

Northern Ireland
**CHANGING
GEAR**

*A Bicycle
Strategy for
Northern
Ireland*

CONTENTS

Foreword / 5

1 Introduction / 6

2 Our Cycling Future / 8

3 Our Approach / 14

4 Build - A Comprehensive Network for the Bicycle / 16

5 Support - People who choose to travel by Bicycle / 22

6 Promote - The Bicycle as a mode of Transport for every day journeys / 30

7 How will we deliver this Strategy? / 32

Assessments / 37

Glossary / 38

Every time I see an adult on a bicycle I no longer despair for the future of the human race.

H.G. Wells



FOREWORD

Imagine a simple, straightforward, healthy, cost effective and, yes, enjoyable means of transport - something that would ease congestion, lower pollution and reduce wear and tear on our roads.

Around 125 years ago, here in Northern Ireland, the pneumatic tyre was developed for the humble bicycle. This innovation breathed life into cycling as a viable and accessible every day way to get about.

The Travel Survey for Northern Ireland reveals that many of the journeys we make, day and daily, are short journeys: 1 in 6 of all the journeys we make is less than one mile; another 1 in 6 is between one and two miles. More and more people are using the bicycle for these journeys and it seems the interest in cycling in Northern Ireland has never been higher. Recent research by my Department shows that when commuting these distances, over 80% of journeys are typically 'rain-free'.

These things convince me that Northern Ireland has the potential to develop a successful and vibrant cycling culture over the next

25 years - to give people the freedom and confidence to get out on the bicycle and use it as part of their every day routine.

To achieve the vision for cycling we need to build a comprehensive network for the bicycle, support people who choose to travel by bicycle and promote the bicycle as a mode of transport for every day journeys.

I know that infrastructure is only part of what is required. I want to be creative and innovative in encouraging people to use the bicycle. I consider it very important that this strategy sets out the bigger picture, outlining all the elements that need to be addressed in order to make Northern Ireland a cycling community that is comparable with our other European neighbours.

It is clear that if we are to make the vision a reality we need to work across Government Departments, work in partnership with local councils and engage with a range of other stakeholders.

I want everyone in Northern Ireland to experience the joy of using the bicycle. I intend to ensure that Northern Ireland continues to move forward and achieve its own cycling revolution.

Danny Kennedy MLA
Minister for Regional Development

1

INTRODUCTION

The Minister for Regional Development (DRD) has prepared a Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland which sets out, over a 25 year horizon, how we plan to make Northern Ireland a cycling community.

This Strategy document outlines the Minister's vision for cycling in Northern Ireland and, at a high level, how we intend to achieve this vision.



1.1 Consultation

A 12 week public consultation exercise was carried out on a draft of the Bicycle Strategy between August and November 2014.

Nine public consultation events were held across Northern Ireland in addition to the 'Northern Ireland - Changing Gear' seminar on cycling.

Over 100 written responses were received in response to the public consultation. Consideration was given to all feedback received which was important in drawing up this final strategy.

OUR CYCLING FUTURE

2

2.1 Vision

The Minister for Regional Development has set out his ambition to transform cycling in Northern Ireland over the next 25 years. The Minister's vision for cycling is:

“A community where people have the freedom and confidence to travel by bicycle for every day journeys”



This vision for cycling in Northern Ireland is set within the context of, and driven by, the Executive's Programme for Government priorities of growing a sustainable economy, improving health and well being while building communities and protecting the environment. Cycling can make a significant contribution towards the five Programme for Government priorities.

This high level Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland is the first step in achieving the Minister's vision for cycling. It aims to set out progressively how we can transform Northern Ireland into a place where travelling by bicycle is a healthy, every day activity. It will be supported by a Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan which will outline specific time bound actions to realise this vision.

Building a cycling culture does not happen overnight. Evidence from elsewhere has shown that change takes time, it takes commitment and it takes strong leadership. That is why the Minister has developed a long term strategy and set out his commitment to embrace innovation as we seek to transform Northern Ireland into a vibrant cycling society.

What does a vibrant cycling society look like? It is a society which values, nurtures and celebrates cycling in all its forms - on road, off-road, commuter, recreation, journeys to education - every day and every way cycling. Many of our European neighbours have already made that journey. Elsewhere on these islands we are seeing a growing commitment to cycling.

Cycling is not just beneficial for the individual, it also delivers benefits for wider society including less congestion, fewer sick days, longer life expectancy, less wear and tear on the roads, less pollution and more buoyant local economies.

We want to reap the benefits of cycling for everyone.

We will continue to monitor what our near neighbours in England, Wales, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland are doing to progress cycling, and we will draw on the experience of other European countries who are considered to be established cycling societies.

We will work with other Government Departments, District Councils, the voluntary and private sectors and other interested parties to ensure the Strategy is fully and optimally implemented.



2.2 Objectives

Using the bicycle for every day journeys is not an end in itself. It is very much part of building a more dynamic, prosperous and inclusive society. This is reflected in the objectives the Minister has set to guide the delivery of this strategy as set out below.

- **Making urban areas in Northern Ireland more accessible for people using the bicycle** - improvements to cycling infrastructure will enable more people to access facilities in our urban centres by bicycle or by multi modal journeys.
- **Improve opportunities for social interaction** - 22% of households in Northern Ireland do not have access to a car/van. Improved cycling infrastructure enhances the travel opportunities for those who don't have access to a car/van. Perhaps more importantly, cycling is a social form of transport. It allows people to interact and engage with their surroundings, their community and their neighbours. This can help build a sense of community and contribute to personal well-being and social inclusion.
- **Improvements in public health** - increased levels of bicycle use have both direct (personal fitness) and indirect (improvements to air quality) benefits for public health.
- **Increase safety for people using the bicycle** - this includes reducing the proportion involved in collisions and increasing the 'feel safe' factor for people riding a bicycle.

