

***An update on the strategic developments and direction for active travel, and on the Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) Grants delivering active travel initiatives across the City and District Councils.***

## **1. Purpose**

HIB members are asked to note:

- 1.1 An update on the strategic developments and direction for active travel.
- 1.2 An update on the Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) Grants delivering active travel initiatives across the City and District Councils.
- 1.3 The benefits, challenges and key partners involved in the above.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1 Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP) Active Travel Targets**

#### **What is the LTCP?**

- Local Transport Plans, in Oxfordshire the 'Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP)', are statutory documents required by central government.
- Local authorities must produce these plans to set out a clear vision and strategy for transport planning over a 5-year period.
- They provide the framework for how transport systems will evolve to meet national and local objectives, including reducing carbon emissions, improving connectivity, and supporting sustainable growth and health.

#### **LTCP Structure & Active Travel content**

- The LTCP is structured around 54 policies, organised into 12 thematic areas.
- One of these 12 thematic areas is 'walking and cycling', which reflects the importance of active travel in achieving Oxfordshire's sustainability and health goals.
- The walking and cycling policy areas sets out 7 policies that aim to make walking and cycling safer, more convenient, and more attractive for residents and visitors. The policies focus on expanding and improving infrastructure, integrating active travel into new developments, enhancing safety and accessibility, supporting behaviour change through education and engagement, linking routes to public transport hubs, maintaining high standards of quality.
- The most important policy, policy 1, sets out a **modal hierarchy (or road user hierarchy)**: this sets out how different modes of transport should be prioritised in planning and design. Walking, wheeling and cycling are placed at the top, followed by public and shared transport, with private cars at the bottom. This approach ensures that decisions support sustainable travel, reduce car dependency, improve air quality, improve health and help achieve net-zero goals. It is a guiding principle for infrastructure investment,

development planning and scheme assessment, making active and shared modes the first choice for everyday journeys.

- Finally, the LTCP policies are translated into a broader, more specific work programmes for each area to set out a plan for officers to achieve the policies. For walking and cycling, this work programme is set out in the [Active Travel Strategy, which contains 79 actions organised into 13 areas](#).

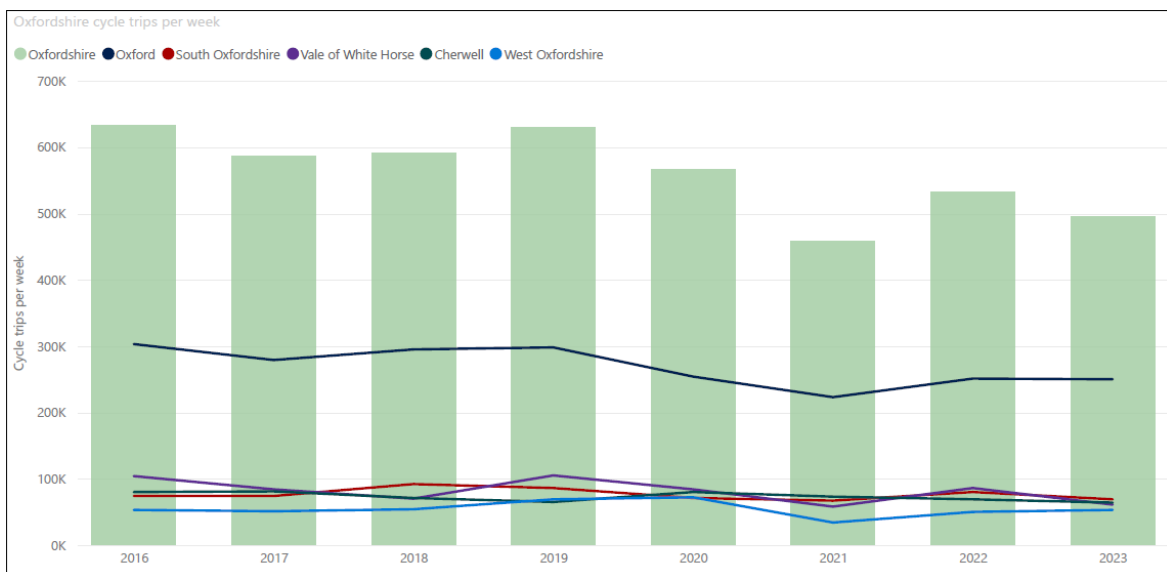
### **LTCP Monitoring: how does it work?**

