

## 31. Cycling Strategy

### 31.1 Introduction and Overview

Cycling is an ideal mode of transport for short local trips, particularly within urban areas. It is low-cost, accessible, healthy, environmentally-friendly and efficient. About half of all the journeys we make are less than two miles, which is a distance that can easily be cycled in about 15 minutes. There is clearly great potential for cycling to be a viable travel choice for many local journeys.

Despite this, cycling is still not a mainstream form of transport in Warwickshire or the UK as a whole and only accounts for around 2% of all trips. There are a range of reasons why most people do not choose to cycle for local journeys and instead use a car. Perceptions about safety are often most prominent, but many reasons are deep-rooted in our car-based culture.

The importance of getting more people cycling has never been greater, as there is increasing recognition that cycling has the potential to help address a number of the challenges currently facing Warwickshire and society as a whole, particularly relating to climate change, congestion and health. Cycling can contribute towards all of five national transport goals set by the government on tackling climate change, supporting economic growth, promoting equality of opportunity, contributing to better safety, security and health and improving quality of life.

This strategy sets out how Warwickshire County Council, with its partners, intends to address the actual and perceived barriers to cycling and seek to increase levels of cycling in the county. The strategy has been prepared in consultation with a range of partners and representatives from cycle user groups.

This document will form a long term strategy for cycling as part of Warwickshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026. It builds on progress made since 1995, when the County Council published its first Cycling Plan, and the sustained investment in cycling during LTP1 and LTP2.

The overall aim of the Cycling Strategy is to bring about an increase in the amount of cycling in Warwickshire by improving the safety and quality of the cycling environment and promoting cycling as a healthy, sustainable and attractive transport choice.

The goal is to get more people cycling for utility journeys – the journeys that people do everyday to school, to work, to the shops and to the rail station. Encouraging more recreational cycling can also contribute towards this goal by helping to develop a 'cycling culture' and maximising the wider benefits of cycling for health and the environment.

Meeting the overall aim of the Cycling Strategy to increase cycle use will require a combination physical improvements for cycling and measures to promote cycling and behavioural change, including education, training and publicity.

### 31.2 The Policy Context

The Strategy has been developed within the national, regional and local policy environment and aims to be consistent with the wider framework. An overview of the policy background is provided in Part A of the Local Transport Plan.

#### 31.2.1 National Policy

There have been a range of policy documents published in recent years which recognise the role of cycling in reducing carbon emissions from transport and tackling health problems. In addition,

a number of publications recognise the importance of the physical environment in encouraging cycling and provide guidance on improving conditions for cycling. There is also growing evidence of the financial and health benefits of increasing cycling levels.

### **Active Travel Strategy (2010)**

This joint strategy produced by the DfT and Department for health sets out the government's aim to get more people cycling and walking more often and more safely. The strategy incorporates a National Cycle Plan for the government's proposed 'decade of cycling'. It emphasises how cycling and walking can have a positive impact on many of the challenges facing national and local government and particularly contribute towards tackling the cost of inactivity and obesity.

### **Active Communities: Cycling to a better quality of life (Local Government Information Unit 2009)**

This document looks at cycling from a local authority perspective, identifying the barriers to cycling and making 17 recommendations under the themes of leading by example, integration, engaging, training regulating and funding.

### **LTN 2/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design (Department for Transport 2008)**

Brings together and updates previous guidance from Local Transport Notes and other notes on improving physical conditions for cycling.

### **A Sustainable Future for Cycling (Department for Transport 2008)**

This document sets out the Government's strategy on cycling up to 2011 and demonstrates the health and environmental benefits of cycling. The document increases the level of funding allocated to Cycling England, the body set up by the government in 2005 to work with local authorities to get more people cycling, to enable further development of a range of initiatives. These include cycling demonstration towns, cycle training, expansion of the Bike It programme to promote cycling to schools and more money for school links. The strategy focuses on increasing cycling for journeys to work and to school.

### **Manual for Streets (Department for Transport 2007)**

This guidance aims to improve conditions for cycling and walking by encouraging local authorities and developers to create more people-friendly residential streets.

### **Walking and Cycling : An Action Plan (Department for Transport July 2004)**

This document sets out a range of practical actions that the government will take to support the efforts of local authorities to encourage more walking and cycling. It also describes a number of best practice case studies.

### **Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 : Transport (March 2001)**

Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13) on Transport aimed to integrate planning and transport to promote more sustainable transport choices, promote accessibility to jobs and services by public transport, cycling and walking and reduce the need to travel. It contained specific guidance on how local authorities should encourage cycling through development plans and determining planning applications.

### **Choosing Health (Department of Health 2004)**

The publishing of the Government's public health White Paper 'Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier' in October 2004 recognised the importance from a public health perspective of encouraging walking and cycling. One of the overarching priorities of the White Paper is to increase the amount of exercise that people take. Walking and cycling are highlighted as having key roles to play because they are regular forms of physical activity that can be easily fitted into peoples' daily routines. Improving opportunities to walk and cycle will be part of a strategy to market healthy lifestyles and the White Paper also endorses the importance of the National Cycle Network for achieving better public health.

## Promoting and Creating Built or Natural Environments that Promote or Support Physical Activity (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence 2007)

This document recommends that cyclists and pedestrians are given priority in the planning and building of towns in order to promote physical activity and improve public health.

### 31.2.2 Regional Policy

The wider regional policy framework is set out in full in the following principal strategies: the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) (which includes the Regional Transport Strategy), West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES), Regional Housing Strategy and Regional Transport Priorities Action Plan (RTPAP), Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). There is a good strategic fit between the national transport goals and the policies and priorities set out in regional strategies.

Policy T3 Walking and Cycling: Development plans and LTPs should provide greater opportunities for walking and cycling by:

- i) developing safe, secure, direct, convenient and attractive networks which connect town centres, local facilities, educational premises, public transport interchanges, residential and employment areas;
- ii) giving pedestrians and cyclists priority in residential areas and town centres;
- iii) providing links between smaller settlements and centres and development of greenways and quiet roads;
- iv) making the most effective use of canal towpaths;
- v) expanding 'cycle and ride' and cycle carriage on public transport and;
- vii) ensuring new developments and infrastructure proposals improve walking and cycling access.

