

**ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO :** CABINET

**DATE :** 10 July 2007

**REPORT TITLE :** Green Travel Plan

**WARDS :** ALL

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER :** Cllr M Ellis – Environment and Sustainability

**CONTACT OFFICER :** Gina Kellett, Technical Services, 01727 819359

**1. Purpose Of Report**

- 1.1 To seek adoption of the City and District of St Albans Cycling Strategy.
- 1.2 To seek approval of the City and District of St Albans Draft Walking Strategy for consultation.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That, subject to 2.2 below, members adopt the City and District of St Albans Cycling Strategy as shown in Appendix A.
- 2.2 That members approve paragraph 8.7 in this report and section 5.2 of the Cycle Strategy subject to consultation with the Rothamsted Park Forum, the Clarence Park Forum and representatives of Longacres.
- 2.3 That members approve the City and District of St Albans Draft Walking Strategy for consultation as shown in Appendix B.

**3. Executive Summary**

- 3.1 The cycling and walking strategies form part of the Green Travel Plan for the District. This report informs members of the results of the public consultation on the Cycling Strategy and seeks approval to consult on the Draft Walking Strategy.

**4. Corporate Policy Implications including Equalities**

- 4.1 Green Travel meets the following Council aims;
  - Work in partnership for the health and well being of the community
  - Safeguard our environment
  - Ensure the District is a desirable place in which to live and work

**5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The work carried out to date has been carried out within existing budgets.
- 5.2 Any new items will have to be considered in the budget allocation process. The items requiring funding allocation are shown in Appendix D – Targets.

## 6. **Legal and Property Implications**

None.

## 7. **Workforce Implications**

None.

## 8. **Background Information**

8.1 A public consultation was carried out on the draft City and District of St Albans Cycling Strategy during February and March 2007. A copy of the strategy was sent to:

- 17 secondary schools within the District.
- The Community Panel – 1000 residents across the District.
- Resident and housing associations on the list produced by Client Services.
- Individuals and groups on the St Albans and London Colney Transportation Forums.
- ‘Friends’ of various parks around the District
- The Leisure Forum

A copy of the strategy was also put on the Council’s website

8.2 A list of the individuals and groups who responded to the consultation is attached as Appendix E.

8.3 The majority of respondents were supportive of the document, however concerns were raised that the principles of the strategy do need to be acted upon rather than the document ‘remaining on the shelf’.

8.4 While there were a number of general comments, there were two issues that generated the most comments. These were the removal of the ‘no cycling’ signs in District owned parks and open spaces and the poor condition of road surfaces within the District.

8.5 The draft strategy proposed the removal of ‘no cycling’ signs within the District owned parks and open spaces therefore making the ‘no cycling’ byelaws unenforceable. Of those who commented on this element of the draft strategy 10 individual/groups were in favour of allowing cycling in the parks with 11 individual/groups against.

8.6 There is concern about the potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists using routes through the parks and therefore it is felt that a rigorous assessment should be carried out on a case by case basis for any conversion of an existing footpath to joint use.

- 8.7 It has been suggested that initially a risk assessment should be carried out at three locations in the District – Rothamsted Park, Clarence Park and Longacres. Details of the exact routes are shown in Appendix C. If it is considered safe to do so then cycling will be allowed at these locations for a trial period of one year. During this period the routes will be monitored by the appropriate park ranger. To ensure that these routes are clearly defined these routes will be signed however the signing will be kept to a minimum.
- 8.8 The strategy (section 5.3) has been amended to include these changes.
- 8.9 While the condition of the carriageway was listed as a reason for not cycling in the draft document the poor condition of the road surface was frequently mentioned by those responding. The following locations were specifically referred to:
- Victoria Street between St Peter’s Street and Marlborough Road (There are proposals to resurface Victoria Street once Three Valleys Water have installed a new water main at this location.)
  - King William VI junction
  - Redbourn Road
  - Ladies Grove
- 8.10 Using the comments received as part of the consultation along with a consultation exercise carried out by the St Albans Cycling Campaign a number of targets have been set. These can be seen in Appendix D.
- 8.11 Officers will produce an annual report giving an update on each of the targets within the plan. This report will update Councillors and the community on the progress being made and also consider the resource implications of maintaining progress.

9. **Background Papers - Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

<u>Bibliography</u>	<u>Custodian</u>	<u>File Location</u>
Cycle Strategy Public Consultation responses	Gina Kellett	SADC Offices

# City and District of St Albans ~ Cycling Strategy

1. Introduction
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The pedal cycle<sup>1</sup> is an efficient, healthy, quiet, sustainable and non-polluting means of transport. This strategy presents St Albans Council's plan for increasing the use of bicycles in the District and sets out why this policy is important.
- 1.2. St Albans is suffering from the effects of pollution caused by motor vehicles. Streets are often filled to capacity with cars and every available piece of kerb space is used for parking. The bicycle offers an alternative means of transport that avoids these problems rather than increases them.
- 1.3. The private car provides many benefits, particularly for people making long journeys to places where public transport provision is poor. However, many trips made within the District are short and for these journeys the bicycle can provide an inexpensive, healthy and relatively quick alternative to the car.
- 1.4. People are interested in cycling, and own and buy bicycles. The problem is that in this country, on average, we don't use the bicycles we own enough. Figures from Hertfordshire's Traffic and Transport Data Report 2005 show that 34% of adults in the county travel survey owned a bike and this had increased by 6% since 1999.
- 1.5. St Albans Council can, in partnership with others, make changes that will encourage and persuade large numbers of people to take up cycling. Key partners in making the necessary changes are:
  - ❖ Hertfordshire County Council/Hertfordshire Highways
  - ❖ Residents of the City and District of St Albans
  - ❖ Cyclists and Cycling organisations
  - ❖ Businesses
  - ❖ Transport providers and operators
  - ❖ the Police and Emergency Services
  - ❖ Health Authorities
  - ❖ Educational Establishments
- 1.6. The Council will work with all these groups, and, where appropriate, take a lead in initiatives developed by its partners as well as seeking support for its own initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this document, the term covers all type of pedal cycle ridden by or transporting persons of all ages and abilities, with or without trailer.

- 1.7. The St Albans Cycling Strategy is 'target driven'. The Strategy sets targets to be achieved in all areas where action is required to encourage cycling, make it safer and so meet the objectives of the plan. These targets are listed in section 6.
- 1.8. This 'Cycling Strategy for the City and District of St Albans' was adopted by the Council on {DATE}

## 2. BACKGROUND

### Why Cycle?

- 2.1. It has been recognised over the last fifteen years that the rapid increase in traffic growth in the UK needs to be reversed so as to prevent irreparable environmental damage. Increases in motor traffic are now causing congestion and parking problems throughout the District, along with environmental damage and pollution. Hertfordshire has one of the highest car ownership levels in the country and traffic flows are 35% above the national average. (Hertfordshire County Council Website).
- 2.2. The bicycle uses energy sources that are more renewable than those of most other forms of transport. It is clean, efficient and if as a consequence of its use, fewer journeys are made by car, air pollution and congestion are reduced to the benefit of the environment as a whole.
- 2.3. Bicycles take up less road space per person than cars, and therefore can be a means of increasing road capacity without increasing road space. More cycle parking and less car parking on new developments can have benefits in land use terms; and the general benefits in noise, pollution and visual amenity through reduced congestion will lead to a better environment.
- 2.4. Three in ten households in the UK do not have access to a car, and in many one car households the majority of trips are made by non-car modes. Ensuring that there is safe and convenient access to jobs, education, health care, other services, and local facilities for non-motorised road users is an essential part of promoting social inclusion.
- 2.5. Besides environmental factors there are also economic reasons why cycling should be popular. The cost of buying a new bike has come down in real terms. It now costs half the weekly average wage to purchase a bicycle. (Local cycling projects and social inclusion, 2002). Latest figures suggest that just to drive a middle market petrol family car costs £5,200 per year, or around £100 per week or 51p per mile. (Automobile Association, 2003).
- 2.6. As cars are most polluting (and suffer the most rapid rate of deterioration) when used on brief trips, the cycle can be seen to be an ideal replacement for the short, say up to two miles, journey. Such trips account for 50% of all trips taken (National Cycling Strategy, 1996). A significant reduction in air pollution, noise congestion and danger to other road users would be achieved if a substantial proportion of these journeys were made by bicycle rather than car. A journey of 1.5 miles only takes ten minutes by bicycle (cycling at 8mph).
- 2.7. Many studies have shown that there are considerable health benefits to cycling. For example cycling reduces the risk of serious conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and the most common form of diabetes.

- 2.8. There has been considerable publicity recently about the prevalence of obesity in children as well as adults, and the related health dangers. A Department for Transport study found that aerobic fitness was boosted by 11% after just six weeks of cycling a 'short distance' four times a week. (Cycling for better health, DfT, 2000).
- 2.9. In connection with traffic fumes it has been found that cyclists absorb lower level of pollutants than car drivers (National Cycling Strategy, 1996).
- 2.10. It should also be noted that particularly over short distances the bicycle could be more convenient than making the same journey in a car. This is particularly true where the journey is made into or out of busy and congested areas such as town centres. It is often the case that free parking facilities are located closer to the destination than the nearest available vehicle parking. Placing cycle parking in prominent and convenient positions is a simple way of demonstrating to others that cycling is a convenient way to travel

### Barriers to Cycling

- 2.11. The speed and increasing volume of traffic, deters many people from cycling. The traffic situation makes parents very reluctant to encourage, or even allow, their children to cycle, and creates a spiral of even more traffic on the roads; this is especially apparent on the 'school run' where few children now cycle to school.
- 2.12. Many people are reluctant to take up cycling due to:
- ❖ Fear of injury
  - ❖ Fear of theft
  - ❖ The speed and amount of motorised traffic on the roads
  - ❖ lack of high quality cycle facilities (cycle tracks, crossings etc) on the roads
  - ❖ lack of facilities for cycles and cyclists at work places, shops and leisure locations
  - ❖ lack of storage for cycles in flats and houses,
  - ❖ lack of training,
  - ❖ lack of knowledge of suitable routes
  - ❖ the weather.
- 2.13. Within the district we suffer from a number of problems with regard to cycling including
- ❖ Narrow roads, with no or little off street parking in some areas
  - ❖ Poorly designed highway schemes
  - ❖ Poor quality of road surfaces

- ❖ Heavy levels of traffic, particularly at the beginning and end of school times and during periods of severe congestion on the motorway network
  - ❖ Barriers introduced to control anti-social behaviour
  - ❖ Lack of cycle friendly infrastructure
  - ❖ Lack of co-ordination when many agencies are involved
  - ❖ St Albans City Centre is at the top of a hill
- 2.14. St Albans District will, in partnership with others, make changes that will reduce the barriers to cycling and increase the numbers of people choosing this mode of transport.

