

Local Transport and Connectivity Plan - Engagement Report

January 2021



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1. Summary

Engagement for the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) ran from the 4th March 2020 and closed on the 17th May 2020. Respondents were invited to comment on 28 topic papers which were divided into five areas; Active & Healthy Travel, Public Transport, Climate Emergency & Air Quality, Area Strategies and Connectivity. A summary of key headlines for each area and conclusions is provided below.

Active and Healthy Travel Topic Paper Key Headlines

- The need to provide for high quality on and off-road cycle and pedestrian facilities for all types of users, including in urban and rural areas.
- Support for further development of LCWIPs and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.
- Some support for a Strategic Active Travel network if this was high quality.
- Mixed views on parklets and equestrian issues.

Public Transport Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Need to develop more reliable and frequent bus services, that also have good ticketing and are low cost.
- Strong support for the development of an improved, and lower carbon public transport network.
- Support for development of the Cowley Branch Line, Grove station, electrification and links to Witney.
- On Park and Ride there was overall mixed messages.
- Some support for developing Park and Rides as travel interchanges or Park and Cycle hubs.

Climate Emergency and Air Quality Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Many of the responders highlighted the need to promote sustainable travel, as well as the importance of electric vehicle charging points.
- Strong support for the move towards a transport network that has less impact on climate change, as well as air quality.
- Mixed responses on Green Infrastructure.
- Strong support for the concept of School Streets and improving and encouraging walking and cycling to school.

Area Strategies Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Main comments in respect of area strategies and corridor connectivity were about improving provision for cycling, public transport and motorcycling, as well as HGV restrictions.
- Regional Network comments were mainly around improving rail links and key roads, particularly the A34 and A420, but not the Expressway.
- Most respondents supported the Connecting Oxford and Zero Emission Zone proposals but there were mixed views on the Workplace Parking Levy.

Connectivity Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Strong support for the roll out of full fibre broadband to support home working, and better mobile phone reception in rural areas.
- Many respondents highlighted the need to better manage freight.
- Support for the need to improve highway maintenance and prioritise maintenance of sustainable transport routes.
- Comments on the motorcycle paper were mixed - general concern expressed about how motorcycles have been perceived.
- Smart City and Living Lab concepts received less support and comments.

Conclusions

Following analysis of these responses and the key headlines, we believe that overall there is support for an approach to developing the LTCP that:

- Recognises the need to develop active and healthy travel modes, and new facilities and networks to support pedestrian and cycle travel.
- Supports development of a transport system that both reduces climate impacts and improves air quality.
- Sets out plans to improve public transport across Oxfordshire, including improved bus and rail services.
- Recognises that different approaches may be more suitable for different areas e.g. between rural and urban areas.
- Considers how best to improve connectivity in a wider context, including measures such as broadband improvements that reduce the need to travel.
- Addresses how best to manage modes of transport with particular needs e.g. motorcycles and freight vehicles.

2. Introduction

Local Transport Plans are statutory documents, required under the Transport Act 2008. We are calling ours the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), to better reflect our strategy both for digital infrastructure and for connecting the whole county.

There are three main reasons why we need to develop a new Local Transport Plan. These are to reflect new priorities, account for new funding opportunities and incorporate new ideas and strategies.

The purpose of this engagement activity was to offer a platform for opinion and interest before developing and consulting upon on a draft LTCP. This approach is part of our commitment to meaningful engagement and will enable us to use the responses to inform the LTCP's content.

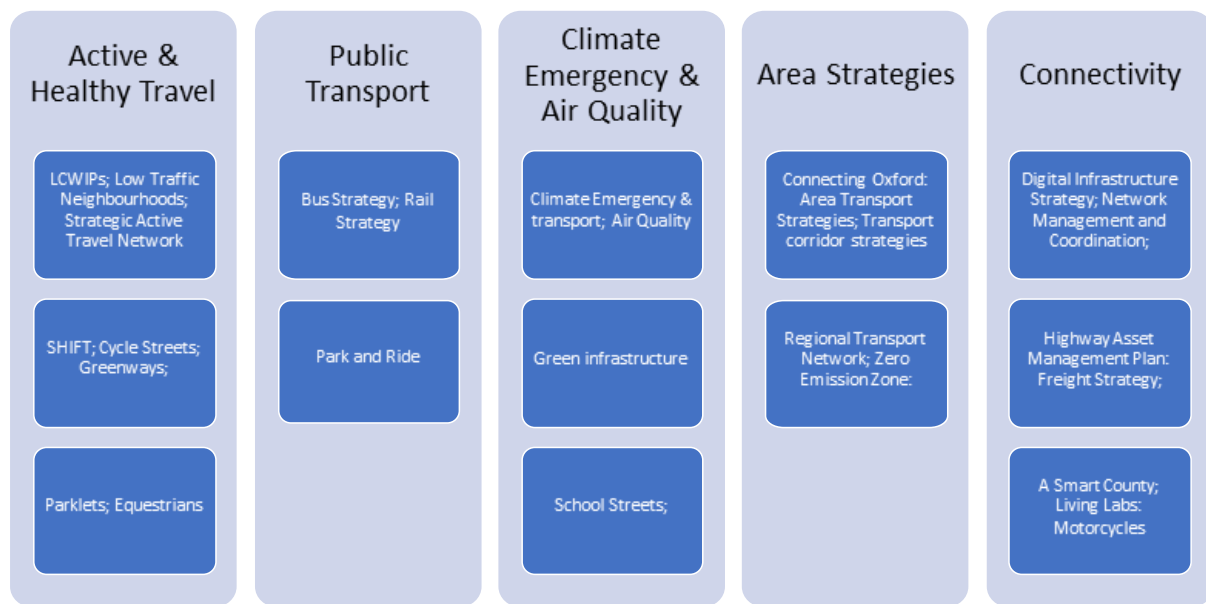
The purpose of this report is to document the LTCP engagement process, provide information on the number of responses received and provide a summary of the themes identified in the responses.

The responses received as part of this engagement will be used to inform the development of a draft LTCP.

3. How we engaged

Engagement for the LTCP ran from the 4th March 2020 and closed on the 17th May 2020, the deadline having been extended to take account for the impact of Covid-19. Respondents were invited to comment on 28 topic papers and comments could be submitted through the online consultation portal, or by email.

The 28 LTCP engagement topic papers were divided into five areas; Active & Healthy Travel, Public Transport, Climate Emergency & Air Quality, Area Strategies and Connectivity, as seen below, with respondents asked to feedback key issues in relation to these topic papers;



Each topic paper closed with a section asking, 'What do you think?'. In this section were several prompts specifically for that topic paper to help gather opinions and thoughts on the topic in question. However, the question boxes were mostly open ended, so that respondents could comment on what they would like.

The topic papers were available online on Oxfordshire County Council's consultation webpage. This webpage can be accessed by computers, mobile phones and tablets to maximise accessibility. Respondents could make representations to the engagement by email, or online through the web-form

We promoted the engagement activity through a press release, emails to known stakeholders and social media. The press release issued on the 4th March 2020 is shown below.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Home News News by topic News by area Media Library Search news Search

Home > Business > News from Oxfordshire County Council > County launches engagement survey on Oxfordshire's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP)- UPDATED

04 March 2020

County launches engagement survey on Oxfordshire's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP)- UPDATED

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County launches engagement survey on Oxfordshire's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP)- UPDATED

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Does your April use an electric blanket? If so, make sure you book an electric blanket check. This year we'll only be doing collections. Let us know when you're available. Call: 01865 205050. Email: communityengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk Further advice here: 2020live.co.uk/home/content/le...

