



Background:
WELLINGBOROUGH
& RUSHDEN
Local Walking,
Wheeling and
Cycling Plan



2024-2034

What is the Wellingborough and Rushden Local Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Plan?

Just another manic Monday - you grab the car keys, bundle the kids in the car, drop off outside the school gates and head for work where you struggle to find a parking space. Sound familiar?

Now imagine your children can safely walk or cycle to school on their own. You can head straight to work and arrive ahead of the crowd... you may even be tempted to try walking or cycling yourself so you can enjoy the fresh air and feel healthier whilst saving a bit of money on fuel.



FEELING SAFE: We know more people in the Wellingborough and Rushden area would like to cycle, for example, or let their children walk to school but due to traffic they don't always feel safe. Parents with pushchairs or prams and mobility scooter users want to be able to easily cross busy junctions and get around safely too.



BENEFITS FOR ALL: There are benefits for everyone if more people travel in active ways for at least some of their everyday short trips - walking, wheeling (using a pushchair, wheelchair or mobility scooter), cycling or scooting. Even people who are driving benefit as it reduces congestion.



EASIER ROUTES: But to make it more attractive for people to do this we need easier, safer routes and better infrastructure - new crossings, separate cycle/scoot paths and more traffic calming.



BUILDING A NETWORK: This document shows the approach we are taking to work with local people and develop a network plan of the safe routes we need. The final network will cover Wellingborough, Rushden and area and will link in to the existing and future Greenway too.



DETAILED PLAN: There will be a final, detailed plan known as an LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan), which local authorities are encouraged to prepare using a set process as part of the Government's plan to increase the number of people walking and cycling.



HAVE YOUR SAY: The plan is almost complete - it just needs local people to give positive feedback through North Northamptonshire Council's formal consultation process.



Why Do We Need to Make it Safer and Easier to Walk, Wheel, Scoot or Cycle and Reduce the Need for So Many Car Journeys in Wellingborough and Rushden Area?

Reduced congestion and parking issues



Reduced road casualties



Cleaner air, less noise pollution



Mental and physical health

Improving walk, cycle, wheel and scoot travel options = Better for everyone



Improved neighbourhoods



Thriving local economy



Action on climate change



Access to jobs, easier recruitment

What Kinds of Improvements Can Be Made?

Parallel crossing: a combined pedestrian and cycle zebra crossing.



Segregated cycleway: a dedicated pathway for bikes that is physically separated from motorised vehicles and pedestrians. These can be one-way or two-way and can be separated by physical barriers such as kerbs or grass verges.



Changing or removing bollards and barriers which are currently causing an obstruction to some users, to improve accessibility and inclusivity of routes.



Secure, well-positioned cycle parking.



Who and What Is Helping to Shape the Plan?

The walking and cycling plan has to meet the needs of a wide range of people in our community - young people, older people, able-bodied and disabled people, parents who travel with small children and people who need to travel for work.

We have been involving many local people and organisations to help form the plan - business networks, NHS, community groups, councillors, members of the public at events and more. We've been doing this through social media, face to face events, news updates, presentations and online surveys where feedback and suggestions have been given.

90% of the time I drive to Rushden Lakes with my bike but I would cycle if this road was safer.

On John Clarke Way there is no signage to show where shared path is for cycling - which side is it?

We need good cycle routes to and near schools and sports facilities.



Social Media Posts

Public engagement events

Stakeholder workshops

Our team have also looked at local data: where people travel to and from, low income areas where people are less likely to have a car, casualty data so danger spots can be prioritised and so on. We have also walked and cycled the existing routes ourselves so we can see what can be improved and how.



All the route plans are in line with the government's new strict standards for quality cycling infrastructure:

- Old methods such as merely painting lines on roads to mark a cycle path are no longer accepted.
- Where possible, people walking should be given space away from people cycling or scooting, who should also have their own space away from cars and lorries.
- It's also about improving pavement quality, dropped kerbs and crossings etc to make walking and wheeling easier for all.



Questions You May Have



When could the routes be built?

It depends on the route, the priorities, local support and the funding available. It's a 10 year plan but some will hopefully be started in the next two or three years. However none are guaranteed to be built and we will ask local residents and businesses for their views on detailed plans first.

Is this the same as the Greenway?

The Greenway is a separate network but will link into and form part of this network. Parts of the Nene Valley Greenway - the walk and cycle route that roughly follows the River Nene - have already been built and more is already planned, particularly to link Rushden Lakes with Wellingborough.

Where will the money come from to pay for the new network?

There are a variety of sources. The Department for Transport has funding which it will allocate to areas where schemes have been well-planned and have the support of their local communities. In addition some funding could come from other places such as contributions from housing developers.

There are routes not shown on the plan which I think should be included - what about those?

This plan is about creating an overall network but has to focus initially on a limited number of main routes. Other routes can be suggested and may be added, depending on the stage of the plan's development.

Is there enough space to build all these two-way cycle lanes between pavements and roads?

Many of our local roads are wider than they need to be and there is space to add the extra cycleways. By narrowing the road for motor vehicles it can also help reduce excessive speed and cut road casualties as well as make the area more attractive for walking and cycling. In some situations where it is too narrow, eg due to large trees, the cycleway may need to be shared with pedestrians for a short distance.

What about parking spaces?

In some areas, some street-side parking could be reduced. However, before doing this we would need to understand what is really needed so it can be managed fairly - for example having loading bays outside shops or short term parking so people can pop in to businesses but not park there all day. By taking out parking spaces for a few people, it could mean many more people are able to safely cycle or walk instead; we need to weigh up the overall benefits and manage any changes fairly.

How will this benefit me - I prefer to drive everywhere?

By making it easier and safer for more people to walk, wheel, scoot or cycle, it will help reduce the congestion that is building up on our roads so everyone will benefit including those still in cars. If you spend a lot of time driving older children around, you may not need to once there are safe cycle routes as they will be more able to travel independently.

By providing more safe, green, active travel options everyone wins.



This document version is provided as background information for the Wellingborough and Rushden Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. 2024.