

## Q & A with Kathryn Mackay, Cycling Development Officer

ACF: Your post was for an initial 2 year period. Is it set to continue beyond that?

KM: We hope so, but there is no confirmation of extension yet.

ACF: Is progress being made – does the role work?

KM: It has the usual frustrations and takes time to build relationships with all the necessary contacts in both Councils. Having established a presence – yes – it feels like it is beginning to show benefits.

ACF: Give us some examples of what has been achieved.

KM: There have been improvements on the Formartine & Buchan way, surface is improved with tarmac on the approach to Dyce. Using funds from *Smarter Choices, Smarter Places* a study has been done looking at connections into Dyce. Works are planned to an underpass (improved lighting) and a more formalised link onto the F&B.

ACF: Still potential for a lot of conflict between pedestrians and cyclists coming into Dyce station. Lighting improvements onto F&B are also good & worth noting that so far the AWPR works have been pretty well managed.

ACF: Maintenance of routes seems poor throughout the city.

KM: Maintenance is definitely an issue – often funds is available for new routes but don't include maintenance so it is usually left to the relevant Councils.

ACF: This is a big issue: a couple of our main routes (Deeside Way, Westhill path) are badly affected by leaves, ice, currently a collapsed wall – no one seems to give these any priority (by comparison with how roads are treated). We have raised winterising with ACC in the past on numerous occasions and have had a range of excuses over trials of new techniques, broken machinery etc. There is a particular issue with poor drainage on sections of the Westhill route, which then freezes.

KM: probably best to report such issues using the reporting tool on ACC website.

ACF: Is the ITT (Integrated Travel Towns) report due out soon?

KM: Yes, expected to go to Committee in Feb or March.

ACF: Are advisory cycle lanes a good idea? There are numerous places around the city where these are in very short sections so as to be pretty useless. In other places they are so badly maintained that they are unusable. And last but not least, because in many of them car parking is permitted, they are obstructed.

KM: Sustrans generally looks for shared-use paths as a minimum and preferably segregated cycle paths. They would not financially support advisory cycle lanes.

ACF: There are one or two good examples (Dyce) but another issue is that they often come to an end approaching a junction which is where they are most needed. They are - in effect – a sub-standard approach to cycle routes and we should resist the tendency amongst infrastructure providers to put these in: we risk “sub-standard lock-in”.

ACF: Any news on the signalling of junctions (part of the supposed “locking in the benefits of the AWPR”)

KM: Feasibility studies are to be carried out looking at the practicalities of taking out roundabouts at 3 locations, prior to any detailed design work being done.

ACF: We want to avoid Toucans as part of the solution– why should cyclists have to stop, press a button, then wait (sometimes twice) just to cross the road: car drivers don't have to get out of their vehicle and press a button do they? We should also look for 'default green' for cyclists – example cited of junction at Lang Stracht / Westhill where cyclists currently have to press the button and wait even when the light is red for traffic.

ACF: Any news on the City Deal or what it might mean for funding of projects? The 'sports' side of cycling are already thinking about what projects they could look for e.g. a velodrome.

KM: Discussions all at a very high level so no indications yet.

**Note:** the questions put in the Q&A above were posed by individuals present and do not necessarily represent the agreed position of ACF as a whole.