

## RAPC 447/21

### NEW FOREST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

### RESOURCES, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – 1 March 2021

#### Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Report by Jim Mitchell, Interpretation and Outreach Manager

#### 1 Summary:

- 1.1 The New Forest NPA is working in partnership with Hampshire County Council (Lead Partner), New Forest District Council, Forestry England and a range of other partners to produce a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) over the coming year. This paper summarises what a LCWIP is and how this fits with wider partnership work on transport and recreation management.

#### 2 Recommendation:

The New Forest National Park Authority agrees to continue to work with partners over the coming year to prepare a New Forest LCWIP, and that officers should report to RAPC on progress.

#### 3 Background

- 3.1 Since 2017, the Government's recommended way of planning and prioritising walking and cycling infrastructure at the local level has been through the preparation of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). An LCWIP covers a 10-year period.

- 3.2 The key outputs of LCWIPs are:

- a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development
- a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment
- a report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network

LCWIPs are linked to the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and those who have plans are well placed to make the case for future investment. LCWIPs also guide other infrastructure development as local and regional funds become available.

- 3.3 LCWIPs have been produced or are in production in several areas of Hampshire already, including:

- New Forest Waterside: in 2020 workshops were held to gain local views on the Waterside LCWIP which was produced as part of the Southampton Transforming Cities Fund. This covered the predominantly urban area from Totton down to Calshot.

This work is shortly to be issued for consultation and will feed into the wider New Forest LCWIP.

- Test Valley Borough Council have produced a draft LCWIP in 2020. This has identified links from the wider Borough to large settlements and cities, but didn't cover in any detail the area of the borough within the National Park so areas in Test Valley within the National Park and close to it could be considered in the New Forest LCWIP
- East Hampshire produced a LCWIP in 2020 which is available [to view online](#).
- Havant, Eastleigh and Winchester City (in production)

## **4 New Forest context and geographical scope**

### **4.1 The context for the New Forest LCWIP includes:**

- The climate and nature emergency and the commitment nationally and locally to become net zero by 2050, which will require substantial lifestyle and transport behaviour changes.
- Hampshire County Council Local Transport Plan 4, which in its high-level consultation (ended 28 February) highlights the need to move a significant proportion of journeys from the car to walking and cycling over the period to 2050.
- The very special highly protected landscape of the New Forest and the special qualities of the National Park and impacts by present and future traffic, including road traffic accidents, loss of tranquillity, physical damage to habitats and air quality issues.
- Behaviour changes from Covid-19, including an increase in interest in cycling and walking, increased demand for outdoor space and attitudes to private cars / public transport.
- Health inequalities increased by Covid-19 including existing health conditions caused by rural isolation and loneliness, low income and deprivation and access to nature and greenspace.

4.2 LCWIPs are primarily about 'utility' journeys, such as travel to the shops, work, school and to onward transport hubs. In the New Forest we recognise the need to ensure recreational journeys are also considered. The LCWIP will therefore follow the principle actions in the Recreation Management Strategy, where relevant. The RMS steering group has indicated its initial support for the development of the LCWIP.

4.3 The geographical area covered by the New Forest LCWIP is the whole of the New Forest District and the whole of National Park, noting that some work has already been undertaken in a draft Waterside LCWIP which in due course will be incorporated into the overall approach.

## **5 LCWIP partnership**

5.1 The operational partnership is overseen by a steering group consisting of officers from HCC (Lead Partner), NFDC, Forestry England and the New Forest NPA. The four partners are sharing the costs associated with the production of the LCWIP and will be aided by the organisation Sustrans which delivers services to help HCC produce LCWIPs across the county.

5.2 Progress will be reported to RAPC as a key part of the 2021-22 Work Programme and the draft LCWIP will come to the full Authority for approval.

