

Local Development Framework

Briefing Paper

Cycling



Devon County Council's advice to Local Planning Authorities.

This is one of a series of briefing papers prepared by Devon County Council to assist the preparation of Local Development Documents. To view this, and other briefing papers, see <http://www.devon.gov.uk/ldf-briefing-papers> For more information or comment contact 01392 382275 or email environment@devon.gov.uk

Local Planning Authorities are requested to take the following matters into account in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and other documents:

- a) **Strategic Priorities** - Set out the strategic cycling priorities in the Core Strategy and indicating strategically important infrastructure [both existing and planned] on the key diagram and any more detailed core strategy inset diagrams.
(see Section 3a)
- b) **Tackling Traffic Congestion/Improving Air Quality** - by including measures to secure the longer term role of the strategic NCN network for long distance cycle tourism, supporting demand management and bringing forward land for appropriate infrastructure that allow for easy and direct access by bicycle.
(see Section 3b)
- c) **Delivering Accessibility** - by focusing development at those locations that offer the greatest accessibility to jobs, services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport; design significant new development so as to assist the servicing of the site by public transport and the extension and enhancement of walking and cycling links; requiring accessibility assessments for development that generates substantial trips and ensuring the accessibility needs of the mobility impaired are considered as part of the development process.
(see Section 3c)
- d) **Making Roads Safer** - by ensure appropriate highway measures are secured as part of new development, to reflect the priority needs of cycle users and the requirement for sympathetic quality design and supporting "secured by design" standards in the construction of other sustainable transport related infrastructure.
(see Section 3d)
- e) **Improving Recreation, Leisure and Tourism/ Promoting Health and Well-Being** - by:
Safeguard and extending the existing the NCN routes and associated facilities such as cycle friendly accommodation providers, cycle hire and trip end facilities, promoting and maintaining circular cycle routes that will improve the links between town and countryside. Supporting and extending the public rights of way network, including the strategic bridleway network as this is accessible for cycle users ensuring that cross border links with Dorset, Somerset and Cornwall are seamless. Promote sustainable travel planning, especially by bicycle, at visitor attractions that generate significant or growing numbers of motorised trips. (see Section 3e)
- f) **Improving Public Spaces** - by supporting the design of public spaces where the NCN and other cycle routes pass to simultaneously provide cycle facilities, reinforce local distinctiveness and deliver a quality public realm.
(see Section 3f)

1. Introduction

Devon County Council is responsible for contributing to the implementation of Devon Structure Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS] and, as the Transport Authority, responsible for the preparation and implementation of the Local Transport Plan [LTP] 2006-2011.

This Briefing Paper seeks to ensure that cycling and cycle facilities are provided for in LDFs as part of an integrated approach to travel and land use. This will support the overall development strategy of Devon 2016, meeting the social and economic needs of all sectors of the community in a way which improves safety, minimises environmental impact, minimises the use of resources whilst offering local options for sustainable travel and economic regeneration and development for leisure, tourism and cultural development.

The strategic priorities relating to cycling are to:

- ***Build in the use and integration of cycling as part of land use and travel planning***
- ***Develop cycling as a key sustainable travel mode when managing travel demand***
- ***Promote sustainable travel and modal choice ensuring that quality cycling provision is a high priority***
- ***Regard the National Cycle Network (NCN) as the core backbone and highest quality of cycle route provision in Devon to which other local cycle networks should be connected as seamlessly as possible***
- ***Develop more effective and integrated transport especially cycle/train and cycle/bus combinations***
- ***Identify and develop an integrated approach to sustainable transport investment in each part of Devon including cycle trip-end facilities at transport hubs and key interchanges***
- ***Ensure that cycling as a mode of travel plays a key role in minimising the impact of motorised transport on the environment.***

The Local Transport Plan and associated documents can be viewed on http://www.devon.gov.uk/devon_local_transport_plan.htm.

2. Key Issues to Address

Key issues to address include:

(a) Meeting environment objectives and targets - cycling and cycle use plays an important part in the LDF so that the key objectives and targets of the LTP can be met, namely: tackling traffic congestion; delivering accessibility; making roads safer; improving air quality; improving recreation and leisure; promoting health and well-being; and improving public spaces.

(b) Making cycling an attractive option for travel - the use of the bicycle for sustainable travel needs to be made an attractive option for journeys of less than 2 or 3 miles in Devon's urban areas notably Exeter, Exmouth, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot, but additionally in many of Devon's market and coastal towns especially those with level town centres or residential and workplace areas, such as Axminster, Braunton, Bideford, Holsworthy, Honiton, Ivybridge, Kingsteignton, Seaton, South Molton, Tiverton, and Totnes. Similarly, large areas of towns such as Kingsbridge, Sidmouth and even the centre of Ilfracombe need not be regarded as having topographical barriers to increasing levels of cycle use.