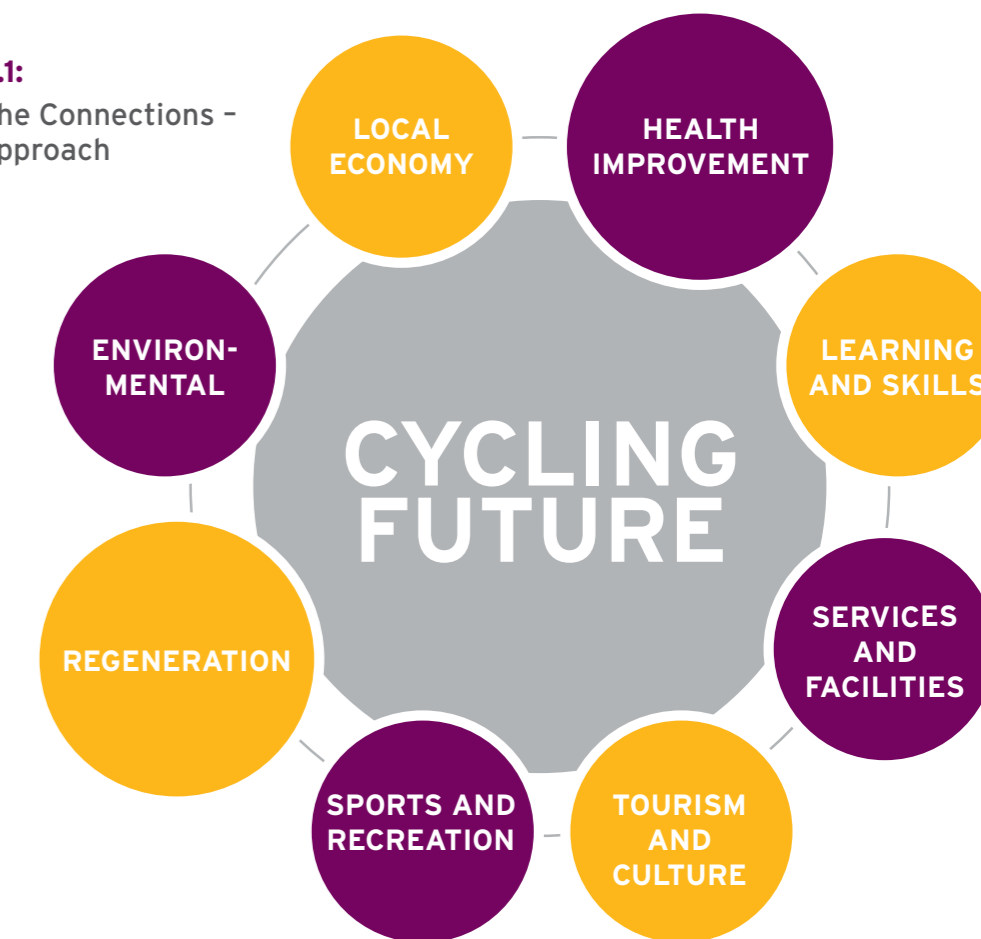
2.3 Making the Connections

Delivering Northern Ireland's 'cycling future' requires action in a range of areas. As already mentioned, increased levels of bicycle use can make a positive contribution towards individual health and wellbeing, the quality of the local environment as well as wider economic and social objectives. Each of these areas can have an impact on cycling levels. That two-way relationship is set out in Fig 2.1.



An overview of each of the areas is set out overleaf. This illustrates that delivering the ambition and benefits of a cycling revolution will require coordinated action across a range of bodies and organisations including working with local government, communities and business to develop solutions that reflect local need and opportunity.

Figure 2.1:
Making the Connections -
A New Approach





Health Improvement

Implementation of the Bicycle Strategy has the potential to play a significant part in achieving national health policies. The health benefits of increased levels of cycling are numerous and include a fitter, healthier society, improved mental health, lower levels of obesity and fewer sick days from work.

Local Economy

By providing safe, accessible and direct connections between residential areas, employment areas and retail centres the Bicycle Strategy will support the local economy.



Environmental

The Bicycle Strategy will contribute to improvements in the physical environment. Increased levels of cycling can contribute to reduced congestion, improved air quality, less noise pollution and a cleaner environment.

Regeneration

By contributing to enhanced public realm the Strategy will contribute to making better places in which to live and work. By creating vibrant, safer and well used urban spaces people will be encouraged back into our towns and cities.

Learning and Skills

Implementing the Strategy will result in improved access to education and training. Working directly with children and young people will assist in establishing sustainable travel behaviour from an early age. Helping adults to improve their cycling skills will empower more adults to choose to cycle, thereby improving their ability to access learning, training and employment opportunities.

Services and Facilities

Implementing the Strategy will result in improved access to a greater range of services and facilities for people in Northern Ireland society. Improved access supports social equality and integration.

Sports and Recreation

Implementation of the Bicycle Strategy will support participation in sporting activities and improve access to recreational facilities.

