

County Durham

# Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2015



Pedal more, live more, live longer

**Durham**  
County Council



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people love their bikes not just because they are useful, but because they bring joy  
*Matt Seaton, Two Wheels, 2009*



# 1. Forewords

County Cllr Foster (centre), Robert Shaw (left) and Rio Floreza (right) from the Local Motion Team.



**Durham's Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2012-15 is an important document for developing cycling in the County over the next three years and I am delighted to provide this foreword.**

Our vision is to make it Altogether Better for the communities in, and visitors to, County Durham. Cycling can help us deliver so much of this vision. With increased pressures on household budgets, cycling offers inexpensive opportunities for everyday travel ... making us Altogether Wealthier. Cycling is an excellent form of exercise ... giving us all the opportunity to be Altogether Healthier. The environmental benefits of cycling are also very clear and reduced pollution can only make things Altogether Greener and Altogether Better for Children and Young People.

Through this strategy we aim to set better standards for cycling and cyclists. The action plan will improve infrastructure to make cycling safer (Altogether Safer, in fact) and more convenient, it will encourage greater participation and promote greater tolerance and understanding between all highway users so we can all travel safely.

Now is a great time to take the cycling agenda forward to promote a healthier, happier Durham that attracts positive investment and development, and provides an attractive destination for active visitors.

I commend this document and whole-heartedly encourage you to embrace this strategy and the ethos it contains so that you too can benefit ... and we can all enjoy an Altogether Better County Durham.

*County Councillor Neil Foster,  
Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration*



The cost of inactivity in the UK is £8.3billion a year = £5mill per PCT. *NICE 2009*





**The Durham County Local Access Forum is delighted to support this cycling strategy for Durham County!**

Why wouldn't we? Any effort to coordinate and maximise opportunities for cycling in the County is a win, win, win for the partners involved and the public. There are huge benefits to be gained to

the health of those who take part, benefits to the environment by reducing carbon emissions and to communities by bringing them closer together.

The LAF hopes that the strategy will mark a step change in the approach to provision for cycling in the County and we will look forward to supporting its implementation!

*Geoff Hughes,  
Chair of County Durham Local Access Forum*



Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride.

*John F. Kennedy*



## 2. Summary

Welcome to the third cycling strategy for County Durham.

**This strategy and action plan aims to bring together key partners who can make changes for a better cycling County.**

The document has been developed with evidence and learning from successes in cycling cities across the world and feedback from the public and stakeholder consultation. We aim to transform the way we approach the cycling agenda by putting the right foundations in place to build a cycling County through 3 specific steps or “building blocks”. These are outlined in Section 3.4 and detailed in Section 6.1.



Economic benefits:  
The average benefit  
to cost ratio of  
transport schemes is:  
20:1 (for walking and cycling)  
3:1 (for rail/road)

*Economic appraisal of local  
walking and cycling routes  
- Sustrans*

The strategy asserts the role cycling plays in travel, leisure, health and the environment and sets the scene for how it can become more influential to the social and economic vitality of the County. It is relevant to many key strategies and plans, in particular the plan ties closely to the Local Transport Plan 3 which aims to increase levels of cycling and reduce the reliance on car travel. The Plan can help deliver on all the Sustainable Communities Strategy priorities and Regeneration Statement objectives and is an integral part of the place shaping works detailed in the County Durham Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The document has a broad and inclusive approach and covers many aspects of cycling including utility, recreational, tourism and elements of sports cycling but to enable the plan to be achievable and manageable it does not cover elite, competitive or velodrome cycling.

#### **This Strategy and Action Plan will help County Durham to:-**

- Become more widely recognised as a cycling friendly County
- Provide a high quality cycling network that's safer, accessible, well maintained, signed, recorded and promoted
- Increase opportunities for sustainable travel to work, school and key services and reduce reliance on cars
- Encourage drivers to become more aware and tolerant of cyclists
- Encourage cyclists to become more aware of their rights and responsibilities to other road users
- Contribute to the quality of people's lives, their fitness, health and wellbeing
- Encourage visitors on active breaks and increase opportunities to enjoy tourist destinations and the countryside
- Enhance the environment and contribute to reducing climate change.



## **3. Introduction**

### **3.1**

The Cycling Strategy and Action Plan for County Durham 2012-2015 is a partnership plan which has been prepared through consultation with a wide range of partners who can help inform, strategically plan and deliver for cycling in the County.

County Durham continues its commitment to cycling. Inspired by Britain's sporting success and sustainable lifestyles we are a County on the move to a better future for ourselves and our communities. This strategy sets out how the growing numbers of cyclists can help us attain these aspirations.

“Riding bicycles will not only benefit the individual doing it, but the world at large.”

*Udo E. Simonis,  
Emeritus Professor of Environmental  
Policy at the Science Centre, Berlin,  
January 2010*



Cycling is a symbol of positive people and places and **“has been identified as a reflection of the economic and social vitality of a city”** (Calgary Cycling Strategy June 2011). Progressive cities across Europe and North America are becoming more cycle friendly as economic and societal trends and influences have shaped behaviour and relationships with travel, leisure, the environment, exercise and fashion.

We can learn a lot from these cities. Getting more people cycling more often, more safely would make them healthier and happier and bring economic benefits. **“There is potential to make billions of pounds of savings to the economy through more active travel:** other countries like the Netherlands have achieved this and we should do the same.” (Active Travel Strategy, DfT, Feb 2010). In addition to savings for individuals and the national economy, walking and cycling can contribute to the local economy through tourism and local spend can boost high street turnover by 10-15% (Norman Baker, Under-Secretary of State for Transport, March 2010).

Now is the time to act and implement a strategy which can help us work towards the achievements of other cycling cities and countries which have seen significant benefits as a result.

### 3.2

Cycling offers a solution to economic, social, environmental and health issues and threats. It is an accessible, affordable and sustainable activity which enables active travel and healthy recreation.

