# oxfordshire
# local transport plan
# 2011 - 2030

# draft for consultation
# october 2010

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL
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Working for you

# Transport in Oxfordshire

**Our goals for transport are:**

* **To support the local economy and the growth and competitiveness of the county**

* **To make it easier to get around the county and improve access to jobs and services for all by offering real choice**

* **To reduce the impact of transport on the environment and help tackle climate change**

* **To promote healthy, safe and sustainable travel**

This Local Transport Plan has been prepared in a very challenging time.  It is likely that there will be very limited funding available for transport improvements in the first few years of the Plan; it is even possible that there will be no public funding available.   The timescale covered by this Plan has allowed us to set out our aspirations for transport while keeping in mind the current economic situation.  It is likely, though, that progress towards these aspirations will be slight in the short term.

With the overall level of funding being scarce our priority must be to protect the existing road network from deterioration before seeking to make improvements.  This will reduce the long term resources needed for the network because deferring maintenance inevitably leads to greater costs in the future.  However, we will take opportunities for delivering new transport schemes or Improvements should they arise, such as through funding associated with new development.

Our goals for transport aim to make Oxfordshire attractive for existing residents and businesses as well as for new development.  This can only be achieved through close working between all those interested in the future of the county.  We will need to work with local communities and businesses to find realistic solutions to help respond to the transport impacts of their activities.

Our general policies for transport in Oxfordshire are as

follows:

**Policy G1**    **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to implement this Local Transport Plan as and when funding becomes available, including seeking opportunities for funding from local communities and other external sources.**

**Policy G2**    **Oxfordshire County Council will give a higher priority to expenditure on maintaining existing transport assets than to improvements to the network.**

**Policy G3**    **Oxfordshire County Council will work to ensure that the transport network can meet the requirements of the county's world class economy, whilst protecting the environment and the amenity of Oxfordshire residents.**

**Policy G4**    **Oxfordshire County Council will seek, as a priority, external funding to deliver:**

* **improvements to the transport network to develop access to Oxford from other towns and regions; and**

* **transport improvements within the Science Vale UK area (Didcot - Harwell - Wantage/Grove)**

**Policy G5**    **Oxfordshire County Council will support sustainable, healthy and inclusive modes of travel.**

**Policy G6**    **Oxfordshire County Council will take into account the location, best use of space and the potential need to prioritise particular movements or users when designing schemes.**

**Policy G7**    **Oxfordshire County Council will consult from an early stage in the development of schemes and initiatives so that the needs of all groups, including disabled people, are considered and where appropriate, acted upon.**

# Highway Maintenance

> ## Objective 1
> **Improve the condition of local roads, footways and cycleways, including resilience to climate change**

Our core priority for highway maintenance is to deliver a safe, serviceable and sustainable network, taking into account the need to contribute to the wider objectives of asset management, integrated transport, corporate policy and continuous improvement.  Maintaining our assets will be our priority, at least for the first few years of the Plan.

**Policy HM1**    **Oxfordshire County Council will use a whole life approach for determining and delivering its highway maintenance programme.**

**Policy HM2**    **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to develop a programme of community-led, low-cost highway maintenance schemes.**

**Policy HM3**    **Oxfordshire County Council will use best practice in developing sustainable drainage systems for roads and other transport assets.**

Our Strategy for highway maintenance will include:

* Maintaining roads to minimise long-term costs
* Setting service standards related to the importance of routes in the county's road hierarchy
* The development of networks that are resilient to the impact of climate change

The range of maintenance activities that will be covered by these policies will include:

* Carriageway structural maintenance and reconstruction
* Footway schemes
* Surface Dressing Treatments
* General structural maintenance and smaller schemes
* Bridge maintenance
* Routine operations (including gully emptying, verge clearance etc)

* Village maintenance

* Road markings and signs

* Seaonal maintenance

* Electrical maintenance

* Drainage Improvements

Hotter, drier summers are likely to lead to heat damage of road surfaces (melting roads) and cracking due to shrinking subsoil.  They can also increase flood risk because dry, hard packed soil is less able to absorb water when higher intensity rainfall occurs. Milder wetter winters will further add to the flooding risk. Unfortunately, milder winters are unlikely to result in lower winter maintenance costs (salt gritting) since milder winters will only lead to marginally fewer freezing nights.

Measures to mitigate the effects of severe weather events can include the specification of more resilient assets and materials, or higher capacity drainage solutions where they are likely to be more susceptible to the effects of extreme weather events or climate change.
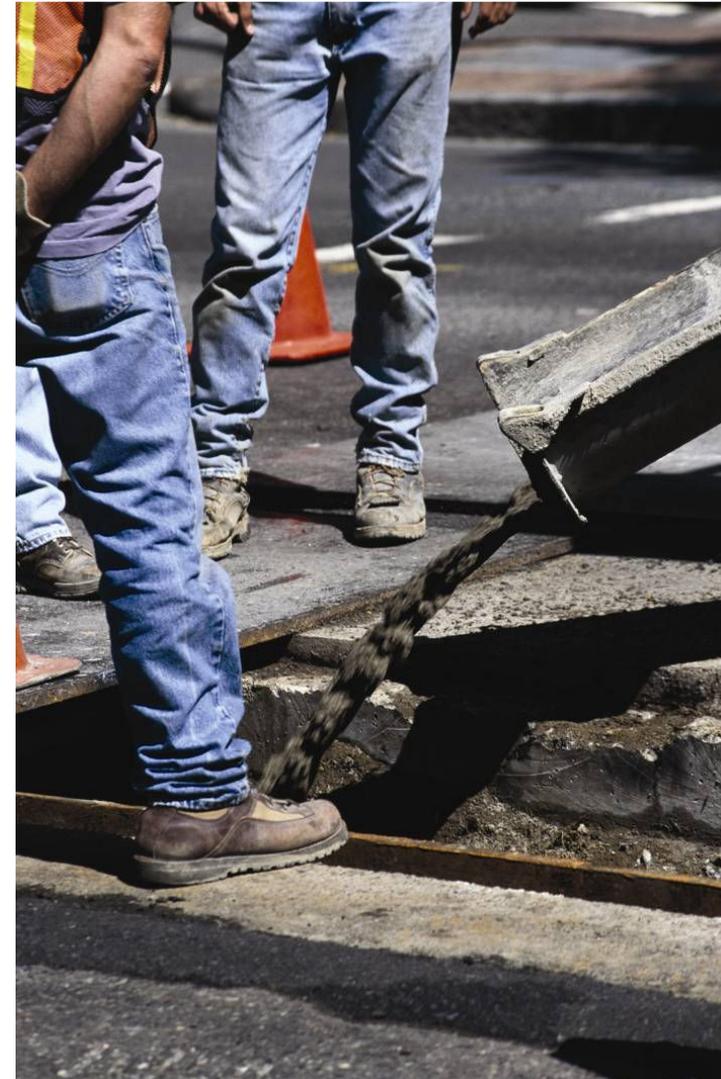
# Tackling Congestion

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**Objective 2**

**Reduce congestion**

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Our central concern is to increase the efficiency of the county's transport system by reducing congestion to improve the economy and relieve environmental problems.

**Policy TC1**     **Oxfordshire County Council will manage, and where appropriate improve, the county's transport system effectively to reduce congestion and minimise disruption and delays to the travelling public.**

**Policy TC2**     **Oxfordshire County Council will work with major traffic generators to promote sustainable travel for journeys to employment, health, shopping and education in order to reduce congestion.**

**Policy TC3**     **Oxfordshire County Council will ensure that travel information is timely, accurate and easily accessible in a range of appropriate formats.**

**Policy TC4**     **Oxfordshire County Council will manage the parking under its control to reduce congestion.**

**Policy TC5**     **Oxfordshire County Council will identify suitable and unsuitable routes for freight movement, balancing the needs of businesses with protection of the local environment and maintaining the highway network.**

Congestion occurs when the demands placed on a part of the transport network exceeds the capacity of the network to deal with it effectively.  We will be seeking to make the most efficient use of current road space through ensuring that roads and junctions are operating as efficiently and effectively as

possible and will be tackling congestion by seeking to implement a range of measures, including:

* Co-ordinated network management

* Better information to travellers

* Incident management and co-ordination of roadworks and events

* Targeted network improvements

* Coherent parking policies

* Clear routes for freight traffic

* Traffic reduction



In developing schemes to reduce congestion then the range of possible solutions will be looked at in the priority order listed below:

1st.  Encourage walking, cycling and public transport use
2nd.  Manage the network more effectively
3rd.  Capacity improvements at junctions
4th.  Road widening
5th.  New link roads or bypasses

We are building on our relationships with both the Highways Agency and the freight industry to assist us in agreeing suitable freight and diversion routes to help remove lorry trips from unsuitable rural roads and villages.

As well as the measures to increase the effective capacity of the network, congestion can also be dealt with by moves to reduce the demand that is placed upon it.  Traffic reduction measures could be:

* improving facilities for or encouraging the use of alternative modes that place fewer demands on the road network

* looking to see if work can be done without needing to travel

* encouraging car sharing

# Road Safety

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### Objective 3
### Reduce casualties and the dangers associated with travel

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Road safety continues to be a core priority both nationally and locally reflecting the very high human and others costs of road accidents, valued at over £200 million per year in Oxfordshire.

