

WYRE FOREST CYCLE STRATEGY

2004 ANNUAL REVIEW



**Forward Planning Section.
Planning, Health & Environment
Division.**

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INDEX OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (PI's)

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PI 23 - % of cyclist casualties during the last twelve months.

PI 24 - No. of employers in Wyre Forest District signed up to cycle friendly schemes.

2004 Annual Review of Wyre Forest Cycle Strategy

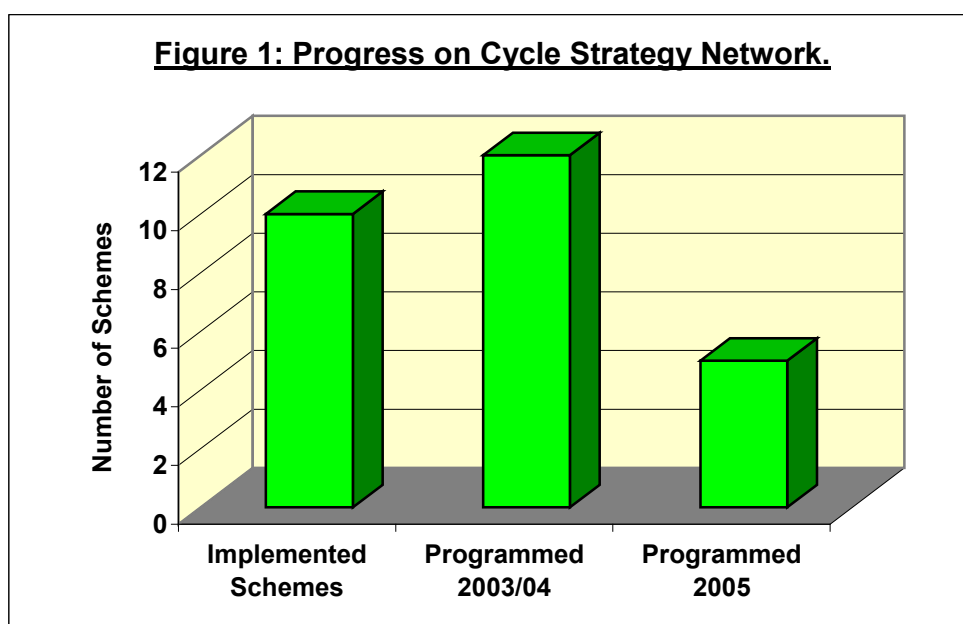
• INTRODUCTION

This report forms the first stage of progress monitoring of the Supplementary Planning Guidance – Wyre Forest Cycle Strategy, which was adopted in 2002. 24 performance indicators (PI's) have been developed, against which progress is to be measured. This will form the bulk of the report.

Conclusions have been drawn from these performance indicators and finally action points have been identified to target efforts over the next year. The Cycle Strategy will help to inform the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan Review, which commences this year.

• IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CYCLE STRATEGY NETWORK

In total 117 proposed schemes have been identified under the prioritised cycle route network. 10 schemes were completed during 2002/03. This represents 8.6% of the total network. 14 schemes were programmed for implementation during the 2003/04 financial year. This represents 12% of the total network. 6 schemes are programmed for implementation by 2005 under the Sustrans Route 45/Advantage West Midlands Rural Regeneration Zone funding proposals. This represents 5% of the total network.

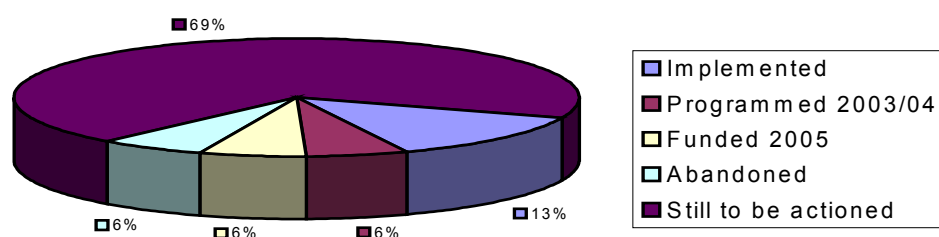


Objective 1 – To create Safe Cycle Routes for Local People to Utilise

PI 1 - Number of Safer Routes to Schools/Transport Interchanges completed under Priority 1 of the cycle route network map within the last 12 months.

