

Samantha Timms
Senior Committee Administrator
Democratic Services
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

11 June 2008

Dear Ms Timms,

Town Forum

I would like to float an idea before the Town Forum to see if there is any common ground with others.

A town centre cycle path

In essence I would like to see a cycle path around the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons providing safe cycling and all- weather walking.

Link to national Cycle Routes

I greatly enjoy use of the off -road cycle path along Pembury Road. However this ends in Pembury village with a road link to National Cycle route 18 and starts in town with a cycle lane in Calverley Park Gardens. National Cycle route 21 lies just to the South West. Tunbridge Wells could support our national cycle route system by better linking these routes.

Obesity, heart disease and safety

Meeting concerns for obesity and heart disease an off-road cycle track in town would encourage more people to be active and reduce demand on the NHS. Safe off-road cycling would reduce traffic accidents.

Sponsorship

There may be sponsorship interest from the property company which owns the Lordship of the Manor. Bike firms may be interested and organisations like Sustrans. There are organisations like the Heart Foundation, Sports Council etc who might sponsor. There may even be EU funding available.

Promotion

With the BBC and Kent Courier on the doorstep there are opportunities for the Town Council to obtain positive publicity in supporting such a venture.

Pre-condition

An absolute pre-condition would be the agreement of the Commons Conservators, but the benefit for them would be in the reduction of unauthorised mountain bike use and increased pedestrian access. An all weather perimeter track would benefit from free street lighting and extend safe walking in winter months.

Yours sincerely

Jim McGrath representative from
Norfolk Grange (Tunbridge Wells) Mgt. Co. Ltd
6 Suffolk Mews, York Road, TN1 1JE

Bristol named first cycling city

Bristol has become England's first "cycling city" in a £100m government scheme aimed at encouraging cycling.

The city intends to double the number of cyclists over the next three years with a series of innovations.

Sharing the funding will be York, Stoke, Blackpool, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Leighton Buzzard, Southend, Shrewsbury, Southport and Woking.

Among the features in Bristol will be the UK's first major bicycle rental network, modelled on a scheme in Paris.

The government is giving Bristol £11.4m to transform cycling by creating dedicated cycle lanes, better facilities and more training for children.

The local area will match this funding to bring the total investment package to about £23m.

Transport Secretary Ruth Kelly said: "I am delighted to appoint Bristol as the UK's first ever cycling city. I am sure that Bristol's bold and ambitious plans will support cyclists and encourage more people to get on their bikes, get fit and beat the traffic.

"Bristol is leading the way. I hope that many more will follow its excellent example."

As well as Bristol, 11 other towns and cities in England have been designated "cycling demonstration" areas, and will get funding to improve infrastructure, bike parking and cycle training.

Six other English towns and cities have held demonstration area status since 2005; the Department for Transport says they have seen a significant increase in cycling.

The Public Health Minister and Bristol South MP Dawn Primarolo said the scheme would help tackle growing levels of obesity in the UK.

"For most people, a great way to keep healthy is by building physical activity into everyday life, such as cycling to work or school," she said.

"The first step in persuading people to leave their cars at home is to offer them a real choice."

Phillip Darnton, chair of Cycling England, agreed, but said it was important that proper training was given.

"Nobody is suggesting you dump somebody, particularly a young person, on a bike," he said.

"We don't drop them in the deep end of swimming pools, you've got to learn properly, there's a national standard called bike ability and that's what we're urging people to do and we have some funding to help."

Councillor Helen Holland, leader of Bristol City Council, said:

"Our aim is to make the bicycle a real alternative for many more people travelling to and around Bristol.

"This award, and the funding that it brings, will enable us to progress with a raft of off and

on-road improvements which will encourage more people to chose pedal power to make a real difference to their own and our city's health and environment."

Among the city's innovative proposals are the creation of the UK's first on-street bike rental network and setting up a scheme to repair bikes and provide them free of charge to people in deprived communities.

BRISTOL'S CYCLING PLANS

Create the UK's first on-street bike rental network

Establish a 're-cycling' scheme that repairs bikes and provides them free of charge to deprived communities
Build state-of-the-art facilities for cyclists commuting to the city centre

Create a dedicated cycleway to link the suburbs with the city centre

More than double the number of children receiving cycling training

Develop a Personalised Travel Plan programme, focusing on changing the way people conduct short journeys to work

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/england/bristol/7462791.stm>

Published: 2008/06/19 08:39:54 GMT

© BBC MMVIII