**Policy RS1**      **Oxfordshire County Council will develop a programme of education and engineering measures to reduce the number of road accident casualties, focusing on high risk groups and responsible use of the highway.**

**Policy RS2**      **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to reduce the casualty rate of motorcyclists by working closely with interested groups to encourage more responsible motorcycling.**

We have made significant improvements in road safety on Oxfordshire's roads in recent years.  Over a thousand fewer casualties were reported in 2009 than had been the case 10 years previously while child casualties have more than halved in this time.  Maintaining this improvement will be a major challenge for this Local Transport Plan.



Drivers comprise the largest category of road-user casualties. The long term trend has stabilised to some extent, in part due to a recent decrease in the number of casualties from the

highest risk age group (17 to 24 year olds).  In recent years there has been very little change in the number of older car drivers involved in accidents, even though there are more (and older) senior-citizen drivers.

Over the long-term both adult and child pedestrian casualties have decreased.  Cyclist injuries are also decreasing, mainly due to the reduction of close to 60 percent in child cyclist injuries since 1999.

Concerns over poor road safety have a major adverse impact on the quality of life and feature highly in the list of community safety concerns in the rural areas in the county.

Our strategy for reducing road accident casualties will include:

* Understanding road safety problems

* Making travel safer for children

* Tackling high risk behaviour and actions

* Developing a safer road environment

* Promoting safer speeds

Education and training initiatives, particularly working with

target groups, are likely to play an increasing role in our activities to improve road safety in the future. Motorcyclists are disproportionately vulnerable to being injured with riders of large motorcycles in particular having a high average injury severity.  Reducing motorcycle casualties has proved challenging.

Tackling motorcycle casualties can be difficult - motorcyclists are more vulnerable to surface defects such as potholes and other surface irregularities.  We have developed a county motorcycle strategy to address issues of information and communication, safety awareness and education, road conditions and facilities, and policy and planning.

# Improving Accessibility

> **Objective 4**
>
> **Improve accessibility to work, education and services**

Our central concern for accessibility is to allow people to access the services they need; this will bring benefits both in terms of reducing social exclusion and developing the county's economy.

**Policy AX1**    Oxfordshire County Council will publish and keep up-to-date a separate Bus Services Funding Strategy, and develop and manage the Concessionary Fares scheme in Oxfordshire.

**Policy AX2**    Oxfordshire County Council will work with partners and particular sections of the community to identify how access by public transport to employment and services, particularly healthcare and education, can be improved.

**Policy AX3**    Oxfordshire County Council will support the use of community transport and dial-a-ride services and encourage the use of taxis and private hire vehicles to meet local transport and accessibility needs, including those of disabled people.

**Policy AX4**    Oxfordshire County Council will continue to allow the use of bus lanes by taxis and private hire vehicles.

**Policy AX5**    Oxfordshire County Council will manage the parking under its control to take into account the specific accessibility needs of the local area, including those of disabled people.

**Policy AX6**    Oxfordshire County Council will

**encourage the growing and inclusive use of the county's waterways, and support appropriate opportunities for developing transport on the waterways network.**

A consistent policy of promoting public transport over the past 40 years has created a culture of bus use in Oxfordshire which is second to none among English shire counties. Continuing promotion of bus use will be essential to meet the council's objectives over the next two decades.



The amount of support for non-commercial services is limited by the funding that is available to us.  In the short term we will

be looking to see how the funding available can be used most effectively to provide for people's minimum access requirements within very tight financial limits.  This will require some difficult and fundamental questions to be asked about how public transport services are to be delivered in the future.

As the population of Oxfordshire ages, so the proportion of people with some kind of disability is also projected to increase.  The move towards enabling more disabled and older people to live independently rather than in residential care homes will also strengthen the case for ensuring an inclusive transport system.  We will follow two important principles on all schemes:  that consultation with disabled people and their representatives should take place at the earliest; and that we should secure high level disability awareness training for all appropriate staff.

The direct use of waterways for mainstream transport activities is, and is likely to remain, limited.  However, the towpaths which run alongside the waterways can play an important role in the overall rights of way network for the area and can act as attractive alternative for motorised travel.

# Supporting Development

> **Objective 5**
>
> **Secure infrastructure and services to support development**

Our core priority is to ensure that a strategic, countywide approach is taken to planning new developments and the infrastructure required to support them.  This is so that new developments contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of the county without creating environmental.

**Policy SD1**  **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to ensure that the location and layout of new developments minimise the need for travel and can be served by high quality public transport, cycling and walking facilities.**

**Policy SD2**  **Oxfordshire County Council will resist development in unsustainable locations.**

**Policy SD3**  **Oxfordshire County Council will oppose any**

**new development where there is insufficient capacity on the transport network available to accommodate its impact and where arrangements for releasing additional capacity have not been agreed with the developer.**

**Policy SD4**  **Oxfordshire County Council will promote sustainable travel modes for all journeys associated with new developments, but particularly those to work and education.**

**Policy SD5**  **Oxfordshire County Council will:**

i.  **secure contributions from new developments towards improvements for all modes of transport, including public rights of way;**

ii.  **ensure that all infrastructure associated with the developments is provided to appropriate design standards; and**

**iii. normally seek commuted sums towards the long term operation and maintenance of facilities and services.**

**Policy SD6  Oxfordshire County Council will support the development of air travel services and facilities which contribute to the economic development of the county unless they have unacceptable transport or environmental impacts or discourage making the best use of existing capacity.**

The development of new housing and employment across the county is likely to have a major impact on travel patterns, both locally and countywide.  Effective development control carried out at district and county council level will be essential to ensure that these developments do not cause problems for the local economy and transport networks.  This will entail decisions on development location, layout, connections from new development areas into the existing transport systems and integrating the transport networks for both existing and new parts of the settlements.

Through the planning and development control processes we will seek to ensure that:

* developments are located to minimise overall travel;

* developments provide highway works to mitigate their impact;

* appropriate contributions are secured from all developments for the management or improvement of transport networks and service provision, including rights of way;

* designs encourage and support the increased use of sustainable means of transport; and

* the impacts of developments do not impose unmet ongoing maintenance revenue costs.

# Carbon Reduction

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### Objective 6
### Reduce carbon emissions from transport

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Our central concern for carbon reduction is principally focused on encouraging trips to either not be made, or to be made by less carbon intensive transport modes.

**Policy CBR1**     **Oxfordshire County Council will work with local communities and employers to promote sustainable travel for journeys to work, education, health and other facilities.**

**Policy CBR2**     **Oxfordshire County Council will support the use of low carbon forms of transport and associated infrastructure.**

**Policy CBR3**     **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to reduce the carbon footprint of its**

**operation of the transport network.**

Our strategy for carbon reduction includes:

* The continued promotion and development of travel planning

* Promotion of modal switch by encouraging low and non-carbon generating travel

* Support or encourage low and zero carbon vehicles

Travel planning is a process where, by a combination of education, promotion, physical measures and incentives, people are encouraged to change their travel habits to ones which cause fewer environmental problems. It has been a component of our transport planning approach for many years.  In addition to meeting the statutory requirement for travel plans to be prepared for new housing and commercial developments, the focus in the past has been in developing School Travel Plans in response to the national Travel to School Initiative.  In this Plan it will be important to use these techniques more widely - this will include working to develop plans at workplaces, in local areas or with individuals.

Walking and cycling are virtually carbon-free forms of transport and encouraging these trips will contribute to reducing the carbon emissions from transport in Oxfordshire. Public transport is also usually less carbon intensive than private vehicle travel, particularly when dealing with large flows along particular corridors.

Electric vehicles have an advantage in that they are effectively zero emission at point of use, meaning that they can bring

local air quality as well as carbon reduction benefits.  As opportunities arise we will work with our partners to identify suitable locations for public charging points.

There are a number of other ways to reduce carbon emissions from travel:

* Telecommuting - where people work at home instead of commuting, can reduce overall mileage.
* Car clubs - these have been shown to reduce members' annual mileage by over 2,000 miles per year in some studies.
* Car sharing - schemes to encourage car sharing will reduce trips - there is some evidence that each active member of a car sharing scheme reduces their overall personal mileage by more than 2,500 miles a year.

# Reducing Environmental Impact

> **Objective 7**
> **Improve air quality, reduce other environmental impacts and enhance the street environment**

Our core objective for the environment is to ensure that transport contributes to improvements in the attractiveness and environmental quality of the county and that this is taken into account in decisions on economic development of the county.

**Policy RE1**  **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to reduce the environmental impact of its operation of the transport network and promote the use of less environmentally damaging modes of transport.**

**Policy RE2**  **Oxfordshire County Council will ensure that the operation of the transport network balances the** protection of the local environment with efficient and effective access for people and freight.

**Policy RE3**  **Oxfordshire County Council will work with partners to improve the public realm and de-clutter the street environment.**

**Policy RE4**  **Oxfordshire County Council will take into account the needs of vulnerable users, including people with disabilities, in the design of public realm improvement schemes.**

Our strategy for meeting these objectives includes:

* Developing air quality action plans and low emission strategies, in conjunction with district councils, where air quality problems have been identified;
* Implementing strategies to deal with noise, vibration and other impacts;
* Working with industry and local communities to deal

with problems caused by inappropriate lorry traffic;

* Developing and implementing strategies to improve the public realm, especially in town centres;

* Developing and implementing strategies to deal with the impacts of transport on the environment, particularly on landscape and biodiversity.

Air quality problems are generally the result of a mix of factors including the level and mix of traffic, the layout of adjacent streets and the management of traffic. A tailored solution is required when air quality problems are identified.

