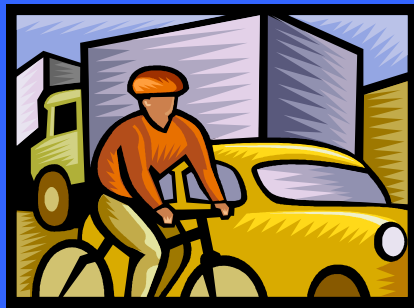


APPENDIX E: Cycling Action Plan

Richmond upon Thames Cycling Action Plan



MAY 2004

Cycling Policy - Contents

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Introduction

THE RICHMOND upon THAMES CYCLING ACTION PLAN

The Councils Cycling Action Plan sets out the aims and objectives for Cycling within Richmond upon Thames. The Action Plan also includes a range of measures to achieve them, and to promote cycling.

A series of National and Regional Policies that have been produced over recent years have advocated the promotion of cycling as a form of local transport. Therefore, the production of this Action Plan is in line with transport policy at all levels of government within the United Kingdom.

The Action Plan will complement associated policy documents, including the Borough Road Safety Plan, and the Borough Walking Strategy, in seeking to reduce accidents involving vulnerable road users, whilst also setting a framework for the promotion of travel choice within Richmond upon Thames.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE CYCLING?

The bicycle is an efficient, healthy, quiet, and non-polluting means of transport. The private car is an important part of every day life, and provides many benefits. They allow for people to make long journeys to places where public transport provision is poor or is less efficient, or where a large load needs to be carried. However, many trips made in London are short, and for these journeys the bicycle can provide an alternative for some types of journey.

Approximately two thirds of all trips in London are less than 5 kilometres in length. 38% of car trips in London are less than 2.5 kilometres in length and this is a distance that can be comfortably cycled if desired. A journey of 3 kilometres only takes 10 minutes by bicycle.

The Borough's **Local Transport Strategy** is intended to reflect local priorities for both residents and businesses. The strategy will inform local decision making on a range of transport initiatives for the borough, aimed at improving movement across the borough, the quality of the local environment, a viable range of transport choices and improving safety for all.

PERCENTAGE OF TRIPS MADE BY BICYCLE

Compared to other European countries, Great Britain has a very low level of cycling, with only 2% of trips overall made by bicycle.

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

People who are new to cycling, or are not regular cyclists, may feel that there are a number of factors that prevent them from taking up cycling, or from cycling more often. These factors need to be addressed, either by the implementation of engineering measures, or through promoting cycling through green travel initiatives and the publishing of promotional literature such as the borough cycling map.

Barriers to cycling include:

- fear of injury
- fear of theft when a cycle is parked outdoors
- lack of high quality cycle facilities (cycle tracks, crossings etc.) on the roads

- Incomplete or indirect cycle routes.
- lack of facilities for cycles and cyclists at work places, shops and leisure locations
- lack of storage for cycles in flats and houses
- lack of training and
- the weather.

Proposals from Richmond upon Thames include:

- Providing on-road cycle facilities where statistics show that there are safety concerns for cyclists.
- training young people and adults to cycle.
- encouraging employers to introduce travel plans and make provision in work places for cycles and cyclists.
- providing cycle parking and storage facilities and encourage others to provide them.
- Ensuring the existing cycle network is continuous, direct and well signed.
- Raising awareness of the benefits of cycling through publications and guides

THE SCOPE FOR FACILITATING CYCLING In London.

- there are 1.2 million bicycles
- only 4% of Londoners cycle on most days but 22% are likely to use a cycle in any year.

In Richmond upon Thames:

- Richmond upon Thames is an outer London borough, eight miles south west of Central London with a population of 190,000.
- Using the National 30% ownership figure, this would mean that there could be approximately 49,000 bicycles split between 70,274 households using 1991 census figures.
- Door to door journeys by car may take over three times as long again as journeys by bicycle. (Teddington Lock to Twickenham 1998, car 20mins, cycle 6mins, AM peak hour)

POLICY BACKGROUND

CYCLING POLICY

The national and local policies and strategies, set out in this section are important in setting the framework for the Richmond upon Thames Cycling Action Plan.