Tourism and Culture

Northern Ireland is an excellent tourism and holiday destination. The Bicycle Strategy can assist in opening up the unique character of Northern Ireland by developing amenity routes, greenways and cross border routes. We want people to come to Northern Ireland and enjoy a good, high quality cycling experience.





OUR APPROACH

As a government department with responsibility for transport we know that the services and infrastructure we develop and maintain are of critical importance to the daily lives of everyone in Northern Ireland. The transport network provides access to the goods and services we all rely on. In some cases the design of our transport network can act as a barrier. Those who don't have access to a car/van can find their opportunities and choices limited, while high volumes of traffic can act as a barrier between neighbourhoods and within communities.

Higher levels of cycling, walking and public transport use are key to ensuring we have a transport system that benefits everyone in our society.

3

The economic, social and environmental benefits of cycling have been set out in Section 2 of this strategy. One of the major constraints in realising these benefits is that the funding available for cycling has been limited and spread thinly across Northern Ireland. While there are examples of good quality provision which have led to the transformation of some areas there are also many cases where infrastructure provision is disconnected and this is of limited benefit.

We want to change this to a prioritised, more focussed approach which provides a comprehensive solution to make sure the full benefits are realised. It will not be possible to invest significant amounts of expenditure on cycling schemes everywhere at once. That is why to begin with we will focus on a small number of areas where we will develop detailed proposals for cycling schemes and pilot projects.

In addition to delivering bespoke cycling infrastructure, we will also build on opportunities that arise as other transport interventions are being taken forward across Northern Ireland.

We will closely monitor our pilot projects to make sure we identify the fully range of benefits, and adopt the 'lessons learnt' approach, including where pilots may not have gone as well as hoped.

In developing cycling infrastructure, we will adopt the 'three-pillar approach' in Figure 3.1. This includes careful planning, high quality infrastructure and effective behaviour change campaigns. The intention is that these three pillars will all be taken forward across the 25 years of the Strategy, with the emphasis attached to each, evolving over that period.

The approach recognises that while infrastructure provision is a very important element of developing a cycling society, on its own, it is not usually sufficient to generate new numbers of bicycle trips.

A creative approach is often required to support that investment and encourage more people to cycle part or all of their every day journeys.

Figure 3.1: Three Pillar Approach



4

BUILD

a comprehensive network for the bicycle



This section sets out how we plan to develop and deliver a comprehensive network for the bicycle in both urban and rural areas in Northern Ireland.

4.1 Urban Networks

In urban areas we will develop bicycle network plans which will outline how the 'comprehensive network for the bicycle' will be delivered. In developing the network our focus will be on meeting journey needs, connecting people to places they want to travel from and get to.

Our bicycle network plans will cover defined geographical areas and set out detailed proposals for bicycle infrastructure. However, recognising that infrastructure is only part of the solution, they will also detail area specific behaviour change initiatives and campaigns, and locally driven interventions.

At the moment there is a general perception that levels of commuter cycling in Belfast are higher than in other urban areas in Northern Ireland. Recognising this and the fact that Belfast is the most populated urban area in Northern Ireland our first bicycle network plan will be focussed on Belfast. This will be followed by detailed bicycle network plans for other urban areas. As a starting point these will be considered as part of the existing Transport Plans.

4.2 Infrastructure

Since 2002 our Department has invested over £10million in the development and expansion of cycle lanes and on cycling infrastructure measures. We appreciate that many people feel that provision is frequently fragmented and of varying quality. We will ensure that provision is more integrated and coherent, by providing a 'whole of route' treatment. However, where opportunities arise when road maintenance or upgrade schemes are being undertaken, we will aim to use these opportunities to improve bicycle provision locally, whilst emphasising how these improvements fit into the wider vision for Northern Ireland.

In urban areas the network for the bicycle will typically comprise:

- Radial routes
- Quiet routes
- Greenways

Creating a network of high quality, direct, joined up routes is a key element of delivering the vision.

This is likely to comprise a series of 'Radial routes' in our urban areas which will largely mirror the arterial road networks in towns and cities. The aim is to provide a primary network, linking each area of the town through the urban centre.

We will also develop a secondary network based on 'Quiet routes'. These will link communities to the primary network and offer convenient yet quieter, less direct, less trafficked options for people to cycle in our urban areas.



We will encourage the development of more 'Greenways'. These will be mainly off-road traffic free routes. They may be orbital routes around towns or cities or, where possible, off road routes into urban areas. A significant aspect of greenway development is likely to provide routes between our urban areas - reaching out into more rural areas.

The secondary network will feed into this hierarchy of routes in order to deliver an area based cycle network providing links to shops, community facilities, places of education and workplaces.

4.3 Rural routes

We recognise there are differences between using the bicycle in an urban area and in a rural area. Cycling in rural areas presents particular challenges such as:

- higher speed roads
- a larger number of narrow, meandering roads with limited opportunities for safe overtaking by motorised vehicles
- the presence of agricultural vehicles; and
- longer journey distances.

These can act as significant barriers for cycling which can be more difficult to address. As with urban areas, infrastructure is part of the solution. More recently, the Department has taken forward a number of schemes in rural towns which have provided cycle tracks and lanes on main roads as part of a larger road maintenance/upgrade.

We will continue to invest in enhancing the physical infrastructure in rural areas where opportunities arise and especially where there is cycling demand.

We will also review existing National Cycle Network routes with a view to developing them by introducing more physical infrastructure, in addition to existing signage.

