

# **Tonbridge & Malling Cycling Strategy**

2013-2018

A report prepared by

Kent County Council

with support from

Sustrans

and

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. National and Local Policy Overview .....	5
3. Local Priorities.....	7
4. Improving the Cycle Network .....	8
5. Maintenance of the Cycle Network .....	10
6. Safer Cycling.....	11
7. Promoting Cycling in Tonbridge and Malling.....	12
8. Monitoring the Cycling Strategy .....	13
9. Proposed Development of the Cycle Network: .....	14
A. Tonbridge Area .....	15
B. Medway Gap.....	17
C. Snodland .....	19
D. Kings Hill .....	20
E. Medway Valley East .....	21
F. Inter-urban Links .....	21
References .....	23
Appendix .....	24

## 1. Introduction

This Cycling Strategy is a collection of policies and related action plans that work together to promote cycling and the development of appropriate cycling facilities throughout Tonbridge and Malling Borough. The Strategy was originally drafted by Sustrans, working in partnership with officers from Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, as well as local cyclists. It builds on the previous strategy "Putting the Wheels in Motion", published in September 1998.

It is recognised that there are many advantages in providing and encouraging cycling as a viable alternative form of transport, exercise and as a source of recreational enjoyment. Everyone should have the opportunity for independent mobility, and in order to achieve this it is vital to consider the street environment and infrastructure. The vision is to create an environment, particularly in the urban areas within the Borough, where people of all ages and abilities feel able to cycle safely, easily and enjoy the experience.

Cycling offers a truly door-to-door transport solution. It is often quicker than motorised forms of transport for short journeys and provides an affordable means of travel for most. Over 40% of all journeys made are less than two miles, and almost 70% of all journeys made are less than 5 miles; of which 69% are made by car (Department for Transport, 2005).

Cycling is fun and an ideal activity for all the family. It provides an opportunity to enjoy sights and sounds during journeys that cannot be experienced in a motor vehicle. It offers access to areas that are often too far for many to walk from car parks. It also boosts local spending as cyclists tend to shop locally and spend more as they do not carry large stores of provisions on a journey. Cycling is reported to be worth £2.9bn to the UK economy with the average cyclist spending £230 per annum (London School of Economics, 2011). Therefore an increase in cycling in the Borough has potential to improve the local economy.

The aim of this Strategy is to release some of the suppressed demand to cycle, particularly in the urban areas. A third of students at secondary schools would like to cycle yet very often the actual figure is 2% (Sustrans, 2006). Continuity of route is the key to getting more people to cycle safely and this strategy looks to join the many disparate cycle routes in the urban areas of the Borough.

A relatively short but very attractive cycle route was opened in the Borough in 2005 linking Tonbridge and Penshurst and forms part of the National Cycle Network. Signed as Regional Route 12, it is proving very popular with 60652 users in 2012 and has been voted to be one of the most scenic routes in Britain ([http://www.visitengland.com/en/Things-to-do/Outdoor-England/Scenic-Cycle-Routes.htm?SL\\_ClassKey=1](http://www.visitengland.com/en/Things-to-do/Outdoor-England/Scenic-Cycle-Routes.htm?SL_ClassKey=1)). The route forms part of a longer route known as the Tudor Trail which will extend Regional Route 12 to Hever and Edenbridge.

We need to improve conditions for cyclists, enhance the safety of cycling, provide more cycle parking, and integrate cycling within other relevant initiatives. The Strategy has unashamedly concentrated on routes in the urban areas of Tonbridge and the Medway Gap because this is where most people live and where most new development will take place in the coming years. That said there is also merit in providing the missing links identified in the National Cycle Network to encourage inter-urban travel and cycle tourism.

In a challenging financial climate, funding for new transport infrastructure is limited. However, opportunities will continue to present themselves and it is vital to have a well planned and prepared cycling strategy to enable us to take full advantage of them.

## 2. National and Local Policy Overview

This Strategy is influenced by and interacts with a range of national and local policies and strategies. This chapter briefly outlines the current policy context within which the Strategy has been prepared.

### National Cycling Policy Overview

The Department for Transport and Department of Health jointly published the **Active Travel Strategy** in 2009, which aims to put walking and cycling at the heart of the local transport and public health agendas. The Strategy emphasises the importance and benefits of active travel; in terms of health, the environment and the economy. Its guiding principle is that walking and cycling should be the mode of choice for most journeys. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidance in November 2012 (PHG41); on **Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation** which has been taken into account within this strategy.

### Local Cycling Policy Overview

The third **Local Transport Plan for Kent (2011-16)** sets out Kent County Council (KCC)'s policies and delivery plans for the management and improvement of the local transport network. It has five principal themes, all of which include cycling as an aspect; 'Growth Without Gridlock', 'A Safer and Healthier County', 'Supporting Independence', 'Tackling A Changing Climate' and 'Enjoying Life in Kent'.

*Growth Without Gridlock* is based on measures in Kent's Growth Areas and Growth Points that support housing and employment as well as the management and maintenance of the countywide road network. This includes cycle routes as an important factor, in particular with regard to reducing traffic congestion.

*A Safer and Healthier County* brings together a variety of partners working towards a number of common aims, including promoting active travel.

*Supporting Independence* aims to improve access to services and opportunities, particularly for those who do not have access to a car. Part of this involves improvements to cycling infrastructure, enabling efficient and cost effective access to services without the use of vehicles.

*Tackling a Changing Climate* looks to reduce transport emissions (in conjunction with the new Kent Environment Strategy) through the promotion of greener travel.

Finally, *Enjoying Life in Kent* recognises the wider role that transport can play in improving our quality of life. This includes improving cycling access within the countryside.

