

Thanet Cycling PLAN



December 2003





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Introduction

1.1 Why Promote Cycling

Cycling has many advantages as a means of transport. Bicycles occupy little space, save energy and cause no air or noise pollution. They are cheap to use and to provide for. Cycling is good exercise and is beneficial to individual health.

1.2 Policy Background

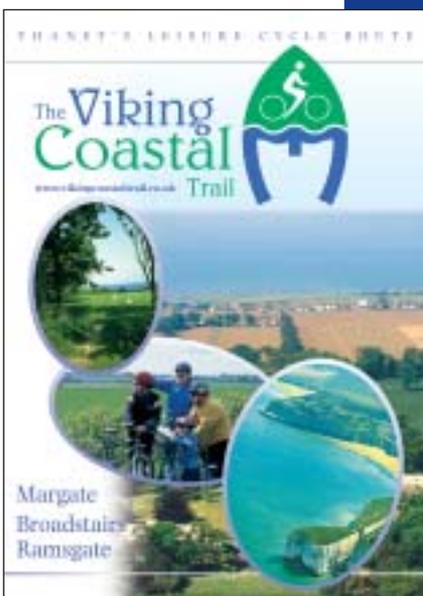
Transport policy in the UK saw significant changes during the 1990s. A number of "milestone documents", for example The UK Strategy for Sustainable Development 1994 and PPG13: Transport recognised the importance of cycling, but The National Cycling Strategy 1996 firmly established cycling as "a central factor in offering an environmentally sustainable and health promoting local transport option".

This policy shift towards a more integrated transport system and the recognition that there must be viable alternatives to private car travel, has been continued by the publication of the Government White Paper A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone in 1998 and the Transport Act in 2000.

1.3 The place of cycling – in Thanet's transport strategy

Three quarters of journeys to work in Thanet are of less than three miles. Cycling is usually quicker over this distance than either car or public transport. An increased role for the bicycle can make a significant contribution to reducing car use in Thanet, as an efficient and economic form of transport.

In 1998 just 3% of journeys to work in Thanet were made by bike. As part of the Cycling Plan we aim to increase these percentages substantially.



Targets

1 – To increase the percentage of journeys to work by cycle to 12% by 2012 (to be consistent with The National Cycling Strategy).

1.4 Progress to date

This is Thanet's second cycling plan (or strategy). The first, published in 1995, included an action plan to 2001. The majority of the targets in that plan have been achieved, and indeed some have even been exceeded.

The most notable achievements since 1995 have been:

- The opening of the Viking Coastal Trail in June 2001, linking Thanet's towns and villages together with a 45km (28-mile) circular route and joining them to the National Cycle Network.
- The completion of the Broadstairs 'Safer Routes to School' initiative.
- The creation of 66km of new cycle routes in Thanet, two "toucan" crossings to help cyclists, and an extensive programme of cycle parking provision in shopping centres which is still ongoing.

We propose eight main areas of action:

- Cycle friendly route design.
- Expansion of the cycle network.
- Improvements to cycle storage, parking and other workplace facilities for cyclists.
- Integration with public transport.
- Encouragement and promotion.
- Education and training.
- Dialogue and consultation.
- Monitoring.



Cycle friendly route design and expansion of the cycle route network are complementary.

Cycle friendly design involves designing to improve both safety and convenience for cyclists. This will lead to a much safer and more attractive road network for cycling. However a specific cycle network is vital to ensure continuity of safe facilities linking to important destinations.

2.1 Cycle friendly design

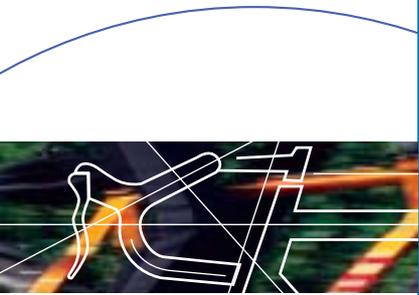
All cycle journeys use ordinary roads for at least part of their length. Therefore, to encourage cycling, as much as possible of the road network must be cycle friendly. To achieve this we will give high priority to assisting cyclists in all traffic management and traffic calming schemes, in the design of new developments, and in any new road construction. The following policies and actions will be pursued:

Policies

1 – All traffic management and calming schemes will aim to make the road network more cycle friendly. There will be a presumption in favour of incorporating facilities to benefit cyclists in all schemes. So:

- a) Schemes involving signalled junctions will generally incorporate facilities such as cycle lanes and advanced stop lines, while pelican crossing schemes will be assessed as potential "toucans".
- b) Segregated facilities or cycle lanes will be provided as part of all new road schemes, ensuring safe passage through junctions.
- c) Traffic calming will use cycle friendly measures.
- d) Cyclists will generally be exempted from all new road closures, one-way restrictions and banned turns, except where there is a technical or safety case for not doing so.
- e) Cycle parking will be provided in appropriate locations.