In seeking to increase opportunities to use the bicycle in rural areas we recognise that many of our rural roads are spaces to be shared by a range of users including people walking, people using the bicycle and people in motorised vehicles. It is important that all of these users feel safe when using rural routes, particularly vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists. This can be done through investment in infrastructure in combination with improved respect and understanding between all road users.



4.4 Greenways

We recognise that quieter routes such as Greenways, where there is little or no motorised traffic, are good examples of off-road routes which are attractive to a broad spectrum of users. We intend to support local authorities in the development of additional Greenways throughout Northern Ireland where possible.

Greenway routes are generally developed on disused transport infrastructure such as dismantled railways or canal towpaths. These routes tend to be straighter and gradients tend to be low. This helps to attract inexperienced and young people to cycling. However, Greenways can potentially be developed anywhere with similar properties.

We intend to look at proposals to develop both urban and rural Greenways throughout Northern Ireland. Although there are more limited opportunities in urban areas, Greenways offer the potential to link housing areas, schools and amenities. In rural areas, where there are more opportunities, they can be a valuable tourist attraction as well as providing a link between communities and to local facilities. We aspire to use rural Greenways as an integral part of the Northern Ireland comprehensive network in order to create long distance, high quality routes.

Greenways – Westport, County Mayo

Urban Greenways

An Urban Greenway links around 60% of residential areas in the town core. More interconnections are being added to ensure all the housing areas around the town are connected. More links are to be established around the town centre which will complete an independent network of greenways so that all businesses and schools are linked.

Rural Greenways

The Great Western Greenway is a traffic free cycling and walking route which follows the route of the old Westport to Achill railway which closed in 1937. The route runs from Westport to Achill Island and is 42kms (26 miles) in length.

The greenway was established following negotiation with private landowners to secure permissive access. In exchange for granting access landowners were provided with gates, drainage, ditches, dykes etc.

The Greenway has helped create more than 90 local jobs and brings in around €7.2 million to the local economy. It is used by 175,000 users annually.

4.5 Maintenance

Where we provide bicycle infrastructure it is very important that it is maintained to a high standard: both in terms of routine maintenance (i.e. surfacing - the surface of a cycle lane should be maintained to road carriageway standards) and clearance (i.e. priority afforded to the clearance of glass / snow / debris on the bicycle network).

4.6 Safe spaces for the bicycle

We know that safety is important to people using the bicycle. There are a number of elements to safety that we want to address and these are set out in the following paragraphs.

It is important we make changes to our transport network to improve safety for people who cycle.

4.6.1 Design Guidance

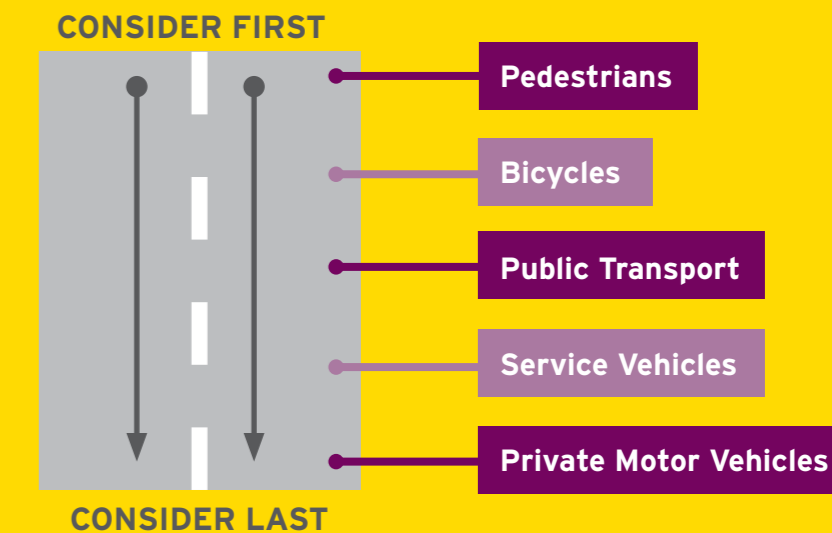
There is a substantial body of good design guidance available for both urban and rural areas. The Minister has set out his determination that the development of Northern Ireland's cycling infrastructure should reflect best practice design guidance. That includes drawing on experience and innovative approaches from elsewhere to identify ways that junctions, roundabouts and cycle lanes can be made safer and more attractive to users. The guidance that is adopted will promote a 'common standard' to work to, and will give those who use the bicycle confidence that their safety is taken seriously and steps are being taken to make the network as safe as possible.



4.6.2 Different types of Road Users

We believe it is important to remind people that our road network exists principally as a means of transporting people and goods. All road users have an equal right to make their journey, whatever the mode of transport they choose to use. However, it is important to recognise that some categories of road users are more vulnerable than others. For example, those using a bicycle on a shared footway/cycleway can make pedestrians feel more vulnerable, while those driving a motorised vehicle can make those cycling, running or walking feel more vulnerable. This is the logic behind the concept of a hierarchy of road users (shown in Figure 4.1) which has been developed for use in the planning and design processes for new developments and proposed traffic management schemes.

Figure 4.1: Road User Hierarchy



*Adapted from Department for Transport (2007), Manual for Streets

The objective of this hierarchy is to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable road users are fully considered and adequately provided for in all highway schemes. It is not designed to give priority to pedestrians and people on bicycles at every location.

We are also aware that people who cycle are not a homogeneous group. People cycle for different journey purposes and at different speeds. Indeed, the same person may cycle in different ways depending on their particular circumstances on a particular journey. With this in mind, we will consider the requirements of likely users on a scheme by scheme basis.

