

Policy or action disability impact assessment record sheet

Policy Title:		Cycling Through the Town Centre	
Policy action owner: Sue Dobson, Principal Transport Policy Officer		Date: December 2008	
Type of assessment	Type 1	Type 2 ✓	Type 3
Is this a policy or an action? <i>Please state</i> Policy			
What are the positive or negative effects that the policy or action will have on disabled people?			
<p>A meeting was held with Gordon Pybus on 20 May 2008 to discuss which groups would need to be contacted in order to carry out the Disability Impact Assessment on this policy. It was agreed that this should be a type 2 assessment and that groups representing people with visual impairments, the deaf, those with mobility difficulties, the elderly and mental health issues should be involved.</p> <p>Contact was made with a number of organisations during June and meetings held in July and September. A draft report was sent to David Plews and Peter Roberts in October for comment. A draft report was sent to Gordon Pybus at his request in November following the Talking Together event on Cycling Through the Town Centre. A meeting to address some of the issues raised by Gordon followed and his comments have been taken into account in this final DIA record sheet. These were to focus the document on impacts only rather than opinions.</p> <p>Comments were received from disabled people, some of whom were cyclists and others were non-cyclists.</p>			
<u>Positive Impacts and evidence to support this</u>			
<i>Impact 1 - Cycling provides independence</i>			
<i>Evidence</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am unable to use buses or walk very far and so without being able to cycle safely through the town centre from home to places I need to go, I would be unable to travel anywhere. 			
<i>Source</i>			
– MIND 17 July 2008			
<u>Negative impacts and evidence to support this</u>			
<i>Impact 1 - Upsetting</i>			
<i>Evidence</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot see/hear cyclists when they are behind you. A cyclist came in front of me – I asked him to be careful and he gave me verbal abuse. 			

- A lady who has both visual and hearing impairments cannot hear cyclists approaching. They treat her as if she is in the wrong.
- Verbal abuse if you criticise cyclists.
- Cannot hear them coming - make you jump.

Sources

- *GOLD 25 July 2008*
- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*
- *Deaf Forum – 23 September 2008*

Impact 2 - Disorientation and stress

Evidence

- Near misses cause shock and upset as lose orientation, which is exacerbated by the environment in the Pedestrian Heart as there is no pavement edge or other means by which to orientate and confirm location.
- You do not know where cyclists are going. It is confusing.
- In the Pedestrian Heart there are no rules. People, mobility scooters, bikes – all passing at different angles. Pavements and roads create rules.
- Strongly believe that blind people have not been considered in the Pedestrian Heart.
- It is dangerous for guide dog owners. Similar impact as a car or van. A guide dog is not trained to go round moving objects. Confuses dogs and disorientates people.
- A guide dog user complains that bikes are quiet and she doesn't hear them. It makes her jump and startles her guide dog.

Sources

- *COB 30 July 2008*
- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*

Impact 3 - Self esteem/lack of confidence

Evidence

- Those with a hearing impairment don't hear cyclists and are startled. Lowers self-esteem and confidence, especially at busy times. Either avoids using the town centre, visit at quiet times or ask someone else to go on their behalf.
- Lady has a carer and cannot go out alone. She would like to be confident enough to go out alone.

Source

- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*

Impact 4 - Physical hurt/pain

Evidence

- Bikes thrown on the floor outside shops instead of parking them. Hurts when you walk into them.
- A lady with hearing and mobility problems complains that she cannot hear

cyclists. When they appear it makes her jump and this leaves her in pain and she cannot move.

- Cyclists go too near shop doors. Difficult when you come out of a shop. Plus bikes are left on the pavement instead of in the cycle parking. Hazard for wheelchair users and visually impaired.

Sources

- *COB 30 July 2008*
- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*

Impact 5 - Long term impact

Evidence

- Chaos of Pedestrian Heart puts people off getting out and about.
- Cycling adds to the problems of pedestrian Heart not being designed for people with a visual impairment. Lots of small things, which have a negative impact, build up and have a long-term impact.

Sources

- *COB 30 July 2008*
- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*

Impact 6 - Won't go into town at all

Evidence

- A lady with a visual impairment was hit by a bike on Saturday. Her guide dog was startled. Luckily she had someone with her. Knocked her confidence and she is angry. She will not go out on a Saturday on her own again.
- A young person with autism will not go out on his own as he believes that people riding bikes on pavements are 'chavs', and 'chavs' carry knives and are therefore dangerous. As people are not following the rules, he will not go near them.
- People with Autism Spectrum Disorder learn acceptable behaviour and are challenged if this is out of the norm, seeing someone who is cycling in a 'non-cycling' area can create real problems for them.

Sources

- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*
- *Mencap Society 7 September 2008*

Impact 7 - Damage to equipment

Evidence

- Cane can be broken by passing bikes. No means of getting around.

Source

- *Access Interest Group 31 July 2008*

Impact 8 - Safety concerns

Evidence

- Some people with Learning Disabilities can be very impulsive, dashing across the road/thoroughfare to see family/friends etc. this has been a designated pedestrian zone and as such this will be seen as a safe place to walk and shop. Taking away this safety net could have safety consequences.

Source

- Mencap Society 7 September 2008

Who was involved?

Meetings were held as follows:

17 July 2008 – MIND

25 July 2008 – Growing Older Living in Darlington (GOLD)

30 July 2008 – Charitable Organisations for the Blind (COB)

31 July – Access Interest Group

23 September 2008 – Deaf Forum

Information was provided by email as follows;

7 September 2008 – Mencap Society

What action will you take as a result of the impact assessment?

The decision on whether to allow cycling through the Town Centre will be taken by Cabinet in February 2009.

The Impact Assessment has highlighted two key areas which need to be addressed whatever recommendation is made:-

1. Highly visible enforcement – irresponsible cycling needs to be deterred. Whilst this is currently enforced by Police discussions are underway between the Police and Darlington Borough Council’s Transport Policy and the Anti Social Behaviour Teams to assess how a joint approach can be implemented to tackle this issue.
2. A Code of Conduct will be developed and used by the enforcement teams to inform people of the issues associated with cycling (either in the Town Centre or on pavements in other parts of the Borough). Following this Disability Impact Assessment there will more information on how irresponsible cycling can have a negative impact on disabled people. There will be information on how positive actions by cyclists can improve the walking environment and experience for all pedestrians. This Code of Conduct will also be made available in schools and libraries.

How and when will this action be monitored?

- Monitoring of cycling and walking levels in the town centre will continue every quarter to assess the impact of the decision as to whether to continue to allow cycling through the town centre.
- Road Traffic Accident statistics will continue to be analysed in and around the town centre.
- The level of enforcement and numbers of tickets issued will be monitored.

Please tick as many of the following as the policy or action will achieve

Promote equality of opportunity	
Eliminate unlawful discrimination	

Eliminate disability-related harassment	
Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people	
Encourage participation by disabled people in public life	
Take steps to meet disabled people's needs	