
To: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

Report of: Director of Transportation and Highways

Date: 8th March 2023

Subject: Cycling and Walking Update

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) have requested an update on the Council's plans to encourage walking and cycling, including how the Council is engaging with the public to promote the benefits of cycling.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) are recommended to note the update provided and make any recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change on any issues to be considered as part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

3 Background and Information

- 3.1 Coventry's Transport Strategy (CTS) was adopted in December 2022 setting out how the Council's aims to deliver a safe, sustainable and reliable transport network for the city of Coventry. The Strategy specifically sets the four following objectives, and the promotion of walking and cycling for local journeys within the city is fundamental to achieving these:
1. Supporting the city's economic recovery and enabling long-term growth
 2. Delivering a sustainable, low carbon transport system
 3. Ensuring equality of opportunity
 4. Maximising health and wellbeing.
- 3.2 Coventry's draft Climate Change Strategy is currently out for consultation and recognises that walking and cycling networks are part of the infrastructure that needs to be developed to manage the transition from fossil fuel-based transport to transport powered by renewable energy.
- 3.3 The CTS will be supported by a series of more detailed policy documents that focus on specific elements of the transport network. One of these is the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which will set out the detailed policies and infrastructure requirements necessary to support walking and cycling in the city.

- 3.4 Currently a West Midlands LCWIP is in place that identifies a strategic regional cycle network, including routes such as the Binley Cycleway which is currently under construction. The regional LCWIP was developed in 2019 and forms the basis for investment planning in new cycle routes at a regional level.
- 3.5 Work is continuing, following the adoption of the CTS, on a local LCWIP for Coventry. This will drill down into more local detail and enable the identification of the local cycling network necessary to complement the regional network that has already been identified. There will be engagement with the public, local communities and the business community on the development of the LCWIP, and the aim is that the LCWIP will be adopted by the end of 2023.
- 3.6 The LCWIP will identify improvements to existing cycling facilities, as in the case of Binley Cycleway where new segregated cycle tracks have replaced cycle lanes in line with LTN 1/20 guidance, or the provision of new facilities as on Coundon Cycleway. As well as dedicated cycle facilities on key routes, the LCWIP will also identify areas where wider traffic management is appropriate due to lower traffic speeds and flows, such as the Liveable Neighbourhood approach, which can create a safe walking and cycling environment.
- 3.7 The LCWIP will also consider walking, recognising the vast majority of journeys made by anyone will involve an element of walking or wheeling. There is a need to ensure that we invest properly in our walking network, and to make sure that our local and district centres provided high quality public realm for residents and visitors.

4 Update on current infrastructure programme

- 4.1 Significant improvements to infrastructure are already taking place and more are in development. The most significant length of new active travel infrastructure that has been provided are found along the Coundon and Binley Cycleways. These consist of 2-way cycle tracks which are segregated from motor vehicle traffic by kerbs and have adjacent footways. Both routes directly serve local centres with shops and community facilities, but they are also within a 15 minute ride of the city centre. These routes can also widen travel horizons for active commuting. For example Upper Coundon to Binley Business Park is a distance of around 5 miles, which will become a 30 minute ride predominantly on segregated facilities separate from motor vehicles. People walking and wheeling have also benefitted from new crossings at side roads along these routes.
- 4.2 Busy junctions can be a barrier to active travel. In this regard improvements are already being made to crossings on the Ring Road including Junction 7 and Junction 9. The Junction 9 crossing improvements form part of a segregated cycle route from Upper Well Street to the Canal Basin. This then connects with the walking and cycling route towards Radford and the leisure route National Cycle Network 52 along the canal towpath.
- 4.3 This section provides an overview of schemes that are in different stages of development. These are presented on an area basis to complement recent improvements and existing facilities.
- 4.4 University of Warwick – A network of routes is being developed in partnership with the University's Masterplan. This is recognising the areas which generate the most trips to the campus, namely Canley and Cannon Park, Earlsdon and City Centre. Improvements in development include:

- Cannon Park Connections – to Cannon Park, Canley and City Centre
- Westwood – to Westwood business park
- Canley to Tile Hill – to Tile Hill Station
- Kenilworth Corridor – including improvement of the 1930s cycleway
- National Cycle Network Route 52 – quiet way through Earlsdon via Liveable Neighbourhood towards the city centre.
- A45 – potential to enhance existing provision also to serve Whitley South

4.5 City Centre

- Cross city route – joining up existing routes through the city centre.

