustrans publication National Cycle Network: Guidelines and Practical Ideas) in 2005 and, although this document has not, as yet, been formally adopted, it is used as the primary reference guide for the preparation of cycle route scheme proposals in Harrogate and Knaresborough.

5.2 Cycle Audit

All other highway improvement, local safety and traffic management proposals are audited to determine their potential effect on cyclists and steps are taken to modify the proposals to acknowledge any issues that do arise. The Cyclists Touring Club provided a list of issues that it was felt merited specific consideration when the design of cycle routes and other schemes was being undertaken and this acts as a very useful ‘checklist’ in the ‘cycle audit’ process.

The Council recently adopted a ‘Core Strategy’ to better manage the Development Control process which requires developers to submit a Transport/Accessibility Assessment which will ensure that applications which do not satisfy the requirement to provide suitable links to the existing/proposed cycle network will not be considered for approval.

A comprehensive assessment procedure is also applied to all planning applications involving highway works to ensure that the opportunities to encourage/assist cycling are included in approved proposals.

5.3 Cycle Route Network Maintenance

There is no additional specific funding available for the maintenance of off-road cycle routes through the normal revenue funding process and these costs are, therefore, having to be met from existing resources.

5.4 Shared Use Paths

The minimum width recommended in the guidelines referred to in Section 5.1 above for a cycle path, which is also to be available for pedestrian use, is 3.0m and this will continue to be the standard sought where this is possible. In designing schemes which are subject to width constraints, however, this dimension has had to be varied to suit individual site conditions without creating any obvious safety problems or conflicts between the two classes of path user.
The Draft Design Guidelines also suggest that shared use paths should be segregated by means of markings or coloured surfacing to delineate the specific areas of the path that should be used by cyclists and pedestrians. This has been shown (except in exceptional cases) to create difficulties and the Council have, therefore, (in line with recent advice from Sustrans) adopted a standard design for shared use paths which does not include measures which seek to segregate cyclists and pedestrians.

5.5 Disability Access

The types of barrier utilised since 2001 on “shared use” cycle routes to encourage use by wheelchair, disabled buggy and cycling users but to deter use by motor cyclists have become less effective as the design and size of motorcycles has evolved. Of the proprietary barriers available the ‘3 Valley’ type has proven to be the most effective against motorcycles (although it can present problems for some disabled buggies) and will therefore be used on future schemes if deemed necessary. In order to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act it will be necessary to construct accesses to shared use paths to comply with the guidelines produced by the Department for Transport. Consultation with relevant user groups will also be necessary.

The need for other accessibility measures such as dropped kerbs and shallow gradients will also be acknowledged when developing future cycling proposals.
6.0 Cycling

6.1 Cycling to School

The original Cycling Implementation Plan suggested that substantial scope existed to significantly reduce congestion and improve road safety (especially near schools) if parents could be persuaded to allow their children to cycle to and from school rather than conveying them by car. This would also serve to establish the cycling ‘habit’ and lead to more general cycle use in later life.

Surveys were carried out (the results of which are reproduced in the original Implementation Plan) in 1999 and 2000 at a number of secondary schools to identify the extent of cycle use and of latent cycling demand. It was intended that these surveys should be repeated on an annual basis to determine if the completion of specific cycle route projects (many of which are specifically targeted to improve the facilities available for those children able and willing to cycle) and the other promotional work which has been undertaken over the period of the plan had resulted in increased cycle use by school children. Unfortunately because of other curriculum demands and the extra work imposed on schools by Central Government it has not been possible to follow up these original surveys and or to produce data which might confirm the trends in cycle usage by schoolchildren. Some rough ‘hands up’ surveys were carried out at selected schools in April 2006 which confirmed that there was still considerable suppressed demand for cycling as a mode of travel to and from schools.

