

# **Medway's Cycling Action Plan 2016/18**

**April 2016**

version 2.2

[www.medway.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.medway.gov.uk/cycling)

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## **Foreword**

As Portfolio holders responsible for transport, green spaces and leisure services, we are pleased to support Medway's Cycling Action Plan 2016/18

Implementing the action plan will facilitate greater participation in cycling by residents, visitors to Medway and those commuting into Medway for work to lead healthier, more active lifestyles, together with contributing to delivering growth and tackling environmental issues.

The action plan supports the priorities in the Medway Council Plan, regeneration initiatives, the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway, the Air Quality Strategy, the Medway Local Transport Plan and the emerging Local Plan.

We are very supportive of the work carried out locally to deliver the national *Bikeability* scheme and see this as an important way of encouraging young people to be more active by delivering cycle training safely.

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## **STATUS OF DOCUMENT**

Medway's Cycling Action Plan 2016/18 will deliver actions that form part of Medway Council's policy framework including the Medway Council Plan, the statutory Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway 2012–17 and the statutory Local Transport Plan 2011–26.

If you have any comment on the content of this document, please contact Medway Council either by email or post. Our contact details are:

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# Medway's Cycling Action Plan 2016/18

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Cycling, whether it's a day-to-day activity or an occasional adventure, is a great way to help keep people of all ages healthy. There is strong evidence that the benefits of cycling outweigh any risks. Cycling is something that is really so simple. All that is needed is a roadworthy bike, a knowledge of the Highway Code and then it just takes a little bit of practice. Cycling can be slotted into everyday life, enabling people to benefit their health without having to set aside time for exercise. However, it is acknowledged there is a need for investment in cycling infrastructure to reduce risks and encourage growth in cycling.

1.2 In recent years participation in cycling has grown, partly as a consequence of the 'Olympic effect'. Nationally there is strong support for cycling. A national *Cycling Delivery Plan* was published by the Department for Transport in October 2014. In February 2015 government introduced a duty through the Infrastructure Act for the Secretary of State for Transport to bring forward a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) in England. The first CWIS was published in March 2016.

### 1.3 Leadership and vision

1.4 Medway Council is providing leadership and vision at a local level. Medway Council has shown a commitment to work with Government to deliver locally the ambitions of the national Cycling Delivery Plan. Furthermore, our long-term vision for cycling supports the national vision. Our vision is that:

***Cycling and walking should become the natural choices for shorter journeys in Medway - or as part of a longer journey - regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.***

1.5 We are aware that the current funding available falls short of the recommendations of All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's Get Britain Cycling, which called for spending of at least £10 per head per year to boost cycle use, increasing as cycle use increases. However, it is considered that the funding secured for cycling improvements during 2016/18 will provide a good foundation on which to build in future years with the long-term aim of delivering our vision. The intention is to seek additional funding when opportunities allow.

- 1.6 The action plan seeks to contribute to the themes of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway that aims to prevent early death and increase years of healthy life, improve physical and mental health and wellbeing. Increasing physical activity by encouraging cycling can significantly contribute to these themes. A key objective of the Medway Local Transport Plan is to encourage active travel and improve health by developing safe transport corridors that encourage cycling and walking. Proactively encouraging cycling directly contributes to this strategic objective.

### **Objectives**

- 1.7 To further develop a cycling culture in Medway, the objectives of Medway's Cycling Action Plan are to:
- a) Provide safe, attractive and useful facilities that deliver journey time and safety improvements for cyclists by expanding and improving the cycle network.
  - b) Contribute to improving the health of people who live and work in Medway by increasing physical activity. Increased physical activity not only improves physical and mental health, it also delivers long term savings to the National Health Service and social care through improved health in later life.
  - c) Contribute to growth in the local economy by making the local road network operate more efficiently during periods of congestion.
  - d) Provide support to target users of the cycle network (see the definition of target user below).
  - e) Contribute to improving air quality (particularly in declared Air Quality Management Areas) by making the local road network operate more efficiently.<sup>1</sup>
  - f) Contribute to reducing social isolation by encouraging more local people to become involved in cycling club activities.

### **Target user**

- 1.8 When designing changes to the cycle network the focus will be people who could be encouraged to cycle or cycle more.

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<sup>1</sup> Medway's Air Quality Action Plan (draft Jan 2016) identifies promoting walking and cycling as a measure aimed at improving local air quality by reducing levels of nitrogen dioxide to acceptable levels.