The main objectives of this Action Plan complement other Council policy documents including the Borough Road Safety Plan and the Borough Walking Strategy. Both the Cycling Action Plan and the Borough Walking Strategy work towards improving 'the Quality of Life' by improving air quality, promoting healthy activity, and safer roads.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY

There are series of policy documents that have been produced in recent years that advocate the promotion of cycling as an essential part of National and Regional transport policy:-

- The Mayors Transport Strategy - July 2001
- A Cycling Strategy for London

THE MAYOR OF LONDON'S INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Mayor for London and a Greater London Assembly were elected in 2001. One of the first tasks of the Mayor was to produce an Integrated Transport Strategy.

A draft Transport Strategy was published in May 2000, and a public consultation process was undertaken by the GLA with the Greater London Assembly, 33 London Boroughs, businesses and other stakeholders. The full Mayors Transport Strategy was published in July 2001, and forms part of the Mayors vision to develop London as an exemplary sustainable city.

The strategy aims to improve access to peoples jobs and services by enhancing public transport, walking and cycling, so that they become realistic alternatives to the private car for an increasing number of journeys

A Cycling Strategy for London

In 1997, a Cycling Strategy for London was produced jointly by the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) and the London Pride Partnership. This strategy sets out how the aims of the National Cycling Strategy can be achieved in London.

The main target of the Cycling Strategy for London is for 10% of all journeys in the capital to be made by bicycle by the year 2012, a 10% modal share. This target links to recommendations that employers seek to ensure that there are the facilities at the workplace for at least 10% of their employees to cycle to work by 2012, and that retailers and service providers provide facilities for at least 10% of their customers to travel by bicycle by 2012.

RICHMOND UPON THAMES'S POLICIES

THE RICHMOND UPON THAMES TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Borough's **Local Transport Strategy** is reflects local priorities for both residents and businesses. The strategy will inform local decision making on a range of transport

initiatives for the borough, aimed at improving movement across the borough, the quality of the local environment, a viable range of transport choices and improving safety for all.

The Council has six objectives in the UDP which have been refined into five key transport objectives in this strategy. These will define the direction of the development and improvement of transport in Richmond upon Thames over the next five years. They can be summarised under the following headings:

- **Clear Road Ahead**
- **Safety First**
- **Civic Pride**
- **Free Transport Choice**
- **Planning for the Future**

These objectives are being progressed by seven strategies which are generally cross-cutting and aimed at meeting more than one of the objectives. Of these strategies, five directly concern the progression of cycling issues:

- **Environmental Transport Strategy** - Transport policies *that* aim to provide a choice of efficient alternative modes of transport to reduce traffic congestion, and the resulting air and noise pollution.
 - **Safety Strategy** - Safety policies *that* underpin the commitment to reduce the number of casualties on the highway network to meet the government targets and protect local residents from the danger of traffic.
 - **Parking Strategy** - Parking policies *that* are designed to protect the vitality of town centres and residential amenity by appropriate management of parking demand.
 - **Land Use Strategy** – Designed to reduce the overall need to travel by locating land uses likely to generate large numbers of journeys in accessible locations.
- The River Strategy** – The linkages between river environments and cycling.

RICHMOND UPON THAMES UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The UDP also contains policies on development control (planning) applications, which encourage a mix of land uses. This mix of land uses also reduces the need for residents to travel excessive distances by ensuring that jobs, leisure activities and shops are located close to the areas where people live, so linking into the type of developments that are advocated by PPG13. This, in turn, increases the viability of, and the potential of the bicycle as a means of transport.

There are associated policies on traffic restraint, the promotion of public transport and improvement of conditions and facilities for pedestrians.

RICHMOND upon THAMES - UDP POLICIES RELATED TO CYCLING.

The Council's Strategic Policy for Transport in the Unitary Development Plan, contain the following policies that cover or link to cycling;

STG 11 TRANSPORT

TRN 1 LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

TRN 2 TRANSPORT AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS

TRN 4 CAR AND BICYCLE PARKING STANDARDS
TRN 7 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND ROAD SAFETY
TRN 12 CYCLING
TRN 15 TRANSPORT INTERCHANGES
TRN 17 ROAD HIERARCHY
TRN 18 ROAD CAPACITY AND TRAFFIC REDUCTION
TRN 22 ON-STREET PARKING
TRN 30 PROMOTION / PUBLICITY

CYCLE NETWORK IN RICHMOND UPON THAMES

There are two elements to the cycle network in Richmond upon Thames, the London Cycle Network (LCN) and the Richmond upon Thames Borough Cycle Routes. Richmond upon Thames Council has published a map for use by cyclists showing the network.