Traffic noise is a complex mix of the number and mix of vehicles on the road, their speed, the nature of the road surface and other factors. Where traffic noise is deemed

excessive then action can be considered either to reduce the generation or to block its transmission. Traffic vibration is almost exclusively caused by heavy vehicles. Research indicates that vibrations from road traffic are unlikely to cause structural problems to any fairly robust building but may possibly exacerbate existing problems.

Light pollution from street lighting has become a major issue in recent years, particularly in rural areas. In response to this, and as a means of reducing the carbon footprint from the operation of our highways, we will investigate opportunities to remove or reduce existing lighting schemes, including limiting the hours when lighting is switched on.

A key challenge in all communities is how to deal with vehicle movement and how it impacts on other users of the public realm. There can be conflicts between providing the elements of a high quality street environment and public realm and providing car parking. While there is a great deal of potential for creating good quality street environments by removing parking, proposals such as this are often controversial with shopkeepers and local residents.

# Public Transport

> **Objective 8**
>
> **To develop and increase the use of high quality, welcoming public transport**

Our main ambition is to extend Oxfordshire's successful public transport model for journeys into the centre of Oxford to other parts of the county, including new developments, to provide more of the county with a real choice of attractive, frequent and welcoming public transport.

**Policy PT1**   **Oxfordshire County Council will define a three-tier hierarchy of services, consisting of:**

- *Premium Routes -* **operating at "turn up and go" frequencies;**
- *Hourly Plus -* **operating at frequencies of at least once an hour during weekdays; and**
- *Local -* **to hep meet local accessibility needs.**

**Policy PT2**   **Oxfordshire County Council will help create the conditions for welcoming, effective and successful commercial bus services by working with operators and other partners to:**

i. **improve the reliability of bus services and reduce journey times, especially on Premium Route services;**

ii. **produce up to date, comprehensive public transport information that is widely available in a range of appropriate formats;**

iii. **improve ticketing arrangements to make travel easier and reduce boarding times;**

iv. **encourage the use of buses that meet standards for low emissions, particularly those passing through designated Air Quality Management Areas or Low Emission Zones;**

v. **encourage social inclusion by ensuring that services use low floor buses, have drivers that are trained in customer care**

and disability awareness, and that wheelchair users have priority access to designated spaces on vehicles.

**Policy PT3**    **Oxfordshire County Council will support the development of appropriate inclusive public transport interchanges and infrastructure.**

**Policy PT4**    **Oxfordshire County Council will support proposals for strategic enhancement of the existing Oxfordshire rail network, and will work with the rail industry to facilitate these.**

**Policy PT5**    **Oxfordshire County Council will work with the rail industry and other partners to deliver new or improved stations, new rail services and greater integration of rail and buses.**

**Policy PT6**    **Oxfordshire County Council will only support the High Speed 2 rail proposals if the local economic benefits outweigh the environmental impact on the county.**

**Policy PT7**    **Oxfordshire County Council will support the development of Quality Bus Partnerships and Rail Partnerships, where appropriate.**

Our strategy for increasing public transport use includes:

* Providing infrastructure to allow attractive and reliable bus services, including park and ride, to run across the county;

* Working with bus companies to improve the experience of bus travel; and

* Encouraging the development of rail use.

We will help to achieve the commercial viability of bus services by:

* Tackling congestion and delay points along the major bus routes;

* Ensuring bus services come as close as possible to major destinations; and

* Providing good information on the services available and facilities at bus stops.

We are working with the two main operators to develop a Bus Qualifying Agreement for the specification and operation of bus services, focussing on the four main radial routes into Oxford city centre.  The aim of the Agreement is to bring bus user and environmental benefits by securing a service pattern which would include

* a substantial reduction in the number of buses

* the introduction of shared ticketing with smartcard ticketing technology

* the replacement of buses used on these services by new low emission vehicles
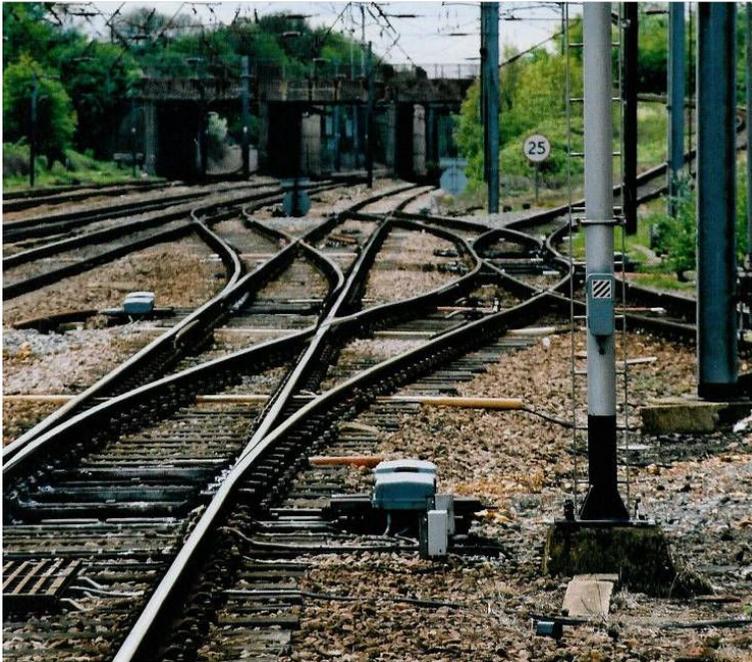
The qualifying agreement is expected to become finalised and operational in the autumn of 2010.

The provision of high-quality infrastructure is fundamentally important to the successful operation of bus and coach services in Oxfordshire.  Reliable and welcoming public transport services can only be operated through an arrangement where vehicles operate congestion-free and arrive at high-quality stops where users can wait in comfort knowing their service will arrive on time.

Our long term ambition at all Park & Ride sites is to have attractive terminal buildings with waiting and other facilities, high levels of security, easy access to the road network, and good design of walking routes from parking to bus stop areas.



A strategy of investment in a network of high-frequency, commercially self-sustaining bus routes, was adopted in 2003.   This work is mostly complete but significant new developments are planned in some parts of Oxfordshire, so a limited number of routes will require appropriate bus stop infrastructure, and eventual inclusion in the Premium Route bus network.

* Better access for disabled people;

* Improve and expand station car parking

* Station interchanges

Many of the actions which we are intending to carry out to meet other objectives could also help to promote greater use of the railways.  These include:

* Bus and train information

* Improved cycle access and parking

* Improved pedestrian access

* Developing rail station travel plans

* Through ticketing

* Marketing and promotion

We will need to be flexible in the future so that we can grasp opportunities for improving rail services as they arise in franchise agreements and rail-industry planning.  These will include, but not necessarily be limited to:

* Improving regional and inter-regional rail links;

* Supporting improved rail links to international gateways;

* New stations and services to serve growth areas, such as Science Vale UK;

# Cycling and Walking

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**Objective 9**
**Develop and increase cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health**

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Walking and cycling provide travel options that have the lowest carbon footprint, few adverse environmental impacts and contribute to improving health.  While not suitable for all journeys, our core objective is to create the conditions where a greater proportion of trips, especially in urban areas, are made on foot or by bicycle.

**Policy CW1**         **Oxfordshire County Council will seek to improve facilities for walking and cycling to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling.**

**Policy CW2**         **Oxfordshire County Council will work with interested groups and local communities to promote responsible cycling.**

**Policy CW3**         **Oxfordshire County Council will take into account the needs of all users, including people with disabilities, in the design of cycling or pedestrian facilities.**

**Policy CW4**         **Oxfordshire County Council will protect and maintain public rights of way and natural areas so that all users are able to understand and enjoy their rights in a responsible way.**

**Policy CW5**         **Oxfordshire County Council will seek opportunities for network improvements and initiatives to better meet the needs of walkers, cyclists and horse riders, including people with disabilities, for local journeys, recreation and health.**

To encourage more walking it is necessary to consider all aspects of the pedestrian environment, including the

pavement surface, amount and location of street furniture, pedestrian signing, and crossings of main and side roads.  We will also consider the following when developing schemes to encourage more walking:

* Improvements to walking facilities;

* Traffic calming measures;

* Pedestrianisation schemes; and

* Developing new pedestrian routes.

Our approach to develop cycle networks will include investigations of the following:

* Developing new cycle links and improving existing routes;

* Improving traffic management for cyclists, including providing for cyclists at traffic signals;

* Providing more and better quality cycle parking;

* Promoting cycling for shorter trips;

* Converting appropriate footpaths to bridleways;

* Linking new developments to existing destinations with signed high quality cycle routes; and

* Ensuring travel plans encourage more cycling.

A well-maintained and connected public rights of way and accessible green space network offers huge potential for residents and visitors to enjoy all of the county. There is a need to ensure that access to these routes and areas is maintained and that safe and attractive links are provided where rights of way have become severed or difficult to use because of traffic on major roads.

# Area Strategies

To put the policies into practice we have developed a series of Area Strategies for the county's largest settlements.  In addition we have developed strategies which cover the major corridors of movement in the county and the remaining, mostly rural, areas.  These make up the LTP Implementation Plan.

For each settlement a full version of the strategy has been produced and these replace or incorporate any previous transport strategy for the area.  It is intended that these will be living documents to be updated as more detailed information becomes available.  In particular, there are a number of issues where the strategy includes the investigation of possible schemes.  As this work is carried out then preferred schemes will be added into the strategy.