- 1.9 The action plan supports less confident cyclists, with many of the routes being off-carriageway. This decision has been made with less confident riders in mind. These off-carriageway routes have been used in locations where it is considered hazardous for less confident cyclists to travel on the road.
- 1.10 The needs of the target user are set out in the box below<sup>2</sup>.

***Target user: Design of the cycle network should be attractive and comfortable for the less confident cyclist.***

### **Link to strategies, plans and guidance**

- 1.11 The action plan contributes to the delivery of a number of adopted and emerging strategies, plans and guidance, including:
- National Cycling Delivery Plan (October 2014)
  - National Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (March 2016)
  - Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway 2012 – 2017 (Nov 2012)
  - Medway's Council Plan 2016-21
  - Medway Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026
  - Medway Air Quality Strategy – (draft issued Jan 2015)
  - Medway Sustainable Schools Travel Strategy (2013)
  - NICE public health guidance 41 – Walking and cycling (Nov 2012)
  - The British Cycling Economy – London School of Economics (2011)

### **Funding**

- 1.12 Medway Council is an active partner of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership. Through this partnership Medway Council has been successful in securing £2.5m Local Growth Funding to deliver a package of capital projects detailed in the Cycling Action Plan and securing this funding provides a good foundation to build on. This will help in future years to work towards a step change in the levels of cycling in Medway. This funding flows over a three year

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<sup>2</sup> Definition of target user taken from the *Handbook for cycle-friendly design* published by Sustrans

period from 2015/16 to 2017/18 and is supplemented by funding from the Local Transport Plan and S106 planning contributions.

### **Coordination of activities**

- 1.13 Medway Council undertakes a broad range of activities that contribute to encouraging cycling, including responsibilities for highways and transportation, land use planning and regeneration, public health, green spaces and sport. Officers across the council work closely together and with our partners to ensure a coordinated approach to encouraging cycling in Medway.

## **2 What we have delivered**

- 2.1 In recent years Medway Council has delivered a broad range of initiatives to promote and encourage cycling.
- 2.2 The local cycle network has been enlarged and improved – 72 miles (116 km) of cycle routes now exist across the Medway Council area (as at July 2015). Many routes link up with longer distance routes including those which form part of the National Cycle Network.

### **Improvements to the National Cycle Network (NCN) through Medway**

- 2.3 Route 1 of the NCN between Dover and Inverness passes through Medway along attractive routes adjacent to the River Medway, through town centres and rural areas, and close to major tourist attractions such as Rochester Castle and Cathedral and Upnor Castle. The route also links the Universities at Medway campus to local commercial and residential areas. High quality public realm improvements to NCN route 1 have been delivered along Corporation Street, Rochester; Riverside Link at Strood and through Chatham Waterfront Bus Station. In 2013 the *Heron Trail* was reclassified as a national route (NCN 179) following improvements and upgrades to signing. In addition, *The Pilgrims Trail* (NCN route 17) now links Rochester to Canterbury.

### **Recreational cycling**

- 2.4 A leisure cycle route is provided along the estuary of the River Medway from Motney Hill, through Riverside Country Park to The Strand Leisure Park – this is a traffic free route of approximately 3 miles and forms part of NCN route 1. In addition, a mountain bike course has been constructed at Capstone Park where a

number of successful cycling events have been organised annually including the 'Kites and Bikes over Capstone' event.

### **Utility cycling**

2.5 By observation, a large proportion of the cycling trips in Medway are for utility purposes, such as the journey to work, education or local shops. A significant part of Medway's cycle network serves utility purposes, for example routes along:

- A2 between Gillingham and Rainham
- A289 Ito Way
- North Dane Way
- Medway Road to Mid Kent College
- Dock Road to Chatham Waterfront bus station and onwards to Rochester

### **Cycle parking**

2.6 Cycle parking provision has been increased through specific cycle parking schemes and as part of planning conditions for new development. By working with Southeastern and Network Rail improved facilities have been installed at a number of mainline stations to respond to increased demand.

### ***Bikeability* training and education in schools**

2.7 Medway Council has delivered free *Bikeability* training at levels 1 and 2 to students in years 5 and 6, with the training taking place in schools during the school day. During a transition lesson offered by the Safer Journeys Team participation in a *Bikeability* course is recommended for all year 6 students planning to cycle to secondary school. To support this, summer holiday courses are offered for those students who did not receive or complete *Bikeability* training in primary school. The number of students receiving the training is constrained by a number of factors including the:

- willingness of schools to allow students to undertake the training during the school day;
- availability of trained cycling instructors; and
- level of funding provided by DfT to support this service.

