

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT

16 JULY 2026

ACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDANCE FOR WORKS PROMOTERS

Report by Director for Environment & Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to

- a) **Note the process taken in the development of the Active Travel Guidance for Street Works documentation.**
- b) **Approve the “Active Travel Guidance for Street Works” document**
- c) **Delegate authority to the Director for Environment & Highways to make amendments to the “Active Travel Guidance for Street Works” in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member**
- d) **Endorse the contents of the document.**

Executive Summary

1. Active travel is a core priority for Oxfordshire County Council (the Council), supporting its objectives to improve public health, reduce carbon emissions and deliver inclusive, well connected places. While legislation and national codes of practice for street works require consideration of pedestrians and cyclists, they do not provide detailed or practical guidance on addressing the specific needs of active travel during works.
2. Transport authorities such as Transport for London and Transport for Wales have therefore developed supplementary guidance to make expectations clearer within the limits of existing legislation. The Council has adopted the same approach and has developed Oxfordshire specific guidance to clarify local expectations for active travel during street works, which, subject to endorsement, will be rolled out to works promoters operating on the county’s highway network. The proposed Active Travel Guidance for Street Works document (the Guidance) is attached at Annex 1 of this report.

Approach and roll out plan

3. Active travel is a core priority for the Council, supporting its ambitions to improve public health and wellbeing, reduce carbon emissions and deliver inclusive, well connected places across the county. While existing legislation and national codes of practice for street works require highway authorities and works promoters to have regard to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, they do not provide detailed or practical guidance on the specific nuances of supporting active travel during the planning and delivery of works. As a result, active travel considerations are often only fully identified during inspections, rather than being embedded at the earliest stages of works design and programming.
4. In developing this Guidance, the Council has taken a structured and evidence led approach informed by national best practice and the experience of other highway authorities. Early engagement was undertaken with authorities such as Transport for London and Transport for Wales, who have developed supplementary local guidance to clarify expectations for active travel within the limits of existing legislation. These discussions focused on what worked well in practice, the processes used to develop their guidance and the lessons learned during implementation. The Council has drawn on this learning, reviewing its applicability to local circumstances and shaping the Guidance to reflect Oxfordshire's network characteristics and corporate priorities, particularly those relating to active travel, accessibility and network management.
5. Once developed, the Guidance was subject to internal consultation with relevant service areas, including network management, highways maintenance and strategy and policy teams supporting active travel. The document brings together and highlights those elements of legislation and national codes of practice that are most relevant to active travel and are frequently overlooked by works promoters until highlighted through the inspection process. While the Guidance does not go beyond existing legislative requirements, it makes explicit the considerations that must be addressed when planning and carrying out street works on Oxfordshire's highway network.
6. The Council's expectation is that this Guidance will be followed by works promoters and will lead to improved consistency, greater adherence and a renewed focus on active travel throughout the lifecycle of street works. By clearly resetting the standard and setting out expectations, the Guidance is intended to support more proactive consideration of pedestrians, cyclists and other active travellers. Street works officers will use this reset to reinforce the Council's expectations through the permitting process, inspections and ongoing engagement with works promoters.

7. It is proposed that the Guidance is rolled out to works promoters through the Oxfordshire Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee (HAUC), providing a clear and established forum for communication, implementation and the resolution of any queries. The Council also intends to continue working with other highway authorities to review and refine the Guidance over time, supporting continuous improvement and greater consistency in how active travel is considered during street works.

How this support Corporate Policies and Priorities

8. The guidance directly supports the Council's strategic priorities and policy framework, particularly those set out in the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, the Active Travel Strategy and the Network Management Plan. These policies place walking and cycling at the top of the transport user hierarchy, with a clear ambition to make active travel the natural first choice for everyday journeys, reduce carbon emissions, improve health outcomes and deliver a safe, inclusive and well managed highway network. By embedding clearer and more consistent consideration of active travel within the planning and delivery of street works, the guidance supports these objectives while reinforcing the Council's approach to effective network management, climate action and inclusive mobility, ensuring that disruption is minimised and that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are proactively addressed across the highway network

Financial Implications

9. The report sets out guidance which reenforces legislative and guidance led expectations of those who carry out works on the highway. It is not expected the guidance issues will have any financial implications for Oxfordshire County Council.

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Finance Business Partner (Filipp.Skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Legal Implications

10. The Guidance takes into account and is supplementary to the powers the Council has under the relevant legislation including the Highways Act 1980, New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, the Traffic Management Act 2004, the Safety at Street Works and Road Works: A Code of Practice 2013 (the Red Book) and the guidance found in Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual 2009. The Guidance has been developed considering existing guidance documentation issued by Transport for London and the Welsh Government as

well as related legislation, regulations and statutory and other guidance including the Council's own Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 2022 – 2050.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch, Principal Solicitor (Jennifer.Crouch@Oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Staffing Implications

11. It is not expected that there will be any staffing implications based on the contents and roll out of the Guidance approved in this report.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

12. The rollout of this Guidance is expected to have a positive equality impact by promoting more consistent and proactive consideration of the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and other active travellers during street works, including those with disabilities, reduced mobility, sensory impairments or other accessibility needs. By making requirements clearer at the planning and delivery stages of works, the guidance supports safer, more accessible temporary arrangements and helps reduce barriers that can disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, thereby supporting the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and its wider commitments to inclusive mobility.

Sustainability Implications

13. The rollout of this Guidance is expected to have a positive sustainability impact by reinforcing and promoting active travel as a practical and attractive choice during the planning and delivery of street works. By supporting more consistent provision for walking and cycling, the guidance helps reduce reliance on private vehicle journeys, contributing to lower carbon emissions, improved air quality and progress towards the Council's climate and environmental objectives. Ensuring that active travel routes remain usable and attractive during works also supports longer-term behaviour change, helping embed more sustainable travel choices across Oxfordshire's highway network.

Risk Management

14. Risks and opportunities associated with the development and rollout of this guidance have been considered as part of the policy development process. Key risks identified include inconsistent application by works promoters and the need to ensure clarity of expectations within the limits of existing legislation; these are being mitigated through clear guidance, engagement via Oxfordshire HAUC, and reinforcement by street works officers through permitting and inspections. The guidance also presents opportunities to improve network

efficiency, reduce disruption to active travel, and support delivery of the Council's wider transport, climate and inclusion objectives.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annex: The Oxfordshire Active Travel Guidance for Street Works

Background papers: Nil

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