

Buckinghamshire Motorcycle Strategy

This is a transport strategy for all powered two wheel vehicles, including scooters, mopeds and motorbikes. The strategy has been prepared by Buckinghamshire County Council in close liaison with the Buckinghamshire biker forum and has been informed by extensive consultation with users and stakeholders. It is intended to cover the use of powered two wheelers on the highway authority's roads and therefore does not extend to off-road riding.

The strategy recognises that powered two wheelers can provide an alternative means of transport for some journeys; especially where public transport is limited and walking and cycling are impractical. It does however acknowledge that they represent a large proportion of road casualties in relation to their numbers. Consequently the main aims of the strategy are to encourage the increased, safer use of power two wheelers.

The strategy has four main elements:

- **Safety and casualty reduction**
- **Access and facilities**
- **Road Safety Awareness, and**
- **The role of powered Two Wheelers as a mode of transport**

The authority recognises that the development of a motorcycle strategy is only one of the strands of an integrated transport policy and there is a need to balance the needs of many types of road users. It is therefore accepted that when providing for powered two wheel vehicles, concerns must not be created for other road users and that when carrying out improvements for other road users the impact on motorcyclists is fully understood. An example of this is to monitor the use of bus lanes by P2W in which we will need to ensure that this does not increase the number of road casualties.

It will not be possible to achieve the objectives of the strategy overnight and the strategy will be delivered over the remaining time of the Local Transport Plan up to 2011. The strategy therefore contains an action plan that has been developed to guide the implementation of the strategies and details specific actions that will be carried out by the local authority and members of the forum. The forum will review the action plan annually.

STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 improve safety and reduce the number of Powered Two Wheeler casualties

Objective 2 improve access and facilities for Powered Two Wheeler users

Objective 3 improve road safety awareness amongst Powered Two Wheelers and other road users

Objective 4 work with others to develop a better understanding of the role of Powered Two Wheelers as a mode of transport

Background

The popularity of P2W has increased in recent years; they offer a number of advantages over other modes of transport. P2W:

- can offer more flexibility than public transport, cycling or walking where these modes are limited or unrealistic
- can reduce journey times at peak periods
- are less likely than cars to cause damage to roads
- take up less road space than cars
- require less parking space than cars

There are some disadvantages of P2W:

- riders are more vulnerable than drivers of larger vehicles, especially in poor weather conditions
- poor weather conditions reduce the attractiveness of P2W
- load carrying capacity is very limited
- less environmentally friendly than cycling and walking

Casualty Statistics

Number of motorcyclists killed

	2003	2004	2005
National	693	585	569
Bucks	12	7	7
	1.7%	1.1%	1.2%

The 2006 figure for Bucks is 4, national data not available as yet

Number of Motorcyclists seriously injured

	2003	2004	2005
National	6959	6063	5939
Bucks	71	62	64
	1.02%	1.02%	1.07.%

The 2006 figure for Bucks is 59; national data is not available as yet

P2W killed and seriously injured figures both for Great Britain and for Buckinghamshire, plus the % that Buckinghamshire's figures represent of the National total.

Training

Compulsory Basic Training was introduced in 1990 to help reduce the very high accident rate among inexperienced motorcyclists. It is aimed to reduce the rate by 33% amongst new riders in the first year after compulsory basic training was introduced, but achieved a 43% reduction.

Licensing

There are several types of licence required depending on whether the rider wishes to ride a moped or motorcycle, or if the rider holds a full car driving licence. The DfT publishes guidance to help riders understand the P2W licensing system.

Theft

The report produced by the National Advisory group on motorcycling recognises that the theft of motorcycles is an increasing problem. Nationally, it is estimated that between 25,000 and 30,000 motorcycles are stolen each year, of which only roughly 14% are recovered compared to 60% of stolen cars. The risk of theft in public places can be reduced if specialist P2W stands or security loops are used, and if parking facilities are provided in well-lit public areas.

Powered Two Wheelers in Buckinghamshire

Several areas of Buckinghamshire are particularly popular for leisure P2W use. Web sites state that the County has some of the most challenging roads for motorbikes and encourages them to "attempt" them.

