Kettering Borough Council

Cycling Strategy and Master Plan
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1. **Introduction**

1.1 This cycling strategy builds on the policies of the Northamptonshire County Local Transport Plan of July 2000 (LTP) to provide more specific targets and guidance; and set out priorities for works and initiatives to be undertaken.

1.2 Despite low levels of bicycle use, there is strong interest in cycling in the UK and cycle sales rose from around 500,000 a year in 1970 to over 2 million in 1994. The challenge for national and local strategies is to turn this interest into increased use by overcoming the real and perceived barriers to cycling, these include:

- Safety issues around cycling in busy traffic
- Concerns about cycle security
- A lack of facilities that enable cycling to be a convenient method of travel
- A lack of awareness about the opportunities to cycle; and
- A lack of awareness about the benefits of cycling

1.3 Kettering and the surrounding towns are compact settlements with centrally located town centres and this provides plenty of scope to increase cycling. With current moves towards a more sustainable environment and the aim of an integrated transport strategy with less reliance on the private car, cycling needs to be encouraged.

1.4 The aim of this strategy is to increase cycling in the town of Kettering and to highlight what the Borough Council intends to do to support this.
2. **Why a Cycling Strategy?**

2.1 Cycling is a healthy and sustainable method of travel, and there are a number of reasons why we should be encouraging cycling in Kettering Borough:

- It is a Local Transport Plan goal
- A recreational pursuit
- Can contribute to sustainable transport;
  - efficient and quiet form of transport
  - can help reduce congestion and parking problems
  - environmental benefits (lower air pollution, etc.)
  - makes little demand on space
- Can contribute to educational goals including increasing children’s confidence, judgement and physical skills;
- Can help to improve health and enhance personal fitness
- Relatively cheap and simple to maintain
- Is available to young and old; and
- Potential contribution to tourism.

2.2 Health issues are often seen as an important, but relatively neglected benefit of cycling and there is a wealth of medical research demonstrating that low-impact exercise of the kind offered by cycling can help to meet national health targets, including reducing cardiac disease, cancer and mental illness.

2.3 In 1994 the County Council produced a cycling strategy for Northamptonshire. This document incorporated an aim to increase the use of the bicycle to 5% of all journeys made by 2010. The report recommended a number of ways of achieving this target, which included the creation of urban cycle “master plans” and also a proposed “Rural County Cycle Network” of cycle routes. In the time that the strategy has been in existence very little has been developed in the way of cycle routes across the Kettering Borough although progress has been made in Wellingborough and Daventry.

2.4 The County Council is currently in the process of reviewing its strategy and plans, so we have worked with them to develop a Strategy and Master Plan for the town of Kettering. It seeks to link housing areas, employment areas, shops, schools, open space, public transport interchanges and the town centre. The Master Plan covers both the Urban and Rural areas.

2.5 The 1998 White Paper “A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone” was followed by a revised PPG13 (Transport) in 2001. These documents espouse the principles of sustainable transport, which are also enshrined within the development plan. For example, Local Plan policy 75 encourages provision for cyclists, and a number of other Local Plan and Structure Plan policies (see Appendix B) refer to provision for cyclists. The recently adopted Parking SPG also contains minimum cycle parking standards.

2.6 In order to encourage more cycle use the Borough Council will need to build upon the work already achieved and be more proactive in its approach. Whilst the County Council is the Highway Authority the Borough Council clearly has an important role to play. By actively supporting the implementation of the Cycling Master Plan the Borough Council can progress towards achieving the following key commitments:
• Work to improve the quality of life in the Borough and reduce poverty;
• Protect and enhance the environment;
• Maximise the equality of opportunity and improve access to services; and
• Ensure integrity and make the best use of the resources that we have available.

2.7 The forthcoming LDF (Local Development Framework) will incorporate policies to encourage provision for cyclists. Opportunities for improved cycle provision include:

• Travel plans;
• Planning improved routes and facilities within existing settlements (e.g. town centre masterplans/urban design frameworks for Kettering and Desborough);
• Securing developer contributions and other external funding towards creating or improving parts of the cycle network; and
• Ensuring that new development resulting from the Milton Keynes and South Midlands (MKSM) growth area prioritises sustainable transport, including safe and convenient routes for cyclists.

2.8 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan will also address the needs of cyclists in the county. Cycling is very important as a means of accessing the countryside – both from towns and then within the countryside. Green Lanes, Quiet Roads and bridleways remain key funding areas for cycling improvements.
3. **The Current Situation**

3.1 According to official measurements, cycling accounts for about 1% of trips on urban roads in Northamptonshire (Table 1.1). This level has been broadly stable over the last few years.