THE LONDON CYCLE NETWORK PLUS (LCN+) AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE LCN+

- a) The aim of the London Cycle Network Plus is to provide a network of safe, convenient and conspicuous cycle routes linking residential areas with all the major centres of employment, retailing, leisure and transport across London.
- b) Routes will be suitable for cyclists of all age groups and provide for longer distance journeys across London, as well as parts of local journeys.
- c) With the majority of all journeys being under 5 miles, provision for cycling forms a major part of the initiatives to reduce road traffic levels, accidents, and to improve air quality.
- d) The proposed total length of the routes forming the network is 3000 kilometres, and includes the Thames Cycle Route and sections of the National Cycle Network, that both run through Richmond upon Thames.

LCN ROUTES IN RICHMOND UPON THAMES

In consultation with cycling organisations, including the London Cycling Campaign, Priority Strategic Routes (PSR) have been identified linking destinations throughout London. There are four PSR's running through the borough. These include :-

SW3 - Heathrow to Central London

From Heathrow through Twickenham, to Richmond, and then on through Putney to Central London.

SW6 - Surbiton to Chiswick

From Surbiton through Kingston and Richmond to Chiswick.

SW7 - Kingston to North London

Running from Kingston through Teddington and Twickenham to Brentford and North London.

SW8 - Hampton to Central London

Which runs from Hampton through Teddington and Richmond Park and Barnes and then onto Hammersmith and Central London

SW3 and **SW7** have been quality monitored to highlight improvements needed to bring them up to the highest standard.

LCN+ FUNDING

Funding for the LCN+ is awarded by Transport for London following the submission of a joint bid by 33 London Boroughs each July. The bid was coordinated by The Royal of

Kingston upon Thames up to the 2002/03 package bid. In future years, the bid will be coordinated by the London Borough of Camden.

Following the submission of the 2002/03 package bid, the Council have been awarded £230,000 for the implementation of LCN+ routes in the borough for the forthcoming financial year.

THE LOCAL RICHMOND UPON THAMES CYCLE NETWORK

The Borough Cycle Network supports the routes that are being implemented as part of the LCN+. The LRCN provides links between the LCN+ routes that connect major destinations in and around Richmond upon Thames.

Cycling measures that are implemented as part of road safety and other traffic schemes enhance the level of provision of cycling facilities within the borough, and contribute to the routes that form the LRCN.

Funding for road safety and other traffic schemes that contribute to the LRCN are funded through Borough Spending Plan submissions that are made to Transport for London on an annual basis by the Council.

CYCLING MEASURES USED ON THE HIGHWAY

The Council will consider the provision of cycling related measures on the highway network. Facilities will be provided and promoted to key destinations such as town centres, schools leisure facilities, public transport interchanges and along routes primarily for recreation.

ONE-WAY WORKING

One-way streets are often introduced with the objective of maximising the capacity of the road network or to protect residential areas from the impact of through traffic. Contraflow provision for cyclists will be considered to alleviate the need for cyclists to cycle longer distances to reach their destination than would be the case if all roads were two way.

CYCLE GAPS AT ROAD CLOSURES

Where roads are closed to motor vehicles for environmental reasons, gaps allowing cycles to pass through the closure should normally be provided. In the past, this was not always the case and this has caused inconvenience and delay to cyclists. Where gaps have been provided, measures to prevent parked cars obstructing them may be required.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Cyclists often find traffic signals at junctions intimidating and dangerous. This can because of the design of the junction and the signals, the behaviour of other road users or both. Pedestrians have similar problems and concerns. The Council proposes to audit all junctions in the borough that are controlled by traffic signals.

SPEED

The reduction of excessive speed will be an objective of traffic and environmental schemes on the public highway, whether or not they fall within a designated 20 mph zone. The Council will work with the Metropolitan Police to improve enforcement of speed limits.

PARKING

An adequate supply of on street and off street parking facilities is essential if cycling is to be encouraged. Parking is required in the following locations.