Policies

2 – A Cycle Audit will operate in parallel with the Road Safety Audit to ensure adherence to appropriate and high quality design standards.

3 – "Kent Design" will require cycle friendly new development, both in overall layout and detailed design.

Targets

2 – To provide cycle facilities at 50% of signalled junctions by 2005 and all by 2008, wherever practicable.



2.2 Cycle network

Expansion from existing routes will aim towards a comprehensive safe network catering for all journey purposes. Urban networks will aim to link to all significant destinations, such as employment and shopping centres, schools and colleges. The already well-developed longer distance network and National Cycle Network will link Thanet's towns to each other, to other towns in East Kent and to the countryside.

Existing and proposed cycle routes in Thanet are shown on pages 13, 14 and 15. While off-road paths have an important role in the networks, many routes use both major and minor roads. On main roads forming part of the cycle network, priority will be given to achieving continuous facilities. With appropriate design, traffic calmed streets and minor roads offer good conditions for cycling.

Policies

4 – Cycle network proposals will be further developed in consultation with the Thanet Cycling Forum and other interest groups.

5 – Safeguarding will be sought for proposed routes in the Isle of Thanet Local Plan.

In urban areas we intend to start by concentrating resources where cycling is already relatively popular. Higher existing cycle use should help to achieve support for cycle facilities and to generate increases in cycling. Early priorities will be:

- a) Completing the Viking Coastal Trail along Margate seafront.
- b) Improved crossing facility on the Viking Coastal Trail at the A256 Sandwich Road/Foads Lane junction in Cliffsend.
- c) Completing the programme of Viking Coastal Trail links to railway stations, i.e. Birchington and Broadstairs. Improved facilities would provide increasing opportunities for combined cycle and public transport journeys, and provide for increased cycle tourism.
- d) A254 Margate to Westwood. Improving access to QEQM Hospital, Westwood Industrial Estate and Westwood itself.
- e) Palm Bay to Westwood. Linking residential areas of Cliftonville to Westwood, Christ Church University College, Thanet Reach Business Park and four secondary schools.
- f) Birchington/Westgate to Garlinge/Hartsdown Park. Avoiding the main A28, serving two secondary schools and expanding leisure opportunities at Quex Park and Hartsdown Park.
- g) Margate to Broadstairs via Dane Valley. Linking the Millmead/Dane Valley residential area to the two towns and to the Oakwood Industrial Estate.

The cycle network shown on pages 13, 14 and 15, is likely to cost upwards of £2m, and an increase in the resources available for cycling will be needed.





Targets

3 – To complete (a) to (g) above by 2005, other routes, as shown on pages 13 and 14 by 2008 and routes on page 15 by 2011.

Good maintenance of the cycle network is vital to its success. We will ensure that the maintenance and repair of cycle paths and other cycle facilities are given enhanced priority.

Policies

6 – Proposals affecting existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) will be developed in consultation with the County Council's PROW Unit and in accordance with agreed procedures.

