

Local Authority: Aberdeenshire Council	Overall Rating: 2.6 / 5
<p>Introduction: Aberdeenshire in the North East of Scotland is a predominantly rural and diverse area, stretching from the Cairngorms in the West to 250km of coastline in the North East. It consists mainly of towns with a population of 20,000 and under, with a total population of 226,260.</p>	
<p>Summary: Aberdeenshire has a cycling strategy with targets in place, with cycling also represented within the LTS. Several officers contribute to the development of cycling and the implementation of audit and review of the road network and stakeholder involvement would support efforts in cycling development. A focus on the use of audit and review, stakeholder engagement and instructional programmes would further develop existing efforts for cycling development.</p>	
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate more staff time for a lead officer to manage the development and implementation of a cycling action plan. • Review baseline figures and identify appropriate local targets. • Establish a multi-agency cycle forum to allow more formal stakeholder involvement in a cycling development action plan. • Establish formal communication between the cycle forum and the Council's Transport Committee and management committee of Nestrans. • Make use of audit and review procedures on new and existing infrastructure including the road network. • Promote the extensive network of B, C and unclassified roads as an integral part of the cycling network. • Maximise the provision of on road cycle training for 10 to 12 year olds and introduce such provision as policy for all schools. • Monitor the provision of and uptake of cycle training. • Promote and monitor the numbers travelling to school by bike. • Extend the promotion of utility cycling. 	

Background

- *Road network:* Aberdeenshire has 5494 km of road network, comprising, 173km trunk roads, 688km A roads, 793km B roads, 1,534km C roads and 2,305km unclassified roads.
- *Path Network:* Aberdeenshire has 441 rights of way, measuring just over 949km.
- *Cycling Budget:* The CWSS allocation for 03/04 - £316,000, of which £112,000 was spent on cycling.
- *Modal Share:* Aberdeenshire has 120,942 people at work or study, of which 1843 travel by bicycle, representing 1.31% of those travelling to work or study. The average distance travelled to work or study was 17.97 km, as shown by 2001 census data.
- *Length of Cycling Network:* Not quantified but significant, particularly in newer development areas.
- *Number of cycle parking spaces at public buildings:* Lockers 44 spaces, Racks 198
- *Number of Employers with travel plans:* Unknown at present. Would need to be determined by questionnaire. A travel plan is normally asked for with any new commercial or retail development site of reasonable size.
- *Cycle challenge projects:* Cycle lockers installed by the Council at all Aberdeenshire's railway stations. Racks also installed at various public buildings through the area.

Good practice:

- Appointment of Travel Plan Coordinator (position currently vacant)
- Council Travel Plan including cycling provision now in place.
- 6 on / off road maps covering Aberdeenshire areas.
- Formatine and Buchan Way linking Aberdeen to Fraserburgh and Peterhead using an off-road route.
- Development of the Deeside Way linking Aberdeen to Banchory and beyond using an off-road route.

Assessment against Key Criteria:

<p>1. Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for the development of cycling is split between 5 members of staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Principal Engineer Transportation, Travel Plan Coordinator – utility cycling, School Travel Co-ordinator – Working with schools, Recreation Officer – recreational cycling, Environmental Planner – Countryside access and off-road / long distance routes • The Travel Plan coordinator spent on average 1 day a week on cycling development, and has both a strategic and operational role, including the development of strategic routes and standards for construction and maintenance, liaison with colleagues in access, recreation, school travel planning, links with the Tourist Board, the installation of lockers and racks, and finally acts as a point of liaison for a European project considering dissemination of good practice. • There are 6 area committees within Aberdeenshire and an Infrastructure Services Committee where cycling implementation is coordinated across the areas. 	<p>Rating: 3 / 5</p>
<p>2. Cycling Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a separate Cycling Strategy with 6 targets relating to; increase in cycling rates, safer routes to school, reduction in casualty rates, reduction in cycle theft, training and increases in funding. • The LTS also has 5 objectives for cycling development, incorporating utility and cycle tourism with resource allocation for implementation. • A travel plan coordinator was appointed to oversee the Cycling Strategy and Aberdeenshire Council Travel Plan. • 40 Safer Routes to School projects completed. They have been successful in promoting cycling where appropriate, using measures such as cycle lanes, racks, traffic calming measures and road safety training workshops. • Plan for update of the Cycling Strategy – to be included in the review of the Local Transport Strategy due for completion December 2005. 	<p>Rating: 3 / 5</p>
<p>3. Use of guidance, audit and review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific cycle review and audit is not currently used on new or developing infrastructure, but this will be introduced shortly. • The Cycling Strategy states that all relevant road and land use development schemes will include cycle audit. A training need has been identified for staff in Cycle Audit to fulfil this role. Two key members of staff have now been trained and further training is planned. • This requirement for cycling infrastructure provision is reflected in the LA's guidance and specifications for housing developments. 	<p>Rating: 2 / 5</p>
<p>4. Targets and Monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are road safety targets for cyclist casualty reduction in the road safety plan and Cycling Strategy. This is not explicitly reflected in the LTS at present. • There is a monitoring and review programme outlined in the cycling strategy, including recording numbers of cyclists, development control decisions, user satisfaction and targets for cycle trips to schools. 	<p>Rating: 3 / 5</p>
<p>5. Stakeholder Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is little mention of partner organisations within the existing Cycling Strategy, although the relevant policy context is discussed within the LTS. • A broad consultation for the LTS was undertaken, including road shows, 	<p>Rating: 2 / 5</p>

<p>consultations on a Modern Transport System for the Northeast and a door-to-door survey by Robert Gordon's University.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Authority does not currently have a Bicycle User Group but would be willing to re-establish this group if the demand existed locally. Officers are always willing to discuss cycling issues with interested parties as and when the need arises. • There is no specific local cycle forum at present but cycling is addressed along with all other transport modes in most roads consultation exercises. • The travel coordinator links regularly with access, leisure, engineering and planning colleagues. A link with health improvement colleagues has also been established. 	
6. Council / Local Authority Commitment:	Rating: 3 / 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling development has reasonable status with the LTS and obviously within the Cycling Strategy. • The appointment of the travel plan coordinator demonstrates commitment to sustainable transport and active travel. • There is an established link with colleagues in development control to ensure inclusion of cycling development opportunities within most new areas. • There are a number of Local Councillors who are keen recreational cyclists. • Council commitment to cycling development is described as 'very supportive'. 	
7. Infrastructure:	Rating: 3 / 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of existing infrastructure is undertaken between the Roads Department and the Education and Recreation Department. • Engineers apply Cycle by Design for new installations and cycle parking standards are in place. • Development of infrastructure is split between utility routes – Transportation and Infrastructure Services, and leisure and recreation routes – Education & Recreation and Planning and Environmental Services. • A report on the NCN between Stonehaven and Aberdeen has recently been commissioned by the Local Authority, to consider scoping suggestions for improvements and re-routing. • A commitment for cycle lockers at stations is made in the LTS and is fulfilled. Bike carriage on buses has proved more problematic, where bicycles can only be carried on buses between Aberdeen and Peterhead. The Council does aim to expand this service. Bike stands at bus stops have also been installed. • A network of on and off-road routes, including the NCN and North Sea Network, has been mapped and there are plans for improving signage. 	
8. Cycle Training:	Rating: 2 / 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A programme of cycle training is in place for 10-12 year olds (Primary 6), run by road safety officers, Grampian Police. • No current adult training is noted. 	
9. Promotion of Cycling:	Rating: 3 / 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 on/off road maps, covering mainly recreational routes in Aberdeenshire, have been produced and proved popular. • North Sea route map is available, as is signage for NCN. • Web site information under development and should be active by March 2005. • Within Bike Week, breakfast was provided for cyclists at Local Authority sites. • The Road Safety department distribute information. • Network not widely promoted at the moment, but this is planned for future. 	

10. Priorities:

- Priorities are established in the 6 targets within the Cycling Strategy.
- The LTS supports the prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists within the context of sustainable transport and integrated services.

11. Resources:

- £316,000 of CWSS available. £112,000 spent on cycling infrastructure and development.
- The Cycling Strategy details a short and long term option for expenditure and commitments to capital and revenue spend for cycling.
- A report on outcomes and performance against this committed expenditure was not available.