- transport interchanges. This is important because journeys are not necessarily made by a single transport mode and cycling may form a significant link in longer journeys.
- all leisure facilities, shops, businesses.
- It is important to ensure that flats and houses have adequate storage for cycles. Cycle parking standards for new developments are set out in the UDP, and the Council now has standards that set minimum parking standards that must be provided for each new development.

Cycle parking facilities are only useful if they are safe and secure. It is therefore essential that, in siting parking facilities and selecting the equipment to be supplied, designers recognise that the provision of cycle racks or other storage is only part of a solution.

Ensuring the safety of cyclists using the racks and the security of cycles left on the racks is also important. Cycle theft is a serious problem and deters people from cycling. Improving security is very important if cycling is to increase, and Richmond upon

Thames will endeavour to work in partnership with the police, transport operators, businesses and property owners to reduce the level of cycle thefts.

The Council will work with Train Operating Companies (TOC) and Railtrack, to improve facilities for the carriage of cycles on trains and improved access and parking at stations. The Council will encourage schools to provide secure cycle parking for use by pupils who have received suitable training, and staff.

The Council will also look to encourage private and public owners of residential properties to provide secure cycle parking. In addition to these initiatives, Richmond upon Thames will implement an annual programme of cycle stand installation with the aim of ensuring that adequate on street parking is available.

In determining the locations for these stands, the Council will, in addition to land use factors, take the following factors into account:

- number of cycle thefts in the area
- numbers of cycles parked on railings and street furniture
- the presence of a substantial number of frontages with signs prohibiting cycle parking against railings and
- whether existing cycle stands often have more than 50% occupancy.

The racks will, where possible, be placed on sites where parked cycles are easily visible to the general public, with overlooking windows, security cameras etc. In some locations, it may be appropriate, because of the level of theft, to consider parking facilities that offer a greater level of security than the standard racks.

SIGNING

It is important that cycle routes and other cycle facilities are adequately signed. It is of little use providing a facility if cyclists do not know it exists or cannot find it.

The Council will audit and review the existing cycle signage and develop a cycle signing strategy with a view to producing a programme for changes and additions to the existing signage. A key objective of the review will be to ensure cycle network coherence and consistency with neighbouring boroughs. One objective of this work will be to achieve improvements in route signing without causing unacceptable additional street clutter. The quality monitoring of routes, undertaken as part of the LCN ensures that signing on LCN routes is of a high standard.

NEW LINKS / REMOVING BARRIERS

The ability of a cyclist or a pedestrian to travel where a motor vehicle cannot, or should not, allows the creation of flexible route networks for pedestrians and cyclists in a way that is not possible for other modes of transport.

Often the creation of such links can only be achieved through partnership working. Richmond upon Thames will seek, in partnership with others, to create new pedestrian and cycle links across existing barriers.

LEISURE CYCLING

The provision of leisure cycling facilities has an important role to play in the following areas:

- encouraging people to cycle for health reasons
- providing opportunities for children to cycle in conditions less hazardous than those normally encountered on Richmond upon Thames's streets
- providing opportunities for new cyclists to practice and learn
- introducing people to the pleasure of cycling which can then encourage people to cycle on a daily basis and
- ensuring access to leisure facilities.

However, the primary objective of this Action Plan must be to create the conditions where people can safely use bicycles as a daily mode of transport. For this reason, when allocating limited resources, the council will concentrate on the construction of the LCN, the LRCN and those programmes outlined above which improve the accessibility and safety of the road network to cyclists.

Where opportunities exist for the development of leisure routes, these will be taken but significant levels of staff and financial resources will not be targeted towards this area at present.

The Council will consider proposals for cycling facilities within the Council's own parks, and take advantage of opportunities that occur for the provision of such facilities, subject to consultation with park users.

LINK IMPROVEMENTS

- **Segregated cycle lane** – a part of the road that is for the sole use of cyclists, which motor vehicles are prevented from entering by kerbs and bollards.
- **Contra-flow cycle lane** – allows cyclists to use streets in both directions where motor traffic is restricted to one way. These lanes can be wholly or partly segregated from other traffic.
- **Mandatory cycle lane** – a cycle lane in the road, marked by a solid line. Motor vehicles are not permitted to enter this lane.
- **Advisory cycle lane** – a cycle lane in the road, marked by a dashed line. Motor traffic may enter the lane. (This technique is only used if it is not practicable to provide mandatory lanes).
- **Cycle by-passes of traffic calming measures** – allow cyclists to avoid areas of the road that have been restricted in width to slow down motor traffic.
- **Shared bus and cycle lane** – a lane in the road in which only buses, taxis and cycles are permitted to travel.

