

Place and Resources Overview Committee 21/11/2024

Agenda Item 5- Public Participation

Questions Received

1. Question from Mike Brown:

As a Lytchett Minster & Upton (LM&U) resident, I welcome the Active Travel Implementation Plan (ATIP). However, it ignores strategic long distance routes as they are "predominately recreation routes", which is regrettable. Many people in Dorset are retired, walk and/or cycle for leisure - the response to your consultation suggested that most people "walk or cycle to stay active and get exercise". In addition, the Dorset economy depends on tourism - leisure pursuits in attractive surroundings being a key driver.

It is also regrettable that links out of DC area were discounted. I visit Poole, Wareham and the Purbecks regularly and note that most pressure on Sandford Rd, Bakers Arms and Upton Crossroads, including its four artery roads, comes from traffic originating within BCP, host to half the Dorset population and many tourists.

Many existing Active Travel routes are adjacent to busy roads and unlikely to create significant use or modal shift. A shared footway link is poor for both pedestrians and for cycling. Many cyclist groups pass through LM&U/Sandford in evenings/weekends, most avoiding the A351 shared footway, some blocking the carriageway.

Many leisure walkers/cyclists/commuters/dog walkers can be observed along the proposed Castleman Trailway extension between Upton and Hamworthy station – this is included in BCP's RoWIP.

The Cordite Way, with proposed extension to link Hamworthy/Turlin Moor to Sandford/Wareham/Purbecks, is not just a leisure route but an opportunity to reduce congestion/pollution/noise on the busy A351 and LM&U roads - many acknowledged as dangerous. A group of volunteers have cleared the accessible part of that new route, which is now usable. Discussions with visitors, some working at Holton Heath and living in Hamworthy, note this route is more pleasant than the A351 link from LM&U. Walkers use the route for bird spotting, dog walking and general enjoyment - i.e. for off-road leisure.

An off-road link from Bakers Arms to Organford Lane would link LM&U to various RoWs in the Holton Heath area and local TCF Scheme. Note: this and the above extensions are relevant to Poole Harbour (leisure) Trails and a Draft Local Transport Strategy for LM&U (currently under discussion with Highways).

The North Dorset Trailway provides not only an inter-community link but also opportunities for school/work/leisure journeys away from roads. The potential to link this into Somerset and to Sturminster Marshall/Corfe Mullen/BCP would provide significant modal shift opportunities, subject to funding.

The Western Gateway SNTB has been considering a Strategic Cycling Network with the aim of connecting communities. A strategic RoW network is also required in Dorset.

Will the Committee please recommend that the ATIP recognises the value of leisure routes, connections to neighbouring authorities, and as far as possible, links away from busy roads?

2. Question from Cllr Andy Hadley, BCP Council, Poole Town Ward, Cabinet Member for Climate Mitigation, Environment and Energy

I am the portfolio-holder at BCP Council for Climate Mitigation, Energy and Environment, which includes Transport. Outside of my Council role, I chair the Poole Harbour Trails group, concerned with improving walking and cycling links around the harbour, but in particular currently working on the Cordite Way at Holton Heath, with an ambition to provide a high-quality sustainable link between Sandford and Hamworthy.

In addition to priorities outlined in our own LCWIP and RoWIP documents, BCP Council have worked closely with Dorset Council on the Transforming Travel initiative, This seeks to ensure joined up journeys across our two authorities, especially recognising significant flows of people for work, leisure, school and utility journeys. Due to funding challenges, this work is incomplete, but the barriers that the River Stour, A350 and A31 create for Active Travel journeys are significant.

I am concerned that whilst the priorities outlined in 1.9 are important, the relevance of very significant numbers of vehicle trips associated with leisure use, and holidaymakers do not feature. One of the reasons that few longer journeys are undertaken in the UK is the hostility of vehicles on the road network, especially on small rural roads. As a Warmshowers host to touring cyclists, I had one very well-travelled visitor highlight that the UK roads were the worst in his very wide experience. Many of our National Cycleway routes are not fit for family cycling.

Under 2.4 the paper suggest that rural links are excluded as they are covered by the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, but many of these links are also used for work, utility or school journeys, and I know the funds available for RoWIP are minimal.

The analysis mentions difficulties with using the online platform. In my personal experience the website failed several times, and was extremely laborious to enter more than one idea.

It is regrettable that the new urban extensions in Merley and Wimborne were not taken as a golden opportunity to provide significant quality Active Travel links between these communities. This continues to cement car dependency, and spiralling congestion in our area.

The employment areas of Ferndown Industrial Estate, the Airport estates, Nuffield, and Holton Heath are of joint importance, and I hope our authorities can continue to work together on links to these, but this didn't seem to feature well in the map at 7.1.

I welcome the southern extension of the North Dorset Trailway, and am very keen to see how we can link it further southwards into Broadstone.

We also have a joint project with the National Trust and the two Authorities around the River Stour including access.

Can the Committee please highlight a priority for joint working in the Infrastructure plan.