



Dacorum

Cycling Strategy

October 2009

Council's Resolution: Extract from the Full Council Key Decisions Sheet
30th September 2009

Points 1 and 2 were approved by Cabinet.

Referrals from
Cabinet 22
September 2009

9. Dacorum Cycling Strategy - CA/318/09

1. The Dacorum Cycling Strategy as a basis for obtaining funding for cycling facilities via such sources as tariffs, planning agreements made under section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990, the Community Infrastructure Levy and possible growth funding for sustainable transport, to contribute towards the forthcoming Tring and Berkhamsted Urban Transport Plans, and to future reviews of the Hemel Hempstead Urban Transport Plan.
2. The Dacorum Cycling Strategy as an advisory document which will guide preparation of Transport Plans and the Local Development Framework, and assist infrastructure planning.

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Introduction

An integrated long term sustainable transportation strategy is an essential ingredient in the path to securing accessible and environmentally acceptable transport for everyone. The continuing increase in private car use cannot be sustained in the long term and it is necessary, therefore, to plan other ways forward. Cycling has a clear role to play within this framework and the formulation of a cycling strategy is an integral part of this approach.

Despite the fact that around half UK households own a bicycle, on average less than 2% of trips are undertaken by bicycle, compared with 11% in Germany, 15% in Switzerland and 18% in Denmark.¹ The 2001 Census shows that Hertfordshire is comparable to the national average, but that Dacorum falls below it.

Table 1

Area	% cycling to work
Hertfordshire	1.8
Dacorum	1.2
Hemel Hempstead	1.5
Berkhamsted	0.7
Tring	1.0
Rest of Dacorum	0.8

Although there are undoubtedly some differences in the demography, topography, traffic density and travel desires between countries, there is still enormous potential to increase the levels of cycle use, particularly as half of all trips currently undertaken in the UK are less than two miles in length, and 40% of commuting car trips are less than 3 miles.² Short trips by car are the most polluting.

Cycling is environmentally friendly and cheap compared with other transport modes. It is non-polluting, and takes up less road space and parking space (around 10 cycles can be parked in the space needed for one car). Cycling provides a valuable form of healthy exercise, reducing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and the most common type of diabetes. Aerobic fitness is boosted by 11% after just 6 weeks of cycling a short distance 4 times a week. Cycling England has quantified the financial benefits of making provision for cyclists.

However, the cycling environment is hostile in places with perceived dangerous traffic conditions, unsuitable road design and a lack of secure parking and other facilities. To improve these conditions it is necessary to ensure a planned and consistent approach to the provision of better facilities, and to publicise those that are available. This strategy will help to define the Council's role in meeting the needs of the cyclist in a consistent and balanced way. With the focus on the needs of cyclists that this strategy will provide, it is hoped that the Council will be able to play its part in making the cycling environment safer, more attractive and more enjoyable, thereby presenting a real option to prospective travellers in the selection of their means of transport for local journeys.

¹ National Cycling Strategy (para 1.1.1)

² National Cycling Strategy (page 2)

There are undoubtedly a number of people who would currently like to cycle but are put off by the conditions, and improvements will encourage them to do this. Improvements that are installed now will also, it is hoped, encourage the younger generation to continue with cycling as a mode of transport instead of reverting to the motor car.

OBJECTIVES

Dacorum Council's long term vision is that the continuing improvement of cycle facilities in the borough will produce a culture where the uptake of cycling as a mode of transport will be a popular, safe, attractive and enjoyable alternative to the private car.

The specific objectives of this strategy are:-

- O1. To develop a safe, convenient, efficient and attractive transport infrastructure to encourage and facilitate cycling.**
- O2. To maximise cycling as a safe, convenient and enjoyable means of transport.**

TARGETS

The Government's ambitious target of quadrupling levels of cycling by 2010 in the 1996 Cycling Strategy was dropped in "The Future of Transport" White Paper. Instead, local authorities should set specific local targets. Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 2005/06-2010/11 aims to increase cycling county-wide by 11% by 2011. This target has been met county-wide and HCC are considering what the targets will be for the next round of Local Transport Plans. The targets adopted by this strategy are set out below, followed by the policies to achieve them.

- T1. To contribute to a County-wide increase in cycling year on year and increase the number of cycle monitoring locations.***

Dacorum currently has two official cycle monitoring locations (Automatic Cycle Counters at Station Road, Tring, and Two Waters Road, Apsley). Further locations in Hemel Hempstead are proposed in the County Cycling Strategy. However there are no monitoring locations in Berkhamsted at present. In addition cyclists are included in cordon surveys of the main towns every three years, although the locations are historical and may require review to reflect recent trends.

