

Essex Cycling Strategy Survey Report

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15th December 2015

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Introduction

Cycling is important to Essex. It is more than just a pastime for a dedicated few, or a cheap mode of transport; it is a solution to the problem of congestion in our towns and poor health in our society. It contributes to an improved quality of life, a stronger economy and an enhanced environment. It brings people together and gives them freedom. It facilitates urban renewal and encourages sustainability. On top of that, it's great fun! Essex County Council recognises the importance of cycling, both to individuals and to the county as a whole, and is committed to facilitating its growth.

The purpose of Essex County Council's (ECC) Cycling strategy is to set out the key elements of a long term plan that will lead to a significant and sustained increase in cycling in Essex, establishing it in the public's mind as a 'normal' mode of travel, especially for short a-to-b trips, and as a major participation activity and sport for all ages.

The strategy has been produced in conjunction with Essex County Council, the 12 Essex Districts/Boroughs, the two Unitary Authorities (Southend-On-Sea and Thurrock) and other key stakeholders. It has taken account of current UK policy, data on cycling levels within Essex and best practice from around the world.

The strategy itself contains three sections:

Section 1: Explains why cycling is important to Essex, summarises its main benefits and highlights its importance to Essex County Council's seven key Outcomes.

Section 2: Sets out the nine areas of strategic action that we believe are necessary to deliver the growth in cycling we want to see as a local authority.

Section 3: Summarises the monitoring regime we will adopt to assess the effectiveness of the Strategy and the Performance Indicators we will use to track progress. This section also outlines potential funding options.

In order to gain the views and feedback of Essex residents about the strategy a questionnaire was developed. This questionnaire was open to all Essex residents for a period of 8 weeks.

The results of this survey are currently being used by Essex County Council to inform the final version of the Cycling Strategy, which will be presented to Cabinet in January 2016.

This report will be accessible to members of the public via our online portal and alternative formats are available on request.

Key Conclusions

- The majority of respondents (81%) said they currently use a bicycle, for those that responded no, a third said that they 'Did not feel safe on the road', When asked what would encourage them to use a bicycle 57% said 'more traffic free cycle routes'.
- 81% agreed with the appointment of an Essex Cycling Advocate, however concerns were expressed that the 'cycling advocate' would not be a cyclist themselves.
- 87% agreed that increased funding for cycling is appropriate, with nearly a third (32%) putting 'Additional funding from central Government', as the highest priority.
- A number of comments were made about Best practice design, with many suggesting that ECC follows the best practice of other European countries such as the Netherlands.
- A number of respondents highlighted issues around the idea of an 'Essex Cycle Brand' saying that it was a waste of 'resources' and suggesting that infrastructure needs to come first.
- A number of respondents suggested that 'high profile' events were most useful in promoting cycling within Essex, however concerns were raised that these are not promoted enough and suggested that events for the whole family would be more suitable.
- When asked about initiatives in their local areas there were a number of suggestions made including, free bike maintenance workshops, skills and safety training, and incentives for using bicycles for commuting.
- The majority of respondents agreed that continental standards and 'quietways' should be introduced in their area, suggesting that they would encourage more people to cycle.
- 87% agreed that investing in cycling skills training is important, suggesting that 'Bikeability' or cycling proficiency schemes, specifically for children, are most effective.
- A number of respondents highlighted the importance of improving cycle lanes and ensuring they are properly integrated into the wider Essex transport structure. For some linking the strategy with other agencies such as Essex Highways, specifically regarding issues around road resurfacing and maintenance was important.
- A number of issues were raised around legislation and suggestions were made for ECC to lobby central government for changes in the Highway Code, specifically the idea of 'strict liability' which is widely used in other European countries.
- A number of comments suggested that the strategy should have a greater focus on drivers of motorized vehicles too, specifically training around overtaking cyclists safely.

Executive Summary

The majority of respondents (81%) said that they currently use a bicycle, for those that responded no, a third (33%) said that they 'Did not feel safe on the road', while 11% said that there were 'no cycle paths/routes' for them to use and 10% said that it 'would take too long to get where I wanted to.'

When asked what would encourage them to start using a bicycle, the majority (57%) of respondents said 'more traffic free cycle routes', while 34% said more 'cycle lanes printed on the roads' and 17% said 'more cycle parking facilities.'

Respondents were asked if they thought the appointment of an Essex Cycling Advocate would be a positive step forward. The majority of respondents (81%) agreed, while only 15% disagreed. Several respondents expressed concerns that the 'cycling advocate' would not be a cyclist themselves and that this was important to ensure that they had sufficient "*understanding and knowledge about cycling*." Other comments suggested the need for the advocate to liaise and work in partnership with other agencies, specifically Essex Highways.

Respondents were asked if they agreed that increased funding for cycling is appropriate. The majority of respondents (87%) agreed, with only a small number disagreeing (6%). When asked which funding source should have the highest priority, nearly a third (32%) chose 'Additional funding from central Government', while 27% chose 'Better coordination of the county council's existing spending', 29% 'improved developer contributions towards the provision of infrastructure' and 3% 'closer working with voluntary and training sectors'.

Respondents were asked if they had any additional ideas regarding best practice design. Over 10% of comments suggested following the best practice of other European countries, such as the Netherlands who have "*the world's best cycling infrastructure*." There were also several comments made around the importance of consulting with existing cyclists and cycling groups, maintaining current infrastructure, clear and appropriate signage, cycle storage and the education and promotion of safe cycling.

Respondents were then asked about the Essex Cycle brand, there were over 300 comments, with nearly 1/5 of these expressing concerns, with many seeing branding as a "*waste of money*" and suggesting that infrastructure needs to come first. There were other suggestions made around the use of social media, slogans and the importance of including schools and children in the creation of an Essex brand.

Respondents were asked if they agreed that high profile events are useful for promoting cycling within Essex, with the majority (78%) of respondents agreeing and only 7% disagreeing. When asked what events are useful, over half of the comments referred to 'High Profile' events, however concerns were raised that these were not promoted well enough and that they did little to encourage everyday 'normal' cycling. Over a third of all comments suggested events that were fun or suitable for the 'whole family' rather than professional cyclists.

Respondents were asked about what initiatives they thought should be supported in their local area. Several suggestions were made including, free bike maintenance workshops, skills and safety training, incentives for using bicycles for commuting and improved facilities for cycle storage.

Respondents were asked if they agreed that continental standards should be introduced in their area, the majority (82%) of people agreed, while only 8% disagreed. They were also asked the same for the introduction of 'Quietways', with the majority (80%) agreeing, and only 9% disagreeing. When asked why/why not, the majority of comments were positive, suggesting that they would encourage more people to cycle, however some respondents argued that this type of infrastructure is often poorly maintained and is not suitable for those who wish to cycle at a faster pace.

Respondents were asked if they thought investing in cycling skills training is important. The majority (77%) agreed, while only 5% disagreed. When asked about subsidized access to bikes and equipment, over half (55%) agreed that this was worthwhile, while 17% disagreed.