## 31.3 Overview of the Current Situation

### 31.3.1 Cycling in Warwickshire

Cycle use in the UK has been declining as a form of transport for many years, and now accounts for less than 2% of all trips and 0.6% of distance travelled. This is significantly lower than other European countries with climates and topography no less conducive to cycling than the UK. For example, 11% of trips are made by cycle in Germany and in Denmark this figure is 18%. Despite low levels of cycle use for utility journeys, cycle ownership in the UK is high, with around 20 million people owning a bicycle, and there is growing interest in recreational cycling.

Although overall local cycling levels are very difficult to measure, cycling levels in Warwickshire generally seem to reflect the national picture.

Census data shows that the number of people cycling to work in Warwickshire has declined significantly over the last 20 years. In 1981, 5.6% of journeys to work were made by cycle, but this declined to 3.8% in 1991 and to 3% in 2001. (Note: 2011 census results unavailable at time of writing). Levels of cycling to work also vary across the county (see table below).

Table CY1: Journeys to work by cycle (2001 census)

Area	Percentage of journeys to work undertaken by cycle (2001)
English Shire Counties	3.1%
Coventry	2.8%
Warwickshire	2.9%
North Warwickshire Borough	1.3%
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough	2.8%
Rugby Borough	4.0%

Stratford-upon-Avon District	2.6%
Warwick District	3.5%

Cordon counts are carried out in each main town every two years, and measure the number of cyclists travelling to and from town centres on the main routes. Data between 2000 and 2008 shows a mixed picture, with Stratford, Warwick and Bedworth showing an increase and Leamington, Nuneaton, Rugby and Kenilworth showing a decrease. However, these 12-hour cordon counts cannot provide an accurate reflection of cycle use as cycling does not always take place on main routes and is greatly affected by seasonal variations and weather conditions. In addition, other factors such as the provision of new cycle routes to town centres may lead to a reduction in cyclists on nearby main roads.

Data from automatic cycle counters which are installed on most new cycle routes generally show positive trends in cycle usage where new infrastructure has been provided. There are now 17 automatic counters around the County. Whilst it takes a number of years for trends to become evident, many routes are showing good increases in cycling levels (INSERT GRAPH)

There is insufficient data yet available for most routes constructed during LTP 2006-11 to demonstrate clear trends in cycle usage levels. However, 12 hour manual cycle counts are carried out before new cycle schemes are constructed and this data can be compared with data from automatic counters installed on new schemes. This data indicates that developing dedicated cycle infrastructure can lead to significant increases in cycling levels on those routes. For example, the number of cyclists more than doubled following the provision of a dedicated footway / cycleway between Heathcote and Warwick Technology Park.

### 31.3.2 Summary of Progress to Date

Since publication of Warwickshire's first Cycling Action Plan (1995) and over the lifetime of LTP1 and LTP2, there have been over 15 years of sustained investment in cycling infrastructure in the county. The focus has been on the main urban areas, where most people within easy cycling distance of schools, employment areas, town centres, rail stations and other significant destinations. Key improvements during LTP2 include:

- New links from both Heathcote and Warwick to Warwick Technology Park, a major employment site on the outskirts of Warwick;
- A new link from Attleborough Industrial Estate / Nuneaton town centre to Bermuda Park, including signalised crossings across Griff Island, a major roundabout on the A444 dual carriageway;
- A cycleway along the A429 between Leek Wootton and Warwick, providing an improved link between Kenilworth and Warwick (part of NCN52);
- Extension of the cycle route along Birmingham Road in Stratford to connect to the town centre;
- Completion of Safer Routes to School links between Leamington town centre and North Leamington School, Bishops Tachbrook to Warwick Gates and north Rugby to Avon Valley School;
- Improved access to Nuneaton town centre through provision of an off-carriageway cycle facility along the ring road, 10 toucan crossings and new route from the north east of the town;

- Cycle link and toucan crossings to provide access to Shires Retail Park in Leamington Spa, a major retail development which was previously difficult to reach by bike due to two busy roundabouts and high traffic volumes.
- A new cycle and pedestrian bridge over the West Coast Mainline in Nuneaton and extension to the Wem Brook Trail, linking the Whitestone area to the town centre and other trip generators.

The Council also worked with Sustrans to develop sections of the National Cycle Network (NCN) within Warwickshire. NCN5 (Stratford-upon-Avon - Birmingham), NCN41 (Rugby – Leamington), NCN 52 (Stratford – Warwick) and parts of NCN 52 (Warwick – Kenilworth – Coventry – Nuneaton) have been completed over the past 10 years. The County Council has also developed 11 leisure cycling routes throughout the county, which utilise 'Greenways', country parks and quiet lanes.

Cycle routes to secondary schools, developed through the Safer Routes to School project, have made a significant contribution to cycle network development in the main towns.

To date, a total of approximately 80km of dedicated cycle lanes and cycle tracks have been delivered in the main towns in partnership with District / Borough Councils and other partners. It is acknowledged that improving conditions for cyclists cannot be measured in terms of length of dedicated cycle facilities alone and this will be discussed later in the strategy.

Whilst much progress has been made, there are a number of links within each town which would benefit from improvements. Route discontinuity can be an issue, and is often highlighted by cycle users. There are obvious missing links in the networks and barriers to cycling in the form of busy junctions, large roundabouts and pinch-points caused by narrow roads, bridges and other features. These are often very difficult to improve for cycling due to physical restrictions. Cycle access into and through town centres generally needs improvement.

### 31.3.3 Opportunities

#### Environment

Tackling CO2 emissions from transport is vital if national carbon reduction targets are to be met. Cycling produces no emissions or adverse affect on the environment and can therefore contribute towards carbon reduction objectives and local air pollution targets. Air Quality Management Areas have been declared or will soon be declared due to poor air quality in several areas of the county (more details are provided in the Air Quality Strategy in section 11). All of the potentially emerging air quality issues in Warwickshire are related to road traffic in and around the County's town centres and along major commuter arterial routes and junctions.

