

A Cycling Strategy for Leighton Buzzard and Linslade

Recommended to the Local Authorities by the Leighton Linslade Cycling Forum
February 2007

Introduction

This Cycling Strategy is made up of two sections:

Section A outlines a framework of general policies and objectives regarding cycling

Section B gives specific, and in some cases detailed, recommended action points to achieve the aim and objectives of the strategy.

There are also maps showing existing and desired cycling infrastructure.


A Summary of the Leighton Linslade Cycling Strategy

- 🚲 Leighton Buzzard and Linslade are a good size for encouraging cycling but there are some fundamental issues that would need to be addressed to really make a difference; many of the roads were never designed for the amount of traffic we now have.

 - 🚲 As the town's population continues to grow the negative economic and environmental impacts of traffic congestion will continue to grow unless we are prepared to be radical and implement measures that will significantly increase cycling and make it a genuinely realistic alternative to the car for most people.

 - 🚲 There are many measures that can be put in place to encourage more cycling and it must not be assumed that these have to be major infrastructure projects; the minor improvements and 'soft' measures can be just as important.

 - 🚲 In many situations reducing traffic volume and speed could make a huge difference to encouraging cycling as could building the confidence of potential cyclists through training and travel planning.

 - 🚲 If we are to have a long term vision to increase cycling in the town we need to have long term guarantees of support from decision makers and funders within local government.
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Section A. A Policy Framework for Cycling

1 Why have a Cycling Strategy?

- 🚲 To demonstrate a long term commitment to cycling
- 🚲 To outline an agreed approach to cycling
- 🚲 To provide a policy framework for decision making affecting cycling
- 🚲 To provide a framework for influencing future development in the town

- 1.1** Leighton Linlade Town Council is currently writing its Town Plan which will influence the development of the town over the next 25 years. The government's growth agenda for the south east is going to have a major impact on the town with an expected doubling of the population over the next 15 years. The majority of the new housing will be located to the south and east of the town. In order for the town to sustain this increase in population some radical decisions will need to be taken regarding transport.
- 1.2** Initiatives that encourage walking, cycling and bus use will be key to ensuring the sustainability of the new developments and limiting the impact of an increased population on the traffic levels in the town. However this will only happen if we start to plan and develop a comprehensive and high quality cycling infrastructure now and start to seriously promote cycling in all sectors of the community through 'soft' measures such as travel planning and cycle training.
- 1.3** Cycling has many benefits not only to the individual but to the whole community and should therefore be encouraged. The following is an extract from the Bedfordshire County Council Cycling Strategy, *Cycle Stand*:

Benefits of Cycling

In November 2004 the Department for Health published the White Paper 'Choosing Health: Making healthy choices easier'. The document focuses on 'health as a way of life' and the promotion of sustainable forms of transport such as cycling is a part of the overall aim of the White Paper.

Cycling is:

- **Environmentally friendly** - cycling causes very little pollution and helps to reduce traffic congestion.
- **Low cost** - there are low maintenance costs, no running costs or fares to pay. The need for car parking is also reduced.
- **Healthy** - the British Medical Association (BMA) recommends cycling as one of the most effective methods to improve general health and fitness.
- **Sociable** - it allows people to share an interest in health and recreation.
- **Saving time** – taking exercise whilst getting to a destination quicker.
- **Parking** – you can park your bicycle at almost any location.

- 1.4** It is proposed that this Cycling Strategy form part of the Town Plan and also that it be adopted by South Bedfordshire District Council and Bedfordshire County Council. It should form the basis of a programme of work by Bedfordshire Highways and also act as a guide to town planners.

2 The Aims and Objectives of the Strategy

2.1 The Leighton Linlade Cycling Forum has adopted the general ambition:

To make Leighton Buzzard and Linslade a Cycle-Friendly Town

It is recommended that this strategy also adopt this overarching ambition.