The number of students receiving both level 1 and 2 training in Medway in the 2014/2015 academic year was approximately 1500 which equates to 24% of all year 5 and 6 students at that time.

- 2.8 The council promotes active modes of travel not just through education in schools, but also with after school clubs, children's centres and youth centres. The Safer Journeys Team is instrumental in promoting cycling, as well as other sustainable transport modes. In addition to promoting cycling for the journey to and from school the Safer Journeys Team support local cycling events such as The Big Ride, which attract a high level of interest from children. The idea is to imbed a positive memory of active travel at a young age.
- 2.9 The Safer Journeys Team have worked with schools in Medway over a number of years to develop and implement School Travel plans, which contain a package of measures for reducing the number of car trips to school, together with improving children's health and safety on the school journey. 90% of schools have completed a travel plan. The School Travel Plan forms a condition for schools who submit planning applications which will lead to an increase in roll numbers and/or alterations which may impact upon pedestrian movement to and from school, therefore the team continue to work with these schools to meet the condition. The package of School Travel Plan measures include the successful Walking Bus Scheme, which forms a commitment in the Medway Council Plan 2012-2017 – as at June 2015 there were 50 operational walking buses in Medway with 711 participants.

### **Active Medway Cycle Groups**

- 2.10 Following on from the success of the adult walking programme, the council's Active Travel Co-ordinator has developed a cycle leadership programme in partnership with local cycling groups. This was launched in 2011 and has involved training ride leaders to enable these volunteers to take out groups of people on short rides. This initiative has been very successful – by April 2015, more than 40 volunteers had been trained, which enabled the coordination of a number of regular local cycle rides led by volunteer ride leaders. This has enabled GPs and other health professionals to refer people with medical conditions onto cycle groups to increase their fitness levels. A small number of people that have been referred to the scheme had no cycling skills at all, so some volunteers have been trained to conduct adult cycling group lessons. These run at weekends during the summer months, and have been very successful in teaching adults how to balance and other basic cycling techniques, enabling them to go on and join the Active Medway Cycling Groups.
- 2.11 The number of cycle groups meeting regularly each week has continued to grow, but attendance does depend on the time of year, the weather and the number of

available ride leaders. Since the launch of the programme, 362 individual cycling groups had taken place up until April 2015, resulting in 3,770 individual cycling hours directly attributable to the scheme. The number of people typically attending each ride varies between five and 20.

- 2.12 Other local cycle groups have also organised regular cycle rides, but these tended to be over longer distances and therefore are more suitable for experienced riders. The council has provided some information on its website on these activities.

### **Partnership working with Sustrans**

- 2.13 Medway Council works very closely with Sustrans, which is a national charity set up to promote sustainable transport. It leads on the development of the NCN, with over 10,000 miles of signed cycle routes throughout the UK. Medway Council is working closely with Sustrans to develop and improve cycle routes in Medway.
- 2.14 Sustrans have been commissioned by Medway Council to review a number of new cycle corridors in Medway that form part of Medway's Cycling Action Plan. In addition Sustrans are undertaking an audit of Medway's existing cycle network and will be producing the graphics for a new cycle map as part of their work.
- 2.15 Medway Council has supported the Sustrans Cycle Ranger scheme and occasionally receive emails from the Rangers if they encounter any issues on Medway's Cycle Network. The Rangers also put up signage if works are taking place near to or on a cycle path, set up information stands and refresh paintwork on certain signs/milestones as required.

### **Regional cycling facilities**

- 2.16 Medway benefits from *Cyclopark*, a regional cycling facility situated close to its border with Kent County Council, in the adjacent Gravesham Borough Council area. This 43 hectare site opened in 2012 and among its attractions are a 1.7m (2.8km) road race circuit and an international standard BMX track. Medway Council will encourage the use of the Cyclopark by actively promoting the facility and improving the connections from Medway to the park. Medway Council will also investigate recreational cycling attractions which could be implemented.

### **Information and promotion**

- 2.17 Medway Council started producing a Medway cycle map in 2006, which has been updated regularly to incorporate new cycle routes. The map shows all signed cycle routes, including NCN routes through Medway. The map also includes local

information such as tourist information, cycle training and cycle shops. The 2013 edition of the map provided a link to cycling activities available in Medway. This map is available on the council's website. Working with Sustrans, work is underway on producing a new and improved cycle map which will be available for publication in 2016.