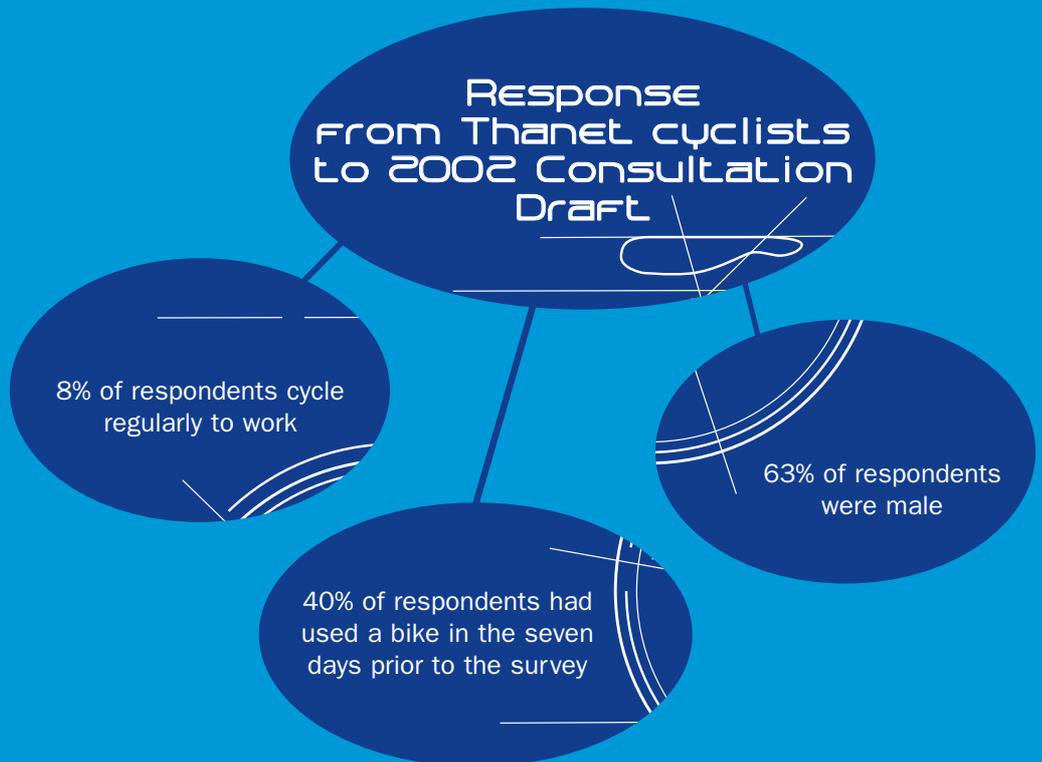
7 – We will co-operate with interest groups to ensure prompt and high standard maintenance of all cycle facilities and all routes identified as part of the cycle route network.

Targets

4 - Regular safety inspections will be carried out, with particular emphasis on pothole repairs and sweeping of grit and debris. For on-road cycle routes this will be twice annually and for off-road routes it will be annually (to be consistent with KCC's Draft Maintenance Plan, currently the subject of consultation).

5 - Hazardous defects that could lead to an accident occurring will be repaired within 3 days (to be consistent with KCC's Draft Maintenance Plan, currently the subject of consultancy).

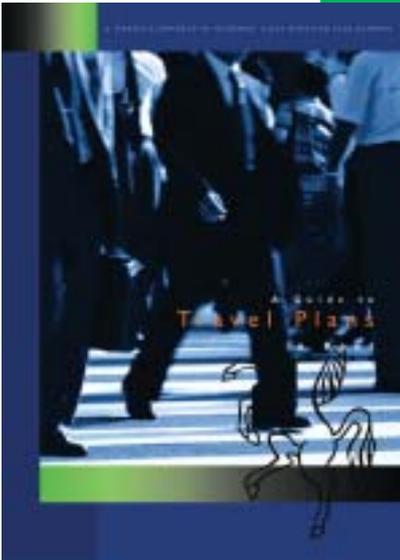
6 - To remove vegetation that obstructs free passage or adequate sightlines on cycle paths at least twice annually, or more often in response to complaints.





2.3 Cycle parking

Adequate storage space in people's homes and cycle parking at all destinations are important components of the Cycling Plan. The County Council's parking standards now require cycle parking for all categories of new development. However, there is a need to enhance storage and parking at existing homes, shops, workplaces and other buildings. To this end:



Policies

- 8** – The County Council's cycle parking standards will be included in the Isle of Thanet Local Plan.
- 9** – The provision of secure cycle parking for new residential developments will be encouraged.
- 10** – A programme of secure cycle parking provision at each of Thanet's seven railway stations will be pursued.
- 11** – The programme of cycle parking provision in shopping areas will be continued.
- 12** – A programme of provision of cycle parking at other destinations will be pursued.
- 13** – We will investigate the provision of cycle parking at selected bus stops, to extend the catchment area of bus routes.
- 14** – Employers will be encouraged to adopt company travel plans incorporating features such as improved cycle parking, cycle allowances, showers and changing facilities.
- 15** – We will co-ordinate a Company Travel Plan Working Group to offer advice and information and help to identify demand for additional cycling facilities.
- 16** – We will work with schools to facilitate and encourage the adoption of School Travel Plans which encourage and aid walking and cycling (in combination with public transport use, where necessary) as a means to improve the safety, level of health and independent mobility of school children, and to reduce congestion and traffic danger around schools

Targets

- 7** – Thanet District Council will adopt a workplace travel plan for its employees, which will include encouragement of cycling as a preferred transport mode, by 2004.
- 8** – Three further major employers to have workplace travel plans in place by 2005, all by 2008.
- 9** – Three schools to have school travel plans in place by 2004, 50% by 2008, all by 2011.