3.2 The national average modal share of trips for cycling is around 2%, although this is much higher in some cities such as York, Oxford, and Leicester. The UK rate is one of the lowest in Europe, where several countries have cycling shares above 10%.

3.3 The target in the county’s Local Transport Plan is to increase cycling journeys to 5% of total urban journeys by 2010. It is clear that this is not being met.

Table 1.1: Cycling rates in Northamptonshire (source: Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report 2003) (Annual 12 hour two way manual traffic counts around town centre cordons).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>% of total urban journeys</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999/00 (Baseline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northampton</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kettering</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellingborough</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corby</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushden</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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</table>

3.4 The use of cycles in Kettering is currently limited with only 0.9% of total urban journeys being made by bicycle in 2002, although this is an increase on previous years figures. The current facilities for cyclists in Kettering Borough, as at July 2004, include nearly 44 km of on and off road tracks/shared paths. In addition, there are 13 cycle parking areas, including various locations around Kettering town centre, and the railway station.

3.5 It should be noted that recreational cycling, i.e. family and club outings, touring etc., is showing signs of increasing in popularity, although at present it forms too small a base for any sensible measurement to be made.

3.6 Feedback from cyclists in regards to the current situation are that numbers of utility cyclists¹ are declining, most likely due to feelings of intimidation and danger from increasing volumes of traffic. Young people are being deterred from cycling upon the roads causing an increase in nuisance cycling on pavements etc.

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¹ Utility cyclists could be those who are using cycling as transport connected with business, shopping etc. Utility cycling would not include recreational or leisure trips.
4. **Objectives, Targets and Actions**

4.1 A recommended set of objectives in line with the County Council’s revised strategy are:

- **Objective 1**: to maximise the role of cycling as a transport mode in order to reduce the use of private cars.
- **Objective 2**: to develop a safe, convenient and efficient transport infrastructure which encourages and facilitates the use of walking, cycling and public transport and which minimises the reliance on the private car.
- **Objective 3**: to ensure that policies to increase cycling and meet the needs of cyclists are fully integrated into the Local Development Framework and other travel plans.
- **Objective 4**: to promote cycling as a healthy means of travel and as an effective means of reaching local destinations, including shops, the workplace and the public transport network.

4.2 In relation to these objectives a series of targets are outlined below and these build on those proposed in the County Council’s strategy:

- To adopt a strategic cycle network identifying priority routes;
- To work with the County Council to ensure the provision of cycle-friendly infrastructure and to work towards 50% completion of the strategic cycle network as outlined in the Master Plan by 2010.
- Contribute to national cycling targets by increasing cycle trips from 0.9% in Kettering in 2002 to an average of 5% of urban traffic by 2010.
- Prioritise the development of appropriate cycle facilities at key locations, including Council buildings, Kettering General Hospital, Tresham Institute, within town centres, at transport interchanges, new developments, business areas, cultural and leisure centres and to meet demand, commensurate with other access requirements.
- Support the County Council to publicise and promote cycling locally, specifically targeting secondary school and college students.
- Implement the Council’s Travel Plan by 2005, establishing a programme of cycle friendly employer initiatives.
- Source and apply for other areas of funding to support all of the above.
- Support the County Council in collecting and monitoring data to develop future targets.

4.3 To ensure these objectives and targets are taken forward and implemented an Action Plan has been developed and is detailed at Appendix A.
5. Implementation and Resources

5.1 It must be noted that of the targets in the LTP, provision of facilities for cycling is currently under performing. If the current trend is not remedied, this situation is unlikely to change. Current resources are felt to be inadequate to undertake all the tasks required to enable local and national targets to be reached. This Kettering strategy will help enable this failing to be addressed but under the current resource situation, progress towards the targets is extremely limited, and so it is important that where possible the Borough Council incorporates and encourages cycling in the Local Development Framework and other relevant strategies.

5.2 A Cycle Master Plan for Kettering covering both Kettering town and parts of the rural area has been prepared by the Borough and County Councils, and will be incorporated into the developing Local Development Framework. The Master Plans (see Appendix C) show existing routes, and an indicative network where cycle provision is considered to be particularly desirable. It is intended as a guide to encourage opportunities for cycle provision and eventual routes may vary from the plan slightly, for example to avoid particular junctions or natural features such as trees and brooks.

5.3 Methods of implementation will vary as it is acknowledged that cyclists of different levels of competence require different types of facility. Cycle routes for adults and experienced cyclists will generally be provided for by installing cycle lanes on the Urban A and B roads whereas routes for children may be on shared pedestrian /cycle routes. Where off road routes are to be provided they will normally be joint pedestrian and cyclist facilities. Cyclists however are not restricted to cycle routes, and there is a need to develop better conditions for the cyclist on the road network.