- 2.18 A collection of pages dedicated to cycling in Medway have been developed on the Medway Council website – the home page is at [www.medway.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.medway.gov.uk/cycling). The pages contain information on cycle routes in Medway, *Bikeability*, Active Medway cycling groups and other initiatives. The website also contains links to the national journey planner, local cycle shops and cycling organisations. The website is regularly updated. Medway Council can be contacted for information on cycling by emailing [cycling@medway.gov.uk](mailto:cycling@medway.gov.uk).
- 2.19 Medway Council was the first council in Kent to have all of its cycle routes mapped for the national cycle journey planner, a website supported by the Department for Transport. This journey planner has been replaced by the *Cyclestreets* web based cycle journey planner. Further information is available at <http://www.cyclestreets.net>
- 2.20 In addition, a number of apps are available that incorporate network data for the Medway area.

### **Medway Council workplace travel plan**

- 2.21 Medway Council's workplace travel plan has delivered a package of travel initiatives to encourage Medway Council staff to cycle, car share and use public transport more. Workplace initiatives that have been offered to Medway Council employees include discounted bus travel. Measures to encourage cycling to work include:
- Secure cycle parking, showers and changing facilities at the council's HQ at Gun Wharf
  - Payment of cycle mileage allowance for travel on official duties
  - Interest free loan for cycle purchase
  - Discount scheme at several local cycle shops
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### 3 Trends

#### Trips by cycle

3.1 To enable the local trends in cycling to be measured Medway Council has permanent automatic cycle counters at 19 locations on the local cycle network. These have continuously monitored the levels of cycling in Medway since 2008. The counters remotely collect time-series cycling data over a continuous time interval. This is a cost effective method of monitoring cycling trends in Medway.

3.2 The data from the counters is summarised into monthly and annual average figures for each counter location and summarised again across all operational counters, to produce an overall trend. This enables an overarching objective assessment to be made regarding the trends and hence the benefits of the package of cycling interventions installed.

3.3 The data can demonstrate the following trends:

- Year on year changes;
- Seasonal changes;
- Climatic changes;
- Potential external influences.

The data could also be used to approximate the split of cycling journeys between work, leisure and school trips.

3.4 The historic data demonstrates a **17% increase in cycle journeys** on Medway's cycle network between 2009 and 2014. In 2009 the cycle counters in total recorded approximately 383,000 cycles which had increased to approximately 450,000 by 2014<sup>3</sup>.

3.5 Our monitoring of cycle parking at railway stations for 2014 showed an average of 99 cycles parked each month across all sites. This data was first collected in 2004 when there were an average of 61 cycles parked each month across all sites. These figures show a 60% increase in the number of cyclists travelling to stations. However, over the last 4 years this figure has levelled out with numbers remaining fairly constant. This is mainly due to the cycle parking facilities at the stations being close to capacity. To help remedy this more cycle parking is being provided

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the number and location of the cycle counters, it is likely that cyclists will have travelled over more than one counter during their journey.

at Rochester Station as part of the station being relocated. Medway Council works with Network Rail and Southeastern to promote sustainable transport to all stations where possible. Through the Local Growth Fund the Council is part funding accessibility improvements for cyclists and pedestrians at Chatham and Strood stations, which will include improvements to cycling parking at the stations.

3.6 The growth in cycling in Medway is likely to be an outcome of a combination of:

- measures delivered to enable people to feel more confident and safer;
- increased number of cycle routes linking more areas with key destinations;
- higher national profile of cycling, making it a more socially acceptable form of transport; and
- the impact of the economic downturn and the high cost of motoring.

### **Cycle safety**

3.7 There is a misconception that cycling on roads is dangerous, but as demonstrated in the following paragraphs, cycling injuries are infrequent and are generally relatively minor. However, there can always be improvements and the Road Safety team continually monitors the collision data to determine if improvements can be made.

3.8 During the period 2007 to 2014 there was a total of 499 collisions involving pedal cyclists in the Medway Council area, which averages to approximately 62 collisions a year. By contrast there were 4505 collisions involving cars (approximately 563 collisions a year) and 960 collisions resulting in injury to pedestrians (120 collisions a year). It should be noted that these figures do not take into account the number of trips made by each mode per year and cannot therefore be directly compared. Information regarding the number of trips per mode is not readily available without undertaking comprehensive traffic surveys.