#### Economy

Reducing and mitigating the effects of congestion at a local level is a major objective of the government's transport policy and cycling has an important role to play. Congestion is particularly severe in urban areas during peak hours, and many of the car trips contributing towards the problem are short local ones, often driver only, which could easily be undertaken by cycling. Cycling can often be the fastest mode of transport for these short urban journeys and cycles also take up significantly less space than cars, therefore being a far more efficient use of available road space.

'Valuing the Benefits of Cycling', a study commissioned by Cycling England, calculated a value for the economic loss directly attributable to the decline in cycling trips over the last decade and quantified the value that could be generated by an increase in cycling in the future. If, by 2015, the number of cycle trips returned to the level of 1995, the savings in health, pollution and congestion would be around £500m. A subsequent study commissioned by Cycling England, 'Planning for Cycling', estimated that the annual economic benefits generated by one new cyclist,

cycling regularly for one year, range from around £540 to £640. This indicates that investment in cycling infrastructure offers good value for money.

### Healthy lifestyles

There is growing concern about the impact on public health of sedentary lifestyles, which have contributed to an increase in obesity, heart disease, diabetes and strokes. The value of cycling, as a form of physical activity which can easily be incorporated into people's daily routines, has been increasingly recognised by the health sector. Cycling England economic modelling has calculated that 20% increase in cycling by 2015 would save £107million in reducing premature deaths, £52 million in lowered NHS costs and £87 million in shrinking absences from work. Cycling also offers wider benefits for public health, including contributing towards air pollution reduction, improving road safety, and improving social cohesion.

### Social inclusion

Whilst levels of car ownership are higher in Warwickshire than the West Midlands or England and Wales as a whole, 19% of households do not have a car and therefore may experience problems accessing employment opportunities and essential services. Cycling is a low cost mode of transport, requiring no tax, insurance, MOT or parking fees and minimal maintenance costs. With some basic training, cycling is an activity that almost everyone is able to undertake, from children to elderly people. It is therefore a mode of transport available to most sectors of the population, providing a means of access to jobs, education and basic services necessary for everyday life.

### Tourism and recreation

Cycling is a popular leisure activity for a range of people, from sport cyclists to families wishing to enjoy the countryside. Leisure cycling routes can benefit local tourism, particularly when they are easily accessible from sizeable towns or rail stations, as they can attract cyclists from beyond the county boundary. Traffic-free routes through scenic countryside can be a particular draw.

## 31.3.4 Issues and Challenges

The decline in cycling is the result of a combination of socio-economic, demographic and cultural changes largely associated with the rise in car ownership. Despite the wide-ranging benefits of cycling as a mode of transport, there are significant physical and psychological barriers to cycling for much of the population.

### Social attitudes

In the UK, many people hold negative views of cycling as a mode of transport or just cannot see themselves cycling. Cycling is often associated with low social status or with lycra-clad males on racing bikes, rather than a practical transport choice. This contrasts with many other European countries, where cycling is part of the culture and is viewed as the best way to get around in towns and cities for all sectors of the population. Additionally, factors such as the weather, hills and effort required are often cited as reasons why cycling is not a practical choice. Changing 'hearts and minds, improving the image of cycling and convincing individuals that the health, fitness, financial and often time saving benefits of cycling outweigh the perceived disincentives is a major challenge for cycle promotion initiatives.

### Poor cycling environment

Increased traffic levels have resulted in a general deterioration in cycling conditions on many roads in the county. High traffic volumes and physical infrastructure built for motorised vehicles all contribute towards creating an unattractive cycling environment. Busy junctions, large roundabouts and pinch-points are some of the features of the road network which are particularly difficult for cyclists.

### Perceived danger of cycling

Linked to the increased traffic volumes described above is the common perception that cycling on the roads is a dangerous activity. The speed of traffic and poor driver behaviour are particular

concerns for cyclists. In reality, cycling is not as hazardous as some believe, particularly when put into a wider perspective. Cycling accidents have declined in Warwickshire over the past decade and cyclists were the road users with the largest fall in casualties. (Add figures). The evidence shows that increased levels of cycling leads to fewer accidents. The British Medical Association have concluded that the benefits of cycling are likely to outweigh the loss of life through cycling accidents by 20-1. You are far more likely to suffer illnesses such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes than be injured whilst cycling. However, cycling safety is an important issue, both in terms of perception and reality. Of note is that over three quarters of cycling accidents occur at or around junctions.

### Lack of awareness of opportunities for cycling

People who are considering starting cycling for local journeys are often unsure of the best routes for cycling between their home and their destinations. The routes which people chose to drive are not always the ones most suited to cycling. People may be unaware of the existence of cycle routes or quieter streets which enable them to avoid busy routes and difficult features of the road network. This lack of knowledge on cycle routes and other matters, such as basic cycle maintenance, can deter people from cycling for utility journeys.

### Concern about cycle security

Fear of bicycle theft can deter people from cycling for local journeys. People need to be sure they will find a convenient and secure place to leave their bike at the end of their journey in town centres, at public buildings, rail stations and other public transport interchanges. People are unlikely to consider cycling to work or school / college if there are no secure cycle parking available, as well as other facilities such as lockers and showers.

### Increasing journey lengths

Demographic changes, changes in patterns of employment and living, rising car ownership and decades of planning for the car have resulted in a dramatic rise in average journey lengths. However, despite the above trend, a quarter of all car journeys are under two miles, and around two thirds are under five miles, distances which can easily be cycled by most people. Longer journeys can often be undertaken by cycling in combination with public transport. Cycling can clearly play a greater role as a mode of transport for these local journeys, particularly in urban areas, where residential areas and key trip generators are generally within cycling distance. The average length of utility cycling journeys is about four km. Whilst the average distance that people travel to work has increased in recent years, about a fifth of all working people in Warwickshire live within 2km of their work place and just under another fifth live between 2 – 5kms, indicating the clear potential for more commuter journeys to be undertaken by bike.

