
OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Transport Portfolio.

Civil Parking Enforcement

2. The Civil Parking Enforcement project is nearing implementation. The review of Traffic Regulation Orders is complete with five new orders covering all off-street parking, on-street parking, moving traffic offences, resident parking and waiting and loading restrictions coming into effect in August 2010. A further legal process to convert the orders to comply with Civil Parking Enforcement powers will be carried out prior to the implementation date. The changes to the car parking enforcement team have now been implemented and training of staff has been programmed. The car park team is now located in an annex to the Town Hall.

Highway & Bridge Design Schemes

3. **Middleton-One-Row Retaining Wall Reinstatement** – The planning application for the scheme has been submitted and the contract documents are currently being finalised.
4. **Polam Lane Footbridge** – The contract for the bridge refurbishment work is out to tender, with submissions due back on the 6 September 2010. The works will commence on site following the completion of Public Utility diversionary work.
5. **Chesnut Street Bridge** – This bridge was identified as requiring a weight limit as the result of a recent programme of bridge inspections. Further investigations are being carried out to consider the scope of the remedial works required to bring the bridge back up to full strength.
6. **Yarm Road, Woodland Road and Whinfield Road** – Studies are being carried out into the feasibility of introducing cycling routes on these roads.
7. **Staindrop Road Crossing** – Scheme options are being developed to improve pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities adjacent to the junction with Edgecombe Drive.
8. **Great Burdon to Sadberge Cycle Route** – This scheme is now complete.

Highway Maintenance Schemes

9. Recently Completed Schemes:

- (a) Auckland Avenue Phase 4 – footway refurbishment.
- (b) Northwood Access Improvements Phases 1, 2 and 3.
- (c) Barnes Road Phase 3 – footway refurbishment.
- (d) B6280 Yarm Road Phase 5 – carriageway and footway refurbishment.
- (e) Polam Lane – carriageway resurfacing.
- (f) A67 Piercebridge to High Coniscliffe Phase 2 – carriageway resurfacing.
- (g) Thompson Street East – carriageway deep patching and resurfacing.

10. Ongoing Schemes:

- (a) Whessoe Road Phase 3 – carriageway resurfacing.
- (b) Bushel Hill Drive – carriageway resurfacing.
- (c) Victoria Road, Railway Station to St Cuthbert's Way – footway crossing point refurbishment.

11. Schemes Due to Commence -

- (a) Laburnum Road – verge hardening.
- (b) C182 Geneva Road Phase 4 (309 to 359 approximately) – carriageway resurfacing and verge hardening.
- (c) A167 North Road Footway Phase 5 (Thompson Street Northwards East side) – footway refurbishment.
- (d) Priestgate – carriageway resurfacing.
- (e) Friars Pardon, Hurworth Phase 1 – footway renewal.

Winter/Adverse Weather Repairs

12. Permanent patching works and the following surfacing schemes are complete -

- (a) Allen Street Phase 1, Railway Bridge to Bowes Court – carriageway resurfacing.
- (b) Barton Street, Nestfield Street to DETC – carriageway resurfacing.

- (c) Edinburgh Drive (Coniscliffe Road to Holyrood Avenue) – carriageway resurfacing.
- (d) Longfield /Whessoe Road Junction – carriageway resurfacing.

Traffic Management Schemes

13. **Safer Routes to School** – The feasibility of providing safer route to school improvements is being considered at the following schools:
- (a) Northwood School
 - (b) Heathfield School
 - (c) Gurney Pease School
 - (d) Reid Street School
 - (e) Hummersknott School
 - (f) Carmel
 - (g) Cockerton

Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives

14. A number of initiatives have been instigated, including the following:
- (a) **Cyclist Activities** –
 - (i) Level two bikeability training concluded cyclist training for the past academic year at the end of July's summer term.
 - (ii) The Road Safety Officer took part in Darlington's Cycling Festival in South Park during the first week-end of the summer holidays. Over 160 children took part in the colouring ,word search and other cycling related activities and were given lots of different cycle related items to take away to remind them to be safe when on their bikes.
 - (b) **Pedestrian Training** – Pedestrian training concluded for the academic year with another increase in figures of children enrolled.
 - (c) **School Activities** –
 - (i) The Road Safety Officer visited Harrogate Hill Primary school to deliver the road safety scenario which the year 6 children missed because they did not attend the safety carousel in June. In addition to the road safety quiz, as a bonus, the children were given a model seat belt demonstrator scenario to back up one of the questions.

