

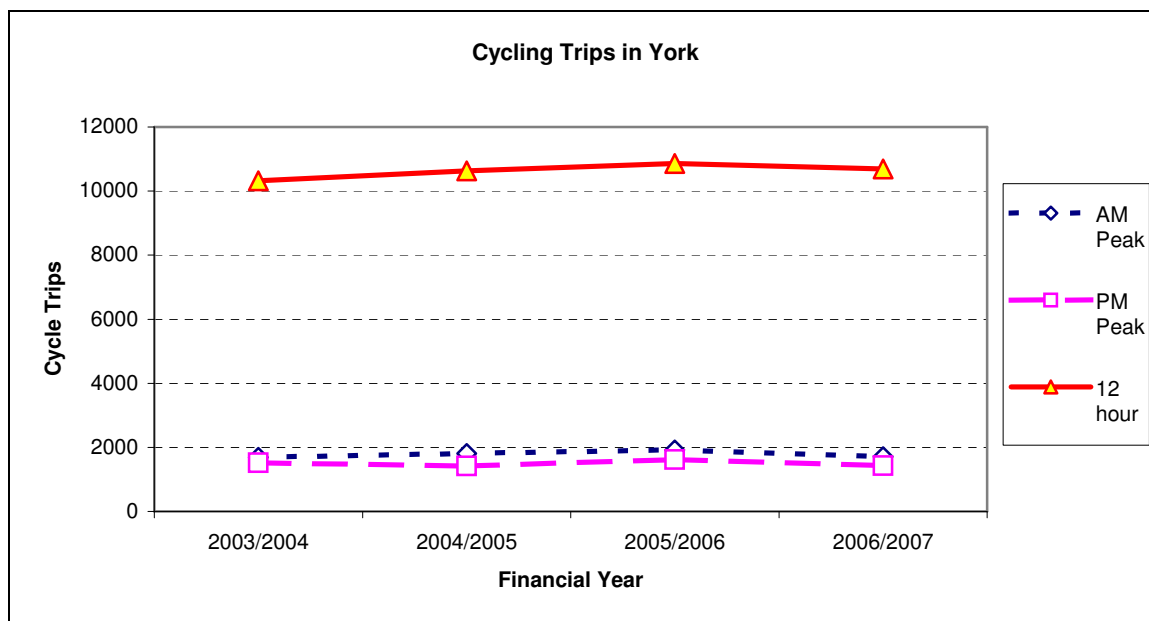
## Overview of Cycling in York

1. This briefing paper provides Members of the Traffic Congestion Ad Hoc Scrutiny Committee with an overview of cycling in York and the projects the council is currently involved in, aimed at improving cycle facilities and increasing the numbers of people cycling which both have the potential to reduce congestion by removing car trips.

### Cycle Usage

2. York has historically generated high levels of cycle usage, this was partly due to its size and flat terrain and partly because the majority of the larger employers were located close to the city centre and therefore within easy cycling distance of where their workforce lived. In the 2001 census 12% of York's residents travelled to work by cycle compared to 2.8% for England and Wales as a whole. This represented a fall from the figure in 1991 which was 16%. This needs to be viewed against a national decline in cycle usage and a significant increase in households in York with access to a car, which has grown from 58% in 1981 to 66% in 1991 and onto 73% in 2001.
3. Employment patterns have changed dramatically in the past couple of decades and many of the manufacturing jobs in the city have either transferred elsewhere or disappeared altogether. Many of the jobs in York now are tourism related or in professional type fields such as finance and the sciences. Some of York's residents do not necessarily have the skills to undertake these jobs, so there are higher numbers of people commuting into York to fill the posts and commuting out of York to find blue collar employment.
4. The trends of cycle use over the past four years are as shown in the table and the chart below. These are taken from counts on radial routes to the city centre and off-road counters at various locations on the network.

	AM Peak	PM Peak	12 hour
2003/2004	1686	1520	10320
2004/2005	1806	1420	10634
2005/2006	1918	1623	10864
2006/2007	1713	1429	10690



5. As can be seen above there had been a steady growth in the AM peak and over the 7am to 7pm period until it dropped off slightly last year. The PM peak seems to be a bit more erratic with no obvious trend, this may be due to peak spreading with people finishing work at different times rather than just at 5pm.
6. The methods for monitoring cycling levels will need to be updated and different monitoring sites identified to reflect differing trips patterns with more orbital trips taking place. Many trips now do not pass near the city centre and therefore do not currently get picked up by surveys or counters. One of the most obvious example of cycle routes implemented recently to cater for orbital trips is the East-West Millennium Route, which avoids the city centre by crossing the Millennium Bridge.