## 31.5 The Strategy

### Policy CY1: Consultation and Partnership Working

The County Council will consult with cycle users and other interest groups in the delivery of the policies and actions within the cycling strategy. We will seek further opportunities for partnership working to develop improvements to cycling infrastructure and to promote the benefits of cycling.

The County Council, as highway authority, has overall responsibility for cycling within the county as part of the Local Transport Plan. However, achieving the aims of this strategy requires partnership working with a range of organisations, as well as local cyclists and user groups.

### Cycle forums

The County Council liaises and consults with local cyclists through the cycle forums established in Warwick, Stratford, Nuneaton and Rugby. These enable local cyclists and representatives from cycle campaign groups to input their views into cycling strategy, policies and schemes and to discuss local cycling concerns. Cycle forums have helped produce cycle network plans for each of the main towns, which highlight the key routes for improvements.

To encourage more people to cycle, it is also important reach those who do not currently chose to cycle as a mode of transport to understand the reasons why. The County Council will seek to improve communication with potential cyclists as part of marketing and promotional initiatives.

### Partnership working

Delivering physical improvements for cyclists requires partnership working with a number of groups and organisations which have an interest in increasing cycling.

District/Borough Councils: to develop traffic-free cycle routes through open spaces, parks and riversides.

Sustrans: to further develop the National Cycle Network and links to adjoining areas. To work on a number of other cycling projects such as Links to School and Connect2.

British Waterways: to improve canal towpaths for cycling, where they provide useful traffic-free corridors in urban areas.

Promoting cycling will also involve working with health bodies, schools, local businesses and the police, amongst others. We will seek further opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations to develop new initiatives to promote cycling.

### Policy CY2: Cycle Networks

The County Council will develop high quality cycle route networks to provide safe and convenient access to town centres, employment sites, schools and public transport interchanges. The cycle network will consist of the highway network, adapted where necessary through provision of dedicated cycle facilities or through traffic restraint or calming schemes, and off-highway links developed in partnership with others.

Developing safe, high quality, convenient, permeable cycle networks is key to encouraging more people to cycle for short local utility journeys to work, school, railway stations and shopping facilities. However, it is important to recognise that cycle networks do not consist of dedicated cycle facilities alone. As LTN 02/08 states, 'the road network is the most basic (and important) cycle facility available and the preferred way of providing for cyclists is to create conditions on the carriageway where cyclists are content to use it, particularly in urban areas'.

### Improvements for cyclists

The County Council will seek to make the road network in urban areas more cycle-friendly. This will be achieved through the cycle audit process, highway improvement schemes and opportunities arising from new developments. Ongoing improvements will be complemented by dedicated cycle infrastructure, such as cycle lanes, cycle tracks, toucan crossings, advance stop lines, contra-flow cycle lanes and other measures which give cyclists advantages over vehicle traffic.

A range of non-cycling specific schemes will contribute towards improved cycling conditions, including traffic calming, junction treatment, 20 mph zones, shared space initiatives and exemptions for cyclists at road closures. Other measures which benefit cycling fall within the

description of ‘invisible infrastructure’ and include parking management, redistribution of carriageway, land-use and development policies which reduce the need to travel and reliance on the car; public transport policies that create viable alternatives to car use; school and workplace travel plans and individualised travel marketing. Many of these measures will be delivered through other elements of the Local Transport Plan.

### Cycle audits

Formal cycle audits will be carried out on all new highway schemes to make sure they positively contribute towards the aim of making the road network more cycle friendly, or at the very least do not have a negative impact on cycling conditions. Cycle audits follow the guidance set out in Local Transport Note 2/08 and Guidelines for Cycle Audit and Cycle Review (IHT et al., 1998). They are carried out in addition to a road safety audit and use five main criteria to assess a scheme: directness, coherence, attractiveness, safety, and comfort.

### Problem locations for cyclists

Junctions, large roundabouts and pinch-points can be significant physical ‘barriers’ to cycling in urban areas. Although these features are often particularly difficult to improve for cycling, we will analyse accident data and work with local cycle forums to identify problem locations and seek to make improvements should the opportunity arise, for example through a local development.

### ‘Advisory’ cycle routes

Quieter roads with low traffic volumes and low speeds are often ideal for cycling and can be used as a means of access onto dedicated cycle routes or as an alternative to busy roads. These cycle-friendly roads form an important part of the cycle network, particularly for young or novice cyclists. We will further identify and promote such ‘advisory cycle routes’, particularly where they provide useful links to key trip generators or to dedicated cycle routes. We will also seek opportunities for cost-effective improvements to these routes, for example by provision of contra-flow cycle lanes.

### **Policy CY3: Priorities for developing cycle infrastructure**

The County Council will give priority to developing cycle infrastructure within the main urban areas and on key inter-urban links which generate significant commuting movements. In addition, dedicated cycle routes to secondary schools will be provided through the Safer Routes to School project.

Cycling is generally most practical for short journeys under five miles. Statistics show that 62% of all journeys we make are between 1 and 2 miles and nearly 75% are under 5 miles, most of which are everyday journeys to work, school and other key locations, such as rail stations. Focusing on making cycling an attractive choice for these journeys therefore has the greatest potential for achieving an increase in cycling and helping to reduce carbon emissions and congestion.

### Priorities for improvements

We will prioritise improvements for cycling in the main towns of Warwick, Leamington Spa, Kenilworth, Nuneaton, Bedworth and Stratford-upon-Avon. Within these urban areas, cycling has the potential to be a viable transport choice for many people as the distance between people’s homes and key destinations is relatively short. Investment in improvements for cyclists will therefore have the greatest benefit.

The County Council will also seek to develop cycle links into the above main urban areas from neighbouring settlements, where the distance involved is under five miles and there is clear potential to cater for significant flows of cyclists. Priorities for inter-urban cycle links will be Kenilworth to Leamington Spa and Bedworth to Nuneaton for these reasons.

The future routes in and around urban areas will include sections of the National Cycle Network and the County Council will work in partnership with Sustrans to complete the remaining sections within Warwickshire and to secure funding for additional links.