- (ii) A general road safety leaflet was prepared for all primary schools in the Borough ready for distribution when the schools commenced the new academic year.
- (d) **Growing Older Living in Darlington (GOLD) Tea Dance** – Following last year’s successful exhibition stall at the GOLD tea dance in Darlington’s Market Square the Road Safety Team provided driver vision screening and advice for older drivers.
- (e) **WISEDRIVE** – The annual multi agency WISEDRIVE organised by Durham Constabulary was scheduled for the end of September. Road Safety staff joined forces with those from Durham County Council to support the police in delivering appropriate messages to those youngsters who may be thinking of applying for their provisional licences. A new driving simulator was used with more up to date software to make the session more enjoyable.
- (f) **Child Car Restraint Checks** - As part of Road Safety GB’s Northern Branch, Darlington took part in one of the many child restraint checks in the area. In general tests show restraints checked need some adjustment to ensure they are completely safe. The national figure quoted is two out of three car seats are incorrectly fitted.
- (g) **Out of School Activities** -
 - (i) The road safety officer was invited to Hurworth Cubs to assist the leaders deliver a road safety programme to their youngsters. Scouting activities usually focus more on the game scenario because of the smaller numbers participating and to make a difference from activities taking place in the schools.
 - (ii) A leaflet was prepared for distribution at the *Darlington By The Sea Event* which was held in the market square at the end of the summer holidays. The leaflet, intended to occupy children in a fun meaningful way, listed numerous fun road safety web sites.

Concessionary Fare Passes

- 15. Changes to the concessionary fares travel scheme were implemented on the 19 September 2010.
- 16. Letters were sent to all 1,610 taxi voucher pass holders advising them that the scheme was ending and offering them a bus pass as an alternative (subject to them meeting the eligibility criteria). By the end of August 119 residents had opted for the bus pass, 10 with immediate effect and 109 after the 19 September.
- 17. Information was posted at bus stops in the town centre and at other key stops advising residents that the discretionary elements of the concessionary travel scheme have been withdrawn. The national scheme now applies providing free travel after 09:30 and before 23:00 Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

School Travel Plans

18. The five schools that submitted School Travel Plans in March 2010 have had their plans approved, which means that 100% of Darlington's maintained schools now have plans in place. We are awaiting a Ministerial announcement as to whether or not these five schools will receive their School Travel Plan grants as have previously been paid to other Darlington schools (£3,750 plus £5 per pupil for primary/£5,000 plus £5 per pupil for secondary and special schools).
19. Those schools are now going forward to the Sustainable Travel Accredited and Recognised (STAR) accreditation scheme for School Travel Plans. Thirteen schools have applied for the scheme this year which takes the total number of accredited schools to nineteen. It is planned to reward schools at a celebration event during October International Walk to School month.
20. The official national indicator 198 – mode of travel to school statistics have been released which show a reduction in car travel to school from 22.6% in 2006/07 to 20.5% in 2009/10. This represents a 9.3% reduction in car travel to school over the three year period.
21. Medal Motion will not be running in its usual format in October 2010. The plan is to return early in 2011 with a new campaign that aims to achieve more long term behaviour change and builds in sustainability with pupils also being rewarded for participation in physical activity other than the journey to school. This campaign will be delivered with Healthy Schools and other partners across the Borough.
22. Meetings have taken place to discuss and agree locations for cycle parking installations at Mowden Infants, Haughton Community School, Dodmire School and The Bridge.

Cycling

23. The Annual Cycling Festival took place on Sunday 25 July 2010. There was an estimated 4,000 people attended the event and feedback was very positive. Activities available included bike try out areas, cycle obstacle course, all ability cycle try out area and a BMX stunt team that gave demonstrations throughout the day but also taught skills. As part of the festival other activities were also included such as the climbing wall and bowls tuition. A family cycle treasure trail took place on Sunday 22 August. 14 families took part in the event on bikes.
24. The second Workplace Cycle Challenge took place between 5 and 25 July. The challenge encouraged staff of Darlington organisations to cycle at least once for at least ten minutes during the challenge period and to record all trips on the challenge website. 413 people from 43 different organisations participated, registering 26,634 trips during the three weeks of the challenge. Those trips accounted for CO₂ savings equivalent to 2,990kg and burning of 236 pounds of fat.

Transport Marketing and Communications

25. The Summer/Autumn 2010 Local Motion newsletter is currently in production. This will be the final newsletter to be mailed to all Local Motion members on the database (circa 8,500 Darlington residents). It is to be a 'thank you' to the people of Darlington for making active travel choices and 'doing the Local Motion'. This edition provides an update and summary

of the Local Motion project to date, an overview of the Cycling Town project, plus news from summer events and activities such as the Cycling Festival.

26. The existing Local Motion website and associated links will be overhauled and updated to reflect the whole Local Motion and Cycling Town projects. Additional news and project summary information will be added, for example Medal Motion, Sustrans Bike It and other successful work carried out in schools. The updating, revision and printing of additional cycling literature such as Cycle Route Cards and new self guided ride leaflets will be completed in this financial year funded by Cycling England.

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Transport Portfolio