2.2 Achieving this ambition will mean a significantly higher proportion of journeys being made by bike rather than by car resulting in:

- 🚲 Reduced traffic and congestion
- 🚲 A healthier and happier population
- 🚲 A cleaner environment
- 🚲 Improved access links throughout the town

2.3 Objectives for achieving this aim are:

- 1 Develop a comprehensive, publicised, accessible and well maintained cycle network within the town and linking to nearby villages
- 2 Make Cycle Training accessible to all
- 3 Install appropriate cycle parking at key locations throughout the town
- 4 Increase opportunities for leisure cycling
- 5 Promote the use of Travel Plans by schools, employers, employees and residents
- 6 Promote the needs of cyclists during the planning of new developments
- 7 Regularly monitor cycle use and consult with cyclists
- 8 Develop opportunities for cyclists to integrate with other forms of transport, especially public transport

3 Leighton Linlade and Cycling – the current situation and future potential

3.1 Good and bad aspects of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade for cyclists

Leighton Linlade is an ideal size for getting around by bike. Residents from most areas could reach the town centre within 15 minutes on a bike. However, there are three intrinsic problems that Leighton's cyclists have to face:

1. The most direct routes to key destinations, such as the town centre and the station, are busy main roads or 'spokes'
2. There is a major pinch-point at the Canal Bridge
3. Many roads in the 'old town' areas are narrow with parked cars along the sides

Another key fact to bear in mind is that the majority of the existing population and planned population growth is on the east and south of the town whilst the station, a key destination, is in Linslade, on the west, with the River and Canal between.

3.2 The current cycle network

There is currently a limited amount of cycling infrastructure in the town and most of it is focused on Safer Routes to Schools. There is also the excellent Sustrans National Cycle Route 6 which comes directly into the town along the canal tow path from Bletchley. The Riverside Walk and Old Railway Path are regularly used by cyclists and are due for upgrades to promote this use, and these both serve as vital traffic-free and short-cut routes for cyclists. (see map)

3.3 Who are Leighton's cyclists

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the people in Leighton and Linslade that currently cycle regularly are:

- 🚲 Commuters to the station
- 🚲 School children
- 🚲 Commuters to the town centre and industrial estates
- 🚲 Shoppers
- 🚲 Postal workers

3.4 The challenge of an increasing population

The new housing developments planned for the east and south of the town should be seen as an opportunity to build-in from the outset a cycling infrastructure. Encouraging cycle use from these areas will be key to reducing traffic congestion as well as ensuring the residents of the new estates use the town centre for their shopping needs rather than being tempted to go elsewhere.

3.5 To make the most of this situation in Leighton any plans for cycling need to focus on:

- 1 Reducing traffic volumes and speeds on the main 'spokes' into the town
- 2 Developing additional cycle/pedestrian crossing points over river & canal to allow these to bypass town (such as at Black Bridge)
- 3 Developing good cycle routes, especially from the east, to the station and town centre

These three aims should form the basis of a cycling network for Leighton Linslade

3.6 Other key points

- 🚲 As well as infrastructure improvements there is a need to encourage people onto their bikes through promotion (health, environment, financial benefits) information (signage, maps) and building skills and confidence (training and travel plans)
- 🚲 Local decision makers must also show real support for making Leighton-Linslade a cycle-friendly town by considering the needs of cyclists when planning decisions are made and in giving real financial support to cycling schemes, equivalent of that given to road schemes
- 🚲 In the longer term it would also be good to get public transport providers on board and develop better integrated transport, such as allowing bikes on buses and better cycle parking at the station.

4 Existing Cycling Policy

4.1 National Policy

The Government's National Cycling Strategy, 1996, which aimed to double cycle use by 2002 and again by 2012 and also targeted a need for local cycling strategies, was endorsed in the 1998 Transport White Paper, '*A New Deal for Transport*' but was abandoned in 2004.

In June 2004 the DfT published the booklet '*Walking and Cycling: an action plan*' which advises cycling promotion organisations on national and local actions to promote cycling on and identifies best practice with regards infrastructure, safety and travel behaviour.

Councils were also required to set a target to maintain or increase cycling as one of the mandatory indicators of the second Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11. Additionally Cycling England was set up to advise the Government and administer a small budget to promote cycling. This budget has so far been used to fund several cycle demonstration towns, promote national cycle training and create cycle links to schools.

4.2 Creating a Good Cycle Network

A Public Consultation Draft produced by the Department for Transport in April 2004 entitled, '*Policy, Planning and Design for Walking and Cycling, Local Transport Note 1/04*' states that the cyclist should have priority within the demands of other users in carriageway space. The document outlines the following five core principles of planning for increased cycling:

1. Convenience
2. Accessibility
3. Safety
4. Comfort
5. Attractiveness

It is recommended that these principles be adopted when reviewing existing cycling infrastructure and planning new ones in Leighton Buzzard and Linslade.

