

County Durham Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2001 - 2006

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The launch of the National Cycle Network in Durham City, June 2000

1. Introduction

1.1 The County Durham Local Transport Plan sets out a broad approach towards the promotion and encouragement of cycling within the County. The purpose of this related local cycling strategy is to:

- develop the general approach of the Local Transport Plan into more detailed policies and proposals for implementation; and
- draw together the various initiatives relating to cycling contained within the Local Transport Plan in a single coherent document for the County.
- provide an action plan for developing cycling in the County

The cycling policies contained within the Local Transport Plan are set out in Appendix 3.

1.2 This strategy has been prepared as part of the Local Transport Plan process, with the assistance of a sub-group of the Local Transport Plan Partnership Forum (Appendix 2). A consultation process was conducted on a draft strategy during winter 2000/01, resulting in some changes to the draft. Now that the final version is published, work will continue on developing the Local Area Cycling Plans within the Strategy in more detail, with District Councils and local organisations as key participants.

1.3 Progress on implementing the cycling strategy as part of the Local Transport Plan will be monitored, with revised versions of the cycling strategy being published when necessary.

2. Vision and objectives

2.1 The vision for Cycling in County Durham is:

“To have a network of routes and facilities throughout the County which enable cycling to be a safe, attractive and enjoyable mode of transport, where people are encouraged to cycle for commuting, travelling to school, shopping and recreational purposes.”

The priorities for the development of cycling in County Durham are:

- *“over the long term, to ensure that all projects and provision contribute to the development of a comprehensive network across the County;*
- *in the short term to focus efforts on providing safer routes to schools and developing useable networks within the urban areas;*
- *to maximise the potential for funding opportunities through SRB, Lottery and other sources;*
- *to ensure that when provision is made, logical links are made to adjacent areas to maximise the benefit accruing from that investment*
- *to ensure that cycling facilities are being considered in all new development proposals;*
- *to raise the profile of Cycling in the County, highlighting its important role in the pursuance of integrated transport within the County; and*
- *to engender cultural changes in attitudes towards cycling, educating people about its benefits and promoting road safety for cyclists and motorists alike.”*

3. Policy context

3.1 The framework for national policy towards transport is set out in the White Paper ‘A New Deal For Transport – Better For Everyone’ (1998). This provides the basis for the Local Transport Plan and, as a result, this strategy.

3.2 Other national policy documents of particular importance to the Cycling Strategy include:

- National Cycling Strategy (1996);
- Our Healthier Nation – The Government’s Strategy for health improvement;

- Planning policy Guidance Note 12 (Development Plans), which provides guidance on the production of statutory development plans;
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (Transport); which seeks to ensure integration of lands use and planning policies, to promote alternative modes of transport and reduce the need to travel.

3.3 In addition to the Local Transport Plan the Cycling Strategy has links to many local strategies and policy documents. The links to these are summarised in Appendix 1 and include:

- Regional Planning Guidance
- County Durham Structure Plan;
- District local plans;
- DCC Action Plan For the Environment
- Tourism Cycling Strategy;
- Sustrans Regional Action Plan;
- Local Agenda 21;
- Sustainable Communities initiative;
- Community Safety Strategies;
- DCC Travel Plan;
- School Travel Plans.

4. The importance of cycling

4.1 Increased cycle use, both as a recreational activity and in order to meet day to day travel needs, can have significant benefits in terms of:

- improved health and levels of enjoyment;
- reduced pollution;
- reduced car use;
- social inclusion;
- economic benefits

Improved health and levels of enjoyment.

4.2 Cycling is one of the few modes of travel that can improve the health of the individual. "Cycling does not have to be strenuous. 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week is enough for your heart to benefit"¹. Cycling can also be an extremely enjoyable form of recreation and mode of transport generally.

Reduced pollution

4.3 Cycling is an environmentally friendly, pollution free means of transport. It is the most efficient of all modes in terms of energy converted to mobility, the energy efficiency of cycling being equivalent to a car doing 1,600 miles to a gallon of petrol.

Reduced motorised traffic and car use

4.4 Vehicle traffic has increased 50% in the last 10 years. Traffic growth rates predicted in the National Road Traffic Forecasts lie between 136% and 184%. (from 1996 to 2031, (NRTF, 1997)). This is neither desirable nor feasible in terms of the environment, the economy or the health of the nation. Central and Local Government both recognise that even the current level of traffic growth is unsustainable and that a reduction in traffic must be achieved. Cycling can make a significant contribution towards this aim. 61% of all car journeys are less than five miles long: if even a small proportion of these short journeys were taken by bike, reductions in car mileage could be achieved.

Social inclusion

4.5 Bicycle ownership and use is a relatively cheap form of transport providing improved mobility at affordable cost.

Economic Benefits

4.6 Aside from the personal economic benefits of cycling – such as travel cost savings, there are wider economic benefits to be gained through the promotion of recreational and tourist cycling, especially on long distance routes such as the C2C, where each cyclist is estimated to spend an average of £40 per day whilst completing the route². This helps to support and create jobs, and can assist in sustaining local economies. (this is especially noticeable in rural areas) There would also be economic benefits if increases in cycling results in reduced congestion.



¹ National Heart Forum, reported in "Ride for Health: Your guide to creating a ride for health event" (2000)

² Research Carried out by A. Cope, University of Sunderland: Monitoring of Cycle Tourism on the C2C, 1999

5. Cycling in County Durham

5.1 At present, cycling in County Durham is characterised by:

- low levels of cycle use for day to day (utility) journeys, reflecting poorly developed urban cycle networks; and
- a relatively well developed network of off-road recreational cycle routes which are popular with local residents and tourists alike.

5.2 A recent household survey on travel patterns, problems and aspirations carried out by MVA Consultants for the Local Transport Plan³ has highlighted these low levels of utilitarian cycling and low enthusiasm for transferral of regular journeys, but an enthusiasm for more provision, and a willingness to cycle in certain circumstances. Almost a quarter (23%) of respondents suggest that they would consider cycling up to 5 miles while more than three-quarters (78%) claim that they would be willing to cycle between one and five miles on a single journey before considering another form of transport. 19% considered that additional cycle paths would encourage them to cycle more.