Cycling can have a positive impact on the long-term increase in car mileage and over-reliance on motorised transport. It can transform simple journeys to work or school into uplifting, invigorating experiences. It also has wider benefits such as improving air quality, reducing noise pollution, increasing opportunities for outdoor activity and play for children and improving social support and inclusion.

It can have a **significant positive impact on an individual’s health and fitness** and compares favourably to other activities as it is easy, convenient and a relatively painless way to exercise.

Cycling is predominantly undertaken outdoors and involves travelling and adventure. This generates knowledge, confidence and a better appreciation of, and investment in, the local environment and community. It creates a sense of place and facilitates social contact and capital amongst users. Importantly, this can have the effect of “normalising” physical activity so others are inspired to take up the activity also.

Cycling therefore can reconnect people with exercise and environment, two things which have become increasingly alien through the convenience of technology and motorised transport.

### 3.3

In County Durham we are on the right track for taking the cycling agenda forward.

We are currently putting the foundations in place to be able to build a better cycling future. However, it is early stages and there is much to improve on. We can build on the good work being carried out by using best practice case studies and guidance to assist us to create policies and set aims to develop and manage the network, deliver projects and promotional campaigns which are well-designed and high quality.

### 3.4

We have identified 3 main building blocks required to create a Cycling County so we have split the delivery of our cycling strategy into these 3 elements.

The strategy needs to be delivered in partnership, with dedicated resources and high level political commitment and drive.

Building blocks detailed in Section 6.1 but outlined here:-

- 1 **Audit, assess, plan, design, build**
- 2 **Operate, maintain, improve, refine, enforce**
- 3 **Educate, promote, inspire, motivate, encourage, engage**

## Building Blocks



The building blocks were determined by the main barriers to cycling uncovered by successful cycling cities. This approach was supported by responses received to the draft strategy consultation. As the research carried out by the other authorities is robust, the learning can be applied to County Durham. It is worth noting though that in order to achieve individual behaviour change a more detailed approach would be needed and the common barriers may not be applicable on an individual basis.

The barriers we are looking to address are;

- 1• Fears over safety on roads
- 2• Physical: lack of facilities, poor design of network of components of network
- 3• Habit

In order to build a Cycling County and get the best possible results, we need commitment and patience. Results will not be instant and this requires a good level of trust in best practices and a long-term view to allow for plans to unfold.





### 3.5 Motivators

Research from the Cycling Cities initiatives shows that the greatest motivators for motorists to convert from driving to cycling are **improving health and saving money.**

Far fewer people take up cycling to help the environment or to reduce congestion. Furthermore cycling is cost-effective and, to certain groups, is considered a more acceptable form of activity than formal exercise classes. This combination of factors presents the opportunity to promote workplace health through staff cycling initiatives. For a workforce, this can mean fewer car-parking issues and associated costs, improved morale, loyalty and productivity and reduced absenteeism. Also, to encourage everyday cycling, it is crucial that cycling is a convenient form of travel.

With this knowledge, **we know that any campaign to influence a sustained uptake in cycling which focusses on the health and financial benefits of cycling to individuals** would be more successful than the promotion of altruistic aims such as climate change.

These same factors can also motivate domestic active breaks which are either based on or include cycling. County Durham has great potential for expanding its cycle tourism offer.