- To ensure accountability and make sure we meet our strategic objectives and policies, the LTCP sets out a monitoring framework consisting of Headline Targets and KPIs.
- Headline Targets are high-level, long-term objectives that define the overall direction and ambition of the strategy. They are designed to express the outcomes the plan seeks to achieve over decades.
- Key Performance Indicators, on the other hand, are detailed, measurable metrics used to monitor progress towards those headline targets. They operate at a more granular level and are typically assessed over shorter timeframes, such as annually or quarterly.

### **Active Travel-related Headline Targets:**

1. **Increase the number of cycle trips per week in Oxfordshire to 1,000,000 by 2030:**

Baseline value (2019):	630,000 cycle trips per week
Value (2023):	496,000 cycle trips per week
Change from baseline:	- 21%
Target value (2030):	1,000,000 cycle trips per week
Data source:	Department for Transport, Walking & Cycling Statistics: Active Lives Survey



Description:

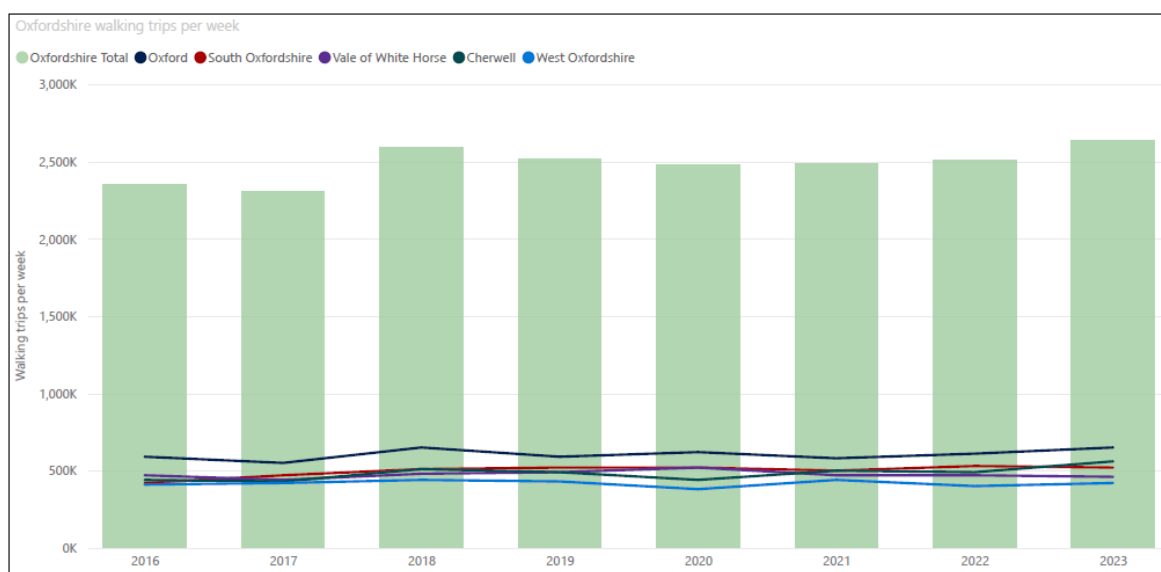
- The graph illustrates cycle trips per week between 2016 and 2023. The green column depicts the Oxfordshire total, while the associated line graphs show trends for individual district councils within the county.