Within rural areas and smaller settlements, cycling is not a viable mode for most journeys and other types of transport provision may be more appropriate than cycling infrastructure.

### Cycle network development plans

Cycle network development plans, prepared in consultation with local cycle forums, will be used to highlight key routes for improvement and these will be prioritised according to their potential to generate more cycling. These plans will be reviewed and updated regularly. Accessibility planning data, information on existing cycle flows, accident data and local views will also help identify the highest priority routes. The same plans will help guide the County Council's initiation of and response to development, regeneration and special project proposals as well as informing its views on the Core Strategies of District and Borough Councils.

### Safer Routes to School

Encouraging more cycling to school is a key element of Warwickshire's Safer Routes to School programme, which has been ongoing since 1999. The SRtS project focuses on improving cycle links to secondary schools, in line with advice from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) which states that unaccompanied children under the age of 10 cannot cope with cycling on the road. Cycle routes developed through the SRtS project are generally of use for other cycle journeys and therefore contribute towards cycle networks in the main towns. We will seek to co-ordinate the development of cycle links to schools with wider cycle network development plans to ensure maximum benefit.

### Policy CY4: Cycle Infrastructure Design

The County Council will design cycle routes to meet user requirements and in accordance with national guidance. We will ensure that the needs of cyclists are considered in the design of all highway schemes and that, where possible, schemes contribute towards improving conditions for cycling.

The design of highway schemes and dedicated cycling infrastructure is of high importance when seeking to improve conditions for cycling. The County Council will seek to ensure all officers involved in the design of highway infrastructure have a good awareness of cyclists' needs and of the latest guidance on principles of cycle provision and infrastructure design. Cycle audits will be carried out on non-cycling specific highway schemes to ensure their design supports the encouragement of cycling (see policy CS2).

### Designing for cyclists

The County Council will use the guidance and recommendations within Local Transport Note 2/08 on Cycling Infrastructure Design to inform scheme development. Warwickshire County Council's own design guidance for cycle facilities has been revised to reflect the content of LTN 2/08, the Manual for Streets and other new guidance documents.

The type of cycle infrastructure provided for dedicated cycle schemes will depend on a range of factors including the 'design cyclist', road conditions, traffic speeds, highway layouts, resources constraints, local priorities. Existing highway conditions mean that there are often many constraints for designers and 'retro-fitting' cycle infrastructure onto historic highway networks can be very difficult or prohibitively expensive.

### Shared use footways / cycleways (adjacent to roads)

In line with the recommendations in LTN 2/08, the County Council will generally seek to improve cycling conditions on the road before considering converting pavements to shared use footways / cycleways within urban areas. Although some less experienced cyclists perceive off-carriageway routes to be safer than mixing with vehicular traffic, there are generally limited opportunities to provide good quality shared use facilities adjacent to urban roads, due to restricted space, frequent side roads, high pedestrian use and a number of other factors. Shared use footways / cycleways can also be unpopular with pedestrians.

Converting footways adjacent to urban roads to shared use will generally be considered only when on-carriageway options have been fully explored but prove unfeasible or for Safer Routes to School or National Cycle Network schemes.

### Shared footpaths / cyclepaths (away from roads)

Shared footpaths / cyclepaths through parks, open spaces and along riversides can be of great benefit to cyclists and form key links within local cycle networks, by providing quiet and pleasant routes or more direct alternatives to roads. The County Council will seek to create more of these cyclepaths through joint working with District and Borough Councils, British Waterways and other landowners. We will identify opportunities to upgrade suitable footpaths to permit cycle use where they have potential to generate increased levels of cycling.

### Policy CY5: Maintenance

The County Council will take account of the particular needs of cyclists in maintaining the highway network and ensure that off-carriageway cycle routes are maintained to a good standard.

Maintenance is an important issue for cyclists as they can be particularly affected by problems such as poor surface condition, bad drainage, surface debris and overhanging vegetation.

### On-carriageway cycling

In common with other users, the main requirements for cyclists are networks that are:

- Free from dangerous surface defects such as potholes and uneven surfaces
- Are free from branches and vegetation which reduce visibility or which overhang and cause an obstruction
- Have non skidding surfaces
- Are free of snow and ice
- Can be used without fear of crime

However, cyclists generally use the edge of carriageways, where defects and obstructions can accumulate, meaning that they have specific needs in terms of highway maintenance. The Highway Maintenance Strategy considers the needs of cyclists when planning and carrying out maintenance procedures.

A hotline line for reporting carriageway and cycleway defects is publicised, and all emergency repairs are made within 24 hours. We will also ensure cyclists are considered at roadworks, including those undertaken by utility companies.

### Maintenance of off-carriageway cycle routes

New cycle facilities adjacent to the carriageway or away from roads require particular consideration from a maintenance perspective, as this can be as important as good design in ensuring quality provision for cyclists. We will ensure that maintenance requirements are considered at the development stage of new off-carriageway cycle routes. Key issues include ensuring overhanging vegetation is cut back and that routes are free from broken glass and other debris. The latter is the responsibility of District or Borough Councils under their street cleaning regimes.

Policies on winter gritting of cycleways are set out in the County Council's Guide to Highway Policy Details and Service Levels.

### **Policy CY6: Cycle Parking and Security**

The County Council will provide secure cycle parking facilities in key public places and work with others to improve parking at workplaces, schools, public transport interchanges and other key trip generators.

The County Council aims to ensure an appropriate supply of quality cycle parking is provided at convenient and visible locations in town centres, suburban shopping centres, at public transport interchanges and public buildings.

#### **Types of cycle parking**

The type of cycle parking provision is important and will differ according to the length of stay and security requirements. For long stay cycle parking, cycle stands may not offer the necessary level of security and cycle lockers or secure cycle compounds may be more appropriate. We will seek to develop long-stay parking facilities where needed, particularly at public transport interchanges.

#### **Cycle parking locations**

The County Council will encourage employers to provide cycle parking for employees and visitors as part of Workplace Travel Plans and other initiatives. We will provide cycle parking facilities at schools through School Travel Plans.

