



Bike and Rail

A good practice guide

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this leaflet is to publicise Bike and Rail – A Good Practice Guide published by Countryside Agency (CA) and Department for Transport (DfT). The guidance gives information on how a number of Bike and Rail projects have been successfully promoted. The guidance aims to provide practical advice to those working to deliver Bike and Rail projects, either working in partnership or alone. It will also help users assess their main priorities for improvements, direct them quickly to the main issues of design and operation, and provide them with all the necessary information and useful contacts with whom to form partnerships and explore funding opportunities. The guidance will be of particular assistance to: Local authority officers and elected officers; Train Operating Company (TOC) staff; Rail Station Managers; Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) staff and cycle user groups, small businesses and local community groups

It is hoped that the guidance will provide a valuable and timesaving resource in the development and implementation of Bike and Rail projects.

BACKGROUND

The term Bike and Rail covers all aspects of cycling and rail combined in a single journey, however it usually forms one of the following combinations :-

- Cycling to a station, parking, and riding on the train to the destination.
- Cycling to the station, carrying the bicycle on the train, and cycling to the destination.
- Cycling to the station, parking, riding on the train, hiring or using a second bicycle and cycling to the destination.



The Bike and Rail diagram (figure 1) in this leaflet illustrates how cycling and rail combine in a chain to form a single journey.

The Bike and Rail transport combination offers a realistic and viable alternative for many journeys currently being made by less sustainable modes, however in many places its potential is not being realised. While it needs to be recognised that a shift in perceptions and attitudes needs to take place for the Bike and Rail potential to be fulfilled, many of the practical measures necessary can be implemented now. The case studies referred to in this leaflet and described in more detail in the main guidance document show what can be achieved.

SCOPE OF THE CASE STUDIES

As the guidance will illustrate there are many types of Bike and Rail Projects. The key to their success will often involve partnership working. The case studies in the guidance are described briefly in this leaflet and highlight a range of projects where organisations have worked successfully together to deliver a project. The studies carry a wide range of different Bike and Rail projects set in rural and urban locations showing how Bike and Rail can be used for commuter, everyday and recreational and tourism journeys.

Case study: Route to Oxford Station

Over several years a 750m off-road cycle route has been developed linking Oxford Station with the nearby district of Jericho. With the alternative on-road route being approximately 2km in length, cyclists and pedestrians have a significant advantage over other road users.



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The route was developed in stages, with the first 300m from Oxford Station being funded by means of a site covenant as part of a planning obligation for a new housing development. Network Rail sold land to Persimmon Homes for development and agreed to construct a shared-use facility for cyclists and pedestrians. The remainder of the route continues on a canal towpath where surface improvements were carried out by British Waterways. Wheeling ramps were added to a footbridge making it usable by cyclists and were funded by Oxford City Council.

Oxford City Council have demonstrated how the planning system can help to provide cycle facilities that benefit Bike and Rail users. Had the local authority not been proactive in seeking funding from different partners then it is unlikely that this useful link to Oxford Station would have been constructed.

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In 2001 Anglia Railways launched a dedicated web site for its Bike and Rail users, providing information on:

- Cycle carriage conditions
- Cycle fares
- Cycle parking at stations
- Cycle routes accessible from train stations
- Cycle rescue scheme
- Useful links

A link to the site was provided from Anglia Railways' main web site. Feedback from cyclists in response to the site has been positive and where possible suggestions were taken on board. The web site was built in-house by Anglia Railways' Internet manager, with the only costs being officer time.

This project shows the importance of providing accurate and easily accessible information to enable passengers to plan Bike and Rail journeys. The cost to a TOC of making information available on a web site should be relatively insignificant. Anglia's Corporate Affairs Director, Jonathan Denby, pointed out that "cyclists are also customers and have been a valuable part of our significant increases in passenger numbers over the last three years".