4.3 Solving infrastructure problems in favour of the cyclist

The Department for Transport, the Cyclist's Touring Club, the Institute of Highways and Transportation and Bicycle Association produced a guidance document called *Cycle Friendly Infrastructure* in 1996 which advises use of the following 'hierarchy of solutions' when selecting design improvements for cycling. This starts with measures that will benefit all road users, such as traffic restraint and speed reduction, then follows traffic management that advantages cyclists along with other priority road users, such as buses, and finally cycle-specific facilities, such as cycle tracks.

1. Traffic reduction
2. Traffic calming and restraint
3. Junction treatment and traffic management
4. Redistribution of space on the carriageway
5. Cycle lanes and cycle tracks

4.4 County Council Policy – Cycle Stand

Bedfordshire County Council produced their cycling strategy, '*Cycle Stand*' in 2005 with a target to increase cycling by 20% by 2012. The strategy is included in the Local Transport Plan 2 and has three objectives:

- 1 A higher proportion of journeys to be made by bicycle, particularly journeys to work and school
- 2 Create safe, direct and attractive conditions for cyclists
- 3 Promote the positive role of cycling as a healthy activity as well as a practicable alternative to the private car

Through *Cycle Stand* Bedfordshire County Council adopts the following 12 Policies:

- 1 **Cycle Network Development:** priority will be given to urban areas, links between urban areas, links within and between rural settlements, employers, educational establishments, public transport interchanges, retail centres and other main attractors, and leisure routes.
- 2 **Advanced Stop Lines:** all new schemes to include ASLs at signalised junctions, where practicable and accepted by safety audit.
- 3 **Cycle Audit:** all major transport and highway schemes and significant land use development schemes will be subject to a cycle audit.
- 4 **Maintenance:** review annually the cycling schemes on the maintenance list to ensure sufficient and appropriate levels of maintenance and add new cycling schemes to the list.
- 5 **Cycle Parking:** adequate parking to be provided by the County Council in town centres, public transport interchanges, schools, village centres, leisure facilities and other major attractors. Employers will be encouraged to provide cycle parking at workplaces and provision of cycle parking will be required as part of planning consent for new developments.
- 6 **Cyclist's Safety:** traffic reduction and management, traffic calming, speed reductions, junction treatments, carriageway redistribution and signing will be incorporated into cycling provision
- 7 **Cycle Training – Child and Adult Training:** the County Council will provide Cycle Training to all Middle School children where possible and Adult Cycle Training where requested.
- 8 **Cycling and Employers:** establish and promote Cycle Friendly Employer Initiatives
- 9 **Planning Obligations:** The County Council will secure cycling improvements, wherever possible, through planning obligations with the assistance of District Councils.
- 10 **Integration with Public Transport:** facilitate integrated journeys for cyclists through partnerships with public transport operators.
- 11 **Consultation:** provide cycling forums and local residents with current plans regarding cycling improvements and promotions
- 12 **Promotion of Cycling:** develop and promote a programme of initiatives aimed at publicising the health, environmental and economic benefits of cycling and the current cycle network and work closely with local cycling campaign groups to promote cycling.

4.5 County Council Policy – Local Transport Plan 2

Bedfordshire's LTP2 covers the period 2006/7 to 2010/11. The following table contains extracts that relate to cycling:

Indicator	Target for end of LTP
Objective 1 – Preparing for Growth	
LTP2	Limit change in area wide traffic mileage to +10%
LTP6	Change in peak period traffic flows to urban centres to be kept stable
Objective 3 – Asset Management	
Local 4	Completion of the cycle network, 95% of strategic network completed
Objective 4 – Managing congestion	
LTP4	Mode share of journeys to school, a 3% increase in use of sustainable modes (from 66% to 69% of children, including doubling the number of children cycling from 2% to 4%)
LTP3	Off-highway cycling trips, a 22% increase by 2010/11 (from 2003/04 baseline)
Local 5	On-highway cycling trips, a 15% increase

5 How to encourage more cycling

5.1 To encourage more cycling we need to reduce the obstacles, physical and mental, that deter people from cycling and build on the reasons people choose to cycle. For some people it may be something very small and seemingly insignificant that will encourage them to cycle more, such as repairs to a pothole, a cycle stand at their destination or the removal of nettles from a cycle path.

Others may need something bigger, such as new cycle lanes or a re-designed roundabout. Some just need their confidence boosted by a training session or a leaflet showing them where the cycle paths are.

While a shiny new cycle path might look good and give a sense of something achieved it may all be a waste of money if there is a 6 inch drop onto the road at the end of it! It is often the minor improvements that make the biggest difference.