47 proposals were identified under Priority 1 routes, 6 have now been implemented (13%). A further 3 schemes had been scheduled for completion during 2003/04 (6%), but unfortunately have slipped back into the 2004/05 financial year. 3 schemes are to be funded under the R45/Opportunity Bewdley by 2005 (6%) although alternative funding sources may need to be sought. Finally, 3 schemes had to be abandoned due to residents' objections (6%).

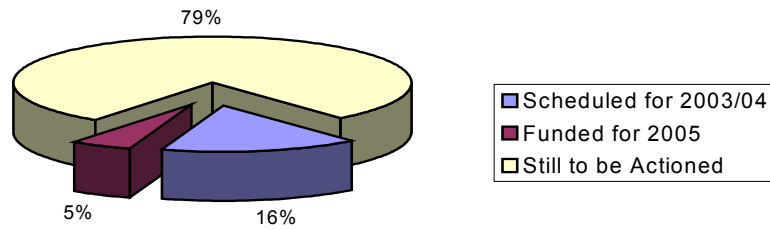
Figure 2: Progress on Priority 1 routes



PI 2 - Number of commuter routes implemented under Priority 2 on the cycle route network map within the last 12 months.

19 schemes were identified under Priority 2 routes; none of these have yet been implemented. 3 were to be implemented during the financial year 2003/04 (16%) but unfortunately have slipped back into the 2004/05 financial year. Finally a scheme is proposed for funding by 2005 representing 5%.

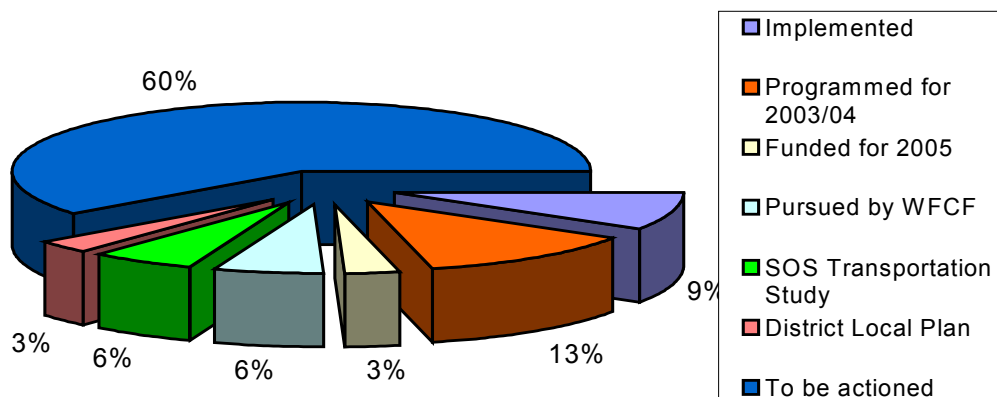
Figure 3: Progress on Priority 2 Schemes



PI 3 - Number of town centre routes implemented under Priority 3 on the cycle route network map within the last 12 months.