5

SUPPORT
*people who
 choose to travel
 by bicycle*



5.1 Improving the Options

It is important that people feel safe and comfortable using the bicycle for every day journeys. To make the bicycle an attractive, obvious mode of transport, there are a number of practical areas we need to take forward to encourage and support people who choose to use the bicycle.

These include:

- Having high quality infrastructure which provides equal priority for the bicycle
- Providing cycle parking where it is required
- Developing Bicycle Hubs
- Promoting the 'Cycle to Work' scheme to employers
- Promoting e-bikes
- Encouraging Public Bike Share schemes

These types of interventions increase the opportunities for people to use the bicycle by making cycling a more attractive and accessible option for the whole journey or part of the journey.

Public bike hire – Belfast Bike Share scheme

The Belfast Bike Share scheme launched in April 2015. The scheme includes 300 public bikes and 30 bike docking stations in Belfast city centre. Belfast City Council operates the scheme which received over £1 million of capital funding from the Department for Regional Development (DRD) as part of the Active Travel Demonstration Projects competition.

It is anticipated that the public bikes will be used by a range of users including residents, tourists, students and commuters for a variety of journey purposes. The scheme represents a new, low cost, healthy and convenient way to travel for short trips around the city centre.



5.1.1 Legislation

The Welsh Government has shown how legislation can be used to support people who choose to travel by bicycle. Drawing on the Welsh experience, we are keen to explore options for developing active travel legislation for Northern Ireland.

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 made it a legal requirement for local authorities in Wales to map and plan for suitable routes for active travel, and to build and improve their infrastructure for walking and cycling every year. It creates new duties for highway authorities to consider the needs of those who walk and those who cycle and make better provision for them. It also requires both the Welsh Government and local authorities to promote walking and cycling as a mode of transport.



it is important
that all road users
know their rights,
and also their
responsibilities

5.1.3 Respect and Understanding

We want to encourage greater respect and understanding between all users of the transport network. This includes car drivers, bus drivers, taxi drivers, HGV drivers, van drivers, people who cycle and people who walk. It is important there is awareness, care, courtesy and consideration for each of the modes and that each knows how best to interact with the others.

There are a number of ways we would like to approach these issues, including through various training programmes:

- Cycle training / Bikeability - providing people who use the bicycle with good confident cycling skills and with a clear understanding of their responsibilities to other road users
- Driver cycle awareness training - providing specific training on responsibilities towards people who use a bicycle
- HGV, bus and taxi driver training - cycle awareness training which provides drivers with the opportunity to experience the roads on a bicycle to help them understand the risks that they pose to more vulnerable road users
- Media campaigns delivering tailored safety messages to all road users

We will work with other Government Departments, local authorities, representatives of the respective industries and licensing bodies to develop specific interventions promoting greater respect and understanding.

5.1.2 A Legible Network

We recognise the importance of developing a consistent, uniform signage and design format for our 'comprehensive network for the bicycle'.

This helps minimise confusion for all users of the transport network. By developing a legible, easily identifiable brand standard and by helping people find their way we can increase the sense of security and safety for all road users. A legible network also improves Northern Ireland's potential as a cycle tourism destination.



5.1.4 Highway Code

It is important that all road users know both their responsibilities and their rights when using the road network. We want to encourage all road users to show respect and understanding to each other.

One way we plan to do this is by improving awareness and communication of the Highway Code. Where legislation or guidance is changed we will work with other Departments to ensure that it is correctly reflected in the next edition of the Highway Code.

We recognise that enforcement of 'rules' (identified by the use of the words 'MUST/ MUST NOT' in the Highway Code) is a key issue for all road users. We will work with the PSNI to identify priorities and resource efficient mechanisms for proportionate enforcement of the 'rules'.

5.1.5 Education

We know that by working with the education sector and young people we can influence the travel behaviour of young people. There are a number of well established and effective education programmes already in place which we will seek to build on. These include:

- DRD / PHA Active School Travel Programme 2013 - 16
- Department of Environment funded Cycle Proficiency training
- Department of Education funded school cycle infrastructure

We recognise that adults also require support to build confidence and skills to enable them to cycle. A key mechanism for this is the availability of adult cycle proficiency training.

5.1.6 Interchange between modes

Cycling is part of a larger transport picture. It is important that the bicycle is fully integrated into the wider transport infrastructure and linked into other modes of transport. This includes linking cycle routes and infrastructure into our transport hubs, bus and rail stations, major bus stops and Park & Ride sites.

Recognising this, we would like to progressively address a number of issues relating to facilitating modal interchange including:

- Secure cycle parking at entry / departure points from public transport
- The use of folding bikes
- Encouraging subscriptions to the Belfast Bike Share Scheme
- Carriage of bicycles on public transport

Facilitating interchange between modes will give a greater number of people the opportunity to cycle part of their journey. It will also enable people travelling longer distances to enjoy cycling part of their every day journeys.

5.2 Inviting places for all

People's experience of the urban environment and urban life has a significant role in the choices they make in relation to transport. We want our public spaces to be lively, attractive, safe, sustainable and healthy. Creating places that people want to spend time in rather than simply travel through can greatly enhance the attractiveness of using the bicycle.

An important element of our Strategy therefore is a focus on public spaces and creating a desire for people to spend time in them. It is about improving Northern Ireland for everyone, including those with no particular desire to get on a bicycle.

Travelling by bicycle helps people to experience our public spaces more intimately and keeps people in touch with the changing seasons.