Trend:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the previous year (2022) cycle trips per week have decreased by 7%. Between 2019 and 2023, the cycle trips per week have decreased by 21%.</li> </ul>
Variables:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active travel schemes are in development but have not yet been delivered to support an increase in cycle trips.</li> <li>Ongoing stakeholder engagement identifies perceived safety risks, especially in rural and car-dominated areas discourages cycling.</li> <li>Cycling continues to lag in rural areas due to factors like longer travel distances, fewer dedicated cycle paths, and topographical challenges.</li> <li>Behaviour change initiatives take time to lead to travel behaviours shifting</li> </ul>
Outlook:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The future of this headline target is uncertain. The scale of the decrease is amplified because the baseline year reflects pre-COVID conditions. Cycle trips require time to recover, particularly following the shift to remote working. A new baseline should be considered, accounting for post-COVID travel behaviours.</li> <li>It is important to clarify that the reduction in cycling trips does not indicate a decline in cycle provision, as trip numbers have been more heavily influenced by changes in commuting patterns.</li> <li>The County Council is working on embedding the use of VivaCity sensors in strategic locations within the county to capture monitoring data to provide a more robust and reliable data source.</li> <li>It is planned to utilise this approach in the 26/27 financial year.</li> </ul>

## **Active travel-related Key Performance Indicators (most relevant):**

### **1. Number of walking trips:**

Responsible team:	Place Shaping	Status: On Track
Baseline value (2019):	2,520,000 walking trips per week	
Value (2023):	2,640,000 walking trips per week	
Change from baseline:	+ 5%	
Data source:	Department for Transport, Walking and Cycling Statistics: Active Lives Survey	



Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The graph illustrates the number of walking trips per week between 2016 and 2023. The green column depicts the Oxfordshire total, while</li> </ul>
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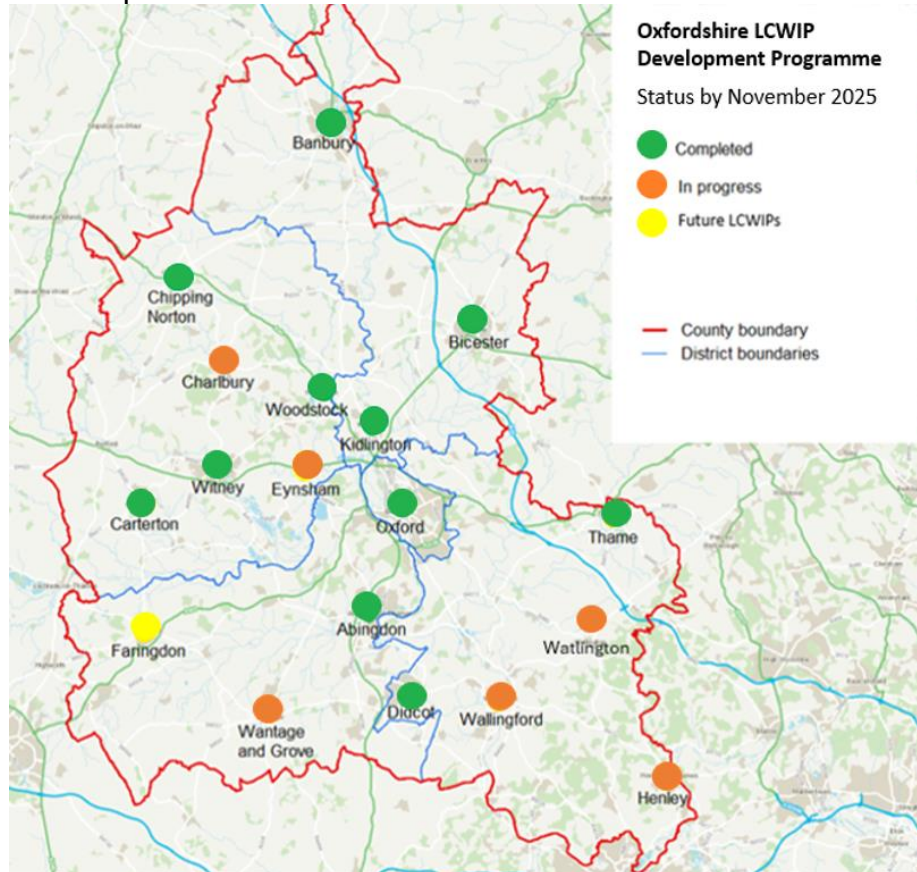
	the associated line graphs show trends for individual district councils within the county.
Trend:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the previous year (2022) the number of walking trips per week have increased by 5%. Between 2019 and 2023, the number of walking trips per week have increased by 5%.</li> </ul>
Variables:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There has been targeted policies and initiatives put into place to make walking more inclusive and accessible.</li> <li>Local authorities and health organisations have promoted walking as part of daily routines, not just as part of a commute or transport.</li> <li>Behaviour change initiatives take time to lead to permanent travel behaviours shifting</li> </ul>
Outlook:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The future of this headline target is positive. The number of walking trips per week have remained steady since 2020 and have risen in the past year.</li> <li>The County Council is working on embedding the use of VivaCity sensors in strategic locations within the county to capture monitoring data to provide a more robust and reliable data source.</li> <li>It is planned to utilise this approach in the 26/27 financial year.</li> </ul>

