

Agenda Item 14

For information - Sustrans Update

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Summary:

This report to Full Council provides updates on the following:

1. Sustrans Visit
2. Sustrans Proposal
3. Community Engagement
4. Funding (Stage 1)
5. Funding (Stage 2)
6. Cycling network connectivity
7. Recommendations

1. Sustrans Visit

On the 5th November 2019, thanks to a donation from Cllr Jerry Brook, the Town Council were able to commission a site visit from Sustrans, a registered charity that develops safe infrastructure, supports communities in active travel provision and influences policy to ensure more people have the choice to walk and cycle - <http://www.sustrans.org.uk>. The initial purpose of the visit was to discuss school safety with relevant stakeholders, and the meeting was held at Chudleigh Primary School. Documentation was provided to Sustrans from the School Road Safety Group, Mrs England (Headteacher), local Childminders, Parents and the Town Council: the visit took the whole day. It involved detailed talks with stakeholders, a walk around Chudleigh to identify areas of safety concern, areas with potential for positive change, and monitoring at school pick up. As part of the discussions it became obvious this wasn't an isolated 'school safety' project, and that we needed to be looking at active travel solutions for all of Chudleigh. We discussed the different options available to us through Sustrans, and we agreed upon two projects Sustainable Travel Town Strategy and School Street Design. The visit was the first step towards a more sustainable community, and I was very encouraged to see the school head discuss how she would be looking at how staff travel to work, and how they can implement sustainable travel into the school day.

2. Sustrans Proposal

See attachment sent by JC on the 27th February.

3. Community Engagement

Sustrans have good rates of community engagement in part because they run their workshops in partnership with other community organisations – community groups, town council, youth club, school, etc. so that they can work with their existing networks, social media, newsletters, etc. They also often use gazebos outside to get passers-by. Both of those help them reach a wider audience. For their recent co-design activities in a neighbourhood in Southampton, for instance, they worked with hundreds of students at a primary school, over 70 parents and over 60 residents in schemes that took place in the section of street outside a school, a green surrounded by five walk-up housing blocks, and a stretch of road between the two sites. They used door-knocking, school newsletters, local Facebook groups, and then held many of the information sessions on the edge of the road with gazebos to get additional feedback. They also try to run sessions at a variety of times - particularly weekday after the school-run until early evening and weekends - to try to get a wider range of people's availability.

Key to getting engagement is also making sure that people know how it will impact them, and why they should care. They work with us early on to make sure that's very clear in any communication they have.

4. Funding (Stage 1 - Sustrans Consultation)

Sustrans consultation projects aren't always funded as active travel projects. In the past, they've had traffic calming schemes that included planting funded by a water company because they also provided sustainable urban drainage, co-design of streets and paths funded by the police to support community cohesion, and the Southampton project I mentioned above was for child-friendly cities. Another option is whether CIL funding could pay for any of it. Sometimes it can take significant time to secure funding, some projects approx. 2 years, and others delivered in phases to spread the cost.

Possible sources of funding:

There's a Devon CC opportunity called "Doing what matters most community grant scheme" - £5k to £20k - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/how-do-i/getting-support-and-funding/sources-of-grant-funding> - although they could only provide 75% of project costs, so would require some match. Relevant priorities include: Supporting people to become more physically active; build more connections locally; people take notice of their local environment; make people feel safer. Other funding:

- National Lottery – they're really interested in projects developed by local groups (which Chudleigh's Street Design Strategy/ Schools work will be).
- Reaching Communities Fund- <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england>. Funding £10k+ for projects that work with

the community, small local groups can apply. Interested in funding projects that bring people together and improve places and spaces.

- Awards for All - <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england#section-2>. Up to £10k
- Devon Community Foundation – lots of philanthropists with an interest in investing in Devon will distribute their funds through them. It looks like they have paused their grant activity for now (apparently something they do on a three yearly cycle) but could be worth asking them for ideas - <http://devoncf.com/>

5. Funding (Stage 2 - Delivery)

We don't know what will be determined regarding delivery until we go through a co-design process with Sustrans and come up with some ideas. It's really important that these things are decided by local people rather than imposed upon them, and this process will ultimately provide a shortlist of interventions which Sustrans can help to seek funding for.

