

Introduction

Key Principle

To achieve Cycling England's aim of 'More People Cycling, More Safely, More Often', physical improvements in [cycling infrastructure](#) should be coupled with a programme of 'smart' measures and political support. This portfolio deals with 'Smart Measures' that combine incentives, information, training and promotion, and are closely tailored to the needs of a specific target market. Cycling England is also providing [support to elected members](#) keen to promote cycling through the political system within their area.

The general principles of a smart programme to encourage cycling are introduced below.

The guidance includes the following elements :

- [Understanding the potential market for cycling](#)
- [Personalised travel planning](#)
- [Targeted marketing of routes](#)
- [Promotional events](#)
- [Maps and signing](#)
- [Residential travel plans](#)
- [Integration with public transport](#)
- [Cycle training](#)
- [Cycling to work](#)
- [Cycling to school](#)
- [Cycling to the shops](#)
- [Cycling for leisure](#)
- [Reaching types of people who are less likely to cycle](#)

Understanding how smart measures can increase cycling

These guidance notes set out how 'smart' (sometimes called 'soft') measures can be used to increase cycling. Smart interventions use a combination of marketing, information, incentives and tailored new services to influence travel behaviour. Smart interventions should systematically tackle each of the barriers that prevent or discourage people from using a bicycle:

- Encouraging people to consider cycling as an option, through publicity, advertising, events or guided ride programmes;
- Providing information and maps to show safe and convenient routes;

- Providing clear signing that makes it easy to follow a route;
- Ensuring there is secure cycle parking at someone's destination, such as a school, workplace, town centre or station;
- Offering new services that make it easier for people to try cycling – for example, cycle loan schemes, or cycle training; and
- Offering incentives to encourage people to take up cycling, such as 'bike miles vouchers' as part of a travel plan.

Some smart measures are designed to encourage a switch away from single-occupancy car use towards a full range of alternatives, including walking, public transport and car-sharing as well as cycling. Examples of this type of smart measure include personalised travel planning, workplace travel plans and school travel plans. For these types of interventions, the guidance notes explain what actions can be taken to get the greatest uptake of cycling.

Other interventions are specific to cycling. These include services such as cycle loan schemes; information (including signing and maps); and marketing and activities targeted at particular groups, such as women and older people, or particular types of cycling or journey purpose, such as trips to the shops.

Integrating smart measures with cycle infrastructure

A programme of smart measures to increase cycling should be closely integrated with physical improvements in cycle routes and facilities. This means that:

- Travel plan interventions at schools, employers and colleges should be used to identify gaps in the cycle infrastructure, with this knowledge then fed back into the process of route development.
- When a new cycle route is built, there should be a parallel process of improving the cycle facilities on offer at key destinations served by the route (e.g. schools, colleges, larger workplaces, leisure centres).
- As cycle routes and facilities are upgraded, they should be marketed to potential users – so, for example, a rolling personalised travel planning programme might be scheduled to take place in the period after a key cycle route has been improved, or households living close to a new cycle route could be sent a mailshot showing how the new route connects to the town centre.
- In general, smart measures should be focussed in those areas which already have good cycle routes – that is, in places where the cycle 'offer' is already of high quality.

A smart programme that is closely linked to capital investment in new cycle infrastructure, and which therefore maximises the benefit of that infrastructure, may be funded via a local authority's LTP capital programme.

What does an effective smart programme for cycling look like?

Few local authorities have so far developed an effective programme of smart interventions to increase cycling. This is partly because of the shortage of resources for revenue-type interventions – although as noted above, there are ways in which this problem can be overcome. It is also partly because of lack of experience of smart measures within local authorities.

There is no single 'right' answer, but the experience of the Cycling Demonstration Towns provides some lessons on effective use of smart measures. A key lesson is to focus on doing a few things intensively, and not to try to develop too many interventions at the same time. Lots of small interventions will have little impact.

Based on the Cycling Demonstration Towns experience, one possible model for a strong smart measures programme (spread over about three – five years) might be as follows:

Early measures

Think about making the whole town easy to navigate by bike, through good route signing (possibly using times instead of distance) and clear branding of different routes. The [Aylesbury Gemstone Cycleways](#) provide a good example of this.

This is also the stage to consider a 'mass market' publicity / advertising campaign for cycling – using billboards, local radio ads and jingles, mailshots and other media to promote cycling. However, this sort of campaign is only worthwhile if it lays the foundation for more targeted work with schools, workplaces, households and so on. If funding is limited, an advertising campaign is likely to be a poor investment.

Interventions to get children and young people cycling should also be an early priority. This might include work with [schools](#), after-school or community cycle clubs. It could involve a Bike It programme, working intensively with ten schools a year. It might also involve roll-out of Bikeability Levels 1-3 national standard [cycling training](#) to all year 5 and year 6 pupils. Children are already enthusiastic about riding their bikes, but often not allowed to do so, and a smart programme can take away the barriers that lead parents to say 'no'.

Phase two

If there are good opportunities for family [leisure cycling](#), such as routes into the surrounding countryside, this might be a good focus in phase two. Encouraging families to try cycling might involve a programme of weekend / summer holiday leisure rides; community cycling events or festivals; and specific services promoted through these events such as bike loan (or bike trailer / child seat loan), and Dr Bike maintenance sessions to get old bikes working again. Family events could be promoted via schools already engaged in phase one – perhaps by setting up Saturday family bike clubs. The rationale for focussing on leisure cycling is that it encourages people to start cycling again. This can be a basis from which to encourage cycling for other journeys.

Phase two might also involve engagement with employers to encourage [cycling to work](#). Initially, focus on working intensively with a small number of large employers (between three and five). Key targets might be the local authority itself, a college or university, a hospital, and any major employer whose culture is such that staff are likely to be pre-disposed towards cycling. This might also be a good time to work with main [train stations](#) to make sure that their cycle access policy and cycle parking is adequate.

In parallel with a focus on leisure and commuter trips, phase two should maintain and develop the initiatives begun in phase one.

Phase three

In areas where a good, well-signed network of cycle routes is in place, phase three might involve an intensive, individualised marketing programme to

households. This could be as part of a wider [personalised travel planning](#) (PTP) programme, or it could focus specifically on cycling. Brighton has experimented with offering very attractive cycling incentives to a limited number of individuals who are keen to try cycling, as part of its PTP programme.

Phase three would also maintain and develop initiatives on cycling to school, cycling for leisure, and cycling to work. For example, this might include expanding the number of employers with whom there is an intensive effort to increase cycling to (say) six to ten.

Finally, with all these initiatives bedded in, phase three might include a focus on cycling for another type of journey – for example a programme to encourage [cycling to local shops](#) or to leisure centres, or to encourage older people to start cycling (see [Reaching types of people who are less likely to cycle](#)).