Approx 56 million calories were burned by cyclists yesterday

Cyclescheme website

## 4. Setting the Scene

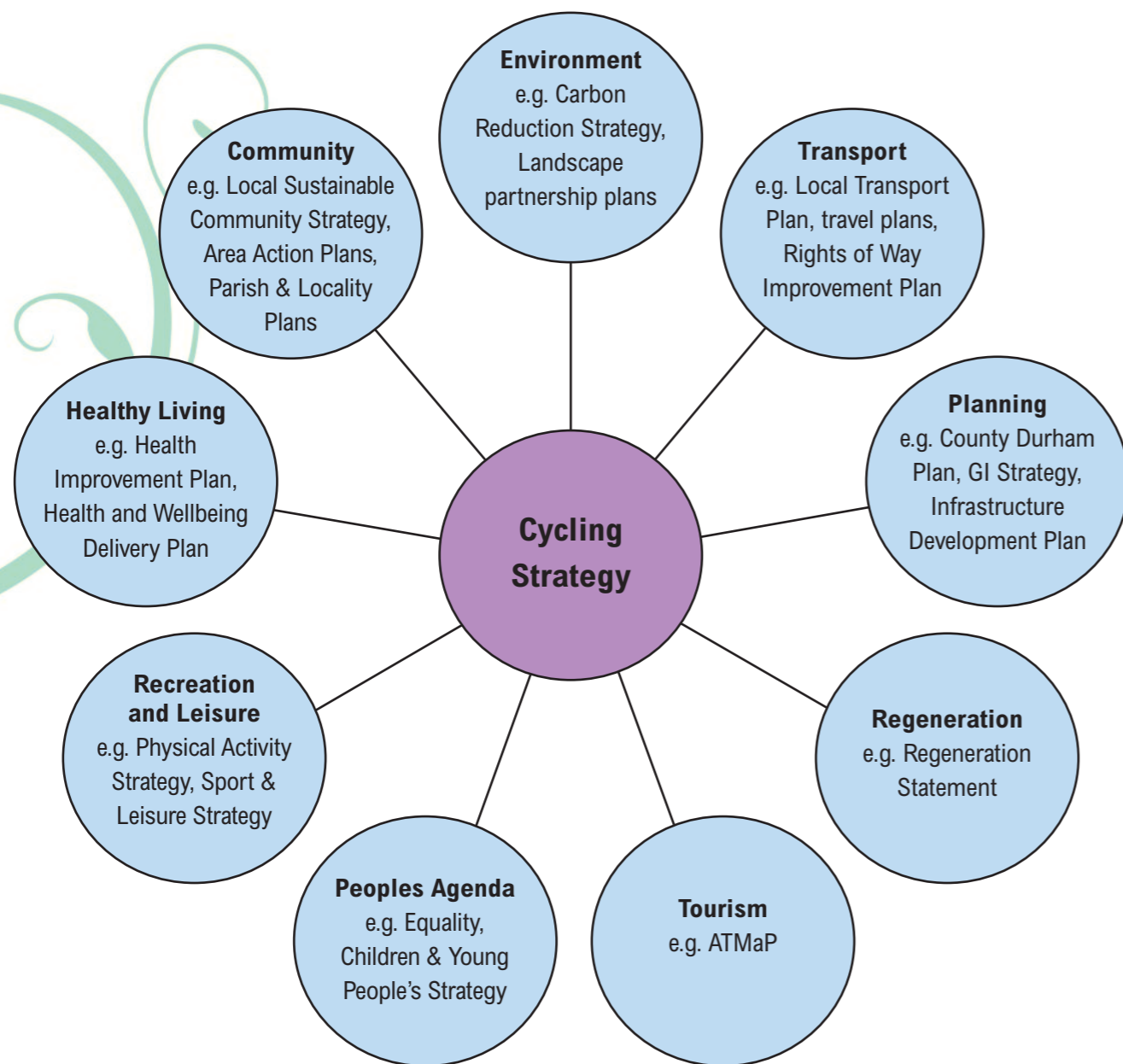
### 4.1

This is the third cycling strategy for County Durham and immediately follows the Interim Cycling Strategy 2009-2011.

The plan ties closely to the Local Transport Plan 3 2011 and aims to increase levels of cycling and reduce the reliance on car travel. The document covers many aspects of cycling and has a broad and inclusive

approach. The scope includes utility, recreational and elements of sports cycling but to ensure it is both achievable and manageable it does not cover elite competitive or velodrome cycling. The document sets the scene for transforming the way we approach the cycling agenda and sets out policies and actions for delivering the vision for a cycling revolution in Durham.





## 4.2 Policy Context

Cycling permeates many themes including transport, planning, health, economic regeneration sport, leisure and tourism.

The diagram above shows how cycling links to other plans and strategies and how the strategy can help contribute to fulfilling the aims of these documents.

At a national level the profile for cycling has increased significantly with The Times Cities Fit for Cycling Campaign and associated Manifesto being debated in Parliament and the recent proposal for an Active Travel Bill in Wales adding momentum to the political support for local authorities to address the needs for safer and more convenient cycling.

This strategy is part of the broader strategic framework which sets the scene for regeneration and economic prosperity in the County. The overarching plans and strategies within this framework, i.e. the County Durham Plan, The Council Plan, Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and Regeneration Statement, influence the strategic direction of this document (visit [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk) > *council and democracy* > *policy and plans* for more information). Cycling plays an important role in delivering key priorities and objectives of these plans. In particular, cycling can help deliver the Altogether Greener, Healthier, Safer and Wealthier priorities of the SCS. Cycling also delivers on 9 of the 15 LTP3 objectives, is identified as a common intervention benefitting 5 LTP3 goals and is included in LTP as policy 16.

Cycling is also now firmly embedded in national and local planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published March 2012, promotes sustainable travel, including cycling and provides the basis for the authority to produce its Local Plan. The County Durham Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan form the local policy framework which includes policies on sustainable travel, including cycling and fully support this strategy and action plan. This work is reinforced by the County Durham Parking and Accessibility Guidelines which state that all developments should promote sustainable travel with Travel plans and sets design standards for pro-cycling developments and cycle parking.



## 4.3 Consultation Draft

The draft Cycling Strategy was released for an 8 week public consultation. 53 people responded to this consultation. All the comments have been compiled into a report which is available at [www.durham.gov.uk/transport](http://www.durham.gov.uk/transport) and follow the links to the cycling pages. The comments were mainly supportive and the majority related to the document itself with constructive suggestions for amendments. Other feedback focussed on people's own experiences of and aspirations for cycling in the County. The majority of comments on cycling issues related specifically to Durham City - difficulties getting across the city, secure parking, inadequate signage, the need to educate highway users of their rights, driver behaviour and maintenance of



routes were the most common problems encountered. Where possible and appropriate we have taken on board and incorporated the comments to strengthen specific sections and have redrafted and redesigned the document to produce the final version.

#### 4.4 Review of Interim Cycling Strategy 2009-2011

A more detailed review document is available at [www.durham.gov.uk/transport](http://www.durham.gov.uk/transport) and follow the links to the cycling page but to summarise, the key successes, schemes delivered and total spend are outlined below.

##### Key successes

- Engaged with local cycling forums/ groups i.e. Climate Durham's Durham City Cycling Forum
- Delivered 3 infrastructure schemes (1. Limestone LinX Routes; 2. extension to Witton le Wear multi-user route and 3. Low Flatts to Drum Industrial estate route)
- Piloted cycle audit in Durham City
- Delivered 2 opportunities for salary sacrifice bike purchase for staff at Durham County Council
- Delivered 16 Travel Plans
- Set the scene for the future policy work
- Recorded achievements and aspirations to date.



##### Total Spend

Approximately £860,000 was spent on infrastructure delivery throughout the life of the plan.

##### Lessons Learnt

It is vital we continue to take collective responsibility to share and co-ordinate delivery and continue to engage with clubs and user groups to ensure delivery is contemporary.

Some actions became irrelevant throughout the life of the plan and others weren't delivered due to a lack of engagement of delivery partners. This is being addressed in the current strategy via a stronger engagement at the outset, a shared understanding of the vision and how it will be achieved collaboratively.

Overall, the interim strategy was a useful stepping stone which has created greater understanding of requirements to develop the cycling agenda.



#### 4.5 Cycling in County Durham

County Durham has excellent opportunities for on and off road cycling.

The west of the County has many quiet roads and lanes to explore while Hamsterley Forest has trails for all abilities from family and novice to extreme. 543kms Bridleways, 45kms byways and over 150kms of railway paths offer excellent facilities for recreational, and in many cases commuting, use across the County. The growing number of cycle lanes complement the off-highway facilities and help to create a more comprehensive network. To help achieve the strategy aims it will be necessary to review the cycling network.