### Cycling Conflicts

- 2.15. Both walking and cycling are healthy, sustainable, cheap and efficient means of travel, and they are both available to a wide range of people. However, pedestrians and cyclists have different needs. In some cases the provision of facilities for cyclists can cause conflicts between the two groups. Allowing cyclists any use of facilities previously reserved for pedestrian use only can be a contentious issue.
- 2.16. Concerns that any measures to favour cycling do not increase congestions for motor vehicles.
- 2.17. It is acknowledged that there is a the presence of a fairly aggressive minority of cyclists who ride on the pavement or through red traffic signals and seem to expect to have priority when doing so.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT / FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- 3.1. The Council recognises that any cycling strategy is integrated with other relevant strategies and policies at National, County and District levels. Outlined below are the relevant strategies and policies that link into the Cycling Strategy for St Albans District.
- 3.2. The cost per kilometre of route of providing high quality facilities rather than the standard package is high, but if real progress is to be made in persuading people to cycle then the provision of high quality facilities is essential. It is therefore vital that all funding opportunities are used to their full potential, to ensure the maximum number of quality facilities are introduced. It is possible to provide some facilities for a very modest cost which result in dramatic improvements for practical cycling.

#### National Policy Context

- 3.3. At a National level, the government published its white paper on 'A New Deal for Transport: better for everyone' in 1998. This announced a change in focus in national transport policy, and included an emphasis on improving conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. The White Paper made explicit the links between transport and health.
- 3.4. In parallel, the Government's 'Our Healthier Nation' strategy stresses the importance of environmental influences on health and the importance of routine physical activity in people's daily life.
- 3.5. In 1996, the National Cycling Strategy (NCS) was launched as a blueprint for the development of cycling and the National Cycling Forum was established to co-ordinate this. The main target of the Strategy was to double the number of cycling trips by 2002 (base figure 1996), and doubling this figure again by 2012. Unfortunately the 2002 target has not been reached but that the 2012 figure is still being kept as a target.
- 3.6. The National Cycling Strategy stresses the need for partnership working and an increased level of co-operation between organisations in the public, commercial and voluntary sector. This approach is strongly endorsed by St Albans.
- 3.7. The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 requires the local traffic authority (in the case of St Albans, Hertfordshire County Council) to set targets for reducing motor vehicle traffic, or to justify their reasons for not doing so. The reduction of motor vehicle traffic will improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, improve air quality and reduce accidents and the domination of public space by motor vehicles.
- 3.8. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the highway authority to make the best use of the existing road network. The road network should be working efficiently, without unnecessary delay to those travelling on it (which includes pedestrians and cyclists, as well as motorised vehicles).

- 3.9. Safer Routes to School is a national project seeking to influence the transport choices of children and young people. It aims to reduce traffic congestion and to encourage children towards more healthy lifestyles by cycling and walking to school.

#### County Policy Context

- 3.10. The Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006/2007 – 2010/2011 sets the framework for achieving the vision for a better transport system for all. This plan builds upon LTP1 and focuses on delivering the shared priorities of tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, providing safer road, improving air quality and improving the quality of life for residents.

- 3.11. The vision of the plan is:

*“To provide a safe, efficient and affordable transport system that allows access for all to everyday facilities. Everyone will have the opportunity and information to choose the most appropriate form of transport and time of travel. By making best use of the existing network we will work towards a transport system that maximising the capacity of the network we will work towards a transport system that balances economic prosperity with personal health and environmental well being.”*

- 3.12. An increase in cycling will be delivered through implementing cycle schemes over a network of routes providing an integrated network of inter and intra town centres. This will provide a strategic network for national, cross authority and county routes. The strategic network will be supplemented by the growth of a local network developed to the needs of the local community through transport plans. The softer measures of education and training are important and will be delivered through road safety education, cycle training and promotions.

- 3.13. The LTP includes indicators and targets for mode share of journeys to school and development of school travel plans. These targets include cycling and will be delivered through a number of different measures including Safer Routes to School, Road Safety Education including cycle training.

- 3.14. The Mid Hertfordshire Area Plan covers the settlements of St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney in this district as well as Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. The area plan approach has been adopted by the County so as to provide a greater opportunity for consultation with district and parish councils as well as local residents. The Cycling Strategy review will be fed into the Mid Hertfordshire programme, along with the St Albans and St Albans South Urban Plans.

#### Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011 (1998)

- 3.15. At a national level, Planning Policy Guidance 13 (Transport) advocates a reduction in car travel. Mindful of this the County Structure Plan promotes a role for cycling through two of its key policies:

#### POLICY 22 : REDUCTION OF TRAVEL NEED AND CAR USAGE

- 3.16. The County Council will aim to reduce the growth in private motor traffic on roads and minimise its environmental impact. Total capacity of County roads will be stabilised at

its current level, subject only to the increase attributable to planned development within Hertfordshire. The management of that capacity will be designed to create opportunities to increase the proportion of journeys made by walking, cycling or by passenger transport in the safest manner possible.

- 3.17. The need to travel will be reduced, mainly by locating and planning development so as to require fewer and shorter journeys to be made.

**POLICY 23 : NETWORKS AND FACILITIES FOR NON-MOTORISED TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC**

- 3.18. Cycle networks will be identified and implemented, as part of integrated transport plans. Along these routes measures will be undertaken to give greater priority and safety to cyclists.
- 3.19. Development proposals should include appropriate facilities to provide safe access for cyclists. Developers and occupiers will be encouraged to develop their own transport plans or take part in wider initiatives aimed at minimising inappropriate car use.

**District Policy Context**

- 3.20. The national emphasis on cycling, walking, traffic reduction and air quality is reflected in the Council's vision and objectives:

**The Council's vision**

To preserve and enhance the distinctive character of St Albans City and District, making it an outstanding place to live, work and visit, where everyone enjoys a range of quality and efficient services in a progressive, caring and environmentally concerned community.

**The Council's Objectives**

Build a community that is open, fair and inclusive

Work in partnership for the health and well being of the community

Cherish and promote our heritage, arts and culture

Safeguard our environment

Ensure the District is a desirable place in which to live and work.

- 3.21. The District Council can provide funds for cycling from both revenue and capital budgets. There are opportunities to use a wide range of local authority budgets such as those for leisure, tourism or environmental schemes in ways which incorporate or support cycling measures. Cycling programmes can have a distinct advantage in that they are relevant to the wider objectives of planning, leisure and community services and therefore a single cycling scheme can contribute to several services.

- 3.22. Town and Parish Councils may wish to support the provision of cycle route networks and cycle facilities as and when appropriate.

- 3.23. In certain circumstances, Section 106 planning obligation agreements can require the provision of cycle facilities in conjunction with development. Developer contributions can be sought particularly where a proposed development will create a need for a particular facility.

#### Local Development Framework

- 3.24. The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the spatial planning strategy introduced in England and Wales by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It replaces the previous system of county level Structure Plans and District level Local Plans. The LDF comprises a series of documents, which set out policies and proposals for future development within each local planning authority's area. SADC is still at an early stage in the production of its new style Development Plan documents.

#### Local Strategic Partnership

- 3.25. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is an organisation made up of representatives from public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The LSP matches local authority boundaries, and aims to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.
- 3.26. The LSP is key to tackling deep seated, multi-faceted problems, requiring a range of responses from different bodies. Local partners working through a LSP will be expected to take many of the major decisions about priorities for their local area.

#### Green Heart Partnerships

- 3.27. The Green Heart Partnership (GHP) is an initiative that aims to achieve growth and build capacity between the arts and environment sectors across Hertfordshire.

- 3.28. The focus of the partnership is on:

- improving the quality of life for our communities
- bringing tangible benefits to our artists and arts organisations
- working towards the Government's vision for an urban and rural renaissance
- combining resources for arts and the environment
- promoting environmental sustainability
- contributing towards high quality vibrant public spaces
- creating a sense of place

- 3.29. The Partnership seeks to raise the profile and the value of the arts within Hertfordshire. The environmental focus of Green Heart Partnership has been taken to reflect the national, regional and local agenda of creating and promoting sustainable development. This development is designed to meet people's need for homes, jobs and social & cultural growth, without the depletion of the earth's resources.

## Other Funding Opportunities

- 3.30. Entering into partnership agreements with public transport operators and local employers can offer opportunities to fund cycle infrastructure, particularly cycle parking and changing facilities at public transport interchanges and workplaces. Funding of access links to identified cycle networks may also be sought.
- 3.31. Cycling is attractive to sponsors because of its healthy, environmentally friendly image. Opportunities may arise for partnership funding of cycling initiatives or publicity, involving local government and the private sector.

## 4. OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the St Albans and District Cycle Strategy are to:

- 4.1. Improve facilities for cycling
- 4.2. Improve cycle safety
- 4.3. To improve cycle security
- 4.4. Promote a cycle friendly culture
- 4.5. Integrate cycling into relevant policy initiatives and programmes
- 4.6. Increase cycle use

## 5. Action Plan

To achieve the cycling objectives we will focus on a number of actions outlined below.

### 5.1. Plan new cycle measures

In June 1998 a local strategy for cycling in St Albans was published by the District Council with the title "*Pedalling for Change*". In 2000 St Albans Cycling Campaign published their own Cycle Plan document that intended to provide a structured and comprehensive cycle plan for the city prioritising the best schemes for implementation each year.

