

Highways England **Cycling and Accessibility** Annual Progress Report



October 2018



Summary

Over the course of this Road Period we have taken significant steps towards realising our vision for a high quality cycling and walking network and making everyday journeys as easy as possible. An important part has been to define our standards and integrate cycling and accessibility as a key consideration in the early stages of scheme design. There have been some great examples of good practice and collaboration with our staff, stakeholders and communities.

We have delivered a number of new and enhanced network facilities for cyclists, walkers and equestrians which are safe, separate from traffic and suitable for use by people of all ages and abilities. Our future investment programmes will continue to contribute to a connected, comfortable, attractive and high quality network.

If you would like to contact us about cycling and accessibility please email us at:

integrationandsustainabletransport@highwaysengland.co.uk

Introduction

In 2016 we published our Cycling and Accessibility strategies (these can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications).

These strategies set out our vision for:

- a connected, comfortable, attractive and high-quality cycling network, suitable and safe for use by people of all ages and abilities
- reducing the barriers our roads can sometimes create, helping expand peoples travel choices, enhancing and improving network facilities and making everyday journeys as easy as possible

Our approach integrates with the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and supports the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

Since the launch of our Cycling and Accessibility strategies we have made significant progress on many fronts, which are already delivering improved cycling and accessibility to our customers.

Developing our capability

- We have published **new design standards** for cycle traffic (Interim Advice Note 195/16 Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network) which will ensure the needs of cyclists are fully accommodated in all future scheme designs. These standards were developed in collaboration with Sustrans, British Cycling and Cycling UK. The new standards have been accompanied by a comprehensive training and e-learning programme for designers.
- We have enhanced our **Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment and Review Process** (HD42) which promotes the inclusion of cycling, walking, and horse-riding

provision in the earliest stages of design.

This process also emphasises the need to identify opportunities for improved facilities and integrate with wider networks.

- We have developed a **cycling investment tool** which provides an enhanced evidence base to identify and prioritise potential areas for cycling improvements. The tool will be used in addition to wider resources including the Department for Transport funded Propensity to Cycle Tool.
- We have established our **Accessibility and Cycling Leadership Group**. This is an effective forum to engage with colleagues across the business to identify, develop and implement new interventions as well as review and adopt good practice.
- We have introduced an **Accessibility, Cycling Assessment and Prioritisation Framework** which provides Regional Teams with a consistent approach to scheme identification, evaluation, construction and review. This process supports continuous learning and improvement through the inclusion of scheme case studies which will highlight any lessons learnt during scheme development, how the requirements of stakeholders have been taken into consideration and details on the scheme's construction and funding. This will then help to inform how we approach our future schemes.
- We are developing **guidance in 'place making'** to improve the facilities we provide, creating an environment which our customers will feel safe and that promotes wellbeing and happiness. This guidance will be considered throughout the planning, design and management of our schemes, linking to local aesthetics and culture. This approach also encourages ownership of our facilities within our communities.

Improving our network

Our infrastructure investment programmes are delivering improved facilities that will address the barriers that our roads can create, improve connectivity and ensure routes are high quality, direct and above all safe.

- Cycling, walking and equestrian improvements are being made as part of our **major investment projects**, such as improvement schemes on the M1/M6/A14 Catthorpe Interchange, A45/A46 Tollbar End and A1 Leeming Bar.
- We are making further enhancements through the delivery of our **Cycling and Integration Designated Fund** Programme, investing over £100 million. Since 2015, Designated Funds has enabled us to deliver 80 cycle schemes, 120 new crossings for cyclists, pedestrians and or equestrians and 286 upgraded crossings where we have improved the quality of previous facilities.
- We are including cycling and walking provision within schemes delivered through our **Environment, Growth and Housing Designated Fund Programmes**, an example of this is the M5 junction 29 Titherbarn Link Road Growth & Housing scheme.
- We continue to explore opportunities to support the development of wider cycling and walking networks and recognise the important role and opportunities of future **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans**. This includes developing an investment programme with Sustrans to improve the National Cycle Network.
- We are **measuring our performance** by the number of new and upgraded crossings, and the number of non-motorised user casualties on and around our network. In the future we will develop new metrics that will more accurately monitor our progress against

the strategies and identify research areas to improve the planning and delivery of the cycling and accessibility vision.

Working with our partners

- We have worked closely with **local authorities** to help develop their **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans** to ensure our network supports their aspirations of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and is well integrated with other networks and facilities.
- We are collaborating with **Transport Focus** to understand the needs of our customers and how we can use feedback to inform our approach to cycling and accessibility and develop our schemes. Our collaboration with Transport Focus has led to the first ever **non-motorised user satisfaction survey**, to be launched in autumn 2018. We are looking forward to seeing the results from this survey to understand how network users think we are performing and how we can improve in the future.
- We have collaborated with **Sustrans** to develop and improve our monitoring and evaluation of cycling and walking schemes. The recommendations have been incorporated into our scheme assessment processes and are informing the development of new performance metrics for the next Road Period.
- We have trialled a pool bike scheme at our Manchester office in partnership with **Transport for Greater Manchester**. Under the scheme, staff can use free cycling and safety equipment. We are currently gathering feedback on the trial and further promoting the use of more sustainable modes of transportation and providing the means for our staff to become more active and healthier.