The County Council will ensure that high quality cycle parking facilities are provided at new developments through the planning process (see Policy CS8). Cycle parking standards, which set the minimum cycle parking requirements for different types of development, have been produced by each of the planning authorities in Warwickshire.

Funding and advice will be provided for organisations wishing to provide cycle parking at community facilities.

#### **Cycle security**

The County Council will also work with Warwickshire police to promote initiatives aimed at reducing cycle theft, such as free post-coding for cycles.

### **Policy CY7: Integration with Public Transport**

The County Council will work in partnership with public transport operators to encourage and facilitate cycling as part of journeys made by public transport.

There is great potential for cycling and rail travel to be easily combined for longer journeys without the use of a car. In Warwickshire's main towns a large proportion of residents live within two miles of a railway station, making cycling and rail commuting a viable choice for many who work in nearby towns within Warwickshire and within neighbouring counties, such as Birmingham and Banbury. The growth in popularity of folding bikes has also helped to increase the number of people cycling to rail stations.

#### **Promoting 'Bike-Rail'**

The importance of 'bike-rail' journeys has been increasingly recognised by the government and the rail industry in recent years. The County Council will seek to make cycling to stations convenient and attractive by improving cycle links, ensuring easy interchange between modes, providing adequate number of high quality parking facilities and providing information and publicity on bike-rail.

## Station Travel Plans

Station Travel Plans are under development at stations throughout Warwickshire and these seek to increase access to rail stations by cycling and other sustainable modes of transport through a package of infrastructure improvements and promotional initiatives. Leamington Spa station was one of 24 stations selected to be part of the ATOC Station Travel Plan national pilot programme and a number of improvements for cyclists have already been implemented.

## New public transport interchanges

Where new rail stations are planned by the County Council, provision for cyclists will be considered as part of the scheme, including routes to the station.

Whilst cycling is most frequently combined with rail travel, facilities for cyclists will also be provided at new bus stations, park & ride sites and major bus stops where appropriate.

### **Policy CY8: Planning and New Developments**

The County Council will seek to ensure that all new developments support cycling as a practical and attractive mode of transport. This will be achieved through provision for cyclists within the site itself and, where appropriate, securing funding from developers towards wider cycling improvements in the vicinity of the site, consistent with the Land Use & Transportation Strategy.

Land use planning has a major role to play in reducing car dependence and encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport. Warwickshire's Land Use and Transportation Strategy seeks to ensure the integration of land use planning and transport in order to promote sustainable patterns of development which reduce the need to travel, encourage more sustainable travel choices and promote accessibility to jobs and services by public transport, cycling and walking.

## Provision for cyclists at new developments

The County Council will seek to ensure that new developments positively encourage cycling, through provision of cycle parking facilities and good cycle access within the site. The County Council's guidance for developers, 'Transport and Roads for Developments', details the standards required for new road construction at new developments in order to ensure high quality cycle-friendly design.

Developments over a certain size are also required to produce a travel plan, in accordance with the County Council's Practice Note for Developers (see Changing Travel Behaviour Strategy) and additional cycling facilities may be provided.

## Developer contributions

The County Council, as transport authority for Warwickshire, is consulted by the five District and Borough Councils on the transport implications of planning applications and can recommend measures that may be required to minimise any adverse effect on traffic flows. Where appropriate, contributions are secured from developers to fund new cycle infrastructure and improve existing routes in the vicinity of the site, in accordance with the 'Criteria for Assessing Sustainable Development' within the Land Use and Transportation Strategy. The County Council will seek to ensure that new developments contribute towards making incremental improvements to the road network for cyclists. At the very least, it will be ensured that new developments do not sever existing or proposed cycle routes, or result in a net loss of network for non-motorised users.

### **Policy CY9: Training and Education**

The County Council will provide cycle training for children and adults to encourage safe and responsible cycling. We will seek to promote a wider awareness of the needs of cyclists amongst other road users.

Training has a key role in encouraging more people to cycle, by providing the necessary skills and confidence for both children and adults to cycle on today's roads. Cycle training has been found to be highly effective in increasing the frequency with which people cycle, the length of journeys they are prepared to cycle and their willingness to cycle in all seasons.

#### **'Bikeability'**

In March 2007, Cycling England launched 'Bikeability', the new national cycle training standards for children and adults, viewed as the new Cycling Proficiency for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. By 2012 Cycling England would like to see all children have the chance to achieve Bikeability to Level 2. Warwickshire County Council adopted the Bikeability framework in 2008.

Adult training is available and actively promoted by the County Council, with the aim of targeting those who would like to take up cycling but lack confidence to cycle on roads. Training will be promoted at key large employers through the travel plan process, with the County Council leading by example by offering training for its employees. The County Council will seek opportunities to further promote cycle training, for example in conjunction with the introduction of new cycle routes to try to maximise potential for achieving behaviour change.

#### **Cycling and pedestrians**

Many people perceive cycling on busy roads as unsafe and therefore opt to instead cycle on pavements and public footpaths. In some locations, this can cause conflict with pedestrians, particularly elderly people or those with mobility impairments. Cycling on footways is illegal and therefore primarily an enforcement matter for the police, but it is hoped that improving cycling conditions and providing cycle training to raise skills and confidence levels will lead to less people cycling on pavements. The County Council will also raise awareness of this issue through publicity, such as cycle map / guides and web pages.

#### **Raising driver awareness of cyclists on the road**

Poor driver behaviour was raised as a particular concern amongst local cyclists during consultations with cycle forums. The County Council will seek to encourage courteous and considerate behaviour towards cyclists through road safety initiatives.

### **Policy CY10: Promoting Cycling**

The County Council will promote cycling as a viable, attractive, sustainable and healthy mode of transport and recreational pursuit. We will ensure that good quality information is widely available on local cycle routes and other cycling matters.

Promotional measures are a vital component of the cycling strategy, as physical improvements to infrastructure alone are unlikely to generate a significant increase in cycling. Changing hearts and minds, overcoming perceived barriers and improving the image of cycling to try to develop a cycling culture is a major challenge. However, there is now a stronger evidence base on the effectiveness of 'soft' measures in encouraging a shift to more sustainable modes of transport and achieving behavioural change.