Embed View on Twitter

A new survey that will allow you to help shape the future transformation of transport across Oxfordshire has been launched by Oxfordshire County Council.

With the need for climate action, Healthy Place Shaping and addressing air quality at the heart of our thinking, the new Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP) will set out a transport vision for Oxfordshire that will contribute to developing a zero-carbon economy for the county and transform the health and wellbeing of residents.

Figure 1 – Press release issued on 4th March 2020

4. Who responded to engagement

When responses were submitted via the online form, some demographic information was also recorded. However, it was not a requirement for participants to answer these questions, therefore this section may not be fully representative. This section provides an overview of the demographic information collected to understand who responded to the engagement.

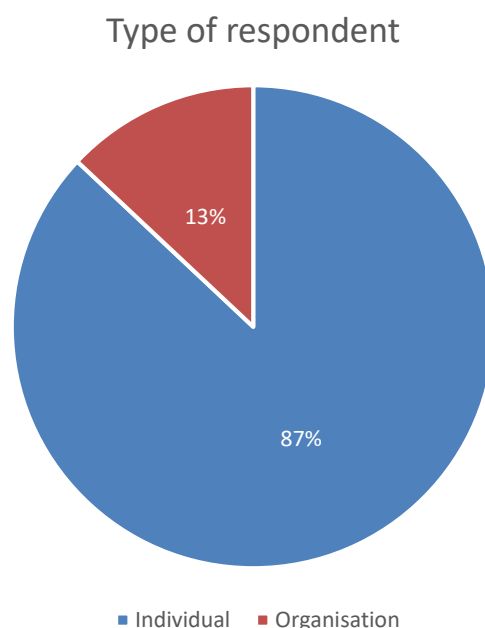
This information helps us to understand how we should use the information, particularly where groups may be under or over-represented. It also helps us to understand how effective our engagement was so that we can improve the approach during the subsequent LTCP consultations.

Type of respondent

In total 735 responses to the engagement were received.

688 responded using the online web-form, of which 636 were individuals and 52 were made on behalf of organisations.

Of those who sent responses by email, 7 were sent by individuals and 40 on behalf of organisations. The full list of organisations that responded can be found in appendix 1 of this report.

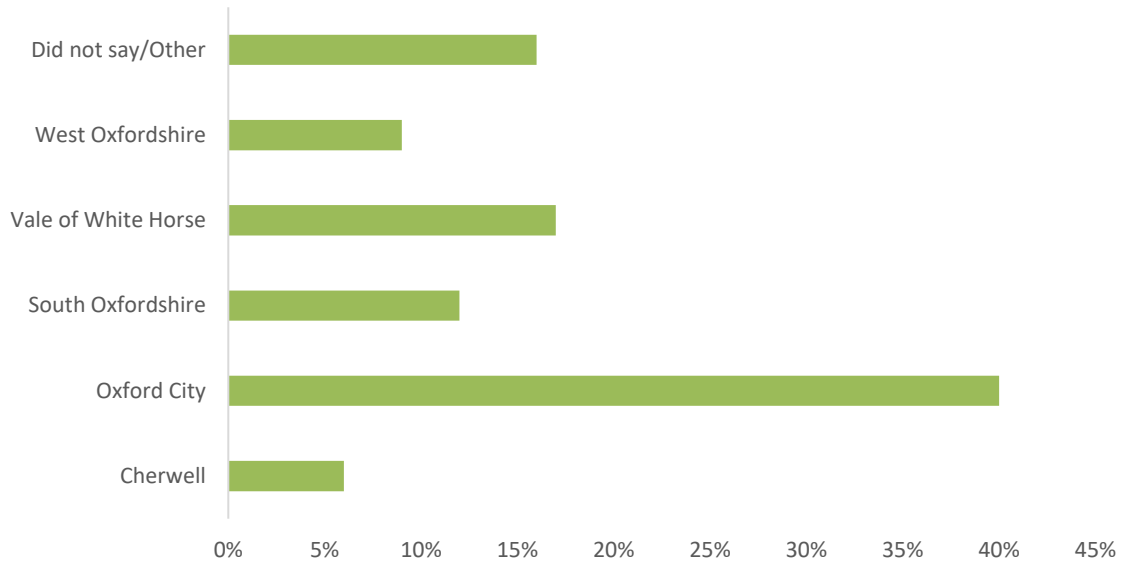


Spatial distribution of respondents

There were respondents from all Oxfordshire districts, with the highest proportion being from Oxford City (40%) and the lowest being from Cherwell (6%).

As noted previously, respondents were not required to provide postcode data resulting in a relatively high proportion (16%) of did not say/other locations. This highlights that the data in these sections may not be fully representative.

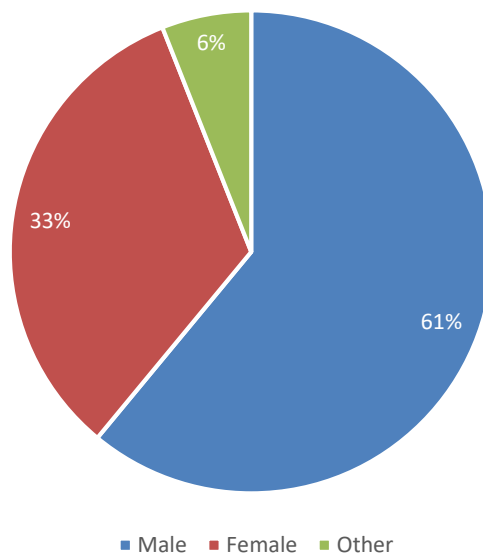
Spatial distribution of respondents



Gender of respondents

There were a higher number of males responding (61%), than females (33%), with the remainder preferring not to say.

Gender of respondents

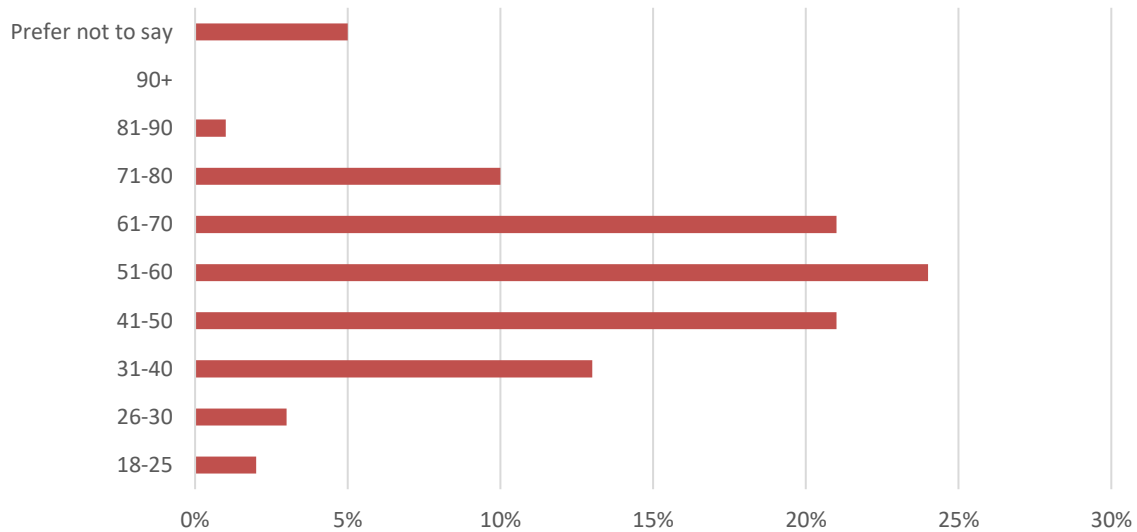


Age of respondents

There were a higher proportion of respondents in the middle age categories, with 45% of respondents aged 41 to 60. The 61 to 70 age group was also well represented with 21% of responses.