- T2. To agree the aspirational cycle network with Hertfordshire County Council for Tring and Berkhamsted in association with their Urban Transport Plans, and for Hemel Hempstead in the UTP review.***
- T3. To prepare a phased programme, jointly with Hertfordshire Highways, to implement the agreed cycling proposals employing appropriate funding streams.***

POLICY CONTEXT

Cycling policies are likely to be most effective as part of an integrated transport strategy which emphasises traffic restraint, speed reduction and the promotion of environmentally-friendly modes. This cycling strategy supports the development of a package of measures in which cycling is an essential element in local transport.

The strategy takes account of the aims and guidance set out in Government advice, the Regional Spatial Strategy, the HCC Cycling Strategy (which shapes the approach to delivering cycling infrastructure county-wide), the West Hertfordshire Area Transport Plan (which sets the scene for transport issues in Dacorum), Dacorum Borough Local Plan, Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan, Hemel Hempstead Urban Transport Plan (identifies schemes and measures), and Dacorum Sustainable Community Strategy, together with many other reference documents. Urban Transport Plans for Tring and Berkhamsted are programmed for 2011/12 and 2012/13 respectively, and the proposals in this Strategy are put forward for consideration in these UTPs. Proposals will need to contribute to meeting LTP targets and policy aims to be obtain funding.

As part of an integrated approach to transport, Dacorum Council has developed and will continue to develop policies and systems and where appropriate put pressure on other authorities to develop programmes, aimed at increasing the attractiveness of cycling as a safe, convenient and enjoyable means of transport. With the loss of its highway agency powers in September 2002, Dacorum's role in the direct provision of such facilities is limited. In this context the Council's main roles can be publicity, ensuring provision of facilities through development proposals, and working with other bodies with appropriate resources for the provision of cycle facilities.

POLICIES

Planning

- P1. New development schemes should include a cycle audit, where appropriate, or otherwise ensure that schemes provide improvements to, or at least have no negative impact on, the safety, comfort and convenience of routes used by cyclists.**

For example, new development should identify opportunities for safe cut-throughs for cyclists and not sever any existing or proposed cycle routes or unnecessarily prejudice accessibility by cyclists

- P2. Financial contributions will be secured from private developers in connection with planning applications and will be used to improve transport infrastructure to aid cyclists.**
- P3. All new developments shall meet minimum cycle parking standards as defined in Appendix 5 of the Adopted Dacorum Borough Local Plan, and follow the advice in the HCC Cycle Parking Guide.**
- P4. Dacorum Council will encourage the provision of adequate cycle parking, according to standards defined in the local plan, at educational establishments, retail centres, public transport interchanges, leisure facilities, and other major journey attractors. Employers will be encouraged to provide cycle parking through the Dacorum Green Business Club.**

The intent of this policy is to seek to ensure that provision is made for cycle facilities at existing locations, to the same standard as would currently be required at similar new developments.

- P5. The authority will continue to protect disused railway lines as transport corridors.**
- P6. Priority will be given to links to and facilities at destinations in the main urban areas (such as schools, shops, employment areas and public transport interchanges); links between the main urban areas (National Cycle Network Route 57 and Regional Route 66); and links to surrounding settlements which generate significant amounts of commuting. These networks should be included in the highway and rights of way networks.**

Integration should 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, ultimately, the convenient carriage of cycles on trains and buses. Cyclists will be permitted, wherever safe and practicable, to use bus lanes and other priority measures.

Engineering

The primary aim of engineering measures is to provide a high quality cycle friendly infrastructure. This will be included in the road and rights of way networks, modified where possible and supplemented by cycle routes, cycle parking and other facilities to enable cyclists to reach all destinations safely, conveniently and more enjoyably.

- P7. Cycle routes and facilities will be reviewed and schemes identified in line with the UTP development programme.**
- P8. All routes should be designed to achieve the highest possible standards of coherence, directness, safety, attractiveness and comfort, improve cyclists' safety and give cyclists greater priority (in terms of access and journey time) over other traffic.**

Cycleways will, as far as possible, follow natural desire lines and levels and as far as practical be direct and continuous.

