

### **3. Health**

The links between health and cycling are acknowledged within the strategy. The HPA has been unable to promote cycling, except in a limited way, due to DHSSPS constraints.

The NICI questions the basis of the DHSSPS position in light of Public Health approaches elsewhere in the UK and the Chief Medical Officer's report 'The Health of the Public in Northern Ireland 2004' addressing physical activity in a couple of paragraphs whilst devoting a complete chapter, in an eight chapter document, to medical careers and the new GP contract.

### **4. Increasing cycle use**

The NICI welcomes growing Council involvement, particularly in Belfast, Derry and Craigavon but is disappointed by the indifference shown in some Council areas.

### **5. Planning for sustainable access**

NICI welcomes the publication of the suite of policy and standards statements.

### **6. Improving cyclist's safety.**

The NICI is concerned that speed management issues have yet to be addressed. Experience elsewhere in Europe shows that wide area speed reduction encourages cycling.

The NICI is unaware of the outcome from monitoring road traffic collisions involving cyclists.

The NICI is concerned that the high quality cycle training that has been introduced elsewhere in the UK is not yet available in Northern Ireland. The NICI is also concerned that cycling proficiency is not available in nearly half the primary schools in Northern Ireland. The NICI is aware of the 'Cycling Safety Sheet', published by DfT and circulated in Northern Ireland. The leaflet quotes a figure of 5500-child casualties. The NICI suggests that the leaflet should reflect casualty rates in Northern Ireland only as a 5500-headline figure is misleading and discouraging.

### **7. Creating a cycle friendly infrastructure**

The NICI is concerned that there is little or no road space reallocation to cyclists and cycle review procedures are still not published.

### **8. Integrating with other modes**

NICI welcomes progress made and believes that further integration must be achieved to make a significant difference.

### **9. Providing cycle parking**

NICI welcomes the start of the provision of cycle parking and looks forward to ample secure and convenient cycle parking throughout Northern Ireland.

### **10. Reducing cycle theft**

NICI is unaware of progress in this area.

### **11. Travel Plans**

NICI welcomes progress made to date and believes funding should be increased as the cost-benefit ratio of soft measures appear to be significant.

## **12. School Travel Plans**

NICI welcomes progress made and looks forward to further progress

## **13. Tourism**

NICI welcomes progress made to date and is aware of a large untapped market, particularly for sustainable tourism, as many ferry services refuse to carry bicycles.

## **14. Sport & Leisure**

NICI is not involved in sport cycling. NICI focuses on everyday utility cycling. NICI is concerned that Forestry Service appears not to be aware of the huge economic benefits arising from the promotion of high quality Mountain Bike Trails.

## **15. Raising Public Awareness**

NICI welcomes the appointment of Kathryn Ng, Cycling Promotion Officer, CyclingNI and the novel partnership funding of her post. NICI believes more resource should be allocated to promotion.

## **16. Community Consultation and Participation**

NICI have been asked to comment specifically on 16a. Members of the NICI Steering Group are unaware of any consultations taking place and accept consultations may have taken place without NICI's involvement.

NICI's experience shows that both potential and actual barriers to cycling are still in place. NICI believe there is a reluctance to implement car constraint. Cycling provision is made where there is least resistance from car users and without inconveniencing car users.

The NICI have lobbied politicians and found there is significant political support for cycling. This support is reflected from the most senior to the most junior level of politics in Northern Ireland.

## **17. The Voluntary Sector**

The NICI has been active for 10 years and welcomes the transparency and courtesy shown by the Transportation Unit and the Department.

## **18. Research**

The NICI is concerned that well-established practice in other towns, cities and countries, promoting modal shift is not enthusiastically employed in Northern Ireland.

## **19. Resources**

The NICI is concerned that funding for cycling is not at the level required to encourage, expand and maintain modal shift

## **20. Monitoring Progress**

NICI welcomes the work of the monitoring group and is aware of the difficulties associated with accurate monitoring.

From the Steering Group

Northern Ireland Cycling Initiative

Belfast