

Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan (SCWDP) 2018-2028

Summary of Responses to Public Consultation (30th July – 7th Sept 2018)

There were 55 official consultation responses and five other informal replies. The responses ranged from a single comments in a paragraph to detailed replies over six pages. Response were submitted by partner organisations and agencies, members of groups, clubs and the general public.

In general, there was an understanding that the delivery plan is in line with Government targets to increase short journeys on foot and by cycle for travel purposes.

The consultation was not questionnaire/survey based so the responses were wide ranging and covered all elements of the plan, process, content and scope. Many comments covered the same or similar points so these have been grouped together with the number of comments i.e. (x3) for three of the same or similar response. In order to present the responses in a meaningful way and process the information, we have collated them into the following themes;

- 1. Support**
- 2. Area Specific**
- 3. Site Specific**
- 4. User Comments - Walking /Cycling /Equestrian**
- 5. General**

Each thematic section contains responses which have been collated and numbered according to subject area. They have been answered with a Durham County Council response where the main points have been addressed. Other single comments received are listed with bullet points and these have been addressed wherever possible. Specific queries not covered by the consultation (but were prompted by) have been answered to the individual.

The report concludes with the main points which have been addressed following the consultation.

SCWDP = Strategic Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan
LCWIP = Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans
ROWIP = Rights of Way Improvement Plan
GNC = Great North Cycleway
CDP = County Durham Plan
CPO = Compulsory Purchase Order

1. Support

In general the comments were supportive. Here are a few extracts;

- “I applaud DCC on its endeavours to make cycling and walking part of Durham’s culture”
- “the drafted plan is a competent and well crafted plan”

- “it is very impressive”
- “I am very encouraged and enthusiastic” about the draft plan
- “I think this is an excellent idea.”
- “I wanted to drop a line to largely applaud the strategic cycling and walking delivery plan. “
- “I fully support the objectives of the plan and hope that it can be fully carried through.”
- Well laid out

There was only one unsupportive response;

- “I strongly oppose the approach of prioritising cyclists and walkers over motorists”

DCC Response:

Thank you for your positive and supportive comments.

2. Area specific points/comments

Many of the respondents commented on specific areas and places.

1. Include villages and smaller towns and links in between (x3)
DCC Response: Thank you for your suggestion. In line with Government’s targets, the Delivery Plan focusses on the main towns. Other projects and schemes will continue to be delivered in the smaller towns and villages around the County and will still be eligible for funding which is prioritised according to criteria including ROWIP and LTP objectives.
2. Locomotion Way identified as safe and useable route (x3)
DCC Response: Thank you for your positive comments.
3. Include key development sites such as Integra 61, Hitachi, Netpark, Durham Gate (x2)
DCC Response: Key developments will be covered by the LCWIPs within the 12 main towns. Where sites are outside the scope of the LCWIPs the walking and cycling elements will be considered through the planning process.
4. Better map and record routes in Newton Aycliffe (x2)
DCC Response: Existing cycling routes have been recorded in Newton Aycliffe through the LCWIP process. A town cycling map is currently being produced and will be available in the coming months. However, where the status of permissive routes, such as the Great Aycliffe Way, is unaltered as yet as the routes would need substantial investment to make them suitable for use and promotion as shared use paths.
5. Too much focus on Durham City (x2)
DCC Response: The Delivery Plan prioritises the main towns in line with the overall aims. The plan also ties in with the CDP and Durham City Sustainable Transport Plan.

6. 5 miles around Durham City routes should be expanded (x2)

DCC Response: It is hoped that on completion of the 5 mile routes that the links will be expanded. As our largest settlement, Durham City is the focus for enabling cycling journeys to reduce travel by car. 5 miles is often cited as an achievable distance for cycle commutes on a regular basis.

Other comments:

- Will this lead to cycle routes that go into East Durham
- Include Sedgfield as main town
- Access between Trimdons poor
- Prioritise Durham City in LCWIPs
- Rural areas not included
- Links to bus routes in rural areas
- Keep countryside sites (car parks) free
- Link up towns

DCC Response: Thank you for your suggestion. In line with Government's targets, the Delivery Plan focusses on the main towns. Other projects and schemes will continue to be delivered in the smaller towns and villages around the County and will still be eligible for funding which is prioritised according to criteria including ROWIP and LTP objectives.

There are no plans to start charging for parking at the countryside sites. Durham City will have the first LCWIP in the County.

3. Site specific comments/queries

Many respondents commented on specific sites or routes.

1. Include named potential recreational routes e.g. Bishop Auckland to Barnard Castle route, Barnard Castle to Cotherstone (x4) and Stockton & Darlington Railway Route (x2)

DCC Response: Though outside the scope of this Delivery Plan, the development of recreational routes is supported. However, such projects are better aligned to other plans such as the Rights of Way Improvement Plan which includes the recreational element of the access network in more detail. In order to deliver the objectives of this plan, the focus is on active travel which means that such routes are not included.

2. Width of cycle lanes Newton Aycliffe (x2)

DCC Response: This comment will be fed into the LCWIP for NA.

