
OVERVIEW OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Highways and Transport Portfolio:
 - (a) **Proposed Residents' Parking Schemes – Darlington College** – To manage potential parking displacement from the new Darlington College on the Central Park site, a study was commissioned, with a view to protecting resident parking and managing traffic in the surrounding area. From that study it was agreed that a resident parking scheme be designed and residents be consulted. In addition to the Residents' Parking Scheme it was also agreed that waiting restrictions be progressed to assist road safety and regulate traffic flow in the area.
 - (b) **Proposed Residents' Parking Scheme – Stanhope Road Area** – The objections received to the publication of the Traffic Orders for the Stanhope Road Area Residents' Parking Scheme, which had recently been advertised, were considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 11th July, 2006. The Residents' Parking Scheme was approved, with a number of amendments, in order to take into account some of the comments received. Approval was also given to the publishing of a secondary traffic order.
 - (c) **Footpath and Land at Ullswater Avenue** – A scheme was considered by Cabinet, to erect a 2.4 metre high fence running parallel to both sides of the pedestrian/cycle link, joining Ullswater Avenue to Railway View, together with landscaping of the site and land adjacent to the footpath and Smithfield Road, in order to address concerns of anti-social behaviour and crime in the locality. The scheme was approved and the funding to complete the scheme was formally released in order to address those concerns.
 - (d) **Provision of Supported Bus Service to Sadberge** - A contract was awarded to Compass Royston for the provision of a two-hourly Monday - Friday daytime bus service between Darlington Town Centre and Sadberge via North Road, following the withdrawal of Services 98, X99 by Arriva with effect from 30 April 2006.
 - (e) **Cycle Demonstration Town Project**
 - (i) Philip Darnton, Chair of Cycling England visited Darlington on 2 June to review progress on the project.
 - (ii) Other Cycle Demonstration Town's representatives will visit Darlington on the 11 and 12 July, to review the work Darlington has done so far on the "Smarter Choices" agenda, under the Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town project. The intention is to assess whether they can use their more limited LTP funding to introduce similar measures.

- (iii) McMullen Road cycle path now in a well-advanced stage of construction. This should help to provide improved segregated safe links to Red Hall (residential estate), Lingfield Point and other businesses in the McMullen Road area.
- (iv) Planning Permission has now been submitted for a new length of cycle path extending from Mill Lane to Stockton Road. This should provide a vital link to help to improve the network in the north east part of the town.

(f) **Travel Plans**

- (i) A course for DBC Policy and Development Control Planners has taken place, presented by consultants Foxley Tagg. They have presented similar courses for planners in the London Boroughs and Peterborough. Following this course, Foxley Tagg are to produce a guidance note on Travel Plans, to help planners promote the issue with developers.
 - (ii) All organisations who currently have travel plans were invited to participate in the Local Motion Bike Week Challenge. Seven such organisations have taken part, and have risen to the challenge. Publicity will be given to this success and the links with the firms will be continued with a view to arranging a summit meeting to discuss common travel issues with Transport Offices as enablers.
- (g) **Medal Motion** - More than a thousand pupils from 24 of the Borough's Primary Schools completed their Medal Motion diaries. These children have been awarded a gold, silver or bronze medal according to how often they walked, cycled or used public transport over the 3 week campaign. A letter has been sent to all parents of Primary aged children thanking them for their support for the campaign.
- (h) **Individualised Travel Marketing 2006** - The Individualised Travel Marketing team started the 2006 programme of work on 24 April in the Whinfield area of Darlington. All staff coming into contact with the public are dressed in Local Motion branded clothing. The 2006 ITM programme encompasses a target group of 13,000 households and is due to be complete by early August. To support the ITM programme the Council and Steer Davies Gleave have published a suite of Local Motion branded travel materials, listed below:
- (i) Bus map
 - (ii) Bus timetable leaflets (Whinfield, Red Hall and Firthmoor printed)
 - (iii) Cycle Map
 - (iv) Pedal Power events programme
 - (v) Travel in Darlington is changing ...
 - (vi) Are you doing the Local Motion?*

- (vii) Cycling the Local Motion*
- (viii) Walking the Local Motion*
- (ix) Local Motion Cycle Training*
- (x) Keeping in Motion*
- (xi) Car Wise Guide*
- (xii) Community Guide - Haughton, Whinbush and Red Hall*
- (xiii) Community Guide - College, Pierremont and Northgate*

* Designed and printed by Steer Davies Gleave.