5.2 Why people don't cycle

There are as many reasons why people don't cycle as there are non-cyclists but here are some of the common ones:

Safety fears

- lack of confidence & skills
- heavy & fast traffic
- insufficient or unsuitable cycle paths
- roads & junctions badly designed for cyclists

Badly maintained roads & cycle paths

Lack of information

Journey distances & times

- inability to integrate with other modes of transport
- false perceptions of relative timings of car and cycle journeys in urban areas
- delays caused by traffic congestion e.g. at junctions

Lack of bike security and facilities, such as shower and change facilities, at destination

Weather

5.3 Why people choose to cycle

Similarly there are as many reasons why people choose to cycle as there are cyclists but here are some of the main ones:

- 🚲 Ability to use short-cuts & avoid traffic congestion
- 🚲 Good cycling network
- 🚲 Good facilities (parking, showers etc.) at destination
- 🚲 Independent travel for people without a car (e.g. children)
- 🚲 Financial incentives
- 🚲 Environmental incentives
- 🚲 Health and fitness

5.4 Ways to encourage more cycling

There are a variety of measures that can be taken to encourage more cycling. Experience has shown that there are 3 key elements in successfully promoting cycling. Firstly, there is a need to create a viable **network** by 'hard' measures, such as infrastructure improvements, Next there is a need to **promote** cycling by 'soft' measures, such as training and publicity. Finally, there is also a need for **complementary measures**, such as speed reduction, traffic management and integrated transport schemes.

Network

- 🚲 High quality, accessible, well publicised and comprehensive cycle network that meets the needs of cyclists and helps avoid traffic and congestion
- 🚲 Design new developments with cyclists in mind and provide sufficient local amenities to reduce the need to travel longer distances
- 🚲 Regular and appropriate checking and maintenance of cycling infrastructure & roads
- 🚲 Address potentially dangerous highway features

Promotion

- 🚲 Cycle training & promotion of benefits & relative safety
- 🚲 Sufficient, secure and well publicised cycle storage facilities
- 🚲 Travel Plans for companies, schools and individuals & cycle-friendly employer initiatives

Complementary measures

- 🚲 Reduction of traffic volumes & speeds
- 🚲 Integrated transport schemes such as 'Bikes on Buses/Trains' and 'Park and Cycle'
- 🚲 Improve driver awareness of cyclists & promote safe driving

6. Consultation and Surveys

6.1 This strategy has been written following a number of discussions with the Leighton Linlade Cycling Forum, which includes a wide range of cyclists, as well as consultation with the public at the Leighton Buzzard 2006 Carnival. A survey of cyclists has also been carried out at the railway station. Results of these indicate that the area in town that most cyclists

want to see improved is the main link between Linslade and Leighton Buzzard in the vicinity of the Canal Bridge (the Leighton Road, Wing Road / Stoke Road / Old Road junction).

- 6.2** The strategy should incorporate further and ongoing cyclist surveys and counts as well as consultation with potential cyclists, such as school children and local company employees, to ensure that cycle planning is keeping in line with what existing and potential new cyclists need and want.

7. Implementation of the Strategy


7.1 Key Partners and Stakeholders and their roles:

Partner	Who they are in relation to cycling	Their likely role
Leighton Linslade Cycling Forum	An independent group of local cyclists working and campaigning to improve the situation for cyclists and promote cycling	Consulting with local people and advise the other partners on what local people would like. Putting pressure on other partners to implement the strategy. Monitoring progress and ensuring other partners work together. Lobbying for funding.
Leighton Linslade Town Council	The local authority closest to the people. Produced the Town Plan.	Consulting with local people and influencing decisions made by other partners in favour of local people. Working with cycling groups, district planners and County Council to ensure adequate funding of cycle network and complementary measures to promote cycling. Identifying funding streams such as GAF funding, LTP funding and developer funding to build and promote network.
South Beds District Council	Local planning authority and responsible for the strategic development of the District as a whole.	Would need to give permission for most cycling infrastructure schemes and able to influence the designs and planning conditions of new developments. Collect Section 106 funds to pass on to Beds CC and could also provide other funding.
Bedfordshire County Council	Local Highways Authority. (Local Education Authority.)	Responsible for policy. Major source of funding for infrastructure and other projects such as training & travel plans. Also provide expertise in the form of a cycling officer.
Bedfordshire Highways	Term Consultants responsible for delivery	Undertake design and give technical advice. Primary delivery body for infrastructure schemes.
Sustrans	National cycling and sustainable transport charity.	Establishing network of cycle routes across the country including National Cycle Route 6 through Leighton Buzzard and Linslade. Creating local cycle networks including Safe Routes to Schools. Providing technical advice & guidance. Source of funding especially from central government.
The Ouzel Valley Park Project	Cross-sectional group developing access and open space in the heart of Leighton Linslade.	Establishing links with land owners to open up new areas and routes for access. Funding of projects. Involving local community groups.

