

## **Cycling Hub**

We, Zone 9 Cycling Group, as part of Sustainable Chesham, strongly feel that The Masterplan for Chesham should include a Cycling Hub based on existing hubs in Hertfordshire [none as yet in Buckinghamshire] to be located in or close to the centre of town. This would enhance the current and proposed infrastructure, act as a focal point for cycling & walking and be a clear statement of Chesham's commitment to green and sustainable travel in and around our town.

Chesham, as we know, suffers from a lack of user-friendly alternatives to the car and the Local Authority's current stance is not clear when it comes to providing safe routes into the town centre and to schools from the outlying areas. Promotion of green routes would significantly improve our local environment and also allow us to take advantage of our proximity to the countryside and act as a 'Gateway To The Chilterns'.

Currently there are three potential sites for a hub:-

Chittenden's, a currently-empty shop, is close to the town centre, has great visibility and good potential footfall.

Water Meadow car park [Masterplan proposes housing for the place I had in mind, so this is currently at odds with their thoughts] has good parking and is close to the town centre with good visibility

The Moor has good parking, plenty of space/options and maybe a linkup with the outdoor pool/gym, but is not central.

Unfortunately, the only cycling shop in Chesham has limited potential and would not fulfil any brief.

Using the 4 hubs in Hertfordshire as a template, they are non-profit making community resource, set up in partnership with local, district and county councils and the communities they serve, together with local organisations and national bodies. They provide a focus for cycling with training courses [cycling and maintenance], bicycle hire and sales [new including e-bikes and recycled], repairs and servicing, local information on routes, social/guided rides and recycling old bikes and parts. They provide employment and volunteering opportunities and are expected to be self-funding after 2 years.

Investment in the start-up phase will vary depending on the site selected but could range from £25k for a shop style fit-out to £50k plus if buildings etc need to be sourced. These estimates are based on the experiences of the Hertfordshire schemes, so will need to be tailored to the preferred site in Chesham.

The hubs have been set up to promote healthy activities and improved mental well-being and to enhance the National Sports Strategy, as well as to meet the stated aims of local, district, county councils and the government who have committed to providing comfortable, safe and sustainable walking and cycling links through town centres and to protecting and improving their green infrastructure.