



**PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL
PARK**

Wider Peak District Cycle Strategy

www.peakdistrict.gov.uk

Why a Strategy?

'We have a big ambition for cycling, into and around the Peak District, because we believe it will deliver so many benefits.'



For over 60 years the National Park Authority has been looking after Peak District landscapes and enabling many people to enjoy and understand their special qualities. This cycle strategy is grounded in these principles.

We have a big ambition for cycling, into and around the Peak District, because we believe it will deliver so many benefits. Bringing all our ambitions and ideas together into this strategy and action plan creates the focus for securing resources to achieve the ambition over time. Through a focus on cycling, we aim to help drive forward benefits for strategic access, sustainable transport, the environment, community health, economic growth, education, enjoyment, sporting challenge, local access, tourism, carbon reduction and more. The focus on cycling is a means of achieving more benefits for the wider Peak District (communities | businesses | place) none of which are exclusive to cycling.

Promoting understanding of and experiencing its special qualities at first hand is what a national park is all about, and is central to this strategy. Slow travel, through cycling, offers a means of discovery and enjoyment of the Peak District. Cycling provides enough speed to cover the ground and explore the diversity of the varied landscapes, but is slow enough to take in the sights, smells and sounds of the countryside. Cycling the extensive network of green lanes, trails, and bridleways of the Peak District is a journey through a series of living galleries, each carefully curated by farmers, land managers and populations over time. The scenery encompasses natural landscapes shaped by millennia of human habitation and influence, where prehistoric monuments sit alongside Roman mines and medieval settlements, and the power of water drove the Industrial Revolution. Coupled with active recreational cycling on traffic-free trails, quiet lanes, challenging mountain bike routes or iconic road rides, the health and wellbeing benefits are huge.

Our Approach

'The Peak District's position, at the heart of the nation, presents a fantastic opportunity to connect world class landscapes with wider populations.'

This strategy has been instigated by the National Park Authority, and has been developed and implemented with Sustrans, Chesterfield Borough Council, Sheffield City Council, Transport for Greater Manchester, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, CTC, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, High Peak Borough Council, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Manchester City Council, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Visit Peak District, National Trust, Kirklees Council, Canal and River Trust, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, Derbyshire Sport and Staffordshire County Council.

Although the Peak District National Park is central to this strategy, it isn't confined to the National Park. The Peak District's position, at the heart of the nation, presents a fantastic opportunity to connect world class landscapes with wider populations. See diagram for location of the National Park in relation to the surrounding urban conurbations. This strategy isn't just about cycling the Peak District's network of trails, it's about putting the Peak District at the heart of a national cycling network. It's about connecting inspirational landscapes with major cities, whilst enabling the Peak District to be a destination for cycling trips. Thus significantly contributing to the visitor economy. This would make the Peak District National Park one of the most cycle accessible national parks in the world.

We aren't beginning this strategy from a standing start. It builds on great natural assets and a growing reputation – an extensive and dispersed network of green lanes, bridleways and some of the country's best multi user trails, set in stunningly diverse landscapes. This diversity of cycling experience is accessible for all levels and interests – from novices looking for a first experience, regular cyclists, and mountain bike enthusiasts, right through to endurance cyclists and Olympic athletes. When this diversity is coupled with proximity to a massive market, ease of access and an established but low spending visitor economy, it presents a significant opportunity to grow a wide range of economic benefits, through gearing up our cycling offer. This is the essence of our unique position.



Our Approach

The Peak District National Park is a fantastic asset, and through this strategy we will deliver benefits to its 38,000 residents and 16 million near neighbours, who will have better cycle access to the national park. It will also benefit many more visitors from wider national and international markets.

This strategy's primary focus is on delivering and promoting traffic-free routes suitable for new, returning or occasional leisure cyclists. We will do this by connecting urban centres with iconic landscapes. This is the type of cycling where we can bring added value and wider benefits to larger numbers of people. However, through partnership working, we will deliver enhancements to routes suitable for mountain bikers and road cyclists.

