

16 March 2021

## **Council's next steps in drive to get more of us walking and cycling**

Cheshire East Council has taken another major step in its drive to reduce emissions from cars and get more people walking or cycling to boost health and wellbeing.

The council intends to introduce cycling and walking infrastructure plans with proposed dedicated active travel routes across four towns in the borough.

Crewe, Macclesfield, Wilmslow and Congleton are the first towns to benefit from a walking and cycling infrastructure plan, which could attract government investment.

Following an evidence-based review, these towns were considered to have the greatest potential for increased walking and cycling. Each town could see a network of segregated cycling and walking routes linking key locations, such as bus and train stations, leisure centres, shops and employment sites.

In Crewe, for example, where seven potential routes have been identified, a new green link along the Mill Street corridor would offer safe off-road cycling and walking routes to and from the town centre and train station.

Rood Hill, Mill Street, Antrobus Street and the town centre are some parts of Congleton, identified as potential locations for similar schemes, while in Wilmslow work is already scheduled for a new walking and cycling designated route from the train station, through the town centre to the high school, Royal London campus and Alderley Park. Other measures are also proposed.

In Macclesfield, a variety of improvements are proposed, creating or upgrading cycling and walking-friendly routes linking Middlewood Way, Hurdsfield industrial park, Waters Green, Sunderland Street and Cumberland Street, together with public realm improvements at the train station.

Council deputy leader Craig Browne, cabinet member with responsibility for strategic transport, said: "There is every indication that councils that have these plans in place are more likely to receive central government funding in future years.

"These improvements take account of the numbers of people cycling and walking in Cheshire East and how we can increase these numbers through a wider infrastructure strategy. There will be extensive public consultation before any schemes are implemented."

The council's cycling strategy, adopted in 2017, outlines the target to double the number of people cycling once per week for any purpose by 2027. The Department for Transport says councils should develop local plans to increase the number of people walking or cycling to work, for education or other reasons.

Councillor Jill Rhodes, Cheshire East Council cabinet member for public health, said:  
“The health benefits from walking and cycling are obvious. We know that good health is important to people in Cheshire East and we are generally a healthy borough.

“Physical activity improves mental health as well as physical wellbeing, reducing the risks of poor health and morbidity as well as improving the air that we breathe, through reduced emissions.”

Cheshire East Council is committed to becoming a carbon neutral authority by 2025 and is encouraging all businesses, residents and organisations in the borough to reduce their carbon footprint in whatever way they can.

The plans for each town will be published on the council’s website.

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Photo captions:

Councillor Craig Browne, Cheshire East Council deputy leader

Cyclists on cycleway

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