The Human Dimension – Gehl Architects (Copenhagen)

Gehl Architects has pioneered an approach which has people at the core of their work on the built environment. Their approach considers how the built environment connects to people's quality of life.

To create more 'liveable' cities Gehl considers both the public life and physical spaces of the cities (public realm) by looking at infrastructure, buildings and how they contribute to city life, people's behaviour, use patterns and cultural trends and then uses this information to create 'cities for people'.

Their focus is to create liveable, sustainable spaces, where the emphasis is not only on the physical environment, but also social sustainability and quality of life. The vision is that a city is a place where people can see and meet each other.



5.2.1 Traffic Calming

A key factor in making our urban spaces inviting is our ability to create a calmer traffic environment. More effective management of traffic speeds in specific areas can help create safer urban spaces which are dominated by people not cars. That is why we are keen to explore creative and innovative traffic calming ideas and pilot these in appropriate locations. One way to do this is through 20mph zones and 20mph limits.

20mph Zones

- 20mph zones are designed to be self-enforcing, using physical measures such as humps, chicanes and gateway features to achieve the desired speed reduction. As such, they are most appropriate for roads where average speeds are already low.

To date around five hundred 20mph zones have been introduced across Northern

Ireland. These have been implemented in locations where local residents have expressed a desire for reduced speed limits and following consultation with local stakeholders.

20mph limits

- While 20mph zones are self enforcing, 20mph limits are mandatory and consist of a speed limit change which drivers are alerted to using 20mph speed limit signs alone.

The DoE Road Safety Strategy 2020 sets out a commitment to pilot 20mph limits, with five 20mph pilot schemes currently being implemented. Monitoring of the average speed of traffic in the pilot areas will be undertaken, along with local consultation exercises to assess whether 20mph limits demonstrate improved road safety as well as the wider benefits of lower speed limits.

As set out below, evidence shows that the implementation of 20mph zones and limits reduces the number and severity of road traffic collisions, and can contribute to people feeling safer cycling on road.

Effect of 20mph traffic speed zones on road injuries in London, 1986-2006: controlled interrupted time series analysis

Road injuries are among the leading causes of mortality and disability worldwide. There is evidence that reducing the speed and volume of traffic can reduce rates of road traffic injury.

Zones in which traffic is limited to 20mph are a type of area-wide traffic calming that uses engineering measures to physically slow traffic. Over the past 15 years or so, 20mph zones have been established in London and many other areas of the UK. This has provided a good case study for evaluating the effect of 20mph zones.

The London study has shown that the introduction of 20mph zones was associated with a 40% reduction in road casualties (after adjustment for underlying trends). The percentage reduction was greatest in younger children and greater for the category of killed or seriously injured casualties than for minor injuries.

The research concluded that 20mph zones are effective measures for reducing road injuries and deaths, with no evidence of casualty migration to nearby roads.



5.2.2 New Developments

One of the most effective ways to support people to use the bicycle is to ensure that in planning new developments appropriate consideration is given to how people will travel. We want to see a stronger focus on building people friendly places. To do this we will work with those who have responsibility for land use planning policy and planning decisions to ensure that cycling is recognised as an integral mode of transport.

5.2.3 Environmental Improvement Schemes

We will work with other Government Departments and local authorities to ensure that provision for using the bicycle is reflected in any new Environmental Improvement Schemes.

When detailed proposals for Environmental Improvement Schemes are being drawn up we want to make a meaningful contribution that will lead to better spaces for all members of society to use.



6

PROMOTE

the bicycle as a mode of transport for every day journeys

This section sets out how we plan to promote the bicycle as a mode of transport for every day journeys. It builds on a well established approach, focussing on working with people, organising and supporting events and providing people with relevant information.

6.1 Working with people

Individuals and groups can have a significant role to play in facilitating and encouraging others to travel by bicycle. Recognising this, the Department through initiatives such as Travelwise has engaged directly with a broad range of sectors to promote the benefits of cycling. This includes:

- retailers and the business community - to make it possible for people to access local and town centre shops using the bicycle
- service providers - to enable people to access facilities and services by bicycle

As well as a range of targeted activities including:

- Bike Week and Bike to Work Day
- Workplace Travel Plans
- Cycle to Work Scheme
- One off events

We want to continue to work effectively and efficiently with these groups to support them in encouraging their staff, customers and clients to cycle their every day journeys. We will investigate best practice in this area and seek to develop specific interventions.

6.2 Events

Recurring annual events, such as Bike Week, are useful tools for promoting the bicycle as an every day form of transport. One off events, such as the Giro d'Italia and the subsequent Gran Fondo also raise the profile of cycling and increase public interest. We believe there are other events that can add to this including Ciclovía and 'in town without my car' days. There is a growing interest in these types of event. We want to seize the opportunity this presents to extend the range of events which we can participate in and support to encourage more people to cycle.

6.3 Publications

Quality publications that give people information about bicycle use and bicycle related activity, and make it easier to undertake cycling either for the whole or part of a journey can play a key role in promote cycling. With every day cycling playing such a pivotal role in Denmark's capital city of Copenhagen, the Copenhagen Bicycle Account was introduced in 1994 to gather data about cycling and people who cycle in the city. Since then it has been produced every two years.

