

Connecting Oxfordshire: Volume 4

Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031

Active & Healthy Travel Strategy

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1. Policy Context

- 1.1 This updated Plan has brought active and healthy travel modes together as an Active & Healthy Travel Strategy. This builds on what was already in the original LTP4. It updates the LTP4 cycling strategy and adds new sections on walking and Door to Door integrated journeys, which covers longer journeys undertaken by cycling or walking in combination with bus or rail.
- 1.2 In 2015, the Government stated that it wanted to create “an environment where walking and cycling is the norm for short journeys or part of a longer journey”. The Government issued a consultation draft Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy in March 2016, and aims to work with local government and others to ensure its effective delivery at local level. Oxfordshire County Council will seek to work with the Government to deliver a better cycling and walking environment.
- 1.3 In May 2016, Public Health England outlined five key messages when developing a healthy local transport strategy:
- * Physical activity directly contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and costs £7.4 billion a year to businesses and wider society
 - * The growth in road transport has been a major factor in reducing levels of physical activity
 - * Building walking and cycling into daily routines are the most effective ways to increase physical activity
 - * Short car trips (under 5 miles) are a prime area for switching to active travel and to public transport
 - * Health-promoting transport systems are pro-business and support economic prosperity. They enable optimal travel to work with less congestion, collisions and pollution, and they support a healthier workforce.
- (Source: Working Together to Promote Active Travel – A briefing for local authorities, Public Healthy England 2016)*
- 1.4 Walking and cycling provide opportunities for people to take outdoor recreational exercise and Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for managing and maintaining an extensive network of public rights of way. This includes equestrians as well as walkers and cyclists. There is more information in the Council’s Rights of Way Management Plan – link below:
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxfordshires-rights-way-management-plan>
- 1.5 The Active & Healthy Travel Strategy aims to contribute to reducing pressure on the road network, contribute to economic growth and the reduction of emissions, quality of life and health, and link active travel with bus and rail options by enabling sustainable door to door journeys combining cycling or walking with public transport. It will link with and contribute to other strategies, as outlined in the diagram on page 4.



2. Why there is a need for an Active & Healthy Travel Strategy

Health and inactivity

- 2.1 A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) looks at the current and future health and care needs of local populations to inform and guide the planning and commissioning (buying) of health, well-being and social care services within a local authority area. The 2016 JSNA provides information about Oxfordshire's population and the factors affecting health, wellbeing, and social care needs. The JSNA found that in 2014, 21.9% of people aged 16 years and over in Oxfordshire were physically inactive. 63.1% of those aged 16 years and over in Oxfordshire achieved at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week. This was similar to the level for the previous year (62%). The proportion was similar to the South East (59%) and higher than in England overall (57%). Across the county, proportions varied - from 59.7% in West Oxfordshire to 65.9% in Oxford. However, these differences from the county average were not statistically significant.
- 2.2 In November 2013, Public Health England published *Obesity and the Environment: increasing physical activity and active travel*. The document stated that physical activity that can be incorporated into everyday life such as brisk walking and cycling has been found to be as effective for weight loss as supervised exercise.
- “Creating an environment where people actively choose to walking and cycle as part of everyday life can have a significant impact on public health and may reduce inequalities in health” (Source: *Obesity and the Environment: increasing physical activity and active travel*, Public Health England, 2013).
- 2.3 The Department of Health document *Start Active, Stay Active* (2011) states that regular physical activity can reduce the risk of many chronic conditions including type 2 diabetes, as well as coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions.

What does active travel have to do with transport?

- 2.4 Active and healthy travel can enable people build exercise into journeys that may already form part of their daily routine, rather than try to find time in busy lives to add exercise as an extra task. Walking and/or cycling can replace car trips to work, to the shops, or to catch trains or buses. Walking is the most frequent mode used for very short trips – 76% of all trips under one mile are walks (Source: *National Travel Survey, England 2014*).
- 2.5 However, there is evidence that people from disadvantaged areas are less able to benefit from active travel options. Disadvantaged areas tend to have a higher density of main roads, leading to poorer air quality, higher noise levels and higher collision rates in the UK. The obesogenic environment impact most on disadvantaged groups which discourages walking and cycling and exacerbates health inequalities (Source: *Working Together to Promote Active Travel, Public Health England 2016*).
- 2.6 Through this Strategy, the County Council will proactively seek ways for active travel and transport to play a role in contributing to the health agenda. For example, NHS England recently announced their 'Healthy New Town' programme. Developments or environments which encourage active and healthy travel can contribute to tackling key health challenges that this programme seeks to address, including obesity, dementia and social isolation. Two sites in Oxfordshire have been chosen to be part of this initiative – one in Bicester and another in Barton Park in Oxford.