**The strategies are long term outlines for the development of transport in the county.  Progress on each of the strategies will depend on the availability of funding, which is expected to be limited in the short term.**

# Oxford

Oxford has a resident population of 150,000, including around 40,000 students and also welcomes almost 9 million tourists each year.  Oxford's attractiveness brings great benefits, but also puts pressure on the city's transport system.

Compared with other towns and cities outside London, Oxford is well served by high quality local public transport with *"turn up and go"* levels of service on the main radial routes into the city centre.  Oxford has five park and ride sites with parking space for 5100 cars, high frequency bus services to the city centre and some services from three of the sites directly to hospitals in the Headington area.

The city has high levels of cycling but there are opportunities to improve and expand the city's cycle route network and increase cycling levels further.

Oxford has frequent train connections to London Paddington and cross country services to the south coast and north, as well as more limited services to Worcester. Hereford and

Bicester Town.  The city also benefits from high frequency coach services to London and the main airports.

## Challenges

There is a recognised need to provide more housing within the city to address the imbalance between housing and employment.  Flooding constraints mean that future development opportunities in Oxford are predominantly in the "Eastern Arc" - the outer wards in east and south east Oxford adjoining the ring road.   While access to the city centre by public transport is good, it is more limited within the Eastern Arc meaning that many people do not have easy access by public transport to the employment and other destinations there.

In addition to the Eastern Arc, there are significant development opportunities in the West End of the city centre. This includes the Westgate shopping centre, which is very likely to be redeveloped and substantially extended leading to an increase in demand for trips to the city centre.  Housing and employment developments are planned also both in the West End and in the Eastern Arc.

Traffic flows into the city centre have been maintained at roughly the same levels as in 2000, when they dropped significantly after the implementation of the Oxford Transport Strategy.  However, there is still considerable congestion on some of the main approaches to the city centre, particularly the routes leading into Frideswide Square.  Two of the park and ride sites are regularly full and two others are approaching their capacity.  Planned and possible developments in the city are likely to have a significant impact on the operation of the road network - there is expected to be particular pressure on the ring road, especially at Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts and on the A34.

Without a strategy to reduce or prevent the increase in traffic in Oxford and on the approaches to it, congestion will become increasingly severe, damaging the economy, environment and quality of life of people travelling to and around the city.

Additional future demand for travel will be focused strongly on destinations in the city centre and the Eastern Arc.  The

amount of peak time car travel to the Eastern Arc is a major contributor to congestion at many of Oxford's traffic hotspots, in particular at junctions around the B4495,  which links Summertown, Headington and Cowley, and at many of the ring road junctions.

## Strategy

Our strategy for the next 20 years will predominantly focus on tackling problems associated with trips to the city centre and Eastern Arc.  This will include:

Bus - Improved bus services and facilities will encourage people to choose public transport over car travel.  There will be further bus priority measures on the routes into the city, improvements to ticketing arrangements and better waiting facilities.  At the same time the environmental impact of buses and coaches on the city centre will be reduced.

In the Eastern Arc local bus services will be improved through better traffic management measures and bus priority schemes.  Possible future phases of the "rapid transit" service

(see park and ride below) to Abingdon, Witney and Bicester.

Park and ride - Increased capacity is required to access the city centre by park and ride and new park and ride services to the Eastern Arc.

We will work towards delivering fast and reliable, high quality public transport leading to a "rapid transit" system serving park and ride sites and major employment and housing areas in the Eastern Arc.

There will be a need to ensure good access to the park and ride sites, including careful consideration of the impact on all modes using local transport networks.

Walking - the pedestrian environment will be improved to encourage people to walk further as part of their journey.  In the city centre pedestrian routes between the station, city centre and science area will be improved as well as further measures to improve the pedestrian experience.

In the Eastern Arc high quality walking routes will be

developed to serve key destinations, including stations on the proposed rapid transit line.

Cycling - Further development of the city's cycling network will encourage more people to cycle, particularly for journeys to work and education.  In the city centre the provision of more, better managed cycle parking as well as improved radial and cross city centre cycle routes, will encourage more people to cycle into the city centre.  For the Eastern Arc, traffic free orbital routes will be created to serve key destinations, including stops on the proposed rapid transit line.

Traffic management - Traffic will be managed to minimise congestion where it is most harmful such as in the city centre, other areas of poor air quality, bus routes and strategic routes. This will include the re-design of Frideswide Square to provide a more effective and attractive gateway to the city centre and measures to reduce traffic in the university science area. Parking controls and other demand management tools will be considered to help encourage the use of non-car modes.

In the longer term we will work with the City Council to

encourage the redevelopment of workplace car parks (particularly in the city centre and Eastern Arc) for housing, employment or other uses.

Rail - Access to Oxford by rail will be encouraged by improving and expanding Oxford station and enhancing bus, walking and cycling links to it.

Lower emissions - A city centre Low Emission Zone will be implemented, targeting buses and other heavy vehicles initially and all traffic in the longer term.  Emission controls covering the rest of the city will also be pursued to tackle air pollution problems in the suburbs and on the ring road.  The introduction of electrical charging points will be facilitated and traffic routeing will be improved to reduce emissions in streets with the most residents and pedestrians.

Behavioural change - Travel planning work will target schools, large employers and clusters of small and medium employers to reduce car travel.  There will be tailored social marketing of sustainable travel including working with the health sector to stress the health benefits of active modes.

# Abingdon

Abingdon is a historic market town located 9 miles to the south of Oxford.  It is the largest town in the Vale of White Horse district with a population of 32,000.  The town is located to the south of the Oxford Green Belt and is bounded by the A34 Trunk Road to the west and the River Thames to the south and east.  Town centre improvements were implemented between 2006 and 2010 and have helped to reduce the levels of pollution in the town centre, although they still exceed the national air quality objective level.

## Challenges

The town's layout, including the location of main employment, residential and shopping areas, can be a barrier to more walking.  While there have been improvements to facilities for cyclists in recent years there are still some areas where this could be improved and there is a lack of connected, legible routes from residential to employment areas.

Abingdon has no direct access to the rail network with local services available from the nearby Radley and Culham

stations and national services from Oxford and Didcot stations.  Frequent bus services run from Abingdon to Oxford, although not all residential areas in the town are equally served by bus.  Congestion in peak hours is present on most of the main routes into the town centre, primarily affecting east-west movements along the A415 and on Drayton Road from the south.  An Air Quality Management Area was declared in 2006 covering several streets in the town centre, since extended along Marcham Road.

There is a strong local desire to build an all movement junction on to the A34 at Lodge Hill to enable movements from the north of the town and so reduce town centre traffic.  There is also a local desire for a second River Thames crossing for the town to relieve traffic congestion in the town centre.  Funding for these schemes could only be available through government grant or if significant contributions from developers were available.  Government funding for major schemes has also been targeted in recent years on schemes which assist to deliver development.  Given that there is not a substantial amount of growth planned in Abingdon to 2026 neither central government nor developer funding is likely to

be available.  Additionally, traffic modelling has shown there would be limited benefits to town centre traffic levels from the Lodge Hill scheme together with increased traffic on other parts of the road network.  This would make it even more unlikely to attract central government funding for the scheme.

## Strategy

Our strategy for Abingdon will include:

Walking  - To improve facilities for all pedestrians across the town through developing good, clear routes from residential areas to the town centre and other services and facilities around the town ; improving connections from the town to the rights of way network, particularly where urban footways meet rural rights of ways; implementing High Street Phase 2 works.

Cycling - To provide appropriate infrastructure, including parking stands at key destinations, along key routes from the town centre to key destinations in the town and National Cycle Network Route 5; ensure that the best routes are publicised.

Public transport - To work with the local bus companies to improve and develop bus services to areas such as Drayton Road, Wootton Road and Northcourt Road in order to increase accessibility from the town to key facilities, including education and employment; to promote Radley as the rail connection for Abingdon and improving bus and cycle links between the two.

Behavioural Change and Traffic Management - To encourage schools, businesses and organisations to reduce, or make more efficient, car trips where possible, and to use  more efficient and lower emission vehicles as they become available.  To improve and increase public awareness of the infrastructure available for walking, cycling and public transport in and around Abingdon and discourage car use in inappropriate locations by physical constraints such as traffic calming and parking restrictions.

This strategy replaces the Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy (AbITS, 2001).  Contributions collected towards AbITS will be transferred to the LTP3 Abingdon Town Strategy.

# Banbury

Banbury is the second largest settlement in Oxfordshire with a population of nearly 43,000. The town has a strong retail offer along with a range of leisure and tourism facilities and serves a large rural hinterland that includes parts of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.  Banbury has direct access to the strategic motorway network and good transport links to major A-roads, as well as having a mainline rail station with links to Oxford, London, Birmingham and the North. Nearly two thirds of workers in Banbury travel less than 10km to work. Accordingly, relatively few people commute by car; almost 18% of workers walk to work compared with 10.2% in the county, however only 4% cycle to work.

## Challenges

The key routes in the town centre suffer from heavy congestion, particularly those for north-south movement. Further development in Banbury is likely to increase its attractiveness and may worsen problems on the edges of the town, such as at M40 Junction 11.

Cherwell District Council are likely to announce Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in 2010/11 in Banbury along Hennef Way and along Oxford Road, South Bar, Horse Fair, Warwick Road, Bloxham Road – further monitoring & modelling will help define a precise area.