We will produce a similar report, in partnership with Sustrans, which will be called 'Bike Life'. Our report will:

- provide current information on Belfast as a cycling city
- initiate an ongoing sustainable change in how we will monitor, evaluate and communicate cycling
- assist in producing a consistent method of collating data which will enable benchmarking and comparative statistics to be carried out in our efforts to increase participation in cycling as an every day mode of transport

The first Belfast 'Bike Life' report will be published in October 2015 followed by another report in October 2017. We plan to continue to produce the report every two years.

In May 2015 Denmark published the world's first country wide report and this is something we hope to produce in the longer term.



7

How will we deliver this strategy?

This strategy has been developed and will be delivered in line with our Departmental Core Values. These are set out below and govern how we work and relate to our people, customers and stakeholders.

- Commitment to Delivery
- Leadership with Purpose
- Teamwork and Participation
- Support for our People
- Learning and Improving
- Working in Partnership
- Professionalism and Corporate Responsibility

7.1 Funding

In 2013 DRD published 'Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation'. This document set out the Minister's priorities for transport and included the need for a better balance between focus on the car and more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. The 'New Approach' underlines the importance of active travel and proposes that walking and cycling should be a viable alternative for many short to medium journeys. Accordingly, it sets out a number of strategic objectives to make cycling an attractive and accessible option that could enable people to access key services. The New Approach also recognised that these objectives could only be delivered if they were appropriately funded.

The need for sufficient resources to drive increased levels of cycling has been the subject of extensive debate in GB and indeed is included in Article 21 of the GB Infrastructure Act (2015). That acknowledgment of the need for sufficient resources followed on from the influential report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on Cycling 'Get Britain Cycling'. Published in April 2013, that report recommended a cycling budget of at least £10 per person per year, increasing to £20. Other stakeholders have identified similar figures. For example, in their response to the draft Bicycle Strategy, Sustrans recommended a direct annual budget for cycling of £10million for urban areas and £2.5million for rural areas.

If this was replicated in Northern Ireland, it would suggest an annual spend of around £12.5million per annum within five years and £18million per annum within 10 years.

Given the current fiscal constraints in Northern Ireland these are highly ambitious figures. However, the Minister is committed to making the case for cycling investment in Northern Ireland both at the Executive table and in Europe. Already this has resulted in an allocation within the Interreg V programme of some €40million for sustainable transport, with a significant emphasis on cycling.

The Minister is committed to making the case for cycling investment in Northern Ireland both at the Executive table and in Europe.



