Cycling & Walking Summary

Central Severn Vale Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Gloucestershire County Council’s Transport Planning Team
August 2018
Gloucestershire County Council’s Transport Planning Team
October 2018
CSV CWIP Summary

The contents of this plan have been developed in accordance with the Department for Transport Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans Technical Guidance for Local Authorities. With thanks to WSP, ITP and SYSTRA.

Contents Amendment Record
This report has been issued and amended as follows:

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<th>Revision</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>November 2018</td>
<td>SW</td>
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<td>December 2018</td>
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1. **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans**

1.1. The Department for Transport (DfT) launched its Cycle and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) in April 2017. The strategy outlines Government’s ambition ‘to make cycling and walking the natural choices for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey’.

1.2. Technical guidance was published by the DfT on *Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)*. LCWIPS are plans that local authorities are encouraged to develop, that set out the strategic approach to identifying long-term cycling and walking improvements, (ideally over a 10 year period) with a particular focus on and meeting the needs of people who do not currently walk or cycle. The guidance explained that LCWIPS should also include a draft network plan indicating the priority routes for investment, based on their connectivity with popular destinations, likely levels of usage and relevance to other local strategies, such as health and economic development.

1.3. LCWIPs will make the case for future investment to provide the basis of future funding bids and inform discussions with developers and should include a draft network plan indicating the priority routes for investment, based on their connectivity with popular destinations and likely levels of usage.

2. **Network Background**

2.1. Gloucestershire is serious about increasing the number of trips made by walking and cycling and it is Gloucestershire County Council’s view that this as an essential component of creating better places and improving the quality of people’s lives.

2.2. It is Gloucestershire County Council’s long-term aim to produce a number of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan’s (LCWIP) based on our Local Transport Plan Connecting Places Strategy areas. The initial LCWIP will focus on the centre of Gloucestershire, known as the Central Severn Vale, because it has the greatest population density and the highest propensity for change.

2.3. The Central Severn Vale (CSV) consists of the two largest urban areas in Gloucestershire; the city of Gloucester and the town of Cheltenham Spa as well as the communities of Churchdown and Bishops Cleeve. The total population covered by the LCWIP is 270,000.

2.4. Through this process we engaged with a variety of people to fully understand the range of barriers people have to cope with and what changes can be made to improve the quality of environment to enable more people to walk and cycle. It is important to move away from a culture where the car is the dominant mode of transport towards one where the car is one transport choice within a range of realistic travel options. Gloucestershire’s CSV Walking Infrastructure Plan (CWIP) will enable this.
2.5. As Gloucestershire grows over the next 15 years much of this growth will centre on the CSV area and it is hoped the CSV CWIP will provide a systematic framework through which to engage with local communities, shape discussions with developers, identify strategic walk and cycle networks, and direct delivery.

3. **Policy background**

3.1. The assessed need for development in the adopted Joint Core Strategy is 33,500 dwellings and a minimum of 192 hectares of B-class employment land to support approximately 39,500 new jobs. This level of development will present challenges. A key challenge for future transport delivery will be to develop and use the existing transport network to full capacity; it is not feasible or desirable to build our way out of projected growth in traffic congestion.

3.2. By 2020, the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Transport Strategy intends to explore the feasibility of amending legislation to recognise the use of cycles as a mobility aid in order to increase the number of disabled people cycling.

3.3. The CSV LCWIP will be incorporated into Local Policy through the planned Local Transport Plan) LTP review timed for 2019.

3.4. The Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy has a six point plan. This emphasises the importance of minimising the impact of development to ensure an efficient, safe and resilient transport network and strongly supports walking, cycling and public transport use, with the long-term aim of reducing reliance on the car for short and longer
3.5. Physical inactivity now kills as many people as smoking in the UK, and costs the economy £7.4bn a year. Two-thirds of people in Gloucestershire are inactive. Yet being physically active offers individuals and society a raft of benefits that extend beyond physical and mental health to relationships, success at school and work, social integration and reduced crime.

3.6. Gloucestershire County Council works with a large number of organisations, such as Active Gloucestershire which is a charity whose vision is that “everyone in Gloucestershire is active every day”.

3.7. In addition, GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has secured funding into the county through their Strategic Economic Plan. Funds secured by LEPs are for projects that benefit the local area and economy. In transport terms the LEP has supported several infrastructure projects including planned improvements to Cheltenham rail station forecourt, which will address walk and cycle access as well as public transport and parking.