The government have, however, introduced guidelines that require schools to complete School Travel Plans if they wish to access funding which has been made available for, amongst other things, transport infrastructure improvements within the school campus. School Travel Plans set out specific measures designed to reduce traffic and encourage walking and cycling and oblige the school to meaningfully contribute to the outcomes. All these plans include a commitment to encourage cycling by whatever means are available so it is anticipated that, in the future, the Council will be able to relaunch the questionnaire surveys and obtain meaningful information on cycle use in future years.

Details of modal use on journeys to school is now collected by the Department for Education and Science on an annual basis as part of the PLASC, so it will be possible to monitor cycle use more effectively in the future.

6.2 Cycle Training

Harrogate Borough Council’s Road Safety section offers on road cycle training courses. These are undertaken by trained, paid instructors and have been offered to all year six pupils at all the primary/junior schools in the urban area for a number of years. The number of pupils who receive training has increased annually since 2002 (when on-road was introduced) and 86% of those eligible completed the course in 2008.
Cycle training for secondary school children and adults is also offered on an ad-hoc basis although the numbers seeking this instruction are relatively low.
7.0 Cycle Safety

The original Cycling Implementation Plan stressed the importance of ensuring that the creation of new cycle routes and increases in the number of cyclists did not result in an increase in cycling casualties. No accidents involving personal injury have occurred on any of the off road cycling routes since the individual schemes were implemented but existing and future schemes will continue to be monitored annually to identify any problems in this respect. The interests of cyclists are assessed when proposals are being developed for Local Safety Schemes at locations with established accident records and also in the design of more general traffic management schemes.

Appendix A shows the cyclist casualty figures for the period 1994 to 2006.

The 2000 Cycling Implementation Plan set a target of 50% reduction in cyclist casualties to be achieved upon the full implementation of the plan. The figures in Appendix B show that this target is likely to be achieved considerably in advance of this time scale if existing trends continue.

The County Council introduced a road safety initiative in 2002 (that is ongoing) which targeted accidents involving vulnerable road users which has been successful. It is, therefore, difficult to wholly attribute the reduction in casualties to the creation of new cycle routes or to better cycle training but these have, inevitably, made some contribution to the improvement.
8.0 Cycle Parking

Appendix B indicates the locations where cycle parking spaces have been provided since the adoption of the Implementation Plan. Parking facilities are now available for over 300 cycles in the urban area which substantially exceeds the target set out in the original Cycling Implementation Plan.

Secured cycle lockers are available at Victoria and Jubilee Car Parks in Harrogate Town Centre and at Starbeck and Pannal Rail Halts.

The provision of cycle parking and storage facilities will continue to be required, where appropriate, as a condition of planning approval for all types of development including residential applications.
9.0     Targets and Measurements

9.1     Targets

The North Yorkshire Cycling Strategy set countrywide targets for increases in cycle usage but also allowed these to be set locally where this was appropriate. Accordingly the following targets were adopted in the 2000 Cycling Implementation Plan (to be achieved on completion of the network):

- 15% of journeys to work by cycle
- 20% of secondary school journeys by cycle
- 90% of 10 to 12 year olds to receive cycle training annually
- 50% reduction in rate of casualties (in proportion to level of cycling)
- Creation of 200 new cycle parking spaces

LTP2 seeks increases in cycle usage countywide over the period of the plan of just 1% but it is acknowledged that this figure should be higher in urban areas and further work needs to be undertaken to determine the appropriate targets.

9.2     Measurement

It has proven difficult to measure some of these outcomes particularly since it is not certain when the cycle network will be fully completed. No information is available on work or school journeys at the present time although it is intended that surveys be undertaken in the near future to set “benchmarks” for cycling to work and the re-engagement with secondary schools should also allow officers to collect data on school cycling. The main measurement of cycle use over the period of the plan has taken the form of surveys undertaken on cycle routes which have been completed at a number of ‘key’ locations. In recent years advice from the Department for Transport has suggested that surveys taken at sites where improvements have been implemented are not really representative of the changes in general cycle usage. Since 2003, therefore, surveys have been taken at 2 “benchmark” sites which have not been the subject of cycling improvements. The results of these cycle usage surveys are shown in Appendix C.