2.4 Integration with public transport

The authorities are working closely with local public transport operators to consider the various options to improve facilities for cyclists at public transport interchanges throughout Thanet. This work includes a review of signing, access arrangements and cycle parking facilities at all public transport interchanges. In addition the issue of the transport of cycles on trains, ferries and buses is being discussed. Improved facilities would provide increasing opportunities for combined cycle and public transport journeys, therefore facilitating cycle use as part of longer journeys.

Policies

17 - The authorities will work with public transport operators and other agencies to seek full integration of cycling with public transport to facilitate cycle use as part of longer journeys (see also Policy 13).

2.5 Promotion

Increasing public knowledge of the health, financial and environmental benefits of cycling and of its role in the overall transport strategy will play an important part in the Cycling Plan.

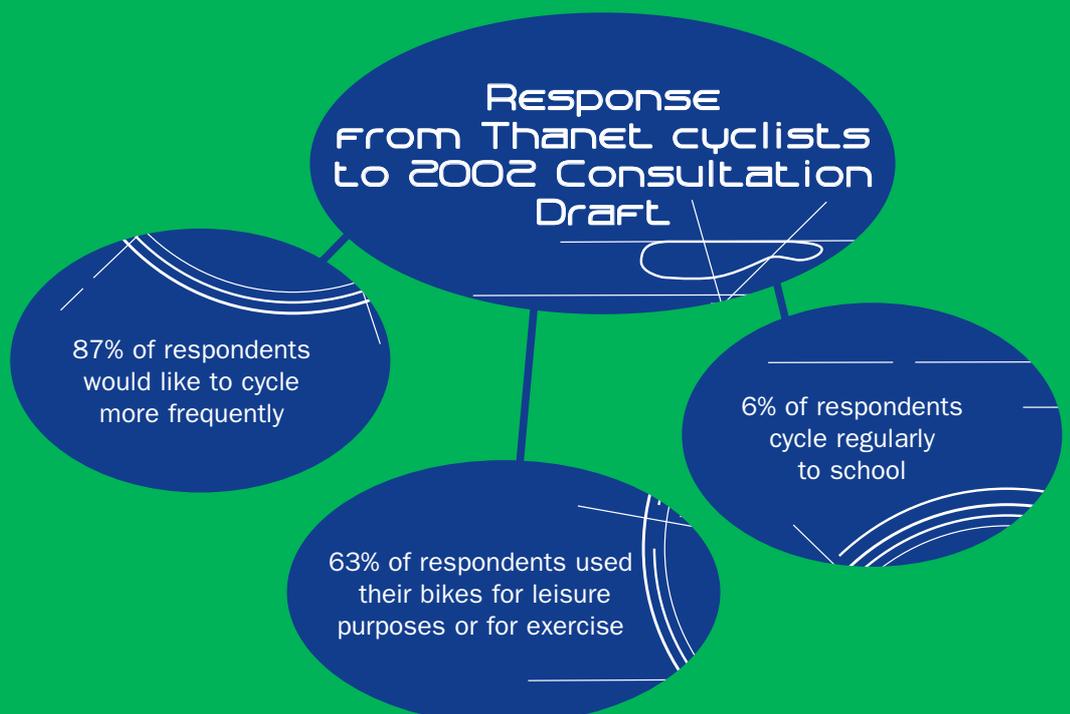
Policies

18 - The implementation of new cycling initiatives will be supported with a programme of complementary publicity of the cycle network and other facilities

19 - Other publicity will comprise two strands:

a) Targeted publicity aimed at groups of people who are most likely to take up cycling, for example cycling messages at recycling banks designed to encourage 'green minded' individuals who would be hard to reach by targeted campaigns at large organisations.

b) General publicity aimed at raising awareness, status and acceptance of cycling by the wider population as part of more sustainable lifestyles.





Policies

20 – We will lead by example by introducing cycle use into local authority activities, for example beach wardens travelling by cycle, cycle path inspection by cycle, officers and members travelling by cycle to meetings with partner organisations and the wider public.

21 – We will encourage other influential organisations - particularly the Police - to make high profile use of cycles

Leisure cycling can provide a positive introduction to cycling for individuals who are deterred from utility cycling in the District. Novice cyclists can gain positive experiences of the health benefits, fun and freedom of cycling while gaining in confidence and bike handling skills. The authorities recognise that recreational cycling is the first step for some individuals towards cycling as a means of transport.