When asked which training schemes they thought were effective, a 1/3 of all comments suggested 'Bikeability' or 'cycling proficiency schemes', specifically targeted at children and Schools and just over 6% suggested cycle to work schemes.









Respondents were then asked if they had any other comments regarding the strategy, out of 277 comments, 16% spoke about the importance of improving cycle lanes and ensuring that they are properly integrated into the wider Essex transport structure. Issues were raised around legislation and suggestions were made for ECC to lobby central government for changes in the Highway Code, specifically the idea of 'strict liability' which is widely used in other European countries.

There were several comments highlighting the importance of linking the strategy with other agencies such as Essex Highways, specifically issues around road resurfacing and maintenance. 12% of comments suggested that the strategy should have a greater focus on drivers of motorized vehicles too, specifically training and promotion around overtaking cyclists safely. Over 6% of comments related to Horse riding and bridle paths, with one person commenting that, "*All vulnerable road users should be included in this scheme.*" Over 10% of comments raised concerns around ensuring that ECC works with partners in order to have a more "*joined up thinking with districts, boroughs and the cities*".














Who gave their views?

A total of 626 people responded to the survey. Of the total, 63% of respondents were male and 35% female. The majority of respondents (85%) said that they do not have a disability, while 5% stated that they have a long-term health problem and 2% stated that they had a physical or sensory impairment.

Most respondents were aged between 41-50

		Response Total	Response Percent
18 or under		8	1%
18-25		8	1%
26-30		37	6%
31-40		131	21%
41-50		177	28%
51-60		161	26%
61-75		93	15%
75+		9	1%
Total Respondents		624	100%








The breakdown of respondents by the home district is shown below

		Response Total	Response Percent
Basildon		31	5%
Braintree		84	13%
Brentwood		22	4%
Castle point		27	4%
Chelmsford		177	28%
Colchester		96	15%
Epping Forest		21	3%
Harlow		6	1%
Maldon		24	4%
Rochford		27	4%
Tendring		25	4%
Uttlesford		16	3%
Other, please specify		96	15%
Total Respondents		626	100%






Detailed findings

Section 1






Question one asked respondent if they currently use a bicycle, the majority of respondents (81%) answered yes, while 19% answered no. For those that responded no, they were then asked what their main reason for not riding a bicycle was. An third of respondents (33%) said that they 'Did not feel safe on the road', while 11% said that there were 'no cycle paths/routes' for them to use and 10% gave time as a reason, saying that it 'would take too long to get where I wanted to.'

		Response Total	Response Percent
I do not have a bicycle		28	18%
I am not able to ride a bicycle		2	1%
It would take too long to get where I want to go		15	10%
I do not feel safe cycling on the road		50	33%
I just automatically use the car		7	5%
There are no cycle routes/paths for me to use		16	11%
Other		34	22%
Total Respondents		152	100%







When asked what would encourage them to start using a bicycle, the majority (57%) of respondents said 'more traffic free cycle routes', while 34% said more 'cycle lanes printed on the roads' and 17% said 'more cycle parking facilities'.

		Response Total	Response Percent
More traffic free cycle routes		89	57%
more cycle lanes painted on the roads		53	34%
Cycle priority facilities at junctions		22	14%
More cycle parking in public places		26	17%
Secure cycle parking where I		12	8%







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live			
Better maintenance of the existing cycle paths and lanes		27	17%
More high quality cycle signs		10	6%
Subsidised bicycles and equipment		18	11%
Cycling skills training		8	5%
Other		41	26%
Total Respondents		157	100%







For those that answered yes to riding a bicycle, respondents were asked how often they rode. Just over a third (37%) said at least five times a week, 40% answered at least once a week, with 9% saying that they rode two or three times a month. Only 4% answered once a month, 9% a few times a year and just 1% said that they had not ridden at all in the last year.

		Response Total	Response Percent
At least five times a week		265	37%
At least once a week		289	40%
Two or three times a month		67	9%
Once a month		29	4%
A few times a year		65	9%
Not at all in the last year		10	1%
Total Respondents		725	100%

When asked what their main reason for using a bicycle was 17% answered that it was the most 'convenient way to travel', 4% said it was 'cheaper than other forms of transport', nearly half of all respondents (47%) answered because they 'enjoy it'. A quarter of respondents answered because 'it's good for my health', 2% said it was because they didn't have a car and 8% answered 'other'.

		Response Total	Response Percent
It's the most convenient way to travel		120	17%
It's cheaper than other forms of transport		27	4%
I enjoy it		325	45%
It's good for my health		185	25%
I don't have a car		11	2%
Other		61	8%
Total Respondents		727	100%

Respondents were then asked what their main purpose for riding a bicycle was. A quarter of respondents answered 'getting to work', 5% said it was for 'going shopping' and only 1% answered 'visiting family and friends'. Nearly half of respondents (46%) answered 'leisure', 16% 'sport' and 7% answered 'other'.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Getting to work		178	25%
Going shopping		35	5%
Visiting family and friends		9	1%
Leisure		337	46%
Sport		116	16%
Other		52	7%
Total Respondents		726	100%

Our Strategy

The next part of the questionnaire then asked questions regarding ECC's Cycling Strategy, (ECC's long term plan for increasing cycling in Essex) which included three key elements:






- ENABLE
- PROMOTE
- PROVIDE

ENABLE

Proposal 1: An Essex Cycling Advocate

Essex County Council (ECC) wants to ensure that the promotion and development of cycling is embedded in everything they do as a Council. ECC propose to appoint one of their Councilors as an Essex Cycling Advocate. They will be a high profile champion of cycling in Essex and chair a new Essex Cycling Steering Group.

Respondents were asked if they thought the appointment of an Essex Cycling Advocate would be a positive step forward. The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (42%) or agreed (39%) with this statement, with 12% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		330	42%
Agree		308	39%
Neither agree nor disagree		92	12%
Disagree		28	4%
Strongly disagree		26	3%
Total Respondents		784	100%

Respondents were then asked if they had any comments regarding the appointment of an Essex Cycling advocate. Several respondents expressed concerns that the Cycling advocate would not actually be a cyclist themselves and that their level of knowledge and understanding around cycling would be limited. One respondent commented, "*The person chosen should ride themselves and must have a passion for cycling in all its forms*" and another saying, "*They should be a keen active cyclist who lives in the area to ensure they understand the issues in Essex.*" Others expressed concerns about it being a Councilor, with one respondent saying, "*I think it needs to be someone that actually cycles not just a Councilor who will get in his car after every meeting and go home.*" And another saying that ECC should "*Enlist the services of an Organisation such as the CTC; don't appoint a Councilor who probably won't have sufficient background/knowledge.*"

There were also several respondents who felt very positive about the appointment of an Essex Cycling advocate, with one person saying *“what a great idea”* and another saying *“We need someone to champion cycling!”* Some respondents added that although it was a good idea they felt that more advocates were needed in other areas, not just at a county level. One respondent commented that the appointment was a *“Good idea but can we also have advocates in the local councils so strategy is joined up and followed through by the boroughs?”* and another questioning if it would just be for Chelmsford? Commenting *“ECC staff who work in County Hall seem to forget sometimes that Essex is bigger than Chelmsford's boundaries.”*