The rural nature of Buckinghamshire can cause problems of social exclusion for people who do not have access to a car. In the urban centres, congestion can cause many problems and some residents can experience social exclusion when they do not have access to a car. P2W can provide a cheaper alternative.

The Buckinghamshire County Council Casualty Reduction team provides a co-ordinated approach to casualty reduction throughout the County. Each year, the team carries out a number of key awareness raising campaigns and supporting activities. A reduction in P2W collisions continues to be a key action for the team.

The Thames Valley Safety Camera Partnership is a road safety partnership consisting of the authorities within the Thames Valley, the police, the magistrate's service and the crown prosecution service.

The partnership is responsible for safety cameras operation and related activity in the whole Thames Valley region. The Partnership is also responsible for a wide range of speed and casualty reduction activities.

Motorcycle Survey

Buckinghamshire County Council has been working closely with motorcyclists and motorcycle groups to reduce collisions involving motorcycles. As part of the ongoing

need to consult with as many bikers as possible on a range of issues concerning safety, and when and why people use their bike. The responses have been used to develop this strategy.

The survey, in the form of a questionnaire, was distributed through the local media, the internet and specialist shops. The responses received provided useful information on P2W use in the County.

A management summary of the findings is attached within this strategy.

The main issues raised by the survey were:

- Consideration by others
- Road Maintenance
- Diesel and debris
- Secure parking
- Bus lane use

Training

For the past three years the Be a Better Biker campaign has successfully ran in Buckinghamshire specially designed to target bikers who have been involved in higher levels of killed or seriously injured collisions(KSI). Our research has shown that bikers over 30 and riding a more powerful type of machine have the highest KSI rate amongst vulnerable users. Even compared to motorists, there is a worrying high KSI rate per user for this road group.

The assessment day consists of a days training by UK Advanced where bikers are given the opportunity to discuss their riding during a morning theory/classroom session followed by an enjoyable afternoons riding with the highly skilled trainers. They were able to practice cornering and observation techniques and hone their skills on any areas they felt needed improving.

These days are the ideal opportunity for bikers to have their skills analyzed and be given pointers on how to improve. The Casualty Reduction Team has worked hard to develop a campaign, which is accepted by bikers and also reduces casualties. The overwhelming demand for places is testimony to the success of the campaign and will play a valuable part in reducing casualties on our roads.

Awareness Raising Campaigns

The Council and Buckinghamshire motorcycle forum feel strongly that awareness campaigns should target other road users as well as P2W. One of the highest concerns shown in the recent motorcycle user survey was that one of the main concerns facing motorcyclists was poor awareness amongst other road users.

The Casualty Strategy includes measures aimed at reducing P2W casualties. These include publicity campaigns (including press releases and radio interviews) for both motorcyclists and all road users complimenting the National DFT campaigns (Think bike and look longer for bikes). An initiative to make motorcyclists more visible to motorists, and motorists more aware of bikers was also promoted by The Road Safety Team. Fluorescent backpack style bags bearing the logo `THINK BIKE` have been distributed to motorcycle dealerships and training schools. The bags are given free of charge to riders.

Powered two wheeler riders are especially vulnerable to potholes, fuel spillages and other debris on the road. Buckinghamshire County Council operates a telephone 'hot line' to which people can report such hazards. Members of the public are encouraged to use the service as the most effective way of reporting hazards on the highway. Call Highways on call on 0845 2302882, or e-mail www.buckscc.gov.uk/hoc

Use of bus lanes and advanced stop lines by powered two wheelers

Respondents to the motorcycle user survey expressed a desire to be able to use bus lanes and advanced stop lines as a way of avoiding congestion and proving a safer environment for P2W users.

The current DFT advice on bus lanes, recommends against allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes. But it recognizes that it is for the individual authorities to decide what is appropriate in their circumstances. Several authorities have chosen to allow motorcycles into their bus lanes, with evaluation and monitoring ongoing, the evidence so far suggests that there are no apparent safety disbenefits from allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes

There are now 3 bus lanes in the County. Several local authorities have investigated allowing P2W to use bus lanes as a means of separating them from the general traffic flow, improving safety and allowing them to negotiate congestion. Bus lanes need to be looked at on an individual basis, as there is a distinct variation between the circumstances of some bus lanes and safety implications for the use of them.