Cycle priority measures could include the following:

- 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
- Road closures with cut-throughs
- Shared use on converted footways - only in exceptional circumstances where no alternatives are available

P9. The Council will press Hertfordshire County Council to undertake prompt and high standard structural surface and lighting maintenance on segregated cycle facilities and all roads used by cyclists and lighting maintenance on urban routes.

P10. The feasibility of integrating measures to facilitate cycling will be with measures to aid pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties will be investigated.

The needs and preferences of cyclists match very closely those of wheelchair users: smooth level surfaces, gentle gradients, barrier-free access. Access for cyclists will be considered in pedestrian areas where pedestrian flows during peak shopping hours make this practicable.

Safety and Security

P11. Dacorum Council will liaise with Hertfordshire County Council to identify potential remedial schemes to reduce cycle accidents.

The cycling environment is currently considered by some to be dangerous, but perceived and actual risk will fall as numbers of cyclists increase and other vehicle numbers fall. From 2003 to 2006 the number of recorded cycle accidents varied between 34 and 18 per annum. However the latter figure included two fatalities.

P12. The Council, along with local cycling groups, will work with Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that an appropriate standard of street lighting is provided on urban cycle routes.

This is important both as a road safety measure for cyclists and as a security measure against crime, and will include an annual check of street lighting on cycle routes and repair of defects within 48 hours of notification.

P13. Dacorum Council will promote the provision of secure cycle parking facilities to reduce theft of bicycles.

Encouragement and Publicity

P14. Dacorum Council will refresh its own programme of measures as a cycle-friendly employer and encourage greater staff awareness and use of existing facilities.

The Civic Centre already has secure cycle parking and showers for staff, a cycling allowance for trips made by bike, and Sheffield stands in front of the Civic Centre.

P15. Dacorum Council encourage other major employers in the area to adopt cycle friendly policies for their staff through the Dacorum Green Business Club.

P16. Dacorum Council supports the County Council's Sustainable Modes to School Strategy, the Safer Routes to Schools programme production of school travel plans (which encourage and facilitate walking and cycling) as a means to improve the safety, fitness and independent mobility of school children, and to reduce congestion and traffic danger around schools.

The school travel plans should include:

- A target for increasing cycle use for journeys to secondary schools
- Provision of safer routes to school

- Provision of adequate, secure, covered cycle parking at schools
- Provision of cycle-training for all children. This should include indoor, in school premises and on-road training as appropriate.
- A review of opportunities to restrain car trips to educational establishments by car parking restraint

New education establishments and housing developments should be located so as to minimise journey to school distances.

P17. Dacorum Council supports provision of on-road cycle training for adults.

P18. Dacorum Council will support infrastructure measures with a programme of complementary publicity to publicise 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.

The Council supports the County Council's Travelwise travel awareness campaign as a means to co-ordinate measures to encourage cycling and walking and a reduction in car use.

Monitoring

P19. Dacorum Council will liaise with Hertfordshire County Council to undertake more comprehensive monitoring of cycle use, accidents involving cyclists and cycle theft, to inform infrastructure development and to measure progress towards targets. In particular, a monitoring location should be identified in Berkhamsted.

Monitoring should include:

- Annual Review of Cycling Strategy
- Recording of pedal cyclists as standard procedure in all manual traffic counts and vehicle turning counts
- Regular monitoring of cycle traffic flows at agreed locations
- Cycle parking
- Roadside surveys
- Collation of figures on location and number of cycle injury accidents as a three year rolling average.
- Collation of figures on location and number of cycle thefts
- Progress towards targets for cycle use for trips to secondary schools
- School Travel Plans
- Cycle training schemes
- Cycling events (such as the recent event in the former Market Square)

PROPOSALS

Following extensive discussion with local cycling groups, existing routes and proposals for new routes and facilities were identified. The new routes/facilities considered most important were assigned to Priority 1. The routes are also divided into Strategic (i.e linking the main settlements) and Local (predominantly within towns).

Strategic

National Cycle Network (NCN)

NCN Route 57 runs from Cricklade in Wiltshire to Welwyn Garden City. The route is open and signed between Oxford and Chesham. Detailed routing has still to be finalised between Chesham and the start of the Nickey line in Hemel Hempstead.

Regional Route 66 is planned to largely follow the canal between Aylesbury, Tring, Hemel Hempstead and Watford.