9.3     Achievement of Targets

It can be seen from the cycle counts summarised in Appendix C that cycling levels (at the improvement scheme and benchmark sites) have varied considerably over the period of the surveys. There would appear to be good usage of some of the new routes soon after they are opened which “drops off” over time. Other routes appear to have retained their usage levels fairly consistently since they became available.

Significant progress against the casualty reduction (Appendix A) and cycle training (Section 6.2) targets has been achieved and that for cycle parking spaces has already been exceeded.
10.0 Cycling Promotion

10.1 Cycling Events

The Council have organised a one day cycling promotion event during National Bike Week since 2000 with the assistance of the Cycle Group and support from other sustainable transport organisations. This ‘event’ has received increasing publicity over the years and has been regularly attended by the local M.P. and members of Harrogate Borough Council’s Cabinet.

10.2 Cycle Route Map

A Cycle Route Map has been published & reviewed annually since 2001 containing updated cycle route information and details of other cycle facilities such as parking facilities and cycle shops. This has developed from a fairly crude document to a glossy pamphlet which gives other cycle information relating to events, cycle clubs and contacts etc… The initial map, which was produced in 2001, was distributed to every household in the urban area but since then copies have been made available at most public buildings in Harrogate and Knaresborough or on request from the Department of Development Services. Four thousand copies of the map, which is also distributed to schools, are produced annually which is sufficient to meet current demand. “Cycle zoning” information which will assist cyclists to judge travel times (by cycle) between various parts of the urban area were included in the Cycle Route Map for the first time in 2006.

10.3 Cycle Route Signing

Substantial signing of new cycle routes has already been provided where they connect to recognisable destinations and form part of a larger strategic route. It is sometimes difficult to sign isolated sections of route meaningfully but a review of signing arrangements has been undertaken which has highlighted ‘gaps’ in signing provision and these will be addressed when an appropriate budget is available.

10.4 Green Travel Plans

Aided by recent Planning Policy Guidance from Central Government the Council continue, through the planning process, to require the production by developers (and particularly those of employment sites) of Green Travel Plans which set down measures that will be taken to persuade (or require) users of the development to use alternative means of transport to the private motor vehicle. These plans seek to ensure that a range of facilities are in place on site to cater for cycle users and to offer financial incentives to employees, visitors etc… who elect to walk, cycle or use public transport. Various attempts have been made by officers over recent years to persuade major existing employers to consider the development of Green Travel Plans for their own organisations with varying degrees of success. This has resulted in the provision of ‘soft’ facilities such as cycle parking at a number of sites, including Harrogate District Hospital but has fallen short of offering financial and other incentives to those who are willing to cycle to their facilities.
Harrogate Borough Council have been keen to set a good example as a “cycle friendly” employer and cycle parking, shower and changing facilities have been provided at the larger Council site to encourage staff to cycle to work. The Council also offer ‘mileage’ payments to staff who use their cycles whilst carrying out their duties and offer “free” loans to staff to assist them in their purchase of a bicycle. This has resulted in some increase in cycle usage but the fact that many members of staff live outside the district is an obstacle to more extensive cycle use.
11.0 Future delivery of Cycle Schemes

11.1 Funding of Cycle Schemes

Funding for cycle schemes in the Agency Area of approximately £300k per annum was available from North Yorkshire County Council over the period of the first Local Transport Plan (2001-2006). The Borough Council were able to use this funding to deliver projects which District Councillors believed best contributed to the development of a comprehensive cycle network or would be most effective in encouraging cycling. Members of the Cycle Group had an input into this decision making process through the regular meetings with Council Officers who made recommendations to the Councillors on cycling proposals.