The provision of facilities by private businesses also make a valuable contribution to a quality cycling resource and cycle parking, shops, cafés and accommodation providers all serve to make the County cycle friendly.

#### 4.6 Resources

It is important that we are properly resourced to succeed in building a cycling County.

This is particularly the case as cycling cuts across so many service areas. It is vital that Council staff are also appropriately trained in cycling matters and we need to invest in staff to ensure a consistency of approach and a shared vision of the outcomes we want to achieve.

In recent years, the Local Transport Plan has been a primary source of funding for cycle infrastructure. The funding of provision, improvement and maintenance of cycle routes is listed as a priority for the first 3 year of LTP3 and is supported through the walking and cycling budget. Other areas such as events and training are mainly grant funded.

Through the life of this document the County will also benefit from the Local Sustainable Transport Funded (Department for Transport) initiative, Local Motion. This is a joint initiative with Darlington Borough Council which



targets South Durham and is aimed at all modes of sustainable travel including measures for cycling and cyclists. The project uses established good practice from Darlington's Local Motion campaign and is also a test bed for new ideas. If proven successful, we will seek to roll out aspects of the initiative across the County. Local Motion fulfils the aims of this strategy and will help deliver the action plan.

Working in partnership will be an essential part of delivering the strategy as cycling crosses many service areas, organisations and agencies. Support and advice from cycling groups and communities and partnership working will continue to be welcomed.



## 5. Vision, Objectives and Commitment





### 5.1 Our **Vision** for cycling is:

Cycling is a visible, normal, everyday activity. Cycling is part of Durham's culture and is a safe, affordable and enjoyable mode of transport as well as a fun, family-friendly, cheap and accessible and competitive leisure activity.

### 5.2 Our overall **Aims** are to;

1. prioritise cycling in policy and funding and integrate cycling policies within other strategies
2. create and maintain a strong and visible profile for cycling
3. create consistently high standards for on and off road cycle infrastructure
4. develop and maintain a more comprehensive network
5. contribute to economic growth and a prosperous County by encouraging cycling tourism and reducing car travel through Travel Plans
6. protect the cycling network from negative impacts of development and works on the cycling infrastructure
7. contribute to a healthier County for individuals, communities and the environment and wildlife through enhancement of green infrastructure, marketing and promotion.

### 5.3 Our **Objectives** to deliver the aims are;

1. Make short trips more convenient and attractive by bike than car and make cycling an automatic choice for travel
2. Develop, improve and maintain routes to maximise rider comfort, convenience and safety
3. Increase the number and quality of cycle routes
4. Develop a backbone of major cycle super highways in and between the 12 main towns to serve high volumes of cycle traffic
5. Implement Travel Plans with businesses and incentivise action
6. Work in partnership to ensure efforts are co-ordinated
7. Support events which encourage participation
8. Use health as a motivating factor in promotion
9. Coordinate funds and secure external funding
10. Integrate routes with public transport
11. Promote a culture of tolerance and understanding between motorists, pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists
12. Update Accessibility and Parking Guidelines and include in planning and parking policies (especially new buildings and include residential development)
13. Work with neighbouring authorities to share good practice and enable cross-boundary travel
14. Install high quality public and private bike parking
15. Establish planning policies which require new development to be cycle-friendly.

### 5.4 **Looking ahead** - An Ideal Durham Beyond 2015

- Durham is becoming recognised as a County which provides for and celebrates a strong cycling culture
- The high quality cycle network is well maintained, signed, recorded and promoted
- Drivers are aware of, sensitive to and tolerant of cyclists
- Cycling is becoming an automatic travel option
- People enjoy improved health and environment
- Visitors enjoy long stays for active breaks
- Cycling is becoming part of life for families and adults are teaching children safety skills.

The average cycle commuter saves over £600 a year in car running costs.

*Cyclescheme website*





In politics, one can learn some things from cycling, such as how to have character and courage. Sometimes in politics there isn't enough of those things.

*Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of Belgium, 2004*



## 6. Policies and Measures

### 6.1 Building Blocks to Create a Cycling County

To deliver the aims and objectives we have set out policy measures each with actions which can be monitored and reported on. The 3 building blocks form the structure and set the theme for each series of policies.



-  **Audit, assess, plan, design, build**
-  **Operate, maintain, improve, refine, enforce**
-  **Engage, Educate, promote, motivate, encourage.**

#### 6.1.1 Building Block 1: Audit, assess, plan, design, build

*"It is unreasonable to expect people to change their behaviours when the environment discourages such changes"*

Schmid and colleagues 1995.

High quality infrastructure makes cycling a more attractive option. A better, safer and greener network of non-car routes is more likely to succeed in changing behaviour to encourage more people to be more active. But behaviour change programmes are unlikely to succeed unless social, economic and environmental conditions are also changed. Poor quality environments and lack of facilities are usually experienced by the poorest people, therefore planning is a significant determinant of health. Design and shape of local environments can influence lifestyle choices. We will use and exceed, where possible, the existing good practice guidelines (Local Transport Note (LTN) 2/08 and the Dutch Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic (CROW)) to design cycling infrastructure.

We will ensure that through high quality design and build standards other users such as walkers and runners will also benefit.



