
OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Transport Portfolio:
 - (a) **Borough Road Area Residents' Parking Scheme** – At the meeting of Cabinet held on 11 December, 2007, the objections received to the publication of the traffic regulation order in relation to Borough Road area were set aside and it was agreed that the scheme be implemented. The purpose of the scheme was to help alleviate parking problems experienced in the Borough Road area as a result of the relocation of Darlington College. The scheme is being prepared for implementation in March 2008.
 - (b) **Eastmount Road and Hundens Lane Area Residents' Parking Schemes** – Work is progressing to implement these two schemes in February 2008.
 - (c) **Darlington: Local Motion** – The Council were allocated £3.24 Million Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town grant in April 2004, by the Department for Transport. Work has been continuing since that time on the project, and, in order to allow officers to proceed with a range of further initiatives to promote sustainable travel and to put in place actions to assess the effectiveness of the Local Motion project, Cabinet approved the release of the final £860,000 of this grant.
 - (d) **Southend Avenue Residents' Parking Scheme** – The legal order has been advertised. The objections are being considered and discussions are planned with interested parties. Any outstanding objections will be reported to Cabinet in March.
 - (e) **Provision of Shopmobility Service** – It is pleasing to note that the Shopmobility service continues to be popular, with usage increasing from year to year. To ensure continuity of the provision of this service to local people and visitors to Darlington, a Service Level Agreement (SLA), between this Council and Darlington Association on Disability, was approved by Cabinet, at its meeting held on 15 January, 2008. The SLA will cover the period up to 31 March, 2009.
 - (f) **School Travel Plans** - 15 out of the 16 mainstream schools yet to complete a travel plan are now working on their School Travel Plan, 6 or 7 schools are expected to complete their travel plans by 28th March, (the 2008 deadline for a DCSF School Travel Plan grant). In addition, the Pupil Referral Unit is working on a travel plan for its new site on Eldon Street (site of former Rise Carr Primary School).

Polam Hall School has set up an Eco-Schools Action Team that will be addressing the School Travel Plan.

School Travel Plan review forms have been sent to each of the 22 schools in Darlington that have approved School Travel Plan's in place. This new method of monitoring will ensure that School Travel Plans are continually updated and will give schools the opportunity to see how successful they have been in promoting sustainable travel. We are planning to introduce a School Travel Plan accreditation scheme based on the outcome of an annual review of travel plans.

- (g) **Cycle Storage** - On 8 January Lock IT Safe were awarded the contract to install cycle parking in 7 schools around the Borough. 5 Primary schools and 2 Secondary schools will receive new shelters, providing cycle parking for over 330 pupils. When completed this will take the number of schools with cycle parking to 29.
- (h) **Healthy School Partnership** - Local Motion has sponsored the Darlington launch on 22 January of the new National Healthy Schools Physical Activity Tool Kit. The launch will highlight the partnership work being undertaken through Local Motion, the Healthy Schools Team and the School Sports Partnership. At the event schools will be invited to take part in a 6-week pedometer challenge involving structured physical activity and travel to school. Local Motion has funded the purchase of 30 pedometers for each school.
- (i) **Bike It Schools** - The Bike It project is now working with 12 schools, some now fully active in promoting cycling, others are in the early stages of the project. Recent highlights include a Bike Breakfast at Alderman Leach Primary with 52% of pupils cycling to school and the launch of the Bike It programme at Carmel RC Technology College, which attracted media coverage on ITV television and on BBC Radio Tees.

A new programme of cycle maintenance courses was piloted in November and December. The 4-week course teaches pupils basic cycle maintenance skills such as repairing punctures. The course will now be offered to other Bike It schools in the borough. Cycle skills sessions for years 2, 3 and 4 have recently taken place in 8 of the Bike It schools.

The Bike It Officer has developed 'exit' strategies for Mowden Juniors and Hummersknott School and Language College – both schools will continue to encourage cycling with a low level of input from the Bike It Officer.