Foleshill

- Foleshill – connecting City Centre to Foleshill

4.6 Sustainable Urban Extensions – A network of routes is proposed to enable access to new developments, which will also benefit existing residents and access to employment including:

- Eastern Green to City Centre
- Eastern Green to Tile Hill
- Keresley to Allesley
- Keresley to Coundon

4.7 Beyond Binley – Connections to the Binley Cycleway are under consideration, including towards:

- Whitley – connecting to New Century Park, London Road and Tollbar
- Wyken – connecting to Allard Way junction
- Coombe Abbey and Binley Woods – potential related to A46 schemes

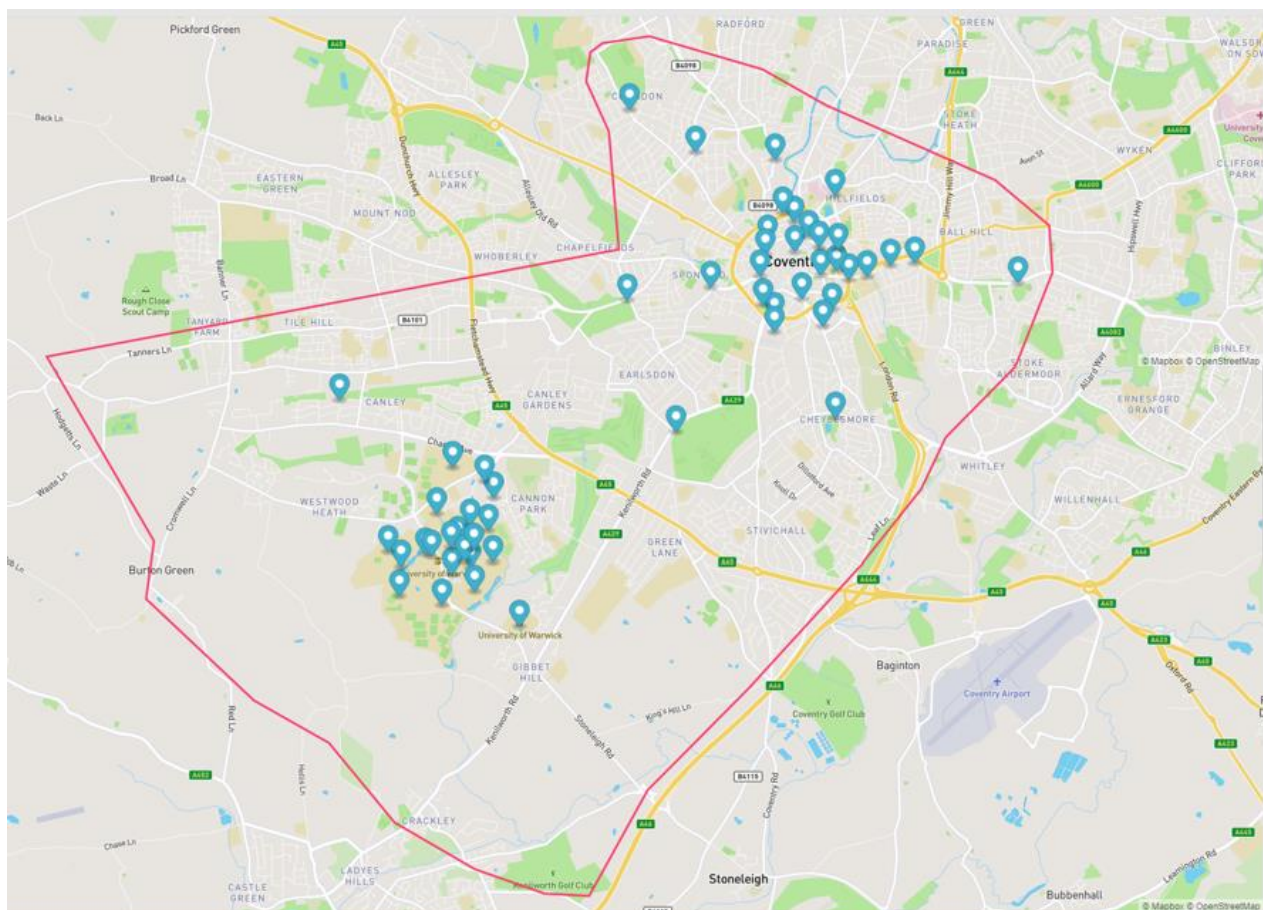
4.8 This list provides an update of the schemes identified at this stage, but the aim of the LCWIP process will be to further develop this into a comprehensive city-wide network that can then be brought forward for delivery as and when funding is secured.