Other respondents spoke about the need for the advocate to liaise and work in partnership with Essex Highways, emphasizing the importance of road maintenance and safety, with one person commenting, *“Liaise with the Highways agency regard to the method used to resurface our roads.”* Another also commenting about the condition of the roads saying specifically about the recent, *“road dressing”* which was carried out on many of the local roads and which, *“made the road surfaces much worse, especially for bicycles.”*






In regards to safety many saw the appointment of a cycling advocate as a positive step forward, one person commented that *“If they can help influence promoting the provision of more and improved and safe cycle paths to encourage cycling this would be great!”*

There were also several comments made in regards to horse riding, with many stating that they would like to see an advocate for horse riding as well as cycling, with one respondent commenting, *“should the cycling advocate also be an ambassador for safe riding for horses as well as cycling? As both cyclists and horses use same routes”* and another commenting that the role should also cover, *“other non-motorized modes of transport eg. Horse riders.”*






Proposal 2: Transformational funding

To provide the kind of cycle schemes, facilities and promotion that will get significantly more people cycling in Essex will require an increase in funding over and above the current level of funding for cycling in Essex.

Respondents were asked if they agreed that increased funding for cycling is appropriate. The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (60%) or agreed (27%), with only a small number disagreeing (3%) or strongly disagreeing (3%).

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		469	60%
Agree		212	27%
Neither agree nor disagree		59	8%
Disagree		20	3%
Strongly disagree		24	3%
Total Respondents		784	100%

Respondents were asked which funding source should have the highest priority. Nearly a third (32%) of respondents chose 'Additional funding from central Government', while 27% chose 'Better coordination of the county council's existing spending'. 29% of respondents chose 'improved developer contributions towards the provision of infrastructure' and 3% 'closer working with voluntary and training sectors'. Out of those that responded 9% chose other.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Additional funding from central government		246	32%
Better co-ordination of the County Council's existing spending		208	27%
Improved developer contributions towards the provision of infrastructure		228	29%
Closer working with voluntary and training sectors		25	3%
Other		72	9%
Total Respondents		779	100%

Proposal 3: 'Best Practice' Design

Essex County Council are committed to ensuring that the cycling infrastructure they design looks attractive, serves its purpose and encourages more people to cycle. Their Cycling Strategy sets out a number of proposals to help achieve this and respondents were asked if they had any additional ideas to help them to ensure 'Best Practice' in their cycling schemes.

Over 400 respondents made comments regarding 'Best Practice', of those nearly 10% were around the Best practice of other European countries and other counties within the UK.

"The Netherlands has the world's best cycling infrastructure, therefore their cycling (and general road) infrastructure designs should be used."

"Go to the Netherlands, they have similar terrain to Essex and what they do, their infrastructure absolutely works. They have separate lanes for bikes, the bikes have priority in many cases and where they do not have room for separate lanes they have share usage so not only the motorists and cyclists share the space but there are no pavements so pedestrians do too. This means the motorists drive slower and more considerately."

“Why redesign the wheel, look to Holland for inspiration.”

“I am completing this while on holiday in Amsterdam where cycling is cultural and safe. Cyclists have priority and cycle ways are safe and have enough space between them and vehicle roads so cyclists cannot fall into a stream of traffic.”

“Model on South Cambridgeshire cycle paths.”

“TFL are starting to get the idea with the new, segregated cycle superhighways - ask them for help (or even Cambridge, the UK's no.1 cycling city).”

“There are already some good best practice guides available. The Welsh design guide and the London design guides are among the best. Any Essex guide should take best practice from these and take contributions from local and national cycle advocacy groups”

There were 18 comments regarding the use of multi-user schemes, specifically best practice design around the inclusion of Horse-riders as well as cyclists.

“Instead of cycle tracks you should be creating a better and more comprehensive bridleway network for all non-motorized traffic.”

“Extend your thinking outside the box so that instead of "cycleways", you refer to "multi-user routes", this means they are available for walkers and horse riders too.”

“Please include horse riders as like cyclists they are vulnerable, can't use footpaths, can use bridleways.”

“Cycling schemes should join up with bridleway schemes so that safer routes are created for all. This in certain high risk areas would help all parties away from those dangerous roads and give them alternative routes.”

“It is very disappointing that horse riding does not seem to be part of the council's strategy. There is already a network of bridleways and byways that could be transformed into Multi User Routes to accommodate cyclists as well as horse riders. Dedicated road crossings should be best practice and would ensure safety, especially where child bike and horse riders are concerned.”

Just over 8% of comments spoke about the need to consult with both the cyclists themselves and also liaise with local organisations and businesses when ensuring ‘best practice’ in their Cycling schemes.

“Set up local groups with Sustrans' support to develop local strategies.”

“The Chelmsford Cycling Action Group used to see draft briefs and designs for cycle infrastructure and have direct contact with the design technician to suggest improvements. This process needs to be reinstated.”

“Involve the cycling groups, consult and share ideas.”

“To create a safe environment for the cyclist. Enlist the support/views of local bike shops of which there are many in Essex, some Corporate Company’s.”

“Speak to local cycling clubs to find the best cycling routes that are generally free from busy traffic and promote this as a cycling network across the county.”

“Liaise with Sustrans, CTC and British Cycling. Canvass the views of local cyclists and always bear in mind the vast majority of cyclists are also motorists meaning that they usually offer a balanced view as to what is required.”

“Have genuine consultation with cyclists' representatives.”

“Consultation with cyclists to get a real understanding of what works now and what could be improved.”

“Actually talk to cyclists when designing infrastructure and make sure the cycle lanes link logically with roads & other cycle lanes.”

There were 35 comments made regarding current cycling infrastructure and road maintenance, with many respondents highlighting the importance of liaising with Essex Highways to ensure a joined up approach when designing infrastructure and new cycling schemes.

“Road surfacing should be cycling friendly. Chippings may be cheaper than smooth asphalt, but it is amazing how much difference it makes when cycling.”

“Make sure all potholes are filled and drains are maintained so that cyclists can cycle in the curbside on narrow roads”.

“Roads and road safety are key to promoting cycling. The recent resurfacing using loose clippings across the Essex area is hazardous and awful to cycle on.”

“We must make sure that the infrastructure links up and is fully maintained. We also need to use people who cycle to advise on the schemes”

“Providing cycling facilities is often quite easy, but they tend to get constructed and then left to deteriorate, so make sure that what is built is maintained.”

“Ensuring existing cycle paths are maintained and kept clean as well as providing new strategies. The state of some cycle paths are awful with glass and other debris regularly on them. It is annoying that debris from car accidents are swept onto them as well as other rubbish ruining them.”

There were 22 comments highlighting the importance of clear and appropriate signage within Essex's cycling infrastructure.

“There should be frequent signs on roadsides showing motorists that they should leave more space when overtaking cyclists.”

“There needs to be a focus on improving cycling on rural roads, whether through signage (eg. 'Watch out for cyclists on these roads') or regular hedge cutting to ensure that cyclists can be seen and cars have space to pass.”