Case study - Kent stations cycle parking



In 2002 Kent County Council and Connex Trains obtained funding for new cycle parking facilities at 65 stations (two thirds of Connex managed stations in the county). The impetus for the project came through awareness of what had been achieved in East Anglia where Anglia Railways implemented improved facilities for cyclists on an area-wide basis. Funding was provided

by the SRA under its Rail Passenger Partnership scheme with contributions also from Kent County Council, Connex Trains, Medway Council, Dartford Borough Council, Thanet District Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. The installation of improved cycle parking followed a detailed study of the commuter stations by Kent County Council in which existing facilities for cyclists were recorded and improvements identified. Surveys involved local communities served by stations as well as local cyclists.

As cycle parking was being installed at a very security-conscious time, British Transport Police proved to be of great assistance in advising on locations to site cycle lockers in accordance with security requirements. A survey of ten stations where new cycle parking facilities were installed either to supplement existing facilities or where none previously existed showed an average % occupancy of 81% with 8 of the stations recording 70+% occupancy.

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Case study: Halesworth Station, Suffolk

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Free and open access cycle lockers were provided on the platform at the Halesworth Station which is unstaffed. Despite being unstaffed the location - has good natural surveillance from

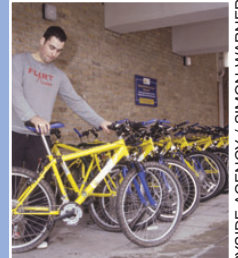
passing passengers. Instructions and regulations for use are clearly displayed on the lockers. The project was developed by the 'Halesworth Partnership' led by a local town councillor. This group met regularly to progress the project. Different parties contributed with their expertise in bidding for different funding sources, for example Sustrans secured funding under the Landfill Tax Award, and Suffolk County Council funding from the Railway Heritage Trust.

This project demonstrates amply that refurbishment works at a station can easily also incorporate better facilities for Bike and Rail users. The strong community involvement reflects the important role that a rail station can play in bringing about improved facilities for rail passengers in rural areas.

Case study: Budgie Bikes Cycle Hire, Lancaster

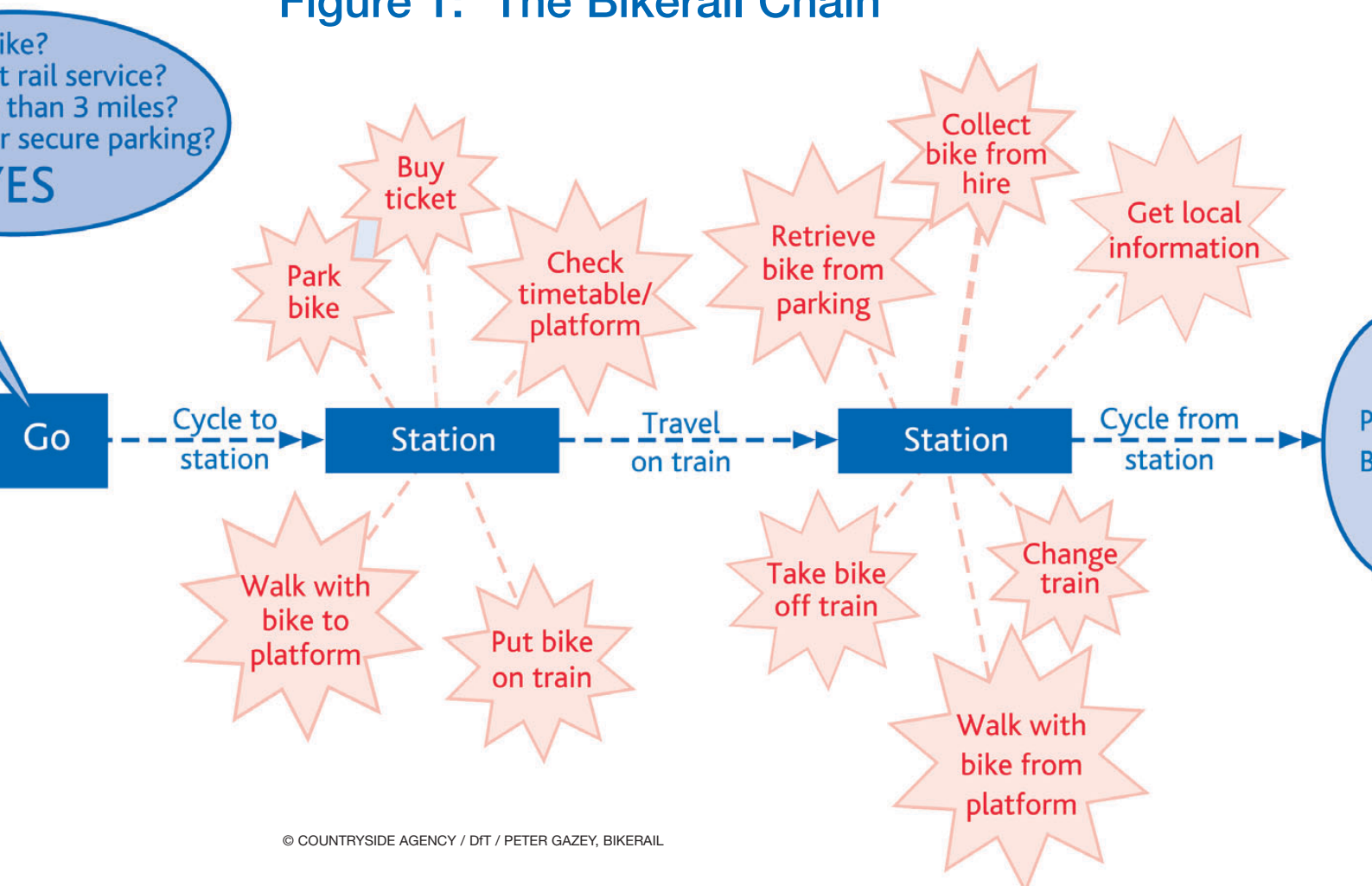
An innovative bicycle hire scheme was set up, based at Lancaster Rail Station. Users have the flexibility of being able to pick up and drop off rental bikes at sixteen sites in the area, including: Carnforth Rail Station, Lancaster University, hotels, garages and tourist information centres. The special needs of families cycling with children are catered for by way of children's bikes, tandems, and trailers all being available at Lancaster Station.