3.9 The number of KSI (killed or seriously injured) pedal cycle casualties has increased since 2007, although in recent years the number appears to have stabilized. It should, however, be noted that sadly in 2013 one collision resulted in a pedal cycle rider fatality. The slight and KSI casualty figures for cyclists is detailed in table 3.1

| Table 3.1<br>Number of casualties |        |     |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-----|
| Year                              | Slight | KSI |
| 2007                              | 48     | 2   |
| 2008                              | 58     | 7   |
| 2009                              | 51     | 4   |
| 2010                              | 46     | 6   |
| 2011                              | 71     | 7   |
| 2012                              | 40     | 7   |
| 2013                              | 68     | 7   |
| 2014                              | 67     | 7   |

The data above shows that between 2007 and 2014, 90% of pedal cycle casualties were classified as slightly injured. It is disappointing to see that the number of slight casualties has increased in recent years with the annual total now being almost equal to the previous peak in 2011. Although this rise in casualties may partially be a reflection on the increase in cycling in recent years, it also highlights the need to provide more safe off road cycle routes in Medway. However, the information from collision data has not directly influenced the location of the cycle facilities being introduced, because incidents of cycle collisions are generally spread across the area on various types of road.

### 3.10 Analysis of the collisions involving pedal cyclists between 2012 and 2014 indicates:

- The vast majority of the collisions are recorded as having occurred on the road. Less than 5% of the collisions (nine) involving pedal cyclists occurred on a designated cycle path with four occurring at various junction crossings.
- Casualties are relatively evenly spread across all age groups with approximately one third of casualties aged 24 or under, one third aged in their 20's or 30's and one third aged over 40. The highest number of casualties recorded were aged between 17 and 19 years;
- Approximately 15% of pedal cycle collisions occurred in town centre locations
- A review of the contributory factors assigned to vehicles involved in pedal cycle collisions which Police attended shows that 55% of contributory

factors were assigned to pedal cyclists, with 45% being assigned to other road users (vehicles/pedestrians) who were involved. The most frequently recorded contributory factor for both pedal cyclists and other involved parties was 'Failed to look properly'.

### **Assessment of trends**

3.11 The statistical information detailed in this section demonstrates that:

- There has been a growth in cycling in the Medway area, estimated at 17% between 2009 and 2014.
  - Over the same period there has been a significant increase in slightly injured pedal cycle casualties, which may be partially related to the increase in cycling but other factors are likely to have played a part, such as a 7% increase in population across Medway.
  - More cycle parking provision is required at train stations to encourage a further increase in the number of people cycling to the stations.
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## 4 Indicators of success

4.1 National changes to levels of cycling will be measured by the National Travel Survey. A national *Cycling Delivery Plan* was published by the Department for Transport in October 2014. This sets out the government's ambitions for cycling and walking up until 2025:

- To double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages<sup>4</sup>; and
- To increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55%.

4.2 Following on from the publication of the national *Cycling Delivery Plan*, the government introduced a duty through the Infrastructure Act for the Secretary of State for Transport to bring forward a *Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy* (CWIS) in England. The first CWIS was published in March 2016.

4.3 The outcomes of projects in Medway will feed into the national strategy to encourage cycling. Success will be measured locally by monitoring key indicators, including:

- The proportionate percentage change in the number of journeys made by cycle in Medway, by undertaking continuous monitoring of cycle movements at fixed locations.
- Level of participation in organised cycling activities including:
  - *Bikeability* training;
  - Active Medway Cycle groups;
  - mass participation cycling events.

We will also seek to obtain data from local cycling clubs.

- The proportionate change in the number of pedal cyclist KSI casualties in relation to the:

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<sup>4</sup> Information from Cycling Delivery Plan: Cycling activity for the purpose of this document is measured as bicycle stages as in the National Travel Survey. The basic unit of travel in the National Travel Survey is a trip, which consists of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the form of transport. Counting bicycle stages rather than trips allows us to include journeys that involve a bicycle but where this is not the main form of transport (for example, cycling to a railway station to catch the train to work).

- a) proportionate change in the number of journeys made by cycle; and
  - b) overall trend in road traffic collision data.
- Levels of congestion on the local highway network
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## 5 Actions

5.1 The Cycling Action Plan covers the period 2015 – 18 and builds on the success of the previous plan and the Olympic sporting legacy. Medway's Cycling Action Plan will deliver actions that:

- expand, improve and maintain the network of facilities for cyclists;
- deliver training and participation in cycling;
- delivers improvement by working in partnership;
- provides information and promotional material; and
- maintains and develops travel plans.

Collectively, these actions deliver the objectives of the action plan.

### **Expand, improve and maintain the network of facilities for cyclists**

5.2 When designing changes to the cycle network, Medway Council will take account of the target user defined in Section 1.

