Welwyn Hatfield
Space for Cycling

Possibilities for Welwyn Hatfield including detailed ideas for both town centres

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**Space for Cycling in Welwyn Hatfield: Local schemes by theme**

**Bold** = quick win

**Titles and text in italics** are the Space for Cycling objective

1. **Protected space on main roads and at junctions**

*Often the most direct route for cyclists is along main roads - where they have to mix with fast moving and / or heavy traffic. This can be intimidating for would-be cyclists. We need to see protected cycle lanes on main roads that allow people of all ages and abilities to cycle. This is distinct from inadequate pavement conversions that stop and start. Adequate provision is also needed at major junctions.*

**Good current practice:**

- The off road cycle routes from Welwyn Garden City to Hatfield alongside the A1000 and A1001. These are all year commuter routes linking the towns
- Black Fan Road from Mundells to Panshanger
- Broadwater Road, WGC
- Woods Ave/Travellers Lane, Hatfield.

**Significant gaps:**

- Bessemer Road to Welwyn via A1(M) junction: This could be achieved by upgrading the footway to shared use. Link via local streets or off road path to Monks Walk School.
- East side WGC: Heronswood Road has had cycle warning markings added, but this does nothing to create a safe route along this busy road. An off road shared pavement is required at least linking the town centre to the QE2 Hospital.
- North WGC from the Campus to Bessemer Road Cycleway via Digswell Road. This could be achieved by upgrading the footway to shared use.

**Commuter routes with no all year safe links:**

- Hertford: The Cole Green Way is unlit so cannot be used all year and the porous surface east of the A414 makes it very muddy in wet weather. The alternative on road routes requires the use of the B195, a crossing of the A414 and the use of the A414 on the approach to Hertford: An off road link to the Old Coach Road at both ends would create such a route.
- St Albans: The Alban way is unlit so cannot be used as an all year commuter route. An off road cycle path using shared use pavements is needed along the A1057 west of Ellenbrook. This would enable students to cycle from Welwyn Hatfield to Oaklands College.
- Potters Bar: There is no connection between National Cycle Route 12 and Potters Bar, so south of Welham Green the only option is narrow C class roads plagued by fast cars. Hertsmere Council need build the promised links to the Royal Veterinary College and thus connect NCN12 to the town.
Villages:

- The following villages have no cycling provision. We suggest a possible solution in brackets:
  - Welwyn (connect to Bessemer Road WGC, see above)
  - Woolmer Green and Oaklands (connect to Welwyn and Welwyn Garden City via shared use pavements, incorporating the existing cycle underpass at the Clock roundabout and shared use footway alongside Welwyn Bypass to link to Bessemer Road link proposed above)
  - Lemsford (Shared use pavement up Valley Road to WGC and via Lemsford Lane to Stanborough School)
  - Stanborough (shared use pavement under A1(M) connecting to A6129 cycle route.)
  - North Mymms (connect to Great North Way NCN12 at Swanland Road)
  - Brookmans Park (off road route parallel to Bulls Lane or Station Road)
  - Cuffley (20 mph zones to create safe links to the station, safe route along the Ridgeway to Brookmans Park.)
  - Essendon (link to WGC either via Cole Green or via future housing north of A414)

Junctions:

- Queensway, Hatfield: Redesigning to improve cycle safety on the Woods Ave and French Horn Lane roundabouts, ideally bypassing the existing on-road routes entirely.
- Traffic speeding off main roads at junctions is an issue for cyclists at:
  - Birchwood Roundabout,
  - Mill Green (A1000/A414 westbound slip via Mount Pleasant Lane),
  - Ascots Lane WGC.

2. Removal of through motor traffic on residential streets

Fast or heavy through traffic make residential streets inhospitable for cycling and walking. Cycle-friendly road closures and planters are inexpensive ways to remove non-local motor traffic, creating more pleasant and liveable neighbourhoods. Local residents can still access their properties by car, and deliveries and refuse collections would be unaffected.

Current good practice:

- Division of Longcroft Road, WGC in to two, removing through traffic and making this a pleasant route for cyclists.

Needed:

- Link Drive, Hatfield, to divert traffic away from Onslow St Audrey’s School
3. Lower speed limits
Reducing motor traffic speeds is proven to prevent death and serious injuries to cyclists and pedestrians alike, especially children, with little impact on most journey times. Many areas have already introduced 20mph speed zones, which should be the norm for urban streets. Lower speed limits such as 40mph will also be needed on rural lanes.