#### **'Smarter Choices'**

In recent years, there has been growing interest in a range of 'soft' transport initiatives, which are now widely described as 'Smarter Choices'. These seek to give better information and

opportunities, aimed at helping people to choose to reduce their car use while enhancing the attractiveness of alternatives. The Smarter Choices measures with most direct relevance to cycling are workplace and school travel plans, personalised travel planning and travel awareness campaigns. The County Council's strategy for delivering Smarter Choices measures is set out in full within the Changing Travel Behaviour Strategy in section 29 but the key measures for encouraging cycling are summarised below.

### Travel Plans

The County Council will encourage cycling through Travel Plans at workplaces, schools and rail stations (see Changing Travel Behaviour Strategy). Travel Plans usually include provision of facilities for cyclists such as secure cycle parking, lockers and showers, together with a range of promotional initiatives.

### Personalised travel planning

The County Council will seek to develop personalised travel planning initiatives, which will include promotion of cycling, at major new residential developments. It has been found that people are most likely to consider a change in their travel behaviour following a major life change like moving house.

### Raising awareness and providing information

The County Council will promote cycling through awareness campaigns, cycling events and the local media. A range of promotional events are organised regularly by the County Council as part of the Travelwise initiative and in support of national events such as Bike Week.

We will provide good quality information about cycling and local cycle routes by publishing cycle route maps for the main towns and through comprehensive and up-to-date cycling web pages. Cycle network signage is also important to raise awareness of the cycle route network.

As well as wider awareness campaigns, we will develop targeted promotional initiatives where it is considered that there is a good opportunity to encourage individuals to change their travel behaviour. For example, where new cycle infrastructure has been introduced or in conjunction with health initiatives. With growing public awareness of the health problems caused by sedentary lifestyles and poor diets, emphasising the health and fitness benefits of cycling offers perhaps the greatest opportunity for targeted promotional initiatives. We will seek opportunities to develop new initiatives in partnership with the health sector to promote cycling.

### **Policy CY11: Recreational Cycling**

The County Council will promote and increase opportunities for recreational cycling in the county, including improving the Rights of Way network.

Despite the overall decline in cycling levels, cycling is increasingly popular as a leisure pursuit and as a means of enjoying the countryside. The growth in sales of mountain bikes and hybrid bikes has led to an increase in off-road cycling, particularly in attractive countryside areas. As well as the wider health and environmental benefits of recreational cycling, it is believed that encouraging people to cycle for leisure may lead to some considering cycling for utility journeys. Recreational cycling can increase personal fitness and confidence in cycling ability, and therefore increase the likelihood of cycling being used as a transport alternative. Participation in recreational cycling at an early age means that individuals are more likely to cycle as adults. Promoting opportunities for recreational cycling is therefore an element of the overall strategy to increase cycling.

### Providing for recreational cycling

The County Council actively promotes leisure cycling by developing opportunities for leisure cycling, providing publicity and improving rights of way. 11 way-marked countryside leisure

routes have been developed which use quiet roads, tracks, and bridleways and are each accompanied by a high quality map / guide. Greenways and Country Parks offer traffic-free cycling opportunities particularly suitable for novice cyclists and families, providing the ideal environment to gain skills and bike handling confidence.

**Cycling and Public Rights of Way**

The county’s rights of way network covers over 1,700 miles, although less than 20% of this network can be used by cyclists, i.e. is public bridleway status or above. These routes are generally open and available but their condition is more suited to mountain bike use than touring use. Whilst much of the network is rural, it links communities, can provide an alternative to cycling on roads and verges making local journeys possible and more pleasant and provides access from urban and urban fringe areas into adjoining countryside. Paths through open spaces in urban areas are also often used for recreational cycling.

The County Council will promote recreational cycling through publicity, information, events and activities. We will improve recreational cycling opportunities by providing safe and attractive routes and by maintaining and improving the rights of way network.

**3.6 The Action Plan**

Actions for delivering the Cycling Strategy are set out in the table below. Actions are categorised according to their timescale for delivery into short (0 -3 years), medium (3 -10 years) and long (10 -15 years)

Policy	Action	Timescale
CY1: Consultation and partnership working	Participate in regular cycle forum meetings throughout the county.	Ongoing
	Identify opportunities for new off-highway links and liaise with relevant partners to promote development of key links.	Ongoing
	Continually review Cycling Network Development plans with input from cycle forums as regards both routes and priorities.	Ongoing
CY2:Cycle Networks / CY3: Prioritising Cycling Schemes / CY4: Design / CY5: Maintenance	Develop dedicated cycle infrastructure on key links to town centres, employment sites, educational establishments and public transport interchanges in the following towns (see cycle network plans and area strategies for priority routes):  Leamington Spa / Warwick / Kenilworth Rugby Nuneaton / Bedworth Stratford-upon-Avon	Short / Medium
	Develop cycle network development plans for Kenilworth and Bedworth.	Short
	Seek to develop dedicated cycle infrastructure on key inter-urban links:  Kenilworth – Leamington Spa Bedworth – Nuneaton	Medium / Long
	Work in partnership with Sustrans to:  (a) Complete National Cycle Network route 52 and 53 in Warwickshire; (b) Create links between the NCN and residential areas, local schools and other trip generators.	Short / Medium  Ongoing

