



31 July 2023

Paul Davies – Engineer, Policy & Asset Management

Aberdeen City Council

By email: PDavies@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Dear Paul,

ABERDEEN CITY WINTER TREATMENT PROGRAMME – CYCLE ROUTES

Further to our recent meeting I am taking this opportunity to follow up with our thoughts on the winter treatment of cycleways.

Firstly, in our discussion we noted that the prioritization for treatments is based on the Council's statutory duties and the "Well Managed Highways" policy document. Current prioritisation does not necessarily reflect the Transport Hierarchy which is now enshrined in many transport policies at a national and local level. This seems incongruous and something that needs to be addressed in the longer term. As you will know, the Transport Hierarchy places the needs of more vulnerable users (pedestrians and cyclists) above those of vehicular transport.

We acknowledge that the Council is working with limited resources and the gritting programme cannot simply be expanded beyond the financial and physical resources at the Council's disposal. We welcome the recognition that cycling stakeholders & representative groups have not had input for some years and we are pleased to be able to contribute now and in future.

We note that the current list of cycle ways which may be treated under 'Priority 2' are few (six) and that the rationale for their selection is not clear.

Of the six, three are treated only as part of a shared-use path which in practice means that only part of a route or user's journey will be treated.

In terms of updating or refreshing that list, we would first advocate that the Council makes use of available data, both from its own and wider sources. Firstly the Council has an array of on and off road cycle counters across the city, and these will give an indication of which routes are best used. My understanding is that data is available broken down by day and hour, which would allow those routes heavily used for commuting to be identified. Some count locations (e.g. Wellington Road) will give an indication of how well used routes on the current list are in comparison to other routes across the city.

Count data: [uSmart](#)

Similarly, data from Strava 'heat maps' show which routes are most heavily used. Tools such as Strava Metro allow more detailed analysis. Another source of information could be the useage of the city's Big Issue hire bikes.

We carried out a quick and informal canvassing of some of our members, and the list appended reflects the outcome of that. However without data we cannot say which of these are most heavily used and whether they are used more or less than the six routes in your current winter plan, although some can be extrapolated from the uSmart count data.

From our discussion we are surprised to learn that the Deeside Way is omitted because it is not part of the adopted network. The uSmart data shows that it is almost certainly the most heavily used cycle route in the city (peak count 500+/day), so we suggest that some way needs to be found of having it included in the treatment programme.

I reiterate that our appended list is simply a snapshot from a selection of our members and not necessarily representative. In the absence of more robust data it would seem to make sense to prioritise main corridors.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Clark – Chair, Aberdeen Cycle Forum

Suggested priority routes for winter treatment (but note caveats in text above)

- A944 corridor, namely Westhill-Lang Stracht but also B9119 Skene Rd leading to Hazlehead & Queen's Rd
- Auchmill Road and Great Northern Road
- Howes Road
- Diamond Bridge and Tillydrone Avenue
- Bridge of Don and Ellon Rd– Murcar
- The Parkway
- Riverside Drive (between George VI and Queen Elizabeth bridges)
- South College St new cycle track and shared-use path.
- Routes in and around Aberdeen University & Sports Village
- Mounthooly underpass approaches