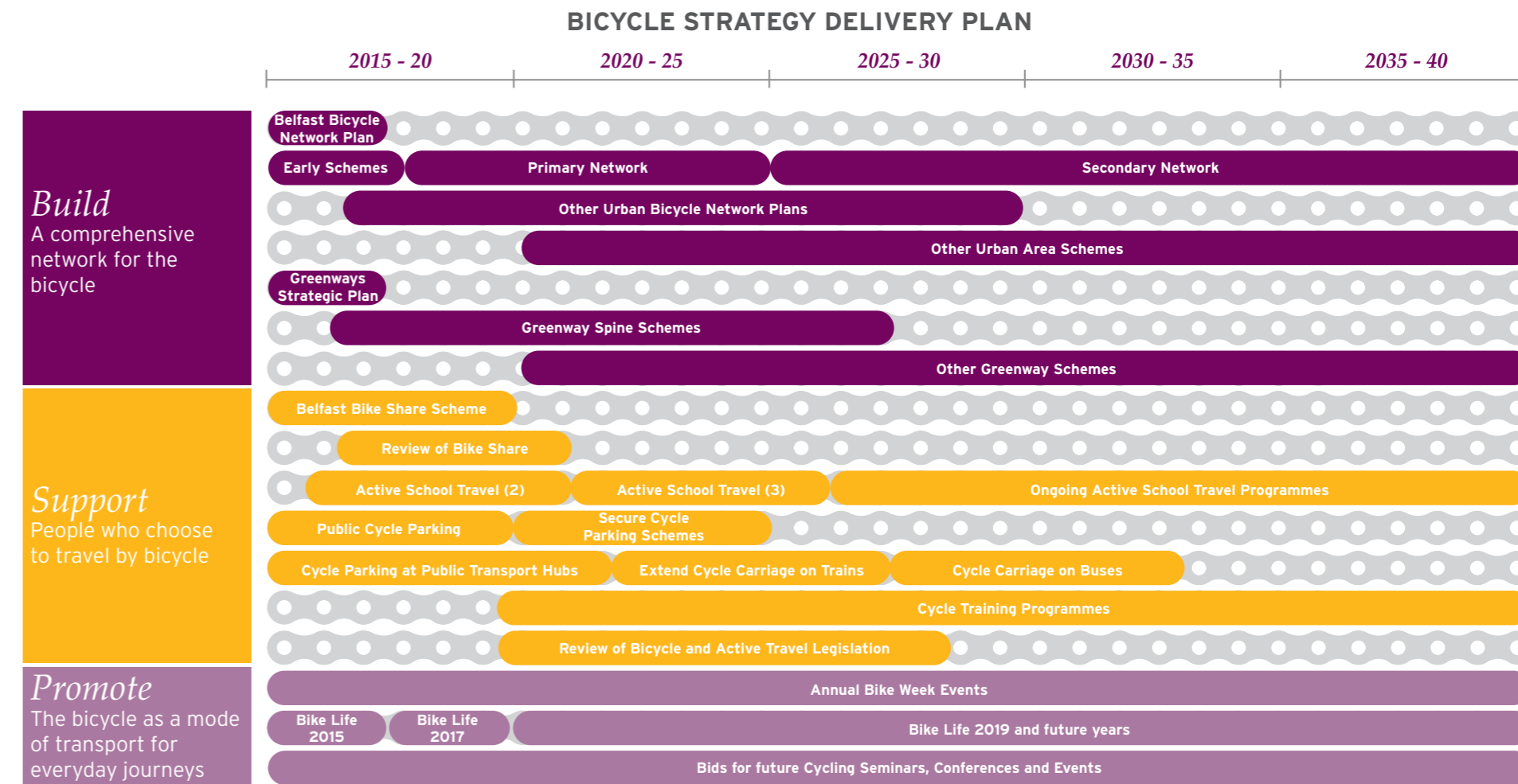
7.2 Timeline

It is important to remember this is a 25 year strategy. There are some aspects of this strategy that we will start working on in the short term. These will be included in the 2015-2020 Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan which is due to be published in autumn of this year. Other aspects of the strategy will be delivered in the medium to long term and will feature more prominently in subsequent delivery plans.

In general terms we want to prioritise the 'Build' and 'Promote' pillars of the strategy in the first 10-15 years of the strategy. As we reach the point of having high quality infrastructure on the ground we anticipate focussing less on the 'Promote' pillar because people will be experiencing and realising the benefits of cycling and prioritising the 'Support' pillar.

Figure 7.1 illustrates how we plan to prioritise elements of the strategy. It is important to note that the projects listed are for illustrative purposes only, this is not intended to be a comprehensive list of everything each Delivery Plan will include as we still plan to avail of opportunities as well as responding to circumstances.

Figure 7.1 Indicative delivery schedule for the Bicycle Strategy (2015-2040)



7.3 Measuring Success

The Minister's ambitions for increasing the number of people choosing to travel by bicycle during the lifetime of this strategy are set out below. Securing the level of resources set out in Section 7.1 will enable us to deliver these ambitions.

Ambitions

By 2025:

- 20% of all journeys less than 1 mile, to be cycled
- 10% of all journeys between 1 and 2 miles, to be cycled
- 5% of all journeys between 2 and 5 miles, to be cycled

By 2040:

- 40% of all journeys less than 1 mile, to be cycled
- 20% of all journeys between 1 and 2 miles, to be cycled
- 10% of all journeys between 2 and 5 miles, to be cycled

Publication of the Strategy will be followed by a Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan which will outline time bound actions. This will form the basis of a monitoring framework which will measure progress towards the Minister's vision and ambitions.

There is a range of data sources that will inform the monitoring of this strategy, including the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI). This is an important source of statistical information on how people in Northern Ireland travel as well as information on trends in personal travel and reasons why they travel. The TSNI is published annually and incorporates data for the previous three years.

We intend to develop specific city wide or local area targets through our 'Bicycle Network Plan' approach. This way targets will reflect local circumstances and avoid the

'one size fits all' approach. This is consistent with what developed cycling cultures such as Denmark and the Netherlands do for their national bicycle strategies.

We will evaluate and report regularly on the overall impact of the Bicycle Strategy in terms of modal shift, both within defined geographical areas and Northern Ireland wide.



ASSESSMENTS

The Bicycle Strategy has been subject to Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998).

The Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan will be subject to a rural proofing exercise.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Active Travel Demonstration Project	Local councils were invited to submit applications for capital funding to support the development of demonstration projects designed to show how active travel can benefit people and communities, the environment and the economy and generate enthusiasm to develop active travel more widely.
Bicycle Account	A report introduced in Copenhagen in 1994 which gathers data about cycling and the people who cycle in Copenhagen
Bicycle Network Plan	A plan which contains detailed proposals for bicycle infrastructure in a defined area
Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan	A plan which will outline specific actions to be taken to deliver the Bicycle Strategy
Bike Life	A biennial report setting out factual and attitudinal data about cycling - a Belfast Bike Life report will be published in 2015 and 2017
Bike to Work Day	An annual event to encourage people to cycle to work
Bike Week	An annual series of events to raise the profile of cycling
Chicanes	A series of two or more build-outs on alternate sides of the road to reduce traffic speeds
Ciclovía	The closure of certain city streets to motorised traffic to make the space available for people and events
DoE	Department of the Environment
DRD	Department for Regional Development
e-bikes	Pedal cycles equipped with an electric motor

EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
Gehl Architects	A Danish company based in Copenhagen that focuses on creating cities for people
Giro d'Italia	The second largest annual bicycle race in the world - primarily held in Italy but starting in other countries in alternate year (in 2014 the start took place in Northern Ireland)
Gran Fondo	A follow on cycling event to the Giro d'Italia which involves a variety of races or rides
Greenways	Off-road routes for walking and cycling - generally developed on dismantled railways or disused canal towpaths
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
Homogenous Interventions	Of the same kind; alike Action taken to improve delivery of a service
MPH	Miles per hour
Multi Modal	Several different modes (eg. bus, train, walk, cycle)
PHA	Public Health Agency
Pilot Scheme	A small-scale experiment or set of observations undertaken to decide how and whether to launch a full-scale project
Public Realm	Publicly owned streets, pathways, rights of way, parks, publicly accessible open spaces and any public and civic building and facilities
Quiet Route	A route with low levels of motorised traffic
RTS	Regional Transportation Strategy

Radial route	A route starting in the centre of an area which goes out to the edge
Sustrans	A charity promoting use of sustainable transport
TSNI	Travel Survey for Northern Ireland
Workplace Travel Plan	A Plan which sets out measures to encourage the adoption of sustainable travel behaviours





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