The Council, working in partnership with the St Albans Cycling Campaign and Hertfordshire County Council, will review the prioritisation of the proposed routes in the September 2000 booklet entitled "St Albans Cycle Plan" and provide a realistic programme of implementation for these routes.

When considering new route construction, the Council will seek to promote routes that link up existing cycle routes to aid in providing a 'seamless' journey on the network.

### 5.2. Progress new cycle measures on the St Albans Network

The Council will push, support and help to progress new cycle facilities within the District.

The District Council will work with the County Council to achieve construction of these measures, starting with those agreed to have the highest priorities. The local St Albans Cycle Network will support the National Cycle Network by providing local links to the strategic network.

The creation of a cycle network is a key objective in the Cycle Strategy. However, cyclists use other parts of the road network in St Albans District as well, and improvements are necessary to make cycling safer and more convenient on those roads which are not part of the National Cycle Network or the local St Albans Cycle Network.

There is concern about the potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists using routes through the parks and therefore it is felt that a rigorous assessment should be carried out on a case by case basis before any conversion of an existing footpath to shared use.

It has been suggested that initially a risk assessment should be carried out at three locations in the District – Rothamsted Park, Clarence Park and Longacres. If it is considered safe to do so then cycling will be allowed at these locations for a trial period of one year. During this period the routes will be monitored by the appropriate park ranger. To ensure that these routes are clearly defined these routes will be signed however the signing will be kept to a minimum.

### 5.3. Contribute to the development of the National Cycle Network

The National Cycle Network is a comprehensive network of places to cycle in the UK. Ten thousand miles of route had been implemented by September 2005 putting almost 75% of the population within 2 miles of the network. One third of the network is on traffic free paths with the rest on quiet minor roads and traffic-calmed streets. These well marked routes provide fantastic leisure opportunities as well as links into towns for schools, work and stations. Within St Albans District there is easy access to Route 61 (The Alban Way to Hatfield), Route 6 (through to Watford and Windsor) and Route 57 (The Nickey Line)

The cost per kilometre of route of providing high quality facilities rather than the standard package is high, but if real progress is to be made in persuading people to cycle then the provision of high quality facilities is essential.

In addition to the NCN routes themselves, the District is also keen on improving the links onto the NCN routes. The following twelve sites linking to the Alban Way (NCN Route 51) sites have been identified by Herts County Council and will be implemented over the next six years as part of a rolling programme of works.

In addition to the NCN routes themselves, the District is also keen on improving the links onto NCN routes. The following twelve sites linking to the Alban Way (NCN Route 51) have been identified by Hertfordshire County Council and are intended to be implemented over the next six years in partnership with the District Council as a rolling programme of works.

Cottonmill Lane  
London Road  
Camp Road  
Sutton Road  
Ashley Road  
Longacres  
Hill End Lane  
Alban Park  
Lyon Way  
Station Road

The design of these routes will be the subject of consultation with cyclists and the residents and businesses of the areas in which they pass. There will inevitably be differences over design details and compromises to be made, in some cases with interest groups other than cyclists. It is, however, the Council's firm intention to deliver a high quality strategic network within the District linked to the National Cycle Network.

#### **5.4. Encourage good practice in planning and design**

Engineers from Hertfordshire Highways designing traffic schemes for the District's roads should take into account, and design for, the needs of cyclists.

The Council supports Hertfordshire County Council in ensuring that plans and designs for cycling provision follow the latest best practise. The design of cycle facilities needs to include the cycle commuter not just the leisure cyclists – this means fast and efficient routes.

There are a number of documents designed to assist engineers when considering implementing cycle facilities. This guidance will assist cycle planners and engineers to consider the problems and wider solutions and so produce better finished products to encourage the wide and varied groups of cyclists who will be using them.

The Council supports the process of including a cycle audit at all stages of all highway schemes. This will ensure that they provide improvements to, or at least do not have a negative impact on, the use of routes by cyclists.

## **5.5. Provide cycle parking**

An adequate supply of on and off street parking facilities is essential if cycling is to be encouraged. Parking is required at the end point of all journeys and at all leisure facilities, shops, businesses and transport interchanges. It is important to ensure that flats and houses have adequate storage for cycles. Parking at transport interchanges is important because journeys are not necessarily made by a single transport mode and cycling may form a significant link in longer journeys.

Cycling parking facilities are only useful if they are safe and secure. It is therefore essential that, in selecting equipment and siting parking facilities designers recognise that the provision of cycle racks or other storage is only part of a solution. Ensuring the safety of cyclists using the racks and the security of vehicles left on the racks is also important. Siting cycle parking in high profile and convenient positions increases public awareness and encourages cycling.

As part of the Action Plan the Council will review current cycle parking facilities in the district.

Emphasis will be placed on providing and improving facilities in the following areas:

- schools and colleges
- places of employment
- shopping areas
- transport interchanges
- leisure and community facilities
- health institutions
- blocks of flats / new housing developments

A covered bicycle shelter has recently been installed at Abbey Station, however demand still exceeds supply at the City Station. Despite a significant increase in 2004 in provision for cycles at City Station – there are now over 300 places – there is a clear demand for more as cycles are chained to fences and barriers. The District is also working with the rail operator First Capital Connect in a match-funding scheme to increase the amount of bicycle parking at Harpenden station

Despite the work carried out to date, an early action of the strategy is to obtain, in association with rail industry partners, provision of additional cycle parking facilities at our rail stations.

The Council will encourage the provision of cycle parking facilities by businesses for both employees and customers through the planning approval process and Green Travel Plans.

## **5.6. Maintain cycle facilities**

Hertfordshire County Council, as the highway authority, carries out the majority of the maintenance on the cycle network in the district. The District Council will work closely with these bodies to ensure appropriate maintenance is carried out. The Council will also make sure that appropriate levels of maintenance are achieved for the few facilities under its control. To streamline this process the Council will set up one point of contact for all cycling enquiries from the public.

It is important that cycle routes and other cycle facilities are adequately signed. It is of little use providing a facility if cyclists do not know it exists or cannot find it.

The Council, with the assistance of Hertfordshire County Council and the St Albans Cycling Campaign will audit and review the existing cycle signage and develop a cycle signing strategy with a view to producing a programme for changes and additions to the existing signage. The Council will work with its partners to upgrade these facilities accordingly. A key objective of this work will be to achieve improvements in route signing without causing unacceptable additional street clutter.

The Council will review current signage on the local network and report on those areas that need improvements.

## **5.7. Integration with public transport**

The Council will seek to agree with rail operators improved facilities for the carriage of cycles on trains and improved access and parking at stations. The new operator for the service between St Albans and Harpenden – First Capital Connect – has made a commitment to invest in integrated schemes including cycle facilities.

Some cyclists would like to travel part of their journey by public transport with the rest on their bike. Other countries do have the bike rack facilities on the front of buses, however there are operational issues and concerns with regard to pedestrian safety.

## **5.8. Encourage training and education**

The Council, working in partnership with the School Travel Plan team at Hertfordshire County Council, will encourage schools to promote safe cycling and provide secure bicycle storage.

## **5.9. Provide information and publicity**

At present, there is little information on the Council website in relation to cycling. It will be an ongoing task to include better information and keep it up to date. Technical Services will work in partnership with the IT section to make the necessary changes and improvements.

The Council in association with other bodies will produce cycling information packs.

## **5.10. Promotion and Marketing**

The Council will actively promote cycling throughout the district through a variety of measures including

- ❖ Updating of district cycle route map
- ❖ Creation of one point of contact
- ❖ Information being available on the Council Website
- ❖ Travel packs provided at all new developments to include cycling information.
- ❖ Use of local press & Council publications
- ❖ Leading by example

## **5.11. Speed Limits**

In order to encourage cycling and improve safety, the Council wishes to see a reduction in the inappropriate speed of motor traffic on the District's Roads. The Council will continue to support the County Council in the introduction of 20 mph zones within the District. In addition the Council will work with the Police to improve the enforcement of speed limits.

## **5.12. Seek to involve the community**

The Council aims set up a one point of contact as soon as practicable. This will take the form of a dedicated telephone number and e-mail address for all district wide cycling issues. Although the setting up period is short term, it will be an ongoing task to promote the number and email address through the media.

The Council will work with local voluntary bodies, including the St Albans Cycle Campaign, to help maintain the local cycle network publications.

## **5.13. Make appropriate use of the development plan process**

In its role as the local planning authority, the Council will ensure that all new developments take into account the needs of cyclists.

- i. Accessibility – Development proposals will be permitted in locations with accessibility to cycle routes or where they can be created.
- ii. Priority to non car users – Internal layouts in development schemes must demonstrate priority to non-car users. They must include safe and effective routes for cyclists.
- iii. Cycle Facilities – The Council will require proposals for new developments to encourage cycling through the provision of facilities on site. Developers may also be required to contribute to off site facilities connected with their site.
- iv. Changing and Showering Facilities – Where appropriate developers be encouraged to provide changing and showering facilities within buildings on the site
- v. Cycle Storage Provision

## **5.14. Encourage company travel plans**

The Council will be adopting its own 'travel plan' to promote other ways of travelling to, from and at work other than the car. We have already set up a pool bike scheme that at the Civic Centre Offices. Four pool bikes are available for staff to use during business hours for meetings and site visits. Provision will include safety equipment and training if requested.

The Council will complete its Green Travel Plan which will include encouragement for members and staff to cycle to, from and at work. The Council will encourage other employers to follow suit.

#### **5.15. Integrate with safer routes to school**

The Council will support and promote the County's School Travel Plan and Safer Routes to Schools initiatives. The Council will also seek ways in which it can work more directly and proactively with schools to increase cycle use to and from schools.

There is considerable potential to increase the numbers of school journeys made by bicycle. A survey carried out by the Young People's Transport Information Network (Young Transnet) found that although only 3% of children did cycle to school, 34% who don't would prefer too. It was also discovered that the construction of cycle lanes and safe cycle storage at schools were the two main reasons that would encourage children to use this mode of transport. This survey indicates that works that are carried out through this strategy, if promoted in the right way could have a dramatic increase in the number of bicycle journeys.