Policies

22 – We will encourage leisure cycling initiatives as a means to reduce traffic-related impacts and as a catalyst to increasing cycling for utility journeys.

23 – We will work with the East Kent Coastal Primary Care Trust and others as appropriate to promote cycling as a means of improving the health and fitness of the community.

Targets

10 – To initiate a series of bike rides, for those who want to gain confidence and improve their health, by Summer 2005.

2.6 Education and training

The County Council runs various campaigns and training schemes aimed at cyclists. It will continue to produce promotional information and training on cycle safety and safer cycling skills, cycling and the law, and safety equipment.

Policies

24 – To make the basic cycle training available to all 10 to 11 year olds.

25 – To develop advanced on-road cycle training for 12 to 13 year olds to be available when requested by schools.

26 – To provide, in partnership with local cycling organisations and employers, on-road cycle training for adults who are starting or returning to cycling.

27 – To support national and local publicity campaigns aimed at educating cyclists about responsible behaviour and other network users about considerate driving/use of the network.





2.7 Dialogue and consultation

Dialogue with cyclists and other road users will be very important in developing the Cycling Plan. Over recent years, the District and County Councils have developed a positive relationship with the Thanet Cycling Forum and Spokes (East Kent Cycling Campaign). We intend to build on this relationship. In addition we want to expand consultation with ordinary cyclists and other members of the public. As a first step we propose to explore the reasons why people do not cycle more and what they see as the best ways to encourage cycling.

Policies

28 - We will continue a regular programme of meetings with local cyclists and cycling organisations.

29 - We will consult with cyclists on traffic calming and traffic management proposals as well as schemes with cycle-specific facilities. We will ensure that consultation is undertaken early enough to influence the scheme designs.

30 - To co-ordinate with other agencies on any initiatives which could be used to promote cycling, in particular health, education and environmental initiatives

31 - We will liaise with Canterbury City Council and Dover District Council to ensure consistency of planning control and co-ordination of cross-border cycling infrastructure and other initiatives.

2.8 Monitoring

It is important to be able to monitor the effects of introducing policy and implementing schemes in order to assess progress towards achievement of the Cycling Plan's objectives. This will involve regular monitoring of cycle traffic flows the observed behaviour of cyclists, and reported crashes involving cyclists, and monitoring of complaints about perceived traffic danger.

Policies

32 - We will undertake comprehensive monitoring of cycle use, crashes involving cyclists and the uptake of cycle training and workplace and school travel plans to measure progress towards the Plan's targets.

33 - We will ensure that cycle infrastructure developments are based on regular monitoring of cycle traffic flows, the observed behaviour of cyclists, reported crashes involving cyclists, and areas where there is a perception of high traffic danger.

3

What you can do now...

- The first and best thing is look carefully at your own car use (if you have one). A large proportion of car trips in Thanet is for very short distances. Think about the effects of each trip and consider the alternatives.
- If you feel you must use a car make sure you drive and park responsibly.
- Think about joining a group to ensure that your views about the promotion of cycling are heard.
- Encourage a change in attitude of friends and family. Contact the groups at the end of this document for more information.
- Report problems to the Council. It simply isn't possible for Council Officers to keep a constant watch on the whole District network. Use the contact list at the end of this document to report anything that is causing problems for cyclists.
- Encourage your child's school to become involved with the School Travel Plan and Safer Routes to School initiatives. This could involve co-ordinating car sharing between parents, encouraging parents not to drive to school, or park outside, arranging for a rota of parents to walk groups of children to and from school (a walking bus), identifying popular routes to school and traffic measures which could make walking or cycling easier and safer, cycle training for children at school, etc.
- Suggest new routes for commuter and/or leisure cycling
- Don't cycle on the pavement, except where it is a signed dedicated shared use footway/cycleway.