Active travel can reduce congestion and improve punctuality

- 2.7 Congestion is bad news for the economy. In 2014, a report from the Centre for Economic & Business Research and Inrix estimated that the annual cost of congestion to the UK is currently £40 billion and set to rise to £3 trillion in 2030, if current trends continue. Figures released in May 2016 by the Department for Transport found that a total of £316.7bn miles were travelled by vehicles on the UK road network during 2015, a year-on-year rise of 1.6% and the highest level ever recorded. Long term trends show that since 1995, road traffic has grown by 18.6%. ((Source: *Road Traffic Estimates: Great Britain 2015 Summary Department for Transport 2016*).
- 2.8 More commuting by cycle (or for shorter distances by walking) and Door to Door travel using bus and/or rail in combination with cycling or walking has the potential to contribute to reducing vehicle congestion, increasing punctuality, reducing stress levels and providing businesses with a fitter, healthier workforce. It could also be quicker – for example, even the fastest car journey times into Oxford during weekday peak time (on the Woodstock Road) is just 13mph and the slowest average journey times (on Beaumont Street/Hythe Bridge Street) had an average speed of only 5.4mph. (Source: *Oxfordshire & Oxford City Congestion Monitoring 2014/15*).
- 2.9 There is evidence that cycling and/or walking boosts the economy. Research commissioned by Cycling UK in 2015 found that if cycle use increased from less than 2% of all journeys (current levels) to 10% by 2025 and 25% by 2050 (as recommended by the Parliamentary Cycling Group's *Get Britain Cycling* report), the cumulative benefits for England would be worth £248bn between 2015 and 2050. These economic benefits are generated chiefly through a physically fitter population, but also in terms of reduced congestion and absenteeism, improved air quality and consumer spending.

- 2.10 The overall costs to society from road transport is substantial, and there is evidence of its impact on the economy. It has been estimated that half of the UK's £10bn cost per annum in relation to air pollution comes from road transport (Source: *Health & Environmental Costs (European Environment Agency, 2014)*). Further evidence suggests that switching active travel for short motor vehicle trips could save £17bn in NHS costs, with benefits being accrued within 2 years for some conditions (Source: *Effects of increasing active travel in urban England and Wales on costs to the National Health Service (Source: Jarrett, Woodcock, Griffiths et al 2012, published in The Lancet)*).
- 2.11 To inform people of the choices available, and support the aim of increasing walking and cycling, the Council is developing Journey Planner tools to help people make informed decisions about journeys, promote active travel and reduce congestion and environmental impacts from travel. The Journey Planner will enable people to plan journeys using cycling, walking and Door to Door travel. We are also developing a new One TRANSPORT project – more details on these in paragraphs 3.35 and 3.36.
- 2.12 The Government recently consulted on a new draft Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy, and Oxfordshire County Council provided a comprehensive response. The Government is also promoting best practice through the Cycle Proofing Working Group, an advisory body to the Government on cycle proofing, a process which over time ensures that the built environment generally, and roads specifically, are seen to be safe, convenient and pleasant for cycle use by people of all ages and abilities.
- 2.13 The remainder of this document sets out the Strategy vision for healthy sustainable travel in three sections – cycling, walking and Door-to-Door active multi modal travel. In order to achieve the vision, we are creating an Oxfordshire Active Travel Steering Group that will oversee the development of the Strategy to promote healthy and sustainable travel. More details of the Steering Group and what it aims to do can be found in the Implementation Plan at the end of this Strategy (paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2). Recreational walking, cycling and horse-riding are mostly managed through the Rights of Way Management Plan (see paragraph 1.3) and there are clear connections between this and the Active and Healthy Travel Strategy.

3. Cycling Strategy

Cycling: why it is important and what needs to be done

- 3.1 The 2011 census data on travel to work in Oxfordshire found that 54% of people usually drive to work while just 7% of people cycle to work. As mentioned earlier, the number of people who usually drive short journeys to work in Oxfordshire is increasing and our roads are becoming more congested.
- 3.2 Cycling is one of the key elements of active and healthy travel. Overseen by the new Active Travel Steering Group Oxfordshire County Council and partners will work with Government, businesses, developers and cycle groups in order to create the foundation for cycling to become a major mode of travel in Oxfordshire. Cycling is a sustainable and non-polluting way of getting around, and comes with the added benefit of improving our health and well-being. It is also a low cost form of transport which can enable people on low incomes to travel.