### **POLICY 1: We will audit the cycle network**

1. Audit current network starting with 12 main towns
2. Create cycle network maps for operational and strategic management of network and create publically accessible version

### **POLICY 2: We will assess the cycle and road network**

1. Classify routes - create hierarchy, identify fine-aggregate routes and safety issues
2. Prioritise improvements
3. Review highway network in 12 main towns and establish opportunities to reallocate road space which could be used for cycle lanes or cycle parking (i.e. space currently used for car parking)

### **POLICY 3: We will ensure the cycle infrastructure is better planned and incorporated into the planning system**

1. New developments are required to include pedestrian and cycling routes which are direct, attractive and convenient, take priority over motor traffic and provide cycle parking where appropriate
2. Request new workplace buildings have Travel Plans which are cycle friendly, with sufficient cycle parking and facilities for showering/changing
3. Require all new roads include cycle infrastructure or provision for cycling
4. Maximise connectivity between existing facilities and developments when planning new routes
5. Pilot a road safety and speed reduction campaign coupled with a

socially-targeted cycling and health promotional campaign

6. Map cycle super routes for 12 main towns

### **POLICY 4: We will use sustainable and best practice design standards**

1. Utilise environmentally sound methods for creation and maintenance of cycle infrastructure
2. Ensure green infrastructure design and cycle transport improvements are mutually supportive
3. Integrate off and on road routes
4. Use best practice design guidelines to attract riders of all ages and abilities and ensure quality of experience
5. Work with public transport operators to integrate tourism with public transport (marketing, carrying cycles, cycle parking enhancements, promotional events etc)

### **POLICY 5: We will build a high quality network and include cycle parking**

1. Anticipate and provide high quality cycle parking at key locations
2. Ensure all staffed Council buildings have sufficient cycle parking which complies with modern standards (BREEAM compliant)
3. Develop a backbone of urban cycle super routes in the 12 main towns
4. Monitor use before and after improvements of key infrastructure schemes

## **6.1.2 Building Block 2: Operate Maintain Improve Refine Enforce**

*“An engineer designing from scratch could hardly concoct a better device to unclog modern roads - cheap, nonpolluting, small and silent...”*

Rick Smith, International Herald Tribune, May 2006

It is vital to retain a safe and high quality infrastructure to increase numbers of cyclists. A programme of maintenance and refinement will play a large part in building a cycling county.

### **POLICY 6: We will operate the network to maximise safety for users**

1. Assess Road Safety data to inform cycle route design and engineering improvements at key locations
2. Implement enforcement practices that contribute to safety and attractiveness of cycling

### **POLICY 7: We will maintain the network to high standards to maximise comfort and effective use**

1. Establish a system for management of cycling network through maintenance, inspection and recording
2. Use LTP3 funds for maintenance of the cycling network for vegetation removal, sweeping (where appropriate co-ordinate with highway hedgecutting programme) and pothole repair
3. Produce a plan of key routes for winter maintenance



### **POLICY 8: We will improve the network through development and modernisation**

1. Develop a strategic creation programme of new routes through permissive agreements, dedication of land, bridleway creations and cycle track orders
2. Improve and modernise signing and ensure a coordinated approach
3. Improve existing key urban routes as part of a prioritised programme
4. Improve cycle routes to schools and colleges/universities through a prioritised programme
5. Support the installation of cycle parking at educational establishments

### **POLICY 9: We will refine the network to maximise accessibility and connectivity**

1. Draw up refinement plans for crossings and connections on key routes following audits
2. Reconfigure NCN Route through Durham City





The average cyclist burns 8,391 calories cycling to work each month (that's equivalent to 17 cheese burgers, or about 20 hours in the gym).

*Cyclescheme website*

### **POLICY 10: We will enforce legislation which protects access rights, promotes ease of use and enhances the environment**

1. All schemes to include provision for biodiversity enhancement and to fully comply with European species and habitat regulations. Routes must not impact on Natura 2000 sites.
2. Protect the network and minimise negative impacts caused by developments
3. Enforce highway laws on parking and speed to encourage cycling.

### **6.1.3 Building Block 3: Engage, Educate, Promote, Inspire, Encourage**

*“Cycling to work is an important issue for business - the more who do it, the more our communities will support it. Healthy and green, cycling is worthy of the support of every business in the land.”*

Sir Digby Jones, director general of the Confederation for British Industry, February 2006

We need to invest in people as well as place to successfully build a Cycling County. Life changing events, inspirational events, motivational training as well as information and marketing will all help to develop Building Block 3 by influencing lifestyle choices. These actions will also help reinforce Building Blocks 1 and 2 by encouraging responsible use and tolerance between all users.

### **POLICY 11: We will provide training and education to staff and the public**

1. Continue to roll out Bikeability training for children and Get Cycling scheme for adults
2. Encourage other cycle journeys for those who have completed Bikeability training (provide maps, information, safe routes and parking - required for level 3 Bikeability)

3. Produce guide on safer cycling for staff and the public, to include information for drivers on safe conduct (including information on the network available to cyclists and responsibilities under Highway Code)
4. Provide training for staff on cycling audit and design
4. Encourage employers to invest in a fleet of pool bikes to encourage short trips
5. Promote independent cycling through health campaigns - use best practice and information on key motivators and link to Healthy Hearts programme

### **POLICY 12: We will promote cycling through a variety of schemes**

1. Devise a co-ordinated marketing campaign and establish a one-stop cycling webpage on the County Council website
2. Update DCC cycling maps and make available online, with a journey planner to promote 5 mile cycle trips
3. Market visitor cycle break opportunities online and distribute literature to visitors pre-arrival and at destination, link with tourism campaigns (i.e. It's in our Nature, Taste Durham) and accommodation providers and refreshments stops with the Cyclist's Welcome accreditation
4. Promote newly improved and new routes

### **POLICY 13: We will encourage participation**

1. Expand programmes that promote long-term change i.e. guided cycle rides for those with less confidence
2. Pilot an electric bike hire hub for staff at a major employer, roll out if successful
3. Encourage cycling to work through Travel Plans and workplace health schemes (i.e. Better Health at work) and Cycle Guarantee scheme

### **POLICY 14: We will engage and inspire communities, clubs, schools and businesses**

1. Work with cycling groups, forums and partnerships as a mechanism for reviewing routes, providing information, monitoring progress and budget allocation and consulting on proposals
2. Work with cycling and triathlon clubs and provide support for development
3. Encourage implementation of Travel Plan initiatives
4. Encourage employers to install cycle parking at or within easy reach of every public building and large workplaces in County in accordance with the Accessibility and Parking Guidelines
5. Encourage recreational family cycling and engage new cyclists by supporting regular events and inspire progress and development through events such as the Durham Big Ride
6. Establish a Festival of Cycling (to include rides, demonstrations, films, free bike loan, training)
7. Establish the County Council as a cycle friendly employer with provision of adequate showers, parking, salary-sacrifice bike purchase scheme





## 7. Conclusion

Not only can cycling help create fitter, healthier, wealthier and greener communities, it is also a thrilling and compelling activity for individuals. In short, cycling offers more. It is an efficient form of transport, an opportunity to exercise regularly, to improve poor and maintain good health, a way of saving money, it gives time to soak up local places and it reduces vehicular traffic on roads.