JUNCTIONS CONTROLLED BY TRAFFIC SIGNALS OR SIGNALLED CROSSINGS

- **Exclusive signal controlled cycle crossings** – traffic signals activated by cyclists passing over detectors allow cyclists to cross junctions or roads without coming into conflict with motor vehicles. Green and amber cycle symbol lights replace the conventional signal lights where the signals are for the use of cyclists.
- **Advanced stop lines** – areas in the road, usually coloured red, marked in front of the stop line at traffic signals, designed to allow cyclists to position themselves correctly

ahead of motor traffic at the traffic signals so that they can move off ahead of other vehicles.

- **Parallel cycle and Pedestrian Crossings** – these are signalled crossings where pedestrians and cyclists cross at the same time on crossings that are parallel to each other.
- **Toucan Crossings** – cyclists and pedestrians share a road crossing controlled by traffic signals.

UNSIGNALLED ROAD CROSSINGS

- **Advisory cycle crossing markings**
– often known as ‘elephants footprints’ markings. These indicate to cyclists that the location marked is a good place to cross, and to motorists that they should anticipate cyclists crossing at the location.
- **Refuges** – allow cyclists to cross roads in two stages.
- **Priority cycle crossings** – where cyclists are given priority over motor vehicles by the use of give way lines on the motor vehicle approach.

The list above is not comprehensive. There are many techniques available to enable the creation of safe, convenient facilities and Richmond upon Thames will use the full range of these. New techniques and types of cycle facility become available every year and Richmond upon Thames will be innovative in seeking to improve existing techniques and pilot new ones.

CYCLE PARKING EQUIPMENT

Most on-street cycle parking facilities use the Sheffield style cycle rack that provides a simple tubular steel bar to which cyclists may lock their bikes. The Council will however consider the use of other types of equipment in appropriate circumstances. The cost of secure parking facilities is high and can often only be achieved in partnership with the private sector.

CYCLISTS AND NON-CYCLING SCHEMES

Where possible, the traffic and environmental schemes introduced by Richmond upon Thames are holistic, and offer facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. However, there are some schemes for which the primary objective will not be the provision of facilities for cyclists. In these cases Richmond upon Thames will use techniques that will, as far as is possible, improve conditions for cyclists and not disadvantage them.

For example:

- in the design of schemes which prohibit motor vehicles from making particular movements or travelling in particular directions, careful consideration will be given to exempting cyclists from prohibitions or providing alternative facilities
- where carriageways are narrowed to restrict vehicle speed, consideration will be given to the provision of cycle by-passes,
- when designing schemes, consideration will be given in the materials chosen to ensure that a safe, smooth riding surface is provided in areas where cycling is permitted.

In all cases, the safety and convenience of cyclists will be considered during the design

and construction of schemes, regardless of the objective of the scheme.

QUALITY OF DESIGN

High quality schemes are provided by well-trained designers. It is important that all staff involved in the design and maintenance of Richmond upon Thames's road network are aware of the needs of cyclists and other vulnerable road users, and not simply those staff working on cycling related schemes. Issues of quality and safety are intrinsically linked and high quality schemes provide the greatest safety improvements.

All design staff will be made aware of good design practice for cycling and walking provision and the standards to be applied. All staff will be regularly updated on best practice issues and design standards.

MAINTENANCE AND COMMUNICATION

Improvements and new facilities are only of use if they are part of a well-maintained road network. The Council aims to increase public satisfaction with the following services, where funding permits:

- road repair
- footway maintenance
- street lighting
- street cleaning.

The Council will monitor public concerns about the local environment, and monitor the views of cyclists. The Council will seek to repair all dangerous damage on roads and footways within a 24-hour period. Less severe damage will be dealt with between one to six months, depending on the level of traffic that uses the road.

ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF CYCLE ROUTES AND SPECIFIC ENGINEERING MEASURES

- A wide range of traffic engineering measures are used by the Council to provide safe cycle routes and crossing points, as well as secure cycle parking, where deemed necessary throughout the borough.
- The Council constructs measures that are part of the LCN, but also install routes and facilities that are part of its own local cycle network.
- The majority of funding for cycle schemes within the borough comes from the LCN, with some funding available for the implementation of measures away from the LCN network.
- The Council can draw on section 106 planning agreements to fund additional cycling measures, although funding from this area is reliant on planning proposals being submitted by developers.

PARTNERSHIP AND CONSULTATION

The provision of high quality, innovative schemes that meet with the approval of existing cyclists and attract new cyclists to use them, can only be achieved by working in partnership with a wide range of interested parties. The key partnerships are listed below:

- Residents of Richmond upon Thames
- cyclists and cycling organisations
- businesses
- transport providers and operators
- the police and the emergency services
- property owners and landlords
- health authorities and
- Royal Parks

CYCLE LIAISON GROUP

The Council hold regular meetings of its Cycle Liaison Group, which is attended by key stakeholders involved in cycling in the borough. This includes Council officers from the Transport and Safety Education Sections, Members of the Council, and representatives of local cycle pressure group, and some individuals with an interest in transport and cycling issues.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP (TMLG)

The Council also consult the emergency services and public transport operators via its TMLG. This group meets on a regular basis to discuss traffic schemes that are proposed by the Council. This includes any local network or LCN schemes that are proposed for implementation.

BOROUGH CYCLING OFFICERS GROUP (BCOG)

BCOG is a pan-London working group consisting of Borough Cycling Officers, and is a forum where best practice can be discussed and disseminated between Officers.

DEVELOPING CYCLING ISSUES WITHIN RICHMOND UPON THAMES

The benefits of cycling should be demonstrated in order to promote it as a part of the travel choice within the borough. It is important to emphasise the facilities and routes that have already been implemented within Richmond upon Thames, but the personal and health benefits of cycling must be promoted to encourage the consideration of cycling by residents of the borough.

Personal Benefits of Cycling

If a person takes up cycling for commuting, business or leisure trips. The following health and financial benefits can be achieved: -

- **Lower travel costs:** No need to buy season tickets, bus passes, and pay for petrol bills and parking fees.
- **Self-financing:** A bike will pay for itself within a few months, but will provide benefits for years to come.
- **Better Health:** Cycling combines work with exercise, and no stressful search for a parking space. Even employees who live further from the workplace can combine cycling with a train journey. The health benefits identified by the British Medical Association (BMA) include: -
 - **Increased fitness** – Your strength, stamina, aerobic fitness and general muscle function are all improved with little risk of over exertion or strain. Regular exercise also facilitates other healthy behaviour- especially diet and giving up smoking.
 - **Lowering risk of heart attack** – Your heart muscles are strengthened, resting pulse is lowered and blood fat levels reduced. People taking regular exercise suffer far less heart disease than people who don't.
 - **Shedding excess weight** – By burning body fat, and raising your metabolic rate you can lose weight. If you exercise regularly you can enjoy a more varied diet without increasing body weight.
 - **Reducing stress** – Anxiety, stress and depression are all alleviated partly due to the exercise itself. Cycling is accessible, convenient for short journeys, and often faster across the borough than many other forms of transport, and form part of your daily travelling routine.

Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)

Studies suggest that regular cycling or other physical activity can result reducing the risk of CHD by 50%, compared to the risk for inactive people. CHD is both the largest single cause of death, and the main cause of premature death in this country. Medical studies indicate that exercise is likely to benefit the heart. The type of exercise required must be more energetic than ordinary strolling.

Cycling is a useful way of taking the necessary exercise for the following reasons:

- it is a good aerobic exercise.
- even the gentlest cycling is a more strenuous exercise than is usual for a sedentary population.
- it does not place the strain on muscles and joints associated with weight bearing exercises.
- it is a form of exercise available to most adults and children.

Strokes, Colon Cancer and Diabetes

There is evidence that physical activity can protect against strokes. Data from the Office of National Statistics indicates that colon cancer is the third most common form of cancer causing deaths in England and Wales.

Evidence strongly suggests that physical activity has a protective effect against the risk of developing colon cancer. There is also considerable evidence of a relationship between physical inactivity and non-insulin dependent diabetes. People at risk of developing this disease, such as those who are overweight or have high blood pressure, could benefit from cycling.