5.3 The main deterrents to greater day to day cycle use in the County are:

- lack of dedicated facilities. Urban cycle networks within the County are relatively undeveloped, while the absence of facilities at trip destinations (for example, safe and secure cycle parking and shower facilities at workplaces) pose additional barriers to cycling. Poor links between urban areas and existing rural cycle routes further limit the scope for cycle journeys from outlying communities into the main town centres;
- high volume of motorised traffic is a major deterrent to increased cycle use, posing both an actual and perceived threat to safety (see below). Such difficulties can be compounded by poor driver awareness of vulnerable road users, overly aggressive driving and inappropriate vehicle speeds;
- fear of accidents. Although pedal cycle casualties in Durham are decreasing (from 134 in 1996 to 99 in 1998),

³ This interviewed a random sample of 766 residents within 5 distinct areas of the County (East Durham, North Durham, North West Durham, South West Durham and the Dales.

County Durham Cycling Strategy and Action Plan casualty rates remain high compared with other road users;

- local climate and topography. Much of the south and eastern parts of the County are relatively dry and low-lying. However, particularly in the north and west, hillier topography and higher rainfall are likely to limit the scope for cycling in some locations. Whilst the topography may be a problem for cycle commuting, it is accepted that this is one of the key attractions for recreational cycling in the County.
- poor condition of roads. The County has experienced a decline in the condition of the road network in recent years, largely due to the lack of money available for maintenance. Poor road conditions increase the hazards faced by cyclists, acting as a further deterrent to increased cycle use;



5.4 In advance of this strategy being prepared, work has been on-going to improve conditions for cyclists and start to move towards a network of facilities. A summary of the state of the network in each area is provided in section 7.0 of this strategy.

5.5 There is already an extensive network of rural cycling routes within the County (figure 1). Although currently principally off-road and used as recreational routes, improved links to urban areas would have the potential to provide useful cycle links between the scattered rural communities and the main employment, shopping and service centres in the County. At present there are 100 miles of off-road routes and 18 miles of on-road routes in the County.

5.6 The National Cycle Network is being developed by Sustrans and its partners (including local authorities, public and private bodies, and other landowners). The Network will offer a genuine alternative to the motor car. It runs through towns and cities, linking urban centres to the countryside with high quality sign posted routes (see Appendix 4). It will pass within 2 miles of over 20 million people and is forecast to create 8,000 miles of route by 2005, with 3,000 miles launched in June 2000.

5.7 County Durham has 82 miles of National Cycle Network (June 2000). A significant portion of the C2C cycle route runs through the County. In 1997 this route attracted 15,000 visitors, all completing the whole 142 mile journey. Local use of the C2C (Sea to Sea) route in the Chester-le-Street area exceeded 100,000 trips per year. The return C2C route is planned, with Durham County Council as a major partner, whilst the National Byway cycle route should be launched during 2001. The National Cycle Network will form the starting point for a strategic network of routes for cyclists within the County and beyond. The composition of the National Cycle Network in the County is:

Millennium Routes

Route No.1	Leg 106	Newcastle to Middlesbrough
Route No.14	Leg 142 Leg 141	Consett to Durham Consett to Gateshead
Route No.7	Leg 701 Leg 701	Penrith to Consett Consett to Sunderland

National Cycle Network Routes

Leg 143 Haswell to Hart

(See Figure 1)



Cyclists on the C2C at Consett (Phil Nixon)

5.8 In the European context, Denmark the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden and Finland are all developing national cycle networks. Parts of these national networks and routes in other North Sea countries have been linked together to form a North Sea Cycle Route. This is being promoted internationally as a major route for cycle tourists.

6. Local Cycling Policies

6.1 The following local cycling policies develop in more detail the approach towards cycling set out in the Local Transport Plan. The policies are set out under the following headings:

- engineering;
- encouragement;
- education;
- enforcement;
- monitoring;
- staffing;
- funding.

Engineering

6.2 Seventy two percent of all journeys made are under 5 miles and almost half of all journeys are less than two miles. Many of these journeys could be made by cycle causing virtually no pollution and may take less time. Furthermore, from the results of the recent LTP survey, there appears to be a willingness to cycle on journeys up to five miles, provided that the infrastructure is in place (see para. 5.2). It is important, therefore, that a comprehensive network is developed to facilitate cycle journeys. This does not necessarily have to mean dedicated cycle paths, although there may be such opportunities, but will include priority measures for cyclists on the road network and in the design of new development, clear signposting of routes and links between routes to complete the overall network.

6.3 The primary aim of engineering measures is to provide cycle-friendly infrastructure. This will comprise the road network, modified where necessary and supplemented by traffic free cycle routes and cycle parking, to enable cyclists to reach all destinations safely and conveniently.

Cycle Audit

Policy C1:

All highway and land-use development schemes should include a cycle audit, in accordance with the Guidelines for Cycle Audit and Cycle Review (IHT 1998), to ensure that schemes provide improvements to, or at least have no negative impact on, the coherence*, directness, safety, attractiveness and comfort of routes used by cyclists.

** Coherence of routes relates to ensuring that they are logical in their location and routing.*

Policy C2:

The Highway Authority will undertake a cycling review of existing roads to assess locations and routes on the basis of the following criteria: coherence, directness, safety, attractiveness, and comfort for cyclists. The review will concentrate on key corridors linking centres as identified in Figure 1. The Authority will undertake traffic management and other measures, as funding allows, to treat problem sites and routes or develop equally convenient, safe and attractive alternative and additional routes.

6.4 In addition to the existing road network, County Durham has a vast resource of bridleways and byways. Their potential should also be harnessed, where possible. Those stretches assessed as having significant potential for utility journeys as well as recreation will be given priority consideration for improvement. Consultation with land owners and individual user groups representing the interests of horse-riders and walkers will be important. The development of such routes would also assist in making the countryside more accessible for those with impaired mobility.



Cycle Networks

Policy C3:

High quality networks of routes will be provided for cyclists, with priority given to the main urban areas and links to surrounding settlements which can generate significant amounts of commuting. The route network will comprise the highway network, modified where necessary using traffic restraint, traffic calming and cycle specific facilities along with traffic free cycle routes to enable safe and convenient access to all destinations. Local Cycling Plans will be key to the planning and development of networks at the local level (see Section 7).

Policy C4:

Priority to be given to routes as follows:

- i) Major routes which serve utility cycling trips, and in particular 'Safe Routes to School', journeys within main towns and routes from residential areas to major journey attractors such as employment sites, retail centres, public transport interchanges, hospitals, other education and leisure facilities;
- ii) Other connecting routes used for utility cycling, including inter-urban links; and
- iii) Recreational routes, including links to non-urban sections of the National Cycle Network.

Policy C5:

Route networks will achieve high standards of coherence, directness, safety, attractiveness and comfort, and will be designed in accordance with current guidance⁴.