(c) Providing innovative cycling solutions in rural areas of Devon - Taking on the challenge of the need for more innovative solutions elsewhere in Devon's smaller more dispersed communities so that access by bicycle is a viable option. Access by bicycle to and from more remote communities into larger settlements remains challenging to implement and will necessitate bringing in successful ideas from elsewhere in both the UK and overseas such as cycle/bus combinations. Access for leisure purposes offers a different perspective as time, directness of travel and distance are often less critical.

(d) Safeguarding potential cycle routes from future development, at least until a thorough check has been made through the appropriate channels, all potential sustainable transport corridors and routes such as existing and disused railway lines, bridleways, footpaths, and even waterways. The existing highway network, including all cycle/walkways, is a key economic asset to the County, important for wider connectivity and economic competitiveness but so too are potential sustainable routes particularly when viewed against a background of climate change and ever increasing motor congestion

(e) Developing cycling strategies to provide sustainable, healthy travel alternatives to meet to meet travel demand and improve the local environment_- Recognising that the impact of motorised transport can seriously blight the urban environment through the creation of congestion, pollution and noise. As a result separate cycle strategies for the main congestion areas of Exeter, Barnstaple Newton Abbot and Totnes are being developed, the County Council, alongside the specific LTP strategies for these urban centres, aiming to help offer sustainable, healthy travel alternatives to meet and manage travel demand and improve the local environment. These strategies should be reflected in LDFs and are the subject of separate briefing papers.

(f) Addressing the fact that the location of development is critical for sustainable travel options. Encouraging access by bicycle should avoid issues of severance caused by major road, water or rail corridors and by large scale, inaccessible, existing development. Locating new development where sustainable travel modes particularly the bicycle can minimise the environmental impact and where development of these modes can be easily achieved is critical. Such impacts need to be carefully considered as part of the options and issues stage of LDFs.

(g) Ensuring that development regards sustainable travel modes particularly cycling as integral part of the main transport facilities. There must be a clear recognition that developer contributions to cycling, (walking and public transport) and the integration of these, as quality sustainable modes, must be factored in to any new development from the outset. By quality provision it is meant that cycle facilities are not only seen in terms of, for example, a well laid smooth cycle path or sufficient cycle parking stands at the trip-end but that the cycle route is both direct and unbroken and the cycle parking is located very conveniently for users. The route of planned new infrastructure will need to be safeguarded. This is particularly pertinent to new communities so that cycling is a central feature of design at the outset.

(h) Recognising the advantages regular cycling can offer to improve health and physical wellbeing including helping to reduce the growth in childhood obesity.

(i) Taking cognisance of the successes and lessons learned from the Exeter Cycle Demonstration Town (CDT) project and employing them throughout the rest of the County.

3. The Content of LDFs

Local Planning Authorities are requested to have regard to the following matters in preparing their Local Development Documents cycling related policies and proposals

a) Strategic Priorities

- The Core Strategy should reflect the strategic priorities relating to cycling (set out in Section 1) in a Policy and indicate strategically important infrastructure [both existing and planned] on the key diagram and any more detailed core strategy inset diagrams.
- Supporting the integration of cycling and cycle facilities as part of land use and travel planning
- Focussing development and locating traffic generating uses at locations that maximises accessibility to high quality sustainable modes, especially cycling.
- Reducing existing transport and congestion problems with appropriate mitigation and demand management measures; picking upon Cycle Demonstration Town successes
- Promoting the development of sustainable communities by development of comprehensive cycle networks, especially for trips of up to 3 miles, which link residential areas, main employment centres, town centres, education and other facilities.

b) Tackling Traffic Congestion/Improving Air Quality: LDF proposals should:

- Secure the longer term role of the strategic NCN network for long distance cycle tourism
- Support demand management – for example, through travel planning, parking and cycle policies; provision of integrated cycle routes and planning obligations
- Bring forward land for appropriate infrastructure, such as park and cycle sites; planned improvements to the highway network that allow for easy and direct access by bicycle
- Require transport impact assessments as part of the planning application process

c) Delivering Accessibility: LDF proposals should:

- Focus development at those locations that offer the greatest accessibility to jobs, services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport.
- Facilitate the provision of locally based services through development opportunities
- Design significant new development so as to assist the servicing of the site by public transport and the extension and enhancement of walking and cycling links.
- Require accessibility assessments for development that generates substantial trips
- Ensure the accessibility needs of the mobility impaired are considered as part of the development process.