“We need more road signs to alert motorists to cyclists as they pose a massive danger to cyclists and need to be more aware of cyclists.”

“Some of the developer funded cycle paths on new housing estates are not fit for purpose, with 'Cyclists Dismount' signs at every side turning. It is safer and more practical to cycle on the road in these areas.”

“Be great if they segregate vulnerable road users with nationally used signage and universally accepted terms.”

“More signs for off road options (like the blue bicycle signs that tell you how far to a town via a quieter route.”

There were 10 comments made regarding parking facilities and storage for Bicycles. Specifically providing secure cycle storage in key areas, such as city centers, train stations and places of work to encourage more people to use a bicycle as their main form of transport.

“The other important thing is the ability to lock up your bike when stopping to go to the shop or using another mode of transport i.e. trains to move on to further destinations for commuters who work outside of Chelmsford.”

“Make sure that the infrastructure for storing cycles at a destination is, and feels secure. I would cycle to my local town shops and station if I was more confident that my bike would be there on my return. “

“Cycling works for the community when it is the easiest option (i.e. better secure parking provisions at key destinations.”

“Make employers provide secure cycle storage at the workplace.”

“Chelmsford needs more cycle stands for weekend commuters cycling into town to shop in the high street. There should be a website that shows people the location of cycle racks.”

There were also several comments made highlighting the importance of safety when designing any cycling structure. Specifically a number of comments were made around working with Schools to promote and encourage cycle safety and the importance of promoting helmet use.

“Work with schools to find out how children could be encouraged to cycle safely to school. This is an important factor in well-being and overall improved fitness of our children. “

“Need to encourage children more, they are or future. The strategy is very lacking in

anything relating to children. If they are cycling to school then they are not being driven there."

"Safe routes to ride for all ages."

"Cycling lanes are a MUST in the 21st century, WE HAVE TO BE SAFE TO CYCLE AND THE CYCLING LANES ARE THE ONLY SOLUTIONS as drivers are injuring us/killing us at the moment."

"Promoting the wearing of helmets and hi viz clothing. Especially amongst schoolchildren"

"Safety is the paramount concern. Separate cycle lanes that protect cyclists matter much more than attractive design".

"Ensure that they provide safe off-road access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders."

There were also several comments made around education and promotion of safe cycling within Essex. Some respondents highlighted the importance of educating both cyclists and other road users around the Highway Code and 'good practice' when using roads.

"Educate other road users highlighting the fact that they need to share the road."

"Promotion of safe cycling routes, removing potential conflict between cycles and other vehicles, education of drivers and cyclists to each other's needs."

"Campaign for safer cycling. Enforce cyclists to use lights at night. Enforce penalties for cyclists cycling without lights at night."

"Promote the Highway Code to walkers, dog walkers, schools etc., so everyone knows it applies to cars, bikes, cycles, walkers, etc."

"Attempt to educate drivers so that they know how to navigate around cyclists safely."

"Positive promotional material aimed at all ages."

Over half of all comments made (232) were related to Cycle lanes and or pathways. Most comments suggested greater provision of cycle lanes/paths, with one respondent saying, *"People are more likely to cycle if there are more cycle paths/lanes which are well maintained with safety an absolute priority"* and another saying *"More dedicated cycle lanes, particularly on busy routes would help build confidence in cyclists and allow more to cycle to work."* Others commented the need for segregated cycle lanes, saying that it was important to separate cyclists from other road users in order to improve safety.

"To ensure best practice design it is imperative that money is put towards the creation of SEGREGATED cycle lanes on routes where people will want to use them - i.e. that pass shops."

“Segregated cycle lanes are the only way that will encourage more people to cycle - the danger, real or perceived is the only reason why many adults and children alike do not cycle more. Children need to be encouraged to cycle to school, but only when it is safe to do so.”

“Cycle lanes should be segregated from walkers and vehicles wherever possible. I have found that walkers don't pay attention to cycle lane markings and are unaware of cyclists.”

There were a number of comments made regarding cycle paths/lanes with shared use. One respondent commented that, *“There must be no parking in ALL cycle lanes otherwise they are not only useless but dangerous. Cyclists having to go in and out of parked cars are in much more danger than if they stayed in the middle of their lane.”* And another saying that cycle paths need to be well thought out and should not *“conflict with other travelers, whether pedestrian, horse riders or motorized vehicles.”* While another person commented that *“Cycleways need to be completely separate from busy roads, cycle lanes are often used for parking cars.”* And that *“Proper design of cycle lanes is important. Just narrowing a road does not help.”*

There were a large number of comments around ensuring that cycle paths and lanes are continuous and joined up. With many respondents highlighting concerns that cycle paths are not fit for purpose when they end abruptly at junctions and roundabouts.

“The cycle lanes must continue in crossings and roundabouts. My children get always in trouble when the cycle lane stops at a roundabout and suddenly they are in the middle of heavy traffic.”

“The routes must be continuous. Where I live there are cycle paths, which then disappear as soon as the road gets narrower and the cycle path filters into the main, busy road at its most dangerous point.....which is pointless.”

“Make the schemes joined up, so it makes it a viable option for cycling in and around town. At present, cycle lanes just stop and start in random places“

“Ensure cycle paths follow a route between towns/villages and don't disappear leaving no choice but to cycle on the main road which can be dangerous.”

“A joint up cycling network for towns. Some areas in Colchester have a cycling path that is only 20 meters long Avoid abrupt ends to cycle routes.”

“Dedicated cycle paths have to go all the way from the start to the end of the journey. A route that goes half way is not half as good, it is no good.”

PROMOTE

Proposal 4: A 'Cycle Essex' Brand

Essex County Council plan to create a Cycle Essex brand that will change the image of cycling in Essex to a safe, normal and enjoyable everyday activity and promote it as a healthy leisure activity. Respondents were asked if they had any new or innovative ideas that would further enhance the work of Cycle Essex.

There were over 300 comments regarding branding, nearly a 1/5 of all comments expressed concerns about the use of branding, with many respondents not seeing branding as a priority and a waste of money and resources. One respondent commented, *"Branding is a waste of time. The only way you can change the image is by making it actually safer for cyclists."* And another saying, *"Don't waste money on a 'brand' - good cycling facilities will become the brand"*. One respondent suggested that ECC should not *'waste money on a brand'* but instead look at other *'national schemes already in existence'* and then use the money saved to *'make the roads safer!'*

There were also several comments suggesting that resources and money should not be spent on a brand but on facilities and infrastructure instead, with many arguing that it was a *'distraction from the issues.'* And the main focus of *"creating modal shift."* While another commented *"Put in the infrastructure before-hand otherwise some will think why cycle."*

"Improving cycle routes and providing secure places to leave bikes is more important than fancy logos to promote cycling."

"If 'Cycle Essex' is used around existing inadequate infrastructure, or poorly designed new infra, it will quickly become tarnished."

"Branding will not change people's habits - provision of facilities will. Look at the changes in London from the introduction of 'Boris Bikes'."

"If it is a natural transport choice, then people will do it."

