

Cycling Strategy

Our approach

Introduction

Highways England operates, maintains and modernises the strategic road network.

As part of this challenge, we're delivering an ambitious £11bn investment programme to support the Government's Road Investment Strategy. Ultimately, we're helping to grow the UK economy and support the quality of life of communities across the country.

This means more than just supporting the millions of cars, vans and motorcycles that use our roads every day. Our network also plays a key role in supporting the needs of vulnerable road users, including cyclists.

Our Cycling Strategy shows how our planned roads improvements programme will provide integrated schemes which improve cycling facilities. This will contribute towards the development of an integrated, safe, comprehensive and high quality cycling network. For our network this means cycling facilities which are safe, separate from traffic and that enable users of all abilities to cycle, encouraging cycling as a sustainable form of transport. Our strategy also recognises the limitations of our network - cycling is prohibited on our motorways and incompatible with major parts of our network.

In essence, our strategy will help create a better environment for cycling, starting by:

- Reviewing the extent and quality of the existing cycling network.
- Identifying, prioritising and investing in ways to improve cycling conditions.

- Progressively creating comprehensive and coherent cycle networks with our key stakeholders and delivery partners.

But our strategy is not just about building better cycling infrastructure, we are also:

- Training and developing our planners, designers, engineers and service providers to think differently about cycling infrastructure.
- Working more collaboratively with our partners and stakeholders.
- Improving how we plan for cycling.
- Supporting the overall development of cycling related infrastructure design and planning.

Our Delivery Plan makes a commitment to invest £100m of ring-fenced funding in 200 cycling schemes between now and 2021. This investment supports the Government's ambition for cycling to become a natural choice for journeys, and aligns with the development of the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.



Our cycling vision

Our vision for cycling builds upon our overall aim which is to deliver a high performing strategic road network and the best possible service to road users.

In particular, we want to contribute to a connected, comfortable, attractive and high quality cycling network, suitable and safe for use by people of all ages and abilities.

Our guiding principles

To support the delivery of this vision, we have identified a number of key principles:

Planning for cycling – we will improve our capability to ensure the needs of cyclists are considered.

Improving cycling facilities – we will plan and deliver an investment programme to improve cycle facilities which are safe and separate from traffic. Over time we will improve the safety, convenience and environment for cycling.

Partnership working – we recognise the role of our partners and stakeholders in helping us to identify and support the delivery of cycling facilities and will work closely with them.

Impact – our cycling improvements will have a positive impact on communities, such as improving connections across roads that divide communities and providing an integrated and safe cycling network.

Direction of travel – we will play our part in delivering the Government's ambition for cycling.

The benefits of increasing cycling investment

Cycling has many advantages over other types of transport, especially its environmental benefits; it causes negligible climate change, air pollution and noise. Increased levels of cycling can deliver a wide range of benefits to society, the economy and the environment.

Despite the benefits of cycling, many barriers, both real and perceived exist, including a lack of facilities, incoherent networks and a lack of information on where facilities do exist.

Cycling can play an important role in achieving our overall ambitions for the road network. Providing more attractive, safe, accessible and integrated cycling facilities will encourage cycling participation and remove some local motor vehicle journeys from our network. This will support the development of a more-free flowing network with fewer delays and better journey reliability, reduced environmental impacts, improved public health and greater sustainability.



Delivering the vision

We will achieve our vision for cycling through a number of areas, building on our Delivery Plan commitments and planned road investment programme. This work will develop our capability, deliver enhanced cycling facilities and allow us to effectively monitor our performance. The key activities are set out below:

Developing capability

- Embed our cycling strategy throughout Highways England, our supply chain and service providers and ensure that the future development and management of the network reflects our vision.
- Ensure effective internal working within Highways England through the development of an enhanced capability and the establishment of a Cycling Technical Working Group.
- Update our design standards to raise the level of provision for cycling on our network and improve the capability of our planners, designers, supply chain and service providers through training and development.
- Improve our engagement with cycling stakeholders and delivery partners, developing a collaborative approach to the identification, development and implementation of cycling interventions.
- Improve engagement and communication with our road users, in particular cyclists, to ensure our plans meet their needs.

Cycling infrastructure investment

- Develop an annual programme of work to improve cycling facilities which are separate from traffic, for example, new cycle crossings, cycle paths, improved signage and safety schemes. These facilities will support the development of integrated, high quality cycle routes that are safe, direct, connected, comfortable and attractive.

- Develop a longer-term programme of work to ensure that we deliver enhanced, high quality cycle facilities and develop future investment programmes.
- Consider how we can improve cycling safety across a broad range of initiatives, such as improving cycling safety measures for construction vehicles working on our network.
- Ensure that wider network investments incorporate cycling facilities. For example, when we invest in road network improvements, the needs of cyclists will be considered, both during construction and as part of any completed scheme. Also, as we invest in network maintenance, we will consider opportunities to improve cycle provision.

Measuring our performance

- Our Delivery Plan and Performance Specification outlines our key performance indicators and performance indicators relevant to cycling, which are:
 - Key performance indicator – the number of new and upgraded crossings.
 - Performance indicators – the number of vulnerable user casualties (including cyclists), and the development of an annual cycling programme.
- We recognise that further work is needed to develop new metrics that more accurately monitor our progress. For example, new metrics covering cycle usage and customer satisfaction will be explored.
- We will identify areas for further research which will improve our planning and delivery of cycling measures.

These activities will help us to prioritise investment and effectively meet the requirements and commitments set out in our Delivery Plan. They will also help us coordinate our work in a number of related areas including safety, supporting vulnerable users and developing innovative technology, as well as supporting housing and growth. By making better use of existing funds we can balance our priorities and take timely opportunities to improve cycling facilities. This means we can deliver multiple benefits and work as efficiently as possible.

Our approach also needs to take a longer-term view, recognising that this strategy will evolve and take us beyond the current Road Investment Strategy period. We will therefore plan ahead and build the foundations for future investment periods.

Who will we engage with and why?

Our road users and local communities, in partnership with local authorities – to develop integrated cycling networks which meet local needs.

Our monitor – the Office of Rail and Road and the Department for Transport, who assess our performance against the requirements of our licence.

Transport Focus, which represents the interests of road users.

Other Government bodies, particularly Public Health England and the Department for Communities and Local Government which set wider policies that impact on cycling.

The Department for Transport's Cycle Proofing Working Group – to share best practice, undertake research and development, and advise on cycle design standards and policy.

Professional Institutions, including the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation, Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, Institution of Civil Engineers and Institution of Highway Engineers – to support the development of our cycling design standards and training and development requirements.

Key cycling stakeholders including Sustrans, CTC – the national cycling charity and British Cycling, to inform the development of our interventions at a national and regional level.

Other infrastructure operators, particularly local highways authorities, Network Rail, Canal & River Trust and National Cycle Network – to share best practice and explore opportunities for joint working.

How will we know we have made a difference?

We will establish a Cycling Technical Working Group which will be responsible for developing a non-technical Annual Cycling Report. It will set out our progress against the strategy, as well as our activities for the next 12 months.

This group will also be responsible for developing new metrics that that will allow us to more accurately monitor our progress.

Summary

Our Cycling Strategy shows how we'll contribute towards the development of an integrated, comprehensive and high quality cycling network. This includes facilities which are safe and separate from traffic, that enables users of all abilities to cycle and encourages cycling as a sustainable form of transport.

For information about our cycling projects or wider investment activity, please contact
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