Inter-urban

Footpaths adjoining the A4251 and A4146 are little used by pedestrians, and could be converted to shared use:

- IU 1 Wharf Lane, Dudswell to Newground Road (A4251)
- IU2 Edge of Berkhamsted to Little Heath Lane (A4251), then following Pix Farm Lane, Pouchen End Lane and Chaulden Lane (NB poor road condition)
- IU3 Gadebridge Park to Red Lion Leighton Buzzard Road (A4146)

Adjoining districts

- Bedmond Road (Three Rivers District are progressing this route)
- Northfield Road (Pitstone, Aylesbury Vale to Tring Station)

Local

Berkhamsted

Berkhamsted is a linear valley town, with a height range from 110 m to 160 m above sea level. It had the lowest percentage of people of working age cycling to work (0.64% for Berkhamsted alone, and 0.73% with Northchurch). The High Street would be the preferred route for cyclists, but although traffic-calmed, it is dominated by traffic, with short stay parking bays alongside. There is a 20mph zone between St John's Well Lane and Three Close Lane. Reducing vehicle speeds contributes to cyclists' safety, and speed restrictions could be extended. Removing central white lines has been shown to reduce vehicle speeds, and enable space to be allocated to cyclists. The Grand Union Canal towpath is also well-used by pedestrians and anglers, and local cyclists are concerned about potential conflict.

There is little cyclist-specific provision in Berkhamsted. There is one useable cycle lane and limited cycle parking. The High Street has a scatter of customised cycle stands between Kings Road and Three Close Lane provided as part of the Bypass Demonstration Project. However in some instances the wood is splitting and they may require replacement/relocation. The most recent cycle parking provision is at two filling station upgrades. The main proposals in Berkhamsted seek to provide alternative routes on quieter roads parallel to the High Street and the canal towpath; identify routes to secondary schools; and increase cycle parking provision.

Berkhamsted Schemes for consideration in UTP

Priority 1	Priority 2
B1 Cycle path along north side of Kingshill Way, including crossings of Kings Road and Chesham Road; traffic calming of Kingshill Way and Shootersway	B7 Upgrade bridleway from steps to a ramp to improve access between Bridgewater School and Northchurch Common Bridleway.
B2 Extension of 20mph zone to Swing Gate Lane. Considered previously and not pursued.	B8 Create cut-through from Canal Fields to River Park Industrial Estate. Considered previously and not pursued due to land issues.
B3 Cut-through between Northbridge Road and Brimstone Walk	B9 Upgrade road from South Bank Road to Admiral Way
B4 Install cyclists' Advanced Stop Lines at the Kings Road/High Street traffic signals	B10 Provide ramp or wheeling channel between Ellesmere Road and Bank Mill Lane
B5 Warning signs on Brownlow Road/New Road (leisure route)	B11 Cycle path up Chesham Road (Ashlyns School)
B6 Remove central white line in High Street Northchurch	
Cycle Parking: Ashlyns School, Bridgewater School, High Street including Civic Centre and Town Hall, Sports Centre, River Park Industrial Estate, Northbridge Way	

Hemel Hempstead

Hemel Hempstead is a New Town based on the Bulbourne and Gade valleys. The valley setting leads to similar height differences to Berkhamsted (80 to 140 metres). The western part is more undulating due to the presence of dry valleys, but the eastern side is more level once the top of the valley sides is reached.

The town centre is in the Gade Valley, and Local Centres are spread amongst the residential areas. The main employment area is on the eastern edge close to the M1 whilst the main railway station is in the Bulbourne valley.

The town has the highest proportion of cycling to work (1.5% overall), and some wards with levels higher than the County figure:

- Adeyfield East 2.3%
- Adeyfield West, 2.3%
- Bennetts End 1.9%.

These wards are on the plateau with relatively level access to the Maylands Employment Area and downhill journeys to the Gade Valley.

Traffic calming is present in many of the residential neighbourhoods, and there are 20mph zones in Boxmoor and Crabtree.

Hemel Hempstead has benefitted from cycle provision in the past under the Hemel Hempstead Transportation Plan. Advisory routes were implemented between:

- Leverstock Green and Nash Mills,
- Maylands and the town centre via Adeyfield,
- town centre and Maylands via Highfield, and
- town centre and Gadebridge via Gadebridge Park.

Cyclists can also share the bus access from the Plough Roundabout and the bus lanes in Marlowes, though they are precluded from cycling in the pedestrianised area. However these routes would benefit from greater publicity and mapping.

Major new developments are envisaged for the Town Centre and Maylands, and enhanced provision for cyclists will be an integral part of the plans.