There was a low response from the under 30 age group with only 5% of respondents being in this age bracket. The 18-25 age group were particularly poorly represented with only a 2% share of the total responses.

Age of Respondents



5. Overview of Topic Paper Responses

As previously highlighted, there were 28 topic papers across five areas which respondents were invited to comment on. This section provides an overview of how many responses were received on each topic. The following sections then provide a summary of the key headlines arising from the feedback on each topic paper.

Overall the Active and Healthy Travel topic papers received the greatest number of individual responses with 411 responding on the Cycle Streets and Greenway papers, 367 on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and 339 on LCWIPS.

There was also a large individual response to the Climate Emergency and Air Quality topic papers with 342 responses on the Climate Emergency paper and 307 responses to the Air Quality paper.

The Public Transport topic papers received slightly fewer individual responses with 328 responding on the Bus Strategy, 284 on the Rail Strategy and 287 on the Park and Ride paper. The Area Transport Strategy and Connectivity topic papers received fewer individual responses overall, with the main exceptions being the Connecting Oxford, Zero Emission Zone and Motorcycle topic papers.

A full breakdown of the number of responses received on each topic paper is provided in the table below.

Topic Paper Area	Topic Paper	Responses
Active & Healthy Travel	Cycle Streets	445
	Greenways	448
	LCWIPS	375
	Low Traffic Neighbourhoods	397
	SHIFT	348
	Parklets	348
	Strategic Active Travel Network	292
	Equestrians	359
Public Transport	Bus Strategy	359
	Rail Corridor Study	311
	Park and Ride	312
Climate Emergency & Air Quality	Climate Emergency and Transport	377
	Air Quality	340
	Green Infrastructure	247
	School Streets	282
Area Strategies	Connecting Oxford	398
	Area Transport Strategies	219
	Transport Corridor Studies	206
	Regional Transport Network	261
	Zero Emission Zone	424
	Local Community Action on Transport	189

Connectivity		
	Digital Infrastructure	187
	Network Management and Coordination	123
	Highways Asset Management Plan	143
	Freight Strategy	193
	A Smart County	129
	Living Labs	122
	Motorcycles	341

6. Active and Healthy Travel Topic Paper Responses

The Active and Healthy Travel topic papers set out a number of proposals around supporting active travel and also sought feedback on concepts that could further encourage the uptake of active and healthy travel. As highlighted in the previous section there was a strong response to these topic papers, which received a total of 3,012 responses across the 8 topic papers.

Analysis of the key messages received from each topic paper is conducted in the rest of this section. Quoted comments are also included to illustrate the nature of responses received.

Cycle Streets Topic Paper

The Cycle Streets topic paper introduced the concept of Cycle Streets which originated in the Netherlands. The streets are located on main cycle routes and remain open to motorised traffic; however, cyclists have priority over the motorised traffic. The topic paper outlined several street design features that would be used to achieve this, examples and advantages to the concept.

Overall, the majority of responders were supportive of the cycle streets concept and felt they would be an essential step in promoting the uptake of cycling across Oxfordshire. Many respondents highlighted they would be encouraged to cycle with such a scheme in place.

“Cycle Streets would be a great encouragement to cycling, as well as making a better public realm for residents”

A number of respondents highlighted the need for improved road and cycle path maintenance, which is currently viewed as a notable barrier to further uptake of cycling. There were also several respondents who highlighted the speed of motor vehicles as an existing barrier to cycling and there was support for town wide 20mph zones to address this.

“One of the greatest deterrents to the growth of cycling is the number and speed of motor vehicles”

Some concerns were expressed about the behaviour of motorists on streets where cyclists have priority. There were several suggestions that engagement and communication campaigns may be required to address this.

There were also some respondents who instead advocated for more fully segregated cycle routes and a number who highlighted the need to consider pedestrians and other vulnerable road users on a par with cyclists.

Greenways Topic Paper

The Greenways topic paper set out the intention to improve, combine, link and promote a set of Oxfordshire Greenways. These will deliver higher quality routes for mostly car-free active recreation and some daily journeys. The Greenways would comprise of the existing Public Rights of Way and the minor rural roads, unsurfaced

roads, canal towpaths, disused railway lines, cycle paths, parkland and areas of open countryside that if better linked could provide a set of high-quality dedicated cycling and walking corridors.

There was strong support for the proposals outlined in the Greenways topic paper. Many respondents felt the proposals were positive and highlighted a range of potential benefits such as improved access to the countryside, routes for commuting and recreational use and the potential safety benefits of segregated routes.

“Yes, a brilliant idea that helps link up the city and surrounding areas. It would undoubtedly discourage car use as the alternative is pleasant and feasible for many more people”

A number of respondents highlighted the need to ensure the Greenways are suitably maintained to ensure they remain functional and attractive. Several respondents also mentioned the need for suitable safety measures such as lighting to be considered.

There were several suggestions that the Greenways should be accessible to equestrians and the need for relevant consideration to enable this. Similarly, there were some concerns around the need to ensure safety for all users and questions around how this could be achieved.

“I am concerned about likely safety conflicts between fast moving bicycles when approaching pedestrians from behind”

There was very limited opposition to the Greenways proposals. From those respondents that did oppose the proposals there were not any notable recurring themes. Some of the reasons mentioned include a belief they would only be seasonally used, a belief there is already a sufficient network in place and a preference for other schemes.

LCWIPs Topic Paper

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan’s (LCWIPs) topic paper provided an overview of what LCWIPs are and the approach that has been adopted by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). The County Council have initially opted to produce LCWIPs focused on the ‘Knowledge Spine’ of Didcot, Oxford and Bicester. Further LCWIPs may cover other growth towns and links between them. The topic paper outlined what each LCWIP will consist of and the policies that will be implemented.

Many respondents supported the LCWIP approach and there was strong support for the production of further LCWIPs, including several respondents who suggested conducting LCWIPs for all towns in the county.

“LCWIPs need to be extended to cover the whole County. That is the only way to achieve a modal shift”

However, there were some concerns around the way in which the LCWIP approach segments the different types of cycleway. It was suggested this approach was not inclusive to different cyclists. There was a number of respondents who were

particularly concerned about the 'Quick Ways' concept and potential safety issues associated with these routes.

“A distinction between Quick Ways and Quiet Ways on the basis of usership is a really bad idea, most fundamentally because the people who cycle (or might want to) are not bimodally distributed.”