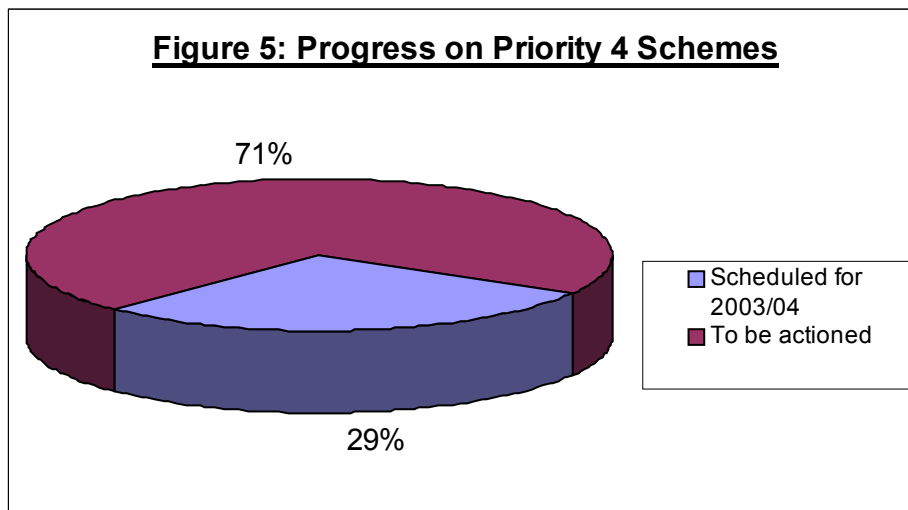
32 proposals were identified, 3 schemes have been implemented (9%), 4 schemes were scheduled for implementation in 2003/04 (12.5%), and one of these schemes (Bewdley Road North) was implemented in June 2004. A further scheme has funding until 2005 (3%). In addition 2 are being pursued by Wyre Forest Cycle Forum (6%), 2 through Worcestershire County Council's Stourport-on-Severn Transportation Study (6%) and one route is safeguarded within the District Local Plan. (3%)

Figure 4: Progress on Priority 3 Schemes



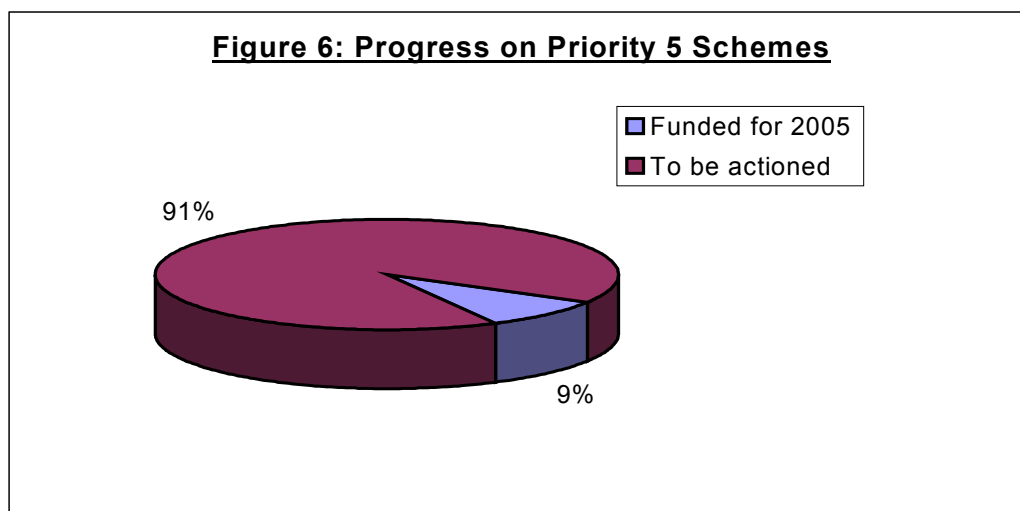
PI 4 - Number of identified Sustrans network routes implemented under Priority 4 on the cycle route network map within the last 12 months.

A total of 7 proposals were identified. None have yet been implemented. 2 were scheduled for implementation during 2003/04 (29%). One of these schemes (Dry mill Lane) was implemented in May 2004.



PI 5 - Number of other leisure amenity routes implemented under Priority 5 on the cycle route network map within the last 12 months.

A total of 11 proposals were identified. None have yet been implemented, 1 scheme has been programmed for funding by 2005 (9%).



Objective 2 – To ensure that cyclists needs are catered for in new developments within the District.

PI 6 - Number of new developments undertaken within the last two years incorporating facilities for cyclists.

New facilities for cyclists include:

WF/950/00 Kidderminster College– cycle parking (56 Sheffield Stands)

WF/1043/00 Tescos– cycle parking

WF/361/99 Kidderminster Flood Alleviation Scheme– creation of shared use cycle paths.

WF/794/03 – Blakedown Apartments - 6 sheffield stands.