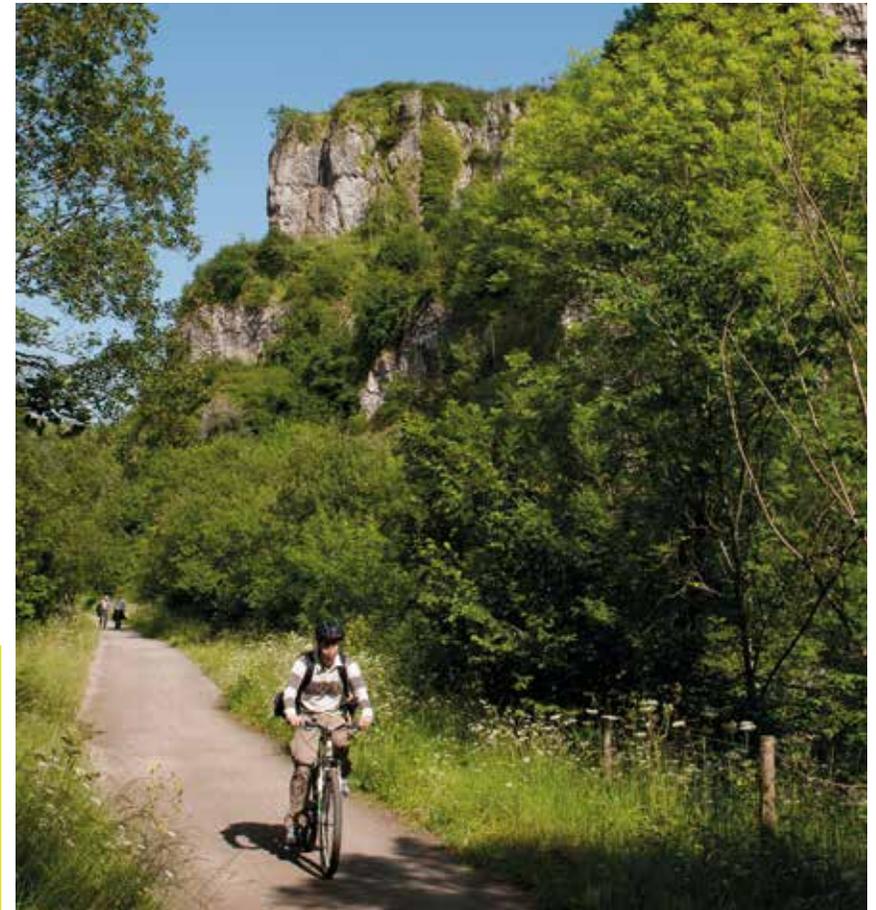
This strategy has been developed by a partnership of public, private and third sector bodies, and the actions arising from this strategy will be delivered in the same way. Very few of the actions within this strategy have funding associated with them. However, this document sets out a strategic approach that will identify gaps in provision for cyclists and steer the development of cycling in the wider Peak District, as well as seeking funding opportunities.

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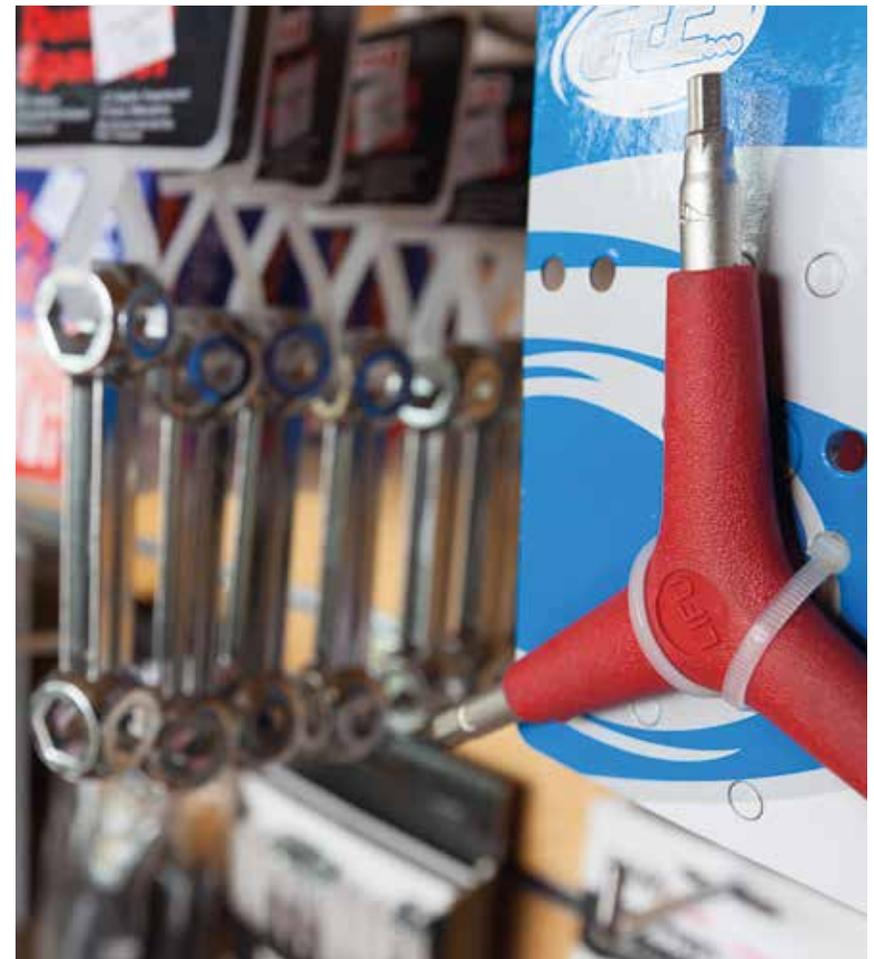
Our Ambition