3. Route between Coxhoe and Durham (x2)

DCC Response: The route will be dealt with through the planning process.

4. A689 – poor maintenance (x2)

DCC Response: This has been reported to Highways.

5. Redhills Lane - review for walking and cycling needs (x2)

DCC Response: This comment will be fed into the LCWIP for Durham City.

Other comments;

- NCN1 – poor condition
- Need a route between Nevilles Cross and Durham City
- Crossing at Villa Real for partially sighted people difficult
- Need a route between Langley Park and Witton Gilbert
- Cycle paths around Winteron and NETPark undulate
- Include Spennymoor on GNC route
- Include routes on and around Uni Estate
- Route Carrville/Belmont to Uni via Maiden Castle/Old Durham
- Sacriston to New College route needed
- Make all residential areas 20mph and 30mph through residential areas of A167

DCC Response: Thank you for your suggestions. Some of the points listed are beyond the scope of the plan. However, as far as practical the feasibility of the routes will be investigated and improvements requested. Routes within 5 miles of Durham are covered under Objective 5, Action 3. In order to deliver the objectives of this plan, the focus is on active travel in the 12 towns listed.

4a. Walking

Comments relating to walking and pedestrian access were dominated by concerns over the safety of pedestrians on shared use paths (shared with cyclists).

1. Safety of pedestrians on shared use paths (x5)
DCC Response: The walking actions have been strengthened up and wherever space and resource allow, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists will be separated.
2. Parking obstructions (x4)
DCC Response: An action to deliver enforcement actions which includes obstructive parking has been included.
3. Links to public transport need to be included (x2)
DCC Response: An action to create pedestrian links to public transport facilities has been included.
4. Grass verge cutting in rural areas (x2)
DCC Response: This is beyond the scope of the plan and has been referred to Highway Maintenance.
5. Include health walks (x2)
DCC Response: An action on health walks to monitor how participation can motivate active travel has been included.
6. Include walk map/plan (x2)
DCC Response: Network Plans will be produced through the LCWIP process which provides a recognised evidence base for establishing the hierarchy of routes and priorities for improvements.

- Winter maintenance on walking routes (x2) Inspections should have cyclists and walkers in mind

DCC Response: See response in 4b, 5.

Other comments;

- Promote countryside code
- Need more promotion of short travel journeys on foot

DCC Response: The countryside code will be promoted wherever appropriate, though for this plan, which deals predominantly with towns it is of less relevance.

Short walking journeys will continue to be promoted through our partners Living Streets.

4b. Cycling

1. Need for secure parking, with CCTV coverage (x7)

DCC Response: There will be continued investment in cycle parking through the ParkThatBike scheme and individual schemes where there is demand using the Local Transport Plan funding. Opportunities to install more secure parking in Durham City and other areas suggested will be investigated.

- Create more routes and join up the existing network (x4) Like idea of Great North Cycleway

DCC Response: The Delivery Plan focusses on short journeys within settlements and will seek to join up the existing network within towns and create new routes where there is evidence to support plans.

The Delivery Plan does not aspire to create new recreational routes but to improve and join up the existing networks such as the NCNs and the links which will form the Great North Cycleway.

2. Include leisure cycling (x4)

DCC Response: In line with Government's targets, the Delivery Plan focusses on cycling and walking for active travel as this will have the greatest impact on health, the environment and

3. Surface railway paths to make them all weather/season cycle paths (x3)

DCC Response: Whilst appreciating the difficulties that the unsealed surface can create for cyclists, the Railway Paths are multi-user routes and are shared with pedestrians and equestrians and as such consideration must be given to all users and any improvements for one user group should not create issues for another.

Wherever appropriate, feasible and where resource and space allow for an alternative off-surface path (where needed) we will seal the surface of Railway Paths. This may be Fibredec or Tarmac.

4. Maintenance issues: potholes (x3), winter clearing and gritting, general e.g. cutting back. Address potholes and make commitment to repair for cyclists as well as motorists (x3) Inspections should have cyclists and walkers in mind

DCC Response: The Council is committed to ensuring that the adopted highway is maintained in a safe condition as far as reasonably practicable. All adopted roads and footpaths in County Durham are inspected by our team of Highway Inspectors at a frequency appropriate to their usage. Defects are assessed against intervention criteria set out in our Highway Safety Inspection Manual and proactive repairs are undertaken to those defects which exceed the intervention criteria in accordance with the response times set out in our Highway Maintenance Plan which is available on our website at the following link:

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2378/Road-maintenance>

Our Highway Safety Inspection Manual and Highway Maintenance Plan are aligned with the national code of practice.

5. Review quality of existing routes (x2)

DCC Response: The LCWIP process incorporates a rigorous assessment and scoring of routes.

6. Separate cyclists and cars (x2) as busy roads are off-putting– especially women can be put off (x2) Traffic calming measures can encourage motorists to squeeze passed, cars parking and driving in cycling lanes

DCC Response: Pedestrians, cyclists and motorists will be separated wherever space and resource allow.