The **Countryside Access Improvement Plan (2007-2017)** (CAIP) is KCC's strategy to increase usage and enjoyment of Public Rights of Way (PROW) and open green spaces in Kent. The county's vast network of paths should be a gateway for residents and visitors to explore Kent's wildlife, history, and landscapes. The CAIP seeks to develop the PROW network to increase sustainable access to these features.

## **Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework**

The **Local Development Framework, 2007-2021** (LDF), for Tonbridge and Malling is a key planning document setting out the Borough's vision, aims and objectives, which will determine the future pattern of development over the Borough. Within this document the main development locations have been identified, therefore will help when planning key cycle routes throughout the Borough. The extract below identifies the areas for development within the Borough:

“New development will therefore be concentrated at the main urban areas of the Medway Gap (including Kings Hill and Snodland), Tonbridge and the Walderslade part of the Medway Towns urban area and at those larger rural settlements that have a range of services or reasonable access to them. New development will be located within the built-up areas of these settlements mainly on previously developed land or by conversion of existing buildings. In addition, there are four major brownfield sites where development has already been permitted which will accommodate and ensure delivery of the major part of the Borough's strategic housing requirement up to 2021. Development elsewhere, in the countryside and at smaller rural settlements more remote from services, will be more restricted. No greenfield sites will be required for housing development to meet strategic needs up to 2021.” The four major brownfield sites that have been identified are: Holborough, Kings Hill, Leybourne Grange, and Peters Pit.

### 3. Local Priorities

#### Why Cycle?

The role of walking and cycling in helping to create liveable towns and cities and promoting health improvement and social inclusion has not always been fully acknowledged by government and the health authorities in the past. Recently, however, the link between transport, physical activity and health has been highlighted in the Chief Medical Officer's Report (2009) and by the British Medical Association (BMA) in its report Healthy Transport = Healthy Lives (2009). Warnings about the health consequences of an increasingly sedentary society are now widely reported and it has been estimated that the cost of transport-related physical inactivity in England costs the economy £9.8 million per year. This is in addition to the estimated £2.5 billion annual healthcare cost of treating obesity.

The BMA outlines the recognised health benefits associated with active travel, which include:

- improved mental health
- a reduced risk of premature death
- prevention of chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, dementia, and cancer

Furthermore, walking and cycling are effective ways of integrating, and increasing, levels of physical activity into everyday life. However, the BMA suggests that there has been underinvestment in walking and cycling infrastructure to date.

Cycling in urban areas can improve air quality through reducing congestion and the local air pollution that comes with it, as well as reducing the carbon emissions that can cause climate change. It has been reported that air pollution reduces life expectancy by 7-8 months, which has the equivalent economic impact of £20 billion per year, (Air Quality Strategy, 2007). Cycling can therefore help increase life expectancy and decrease the economic impact of air pollution; particularly in an urban area like Tonbridge.

Cycling also brings benefits to the local economy. The Viking Coastal Trail (VCT) Study has shown that this goes beyond cycle equipment. The VCT is a 28 mile multi-purpose route within Thanet, opened in 2001 and has since been very well used. The study looked into the economic benefits that the route brought and it was found that many cyclists stopped at cafes and pubs along the route. Other business that also benefited from the route include local attractions such as museums, historic houses, and accommodation providers. The success of the trail has led to many businesses catering for the needs of cyclists, thus recognising the positive impact that they continue to have on the local economy.

## 4. Improving the Cycle Network

New routes will be designed to provide safe, continuous links between communities and popular destinations such as shops, schools, leisure centres and work places. To ensure the highest possible standards, Local Transport Note (LTN) 02/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design will be the standard guidance underpinning the design and construction of new cycle infrastructure. Additional guidance will include LTN 01/12, Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists, Manual for Streets II and the Kent Design Guide.

There is also a role within land use planning to enable users of new developments to undertake more journeys on foot or by bike. A hierarchy of users has been developed, which can assist in prioritising the needs of different transport modes where there are conflicting demands on carriageway space, or there is incompatibility in the highway layouts suiting different modes. A set of minimum requirements must be met if the infrastructure is to be Convenient, Accessible, Safe, Comfortable and Attractive for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Cycling England produced a report with the Department for Transport, based upon evidence from continental Europe and the English Cycling Demonstration Towns, suggesting that a £10 per head investment is required nationally to significantly increase cycling. Their results indicated that cycling levels rose by 10-50% after this level of investment coupled with a carefully considered strategy. The report also found that for every £1 invested in cycling, the value of decreased mortality is £2.59, thus investing in cycling offers high value for money.

**Policy 1:** A network of high quality routes will be completed in the urban areas of Tonbridge and the Medway Gap providing convenient and safe access throughout those areas. The network will include routes to and from the surrounding countryside. Detailed recommendations for new and improved routes in the urban areas can be found in chapter 9 of this report.

**Policy 2:** Wherever possible measures will be provided in all traffic management/ improvement schemes which give cyclists priority over motorised traffic in terms of accessibility and journey time.

### Cycle Parking

Cycle parking needs to be convenient, safe and secure. A cycle locked in a shed at the end of a garden is less likely to be used than one stored close to the front door. Therefore, it is vital that there is secure storage area close to the usual exit of a property. In addition, it is essential that new residential properties have sufficient storage for cycles and this should be managed through the development control process.

Cycling can form part of longer journeys if there is good integration with public transport. High quality, secure cycle parking at railway stations is essential to promote this. There is a good supply of parking at Tonbridge Station but this is frequently full and needs to be kept under regular review. Significantly increased provision is also proposed as part of the remodelling of the West Malling Station Forecourt. However, cycle parking at most other stations is very limited and should be improved.



A key component of any public space cycle parking is that it should complement and enhance the local environment while remaining functional and within cycle parking standards. Therefore, wherever possible new cycle parking will be chosen to both enhance and compliment public spaces and ideally will be sourced from local suppliers, designed by local artists making use of distinct yet functional designs.

