

Recommended investment plan details and rationale

PART ONE

Free park and ride (P&R) return bus offer

Duration and estimated cost: 7 months from 1 June 2026; £1,290k

Scheme description: Continuation of free return bus travel for users of Oxford's park and ride sites who present a valid parking ticket.

Rationale: The scheme is simple, well-understood and available to nearly all drivers entering Oxford from outside the city. Monitoring data shows strong growth in park and ride usage and non-park and ride bus usage since the congestion charge was introduced, helping to reduce traffic entering the city while supporting the city centre economy. The scheme can be implemented quickly, uses existing (under-used) assets and aligns with consultation feedback and Citizens' Assembly recommendations.

PART TWO

Free weekday park and ride parking for NHS and school staff

Duration and estimated cost: 9 months from 1 June 2026; £120k

Scheme description: Free weekday parking at park and ride sites for NHS and school staff based in Oxford.

Rationale: NHS and school staff represent a substantial proportion of peak-time commuting traffic and often have limited flexibility in working hours and location. On-site parking at hospitals and schools is typically free or low-cost, reducing incentives to change behaviour. This measure ensures park and ride is no more expensive than existing parking options, directly targeting peak-time congestion while supporting essential public services.

NHS and education workplaces account for approximately 42% of workplace parking spaces inside the Oxford ring road, indicating the scale of peak-time travel to these sectors.

Free weekday bus travel for NHS and school staff

Duration and estimated cost: 9 months from 1 June 2026; £670k

Scheme description: Free weekday bus travel for NHS and school staff based in Oxford, including those travelling directly from home rather than via park and ride.

Rationale: This scheme provides an equivalent offer for staff for whom park and ride is not relevant or suitable. It complements the free park and ride parking offer and targets the same peak-time commuting trips that contribute most to congestion.

NHS and education workplaces account for approximately 42% of workplace parking spaces inside the Oxford ring road, indicating the scale of peak-time travel to these sectors.

Hospital express park and ride services

Duration and estimated cost: 12 months from 1 October 2026; £1,000k

Scheme description: Enhanced and potentially limited-stop bus services linking park and ride sites directly with major hospital destinations in Headington.

Rationale: Hospital commuting is a significant contributor to congestion on Oxford's radial routes. Faster, more direct services improve the attractiveness of park and ride for hospital staff and visitors, providing a realistic alternative to driving all the way to hospital sites.

NHS and education workplaces account for approximately 42% of workplace parking spaces inside the Oxford ring road, indicating the scale of peak-time travel to these sectors.

Active travel infrastructure

Duration: Not applicable; **Cost:** £500k

Scheme description: Funding for a package of small-scale active travel measures such as pedestrian crossings (e.g. Abingdon Road / Weirs Lane), side road entry treatments (e.g. London Road), secure cycle parking/hubs (e.g. in schools, Thornhill P&R site, Radley Station, on-street etc) and related improvements. This could also include schemes to better manage e-scooters and e-bikes

Rationale: While large infrastructure schemes are costly and slower to deliver, smaller interventions can provide targeted safety and accessibility benefits and reinforce the benefits of reduced traffic levels resulting from the congestion charge.

Free bus travel for Connect to Work programme participants

Duration and estimated cost: Six months per participant, 2026/27; £100k

Scheme description: Up to six months of free bus travel for participants in the Connect to Work programme.

Rationale: The cost of travel can be a barrier to entering employment or training. This targeted measure supports inclusion and access to work and indirectly facilitates the achievement of local transport policies.

Reserve

Duration: Not applicable; **Cost:** £500k

Scheme description: Contingency allocation retained within the investment plan.

Rationale: Congestion charge income remains a forecast. The reserve provides flexibility to manage lower-than-expected income or higher-than-expected costs and allows schemes to be scaled or adjusted as more information becomes available.