Other comments;

- Include ebike actions
- Bring back the Durham Big Ride!
- Better visibility of cyclists in dark

DCC Response: Actions have been included for electric bike charging.

Unfortunately there is not currently resource for delivering the DBR.

Promotion of “be safe be seen” (or similar) campaigns for staff at DCC and in partnership with other organisations such as Durham University will continue to be delivered.

4c. Equestrian

1. Equestrians are not included – need to ensure improvements on bridleways bring no issues for equestrians (x3)

DCC Response: A statement has been included in the Evidence Base addressing these points.

5. General

- Not enough resource (x7) Reallocate road budgets (x3) DCC starting from a low base (x4) Funding uncertainty a key issue for delivery (x3), Level of priority for Delivery Plan, Good to include provision of facilities such as showers and parking
DCC Response: Additional funds will continue to be sought to support the delivery of the SCWDP.
- Segregate cycling and walking (x4) Reallocate road space (X3) Too much focus on cycling and not enough on walking (x3) Road crossings and key junctions also need to be addressed to provide for cycling and walking (x2) Network continuation an issue (x3) Exceed guidance (x3) Infrastructure is the priority to enable change and needs more emphasis (x2) Prioritise cycling and walking routes over road building, Value for money of cycling and walking infrastructure questioned, Impractical to expect people to commute by bike or on foot, CPO land for cycle paths
DCC Response: As far as possible, these points have been addressed in the production of the final version.
- Driver behaviour a key issue / Educational programme needed (x4) All travellers have equal priority
DCC Response: Information for motorists will continue to be provided through the Town cycle maps, Road Safety campaigns and events (i.e. Bike Wise) and through other promotional opportunities.
- 1. Discourage car use / close roads to car traffic and have Car-Free Durham City Day (x4) Park and Ride should include facilities for park and cycle/walk (x2)
DCC Response: Unfortunately, at this time there is not the resource to undertake a large campaign of this nature. Though in the longer term it is something to aspire to.
Park and Ride sites need to be financially self-sustaining and as such users are required to pay for the bus.
- No maps included (x4) Mapping information is important (GPX Maps) (x2) Not clear that all 12 towns will have LCWIPs, Cycle maps not available at libraries
DCC Response: Information in the Evidence Base Appendices 10.1 has been amended.
Maps (Network Plans) will be produced through the LCWIP process. Town Cycling Maps for the 12 main towns will be produced. Supplies at libraries are regularly restocked when maps are requested, however, stocks do require a resource to reprint which is not always available.
- 2. Engagement process and non-cycling and walking consultees (x3) Ensure landowner involvement with new routes on private land (x2) Involve local people and specific groups in LCWIP process (x3)
DCC Response: The consultation process was considered thorough, with the creation of two working groups, six weeks public consultation and direct invitations to the stakeholders listed in the document.

The LCWIPs will involve targeted consultation which will include relevant audiences.

Landowners will continue to be involved in any changes to, or creation of, routes on their land.

- Link to County Durham Plan not clear and contradictory (x3) No safeguarded routes, include more on air quality (x3), align to DDA
DCC Response: This has been referred to Spatial Policy and amendments to the CDP will be made. Safeguarded routes are not included in the CDP but the LCWIPs will produce network plans which will better protect the networks from development.
- Enforcement should include Close Pass, Pavement Parking and Dangerous and Careless driving (x2) More 20mph zones and enforcement of 20mph (x2) 20mph are a waste of money, the driver and the cyclists should be friends!
DCC Response: The enforcement action, under Objective 6, has been amended to include delivery on Close Pass, Obstructive Parking and Excess Speed. 20mph zones are outside the scope of this strategy but their delivery will continued to be supported.
- 3. Removal of streetlamps discourages use (x2)
DCC Response: This has been reported to Street Lighting.
- Need more measurable targets (x2), timeframe - some thought the timeframe is too long and others too short , recording and obtaining of data is important
DCC Response: Wherever possible actions have been amended to include measurable targets. The timeframe was determined by the Working Groups who helped develop the strategy and it was felt that a 10 year plan with two 5 year action plans brought a good balance.
- 4. Issues using weblink (x2)
DCC Response: This has been reported to the Web Team.

Other comments;

- Strengthen promotional programme
- Include tourist and visitor economy
- Include volunteering opportunities
- Which actions are capital or revenue
DCC Response: Tourism, recreational and volunteering are beyond the scope of the plan.
Additional actions in Building Block 3 have been included in the final version.
Information on capital/revenue has not been included in the Action Plan as it may vary, though actions in Building Blocks 1 and 2 are predominantly capital and BB3 are predominantly revenue.

4. Key changes for the final version following the consultation

1. More walking actions have been included and strengthened up, such as an action to build walking links to other routes and public transport facilities.
2. We have amended the enforcement actions to include Close Pass, Obstructive Parking and Speed Reduction.
3. We have included actions which will monitor the effectiveness of encouraging active travel as a result of participation in guided walks and rides.
4. We have included an action to encourage installation of charging points for electric bikes.
5. A new email address will be set up activetravel@durham.gov.uk to replace pedalpower.