Wf/1142/03 – Bromford Carinthia Housing Development – 6 sheffield stands for residential development.

PI 7 - Number of travel plans submitted/implemented via planning applications within the last two years.

Only one travel plan has been implemented as a Section 106 Agreement – this formed part of Kidderminster College's Planning Application for its relocation to Market Street. The requirements for travel plans as part of a planning application represents a potential resource to implement cycle infrastructure, which is currently being under used.

PI 8 - Number of Section 106 agreements relating to sustainable transport initiatives and promoting cycling implemented.

Table 1: Section 106 Agreements

Application Site	Amount	Contribution Towards	Status
Folkes Forge, Stourport Road	£15,000	Sustrans Route 45	To be finalised.
New Forest Close, Far Forest	£5,000	Footpath Link	Finalised and spent
Swan Centre, Kidderminster	£50,000	Sustainable Transport for Kidderminster Town centre	Pending finalisation
Plot 2a Foley Park	£10,000	Sustrans Route 45	Finalised and Spent
Sainsburys Extension	£100,000	Town Centre Improvements	Finalised, some works undertaken.
Kidderminster College Relocation	£75,000	Sustainable Transport measures for students	Proposals being developed.
Stourvale Housing Development	£50,000	Pedestrian./cycle linkage	Revised scheme being investigated.

Objective 3 – To improve the provision of facilities for cyclists at transport interchanges and to promote links between cycling and public transport.

PI 9 - Number of cycle stands at rail and bus stations.

The provision of cycle facilities at local interchanges is currently very poor as is demonstrated by the figures below:

8 at Kidderminster Rail Station

0 at Kidderminster Bus Station

0 at Blakedown Rail Station

Objective 4 – To support the creation of Safer Routes to Schools in conjunction with Worcestershire County Council.

PI 10 - % increase in the number of children cycling to school in the Wyre Forest District from 2002 baseline figures.

The figures shown in the table below can be used as a baseline for monitoring in future. They demonstrate that only small numbers of pupil's actually cycle to school compared with a large number of pupils who would like to cycle if infrastructure and conditions were improved. At least 95% of pupils interviewed at the above schools believed that their health would improve if they were enabled to walk or cycle to school.

Table 2: Safer Routes to Schools Data

Name of School	% children who own bike	Current % of children cycling to school	% of children who would like to cycle to school.
King Charles 1 High	79%	2%	16%
Sladen CE Middle	86%	1%	25%
Lea St First	83%	3%	26%
St Georges CE First	75%	0%	33%
St Ambrose Catholic	87%	1%	50%
Stone First	95%	0%	25%
Offmore First	Not specified	1%	27%
Wolverley High	80%	2%	10%
Sion Hill Middle	Not specified	2%	Not specified
Wolverley Sebright 1 st	88%	0%	21%
Cookley Sebright 1 st	92%	0%	29%
Blakedown C.E First	96%	0%	36%
Franch Middle	Not specified	2%	Not specified
Marlpool First	Not specified	0%	Not specified

(Source: Worcestershire County Council's Safer Routes to Schools Survey: Part A- King Charles 1 High School Pyramid & Part B – Wolverley High School Pyramid, December 2002)

PI 11 - Number of traffic calming schemes implemented during the last 2 years adjacent to local schools.

- Queensway Estate, Wribbenhall, Bewdley
- Borington Road, Comberton Estate, Kidderminster

(NB: Three traffic-calming schemes were not implemented due to lack of local support from the residents. These included:

- Hales Park/Wyre Hill/Cleobury Road, Bewdley (St. Anne's First & Middle Schools)
- Stourport Road, Bewdley (provision of zebra crossings) Wribbenhall Middle and Bewdley High Schools.
- Habberley Road/Mason Road, Kidderminster (St John's First School and Baxter College)

PI 12 – Number of cycle parking facilities at secondary schools within Wyre Forest Area

Table 3: Cycle Parking at Local Schools

Name of School	Cycle Storage Facilities
Baxter College	6
Comberton Middle	23 (only 2 used)
Wolverley High	20 (many used)
Stourport High	20 (not well used due to cycle thefts)

(Source: WCC Safer Routes to Schools Survey)

The above table confirms that there are currently not sufficient cycle parking facilities available at local schools. Where facilities are available they are often not in the right location, for example at Stourport High School where bicycle theft is common. There are currently no facilities at Birchen Coppice, St Johns Middle, Burlish Middle, Wribbenhall Middle and St Annes Middle. There are proposals for cycle parking at Bewdley High School under the Safe Routes to Schools scheme.