- (j) **Workplace Travel Plans** - Greg McDougall has recently been given responsibility promoting for workplace travel planning amongst Darlington businesses. It is proposed that he works intensively with around eight businesses per annum in Darlington focusing on specific transport issues relevant to each business and providing resources to assist with developing and implementing a travel plan.

An introductory 'Local Motion' travel plan pack has been sent to the following organizations: Capita, Department for Children Schools and Families, Argos, Orange, Darlington College, Infoserve, Cummins and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

- (k) **Marketing and Communications** - Local Motion has been working with TFM on a campaign to encourage car sharing. In addition to radio advertising the campaign involved TFM promotional staff handing out car sharing information leaflets and car stickers in the town centre, at workplaces and in Darlington College. The promotional staff also signed up 200 residents to the Local Motion supporters club.

TFM are also broadcasting podcast interviews on their website with Darlington residents talking about the benefits of car sharing. The campaign will continue until February 2008.

A Christmas newsletter was posted to Local Motion members. The newsletter features items on Medal Motion, the latest Darlington bus map, Local Motion club members who 'set a positive example for sustainable travel' and a new year walking challenge for Local Motion members.

- (l) **Chesnut Street Car Park** - Chesnut Street car park is to be upgraded by 30 March 2008 to provide alternative parking after the closure of Kendrew Street car park. The long stay car park will be able to accommodate 109 cars as well as coaches and lorries. It will have a new surface, new lighting, CCTV and improved pedestrian links via Lodge Street to the town centre. Users will be able to take advantage of the new Park and Pay by Phone facility offered in other town centre car parks.
- (m) **Pay By Phone Parking** - The Pay by Phone system for parking in the town centre is continuing to attract new users. Over the Christmas period, additional publicity was given to the availability of the service by a full-page advertisement in the Wintertime magazine with a press release announcing the 1000th transaction in Darlington using Pay by Phone. This milestone was positively reported by the press. Latest figures show continued expansion with 158 people registering on the system in November 2007 and 129 people in December.
- (n) **Cycling Demonstration Town** - Design details of the new signs for the cycling route from West Park to the town centre have been completed and sent to the Department for Transport (DfT) for approval. Work has started on designing the signs for the next route from Morton Palms to the town centre. The signs need DfT approval, as they show travel time, rather than distance and are colour coded - both features helping cyclists find their way around Darlington.

West Darlington and Durham Groundwork has been appointed to help the Council undertake community engagement and consultation on a number of cycling and pedestrian schemes. These include schemes on Grange Road, Mill Lane, Staindrop Road and Whinfield Road.

- (o) **A New Bus Network for Darlington** - Following their takeover of Stagecoach in Darlington, Arriva are working with the Council to review the bus network in Darlington. A questionnaire was produced and sent to every household in November 2007 and analysis of the responses is currently underway. Proposals for a new bus network will be developed during February, and the new network will be introduced

later in 2008 after the required approvals.

- (p) **Local Motion Conference – April 2008** - As a sustainable travel and cycling demonstration town Darlington has a role to play in disseminating best practice to other local authorities and transport professionals. As part of this process we are proposing to hold a Local Motion conference on the 2 April 2008.
- (q) **Monitoring – Household Travel Behaviour** - Socialdata have issued a field report detailing the number of respondents to the 2007 travel survey. There are 1,230 residents living in the area visited by the Local Motion travel advisors in 2007, and 577 residents living in other areas of the town. Findings from the survey will be available in early March 2008.
- (r) **Local Motion Enquiry Group Report** - A draft report on the Local Motion project was presented to the project reference group on 14th December 2007. A revised draft is being prepared.
- (s) **European Funding** - In late December 2007 the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit contacted Officers with information on a proposed project under the North – West Europe Interegg programme. Led by the City of Eindhoven this project allows scope for partnership working on a number of initiatives aimed at encouraging greater use of sustainable travel modes. Specific elements of the project which are most relevant to Darlington are ‘Transport orientated marketing’, ‘Integrated Planning Strategies’ and ‘Intelligent Transport Systems Technologies’. Officers are considering proposals for Darlington to take part in this project, which could help fund continuation of Local Motion work.
- (t) **20mph Zones** – The traffic calming aspects of the 20mph zones have been completed at Coombe Drive and Oakwood and are in progress at Lascelles. Corporation Road traffic calming is scheduled for early March 2008 and Bank Top will follow in the next financial year. The 20mph signage will be implemented in due course.
- (u) **Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor** - The A66 work is substantially complete with the final connections at Little Burdon expected to be made by the end of January. The footbridge will be delivered to site in mid-February and placed across the road during an overnight road closure in the last week of February.