4. **Cycling Infrastructure Plan**

4.1. The Central Severn Vale CWIP focuses on creating a county wide cycleway joining Bishops Cleeve in the north to the Sharpness Canal towpath in the west. This alignment connects the county’s three major priority cycling schemes which are currently in development:

- The Bishops Cleeve to Cheltenham cycleway beside the A435;
- Investment in cycling improvements by Highways England along the B4063 between Cheltenham and Gloucester; and
- The planned Canal and Rivers Trust upgrade to 5.6km of the Sharpness Canal Towpath between Gloucester and The Pilot Inn, Hardwicke to a shared cycle and walk facility.

4.2. The County Cycleway is described in more detail in Appendix 1.

4.3. A variety of data sources were used to identify areas of cycling potential. The 2011 Census data showed that the largest current cycle flows in Cheltenham and Gloucester are typically between 100 and 250 cyclists a day with greater numbers recorded around major employment sites. Another useful data source is the Propensity to Cycle Tool produced by the Department for Transport with the aim of enabling users to identify and plan for the areas with the greatest propensity to convert journeys to cycle;

- **Figure 3** illustrates 2011 Census cycle to work data for the county.
- **Figure 4** illustrates the potential for cycling should GCC adopt a Dutch approach to managing cycling.
- **Figure 5** highlights the potential increase in cycle flows.
Figure 3 – 2011 Census cycle to work data for Gloucestershire

Figure 4 – Go Dutch cycling scenario for Gloucestershire & prioritised area for LCWIP

Figure 5 – Potential increase in cycling flows in Central Severn Vale CWIP
4.4. Having identified the importance of connecting the strategic link between Cheltenham and Gloucester, to each of the respective town centres, stakeholders were consulted on the preferred route options. Once established these were audited by cycling enthusiasts and professionals to review existing barriers and identify solutions.

4.5. A technical report for Cycling Infrastructure was undertaken to look in detail at the required routes within the urban areas of Cheltenham and Gloucester, identifying the rationale for route selection and anticipated potential for increased cycling trips. This data led process led to the development of a list of prioritised schemes, which will become part of the Local Transport Plan delivery priorities. The prioritised list can be viewed at Appendix 2.

5. **Walking Infrastructure Plan**

5.1. The transport hubs at Cheltenham Spa rail station and Gloucester bus and rail station were looked at because of the number of walking trips they generate and their potential to attract more walking trips as part of a longer journey. The 2016 Cheltenham and Gloucester station travel plans identify a walking mode share of 26% and 33% respectively. This means Cheltenham generates around 1,600 walking trips daily and Gloucester over 1,300. For this reason the transport hubs were selected as the epicentre of the walking zones to be assessed.

5.2. Consultation was undertaken early on in the Walking Infrastructure Plan process to identify key destinations and desire lines. Stakeholders representing the local community, public transport users, walkers and cyclists, the voluntary sector, a community interest company, local businesses and local government transport/engineering & health professionals attended.

5.3. The project board then identified two routes in each town for audit, by assessing the routes in relation to local objectives such as managing air quality, reducing congestion and health and community benefits. The Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT) was used to assess the current condition and suitability of the routes. The WRAT uses a range of criteria, looking at the attractiveness, comfort, directness, safety and coherence of the routes. Each criterion is looked at in detail and scored between 0 and 2 for poor, adequate or good provision. An overall score of 70% is considered a minimum level of adequate provision.

5.4. In addition to the WRAT an Equalities Assessment Tool (EQAT) was developed by specialist transport planning consultants, Integrated Transport Planning Ltd. The EQAT provides a more qualitative assessment of the route in terms of its impact on protected characteristics groups. It considers operational, regulatory and behaviour based issues that may impact certain groups. A key part of the EQAT is to get people ‘thinking equally’. Functionality, legibility, seasonality, activity and perception are used to score aspects of the route between 0 and 2 for poor, adequate or good provision.

5.5. A technical report for Walking Infrastructure was undertaken to look in detail at the required routes within the urban areas of Cheltenham and Gloucester, investigating the rationale for route selection and anticipated potential for increased walking trips. This data led process led to the development of a list of prioritised schemes, which will become part of the Local Transport Plan delivery priorities. The prioritised list can be viewed at Appendix 3.

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1 Based on 2016/17 data collected for the Office of Rail Regulation (orr.gov.uk)
6. **Next Steps**

6.1. Once stakeholders have confirmed their agreement of the proposed routes and the prioritisation of schemes, these will become part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) review. The review will include a public consultation and, should CSV CWIP schemes be prioritised for inclusion in the LTP through this process, they will be identified as key schemes for the authority to seek funding towards.

6.2. The authority intends to conduct future investigation of lateral links to the strategic cycle link and to increase walking corridors to extend the current route proposals into more of a network across the Central Severn Vale.