## 2.2 Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) Development

The Active Travel Strategy committed in 2022 to producing an LCWIP for all major settlements in Oxfordshire, with a population above 10,000 by 2025. The LCWIPs are aimed to improve or complete cycling and walking networks, identifying key barriers and areas of opportunities. The programme of LCWIPs are well on track, with OCC having developed and approved LCWIPs for the following locations:

2020	Oxford
2022	Bicester
2023	Abingdon; Witney; Banbury; Didcot;
2024	
2025	Chipping Norton; Woodstock; Thame; Carterton
Currently in development	Wantage and Grove; Wallingford; Charlbury; Henley-On-Thames; Eynsham
Planned	Faringdon

This map illustrates the above:



## 2.3 LCWIP Implementation

- During 2025, the Active Travel Team has undertaken a major task to better track and prioritise all schemes identified in LCWIPs countywide.
- The combined approved LCWIPs have identified a total of **1137** walking, cycling and walking and cycling schemes countywide, of which less than 10% have received funding.
- In addition to this, we have an adopted Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN) – effectively a ‘super LCWIP’ for the county which will provide inter-urban links, connecting up towns and villages and in some cases provided off road cycle routes across the county.
- Phase 2 of the SATN within the Oxford area is being undertaken in the form of Greenways (connecting to Kidlington, Cumnor, Nuneham Courtney and Wheatley).
- Following this, further identified SATN routes will be developed, dependant on future resources and funding.

## 2.4 Accessibility

- We are improving our approaches to Active Travel accessibility. This includes undertaking a barrier review to improve access for walkers, wheelers and cyclists. We are also doing a dropped kerb redesign to provide a smoother, less undulating surface on pavements and cycle paths.
- Budget was also allocated to fund an updated Street Design Code which will set out local standards for developers and other designers to use for walking and cycling provision, incorporating a Kerbside Strategy and Bus Stop design standards.

- We run the Inclusive Transport & Mobility Focus (IMPACT) group, which has individuals with lived experience and representation from countywide accessibility groups. This group is primarily Oxford focused.

## 2.5 Travel Behaviour Change

- We target schools and workplaces to equip them with the skills, experience, knowledge and confidence to enable sustainable travel choices.
- We employ two School Engagement officers, and our Technical Lead for Workplaces started October 2025.
- This is reflective of LTCP Policy 11. Since LTCP adoption we have published our [Sustainable School Travel Strategy](#) and action plan, which sets out what we are doing to enable safe, active and sustainable travel to schools across the county. School Streets is one such example of action that we can take with schools wanting to improve school journeys. We have just consulted on our third phase of School Streets: nine schools have permanent School Streets at the current time.
- One innovative way we are doing this is through our partnership with British Cycling employing two 'Community Developer' officers. Their roles are to work with and support local businesses and community groups to grow participation in cycling across their areas.
- Public Health provide funding for the Community Outreach Active Travel (COAT) programme. This gives funding to our current provider, [Active Oxfordshire](#) who award grants to local community, grass roots projects with a focus on walking and cycling in areas where deprivation levels are highest. Examples of projects include:
  - Walking for Wellbeing run by Oxfordshire Mind which promotes access to nature for those experiencing mental health issues;
  - Joy Riders are a cycling initiative offering cycle training and led rides, targeting residents who might otherwise not engage with cycling, such as ethnically diverse women.
  - Green Walks by MyVision Oxfordshire, helping those with visual impairments to develop the skills and independence to lead active lives.
- In the first year of COAT, 1,183 people engaged in projects, 60% of whom live in one of Oxfordshire's priority neighbourhoods.
- Our ambition is to provide some form of travel behaviour enabler/intervention as part of every capital scheme investment e.g. a new crossing is installed, appropriate training locally is given to more vulnerable users such as children, or cycle fun days/training is provided alongside a new cycle route improvement.
- A Travel Behaviour Change Strategy is being developed in 25/26.