Rental costs were deliberately kept low to maximise hires and appeal to users who might not normally rent a bike. Deposits were avoided by taking a digital photograph of hirers at the time of hiring. To raise awareness of the scheme with travellers and tourists from outside the Lancaster area a joint marketing campaign was arranged with the three TOCs serving the area. The first three months of the project have seen a steady increase in the number of hires. This project represents an excellent example of partnership working with an innovative approach to cycle hire.



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Figure 1: The Bikerail Chain



Case study Granite Way, Devon

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The Granite Way is an 18 kilometre off-road cycle route from Okehampton to Lydford, which forms part of the National Cycle Network. The Granite Way works well in combination with the Dartmoor Railway, which runs parallel to the route for the first 5 kilometres. To / from Okehampton

Station users have the choice and flexibility to either cycle in one direction and can then undertake the return journey by taking their bicycle on the train. The luggage van on Dartmoor Railway trains can accommodate over 30 bicycles. Cyclists are also encouraged to visit another tourist attraction on the route at Lydford Gorge, where they enjoy nearly 20% off the entry price.

Counts of cycle traffic have shown a steady increase since the Granite Way opened in 2002. Since then two new cycle hire centres and a cycle shop have opened in Okehampton. One of the new cycle hire centres is located conveniently at Okehampton Station.

This project really demonstrates how a quality off-road cycle route in an attractive area can help develop tourism and bring new employment to a rural area. This development was also achieved with minimal impact on the local environment.

Case study: Country Lanes Cycle Hire, Windermere

Established in 1993, Country Lanes is a small rural tourism business enterprise with an innovative and sustainable approach.