To be one of the premier places to cycle... using the iconic landscapes of the Peak District as the inspiration for a diverse cycling experience for everyone, encouraging sustainable travel and delivering lasting health, economic and community benefits.



Our ways of working

- This strategy and its associated action plan have been through a public consultation process.
- This strategy and its associated action plan will be delivered by a partnership of public, private, third sector bodies and user groups. The action plan will be updated on a regular basis.
- This strategy will be guided by a Steering Group comprised of the key delivery partners, user groups and interested bodies. This group is chaired by a representative of a body independent of the National Park Authority.
- This strategy complements and adds value to other plans and strategies of the National Park Authority and its partners.
- This strategy helps to provide the case to secure future funding for cycling in the wider Peak District.
- This strategy will act as an influencing document to secure improvements and deliver change across the transport and recreation sectors.
- When developing or enhancing routes for cyclists, we will take a practical approach to visitor management.
- Community consultation and appropriate impact assessments will be undertaken as schemes are developed.
- Where possible, new routes will be available to all non-motorised users, and with provision for those with a disability.
- Through existing mechanisms, a consistent approach to maintenance will be undertaken to ensure the sustainability of new and existing facilities.



Delivering and sustaining our strategy

'As important as funding for new infrastructure is sustaining funding so infrastructure can be maintained.'

This strategy sets out an ambition for cycling in the wider Peak District along with the processes for working with partners to develop specific schemes, gather evidence and build business cases for financing new schemes.

The action plan accompanying this strategy provides a phased framework to work within; building support, consulting with communities and identifying and securing funding for new and longer term schemes and projects that will deliver lasting benefits.

Some actions in the action plan have funding. However, most actions do not have funding and partners will be working to secure funding from various sources such as Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Sustainable Transport Fund, public health, lottery and other sources. As important as funding for new infrastructure is sustaining funding so infrastructure can be maintained.

There is strong evidence to indicate that funds invested in cycling bring a range of benefits including environmental, economic, transport and health & well-being, and that in most cases, these benefits outweigh costs by some considerable margin. We will use this strategy to build the case for delivery of the longer term actions and as a means to identify and secure funding beyond 2016.



Cycling in the wider Peak District now ...

Recent years have seen a growth in the popularity of cycling in the area, partially driven by the delivery of new and exciting cycle routes, and partly because of the UK's recent success in competitive cycling events including the Tour de France and the Olympics. We already have an intrinsically good cycling offer, with the potential to become one of the premier cycling destinations. This is our assessment of the current situation.

Strengths

- Diverse landscapes offer varied experiences.
- Strategic location, close to large populations.
- Reasonable strategic transport linkages.
- Enviably network of on and off-road cycling routes.
- Extensive bridleways and green lanes.
- Good provision of cycle hire facilities, including specialist provision for all abilities and those with a disability.
- Partner's existing plans and strategies.

