

Walking Forum Meeting

DATE AND TIME: 09/07/2024 17:00 – 18:30

LOCATION: Teams

CHAIR: Cllr Ben Miskell

ATTENDEES:

TFS. AC. JW. RS. SO. TH. MG. JS. DB. LF. DS. SL. SO. RH. JM. SP. MD. JR

APOLOGIES:

JM. KM. PB. TH. RM. SH. NM. CJ.

Minutes

1. Item: Welcome to our 3rd meeting: introductions, apologies.

- Cllr Ben Miskell introduced himself and offered to Chair the Forum
- Apologies

2. Item: Comments from minutes of last meeting/Matters arising

Comment from SO about the works & projects being carried out across Sheffield, but no publicity or onsite information surrounding the works informing the public about the various projects.

Reply – communication about all the SCC projects is important, as well as education for people as part of launching these projects.

The city centre to Kelham /Neepsend improvement includes features (such as the Dutch Style roundabout) that will be implemented in South Yorkshire for the first time, so we expect that there will be a learning curve - to support that we've got communications plan in place to make sure that that happens. This will include an animated video to be launched once the scheme is finished. We will also have on-street information including QR codes on posters and lampposts as well as links through our social media and website channels.

Action – to put links to useful sites on the Transport Forum Page



Reply – AC has put a request in to IT to update the Forum page and add links to Local Access Committee, Rights of Way.

Action - report back/update the projects surrounding the Attercliffe Waterside development – specifically any improvements to the access route into the City along the canal.

Reply - The application for improvements is being determined at Planning & Highways Committee tomorrow (10/7/2024). There is a recommendation as part of the application that includes section 106 contributions towards towpath improvements between Staniforth Road and Darnall Rd.

Regarding the requirements for lighting – this is a sensitive issue on canal tow-paths and we work closely with the Canals & Riverside Trust - it has been proposed not to implement lighting due to the impact on wildlife. However, the surface treatment for the route will be improved to ensure it is accessible throughout the year, for walking, cycling & wheeling.

Action – Meeting to bring all the data gathered by various agencies together to give us more of a focused picture of what is happening across the city in relation to walking.

Reply – The suggestion is - that we hold a separate focussed discussion, involving parties that are involved with data gathering and analysing, and then bring the findings of that meeting to the walking forum as an overview and for comments from forum members at a future meeting.

1. Item: New SCC projects:

DS - Burngreave Rd to City Centre - The Burngreave Accessibility Links Scheme is an active travel scheme (with funding from Active Travel England), and it's predominantly aimed to encourage walking and wheeling in a safer environment. The expectation is that the scheme will be completed by March 2026. The two main route corridors being developed are Burgreave Rd and Rocks St/Nottingham St

A large part of the treatments that will be applied in this scheme will be continuous footways that give greater priority for pedestrians to cross on side road junctions to support recent changes in the highway code. These are most suitable where the traffic flow is lower in and out of junctions. The scheme also includes several modal filters/vehicle closure points on quieter roads. These will reduce through traffic, offering improvements to pedestrians and cyclists.

The scheme supports wider interventions in this part of sheffield including

- Astrea Academy School Streets (existing)
- CRSTS Northern Communities schemes (proposed)
- CRSTS Cross City Connections (proposed)

Feasibility work is being carried out to improve crossing facilities near Spital Hill. This ties in directly with the bus route improvements being examined through the CRSTS Northern Communities proposals. The aspiration is to upgrade an uncontrolled crossing to a fully signalised crossing. Further design work and modelling is required to assess the interface between the crossing and proposals to improve bus journey times on Burngreave Rd/Spital Hill.

The Burngreave scheme also proposes minor improvements for bus users including flat-top road humps, tactile paving and raised kerbs at bus stops, a small section of parking restrictions to minimise waiting times for buses and reduced junction entry/exit points (modal filters) on route corridors as mentioned above.

Question from Cllr RS – Speed control – will this be done by speed tables that cover the full width of the road or will speed cushions be used where cars veer round to avoid.

Answer – as this project is just at the concept design stage this will be something to take up with the planners & designers and review as the work progresses.

Comment from JM - Crossings can be completely inaccessible for some members of the community, so they will avoid using a particular route. Different locations may be more important for access and flow but you could be not counting some people, because they've got no option than to cross at a particular location.

Answer - We appreciate that, even though pedestrians or cyclists may not be crossing at certain points, it doesn't mean that there isn't some demand, so we need to be mindful of where people need to be crossing, whether they're using it now or not.

