

Agenda item 4

For information – an update on the work to support active travel

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Summary

This report provides an update on the work we are doing to deliver a wide-ranging work programme to support people to travel in an active and sustainable way.

Relevant elements of this year's Work Programme

- Develop pedal powered resources for schools and community groups via Cycle Together (Lotto Climate Action Fund (CAF) funded Green & Healthy Future)
- E bike 'Cycle Together' facility development through Green & Healthy Future (Lotto funded CAF)
- Purchase new e-bikes for FTC hire scheme
- Organise School Travel Challenge
- Develop clean air monitoring network
- Prepare Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- School Streets development work
- Promote public transport, volunteer driver scheme, liftshare, car clubs, EV charge point network, sustainable transport, cycle courier & e-cargo bikes, walking, cycling and rickshaws

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Earlier this year, Frome Town Council (FTC) successfully secured £75k from Somerset County Council's (SCC) Climate Emergency Community Fund with part of the funding being allocated to a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan will create detailed and joined up infrastructure designs that plan safe walking and cycling routes around and through the town; having a plan will unlock further funding to make these designs a reality in the future.

FTC is inviting Frome residents to get involved with the project and future plans at an online workshop on Thursday 12th August from 7:30pm to 9pm. The session will then be repeated on Thursday 23rd September (also 7:30pm to 9pm). A follow up workshop will take place on 10th November at 7.30pm-9pm, where residents will get the opportunity to see the draft plan and will be invited to comment.

School Street

Government funding has now been secured through SCC to enable FTC to work with the community to co-design and implement an experimental School Street in Oakfield Road and Somerset Road. The concept is that this scheme will encourage more active travel to Critchill,

Oakfield and Trinity Schools, connect access to Avanti Academy via Victoria Park and improve safety on a section of road on the NCN 24 cycle route.

Following a procurement exercise, we have also now selected Sustrans to help with the engagement and design. Sustrans, a national charity whose mission is to make it easier for people to walk and cycle, have huge experience of delivering School Street schemes across the country and of working with the community to involve them in the process. Sessions to explore the Frome School Street scheme and identify issues and opportunities in the area are planned for September and will be followed by co-design workshops in October. Details will be announced shortly.

Cycle Together

[Cycle Together](#) is a new Lottery funded project that officially launched in June 2021, after a pilot group trialled the scheme in May. Designed to support people to feel more confident riding a bike and to increase activity and wellbeing levels, participants can borrow an ebike for four weeks and are offered six hours of guided rides.

The scheme is part of the [Green and Healthy Futures programme](#), a series of Lottery funded projects delivered in partnership by FTC, Frome Medical Practice and Edventure: Frome.

School Active Travel Challenge

The School Active Travel Challenge invites Frome schools to take part in a week of fun activities and incentives that encourage active journeys to school. On average, schools see a 20% increase in walking, cycling and scooting during the week and levels have remained higher throughout the year. The 2020 challenge was cancelled due to COVID, but it will return on 20th September 2021 to coincide with [Great Big Green Week](#). Next year we will be working alongside SCC to invite schools to sign up to Modeshift Stars, a scheme that recognises schools, businesses and other organisations that have shown excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable and active travel.

Bike Jumble

Frome's 4th annual bike jumble sale took place on Sunday 27th June. Over 90 bikes were donated to the sale plus parts and accessories. The sale of these donations raised over £3,000. All of the money raised goes to local charity Frome's Missing Links, a local community group campaigning to complete the traffic free Colliers Way and to create new links between Frome and the surrounding villages. Many of the bikes and accessories donated to the jumble would have ended up in landfill so this is a great way to recycle and reuse whilst encouraging active travel. We are now looking for a permanent location to make the jumble a more regular event.

Climate Emergency Transport meetings

Monthly transport meetings take place with stakeholders to share news, updates and plan actions to improve opportunities for sustainable and active travel. The meetings include representatives from FTC, Mendip District Council, Sustainable Frome, Frome & Villages Bus Users Group (FAVBUG) and Frome Station Friends.

Active Travel newsletter

A newsletter has recently been set up with regular news and updates regarding active and sustainable travel in Frome. There are currently 70 people on the mailing list. Anyone can sign up here: <http://bit.ly/activetravelfrome>

Frome Station Friends

In early 2020 a group of volunteers came together to set up Frome Station Friends, a group to maintain, improve and develop the train station. The live side of the platform has already been spruced up with new planters and a mural in the waiting room. COVID caused a long delay in securing the permissions needed from Network Rail to gain access to the disused platform, but the group have now had the go ahead to start working on the disused side to improve the whole area of Frome Station.

E bike hire scheme

For the last 5 years FTC have owned 2 ebikes that are available to hire from Cycology bike shop. These are available for half or full day hire. The ebikes are charged at a very low rate (currently £6 half day or £12 full day) which is much less than a bike rental business and therefore gives more people the opportunity to borrow a bike for leisure or commuting.

Frome Walkers are Welcome

Walkers are Welcome is a nationwide initiative that encourages towns and villages to be 'welcoming to walkers'. There are now over 100 accredited Towns and Villages who strive to improve communities' economic, physical and mental health and well-being through walking. The Frome Walkers are Welcome group have been proactive in reopening and protecting footpaths; working with the Mendip Way AONB to link with other WAW towns along the route; developing and mapping new walks around Frome and organising Frome's annual walking festival.

Clean Air Frome

The Frome Tech Shed have created a series of air quality monitors that are spread out around Frome to record the air quality in different areas. Some of these are currently offline and waiting for upgraded replacements, but as the data grows, we can use this to monitor peaks and troughs in air quality alongside traffic monitoring and travel behaviour. The Tech Shed are planning to offer workshops for streets to build their own air monitors.

Co Wheels car club

Frome has two Co Wheels cars available for hire by the hour. Being part of a car club means members can have access to a car without having to own one. The locations in Frome are Frome Town Hall and Alexandra Road. There will be the opportunity to have more cars in the future if these cars are regularly in use.