

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL

Active Travel Strategy 2020 – 2030

Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ambition and vision

The aspiration for active travel in North Somerset is represented by the ambitious but achievable vision statement for this Active Travel Strategy:

‘Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.’

Within North Somerset, we will use active travel improvements to help reshape places to become healthy, vibrant and clean. Using new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure, we strive for residents and businesses to choose walking and cycling as the natural choice for short and medium length journeys and for the first and last mile of longer journeys. We aim for residents to take these journeys via a safe, connected network, making active travel the most attractive option wherever possible. This will be important in working towards making our transport network carbon neutral by 2030.

The provision of a high-quality, segregated cycle network will also attract visitors to North Somerset to cycle, walk and spend more within the District. This will be to the benefit of the local economy, as we work towards a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have four key objectives, showing what we aim to achieve for North Somerset:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel.
- Tackle the Climate Emergency.
- Drive local economic development.
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an enabling planning system.

Achieving these four objectives will result in the following successful outcomes:

- High-quality walking and cycling networks are delivered, enabling residents and visitors to make active journeys more frequently, with improved public realm and access to local shops, facilities and green spaces.
- Safety and perceptions of safety are addressed through improved infrastructure and suppressed demand for active travel is released through reallocated road space to improved walking and cycling facilities.
- Awareness is increased, supported by a strong, consistent media campaign showing the active travel options available. Residents are supported to make changes using education, training and publicity.
- Improved health and wellbeing of residents through increased regular walking and

cycling, making a healthier, happier and more resilient North Somerset.

- A lower carbon transport network with lower fossil fuel and car dependency, reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality across North Somerset, especially around schools and shopping areas. Transport is playing a central role in contributing towards carbon neutrality by 2030 to help tackle the climate emergency.
- A stronger local economy, supported by improved access to work, services and businesses, as part of our green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Income from tourism is higher, supported by attractive active travel facilities and the reduced dominance of cars in central spaces.
- Council spending priorities will be more focussed towards delivering identified active travel improvements and funding opportunities are maximised.
- An enabling planning system that ensures development is active travel focused. Other local policies ensure that new developments are active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and support the rapid growth in retrofitting our transport network to prioritise active travel.

Foundations and the context for change

North Somerset has laid strong foundations for a significant rise in walking and cycling through to 2030. Between March 2017 and March 2020, North Somerset saw an increase of 25% in cycling trips (pre-COVID-19, Annual Average Daily Cycle Trips). This was significantly higher than the national trend of in this period. This has been partly due to the delivery of some flagship strategic active travel routes, including the increasingly popular Festival Way commuter-route into Bristol from Nailsea and Backwell (via Long Ashton) and the more leisure-focussed Brean Down Way section of our ambitious North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route. When completed this route will link the Somerset and North Somerset Coast with Bristol via our three coastal towns of Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon and Portishead.

However, there is plenty more work to do. In order to help achieve carbon neutrality for North Somerset by 2030, we set out in this Active Travel Strategy to **increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030**.

It is only by setting ambitious aims like this that we will raise our game sufficiently to ensure that the North Somerset transport network and its users are contributing to carbon neutrality as much and as soon as possible.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that a rise in temperatures of just 1.5 degrees could lead to ecological, environmental and humanitarian disaster. The Panel concludes we will require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society to avoid this. This is

especially true for the transport sector which, at 42%, is the largest single source of carbon emissions in North Somerset. This is considerably higher than the regional (South West) average of 32% and the national average of 33% from transport (2018 figures, Gov.uk). For the West of England region, transport CO2 emissions will rise by a further 22% by 2036 if we don't act – increasing the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat globally and in the South West region. Consequently, North Somerset Council (NSC) and the other four authorities in the West of England have declared climate emergencies and are urgently working on action plans to mitigate this. The Active Travel Strategy will be an important part of North Somerset's carbon reduction action planning.



2020 was already set to be a year for active travel growth with the climate emergency and resulting work on decarbonising transport well underway. Momentum was building, with young people particularly helping to invigorate climate action, supported by a moving speech from global climate activist Greta Thunberg in nearby Bristol at the end of February 2020. This helped represent the West of England’s ambition and commitment for carbon neutrality via meaningful carbon action.

This was before the COVID-19 global pandemic dramatically changed the world as we know it. Despite being a significant and ongoing resource and public health challenge, North Somerset Council is determined to maximise the benefits of our changed world for decarbonising the transport network and delivering public health resilience and improvement through significant active travel growth. During peak lockdown, we saw a staggering 364% increase in cycling on some routes and even as we continue to ‘reopen’ as a district and as a nation, walking and cycling levels overall remain higher than pre-COVID-19 levels. The COVID-19 crisis has shown us the importance of underlying good health both physically and mentally and active travel is a very easy way for people to achieve this. It also showed the strong suppressed demand for active travel; only when motor traffic levels were down to approximately 25% of pre-COVID-19 levels

did many people feel it safe enough to cycle on our transport network. Such opportunities and lessons must be harnessed.