Objective 5 – To implement the Sustrans Route 45 network within the District in partnership with Sustrans and Worcestershire County Council.

PI 13 - Amount of Sustrans National Cycle Network implemented during the last 12 months.

- Stourport-on-Severn to Kidderminster canal towpath. Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. (2003)
- Leapgate Ramp at Wilden disused railway line. (2004)
- Signage, bridge and surfacing in Wyre Forest undertaken by the Forestry Commission. (2003)
- Provision of signage from Dry Mill Lane to Bewdley Town Centre (2004)

An immense amount of planning and background work has been undertaken, which has been complicated by funding difficulties and changing priorities.

Objective 6 – To increase cycle parking provision within the town centres of Kidderminster, Stourport & Bewdley.

PI 14 - % increase in cycle stands over the last 12 months from baseline figure of 76.

New cycle parking facilities have been installed at Tesco's (provision for 6 cycles). However the main contributor to cycle parking has been the provision of 56 Sheffield stands at the relocated Kidderminster College in Market Street. 46 of these are located to the rear of the building and are not well used due to security worries. However, the ten to the front of the building are well used by students and the public. Worcestershire County Council is currently working with the college to make the cycle parking more safe and convenient to use.



Cycle Parking outside Kidderminster Town Hall (July 2004)

There has been a substantial increase from the baseline figure of 81%. However, this figure has been very skewed by the college provision and does not represent good coverage for the whole district in the town centres and at local shops.

PI 15 - Number of cycle parking stands available in the District Council's nature reserves.

There is current provision for cyclists at the Hurcott Woods Nature Reserve where there are 5 Sheffield stands. Provision of cycle parking at other nature reserves within the District needs to be considered and implemented accordingly by Cultural Leisure and Commercial Services.

Objective 7 – To promote cycle routes for leisure and sustainable tourism purposes within the District.

PI 16 - Number of publicity items issued by Wyre Forest District Council in Newswyre during the last 12 months.

- Introduction of Wyre Forest Cycle Strategy. Winter 2003
- National Bike Week. Summer 2003.
- Travel Awareness Campaign. Winter 2003.

Coverage of sustainable transport issues has been fair and can be further utilised to cover success stories.

PI 17 - Number of items promoted on Wyre Forest District Council's Website.

The Cycle Forum web page has recently been established and is in its early stages of development. It includes links to local cycling organisations, dates and minutes of meetings, links to National Bike Week and details of events the Forum is involved in. In addition the Cycle Strategy is now located on Wyre Forest District Council's web site.

PI 18 - Number of signed cycle routes implemented during the last 2 years.

A number of signed routes have been implemented by Worcestershire County Council these include:

- Stourport-on-Severn to Kidderminster canal towpath. Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal.
- Minster Road/St John's Road, Stourport-on-Severn.
- Bewdley Hill/Sutton Park Road, Kidderminster
- Provision of signage from Dry Mill Lane to Bewdley Town Centre

Objective 8 – To promote the environmental and health benefits of cycling, for all ages, both young and old, as a form of transport through partnership working.

PI 19 - Number of national, regional and local events participated in by the District Council during the last 2 years.

Wyre Forest District Council's Health and Sustainability Officer generally co-ordinates WFDC's involvement in events and ensures appropriate press coverage.

- National Bike Week
- Green Transport Week
- In Town Without My Car Day
- Sustrans Longest Ride.
- Opening of Route 45 Bewdley to Alveley Cycle Route (13/06/04)



Bewdley to Alveley Cycle Route Launch 13/06/04

Objective 9 – To provide quality and usable cycle infrastructure through regular consultation with local cyclists.