Up to the end of week nine, 5,544 out of a target area 11,500 of households have participated in the 2006 Individualised Travel Marketing Programme. As repeated attempts to contact households not available at the first call are still ongoing, it is too early to predict the overall participation rates for any of this year's target wards. However, indications are that participation levels are greater than in 2005. 1,400 residents have signed up as members of the Local Motion Club.

- (i) **Local Motion Media Coverage** - Darlington's work to encourage sustainable travel has received a national media coverage in the Independent (15 June), Woman's Hour (22 June) and in the specialist press (Cycling Plus and Travel Plan News).
- (j) **School Travel Plans**
 - (i) Seven schools submitted travel plans in March 2006 bringing the total number of Darlington schools with a completed travel plan to eighteen.. The seven schools that recently submitted travel plans will receive their capital grant from the DfES before the end of the summer term. This will bring the total amount of DfES Travel Plan grant money distributed to Darlington schools since July 2004 to £107,000.
 - (ii) With the DfES grant and other funding from the Local Transport Plan and Cycling England capital programmes it has been possible to accelerate the programme of installation of cycle parking in schools, twenty five of the Borough's thirty nine schools now having secure cycle storage.
 - (iii) An award ceremony recognising the work of the eighteen schools with a travel plan is scheduled to take place in the Council Chamber on 13 July.
 - (iv) The Local Transport Plan has a target of a further six school travel plans to be completed by March 2007. Three schools (Hurworth Primary, Firthmoor and Mowden Juniors) have started work on a travel plan. Skerne Park and the three schools at the Education Village are, as a planning condition, required to

complete a travel plan. Contact has been made with Children's Services and staff at these schools.

- (v) The Sustrans Bike IT project is being extended so that it will include 5 schools in the academic year 2006/2007 rather than three as it has been in previous years. Bike IT is coordinated by Sustrans and jointly funded by Cycling England and the Association of Cycle Traders.

- (k) **National Bike Week 17-25 June** - Events which took place during National Bike Week included a women's cycle ride, an evening and lunch time guided ride and bike to work day. Seven Darlington employers took up our Cycle Challenge to promote cycling during the week. Employers taking part were:
 - (i) Argos (Warehouse)
 - (ii) Darlington Primary Care Trust
 - (iii) AMEC
 - (iv) Supreme Care Homes
 - (v) Lingfield Point Business Park
 - (vi) DfeS (Mowden Hall)
 - (vii) B & Q Warehouse

Participating employers have been asked to gather evidence on what they have done to promote cycling and on numbers of employees taking part. We will use this to select a winning employer - to be awarded up to £5,000 to be spent on travel plan measures. We plan to run a feature mentioning all the employers in the Town Crier.

- (l) **Car Parking** - New information leaflets have been produced. The "Park in Darlington Town Centre" leaflet has been updated to reflect the recent changes to East Street and The Cornmill. A new leaflet on parking fines and how to avoid them has also been produced.

- (m) **Central Park Northern Access** – Works substantially complete.

- (n) **A66/A67 Morton Palms Roundabout Improvement** - Awaiting updated detailed estimate from Highways Agency for works to be carried out by their contractor.

- (o) **Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor** - Detailed design is being finalised and the tender process is underway.

- (p) **Highway Maintenance Works** – One highway maintenance scheme is about to commence; two schemes are ongoing and three have recently been completed.