Within Banbury pedestrians and cyclists can be put off by high levels of traffic, on-street parking and a general lack of travel information.  Ease of access is hampered by the River Cherwell, Oxford Canal and the railway line bisecting the town.

Banbury has a variety of bus routes starting and finishing in the town centre, including some of Premium Route standard. The industrial areas and employment areas are concentrated in the town centre and to the north east, which is not well served by a good local bus service.  Banbury Railway Station is located in the town centre but main roads and narrow footpaths mean its approaches are not welcoming. There are no obvious pedestrian links to the town centre or the employment and residential areas to the east of the railway.

## Strategy

The town strategy aims to deliver transport improvements with a focus on walking, cycling, bus service improvements and reducing congestion.  Key elements of the strategy will be:

Highway infrastructure and traffic management - encourage use of the strategic network and discourage use of undesirable routes; investigate the potential for changes to junction design to reduce congestion; investigate the need for new road links.  New road links will be considered where the required capacity cannot be realised and where other alternatives have been investigated and discounted.  This could include the South East Relief Road (Bloxham Road to Hennef Way) and the Banbury South West Relief Road (Stratford Road to Bloxham Road). These schemes are currently considered unlikely to attract central government funding and will only be likely to be delivered in association with development of such scale that would be able to wholly or mostly fund the road.

Buses - deliver an information system and infrastructure improvements at Banbury bus station; new bus routes and links in town centre; improve bus services and facilities between residential and employment areas.

Rail - redesign the station forecourt; improve walking routes to the railway station; improve cycle parking and creating a cycle hub at the station.

Walking & Cycling - Improving the pedestrian environment in Banbury, in the town centre and to/within residential and employment areas; develop a high quality cycle network including new and improved links; improve connections to the rights of way network.

Behaviour change - work with employers to produce and implement workplace travel plans; explore the potential for developing car clubs and promoting car sharing in Banbury.

This Strategy replaces the Banbury Integrated Transport & Land Use Study (2000).

# Bicester

Bicester is the second largest town in Cherwell district, located 12 miles from Oxford, 21 miles from Banbury and 24 miles from Milton Keynes. It has rail links from its two stations to Oxford, London Marylebone, High Wycombe and Birmingham.

Bicester has seen considerable growth in the last few decades influenced by its location on the strategic road network close to junction 9 of the M40, where the A34 meets the A41. It is also close to junction 10 with the A43 which connects the M40 and M1. This growth is expected to continue through this Plan's lifetime.  Much of the future growth in this area will be at North West Bicester, which has been identified as an eco town location, with plans for a sustainable development of 5,000 homes by 2030.

The 2001 census recorded Bicester's population at around 29,000. It is predicted to rise to 33,000 by 2016 and up to approximately 40,000 by 2026.  There is a recognised need to attract more jobs to the town to address the significant imbalance between homes and jobs in Bicester - currently over 60% of residents leaving the town to work

The transport strategy for Bicester will be part of the "Eco-Bicester" Shared Vision for the town.  This vision is to create a vibrant town where people choose to live work and spend their leisure time in sustainable ways.  This would be achieved by:

* Effecting a town wide transition to a low carbon community;
* Attracting inward investment to provide sustainable jobs and commerce;
* Offering transport, health and leisure choices while emphasising energy efficiency and zero carbon;  and
* Ensuring green infrastructure and historic landscapes, biodiversity water and waste issues are managed in a sustainable way.

## Challenges

The overriding challenge for Bicester is to develop an effective eco-town at north-west Bicester and to achieve Eco-Bicester

objectives for the whole town where sustainable living, including sustainable travel choices, becomes a reality.  This will involve achieving a life/work balance at north west Bicester to meet containment targets; achieving a high level of sustainable transport use from the new development; using the measures being implemented in north west Bicester to trigger a change in travel behaviour across the whole town; and ensuring the highway network functions with the remaining car trips.

Bicester currently suffers with a weekday congestion problem especially on the B4030 outside Bicester Village Retail Park and on the A41.  Because of the nature of Bicester Village's business, the worst traffic congestion is often at weekends or on Bank Holidays.  This congestion can further create inappropriate route choices by frustrated drivers, for example through Chesterton.  The problems at Bicester Village contribute to queueing at M40 junction 9.  There is also a congestion bottleneck at the Bucknell Road railway bridge as traffic uses this route to/from Upper Heyford and to access junction 10 of the M40.

Cherwell District Council is likely to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2010/2011 on Kings End & Queens Avenue possibly extending to Field Street/North Street.

Currently there is a bus station in Bicester town centre at Bure Place. This is being redeveloped as part of the town centre redevelopment which will see new bus bays provided on Manorsfield Road, adjacent to the new retail centre.

Bicester has many walking and cycling routes, although not a complete network and the town's layout can be difficult to navigate especially for visitors.  An audit has recently taken place throughout the whole of the town to assess the condition of the existing routes and recommend any improvements as well as propose new routes to key destinations.  There is a good range of public rights of way that connect Bicester to the surrounding countryside. However the network is disjointed in many places where paths meet the road network.

Bicester has two rail stations: Bicester North has frequent services between London Marylebone and Birmingham; Bicester Town currently has a limited service to Oxford.  The Chilterns Railways' Evergreen 3 proposals will include improvements at Bicester Town to cater for the introduction of services to London from Oxford - this requires the construction of a new chord between the two lines as they cross in the town.  The East West Rail proposals would also serve Bicester Town on their route from Oxford to Milton Keynes and Bedford.

The strategy for accessing the rail stations is to work closely with Chiltern Railways and other partners to ensure that travel by foot, bike, bus, and car share is the first choice of travel within Bicester so that congestion and pollution can be minimised.  Use of sustainable travel options for journeys with an origin within Bicester is to be significant so that car travel to the stations is kept to a minimum.

## Strategy

The key elements of the strategy will include:

**Behaviour Change** - promoting behaviour change through the *Bicester Travel Behaviour Project*; working with employers that have high car trip rates to understand current travel patterns, and look for opportunities to change travel to work patterns; continuing to work with the schools to update their existing school travel plan and monitor travel to school modes, travel opportunities and concerns for students travelling to school.

**Walking & Cycling** - creating and improving pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the town; physical improvements to walking and cycling routes to key destinations; promoting the public realm enhancements to the Market Square;  making street environment improvements for pedestrians and cyclists at key destinations and employment sites.

**Buses** - delivering a rapid bus route between the development site at NW Bicester and the town centre; bringing Bicester area bus stops up to Premium Route standard; delivering bus infrastructure and bus priority to enable bus reliability on the A41 corridor; investigation of new electric/hybrid vehicles to be used on key routes such as the exemplar site at NW

Bicester; securing developer contributions to enhance the routeing and frequencies of local bus services;  creating a park and ride facility adjacent to the A41 (subject to demand assessment).

Low Emission Vehicles - introducing charging points for electric vehicles in the town through the *"Plugged in Places"* project, including on routes where electric buses run; working with local organisations to encourage the use of lower carbon emission vehicles; investigating options for encouraging lower carbon emission private vehicles.

Rail - supporting the upgrade of Bicester Town Station; working with the East West Rail consortium to provide a new link to Milton Keynes and Bedford, and possibly direct link to Didcot Parkway; ensuring delivery of high quality public transport from the development at north west Bicester to Bicester North and Bicester Town stations; delivering better cycle routes to both stations; improving cycle parking at Bicester North and at Bicester Town; introducing a bus interchange at Bicester Town.

Highway Infrastructure and Traffic Management - working with the developers of North-West Bicester to promote integration with existing Bicester, incorporating *Eco-Bicester* principles to promote safer, sustainable and healthy modes of travel to and from the site including reducing the attractiveness of Howes Lane and Lords Lane for through traffic; investigating improvements to the Eastern Perimeter route to provide through traffic with a viable and attractive alternative to the central corridor; working with the developers of South-West Bicester to ensure delivery of the South-West Bicester perimeter road; working with the Highways Agency to ensure delivery of improvements to M40 Junction 9; investigating the need to improve M40 Junction 10 and its approaches from Bicester; delivering the second phase of Roman Road improvements to complete reconstruction of the road from the new A41 roundabout link to the turn to the Chesterton over bridge; conducting a traffic signage review on the strategic road network particularly from A41, A4095 and A4421 of signage to Bicester to remove clutter and ensure the routeing is correct.

# Science Vale UK

The Science Vale UK area encompasses the towns of Didcot, Wantage and Grove, and the employment centres of Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, Milton Park and Culham Science Centre.  Science Vale UK is the national science and innovation centre for the UK and includes a world class concentration of cutting edge research that is unrivalled anywhere in the UK.  Alongside this are science and business parks with a wide range of businesses successful in commercialising new technology across a wide range of sectors.

Didcot is a large town with a population of approximately 28,000 residents located 17 miles south of Oxford and 19 miles northwest of Reading.  The Parkway rail station is of key importance with frequent links to Oxford, London, the West Country and South Wales as well as connections to further afield.  Road connections to the nearby A34 are also good.  Housing development has been rapid since the 1980s and the town will continue to increase in size with the committed and proposed housing developments, to a possible population of 45,000 by 2026.

Wantage, an historic market town, is the second largest settlement in the Vale of White Horse (population approximately 10,000) and a shopping and service centre for the central part of the Vale.  It is located 18 miles south west of Oxford and 18 miles east of Swindon. Its attractive market place and downland setting are essential components of its character.  Grove is a large village a mile north of Wantage with a population of approximately 8,000.    Major housing development was allowed in the 1960s without the provision of the range and quality of services a settlement of this size would normally expect.