Mental Health Benefits

Taking regular exercise, such as cycling, has been shown to reduce stress levels in an individual, with resultant benefits to mental health.

Promoting Cycling - Main Issues

- Promoting cycling as a mode of transport has benefits in terms of reducing traffic congestion. There are also the positive gains in terms of improving the health and well being of individuals, and so have a wider benefit in terms of the demand on health resources.
- The positive health benefits of cycling far outweigh the possible negative issues related to it, such as risk of injury, and exposure to pollution from traffic fumes.
- There is a need to ensure that the policies and objectives of the Councils Cycling Action Plan are understood by health organisations, especially the forthcoming Richmond Primary Care Trust (RPCT). The Action Plan will need to incorporate the aims of the RPCT with regard to improving health within the borough.

ROAD SAFETY

Local Safety Schemes

The Council has adopted the Governments targets for 2010, namely: -

- 40% reduction in killed and seriously injured casualties.
- 50% reduction in child and seriously injured casualties.
- 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate.

Targets have been enhanced for 2004 through the Public Service Agreement with the Government and £150,000 is being used as pump priming funding to assist with the implementation of safety cameras and local safety schemes.

The Council also bid annually to Transport for London to secure funding for the progression of road safety initiatives and engineering schemes. This leads to a number of projects being taken forward annually that have a benefit to road safety in the borough, including benefiting cyclists.

Pedal Cyclists

Pedal cycle usage is perceived to be an important part of travel choice and is seen as a healthy alternative to the use of the private car. It is therefore important that resources are directed into providing safe cycle routes and crossing facilities, where they are deemed necessary, and safety education and training initiatives are progressed.

The highest risk age group for cycle accidents is between 25 to 30, and cycling is believed to be very popular amongst this age group both for leisure and work purposes.

ROAD SAFETY- MEETING THE TARGETS

SAFETY

The key factor in the reduction of cycling among young people must be safety. Although the numbers of young cyclists injured on Richmond upon Thames's roads is low in absolute terms, 13 in 1998, this is likely to be because very few young people cycle. Cycling In Britain (DETR 1996) assesses the relative risk of a cyclist of being killed or seriously injured by age group, when the distance travelled is taken into account. Young cyclists between the ages of 8 and eleven are nearly three times more likely to be killed or seriously injured than the average cyclist.

The risks to young cyclists are real. However, so are the risks of obesity and ill health caused by lack of exercise. Given the current situation, it is not acceptable simply to urge parents to allow their children to cycle, or to encourage young people to cycle. Encouragement must go hand in hand with training, safety improvements, the provision of cycle routes and the development of a culture of cycling. The training of young people is discussed in the next section.

SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

In addition to the creation of the LCN, it is necessary to consider the routes that young people take to school and to introduce facilities to make them safer for young pedestrians and cyclists.

In a MORI poll in 1997, residents were asked to prioritise a list of Council transport policies in order of importance. The provision of safe routes to schools and parks was picked out as a top priority.

In 1999, the Council commissioned a consultant to audit pedestrian access and crossing facilities in the vicinity of all schools, of which there are over 80 in the borough. This audit is being used in consultation with schools, to produce programmes of schemes for safety improvements on routes to school.

Although the primary focus of this work was on pedestrian routes, the consultants were asked to consider cycle access and the results of the audit will be used to develop improved cycle access to schools.

Cycling As Part of Travel Choice

In order to inform young people about cycling as a mode of transport, it is necessary to create a culture of cycling where cycling is perceived as a safe, efficient, enjoyable and environmentally sound form of transport: a logical choice when planning a trip.

It is not enough to persuade people to cycle, it is also necessary to persuade or require drivers of motor vehicles to respect cyclists and their safety. Training the drivers is as important as training the cyclists.

The programmes and strategies set out in this Action Plan may go some way to making the necessary changes, but cultural change requires the assistance of central Government, the media and the community. The Council will encourage and work with these groups to create a culture of cycling.

TRAINING IN RICHMOND UPON THAMES

The Council's Safety Education Team, lead by the Principal Safety Education Advisor, is responsible for the provision of cycle proficiency training. They organise courses for child and adult cyclists so that they can improve their cycling skills and train on average 1700 school children per year in cycling proficiency skills.