## 8. Action Plan

The Cycling Strategy will be delivered through the following Action Plan.



“Cycle tracks will  
abound in Utopia.”  
*H.G. Wells*



## 8.1 Action Plan Key

### Policy:

Our approach to delivering the plans aims

### Action:

The specific task/scheme to be delivered

### PI (Performance Indicator):

The measure we will use to report progress

### Lead & Partners:

The team/partners involved in delivery

### Aims:

The plan's aims addressed

### Timeframe:

The timescale for delivery

### Cost:

-£ = no additional cost, uses existing staff resource and may lead to efficiency saving  
 £ = up to £10,000  
 ££ = £10-100,000  
 £££ = £100-500,000  
 ££££ = More than £500,000

## 8.2 Monitoring

The Action Plan will be monitored through an annual assessment of actions delivered and performance indicators reached in annual reports and a final report in 2015.

A working group will be established to act as a critical friend to assess the plan's success. Regular updates will be provided to enable the group to evaluate progress against the Action Plan.

## 8.3 Funding

The Action Plan shows works to be delivered over the next 3 years and we have shown approximate costings. We have used the plan to draw up a work programme for Year 1, detailing schemes and funding required and we will do the same for each financial year.

Capital schemes in Years 1 & 2 will be eligible for Local Transport Plan 3 funding through the Walking and Cycling budget. We hope that similar central government funding will be available in Year 3 to support the delivery of the Action Plan.

In addition, partnership projects will provide match funding such as Area Action Partnerships, Limestone Landscapes and Limestone LinX.

## 8.4 Action Plan Tables

Building Block 1	Action	Delivery	Lead & Partners	Aims	Cost	Timeframe
<b>POLICY</b>		<b>PI</b>				
<b>1: We will audit the cycle network</b>	1. Audit current network starting with 12 main towns	4 towns/year audited	DCC Transport and Highways, strategic alliance	3,4,6	££	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Create cycle network maps for operational and strategic management of network and create publically accessible version	Maps produced and incorporated into working practices	DCC Transport and Highways	3,4,6	£	By Yr 3
<b>2: We will assess the cycle and road network</b>	1. Classify routes - create hierarchy, identify fine-aggregate routes and safety issues	Information mapped and incorporated into working practices	DCC Transport and Highways	3,4,6	-£	By Yr 3
	2. Prioritise improvements	Annual priority lists agreed	DCC Transport and Highways	1,3,4,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Review highway network in 12 main towns and establish opportunities to reallocate road space which could be used for cycle lanes or cycle parking (i.e. space currently used for car parking)	Review 4 towns/year and action plan created by 2015	DCC Transport and Highways	All	£	Yrs 1,2,3
<b>3: We will ensure the cycle infrastructure is better planned and incorporated into the planning system</b>	1. New developments are required to include pedestrian and cycling routes which are direct, attractive and convenient, take priority over motor traffic and cycle parking where appropriate	Cycling policies and recommendations created and included in relevant documents	DCC Transport, Planning, Highways and developers	All	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Request new workplace buildings have Travel Plans which are cycle friendly, with sufficient cycle parking and facilities for showering/changing	Number of new cycle-friendly Travel Plans	DCC Sustainability, Planning, BSF	All	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Require all new roads include cycle infrastructure or provision for cycling	Number of new roads including cycling infrastructure	DCC Transport, Highways, Planning	All	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	4. Maximise connectivity between existing facilities and development when planning new routes	Number of connections created	DCC Transport, Planning, Highways, developers	3,4,6,7	£££	Yrs 1,2,3
	5. Pilot a road safety and speed reduction campaign coupled with a socially-targeted cycling and health promotional campaign	Campaign carried out	DCC Transport, Health Improvement, NHS Foundation Trust	2,7	£	By Yr 3
	6. Map cycle super routes for 12 main towns	Route maps created for 4 towns/year	DCC, external agency	3,4,6,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3



Building Block 1	Action	Delivery				
POLICY		PI	Lead & Partners	Aims	Cost	Timeframe
<b>4: We will use sustainable and best practice design standards</b>	1. Utilise environmentally sound methods for creation and maintenance of cycle infrastructure	Number of schemes using env sound methods	DCC Transport, Highways	3,6,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Ensure green infrastructure design and bicycle transport improvements are mutually supportive	Number of schemes demonstrating good practice	DCC GI, Planning, Transport, Highways	1,3,4, 6,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Integrate off and on road routes	Number of links or crossings created or improved	DCC Transport, Sport and Leisure	3,4,6, 7	££££	Yrs 1,2,3
	4. Use best practice design guidelines to attract riders of all ages and abilities and ensure quality of experience	Number of schemes adhering to best practice	DCC Transport, Highways	3,4,6, 7	-£	Yr 2
	5. Work with public transport operators to integrate tourism with public transport (marketing, carrying cycles, cycle parking enhancements, promotional events etc).	Number of schemes in place	DCC Transport, public transport operators	2,3,4, 5,7	£	Yrs 2,3
<b>5: We will build a high quality network and include cycle parking</b>	1. Anticipate and provide high quality cycle parking at key locations	Number of cycle parking installations	DCC Transport,	2,3,4, 5,7	££	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Ensure all staffed Council buildings have sufficient cycle parking which complies with modern standards (BREEAM compliant)	Percentage of buildings with sufficient parking	DCC Assets, Transport	2,3,4, 7	££	By Yr3
	3. Develop a backbone of urban cycle super routes in the 12 main towns	Number of cycle super routes delivered	DCC Transport, Highways, Planning	All	££££	By Yr 3
	4. Monitor use before and after improvements of key infrastructure schemes	Number of counts undertaken and % change of use recorded	DCC Transport and Highways	2-5	£-££	Yrs 1,2,3