## 2.6 Healthy Place Shaping Grants

- Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) is both an approach and a programme of work. HPS principles need to inform policy and strategy but place based activity is also required to deliver tangible change to improve the building blocks of health. It does this through changes to the built environment, community activation and new models of care, which involve working with the health care sector.
- In 2023, a needs assessment of Healthy Place Shaping was undertaken which identified key priority areas for action which have also informed Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-30. One of the seven priority areas is

*“Support cycling and walking activation to increase physical activity and reduce carbon emissions.”*

- The Healthy Place Shaping grant is revenue from the Public Health grant, totalling £450,000, split over 3 years and divided equally across the five City and District Council authorities. The grant runs between 2024 and 2027.

### **3. Key Issues**

- In Cherwell, funds have enabled wayfinding and circular walks to be publicised on the Go Jauntly app. This will enable more people to find out about them, increase access to green spaces, and improve physical activity levels. Some of the routes, such as the Parrot Trail, now have ground markings, wayfinding discs, and benches, which further improve the appeal and uptake of active travel, especially among families with young children. Cherwell also used their Healthy Place Shaping grant funding to initiate four ‘pedal parties’ in Bicester, with 153 people taking part and becoming more confident with cycling. Over half of the participants were children, which has multiple benefits of increased physical activity and increasing the likelihood that cycling will become integrated into their travel behaviours as they become adults.
- In West Oxfordshire, the grant funding enabled officers to work with YouMove to take families on a guided walk through Deer Park Wood in Witney. This small green space connects residential areas to a café, but many people use the road network to access it. The activity helped to encourage the use of the wood while also promoting a connection with nature, with foraging, brass rubbing and tree identification included in the session.
- In the Vale of White Horse, the district have linked up with a community cycling hub based in Faringdon to deliver safe cycling courses and convert their Ride Revolution HQ into a useable and safe cycling facility.
- Oxford City are focusing a portion of their grant funding on improving wayfinding in Shotover Park – a green space which is a short distance from urban East Oxford. By promoting access to the park, it is hoped that physical activity levels and associated improvement to health and wellbeing will be captured in residents living in some of the county’s most disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Some of the challenges faced when delivering these active travel initiatives include a lack of volunteers, resourcing issues, and communication problems with schools. Cherwell District Council have acknowledged the importance of appropriate delivery partners for the success of a scheme, and this is something that might not be available in all locations.

We are currently rated a Level 2 authority for active travel capability, based on Active Travel England’s assessment. This rating is an assessment across four categories:

1. Organisational Context
2. Leadership and organisational capability
3. Network Planning
4. Delivery



We are waiting to hear the outcome of our most recent self-assessment to ATE, in which we made the case to be a Level 3 authority (a status mainly afforded to large combined and some unitary authorities). An authorities' Level directly correlates to the amount of active travel grant funding awarded.

#### **4. Budgetary Implications**

4.1 Funding for Active Travel is from several sources, including S106, Council funds and via grant award. This is allocated prioritised based on factors including link to LTCP outcomes, deliverability, identified need, and funding conditions. One key challenge is that Active Travel England grant funding has to date been allocated on an annual basis, but this is anticipated to change with the promise of multi-year settlements, linked to the national Integrated Transport Strategy.

4.2 Funding for the Healthy Place Shaping Grants was secured in 2024 and will provide annual payments of £30,000 to each of the five District Councils over three years.

#### **5. Equalities**

5.1.1 Where applicable, HPS Grant funded projects will work/are working in areas of heightened health inequalities, such as Oxfordshire's 10 most deprived wards.

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November 2025

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