d) Making Roads Safer: LDF proposals should:

- Ensure appropriate highway measures are secured as part of new development, to reflect the priority needs of cycle users and the requirement for sympathetic quality design
- Support “secured by design” standards in the construction of other sustainable transport related infrastructure

e) Improving Recreation, Leisure and Tourism/ Promoting Health and Well-Being:

LDF proposals should:

- Safeguard any proposed route of the NCN and facilitate its completion where opportunities arise
- Support and extend the existing the NCN routes and associated facilities such as cycle friendly accommodation providers, cycle hire and trip end facilities
- Complete, promote and maintain circular cycle routes that will improve the links between town and countryside
- Support and extend the public rights of way network, including the strategic bridleway network as this is accessible for cycle users ensuring that cross border links with Dorset, Somerset and Cornwall are seamless
- Promote sustainable travel planning, especially by bicycle, at visitor attractions that generate significant or growing numbers of motorised trips.

f) Improving Public Spaces: LDF proposals should:

- Support the design of public spaces where the NCN and other cycle routes pass to simultaneously provide cycle facilities, reinforce local distinctiveness and deliver a quality public realm.

Key Structure Plan Policies

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| TR1: Devon Travel Strategy | TR10: Strategic Road Network and Roadside Service Areas |
| TR2: Coordinating Land Use/Travel Planning | TR11: Safeguarding Transport Networks |
| TR3: Managing Travel Demand | TR13: Ports |
| TR4: Parking Strategy, Standards and Proposals | TR14: Airports |
| TR5: Hierarchy of Modes | TR15: Freight Distribution Network |
| TR6: Network Integration | TR16: Travel Investment Priorities |
| TR7: Walking and Cycling | TR17: Strategic Network Investment Proposals |
| TR9: Public Transport | ST4: Infrastructure Provision |

Appropriate Statistics

Distance travelled per person - The average distance travelled per person per year in the South West region is 10,900km of which 9,700km are travelled by car (Source: National Travel Survey, Department for Transport).

Population - In 2001 the population of Devon was 704,499, living in 298,574 households. Only 57,046 (19%) of those households did not have a car. (Source: 2001 Census).

Cars - In 2001 370,000 cars were owned in Devon. (Source: 2001 Census)

Bus Passengers - In 2004/05 there were 18.2 million bus passenger journeys in Devon (BVPI 102)

Travel Information - 41% of respondents found they had difficulty accessing or interpreting travel information. 72% of respondents without access to a car experienced problems accessing social and leisure activities ("Young People and Transport in Rural South Devon", Dr Zoe Harris, 2004).

Reason for not being able to obtain a job - In North Devon 64% of unemployed respondents highlighted transport as a reason for not being able to obtain a job ("Study of the Transport Needs of Young People in North Devon District Area", 2003, Nicholas Curley)

Access to after school activities - The main transport difficulties experienced by young people were access to after school activities, access to weekend leisure opportunities and meeting friends. (Devon Big Voice Reloaded Questionnaire 2004)

Travelling to Hospital - 31% of people without a car have difficulties travelling to their local hospital, compared to 17% of people with a car. Nationally over 1.4 million people say they have **missed, turned down, or chosen not to seek medical help over the last 12 months**

Road injuries - There were 3,219 recorded casualties on Devon's roads in 2004: 37 deaths, 245 serious injuries and 2937 slight injuries

Casualty Targets - Devon is making good progress towards the national targets for road casualty reduction. In 2003 it ranked 3rd amongst the 33 other shire counties in terms of the number of people killed or seriously injured per 100,000 people.

The casualty record within Exeter is among the lowest of any urban area in Britain.

Travelling safety - The December 2004 Devon County Council "Citizens Survey" found respondents felt that travelling in Devon was safer than other parts country and only 3% felt it was more dangerous.

Tourist / Visitor attractions - 86% of the Devon tourist/visitor attractions responding to the "Discover Devon Naturally" survey were aware of the public transport routes which serve their business and 58% promote that information. 59% of the businesses responding are willing to consider reducing the cost of admission to people arriving on foot, bicycle or by public transport.

People over 75 - At 10.4% Devon has a higher number of people aged over 75 years than the national average which is 7.5% (Census 2001)

Obesity - Between data recording exercises in 1994-1996 and 2000-2002 there was a 3% increase in the proportion of adults in Devon who were obese. (Source: Health Surveys for England 1994 to 2002)