A number of sites for improvement have been identified and are outlined within this strategy. In addition, KCC Highways and Transportation and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) will continue to liaise and negotiate with developers to ensure that cycle parking is included in all new developments.

**Policy 3:** Cycle parking will be provided in all developments (both new build and change of use) that result in the employment of people and secure cycle storage will be provided in all new residential developments in the Borough.

**Policy 4: Additional cycle parking will be provided at key locations as funding allows?**

## 5. Maintenance of the Cycle Network

Unless the facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard they will quickly fall into disrepair and will not be used. Structural maintenance on a cycle track is generally not as demanding as for a carriageway but it requires more regular and frequent cleansing and cutting back of vegetation. This includes ensuring that roads frequented by cyclists are maintained with whipping branches and vegetation kept cut back.

**Policy 4:** KCC will work with partners to ensure the frequent and regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.

## 6. Safer Cycling

### Cycle Training

National Standard Cycle Training (Bikeability) is now provided across Kent by both KCC and via School Games Host Organisations. Bikeability comprises three levels of competency-based cycle training. Level 1 is aimed at the basic bicycle control skills that are required to cycle safely in any environment and is delivered in an off-road environment such as a playground. Level 2 is delivered on quiet roads and teaches participants the skills necessary to take a basic on road journey and includes a variety of junctions. Level 3 tackles busy traffic situations and complex junctions. Importantly, participants must demonstrate competence at each level before they progress to the next.

#### **Policy 5:**

- a) All year 6 children will have the opportunity to participate in Level 1 and 2 Bikeability Training.
- b) All children in years 7 to 9 will have access to Level 3 training.
- c) Adult cycle training will be available via work place travel planning initiatives.

## 7. Promoting Cycling in Tonbridge and Malling

Without the promotion of cycling in Tonbridge and Malling the uptake of cycling and the use of cycle routes are unlikely to increase. Therefore, to make this Strategy successful, cycling must be promoted in a variety of ways to a range of different audiences. First and foremost, KCC and TMBC's websites need to be kept updated to enable local residents and visitors to access to the latest information on cycle routes and facilities. All cycle routes should be fully signposted for the benefit of new cyclists and those who are unfamiliar with the area. Local clubs and cycle shops could help promote cycling within the Borough through active promotion and use of the local network. KCC will continue to develop and maintain a range of publications that will cover both the local and county cycle network.

**Policy 6:** Ensure all cycle routes are fully advertised and signposted within and around the Borough

## 8. Monitoring the Cycling Strategy

Monitoring should take several forms including continuous automatic counters on cycle tracks and detailed route user surveys. This will enable a detailed database to be established which in turn can inform economic appraisals and health impact assessments in the Borough.

**Policy 7:** Automatic counters will be installed throughout the cycle network to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Each new proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.

## 9. Proposed Development of the Cycle Network:

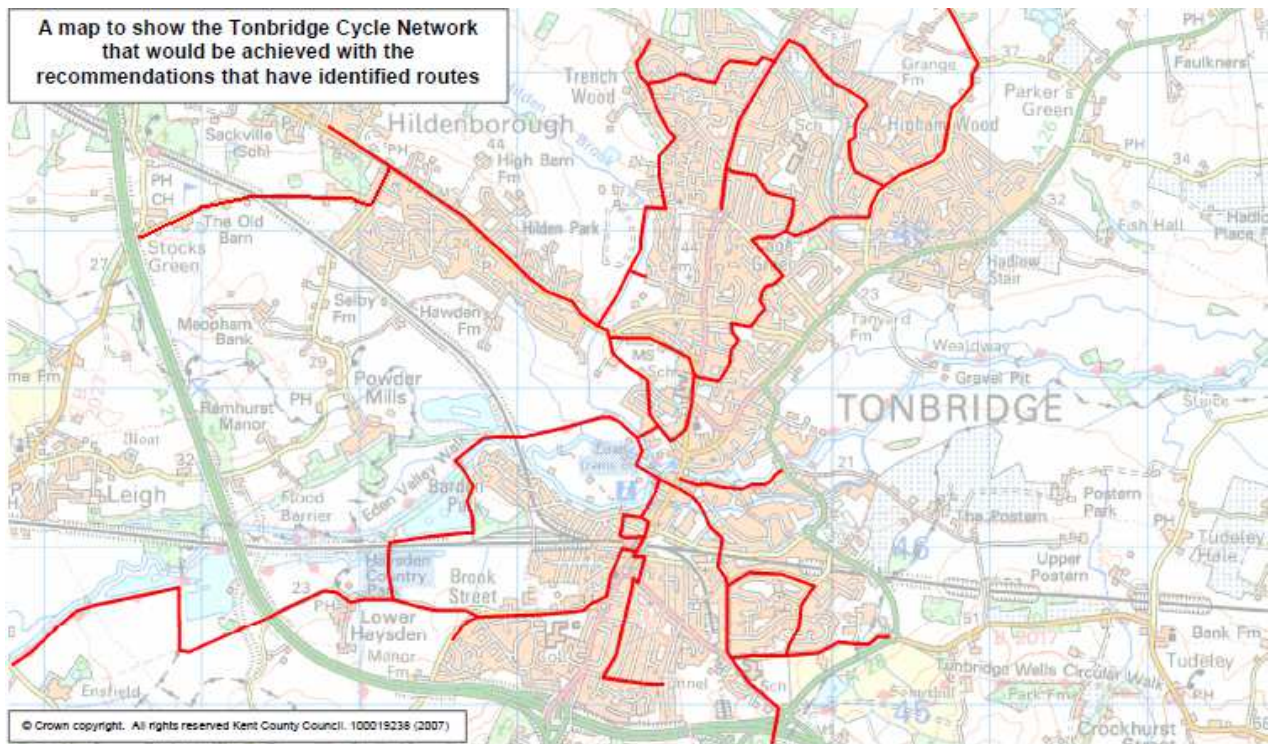
If we are to achieve the aims set out in this strategy then the schemes chosen must create a network that appeals to both existing and potential cyclists. Numerous consultations around the country have highlighted a number of key areas that have to be tackled to enable more people to cycle safely, more often. Therefore, in order to plan and prioritise the development of the cycle network in Tonbridge and Malling, the following criteria have been applied:

- a) Inexperienced cyclists prefer routes away from heavy traffic largely due to perceived and actual safety concerns related to mixing with fast and busy traffic.
- b) Separate, designated cycle lanes are preferred (whether on or off road), with inexperienced and infrequent cyclists preferring off-road routes.
- c) Existing routes need to join up and be continuous; therefore gaps in the network must be addressed.
- d) Barriers need to be addressed to improve cycle accessibility e.g. fast and/or busy traffic, rivers and railway lines as well as gates and railings.
- e) A high proportion of people cycle for leisure and this is a good way to enable people to be active, get fit and learn cycling skills.
- f) Fear of crime needs to be addressed by increasing secure cycle parking provision at key locations.

In order to develop the strategy Sustrans has undertaken an audit of the existing cycling facilities throughout the urban areas of Tonbridge, the Medway Gap, Snodland, Kings Hill and Medway Valley East. Some of the routes in Tonbridge and Malling are amongst the oldest dedicated facilities in Kent and were built to specifications that have long since been superseded. Detailed recommendations for each area have been prepared.

## A. Tonbridge Area

The map below provides a representation of what the Tonbridge cycle network could look like with the recommended improvements in place. The map shows a continuous, linked network allowing cyclists to get to a variety of destinations within the area easily and safely. Following the map are the detailed recommendations.



1. Create a link from the centre of Tonbridge and the railway station to the areas in the south and a link from the station to existing routes to the town centre. Railway approach is a key access linking the south of Tonbridge to the town centre. It is also a vital link in many journeys to and from the station and it is critical that improved facilities be provided for cyclists (and pedestrians). Much of the traffic going through Tonbridge is funnelled across this bridge over the railway line and the volume and size of many vehicles is intimidating to all but the experienced cyclist. There is adequate width between parapets to rearrange the highway space to provide good facilities for both pedestrians and cyclists and maintain sufficient lane-width for vehicles.

2. Create a route from the centre of Tonbridge to the north east housing area. In much the same way as the railway line is a barrier to the south, the A227, Borden Park and the High Street, are a barrier to the north. A route through the Portman Park area is critical to linking the large residential area in the north east with the town centre and the station. This route also provides a crucial link to schools in the area.

KCC Highways and Transportation has had a scheme prepared to upgrade the cycle route along Shipbourne Road between Whistler Road and Yardley Park Road. The proposal also includes a continuation towards Portman Park via Town Acres, Cheviot Close and Chiltern Way following a route similar to that which was the subject of a public consultation exercise in 2000.

3. Create a link from the B245 London Road to Welland Road and Darenth Avenue. This includes the continuation of the existing cycle route on London Road to link to the North West housing area. The largely traffic free route would link the town centre with the North West housing area, and sports facilities.

4. Create a link from the B245 London Road to Havelock Road. Currently there is a footpath linking these two areas which is used (illegally) by cyclists. Tonbridge School is the owner of this link and with their consent this could be transformed into a shared use path. The path would require widening which for the southern half could be expanded onto the open field and for the northern half could be achieved through pruning of the hedge adjacent to the path. This proposal combined with the previous proposal (3) will provide an important link for residents in the North West area of the town, giving good access to the town centre and station yet bypassing the A227 which is insufficiently wide to provide for safe cycling. It would also provide useful links with the existing cycle network in Hildenborough giving residents there good access to the shops and facilities in the town centre as well as to the various schools and colleges.

5. Create a link from the housing area around Goldsmid Road, through the industrial area to the centre of Tonbridge. This would be a very useful link connecting the residential area with the town centre. An attempt to convert the Strawberry Vale footpath failed at public inquiry, but this is the most direct route to the town centre from the south east part of the town. The path is currently too narrow to be a shared use path, but if space is made from neighbouring properties the path could be widened for shared use.

6. Extend the facilities on London Road to Half Moon Lane in Hildenborough. This short missing link will complete the network in Hildenborough to permit good access for all residents to and from the Tonbridge town centre area. This can be done through the removal of the parking bays in front of the garage, enabling sufficient width of path to allow continuation of the segregated path.

7. Link all of the housing areas to the east of Shipbourne Road to the existing and recommended facilities. Despite being a relatively short link on Shipbourne Road it is one which will give residents in the Whistler Road area safer access to the network proposed above and the schools south of the Pen Stream. Traffic calming on Whistler Road would help ensure that the housing area is cycle-friendly.

8. Extend facilities on Brook Street (south side) to Molescroft Way. This additional short length of path would ensure that all of the housing area leading from Brook Street / Upper Haysden Lane inside the bypass is connected to the local cycle network.