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The company offers cycling day trips, short breaks and longer touring holidays with expert advice on routes, bike hire, luggage transport and overnight stays in quality accommodation. Country Lanes has established cycle tourism centres at three rural train stations in England, one of which is Windermere in Cumbria. Country Lanes strongly encourage visitors to use the train to reach the cycle hire centre at the Station to start their day trips or holidays. In fact more than 85% of customers reach the start of their cycling holiday or break with Country Lanes via public transport. Information on the travelling time by train from different towns is provided on the web site and in promotional material, including a suggested departure time from Manchester convenient for a day trip in the Lake District. The cycle hire centre at Windermere Station was opened in 1998 partly as result of the demand for cycle touring in the area, but lack of capacity to carry bicycles on local train services. The Centre was updated following a Cycling Projects Fund grant from the DfT in 2003.

Case study: Essex Cycle Parking

In 2002 a partnership was formed between Essex County Council and First Great Eastern to increase the amount and quality of cycle parking at six stations across the First Great Eastern network in Essex. This partnership was supported by the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership (ESSCRP). Funding was provided by the SRA under its Rail Passenger Partnership scheme, with contributions also coming from Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council.



©TRANSPORT REGENERATION

Following the installation of new cycle parking stands the County Council undertook a survey of usage at six rail stations. This showed that of the 322 new cycle spaces, 277 (86%) were occupied. Although some of these bikes would previously have been locked to railings, many are the result of new Bike and Rail journeys. Essex County Council has a target to provide 2,170 secure cycle parking spaces at bus and rail stations by 2006. By 2003/04 1,525 spaces had already been provided - a rise of 10% since 2000. The success of this project provided the impetus for a subsequent RPP bid for cycle parking at a greater number of stations in Essex in 2003.

An excellent example of project partners working together to deliver improved facilities for cyclists and extra passengers for the TOCs'.

Throughout the Merseytravel PTE area bicycles are carried free and at all times on all local trains operated Merseyrail. Cycle carriage is one of the standards of service specified in the franchise agreement under which (Merseyrail) operate. The costs of modifications to rolling stock to facilitate bike carriage were met by Angel Train, one of the three Rolling Stock Leasing Companies (ROSCOs), which own most of the rolling stock used on UK railways. Provision of space to carry cycles originally came about in 1993 as a result of demands to provide a dedicated area for wheelchair users. Unrestricted carriage of bikes on trains was introduced for a trial period in May



1998 as a result of demand from local cyclists, and as no problems were encountered, has since become permanent. Although it might be expected that permitting cycle carriage at peak times would cause conflicts, experience on Merseyside has shown that demand on space are largely self-regulating with cyclists avoiding taking their bikes on trains during the busiest periods.

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PRACTICAL MEASURES TO DEVELOP BIKE AND RAIL

The case studies highlight many examples of good practice of Bike and Rail schemes throughout England. The key elements necessary to provide for different types of Bike and Rail journeys and users are examined in detail in the guidance document.

These are:

- Cycle parking and security
- Cycle-friendly stations (provision of ramps, lifts, automatic doors etc)
- Information and marketing, including when cycles can be carried on trains
- Cycle carriage on trains
- Access and routes to stations
- Cycle hire
- Cycle centres
- Cycle rescue (breakdown) services

No priority is suggested in the guidance for these different elements. Their potential and use will depend on local priorities and circumstances. However, most successful Bike and Rail projects will require a number of the above elements to be wholly successful.

BENEFITS OF BIKE AND RAIL

In addition to the elements necessary for a successful bike and rail journey the case studies have provided additional benefits for promoters, passengers and the local community. These include:

- Increasing cycling and rail journeys
- Widening access to rail stations
- Better integrated transport
- Improved health
- Improving air quality
- Tackling social exclusion
- More cost effective use of land
- Economic growth

In addition these benefits can help assist in the delivery of a variety of other local authority targets such as increased cycle trips and reduced car trips leading to reduced traffic congestion and pollution. There are also potential knock on benefits to the rail industry in the way of increased passenger numbers and revenue, especially on off peak journeys.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Partnership working can bring about real benefits which can enhance a Bike and Rail project in many ways. The guidance document provides detailed advice on partnership working. The benefits include:

- A better quality outcome
- Better value for money for each project partner
- A smoother running and more quickly developed project
- Spreading the workload/resources of those promoting the project