THANET CYCLING FORUM

Promoting Cycling in Thanet

Linking all cyclists, cycle groups, Thanet District Council, Kent County Council and Kent Police with the community

All correspondence to:

Hamish White
Thanet District Council
PO Box 9
Cecil Street
Margate
Kent CT9 1XZ
01843 577037



Local Contacts:

Thanet Cycling Forum

Tel: 01843 577037 / 01843 295811

Cyclists Touring Club Right to Ride Representative

Tel: 01843 295811 / 01843 845052

Spokes East Kent Cycle Campaign

Tel: 01227 457009

Cyclist Training - Kent County Council

Tel: 01227 825368

Cycle Route Maintenance - Thanet Highway Unit

Tel: 01843 577577

Police Crime Prevention Unit

Tel: 01843 225566

Thanet District Council

Web Site: www.thanet.gov.uk

Kent County Council Web Site

Web Site: www.kent.gov.uk/sp/cycling/intro.html

Viking Coastal Trail Web Site

Web Site: www.vikingcoastaltrail.co.uk



National Contacts:

Sustrans, 35 King Street, Bristol, BS1 4DZ

Tel: 0117 929 0888

Web Site: www.sustrans.org.uk

Transport 2000, The Impact Centre, 12-18 Hoxton Street, London N1 6NG

Tel: 020 7613 0743 Fax: 020 7613 5280

Web Site: www.transport2000.org.uk

Cyclists Touring Club, Cotterill House, 69 Meadrow, Goldalming, Surrey, GU7 3HS

Tel: 01483 417217 Fax: 01483 426994

Web Site: www.ctc.org.uk

National Rail Enquiries

Tel: 08457 484950

Web Site: www.nationalrail.co.uk

**If you have any comments on this document
please email them to:**

cyclingplan@thanet.gov.uk

or contact:

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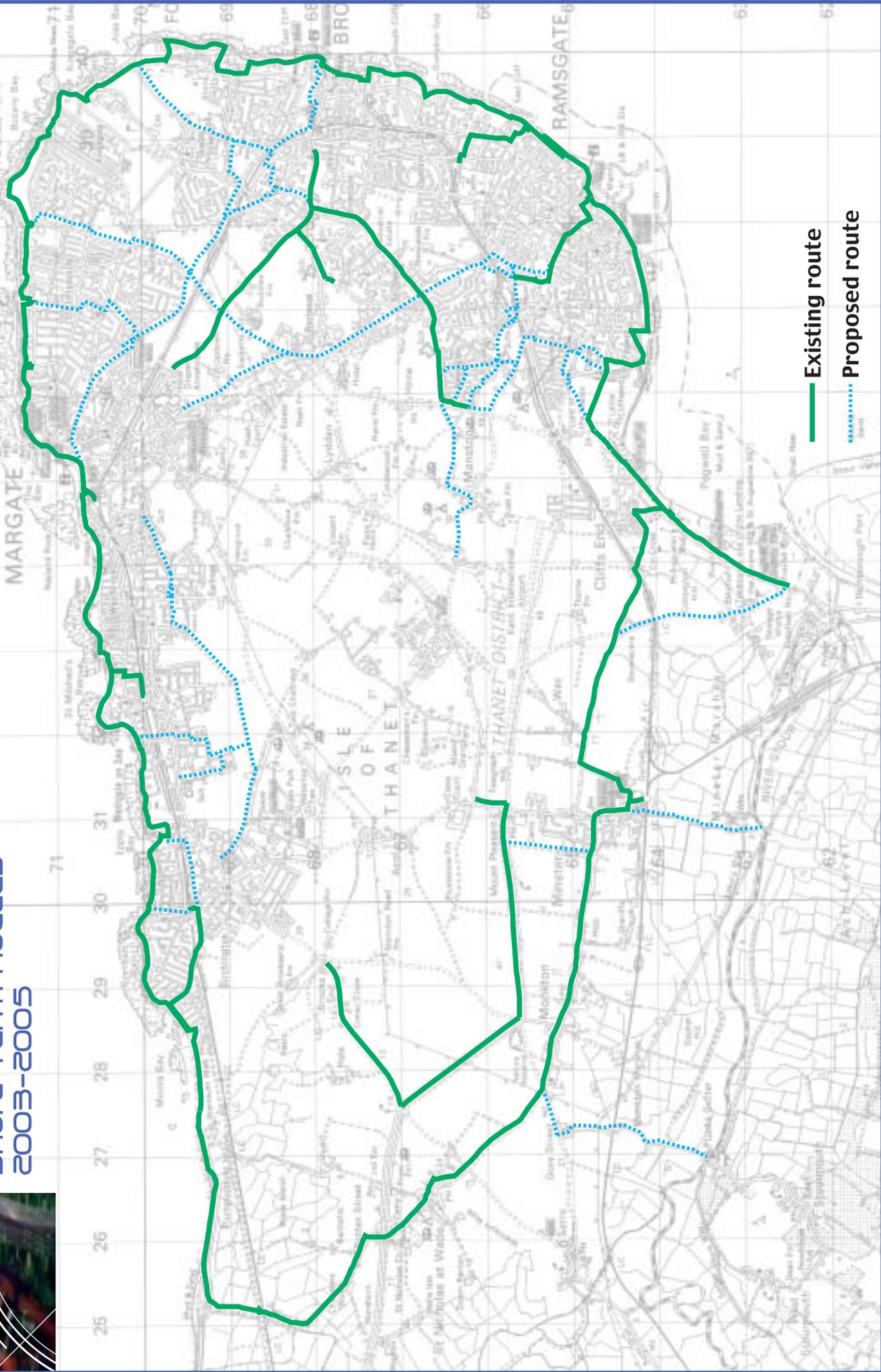
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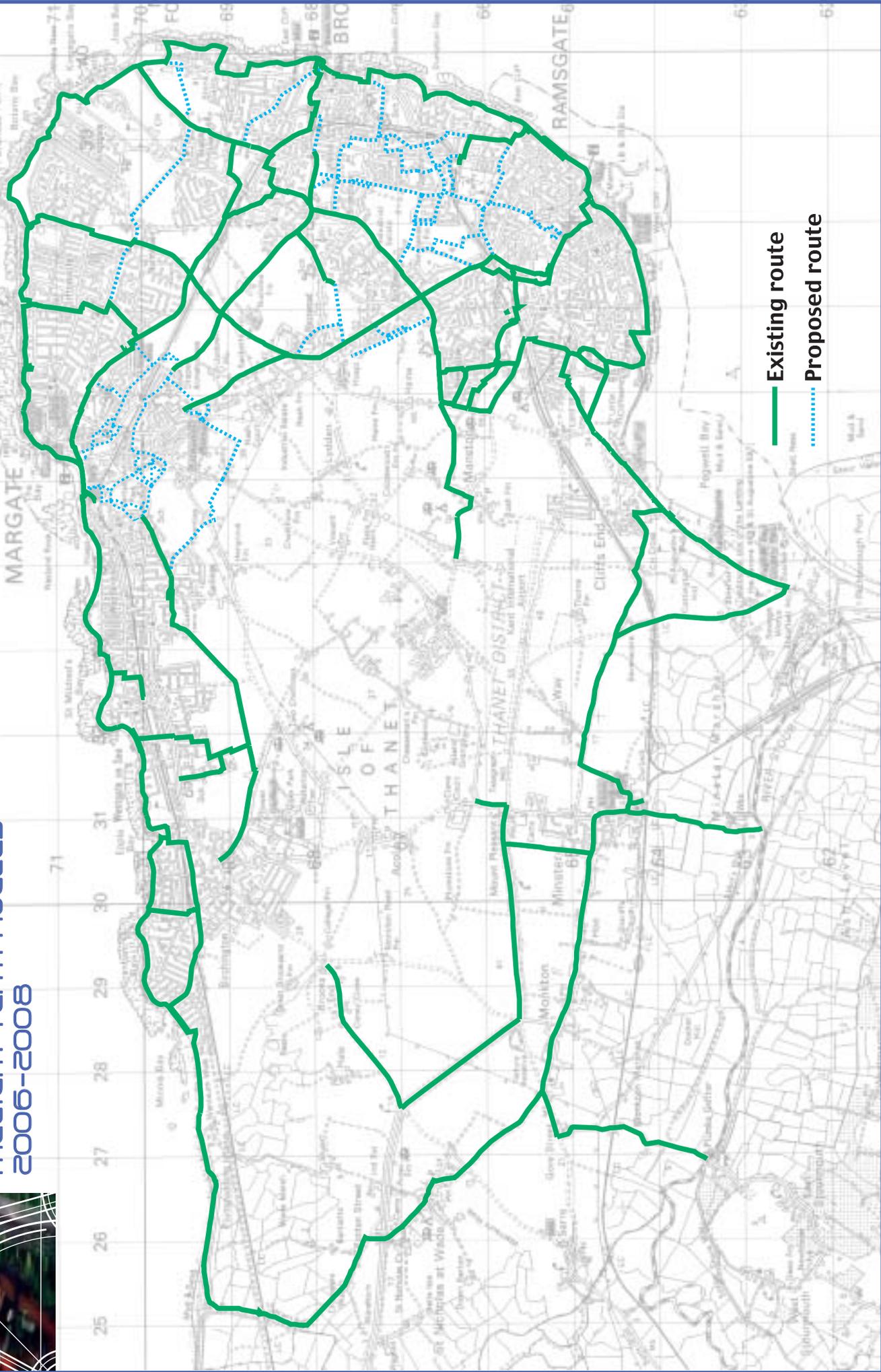
Tel: 01227 825362 Fax: 01227 464765