#### Targets and Monitoring

7. Several cycling-related targets have been set as part of the recently adopted second Local Transport Plan (LTP), namely:
  - Modal split of journeys to work – provisional increase from 12% to 13% set
  - Modal split of journeys to school – provisional target of no increase in car trips set but no specific target for cycling currently
  - City-wide cycle usage – a 3% increase in overall trips over the five year period
  - Percentage of customers arriving at York Station by a sustainable mode – an increase from 62% to 70%
  - Proportion of new developments over 0.4Ha contributing either financially or physically to pedestrian, cycle or public transport networks – an approximate target of 75% set provisionally

8. All the initiatives below will contribute in some way to one or many of the above targets and will help to reduce congestion.

### Cycle Infrastructure

9. The cycle route network is now approximately 140km in length with 80km off-road and 60km on-road (either cycle lanes or signed routes). 26km of these routes were created during the first LTP period (15km off-road and 11km on-road). The major routes provided in this period were:
  - Millennium East-West Route (Foxwood to University)
  - Haxby to Nestle via New Earswick
  - Naburn Lane
  - Millfield Lane (Poppleton to Manor School)
  - Holgate Park to Wilton Rise
  - Leeman Road to Holgate Road
  - Water End
  - Clifton Moorgate
  - Clifton Moor to Sutton Way (via Clifton Backies)
  - Monks Cross (various routes around the estate and on its approach roads)
10. The current network has been developed over many years, however, some sections were provided in a very ad-hoc manner. This was mainly due to the council securing short sections of route as contributions from adjacent development sites as the opportunity arose. Concerted efforts are now underway to fill in many of the gaps in provision across the city and to deal with tricky junctions as recommended during the previous scrutiny of the Cycling topic. Schemes currently in development for implementation in the near future include the Clifton Bridge cycle scheme, the route through the Hospital grounds, the Outer Ring Road – Haxby/Wigginton to Clifton Moor route, and the Heslington Lane route (part of which was completed earlier this year).
11. There are currently over 1,300 publicly-available cycle parking spaces in the city centre (within or immediately adjacent to the inner ring road), 370 of these are located at the rail station itself. Many more are also located in other areas of the city and its suburbs such as at shops, leisure facilities and all five Park & Ride sites (three of which also have cycle lockers). Since 2001/02 1,850 cycle parking spaces have been provided out of the Transport Capital Programme at 41 of York's schools (32 Primary Schools, 9 Secondary School sites) on a rolling programme which is still ongoing and will be rolled out to an additional five schools during 2007/08.
12. During the first LTP period approximately £3.2 million was spent on cycle-related schemes. This figure does not include Safe Routes to Schools measures but does include school cycle parking (£560K). This works out at an average capital spend per year of £646K.

### Measures to Promote Cycling

13. The council are currently working to encourage cycling through several means:
- By providing national-standard training (now rebranded as Bikeability) to both children and adults to give them the confidence and skills to use their cycles for everyday journeys (in the past year we have trained 1,143 pupils at beginner level, 1,164 at intermediate level and 205 at advanced level)
  - Through the provision of infrastructure in the form of cycle routes or cycle parking (as above)
  - Travel plans – where either the employer or the school actively encourage cycling by providing facilities on site and/or by providing incentives such as cycle allowances
  - Promotional products or events – free cycle route maps, slap-wraps and cycle tagging events in partnership with the Safer York Partnership (SYP) and North Yorkshire Police. Four cycling campaigns were undertaken during the first LTP period “Cycle to Work for a Healthy Heart”, “How far will you go...”, “Cycle on by / Walk on by” and “Choose cycling”. Further campaigns will be investigated if resources can be identified to develop them including a “Considerate Road User” campaign as suggested by the Scrutiny panel previously.