- 3.3 Cycling alone cannot replace the car for long journeys, but a combination of cycling and public transport can create more door-to-door sustainable trips. Bike-rail or bike-bus can provide a seamless journey to almost anywhere. More details can be found in the Door to Door: active multi modal travel for longer trips section.
- 3.4 There are a wide range of cycles available, and this makes cycling a potential option for people who are mobility impaired or lack confidence. Electric bicycles (e-bikes) can help people who want to travel actively but may need assistance getting up hills. All e-bikes retain the ability to be pedaled by the rider and are therefore not electric motorcycles. They can offer an active and healthy travel option for a section of the population who do not currently cycle regularly or at all. Germany and Holland are the leaders in terms of e-bikes within Europe, with 42% and 20% respectively of total sales in the EU in 2014 (Source: *e-bikes sold in EU 2014 – statista.com*). The Oxonbike cycle hire scheme will shortly be offering e-bikes as well as conventional cycles (see paragraph 3.31)
- 3.5 Our vision is to make cycling a safe, simple and accessible option for people of all ages. In order to do this, we will consider adopting the six Good Design Outcome factors in the London Cycling Design Guide. These factors will also be proposed for walking – see paragraph 4.3. The six factors are as follows: Safety, Directness, Comfort, Coherence, Attractiveness and Adaptability.
- 3.6 Through the new Active Travel Steering Group, we will work with the Oxfordshire Cycling Network, Local Enterprise Partnership and other stakeholders to develop projects to meet our health and transport challenges. Oxfordshire County Council is updating its Design Guide, and this will include incorporating improved cycling design standards, drawing on good practice from Transport for London and Wales. In the longer term, and subject to funding, our ambition is for cycling to become commonplace, a mode that more people to choose as their first choice of journeys and where people start from as early an age as possible. Our aim is to ensure that more people will want to cycle to work as more cycling has the potential to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality, especially in areas where there is a limited bus network. We also want to see demonstrable increases in levels of cycling for journeys to school, and access to services like health and shopping.
- 3.7 Where funding permits, the County Council will improve cycling infrastructure in order to provide an alternative sustainable and healthy way to travel. The Council and the Active Travel Steering Group will work with the five District Councils within the county to ensure that new cycling infrastructure and other cycling-related initiatives are coordinated. In collaboration with users, we will identify a series of strategic routes, which we will develop into Cycle Premium Routes and Cycle Super Routes, using updated best practice Design Guidance. Paragraph 3.14 provides more details. The greatest investment potential lies in connecting the areas of employment growth to transport hubs and areas of housing growth. Many of these routes may already have good levels of cycling or have the potential for more cycling if made safer.
- 3.8 Over time and where funding is available, local cycle networks will also be upgraded to enable safe, signed cycle journeys throughout the county, as well as providing links with Cycle Premium Routes and Cycle Super Routes. We have already developed cycle strategies and networks for Oxford, Bicester and Science Vale and propose to adopt this approach, including updated Design Standards, for other main towns in Oxfordshire, working with the OCN and other partners to improve the choice of safe, attractive, high-quality cycling routes in the county. We will promote these to residents and visitors, and ensure cycle parking is provided at key destinations

- 3.9 Encouraging and enabling more people to choose cycling is not simply about providing cycle routes, although that is important. We are aware of the need to enable people to become confident about travelling by bike. We will seek resources to provide a toolkit of cycling support, including training. Where possible, we will promote cycling using social media, workplace travel plans and personalised travel planning. The Journey Planning Tools will play a key role in the promotion of cycling.
- 3.10 Patterns of travel behaviour tend to be established very quickly. In order for cycling to be part of people’s daily routine, new and expanding developments must be planned and built with making cycling (and walking) the most attractive forms of transport, within, to and from the development, using best practice design standards (more details in paragraphs 3.29 and 3.30).
- 3.11 Cycling will be considered and incorporated into the design of new roads at the earliest stage, and users and/or potential users consulted as part of this process. Our forthcoming updated Design Standards for cycling, which draws from best practice, will be used. It will also include Quality Audits to appraise place-making, which will include the opportunity for cycle audits with users, to be funded by developers as part of development planning, so that local people can have a direct input into what cycling infrastructure would benefit users.
- 3.12 One of the main aims of this Strategy is to contribute towards a reduction in air pollution. Replacing vehicle journeys with active and healthy travel options such as cycling, walking and door to door travel can make a contribution to the reduction of air pollution. Transport - particularly single occupancy vehicle trips - is widely recognised to be a significant and increasing source of air pollution in the UK and elsewhere. This is a serious risk to health for everyone. Although increased cycling cannot make a difference on its own, we will actively work towards achieving more cycling throughout the county as a contribution to reducing air pollution.

Our plans for increasing and enabling cycling

- 3.13 We have varying quality cycle routes in Oxfordshire, like the rest of the UK. To support our growth, transport and health objectives, we are committed to transforming the cycle network in Oxfordshire in the longer term and will identify funding from all available sources to ensure that the network continues to grow and that supporting infrastructure, such as cycle parking is included:

Cycling Strategy Table 1: cycle route categories

Cycle route category	Common features
Cycle Super Route	Safe, direct, well-signposted routes in and around Oxford's areas of major current and potential cycling demand
Cycle Premium Route	Safe, direct, well-signposted routes in areas across the county where there is substantial potential growth in cycling
Connector/Local Routes	Safe, well-signposted routes attractive for both leisure and commuter journeys, providing links around the county

- 3.14 For routes and areas where our analysis indicates the biggest potential growth in cycling and where funding is in place, we will create safer and connected routes for cyclists, which will comprise safer, direct routes. Our aim is that the routes will be of a quality to convince more people to consider cycling, using our updated Design Standards. Where possible and funding permitting, we will enhance the routes with branded signage, displaying details of destinations and the estimated time to reach these. Where possible, users will be involved in auditing the potential routes to

develop coherent user-friendly plans. We will aim to ensure all designers of schemes fully understand and take into account the needs of cyclists as well as using updated cycle design standards