The success of Science Vale UK is due in part to its advantageous location with good accessibility to all parts of the UK and international links via the south east airports:  the A34 provides north-south connections to the national road network and the A417 provides east-west links between Didcot and Wantage & Grove and the major employment sites.

Premium Route bus services are already provided on a commercial basis between Wantage, Grove, Abingdon and Oxford; and between Didcot, Abingdon and Oxford.  Bus services between Didcot, Wantage, Grove and the employment sites are less frequent, yet provide essential links between residential areas and the major employment sites in Science Vale UK.

Didcot Parkway station, the Orchard Shopping Centre and Wantage Market Place are key locations for interchange between bus services and between modes. Whilst Didcot Parkway is currently being reconstructed to a much higher standard, facilities at the other two key locations are rather sub-standard and inadequate.

The principal railway station within the Science Vale UK area is located in Didcot.  The station also represents the main access point to train services in the south of the county as well as acting as an excellent interchange facility for residents and employees in Science Vale UK.

## Challenges

Science Vale UK is one of three areas in Central Oxfordshire where there are significant pressures (both current and future) on the road network.  The Central Oxfordshire area is heavily reliant on the A34 to provide access between housing and employment.  As demand on the A34 has steadily increased, local traffic has increasingly found alternative routes through the local road network system of A and B roads.  Key junctions on the road network within Science Vale UK are operating at or close to capacity.

The lack of clear and concise signage directing pedestrians to the main destinations in Didcot, Wantage and Grove is a key issue for the towns.  The lack of joined up walking routes from the residential areas to key facilities, amenities and surrounding countryside and villages is also a problem.

There is a significant lack of signed and joined up cycle routes and infrastructure within Didcot, Wantage and Grove and a lack of direct cycle access to key facilities from residential areas; there is also a lack of direct and safe cycle access to

facilities between Grove and Wantage.

Didcot has good rail links to London, Bristol and South Wales but rail links to destinations in the West Midlands and the North of England are poor as they require a time-consuming change of train in Oxford which make them unattractive for many people, including the business community in Science Vale UK.

Buses between Wantage, Grove and Didcot operate on two routes, one via Harwell and another via Milton Park, with roughly an hourly service offered between all points during the daytime. These services do not currently meet the required standards for Premium Routes.

## Strategy

The key aims of the strategy for Science Vale UK is to make the area more self-contained by providing the services they need within the area and making east-west movement across the area easier.  The main elements of the transport strategy for Science Vale UK include:

Highway Infrastructure - Strategic highway schemes (Harwell Strategic Link Road, Harwell Field Link Road, Rowstock Western Link Road, Improvements to Featherbed Lane junctions, Wantage Eastern Link Road);  a new link road north of Grove in association with development west of the village; Didcot Northern Perimeter Road – Phase 3; Grove Northern Link Road; investigate schemes to enhance the capacity of congested junctions; undertake an audit of Cow Lane tunnel, Didcot, to see what, if anything can be done to improve conditions for all users; capacity improvements at the Jubilee Way roundabout, Didcot.

Public Transport - work with the local bus companies and developers to improve the frequency and attractiveness of the existing Premium Route and strategic east-west bus services between Wantage, Grove and Didcot; extend Didcot Parkway Foxhall Road car park to accommodate more parking and provide a fully accessible pedestrian link to the station interchange; seek the introduction of new rail station(s) at Grove & Wantage and/or Milton Park; seek the introduction of East West Rail services at Didcot Parkway to provide new

direct links to Oxford, Milton Keynes, the west coast main line railway and Bedford.

Walking & cycling – improve walking and cycling networks within Wantage, Grove and Didcot and between the towns and the major employment areas; improve the connections between the towns' walking and cycling networks and rural rights of way; improve access on foot and by cycle to schools and other key destinations; safe and secure cycle parking within the town centres and at key local services; developing the identified strategic cycle schemes between settlements and the major employment sites.

Behavioural Change - Identify the businesses that generate high trip rates and contribute towards the traffic in Didcot, Wantage and Grove (especially Harwell SIC, Milton Park and Culham Science Centre) and work with those businesses to develop and implement workplace travel plans exploring current transport to work modes and travel opportunities and concerns for employees travelling to work with a particular focus on reducing car use and promoting walking and cycling by exploring the provision of cycling facilities etc.

The strategic highway schemes are only likely to be realised if they are successful in attracting major scheme funding support from the government.  Given the current financial situation the delivery of these schemes cannot be guaranteed in the near future.  We will seek to identify funding from other sources to allow for their delivery.  It is expected that significant funding from new developments within the Science Vale UK area will be needed for these schemes, whether major scheme funding is forthcoming or not.

The new railway stations at Grove and/or Milton Park would require support from the rail industry to be delivered.

This strategy replaces the Didcot Integrated Transport Strategy (DidITS) (2004/2005). Contributions collected towards DidITS will be transferred to appropriate elements within the LTP3 Science Vale UK Area Strategy.

# Witney

Witney is the largest town in West Oxfordshire.  It has seen significant growth over the past 30 years and now has a population of approximately 25,000.  It is located 13.5 miles west of Oxford, just off the A40 between Oxford and Cheltenham. It has good links by car and bus to other major towns, but has no direct rail service (the nearest station is on the Cotswold Line at Hanborough).  Witney is considered to be the most sustainable location for housing in the district.

## Challenges

Bridge Street in the centre of Witney has an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) declared.  Over 10,000 vehicles a day use Bridge Street as the only river crossing in the town, resulting in slow moving or stationary traffic.  As a result annual means levels of nitrogen dioxide can exceed the national objective level in some parts of the town.

Despite an extensive pedestrian network, some of the most convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists are not clear, particularly through residential areas.  Within Witney high

levels of traffic and on-street parking can deter pedestrians and cyclists.  Therefore, improving existing walking and cycling facilities and signage is important, alongside promotion of existing and new routes.  In some instances Witney's urban foot and cycle paths do not link particularly well with rights of way and rural footpaths.  There are some good cycle routes in existence but there are some gaps in infrastructure.  There are inadequate cycle networks linking to nearby settlements.

There is scope to increase accessibility to buses by the development of new or existing routes that would make bus travel a more attractive transport choice from all parts of the town. Journey time reliability between Oxford and Witney is very variable; this is caused by significant congestion on the A40 between Witney and Oxford and within Witney itself.

## Strategy

The main elements of our strategy for Witney include:

Highway Infrastructure and Traffic Management – the county, district and town councils all support the provision of a second

river crossing in the town to reduce traffic levels and improve air quality by providing the Cogges Link Road from Witan Way to Oxford Hill.  A new junction on the A40 at Downs Road will be facilitated by development at North Curbridge, the preferred direction of further growth for the town.  In addition this we will investigate the need for additional schemes such as West End Link Road Stage 2. Significant contributions from developers are available for the construction of the Cogges Link Road; progress on these other major investments will require significant funding from developments.

Walking and cycling - create formal walking routes to key facilities from residential areas by providing signage and improved crossing points; improve connections to the rights of way network, particularly where urban footways and cycle routes meet rural rights of way; support the redevelopment of the town centre to improve conditions for pedestrians, improved surfaces and pedestrian crossings; enhance facilities for cyclists, including the provision of additional cycle infrastructure such as cycle lanes/cycle paths, advanced stops lines, and cycle parking; delivery of Woodgreen pedestrian and cycle route.

Public Transport - improve walking and cycling routes to existing bus stops; provide cycle stands and replace poor quality shelters at bus stops; investigate a remote Park & Ride site at Eynsham; develop new or existing bus routes to make bus travel a more attractive transport choice from all parts of the town; investigate the demand for a Railbus link to Hanborough from the main residential areas of Witney.

Behavioural Change - Identifying employers and schools with high car trip rates that are contributing to traffic problems in the area and then work with those employers to produce and implement a workplace travel plan.

This Strategy supersedes the Witney Integrated Transport & Land Use Study (2003).

# Carterton

Carterton is the second largest town in West Oxfordshire with a population of 16,000. It is located 7 miles from Witney, 18 miles from Oxford and 20 miles from Swindon.  Carterton grew rapidly following the development of RAF Brize Norton. Significant growth has continued with the new Shilton Park housing estate to the northeast of the town added from 2000. The MOD seeks to strengthen the strategic importance of RAF Brize Norton and significant increases in both military operations and personnel are expected.

We have been working towards a focus on localities through its 'closer to communities' project.  Carterton has been identified as a high priority area due to the development at RAF Brize Norton and Carterton.

The main route into Carterton from the strategic road network is from the A40 via the B4477.  There is a good bus service from Carterton to Witney but more limited bus connections to surrounding villages.  There is no direct rail access to the town.  The town's network of walking routes is incomplete.

The width of some footways and their surface treatment are not attractive for pedestrians to useand urban paths do not link particularly well with rights of way and rural footpaths. There are limited cycle routes and cycle infrastructure.

## Strategy

Walking & Cycling - improve facilities for pedestrians through widening, providing dropped kerbs and improved crossing points; develop schemes  to provide a high quality cycle network; publicising and promoting routes.

Public Transport - work with partners to improve the frequency and attractiveness of local bus services; provide high quality bus stops on the Witney-Carterton route; provide good walking and cycling routes to existing bus stops.

Behavioural Change - work with targeted organisations and businesses to develop and implement travel plans.