6.5 The document ‘*Cycle-Friendly Infrastructure – Guidance for Planning and Design*’⁴ emphasises that that the highway network should be made as convenient and safe as possible for cyclists, whatever other special facilities are provided. It advocates consideration of the following hierarchy of measures before a design solution is chosen:

a. Traffic Reduction.

Can traffic volumes be reduced sufficiently to achieve the desired improvements in attractiveness and safety? Can heavy lorries be restricted or diverted?

b. Traffic calming.

Can speeds be reduced and driver behaviour modified to achieve the desired improvements?

c. Junction treatment and traffic management.

Can the problems that cyclists encounter, particularly at known accident sites, be solved by specific junction treatment or other traffic management solutions such as contraflow cycle lanes?

d. Redistribution of the carriageway.

Can the carriageway be redistributed to give more space to cyclists, perhaps in conjunction with buses?

e. Cycle lanes and cycle tracks.

Having considered and, where possible, implemented the above, what specific cycle lanes or tracks are now necessary?

⁴Guidance for the design of on –highway cycle routes is contained in ‘*Cycle Friendly Infrastructure – Guidelines for Planning and Design*’ IHT/DoT/CTC / Bicycle Assoc. (1996). Standards for off-road cycle routes need to be acceptable to the owner and maintainer. Sustrans standards have to be met where Sustrans are providing funding. The County Council is reviewing its own design standards for highways infrastructure and will incorporate current best-practice on cycle-route design

Policy C6:

Measures will be provided, wherever possible, which improve cyclists’ safety and give cyclists greater priority (in terms of access and journey time) on all roads with significant cycle flows or significant potential cycle flows.

6.6 Cycle priority measures are likely to include:

- Traffic management to reduce traffic volumes, supported wherever possible by exemption for cyclists from traffic restrictions applying to general traffic, where it is safe to do so
- Speed limit reduction, traffic calming and junction treatment to reduce traffic speeds
- Advisory and mandatory cycle lanes, bus/cycle lanes and widened nearside lanes
- Advanced stop lines
- Changes in junction priority
- Toucan crossings and cycle-priority phases at traffic signals
- Fully segregated cycle tracks
- Direction signing of existing routes
- Shared use on converted footpaths - only in exceptional circumstances where no alternatives are available.

Maintenance

Policy C7:

Appropriate levels of maintenance, inspection and repair will be undertaken on the following types of cycle routes, as detailed below:

- i) Cycle routes within adopted highways including cycle tracks (footpaths upgraded by cycle tracks order)
- ii) Permissive paths provided by the County Council or Sustrans

6.7 Maintenance, inspection and repair of **cycle routes within adopted highways and cycle tracks** (Policy C7 (i)) will include:

- Dangerous defects to be repaired or made safe within 24 hours.
- Safety and detailed inspections will be carried out in accordance with set frequencies.⁵
- Cycle routes on the pre-salt highway network will be treated in frost, ice, light and major snow conditions in accordance with the policies, procedures and priorities in the County Council’s Winter Maintenance Plan.

⁵ See Durham County Council, Environment and Technical Services Technical Guidance Note for Highway Inspections.

- Cycle routes will be swept and kept free of rubbish and detritus in accordance with District / Borough Council procedures under the Environmental Protection Act 1991.
- Dangerous intruding vegetation having roots within the boundaries of adopted highways containing cycle routes will be trimmed back within 5 working days and on a planned basis during the appropriate season to ensure safe riding conditions and the maintenance of visibility standards.
- Dangerous intruding vegetation having roots on or outside the boundaries of adopted highways will be brought to the attention of the adjacent landowner for action to be taken.

6.8 Maintenance, inspection and repair of **permissive paths** provided by the County Council will be carried out as required. The County Council's 60 mile railway paths network is regularly inspected by the Countryside Ranger Service and necessary repairs undertaken as required. Sustrans have also recently developed a Volunteer Ranger service, where trained volunteers patrol sections of their network on a regular basis.

Planning Control

Policy C8:

The relevant planning authorities should ensure that where development would sever a cycle route, a suitable alternative route is provided as part of the development.

Policy C9:

In negotiating better forms of development, the relevant local planning authority will attempt to secure better transport infrastructure for cyclists using planning gain and commuted payments where necessary.

Policy C10:

The local authorities (in their estate management role) should protect disused railway lines in their ownership as transport and recreation corridors.

Monitoring

Policy C11:

The Highway Authority will ensure that monitoring of cycle traffic informs decisions on cycle infrastructure development.

6.9 Cycle monitoring will include use of automated cycle counters, cordon counts in the main urban centres, and collation of data on location and number of cycle accidents and cycle thefts, and the undertaking of other surveys when appropriate. Phased programmes of cycle route development will give priority to routes shown to have the highest potential demand.

Integration with Public Transport

Policy C12:

The County Council will endeavour, as far as it is able, to ensure that cycling is fully integrated with public transport to facilitate cycle use as part of longer journeys.

6.10 The County Council will work towards achieving integration of cycling with public transport. This will include provision of high quality links from public transport interchanges to the cycle network, the provision of adequate, secure, covered cycle parking at railway and bus stations, and the County Council will work with public transport operators to obtain the convenient carriage of cycles on trains and buses as well as other possible incentives to combine cycling with public transport. Cyclists will be permitted, wherever safe and practicable, to use all bus lanes and other priority measures.

Integration with measures to help other vulnerable road users

Policy C13:

The County Council will consider the integration of measures to facilitate cycling with measures to aid pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties wherever it is regarded as safe and practicable to do so.

6.11 Consideration will be given to permitting cycling in pedestrian areas wherever it is considered to be safe and practicable. If pedestrian flows make this impracticable, cycling may be permitted in pedestrian areas at quieter times to allow usage by cycle commuters, provided that this would not conflict with the aims of the forthcoming walking strategy.

Cycle Parking

Policy C14:

Adequate cycle parking will be provided in accordance with County Council Accessibility / Parking guidelines at all new developments. Provision will also be promoted / supported at existing developments in accordance with LTP Policy 37 (see Appendix 2). Existing developments to be addressed include:

- i) Major employment locations where cycle parking would contribute to improved travel to work options for staff
- ii) Schools, as part of the development of School Travel Plans
- iii) Sites offering not-for-profit public services, such as council offices, museums, libraries, health centres, leisure centres and residential homes where parking would contribute to improved access for visiting members of the public
- iv) Other main journey attractors, such as public transport interchanges, town centres, visitor attractions, commercial leisure and retail facilities.



