

The following is our 'Blueprint for Cycling', a message to Herefordshire Council, sent to every County politician after the elections in May 2007.

MAKE HEREFORD THE PLACE TO CYCLE!

Herefordshire's politicians are the key to unlocking the enormous benefits of cycling for the people of the county. Conditions for cyclists are a measure of Herefordshire Council's commitment to fairness, safety and the environment.

WHY CYCLE?

Did you know:

- cycling is the most efficient way to get around for trips under 5 miles?
- you can cycle across Hereford in around 25 minutes?
- cycling for 30 minutes a day will help you to keep healthy
- Herefordshire's glorious countryside is only a 15 minute cycle ride from the city centre?

Cycling has a huge range of wider benefits. Cycling...

- is safer than motorised travel for all other road users
- protects the local environment from noise and pollution
- requires a fraction of the space needed by motor vehicles both for moving and storage
- conserves irreplaceable fossil fuel resources
- emits no carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas

Cycling could slow down global warming if it was given more attention in the transport system. It could replace the car for many shorter trips (over one mile and under 5 miles). A significant shift to cycling could ease Hereford's congestion problems.

CYCLING IN THE REAL WORLD

To secure these benefits, conditions for cycling must be improved. This means:

- reducing the intimidating effects of traffic
- treating cyclists fairly in managing available road space
- raising the status of cycling as a desirable activity that normal people of all ages and abilities can do
- increasing understanding and respect between all road users

All travellers need routes that are safe, convenient, direct and comfortable. This is especially the case for those who use their own energy to get around. Cycling is discouraged by the priority that is automatically given to motorised traffic, regardless of the type of road or its location.

It is time to ensure that use and management of the road network does not actively discriminate against self-powered road users.

WHAT POLITICIANS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTING IF THEY ARE SINCERE ABOUT CYCLING AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

1. Lower speed limits

A maximum speed limit of 20mph should be introduced on all streets in Hereford where people are, or should be, more important than motor vehicles. Full width cycle lanes for travel in both directions should be introduced on streets where higher speed limits are retained. The direct, radial routes into the city centre should be a primary focus for ensuring the safety of cyclists through speed management or the reallocation of road space.

2. Law enforcement

As long as 20mph limits are not the norm, there should be much stricter enforcement

of existing speed limits. Once 20mph limits and cycle lanes on the remaining higher speed roads become widespread, the support of the police will be required from time to time to enforce lower speed limits and to keep cycle lanes free of parked cars. We deplore a situation in which pavement cycling is treated as more dangerous and anti-social than speeding which really is dangerous and which frightens cyclists off the road.

3. High quality cycle parking

Cycle parking should be available at all public buildings, health facilities, shops and offices. There should be a policy to provide secure cycle storage in residential areas.

4. Communication

Direct promotional activities by the Council should focus on

- raising driving awareness of cyclists' needs and rights
- reminding all road users of the Highway Code and law
- raising general awareness of the benefits of cycling and
- announcing and explaining the reason for and correct use of new cycle infrastructure such as contra-flows, new off road routes, etc.

These policies are consistent with the five movement principles adopted by Hereford Council's Pedestrian, Access and Cycle Forum (abolished by the Council in 2008), of which Cycle Hereford was a member. The principles are:

1. Making our streets vibrant and friendly *by giving priority to people over traffic wherever possible.*
2. *Sharing road space in a way which always considers the needs of all road users* in order of their vulnerability and sustainability. This puts the pedestrian first, followed by people with disabilities, cyclists, public transport and then other motorised traffic. Where insufficient space is available, speeds must be reduced to 20mph or less or motorised traffic excluded to create a safe and pleasant environment.
3. The most important steps to improve safety and encourage walking and cycling are *reducing the speed and volume of traffic*. This also improves conditions for car occupants! Special facilities for cyclists should be used sparingly and should be considered only where reducing traffic volume or speed is not an option. This is because, above all, the right of cyclists to use the road network in safety should be recognised. In addition, compared to traffic calming which benefits all road users, special cycle facilities are expensive; they can give drivers the impression that cyclists are not supposed to use the carriageway; they are all too often sub-standard and they can actually increase danger for cyclists. We do support advanced stop lines, 'toucan' crossings for pedestrians and cyclists and off-road facilities for children and/or where these provide shorter routes for all cyclists to key destinations. The Great Western Way and Yazor Brook shared path are good examples.
4. *Minimum standards should be agreed and always met.* For example, cycle lanes which are too narrow, too short, badly constructed, located or maintained will not be used. They endanger cyclists and confirm the low status of cycling.
5. *Signing, standards of design and materials, should conform to a design brief* to ensure that providing for cyclists (and pedestrians) contributes to an overall enhancement of our built and rural environment.

We believe that the people of this county care deeply about the environment and that many who want to cycle would do so if traffic were less intimidating and main routes more pleasant.

Our politicians could make Herefordshire an international leader in sustainable, low-carbon transport – THE PLACE TO CYCLE!