Partnerships offer the opportunity for local authorities (LAs), Network Rail, the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA), Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and others to maximise the benefit of their investment in a project. This will bring about a 'win-win' situation in which each party achieves its own objectives and, in doing so, contributes to others. Benefits, include:

- **Integration with other Policies, Plans and Projects**, can see rail service improvements integrated with proposed traffic restriction measures and cycle access improvements in order to maximise benefits to a TOC and also contribute to achieving Local Transport Plan targets.
- **Maximised Funding Potential**, within a partnership, will provide a variety of funding sources and can help unlock potential contributions. A project which would otherwise not be financially sustainable by a single party may be successfully funded as a partnership.
- **Shared Costs of Development**, can mean that larger Bike and Rail projects can be developed, at less cost to each party and over shorter timescales.
- **Improved Understanding of Powers, Responsibilities and Limitations**, by partners will produce a greater awareness and understanding resulting in more effective co-operation on projects and the promotion of "realistic" proposals.
- **Avoiding and Resolving Conflicts**, by working in partnership, conflict can be reduced leading to a speedier resolution to the project.
- **Winning Community Support**, of local communities affected by new projects is often a key to their success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government, local authorities and the rail industry should look to promote policies that will help maximise opportunities to develop Bike and Rail projects and spread good practice.
- Partnership working is often the key to a successful Bike and Rail project; partners should look to maximise the benefits of working together;
- Bike and Rail users need to make a seamless integrated journey, promoters working in partnership with other stake holders is the best way to achieve this;
- Promotion of Bike and Rail projects is essential to their success and promoters should use every media source available to publicise them;
- Successful Bike and Rail projects go way beyond improving facilities for Bike and Rail journeys. Bike and Rail should also be seen as a key element in the successful delivery of other policies such as objectives to improve health, reduce traffic congestion and pollution and help bring about wider benefits to the community.

Requests for orders of this leaflet should be sent to:

DfT Publications Centre
PO Box 236
Wetherby
West Yorkshire LS23 7Nb
0870 1226 236 Fax 0870 1226 237
email dft@twoten.press.net

Requests for the full guidance should be sent to the Countryside Agency:

Countryside Agency Publications
PO Box 125
Wetherby
West Yorkshire LS23 7EP
Tel 0870 1206 466 Fax 0870 120 6467

REFERENCES

Bike and Rail – A Good Practice Guide, Countryside Agency/DfT 2004, (CA175)

Chapter 4 Walking and Cycling Strategy, The Welsh Assembly Government

ENQUIRIES/CONTACTS

All enquiries about the content of this leaflet to:

Charging and Local Transport Division
Zone 3/19 GMH
76 Marsham Street, LONDON SW1P 4DR
Tel 0207 944 2130
Fax 0207 944 2167
tal@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Details of Traffic Advisory Leaflets available on the DfT website can be accessed as follows: www.dft.gov.uk

From the DfT homepage, click on Roads and Vehicles, then Traffic and Parking Management and then Traffic Advisory Leaflets.

The Department for Transport sponsors a wide range of research into traffic management issues. The results published in Traffic Advisory Leaflets are applicable to England, Wales and Scotland. Attention is drawn to variations in statutory provisions or administrative practices between the countries.

The Traffic Advisory Unit (TAU) is a multi-disciplinary group working within the Department for Transport. The TAU seeks to promote the most effective traffic management and parking techniques for the benefit, safety and convenience of all road users.

Department for Transport

Scottish Executive

Llywodrath Cynulliad Cymru Welsh Assembly Government

Requests for unpriced TAU publications to:
Charging and Local Transport Division,
Zone 3/19, Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DR.
Telephone 020 7944 2478
e-mail: tal@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Within Scotland enquiries should be made to:
Scottish Executive, Development
Department, Transport Division 3, Zone 2-F,
Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ,
Telephone 0131 244 0847
e-mail: roadsafety2@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Within Wales, enquiries should be made to:
Welsh Assembly Government,
Transport Directorate, 2nd Floor, Cathays Park,
Cardiff, CF10 3NQ
Telephone 02920 826444
e-mail: keith.alexander@wales.gsi.gov.uk



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