Building Block 2	Action	Delivery				
POLICY		PI	Lead & Partners	Aims	Cost	Timeframe
<b>6: We will operate the network to maximise safety for users</b>	1. Assess Road Safety data to inform cycle route design and engineering improvements at key locations	Assessment made and used in improvements programme	DCC Transport, Highways,	2,3,4, 6	-£	Yrs 2,3
	2. Implement enforcement practices that contribute to safety and attractiveness of cycling	Number of enforcement cases implemented	DCC Transport, Highways, Durham Constabulary	1,2,3, 7	-£	Yrs 2,3



Building Block 2	Action	Delivery				
POLICY		PI	Lead & Partners	Aims	Cost	Timeframe
<b>7: We will maintain the network to high standards to maximise comfort and effective use</b>	1. Establish a system for management of cycling network through maintenance, inspection and recording	System established and implemented	DCC Transport, Highways	1,3,4	-£	By Yr 3
	2. Use LTP3 funds for maintenance of the cycling network for vegetation removal, sweeping (where appropriate coordinate with highway hedgecutting programme) and pothole repair	Cycle route maintenance included in LTP schedule and programme delivered	DCC Transport, Highways	1,3,4, 7	££	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Produce a map of key routes for winter maintenance	Map produced and delivery coordinated with highways	DCC Transport and Highways	1,2,3, 7	£	Yr 2
<b>8: We will improve the network through development and modernisation</b>	1. Develop a strategic creation programme of new routes through permissive agreements, dedication of land, bridleway creations and cycle track orders	Programme established and 4 routes created	DCC Transport, Highways, Legal	All	££££	By Yr 3
	2. Improve and modernise signing and ensure a coordinated approach	4 signage schemes delivered	DCC Transport, Highways	2,3,4, 5,7	££	By Yr 3
	3. Improve existing key urban routes as part of a prioritised programme	2 urban routes improved/year	DCC Transport, Highways	All	£££	Yrs 1,2,3
	4. Improve cycle routes to schools and colleges/universities through a prioritised programme	2 routes to educational establishments improved/year	DCC Transport, Highways	All	£££	Yrs 1,2,3
	5. Support the installation of cycle parking at educational establishments	3 cycle parking schemes supported/year	DCC Transport, Highways	All	££	Yrs 1,2,3
	6. Improve key recreational routes through a prioritised programme	3 recreational routes improved/year	DCC Transport, Highways, Sport and Leisure	All	£££	Yrs 1,2,3
<b>9: We will refine the network to maximise accessibility and connectivity</b>	1. Draw up refinement plans for crossings and connections on key routes following audits	Action Plan devised Number of crossings and connections improved	DCC Transport, Highways, Planning	2,3,4	££	Yrs 2, 3
	2. Reconfigure NCN Route through Durham City	Reconfigured route open	DCC Transport, Highways, Sustrans	All	£££	Yr 2
<b>10: We will enforce legislation which protects access rights, promotes ease of use and enhances the environment</b>	1. All schemes to include provision for biodiversity enhancement and to fully comply with European species and habitat regulations	All schemes provide enhancement for biodiversity	DCC Ecology	3,6,7	££	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Protect the network and minimise negative impacts caused by developments	All developments to include quality cycling provision	All	3,4,6, 7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Enforce highway laws on parking and speed to encourage cycling	Number of enforcement cases	Durham Constabulary	2,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3





Building Block 3	Action	Delivery				
POLICY		PI	Lead & Partners	Aims	Cost	Timeframe
<b>11: We will provide training and education to staff and the public</b>	1. Continue to roll out Bikeability training for children and Get Cycling scheme for adults	Number of schools receiving training	DCC Transport	2,7	££	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Encourage other cycle journeys for those who have completed Bikeability training (provide maps, information, safe routes and parking - required for level 3 Bikeability)	Number of people receiving information	DCC Transport, Sport and Leisure	2,7	£	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Produce guide on safer cycling for staff and the public, to include information for drivers on safe conduct (including information on the network available to cyclists and responsibilities under Highway Code)	Guide produced and distributed through targeted campaign	DCC Transport, Sport and Leisure	2,7	£	By Yr 3
	4. Provide training for staff on cycling audit and design	Number of staff receiving training	DCC Transport, Highways, Sport and Leisure, external agency	2,3,4,7	£	Yrs 2,3
<b>12: We will promote cycling through a variety of schemes</b>	1. Devise a co-ordinated marketing campaign and establish a one-stop cycling webpage on the County Council website	Campaign implemented and webpage live	Establish working group	2,4,5,7	£	By Yr 3
	2. Update DCC cycling maps and make available online, with journey planner to promote 5 mile cycle trips	Maps available online	DCC Transport and external agency	2,5,7	£	Yrs 2,3
	3. Market visitor cycle break opportunities online and distribute literature to visitors pre-arrival and at destination, link with tourism campaigns and accommodation providers and refreshment stops with the Cyclist's Welcome accreditation	Number of visitor opportunities promoted	Visit County Durham	2,5,7	£	Yr 3
	4. Promote newly improved and new routes	Route information provided through targeted campaign	DCC Transport, Sport and Leisure	1,2,5,7	£	Yrs 1,2,3
<b>13: We will encourage participation</b>	1. Expand programmes that promote long-term change i.e. guided bike rides for those with less confidence	3 programmes expanded	DCC Sport and Leisure, Transport, NHS FT	2,5,7	-£	By Yr 3
	2. Pilot an electric bike hub for staff at a major employer, roll out if successful	Pilot undertaken and electric bikes available for staff	DCC Transport, Health Improvement	2,5,7	£	Yr 1
	3. Encourage cycling to work with large employers through Travel Plans and workplace health schemes (i.e. Better Health at work) and Cycle Guarantee scheme	Number of organisations promoting staff cycling to work	DCC Transport, Health Improvement	2,5,7	£	Yrs 1,2,3
	4. Encourage employers to invest in a fleet of pool bikes to encourage short trips	Number of employers with pool fleets	DCC Transport	2,5,7	-£	Yrs 2,3