Cycle parking facilities

6.12 The County Council's Accessibility and Parking Guidelines take account of the requirements of cyclists in terms of secure cycle parking at their destination. The lack of certainty in being able to find a secure, convenient place to leave a cycle is a major factor inhibiting the use of cycles. The guidelines give minimum standards for cycle parking provision, which may need to be exceeded in particular locations. The guidance applies to both short and long stay cycle parking, with Sheffield stands recommended. More secure, supervised, covered or enclosed parking facilities - such as lockers by a main entrance or near windows – are recommended where cycle parking is likely to exceed 2 hours in duration. In light of recent Government

Guidance (Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing)), which seeks to limit the number of car-parking spaces in residential developments, additional cycle parking / storage may need to be considered as part of new housing developments⁶.

6.13 Locations for on-highway cycle parking will be identified and developed as an aspect of area transport packages and Local Cycling Plans. The County Council will work with other agencies to establish an assessment system for allocating LTP funding to the provision of off-highway cycle parking at appropriate sites. Key factors are likely to be:

- i) Potential for the facility to be used by the general public visiting the establishment and / or nearby establishments
- ii) A commitment by the 'host' organisation to the development of a 'green' travel plan

6.14 The County Council will work together with other agencies to encourage cycle registration schemes, publicity on cycle theft awareness and measures that individuals can take to increase security.

Encouragement

Danger Reduction and Road Safety

Policy C15:

The Highway Authority will implement a Road Safety Strategy, which will include measures to ensure that the desired increase in cycle use does not result in an increase in cyclist casualties. The approach of this strategy will be to reduce road traffic danger at source, through programmes of engineering measures. Education of Cyclists and Drivers will be an essential part of this strategy.

6.15 The road safety strategy will include:

- Targets to reduce cyclist casualties (Target 3)
- Collation of data on the location and number of cycle injury accidents as a three year rolling average.
- Logging of complaints about near misses and other perceived danger.
- Remedial action to treat problem sites, undertaken where it is likely that this will remove a proven accident problem, reduce

⁶ Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing) (March 2000) stipulates a maximum of 1.5 car spaces per new house. This includes any garages. Therefore, any space which may have previously been available to store cycles in a garage may be required to store the household car off-street.

actual or perceived danger and/or release a suppressed demand for cycling.

- Monitoring of casualties for the three years before, and three years after, implementation of road safety schemes.

Cycle friendly employer initiatives

Policy C16:

A programme of cycle-friendly employer initiatives will be established.

6.16 The County Council will ensure that it sets an example as a cycle-friendly employer by adopting the following:

- Provision of secure, covered cycle parking, equipment storage lockers, and showers at the place of employment
- Cycle mileage allowance, for work related trips, to be established at a realistic level to fully reflect the costs of cycle use and to encourage cycling as the more appropriate mode for short trips. (Note: An allowance of over 20p per mile will be liable for taxation. However, the staff time and health benefits accruing to the Authority are likely to make the exercise of encouraging cycling cost effective to the Authority even after tax)
- Provision of 'Pool bikes' for work trips.
- Support for and regular liaison with an Authority Bicycle User Group (BUG)
- Development of the travel plan for County Hall, and wider Aykley Heads area, to include incentives to encourage all alternatives to private car use.

6.17 The Authority (for its health, education and transport functions) in partnership with interested local organisations will offer practical advice and information to encourage cycling promotion by other local employers.



Bike to Work Breakfast, County Hall

School Transport Policy

Policy C17:

A programme of School Travel Plans / Safer Routes to School will be implemented, by the County Council (in its role as Highway and Education Authority) in co-operation with local schools, which will encourage and facilitate walking and cycling (in combination with public transport use, where necessary) as a means to improve the safety, fitness and independent mobility of school children, and to reduce congestion and traffic danger around schools.

6.18 Parents driving children to school contribute significantly to congestion during morning rush hours and create safety problems outside and around school premises. Children who are driven to school miss out on valuable exercise and have fewer opportunities to develop good road sense. If parents are to allow their children to walk or cycle to school, they are going to have to be convinced that there are safe routes available. Measures which aim to reduce road traffic in general and to improve the roadside environment will also help to encourage walking and cycling to school. Educational policy which allows parents to choose which school their children will attend has been criticised for increasing the need to travel and the dependence on the car for journeys to school.

6.18 School Travel Plans may include:

- A target to increase the modal share of cycling for all journeys to school, by pupils aged 10 or over (Target 2)
- Engineering, education and enforcement measures to provide safer routes to school and reduce problems caused by traffic outside schools
- Encouragement of schools to provide adequate, secure, covered cycle parking
- Provision of cycle training for 9-11 year olds (see Target 5).
- Use of the planning process to ensure that new education establishments and housing developments are located so as to minimise journey to school distances.



Source: *Sustrans - Safe Routes to School: 3 Year Guide*

Complementary Publicity

Policy C18:

The County Council will support its infrastructure measures with a sustained programme of complementary publicity aimed at raising awareness of the cycle network and other facilities, to emphasise the health, financial and environmental benefits of cycling and the need for reduced use of private cars. Publicity on safety and security will also be vital. Publicity should also highlight the enjoyable nature of cycling as a recreational activity and mode of transport.

6.19 Publicity (including maps) will be produced to promote existing cycle networks, and specific publicity will be generated for key new routes and facilities. The health and environmental benefits of cycling will be promoted in all publicity as will any links with public transport interchanges and services. Promotional material will cover both utility and leisure cycling. The County Council will organise and participate in events to raise the profile of cycling particularly during National Bike Week and Green Transport Week.

Education

Consultation with local cyclists

Policy C19:

The County Council will ensure that its programme of highway schemes and cycling infrastructure proposals are supported by monitoring of cycle use and by regular consultation with local cycling and pedestrian organisations.

6.20 Mechanisms will be established to facilitate effective discussion, consultation and feedback between the local authorities and local cyclists and cycle groups. This will include the development of local fora as well as informal meetings and correspondence with local cyclists and cycling organisations.

Cycle Training

Policy C20:

The County Council will endeavour to facilitate on-road cycle training for adults in partnership with relevant organisations.

Policy C21:

The County Council will provide cycle training for 9-11 year olds in line with the targets set out in the Action Plan (Section 10).

Enforcement

Policy C22:

The Highway Authority will liaise with the Police to ensure that the enforcement of traffic law receives the highest possible priority particularly at reported problem sites.

