

Accessible Cycling and Wheeling Paths Across Harborne

Summary

This is a proposal to improve the accessibility of paths in Harborne used by cyclists and wheelers. Currently some of the access points to these paths are not accessible for cargo bikes, accessible bikes and trikes and mobility devices. This proposal identifies accessibility issues on paths in the ward and suggests ways to address these issues.

Background & Justification

- Fear of road traffic is a major deterrent to cycling, with 64% of people in Britain believing that it is 'too dangerous' for them to cycle on the roads¹
- Safe routes are needed to increase the number of cyclists and wheelers travelling around the ward. We've used the term 'cyclists and wheelers' to include those using traditional bikes, cargo bikes, accessible bikes and trikes, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and legal electric scooters.
- An audit of paths in Harborne was undertaken to assess ease of access, the condition of the path and to consider improvements. A spreadsheet is included in the proposal that shows the results of this audit.
- The audit looked at footpaths, shared paths and cycleways. This proposal focuses on shared paths and cycleways and aims to improve access for those who currently cannot access these safer routes in the ward.
- Access improvements to the shared paths and cycleways will benefit cyclists and wheelers across the ward and those that travel through the ward.
- The proposal supports the Equality Act 2010 in particular section 20 "*to ensure someone with disabilities receives the same services, as much as this is possible, as someone who does not have any disabilities*", and the legal duties of Section 149.
- The proposal also supports the Department of Transport recommendation that "As a principle, access control measures, such as staggered barriers that require cyclists to dismount, should not be used. This is because they both reduce the usability of a route for everyone and may exclude users of 'nonstandard' cycles."²

Proposed Solution

Implementing any of the improvements for paths identified on the spreadsheet will improve access to safe cycling and wheeling routes. We would like to highlight the following that we consider would make a significant difference to those cycling and wheeling in the ward but we welcome the views of the City Council's staff to help identify the best barriers to tackle first. Our suggestions are:

¹ Cycling UK (2016) 'Safety in Numbers: Halving the risks of cycling'

² Department for Transport (December 2021) '[Inclusive Mobility: A guide to best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure](#)'.

- Removing the barrier between Wentworth Way and Minton Road and replacing it with accessible access which will allow easy access between Welsh House Farm and Bournbrook Walkway.
- Removing or altering the staggered barriers on the Gillhurst Road entrance to Harborne Walkway to enable access for mobility devices to the walkway.
- Improving the narrow and staggered access points to Bournbrook Walkway to allow safer access for more cyclists and wheelers from the south of Harborne to the hospital, university and Selly Oak.

Benefits & Expected Impact

- Increased cycling and wheeling particularly for those using accessible bikes/trikes, cargo bikes and mobility devices.
- Improved access to safe, traffic free routes

Cost Estimate & Feasibility

- Labour costs to remove inaccessible barriers
- If accessible barriers are needed - labour costs to install accessible barriers
- If accessible barriers are needed - cost of accessible barriers. The costs of these are going to vary dependent on the path and the entrance but using costs from a 2016 FOI request to Sheffield City Council and allowing for inflation we anticipate the costs of accessible barriers will be around £6850.³

Follow-on Projects

- If further funding was available a second project could focus on improving the footpaths across the ward that are highlighted in the spreadsheet as needing improvement.

Conclusion

- The proposal will improve access to the ward's paths for all cyclists and wheelers.
- The estimated costs of improving a few paths across the ward are relatively low making this a suitable proposal for the ENTF funding.

³ https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/considerations_and_costs_for_bar#incoming-866901