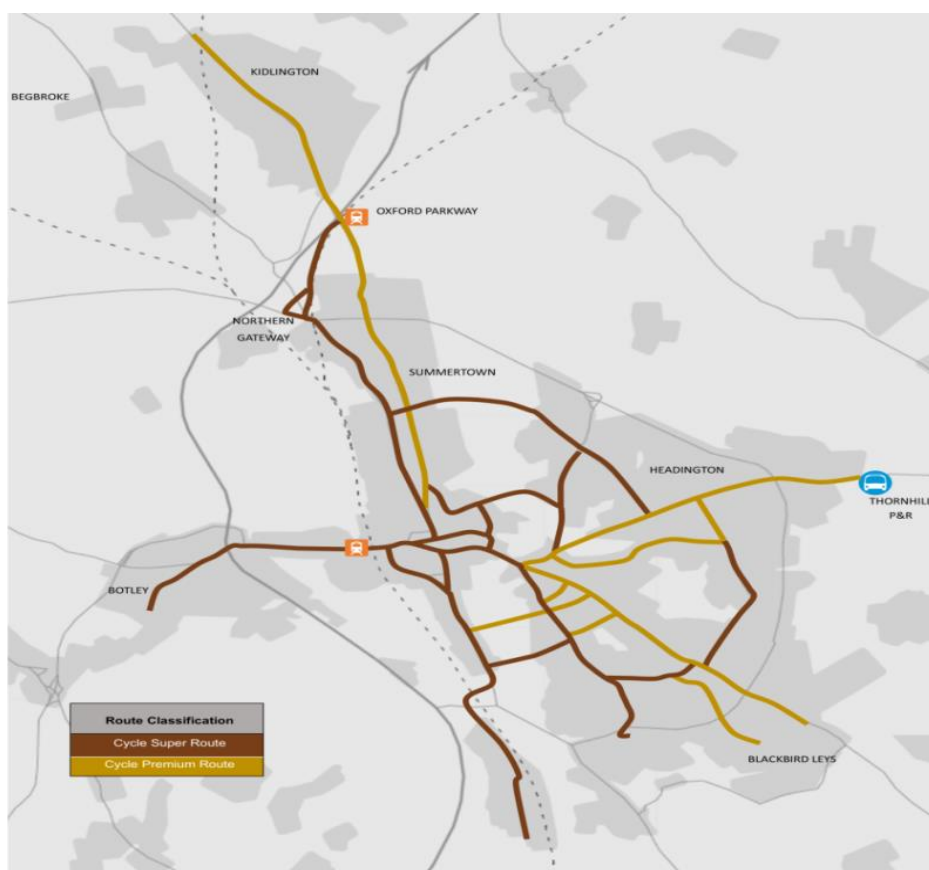
- 3.15 We will also work to increase the number of residents and visitors to Oxfordshire choosing to cycle for recreation (see paragraphs 3.30-3.32 for more details).

Providing a safer environment for cyclists

- 3.16 Sharing narrow carriageway space with fast-moving vehicles – particularly HGVs – is intimidating for even the most confident, experienced cyclists. All available evidence shows that this is why most people will not cycle on the carriageway. Where funding is available, we will provide more segregated cycle lanes and other measures like advance stop lines at junctions. We will consider lowering speed limits and introducing other traffic calming measures in locations where cyclists share space with other vehicles, where these can be justified. In the longer term, our ambition is that there will be more fully-segregated cycle lanes on existing routes. Where space is not available, we will seek to sign cyclists along safer route options, to minimise the need for cyclists to ride on roads that have no cycle facilities. We will also consider reallocating space to cyclists where feasible and where funding permits, considering the needs of pedestrians where space is shared.
- 3.17 A safe cycle network is also a well maintained cycle network. Given limited resources available, we will identify a list of priorities for maintenance on key cycle routes.
- 3.18 Oxfordshire County Council offers Cycle Training, to National Standard Levels 1 & 2 (combined), to all Oxfordshire primary schools, to help children aged 9 and above learn how to be safer on the roads - which, in turn, would encourage more cycling.
- 3.19 Currently, most of our cycling work is taking place in three areas of growth – Oxford, Science Vale and Bicester. A summary of our vision, ambition and the progress we are making on each area follows:

Oxford

- 3.20 Oxford already has an enviable cycling record with an estimated 75,000 cycle journeys made each day and monitoring of trips has shown a consistently high proportion of journeys made by bicycle into the city centre. But, there is an ambition to go further. Our aim is for Oxford to become a world class cycle city where cycling is accessible to everybody, regardless of age, background or cycling experience.
- 3.21 Long term, the ambition is for a fully joined-up and coherent and safe network of higher quality routes throughout the city that are continuous and direct, enabling cyclists to travel more quickly across the city. It will also mean overcoming major road and river barriers and providing cycle hubs at key public transport interchanges and major employment destinations. In the city centre, it also means more innovative cycle parking solutions to deal with future demand and a range of cycle types. The proposed network is based on a hierarchy of Cycle Super Routes and Cycle Premium Routes (shown in the figure below) and Connector Routes linking major origins and destinations.