Weaknesses

- Connectivity between the elements of this network is poor.
- Gaps in the network.
- Poor connectivity to public transport, with little provision for transporting cycles.
- Cycling tourism market is fragmented.
- There are few signed circular routes.
- Business awareness of cyclist needs is low.
- Large numbers of car dependent visitors.
- Increased need for on and off road routes.

Opportunities

- Popularity of cycling is rising fast.
- Best positioned UK national park to offer direct cycle visits by so many people.
- An intrinsically good offer to build on.
- Potential to be a successful cycling destination.
- Tour de France 2014 & L'Eroica Britannia offer opportunities to showcase the area.
- Dispersal of visitors from more popular locations to reduce their impact.

Threats

- Availability of future funding to deliver this strategy.
- There may be conflict of interest with existing users in particular locations.
- There is an increasingly competitive market for cycling.
- The potential for schemes to result in harm to the natural environment.
- Potential impact of large numbers of visitors to new routes on nearby settlements and facilities.

Benefits of cycling in the wider Peak District

Environmental Benefit;

delivering improvements for cyclists helps to conserve the natural, cultural and environmental qualities of the national park, by increasing awareness of those qualities, promoting sustainable access and reducing the impact of car-borne journeys. In addition, there are wider benefits such as safety and carbon saving.



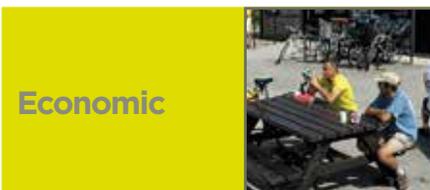
Environmental

Health & Well being

Health and wellbeing benefit; there is a wealth of evidence that participating in active recreation can bring health benefits, as well as promoting mental health and wellbeing. In addition, it is recognised that modal shift to cycling brings societal health benefits including improved air quality and reduced noise pollution.



Economic benefit; as well as bringing significant investment into the area through spending on infrastructure, investment in cycling encourages both day and staying visitors to the area to spend more in the local economy.



Economic

Community

Community benefit; investment in cycling benefits residents as well as visitors, bringing cycle friendly infrastructure to a number of communities. Improvements to local traffic-free cycle routes provides more leisure opportunities, as well as helping everyday cycling such as getting to work, school, college or to the shops. Encouraging children of all ages and abilities to cycle gives lifelong benefits.



Personal benefits of discovery and enjoyment; cycle routes give access to iconic landscapes, spectacles of nature and the deep history of the Peak District, often hidden from the road. Access by bike means people can take time to breath the scents, admire the views or wonder at the ingenuity of our ancestors.



Personal discovery, fun & development

Transport & access

Transport and access benefit; cycling investment delivers practical improvements, making it easier for people to travel by bike or on foot, thus helping to improve access and reduce congestion.



The cycling market

'This strategy will perform a key role in encouraging non-cyclists to try leisure cycling.'

The cycling market

Occasional cyclist



Frequent cyclist



Regular cyclist



Family	30%	15%	2%
Recreational User	70%	37%	5%
Commuter	0%	40%	43%
Enthusiast	0%	8%	50%

The range of cycling from mountain biking, on road cycling and family riding is acknowledged. However, we have segmented the market into cyclist sectors.

Cyclist sectors (used by British Cycling) show that UK cycling can be divided into three major segments:

1. **Occasional Cyclist:** Cycles infrequently; less than other categories
2. **Regular Cyclist:** Cycled 12 or more times in the past year
3. **Frequent Cyclist:** Cycles once per week or more.

This strategy aims to encourage occasional cyclists to progress to become regular cyclists enabling them to use a bike for more of their everyday journeys.

The actions in this strategy will enable progression for regular cyclists to become frequent cyclists.

This strategy will perform a key role in encouraging non-cyclists to try leisure cycling. Their first experiences on a bike in a traffic-free environment can lead to a lifelong enjoyment of cycling.

Route hierarchy

'This strategy provides a mechanism to enhance the existing network by delivering new cycle routes.'

The cycling market



Main Network: connects the main towns in a direct and expeditious manner



Secondary Network: connects housing, attractions and key destinations



Complementary Network: links and provides continuity to the network



The **main network** connects the cities and towns with the Peak District in a direct manner. The **secondary network** leads riders to the main network, it connects housing, attractions and key destinations within the main network. The **complementary network** links and provides continuity throughout. It consists of the additional bike paths that are required to complete the mesh system and to disperse cyclists. We will make it easier for cyclists to travel into and around the Peak District by linking these networks both physically and virtually over time.