- Residential areas in Welwyn Hatfield should all be 20 mph zones apart from the main A roads. This would make a significant contribution to making the towns nicer and safer places to live.
- Increase provision of off street parking and more restricted on street parking on narrow through streets: Continuous on street parking reduces many streets to single lanes and dangerously compromises visibility on bends and at junctions. For example, commuter parking on Beaconsfield Road, Hatfield.

4. Cycle-friendly town centres
Our town centres could be revitalised as places where people want to spend time, meet friends, enjoy social activity and access a variety of services. To make these spaces more liveable, we need to prioritise people over motor traffic, prioritising walking and cycling. This can create lively, pleasant high streets that are economically viable and socially vibrant.

- Hatfield:
  - WHCF’s detailed plan for Hatfield town centre is attached below. Key features are:
    - Create the northern crossing of Queensway to enable the Station to Business Park cycle route to be completed and link into the run down north end of the town centre.
    - Contraflow cycle route on The Common to improve access.
    - Queensway: Roundabout avoidance to improve safety, noted above.

- Welwyn Garden City:
  - WHCF’s detailed plan for WGC town centre is attached below. Key features are:
    - Extension of Haldens to town centre cycle route across the B195 at the Campus to town centre
    - New route from north of town across the B195.
    - Route from east over Hunter’s Bridge, creating shared use paths on both sides of the road (see Heronswood Road above).
    - Extension of the route into town via Longcroft Road to meet these new routes.
    - Town centre roads (Howardsgate, Stonehills, etc) to become pedestrian, cycles and deliveries only.
5. Routes through green spaces and parks

Greenways and parks provide some of the most appealing cycling environments, attracting groups currently under-represented among cyclists (for example, older people). People use them for all kinds of purposes: from commuting to work, to weekend family outings, to shopping trips. Considerate cyclists and pedestrians can happily get along together with the right facilities.

- King George V playing fields: Clearly sign the cycle path across the park to connect the QE2 to Woodhall and then on to the town centre.
- A414: Create a parallel route along the north side of the A414 from Gypsy Lane WGC to the Cole Green Way underpass. This then forms a commuter route from Hatfield to Hertford via the Old Coach Road.
- Stanborough park: Allow cycling across the park and then via Woodhall Farm to Mill Green to form a Beatrix Potter Way.
- Angerland Common: Create a cycle path from Roehyde Way (Colney Heath underpass) to Dellsome Lane, linking Welham Green to the University and Galleria.

6. Safe routes to schools

Bringing up our children to be healthy, independent adults is one of the most important things we can do, and helping them to cycle is one of the best ways to do it. Cycling and walking to school are good for children's physical and mental health - and our national child obesity levels are among the highest in Europe. Less driving on the school run will make the streets safer and nicer for all.

- The following secondary schools are linked by at least one cycle path:
  - Stanborough
  - Sir Frederick Osborn
  - Bishops Hatfield Girls
- There are no safe cycle routes to
  - **Onslow St Audreys**: Off road path to French Horn Lane and Woods Ave.
  - Monks Walk: Link to future Bessemer Way – Welwyn cycle path
  - Sherrardswood: Link to future Bessemer Way – Welwyn cycle path
  - Chancellors: Needs 20 mph limits and appropriate routes in Brookmans Park linking to Brookmans Park station and Welham Green for National Cycle Route 12.
  - Queenswood: Safe route to Brookmans Park station as a minimum.

Adam Edwards
8/2/15, Revised 21.2.15
Hatfield Ring Cycle: Connecting the town centre, encouraging trade

Context

For the past five years cycle and walking route development across the centre of Hatfield has been in limbo awaiting developments by St Modwen. This partnership with WHBC has now ended. This leaves the town centre largely unchanged with a need for developments which encourage passing trade. Creating better cycling and walking access to the town centre will do much to encourage this.

At the same time a number of new cycle routes have been developed to the east of the town centre. This plan proposes a number of additional works to create a cycle route around the town centre to link the local radial routes in to a coherent cycling and walking hub and spoke network. This will create several cycling routes which do not currently exist through the new network. The document assumes the following shared use paths planned are completed:

- Woods Avenue cycle paths (almost finished).
- East side Queensway shared use path from the Market Place crossing to the telephone exchange and on to join the French Horn Lane cycle path.
- Hatfield Station to the Red Lion junction.