Oxford cycle route categories (also outlined in paragraph 3.14):

Cycle route category	Common features
Cycle Super Route	Safe, direct, well-signposted routes in and around Oxford’s areas of major current and potential cycling demand
Cycle Premium Route	Safe, direct, well-signposted routes in areas across the county where there is substantial potential growth in cycling, particularly in the Knowledge Spine area
Connector/Local Routes	Safe, well-signposted routes attractive for both leisure and commuter journeys, providing links around the county

3.22 The Oxfordshire Transport Strategy therefore commits to providing high quality cycle infrastructure on all of Oxford’s main roads and expanding and improving its network of quiet roads. This will include the following funded schemes:

Cycling Strategy Table 2 – Funded schemes in Oxford:

Our Cycle City Ambition project to install a pedestrian and cycle bridge at Oxpens to connect to future city centre redevelopment and the train station, along with improvements along the Thames towpath including certain sections being widened and resurfaced together with the installation of lighting as well as widening of the foot and cycle bridge over Bulstake Stream.
An increase in secure and conveniently located cycle parking in the city centre linked to the redevelopment of the Westgate Centre.
As part of the Access to Headington project, the first implementation of cycle super route facilities are planned for 2016/17 and 2017/18). Botley Road (CSR), Banbury (CPR) and Woodstock (CSR) Road corridor studies are due to be completed by the end of March 2016.
Botley Road (CSR), Banbury (CPR) and Woodstock (CSR) Road corridor studies are due to be completed by the end of March 2016 and these will be used to bid for funding in future.

Science Vale

- 3.23 The Science Vale cycling network will focus investment on a series of strategic corridors across Science Vale where we will establish the Cycle Premium Routes that will become the focus of our future investment. A study will review existing routes and previous studies, and recommend a series of schemes required to provide a continuous Cycle Premium Route along each corridor. Potential schemes are listed below:

1	Wantage to Harwell Campus
2	Wantage to Milton Park
3	Abingdon to Milton Park
4	Abingdon to Harwell Campus
5	Didcot to Harwell Campus
6	Didcot to Milton Park
7	Abingdon to Culham Science Centre
8	Didcot to Culham Science Centre
9	Grove to Wantage
10	Didcot to Wallingford

- 3.24 Connector routes are an important part of the network but vary significantly in terms of value for money and contributing to increasing cycling. Here are some identified possible options.

1	Steventon to Milton Park
2	Chilton to West Illsey A34 junction
3	Backhill Lane Tunnel
4	Culham Village to Abingdon
5	A417 cycle path
6	Didcot Station to Power Station Roundabout area
7	Cow Lane underpass Didcot
8	Wantage Town Network
9	Didcot – a mini Holland
10	Other potential schemes within the towns and villages

Bicester

- 3.25 Investment in the Bicester's walking and cycling network aims to have an essential role in accommodating growth, encouraging sustainable travel choices, and raising the quality of the environment. The county council's Bicester area strategy reflects the benefits of and need for cycle infrastructure improvements and changing travel behaviour through Smarter Choices

- 3.26 As with cycling, we will review walking networks and improve routes with the greatest potential for increasing the numbers of people walking, particularly where improving the pedestrian environment would support economic growth and reduce car use. We will also prioritise important walking routes for maintenance. This will include the following:

Central corridor cycle improvements will provide a strategic route for cyclists through the town between north and south, whilst public realm improvements in Bicester Market Square and The Causeway will enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment by creating a sense of 'place'.

The redevelopment of Bicester Village Railway Station is an opportunity to create a state of the art multi modal interchange offering high quality facilities for pedestrians, bus users and cyclists, including a cycle hub offering hire and repairs. We will also improve walking and cycling links to the station

Good wayfinding can greatly enhance the visitors' experience, can facilitate an increased number of visitors to key destinations within the town centre and can support local businesses which are of increasing importance to Bicester's economy and regeneration. As a result, Bicester requires an expansion of, and where necessary, signage for pedestrians and cyclists, which will be progressing through a wayfinding project.

New Developments

- 3.27 It is essential that new developments are planned with cycling in mind and with facilities to make cycling both convenient and safe. Designing new developments so that cycling is the most convenient transport method for the majority of trips will naturally increase the proportion of journeys made in this way.
- 3.28 For large new or expanded housing and employment development sites, we propose establishing the following principles. Developers must use and follow the new OCC Design Guidance (currently being developed).
- Developers must demonstrate through master planning how their site has been planned to make cycling convenient and safe, for cyclists travelling to and from major residential, employment, education, shopping and leisure sites within 5-10 miles, and also within and through the site.
 - Site road network and junctions must be constructed with cycling in mind, including providing space for cycling on main/spine roads through the provision of, as a minimum, advisory cycle lanes of acceptable width.
 - OCC may ask developers to fund Quality Audits, to include cyclability audits, so that the local user view is incorporated into new cycle facilities. The Active Travel Steering Group will consider the most effective Quality Audit process to adopt.

Oxonbike Cycle Hire Scheme

- 3.29 Using Government funding, Oxfordshire County Council launched a pilot cycle hire scheme called OXONBIKE to link Thornhill Park and Ride with Headington in 2013. The scheme has been very successful and recently expanded to other parts of the city. It was shortlisted for a National Travel Award in 2015. Management of Oxonbike has now been taken over by a Partnership, headed by Oxford University. There are plans for the scheme to expand to other parts of the city and surrounding areas, including other Park and Ride sites. Oxonbike was recently successful in a grant submission that will result in a fleet of electric cycles being added to the project.