6.21 In order to improve the effectiveness of traffic law enforcement to benefit cyclists the County Council will support Police enforcement of:

- the law relating to excessive speed, dangerous driving, illegal manoeuvres, illegal parking, driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- cyclists' use of lights; cycling on footways; and conformance to traffic signals and signs.

Monitoring

Policy C23:

The Highway Authority will undertake comprehensive monitoring of cycle use, accidents involving cyclists and cycle theft, to inform its programme of infrastructure development and to measure progress towards its targets (see Section 9).

6.22 A strategic approach to monitoring will be developed by the County Council in consultation with its partners:

- Cycle-usage monitoring will include annual cordon counts in the main urban centres, and the installation of permanent automated cycle counters on key routes. 'Before and after' monitoring of routes subject to major cycling schemes will be incorporated.
- Accident statistics will be collected in the form of figures on the location and number of cycle injury accidents as a three-year rolling average
- Figures on the location and number of cycle thefts will be collected annually
- In addition, public attitudes towards cycling will be regularly gauged through surveys. Other information pertaining to specific policies and targets in this Cycling Strategy will be collected through the appropriate processes.

Staffing

Policy C24:

The County Council will seek to ensure adequate staffing levels and expertise to meet the targeted increase in cycling as a mode of transport.

6.23 Consideration of cycling issues in all relevant County Council activities should be facilitated by:

- Establishment of a cycling team/cycling officer as a focus for integrating cycling into all highway, land-use and leisure development projects.
- Raising the awareness of all relevant local authority staff ⁷ in the planning and design of cycle-friendly infrastructure.

⁷ Including planning, engineering and design staff within Districts and the County Council.

Funding

Policy C25:

The County Council will identify available sources of funding for cycling and will establish a budget.

6.24 All relevant sources of funding will be investigated to ensure that the objectives of the County Durham and the National Cycling Strategies are met. The main source of funding is still likely to be from Central Government through the Local Transport Plan process. However, private developer contributions, National Lottery funds, Countryside Agency 'Rural Transport Partnership' funds will be drawn upon where appropriate. The publication "Funding Cycle Schemes" produced by the DETR, the Bicycle Association and Sustrans will be used as an initial reference for identifying other funding sources which are currently available. Any other more recent or additional sources of funding which become available will also be exploited wherever possible to further the strategy objectives (see also section 8).

7. Local cycling networks

7.1 Local cycle networks (based on the principles set out in Policy C3) will be developed, loosely based on 5 mile travel zones, (a range for which there is some willingness to cycle). The rationale behind the identification of these zones is shown in Figure 1, which shows main connections, town centres and approximate 5-mile catchment areas across the County in general terms.

Co-operation between county and district councils and other local partners will be important to produce Local Cycling Plans which set out proposals for routes and facilities forming local cycling networks. Input from School Travel Plan and Workplace Travel Plan processes will also be important in the identification of key routes. In the early stages, Local Cycling Plans are likely to focus on the development of sub-networks within the main urban areas.

The zones identified in Figure 1 are described below in terms of their current status with regard to cycling, and their potential to accommodate increased cycling levels.

Countywide and rural

7.2 Outside the main towns, including upper Teesdale and Weardale cycling is more likely to be of a recreational nature. However, there are benefits to be had in providing direct on-road alternatives, creating a network for all seasons, whilst catering for the more limited utilitarian cycling in these areas. Cycle tourism is already being developed, with the National Cycle Network in Durham nearing completion. The National Byway project is also set to provide a circular route in the western parts of the County.

A. North West Durham

7.3 This northernmost area of the County has great potential for developing a locally important network which would link the closely related towns of; Consett/Shotley Bridge, Stanley, Chester-le-Street and Lanchester. There are existing off-road recreational cycle routes that already link Stanley, Consett, Lanchester and Chester le Street, and these will form the basis of a utilitarian network with local links to the urban areas. This area has already seen the successful development of part of the award-winning C2C route and work on local greenways is now underway. For the fitter cyclists, there are also opportunities to develop routes which link with Durham City. This area is also the focus of the NW Durham Task force and the need to relate geographical Cycling Strategy Areas to wider regeneration initiatives is seen as an important consideration.

B. Central Durham

7.4 The central part of the County, focused on Durham City, but also taking in nearby satellite villages and having strong links with Chester-le-Street and Spennymoor has a critical mass of development and activity to form the basis of a network. Strong commuter demand and high potential levels of cycling related to tourism and education also exist, especially owing to the historic nature and attractiveness of Durham City and the popularity of Durham University. This area also has the potential to tie together the other three adjacent strategy sub-areas into a wider network for longer distance cycling.

C. East Durham

7.5 The Coastal area has already seen investment from the Turning the Tide and

East Durham Task-force Initiatives. Seaham has seen improvements for cyclists recently, whilst works to develop the National Cycle Network Route 1 (and associated links) will raise the profile of cycling in the area. The cycling strategy should build on these efforts and those in Peterlee New Town to develop a network to serve the community for different purposes. Key longer links into Durham City and Sunderland are also worthy of development.

D. South West Durham

7.6 Whilst generally more rural than the other areas, there is a grouping of settlements around Bishop Auckland, such as Newton Aycliffe, Spennymoor, Shildon and Crook / Willington which fall within a 5 mile radius. Work will centre on main town mini-packages (facilitated through LTP) but will also ensure that basic on and off road routes exist to provide the main connections. This defined area is also well related to the work of the South West Durham Task force. Important cross-boundary commuter routes between Newton Aycliffe and Darlington will also need to be considered, along with the potential for building on the Return C2C.

E. Teesdale

7.7 Whilst very rural, there is nevertheless activity focused on the main town of Barnard Castle and the smaller settlement of Middleton in Teesdale. Much of the work will centre on the main town mini-packages but will also ensure that basic on and off road routes exist to provide the main connections up to Middleton and to provide the longer links east to Bishop Auckland.



8. Implementation/finance

8.1 The implementation of schemes to improve conditions for cycling is largely dependent upon the availability of funding. An integrated approach to the management of the

highway network can and is resulting in facilities for cycling being created within larger highway maintenance and other such schemes. By incorporating cycling measures within other programmes, such as SRB schemes, lottery applications and town centre improvements, more facilities can be provided within the resources available.