In Buckinghamshire we have decided to look at each bus lane on its own merits to consider what is appropriate in each situation. The criteria for making this decision should be that it improves motorcycle rider safety without compromising the safety and convenience of other road users

We will use the monitoring of the new bus lane sites in Aylesbury as a guide for future investigation of other bus lanes in the County.

It is therefore our intention to allow PTW's to access bus lanes currently being implemented within the new Aylesbury hub development. It is also the intention that the Oxford Road Bus Lanes are to be revoked and remade in accordance with the new Bus Lane Orders for the Hub and that they will all be together in one Aylesbury Bus Lane Order This pilot scheme will give us an opportunity to monitor its effectiveness on both a congestion reduction and casualty reduction basis.

We will closely monitor the impact that the trial have on: -

Safety of all road users, vehicle speeds, journey times (especially buses) and usage.

Advanced stop lines have been developed to help pedal cyclists position themselves at the head of the queue at traffic lights, and to help pedal cyclists turning right to manoeuvre themselves to the correct position on the road.

Discussions are taking place between the DFT, cycling interests and P2W interests about the possible use of advanced stop lines by P2W as well as pedal cyclists.

Buckinghamshire County Council has offered to assist the DFT by working with them by offering trial sites for such investigations.

The shared use of ASL's could provide similar benefits to motorcyclists as those experienced by cyclists.

- They offer a head start over other traffic, reducing the potential for conflict especially where turning movements are possible
- They allow motorcycles to be visible away from and in front of other traffic

Motorcycles are generally capable of greater acceleration than other motor vehicles; the risk of conflict is that much greater if motorcycles are placed directly behind them.

After identifying trial sites the following points should be considered

- A consistent approach should be adopted on a route so that both cyclists and motorcyclists know they share the facility and so drivers will expect motorcyclists to filter to the ASL
- Motorcyclists are more likely than cyclists to access the feature from other than the nearside position. The positioning of road-centre street furniture needs careful consideration in order to avoid last minute steering/braking correction from riders.
- Adequate and prominent advance signing is needed to alert both riders and drivers of the facility.
- Supplementary surface signing should be used sparingly.

Local Transport Plan 2

Bucks County Council recognizes that through their LTP2 that P2W have an increasingly important role to play within an integrated transport strategy, and it is a mode of travel that can contribute to congestion, air quality and accessibility objectives. P2W also represent a large proportion of road casualties in relation to their numbers. (Motorcyclists of all ages make up 20.7% of all KSI casualties in Bucks)

The progression/realization of this strategy supports the further development of the Be a Better Biker campaign and address the motorcycle casualties.

Also progressing the established biker forum, comprising of local riders, motorcycle action groups, local dealers, training schools, police, fire and ambulance plus other agencies. This enables us regular contact with representative groups for motorcycling schemes and interventions and will be a valuable resource in the development of future schemes.

The Strategy

The following sections sets out what we intend to do in order to achieve the objectives of the strategy. Implementation of the following statements will be taken forward by the Buckinghamshire Motorcycle Forum.

Objective 1 To improve safety and reduce the number of Powered Two Wheeler casualties by:

- Promoting and encouraging P2W riders to undertake training courses such as CBT & Be a Better Biker assessment days.
- Investigate offering training as an alternative to prosecution
- Promote and encourage P2W users and other members of the public to report highway hazards to the County Council via Highways on Call.

Objective 2 To improve access and facilities for Powered Two Wheeler users by:

- Encourage businesses to consider the needs of P2W users in travel plans.
- Investigating the need for convenient, secure parking and storage facilities where appropriate and practicable.
- Encouraging the provision of convenient and secure parking and storage facilities in new developments, where appropriate.

Objective 3 To improve road safety awareness amongst Powered Two Wheelers and other road users by:

- Undertaking road safety campaigns aimed at P2W riders
- Undertaking road safety campaigns at other road users
- Raise the positive image of motorcycling

Objective 4 To work with others to develop a better understanding of the role of Powered Two Wheelers as a mode of transport by:

- Investigating/monitoring the use of bus lanes by P2W
- Investigating the use of advanced stop lines by P2W
- Investigate how best to offer support and encouragement in promoting the safe use of P2W

The objectives of the strategy will be secured through:

- Schemes funded by the Casualty Reduction team
- Developer funded schemes, e.g. planning conditions and travel plans
- Working with partners, e.g. the police, fire service, employers, interest groups and Thames Valley Safety Camera Partnership
- Publicity and education programmes

The strategy group of the motorcycle forum have developed an action plan which will guide the implementation of the strategy objectives by detailing 'actions' and allocating timescales. The progress of each objective will be monitored through specific performance indicators and/or milestones on an annual basis. Progress will be reported through the motorcycle forum group meetings.