PI 20 - Number of highway schemes commented on by the Wyre Forest Cycle Forum 2003/04.

All recent schemes incorporating cycle facilities are sent out for consultation via the Chairman of Wyre Forest Cycle Forum. In addition, an officer from the Highways Partnership Unit also attends the Wyre Forest Cycle Forum to provide an update on proposed highway schemes, which could affect cyclists.

PI 21 - Number of Wyre Forest Cycle Forum meetings held during the last 2 years.

8 meetings of the Forum have been held on a quarterly basis over the last two years. These are hosted and organised by Wyre Forest District Council.

Objective 10 – To work in partnership with Worcestershire County Council, the Highways Agency, Wyre Forest Cycle Forum and local residents to meet or exceed government targets by trebling cycling by 2010 compared with 2000.

PI 22 - % cycle usage in Wyre Forest District during the last 12 months.

The 2001 Census Results showed that from a total of 47,161 working Wyre Forest residents aged 16-74, 1,033 people cycled to work. This represents a total of 2.19%. This figure needs to be increased. Realistically having regard to journey to work trip lengths, this figure could be improved threefold to 8%. In an ideal situation 10% could be reached if more cycle infrastructure could be implemented.

Statistics from the cycle counter located on Minster Road demonstrate that the numbers of cyclists increase during the warmer spring and summer months when it is lighter in the mornings and evenings. Figures are set out below for information:

Table 4: Cycle Counter Data

Mar 02	Apr 02	May 02	Jun 02	Jul 02	Aug 02	Sep 02	Oct 02	Nov 02	Dec 02	Jan 03	Feb 03	Mar 03
64	72	76	79	80	77	72	63	59	43	54	57	57

(Source: WCC Cycle Counter Data representing an average daily flow for the specified month)

WCC also has limited figures from the counter located on the canal towpath adjacent to the Gilgal. These show that average daily flow figures have nearly doubled from 36 cyclists in March 2003 to 71 cyclists in April 2004.

PI 23 - % of cyclist casualties during the last twelve months.

WCC's figures provide an overview of cycle casualties during 2003 from 01/01/03-31/12/03. These demonstrate that in total there were 24 casualties, 2 of these were seriously injured and 22 were slightly injured. These figures are skewed towards young males in the 5-29 age bracket. The fact that 8 males within the 10-15 age bracket were slightly hurt in accidents is worrying. This could reflect travel to school by bike during the rush hour. The total number of cyclist casualties for the County is 132; Wyre Forest District's percentage of the County Figure is 18%.

PI 24 - No. of employers in Wyre Forest District signed up to cycle friendly schemes.

- Kidderminster College
- Wyre Forest District Council
- Wyre Forest Primary Care Trust

The above schemes are promoted and overseen by Worcestershire County Council's Travel Plan Co-ordinator. Only Kidderminster College has a fully worked up Travel Plan in place.

• **CONCLUSIONS**

• **Objective 1**

Good progress is being made towards the implementation of the cycle route network, however this has been hampered in the past by the lack of willingness to accommodate and adopt new cycle infrastructure within the District. A more proactive stance needs to be promoted at both County and District levels. Perhaps one of the most effective cycle routes implemented for both utility and leisure purposes has been the direct link between Stourport and Kidderminster along the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Towpath. This provides an excellent off road facility and has helped to boost cycling numbers and offers more transport choice within the District.

• **Objective 2**

Progress is being made towards accommodating cyclists in new development, however far more needs to be achieved and the Highways Partnership Unit needs to become more proactive and less reactive towards implementing infrastructure.

A practice note is to be produced for Development Control purposes in due course. Cycle infrastructure needs to be carefully considered and well thought out. Consideration should be given in the early application stages to maintenance and adoption issues; these should never be an afterthought. Similarly, travel plans need to be negotiated more thoroughly and proper enforcement procedures put in place for larger developments within the District. The securing of a travel plan for Kidderminster College is an excellent starting point.

