

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2030

**This Local Transport Plan has been prepared in a challenging time. It is likely that public funds for transport improvement will be severely limited in the first few years of the Plan and that progress toward meeting the transport challenges will be similarly slow.**

However, by putting forward this long term vision of where we want to be we believe that we will be able to make best use of whatever funding is made available as well as being in a good position to make progress swiftly when funding does become available in the future.

*Oxfordshire 2030*, the county's Sustainable Community Strategy, sets out a long term vision for Oxfordshire: *"By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can reach their potential, contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities."* The strategy's ambitions are to:

- \* Create a **world class economy** for Oxfordshire, building particularly on the high-technology sector;
- \* Have **healthy and thriving communities** which sustain what is good about the county's city, towns and villages but also respond to the needs and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- \* Look after the county's **environment** and respond to the threat of **climate change** and the potential for more extreme weather conditions, particularly the threat of flooding;
- \* **Break the cycle of deprivation** by addressing the regeneration needs of disadvantaged communities, reducing the gap between the best and worst off, and supporting people to maximise their talents and raise their aspirations.

Transport is important for each of the county's ambitions: congestion can act against economic prosperity; air quality and road safety impact on local communities; traffic is a major local source of greenhouse gases; lack of access to education, jobs and other services can re-enforce local deprivation.

These ambitions are set against a challenging background. While Oxfordshire is relatively prosperous and unemployment generally low global economic conditions and increasing competition will make it harder to secure a world class economy in the future. While the county is generally healthier than elsewhere in the country and levels of crime generally lower the profile of the county is changing and becoming more diverse. While the county enjoys an exceptional environment it will need to accommodate an expanding and aging population while responding to the global challenges of climate change. While enjoying low levels of social exclusion compared to the country as a whole, stubborn inequalities remain within particular groups of people and in specific locations.

Situated in the heart of England, Oxfordshire enjoys a thriving economy and a high quality environment. Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the south east with over two thirds of its area devoted to agriculture. Almost three quarters of the county remains designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Area of High Landscape Value or Green Belt.

Most of Oxfordshire is a city region with work, shopping and other activities centred in the county and university town of Oxford. The county is dominated by the Oxford travel to work area with about a third of all the jobs in the county are located in the city. Around half of all the people working in Oxford commute in from outside of the city. Oxfordshire has a higher than average proportion of the population of working age and the income per head is above the average for the UK and the south east.

In 2006, the population of the county was estimated at 605,500; only three settlements had a population of more than 30,000 (Oxford, Banbury and Abingdon) with a further seven having a population between 10,000 and

30,000 (Bicester, Carterton, Didcot, Henley, Kidlington, Thame and Witney). Together, these account for just over half of the county's total population. Over 2,750 homes per year are proposed to be built, on average, up to 2026: during this period the county's population is forecast to grow by over 12%; the number of people over 75 is projected to grow by 60%.

This Local Transport Plan needs to play a major role to play in meeting these overall ambitions. To do this we have developed a set of 9 objectives for transport to 2030:

- \* To improve the **condition of local roads, footways and cycleways**, including resilience to climate change;
- \* To reduce **congestion**;
- \* To reduce **casualties and the dangers associated with travel**;
- \* To improve **accessibility to work, education and services**;
- \* To secure **infrastructure and services to support development**;
- \* To reduce **carbon emissions** from transport;
- \* To improve **air quality**, reduce **other environmental impacts** and enhance **the street environment**;
- \* To develop and increase the use of high quality, welcoming **public transport**;
- \* To develop and increase **cycling and walking** for local journeys, recreation and health.

The Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP) sets out a shared vision and priorities for delivering housing growth, economic development, regeneration, and infrastructure. The LIP focuses mainly on our five-year county-wide development programme to meet our strategic objectives. All the schemes outlined in the LIP are priorities for Oxfordshire, given the pressing need for more homes and for the transport, employment, education and other infrastructure they will require. **It is recognised that in the short term there is likely to be very limited public funding available to make progress on these schemes and strategies.** It will be critical to examine the potential for other funding sources and new opportunities, such as the emerging Local

Enterprise Partnership, to maximise the chances of delivery.

Of the infrastructure schemes the following strategic transport schemes were identified as being necessary to support development in the short term (*in alphabetical order*):

- \* Banbury - north-south priority vehicular corridor
- \* Bicester - Park & Ride facility
- \* Bicester - M40 Junction 9 improvements
- \* Bicester - South West Perimeter Road
- \* Bicester - Sustainable transport improvements
- \* Didcot - Northern Perimeter Road Phase 3
- \* Didcot - Cow Lane Underpass
- \* Didcot - Didcot Parkway station interchange
- \* Didcot - Didcot Parkway (Foxhall car park pedestrian improvements)
- \* Didcot/Harwell/Wantage/Grove - Accessing Science Vale UK transport package
- \* Oxford - Thornhill Park and Ride
- \* Oxford - Access to Oxford Improvements
- \* Wantage/Grove - Grove & Wantage Railway Station
- \* Witney - Cogges Link Road and town centre enhancement
- \* Witney - Downs Road A40 Junction
- \* Cotswold Line redoubling
- \* Chiltern Railways Evergreen 3 Project
- \* East-West Rail (western section)
- \* Transport schemes 2011-2030 identified through LTP3 process

The LTP consultation process will help confirm whether these schemes remain as a priority and are taken forward for more detailed justification and prioritisation. The LTP's Implementation Plan outlines local strategies for the major towns and rural areas of Oxfordshire from which individual schemes to supplement these strategic infrastructure needs will be developed. Schemes identified in these local strategies, or put forward as a result of the consultation on the LTP, will be prioritised on a value for money basis and implemented as and when funding becomes available.

October 2010