This strategy provides a mechanism to enhance the existing network by delivering new cycle routes. The shorter term actions will provide main network links from neighbouring cities to the national park and secondary network links to market towns; including access by railway. Enhancement of the complementary network will be delivered as and when opportunities arise.

The Wider Peak District Cycle Strategy

Why we need a strategy... to outline our ambition for cycling in the wider Peak District; build on existing plans; work together to gather evidence; consult and source funding to grow the benefits of cycling.

The strategy covers... the national park, and surrounding area including cities, market towns and countryside; residents, neighbouring communities, and visitors ; focusing on leisure cycling from novice to experienced cyclists; encompassing other cycling disciplines; delivery of routes and infrastructure; marketing and support to community and businesses.

**Our Ambition is:
To be one of the premier places to cycle...**

using the iconic landscapes of the Peak District as the inspiration for a diverse cycling experience for everyone, encouraging sustainable travel and delivering lasting health, economic and community benefits.

Theme 1

Increase the network of connected routes

Theme 2

Support cyclist infrastructure to provide a welcome and stimulate the cycling economy

Theme 3

Promote the Peak District cycle experience

Theme 4

Develop sustainable transport linkages

Inter-related

Increase the network of connected routes



‘Building on the Peak District’s network of dispersed cycle routes, we aim to increase their connectivity, with fantastic multi-user trails and iconic routes at the centre of the experience.’

One of the biggest drivers for encouraging new and returning cyclists is the availability of traffic-free, convenient cycle routes connecting to cities. Building on the Peak District’s network of dispersed cycle routes, we aim to increase their connectivity, with fantastic multi-user trails and iconic routes at the centre of the experience. Better connectivity will enhance the network and help with the dispersal of users around the wider Peak District, spreading the benefits and reducing any negative impacts; e.g. inconsiderate parking and overcrowding. The connectivity and extension of the network will be the basis for extended visitor stays in the Peak District with iconic multi-day routes, whilst offering new opportunities for residents, as well as considering how to plan for onward travel by car or public transport. Cycle routes are green corridors that provide opportunities to get close to and experience nature in the Peak District whilst connecting to places of interest. Whilst this strategy’s main focus will be on providing routes suitable for new cyclists, occasional cyclists, and families, we are mindful of the requirements of other more confident users and the need to provide for cyclist progression. Therefore, partners will explore opportunities to improve routes and facilities for mountain bikers, BMX riders and on-road cyclists, thus increasing the number of people cycling for pleasure and everyday journeys.

Whilst the emphasis of this strategy is on cycling, in most cases the infrastructure that is provided will benefit other users including walkers and horse riders. To reduce conflicts between users, we want to build respect between users – see theme 3 for more information. Furthermore ‘access for all’ is a key principle of this strategy. Where new routes are implemented, appropriate monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken to inform future delivery. As appropriate, this will include road safety.



Increase the network of connected routes



Headline actions:

Creating new routes, connecting cities... new traffic-free, multi-user routes that are accessible to all, in order to meet the entry level needs of less confident cyclists, whilst ensuring connectivity to major population centres and enabling long distance rides. This approach is in line with Government's aim to encourage new and returning cyclists.

Plugging the local gaps... connect the gaps in the network through new routes or signage, to join sections of the network and places of interest including visitor attractions, towns and villages. This will increase the size of the available network whilst easing access to and around the wider Peak District for visitors and residents, and deriving economic benefits.

Creating iconic multi-day routes... develop the iconic status of the White Peak Loop as a destination and develop other strategic cycle routes such as links from Sheffield to Manchester.

Enhancing the distinctive Peak District mountain biking experience... building on and linking existing routes to develop a more connected, comprehensive and progressive mountain biking offer.

Encouraging diverse experiences... explore opportunities for skills development and improving safety for road cyclists.

Creating and enhancing green infrastructure along cycle routes... look for opportunities to enhance wildlife habitats and increase the understanding of users, enhancing their experience as well as improving conservation.