There were a number of comments made around the inclusion of Horse riding and other non-motorized users within the Essex branding. With one person commenting, *"They need as many safe routes as any other country side user. Horse riders are also tax payers and therefore contribute."* While another suggested for ECC to, *"Join up with the horse riders be safe campaign... Encouraging riders to wear hi viz and asking drivers to be more considerate and give more space when overtaking."* While another said that branding for all *"Leisure riders"* would combine both cycles and horse riders.

There were a few comments regarding social media, with one respondent suggesting for ECC to, *"Make a video advert with OC Media Solutions and promote on Facebook and Twitter"* and another saying *"Don't try and replicate what is already out there, piggy back on existing social platforms by creating a club on Strave, promoting cycling routes and challenges."* Another respondent suggested that ECC should, *"encourage bloggers and*

small business owners who use social media, to 'guest blog' for cycle Essex."

A number of respondents put forward suggestions for various slogans, including; "*The Only Way is 2 Wheels*", "*A Wheely great way to see the county*," "*The only way is get on yer bike*", "*Cycling Essex*" and "*Ride Essex*" to convey a true representation of both horses and bicycles. There were also several comments regarding the use of a logo, for example on illuminous bags, cycle helmets and on public bike hire. One respondent also suggested that there should be a county wide logo that is visible on cycling signage and another suggested for it to appear on posters around Essex and have people standing in town giving out leaflets with the ECC brand/logo on them.

There were 20 comments made highlighting the importance of involving Schools and Children in the creation of an Essex brand. Suggesting that ECC should link with Schools in the county to promote cycling and its health benefits, but most importantly to educate children around safety provision.

"Get parents and children involved through schools."

"Promote Cycle Essex through schools and local businesses to encourage cycling to work. "

"Get the schools to run competition that's the target age range, get the kids cycling and the Parents may follow."

"Rewarding schools, companies, hospitals and colleges with funding / prizes for increasing cycling / walking. "

"Every Child in Essex should aim to achieve a cycling proficiency award before they start at secondary school. It should be a mandatory part of the PE curriculum in Primary schools."

"Encourage younger riders and families. Demonstrate there is value to using cycling infrastructure."

"Bike handling courses run at all schools (with adult schemes available) differentiated for all ages, from cycling proficiency to drinking whilst riding, and emphasising the need for riders to wear helmets, and teaching basic bike-maintenance skills, such as changing a puncture & repairing a broken chain."

"Get kids and families involved in schools - educate children AND parents regarding benefits of cycling. Safer cycling (eg using lights, how to use a bike's gears properly etc."






Other comments were made suggesting working alongside local businesses and other partners in the creation of an Essex brand, with one person saying, "*I would suggest working in partnership with the Sky ride scheme, why reinvent the wheel when there is already a successful Programme out there that sets out to achieve the same ideals.*" And another saying, "*Make sure all partners sign up to it!*" While another suggested working in

partnership with some of the larger retailers of bicycles, *“As Halfords sell bicycles, it seems sensible to incorporate them and other retailers who would benefit when more people cycle. Their advertising and sponsorship would stop you from raiding the council’s coffers.”*

Proposal 5: High Profile Events

Essex has been very successful in attracting high profile cycling events to the County that have been well attended by the public. ECC want to use those events to encourage people to make the step from spectator to cyclist.

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that high profile events are useful for promoting cycling within Essex. The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (41%) or agreed (37%), with only 4% disagreeing and 3% strongly disagreeing with the statement.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		282	41%
Agree		255	37%
Neither agree nor disagree		104	15%
Disagree		25	4%
Strongly disagree		22	3%
Total Respondents		688	100%

Respondents were then asked which events, if any, are best for encouraging people to cycle and asked to specify. Overall 393 comments were made, over half of these (54%) referred to ‘High Profile’ events, with many respondents highlighting the importance of big cycling events such as the ‘Tour de France’, ‘Tour of Britain’ and ‘Sky rides’, with one person commenting, *“I’ve seen a big impact from the Tour de France and also both the men’s and women’s tour of Britain stages which have gone through the county”* and another saying that the Tour de France was great for the local villages, i.e. Great Waltham where, *“there are still frequently people riding the route and several charity rides that use the local lanes.”*

There were several comments made regarding the promotion and advertising of big ‘high profile’ events and the importance of combining ‘mass participation events’ with local events.

“Tour de France was massive for cycling in the region, Tour of Britain needs to be better promoted (I’m a regular cyclist and only realized it was in Essex two days before it arrived).”

“The Tour de France was a great ambassador for cycling” that these and similar events should be *“better promoted and encouraged.”*

“Alongside the promotion of high-profile events, there should be a series of planned, professionally led rides for new cyclists. The goal should be to encourage people to cycle in an environment that makes them feel safe and give them the skills and desire to continue beyond this.”

“High profile sporting events are good (Le Tour, Giro D'Italia would be great!) Things like the SkyRides that are targeted at non-competitive leisure cyclists (families with kids etc.) are probably even more important as they are more likely route into cycling for the everyday rider.”

Mass participation events and those targeted at ‘non-professional’ cyclists was a common theme, with over a third (38%) of all comments highlighting the importance of ‘family’ or ‘fun’ cycling events for all. There were several comments suggesting more events which, *“encourage the whole family regardless of age to cycle.”* And events that focus on, *“Essex people rather than big national events which don't happen that often.”* There were lots of comments suggesting more ‘give it a go’ cycling events and events where you *“don't have to be a superhuman athlete to take part in”*.

“Family group rides with picnics.”

“Family cycle days, reclaim the streets style events. Tour de France although great is elite athletes you need more grass roots everyday people.”

“Family type events with safe routes. Close some roads off occasionally for people to gain confidence whilst riding.”

“Fun cycling events on flat surface in an area easy to get to that children can join in and feel safe.”

“You could do some guided tours - 'What to see on the way'. Some people don't just like to cycle they may get a bit bored”

“An event in the park where they can ride bikes and see things etc. . .”

“Local cycle training events to encourage new and returning cyclists to take part.”

“The smaller events that surround the big events. Like the cycle rides on the closed roads after the tour de France, local events like those at great Waltham following me tour and Colchester following the tour series that keep the interest going.”

“Every town can have a cycle event to promote cycling in their area. “

6% of comments suggested charity or fundraising events to encourage people to cycle, with one person commenting that *“Charity challenge events are very popular e.g. Race for Life, London to Brighton cycle etc.”* and another suggesting that, *“local charity events which encourage family groups to get back on their bikes is a good way to give people who maybe have not cycled for a long time confidence to get back on their bikes.”*

7% of comments suggested Sportives, with one person commenting, *"I have taken part in a number of sportives this year organised by various organisations - I have been amazed at the number of people taking part and of all abilities - these are not races so are aimed at personal achievement."* And another suggesting that the County Council should run its own *"Sportives and go ride events"*. One person suggested that ECC should *'Organise a series of Essex sportive events across the county throughout the year. Not competing with existing events, rather in partnership with those already in existence. Use the Essex brand to promote them and increase participation'*

2% of comments spoke about the inclusion of Horse riders in events, with one person commenting that, *"They should promote horse riders and routes suitable for them as well as other users,"* and another suggesting that ECC should have a *"Joint cycle/horse event"*.