- We continue to work closely with leading organisations, including Cycling UK, Sustrans and the British Horse Society, through our **Vulnerable Road User Committee**. The committee enables us to seek a wide range of views when developing our strategies, interventions and communications.
- We continue to strengthen and improve engagement with our **customers and stakeholders**. For example in Yorkshire we listened to the extensive customer feedback and reviewed our approach to the prohibition of cyclists on the A63, originally proposed due to safety concerns resulting from cycle time trials on that section of road.
- We have new **Regional Cycling Champions** to advise and guide regional scheme planners and designers on central policy to ensure we are delivering the right provisions for all. A key part of their role is to seek the views and input of our customers and partners to ensure our plans meet their needs.

Planning for the future

Building on the progress we have made since the launch of our strategies, we are looking forward and planning for the next Road Period. We are working with the Department for Transport, the Office of Road and Rail, Transport Focus and our stakeholders to ensure our plans meet both customer and government expectations.

Some key action areas will be:

- Develop a research programme to better understand the needs of cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians.
- Introduce non-motorised user consideration in the maintenance and renewals of our network.
- Develop new performance metrics for the future which challenge the organisation to improve provision for cyclists, walkers and equestrians.

Designated Funds Schemes - Case studies

A585 West Drive to Fleetwood shared cycleway

This project involved working in partnership to provide a shared use footway/cycleway to bring communities together. Following a new housing development to the east of Fleetwood, Lancashire, we worked with the County Council, Cyclist Touring Club, British Cycling and Wyre Borough Council to improve routes into the town centre.



We constructed a shared footway and cycleway along a section of the A585. The works also included the construction of two new toucan crossings across the A585. We reduced the maximum speed limit on this section of the A585, to ensure that the safety of cyclists and pedestrians was maintained. Working together meant that we could deliver this £1.5m scheme to the full benefit of the local community.



M5 junction 29 Tithebarn Link

This scheme provided a new cycle and pedestrian bridge in November 2017 which connected to shared use paths on either side of the motorway.

The bridge is a single span steel bridge with an internal width of 3m.



The bridge connects communities either side of the M5 near Exeter and is part of a sustainable travel strategy for the area; the intention is to reduce vehicle use from local developments.

This scheme was delivered as part of the Growth & Housing Designated Fund and supports the development of 5,850 dwellings and approximately 1,000 jobs.



A556 between Knutsford and Bowdon in Cheshire

In November 2017, a £5 million upgrade of the old A556 between Knutsford and Bowdon in Cheshire was officially handed to local communities as a new local road. The upgrade included converting a two-lane carriageway into a dedicated and segregated green route for pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders. It also included installing a signalised Pegasus crossing – specifically designed to assist horse riders – at the junction between the green route and the A50 at Mere.

The project delivered a wide scale change within the local area and was received very positively by local residents and groups such as CycleKnutsford, and has been described as delivering a lasting legacy for local people.



A120 Birchanger to Stansted shared use route

The renewal and upgrade of an existing bridleway and cycle/walking path, between the village of Birchanger and Stansted airport, to promote safe, green travel in the area, was completed as part of a package of maintenance and improvement work on the M11.

The existing Public Right of Way was widened as far as possible within the constraints of the existing ditch and boundary fence to accommodate safe passage of cyclists, walkers and equestrians. The scheme included new signing at strategic locations, vegetation clearance, installation of innovative and energy efficient lighting and resurfacing or repair of the route.



A21 Tonbridge to Pembury shared use route

Prior to the single carriageway section of the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury being widened, there were no footways, and verges were either very narrow or non-existent and unsuitable for use by non-motorised users. As part of the A21 dualling scheme, we have provided a new bridleway for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians along the whole length of the upgraded carriageway. In addition, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge was provided, at Blackhurst Lane, to replace the existing at grade crossing which has improved access to Pembury Hospital and reduced severance of the community.



Further improvements were made through Designated Funds working with Kent County Council. Funding of £1.3m was provided to extend and enhance facilities, extending them to Tonbridge town centre at its northern end and Pembury hospital at its southern end, providing residents from Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Pembury as well as outlying villages with a safer and improved route to these towns, the local hospital and Tonbridge Station.



A550 / A540 Two Mills junction shared cycleway

We have created a 320 metre cycleway through this busy junction in Cheshire, to improve safety for cyclists. In addition, the new traffic lights make it easier to cross the A550. Members of the Chester Cycling Campaign were among the first to ride along the new cycle path. Peter Williams is a member of the Chester Cycling Campaign, which campaigns for new and improved cycle routes. He said:

“The new cycle lane and other improvements at Two Mills make it much safer and easier to cross the junction and a lot of the cyclists I’ve been speaking to think they’re wonderful.”



A160 / A180 Port of Immingham improvement scheme

We constructed a 1300 metre cycleway, from Manby roundabout to Eastfield Road junction, and a surfaced footway between Manby roundabout and Rosper Road, as part of the scheme to upgrade the main access road to the Port of Immingham.

In addition, a new bridge across the A160 was constructed to provide access for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians from one side of South Killingholme to the other, to reduce severance. The footway is 3 metres wide to allow for potential conversion to a cycleway, by North Lincolnshire Council, as the improvement scheme supports the joint sustainable transport plan for North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council and the wider area.





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