Support cyclist infrastructure to provide a welcome and stimulate the cycling economy



Almost of equal importance to the route network is the infrastructure and facilities available to cyclists, particularly those visiting an area for the first time. Providing a 'welcome' and the support that cyclists require when they arrive, as well as connecting to places of interest, enables them to have a more enjoyable stay. This includes infrastructure, services and the all-round offer provided by local businesses. This approach also increases the opportunity for cyclists to stay longer, spend more money in the local economy and visit again. It also promotes the benefits of a slower lifestyle to visitors and residents. It is important that gateways to the destination and cycle friendly hubs throughout the area offer this 'welcome' to enhance the new routes. The promotion of new routes will disperse users across the network, sharing benefits more widely and reducing any negative impacts.

Headline actions:

Creating cycle friendly places... help popular cycle destinations to offer the highest level of cyclist welcome and support, including: - secure or better cycle parking, traffic calming measures and route information. Promote opportunities and focus improvements in market towns; including links to public transport and car parking.

Developing sustainable cycling attractions... develop attractions along key cycle routes, using the unique Peak District cycling offer as the backdrop for great experiences.

Stimulating cycle friendly businesses... encourage and support businesses (cafes, shops, accommodation, cycle hire, attractions, etc) and public providers to offer a high level of welcome and facilities to cyclists, thus encouraging cycle tourism and increasing the benefits of the growing cycling economy.

Helping communities to get the most from cycling... link new routes with green travel planning for schools, work places and leisure. Improve the public realm to make cycling a safe and enjoyable option for more people; provide cycle training in schools and communities.

'Providing a 'welcome' and the support that cyclists require when they arrive, as well as connecting to places of interest, enables them to have a more enjoyable stay.'



Promote the Peak District cycle experience

Through targeted promotion, advice and support we aim to encourage new, returning and occasional cyclists to become regular cyclists, bringing health and other benefits. We will work together to deliver cycle training for communities and in schools. We will encourage people to explore more of the Peak District and not just to visit the most popular destinations. With a mix of routes, information and skills training we will provide opportunities for cyclists to progress and become more confident. Stimulating a more diverse range of regular cyclists and simply getting more people on a bike starts to normalise cycling, helping to make it more accepted, popular, and ultimately safer.

Headline actions:

Helping new or occasional cyclists to cycle more often... through promotion and advice on fitness, routes, safe cycling, cycle hire and equipment for disabled, new or occasional cyclists aimed at increasing skills and confidence. Promote fun and health benefits through cycling ambassadors, bikeability training and work with schools.

Promoting the Peak District as one of the premier places to cycle... using our combined marketing efforts to build the Peak District cycling brand and market; using the natural environment and special qualities of the National Park to attract and enthuse people.

Packaging of routes... by promotion and development of a range of consistent, coherent and signed routes for all

abilities and types of cyclists, including a multi-day circular route around the whole area. We aim to develop branding for the Peak District cycling experience and iconic multi-day routes, including downloadable route information.

Growing the Peak District cycling market through events... by facilitating a nationally known programme of events to encourage more overnight stays and encourage cycling for everyone; including investigating closed road circuits.

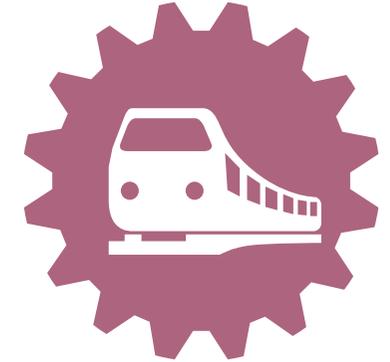
Building loyalty and respect from Peak District cyclists... by providing opportunities to build lasting relationships with the place, encouraging good cycling behaviour, respect for other users and mechanisms to enable people to put something back into the place.



'We will encourage people to explore more of the Peak District and not just to visit the most popular destinations.'



Develop sustainable transport linkages



Through providing easy, reliable and fun alternatives to the private car, based on better sustainable transport linkages, facilities and information to enable more people to be less car dependent for more of the time. This will increase the numbers of people cycling for everyday journeys through improved infrastructure and facilities as well as enabling them to enjoy a slower and less stressful pace of life. Our approach will be to raise the profile of the issues associated with delivering sustainable transport linkages and build the case for a better system. This theme will require support at the national level to aid the delivery of some strategy elements; for example the carriage of cycles on trains will only be achieved through influencing franchise specifications at the Government level.