### Cycling Policy

14. York has had a Cycling Strategy since 1988, which has been revised on at least two separate occasions since to coincide with the production of the two LTPs. Both of these plans had at their heart a “Hierarchy of Transport Users”, this placed cyclists third only to pedestrians and people with disabilities in terms of strategic importance and well above motorists.
15. Cycling has the potential to contribute to all the shared priorities in the LTP in the following ways:
- Tackling congestion by giving people a viable, sustainable mode for their journeys. This will be achieved by filling in many of the gaps in the cycle route network to make it more coherent and continuous thus improving reliability of cycling trips making this more attractive than driving.
  - Accessibility will be improved by better cycling links being provided to work, school, healthcare, retail and for leisure trips. Integration between cycling/rail and cycling/ buses will be addressed with new links and better cycle parking at interchanges, plus cycle carrying facilities on buses and trains. Cycling/walking will be addressed with better cycle parking throughout the Footstreets zone. Careful planning of new mixed-use development sites and linking these into the cycle route network will help reduce the need to travel and help promote travel by sustainable modes.
  - Safety will be improved by provision of more cycle skills training to children and adults. Filling gaps in the network, especially at junctions, will help improve awareness of cyclists by motorists and reduce levels

of danger. Construction of off-road routes will remove the potential of cycle/vehicle conflicts especially for new cyclists and children.

- Air quality will be improved by removing motorised trips from the network which will help the remaining traffic move more freely thus producing less emissions.
- Quality of life will be improved by improvements to health levels due to more physical activity. Access to healthcare sites will also be improved. Better cycling access to new developments will give residents or employees better travel options from the outset allowing them realistic alternatives to the car.
- The local economy will be enhanced by providing cycle routes to and cycle parking at key destinations such as employment sites, retail sites and leisure sites. This also reduces the need for space-hungry car parking.

### Future Initiatives

16. The council are working in partnership with Bikerescue, York's bike recycling initiative, to convert the former Lendal Bridge Sub-Station to a secure, staffed cycle parking compound with other cycle-related functions such as cycle hire, left luggage, changing facilities, cycle and accessory retail. Several other sites for similar secure compounds (probably unstaffed) are being investigated along the lines of a Cycle, Park & Walk concept (based on the Park & Ride concept) with sites on main cycle routes into the city centre around the periphery of the Footstreets zone.
17. Other initiatives under development for cyclists include relaunching the Cycling Forum with a view to giving stakeholders the opportunity to help shape future cycling policies and proposals and to encourage partnership working with common goals. This is also seen as an extension of the partnerships between the council and the York Cycle Campaign, the CTC and Sustrans, all of whom have a role in the promotion of cycling. Cross-party involvement in this forum is seen as essential to help users engage with elected representatives and to ensure as wide an ownership as possible.
18. If and when this forum is reconvened one of its first tasks will be to help undertake a review of the previously adopted proposed cycle route network to assess whether the routes originally proposed are still appropriate and to identify other routes which are now suitable in the light of developments which have taken place in the intervening period.
19. Other multi-agency partnerships will be investigated to give a much broader ownership of cycling across not only council departments but across other public and private sector organisations. The recent Cycle Theft Task Group set up by the SYP is a prime example of good working in partnership, with representatives of the council, SYP, North Yorks Police, cycle retailers, insurance companies and other stakeholders, such as the University of York, all on board and working towards the same goal.

20. There are also aspirations to develop a continental-style cycle hire scheme for York, which would operate in a similar way to the existing car club.

#### Cycling's Contribution to Reducing Congestion

21. Cycling can play a vital role in reducing congestion by providing a alternative mode to the car for many shorter trips (less than five miles). It is estimated that 75% of all personal trips are less than five miles long. Over 95% of York's residents live within a five mile radius of the city centre, with the exceptions being those who live in Strensall, Kexby, Elvington, Wheldrake and Hessay.
22. Some people may argue that in providing facilities for cyclists by removing roadspace from motorists (cycle lanes, advanced stop lines) this in itself compounds congestion, however, giving people an alternative that in many cases may be quicker and easier in an urban setting has the potential to tempt some people out of their cars and onto their bikes.
23. Along similar lines some cyclists would argue that on occasions it can be easier and safer to cycle along congested roads because they don't encounter speeding traffic and that congestion in itself acts as a disincentive to driving.