It is hoped that all the partners will adopt this Cycling Strategy and work towards its implementation. Each has its own particular role to play in this and should work to its strengths

7.2 Other groups who should be involved

Local public transport providers, such as Arriva and Silverlink, will need to be involved in the implementation of this Cycling Strategy as will developers who may be looking to invest and build in the town. Other local campaign groups, such as Friends of the Earth, may also wish to be involved. Bearing in mind the health benefits of increasing cycling the local Primary Care Trust are another potential partner and given that they make up a large proportion of cyclists in the town the Post Office may like to be involved in some way.



Section B. Specific Recommended Action Points for Making Leighton Linslade a Cycle-Friendly Town

A note on prioritisation

The specific proposals in this section are not listed in priority order but are given a priority rating using the following categories:

IP = In progress or agreed; C = Critical; H = High priority; M = Medium priority and L = Low priority

8. Achieving Objective 1

1. Develop a comprehensive, publicised, accessible and well maintained cycle network within the town and linking to nearby villages

This is the largest part of the strategy and is clearly crucial but it will only be beneficial if it is implemented in a structured way, to high standards and with full consultation with cyclists at all times. It will also only be effective if all the other objectives are met and if both existing and new infrastructure and the roads themselves are maintained to a high standard.

Proposals	Priority
Publicising the cycling network	
1. Signage of specific cycle paths and routes	H
2. Signage of suggested or recommended routes for cyclists	M
3. Published and readily available map of the cycle network with useful information for cyclists (repair shops, safety advice, useful contacts etc.), also available on the internet (e.g. the Town Council website). Routes on the network should be named/numbered	C
4. Information boards for cyclists and other travellers showing the cycle network and other travel and cycling information and general local information at key locations such as the town centre bus stops, the railway station and canal tow path.	L
General network proposals	
5. 20mph urban speed limit introduced in a phased approach through zones	C
6. Improvements to road surfaces (potholes, inspection covers and cracking) especially on routes on the cycle network and a review of the road maintenance procedure to speed up repairs	C
7. Maintenance of existing and new cycle paths to be the responsibility of Beds Highways (unless agreed otherwise e.g. by Sustrans, British Waterways etc.)	H
8. Review of cycle path maintenance procedure (surfaces, lighting, vegetation encroachment, removal of debris etc.)	H
9. Assessments of all existing and proposed traffic light junctions for possibility of ASLs	C
Detailed route proposals by area (see accompanying plan)	
Linking the Linslade estates to the railway station, Mentmore Road Schools and the town centre	
10. Shared use path through Knaves Hill estate	L
11. Shared use path from Bideford Green (near Southcott School) to Southcott Community Centre with link to Soulbury Road	L

12. Shared use path (uphill only) or on-carriageway lanes on Soulbury Road from Derwent Road to Station Road	H
13. On-carriageway filter cycle lane for cyclists turning out of Station Road into Soulbury Road	L
14. Cycle crossing or protection for cyclists turning into Station Rd from Soulbury Rd	L
15. Traffic reduction and traffic calming measures on Soulbury Road (between Station Road and Rosebery Ave.), Old Road and Stoke Road	M
16. Shared use path from Southcott Community Centre direct to Southcourt Avenue	M
17. On-carriageway cycle lanes along Bunkers Lane	M
18. Re-design of Wing Road railway bridge and of Cedars Way and Bunkers Lane junctions with Wing Road (including accessible ASL in and outbound)	H
19. De-trunking, traffic calming and parking measures on Wing Road	IP
20. Re-design of Canal Bridge junction area to provide better access across canal for cyclists	C
21. New pedestrian/cycle bridge over canal at Twelve Arches Weir/end of Rothschild Road/Bossington Lane	L
22. Sustrans link from Twelve Arches Weir to Leighton Road alongside river	IP
Linking the southern and eastern estates (Vandyke Road to Grovebury Road segment) to the railway station, Vandyke Road and Brooklands Drive schools and the town centre	
23. On-carriageway cycle lanes on Vandyke Road between Vandyke Schools and cemetery access track and traffic reduction/calming measures on full length of Vandyke Road and parking measures at the western end	M
24. Shared use path between Vandyke Road and the Clipstone Brook between cemetery and playing fields	M
25. Shared use path through Planets estate alongside NG Railway from Meadway to Hockliffe Road (with link across to Orion Way and safe crossing at Appenine Way/Meadway mini-roundabout)	L
26. Shared use path from Beaudessert School to existing cycle path on the west side of Appenine Way	M
27. Off-carriageway cycle path along Hockliffe Road between east end of Appenine Way Road and Brooklands Drive cycle crossing	L
28. Surfaced path across park from Meadow Way to Marley Fields	H
29. Off-carriageway cycle path along Stanbridge Road between Marley Fields and the MOT test centre	M
30. Cycle crossing across NG Railway between Jerrard Close and Weston Avenue	C
31. Shared use path link from Stanbridge Road to Richmond Road	M
32. On-carriageway cycle lanes on Stanbridge Road and South Street from above link as far as Woodman Close and traffic reduction/traffic calming and parking measures on full length of Stanbridge Road	M