9. Extend the existing facilities of the Medway River Valley Walking route to include cycling facilities and signage. A short section of this route, the area near Tonbridge Lock, has been built as part of new development; this is high quality and accepted as a multi-user path (designated MU33). The rest of the path is also designated MU33, but is not of such high quality. If this path was widened, barriers widened for easier access for cyclists and a few small improvements made to the surface of the route this could be a good route for cycling. There is a need for access from Tonbridge High Street to the riverbank which is currently gained from a side street (Medway Wharf Road). There is



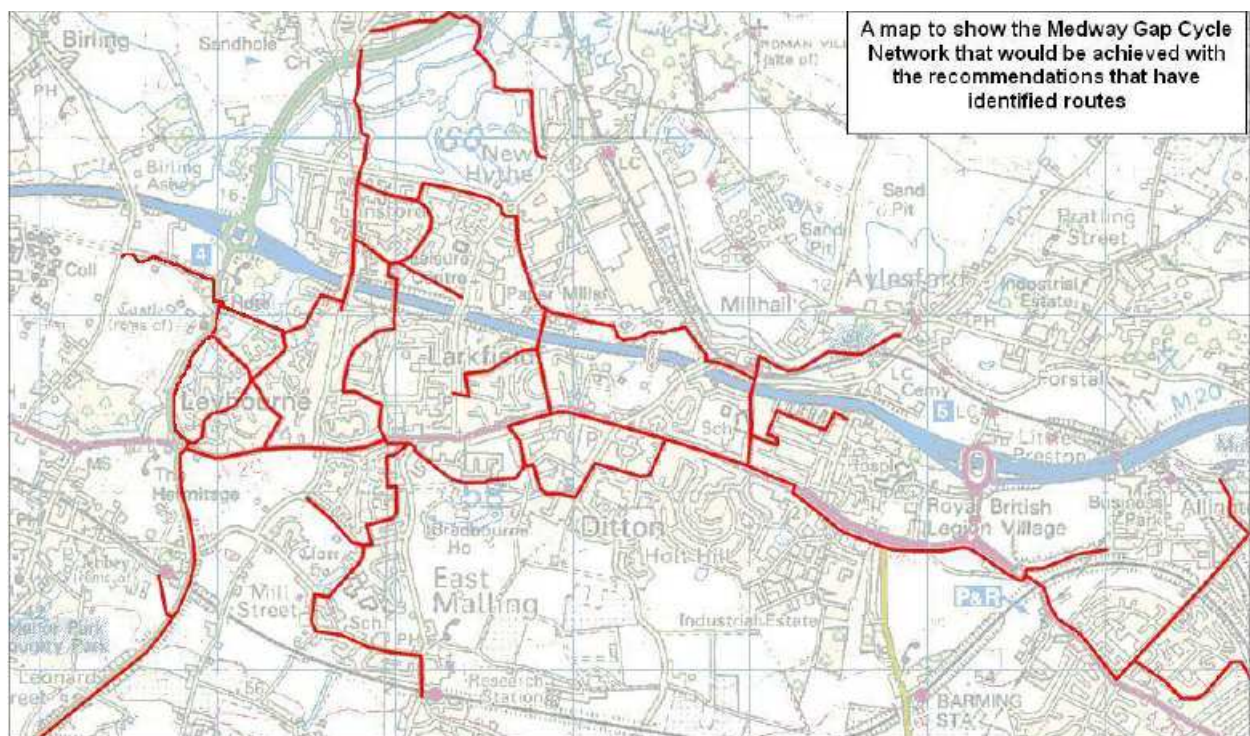
potential for this to be funded from Section 106 Agreements with developers. This would be essential if Regional Route 12 is to be extended from Maidstone.

10. Improve signage on the cycle route that continues after Regional Route 12, from Tonbridge Castle to/from Hever Castle (via Penshurst Place). This needs to be clearly signposted in order for it to be used more. Currently Regional Route 12 is both well signed and well used; however the route is currently relatively short, so if the extension to Hever Castle and ultimately Edenbridge was advertised and signposted there is potential for it too, to be well used. It will link to other routes proposed within the Sevenoaks Cycling Strategy

11. Stocks Green Road in Hildenborough is used frequently by cyclists both for commuting and leisure purposes, however the heavy traffic on this road means that is not currently safe for cyclists. To increase the safety of cyclists and encourage more cyclists to use this route there should be some advisory cycle lane markings, narrowing the carriageway and increasing awareness of cyclists to motorists.

## B. Medway Gap

The map below provides a representation of what the Medway Gap cycle network could like with the recommended improvements in place. The map shows a continuous, linked network allowing cyclists to get to a variety of destinations within the area easily and safely. Following the map are the detailed recommendations.



12. Create a link between Aylesford station and Aylesford village. The Medway riverside path provides the most direct link between the station and the village and, if improved, would encourage commuters to cycle to and from Aylesford station. This would also require adequate secure cycle storage at Aylesford station.

13. Create a link from Station Road to Bellingham Way. The private estate road is a useful link between Station Road, the industrial areas, Leybourne Park and Leybourne Lakes. An alternative would be to upgrade the current footpath into a multi-user path.

14. Create a link along the A20 London Road between Hermitage Lane and Mills Road. There is currently a gap in the cycle track along the A20 across the frontage of the Aylesford Retail Park at the very point where traffic is busiest and where there are many HGVs delivering in the area. This is a very important link in the route from Maidstone to West Malling. This is crucial if we are to encourage students and others to cycle to schools and workplaces in Maidstone and vice versa for those wishing to access Ditton by bike. This would also give sustainable cycle access to Sainsbury's.

15. Link existing fragmented cycle facilities on the A20 London Road. There is a missing section of cycle route along the A20 corridor between the mandatory cycle lanes at Ditton Place and the beginning of the advisory cycle lanes starting at the New Road leading down to East Malling. Without a link between these sections, the western section remains fragment and of little use. This proposal includes completing the missing link on the A20 between Ditton Place and Bradbourne Lane and taking a new route through the residential area between Bradbourne Lane and New Road avoiding the busy A20 where it is too narrow to provide safe on-road facilities. This would formalise and complete the A20 corridor making it cycle safe and friendly from West Malling to Maidstone.

