

Letter from Westminster



**Winchester MP:
Steve Brine**

MANY readers of the *Hampshire Chronicle* will share my passion for cycling and no doubt my frustration that Winchester – and the surrounding area – is not yet the safe cycling space it could be.

As someone who cycles whenever I get the chance, and as a Dad of two, it was therefore easy to put my support behind Cycle Winchester which had its launch last weekend with a 'cycle train' around the city centre and a rally in Abbey Gardens where I spoke.

Cycle Winchester is an initiative by the Winchester Cycle Working Group, backed by Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC), Friends of the Earth Winchester, the City of Winchester Trust and Winchester CTC.

The group aims to promote cycling as a convenient, healthy and inexpensive way to get around Winchester, which reduces congestion, pollution and makes Winchester a better place to live, work and visit. What's not to like.

Cycle Winchester is a really positive idea and, like all great ideas, it's amazing it didn't exist before. As a keen cyclist, and as England's Public Health Minister, I am full square behind anything which aids the active lives and prevention agenda, especially around tackling childhood obesity which, for the record, is a subject we take extremely seriously and are acting on whatever celebrity chefs chasing TV ratings might say.

Equally, so many of us want to see cleaner air in Winchester – and across the country – so our ambition for a massive increase in the number of journeys made by bike, is extremely welcome.

Our recently published Cycling and Walking Strategy makes good reading and, to be clear, our aim is to double cycling activity and increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school to 55 per cent by 2025. Please do search for that online and look out for our landmark Clean Air Strategy to be published for consultation very shortly.

I have offered Cycle Winchester my full support and look forward to working with them as we seek a transformation of the local environment towards a more safe cycle friendly city.

The current Winchester Movement Study is I think a real opportunity for us to grasp this nettle and it's great we have cross-party support to face this. You can see more – and watch a short video – at www.stevebrine.com/cyclewinchester

Finally, I have been greatly moved by the response to my announcement last month of new work to safeguard children with alcohol-dependent parents after measures, including £6 million in funding, were revealed which will help identify at-risk children more quickly, and provide them with rapid access to support and advice. If you're interested in this, see www.stevebrine.com/CoA.

You can catch-up on much more of my work, locally in Winchester and in Westminster, at www.stevebrine.com and you can follow at www.facebook.com/SteveBrineMP.

17.5.18

Steve Brine
MP for Winchester and Chandler's
Ford