	Improve cycle access into and through Leamington, Warwick, Rugby, Stratford and Nuneaton town centre.	Short / Medium
	Investigate new and innovative approaches to make towns more permeable for cycling e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shared space in town centres</li> <li>▪ Two-way cycling on one-way streets</li> <li>▪ Turning bans to exempt cyclists</li> <li>▪ Reversing cycling bans through parks where appropriate</li> <li>▪ Removing ban on cycling on suitable footpath links in urban areas.</li> </ul>	Short / Medium
	Seek to introduce further 20 mph speed limits in town centres and residential areas where appropriate.	Ongoing
	Identify the key physical barriers to cycling in each town and develop a long term approach for improvements.	Short
	Introduce Advanced Stop Lines for cyclists at all new signalised junctions where practical.	Ongoing
	Carry out cycle audits on all highway schemes to ensure they positively improve cycling conditions where possible and, at minimum, do not have a negative impact on cycling.	Ongoing
	Raise awareness about cyclists' needs and skills in cycle-friendly design amongst highway engineers through dissemination of best practice and practical workshops.	Ongoing
	Develop safe cycle routes to secondary schools through the SRTS programme.	Short / Medium
	Identify cycle-friendly roads and consider signing as advisory routes where they can provide a useful link to a key destination.	Short
	Review signage on existing cycle routes and develop signing strategy for the town cycle networks.	Short
	Identify low cost opportunities for upgrading public footpaths to cycleways and bridleways where they will form a key link in the network.	Short/ Medium
	Work in partnership with British Waterways to improve the canal towpath network for cycling.	Ongoing
CY6: Cycle parking and security	Assess the need for new or additional cycle parking in town centres, suburban shopping centres, public buildings, public transport interchanges and other public places and install additional stands where they are considered necessary..	Ongoing
	Investigate the potential and demand for secure cycle parking for commuters in town centres.	Short
	Provide funding for schools to implement cycle parking and other cycle facilities.	Ongoing
	Provide funding and assistance to help community groups and voluntary organisations develop small-scale cycling projects.	Short / Ongoing
	Work with schools and employers to improve cycle parking and other cycling facilities through Travel Plan procedure.	Ongoing
	Work with Warwickshire Police and others to develop initiatives to reduce cycle theft in county.	Ongoing
CY7: Integration with public transport	Develop programme to improve cycle parking at stations in partnership with train operators.	Short / Medium
	Complete cycle links to rail stations in the main towns and ensure maximum linkages to wider town cycle route network	Short / Medium

	Ensure new public transport interchange facilities provide good access and facilities for cyclists.	Ongoing
	Seek to ensure good cycle links and cycle facilities are provided to proposed new rail stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kenilworth Station</li> <li>• Bermuda Station ('KNUCKLE' project)</li> <li>• Stratford Parkway</li> </ul>	Medium / Long
	In partnership with train operators, promote cycling to stations through publicity, signage and information.	Ongoing
CY8: Planning and New Developments	Ensure new developments encourage cycling through provision of cycle parking and other facilities and good access.	Ongoing
	Seek to link development sites to local cycle networks where possible.	Ongoing
	Promote cycling as part of a pilot personalised travel planning scheme at a new residential development.	Short
CY9: Education and Training	Provide Bikeability cycle training for school children to promote safe and responsible cycling.	Ongoing
	Provide cycle training for adults to improve confidence of new or returning cyclists when cycling in traffic.	Ongoing
	Promote the availability of cycle training to major local employers.	Ongoing
	Develop cycling awareness course for secondary schools.	Short
	Publish cycle safety advice on the town cycle maps / guides, cycling web pages and other mediums when the opportunity	Short / Ongoing
	Encourage safe driving and raise driver awareness of the needs of cyclists through road safety campaigns.	Ongoing
	Work with local cycle shops to promote basic cycle maintenance courses, particularly to key groups.	Short
CY10: Promoting Cycling	Continue to organise events in support of national cycling campaigns, such as Bike Week.	Ongoing
	Develop a recognised logo / slogan for cycling as part of wider marketing strategy for sustainable transport.	Short
	Develop strategy for promoting cycling in conjunction with new cycle routes and other highway improvement projects.	Short
	Publish up to date town cycle route maps / guides for the following towns: Warwick / Leamington Spa Rugby Nuneaton Stratford-upon-Avon Kenilworth ( <i>new</i> ) Bedworth ( <i>new</i> )	Ongoing
	Consider contributing towards the development of the national on-line route planner for cyclists.	Short
	Further develop and regularly update comprehensive cycling web pages on Warwickshire website.	Ongoing
	Identify opportunities for promoting cycling with other organisations, particularly health sector.	Short
	Produce regular press releases on cycling to ensure ongoing media coverage for cycling.	Ongoing

	Promote take up of cycle purchase scheme amongst local employers.	Short
	Investigate the potential to provide 'Bike Hubs' offering pool cycles in main towns.	Medium / Long
CY11: Recreational Cycling	Maintain and improve bridleways and byways as multi-user	Short
	Promote the use of Country Parks and Greenways as an introduction to cycling in a safe environment.	Ongoing
	Continue to organise events such as Warwick town cycle races as part of the Travelwise campaign	Ongoing
	Continue to provide information about and new opportunities for recreational cycling.	Ongoing
	Seek to minimise the impact of fast and busy roads on promoted recreational routes.	Short/ Medium
	Work with partners to develop opportunities for cycling in parks, open spaces and along green corridors such as canal towpaths and disused rail lines, both within rural and urban locations.	Short / Medium
	Improve the surface condition of selected routes where they provide a key link in the off road network	Ongoing
	Where appropriate, upgrade specific public footpaths to cycleways or public bridleways (where cycling is permitted), particularly on key links to the recreational network from urban centres and missing links within the rural network.	Ongoing
	Promote safe opportunities for cycling at country parks and other attractive countryside locations within Warwickshire.	Ongoing
	Work with others to provide accurate and high quality promotional material.	Ongoing
	Provide information on cycling within the county: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise awareness of local opportunities, both in towns and rural areas.</li> <li>• to encourage local tourism</li> <li>• to promote opportunities to non-users</li> <li>• to improve confidence of all users and potential users</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	Promote, develop and host activities that encourage cycling and local tourism.	Ongoing
	Organise sporting and leisure events, such as cycle races and guided cycle rides, to promote recreational cycling and the wider benefits of cycling.	Ongoing
Liaise with Ordnance Survey over inclusion of promoted routes on OS maps.	Ongoing	

### 3.7 Targets, Indicators and Monitoring

The following Local Indicators will be used to assess progress with delivery of the Cycling Strategy:

#### Cycling Trips (Annualised Index) (WLI 14)

-Target to be determined.

#### Cycling trips on upgraded routes (WLI 15)

-Target to be determined.