As with the Cycle Streets topic paper there were a number of respondents who highlighted the need for better road maintenance, segregated cycle routes and measures to address car driver behaviour. There were also some comments around the need for a better integrated cycle network.

It was also suggested by some respondents that there is a greater focus required on pedestrians and measures to improve walking across Oxfordshire.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods Topic Paper

The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) topic paper provided an overview of the concept, examples from London and supporting evidence. LTNs aim to create pedestrian and cycle friendly streets and a better liveable environment for residents. This is achieved through targeted road closures to prevent through traffic whilst still always allowing access for cycling and where appropriate also for buses. The topic paper set out that the County Council believe there is strong evidence in support of these schemes.

The majority of respondents were supportive of the LTN concept and would welcome the introduction of such schemes across Oxfordshire. Improvements to local air quality, the public realm and quality of life were frequently identified as potential benefits alongside encouraging walking and cycling.

“We strongly support discouraging through traffic in residential areas. This would lower air pollution, noise pollution, traffic accidents and engender better communities.”

There were also several respondents who welcomed LTNs to reduce 'rat running' in local neighbourhoods. However, there were concerns highlighted about the potential of LTNs to disperse 'rat running' and through traffic to other areas.

It was suggested by some respondents that vehicular access will need to be maintained to LTNs for emergency vehicles and delivery vehicles. Several potential measures such as rising bollards were suggested to enable this.

“It's fine to close down rat runs. But people who live in streets which aren't used for this purpose should still be able to use cars when they want to, and to be able to get deliveries.”

There were some concerns expressed about the applicability of LTNs to rural areas. Concerns were also expressed about access to local shops and the potential economic impact of this.

A number of respondents also highlighted the potential difficulties of implementing such a scheme and likely opposition from residents who are dependent on vehicles. Community engagement and consultation were often cited as ways to mitigate this.

SHIFT Topic Paper

The Sustainable Healthy Integrated Functional Travel (SHIFT) topic paper introduced the SHIFT project. The project aims to improve journeys combining public transport with walking and cycling, effectively breaking down any physical barriers to providing a seamless travel experience. The topic paper highlighted the proposed next steps which is to undertake assessments of the facilities for pedestrian and cycles on our core public transport corridors, so that we can identify opportunities for improvements in more detail.

Overall, the majority of respondents were supportive of the SHIFT project and the County Council's proposed approach. A lack of access to public transport by active travel was seen as a barrier by many respondents and so the SHIFT proposals were seen as a necessary step to address existing issues.

A number of respondents highlighted the lack of cycle parking at transport hubs and the need to address this alongside the SHIFT project.

“There just isn't enough bike parking anywhere, with the possible exception of Oxford Parkway and Didcot Parkway stations.”

It was also frequently highlighted by respondents that accompanying measures to encourage walking and cycling are required. An improved walking and cycling network and safety measures such as LTNs were frequently cited as necessary accompaniments to SHIFT.

There were also comments around the current lack of public transport options available and cost of public transport. It was suggested these issues need to be addressed in the first place to encourage further public transport use.

“More importantly, bus services need to be more frequent, more reliable, and significantly cheaper if they are to get people out of their cars.”

Some concerns were expressed regarding the inclusivity of the SHIFT project and catering for the needs of older, disabled and less active residents.

Parklets Topic Paper

The Parklets topic paper provided a broad overview of the Parklets concept. Parklets are micro-parks created by switching car parking spaces into spaces for sitting, resting, the environment, cycle parking and for adding greenery and plant life to urban environments. The topic paper outlined benefits, examples and potential limitations of introducing parklets in Oxfordshire.

Generally, there was support for Parklets from respondents. Creating green public spaces in place of car parking was broadly supported in principle.

“Parklets sound an excellent idea, a good way to rebalance the (mis) allocation of road space, and to improve the local street environment.”

However, there were a number of concerns expressed about the feasibility of installing parklets due to the existing pressures on parking. There were also several concerns from respondents about maintaining parklets due to potential vandalism.

Some respondents were opposed to parklets, notably because they felt that the funding would be better used on other projects. There were also some respondents who expressed concern about the measurable impact of such schemes and the applicability of parklets to rural areas.

Strategic Active Travel Network Topic Paper

The Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN) is central to the Council’s Healthy Place Shaping agenda. The topic paper outlined how the SATN will bring together all of our thinking, policies and commitments to Active & Healthy Travel, taking a countywide network approach to connect different modes of travel. The topic paper highlighted how this strategic approach will allow progress on projects and approaches such as LCWIPs, SHIFT, Greenways and School Streets.

Overall, there was high level support for the SATN. However, respondents highlighted that this needs to be high quality and suggested that further detailed planning was required to develop the principle. As with previous topic papers the need for maintenance, segregation and a well-integrated network were all highlighted by respondents.

“There are a number of good ideas here, but they are not clearly integrated. The linkages are clear, but there is little evidence here that this will deliver significant modal shift”

There were a number of concerns expressed about how the SATN would be funded and respondents suggested this needs further consideration. Some concerns were also expressed about the focus on cycling and suggested that a greater emphasis is required on walking.

Equestrians Topic Paper

The Equestrians topic paper outlined and sought feedback on the proposal to better include and integrate horse rider and equestrian issues across a number of areas under OCC’s control.

There were mixed responses to the proposals in the topic paper. Overall there was support for the need to better include and integrate equestrian issues. Support for this from respondents often highlighted the need to consider the safety of all road users and the vulnerability of horse riders.

“Any user of the highway, including Equine should be included”

However, there were a number of respondents that were opposed to the better integration of equestrian issues. It was suggested by respondents that horse riding was dangerous and presented issues when mixing with other road users. There were

also several respondents who felt the focus on equestrians was unjustified given their relatively small proportion of the overall population.

“I'm not sure that there are sufficient numbers of riders to be a consideration”

There were a number of respondents who highlighted that other vulnerable road users with specific requirements such as motorcyclists, should also receive similar consideration.

Active and Healthy Travel Topic Paper Key Headlines

- The need to provide for high quality on and off-road cycle and pedestrian facilities for all types of users, including in urban and rural areas.
- Support for further development of LCWIPs and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.
- Some support for a Strategic Active Travel network if this was high quality.
- Mixed views on parklets and equestrian issues.

7. Public Transport Topic Paper Responses

The Public Transport topic papers set out plans for a Bus Strategy, Rail Corridor Strategy and further development of Park and Rides. These topic papers and the proposals within them are at the heart of our ambition to deliver a zero-carbon, public transport network for the county. There was a strong response to these topic papers, which all received over 300 responses and a total of 982 responses across the 3 topic papers.

Analysis of the key messages received from each topic paper is conducted in the rest of this section. Quoted comments are also included to illustrate the nature of responses received.

Bus Strategy Topic Paper

Buses are at the heart of our ambition to deliver a zero-carbon, public transport network for the county. The topic paper highlighted that it is imperative there is mode shift from cars to buses to improve air quality, lower carbon emissions, better manage congestion and have a healthier population. The topic paper set out the current situation, data, current plans and challenges around bus use. It also sought feedback on what else the bus strategy could consider.

There was strong support from respondents for modal shift to increased bus usage and the development of an improved, and lower carbon public transport network. Measures to encourage this such as bus priority infrastructure were strongly supported.