Building Block 3	Action	Delivery				
POLICY		PI	Lead & Partners	Aims	Cost	Timeframe
<b>13: continued</b>	5. Promote independent cycling through health campaigns - use best practice and information on key motivators and link to Healthy Hearts programme	Deliver 2 health campaigns promoting independent cycling	DCC Sport and Leisure, Transport, Health Improvement, NHS FT	1,2,5,7	-£	By Yr 3
<b>14: We will engage and inspire communities, clubs, schools and businesses</b>	1. Work with cycling groups, forums and partnerships as a mechanism for reviewing routes, providing information, monitoring progress and budget allocation and consulting on proposals	Work with 4 groups / partnerships	DCC Sport and Leisure, Transport, NHS FT	2,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	2. Work with cycling and triathlon clubs and provide support for development	5 clubs supported	DCC Sport and Leisure, NHS FT	2,5,7	£	Yrs 1,2,3
	3. Encourage implementation of Travel Plan initiatives	Number of Travel Plans implemented	DCC Transport	2,5,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	4. Encourage employers to install cycle parking at or within easy reach of every public building and large workplaces in County in accordance with the Accessibility and Parking Guidelines	Percentage of large employers with cycle parking	DCC Transport	2,3,4,5,7	-£	Yrs 1,2,3
	5. Encourage recreational family cycling and engage new cyclists by supporting regular events and inspire progress and development through events such as the Durham Bike Ride	Number of people attending events Number of events providing support for novice riders	DCC Sport and Leisure, Transport	2,5,7	£	Yrs 1,2,3
	6. Establish a Festival of Cycling (to include rides, demonstrations, films, free bike loan, training)	Festival delivered	DCC Transport, Sport and Leisure, external agencies	2,5,7	££	By Yr 3
	7. Establish the County Council as a cycle friendly employer with provision of adequate showers, parking, salary-sacrifice bike purchase scheme	Number of good practice examples delivered on County Council premises	DCC Assets, Transport	All	££	By Yr 3





The bicycle is the most civilized conveyance known to man. Other forms of transport grow daily more nightmarish. Only the bicycle remains pure in heart.

*Iris Murdoch, 'The Red and the Green'*



## 9. Appendices

### 9.1 Cycling Tourism Infrastructure

#### Key routes in the County

Sea to Sea (C2C)	National Cycle Network (NCN routes: 1, 7 and 14 through County Durham)
National Byway	
Public bridleways and byways	
Railway Paths	Walney to Wear (Regional Route 20)

#### Key Cycling projects

Bike Bowes	North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership's Pack
Limestone LinX	Horse Trails and Wheels to the Wild

#### Key Cycling Hubs

Hamsterley Forest	(proposed: Eastgate)
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### Public Transport Links

Rail Stations: Durham, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street, Seaham, Shildon, Newton Aycliffe, Heighington, Stanhope

Go North East Lime Bus Services 8, 78 and 78A

National Rail Network (pre-book cycles except Northern Rail)

Weardale Railway (cycles allowed)

### Key Cycling Events

Durham Big Ride & Beast	Etape Pennines
Halfords Tour	Tour of Britain
Local club events (i.e. Hamsterley Trailblazers 1-2-1, triathlons)	Tour of Reservoirs
(Also local events that could be advertised to visitors)	

### Key Providers

Chain-Events	Cycle Trax
Cycle Trex	Durham County Council
NHS Foundation Trust	Wood N Wheels

### 9.2 Key Partners and consultees

Cycling is relevant to many service areas across Durham County Council including: Transport, Sport&Leisure, Green Infrastructure, Planning, Highways, Public Rights of Way, VisitCountyDurham, Countryside, Health Improvement, Sustainability, Streetscene and Traffic. Officers from these service areas will continue to meet to ensure co-ordination of projects and funding.

County Durham Local Access Forum	Cycling Groups
Arriva North East	Chester le Track
County Durham Sport	Cyclists Touring Club
Durham Constabulary	Durham Heritage Coast Partnership
Durham Rural Community Council	Forestry Commission
Go North East	Groundwork Trust
Highways Agency	Key Landowners
Living Streets	Local Motion
National Express	Natural England
NE Chamber of Commerce	NHS County Durham and Darlington
Network Rail	North Pennines AONB Partnership
Northern Rail	Railfuture
Sport England	Sustrans
The British Horse Society	The Ramblers Association



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### 9.4 Glossary

AAP	Area Action Partnership
AROW	Access and Rights of Way
CDLAF	County Durham Local Access Forum
GI	Green Infrastructure
LTP	Local Transport Plan
NHS FT	National Health Service Foundation Trust
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
RED	Regeneration and Economic Development



## 9.5 Assessments

The following assessments have been carried out on the draft Cycling Strategy and any amendments required as a result of the assessments have been incorporated into the final version of the plan.

- Joint Health and Sustainability Impact Assessment
- Equality Impact Assessment

These assessments are available on request.

For major cycling infrastructure schemes a Habitats Regulation Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment and an Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out.



When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road, without thought on anything but the ride you are taking.

*Arthur Conan Doyle, Scientific American, 1896*







It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. Thus you remember them as they actually are, while in a motor car only a high hill impresses you, and you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle. *Ernest Hemingway*



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