16. Create a link between New Road and Heron Road. This proposal provides a much needed link from the residential areas of Larkfield north of the A20 to the proposed cycle route in the A20 corridor through Heron Road (there is a new link by the junction but this is not sufficient to be successful).

17. Create a link from New Road Junction into Larkspur Road housing area. This is another important link from the A20 to a residential area, this time the Larkspur Road area of East Malling. This would need sufficient signing too. Widening the existing footway could provide sufficient shared use facilities.

18. Create a link from Redwing Close to Thackeray Road. A quiet route can be achieved by upgrading the current footbridge over the M20 to link Redwing Close to Thackeray Road. This can be achieved by upgrading the current footbridge over the M20, increasing railing height and widening the footpath. This will give cycle access to schools, shopping, superstore, and the Larkfield Leisure Centre.

19. Create quiet links from Leybourne to the local cycle network. The residential roads in Larkfield and Leybourne are relatively quiet and safe for cycling but the estates are not as permeable to cyclists as they should be. Also the motorway is a barrier and all crossings should be improved to make them cycle friendly, the central hatching is not cycle friendly putting many would-be cyclists off. A link between Oxley Shaw Lane and Rectory Lane needs to be established and formalised. Traffic calming on Lunsford Lane from Chaucer Way to Partridge Avenue would be beneficial for cyclists, making the environment safer and more appealing.

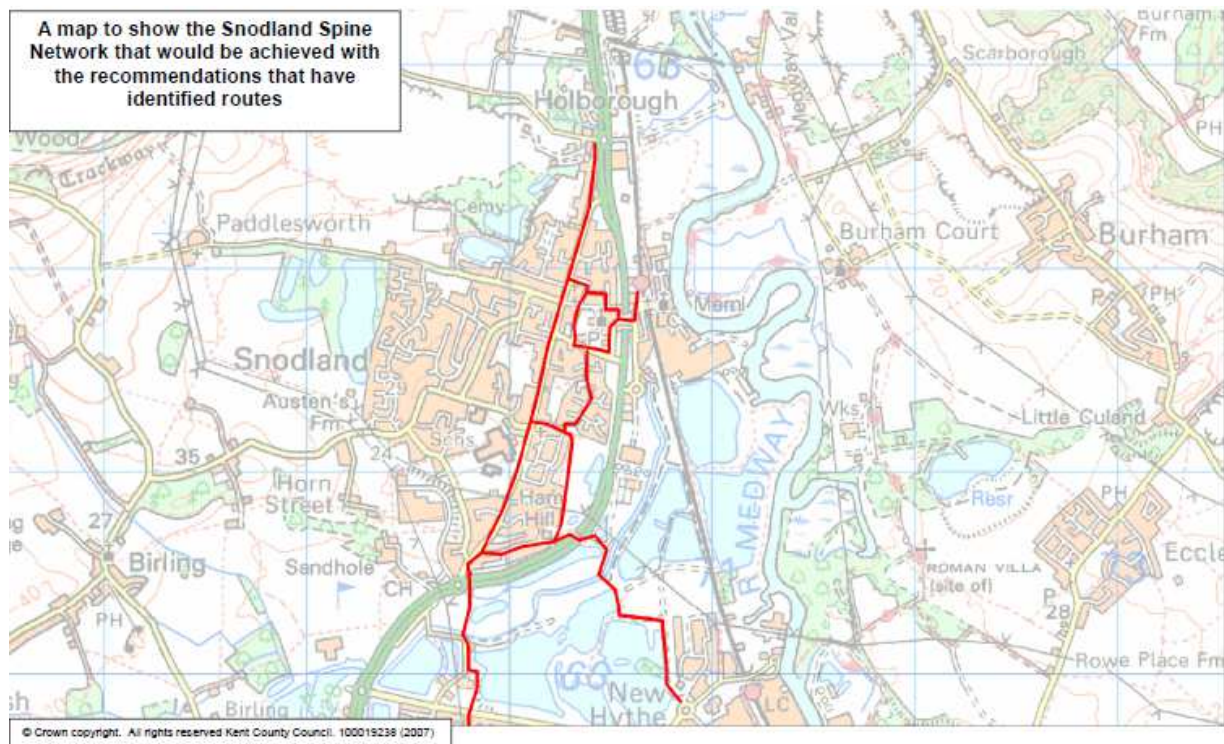
KCC Highways and Transportation has implemented a scheme linking the residential development at Leybourne Park to Lunsford and the Leybourne Lakes Country Park. This links Park Road with Oxley

Shaw Lane on Castle Way, continuing via Oxley Shaw Lane, Willowmead, Willow Road and Lunsford Lane to Gighill Road with a new crossing of Leybourne Way. However, there are no dropped kerbs on Willow Road, which needs to be addressed to allow cyclists to safely navigate the route.

20. Link the two ends of Blacklands together. The right of way status of this lane needs some investigation and may need to be upgraded to bridleway to allow safe formal access for cyclists, whereby a route could be established linking the housing area in the North with the schools and station at East Malling whilst avoiding the busy and potentially dangerous New Road.

### C. Snodland

The following recommendations for the Snodland area seek to create a North-South spine through the town. There are already good cycle links through the Leybourne Lakes Country Park towards Lunsford and a Toucan crossing on the A228. The map below shows the completed proposed cycle network, followed by the detailed recommendations.



21. Create a link along Malling Road between A228 roundabout and Brook Lane. The current connection to the existing Toucan crossing is very short with poor visibility for cyclists travelling north. This simple scheme will make the system much safer and hence more likely to be used. This can be created by extending the existing shared use pathway.

22. Increase signage at Nevill Park between Brook Lane and Saltings Road. The paths through Nevill Park are ideal for cycling and avoid the climb found on Malling Road. The gates have been replaced with narrow barriers, although still usable, ideally they should be widened making this route very attractive. This route would then enable cyclists a traffic free route avoiding the Malling Road.