Highway infrastructure and traffic management - examine the options available to better connect Carterton to the strategic network; identify the transport implications of expansion at Brize Norton; conduct a traffic signage review on the strategic road network.

# Chinnor

Chinnor is a large village with a population of approximately 5,500 located 4 miles from Thame and 19 miles southeast of Oxford on the Icknield Way below the Chiltern Hills.  The village has a concentration of community facilities at the eastern end of the village but there are also additional facilities at various points throughout the village.

Chinnor is served mainly by minor 'B' roads however the village lies north of the M40 and A40 and west of the A4010. There is an adequate bus service to Thame but limited other services.  According to the 2001 census, 53% of the resident population drove to work outside the village; employment in the village is limited.  Chinnor is linked to Princes Risborough via a non- commercial railway that operates most weekends.

## Strategy

Walking & cycling - provide new and improved signage, wideningof footways and improved crossing points; improve the village's pedestrian environment and connections to the rights of way network; provide cycle infrastructure including linking up to Phoenix Trail.

Traffic management – review road safety in village; consider road safety measures; conduct a traffic signage review on the strategic road network particularly from M40 and A40.

Public Transport - maintenance and minor improvements to existing bus stops; increase the frequency of service to Thame.

# Chipping Norton

Chipping Norton is a historic market town with a population of 5,700 which lies on the A44 approximately 20 miles north west of Oxford.  Surrounded by an extensive rural hinterland and being relatively remote from larger towns, Chipping Norton acts as a service centre for up to 40 local villages, including parts of Warwickshire and Gloucestershire.

Chipping Norton sits astride the A44, a heavily used lorry route to and from the Evesham area, at its junction with the A361. This has led to an Air Quality Management Area being designated along the A44. The presence of heavy through traffic detracts from the quality of the town centre as a destination and may deter cyclists from using that route.

There are hourly bus services to Oxford, Witney and Banbury, and a 2 hourly service to Stratford-upon-Avon.  Chipping Norton does not have a railway station but there is a dedicated railbus to Kingham Station.  There is a good range of public rights of way that connect the town to its surrounding countryside and settlements.

## Strategy

Traffic management – deliver HGV relief to the town centre of Chipping Norton; remove primary route status of the A44; encourage use of Low Emission vehicles as technology advances; conduct a traffic signage review to remove clutter and ensure the routing is correct; investigate further measures for London Road network management improvements.

Public transport – work with partners to improve bus service frequencies to Oxford and Banbury; provide real-time information, improve bus stops and provide new stops; extend rail bus route.

Walking & cycling - identify potential schemes to improve legibility, way finding and permeability; improve the pedestrian environment in the town centre; develop potential schemes which could provide a high quality cycle network; improve connections to the rights of way network; identify locations for cycle parking.

Behavioural change - work with schools, organisations and businesses to develop and implement travel plans targeted at the areas which have the greatest problem.

# Faringdon

Faringdon, a market town in the Vale of White Horse with a population of approximately 6,000, is situated 19 miles southwest of Oxford and 13 miles northeast of Swindon.  The A420 (which is mainly single carriageway with limited stretches of dual carriageway) is situated to the south and east of Faringdon and provides good links to other towns.



The road network, within the town centre in particular, is narrow and can easily become congested with on-street parking and/or the presence of large vehicles.

Faringdon has good bus links to Oxford, Swindon and Wantage and minor services to local villages; there is no rail station.  There is a good range of public rights of way that connect Faringdon to the surrounding countryside.

## Strategy

Cycling and Walking - improve wayfinding by creating formal walking routes to key facilities; develop a high quality cycle network; publicise and promote walking and cycling routes; improve connections to the rights of way network.

Public transport - improve manoeuvrability for buses around the town centre; work with bus operators to upgrade the existing 66 bus service to 4 buses per hour; aspire to premium route standard stops with Real Time Information accessible by good walking routes.

Traffic management - consider traffic calming measures along the Highworth Road (B4019), Canada Lane, Gravel Walk and Lechlade Road to reduce speeds; investigate if improvements to the Park Road roundabout are achievable; review the signage within Cornmarket to aid movement for all modes.

# Kidlington

Kidlington is a large village situated on the Oxford to Banbury road (A4165) and is 5 miles (8km) north of Oxford and 7.5 miles (12km) south west of Bicester.  Together with the adjoining village of Gosford it has a population of around 18,000. Kidlington is home to other major employers, including the headquarters of the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police, St. John Ambulance, and publishing company Elsevier which has its UK head office here. Oxford Airport, renamed London Oxford Airport in 2009, is also in Kidlington.

Shops and services are predominantly concentrated in the centre of the village.  In addition to shops and offices within the main part of the village, Kidlington has an expanding office and commercial area along Langford Lane to the north of the village. The Langford Locks area has a thriving business community that attracts businesses from all industry sectors; the whole area employs nearly 4000 workers. Opposite is Langford Business Parks and Oxford Motor Park.

The A4260 runs through the middle of Kidlington, with the A34 and A44 close by. Bicester Road junction towards the A34 is likely to be declared an AQMA in 2010/2011 and all major junctions along the A4260 regularly suffer from delays during peak traffic times.

Kidlington is very well served by buses linking it with a frequent service to Oxford city centre. Access from some villages and other parts of Oxford is less good, and there are poor interchange arrangements for rail. However, there could be good opportunities for links with rail at the proposed new Water Eaton station.  The bus service to London Oxford Airport is also limited to peak hour operation.

National Cycle Route 51 starts in Oxford and heads towards Bicester, routing through Oxfordshire villages including Kidlington.  There is a good range of public rights of way that connect Kidlington to the surrounding countryside.

## Strategy

Walking & Cycling - improve the pedestrian environment in

Kidlington; support schemes  for wider footways and pedestrian crossings; promote opportunities for walking from Kidlington to the railway station at Water Eaton; develop schemes which will provide a high quality cycle network, including improved links to the business parks and London Oxford Airport; join up the walking and cycling network to public rights of way so that routes for commuting and recreation are improved; increase cycle parking; investigate cycle and pedestrian crossings on Bicester Road and Garden City and An Exeter Hall cycle route.

Traffic management - conduct a traffic signage review on the strategic road network particularly from the A44, A40 and A34 of signage to Kidlington to remove clutter and ensure the routing is correct; manage the network by identifying and resolving both short and long term problems; encourage the use of low emission vehicles as technology advances come forward.

Public Transport - improve the level of bus service to and from London Oxford Airport; extend the Banbury Road bus lane towards the Bicester Road signals should the need arise; investigate journey time reliability options for services using Bicester Road (C43) using additional land alongside road;

promoting opportunities to travel by bus between Kidlington and the railway station at Water Eaton; cycle racks at appropriate bus stops.

Behavioural Change – work with schools, organisations and businesses to develop and implement travel plans targeted at the areas with the greatest problems.

# Henley- on Thames

Henley-on-Thames is an historic town on the River Thames within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It lies 24 miles southeast of Oxford, 9 miles northeast of Reading and 12 miles southwest of High Wycombe. It has a population of 11,000.

The town centre has a concentration of shops and services, with a Tesco Superstore located on the southern edge of town.  As well as serving the immediate population, Henley-on-Thames also experiences commuting from surrounding villages to access its facilities and services.  It is a tourist destination which experiences high visitor numbers for events such as the Regatta and festivals.

The road network is known to suffer from high levels of traffic which have to pass through the town centre on the A4155 or A4130. An Air Quality Management Area was declared in 2002 in the town centre. Town centre traffic schemes have helped reduced the levels of pollution, however they still exceed the national air quality objective level.

The town has a rail station with some direct trains to London and regular services to Oxford, Reading and London via the main line at Twyford.  There are hourly buses to Wallingford, for connections to Oxford, and half hourly buses to Reading and High Wycombe.  Outside of the town centre there are limited good quality walking and cycling routes.

## Strategy

Traffic Management - encourage the use of lower emissions vehicles as technology advances; improved signage within the town to aid vehicle movement through the town; parking and loading restrictions to be investigated; investigate traffic management measures such as increased on-street pay & display parking and junction improvements across the town.

Walking and cycling - improve facilities for all through developing good clear routes around the town; develop a high quality cycle network make sure urban links join up with rights of way; additional cycle parking locations.

Public transport – work towards increased service to Reading and Wycombe; new bus stops and laybys; improved bus stops; increased promotion of "Regatta Line".

# Thame

Thame is a market town with a strong agricultural base located 10 miles southwest of Aylesbury and 15 miles east of Oxford.   Thame has a population of around 10,000.  It is situated north of the M40; this along with the A418 to the east and A329 to the south of the town provide road links to the strategic road network.

Thame's nearest rail station is at Haddenham & Thame Parkway which is located around 2.5miles from Thame by road. There is a good range of public rights of way that connect Thame to the surrounding countryside. There is a good bus service through Thame to Oxford and Aylesbury and an hourly service to High Wycombe. Infrequent services run from Thame to the nearby villages. The Phoenix Trail provides a walking and cycling route to Princes Risborough which forms part of the National Cycle Route 57.

## Strategy

Walking & Cycling - explore new and improved crossing points in town centre including a review of the mouth width of road junctions, to identify were road space can be re-allocated as pedestrian space; improve legibility, way finding and permeability by creating formal walking routes to key facilities; develop all weather cycle route from Thame to Haddenham & Thame Parkway Station; develop schemes which will provide a high quality cycle network; join up the cycling network across the wider area using public rights of way so that routes for commuting and recreation are improved.

