

Kenilworth Town Council 1st December 2022

Cycling Delivery Group

Update on infrastructure projects

- Clarkes Avenue Bridge – work was originally intended to commence w/c 28th November. However, this has now been delayed until the New Year.
- K2L – we have reached out to a number of local partners to make a joint approach to WCC seeking faster progress on K2L and are awaiting final responses. There is concern that the declining economic environment will put pressure on capital budgets, a prospect which has been raised by the County Council Chief Executive.
- Kenilworth School – we are meeting with the school, WCC officers and the portfolio holder on November 23rd thanks to support from Cllr Tracey Drew

Events & Activities

The group will be represented at the Christmas Market on 10th December.

Members of the Cycling Delivery Group will again be joined by George Bell and Isadora McAinsh who created the 'Pedal to Protect' petition last year. There will also be information on the stall about Warwickshire Cycle Buddies and the 'More than a Cyclist' road safety campaign.

Local Transport Plan

We have submitted a response to WCC to their draft Local Transport Plan which is also included.

Councillor Andrew Milton
November 2022

**Local Transport Plan Consultation
Response from Kenilworth Town Council**

Thank you for the opportunity to feedback on the Local Transport Plan Draft. We welcome the work that has gone into it.

In many ways the document has the right goals and aspirations. However, we have concerns that the anticipated pace of change will be too slow and underestimates what will be needed to deliver the scale of change required in the time available. There is little in the plan which could be described as brave, or radical and in many ways it feels like a continuation of the approach that has achieved so little over the period of the current plan.

Active Travel Strategy

We welcome the fact that active travel is positioned at the top of the hierarchy but there is little in the plan that suggests this is anything more than symbolic. Given its importance it is disappoint that this section is by far the shortest and has the least detail or innovative thinking.

There is little recognition that new infrastructure that has been planned is extremely slow to come forward. The K2L scheme has been funded for almost three years and yet is still at the very least four years away from completion, if it is completed at all. Whilst this pace of progress continues it will not achieve the level of modal shift needed.

As a consequence this makes the suggestion that communications will make a significant contribution to change doubtful. We do not believe that people will be prepared to venture out onto our road network by bicycle without some significant changes to the road environment. This is backed up by countless studies which explicitly make the link between infrastructure and take-up.

Communication also needs to be targeted at not just those who could use active travel – it needs to speak to all road users. Many people will be put off cycling by the behaviour of other road users which creates danger. Ultimately there is enough space on the road for all of us but all road users need to behave differently in order to share this space effectively.

The plan would benefit from addressing needs in two parts – improving active travel options within towns and improving active travel options between towns. That would perhaps encourage some more creative thinking into how this might be done.

Public Transport Strategy

This appears in particular to be lacking in substance.

For example it indicates that cost is a hugely influential factor in people's travel options but then does not include it in the policy. This is a tangible example of something which could remove a barrier to public transport use and an incentive to use an alternative to the car.

For example, peak pricing applies at just the time when the roads are most congested and we should be trying to migrate people to other forms of use.

We would like to see proposals which will have a much more radical impact increasing the number of people who use public transport. There are a number of examples of action globally which have achieved significant and rapid modal shift. Merely continuing to 'work with partners' seems to be laudable but inadequate as a strategy.

Motor Vehicle Strategy

It's recognised that the car is for some an important source of independence but at the same time for many it has become a default option for all journeys, no matter how inappropriate. Redressing this situation is difficult but relying on incentives to use alternatives modes is inadequate. More consideration needs to be given to how use of the motor car can be disincentivised.

Relying on the switch to Electric Vehicles will help solve some of the problems caused by motor vehicles (e.g. air quality) but they are by no means carbon zero in use and will continue to add to the level of congestion on our roads.

We support the strategies that are set out that will ensure that new developments are built with the intent of facilitating non-car travel but we are keen to understand what changes will be needed to the planning system in order to facilitate this and how these changes will be brought about.

Proposed Managing Space Strategy

There is little mention or focus on the greater use of 20mph zones to create more people friendly neighbourhoods. This would create a more welcoming road network where space is more easily shared but gets little attention. Other ideas e.g. ULEZ schemes get little explanation or expansion.

In conclusion

This Local Transport Plan feels like a missed opportunity.

It lacks any radical intent for the scale of the change that is needed. It also fails to set out any meaningful targets which would enable its ambition or effectiveness to be measured. We would urge a rethink.