- 5.3 There are a number of important statutory partners who are or will be closely involved in the process, including Wiltshire Council, Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council, Test Valley Borough Council, Southampton City Council, Natural England and the Verderers of the New Forest.
- 5.4 There will be a comprehensive programme of engagement with local communities to both identify the issues and opportunities and to consult on the proposed priorities for the 10-year period of the plan. There will be a workshop in the spring to which members will be invited to help inform the priorities and issues around walking and cycling in local communities. An online method for the wider public to highlight issues in their communities will also be in place during the first half of 2021.
- 5.5 On behalf of the LCWIP partnership we gave presentations to the four quadrant meetings in January and February. The presentation has stimulated discussion and Town and Parish representatives have welcomed early engagement. Each Town and Parish has been asked to nominate a link person for the LCWIP process who will be invited to the March workshop. In addition, we have presented to the Recreation Management Strategy Advisory Group, New Forest Zero Carbon Alliance and New Milton Town Council working group (with NFDC).

## 6 Process and timescale

- 6.1 The LCWIP will use the six-stage process outlined within Department for Transport (DfT) guidance, as follows.
- **Determining Scope** – e.g. Geographical scope, governance and steering, consideration of walking and cycling within towns/zones/countryside, including access/interchange with public transport.
  - **Gathering Information** - Identify existing patterns of walking and cycling and potential new journeys. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to cycling and walking.
  - **Network Planning for Cycling** - Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows including desire lines. Audit existing provision identifying barriers and determine the type of improvements required. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required. Key aim of this stage is to establish preferred cycle routes and improvements. Reference to latest Government guidance in preparing plan.
  - **Network Planning for Walking** - Identify key trip generators, including origin and destination points, core walking zones and routes. Audit existing provision, identifying barriers and determining the type of improvements required.
  - **Prioritising Improvements** - prioritise improvements for both walking and cycling to develop a phased programme for future investment.
  - **Integration and Application** - Integrate the Delivery Plan into local planning and transport policies and strategies.

- 6.2 The LCWIP output will include a written report detailing the following:
- Potential for walking and cycling using key data sets and sources
  - Methodologies
  - Examples of best practice
  - Mapping of identified routes including key locations and trip attractors
  - Audit of each route with location specific suggestions for future investigation
  - Prioritised list of potential schemes/approach for identified routes
  - Preparation of high-level costs for implementation
  - Identification of potential funding sources

- 6.3 The indicative timescale for the LCWIP is outlined in the table below (although this could change due to external factors):

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Determining scope	Geographical area defined Methodology prepared Assessment of propensity for walking and cycling	Until end April 2021
Gathering information	Desk based, workshop and wider stakeholder engagement	Until end May 2021
Network planning	Workshop and wider stakeholder engagement Defined network mapping for audits including key walking zones, cycling and walking network maps Survey of potential routes Auditing of existing and proposed routes	Until end July 2021
Prioritising improvements	Explain the methodology and discuss how priorities were arrived These will be reviewed following feedback from consultation. Tables outlining the cycling and walking infrastructure programme, including proposed intervention, priority & high-level cost. Map of proposed interventions	Autumn 2021
Integration and application	Public consultation Approval at full Authority meeting, HCC and NFDC	Winter 2021/22

## 7. Resources and impact

- 7.1 Within the Recreation Management and Learning Team, we have formed a sustainable access project team which looks at active travel, sustainable transport and access. The LCWIP draws on officer time from the Access Ranger, Sustainable Visitor Experience Officer, Inclusive Cycling Ride Leader and Interpretation and Outreach Manager, with advice from the Policy Manager. The work will require £10k towards the

overall costs of the LCWIP production (total approx. £35k), spread between the 2020/21 and the 2021/22 programme fund. The key benefit to the New Forest of this piece of work will be that it will provide an agreed partnership approach to prioritising investment in walking and cycling infrastructure over the coming decade, for the best return on investment.

### **Recommendation**

The New Forest National Park Authority agrees to continue to work with partners over the coming year to prepare a New Forest LCWIP, and that officers should report to RAPC on progress.

### **Contact:**

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**Equality Impact Assessment:**    **Inclusive design will form part of the LCWIP planning process**