33. Shared use path between Grove Road and Grovebury Road	H
34. Off-carriageway cycle lanes along Grovebury Road between above path and track to Grovebury Farm	H
35. De-trunking of Billington Road	IP
36. 'Civilisation' of Billington Road linking new housing estates to town centre	H
37. Improve old railway path and access to it, especially the Chartmoor Road roundabout and spur to Tiddenfoot Waterside Park	IP
38. Bike ramps on White Bridge to aid access to tow path	L
39. Link from southern side of Canal Bridge to tow path	H
40. Link between Stephenson Close to the railway station car park or initially a shared use path across Linslade Recreation Ground from Waterloo Road to railway station	C
41. Install a pavement for cyclists & pedestrians on north-bound side of Billington Road at least from Chartmoor Rd.	H
42. Completion of proposed Sustrans NCR 6 between Lake Street and South Street	IP
43. Off-carriageway cycle path on Lake Street from Grove Road to Duncombe Drive	M
Linking the northern estates (between Vandyke Road and the River Ouzel) to the railway station, the industrial estates, the town centre and Vandyke Road schools	
44. Reduce 40mph limit on Plantation Road to 30mph	L
45. Improved surfacing of Sandy Lane bridleway (but not tarmac)	H
46. Traffic reduction, traffic calming/ speed control and parking measures on Heath Road, Church Street, North Street Clarence Road, Garden Hedge, St. Andrews Street and Beaudessert (possible cycle route through St. Andrew's Close & the old lych gate)	M
47. On-carriageway cycle lanes on Garden Hedge	L
48. Cycle link between Vandyke Road and Summer Street on track opposite George St	L
49. Cycle link between Bedford Street and North Street	L
50. De-trunking of Leston Road, West Street and Leighton Road	H
51. Traffic reduction and traffic calming measures on Leighton Road	H
52. Cycle contra-flow on Hockliffe Street between library car park turning and Lake Street and/or wider pavements	M
53. Cycle link between North Street and Lake Street	M
54. Re-design of North Street roundabout	M
55. On carriageway cycle lane along westbound side of West Street linking to a new ASL at Bridge Street lights	H
56. Upgrade of Riverside Walk to shared use path with links from Millbank and Windsor Avenue	IP
57. Surfaced cycle paths across Ouzel Meadows from Riverside Walk footbridge to Twelve Arches Weir and new canal bridge (see proposal 21)	L

58. Off-carriageway cycle path on Leighton Road from Bridge Street to Canal Bridge junctions on the south side and to Vimy Road on the north side	H
59. Protection for cyclists turning right from Wing Road into Church Road and New Road	M
60. A Home Zone incorporating New Road, Church Road, Vicarage Road, Ship Road, Waterloo Road and Victoria Road with contra-flow for cyclists on New Road	L
61. Shared use path across Linslade Recreation Ground from Vicarage Road to railway station	M
Links to nearby villages onto the town network (Heath and Reach, Stoke Hammond, Soulbury, Wing, Billington, Stanbridge and Eggington)	
62. Cycle path or lanes along Heath Road (on or off-carriageway) between village and Sandy Lane	M
63. Speed limit of 30mph on Old Linslade Road between end of village and Plantation Road then 40mph to Stoke Road	M
64. Speed limit of 30mph along Shenley Hill Road from edge of housing to Vandyke Road and along Vandyke Road to schools	M
65. 40mph limit on Soulbury Road between Soulbury and Linslade or between Soulbury and A4146 with a safe crossing from A4146 to canal or create off-carriageway link between Soulbury and Linslade	L
66. Off-carriageway cycle path alongside A418 from Wing to Linslade with cycle/pedestrian bridge over bypass	H
67. Create off-carriageway link between Billington and Leighton Buzzard (Billington Road) with cycle/pedestrian bridge over bypass (possibly via Grovebury Farm bridge – see proposal 83)	L
68. Create off-carriageway cycle link from Stanbridge and Sustrans NCR6 to Leighton Buzzard (Stanbridge Road) possibly via Eggington or in addition to a route from Eggington	H