- (q) **‘Let’s Get Cracking’** - Delivery of the programme of works has commenced with both Community Services and Alfred McAlpine Government Services Limited carrying out the various schemes. Nine schemes are about to start on site. As part of the project, a Customer Services Officer has been appointed and she is liaising with the public and organisations before, during and after the works.
- (r) **Traffic Management & Road Safety Schemes:**
- (i) Taxis in Bus Lane Experiment – monitoring ongoing.
 - (ii) Coombe Drive - Construction of pedestrian refuge associated with traffic calming scheme - ongoing.
 - (iii) Sadberge Village safety and traffic concerns feasibility work – Phase II - Traffic Regulation Orders being processed.
 - (iv) Middleton St George – School 30 mph zone, speed limit alterations, gateway works and waiting restrictions being progressed for implementation for new academic year in September.
 - (v) Low Middleton – signing and lining scheme in preparation
 - (vi) Firthmoor Phase 5 – preliminary design completed and preparing for consultation exercise in July.
 - (vii) McMullen Road Cycleway – the scheme is substantially complete. The next phase of works - the link to Haughton Road - is being designed
 - (viii) Mill Lane to Stockton Road Cyclepath - planning application submitted.
 - (ix) Whinfield Area Safer Routes to School Scheme - consultation being carried out.
 - (x) Decriminalised Parking Enforcement – feasibility and preparatory work underway.
 - (xi) Stanhope Road Area Residents’ Parking Scheme – Traffic Order advertised and objections reported to July Cabinet.
 - (xii) 20 mph speed limit zones – preliminary design work being carried out for school zones, the town centre and urban zones. The Traffic Regulation Orders for the Darrowby Drive Estate and Harrowgate Hill Estate are being prepared for formal publication.
 - (xiii) Feasibility Study being carried out to consider residents’ parking and waiting restriction schemes around Darlington College on Central Park.

- (xiv) Design and preparation in progress to extend the Football Club residents' parking scheme.
- (s) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** – A number of initiatives have been instigated including the following:
- (i) **Cycle Training Programme**
- The Cycle Training Programme in the second half of the summer term was fully booked with eight primary schools taking part.
- (ii) **Nursery Education**
- The 'People Who Help Us' programme is progressing as normal with approximately five visits per month to Nursery Schools.
- (iii) **Pedestrian Training**
- A full programme of pedestrian training was carried out with the majority of schools having their first pilot courses.
- (iv) **Child Car Restraints**
- Recently the Fire Service has been tasked to carry out road safety educational activities, in conjunction with other providers, as part of their remit in reducing road casualties. In consultation with LARSOA (Local Authorities Road Safety Officers' Association) a working partnership is being developed whereby fire fighters will check child car restraints and the Local Authorities will provide the training and publicity. The checking programme is to coincide with new Government legislation regarding the use of car seats in September.
- (v) **Walking Bus World Record**
- Whinfield Primary School took part in a world record attempt to gain entry into the Guinness Book of Records for Walking Buses. The event organised by the road safety charity BRAKE in conjunction with ASDA was seeking to get 100,000 children involved. We do not yet know if the attempt was successful but it provided a great opportunity to publicise road safety messages for drivers and pedestrians.

(vi) Safety Carousel

- The annual multi-safety event for all year 6 primary school children took place between 26 June - 7 July 2006 in Darlington's Fire Station with the Road Safety contribution concentrating on the wearing of seatbelts and good passenger behaviour. Over 1,000 children participated and were given worksheets and road safety elephant bugs to remind them of the activity

(t) **Bridgework Schemes:**

- (i) Little Stainton Bridge – construction to commence as soon as land entry is confirmed.
- (ii) Barmpton Bridge – detailed design nearing completion.
- (iii) Leadyard Bridge – works nearing completion.
- (iv) Great Burdon Bridge – maintenance scheme being prepared.
- (v) Central House Retaining Wall – Detailed design in progress.

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