A large number of respondents highlighted existing issues with bus services across the county that need to be addressed to encourage modal shift. Recurring themes identified were high costs, limited or infrequent schedules, a lack of connectivity and reliability issues.

“It is imperative that a strategy to increase the geographical spread of these services, and also the service frequencies, is thoroughly considered and implemented in order to make bus travel attractive”

Another key consideration highlighted by respondents was the difficulties of using bus services in rural areas. Limited service frequencies, schedules and geographical spread were all identified as key issues in rural areas. Several respondents also highlighted the challenges around bus subsidy funding for rural areas. There were some respondents supporting Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) in rural areas.

“Many rural parts of South Oxfordshire have no bus service at all. In other parts of the district, buses are infrequent and unreliable. A third of Oxfordshire residents live in rural areas”

Some respondents also highlighted issues with the radial nature of buses into Oxford, the lack of integrated ticketing, difficulties with the first and last mile and the need to improve access to bus stops by active transport.

Rail Corridor Strategy Topic Paper

The Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study (ORCS) is being funded and progressed as a partnership between the Department for Transport and local rail industry Stakeholders, including the Oxfordshire Growth Board and covers passenger and freight operations. The topic paper highlighted what the ORCS will do and what was completed as the first part of the study.

The majority of respondents were supportive of rail and proposals to increase capacity and improve connectivity. There was particular support for development of the Cowley Branch Line, Grove station, electrification and links to Witney.

“Rail travel is vital to reduce reliance on the car and to begin to deliver the carbon reductions that are essential for our joint futures.”

Existing issues for consideration were highlighted by several respondents. These include access to the train stations, a lack of motorcycle and cycle parking and the cost of rail travel.

Some concerns were expressed about the cost to deliver the proposals in the topic paper and where this funding might come from. There were also concerns about the ability of OCC to influence the proposals.

It was suggested by some respondents that a ‘metro’ style system for the county should be investigated.

Park and Ride Topic Paper

The Park and Ride topic paper outlined the existing facilities in the county and plans for these facilities in the future. The topic paper outlined the position that Park and Ride is likely to continue to have a role in development of the transport strategy in Oxfordshire but will need to be further developed in the context of wider environmental and health objectives, as well as planned new development. Three key areas of focus to achieve this were outlined in the topic paper.

Overall there were mixed messages on Park and Ride. Some respondents thought that Park and Ride encouraged car use, whilst others supported development of new sites and making parking free.

“Park and rides have helped protect Oxford and continue to give access to central jobs and services with less pollution and environmental damage compared with car access.”

Respondents in favour of Park and Rides generally recognised their potential to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles entering Oxford city centre and thus tackle congestion and air quality issues. The need for further incentives such as free parking and bus priority measures were suggested by respondents as ways to encourage Park and Ride usage.

Those respondents against the further development of Park and Rides largely highlighted their encouragement of car travel. Encouraging car usage generally and travel to outer Oxford ring roads were seen as notable issues associated with Park

and Ride usage. There were also respondents who viewed Park and Rides as unnecessary if an efficient bus and rail network is in place.

“P&R has catered for, and accommodated, growth in the use of private motor car across Oxfordshire.”

There were a number of respondents that supported developing Park and Rides as travel interchanges, including facilities such as bike parking, parcel collection points and electric vehicle charging bays. There were also several respondents who advocated for increased cycle routes to Park and Rides to enable ‘Park and Cycle’. There was some support for exploring the potential of smaller Park and Rides in other towns and on key corridors.

Public Transport Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Need to develop more reliable and frequent bus services, that also have good ticketing and are low cost.
- Strong support for the development of an improved, and lower carbon public transport network.
- Support for development of the Cowley Branch Line, Grove station, electrification and links to Witney.
- On Park and Ride there was overall mixed messages.
- Some support for developing Park and Rides as travel interchanges or Park and Cycle hubs.

8. Climate Emergency and Air Quality Topic Papers

The Climate Emergency and Air Quality topic papers provide background information and context about the Climate Emergency and outline initiatives that the County Council can deliver to help. There was a considerable response to the Climate Emergency and Air Quality topic papers, with both receiving over 340 responses. Responses to the Green Infrastructure and School Streets topic papers were more limited but a total of 1,246 responses were still received across the 4 topic papers.

Analysis of the key messages received from each topic paper is conducted in the rest of this section. Quoted comments are also included to illustrate the nature of responses received.

Climate Emergency and Transport Topic Paper

The Climate Emergency and Transport topic paper set out background information about climate change and emissions at both the national and local level. The topic paper outlined steps the UK government are taking, current sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Oxfordshire and local actions already happening. The paper then sought suggestions on further actions the County Council could take.

Many of the respondents highlighted the need to promote sustainable travel - public transport, walking and cycling to combat climate change. The role electric vehicles can play in helping to reduce emissions and the importance of charging points to facilitate this transition were also noted by respondents.

“This is the most important section of the paper. We must work to get rid of motor traffic, making it easy, cheap and quick to use a centrally planned, well connected public transport system”

There was strong overall support for the move towards a transport network that has less impact on climate change, as well as air quality. Several respondents suggested that the Council should be setting out targets to achieve a zero-carbon transport network. Some respondents highlighted the need to align with England’s Economic Heartland’s (EEH) ambitions around this.

“England’s Economic Heartland’s Outline Transport Strategy sets out a commitment to a zero-carbon transport system across the region by 2050. LTCP5 must also make this commitment clear”

As with the Public Transport topic papers and Active and Healthy Travel topic papers there were a number of comments around the current issues and measures required to encourage sustainable transport. These comments covered the same topics as outlined in the respective topic paper sections of this report.

Some respondents expressed concern about the focus on electric vehicles. A number of these respondents highlighted that electric vehicles still produce particulate pollution from tyres and brake pads. The fact electric vehicles will not address congestion issues was also cited.

Air Quality Topic Paper

The Air Quality topic paper covered a similar structure to the Climate Emergency and Transport topic paper. The topic paper outlined current evidence and data about air quality in the county and then highlighted existing steps being taken by the County Council. The topic paper sought feedback on what more could be done to address air quality in the county.

Many of the respondents expressed similar comments to those in the Climate Emergency and Transport topic paper. As with before this included highlighting the need for the promotion of sustainable transport and strong support for the move towards a transport network that has less impact on climate change and air quality.

The role of powered two wheelers was noted by several respondents. These responses largely noted that CO₂, NO_x and particulate emissions are lower for motorcycles than cars on a mile for mile basis. It was suggested by some respondents that uptake of powered two wheelers should be encouraged to address air quality issues.

“Not everyone can walk or cycle everywhere. If people needing a vehicle can use a motorcycle instead of a car this will help to reduce emissions, in particular no NO_x and fewer particulate emissions”

It was suggested by some respondents that polluting vehicles should be banned from built up areas. A number of these respondents highlighted the Zero Emission Zone proposals and supported an expansion of them. There were also some suggestions that similar schemes should be introduced in all towns across Oxfordshire.

“Stop private car traffic being able to access Oxford to the maximum extent possible. Make travelling by car the most inconvenient mode of transport”

The role of home working was highlighted by several respondents. The increase of home working during the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential to build upon this was suggested to reduce the need for travel and subsequently improve air quality.