Given the number of both controlled and uncontrolled crossings along this corridor we can be confident in the data from the pedestrian crossing surveys that the priority location identified is the most well used crossing and most suitable for improvements. The next available signal-controlled crossings are no more 150m from this site

Action – design team to liaise with the other Sheffield Transport Forums - Transport for All/Access Liaison Group and Cycle Forum

DS - Oughtibridge Mill Active Travel Link is a section 106 funded scheme that aims to connect the 300-house development taking place at the old paper mill site with the village and proposes to link with a riverside walk that connects Beeley Woods and leads onto the Upper Don Trail.

This is a brief update. We know there has been various questions raised by the Parish Council and Ward Councillors from that part of the city, and that there hasn't been much of an update in some time - but there is still quite a lot of work to be carried out to understand the scope and cost of the scheme.

We have informal agreement from TRC committee that we would be able to access up to £1m as a contribution from our LANTCP funding to support construction of the scheme.

We have recently been working with CTS Bridges to get a better idea of the construction and the process of actually bringing the deck of the bridge on site and obviously the topography and the access into the site which is not straightforward - there are limitations on the size of the crane that we can get down there and therefore the size of the bridge that we would build.

We have to ensure that anything we do in the river channel has minimal impact on ecology and we're also mindful that the scheme does involve tree loss, particularly on the northern bank where we'll need to locate a crane. We will be working closely with planners to work out how we mitigate that and the processes that we need to follow to address the tree loss that will occur.

We will keep the Forum up-dated on this project.

TH - A625/Ecclesall Road upgrade – This item was scheduled for this meeting with the intention of delivering a detailed presentation of the work to be carried out on this arterial route into Sheffield, but unfortunately due to a number of factors including local & general elections the consultation for this project has had to be put back to September/October.

Sheffield City Council is bringing forward a road safety scheme along the 3.5 mile stretch of the A625, Ecclesall Road and Ecclesall Road South, in both directions, designed to save lives and reduce serious injuries.

The application of a variety of road safety measures will begin from the area around the Champs Sports Bar and Grill at the junction with Pear Street near the inner ring road, and will run through to the Whirlowdale Road junction in Whirlow.

We have been looking at this area in detail and looking at road safety measures to implement to reduce collision cases including proposing measures to reduce the speed of motor vehicles using traffic calming measures, improve complex junctions, more signing and lining as well as making it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross the roads at key points across the route using signalised crossings.

The plan is to go out to a full public consultation in September/October, with a thorough consultation process where we want to be consulting residents and businesses, community interest groups, key political stakeholders, key community groups and we will keep the Forum up-dated.

4. Item: JS

Introducing the SYMCA Walking, Wheeling, Cycling Strategy work

In February 2023, SYMCA appointed Ed Clancy OBE as our Active Travel Commissioner, helping to lead on many of the walking, wheeling and cycling developments, strategy and investments, and to promote active travel to the forefront of people's minds, and support the work that we do.

Mayor Oliver Coppard also made a pledge in his recent manifesto to keep active travel as one of the core principles of what he wants to do.

A lot of our work across the local authorities including Sheffield is not only about building infrastructure to enable people to wheel, cycle or walk more, it's about getting people who aren't really engaged for whatever reason, often through no fault of their own or because they just don't have the experience and the knowledge or the skills, to engage with active travel.

We are funded through different areas of government, mainly through Department for Transport and Active Travel England, and can help to provide local neighbourhood schemes through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, which funds a lot of the smaller scale interventions that we have across the region, that the LA's can build. Things like dropped kerbs, traffic signal upgrades, things that generally don't make headlines, but are actually really important to the communities that they serve.

Sheffield is developing its' Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Investment Plan now and a lot of the new South Yorkshire strategy included will be underpinned by the 4 local authorities, local cycling, walking and wheeling investment plans – bringing them all together to give residents of Sheffield and South Yorkshire a cohesive, fully joined up, fully integrated network.

Using the data we have, our emerging strategic direction and some of the impact we want the strategy to have, is around residents, health and physical activity levels, reducing air pollution and making South Yorkshire a better, healthier, happier and safer place to live in. Effective community engagement and support is key to support for schemes like Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

We need the infrastructure to be in place and people need to feel safe when using it and that is why Mayor Oliver Coppard's focus includes children, schools and safer routes to school.

This work is through active travel education and engaging with schools and we have really good close working relationships with some of the partner organizations like Mode Shift and Living Streets who do a lot of work in schools, but particularly looking at most deprived areas and the people who are least active.

Shifting a lot of the short journeys made, from using a car to being more active, we know may not be popular for many reasons, but if there's an option to try and change some of those journeys, we want people to make that choice and so we are trying to make walking a big focus for a significant number of journeys. Community engagement and behavioural insights are really key going forward.