4% of comments were related to Hadleigh Park, with one person commenting that any event at Hadleigh Park would *"encourage people to see the venue, and while they're there, promote training and the bike hire facilities."* And another suggesting *'mountain bike events for children'*. There were several comments regarding MTB racing and the suggestion of having more off-road events, with one person commenting, *"All recent events have been road based. Could more be done for other areas?"* and another highlighting that, *"The MTB cross country national championships have been at Hadleigh recently, with the countries number 1 male and female riders but it wasn't advertised anywhere."*

7% of comments suggested having 'closed road' events or 'car free' days to help run and encourage local cycling events, with one person suggesting that car free days in town centers could both *"reduce air pollution and encourage people to commute by bike."* While another suggested having closed road events, as it *"creates a fast carnival atmosphere for experienced riders and a safe environment for less experienced/first timers."*

Although the majority of comments regarding cycling events were positive, 15% of comments were critical and argued that the promotion of cycling events should not be a priority and that budget and resources should be focused elsewhere, specifically infrastructure, with one person commented, *"events are good but infrastructure is better."* And another arguing that it is not *"high profile cycling events in Essex"* which make a difference to cycling rates but *"good quality infrastructure, reduced traffic speeds and a clearly visible re-focusing of ECC priorities away from cars."* There were several comments suggesting that events are irrelevant and that unless people *'believe that there are safe routes for getting around Essex then they won't use bicycles.'*

Others argued that 'events should be seen as a cheap fun activity not something that needs loads of money'

There were also a number of comments suggesting that high profile events are good but the promotion and follow up to these events has in the past been poorly coordinated, with one person commenting, *"I could see huge potential following the Tour de France, but there was absolutely no follow-up, in Uttlesford at least - a great opportunity completely wasted"*. And another suggesting that big events *"Stir up enthusiasm in the public psyche"*

but the message is short lived. Launching a co-incident promotional campaign during or immediately afterwards would be the best way of recruiting new riders.”

There were also several comments suggesting that ‘high profile’ events don’t do anything for ‘normal cycling’ with one person saying that, *“if anything it skews what cyclists are”* and another commenting that *“high speed cycle races are popular and do encourage cycling, but they aren’t representative of what cyclists need on a daily basis.”*

“Large events like the Tour De France get sports people to change from one sport to cycling they do very little to persuade people who do no sports to take up cycling.”

“Not sure they have any positive effect on cycling uptake - totally different type of ‘product’. Very good for the county to host them, but again, are they cost effective?”

“Although I believe that it is good to attract high profile events to the county, I am not convinced that these do a great deal in encouraging people to take up cycling for non-competitive reasons i.e. for daily short journeys, commuting and going to/from school.”

Proposal 6: Increased Support for Local Initiatives

Essex County Council’s support for local initiatives will ensure that people are encouraged to cycle by local cyclists and provided with the practical advice and support that they need to be confident to use their bicycles on a regular basis. Respondents were asked what kind of cycling initiatives, if any, should be supported in their areas.

There were a number of comments suggesting offering free Bicycle workshops and maintenance, with one person suggesting ECC should run, *“free workshops where people can learn basic road skills/maintenance.”* And that this would make them *“feel confident and safer on the road.”* Others commented that free *“bike services”* and *“bike maintenance courses”* should be offered. Another person suggested that there should be bike checks at events by professionals and could offer *“postcode stamping of frames”*.

There were also several comments suggesting that ECC should offer running free training and cycling safety schemes, including organised rides, led by professionals or local clubs.

“As the assistant road safety officer for Essex it would be great to offer adult cycle training to all that are interested with a view to joining more led rides at weekends and throughout the week.”

“Bring back the cycle proficiency test that we all used to do at school, and then children would be better at handling the bike. It would also encourage them to maybe carry on and join a local club.”

“Organised rides and tuition, both on- and off-road, for people of ALL ages.”

“Cycling safety schemes for cyclists and bicycle awareness activities for motorists.”

“Bikeability and local club led rides would encourage those that aren't confident. “

“Regular closed road events for normal members of the public. “

“Work with Local Cycling Clubs to promote their activities to the local population. Many have BC approved coaches who can run skill based courses.”

“Participation events where cycling and cycling infrastructure can be shown to cyclists (or potential cyclists) in their local area”

“A closed road event like cycle London to get people on their bikes without any traffic.”

A 1/5 of all comments suggested training and cycling safety schemes particularly targeted at children, working in partnerships with local Schools and clubs. Many highlighted the importance of teaching children to ride a bicycle properly and safely, ensuring that they knew safe routes, in order to encourage more children to cycle to and from School.

“Teaching children to ride safely, clear advice on where to ride and clear cycle paths that safely link places. “

Children's skills workshops held at weekends on a regular basis so that children can become confident on riding a bike in a safe environment. There should not be a reliance on Bikeability at school for older children.

“Children's introduction to cycling and its variations like bmx and mountain biking as well as encouraging the aged to take it up too.”

“Cycling to school, especially secondary schools, where the numbers of cyclist are low.”

“Demonstrating to secondary school children a safe route that they could take from their home to school which doesn't require cycling on the road which at peak time would be dangerous.”

“Cycling proficiency courses for children and adults.”

“Encouraging safe riding for children. Closed Road events.”

“Bikeability training in schools. Expansion of skate parks to get kids interested in bikes and exercise at grassroots level. “

There were a number of suggestions made towards using incentives as cycling initiatives, with one respondent suggesting the use of *“interest free loans to purchase bikes”* and *“offering discounts at local stores on bikes and equipment's.”* One respondent suggested the possibility that bicycles could be made available to rent, *“a bit like the Boris Bikes in London”* to try to encourage non-cyclists and tourists to use bicycles more often. There were also several comments around employers and suggestions for encouraging employees to cycle to and from work instead of other forms of transport, with one person

suggesting ECC works *‘with employers to provide changing/showering facilities at work and secure storage for bikes.’* And another suggesting vouchers or *“free training”* for employees who chose to cycle to work.

Bike storage was an issue highlighted by quite a few respondents, suggesting that an improvement in storage facilities would act as an incentive to encourage more people to cycle.

“Free secure parking in city centre where your bike won’t be stolen. “

“Quality practical lock up stations”

“Improve facilities for secure bike parking at local centers, i.e. small shopping areas, doctors, dentists, etc. If you want people to use bikes for local journeys, they must be able to leave their bike and be confident of it still being there when they return. “






There were several comments that highlighted the importance of supporting and promoting already existing cycling initiatives and community bike enterprises around the county, such as *“Bike Kitchens (eg. Wivenhoe, Colchester) that provide local, affordable and friendly support to empower people to learn to look after their bikes, do basic repairs, both to get cycling and keep cycling.”* And projects like the *“Colchester Cycle Champion role”* which has had a *“high impact on getting people cycling, even adults who have never ridden.”*

PROVIDE






Proposal 8: Continental standard cycling facilities and ‘Quietways’

Where appropriate on high-demand cycling routes, ECC plan to include continental standard segregated cycle facilities. On quiet residential streets, they want to introduce ‘Quietways’, where priority is given to cyclists and pedestrians over motorised traffic.