9 Achieving Objective 2

2. Make Cycle Training accessible to all

Bedfordshire County Council has a policy to provide cycle training to all Middle School children where possible and Adult Cycle Training where requested and it has adopted the new National Cycling Standards scheme 'Bikeability'.

The County Council and Sustrans currently fund a Bikelt Officer to encourage a cycling culture at schools in Bedford (the Officer is shared with Luton and St. Albans).

Funding is already available to train individuals as Cycle Trainers who can then offer National Standards cycle training to children and adults.

Proposals	Priority
69. Employ a Bikelt Officer to work with schools in Leighton Linlade (could be shared with Milton Keynes)	H
70. Encourage more individuals to become Cycle Trainers and develop a team of trainers to work in Leighton Linlade and a mechanism by which they can work	H
71. Explore the possibilities of combining on-road training with off-road skills training to make training more attractive to some people, especially youngsters	M
72. Work with local Lifelong Learning providers to set up a programme of Bike Maintenance training sessions	H

10 Achieving Objective 3

3. Install appropriate cycle parking at key locations throughout the town

Cycling is ideal for direct door to door travel – literally door to door. However, this is only effective if there are cycle parking facilities that a cyclist can rely on at both ends of the journey.

A single basic ‘Sheffield’ style cycle stand providing reasonably secure parking for two bikes takes up very little space and is relatively cheap and easy to install. These should be provided at sensible densities at short-stay destinations such as local shops.

More secure and sheltered cycle parking is obviously more costly and requires more space but should be installed at long stay destinations used by large numbers of cyclists. There is already an excellent cycle parking facility in the multi-storey car park in the town centre but more long stay facilities are essential at the railway station and could be appropriate at other locations, such as large employment areas. Most of the Upper and Middle Schools have cycle sheds of some sort but some are in disrepair, are not secure enough or are not accessible to cyclists.

Some people do not cycle because they have no where suitable to store a bike at home. In Leighton Buzzard and Linlade there are many homes without a garage and also many flats. Many of the new residential developments are flats. Developers should be required to provide sufficient secure and sheltered cycle parking as well as garages and such facilities should also be provided at existing flats and residential areas.

The County Council has adopted detailed cycle parking standards. There is a need for South Bedfordshire Planners to adopt these standards and apply them in new developments.

Proposals	Priority
73. Ensure that County Cycle Parking standards are applied to all new developments.	H
74. Install ‘Sheffield’ style cycle stands at all local shops, community centres and other public facilities	H
75. Consult with local cyclists to identify locations where cycle stands would be beneficial (such as places of worship, health facilities, leisure facilities, parks and youth clubs)	M
76. Install more secure and sheltered cycle parking at the railway station, including on the Southcourt Avenue side. Explore possibility of and demand for some paid supervised cycle parking facilities at the station.	C

77. Consult with local cyclists and employers to identify suitable locations for secure and sheltered cycle parking at the industrial estates and other centres of employment	M
78. Work with schools to improve cycle parking at all local schools, especially Middle and Upper schools as part of school travel plans	H
79. Work with developers and planners to ensure sufficient secure cycle parking is provided at all new housing and employment developments	M
80. Work with flat management companies and local residents to identify suitable and required locations for secure community cycle parking in residential areas	M

11 Achieving Objective 4

4. Increase opportunities for leisure cycling

Cycling as a recreational activity should be encouraged in its own right as a healthy and relatively cheap activity open to all ages but it is also an excellent way to get people to think about cycling as a mode of transport.

Many proposals listed in part 9.1, *Links to nearby villages* will also provide improvements for leisure cycling since many of the nearby villages have pubs, and Heath and Reach in particular has Stockgrove Country Park with a limited single-track facility in Oak Wood.