5.3 Analysis of the existing network of cycle routes has been undertaken to identify missing links, gaps or barriers to cyclists. It is planned to simplify existing routes where practical, although existing highway constraints often make this difficult to achieve. Consideration will be given to routes away from the road network where possible. The review of new cycle corridors will be cognisant of potential cycling demand to and from areas outside the Medway boundary. A new cycle route map will be produced as part of the Cycling Action Plan, which will improve legibility of routes.

5.4 The Medway Tunnel will not form part of the cycle network. Cycling through the Medway Tunnel is prohibited under the Medway Tunnel Act which restricts passage through the tunnel to mechanically propelled vehicles only. Furthermore, it is considered that the existing tunnel cannot be altered to allow safe travel for cyclists through the tunnel and the provision of an additional tunnel bore would not offer value for money due to the potentially high cost. However, we will aim to investigate new or improved east-west routes through Medway.

5.5 A programme of improvements have been identified that improve and expand the safety and quality of the facilities for cyclists by either extending the existing cycle network (including providing new links to schools or other key destinations), or

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filling gaps or removing barriers to cyclists on existing routes. This will include the use of designated on-carriageway cycle lanes where they are going to be most effective, however this option is not appropriate on high speed roads. Where possible surfacing and signage on cycle routes will be consistent, and unnecessary cycle related signs will be removed.

- 5.6 There are a number of traffic signals in Medway that have advanced stop lines for cyclists. Where possible, consideration will be given to introducing junctions with advanced stop lines for cyclists on popular cycle routes. Contra-flow cycle routes will be considered in some locations, to allow pedal cycles to travel against the flow of traffic. This option is unlikely to be implemented in Rochester High Street due to the high level of intrusive signing and lining that would be required to be provided in a high profile tourist conservation area.
- 5.7 Most residential streets will not need dedicated cycle facilities due to low traffic flows and vehicle speeds. However, linking residential developments to cycle routes may be beneficial in some circumstances.
- 5.8 Pedal cycles are allowed to travel on footpaths where the surface has been legally designated and signed as a shared-use path. These paths tend to be wider to cater for both pedestrians and pedal cycles. Each location will be considered individually and the most appropriate cost-effective provision for the circumstances will be proposed.
- 5.9 Routes are being planned which would allow cyclists to access Gillingham Business Park and Medway City Estate, two of the biggest areas of employment in Medway.
- 5.10 Cycle routes to key leisure facilities would be beneficial and this will be investigated. Medway Council will also review the existing off road cycle facilities at Capstone Farm Country Park and Riverside Country Park and produce proposals to improve or expand these facilities where appropriate, together with providing and improving links for cyclists to these Country Parks. Additional recreational cycle routes on other significant areas of green space will be investigated including Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve.
- 5.11 We will ensure that major new housing development provides an environment that encourages people to be physically active by the provision of quality facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

- 5.12 Routes need to be effectively signed so that cyclists are able to follow the route easily. However, it is also important to ensure that projects do not introduce a large number of signs, which may produce unnecessary clutter. Signage will be reviewed as part of individual schemes.
- 5.13 If cycle routes are poorly maintained then it is likely that cyclists will be discouraged from using them. As part of Medway's Cycling Action Plan improvements will be made to some existing cycle routes, in particular the route through Riverside Country Park will be improved.
- 5.14 A provisional list of cycle corridor schemes to expand and improve the facilities for cyclists is provided in table 5.1. The estimated cost of the schemes is being established and this will determine the number of schemes that can be delivered. These schemes will be prioritised as the action plan develops and this will take account of the relative difficulty with delivering each scheme. In developing the cycling schemes, Medway Council cycling officers will learn from best practice, investigate innovative solutions that improve conditions for cyclists, and undertake a programme of continual professional development. Furthermore, all new or revised road schemes will consider the needs of cyclists during the design stages.
- 5.15 It is anticipated that schemes listed in table 5.1 that cannot be delivered with the funding currently available will form the basis of future bids and developer funding when opportunities arise. The Cycling Action Plan will be developed into a longer term strategy in the future. This will be possible when the Local Plan is finalised and the location of significant developments confirmed.