5 West Midlands Cycle Hire Update (data provided by TfWM)

5.1 The West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme has been operational since March 2021. There are a total of 1,350 pedal and 150 e-bikes in 8 locations across the 7 West Midlands Metropolitan Authorities.

5.2 Scheme usage within Coventry to-date has been positive, with Coventry's usage outperforming other locations:

- Number of docking stations in Coventry – 47
- Number of available bikes in Coventry – 282 pedal bikes, 50 e-bikes
- Total pedal rides in Coventry since launch – 173,643
- Total e-bike rides in Coventry since launch – 41,959
- Average hire duration in Coventry – 14 minutes
- Average distance travelled in Coventry – 1.95km



Map of West Midlands Cycle Hire Docking Stations in Coventry
 (www.wmcyclehire.co.uk/stations/)

- 5.3 87% of Coventry scheme usage comprises an A-B journey, whereby the customer returns the bike to a different location from where they hired. This indicates that the scheme is well used for utility / commuting trips, and again this is higher than the scheme-wide average.
- 5.4 Cannon Park Centre, Warwick Sports Hub and Coventry Rail Station docking stations have been particularly well used.
- 5.5 95% of bikes within Coventry are returned to docking stations, representing positive customer behaviours, which compares favourably to other regions.
- 5.6 Both the average hire duration and average distance travelled figures have reduced in Coventry this year. However, the increase in the overall scheme usage within the city indicates that a loyal customer base is building with more, slightly shorter distances being covered by regular scheme users.
- 5.7 Sponsorship is currently being sought to support the scheme financially.

6 Health Inequalities Impact

- 6.1 Access to bicycles in the city has improved since the introduction of the West Midlands Cycle Hire Scheme. Residents of wards with the greatest health need have been able to apply for free minutes to use on the scheme through separate grant funding. As the bike docks are not in every ward the grant funding also supported a public bike giveaway initiative through the Cycling for Everyone project, which was similarly targeted at areas of greatest health need.

- 6.2 Residents who have surplus bikes have the option to donate them for recycling through local organisations and via the Recycling and Disposal Centre. Recent feedback indicates that the volume of bikes donated has reduced, which may be because people are keeping bikes for longer or they are selling them on the second-hand market to recoup some of the cost. Nevertheless, local residents in need are still benefitting from donated bikes. Support has also been provided to organisations to upskill volunteers in cycle maintenance with a view to increasing the capacity to recycle bikes.
- 6.3 Local people have also benefitted from public cycle maintenance courses to help them keep their bikes roadworthy in Spon End and Dr Bike maintenance sessions have also been provided at events.
- 6.4 Free cycle skills training has also been provided to residents, with a focus on delivering activity in areas of health need. For example, half term cycling venues have included Stoke Aldermoor, Alan Higgs, Sidney Stringer and Centre AT7.
- 6.5 Walking maps and guides are available which cover various areas of the city, but a number of these are in areas of greater health need. The public health team developed a series of Walk more, feel good! local walking maps covering the city centre, Foleshill, Tile Hill and Canley, Willenhall and Longford.
<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/health-wellbeing/coventry-move/2>
- 6.6 More recently a series of self-guided audio walks have been developed by Talking Birds based on their guided walks of Spon End, Stoke, and Naul's Mill Park and Coventry Canal. <https://talkingbirds.co.uk/walk/#2>
- 6.7 Canal and River Trust have also refreshed their Coventry Canal Guide and Map <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/refresh/media/thumbnail/43497-guide-to-coventry-canal-basin.pdf>

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