6.3. The authority will update and refine its approach to developing LCWIP in response to Department for Transport evaluation of the CWIS process and currently anticipate that the LCWIP will be informed by urban centres and strategic allocations and will expand across the county in future years.
Appendix 1 - Gloucestershire’s countywide cycleway

The Department for Transport launched its Cycle and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) in April 2017. The strategy outlines Government’s ambition for cycling in England which is “to make cycling and walking the natural choices for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey”. The strategy introduces a set of aims and targets for 2025 including the doubling of cycle activity.

Over recent years improvements have been made to the cycle network within Gloucestershire including the area of the LEP defined “Growth Zone”. The Growth Zone is the area around the M5 and was designated by the Glos LEP in its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in 2014. This plan sets out how Gloucestershire is working to develop and deliver a cycle network to enable movement around the Growth Zone.

1. Newtown Cycle Track was opened in 2009 at a cost of £1m. It provides a key traffic-free spine route for people – especially school children and commuters – to walk and cycle. It has contributed to sustained high levels of cycling in Tewkesbury wards. As proposed development is allocated east of Tewkesbury there is a need to strengthen cycle route provision across the M5 corridor.

2. The gap in between Tewkesbury and Bishop’s Cleeve is narrowing as development builds out of these settlements. Quietly trafficked cycle routes should be identified and safeguarded here.

3. The need for improved cycling conditions between Bishop’s Cleeve and Cheltenham is a high priority. In particular, local businesses are keen to see infrastructure provided to retain their accessibility and attract a vibrant work force in the face of increasing traffic congestion on this corridor. In partnership with Sustrans a scheme has been developed and some funding secured.

4. As with most towns, Cheltenham has quiet ways and a wide choice of routes for cyclists, including the traffic free Honeybourne Line. The ‘Stimulates to Cycling’ Study (2015) has led to £40k of key improvements being made for cyclists across the west of Cheltenham which are being delivered in 2017.

5. Highways England are investing £3.7m into cycle route improvements on the corridor between Gloucester and Cheltenham. This will help make cycling safer and more attractive and reduce motorised traffic congestion on the Strategic Road Network.

6. Gloucester City provides a wide choice of key routes through the city: one is a traffic free canal tow path; one is a segregated facility adjacent to the SW bypass; another is the Bristol Road which carries much lower motorised traffic flows now. Also, on the eastern side, the A419 provides a key route. As part of the implementation of the ‘Stimulates to Cycling’ study (2015) £110k of key improvements are being made on this corridor in 2017.

7. The links between Gloucester and Stroud are adequate for experienced cyclists but not optimal. Opportunities will be taken to improve connectivity here and in association with the Stroudwater canal ‘Measuring Mile’.

8. The A419 corridor serving Stonehouse and Stroud offers mixed cycle route provision, mostly in relation to the Canal towpath and the Naillsworth Path. This provides a good leisure network but is less suitable to serve commute and school trips. Improvements to the highway are being delivered to facilitate development which will seek to improve conditions for all highway users, including cyclists.

9. Settlements such as Cirencester, Cinderford and Lydney will benefit from cycle facilities, which will need to be determined in a proportionate manner due to the size and likely demand.
Appendix 2 - Cycling infrastructure – Prioritisation results

Cheltenham

- The prioritisation table for proposed cycling schemes in Cheltenham is shown in the table below. The schemes are ranked as follows, with greatest benefits first:
  - (C/C) Parabola Road to Princess Elizabeth Way
  - (C/B) High Street to Parabola Road (town centre)
  - (C/D) Princess Elizabeth Way to Arle Court roundabout
  - (C/A) New Barn Lane to High Street

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<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Deliverability</th>
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Gloucester

- The prioritisation table for the proposed cycling schemes in Gloucester is shown in the table below. The schemes are ranked as follows:
  - (G/A) Cheltenham Road/Kenilworth Avenue
  - (G/B) London Road/Black Dog Way junction
  - (G/C) City Centre routes
  - (G/D) Southgate Street/Llanthony Road
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Appendix 3 - Walking infrastructure – Prioritisation results

Scheme ranking

- Each of the measures proposed would provide benefits for pedestrians and are scored in tables 1 and 2 below. The lowest ranked schemes are generally the higher cost schemes, including those requiring alterations to junctions, new parking arrangements and footway resurfacing or which are dependent on other work being completed first. For example, relocating the bus stop on Metz Way in Gloucester would affect the desired crossing point and any guardrail requirements. Changes to the alignment of the main vehicle entrances to the Hospital are dependent on a review of future servicing needs, patient transport and bus routings. In additions, with sufficient budget, it would be more effective to complete the route incrementally in one direction rather than cherry pick particular scheme. This would deliver a more tangible marked uplift to route users.

Cheltenham Walking Scheme Prioritisation

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# Gloucester Walking Scheme Prioritisation

**Key**

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Ranking based on overall weighting of RAG rating but with stronger emphasis on funding and deliverability.

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