Short Term Routes 2003-2005

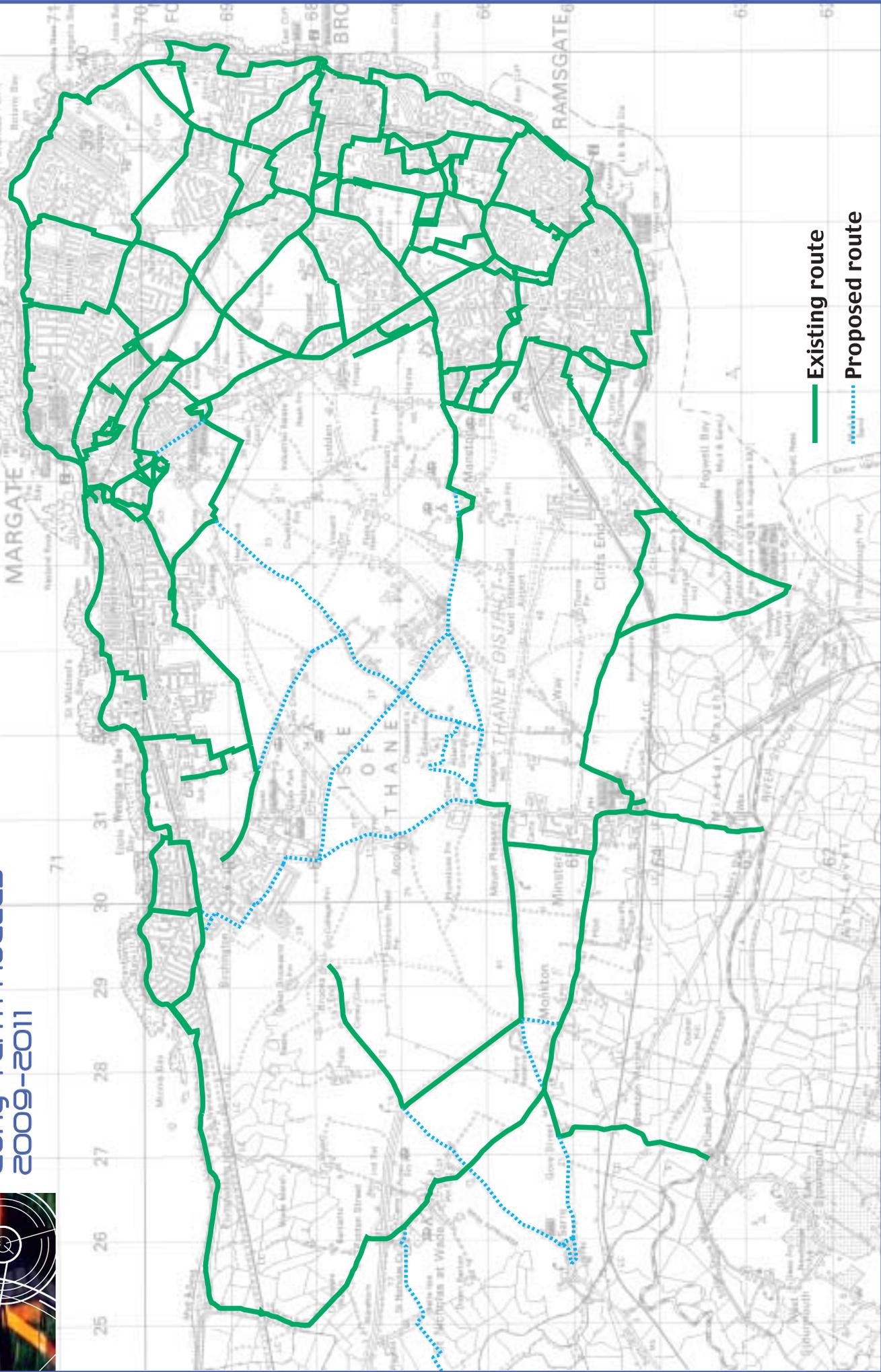


— Existing route
..... Proposed route

Medium Term Routes 2006-2008



Long Term Routes 2009-2011





If you have any comments on this document please email them to:

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