

LAF Report

6/06/2023

**Windsor Cycle Hub**

The **object** of the CIO is the promotion of community participation in healthy recreation in Windsor by the provision of facilities for cycling.

The **aim** of the Windsor Cycle Hub is to help raise awareness of cycling for everyone throughout the Windsor community through activities to encourage residents and visitors into, or back into cycling. This includes recycling affordable bicycles, teaching mechanical skills, sharing knowledge and resource, and running events and rides. In doing so, WCH will help make Windsor a better and more sustainable place to live. (08/2021)

1. Ongoing context

1.1 The completion of the Cycling Action Plan (2018-28) in May 2018 and its adoption as official RBWM policy in January 2019 had constituted a major milestone for cycling in the Borough with 120 researched, consulted, costed and prioritised schemes for implementation over a 10-year period. The “Windsor Quiet Route” and Maidenhead town centre “Missing Links” project were the two routes completed under the CAP 2018-28 while it was in force.

1.2 Windsor Cycle Hub, Windsor Ascot Maidenhead Active Travel group and the RBWM Disability & Inclusion were amongst those providing feedback on the Borough’s emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan during its development over an approximately 18-month development period beginning with “The Big Conversation” public engagement sessions which ran from August to October 2021.

1.3 The LCWIP has been developed in line with the relevant DfT strategic guidance, introduced in 2017. It incorporates the CAP as its foundation and now forms the full RBWM adopted policy (23/6/22) in respect of cycling, walking and wheeling. The LCWIP’s purpose is to create an interconnecting network of walking and cycling routes across the Borough to enable legible, safe and practical connections for people to access the places that they seek to travel to and from for work, education, leisure and other purposes. <sup>i</sup>

1.3 Following steps to determine the LCWIP’s geographical extent and undertake detailed information gathering, the four final stages necessary to develop the plan were:

3. Network planning for cycling: identifying origin/destination points and create network and improvements required;
4. Network planning for walking: identify key trip generators, core walking zones and routes and improvements required;
5. Prioritising improvements: prioritise improvements to create a phased programme of investment; and
6. Integration and application: distil outputs into policy, strategies and funding delivery plans.

1.4 RBWM states that, “The LCWIP supports and ties into several national, regional and local policies which aim to make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys as well as providing better streets for people to ‘be’ in. Furthermore, the LCWIP will help to contribute to decarbonising the UK economy by 2050 as well as enabling half of all journeys in built-up areas to be walked or cycled by 2030. With over 4,000 additional new homes expected by 2025, and a further 3,500 additional homes expected by 2030 (per the Borough Local Plan) the LCWIP can play a fundamental role in making sure these new developments are served by quality active travel infrastructure.” Through its strategic location near RBWM and NCN cycle routes coupled with its programme of weekly Led Rides, together with the expertise of its volunteers, Windsor Cycle Hub has been able to contribute important information and insight to discussions with RBWM Officers and Elected Members concerning infrastructure, routes, road safety and other relevant matters.

## 2. Community engagement and continuing development

2.1 From early 2022, Windsor Cycle Hub has worked with Maidenhead Cycle Hub and Abri Housing Association on a collaborative project which builds on the Embedding Community Response initiative to address community needs in Clewer and Dedworth following the impact of the covid pandemic and of WCH to develop its capacity as a cycling organisation. WCH's success across the wider Windsor area is especially demonstrated by the ongoing catchment area analysis which has shown an encouraging level of growth in second half of 2022.

2.2 Since its inception and formal launch at the start of Bike Week 2021, WCH has fixed over 245 bikes; run 50 weekly "Bike Kitchens"; seen 5 mechanics receive training; held four Dr. Bike sessions under CyclingUK's "Big Bike Revival" national programme for encouraging people onto bikes; and restored over 17 bikes, of which 6 were sold and 11 gifted to individuals in need, including refugees and the homeless.

2.3 WCH's plan for 2023 is to build on these, including running 4 or more Dr. Bike sessions (now independently of MCH) on the 3rd Sundays of selected months including in Eton Wick, Old Windsor and possibly Datchet as well as new locations in Dedworth, along with further mechanics' training being envisaged. A "mobile bike kitchen" is nearing completion, funded by a grant from The Prince Philip Trust Fund and trialling an e-bike from HurrEcane, Britain's first Pay-as-you-Go Electric Smart Bike subscription service. A new, small storage facility is in the process of being developed to accommodate WCH's gentle expansion.

2.4 WCH, WAMACT and the Disability & Inclusion Forum were invited to take part in a site visit and successful in influencing key details in the LCWIP's inaugural project in Stovell Road and Barry Avenue, Windsor, where works are nearing completion. WCH also contributed to the public consultation on the proposed CY-CLOPS junction at the Mill Lane Roundabout (complete separation of pedestrians & cyclists from motor traffic to reduce conflicts) for which results are awaited.

## 3. Moving forward under a new RBWM Administration

3.1 As reported last June, Cycle hubs are found in an increasing number of locations around the country as the popularity of cycling expands and its importance as a "low-carbon"/"Active Travel" mode of transport continues to rise against the backdrop of climate and environmental change. The health, physical development and well-being implications of exposure to CO2 and other pollutants raises unparalleled urgency for the need to reduce traffic congestion on all roads and within residential, commercial, health and educational centres. While each cycle hub differs in its relationship with factors and conditions specific to its location and geographic context, all will share the common goal of **making cycling "accessible, positive and visible" in the community.**

3.2 This variation is clearly demonstrated in the examples of the Windsor and Maidenhead cycle hubs where the nature of their geographic locations, buildings and other physical infrastructure including proximity to other facilities and existing cycling infrastructure differ greatly. Notwithstanding, what is notable is the way in which both are successfully achieving among other goals:

- embedding cycling in their respective communities
- expanding the popularity and uptake of cycling by a growing range of individuals
- supporting valuable social, recreational and educational opportunities for residents living in and outside of RBWM
- raising the profile of "Active Travel" locally at a time when national transport policy is putting a high focus on the delivery of cycling and walking improvements in all LAs

3.3 We continue to argue that the benefits of cycle hubs are clear on many levels, and hope that comprehensive support for the development of cycle hubs across the Borough will be possible over time. We believe these will

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*assist the RBWM Local Transport Authority to achieve these goals which are integral to the LCWIP, Environment and Climate Strategy, emerging Local Transport Plan, and Borough Local Plan and associated policies and SPDs.*

*Report with contributions from WCH volunteers compiled by*

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<sup>i</sup> [https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/transport\\_local\\_cycling\\_and\\_walking\\_infrastructure\\_plan\\_0.pdf](https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/transport_local_cycling_and_walking_infrastructure_plan_0.pdf)