The overall Local Transport Plan funding which the County Council has received for all capital schemes over the period of LTP2 (2006-2011) is much reduced from that previously available under LTP1 and the ‘share’ that Harrogate Borough Council has received for transportation related capital projects in the Agency Area has been reduced as a consequence. Under instructions from the Department for Transport the County Council are now required to prioritise all the schemes which it is intended will be funded from LTP monies to identify those which contribute most significantly to the objectives set out in the LTP. These objectives are set out in Appendix D at the end of this document.

11.2 Future Delivery of Projects

A number of cycle projects which are most likely to score well against the new prioritisation criteria have been submitted for assessment. These are listed in Appendix E. The scheme prioritisation process was applied to these schemes and allocations were provided for the Dragon Bridge to Kingsley Drive cycle route scheme (completed in 2007/8), St George’s Field, Knaresborough cycle route scheme (likely to be completed in 2009/2010) and the Stray Cycle Scheme (likely to be completed in 2010/11). Substantial funding was also provided to assist with the funding of the combined pedestrian/cycle bridge at Hookstone Road (also funded partly by developer contributions and Sustrans Grant) which was completed in 2008.

11.3 Completion of Cycle Route Network

If LTP funding is to be available at this level for the foreseeable future it is unlikely that significant progress can be made on the completion of the cycle network.

Alternative sources of funding will have to be explored if some of the more expensive projects are to be delivered whilst funding from Central Government is constrained.
APPENDICES

A CASUALTY FIGURES
B CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES
C CYCLE USAGE
D LTP OBJECTIVES
E LTP SCHEMES

FIGURES

1 HARROGATE CYCLE ROUTE NETWORK

TABLES

1 ROUTE DETAILS
2 HANDS UP SURVEY
## Appendix A

### Casualty Figures
Casualty Figures (children under 15 in brackets)

<table>
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## Existing Cycle Parking in Harrogate and Knaresborough

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jubilee Car Park</td>
<td>Lockers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Exists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pannal Train Station</td>
<td>Lockers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Exists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL NUMBER OF SPACES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>293</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C

### Cycle Usage in Harrogate/Knaresborough Urban Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>DAILY FLOW – 7am-7pm October in Term Time (am peak hour flows in brackets)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SITES ON NEW ROUTES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Date in brackets indicates when cycling scheme completed)</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrogate Road, Knaresborough</td>
<td>22 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Stage 2, March 2003)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grimbold Road, Knaresborough</td>
<td>32 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(March 2002)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Park Road</td>
<td>6 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(January 2003)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennyfield Drive</td>
<td>28 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(December 2001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BENCHMARK SITES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otley Road</td>
<td>28 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oatlands Drive</td>
<td>62 (11)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- 2002 Figures obtained for manual costs
- All figures 2003 onwards obtained from automatic count site
- * Some doubts about accuracy of figure – figures taken from April
- ** As above – figures taken from July
Appendix D
NYCC Local Transport Plan 2 (2006-2011) Objectives

ACCESSIBILITY
SAFETY
ENVIRONMENT
CONGESTION
QUALITY OF LIFE
ECONOMY
EFFICIENCY
Appendix E
Cycle Route Schemes Submitted to NYCC
for Assessment Under New Prioritisation Criteria

1. Dragon Bridge to Kinsley Drive Cycle Route (scheme completed in 2008)
2. Harrogate to Knaresborough Cycle Route (stage 3)
3. St George’s Field Cycle Route, Knaresborough (funding available, scheme likely to be completed in 2010)
4. Wetherby Road to Hookstone Drive Cycle Route (Railway Road/Showground) (Scheme delivered through planning gain in 2009)
5. Stray Cycle Route (funding available but legal issues to be resolved. Scheme likely to be completed in 2010)
6. Hornbeam Park to Railway Road Cycle Route
7. Penny Pot Lane to Saltergate Drive Cycle Route
8. Beckwith Knowle to Harrogate Town Centre Cycle Route
9. Pannal to Harrogate Cycle Route
10. Coppice Drive to Dragon Road Cycle Route
Figure 1

Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycle Network

July 2000

Proposed Cycle Routes
The numbering refers to Table 1

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