The Council will support the work carried out through School Travel Plans and Safer Routes to School in promoting cycling, improving cycle facilities and encouraging cycle training.

The Council will seek other ways in which it can work directly with schools and young people in further promoting cycling, as children growing up with cycling are more likely to adopt it as a mode of travel as adults.

#### **5.16. Reduce the number of Bicycle Thefts**

Bicycle theft is a serious problem and deters people from cycling. Tackling the problem of theft is essential if cycling is to increase. St Albans will work in partnership with the Police, transport operators, business and property owners to reduce the level of thefts.

#### **5.17. Integrate with walking schemes**

New cycleways can be useful to pedestrians, and shared use facilities have a place in providing for both walking and cycling. Where pedestrians or cyclists gain a new single use facility, rather than sharing an existing one, objections are less likely. Where an existing path is converted to shared use, segregated facilities are likely to be the preferred method provided there is space to separate the two modes.

## 6. Targets

The City and District of St Albans Cycling Strategy is target driven. The following targets aim to meet the objectives as set out in Section 4.

The Council will produce an annual report giving an update on targets within the plan

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# City and District of St Albans – Walking Strategy

## DRAFT ONE

1. Introduction
2. Background – Why Walk
3. Barriers to walking
4. Policy Context / Funding Opportunities
5. Objectives
6. How St Albans will encourage walking

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Walking is the most environmentally and socially sustainable form of transport. It is an integral part of living in towns, cities and villages as it is ideal for undertaking most short journeys. It also forms the link between other forms of transport for longer journeys. Walking is a good form of exercise for improving health and fitness and is an inexpensive leisure activity.
- 1.2 The average total distance walked by people in Great Britain has fallen from 244 miles per person per year in 1985/86 to 193 miles in 1996/98. This decline of 20% is mirrored by the fact that the proportion of journeys made on foot has fallen from 34% to 27% in the same period (National Travel Survey 1998).
- 1.3 Increasing the amount of walking journeys is achieved by improving access for people with sensory and mobility impairments, improving access on foot or by public transport to employment areas, schools, healthcare and other services; ensuring that people do not feel obliged to use their cars and those without cars are not disadvantaged.
- 1.4 Making provision for walking should be made a priority when new developments are being planned.
- 1.5 Encouraging walking will directly benefit the health of people who increase their levels of walking, and indirectly benefit the health of others. Journeys undertaken on foot instead of by car do not contribute to air pollution and the increase in the number of walking trips should also have an impact on reducing congestion, especially at peak times and for specific activities such as travel to school and work.

## **2. Background – Why Walk**

### **Sustainability**

- 2.1 Walking is the most sustainable form of travel. It burns no fossil fuels, involves no harmful emissions and can accommodate peaks in use more easily and at less cost than any other mode.
- 2.2 The emissions from motor vehicles are a significant contributor to air pollution. A report by the Department of Health's Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants concluded that air pollution in urban areas, in the form of particulate matter, is responsible for 8,200 premature deaths a year. In both rural and urban areas, ozone is responsible for 12,500 premature deaths per year. Both particulate matter and ozone pollution are estimated to create or bring forward an additional 20,400 hospital admissions for respiratory disease per year (Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report 1998).
- 2.3 Encouraging journeys on foot instead of by car may not have a significant impact on the overall number of vehicle miles travelled per year, as the journeys are usually short. However, short car journeys cause a disproportionate amount of pollution, as emissions are much higher at the beginning of a journey when the engine is cold. In addition catalytic converters do not operate for the first few miles of the journeys and so emissions are more

## APPENDIX B - DRAFT ST ALBANS AND DISTRICT DRAFT WALKING STRATEGY

harmful. Local air quality will also improve where specific areas are targeted at certain times of the day, for example outside schools that have introduced measures to reduce the number of pupils arriving and departing by car. Reducing the amount of pollution will also make the environment more attractive to walk in and so a virtuous circle may be created.

### Health

- 2.4 “Every day people are presented with opportunities to make decisions about how they will move around, as part of work, education or leisure, and these decisions have an important impact on health. As people increasingly choose to drive or take motorised transport instead of walking or cycling, the result is that physical activity is being marginalised; regarded as a leisure pursuit, or as a formal ‘exercise’”. (Health Education Authority 1999)
- 2.5 The amount of exercise that people take is decreasing. Physical inactivity may double the risk of coronary heart disease and may triple the risk of a stroke. Regular exercise may be linked to a 40% reduction in bowel cancer. Being physically active may also reduce the risk of accident and injury, especially falls by elderly people. Making time for physical activity and relaxation is also seen as a way to reduce stress and so contribute to mental health. (Walking the Way to Health, Sept 99).
- 2.6 Walking is an excellent form of exercise as it is inclusive, free to all users and can form part of normal daily activity. Its intensity can be varied allowing people of different levels of fitness to participate. Walking is an aerobic activity that exercises major muscle groups. As it is regular, rhythmic and load bearing, it strengthens bones and so is helpful in preventing osteoporosis. The Government recommends that people undertake 30 minutes of exercise, such as brisk walking, a day in order to gain these benefits (Saving Lives, Our Healthier Nation 1999).

### Recreation

- 2.7 Walking is by far the most popular active recreational pursuit; it is free, requires little or no special equipment or training and can be carried out almost anywhere.
- 2.8 There are over ?? kilometres of public footpaths and bridleways throughout St Albans District. These provide vital access to the countryside for informal recreation. They also form part of the highway network and, as such, will have an increasing role to play in the provision of a sustainable transport network by providing traffic-free alternatives.
- 2.9 Whilst many people walk purely for recreation, once a habit of walking has been developed, more transport journeys may be undertaken on foot, e.g. local shopping trips, travelling to work, rather than by private car.

### Social Inclusion

- 2.10 Walking is a form of travel available to the majority of people, regardless of age, gender, income or education.
- 2.11 Nationally 30% of households do not have access to a car. While fewer households in St Albans do not have access to a car (15%) this still represents a sizeable number of people who are reliant on public transport, cycling and walking in order to carry out their daily business. Making facilities and services easily accessible on foot is vital in creating an inclusive society and revitalising communities.

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2.12 The 'Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report' highlighted that although households on lower income are less likely to have access to a car; they are more likely to live in areas of high traffic density such as urban areas, on main roads and at junctions. Thus they experience the health disadvantages of air and noise pollution with none of the advantages of access to a car (Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report 1998).

### 3. Barriers to Walking

There are an number of factors that present a barrier to walking:-

3.1 A poor quality pedestrian environment, for example

- Uneven footway surfaces
- Litter and a general appearance of neglect
- Dog fouling
- Lack of benches and public lavatories
- The absence of pedestrian signing
- Steep gradients and / or steps
- Obstructions on footways, roadworks, bins, poorly located traffic and parking signs, 'A' boards.
- Vehicles parked on the footway

3.2 Vehicle/pedestrian conflicts

- Danger from vehicular traffic
- Aggressively designed vehicles with fittings such as 'bull bars'
- Inadequate pedestrian green time at signalled controlled crossing
- Noise, speed and volume of vehicles

3.3 Personal security fears

- The presence of beggars (some of them aggressive) and intimidating drunks
- Illegal cycling on pavements
- Highly publicised personal assaults that have made some parents fearful of letting children walk unaccompanied

3.4 Land use patterns that are unsuited to walking

- Housing layouts that turn estates into mazes and increase walking distances to shops and other services

### 4. Policy Context / Funding Opportunities

4.1 The Council recognises that any walking strategy should be integrated with other relevant strategies and policies at National, County and District levels. Outlined below are the relevant strategies and policies that link into the Walking Strategy for St Albans District.

4.2 It is vital that all funding opportunities are used to their full potential, to ensure the maximum number of quality facilities are introduced.

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### **National Policy Context**

- 4.3 At a National level, the government published its white paper on 'A New Deal for Transport: better for everyone' in 1998. This announced a change in focus in national transport policy, and included an emphasis on improving conditions for pedestrians.
- 4.4 'We are all pedestrians, even if we own a car. Nearly all journeys involve a walk and walking is still the main way of getting about locally. But all too often the things that make walking a more pleasant experience have not been given the proper attention, as can be seen in the way road space and priority is so often biased against pedestrians. Too often pedestrians are treated like trespassers in their own towns. We want streets that are decent and attractive to walk in.' DETR 1998a, Paragraph 3.1
- 4.5 The Government's 'Our Healthier Nation' strategy stresses the importance of environmental influences on health and the importance of routine physical activity in people's daily life. The document set a number of quantified targets where the promotion of walking and the improvement of walking conditions are particularly relevant.
- 4.6 Policies influencing transport are outlined in the Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG13) (March 2001) which has as its objectives to 'integrate planning and transport at the national, regional and local level to: promote sustainable transport choices, and reduce the need to travel, especially by car'. This is reflected in the Draft Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) (December 2000), which states in policy T4 that 'Walking and cycling should be vigorously promoted especially for shorter distances, as the most environmentally -friendly ways to travel.'
- 4.7 Currently, there is no National Walking Strategy, although in 2005, the DfT did publish 'Encouraging Walking' Advice for Local Authorities.
- 4.8 The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 requires the local traffic authority (in the case of St Albans, Hertfordshire County Council) to set targets for reducing motor vehicle traffic, or to justify their reasons for not doing so. The reduction of motor vehicle traffic will improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, improve air quality and reduce accidents and the domination of public space by motor vehicles.
- 4.9 Safer Routes to School is a national project seeking to influence the transport choices of children and young people. It aims to reduce traffic congestion and to encourage children towards more healthy lifestyles by cycling and walking to school.

### **County Policy Context**

- 4.10 The Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2006/2007 – 2010/2011 sets the framework for achieving the vision for a better transport system for all. This plan builds upon LTP1 and focuses on delivering the shared priorities of tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, providing safer road, improving air quality and improving the quality of life for residents.
- 4.11 The vision of the plan is:  
"To provide a safe, efficient and affordable transport system that allows access for all to everyday facilities. Everyone will have the opportunity and information to choose the most appropriate form of transport and time of travel. By making best use of the existing network we will work towards a transport system that maximising the capacity of the network we will work towards a transport system that balances economic prosperity with personal health and environmental well being."