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with the statement that continental standard cycling facilities were appropriate for their area. The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (53%) or agreed (29%) with this statement, while 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		344	53%
Agree		189	29%
Neither agree nor disagree		68	10%
Disagree		30	5%
Strongly disagree		21	3%
Total Respondents		652	100%

Respondents were asked if they agreed with the statement that 'Quietways' were appropriate for their area. The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (48%) or agreed (32%) with this statement, while 6% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		315	48%
Agree		207	32%
Neither agree nor disagree		76	12%
Disagree		39	6%
Strongly disagree		20	3%
Total Respondents		657	100%

Respondents were then asked why or why not they had agreed with this statement, overall there were 412 comments, the majority of comments were positive (82%) explaining why they agreed that continental standard cycling facilities and quiet ways are appropriate for their area. With several respondents commenting that these facilities would, *"encourage more people into safe cycling."* And that this type of infrastructure would, *"encourage cyclists who may be less willing to cycle because their journeys use high traffic areas."* Although there were concerns raised around enforcing these new 'quiet ways', with one person commenting that, *"Quietways are probably the single most effective way to obtain good cycling routes. However, they need to be well sign-posted and mapped. And priority for cyclists really needs to mean priority for cyclists."* And another commenting that, the *"problem will be enforcing the drivers of vehicles to observe the Quietways."* Some of the positive comments included;

"A nice route out of the way of the traffic would be good!"

"Providing these facilities will encourage less experienced/confident people to cycle."

"It's all about safely & encouraging youngsters to cycle to school & mums & dads to cycle with the kids."






"Think they are appropriate for all areas, there just has to be the will to get away from the car is king concept."

Out of the 412 comments just over 12% were negative and gave reasons as to why respondents disagreed with the proposals for continental standard cycling facilities and quiet ways to be implemented in their areas. Several respondents thought that by having this infrastructure in place it would *"result in cyclists being forced to use them, whether they want to or not (Cyclists who are fitter, faster and more confident prefer to use roads, not cycle paths)."* And another arguing that they are often not maintained properly and they *"invariably end up being scattered with broken glass and dog mess."* There were other






comments that did not agree with the concept of 'shared space' with one person commenting that, *"My experience of segregated paths is that they are too often used by pedestrians to be of any use."* And another concerned with the continuity of segregated paths, arguing that cycle networks are not joined up enough, *"They often just stop and then don't continue and in some places they just don't exist at all."* There were also concerns raised around segregation being damaging to cyclists, in that it "reinforces the opinion that cyclists are second class road users." And another commenting that the biggest problem with segregation schemes is that, *"for a cycling club member who is quite capable of riding at 25 mph is the perception by drivers that cyclist should always use a cycle lane where it is available. For a cycling enthusiast that is not always the practical or safe solution, pedestrians and cyclist riding at more than 10 mph don't mix too well either."*

Proposal 9: Training and Access

Many people are unable or afraid to use a bicycle because they don't have access to one, or lack the necessary skills and confidence to ride on the road. ECC are committed to providing cycling training for all ages and improving access to bicycles for those on low incomes. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that investing in cycling skills training is important. The majority of respondents either strongly agreed (40%) or agreed (37%) with this statement, while 4% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		281	40%
Agree		259	37%
Neither agree nor disagree		78	11%
Disagree		28	4%
Strongly disagree		10	1%
Total Respondents (For this Question)		698	

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement that subsidized access to bicycles and equipment is worthwhile. A quarter of respondents strongly agreed, while nearly a third (30%) strongly agreed, 21 % of respondents neither agreed or disagreed, with 13% disagreeing and 4% of respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement.

		Response Total	Response Percent
Strongly Agree		175	25%
Agree		212	30%
Neither agree nor disagree		147	21%
Disagree		94	13%
Strongly disagree		29	4%
Total Respondents		698	

Respondents were then asked which training and access schemes, if any, did they think were particularly effective. Overall there were 326 comments to this question, with nearly 1/5 (18%) of those suggesting Bikeability training, one person commented, *“Bikeability is important so that riders know how to use the road”* And another saying, *“Bikeability is a fantastic way to promote safe and enjoyable cycling.”* Several comments criticised the availability of Bikeability schemes;

“Bikeability is good but needs to be more accessible outside of schools. For example as a cycling family I don't want to wait until year 6 for my children to receive Bikeability training.”

“As well as being a qualified mountain bike guide I am a Bikeability Instructor who works in schools and with adults providing the required skills to ensure people are safer cyclists on the road. Bikeability is a great scheme but it does not have sufficient importance in the school curriculum and is often only available to those who would be considered by most as too young to be out unaccompanied on the road.”

“Whilst this is great preparation for them in later life, further access to this type of training needs to be given to teenagers and young people approaching working age. These are the people who would gain immediate benefit from the freedom, fitness and mobility that cycling provides. They are also the next wave of drivers and increasing their understanding of the road from a cyclist's perspective can only be good in promoting safer cycling and a reduction in cyclist related accidents.”

12% of comments suggested cycling proficiency was an effective training scheme, but criticised the lack of availability and access, particularly for younger children at school age. With one person commenting that, *“It should be part of primary school learning. Everyone*

of a certain age remembers their 'Cycling Proficiency Badge'". And another commenting, "The cycling proficiency test has always stood up in my eyes; it has taught hundreds of thousands of children how to ride safely and legally."

Just over a 1/3 (31%) of all comments thought that training for children, specifically in Schools should be the main priority, with one person commenting that, *"Training in schools is the most important for encouraging children to cycle safely."* And another suggesting that, *"Children should be given training at school from a very early age and this should be refreshed regularly right through to age 18."*

6% of comments related to Cycle to work schemes, with one person suggesting that their cycle to work scheme would work better if *"The retailers that we could use were broader, for example Halfords are excluded. Now I know that they don't make the best bikes, however they do offer cheaper bikes that those on the list so a lot of people just don't bother using the cycle to work scheme."* And another suggesting that all work places need to offer *'wash facilities for office workers'* others commented that the *'cycle to work scheme is over complex and a cycle loan scheme would be far more worthwhile.'* And another commented that the scheme was only good if you stayed with a particular employer and suggested that, *"it should be transferable."*

2% of all comments referred to Bike maintenance training, specifically for 'teenagers' and 'new riders' and 4 % of all comments suggested that there should be greater access for training specifically targeted at adults. With one person commenting, *"Training of adults is important but notoriously hard to achieve."* And another commenting that, *"The school schemes are good but I can't see a link between what they do and translating this into cycling as adults."*

Respondents were then asked if there was anything else that they would like to see covered in the strategy, overall there were 277 comments, 16% of these related to improved cycle lanes and or facilities. With one person commenting that the strategy needs to provide *"a lot more detail on the sort of Cycleways to be made available, what sort of network is proposed and how it would be done."* Others highlighted the importance of creating infrastructure that is *'fit for purpose'* with the division between footpaths and cycle lanes being *'realistic'* and not *"put in a place where pedestrians safety can be compromised."* And another commented that ECC needs to ensure new developments are *"designed in such a way that it is not possible for cycle lanes to become obstructed by parked cars."*

The majority of comments relating to cycle lanes and facilities highlighted the importance of infrastructure and its integration into the wider "Essex transport network."