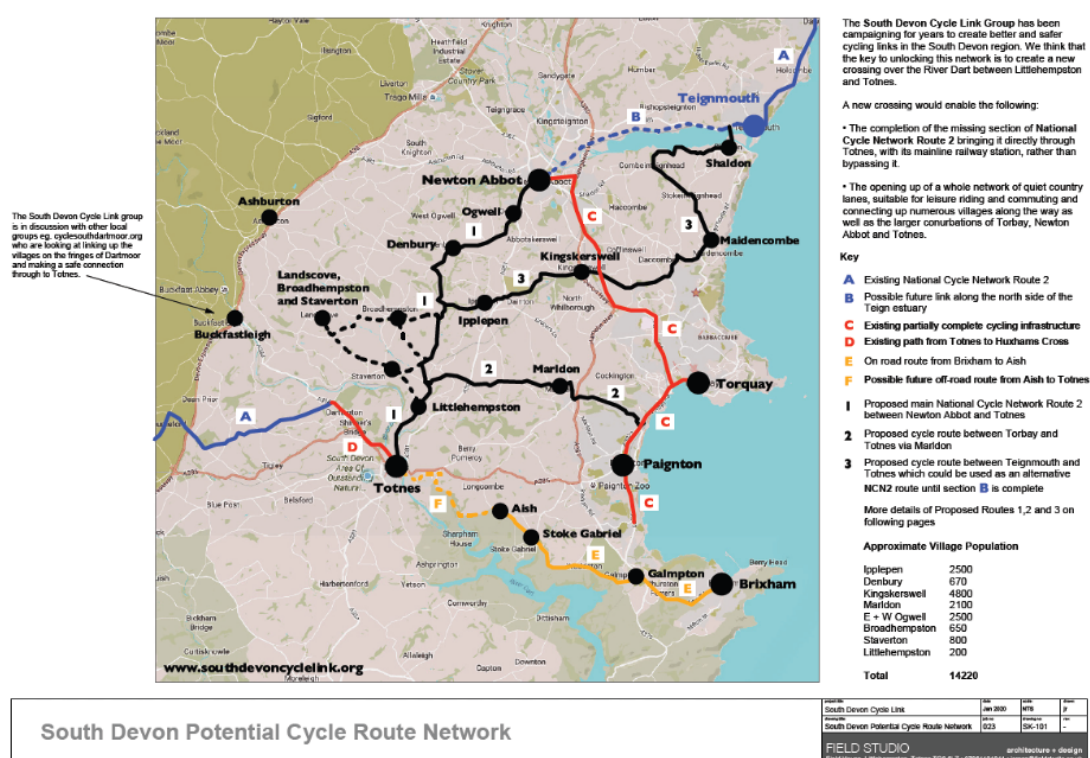
From a fund-seeking perspective, it's important to have tangible projects ready to take to funders, rather than 'chasing the money'. By creating projects to fit a funding opportunity, there's a risk that the community's aims and objectives, and the messaging and passion for the project, will get lost. Lots of the bigger funders, including several of the national lottery opportunities, see community involvement as a core part of any projects they will support.

It's not uncommon giving the present funding environment for local authorities to not have capital funding to pay for physical interventions, but, as long as we have agreements in place with DCC in advance, once these are identified we can start to look at alternative funding sources. The funding sources we apply to will also depend on the interventions and the costs involved, i.e. some funders have an interest in improving conditions around schools, others historic town centres etc. There are often large capital funding opportunities we can bid for from sources such as the Landfill Communities Fund, charitable trusts and foundations, national lottery etc. and Sustrans will work with us to identify funding sources. Examples:

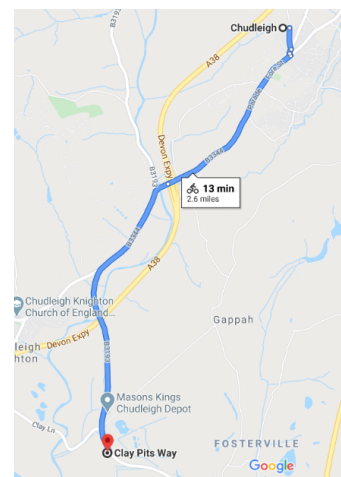
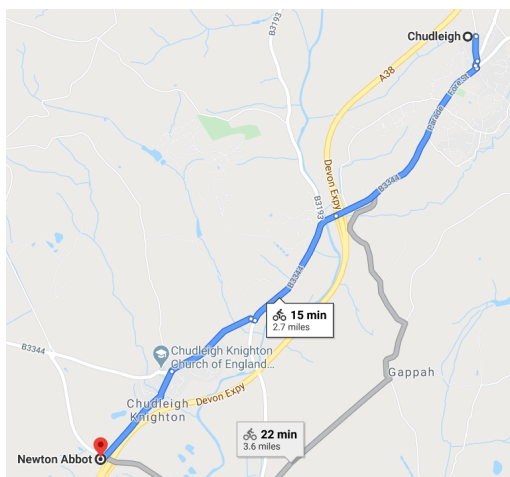
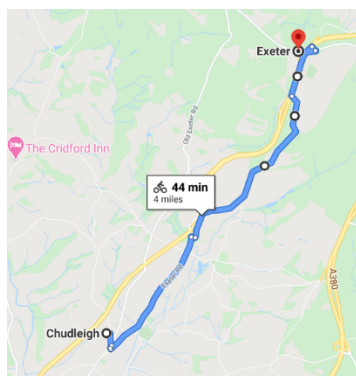
- Places to ride - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/fundingnews/fund/places-to-ride-2/> Getting people to cycle and connecting the community - funding from £1000 - £500k
- Viridor Landfill - Proof of a need and local support for the project; promotion of community participation (volunteering) and partnership approaches. Environmental sustainability and long-term management plans - funding up to £100,000
- Big Lottery Community Fund - <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk>. Projects that bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities, improve the places and spaces that matter to communities and help more people to reach their potential, by supporting them at the earliest possible stage.