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- 4.12 The LTP also outlines the LEARN strategy (Local Educational Access Route Network). The aim of this strategy is to deliver a network of safer and more sustainable transport links to all schools in Hertfordshire that can include cycle facilities.
- 4.13 The Mid Hertfordshire Area Plan covers the settlements of St Albans, Harpenden and London Colney in this district as well as Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. The area plan approach has been adopted by the County so as to provide a greater opportunity for consultation with district and parish councils as well as local residents.
- Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011 (1998)
- 4.14 At a national level, Planning Policy Guidance 13 (Transport) advocates a reduction in car travel. Mindful of this the County Structure Plan promotes a role for walking through two of its key policies:
- 4.15 **POLICY 22 : REDUCTION OF TRAVEL NEED AND CAR USAGE**  
The County Council will aim to reduce the growth in private motor traffic on roads and minimise its environmental impact. Total capacity of County roads will be stabilised at its current level, subject only to the increase attributable to planned development within Hertfordshire. The management of that capacity will be designed to create opportunities to increase the proportion of journeys made by walking, cycling or by passenger transport in the safest manner possible.
- 4.16 The need to travel will be reduced, mainly by locating and planning development so as to require fewer and shorter journeys to be made.

### **District Policy Context**

- 4.17 The national emphasis on cycling, walking, traffic reduction and air quality is reflected in the Council's vision and objectives:
- The Council's vision
- 4.18 To preserve and enhance the distinctive character of St Albans City and District, making it an outstanding place to live, work and visit, where everyone enjoys a range of quality and efficient services in a progressive, caring and environmentally concerned community.
- 4.19 **The Council's Objectives**  
Build a community that is open, fair and inclusive  
Work in partnership for the health and well being of the community  
Cherish and promote our heritage, arts and culture  
Safeguard our environment  
Ensure the District is a desirable place in which to live and work.
- 4.20 The District Council can provide funds for walking schemes from both revenue and capital budgets. There are opportunities to use a wide range of local authority budgets such as those for leisure, tourism or environmental schemes in ways which incorporate or support measures that encourage walking. Walking programmes can have a distinct advantage in that they are relevant to the wider objectives of planning, leisure and community services and therefore a single walking scheme can contribute to several services.
- 4.21 Town and Parish Councils may wish to support the provision of walking facilities as and when appropriate.

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- 4.22 In certain circumstances, Section 106 planning obligation agreements can require the provision of improved pedestrian facilities in conjunction with development. Developer contributions can be sought particularly where a proposed development will create a need for a particular facility.

### **Local Development Framework**

- 4.23 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the spatial planning strategy introduced in England and Wales by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The LDF comprises a series of documents, which set out policies and proposals for future development within each local planning authority's area. SADC is still at an early stage in the production of its new style Development Plan documents.

### **Local Strategic Partnership**

- 4.24 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is an organisation made up of representatives from public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The LSP matches local authority boundaries, and aims to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.
- 4.25 The LSP is key to tackling deep seated, multi-faceted problems, requiring a range of responses from different bodies. Local partners working through a LSP will be expected to take many of the major decisions about priorities for their local area.

### **Green Heart Partnerships**

- 4.26 The Green Heart Partnership (GHP) is an initiative that aims to achieve growth and build capacity between the arts and environment sectors across Hertfordshire.
- 4.27 The focus of the partnership is on: -improving the quality of life for our communities - bringing tangible benefits to our artists and arts organisations -working towards the Government's vision for an urban and rural renaissance -combining resources for arts and the environment -promoting environmental sustainability -contributing towards high quality vibrant public spaces -creating a sense of place
- 4.28 Overall, GHP seeks to raise the profile and the value of the arts within Hertfordshire either through adding creativity to processes or by way of an end product. The environmental focus of Green Heart Partnership has been taken to reflect the national, regional and local agenda of creating and promoting sustainable development. This development is designed to meet people's need for homes, jobs and social & cultural growth, without the depletion of the earth's resources.
- 4.29 Entering into partnership agreements with public transport operators and local employers can offer opportunities to fund improvements to the pedestrians environment.
- 4.30 Walking is attractive to sponsors because of its healthy, environmentally friendly image. Opportunities may arise for partnership funding of initiatives or publicity, involving local government and the private sector

## **5. Objectives**

The principal objectives of the St Albans and District Walking Strategy are to:

- Increase the amount of walking
- Improve facilities for pedestrians
- Promote a walking friendly culture
- Integrate walking into relevant policy initiatives and programmes
- Increase the number of walking trips

## **6. How St Albans District will encourage walking**

- 6.1 Pedestrians have a wide range of needs and abilities. Commuters and shoppers require wide pavements for peak times, the partially sighted pedestrians require uncluttered surfaces and tactile surfaces, people in wheelchairs and with prams require ramps, not steps, and tourists need space to stop while they take photographs or consult maps. Fortunately it is usually possible to accommodate the needs of most pedestrians by providing for those with a mobility handicap; footway widths, gradients and surfaces suitable for wheelchair users will also be satisfactory for other pedestrians.
- 6.2 Encouraging walking: advice to local authorities (DETR, 2000a) recommends using 'the Five Cs' as a checklist to assess the overall quality of the existing environment for walking. Any measures introduced to improve the pedestrian environment should improve one of more of these 'C's. The 'Five Cs' are
- Connected
  - Comfortable
  - Convenient
  - Convivial
  - Conspicuous
- 6.3 To achieve the walking objectives we will focus on a number of actions outlined below:
- 6.4 Work with partners in promoting walking as the most environmentally and socially sustainable form of transport.**

The promotion of walking is an integral part of the Walking Strategy. While engineering measures will make the environment more pleasant for walking, campaigns that highlight the benefits of walking are necessary in order to persuade people to forgo the convenience of their car.

Different aspects of walking appeal to different sections of society, therefore it is necessary to tailor information to suit different groups and target the information so that they get the message.

Walking is an important part of the tourist economy. According to a Countryside Agency Survey of 1998, visitors to the countryside spent £11.5 billion in 1998 creating 340,000 jobs in the United Kingdom. The promotion of walking is an important part of promoting tourism whether it is in towns or in the countryside. Provision of information on longer walks including details of places to stay and eat, sites of interest and public transport access will let visitors to the area plan a walking holiday. People may also want to incorporate a short walk while on a day trip to tourist attraction, or walk round areas of interest in towns. Opportunities should be taken to promote walking in these places.

### **6.5 Encourage schools to promote road safety and sustainable forms of transport, in particular walking, for students travelling to and from school**

Many drivers do not fully understand the vulnerability of child pedestrians and cyclists. It is vital that this is taken into consideration when designing new environments or improving existing ones.

The provision of appropriate crossing places, school crossing patrols and reduced speeds can all help. Schools are encouraged to participate in the Safer Routes to School programme which involves the whole school community investigating the problems and contributing to the solutions.

The concept of the "walking bus" was launched in 1998 at Wheatfields Junior School in St Albans. Each bus has an adult 'driver' at the front and an adult 'conductor' bringing up the rear. The children walk to school in a group along a set route picking up additional 'passengers' at specific 'bus-stops' along the way.

### **6.6 Encourage walking to work to create a healthier workforce and reduce peak hour congestion**

Pedestrian routes should be signed to inform people of the most direct routes to and from key points including railway stations, major bus stops and short cuts away from the road. Signing to, from and along recreational routes is also important. There should be a continuity of signing so that directions are easy to follow. Maps can be provided at information points that clearly show walking routes and key facilities.

The Local Strategic Partnership is actively working with employers in the District to develop and implement Travel Plans that offer staff more travel options and encourage them to leave their cars at home. In many cases this is being achieved by making a Travel Plan a condition of planning consent.

As well as provision for cyclists, users of public transport and car sharers, each company travel plan is expected to include, where practicable:

- Publicising information on pedestrian routes to the site for staff and visitors
- Provision of shower and changing facilities
- Well-lit and well-maintained site footpaths
- Provision of direct and convenient pedestrian routes to site exits and bus stops

Each travel plan includes its own targets, although these may not necessarily refer directly to walking. The health benefits of walking are emphasised during discussions with employers, and they are encouraged to promote this within staff publicity material.

The District Council has introduced Health Walks to encourage staff to increase walking. These walks are led by trained volunteers, and held on a regular basis. They are aimed at people who would like to increase the amount of exercise they take, but would not be attracted to more formal ways of getting fit for such as going to a gym or swimming.

### **6.7 Promote walking as a leisure activity for residents and visitors**

The aim is to create conditions in which people will choose to walk rather than walking only if there is no alternative. 'Recreational walking is often thought of as a purely rural activity, but people walk for pleasure in urban areas too, for instance around local parks or along waterways. Recreational walking benefits individuals, and helps build up a culture in which people walk from choice'. (DETR, March 2000)

Parks, open spaces and wildlife areas within or close to urban areas provide opportunities for people to enjoy walking outside their usual environment. Creation of such areas if carefully designed can offer opportunities for regeneration of an area.

Routes that lead to recreational facilities or out to more rural areas should be identified and clearly signed so that they can be accessed by walking or cycling.

Promotion is an important part of encouraging walking for leisure and the District Council, working in partnership with various organisations, has produced a number of leaflets on a number of walking routes across the District.

## **6.8 Work with partners to improve safety and security for pedestrians**

The provision and maintenance of street lighting is essential in enhancing an area and making pedestrians feel secure. It is especially important in urban areas where people may want to access facilities on foot and around public transport interchanges where people may fear crime.

Lighting in rural areas can be controversial as it can detract from the rural environment and cause light pollution. It is therefore important to strike the right balance between aesthetic and environmental considerations and the needs of pedestrians.

Street lighting lanterns are designed to distribute a proportion of their light onto adjacent footways and verges to permit road users to see pedestrians and some of the street scene. In this way, the British Standards recognise the needs of the pedestrian and make recommendations for all categories of roads, paths, and pedestrian precincts.