8.2 All possible sources of funding for cycling schemes should be exploited by all partners involved in the implementation of the cycling strategy. The major source of funding for cycling infrastructure is likely to remain the Local Transport Plan. However, there are many other sources available and this strategy aims to ensure that facilities for cycling are incorporated in other bids for funding from sources such as such as Single Regeneration Budget, land reclamation programmes, lottery bids, environmental programmes, landfill tax, and any further sources of funding which become available in the future. (See policy C25)

9. Targets and performance indicators

9.1 The cycling strategy needs to adopt locally appropriate targets which are sufficiently challenging to maintain momentum, but are realistically achievable within the specified timescales. These are reliant on sound baseline information about cycle usage before they can be set. Performance indicators will then be developed, to help ensure continuous

improvement in cycling provision, safety records and cycle usage. These should be reported as part of the annual LTP monitoring report. In advance of baseline data being established, the following targets for cycling in County Durham are suggested:

Target 1:

To contribute to the Government's target to treble the number of cycling trips between 2000 and 2010.

Target 2:

To average a doubling in cycling to school / work across school travel plan schools (pupils aged 10 and over) and green travel plan organisations, 2002 - 2007

Target 3:

To reduce the casualty rate for pedal cyclists per mile cycled by 10% between 2002 and 2007

Target 4:

To reduce rates of cycle theft per mile cycled by 10% between 2002 and 2007.

Target 5:

To increase the number of 9-11 year olds receiving cycle safety training per year by 10% between 2002 and 2007.

Target 6:

To ensure that all 12 town centres (as identified in the Local Transport Plan) receive cycling improvements within the Local Transport Plan timespan (2001-2006), in line with the local cycling strategy.

10. Action Plan and Implementation Targets

10.1 In order to ensure that the policies within this Strategy achieve their intended objectives an action plan has been developed to set implementation targets for the duration of the Strategy and outline targets for 2012. This is intended as a guide for the various partners involved in cycling within the County to work towards achieving the overall objectives of both the County Durham and National Cycling Strategies. More detailed actions will be set out in the local strategies as they are developed.

	By end 2002	By 2007	By 2012
Resource	Establish Cycle Strategy team or dedicated post	Continuation of work of Cycle Strategy Team or Officer	
Cycle Audit	Development of a cycle audit and its use in all highway and land use development projects. Improvements to cycle audit procedure in line with national guidance.	Cycle audit used for all new highway and land use development projects	
Strategic cycling review of road network	<p>Completion of a cycling review of roads in the key corridors identified in Fig 1.</p> <p>This will identify opportunities for improvements in the convenience and safety of cyclists and initially concentrate on the most heavily trafficked roads and those with greatest potential for cycle use. Ongoing input from the review to development of the cycle networks.</p>	Identify any additional "key corridors" and conduct cycling review of roads within them. Ongoing input into development of cycle networks.	Identify any additional "key corridors" and conduct cycling review of roads within them. Ongoing input into development of cycle networks.
Cycle Networks	<p>Initial design of primary utility route network in major towns.</p> <p>Plans developed for a Safer Routes to School pilot study at one secondary school.</p> <p>Further development of leisure/tourism facilities that have already been identified, including the completion of the return C2C (Barrow to Sunderland).</p> <p>Consultation with public and partners on the development of cycle networks.</p> <p>Funding to complete NCN Route 1 obtained.</p>	<p>Mini-packages within Local Transport Plan Complete.</p> <p>Local Networks (A-E) well underway In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of utility networks in major towns. • Safer routes to 60% of secondary schools. • Detailed design of interurban routes serving Dormitory settlements" within cycling distance. • Completion of all sections of National Cycle Network within the County. • Provision of a finer network of urban utility routes. • Construction of other interurban routes serving a utility function. • Upgrading of utility networks to accommodate increased usage. 	<p>Creation of a good basic network of routes throughout the County, through :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further development of leisure/tourism facilities. Safer routes to 100% of secondary schools. - Further upgrading of utility networks to accommodate increased usage, where necessary. - Cycle network improvements made possible by on-road demand restraint of motor traffic.

Complementary infrastructure measures

	By 2002	By 2007	By 2012
Cycle Parking	<p>Design of cycle parking programme on Public land.</p> <p>Preliminary negotiations with landowners for cycle parking on private sites.</p> <p>Cycle parking standards prepared for new developments.</p>	<p>Cycle parking installed at all public transport interchanges, shopping centres, public buildings, and schools.</p> <p>Ongoing encouragement of cycle parking at private sites.</p> <p>Increasing cycle parking provision to supply increased levels of cycling.</p> <p>Development of secure cycle parking, with left luggage facilities and other services at town centre destination.</p>	<p>Encouraging cycle parking provision to supply match increased levels of cycling.</p>
Integration with public transport (refer also to cycle parking)	<p>Preliminary negotiations with public transport operators and Strategic Rail Authority to improve carriage of cycles on trains/ buses</p> <p>Flexible space/exterior cycle racks on all new buses.</p>	<p>Flexible space provided to accommodate at least 6 cycles on Inter-City services and 3 cycles on all regional services.</p> <p>Free carriage of folding bikes on all buses and coaches.</p> <p>Flexible space/exterior cycle racks on all buses and coaches serving leisure destinations.</p>	<p>Further improvements to trains/buses to facilitate cycle carriage, dependent on demand.</p>

Complementary publicity and encouragement strategies

	By end 2002	By 2007	By 2012
Usage	Existing levels of cycle usage established through baseline monitoring. Establish current use and set local targets for cycling in monitored areas.	Cycling % of non walk trips in monitored urban areas increased to level set by local 5 year target. Doubling of cycling to school / work across school travel plan schools (pupils aged 10 and over) and green travel plan organisations	Cycling % of non walk trips in urban areas increased to level set by local 10 year target. Further increase in cycling to work / school across school travel plan schools and green travel plan organisations
Accidents	Baseline cyclist casualty rate per mile cycled estimated. Road Safety strategy developed.	Cyclist casualty rate per mile cycled reduced by 10% compared to 2002.	Cyclist casualty rate per mile cycled reduced by 20% compared to 2002.
Education	Increase number of 9-11 year olds receiving cycle safety training by 2% over 2001 figure. Investigate potential arrangements for Adult Cycle Training and Driver Awareness training	Increase number of 9-11 year olds receiving cycle safety training by 10% over 2001 figure Develop adult / family cycle training events (e.g. training sessions or on-road guided bike rides) and implement 6 events per annum.	Increase number of 9-11 year olds receiving cycle safety training by 20% over 2001 figure Carry out and increased number of adult training sessions per annum.
Theft	Theft reduction strategy developed with police. Baseline reported cycle theft per mile cycled estimated	Reported cycle theft per mile cycled reduced by 10% compared with 2002.	Reported cycle theft per mile cycled reduced by 20% compared with 2002.
Employers	Bicycle User Groups (BUGs), parking, lockers and showers at all Local Authority headquarters. Cycle-friendly Employer initiative prepared.	BUGs and Cycle-friendly Employer provision at 30% of firms with more than 500 employees.	BUGs and Cycle-friendly Employer provision at 50% firms with more than 500 employees.