Recreational Cycling

- 3.30 Cycling is the third most popular recreational activity in the UK - it is estimated over 3 million people cycle each month. Recreational and leisure cycling is often about taking the less direct route, using quiet roads, dedicated cycle tracks and public rights of way in addition to the road network. There is evidence that time spent cycling (and walking or horse riding) in green space can boost mental as well as physical health. Recent research looked at feedback from 1,250 people in ten studies and concluded that being in green space enables radical improvements in peoples' mental health and self-esteem (Source: *Longitudinal effects of green space on mental health*, published in *Environmental Science & Technology Journal* 48 (2014)).
- 3.31 Less experienced cyclists may be put off by traffic volumes, driver behaviour, and/or road condition. The public rights of way network is mainly unsurfaced and subject to seasonal variations as well as other problems such as vegetation growth so its quality and availability can be variable. All these factors mean that choices can be limited, and can result in people choosing to drive to a location that can offer a safer cycling experience. As well as generating additional vehicle journeys this may reduce the number of new cyclists using the public network and mean they are less likely to choose to cycle for transport as well as recreation.
- 3.32 We will work to increase levels of cycling for recreation in Oxfordshire by
- Improving the available cycle network where feasible and where funding permits.
 - In collaboration with our Countryside colleagues, improving the quality and resilience of the public rights of way network where possible and particularly where there is potential for increasing usage.
 - Working with partners to improve the choice of other safe, attractive, high-quality recreational cycling and walking routes in the county, promote these to residents and visitors and provide cycle parking, where appropriate, at destinations along the routes. Promoting the use of green infrastructure as one of the tools to help create safer and cycling (and walking) and increasing peoples' exposure to nature and areas of high quality landscape
 - Where the network has breaks in continuity that affect levels of use, we will work with colleagues, local communities and other stakeholders to find solutions.
 - We will also look to reduce traffic speeds and influence driver behaviour where space is shared with vehicles.

“Soft” measures – Awareness, Motivation and Opportunities for cycling (and walking)

- 3.33 A new One TRANSPORT project aims to create a ‘oneM2M’ (machine to machine)-based Open Ecosystem for Nationwide Transport Integration. The project is looking to make transport more user friendly and accessible across Local Authorities, bringing all transport related data to one platform. Four local authorities (Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire County Councils) are partners for the project. The data will be more accessible to app developers, and as such, we hope that it will encourage the production of new and innovative apps to support travellers and boost uptake of alternative modes of transport to driving.
- 3.34 We are also developing Journey Planning Tools, including free downloadable apps which will be a key element of encouraging and enabling cycling and other elements of active and healthy travel. These will be mobile friendly, pull together journey planning information to one location and deliver a product that goes beyond other journey planners.

Funding for cycling

- 3.35 Where there is a clear justification and outcome, we will commit to applying for grant and other funding opportunities announced for cycling and related schemes.
- 3.36 We will work with developers to ensure that funding is used to provide high quality cycle infrastructure as outlined in our updated Design Guidance, designed-in to their own development plans and secure Section 106 money to improve cycle facilities in and around the site, to encourage people to cycle as soon as they move in to the development. Where appropriate, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding will be used to provide cycle schemes or sections of the county cycling network, informed where possible by cyclability audits.

Cycle scheme assessment and prioritisation

- 3.37 As schemes and funding opportunities come forward, we will need to ensure there is a robust means of assessing projects against the outcomes of this strategy and any bid criteria, to maximise our chances of success in securing funds and developing cycling throughout the county. This will be a task for the Oxfordshire Active Travel Steering Group. For more significant and costly schemes, especially those which require Local Growth Fund funding from the Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership, schemes will be prioritised against their contribution to meeting the LEP objectives of Innovative Place, Innovative People, Innovative Enterprise, and Innovative Connectivity. Where schemes require Major Scheme funding (generally those costing over £5 million) then they will also need to be justified through a Business Case based upon the government’s five-case model – economic, strategic, financial, management and commercial - before funding becomes available

Best Practice

- 3.38 As stated, we are currently in the process of updating our Design Guidance for cycling. It will consider lessons from other successful cycling cities and regions from the UK and beyond, while making the document relevant to the specific transport demands of our county, to our ability to influence developers and taking into account the likely budget we shall have available for schemes over the coming years.

4. Encouraging and Enabling Walking

Walking – why it is important and what needs to be done

“Nationally, walking is the most frequent mode used for very short distance trips: 76% of all trips under one mile are walks. For all other distance bands, the car is the most frequent mode of travel. ...Walking accounts for 22% of trips, but is mainly predominant for very short distances”. (Source: NTS England 2014).