Headline actions:

Encouraging better transport connectivity... especially at gateway towns and cities, exploring how the cycle network can better connect with other sustainable transport options. We will use more local (commercial and third sector) sustainable transport solutions to join up parts of the network.

Encouraging more bike/bus and bike/train facilities... by seeking to influence operators to trial more bike friendly carriage.

Providing integrated sustainable transport information... through a single joined-up web based sustainable transport

information service for the Peak District, as the first port of call for easy to use transport information. We will work with tourist boards to embed visitor travel information in wider tourism marketing.

Incentivising people to use sustainable transport... through investigating how packages can be put together to encourage travellers to use sustainable travel through a participating business scheme. Develop itineraries as alternatives to the car making it easy and fun for people to get to and around the wider Peak District by bike for all or part of their journey.

‘Our approach will be to raise the profile of the issues associated with delivering sustainable transport linkages and build the case for a better system.’



Supporting Plans and Strategies

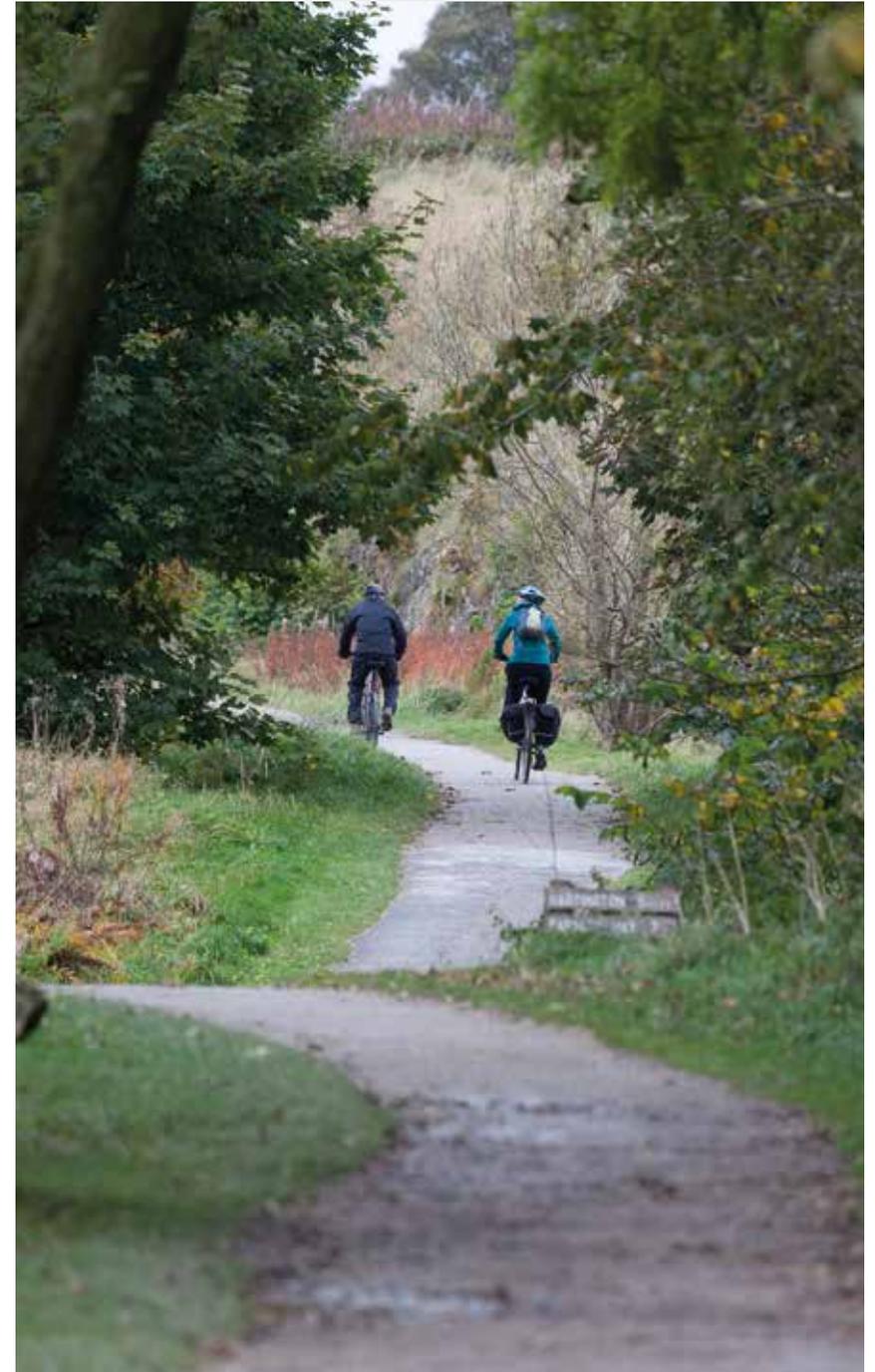
This strategy will be guided by and delivered through a range of national and local plans and policies. These include the following.