Appendix 1. Links to other main strategies/policies

This Cycling strategy has strong links to other strategies and policies including:

- **Regional Planning Guidance:** *This Strategic Planning Document provides an overall framework for land uses across the North-East of England and will include the Regional Transport Strategy and provide a general steer for all modes of transport including cycling. All Structure Plans, Local Plans and the Local Transport Plan need to be in general agreement with its principles. Regional Planning Guidance for the North East is currently going through a Public Examination and will be finalised early next year.*
- **The County Durham Structure Plan** provides the overall framework for land use planning in the County, and provides guidance for District Local Plans, in the form of general policies and criteria for development. It promotes principles of reducing the need to travel and encouraging less damaging modes of transport through better land use patterns.
- **District local plans;** *These are produced by each District in the County and translate the strategic policies of the Structure Plan into site specific policies which reflect the needs of the individual areas. Specific cycle routes and other transport infrastructure can be proposed in more detail along with future areas for housing, retail and industrial and leisure development, safeguarding the land required for important links.*
- **Durham County Council Action Plan For the Environment:** *This document sets out Durham County Councils targets and actions for improvements to the environment and improvements to the Authority's environmental performance on matters such as energy usage, transport, and waste materials.*
- **The Tourism Cycling Strategy** seeks to promote the tourism potential of cycling in the County, with an emphasis on improving the visitor experience, marketing routes and making links with other initiatives to promote cycling.
- **Sustrans Regional Action Plan** sets out their plans for the next five years for this region, when the National Cycle Network will come into full operation and efforts will be required to ensure that the momentum is kept up and that resources are available to ensure the effective long-term stewardship of the network, as well as refining local links to the national routes. The County Durham Cycling Strategy puts the Sustrans routes and proposals into a County Context and ensures integration and co-ordination of provision.
- **Local Agenda 21;** *Agenda 21 is a major Initiative, originating from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit where nations committed themselves to environmental sustainability. Local Agenda 21 takes this concept to the local level, encouraging "ground-upwards" involvement and interest in the environment, community development and sustainable levels of economic growth. As a sustainable mode of transport, cycling is a key part of this initiative.*
- **Sustainable Communities initiative;** *Takes the lead from the Local Agenda 21 Initiative and focuses strongly on the needs and aspirations of individual communities. A series of factsheets have been produced for community groups, including one, entitled "Encouraging more people to cycle"*
- **Community Safety Strategies** are being developed to focus in on specific concerns within localities.
- **The Durham County Council Travel Plan** is being prepared as part of the Council's Local Transport Plan Commitments and looks at the whole area of transport in relation to the County Council, including journeys to and from work, business mileage and the environmental performance of its own vehicle fleet.
- **School Travel Plans** are being funded as part of the Local Transport Plan, based on a competitive bidding process, with schools carrying out basic surveys and analysis of transport issues around their school. 3 pilot schemes and 10 first round School Travel Plans are currently being progressed.

Appendix 2. Local Transport Plan – Partnership Forum Cycling Sub-Group

Durham County Council – Economic Development and Planning Department
– Environment and Technical Service Department
– Corporate and Legal Services

Chester-le-Street District Council
Derwentside District Council
Durham City Council
District of Easington
Sedgefield Borough Council
Teesdale District Council
Wear Valley District Council

Durham Health Authority
Durham Constabulary
CTC (The Cyclists' Touring Club)
The Ramblers Association
Sustrans
Local Agenda 21
RADAR

Appendix 3. Local Transport Plan cycling policies

Cycle network - Policy LTP36

A strategic cycle review will be carried out to assess locations and routes in terms of quality, coherence, directness, safety and attractiveness for cyclists. Traffic management and other measures will be taken as necessary to treat problem sites and routes or develop equally convenient and safe alternative and additional routes. Cycle route development will adopt the following order of priority:

- a) major routes which serve utility cycling trips, and in particular 'Safe Routes to School', journeys to and within main towns and routes from residential areas to major journey attractors such as employment sites, retail centres, public transport interchanges, hospitals, other education and leisure facilities;
- b) other connecting routes used for utility cycling, including inter-urban links;
- c) recreational routes, including links to non-urban sections of the National Cycle Network.

Cycle parking - Policy LTP37

Adequate, secure cycle parking will be provided in accordance with County Council Accessibility/Parking Guidelines at all new developments and, wherever possible, at existing developments. Quality cycle parking and storage facilities should be provided in at all significant journey attractors in locations which are:

- a) convenient, safe and secure;
- b) well located in terms of access to facilities and cycle networks;
- c) avoid conflict with access for pedestrians and mobility impaired people.

Cycle safety - Policy LTP38

Measures will be taken to improve safety for cyclists and, wherever possible, to give greater cycle priority (in terms of access and journey time) over other traffic, on all roads with significant potential cycle flows. Such measures will include:

- a) reducing traffic volumes by using restrictions or diversions;
- b) using traffic calming to reduce speeds and modify driver behaviour;
- c) introducing traffic management such as advanced stop lines for cyclists at traffic lights, cycle diversions at roundabouts or contraflow cycle lanes; and
- d) reallocating existing roadspace to give more to cyclists.

Dedicated cycle paths will be considered as an integral part of major new infrastructure proposals and where measures to improve safety on existing carriageways are not possible or cannot be achieved safely.