It was also suggested that there should be increased monitoring of air quality across the county. A number of respondents suggested having air quality warning systems or displaying warnings on variable message signs to share this data.

Green Infrastructure Topic Paper

Green Infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. The Green Infrastructure topic paper sets out its benefits and potential opportunities for incorporating Green Infrastructure into the LTCP.

Responses on the Green Infrastructure topic paper were generally mixed. There were many comments around limiting development on Green areas. These comments generally expressed concern about the loss of Green Infrastructure to new developments and the need to retain as much Green Infrastructure as possible moving forward.



There were also a number of respondents who expressed support for tree planting rather than the development of green routes. Support for green routes was limited and concerns were expressed about the potential impact of such routes on the surrounding environment. Whereas there was strong support for tree planting, particularly along road corridors.

“Excellent idea to add green benefit with trees, bushes etc to existing highways”

Several organisations highlighted the importance of developing Green Infrastructure alongside transport connectivity improvements. Respondents noted that this should support delivery of the Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network (NRN).

School Streets Topic Paper

A School Street is a road outside a school with a restriction on motorised traffic at school opening and closing times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic but not directly to residents living in the designated area. The aim is to create a safer, healthier and nicer environment for everyone. The topic paper introduced why we need School Streets, how they work, potential concerns and outlined that the County Council are looking at how we can facilitate the uptake of School Streets across Oxfordshire.

Overall there was very strong support for the School Streets concept. Improving and encouraging walking and cycling to school were seen as very important steps in addressing air quality and congestion issues. School Streets were seen by respondents as an effective way to encourage this.

“Strongly support to improve air quality, safety, congestion and healthy access to school”

A small number of respondents expressed concerns about the embedded culture of driving children to school and the conflicts that could arise as a result of School Streets. Some concerns were also expressed about the local applicability of School Streets.

Respondents also raised questions about how School Streets would be enforced. It was suggested further consideration is needed around this. There were also respondents that suggested parking bans around schools as an alternative measure.

Climate Emergency and Air Quality Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Many of the respondents highlighted the need to promote sustainable travel, as well as the importance of electric vehicle charging points.
- Strong support for the move towards a transport network that has less impact on climate change, as well as air quality.
- Mixed responses on Green Infrastructure.
- Strong support for the concept of School Streets and improving and encouraging walking and cycling to school.

9. Area Strategies Topic Papers

The Area Strategy topic papers provided information about more locally specific proposals that are currently under development or will be developed in support of the LTCP. Overall, there were fewer responses to the Area Strategies topic papers with most averaging responses in the 200's. However, there were two exceptions to this; the Connecting Oxford and Zero Emission Zone topic papers. The responses to these topic papers accounted for nearly half of all Area Strategy topic paper responses. In total 1,697 responses were received across the 6 topic papers.

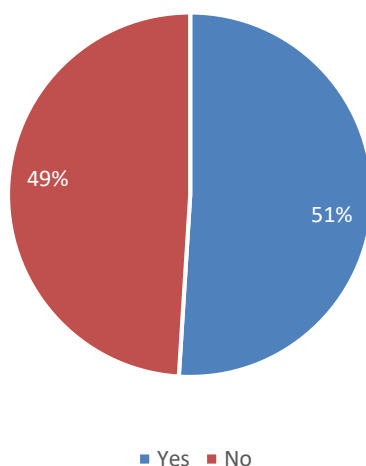
Analysis of the key messages received from each topic paper is conducted in the rest of this section. Quoted comments are also included to illustrate the nature of responses received.

Connecting Oxford Topic Paper

The Connecting Oxford topic paper provided an overview of the Connecting Oxford proposals. The proposals have been developed jointly with Oxford City Council and are for further bus gates, a Workplace Parking Levy in the Eastern Arc, further Controlled Parking Zones and the implementation of a Zero Emission Zone. Connecting Oxford has already been the subject of a public engagement exercise in September and October 2019. The topic paper asked if respondents had previously responded to the engagement and offered a chance for further comments.

The chart below shows that just over half of respondents to the Connecting Oxford topic paper had already commented on the proposals as part of the 2019 engagement.

Did you comment on the Connecting Oxford proposals?



Overall respondents were supportive of the Connecting Oxford proposals. Many respondents recognised the need for stronger and urgent intervention to address the high levels of private car usage in Oxford. There was particular support for the bus gate proposals from respondents.

“Support as the measures should encourage healthy travel, less adverse impact from car travel and enhanced living and working environments.”

The Workplace Parking Levy received mixed responses. Some respondents were supportive of the proposal and several respondents suggested it should be expanded to cover all of the city. However, there was also opposition from some respondents. Opposition was largely due to concerns about impacts on local businesses and those dependent on private car use.

It was highlighted by some respondents that there is a need to provide suitable alternatives before the Connecting Oxford proposals are implemented. These suggestions largely mirrored the key headlines from the Active and Healthy Travel and Public Transport topic papers.

“Unfortunately this will not change anything as there is no alternative options”

Some respondents expressed concerns about the potential for the proposals to displace traffic congestion to elsewhere. There were also suggestions around the need for housing growth in Oxford to be better located around existing transport hubs.

Area Transport Strategies Topic Paper

The Area Transport Strategies topic paper highlighted that different strategies for urban, rural, towns and villages will be required in support of the LTCP. The topic paper highlighted the Science Vale Transport Strategy as an existing example and sought respondents’ views on an area strategy for their area.

Respondents were generally supportive of the need for Area Transport Strategies. The majority of comments on the Area Strategies topic paper were about improving provision for cycling, public transport and motorcycling.

The comments about improving provision for cycling and public transport generally covered the same topics as those covered in the Active and Healthy Travel and Public Transport topic papers. There were also a number of specific scheme recommendations related to respondent’s local areas.

Several respondents made comments around improving provision for motorcycles. Respondents highlighted the specific needs and vulnerability of motorcycle users and suggested they are considered specifically in County Council transport strategies. Potential benefits of encouraging motorcycle use such as reduced emissions and increased road space were also highlighted.

“Motorcycles should be included as an important option in any transport strategy”

Transport Corridor Connectivity Topic Paper

The Transport Corridor Connectivity topic paper provided an overview of the major transport corridors in the county. The topic paper outlined some of the challenges on these corridors and set out some of the opportunities for change along these corridors.

The majority of respondents were supportive of the role buses can play in addressing existing issues on major transport corridors. Respondents generally recognised the role buses can play in reducing the number of cars on these corridors and the

consequent improvements to journey time and air quality. Bus priority measures were mentioned by a number of respondents as a way to address existing issues.

“The A420 is already too busy, therefore any measures taken should discourage car use. Bus priority and safe bus stops are good ideas.”

The role of rail was highlighted by some respondents. Encouraging uptake of rail or creating new rail links along major transport corridors was seen as an effective way to address congestion issues on major transport corridors.

It was suggested by some respondents that measures to restrict HGV’s are required. Encouraging more freight to be transported by rail was suggested as one possible way to reduce the number of HGV’s on major transport corridors. Some respondents also suggested weight restrictions to limit HGV access to certain roads.