Work is required to deliver safe and frequent active travel and we will use this unique opportunity to decarbonise our transport network, improve public health and transform our often car-dominated streets and town centres; not just for the benefit of us all today but for generations to come.

This Active Travel Strategy has strong links with other important strategies, plans and guidance at the local, regional and national levels. Nationally, the update of local design guidance for cycling infrastructure, in the form of LTN 1/20, was very welcomed by NSC, as it sets out for the first time that cycling should take priority over other highway users wherever possible in order to gain Governmental funding. Accompanying updates to the Highway Code with improved priority for cycling offer vital support and make clear the national government’s recent shift towards cycling as a crucial ‘form of mass transit’ that is key to aid social distancing and improve public health in the short term, and reduce motor vehicle dependency and carbon emissions in the medium to long term. The Department for Transport’s Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2) welcomes only ambitious walking and cycling scheme bids that ‘must meaningfully alter the status quo on the

road’ and ‘include segregation or point closures to through traffic’. This sets a strong agenda for mass increases in active travel via significantly improved active travel infrastructure and awareness.

The COVID-19 pandemic will continue to have a significant impact on our local and national economy. As we continue into the ‘reopening’ phase of the recovery, we have the opportunity to reshape and strengthen the North Somerset economy. The evidence on the increased footfall, income, vitality and general attractiveness of local shopping streets and areas that have strong pedestrian, cycle and public realm is staggering. We should not make the false assumption that prioritising access by cars will deliver economic success, where more often than not, this is just not the case.

At the West of England ‘sub-regional’ level links with the emerging West of England Green Infrastructure Strategy will be key in supporting the growth in safe and frequent active travel by maximising active travel connections with improved and greener public spaces. This will enable people to feel comfortable and spend time and money in our popular places and spaces both within towns and in our beautiful rural areas.

Locally, through our emerging NSC Local Plan up to 2038, we will ensure that new developments

(both residential and employment) will be active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and connect into our growing strategic cycle network. Significant 'decarbonisation reviews' of our Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Travel Plans SPD, Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme and our ongoing active-travel focussed COVID-19 response (including the ambitious EATF scheme work) will continue to ensure that the Active Travel Strategy is a strong fit with existing and emerging local policy; to reduce carbon and get North Somerset moving.

It's different this time...

This Active Travel Strategy differs from any active travel plans and policies produced by NSC in the past. This time, active travel will be the number one priority within transport planning and considerations. We are serious about decarbonising our transport network, achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and ensuring a green and fair recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, active travel will be the first priority. After all, the first and last stages of all trips should be walking whenever possible. It is our responsibility to help create and reshape environments that provide equal access for all people regardless of their physical and socio-economic mobility; not just for those who have access to a car. We will create active travel neighbourhoods from new and transform existing neighbourhoods dominated by the motor car to create green, safe and active environments for North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors. Accompanied by an enhanced, safer strategic cycle network (within and between our towns and villages), we will achieve our ultimate vision of making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.



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SECTION 1:

Our vision for active travel

Active Travel refers to the movement of people or goods by using the physical activity of a person for movement. During this Active Travel Strategy, active travel refers to walking and cycling, but also other forms of travel such as running, wheeling and scooting. The wide range of benefits of active travel are well-documented for public health (both mental and physical), air quality and the environment, social interaction and for providing key forms of transport connectivity to help the economy at local, regional and national levels.

The aspiration for active travel in North Somerset is encompassed in the ambitious but achievable vision statement for this Active Travel Strategy:

‘Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.’

This is supported by four key objectives:

- Deliver safe and frequent active travel.
- Tackle the Climate Emergency.
- Drive local economic development.
- Shape active travel neighbourhoods through planning.

Within these four key objectives are more detailed sub-objectives. These help to achieve several successful outcomes for active travel in North Somerset and are shown in Table 1.

Carbon neutrality

North Somerset Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and we have since set out our [Climate Emergency Strategy](#) and accompanying [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (both agreed in 2019). As part of this, we commit to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. But what does this mean?

Carbon neutrality means having a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks. The end result, carbon neutrality, is net zero carbon emissions.

We are working hard to ‘decarbonise’ our transport network (as well as all other sectors within North Somerset, including business, housing and many others) – that is reduce the carbon we are using through transport, such as choosing active travel for short journeys or to get to public transport – instead of the petrol or diesel car. This Active Travel Strategy has an important role to play in setting out how we do this.

Reducing our carbon to a ‘carbon neutral’ status is a huge challenge and one that will only be achievable by increasing opportunities to store carbon, such as through planting trees (that store carbon) and allowing regularly maintained natural areas such as grass banks and verges to grow longer. North Somerset’s Rewilding programme sets out to plant over 50,000 young trees in our area, as well as allowing grass to

grow longer to reduce our carbon footprint and encourage wildlife.