5.4 Provision of cycle routes to date has been through the minor capital works programme via the LTP, through added value to other projects, via the Accident Reduction Programme or through direct developer funding.

5.5 Funding sources should include and have more emphasis on developer contributions as part of development proposals, investigation of business and partner sponsorship, accessing external sources (including MKSM growth area funding), mobilising voluntary work e.g. through the Environmental Task Force and direct funding from the Borough Council.

5.6 In addition to LTP capital funding, Borough Council capital and revenue funding may be used where appropriate to support the implementation of the objectives and targets set out in this strategy.

5.7 The Borough Council will seek to pursue its objectives through partnerships with other organisations, other public bodies and voluntary groups in the area. These organisations include partners who are represented on the Local Strategic Partnership, local employers, public transport operators, interest groups and cycle retailers, where possible, particularly in the areas of education and publicity.

5.8 Planning obligations are agreements with developers made under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990. They can be used to ensure
that appropriate infrastructure and working practices (for example, Travel Plans) are provided in association with new development and can be a significant contributor to new cycling facilities.

5.9 Future revisions of the Cycle Strategy and Master Plan should consider adding additional cycle routes throughout the Borough’s rural area.
## APPENDIX A – Action Plan

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote cycling as a leisure activity</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>KBC (Economic &amp; Community Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that the Kettering strategic cycle routes and policies to increase cycling and meet the needs of cyclists are fully incorporated in the LDF</td>
<td>(TBC)</td>
<td>KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing developer contributions and towards creating or improving parts of the cycle network (which has recently been achieved in negotiation with Morrisons at Burton Latimer, Tresham Institute, Kettering, and KGH)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning; Democratic &amp; Legal; and Development Control)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing other external funding towards creating or improving parts of the cycle network</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>KBC (Economic &amp; Community Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring that new development resulting from the MKSM growth area prioritises sustainable transport measures, including safe and convenient routes for cyclists.</td>
<td>2006 onwards</td>
<td>KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning; Democratic &amp; Legal; Development Control; and Economic &amp; Community Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting travel plans, to prioritise sustainable transport measures, including safe and convenient routes for cyclists.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Northamptonshire County Council Sustainable Transport; KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning; Development Control; Economic &amp; Community Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning improved routes and facilities within existing settlements (eg town centre masterplans/urban design frameworks)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning; Environmental Design; Economic &amp; Community Development; and Environmental Care)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formalising the Kettering Travel Plan Forum, working with partners to prioritise sustainable transport measures, including provision for cyclists.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning; Development Control; and Economic &amp; Community Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with Northamptonshire County Council to cost priority routes, and those which can be secured through proposed major developments</td>
<td>Winter 2004 / Ongoing</td>
<td>KBC (Policy &amp; Environmental Planning; Economic &amp; Community Development; and Environmental Care)</td>
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APPENDIX B –
Relevant Development Plan Policies

Local Plan for Kettering Borough

3. ENVIRONMENT: ACCESSIBILITY OF DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission for proposals for major new development will be granted where there is adequate provision for the site to be accessed via:

i the existing and proposed road network; and

ii footpaths, cycleways, public transportation services, routes and facilities (including rail services).

Proposals which make inadequate provision for, or are inappropriately located in relation to the above will not be granted planning permission.

75. TRANSPORTATION: CYCLING

Provision will be made, in consultation with the appropriate highway authorities, for the introduction of facilities for cyclists by:

i making provision for cycle ways or advisory routes away from major traffic routes where there is potential demand;

ii permitting cyclists to use existing pedestrian routes where this is compatible with safety, there is potential demand and the scheme accords with the local highway authority’s standards for cycle routes;

iii improving conditions for cyclists in urban areas by traffic management (Policies 80 and 81);

iv making provision for cyclists in new development; and

v making provision for convenient cycle parking.

84. TRANSPORTATION: NEW DEVELOPMENT ACCESS AND LAYOUT CONSIDERATIONS

Planning permission for proposals including:

i the layout of new roads;

ii a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic; or

iii the formation, layout or alteration of any means of access to highways;

will be granted only where:

i the appropriate standards of the relevant highway authority regarding layout, access and road design are incorporated;

ii there is a satisfactory relationship between highway standards, safety and the environment;
iii the appropriate traffic management or traffic "calming" measures, in accordance with Policy 80, are incorporated;

iv there is satisfactory provision for pedestrians and cyclists;

v the proposal can conveniently and efficiently be served by public transport and satisfactory provision is made within, or as part of, the scheme for operators and users (including lay-bys and shelters) (see Policy 77); and

vi there is satisfactory provision for people with disabilities (including dropped kerbs and other design aids).