If not planned and managed carefully, completely pedestrian areas can become solitary and threatening at night when shops are closed. The pedestrian environment should be designed so that there is good visibility and no opportunities for strangers to hide around corners. Encouraging mixed use in town centres helps to ensure that town centres are not deserted at night. CCTV cameras also play a role in ensuring that people feel secure in pedestrian areas. These should be conspicuous and well publicised so that people know that they are in place and how they operate.

## **6.9 Improve pedestrian security and reduce the fear of crime**

Fear of crime, particularly personal assault, is a significant deterrent to walking. People will only choose to walk if they feel an area is safe and unthreatening, especially after dark. If people are to be encouraged to walk more they should not feel intimidated into staying away from an area or using their car because they feel that the area is unsafe.

Many factors can contribute to the perception that an area is unsafe – bad design including corners or recessed areas which can not be seen clearly, badly lit or secluded areas and poorly designed crossing facilities. Poorly maintained bus or train waiting areas can also be a deterrent to use, as they are perceived as places where personal attacks are likely.

In order to prevent and reduce the fear of crime the St Albans Community Safety Partnership identify areas where crime and the fear of crime deters walking and identifies actions that will contribute to community safety. These actions could include, introduction of CCTV, increased lighting, opening up of enclosed areas or more visible policing.

## **6.10 Improve pedestrian road safety**

Reducing traffic dangers to pedestrians and their fear of accidents is important in order to enable more people to walk. The volume of motorised traffic, the percentage of large vehicles, its noise and its proximity to pedestrian routes, can be intimidating for pedestrians and make them feel uncomfortable.

The provision of a safe environment in which people feel confident to walk and cross the road without fear of being involved in an accident is vital. While all pedestrians require a pleasant and safe walking environment, two groups of people that are especially vulnerable are children and the elderly. Often members of these two groups do not drive or have access to cars and so their personal freedom is curtailed if they cannot access facilities safely on foot or by public transport. Part of a child's development is to learn to negotiate the pedestrian environment at first with adult supervision and then on their own.

The Government's speed review has confirmed a strong link between vehicle speeds and the risk and severity of collisions. If a pedestrian is hit by a moving car it has been well established that the risk of being killed rises dramatically with a small increase in impact speed. Higher speeds on roads that were not designed for them are associated with both more accidents and greater injury severity. Education plays an important role in this process. Drivers need to take responsibility for their own actions and abide by speed limits. For this to become reality limits must be respected.

The District has one 20 mph zone in St Albans City Centre. The County Council has also introduced 'Home Zones' in other parts of the County although one has not yet been introduced within this district. 'Home Zones' comprise residential areas where pedestrians, cyclists and motorised traffic have equal status. The fundamental difference between a "Home Zone" and other traffic calming is that the demarcation between the road and the kerb is not normally present. This allows free pedestrian and cycle flow and ensures that car drivers do not feel they have priority in any area. The outcome is that car-borne traffic travels at the same speed as pedestrians and cyclists or avoids the area altogether.

Crossing facilities are a vital part of making walking environment safe and easy to move around in, by helping form networks and reduce severance. In order to be most effective crossings must be situated on pedestrian desire lines. They should allow pedestrians to cross in the most direct manner and respond quickly and safely to demands from a pedestrian. The crossing should be wide enough to accommodate pedestrian flow at peak times. There are various forms of crossing that are introduced to help pedestrians cross roads in Hertfordshire. They are installed in different locations depending on the traffic conditions, road type and pedestrian flow in order to ensure pedestrian safety.

### **6.11 Address the needs of disabled, mobility and sensory impaired people within the pedestrian environment**

One in ten people have some degree of sensory or mobility impairment, therefore, it is important that all aspects of the highway are accessible to all members of the public. The term 'mobility impaired' covers a wide range of people from those with physical impairments to those laden with shopping. The term 'sensory impaired' includes people with sight and hearing impairments who may encounter difficulties in the pedestrian environment.

Most new signal controlled crossings in the District have been provided with audible or tactile signals. An audible signal is sounded when the green pedestrian signal is lit and is provided to assist visually impaired pedestrians. A tactile signal consists of a small rotating cone protruding from underneath the push-button box to assist visually and audibly impaired users. Audible signals are provided in preference to tactile signals, but tactile signals are provided at staggered crossings and junctions where an audible signal could be confusing and therefore dangerous.

Dropped kerbs are provided to assist pedestrians, especially people with mobility impairments, including those with prams or pushchairs, when crossing a carriageway. When any new crossing facility is provided dropped kerbs should always be installed. Dropped kerbs are also provided at junctions where there is no formal crossing facility to allow people in wheelchairs or those with prams or pushchairs to cross the junction. Dropped kerbs should be provided automatically when the footways along a road are renewed.

When any new traffic lights are provided or modifications to existing junctions take place the opportunity should be taken to provide tactile paving for visually impaired pedestrians to highlight the presence of the dropped kerbs. Tactile paving acts as a sensory code that allows visually impaired people to navigate within the pedestrian environment, therefore, it is vital that it is

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installed correctly. The national guidelines on installation of tactile paving must be followed at all times.

Guard railing is used on traffic islands at staggered crossings to guide visually impaired pedestrians to the crossing point. The over use of guard railing can act as a barrier to pedestrians. It is important that crossings are placed on desire lines so that it is not necessary to use guard rail to force pedestrians to divert off their natural route in order to cross the road.

Any piece of street furniture located in the footway is a physical obstruction and should be located to maximise the amount of footway space available. A minimum number of signposts should be used and they should be positioned appropriately.

Vegetation should be kept cut back so that it does not intrude on to the footway. 'A' board signs outside shops can obstruct the footway and are particularly hazardous to people with visual impairments as they are not fixed so the layout of the pedestrian environment may vary from day to day and cannot be learnt. All efforts should be made to ensure that these signs are not placed on the footway.

A raised kerb height at bus stops makes access to the public transport network easier for mobility impaired people and they should be provided at all bus stops where highway alterations are being undertaken.

### **6.12 Work with public transport operators to ensure the needs of pedestrians are provided for at interchanges between transport modes**

Most journeys by public transport involve walking stages, therefore making walking easier is a key to an effective integrated transport system. High quality pedestrian networks linking to public transport facilities make the journey to the interchange safe and attractive. The walking element is an important part the whole journey experience and should always be included in the planning process for existing and new developments. Footways linking facilities and residential areas should be as direct as possible.

Nationally recognised standards for catchment areas for urban bus stops are a walk of 400 metres or five minutes, and of 800 metres or 10 minutes for railway stations. Where there are gradients on the footways, the recommended walking distance to a bus stop or railway station is reduced by 10 metres for every 1 metre rise or fall.

Pedestrian route desire lines should be developed so that routes to/from bus stops and railway stations also serve local centres or shops. There should be no obvious obstructions to reach key destinations. For example the route should avoid a badly lit subway or a busy road to reach the bus stop. These routes should be well sign posted and clear attractive information provided at bus stops and interchanges.

Improving the environment for pedestrians should consider the needs of people with a mobility or sensory impairment to access public transport. This includes providing facilities at railway and bus stations, including audio information and encouraging the use of low floor buses. St Albans District Council will continue to seek opportunities to joint fund schemes with the County Council and train operating companies to comply with requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995).

### **6.13 Work with Hertfordshire County Council to maintain and enhance the Public Rights of Way network**

## APPENDIX B - DRAFT ST ALBANS AND DISTRICT DRAFT WALKING STRATEGY

Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority has a legal duty to maintain all Public Rights of Way, ensuring they are available for use, free from obstruction, clearly signed and that farmers/landowners have carried out their responsibilities. In addition, the County Council maintains the Definitive Map, the legal record of all Public Rights of Way.

The Countryside Agency is now actively encouraging the development of a network of 'Greenways' throughout England. Greenways are defined as 'a network of largely car-free, off-road routes connecting people to facilities and open spaces in and around towns, cities and to the countryside. They are designed for shared use by people of all abilities on foot, bike or horseback, for commuting, play or leisure'.

### **6.14 Work with Hertfordshire County Council to maintain and enhance the. quality of the walking environment**

If people are to be encouraged to walk, their surroundings must be pleasant and safe. Unlike car drivers and passengers, who are isolated from the environment in which they are travelling, pedestrians are exposed to all aspects of their surroundings. If the walking environment is perceived as safe and pleasant, people will be tempted to walk and the streets will become a place where people want to be. If footways are damaged and dirty, lighting is inadequate and ill maintained, and the traffic is intrusive, people will be deterred from walking.

The pedestrian environment must be more than functionally adequate, it needs to be of a high quality, so that the walk is a pleasant experience. This will require sustained partnership working in a number of areas such as frequent street sweeping, prompt footway repairs to a high quality standard, removing graffiti and the provision of benches.

Work undertaken by utilities is governed by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. Pedestrians should be given high priority and their safe passage ensured where there are street works. This is particularly important when considering those with a disability. The Institute of Highways and Transportation states that good signing is of paramount importance and requires;

- Adequate advance warning
- Allowance for the use of footway facilities by visually impaired people and protection accordingly
- If footways are to be closed or suffer major disruption, alternative routes are provided which are clearly marked and maintained during the duration of the works. These routes must be accessible for people with sensory or mobility impairments
- Remedial work to reinstate the footway should be undertaken as soon as possible
- All signs and works equipment to be removed as soon as possible

Pavements are constructed and provided for pedestrian use. Parking on the footway creates problems for pedestrians, especially those with mobility or sensory impairments. Vehicles parked on pavements are:

- a hazard to pedestrians causing an obstruction which may result in them having to step off the pavement onto the highway thus putting themselves in danger.
- a hazard by restricting the width of the pavement making it difficult for someone with a pushchair or wheelchair to pass safely - again this person may have to step into the highway to avoid the obstruction.
- a hazard due to the damage caused by driving on and off the pavement. Paving slabs can be dislodged and kerbs damaged, which can cause pedestrians to trip.

Parking on footways outside London it is not an offence in itself and so is difficult to eliminate. The Council acknowledges that footway parking occurs, particularly in areas of older housing where

## APPENDIX B - DRAFT ST ALBANS AND DISTRICT DRAFT WALKING STRATEGY

there is no scope for residents creating their own off-street parking facilities. Traffic restrictions such as waiting restrictions may be imposed on a length of road to make parking an offence. However, the problem of illegally parked vehicles is likely to move to a neighbouring street. The most important factor in permitting footway parking is the need to protect enough footway for pedestrians and in particular those with any form of disability. Bollards or kerbing may be required to protect the reserved footway.

