

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Economy and Growth Select Committee

16 September 2021

TITLE:	Safer Walk and Ride Initiative
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Damien Greenhalgh- Deputy Leader & Executive Councillor for Regeneration, Tourism and Leisure
CONTACT OFFICER:	Sarah Porru – Head of Regeneration
WARDS INVOLVED:	Buxton Central

Appendices Attached –

- A 1 Cycle Route Map Update Sept 2020**
- A 2 Buxton Walk and Cycle Routes - HPBC Site Specific**
- A 3 Buxton Walk and Ride Park Implications**
- A4 DCC DfT Active Travel Tranche 3 Proposal**

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 This report is to update members on progress of Buxton Town Team's proposal to create a Walk and Ride Network in Buxton.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the work of the Town Team to develop the Walk & Ride Network to date and to note the potential implications for the Council if the project were to be fully endorsed

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 Buxton Town Team volunteers have developed a proposal for a Walk & Ride Network through Buxton town centre which is designed to provide a pedestrian and cycle link from residential areas to all schools and FE college, town centre parks and two business areas (Waterswallows and Staden Lane)
- 3.2 The Walk & Ride Network is a Buxton Town Team proposal. HPBC are not leading or responsible for the project. DCC are the lead authority for the project.

3.3 BTT stated objectives are to;

- encourage a shared space concept for all and for each to recognise that all have equal rights to move freely and safely.
- to open up, experimentally, off road routes to allow people to walk and cycle through and around the town – to work, education and for shopping and appointments.
- to gain further feedback on the Safer Walk & Ride Network concept already planned
- to develop a 'new normal' of movement through modal shift.
- to reduce car use.

3.4 A map of the routes is attached at appendix A 1

3.5 The routes across Council land which would require consent for cycling are as follows with summary comments from Council Service Development officers. Full comments attached at appendix A 2;

- Paths through Ashwood Park and Ashwood Park to Granby Road: In general, although not built to accommodate cycling, most of the routes through the park are acceptable if cycling is agreed in principle. Signage would be needed, especially at pinch points where paths cross or where visibility isn't great.
- Spring Gardens (currently one way in two halves) cycle in both directions throughout length: DCC and HPBC to consider how space could be allocated to minimise conflict with pedestrians/shoppers. Would require DCC to do TRO (Traffic Regulation Order).
- Broad Walk - stopping up order in 1970s no right of way except on foot: This route is probably the most physically accessible to accommodate walking and cycling due to its width. However, would need signage to help reduce conflict between pedestrians/cyclists. Broad Walk is not owned by HPBC, so permissions might be an issue here. DCC to pursue further with legal at DCC.
- Footpaths Buxton 56, 57,58 require HPBC permission for DCC Public Rights of Way to resurface and take on maintenance: Surface one of the routes across Temple Fields that is an existing public right of way. Southerly footpath across Temple Fields i.e. a short section of HP4/56 where it leaves DCC land and the whole of HP4/57 to its junction with Fern Road (HP4/55). Although not the most direct route for anyone heading across Temple Fields between the A515 and Green Lane, it makes more sense in terms of the longer-term ambition to provide a route into Harpur Hill.
- Footpath Buxton 55 from junction with Buxton 57 skirting Sherbrook wood via open space off Ferneydale Avenue (would require liaison with DWT who manage the space): Part of this route includes Ferneydale Local Nature Reserve. The Council would need to be kept involved with the route if this can be

agreed by all parties.

- Footpath 73 From Route 2 (Broad Walk) through Pavilion Gardens to Burlington Rd: Broad Walk is not owned by HPBC, so permissions might be an issue here. DCC to pursue further with legal at DCC. This route is probably the most physically accessible to accommodate walking and cycling due to its width. However, would need signage to help reduce conflict between pedestrians/ cyclists.
- Path through Serpentine Burlington Road to St John's Road: This site is similar to Ashwood Park in terms of its layout with the paths. There is little physical improvement on site if cycling is approved in principle. Signage will be needed at entrances, and at pinch points where paths cross/join and visibility is limited.
- Footpath Buxton 66 – part of onward route to Cavendish Golf Club and residential area around The Park Gadley Lane to St John's Road: If included, the issues would be similar to that of Ashwood Park and The Serpentine – predominantly the need for signage but no major physical improvements.

3.6 Council officers from a number of service areas have reviewed the proposed routes with DCC Sustainable Travel officers (see identified issues Appendix 3) and whilst promotion of sustainable transport and improved cycle and pedestrian access are to be welcomed, there are some possible conflicts with other town centre projects, pedestrian flow and access requirements and existing highway infrastructure.

3.7 It is proposed that further work is required, led by DCC with support from Town Team, to understand the route risks and hazards across Council land along with financial risks and liability risks, to identify capital works required and to understand the longer term management and maintenance implications. A further report will be presented at this time.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The Safer Walk & Ride Network will contribute to the following aims of the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023 but is not a named Corporate priority project:

- Aim one: Supporting our communities to create a healthier, safer, cleaner High Peak
- Aim four: To protect and improve the environment including responding to the climate emergency

5. **Alternative Options**

5.1 This report is for information only and therefore there are no alternative options.

6. Implications

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

There are no immediate implications from this report, but full consideration of community safety and liabilities will need to be considered before any decisions are taken to permit change of use on Council owned property.