97. LEISURE: FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

Provision will be made within the Plan to:

i grant planning permission for proposals which enhance existing rights of way or retain them on their original or acceptable alternative routes;

ii ensure the provision of waymarking within new development;

iii enhance existing rights of way by waymarking important routes in Borough Council ownership as a priority and by ensuring that all public rights of way in the Borough are legally defined, properly maintained, signposted and publicised by the year 2000;

iv implement the Jurassic Way long distance footpath from Banbury to Stamford by the County Council;

v establish a footpath/cycleway link west from Kettering along the route of the disused Kettering/Cransley railway line;

vi establish a footpath link between Desborough and Rothwell;

vii develop public transportation links to strategic points in the footpath network and secure satisfactory access, wherever possible, for people with disabilities and the elderly;

viii establish and protect public rights of way to watercourses, particularly where they are within or adjacent to the Borough’s settlements and in accordance with the established policies of the National Rivers Authority;

ix establish a footpath link along the Slade Brook between Rothwell and Kettering;

x establish a footpath to the north and east of Burton Latimer;

xi establish other major new rights of way where there is a clear benefit to the community;

xii encourage, prime and, where appropriate, undertake improvements to, and way marking of, major rights of way where there is clear benefit to the community;

xiii provide car parking facilities at strategic points in the network; and

xiv develop links with heritage trails (Policy 98).

K3. KETTERING: ISE VALLEY

Provision will be made for proposals to improve and enhance the amenity, recreation and
wildlife value of the existing open space in the Ise Valley.

In pursuing this policy the Local Planning Authority will:

i protect existing open spaces and allotments (Policies 94 and 96);

ii make provision for land off St. Vincent's Avenue for new outdoor built sports facilities;

iii make provision for access agreements for footpath/cycleway links where necessary;

iv make provision for the establishment of new wildlife habitats (Policy 18); and

v make provision for the establishment of a Heritage Trail at Castle Fields (Policy 98).

K4. KETTERING: SLADE VALLEY

Provision will be made for a linear park and footpath/cycle link within the Slade Valley, linking existing and proposed open spaces and other extensive urban fringe uses.

In pursuing this policy the Local Planning Authority will:

i protect existing open spaces and allotments (Policies 94 and 96);

ii seek the provision of new open space as part of development proposals at:

a. A6003 employment area (Policies K17 and K18);

b. housing sites K12.4 and K13.1 (Furnace Lane and the adjacent committed housing site); and

c. redevelopment proposals within the town;

d. make provision for access agreements for footpath/cycleway links where necessary; and

iii make provision for the establishment of new wildlife habitats (Policy 18).

Northamptonshire County Structure Plan

Policy GS3

The location, layout, and form of development will be planned so as to reduce the need to travel, improve opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport and therefore reduce dependency on the private car.

Policy T1

An integrated transport strategy will be pursued across the whole county, aimed at promoting means of transport other than the private car and reducing the growth in the number and length of motorised journeys.

The integrated strategic countywide proposals for implementation are as follows:

- A high quality, inter-urban public transport network linked to key transport interchanges and the national network;
• A network of priority, express urban routes for public transport and a network of interchanges, including park-and-ride, serving these routes;
• Town centre multi-modal interchanges;
• An improved rural public transport network;
• Improved facilities for powered two-wheelers;
• A high quality cycle network;
• An improved pedestrian network;
• Safer routes to school;
• 20 mph local centre and home zones;
• Town centre and edge-of-town centre residential parking zones; and
• Restrictions on town centre and edge-of-town centre private non-residential parking.

Policy T2

Integrated transport strategies have been developed for five sub-areas of the county. The five sub-areas are as follows:

• Northampton;
• Northern;
• Eastern
• Southern; and
• Western.

A series of integrated strategic proposals have been identified for each of the five sub-areas. Detailed proposals and other local schemes will come forward through the local transport plan and the district-wide local plans. The integrated strategic proposals are set out below:

Northern sub-area

Integrated strategic proposals for implementation:

• An improved multi-modal interchange at Kettering rail station; and
• A6 Rothwell-Desborough bypass.

For implementation in association with the Desborough/ Rothwell strategic development area:

• A new multi-modal interchange, including a rail station, at Desborough;
• Priority routes for public transport and a network of interchanges serving these routes;
• A network of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes, segregated where necessary; and
• 20 mph home and local centre zones.
Policy T8

Measures will be introduced to encourage walking and cycling, these will include:

- Concentrating development where a wide range of facilities are, or will be, easily accessible by walking and cycling;
- Providing safe and easy access for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Making provision for pedestrians and cyclists when planning development; and
- Identifying networks of pedestrian and cycle routes and supporting improvements to these networks.