Regional Transport Network Topic Paper

The Regional Transport Network topic paper highlighted the relevant regional transport activities that are occurring, and Oxfordshire is a part of. The activities highlighted in the topic paper were the Ox-Cam Arc, EEH’s proposed transport strategy, East West Rail, the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and the Major Road Network.

Comments on the Regional Transport Network were mainly around improving rail links and key roads. Comments around rail links were largely the same as those received on the Rail Corridor Study topic paper. Comments on the improvements needed to key roads particularly mentioned the A34 and A420.

There were also a number of comments expressing opposition to the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. The majority of this opposition cited how the scheme would encourage car use and the potential impacts of this on climate change and air quality.

“I do not think a new Expressway is a good way to mitigate the climate emergency, improve air quality or support healthy place shaping”

Respondents generally supported East West Rail and a number advocated for this to be delivered as soon as possible. It was also suggested that there is a need for greater cooperation with neighbouring local authorities to better coordinate transport planning.

Zero Emission Zone Topic Paper

Overall there was strong support from respondents for the Zero Emission Zone. The potential benefits to air quality were often cited as reasons for support. A number of respondents advocated for implementing the zone as soon as possible.

There were some respondents who opposed to introduction of the Zero Emission Zone, but these comments were limited. Key reasons for opposition were potential economic impacts on businesses, restricting access for older and disabled residents and traffic dispersion to surrounding areas.

Some respondents felt that the Zero Emission Zone is not ambitious enough. It was suggested by respondents that the proposals focus too heavily on introducing electric

vehicles rather than reducing the overall number of vehicles. It was also suggested by several respondents that the scope of the zone should be increased, with a town wide zone being suggested as a more appropriate level of ambition.

“I strongly support an ambitious zero emission zone expansion in oxford”

Local Community Action on Transport Topic Paper

The Local Community Action on Transport topic paper outlined that £3 million of funding per year is being made available to improve local road safety and accessibility. These measures are designed to encourage walking and cycling as part of the council's commitment to improving air quality and active lifestyles. The topic paper sought to find out what local communities would want to progress, including any ideas where there may already be some funding in place.

One of the recurring suggestions was around measures to encourage lower speeds in residential areas. A number of respondents suggested 20mph zones and measures to encourage this such as speed humps and traffic gates. There was particular mention of the need to reduce traffic around schools.

“I'd like to see lower speed limits in villages - 20mph with speed reduction schemes installed such as speed humps in hot spot 'rat runs'”

There were also recurring suggestions supporting the delivery of sustainable transport measures in local areas. These touched upon many of the improvements highlighted in the Active and Healthy Travel topic papers. The need for further cycle parking was also highlighted.

Other recurring suggestions were around the provision of a DRT service in rural areas and using the funding for 'greening' local areas through measures such as parklets, hanging baskets and more street trees.

Area Strategies Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Main comments in respect of area strategies and corridor connectivity were about improving provision for cycling, public transport and motorcycling, as well as HGV restrictions.
- Regional Network comments were mainly around improving rail links and key roads, particularly the A34 and A420, but not the Expressway.
- Most respondents supported the Connecting Oxford and Zero Emission Zone proposals but there were mixed views on the Workplace Parking Levy.

10. Connectivity Topic Papers

The Connectivity topic papers covered a range of proposals and supporting strategies related to various aspects of connectivity both within the county and to surrounding areas. Generally, there were fewer responses to the Connectivity topic papers with most averaging less than 200 responses. However, there was a notable exception to this with the Motorcycle topic paper receiving 341 responses. In total 1,238 responses were received across the 7 topic papers.

Analysis of the key messages received from each topic paper is conducted in the rest of this section. Quoted comments are also included to illustrate the nature of responses received.

Digital Infrastructure Strategy Topic Paper

The Digital Infrastructure Strategy topic paper highlighted the role that digital infrastructure can play now and the increased role it will play in the future. The topic paper outlined that OCC is supportive of connecting the whole county, including rural areas to superfast fibre broadband. The topic paper provided an overview of the strategies and policies proposed to improve digital connectivity and sought feedback on how respondents could be better connected.

Overall respondents supported the roll out of full fibre broadband. There was particular mention of the need for full fibre broadband to support home working and the roll this can play in reducing travel demand. There was also strong support for better mobile phone reception in rural areas.

“Better connectivity would enable us to work from home”

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on home working were noted by a number of respondents. It was suggested that this has demonstrated the ability of residents to work from home and that further home working should be encouraged.

Some respondents highlighted concerns about the health impacts of working from home and increased digital working. It was suggested measures to address these impacts should be considered.

Network Management and Coordination Topic Paper

The Network Management and Coordination topic paper highlighted a number of potential changes to our Network Management Policy. It was suggested that a key focus of our updated Network Management policy could be to directly influence transport movement at both strategic and local levels, through providing support for sustainable travel choices. Supporting systems and opportunities to achieve this were outlined in the topic paper.

There were few dominant themes in responses to the topic paper. Some respondents were supportive of the approach and highlighted the need to prioritise sustainable transport.

Several respondents expressed concerns about the lack of focus on the car. These respondents felt that those reliant on car travel were being overlooked and suggested that the Network Management Policy should do more to improve traffic flow on the existing network.

Other comments from respondents suggested better incorporating real time information, the development of a more integrated transport network and better use of technology for traffic management.

Highways Asset Management Plan Topic Paper

The Highways Asset Management Plan topic paper provided an overview of the assets managed by Oxfordshire, the current approach to managing these and the benefits of this approach. The topic paper then sought feedback on the current approach.

The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed approach to highways asset management. There were several comments about the poor state of many local roads and the need for this to be addressed. This included a number of cyclists highlighting safety issues on existing routes. Respondents were supportive of an approach that would improve current maintenance regimes. Respondents also suggested a greater focus on existing assets rather than creating new routes.

“A safe system for transport is required across the County and needs to be maintained to a high standard”

Some respondents suggested a greater focus on modal shift in order to encourage less vehicle traffic. It was highlighted that this would help to reduce maintenance costs. Measures to encourage this such as prioritising maintenance for sustainable travel routes were also suggested.

There was some concern expressed about the level of detail included in the plan. Some respondents felt that the high-level objectives did not provide sufficient detail to explain how roads would be better maintained in practice.

Freight Strategy Topic Paper

The Freight Strategy topic paper provided an overview of current freight movements in the county. The topic paper highlighted the issue of needing to enable an effective freight network whilst managing the environmental, congestion and pollution impacts of freight. The topic paper introduced several ways in which this might be achieved.

There was strong support from respondents for the need to better manage freight. The impacts of freight on traffic congestion and local areas were often cited as a key driver for this. The negative impacts on local areas highlighted by respondents included noise pollution and road safety.

“I think it is important to encourage more freight onto the railways”

The use of rail and cargo bikes to better manage freight were both strongly supported. A number of respondents advocated for the greater movement of freight by rail and the need for facilities to enable this. Cargo bikes were also seen as having significant

potential to reduce the negative impacts of freight and respondents suggested the implementation of cargo bike schemes.

Several respondents also suggested freight consolidation centres and out of town hubs to reduce freight movements through local areas and facilitate zero-carbon last mile deliveries.

However, there was some concern expressed by respondents about the applicability of the suggested measures to rural areas. Respondents highlighted that cargo bikes may not be feasible in rural areas and that accessibility by vehicle will need to be considered.