6.2 Workforce

Officer time from Regeneration, Parks & Leisure and Legal would be required to review the routes and prepare recommendations. This will have implications in terms of staff capacity to deliver on identified corporate plan projects, especially in Regeneration.

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

The routes would make it easier to move around Buxton for residents who don't have access to a vehicle but could adversely impact on people with disabilities. High Peak Access Group has previously opposed proposals for shared use pedestrian spaces. Consultation with HPAG and an equality impact assessment will be required and their views considered prior to any decision to support change of use on Council owned property.

6.4 Financial Considerations

Cost and maintenance implications for any changes to support proposals need to be fully investigated prior to any decision to support change of use on Council owned property.

6.5 Legal

Byelaws and permissions will need to be reviewed for pedestrian and cycle use.

6.6 Climate Change

Increase in walking and cycling could reduce vehicle carbon emissions.

6.7 Consultation

DCC will be required to consult with Ward councillors, High Peak Access Group and ensure full liaison with FHSF and HAZ Delivery Boards and Project Managers. Initial public consultation on the Buxton Town Team proposals has been completed as part of their sustainable travel plan proposals. Further consultation will be required if DCC are successful with the funding bid.

6.8 Risk Assessment

The risk assessment of the routes is managed by Buxton Town Team but a full risk assessment in terms of financial and legal risks to the Council will need to be considered prior to any decision to

approve change of use for land in council ownership.

Neil Rodgers
Executive Director (Place)

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

Buxton Town Team
<https://www.buxtontownteam.org/safer-walk-ride-network>

Contact details

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7. Detail

Background

- 7.1 Buxton on the Move conference was held on 9th March 2016. From this Buxton Town Team formed an Access, Parking, Traffic and Transport Group. Having undertaken residents' surveys, organised events and gathered a wide range of data, BTT are developing a whole town Sustainable Travel Plan. A major element of that is to encourage more walking and cycling to allow safe and easy movement around town away from busy main roads.
- 7.2 Many towns are constrained by narrow streets with little prospect of installing cycle lanes on the highway. Government advice is currently to walk or cycle where possible to school or place of work to minimise risk of Covid transmission.
- 7.3 Buxton is an important centre nationally for quarrying as well as being a busy tourist destination surrounded by the Peak District National Park. There is also a substantial housing development programme. This means that with narrow streets and the necessary HGV movements, coupled with year-round tourism, inexperienced cyclists maybe deterred from cycling.
- 7.4 There are currently five proposed routes:
- Pump Room to Waterswallows with spur to Dove Holes
 - Pump Room to Fairfield via Morrison's
 - Pump Room to Harpur Hill with spur to Poole's Cavern
 - Pump Room to Burbage with spur to Gadley Lane
 - Pump Room to Harpur Hill via Market Place and Staden
- 7.5 The appendix A 2 Buxton Safer Walk and Cycle Routes - HPBC Site Specific contains reviews of each route by DCC and HPBC officers
- 7.6 Summary of land ownership on the proposed routes

Area	Ownership
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Ashwood Park	HPBC
Fairfield Common (track across golf course)	HPBC
Pavilion Gardens	HPBC
Serpentine	HPBC
Temple Fields	HPBC
Footpath 66 to access Gadley Land	HPBC
Routes on road	DCC Highways
Spring Gardens	DCC Highways
Conway's DIY - Station Approach	Private ownership
Footpath 70 behind station	DB Cargo
Broadwalk	DCC investigating

- 7.7 DCC would be responsible for project management and adopting the cycle route management on public highways. Member consultation will be undertaken by BTT as part of the wider sustainable travel plan consultation, with further consultation via DCC if their funding proposals are successful.
- 7.8 Increased cycling, walking and reduced car use supports the aspiration of a carbon neutral Borough by 2030 and DCC's ambition of net zero carbon by 2050 or sooner.
- 7.9 The identified routes by the Buxton Town Team would benefit local people wanting to make local daily journeys and can also link to wider cycle routes such as the White Peak Loop and DCC Key Cycle Network and could encourage more people to cycle and help ease congestion.
- 7.10 However, the proposed routes via pedestrianised roadways could also present a potential conflict of use with objectives to increase pedestrian footfall and dwell time within town centre and key tourism destinations and there is an increased risk of pedestrian/cycle accidents.
- 7.11 Issues related to Conservation area status, associated approvals for any signage or physical alterations and implications for road traffic flow if new crossings are added also need further investigation.
- 7.12 A number of the proposed routes, notably at the western end of Spring Gardens, the newly refurbished Crescent forecourt, and within Pavilion Gardens have high levels of pedestrian use which could be therefore be adversely impacted.
- 7.13 In addition, the public realm is currently subject to both a Heritage Action Zone and Future High Street Fund regeneration projects to encourage business diversification, dwell time, increase visitor footfall and improve the heritage setting of the area. The Town Team proposals must be considered in line with

this to ensure compatibility with wider aspirations to support business sustainability and increased pedestrian footfall.

- 7.14 Whilst BTT had hoped to open up these routes on a trial basis in the short term, to assess suitability and use, it is understood that this would not be feasible without considerable capital works to make the routes safe and usable.
- 7.15 DCC have submitted a speculative bid to the Department of Transport's (DfT) Active Travel Fund – Tranche 3 which could support delivery of the Buxton Walk and Ride network if successful and if identified issues can be resolved satisfactorily.