23. Upgrade the bridleway surface of Sharnal Lane between Malling Road and Saltings Road. The eastern section of this route would benefit from being widened as it is currently quite narrow. This

will give access to Nevill Park from the residential areas to the west of Malling Road, as well as giving access to local schools in the area.

24. Sign the northern section of Saltings Road as an on-carriageway link. A simple scheme to alert drivers of the presence of cyclists and avoids the narrower section of Malling Road, which can be troublesome for cyclists as Malling Road is further narrowed by the parked cars along it. The link would provide a safer alternative.

25. Create a two way traffic-free link around the corner on Rocfort Road. This is a busy junction with many HGVs to negotiate so it is safer for a traffic-free route to be provided here. It will provide a much safer, traffic-free link to the station for many cyclists.

26. Create a two way link through the car parks between Rocfort Road and High Street. A cycle link through the car park will offer cyclists a choice and avoids the busier section of Holborough Road close to the shopping centre

27. Provide drop kerbs at closure on Saltings Road. The road closure prevents through traffic using Saltings Road and reduces vehicle movements considerably. It provides the ideal cycle route and the closure should have facilities to enable cyclists to continue through the closure without stopping. This will prevent cyclists damaging the grass. The dropped kerbs should be marked as to ensure that no cars will park across them blocking the entrance.

28. In addition to the above recommendations, the major development site at Holborough Lakes will provide a link between the development site and the railway station, via Holborough Road, Queens Avenue, Queens Road, Waghorn Road and High Street. This will create a useful northern extension to the proposed network. As well as this, a multi agency project to deliver a shared use route between Holborough Marshes and Snodland Station is underway. The project is funded by developer contributions and the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. It is being delivered in 3 phases:-

i) Surface improvements to existing public footpath and re-sitting of fencing to provide greater width at pinch points; appropriate signage to be completed by 31st March 2013

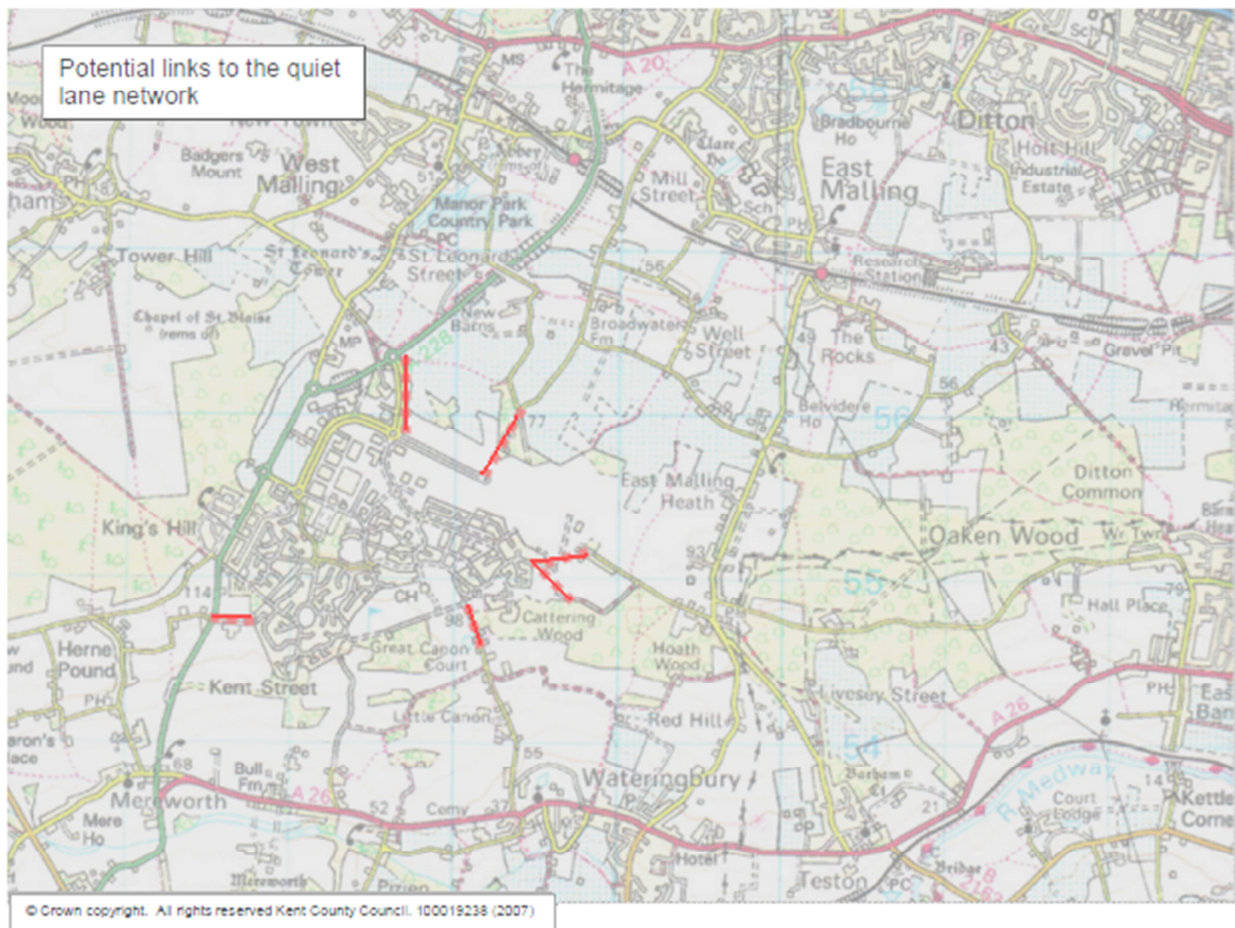
ii) Toucan Crossing to be provided on the A228 - currently in design

iii) Link from the Crossing to the shared use route to be provided via the redevelopment of the Lafarge site

## **D. Kings Hill**

Cycle provision in Kings Hill is generally good and will improve further as the development proceeds. Most of the footpaths within the residential areas are shared use and the access roads all have dedicated cycle lanes. Cycle parking at the various businesses within the development is variable and could be improved at some locations. The link to West Malling Station recently constructed along the widened bypass is very welcome and makes cycle access to and from the station attractive, safe and convenient for many commuters who wish to exercise and save on parking fees.

