
**Proposal from Zone-9 Cycling Group – for consideration at the
Community Board meeting on 11 March 2021**

The Zone-9 cycling group was set up as a sub-group of Sustainable Chesham in early 2020. The following members hold the roles specified and all are privy to all communications.

Richard Dunn: routes adviser; Trevor Brawn: schools adviser; Phil Harrison: cycle hub adviser; Isabel Clements: represents Z-9 on Sustainable Chesham and Bucks Climate Action Alliance; Pam Wignall: group coordinator through which all communications with the Zone-9 Group should be relayed.

Vision

- to promote cycling and cycling facilities as an essential response in helping provide a more sustainable environment in Chesham and the surrounding area, by encouraging healthier lifestyle travel choices and by cutting the usage of petrol-driven vehicles.
- to assist in cutting pollution generally within Chesham and specifically where air pollution breaches the current safe guidelines. The recent Government initiatives provide us with a great opportunity to make substantial changes in Chesham.
- to improve and increase cycling in Chesham for the purposes of travelling to and from school, work, the shops, the park, public transport, or of cycling just for pleasure. Zone-9 Cycling believes that cycling provision should cater for all types of cyclist on all types of bike, including e-bikes.

Plans include

Some proposed routes: a map of these is *attached*

Proposed routes make use of side roads as well as Lowndes Park avoiding, as far as possible, the main roads and steep hills. On roads where it is impossible to adequately segregate cyclists from traffic, other measures may be appropriate such as one-way systems and traffic calming, perhaps for part of the day, e.g. school arrival and departures times.

Development of a Cycling Hub: details can be provided on request

A Cycling Hub should be established in Chesham, with repair facilities, a cycle shop, and a café. This would do much to attract cyclists to Chesham and its existence would act as extra encouragement for those who live here, to take up cycling. The favoured site is inclusion in the proposed development of Swim and Gym on the Moor, although the old site of Chittenden's shop in the town centre has been suggested as an alternative.

Initiating Action

Background information

There have been some significant government initiatives over the last several years to support and encourage sustainable travel. The provision of excellent quality cycle infrastructure is now dependant on new government standards of infrastructure design which aim to make cycling a much safer and realistic travel option. Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans (LWCIPs) are a new, strategic approach to identifying walking and cycling improvements required at the local level. The key to enabling high cycling levels is excellent quality infrastructure including: separation from traffic; dedicated traffic lights for cyclists; provision for bicycle parking; careful management of mixing of cyclists and pedestrians. As well as benefits for people, there are public policy and developer benefits in designing for improved levels of cycling and walking.

Pop-up Lanes and Local Authority responses

A year ago, Cycling UK advised that government had made £225m available alongside revised statutory guidance so local authorities could use their powers to implement temporary measures such as pop-up cycle lanes to enable more people to walk and cycle safely. A map of street changes across the UK in response to the government initiative can be seen at <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/space-to-move/> showing what action is taking place in terms of temporary cycle lanes, wider footpaths, barriers to close streets to motorised traffic and reduced speed limits. It is time that Chesham was on that map. We have been advised that Zone-9s proposals are not compliant with national design standards. Zone-9 needs help and advice from experts in this respect.

Buckinghamshire County Council and cycling

The 35-40% decrease in cycling in Bucks from 2015 to 2019 (the council's own figures) has been completely reversed during lockdown and shown that, once the local roads are safe to cycle on, people, of all shapes and sizes, will get on their bikes. It has been particularly good to see so many young families out for a ride. With the support of Chesham Town Council and the Community Board, in improving local cycle routes, cycling in the Chesham area can continue to grow. This will be of great benefit not only to the health of the local population but will also cut down traffic pollution and help in the fight against climate change.

Progressing Zone-9 Cycling Group's initiative

Our proposed routes have been scrutinised by Jack Mayhew, recently Growth and Development Strategy Manager at Buckinghamshire Council. He assessed that the routes provide a strong starting point but that further exploratory work is needed. In 2021, Buckinghamshire Council will be starting work on a LWCIP which will set out priorities for investment, and Zone-9s proposals could fit in well with this in terms of timing. Buckinghamshire Council currently does not have either financial or manpower resources to work with Zone 9 in order to upgrade plans for Chesham in isolation, but it might make sense for this to be considered in the round in terms of broader traffic/regeneration considerations for Chesham. Jack Mayhew has suggested that outside consultancy may be sought if funds can be made available, Zone-9 will seek further information from the Strategic Transport and Infrastructure Service about this possibility.

Zone-9 Cycling Group would like the Community Board to [1] fully endorse the need for a coherent cycling and walking plan for Chesham; [2] provide funding for a LCWIP to be completed.



• THE ZONE 9
CYCLE PATH
2020

CHESHAM
BOIS