- 4.1 Walking emits less carbon than any other form of transport. From a strategic transport perspective, its advantage is that it uses less space than other forms of transport and does not require any parking facilities. However, walking is also much more than a form of transport - it is good for our physical and mental health, improving walking facilities can also create stronger communities and higher levels of walking can benefit personal security and help reduce crime – . .
- 4.2 Our approach to walking has been developed to reflect four key aims:
- To set out Oxfordshire County Council's overall aspiration to enable and encourage walking over the lifetime of the Active & Healthy Travel Strategy.
 - To provide a means to prioritise funding available to the County Council for the best value for money investments for walking and to adopt good practice standards from elsewhere
 - To support Oxfordshire County Council in enabling additional funding opportunities for walking measures
 - To raise awareness of the physical and mental health benefits of walking. There is evidence that walking (or cycling) in green space provides significant mental as well as physical health benefits (see paragraph 3.32).

Outlining aspirations, tools and targets to support walking

- 4.3 Our overall aspiration is for walking to be the travel mode of choice for short trips and the most popular and accessible form of recreational activity. Our long term ambition is for our streets and public spaces to be accessible to all users, particularly more disadvantaged groups such as people from disadvantaged areas, older adults and people with disabilities. Consultation with people with disabilities has highlighted the importance of adequate road crossings, pavements, toilets and public seating as well as organisational and attitudinal factors to encourage walking (Source: *Living Streets: Overcoming barriers and identifying opportunities for disabled people (2016 – in press)*). A more comprehensive list of categories for consideration can be viewed in paragraph 4.6.
- 4.4 Walking can be more challenging in rural areas than in urban ones. For example, a lack of pavements can discourage walking, even for short distances. The Department for Transport commends adopting a Safe Systems approach, emphasising the need to protect vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians (Source: *Working together to build a safer road system – British road safety statement*, Department for Transport 2015).

4.5 Subject to approval, we will adopt the six Good Design Outcome factors –adopted by Transport for London (TfL) in the London Cycling Design Guide for walking as well as cycling (see paragraph 3.2. Although this refers to cycling and green space, it is equally applicable to walking). The six factors are as follows: *Safety, Directness, Comfort, Coherence, Attractiveness and Adaptability*

4.6 There are other tools that could be adopted to improve walking facilities. The Welsh Assembly document, *Creating an Active Wales*, outlines the following factors that encourage people to be more active:

Proximity of local services to people
Streets designed to encourage physical activity
Attractive environments that are perceived to be safe
Traffic reduction and calming measures
Well-designed user-friendly walking (and cycling) routes, which also consider the needs of disabled people
Access to well-designed and maintained green spaces such as parks
Access to a variety of environments for play

4.7 Walking, particularly in urban areas, is generally a short distance activity for users. Living Streets outlined eight key categories for consideration when evaluating the street environment to ensure that it provides comfort and safety for people on foot.

Footway surfaces & obstructions; issues such as footway condition, alignment and condition of street furniture, shop front displays and road works.
Facilities & signage: toilets, benches, litter bins, lighting and signage
Maintenance & Enforcement: litter, flyposting and graffiti, parking enforcement
Personal security: lighting levels, sightlines, surveillance, anti-social behaviour and escape routes
Crossing points & desire lines: formal (zebras, pelicans, puffins) and informal (no specific provision), including consideration of desire lines (where people most want to cross).
Road layout & space allocation: the share of space allocated to different users and the relationship of different elements of the street to each other
Aesthetics: beauty & interest, public art, fountains, statues, green space/noise, ugliness
Traffic: traffic speed and volume, air pollution, noise and smell

Prioritising funding opportunities

4.8 In collaboration with Active Travel Steering Group, the Council will look for external funding opportunities to improve facilities for walking and review other funding opportunities, including developer funding, consult with stakeholders and ensure that good practice is followed and the best value for money investments are made.

5. Door to Door: multi modal travel for longer trips

Door to Door multi modal travel: why it is important and what needs to be done

“Traditionally, different modes of transport have been considered separately – with separate policy teams, separate funding and separate providers. While this reflects, arguably, how industry operates, it does not reflect the way people think about their journeys. When planning the commute to work or a long-distance trip, people think about the cost, convenience and complexity of the entire door-to-door journey – not simply one element of it. To encourage and enable more people to choose sustainable transport for the whole journey, we need to focus on improving the entire door-to-door journey. That way, we can not only help to meet carbon reduction targets, but also increase use of public transport – so reducing congestion – and encourage health travel choices” *Door to Door – A Strategy for improving sustainable transport integration (Department for Transport 2013)*.

- 5.1 Our ambition is to create an environment where more Oxfordshire residents will consider Door to Door sustainable integrated journeys within and beyond the county, rather than using a private vehicle for longer trips.

Cycling/walking and rail

- 5.2 Improving facilities for Door to Door journeys via cycle/rail has huge potential for reducing congestion and making a contribution to improving air quality. Over 1.6 billion people travelled by rail in 2014-2015, an increase of 4.2% from the previous year and 69.5% since 2002-3.
- 5.3 Many of these journeys involved an element of vehicle travel, adding significantly to congestion, pollution and lack of parking spaces. An example is Hanborough Station, which has seen passenger numbers rise from 75,000 in 2004 to over 200,000 today. Its new 200 space car park is now reaching capacity on most weekdays.
- 5.4 Cycle parking has increased at many Oxfordshire rail stations with positive outcomes. Examples are Oxford Parkway and Didcot, where high quality facilities have led to increased usage by cyclists. We will continue to upgrade cycle parking facilities where there is most use/ potential use for cycling journeys. We will also seek funding to improve walking routes to rail stations where there is evidence of existing or potential walking numbers, including signage with timings, better facilities for crossing roads and segregated routes for pedestrians to safely access the stations.