Pedestrianisation and pedestrian priority schemes can provide a pleasant and safe environment in which pedestrians can go about their business without coming into conflict with traffic. If well designed they can help with the regeneration of commercial areas by making an agreeable and attractive place in which people can shop. There is however potential for problems to arise if the issues of commercial viability, accessibility and pedestrian security are not addressed in the right way.

Pedestrian areas should also be supplied with appropriate seating so that people have the opportunity to rest before carrying on with their journey. Street furniture in general should be well designed and kept to a minimum allowing free pedestrian flow along a route.

A major contribution to the attractiveness of an area for walking is the absence of litter. Street cleaning within our District is undertaken by St Albans District Council and is monitored by the use of Best Value Performance Indicators.

### **6.15 Introduce and maintain walking as the primary mode of transport where appropriate, and incorporate this principle within all relevant policies and strategies**

New developments should be encouraged so as to enable people to access services and facilities without having access to a car. When major new developments (or extensions to an existing developments) are proposed the developer is expected to provide for pedestrian, cycling and local transport facilities as appropriate. These facilities should be integrated and link with existing facilities to provide an environment which is conducive to walking. Developers may also be required to upgrade existing facilities, for example the addition of lighting to a footway or the upgrade of an existing crossing. Agreements and conditions should be arranged as far as possible so that facilities for pedestrians will be implemented before the development is occupied. The District Council should discuss pedestrian, cycling and public transport provision at any pre-application discussions held with prospective applicants.

### **6.16 Ensure maximum provision and safeguarding of walking facilities as part of new developments**

Within new residential and mixed use areas pedestrian movement should be convenient, safe and pleasant. The aim is to discourage the use of the car for local trips and to encourage walking between homes and local facilities that residents need, or wish to use regularly.

In new developments the best way to encourage walking is to plan for pedestrians from the very first stages of design of the development. There are two key aspects that must be considered in terms of walking, these are:

- The accessibility of the development by sustainable modes of transport to local amenities and job opportunities, mixed development is important in achieving this;
- The ease with which people can walk within and through the development.

Developers are expected to ensure bus stop and footway locations are identified at the earliest opportunity of the highway design of new developments. Pedestrian route desire lines must be incorporated into the position of bus stops and any key stops identified. Bus stops in new

## APPENDIX B - DRAFT ST ALBANS AND DISTRICT DRAFT WALKING STRATEGY

developments would be expected to be at intervals of 300 metres to minimise the walk times within the overall 400 metre catchment. Contributions from developers should be sought for public transport facilities including walking and waiting areas as part of the Section 106 planning obligations.

The key considerations are: -

- The provision of good quality footways and footpaths for use by all people regardless of their ability and level of mobility.
- An awareness that people prefer to walk along streets where they can be seen by drivers, residents and other pedestrians.
- If segregated footpaths are provided, they need to be well-connected and overlooked by houses and other buildings.
- Direct routes to be provided to local facilities, adjacent neighbourhoods and public transport services in such a way that it is more convenient and attractive to walk than to drive to such destinations.
- All measures that slow down traffic help pedestrians feel safer.

Internal roads within developments should be designed so that traffic is obliged to travel slowly. This design will result in narrower slower roads, which force drivers to keep their speed below 20 mph (30 kph) and promote a more pedestrian friendly environment. Lengthy segregated spine footpaths can present opportunities for crime against pedestrians if poorly designed. While in many cases pedestrian routes will be situated along residential roads, with occasional short links to give pedestrians a preferential direct route, the integrity of Public Rights of Way should also be preserved.

It should be possible for pedestrians and cyclists to move freely and safely between all parts of a development. A permeable layout should be designed which offers pedestrians a choice of routes. The layout should result in greater visual interest and so generate a higher level of pedestrian activity, and thus security. Incorporating central, overlooked play areas within residential areas encourages children to 'play out' and so take exercise and walk more often.

### **6.17 Minimise conflict between walking, cycling, and people with disabilities**

Both walking and cycling are healthy, sustainable, cheap and efficient means of travel, and they are both available to a wide range of people. However, pedestrians and cyclists have different needs. In some cases the provision of facilities for cyclists can cause conflicts between the two groups, with people being visually impaired often particularly concerned about shared use facilities. Allowing cyclists any use of facilities previously reserved for pedestrian use only can be a contentious issue.

New cycleways can be useful to pedestrians, and shared use facilities have a place in providing for both walking and cycling. Where pedestrians or cyclists gain a new single use facility, rather than sharing an existing one, objections are less likely. Where an existing path is converted to shared use, segregated facilities are likely to be the preferred method provided there is space to separate the two modes.

**Bibliography: To be inserted.**

# CLARENCE PARK

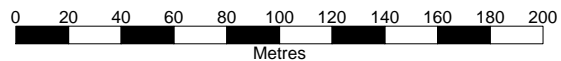


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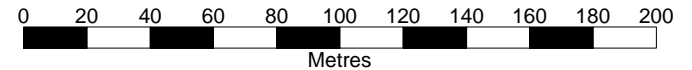
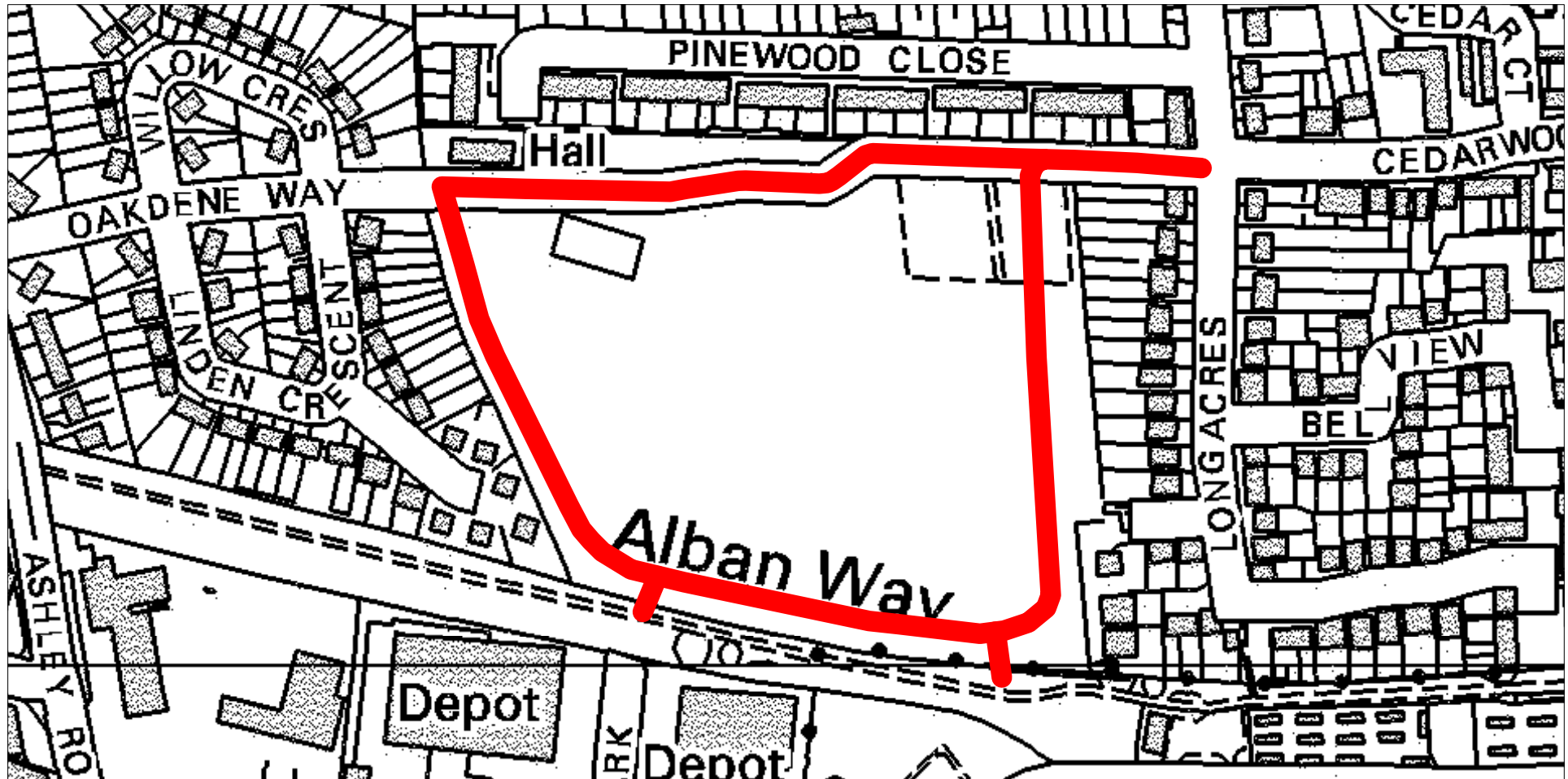
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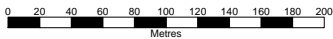
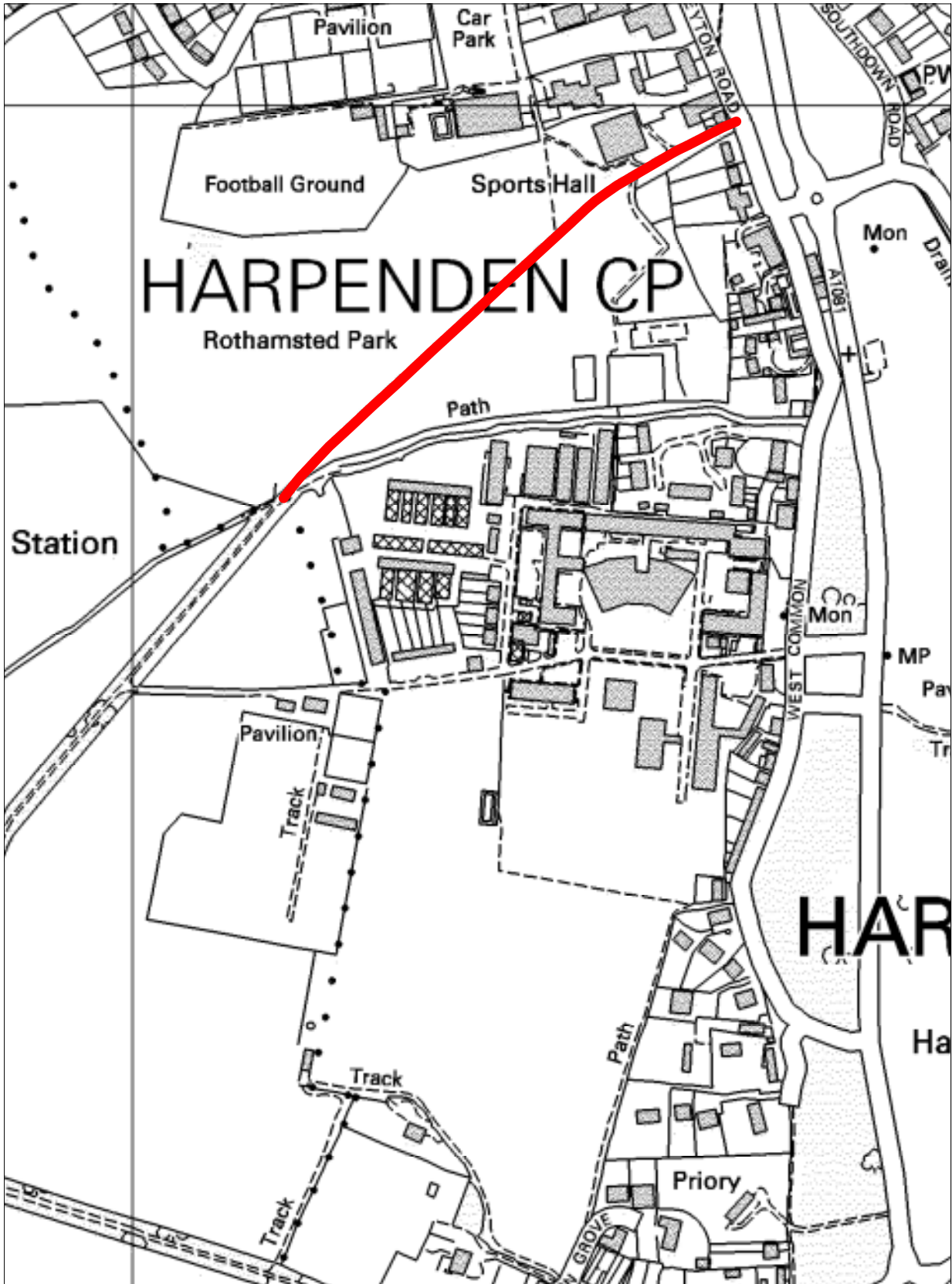
# LONGACRES