The map

This map below shows all current and planned routes and the missing sections we propose should be filled.

- **Solid blue lines** show the current off road cycle paths. All are suitable for all riders. None connect across the town centre.
- **Dotted blue lines show the current on road cycle lanes.** Of particular concern is the cycle lane on the Woods Ave and Queensway roundabout which places cyclists in a dangerous position to the left of cars when entering the roundabout and then expects cyclists to cross in front of cars to turn right. This is dangerous and unfair to drivers and cyclists.
- **Dashed blue lines:** These are signed on road routes with no cycle markings. Most are quiet roads, but where National Route 12 goes round the A1000 roundabout is not!
- **Solid green lines** are our proposed off road routes.
- **Dashed green lines** are our on-road proposals. See text as to whether this is a cycle lane or simply a signed route.

The map is Open Street Map and used under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 license](http://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright).
Hatfield town centre cycle routes
Hatfield Ring Cycle in detail: Four routes required

We propose that the cycling and walking routes listed below should be provided. They are also walking routes as they will enable more crossing points of the major roads round the town centre and enable pedestrians to avoid the subways under Queensway which are perceived as unsupervised and unsafe. When completed there will be a cycling hub around the town, making access easy and safe. Hatfield would then indeed be a model of excellent good practice. The routes we would like to see built are, in priority order, as follows:

1. **Wellfield Road to French Horn Lane:**
   - This vital missing link prevents workers at the Business Park cycling from the station and school children in Hatfield Garden Village and Birchwood accessing Bishops Hatfield and Onslow St Audrey’s Schools. The route should comprise:
     - Shared use pavement alongside the Post Office Sorting Office
     - On road via the service road to the south of Wellfield Road, behind the shops.
     - Link across the north end of the town centre to the Queensway House car park, painted green to indicate to cyclists and pedestrians where cycling is and is not allowed. (Photo to left)
     - Conversion of two car parking spaces to cycle path to link to Queensway.
     - Crossing of Queensway for cyclists (photo to left) and, importantly, so pedestrians can avoid the subways under the roundabout. The subways cannot be used by bikes due to sharp corners and thus poor sight lines. This could be a zebra (as zebras linking cycle path are legally to be cycled across\(^2\)) or toucan. This will doubtless depend on traffic volumes.
     - This creates direct access from the station to this part of the town centre. The route then joins the planned Queensway east side path, due for construction in 2015.

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2. **Woods Ave link to Dellfield Road:**
   - This is a link of only 2 metres, the grass shown in the photo would be removed between one set of bollards sloping from the cycle path (left) to the road (right).
   - This would enable cyclists to use Dellfield Road as an alternative to the cycle lanes on Queensway, joining Cavendish Way at the traffic calmed Lemsford Road roundabout.

3. **Link Drive car park:**
   - A very short link plus signs to enable cyclists to use the existing Market Place crossing, the short cycle path south thereof (shown in the photo) and the gap in the hedge by the grey car (currently pedestrians only).
   - Cyclists would then cross the car park by the skate park, cross Link Drive, access Wood Close and then the link to the Woods Ave route.
   - This would enable cyclists to avoid the Woods Ave/Queensway roundabout. Most of the work is signing and road markings to show where cyclists cross Link Drive.
4. **Contraflow cycling along the Common:**
   - This would enable this road to be used in both directions by cyclists. Many roads in London allow contraflow cycling which requires signs and surface cycle markings to warn motorists to expect cyclists coming the other way.
   - At the junction with Lemsford Road an off road cycle path would go across the junction to the stub road behind the Swim Centre.
   - This would pass the Swim Centre to the west and cross St Albans Road West to join the existing shared use cycle path.
   - This joins the cycle path along Cavendish Way towards the University.

**Encouraging cycling to and from the town centre**

**Parking for shopping:** More cycle parking at the north end of Hatfield will be needed to encourage cyclists to stop and shop en-route between the station and the business park. This will encourage development of this end of town as there will be more passing trade.

**A cycling cafe:** We would like to see one of the town centre retail units used for a cycling café, with staffed secure parking, as is common in many Dutch towns. Insecure parking for employees is a major deterrent to cycle use. The plan should set a target of say 20% of all employees in the town centre having a secure space to leave a bicycle all day. Such parking provision should include power sockets for electric bicycle recharging. Cycling cafes encourage trade as riders and clubs plan their routes to visit them.