- **Objective 3**

There is room for much improvement at the District's transport interchanges. There are currently very poor facilities for cyclists at the bus and rail stations in Kidderminster. This needs to be given a much greater priority and emphasis in the next Worcestershire Local Transport Plan review. It is noted that Worcestershire County Council has reiterated this within its latest Annual Progress Report.

- **Objective 4**

Safer Routes to Schools has helped to secure a great deal of infrastructure for local schools and is an excellent source of funding. However, more could be done to secure effective consultation with local residents to ensure that schemes go ahead. Three schemes have been abandoned due to objections from local residents. Surveys show that far more children would cycle to school if infrastructure were put in place, the District Council should help them to achieve this. More needs to be done to ensure that secure cycle parking facilities are provided at all local schools complete with CCTV, as at Baxter College.

- **Objective 5**

A great deal of work has been undertaken over the past years to progress the implementation of Sustrans Route 45. Many sections have now been implemented culminating in the very recent opening of the Bewdley to Alveley route in partnership with Shropshire County Council. Those sections implemented are well used, however some sections have not been implemented and have been delayed due to poor negotiation and consultation with local residents and interest groups, who subsequently objected to planning applications. This has set the implementation of the route back and has had a knock on effect on funding resources. Sustrans has recently appointed a Land Negotiator who will help to address these problems in the future.

- **Objective 6**

The provision of cycle parking in public places is an area that also needs much improvement. Some increase in cycle parking facilities has been made, principally in Kidderminster around the college site. More convenient locations need to be established with good natural surveillance. Sheffield stands are readily available, now a workplan needs to be confirmed between WCC and WFDC to install cycle parking facilities within the District. In the short term, cycle parking at Kidderminster College

needs to be covered and made more secure in order for it to become more convenient for the students.

- **Objective 7**

Please see objective 5 conclusions on Route 45 for leisure purposes. The District Council's quarterly Newswyre publication regularly reports cycling events and promotions. The creation of the Wyre Forest Cycle Forum webpage will help to promote cycling within the District. Finally, Opportunity Bewdley's Rural Transport Partnership Officer has played an active role in promoting Sustran Route 45 and has helped to boost local publicity for cycling.

- **Objective 8**

Please see comments under Objective 7 above. The District Council plays an active role in promoting National Bike Week and Green Transport Week and organises media events in partnership with Worcestershire County Council.

- **Objective 9**

Wyre Forest District has an active and successful Cycle Forum, which helps to ensure that cyclist's interests are always represented to Wyre Forest District Council and Worcestershire County Council. The Forum is also represented on the Local Strategic Partnership and the Community Strategy. Wyre Forest Cycle Forum was mooted as a successful consultative group within the 2003 Annual Progress Report of the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan.

- **Objective 10**

Cycle usage is on the increase within the District and has been boosted in recent years through the implementation of the towpath route. However, more use could be made of promoting Employer Travel Plans and cycle friendly schemes. It is realistic to target an increase in cycling to work to 8% from the existing 2.19% by 2010.

- **ACTIONS FOR 2004/05**

- **To produce a development control practice note on securing infrastructure for cyclists and travel plans through Section 106 Agreements.**
- **To progress the provision of cycling facilities at local interchange points through the 2005 Worcestershire Local Transport Plan review.**
- **To request that Worcestershire County Council considers revising arrangements to ensure more effective consultation exercises with local residents and interest groups.**
- **To develop an implementation plan in partnership with Worcestershire County Council for the provision of secure cycle parking within the District.**
- **To seek more effective promotion of Employer Travel Plans throughout the District led by Worcestershire County Council.**
- **To support Worcestershire County Council in progressing the Safer Routes to Schools programme within the District.**

LIST OF REFERENCES

1. Carry Over 2003/04 Cycle Schemes and 2004/05 Design Only
Worcestershire County Council Delivery and Operations Unit. June 2004
2. Cycle Counter Data November 2001-March 2003
Worcestershire County Council Delivery and Operations Unit.
3. Safer Routes to School - December 2002
Part A King Charles 1 High School Pyramid
Part B Wolverley High School Pyramid
Worcestershire County Council Delivery and Operations Unit.