Kerbing of the new road is in progress on all sections of the main route and some surfacing has started.

Work on the Haughton Road junction will start in the middle of February with considerable disruption to traffic likely throughout the work, which is expected to continue for three months. There will be one-way traffic systems in operation for most of this period affecting Haughton Road, Barton Street and Hundens Lane junctions.

A programme of public information on the work is planned to begin in the immediate future.

(v) Highway Design Schemes -

(i) Recently Completed Schemes -

- Smithfield road Underpass – footway and carriageway resurfacing.

(ii) Ongoing Schemes -

- Morton Palms/Yarm Road Improvements – construction of bus lay-bys and footways underway.

(w) Bridgework Schemes -

(i) Little Stainton Bridge – Phase 2 works nearing completion.

(ii) Haughton Road Cycle/Footbridge – Work on site due to commence March 2008.

(x) Highway Maintenance Schemes -

(i) Recently Completed Schemes -

- C34a Lodge Lane – carriageway edge strengthening.
- Ketton Avenue – footway refurbishment.
- B6280/C182 – Yarm Road/McMullen Road roundabout – resurfacing.
- Kielder Drive – footway refurbishment.
- North Rise – verge hardening.
- The Headlands – footway refurbishment.
- Marina Road Back Lane – carriageway resurfacing.

(ii) Ongoing Schemes -

- A68 West Auckland Road Phase 2 – Bates Avenue to Brinkburn Avenue – carriageway and footway resurfacing.
- A1150 Salters Lane North – Harrowgate Hill Club to 103 Kingsway – footway refurbishment.

(iii) **Schemes Due to Commence**

- C182 Thompson Street East – No 37 to Davison Road – carriageway/footway refurbishment.
- B6280 Yarm Road – Teal Road to Geneva Road, both sides – footway refurbishment.

(y) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** – A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:

(i) **Christmas Drink Drive Campaign**

- 10,000 beer mats were distributed to pubs and clubs in the run up to Christmas.
- A publicity campaign, culminating with a picture on the front page of the Herald & Post, was organised with the management of Lingfield Point for all workers and organisations on site. Free recipe sheets for non-alcoholic cocktails were given out along with free samples in the site's delicatessen.
- The campaign was also supported by thousands of leaflets and posters distributed throughout Darlington.
- Darlington Borough Council supported the campaign for its employees by printing appropriate messages on the November and December pay slips and by allowing posters to be placed in many locations at the Town Hall.

(ii) **Cyclist Instructor Training**

- Further courses have been held to train new instructors for Darlington Borough Council and other organisations.
- This accredited training course continues to promote good practice and Darlington is beginning to be recognised as a quality training organisation within the cycling world.
- Two of Darlington Borough Council's Cyclist Training Instructors have been requested to appear in a Channel Four television programme because of their Bikeability training experience. The programme is due to be screened later this year.

(iii) **Pedestrian Training**

The pedestrian training supervisor continues to report excellent take-up of training in years 1, 2 and 3. Most schools are now seeing at least 90% return of parental consent forms and many are now gaining 100%, which is a vast

improvement on last year's figures.

Councillor David Lyonette
Cabinet Member with Transport Portfolio