**The network effect**

The following example cycle journeys would become possible for riders of all abilities if the routes listed above were created:

- Birchwood to Hatfield station (via town centre and shops)
- Hatfield Garden Village to Bishops Hatfield School
- Business Park to Old Hatfield
- South Hatfield to Tesco
- Welham Green to Stanborough Park

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8.3.15
Welwyn Garden City town centre

Current situation: Only one ineffective town centre route

Welwyn Garden City has a small embryo network of off road cycle routes largely to the east and south of the town centre. These are linked indirectly to the town centre via Longcroft Lane and then Fretherne Road (part of National Route 57 which continues to Parkway via Howardsgate) or by parking bicycles on the far side of the station footbridge on Hyde Way, an unpleasantly rundown location.

One route does cross the town centre: National Route 57, via Longcroft Lane, Fretherne Road and Howardsgate, provides nothing for cyclists other than a signed route. Cycling is on carriageway and involves mixing with cars and the taxi rank. The speed limit is 30 mph which is too high for the volumes of traffic and pedestrians and conflicting vehicle movements. In order for this route to be usable for inexperienced riders and families we need to see:

- The centre of WGC to be turned into space for pedestrians, cyclists and deliveries only.
- A toucan crossing of Parkway, rather than expecting cyclists to go round the long roundabout in conflict with cars.

This route might then see higher use by residents in west WGC travelling to town and to the station.

To the north of the town centre there is a cycle route which ends in the car park to the rear of Campus East. The route is only signed from College Way north and is poorly signed southwards. Between this and the town centre lies The Campus, a nasty gyratory with fast moving cars and the need to change lanes and cross the paths of traffic to exit the system, and the roundabout which will be removed as part of this scheme.

It should be remembered that on-road cycling means families and children will be deterred from cycling, thus limiting cycle use to a small minority of those who could and want to cycle.

In summary, there are currently no effective north south or east west cycle routes in Welwyn Garden City and this development appears to do nothing to change this.

New routes needed

Welwyn Hatfield Cycling Forum believes the following off road cycle routes are needed:

- An East – West route off road from the Bridge Road/Bessemer Road/Broadwater Road junction via Waitrose, Campus East and Campus West terminating at the junction of Valley Road/Brockwood Lane. This would enable cyclists to avoid the busy roads and junction to the north of the town centre and The Campus gyratory system. This can be achieved by reducing Bridge Road from four lanes to two over Hunters Bridge and then continuing a two lanes only width road through to The Campus. The cycle path would use the pavements on both
sides of Hunters Bridge (as proposed by Spenhill) and then continue as a two way route either on or immediately south of the current north side pavement past Campus East. The junction with Osborn Way will require traffic lights with cycle phases.

- **A South – North** route extending the route along Fretherne Road (reduced to 20mph from 30 mph) via Stonehills (potentially cyclists, pedestrians and deliveries only) and a new traffic light controlled junction to meet the East West route (Junction proposed as part of the WGC North developments). This route should then extend north to the existing cycle route via the Campus East car park to Shire Park and Haldens and over the White Bridge to Sherrardspark Road. At the White Bridge, a connection should be made to National Cycle Route 12 which heads west through Sherrardspark Wood.

- The two routes thus have a common section from Waitrose to Digswell Road. In the town centre, Fretherne Road and Stonehills should have 20 mph speed limits.

- If significant funds were to be made available, then the north south route should pass under Bridge Road via a wide underpass built to Stevenage cycle way standards (i.e. not the current narrow pedestrian subways). This would create a safe non-conflicting route from WHBC offices and car parks to the town centre.

**What would this achieve?**

The routes we proposed would create a number of new sustainable cycle routes. The following three are examples of journeys which are currently only possible by the bravest of cyclists yet could easily be journeys made by far more people:

1. A family living in Panshanger. Instead of taking their car to Roller City they use the cycle route along Black Fan Road pass under the Mundells gyratory and cycle on alongside Bessemer Road, over Hunters Bridge and past the WHBC offices to Campus West.

2. A child resident in West WGC able to cycle off road to Sir Frederic Osborn School.

3. A commuter from Sherrardspark, now able to cycle directly and safely to the station.

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