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# ROTHAMSTED PARK



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Action Plan Ref.		Improve Bicycle Facilities	Improve Bicycle Safety	Improve Bicycle Security	Promote Cycling	Integrate Cycling	Date completed by	Additional Comments
5.1	Review key cycling routes from residential areas to town centres, railway and bus stations, schools, major employment areas, local shopping centres, leisure/recreation centres and hospitals.	✓	✓					St Albans Cycling Campaign (STACC) have consulted their members on where cycling facilities are needed across the District.
5.1	Agree routes between SADC, STACC and HCC	✓					Nov-07	
5.2	Agree a realistic implementation plan for cycle routes within the District	✓					Dec-07	
5.2	Carry out risk assessment of allowing cycling on a trial basis in Rothamsted Park	✓					Aug-07	
5.2	Carry out risk assessment of allowing cycling on a trial basis in Clarence Park	✓					Aug-07	
5.2	Carry out risk assessment of allowing cycling on a trial basis in Longacres	✓					Aug-07	
5.3	Complete Alban Way links at Hill End Lane and Station Way, Smallford	✓				✓	Mar-08	
5.3	Work with Sustrans, Herts CC and other districts to complete the National Cycle Network routes.	✓					Ongoing	
5.3	Encourage Herts CC to give special consideration to cyclists within traffic regulation orders in order to improve accessibility	✓					Ongoing	
5.5	Increase the numbers of secure cycling parking facilities in town centres, schools, public transport interchanges.	✓		✓			Ongoing	Subject to funding being available
5.5	Work with the Police and others to make cycle parking locations more secure and for advice on new locations.	✓	✓	✓			Ongoing	

Action Plan Ref.		Improve Bicycle Facilities	Improve Bicycle Safety	Improve Bicycle Security	Promote Cycling	Integrate Cycling	Date completed by	Additional Comments
5.5	Work in partnership with the Police, British Transport Police to reduce the number of cycle thefts.	✓		✓		✓	Ongoing	Currently have a bicycle postcoding event during the annual bike week
5.6	Ensure that vegetation is controlled at all times of the year particularly on key routes.	✓					Ongoing	
5.6	Review existing cycle signage.	✓				✓	Dec-08	
5.7	Encourage train operating companies to provide adequate numbers of secure cycle parking facilities at stations. Promote once implemented.	✓		✓		✓	Ongoing	
5.8	Encourage the provision of on-road cycle training.					✓	Ongoing	
5.8	Working in partnership with Herts CC and the Police, promote cycle safety issues including using helmets, high visibility clothing and cycle lights.		✓				Ongoing	
5.8	Encourage schools to provide secure bicycle parking once children have had sufficient bicycle training	✓	✓		✓		Ongoing	Subject to funding being available
5.9	Ensure SADC owned cycle facilities and signing are well maintained.	✓					Ongoing	
5.9	Update website				✓		Aug-07	
5.9	Issue press statements on new cycle schemes and cycle initiatives				✓		Ongoing	
5.9	Create and promote one point of contact in SADC				✓		Ongoing	
5.9	Produce cycling information packs				✓		May-08	
5.10	Prepare and update District Map showing cycling routes, cycle shops and key destinations within the district.				✓		Sep-08	Subject to funding being available
5.10	Support national campaigns that promote cycling.				✓		Ongoing	

Action Plan Ref.		Improve Bicycle Facilities	Improve Bicycle Safety	Improve Bicycle Security	Promote Cycling	Integrate Cycling	Date completed by	Additional Comments
5.10	Promote cycling as a healthy form of exercise				✓	✓	Ongoing	
5.11	Support the County Council in the introduction of 20mph/home zones within the District.	✓	✓				Ongoing	Lower speeds on the network improve safety for cyclists
5.12	Support local cycling groups and work with them and other interest parties about issues that effect cyclists.	✓			✓		Ongoing	
5.13	Work with developers to secure the layout of new developments that encourage cycle accessibility and ensure that facilities are in at an early stage of the development.	✓					Ongoing	
5.13	Encourage the use of suitable and justifiable planning obligations to help secure the provision of appropriate cycling facilities with the site and to the site from appropriate destinations.	✓				✓	Ongoing	
5.14	Encourage existing employers to prepare, implement and monitor company travel plans which give prominence to cycling to work.	✓			✓	✓	Ongoing	
5.14	Work with local businesses to encourage staff to cycle to work.	✓			✓	✓	Ongoing	
5.14	Expand the SADC pool bike scheme	✓			✓	✓	Apr-10	Subject to funding being available

## Appendix E – Responses received from the following groups

Association of British Drivers  
Beaumont School  
Community Strategy Stakeholder Focus Group - Feedback Summary  
Cunningham Residents Association  
Fishpool Street Residents' Association  
Folly Residents Association  
Harpenden Town Council  
Hertfordshire Constabulary  
Hertfordshire County Council - School Travel Plan Adviser  
Hertfordshire Highways  
Long Butlers Residents Association  
Loreto College  
Smallford Residents Association  
Sopwell Residents Association  
St Albans and District Footpaths Society  
St Albans Civic Society  
St Albans Community Forest Association  
St Albans Cycle Campaign  
St Albans District Access Group (Highways and Transportation)  
St Albans School  
The Friends of the Wick  
The Friends of Verulamium Park  
The Harpenden Green Belt Association  
The Ramblers Association  
Wheathampstead Parish Council

## Appendix E – Responses received from the following individuals

Mr	Abbott	Mr	Rolfe
Mr	Anderton	Mr	Salvage
Ms	Annett	Mrs	Sansom
Ms	Anslow	Ms	Scott
Mr	Arnott	Mr	Scully
Mr	Barton	Ms	Seymour
Ms	Bennett	Mr/Ms	Shaw
Mr	Bishop	Mr	Sheehan
Mr	Blaikley	Ms	Smith
Mr	Broome	Mrs	Smith
Mr	Cash	Mr	Sperryn
Mr	Christopher	Mr	Stanley
Mrs	Cleaves	Mr	Taylor
Mrs	Dann	Mr/Ms	Taylor
Ms	Dingley	Mr	Thornhill
Ms	Dyson	Mr	Thornley
Ms	Elder	Mr	Townsley
Mr	Escritt	Dr	Warren
Mr	Evans	Mr	Warren
Dr	Fatharly	Mrs	Watson
Mrs	Faulkner	Ms	Watson
Mr	Fox	Ms	Wightman
Mr	Fox	Mrs	Willoughby
Ms	Gauntlett	Ms	Woodward
Ms	Gauntlett		
Mr/Ms	Gibb		
Mr	Graham		
Mr	Grant		
Mr	Hartley		
Mr	Hazelwood		
Mr	Hazelwood		
Ms	Hill		
Mrs	Hunt		
Mr	Hunt		
Mrs	Inger		
Mr	Kay		
Mrs	Libby		
Ms	Lopez		
Ms	Mann		
Mr	Mannell		
Mr	Massey		
Mr/Ms	McCarthy		
Mrs	McCrimmon		
Mr	McGovern		
Mr	Owen		
Mr	Pearce		
Mr	Reece		
Mr/Ms	Relf		