OBJECTIVE 1: - To improve safety and reduce the number of Powered Two Wheeler casualties by:

Promoting and encouraging P2W riders to undertake training courses such as CBT, Be a Better Biker assessment days and advanced training.

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Advertise and maintain a list of PTW Training bodies in Bucks on County Council web site	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officers	Ongoing
Implement a publicity campaign to encourage P2W user's to undertake BABB training courses	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officers	April 2007

Investigate offering training as an alternative to prosecution

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Pursue the investigation of the possibility of offering training as an alternative to prosecution, research current practises	Bucks CC & Thames Valley Police	TVP	Ongoing, after discussions

Promote and encourage P2W users and other members of the public to report highway hazards to the County Council via Highways on call

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Distribute the H.O.C information promoting the services to P2W riders	Bucks CC	Motorcycle Forum	Sept 2007

OBJECTIVE 2: - To improve access and facilities for Powered Two Wheeler users by:

Encourage businesses to consider the needs of P2W users in travel plans.

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Include the use of P2W when discussing the development of travel plans with businesses. Increase the number of business's incorporating P2W in travel plans. E.g. Wheels to work.	Bucks CC	RSO – Work Related Road Safety, Travel Planning Team	Ongoing

Investigate the need for convenient, secure parking and storage facilities where appropriate and practicable.

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Audit existing facilities and their usage	Bucks CC	Bucks CC & District Council Parking Managers	May 2007
Investigate and identify locations where there is a need for convenient, secure parking and storage facilities	Bucks CC	Bucks CC & District Council Parking Managers	Sept 2007
Include P2W user groups on the list of statutory consultees who are consulted over new parking schemes	Bucks CC	Bucks CC & District Council Parking Managers	Ongoing

Encouraging the provision of convenient and secure parking and storage facilities in new developments, where appropriate.

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Secure through the development control process, the provision of parking and storage facilities in new developments	Bucks CC	Bucks CC & District Council Parking Managers	Ongoing

Objective 3: - To improve road safety awareness amongst Powered Two Wheelers and other road users by:

Undertaking road safety campaigns aimed at P2W riders

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Develop and maintain campaigns aimed at P2W riders, including reference to the importance of training	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer	September 2007

Undertaking road safety campaigns at other road users

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Develop and implement campaigns designed to make other road users aware of P2W	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer	September 2007

Action	Lead Partner(s)	Project Leader	Target Date
Raise the positive image of motorcycling	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer and all motorcycle partners within Buckinghamshire	On-going

Milestone – At least one campaign aimed at P2W per year

Objective 4: - To work with others to develop a better understanding of the role of Powered Two Wheelers as a mode of transport by:

Investigating/monitoring the use of bus lanes by P2W

Action	Lead Partner	Project Leader(s)	Target Date
Investigate/monitor existing and proposed bus lanes and identify any, where it would be appropriate for P2W to use them. Monitor the results (including safety and time benefits)	Bucks CC	Traffic Managers	Ongoing

Investigating the use of advanced stop lines by P2W

Action	Lead Partner	Project Leader(s)	Target Date
Consider results of discussions held by DFT to look at the use of existing Advanced Stop Lines by P2W	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer & Traffic Managers	After results are known
Identify suitable location(s), undertake a trial and monitor the results	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer & Traffic Managers	September 2007
When new advanced stop lines are installed, consider whether it would be appropriate to allow P2W to use them	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer & Traffic Managers	Ongoing

Investigate how best to offer support and encouragement in promoting the safe use of P2W

Action	Lead Partner	Project Leader(s)	Target Date
Consider running a motorcycle awareness day promoting all aspects of motorcycling in Buckinghamshire	Bucks CC	Road Safety Officer & forum members	Summer 2007