**Table 5.1  
Proposed cycle corridor schemes**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Corridor</b>  | <b>Status</b>   | <b>Predicted delivery period</b> |
|------------|--|---|----------------------------------|
| 1          | Gillingham Business Park to Riverside Country Park to the Universities and into Great Lines Heritage Park. Includes improved links to Riverside Country Park | Mainly existing links with some new and some improvements to existing links         | 2016/17                          |
| 2          | Dickens Country route from Rochester High Street to Gads Hill via Strood town centre   | Mixture of new and existing links. Links to improvements through Strood town centre | 2017/18                          |
| 3          | Beechings Way  | New corridor. Phase 1 completed 2015/16   | 2015/17                          |
| 4          | Rochester Maidstone Road   | New corridor  | 2016/17                          |
| 5          | Lordswood Lane   | New corridor  | 2016/17                          |
| 6          | Links to Capstone Country Park and Darland Banks including improvements to North Dane Way cycle route  | New corridors. First phase planned to be delivered during this action plan period.  | 2017/18                          |
| 7          | Parkwood/Wigmore to Rainham town centre  | New corridor – route to be identified   | Future years                     |
| 8          | Horsted to Rochester town centre via City Way  | New corridor  | 2016/17                          |
| 9          | Chatham railway station to Chatham Maritime including improvements to NCR1   | Mixture of new and existing links   | 2017/18                          |
| 10         | Medway City Estate – accessibility improvements for peds and cyclists  | New corridor  | 2017/18                          |
| 11         | Links to Ranscombe Farm  | New corridors – route to be identified  | 2017/18                          |
| 12         | A2 corridor - improvements   | Existing corridor to be upgraded and changed to a shared unsegregated route         | 2017/18                          |
| 13         | Connected recreational tour route passing through strategic green space in Medway  | Mixture of new and existing links   | 2017/18 & future years           |
| 14         | National Cycle Route 1 through Medway - improvements   | Existing corridor   | 2017/18 & future years           |
| 15         | Peninsula  | New corridors linked to new development – routes to be identified                   | Not programmed                   |
| 16         | Strood to Cyclopark, Gravesend   | Minor improvements to an existing link  | 2016/17                          |
| 17         | Former Chatham Dockyard railway  | New corridor – dependent on   | Not                              |

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|    |   | developer intervention                                     | programmed             |
|----|---|--|------------------------|
| 18 | Connected River Medway route – flat route in close proximity to river | Mixture of new and existing links – route to be identified | 2017/18 & future years |
| 19 | Cycle parking – various locations                                     | See section 5  | 2016/18                |
| 20 | Pumptrack   | Off-road leisure facility in Gillingham                    | 2016/18                |

### **Training and participation in cycling**

- 5.16 We will continue to support cycle to school programmes. *Bikeability* training has been very successful in teaching young people in Medway cycling skills. Medway Council currently have 13 trained *Bikeability* officers (8 dedicated officers plus 5 members of the Safer Journeys team), which will enable more young people in years 5 and 6 to be offered Levels 1 and 2 *Bikeability* training. Continued delivery of Level 1 and 2 *Bikeability* training will help to keep pedal cycle collision numbers involving children at a low level. In addition, further links will be established with specialist schools to develop a programme of pre-cycling events that are used to encourage children to balance prior to cycling. It is anticipated that *Bikeability* training will continue to be supplemented by Safer Journeys training delivered to schools in Medway. Medway Council submitted a bid to Government to fund a limited amount of adult *Bikeability* training during 2016/17.
- 5.17 Medway Council will continue to coordinate and support the successful Active Medway Cycle Groups, which generally focus on health programmes for adult cyclists. It is planned to recruit and train more volunteer ride leaders to enable more short rides to be organised. A number of adults in Medway are keen to take up cycling but they require basic cycling skills to build their confidence. We would like to explore the opportunities for Medway Council to train additional instructors to teach adults basic cycling skills
- 5.18 Medway Council aims to continue to organise a number of mass participation events as part of its Sports Development programme. Medway hosted the annual Big Ride in May 2015. The event aims to get a large number of people to participate in a short cycle ride, which helps to raise the profile of cycling in Medway.

### **Working in partnership**

- 5.19 Success in delivering the action plan will depend on building on the partnership working that exists with partner organisations and voluntary groups.