6. Cycling Network Connectivity

Chudleigh currently has no connection to any cycle path networks. Secondary school students do not have a safe route to the nearest school which is less than 5 miles away. There are no cycle routes for commuters to link to routes to either Newton Abbot or Exeter. Despite some wonderful local leisure cycling opportunities at Haldon Gateway, the newly opened Wray Valley Trail, the Stover Trail and the Exe Valley trails, there are no routes suitable for all abilities from our town to get to these. Some current proposals for South Devon are focusing on linking strategic national routes from Plymouth to Exeter via Teignmouth only and as can be seen from this map Chudleigh is in danger of being bypassed. Our location on the A38 corridor - the most direct route to Exeter and proximity of trails are other reasons to prioritize linking Chudleigh to network.



The locations of our nearest links to the existing network are shown below - 2.6 miles to the Clay Pits cycle path towards Teign School, 2.7 miles to the path at Chudleigh Knighton which links to the Stover Trail and NCN and 4 miles to the link to Exeter.



7. My Recommendations

Transport remains one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gas, contributes to poor air quality and its severe associated health impacts, and causes significant numbers of deaths and serious injury to pedestrians and cyclists. In 2018, 787 child pedestrians aged under 11 were killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads <https://www.cyclinguk.org/blog/road-casualties-2018-vital-statistics-cycle-campaigning>.

Positive action to increase active travel will help with decarbonization and improve physical and mental health amongst many other benefits https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523460/Working_Together_to_Promote_Active_Travel_A_briefing_for_local_authorities.pdf.

Evidence of need has already been determined in our recently adopted Neighbourhood Development plan '**Footpaths and Cycle Ways**'.

Footpaths and Cycle Ways

- 3.17 The layout of Chudleigh has evolved over a thousand years and was obviously not designed to cope with the cars and heavy vehicles that are an essential part of life today. Walking and cycling are the most important means of reaching the town centre for 94% of respondents to the householder questionnaire. Furthermore, 40% of respondents reported walking or cycling outside Chudleigh for exercise.
- 3.18 The advantages of safe, pleasant, interconnected and easy to use foot and cycle ways are recognised. They include physical and mental health benefits, the protection of children and other vulnerable groups from road traffic, a reduction in the number of car journeys and the consequential reduction in air pollution, including the generation of greenhouse gases.
- 3.19 Complaints voiced at the April 2017 exhibition and in responses to the householder questionnaire related to the difficulty of parking, the speed of traffic through the town and congestion. The provision of facilities which encourage and help to reduce the use of vehicles will both benefit the local environment and contribute to fulfilling the sustainability aspirations which underpin the planning system, nationally and locally. Therefore improving the network of footpaths and cycle ways is considered to be an important objective for the well-being of Chudleigh's population and the connection of new developments to the existing network can contribute to the social integration of new residents with the wider community. Both of these factors are referred to in the Teignbridge Local Plan policy S2 Quality Development.

POLICY CHNDP6: FOOTPATHS AND CYCLE WAYS Accessibility around the town, both on foot and by cycle, and links to the local and national networks beyond the town, will be enhanced. New residential and commercial developments shall incorporate safe footpaths and cycle ways which, where possible, shall connect to the existing networks, preferably off-road and sufficiently wide to give access to a variety of users including those using wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Every opportunity shall be taken to ensure that the new footpaths and cycle ways are designed with appropriate lighting and planting, to also function as wildlife corridors.

Ultimately I believe an active travel working group in Chudleigh should have three goals:

1. To make walking and cycling within Chudleigh safe and easy for everyone so people choose active travel for the majority of journeys within town.
2. To encourage community involvement in plans, designs and campaigns.
3. To get Chudleigh connected to the National Cycle Network, to secondary schools and to other local towns and villages, with routes that are safe for all ages and abilities.

As part of the climate emergency response Government, local authorities and charitable bodies are looking at ways to decarbonise by helping people reduce their reliance on the car and travel by foot, bike or public transport instead. Chudleigh needs projects identified and ready to go, to be in a position to move swiftly when opportunities and funding becomes available.

Recommendation - we set up an active travel working group and seek funding to commission Sustrans for Stage 1

Goals 1 and 2 above can be addressed through the Sustrans proposals initially by securing funding in stages to fulfil the projects identified. Goal 3 will require research to find route options and funding solutions, engagement with stakeholders including the local authority, Highways, Sustrans and others. We need a well evidenced pressure group to make the case for connecting our town. We can work with and learn from the Exeter Cycle Campaign and South Devon Cycle Link locally amongst many others

Recommendation - a separate working group made up of passionate cyclists, representing all abilities, to drive this forward.