Cycling/walking and bus

- 5.5 Given the reduction in funding for supported transport for Oxfordshire, development and expansion of the core commercial bus network and proposals for new transport hubs such as Park and Ride sites, there is an opportunity for more walking and cycling to bus/rapid transit corridors, and interchanges. One way of visualising this is to think of a “catchment area” of a bus stop – typically 400m for walking to an urban stop (e.g. about 5 minute walk). Cyclists can travel longer distances to bus stops, but secure cycle parking is an essential component of cycle/bus travel.
- 5.6 Door to door travel integrated cycle and bus travel is different to cycle/rail in many ways. Given the number of bus stops and wide variation in the numbers of users, there is a clear case for prioritising access to popular routes such as Oxfordshire’s Premium Bus Routes and coaches to London. There are already examples of good practice on the main Oxfordshire bus routes, such as the X13 service between Oxford and Abingdon with good parking facilities for cyclists.

What we will do

- 5.7 The Park & Ride network is popular and well used. We will work to improve cycle facilities and cycle and pedestrian routes, and explore the potential for expansion of the Oxonbike cycle hire scheme to existing and planned Park & Ride sites. We will also work with bus (and rail) operators to improve facilities for Door to Door travel.
- 5.8 In order to facilitate cycle/bus travel where there is most potential in terms of user numbers, we will aim to work with operators and other stakeholders to provide:

Accurate accessible and reliable information about the different transport options for journeys via the Journey Planner
Convenient and affordable tickets for an entire journey
Facilities , including secure cycle parking at stations and main bus stops , at all stages of the journey between different modes of transport
Safe, comfortable transport facilities

- 5.9 For rail stations, other transport interchanges and bus stops where analysis indicates the biggest potential use and where funding is in place, we will seek funding to create safer and direct routes for cyclists and pedestrians, which will comprise safer, direct routes and secure cycle parking. The Active Travel Steering Group will lead on the development of this initiative, including the identification of priorities.

6. Implementation Plan

Oxfordshire Active Travel Steering Group

- 6.1 In order to oversee the Strategy, an Oxfordshire Active Travel Steering Group is currently being set up, which will include membership from cycle groups and other partners. The purpose of this new group is set out below, as well as an Implementation Plan for 2016/17. This Strategy will be regularly refreshed, and Implementation Plans for future years will be included.

- 6.2 **Purpose of Oxfordshire Active Travel Steering Group:**

1.	Oversee the development & implementation of the Oxfordshire Cycling strategy and associated proposals as part of a wider Active & Healthy Travel Strategy
2.	Provide a structure and mechanisms for positive discussion and agreement between Councils, cycle groups, developers and other organisations
3.	Prioritise, commission and review “task and finish” groups
4.	Work with the Oxfordshire LEP and Department for Transport to target support and funding opportunities
5.	Prioritise and agree proposals for investment and feed into Growth Board proposals, funding bids and schemes
6.	Engage with partnership bodies, including the LEP, Universities, OCC Public Health, OCC Countryside and District Councils
7.	Develop, prioritise and agree proposals to promote Active Travel within Oxfordshire, including links with other projects and developments.
8.	Have early sight of planned projects, bids and developments, so that opportunities to enhance active travel can be built in at an early stage
9.	Promote active travel and propose how it feeds into other projects and programmes
10.	Monitor and review completed schemes and interventions, identify lessons learned and establish examples of good practice

6.3 Active Travel Implementation Plan 2016-17

AT1	Set up the new Active Travel Steering Group (ATSG) to oversee the development and implementation of this Strategy and monitor all elements of the Active & Healthy Travel Strategy – e.g. cycling, walking and Door to Door travel. The new Group will undertake a range of tasks, including identifying funding opportunities, monitoring and reviewing completed schemes and interventions, identifying lessons learned, prioritising and agreeing proposals for investment and quantifying the benefits of active travel.
AT2	Identification of funded projects to add to the Cycle Premium Routes and Cycle Super Routes (CPR) network.
AT3	Identification of maintenance priorities for cyclists and walkers in the county. This will be an on-going annual task. Given that only a limited budget is available, it is essential to ensure that resources are directed to where they are most needed.
AT4	Completion and implementation of updated best practice Design Guidance to ensure high standards of implementation for cycling and walking (as distinct and separate elements) and to ensure high standards in terms of developer funded infrastructure
AT5	Working closely with Public Health and Countryside colleagues to raise awareness of the health benefits of walking, cycling and Door to Door travel and seeking funding opportunities for healthy and active travel initiatives, including recreational cycling and walking.
AT6	The ATSG will undertake an analysis of the priorities for improving Door to Door journeys involving rail stations and premium bus hubs and will ensure that limited funding is directed to where there is most use and/or potential increase in numbers of users.
AT7	The ATSG will commission, oversee and review research and statistical reports in relation to cycling, walking and Door to Door travel.
AT8	The ATSG will provide a further Implementation Plan for 2017/18