Traffic Management - review and implement a joined up car parking strategy for the pay and display car parks; assess the costs and benefits to introducing one-way traffic northbound on Nelson Street; conduct a signage review of Thame town centre, bypass & strategic road network, in order to route strategic through traffic via the bypass, and route town centre traffic on the most appropriate route; evaluate the costs and benefits of reducing car parking within the High Street/Upper High Street to provide a formal public space.

Public Transport - improve the accessibility of bus services in Thame by providing new stop locations, pedestrian crossings and safe walking routes; improve the frequency and attractiveness of the bus services to Oxford, Aylesbury and High Wycombe.

# Wallingford

Wallingford is an historic market town on the River Thames with a population of around 8,000 (including Winterbrook and Cholsey).  It is located 13 miles south of Oxford and 14 miles northwest of Reading close to both the Wessex Downs and Chiltern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.  There is a concentration of shops and services within the town centre, and significant employment at the Hithercroft Industrial Estate and north of Crowmarsh Gifford.

Wallingford bypass was completed in 1993 and relieves Wallingford town centre of through-traffic by encouraging traffic to remain on the A4130 and A4074 rather than travel through the town.   Although the traffic levels passing through the Wallingford are not particularly high the layout of the town concentrates the problems associated with them and in 2006 South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) declared an Air Quality Management Area within Wallingford centred on the Lamb Crossroads. Traffic, especially queueing traffic at Lamb Crossroads and crossing Wallingford Bridge, has been identified as the main cause of the air pollution.

The pedestrian environment within Wallingford town centre is considered poor compared to the attractive setting and architecture of the town. The medieval street pattern means that there is a conflict for space from pedestrian footways and road space. The area around the Lamb crossroads is particularly poor, as the four-way junction is signal controlled, and in parts the footways are very narrow and not particularly functional.  Across Wallingford there are limited dedicated cycle routes and cycle infrastructure, particularly within the town centre but also to access key local facilities and employment areas.

Wallingford does not have a public rail station; however Cholsey Station, on the main Oxford to Reading line with trains in both directions every 30 minutes, is only around 3 miles from the centre of Wallingford. The rail station at Cholsey is accessible by bus and cycling as well as private car.

Currently the Market Place is home to the town centre bus stops.  There are half hourly services to Oxford and reading and hourly services to Didcot and Henley-on-Thames.  There

is a good range of public rights of way that connect Wallingford to the surrounding countryside, however there is no attractive link, or adequate signs, from the town centre to the River Thames or Thames Path.

## Strategy

Traffic Management - ensure through-traffic is directed on the A4130//A4074 bypass by reviewing signage; conduct a review of signage on the entrances to the town, to ensure key destinations are signed for traffic to take the most appropriate route; ensure that car park signs are clear and direct to the most appropriate car park; improvements to balance pedestrians, cyclists and traffic in the town centre to improve the environment of the town centre; consider if traffic calming measures throughout north Wallingford to control vehicle movements in town centre; encourage the use of lower emissions vehicles as technology advances.

Walking and Cycling - conduct a study into options to improve the pedestrian environment in Wallingford and in particular at Lamb crossroads, the Market Place, St Martins Street, St Mary's Street and St Leonard's Square; examine the options to provide a clear pedestrian link between the Thames Path and the town centre; develop schemes which will provide a high quality cycle network; conduct a feasibility study into options of providing cycle routes between Wallingford and the surrounding areas including Cholsey and Didcot; increase cycle parking; improve signage and links to rural rights of way footpaths and bridleways.

Public Transport - improve quality of bus stop infrastructure and information at the Market Place bus stops; work with bus operators to upgrade the Oxford bus services to at least 4 buses per hour; ensure good bus access at all times to Market Street.

Behavioural Change - prioritise travel planning for both schools and businesses within the Wallingford area; review and implement a car parking strategy for the nine pay & display car parks across Wallingford.

# Rural Areas

Rural Oxfordshire encompasses a wide variety of different settings from the high Cotswolds to the Vale of White Horse, from isolated hamlets to small towns.  Oxfordshire is a rural county – the least densely populated in south east England – with attractive countryside, towns and villages.  Around 80% of the county is managed for agriculture and the county includes three extensive areas of outstanding natural beauty, four national nature reserves and 109 sites of special scientific interest.  Over 2,600 miles of paths, bridleways and byways are open to the public providing extensive access to the countryside.  However these routes do not always provide a connected, safe or enjoyable network for walkers or riders.

There are a large number of small communities in rural Oxfordshire.  Of the 308 parishes with a population below 10,000 people, three quarters have fewer than 1,000 residents.  The rural area also include a number of large villages and smaller towns (including settlements such as Berinsfield, Burford, Eynsham, Wheatley and Woodstock) which still provide some local services although the range

available in these locations has usually declined in recent years.  Oxfordshire's rural areas show generally low levels of deprivation and crime.  However there are social, economic and environmental pressures which have and will continue to affect and change life in rural communities in Oxfordshire and worsen the isolation of vulnerable groups.

Increased centralisation of services particularly affects rural areas because it leads to reductions in local services and facilities and longer journeys to the remaining service locations.  People in rural areas, including young people and increasing numbers of older people, are most affected by reduced access, especially in areas where public transport provision is least.

In addition, the county's main roads pass through mostly rural areas and there is a need to set out our ambitions for managing these.

## Strategy

Buses - Oxfordshire has a very good country bus network at the moment and we would wish this to continue.  Our aim for rural buses is to encourage improved bus services on the main routes between towns and to retain a basic county bus services network in other areas. However, we need to see if there are better ways that this accessibility can be delivered than through traditional service buses.  There is a need for better marketing and promotion to enable best use of them to be made.  Better bus stops will be rolled out across the county as resources allow and we would welcome working with local communities to provide better bus shelters or other facilities.

Rail - The coverage of the county by accessible rail services is uneven but in those areas where rail lines do exist they offer the chance to access services without adding to problems on rural roads.  In the time covered by this Plan we would wish to see improved services from Islip station as a result of the Evergreen 3 and East West Rail proposals and also improved services on the Cotswold Line.  The main focus of our work will be to improve access to rail stations.  The exact schemes appropriate for each station will depend on the stations

location and locality, in particular the condition and standard of local roads but, where appropriate, we will consider:

Roads - We have no plans for major highway improvements in the rural parts of the county over the life of this Plan.  We do currently "protect" the lines of two rural bypasses, Marcham Bypass and Sutton Bypass, but only on the basis that these may be necessary to allow development in adjacent areas and we would expect them to be funded in large part by those developments.  Over the course of the Plan we will move towards having a speed limit of 50mph on all single carriageway rural roads and support moves to have this adopted as the national speed limit for this class of roads.  Proposals for the change in the status of roads, either in terms of its place in the road hierarchy would need to be justified in terms of meeting our overall objectives in a cost-effective way and without causing problems on other routes.  We will generally not look on environmental weight limits as a suitable permanent solution to local problems.

Walking, Cycling & Behavioural Change - We will look to improve connections from villages to the rights of way network.  This may involve converting sections of highway verge to footpath or bridleway use.  We will also look to

improve connections between villages, and from villages to nearby towns, where this is justified by actual or potential use. This could involve converting footpaths to allow for use by cycles or the creation of new routes.  If resources allow we will develop rural cycle routes.  These would take the form of signed routes on less busy roads, usually connected to the National Cycle Network or other existing cycle routes.

## Corridor Strategies

A34 South of Oxford - measures need to be implemented that better manage traffic volumes on the A34 and encourage people to make journeys by alternative modes; explore opportunities to deliver Park & Ride sites at locations more remote from Oxford, particularly to relieve pressure on the A34; support upgrading the route between the south coast and West Midlands to accommodate larger freight containers.

A34 north of Oxford corridor - better manage traffic volumes on A34; investigate options for park and ride from Bicester and bus priority; support proposals for improvement of M40 Junction 9; support proposals for Evergreen 3 and East West rail improvements.

A4260/A4165 corridor - reduce congestion at Cutteslowe Roundabouts; better manage traffic on approaches to Oxford; improve access to Water Eaton Park & Ride; support Water Eaton rail station proposals; increase bus priority; investigate cycle and pedestrian routes.

A40 west of Oxford corridor - reduce congestion at Wolvercote Roundabout; investigate Park & Ride at Eynsham, bus priority on approach to Swinford toll bridge, bus priority on A40; cycle links from Carterton-Witney and Eynsham-Oxford.

A44 corridor - reduce congestion at Loop Farm and Wolvercote roundabouts; investigate bus priority on approach to Oxford; improve access to Cotswold Line stations.

A40 east of Oxford corridor - expand capacity of Thornhill Park & Ride; eastbound bus priority at Thornhill.

A4074 corridor - improve traffic management on Oxford southern bypass; support improvements to Heyford Hill roundabout; encourage use of local bus services.

A420 and A338 corridor - better manage traffic on A420; support proposals for new rail station at Grove with attractive service to Oxford; work to improve attractiveness of bus services to Oxford from Wantage and Swindon, including better bus stops and crossing points at appropriate locations.

This is the consultation draft of Oxfordshire's new local Transport Plan.  Oxfordshire County Council would welcome any comments on the policies and strategies included in the Plan.  All comments received will be reported to the Council as the final plan is considered.

If you would like to comment on the draft Plan then please go to:

**www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ltp**

or call:

**01865 815093**

**Consultation closes 09 January 2011**

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