

03 Targeted marketing of specific routes

Key Principle

Evidence suggests that route-specific marketing of bus improvements to households living close to a bus route can be highly effective in increasing bus ridership. Cycling England believes that a similar approach could be successfully adopted in neighbourhoods adjacent to quality cycle routes.

Targeted marketing of specific routes

Cycling England is keen to encourage local authorities to experiment with targeted marketing and information to raise awareness of new cycle routes and facilities amongst people living or working nearby. Our interest in this follows from evidence which suggests that route-specific marketing of bus improvements to households living close to a bus route can be highly effective in increasing bus ridership.

Targeted marketing of cycle routes has been tried to some extent in the Cycling Demonstration Towns. In Aylesbury the local authority produced a pocket-sized map of its new radial route from the village of Bierton into the centre of Aylesbury. One side of the map shows the cycle route, and the reverse side shows places to park a bicycle in the town centre. The map was distributed to households living close to the cycle route soon after the route had been signed. The targeted marketing paid off, with cycle use growing faster on this route than on any other radial routes into Aylesbury.

In Lancaster, the local authority wrote to households living near to the Lancaster-Morecambe Greenway to tell them about new access points that would enable them to use the route to cycle into the town centre.

In Brighton, the local authority adjusted the phasing and geographical boundaries of its [personal travel planning](#) (PTP) programme, so that households will receive PTP advice and information in the year following cycle infrastructure improvements in their immediate area.

Targeted marketing of specific routes could involve the following:

- A mailing to all households within a five minute cycle ride of the new cycle route, to tell them that there is now a signed, safe and attractive route into town (or to a key destination);
- Liaison with employers and schools located close to the route to make sure that their staff, parents and pupils are told about the new route. For example, an employer travel plan co-ordinator could arrange for an email alert to be sent to staff living within cycling distance of the site.
- Publicity about the new route (e.g. posters) in public buildings (e.g. leisure centre, libraries, community centres, GP surgeries) that are on the route – and installation of cycle parking outside these buildings.
- An easy-to-follow map showing the new route, and where to park your bike at the end of the journey. This could be delivered to nearby households, and distributed via dispenser racks or on reception desks at schools, offices and public buildings.

- 'Back-up' information to encourage people to consider cycling – for example, information about where they can obtain cycle training if they have not cycled for some time; information about local bike shops and where to get your bike repaired.
- The offer of special services, such as bike repair, for a limited period to mark the launch of the new cycle route. For example, a 'Dr Bike' repair service might be offered free of charge in a nearby community centre.

The cost of this type of marketing activity might reasonably be funded from LTP2 capital allocations, as it is directly linked to maximising the benefits of new capital infrastructure (see part 4, paragraph 70, [Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans: Second Edition](#), DfT, 2005).