JS - Feedback from Schools challenge Year of Active Travel Walk and Wheel Challenge (17-27 June) & Walking event

The Mayor's Walk and Wheel Challenge ran in June over 10 days. 78 schools across South Yorkshire took part. There was good engagement with the schools taking part and lots to pick up on with how they engage with some of our partner organizations.

Our upcoming scheme for walking, is a celebration of walks throughout September. This will clearly overlap and compliment the work that Sheffield is doing with the

Sheffield Walking Festival. We will be working with various walking groups across South Yorkshire as well as community-based projects that take part in walking activities. [Post meeting note – the weekend is called SouthYorksWalks](#)

Comment - MD (Sheffield Ramblers)

Hopefully part of these schemes and projects being supported by SYMCA include safety schemes to keep both pedestrians and cyclists safe. We find that quite a lot of cyclists now use pavements as cycleways, which makes it inherently dangerous for walkers and pedestrians, especially in the city centre and this behaviour could discourage people from walking.

Answer - JS

We've all got to use the infrastructure correctly. Segregated areas clearly define areas for pedestrians and cyclists and keeps both away from the roads, but we all accept that there is a conflict and nervousness between the groups. However, for all schemes being planned and implemented – safety for all groups is always a consideration.

Comment from MG –supportive of SYMCA's approach of considering walking, wheeling and cycling as very different activities rather than as one entity of active travel and know that sometimes when we do use the term active travel, it can sometimes lose some people.

Question - MD (Sheffield Ramblers)

Do pupils in school still do cycle safety training? (similar to what used to be the Cycle Proficiency Test)

Answer from AC – Yes, cycle training, now named Bikeability is offered to every school across Sheffield and includes training out on the road. Modeshift also do basic cycle training.

Comment from BM - there are lots of schemes to encourage confidence amongst adults to be able to cycle as well.

Plus, David Bocking from BetterPoints hosts a blog relating to all things active travel and much more.

5. Item: RH - Sheffield Walking Festival (6 – 15 Sept)

<https://www.welcometosheffield.co.uk/visit/headline-events/sheffield-walking-festival/>

To date there are 27 walks entered for The Walking Festival, and one more to confirm. Details should be online by 12 July and all the walks will then be available on Welcome to Sheffield and on Heritage Open Days websites. The theme this year is Connections, Routes and Networks – so lots of scope for old and new walks to be entered.

Leaders representing the institutions below have submitted walks:

Bradfield Walkers are Welcome, Council for the Protection of Rural England, Friends of the Botanical Gardens, Friends of Ecclesall Woods, Friends of Parkwood Springs, Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust, Heritage Highways Group, Institution of Civil Engineers, Sheffield CHA Rambling Club, Sheffield Good Companions Walking Club, Sheffield Home of Football, Sheffield Manor Lodge, Sheffield Ramblers, Stocksbridge Walkers are Welcome, Upper Don Trail Trust.

6. Item: Comments on draft Terms of Reference, Chairperson and suggested topics for future discussion

The Terms of Reference gives us the purpose of the committee and its' aim to assist the City Council to promote walking for everyone by reducing barriers and achieving a better walking environment, so that walking is a natural choice for everyone, for everyday and local journeys

- It includes councillors from the three political parties in 'the Administration'.
- Servicing of the group is through the City Transport Service led by Tom Finnegan Smith Tom Finnegan Smith.
- It includes that the terms of reference will be reviewed regularly and can be quite flexible.

Cllr Ben Miskell offered his view that it's good to have interplay between this forum and the Transport, Regeneration & Climate Policy Committee. He proposed that, as Committee Chair, to chair the Forum, and also that Cllr Richard Shaw, who is a member of the TRC Committee, would be our Deputy Chair. This was accepted

Action : Add to the terms of reference that the Forum meetings will be chaired by elected members. Once amended - circulate round

7. Item: Any other business

Comment - RH

Would it be possible to use the Walking Forum and its contacts to back any problem that's reported to our members and put it to whichever department in the Council, whether it's relating to rights of way, repairs or maintenance.

Reply - TFS

If there are concerns that people want to raise at these meetings, then there's a place for that. However, we don't want people to have to wait for up to 3 months for pre convened meeting to address those issues.

We need to make sure that we've got clear points of contact, where people can get in touch with the Council to flag issues that are important.

Action: Supply list of key contacts and signpost people to the most appropriate place to report issues for immediate attention.

Comment:TFS

Any suggestions for future items that people would like to suggest to develop a forward plan of key issues for discussion.

Action: Email suggestions to AC

Date and time of next meeting:

Tuesday 17 September 2024 17:00 – 18:30