- 5.20 Medway Council will continue to work closely with Sustrans to identify and develop improvements to the cycle network in Medway. In addition, Medway Council will continue to work with the volunteer Sustrans Rangers and seek to act on issues reported by them if applicable.
- 5.21 Medway Council will work with Kent County Council to develop routes that cross local authority boundaries such as potential new routes along the Medway Valley to Maidstone, Ranscombe Farm Nature Reserve to Shorne Woods Country Park, Cobham and links to the Cyclopark at Gravesend.
- 5.22 Medway Council will seek to work closer with all cycling clubs and organisations in Medway to encourage more participation in rides organised by these groups.
- 5.23 Medway Council will continue its close working with Southeastern trains to improve conditions for cyclists using trains from Medway stations. This will include improving the availability and condition of cycle parking at stations where there is a high demand, in particular at Rainham and Gillingham stations.
- 5.24 Medway Council will also work with retailers and local organisations at key destinations, such as town centres, supermarkets, local centres, local services, leisure centres, retail parks, GP surgeries and hospitals, with the aim to improve cycle parking provision on offer.
- 5.25 The issue of cycle parking is also tackled by Medway Council at the planning stage for new developments, when appropriate levels of cycle parking is required to be provided in accordance with the council's parking standards.

### **Information and promotion**

- 5.26 Medway Council will continue to publish the Medway cycle map to promote cycle routes in Medway, together with promoting activities and tourism destinations in Medway. The map will be regularly updated and published in paper form and will show all signed cycle routes including the parts of the NCN which pass through Medway, together with local urban and rural routes for cyclists. Cycling parking facilities will be shown on Medway's cycle route map. The map will be widely available from various outlets such as the council's Tourist Information Centre in Rochester and bike shops across Medway. The map will also be available on the council's website.
- 5.27 A collection of pages dedicated to cycling in Medway will be maintained on the Medway Council website. The pages will contain up to date information on cycle routes in Medway, route planning, *Bikeability* and other initiatives. The website will

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provide updated links to cycling initiatives, cycle journey planners and cycling organisations. Medway Council will continue to maintain and regularly monitor a dedicated email address for information on cycling.

- 5.28 Medway Council will use the local media to publicise activities, raise awareness of any new or improved infrastructure and provide details of success stories. We will promote cycling activities including the mass cycling participation events, Active Medway Cycle Groups and *Bikeability*.
- 5.29 The Public Health team at Medway Council will continue to promote the health benefits of cycling.
- 5.30 Medway Council will work with the local universities to promote cycling amongst staff and students including provision of information on both existing and new cycle routes.

### **Workplace travel plans**

- 5.31 Medway Council will seek to directly support the existing Medway Council staff travel plan. This includes initiatives that encourage staff to cycle to work and cycle in conjunction with their duties. The initiatives include an interest free cycle purchase loan scheme, discounts at several local bike shops, secure cycle parking at key sites, shower and changing facilities at Gun Wharf and payment of mileage allowance for travel on official duties.
  - 5.32 Medway Council will seek to indirectly support local businesses to maintain and develop travel plans that encourage travel by cycle. In addition, Medway Council will seek planning obligations (where appropriate) on new developments to encourage travel by cycle.
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## 6 Funding

- 6.1 The action plan will be delivered by a package of established capital and revenue funding.
- 6.2 Medway Council has been successful in securing £2.5m Local Growth Funding to deliver a package of capital projects detailed in the Cycling Action Plan 2015/18. This funding flows over a three year period. The business case that successfully secured the funding detailed a local annual contribution of £100,000 from the Integrated Transport block allocation over a period of three years. It is anticipated that S106 planning contributions will be secured during the period of the action plan. The capital funding profile detailed in the approved business case is set out in table 6.1.

| <b>Table 6.1</b>  |                 |                   |                   |                   |
|---|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Medway's Cycling Action Plan 2015/18 funding profile</b> |                 |                   |                   |                   |
|   | 2015/16         | 2016/17           | 2017/18           | Total             |
| <b>Funding source</b>                                       |                 |                   |                   |                   |
| Local Growth Fund   | £100,000        | £1,100,000        | £1,300,000        | £2,500,000        |
| Integrated Transport block                                  | £100,000        | £100,000          | £100,000          | £300,000          |
| Planning contributions                                      |                 |                   | £100,000          | £100,000          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>£200,000</b> | <b>£1,200,000</b> | <b>£1,500,000</b> | <b>£2,900,000</b> |

- 6.3 The detail of the listed capital schemes in section 5 will be investigated and designed as the action plan progresses and this will enable robust programme of work to be determined. The level of planning contributions is an estimate and will depend on the level of Section 106 agreements completed during the action plan period.
- 6.4 Revenue funding will include the *Bikeability* grant from government and existing revenue budgets.

## **References**

- National Cycling Delivery Plan (October 2014)
- Medway Council Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (March 2011)
- Medway Council Draft Local Development Framework
- Medway's Council Plan 2015–2016
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway (November 2012)