Routes for leisure cyclists need to be aesthetically attractive and more or less traffic-free. They should also lead to a suitable location, such as a park, cafe or pub. These routes need not be off-road but roads that are popular with cyclists or promoted to cyclists should have reduced speed limits, especially country roads and lanes.

Off-road mountain biking of various types is becoming an increasingly popular past time, particularly among young people. At present there are very few official facilities that cater for this. To really be accessible to local youngsters such facilities need not be large (a couple of hectares?) or complex but do need to be close to where they live, which means having a number of them in the Leighton and Linslade area.

Proposals	Priority
Leisure routes	
81. Speed limit of 40mph on all de-classified two lane country roads in the vicinity	M
82. Establish as 'Quiet Lanes' (20mph speed limit) all single track country lanes in the vicinity	M
83. Speed limit of 40mph on Stoke Road between Old Linslade Road and the edge of town	M
84. Create a cycle path along the southern edge of New Linslade Wood, over the railway tunnel, linking Knaves Hill with Stoke Road	M
85. Create cycle path along Firs Path footpath and Greensand Ridge Walk at Heath Meadow from Plantation Road to Old Linslade Road	M

86. Create a cycle path from Firs Path to Bossington Lane with new bridges over river and canal or re-instatement of canal swingbridge	L
87. Speed limit of 40mph on Stanbridge Road between edge of town and turning to Stanbridge	M
88. Speed limit of 40 mph on Hockliffe Road from edge of town to turning to Eggington	H
89. Speed limit of 40mph on B488 from A505 roundabout to just beyond public bridleway	L
90. Surface canal towpath south of town as far as Slapton Lock (or initially as far as Grove Lock)	M
91. Cycle/pedestrian bridge across southern bypass from Grovebury farm to proposed Country Park at Grovebury quarry plus extended bridleway from Grovebury Road through Grovebury farm to bridge	L
Mountain biking facilities (jumps and trails)	
92. Identify possible locations, liaise with land owners and consult with local youth to establish sites they will use and respect Possible sites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o New Linslade Wood (western end) o Land between railway and A418 o Old quarry on Miletree Road (opposite Stonehenge Works) o Part of Chamberlains Barn quarry o Astral Park 	H

12 Achieving Objective 5

5. Promote the use of Travel Plans by schools, employers, employees and residents

Bedfordshire County Council have a policy that all new planning applications for businesses must have a Travel Plan for employees but no officer has the responsibility to enforce this. The County Council also encourages all schools to have Travel Plans.

Proposals	Priority
93. Ensure planning application related Travel Plans are enforced	M
94. Extend promotion of Travel Plans to local businesses and individual residents	M

13 Achieving Objective 6

6. Promote the needs of cyclists during the planning of new developments

The local planning authority and those influencing planning decisions should adopt this cycling strategy and not just consider the impact of developments on cyclists but use new developments to improve cycling facilities and encourage cycling.

Proposals	Priority
95. Cycle audits to be undertaken for all major new developments and schemes	H
96. Sufficient secure cycle storage for new housing developments	M
97. Roads and junctions designed for cyclists	H
98. Cycle paths linking to the town's cycling network	H
99. Locate amenities (shops, schools and health facilities) within new estates to avoid the need to travel far	H
100. Training of local authority staff and councillors to help them better understand the needs of cyclists	M

14 Achieving Objective 7

7. Regularly monitor cycle use and consult with local cyclists

In order to know whether or not the cycling strategy is proving effective in achieving its aim the level of cycling in the town needs to be monitored.

Proposals	Priority
101. Cycle traffic counts on existing and new cycle paths and at major road junctions	H
102. Questionnaires of cyclists and non-cyclists to discover why people do or do not cycle, where they cycle to or would like to cycle to and what would encourage them to cycle more	M
103. Consultation of local cyclists through the LL Cycling Forum and Beds County Cycling Forum, as well as with other cycling groups, such as the Buzzards Mountain Bike Club	IP

15 Achieving Objective 8

8. Develop opportunities for cyclists to integrate with other forms of transport, especially public transport

This will obviously require close working with local public transport providers.

Proposals	Priority
104. 'Park and Cycle' bike hire schemes on the edges of town	L
105. Bike racks on buses	L
106. Make it easier to take bikes on trains	M
107. Install a lift or cycle ramps at the railway station	H
108. Improve cycle parking facilities at the station (see proposal 76)	C