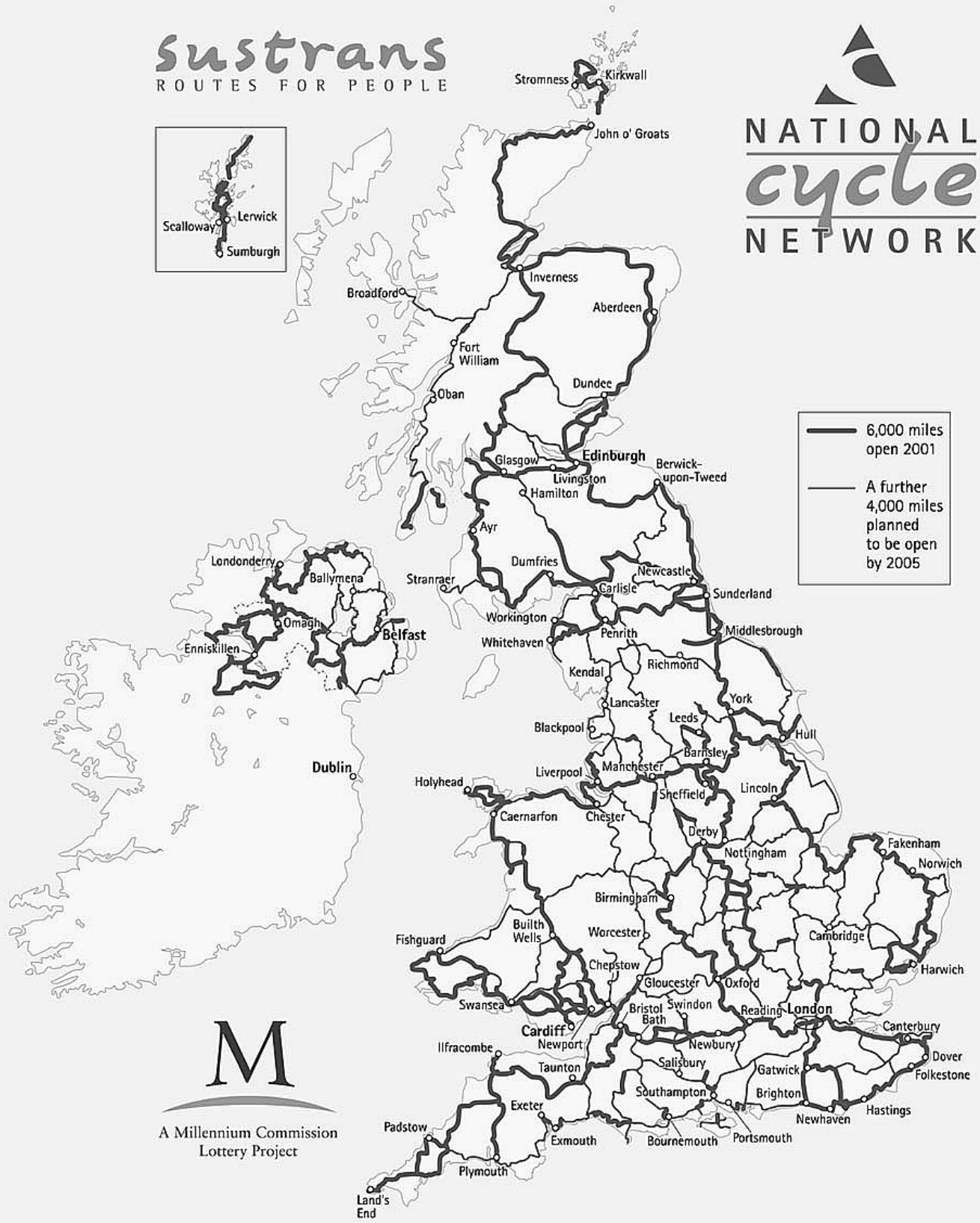
Sustrans
ROUTES FOR PEOPLE



NATIONAL
cycle
NETWORK



— 6,000 miles open 2001
— A further 4,000 miles planned to be open by 2005



M
A Millennium Commission
Lottery Project

Appendix 5. Implementation Responsibilities

Organisation	Department	Tasks	Policy
All Partners	n/a	Actively promote cycling and commit themselves to providing parking and other facilities for cyclists where appropriate	C14
Durham County Council (DCC)	Environment and Technical Services	Carrying out cycle audit of developments, including those notified as part of District Council Highways Consultations, In-house development schemes and Local Transport Projects	C1
	ETS	Undertake strategic review of existing road network	C2
	ETS	Involvement with the development of School Travel Plans.	C17
	ETS	Road Safety Training for 9-11 year olds	C15, C21
	ETS	Develop Adult Road Safety Training	C15, C20
	ETS	Ensure that LTP implementation projects fully integrate the needs of cyclists at the earliest opportunity	C11
	ETS	Ensure that all highways schemes are designed with cyclists in mind	C4, C5, C6, C13
	ETS	Ensure that maintenance is carried out in accordance with agreed standards.	C7
	ETS	Work towards integration of cycling with Public Transport facilities and services	C12
	ETS	Develop a programme of cycle friendly employer initiatives as part of Green Travel Plan Guidance	C16
DCC	Economic Development & Planning Dept.	Ensuring that all County Council developments are audited to ensure that the needs of Cyclists are taken into account at the inception and planning phase.	C1, C8, C9, C14, C25
	EDPD	Ensuring that major applications for Minerals and Waste Sites do not sever public rights of way, including designated cycle routes.	C8, C9
	EDPD	Ensuring that the Structure Plan embodies the needs of cyclists and that these are fully covered in District Local Plans through the conformity process	C3
	EDPD	Encourage the development of further recreational / tourist related cycling, in accordance with the priorities of this strategy and take advantage of funding opportunities which arise.	C3, C25
	EDPD	Actively promote cycling as a enjoyable form of recreation and tourism which has the long term potential to be a regular mode of transport	C18
DCC	Education Dept.	Co-ordinate the bidding process for School Travel Plans	C17
	Education Dept.	Assist in publicising the benefits of road safety training to raise awareness and assist in increasing take-up rates.	C21
DCC		Ensuring that adequate levels of staffing to cover cycling responsibilities are in place	C24
All Councils	(County and Districts)	Ensure that all disused railway lines in their ownership are protected as transport corridors	C10
District Councils		Ensuing that the needs of cyclists are fully considered in District Local Plans	C3
District Councils		Ensure that all projects fully consider the needs of cyclists from the outset and that all funding sources which can assist cycling are taken advantage of.	C8, C9, C14, C25
District Councils		Ensuring that all planning applications fully consider the needs of cyclists and where relevant require the production of Travel Plans and public transport improvements, whilst not severing public rights of way, including designated cycle routes.	
Local Health Authority		Co-ordinating health awareness campaigns related to cycling	C18
Police		Crime Reduction Strategy	C23*
Police		Involvement in Cycle Safety and Security Training, Awareness and related activities	C20
Police		Enforcement of traffic law	C22
Local Cycling Organisations		Assist with detailed development of local strategies and encourage local involvement in the process	C19
Sustrans		Overseeing the construction and maintenance of the National Cycle Network and associated routes	C3, C7

- Indirect part of this policy

Appendix 6.

Figure 1.

Map of County Durham showing existing rural routes and main areas for cycle route development as proposed in the Cycling Strategy.

This page can only be viewed as a separate PDF file (go back to Cycling Strategy page)