"Infrastructure is key- using the tried and tested methods used in the Netherlands."

"Just a key focus on infrastructure. This is the main reason I and many others do not cycle to work."

"A requirement that all infrastructure projects small and large consider what impact

they will have on active travel and how the project can assist making it more convenient.”

“A greater emphasis on developing a cycling infrastructure which encourages more cyclists on roads by putting cycling at the heart of road design.”

3% of comments spoke about the importance having improved cycle storage, one person commented, *“Better cycle parking at railway stations and shopping areas will promote use for travel.”* Another respondent commented that the strategy needs to focus more on cycle storage in towns and explained that they *“will not ride my bike to run errands etc.-as there is no safe storage for them.”* And suggested that *“bike lockers, rather than conventional bike racks should be invested in.”*

There were also issues raised around current legislation regarding cycling and proposed changes to the Highway Code;

“I'd like Essex to lobby government to change to strict liability as seen in the Netherlands and Denmark. They have a law of ‘strict liability’ to protect vulnerable road users from more powerful road users. Under this law, in crashes involving vulnerable road users, unless it can be clearly proven that the vulnerable road user was at fault, the more powerful road user is found liable by default. This makes Dutch and Danish drivers more cautious around cyclists and pedestrians and is responsible for their safe roads.”

“A direct push for legislation changes so that when on the road a motorist is responsible for any accident with a cyclist and a cyclist is responsible for any accident involving a pedestrian. This is commonplace in Europe and it makes both drivers and cyclist’s slow-down.”

4% of comments highlighted the importance of road maintenance, with several of the respondents commenting about the poor state of the roads, specifically the new ‘resurfacing’ that has happened this year, where the ‘surface dressing’ makes it ‘dangerous for cyclists’ Several respondents suggested that there needs to be a greater link up with highways, with one person commenting that they need to *“work together with whoever plans the resurfacing of roads in the county and to stop replacing perfectly smooth roads with dreadful surface dressing”* Others highlighted the importance of road maintenance, ensuring that they are safe for cyclists, specifically on the *“roadside where cyclists are forced to ride.”* with potholes, open drain gates and broken kerb sides all being highlighted as significant issues to those cycling on the road. There were also several comments (4%) that related to the maintenance of existing cycling infrastructure, with one person commenting that, *“it is very important that maintenance takes place on the cycle way network. Vegetation is a particular issue and if ECC as an Authority do not maintain the network.”* And another suggesting that the strategy needs to be ‘revisited’ to *“give some priority to cycle route maintenance, including local roads, without doing so the promise to provide well maintained routes cannot be achieved”*.

4% of comments related to training, with several respondents highlighting the importance of providing accessible training for things like, *“basic mechanics of how to fix a bike”, “how to change a tyre”, and “general bike maintenance”*. One person commented on the importance of providing advice and training around wearing helmets, saying that they are *“clearly a good safety device, but they must be worn properly.”* And highlighting that in the strategy document, on page 3, *“the man in work clothes is wearing his helmet in the wrong position without the straps being properly tightened. Hence, it is practically useless.”* And on page 4, *“both children are not wearing their helmets properly.”*

Out of the 277 comments, 12% related to driver awareness, with many respondents commenting that the strategy focuses only on cyclists and does not take into consideration other road users. With one person commenting that *“Other road users need to treat cyclists with a bit more respect and need to be educated in this in the driving test.”* There were also several comments suggesting that there should be an increased training for drivers of cars, with one person commenting that drivers should be taught what happens *“if they pass cyclists too fast/too close.”* There were also a number of comments that suggested there should be a stronger focus on changing ‘driver’s attitudes’ towards cyclists, with one person commenting that there should be education for motorists that *“cyclists have equal right to use the road.”* And another suggesting that there should be *“Friendly signage to discourage aggressive driving, and encourage patience and understanding to all road users, but in particular cyclists.”* There were other comments suggesting that there should be *“better reporting for bad drivers.”* And better *“PR campaigns and education targeted at drivers. Police enforcement of speed limits, and aggressive driving tackled as a social problem.”*

5% of comments related to safety, with many respondents suggesting that people’s safety was more important than training and skills, with one person commenting that ECC needs to *“make cycling safer!”* and another saying, *“Most people can ride a bike but they need to be encouraged to use them by reassuring them that they can cycle without fear.”* There were also several comments highlighting the importance of wearing cycle helmets, with one person suggesting that, *“Helmets should be mandatory for road-using cyclists.”*

Just over 6% of comments related to Horse riding and bridle paths, with one person commenting that, *“All vulnerable road users should be included in this scheme, we are all tax payers and to just look after one section of society is wrong. We should all be looked after.”* And another criticizing the strategy, asking *“why is this only for cyclists?”* explaining that *“horse riders are even more vulnerable than cyclists!”* There were several respondents who suggested that safe horse-riding routes could be shared with cyclists, with one person suggesting that *“bridle paths could include shared access use with cyclists, to make it safer for all!”*

Over 10% of comments related to the strategy itself and ensuring that ECC works with partners in order to have a *“joined up thinking with districts, boroughs and the cities,”* specifically regarding *“joined up infrastructure and cycle ways.”* There were also a number of positive comments made regarding the strategy, with one person commenting that *“It’s*

good to see cycling being taken seriously in Essex.” However there needs to be a greater emphasis in the strategy regarding *“commitment/funding for building/improving proper cycle routes.”* With another person commenting that the strategy is “fine” but only if, *“the cyclist is genuinely put at the heart of the decision-making and there is a meaningful intent to move people out of cars”*. There were a lot of comments highlighting the importance of the Council in committing to the content of the strategy and the proposals within it, with one person commenting that they would like to see, *“Some actual examples of what will be done and some commitment to more than words”* and another asking for, *“some hard facts about what ECC is going to do, rather than lots of aspirations.”*

There were also a number of comments relating to other issues around the strategy, there were four comments regarding finance, with one person commenting that there needs to be, *“more emphasis and return on investment”* and another suggesting that *“savings to the transport and health budget should be considered as cycling provides huge savings”*. Just over 2% of comments suggested that there needs to be a greater emphasis on advertising and promotion of the strategy, including its benefits, with one person commenting that there needs to be an *“increased awareness/adoption of the cycle scheme”* and another suggesting that there should be a *“Greater use of television as a way of promoting tolerance of cyclists by other road users”*. There were also 5 comments relating to events, with one person suggesting that ECC needs to be more, *“open about all the different types of riders out there,”* and to organise events for all, such as *“mountain bikers, commuters, leisure riders and commuters.”* There were also several comments regarding subsidizing bicycles and equipment, with one person suggesting that, *“There are thousands of used bikes in the world. You do not need to waste money subsidizing them.”*

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