A Smart County Topic Paper

The Smart County topic paper introduced the Smart Cities concepts that have emerged in relation to improved digital technology. The topic paper highlighted that there is a need to expand the Smart City principles and focus on rural areas as well. The topic paper proposed a Smart County approach, the principles developed to support this and identified use cases.

There were few comments on the Smart County topic paper and therefore there are not any clear headlines.

Comments received from respondents included concern about the focus on unproven technology and instead suggested focusing on basic transport provisions. Several respondents also noted that they did not understand the proposals.

“Better to get the basics right first before we invest in this”

Living Labs Topic Paper

The Living Labs topic paper highlighted the opportunity that is currently available to design our shared future with new and innovative approaches. The topic paper explained how this is possible through the Oxfordshire Living Lab which is a test bed innovation.

As with the Smart County topic paper there were few comments provided by respondents and as a result few clear headlines. Similarly, a number of respondents highlighted that they did not understand the proposals.

“Innovation is essential. It will be important to incorporate a 'citizen science' approach and ensure that the agenda is not set solely by professionals.”

There was some support noted from respondents and several expressed a willingness to see innovative trials in their local area. However, there were also respondents that expressed concern about whether these trials would result in meaningful change across the county.

Motorcycles Topic Paper

The Motorcycles topic paper provided a range of data about current motorcycle usage nationally and within the county. The topic paper then set out reasons for and against promoting motorcycle usage as part of the LTCP before asking respondents for their views on what approach should be taken.

A large number of comments were received on the Motorcycle topic paper with many respondents highlighting the benefits of increased motorcycle uptake. This included noting that they are less polluting and take up less space than cars and that there is an opportunity to build upon these benefits with electric motorcycles.

“Instead of criticising motorcycles and motorcyclists I believe you should be promoting and supporting road safety campaigns to protect motorcyclists and training for riders”

Respondents also highlighted a range of general suggestions and existing issues related to motorcycle usage. This included suggestions that motorcycles should be able to use bus lanes and the current lack of motorcycle parking.

A number of respondents expressed a general concern about how motorcycles had been perceived in the topic paper, particularly in relation to accident data. Existing safety measures, the vulnerability of motorcyclists and outlying causes for accidents were all included in response to this concern. It was suggested that further consideration of motorcyclist’s vulnerability and specific needs is needed in the LTCP.

However, overall comments on the Motorcycle topic paper were mixed. There was also opposition to motorcycles noted by respondents. Motorcycle noise, speed and safety were cited by a number of respondents as a significant issue.

“I think we need to recognise what a problem the noise pollution from motorcycles can be for people living in rural areas”

Several respondents suggested that motorcycles should be treated on a par with cars as they are both reliant upon internal combustion engines. These respondents suggested that modal shift to active transport should be the primary focus.

Connectivity Topic Papers Key Headlines

- Strong support for the roll out of full fibre broadband to support home working, and better mobile phone reception in rural areas.
- Many respondents highlighted the need to better manage freight.
- General support for the need to improve highway maintenance and prioritise maintenance of sustainable transport routes.
- Comments on the motorcycle paper were mixed - general concern expressed about how motorcycles have been perceived.
- Smart City and Living Lab concepts received less support and comments.

11. Conclusions and Next Steps

Conclusions

The engagement activity received a large number of comprehensive replies and comments on the topic papers presented, from both individuals and a number of organisations.

Following analysis of these responses and the key headlines, we believe that overall there is support for an approach to developing the LTCP that:

- Recognises the need to develop active and healthy travel modes, and new facilities and networks to support pedestrian and cycle travel.
- Supports development of a transport system that both reduces climate impacts and improves air quality.
- Sets out plans to improve public transport across Oxfordshire, including improved bus and rail services.
- Recognises that different approaches may be more suitable for different areas e.g. between rural and urban areas.
- Considers how best to improve connectivity in a wider context, including measures such as broadband improvements that reduce the need to travel.
- Addresses how best to manage modes of transport with particular needs e.g. motorcycles and freight vehicles.

Next Steps

It is planned that the LTCP is now developed and consulted upon in a 2-stage process. The 2 stages are summarised as follows:

- **Stage 1:** Development of the draft LTCP vision and headline objectives, planned to be agreed by consulted upon in February/March 2021.
- **Stage 2:** Development of the full LTCP including updated vision and objectives following consultation, area strategies and policies, and an updated public transport strategy. It is proposed that this would be complete for statutory consultation in Autumn 2021.

Appendix 1 – Summary Table of Organisational Responses

Businesses:	Local Authority	Local Community Groups	Local Lobby Groups	Local Organisations	National Lobby Groups	National Organisation	Parish Councils
-First Choice Chimney Sweeps -First Line Ltd -London Oxford Airport -Stagecoach -UKAEA, Culham Science Centre	-Cllr Dan Levy, WODC -Cllr Dick Wolff, - Green Party Oxford City -Oxford City Council -Reading Borough Council -South & Vale District Councils -South Oxfordshire Green Councillors	-Abingdon Carbon Cutters -Benson NP Delivery Team -Bicester Bike Users' Group (BicesterBUG) -Bicester Social cycling -Caversham and District Residents' Association -Cowley Area Transport Group -Green TEA Eynsham Hanborough -- Environment Group -Headington Action and Headington Neighbourhood Forum -Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon Community Action Group -Thame Green Living -The Green Living Plan for Thame -Wantage and Grove Campaign Group -Windrush Bike Project	-Cyclox -HarBUG - Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group -Need not Greed Oxfordshire -Oxford Civic Society -Oxford Friends of the Earth -Oxford Pedestrians Association -Oxfordshire Cycling Network -Planning Oxfordshire's Environment and Transport Sustainably -Railfuture, Thames Valley Branch -Sustainable South Oxfordshire -The Chiltern Society -Coalition for Health Streets and Active Travel	-GP Performance -Oxfordshire Environment Board -Rollright Trust -University of Oxford	-British Driving Society (BDS) -British Horse Society -British Motorcyclists Federation -Chiltern Society -British Motorcyclists' Federation and Bus Users Oxford -Indoor carriage driving UK -Motorcycle Action Group (Huddersfield Branch) -Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) Motorcycle Industry Association -OCAF and British Horse Society -The British Horse Society -The Motorcycle Action Group -The Ramblers Association -Trail Riders Fellowship -Vintage Motor Cycle Club	-Chilterns Conservation Board -Cotswolds Conservation Board -CPRE Oxfordshire -Cycling UK -Cycling UK -- Oxford -MOD/DIO -Sustrans -Wilts & Berks -Canal Trust	-Elsfield Parish Meeting -Fyfield & Tubney Parish Council -Marcham Parish Council -Mixbury Parish Meeting, -- Stadhampton Parish Council -Charney Bassett Parish Council

Glossary

DRT – Demand Responsive Transport

EEH – England’s Economic Heartland

LCWIP – Local Cycling and walking Infrastructure Plan

LTCP – Local Transport and Connectivity Plan

LTN – Low Traffic Neighbourhood

NRN – Nature Recovery Network

OCC – Oxfordshire County Council

ORCS – Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study

SATN – Strategic Active Travel Network

SHIFT – Sustainable Healthy Integrated Functional Travel