Cycle parking provision is available at most destinations, but in some cases needs to be improved or its availability publicised.

Hemel Hempstead Schemes

Priority 1	Priority 2
HH1 Canal towpath route from Winkwell to Nash Mills, and links to Apsley Station and Belswains Lane (Regional Route 66)	HH8 Town Centre to Jarman Park (shared footpath parallel to A414)
HH2 Two Waters, Apsley and Nash Mills Cycle Route (DBLP Proposal TWA18)	HH9 Shared use of footpath (Shrubhill Common to Fields End Lane)
HH3 Railway station to town centre (River Park/Kingsland Road, cut-through to St John's Road)	A414 crossings
HH4 New ramps to Nickey Line	HH10 Redbourn Road roundabout, Washington Avenue, Shenley Road, crossing, and continuation to Woodhall

	Farm
HH5 New riverside shared path as part of Waterhouse Square proposal	HH11 Gadebridge to Hemel Sports Centre and town centre (Lockers Park Lane, Heath Road, Cotterells Hill)
Maylands Master Plan HH6 Maylands Avenue shared paths	HH12 Chaulden to town centre avoiding Warners End Road (Long Chaulden, Varney Road, Parkwood Drive, Gravel Hill, Melsted Road, Bury Hill)
Maylands Master Plan HH7 Queensway to Maylands advisory route (via Great Road, Ellingham Road, Briery Way, Cleveland Road, Maxted Road, Boundary Way, Three Cherry Trees Lane, Swallowdale Lane)	HH13 Northridge Way to station – separate cyclist facility required
	HH14 Leverstock Green (cut-through to Leverstock Green Road, shared path to A414 crossing)
Cycle Parking: Hospital, Hemel Hempstead Station (more convenient location), Jarman Park, Snow Centre, Schools, Local Centres	

Tring

Tring is a market town at the edge of the Chilterns. It is very compact, mostly within 1.2 kms of the centre. The land falls away to the north of the town centre before rising again. The height difference is between 135 m and 150m. Overall 1% of employees cycle to work.

Cycle facilities in Tring include cycle paths to the station, and across Pound Meadow to Tesco. The High Street and the Grove Road area are traffic calmed. The main problem identified within the town is finding an alternative to Brook Street. The Tring Gateway Station Project seeks to improve sustainable access from the town and the new development at Pitstone to Tring Station. Cycle parking is fairly well provided, but not well signposted.

Tring Schemes for consideration in UTP

Priority 1	Priority 2
T1 Upgrade Footpath 41 to shared use between Town Centre and Icknield Way	T4 Shared path across Miswell Lane Recreation Ground, as link in advisory route from Industrial Estate and Town Centre
T2 Extend Station Road cyclepath round corner crossing Brook Street into new market and provide safe crossing of London Road	T5 Tring Hill roundabout to Industrial Estate
T3 Footpath 39 to form Safe Route to Schools from Station Road cycle path to Grove Road and Tring Schools	T6 Northfield Road (County boundary to Tring Station)
	T7 Marshcroft Lane (Grove Road to Northfield Road) – improve condition of section over railway bridge
Cycle Parking: Pendley Sports Centre, Pendley Manor Hotel (improved siting), Grassroots plc, Western Road shops	

Rest of Dacorum Schemes

Priority 2

Convert footpath along Ringshall Drive, Little Gaddesden to shared use

Church Road to Hudnall Corner, Little Gaddesden

Half Moon Lane, Markyate (bridleway section)

Track from Pickford Road, past Beechwood Park School, Home Farm to Roe End Lane

Ashridge Cycling Strategy

Chiltern Cycleway (Chilterns Conservation Board)

Cycle Parking

Markyate, Bovington, Kings Langley, Potten End, Flamstead, Northchurch, Little Gaddesden

2009/2010 Programme

- | | |
|--|--|
| Finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Ensure Development Control officers are fully aware of the Cycling Strategy and cyclists' needs for S.106 negotiations |
| Proposed Network design and implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Develop costings for Hemel Hempstead proposals |
| Usage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Work with Hertfordshire County Council to further develop procedures for regular monitoring of cycle usage (e.g. monitoring in Berkhamsted) |
| Cycle parking | <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Review cycle parking provision* Develop a cycle parking programme for local centres |
| Employers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Review and publicise the provision of staff facilities at Dacorum* Approach businesses in the Dacorum Green Business Club to provide cycle facilities |