- **National Parks & Access to Countryside Act 1949 (As amended in the Environment Act (1995))** – sets out the statutory purposes and duty for National Parks.
- **Local Development Frameworks** – sets the high level spatial policy context for development in the local area.
- **Peak District National Park Management Plan (2012-17)** – high level vision for partnership working aimed at protecting the special qualities of the National Park.
- **Local Transport Plans** – produced by Highway Authorities; a strategic delivery mechanism for transport investment.
- **Rights Of Way Improvement Plans** – produced by Highway Authorities, provides a structured mechanism for improvements to footpaths, bridleways and other public rights of way.
- **Greenway / Waterway Strategies** – produced by Derbyshire County Council to deliver improvements to rights of way, with an emphasis on providing for all users.
- **Cycling Strategies** – produced by partner organisations, complement this strategy. These focus on specific elements such as target groups, cycling disciplines or an area.
- **Local Economic Partnership Plans for Growth** – aimed at encouraging economic growth, there is a recognition of the role of the visitor economy, sport and leisure in achieving this aim.



Glossary

- **Bridleway** – a route that is legally available to horse riders, walkers and cyclists.
- **Cycling Network** – a collection of interconnecting routes available to cyclists; the vast majority of these routes will carry other users in addition to cyclists, including walkers and horse riders.
- **Footpath** – a footpath is a route along which users are only allowed to travel on foot.
- **Green Lane** – describes routes that have or may have the potential to carry motorised vehicles. They may be Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATS) or Unsealed Classified Roads (UCRs).
- **Lead Body** – the organisation that is responsible for managing the delivery of a particular project, and will usually be the main funding or accountable body.
- **Modal shift** – the change of use of types of transport for daily travel; for example it could refer to an individual making a journey to work or for shopping by bike or public transport rather than by car.
- **Traffic-free route** – a route open to cyclists and other users that is segregated from motorised traffic.



Partner Organisations

- **Canal & River Trust** - a charity with responsibility for the care of 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales, including bridges, embankments, towpaths, aqueducts, docks and reservoirs.
- **CTC (Cyclists Touring Club)** - a cycling charity whose role is to encourage and inspire people of all ages and backgrounds to experience the joys and benefits of cycling.
- **Derbyshire Sport** - aims to make Derbyshire one of the most active and successful sporting counties in the country by 2020. Currently leading on the emerging Derbyshire cycle plan.
- **District / Borough Councils** - have responsibility for planning and other services including housing and rubbish collections. Partner organisations include; Chesterfield Borough Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council and High Peak Borough Council.
- **Highway Authorities** - have responsibility for the local road network and public rights of way including footpaths and bridleways. County councils also have responsibility for Public Health. Partner organisations include; Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Kirklees Council, Manchester City Council, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Sheffield City Council, Staffordshire County Council, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council and Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.
- **National Trust** - is a UK conservation charity whose role is to protect historic places and green spaces whilst enabling the public to visit and experience them.
- **Peak District National Park Authority** - has responsibility for the conservation and enhancement of the National Park and for the promotion and enjoyment of its special qualities. National Park Authorities are the planning authorities for the whole of each national park irrespective of other authority boundaries.



- **Sustrans** - a charity focusing on sustainable travel, whose aim is to help people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys.
- **Transport for Greater Manchester** - responsible for implementing transport policy across the ten districts of Greater Manchester including Manchester City, Oldham, Stockport and Tameside.
- **Visit Peak District** - the Destination Management Organisation for Derbyshire and the Peak District and perform the role of a Tourist Board, promoting the area to visitors.