29. The links to the quiet lanes surrounding the development are now more pressing and whilst there are plans to provide these later, some should be developed soon. In particular, a link towards Maidstone using Teston Road and North Pole Road would provide a pleasant short cut to Maidstone Hospital and other workplaces in the town. The map below demonstrates where about the proposed links are.



### E. Medway Valley East

30. A major new development is planned for the disused quarry at Peter's Village, with a new bridge over the River Medway linking the development with the A228 at Holborough. This bridge is a significant infrastructure enhancement and will open up walking and cycling routes on both sides of the river. This should be cycle friendly and clearly signed. The most important strategic opportunity is an improved route on the east bank linking Maidstone and the Medway Towns via Aylesford and Wouldham; a new alignment of National Route 17 between Rochester and Maidstone. This route would serve the villages of Wouldham, Burham, Eccles, and Aylesford. The route would be attractive for both commuting and leisure purposes.

### F. Inter-urban Links

31. Two regional routes are proposed in the Borough: Regional Route 12 will eventually link National Route 17 in Maidstone with Tonbridge. The popular route between Tonbridge and Penshurst will be extended to Edenbridge to join the existing network in Surrey. Regional Route 13 will link Maidstone and Sevenoaks.

32. There is also a possibility to create a route from Tonbridge to Tunbridge Wells which can be used both for leisure and commuting purposes. The route would need to be negotiated in order to provide a safe cycling facility avoiding large junctions and heavily trafficked roads.

33. Finally a route from Tonbridge to Sevenoaks should be created, penetrating through parks and woodlands between the two areas, creating a safe, pleasant route for commuters and leisure cyclists.

The map below from Sustrans illustrates the current national and regional routes available, from the map it can be seen that there is room available for creating links between these regional and national cycle routes. ([http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/county/Kent%20\(2\).jpg](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/county/Kent%20(2).jpg))



## References

British Medical Association, 2012, Healthy Transport = Healthy Lives

Canterbury Christ Church University, 2003, Viking Coastal Trail Study

Chief Medical Officer, 2009, Annual report of the Chief Medical Officer

Department for Health, 2007, Air quality Strategy

Department for Transport, 2004, Local Transport Note 1/04, Policy planning and design for walking and cycling

Department for Transport, 2004, The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030

Department for Transport, 2005, National Travel Survey

Department for Transport, 2008, Local Transport Note 02/08

Department for Transport, 2008, Local Transport Note 01/12

Department for Transport and Cycling England, 2009, Analysis and Synthesis of Evidence on the Effects of Investment in Six Cycling Demonstration Towns

Department for Transport and Cycling England, 2009, Making a Cycling Town

Department for Transport and Department of Health, 2009, Active Travel Strategy

Jacobs, 2012, Crashes Involving Pedal Cyclists in Kent 2007-2011 – Data Analysis and Trends

Kent County Council, 2007, Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2007-2017

Kent County Council, 2011, Local Transport Plan 3

Kent County Council, 2012, Bold Steps for Kent 2012-2022

London School of Economics, 2011, The British Cycling Report - Gross Cycling Product report

NHS National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2008) PHG8: Promoting and creating built or natural environments that encourage and support physical activity, NICE

NHS National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2012) PHG41: Walking and cycling: local measures to promote walking and cycling as forms of travel or recreation, NICE

Sustrans, 2006, Walking and Cycling Links to School

Sustrans, Map of Kent Cycle Routes, accessed Dec 2012,  
[http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/county/Kent%20\(2\).jpg](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/assets/files/county/Kent%20(2).jpg)

Visit England, accessed 2013, [http://www.visitengland.com/en/Things-to-do/Outdoor-England/Scenic-Cycle-Routes.htm?SL\\_ClassKey=1](http://www.visitengland.com/en/Things-to-do/Outdoor-England/Scenic-Cycle-Routes.htm?SL_ClassKey=1)

## Appendix

### Local road Safety Statistics:

In 2011 the number of cyclist killed on roads in Kent fell from the 2010 figure of 4 to 1, but the number of crashes resulting in killed or seriously injured (KSI) casualties rose from 41 to 52, and the number of slight crashes involving cyclists went up from 265 to 313. This however does not take into account the number of cyclists, although the figures still need to be reduced if people are to feel safe when cycling and if people are to be encouraged to cycle.

85% of cycle casualties were male and 41% of all recorded cycle casualties were under 25, with 15 and 16 year old being the most vulnerable age group of cyclists. One of the main factors of crashes in the younger age range is when cyclists come off the pavement and onto the road.

Within Tonbridge and Malling on the KCC roads there were 119 crashes recorded (over 2007-2011), with 70% of these crashes involving casualties living in Tonbridge and Malling. Further to this 71% of crashes took place less than 5km from the cyclists' home. The Times Cycle Safety Campaign carried out over Kent identified highlight sites that needed investigating. Listed below are the sites pinpointed by this campaign within the Tonbridge and Malling Borough, which this strategy has also considered:

- A228/M20 Junction 4 to Ham Hill
- A228 Junction with Tower View (Kings Hill)
- Lucks Hill Junction with Winterfield Lane
- New Hythe Lane
- Teapot Lane/Millhall, Aylesford
- Hall Road junction with station Road