We know that carbon offsetting is just a part of the ambitious aim to become carbon neutral by 2030, with most of the carbon reduction coming from making changes to the daily choices we make, with transport currently the most carbon emitting sector both in North Somerset and nationally. Whether walking, scooting or cycling to school and work, working from home more to reduce travel or using active travel to get to the shops and to see friends and family; we all have a big role to play in making greener, cleaner and more active choices to become carbon neutral and address this climate emergency.

Interventions

Throughout this Active Travel Strategy, every time there is a commitment for NSC to ‘intervene’, that is a sentence that starts with ‘**We will**’, it represents an ‘**Intervention**’ for NSC to provide action to improve active travel. For example, in Section 2, we outline how:

We will embark on a programme of delivering Active Travel Neighbourhoods to improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel for residents, businesses and visitors in our towns and villages.

All of these 'Interventions' will be displayed in **bold green** font to outline their importance. These Interventions are included throughout the main body of this strategy (largely from Section 4 onwards) and are summarised in a Table 3 in Section 7. This table also shows which of the Objectives each Interventions contribute towards.



Table 1: Objectives, Sub-Objectives and Outcomes for the Active Travel Strategy

Objectives	Sub-objectives	Outcomes
Deliver safe and frequent active travel	Deliver infrastructure and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality walking and cycling networks are delivered, enabling residents and visitors to make active journeys more frequently, with improved public realm and access to local shops, facilities and green spaces Safety and perceptions of safety are addressed through improved infrastructure and suppressed demand for active travel is released through reallocated road space to improved walking and cycling facilities Awareness is increased, supported by a strong, consistent media campaign showing the active travel options available. Residents are supported to make changes using education, training and publicity
	Achieve health and social benefits	
	Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners	
Tackle the Climate Emergency	Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved health and wellbeing of residents through increased regular walking and cycling, making a healthier, happier and more resilient North Somerset A lower carbon transport network with lower fossil fuel and car dependency, reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality across North Somerset, especially around schools and shopping areas. Transport is playing a central role in contributing towards carbon neutrality by 2030 to help tackle the climate emergency
	Improve air quality and public realm	
Drive local economic development	Improve access to jobs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stronger local economy, supported by improved access to work, services and businesses, as part of our green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Income from tourism is higher, supported by attractive active travel facilities and the reduced dominance of cars in central spaces
	Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities	
Shape active travel neighbourhoods through planning	Guide development planning to create active travel communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council spending priorities will be more focussed towards delivering identified active travel improvements and funding opportunities are maximised An enabling planning system that ensures development is active travel focused. Other local policies ensure that new developments are active travel neighbourhoods from the outset and support the rapid growth in retrofitting our transport network to prioritise active travel
	Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth	

SECTION 2:

Foundations for
future success



This Strategy builds upon our recent foundation-setting for facilitating growth in active travel. We have successfully delivered flagship strategic cycle network schemes, including:

- The Festival Way shared-use commuter route, providing off-road cycle access from Nailsea and Backwell to Bristol via Flax Bourton, Long Ashton and the Long Ashton Park and Ride. For commuters and tourists alike, it has seen a year on year increase in use since its opening in 2013. It saw an increase of 364% in cycling numbers during peak lockdown in May 2020.
- The Brean Down Way, completed in 2017 as the first section of our ambitious Coastal Towns Cycle Route. Providing a popular leisure route for approximately 100,000 users per year, this off-road route connects the Somerset Coast at Brean with the bustling Weston-super-Mare promenade via the picturesque Brean Down.
- A371 Locking Parklands to Haywood Village shared use cycle path, providing active travel connection between two new major development locations (with onward linkages with Weston Town Centre)
- The very popular Strawberry Line off-road shared-use path, along the old Strawberry Line rail route between Clevedon and Cheddar. This provides active travel connections for leisure trips and commuters between Winscombe (and on into Somerset) in the south, Congresbury and the A370 and Yatton Railway Station in the north.

These highly successful schemes have been delivered through a mixture of strong funding bids to external agencies and government departments as well as local contributions, with some private developer contributions. We also continue to deliver a programme of more 'local'

cycle improvement schemes using extremely limited local resource, with funding contributions towards schemes like the Uphill Road North cycle link (as part of the Coastal Towns Cycle Route) and active travel, public realm and public transport improvements at Alexandra Parade in Weston-super-Mare town centre.

Levels of cycling at key employers such as Weston College and North Somerset Council continue to rise through the provision of infrastructure and support through Business Engagement, funded through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and the Access Fund. Significant work is ongoing engaging with schools, by helping them develop and commit to travel plans to increase walking and cycling levels amongst pupils, which has been increasing as a result of these interventions.

Overall, thanks to the early progress achieved above, active travel is increasing in North Somerset. But it is not growing fast enough to contribute sufficiently to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and tackling the climate emergency.

To speed up the transition to active travel,

we will accelerate improvements to our strategic cycle network routes, allowing medium to long distance active travel for leisure, education and commuter trips (via segregated cycle paths, cycle lanes and active travel focused 'Quiet Lanes').

This allows those key connections between our towns, villages and countryside and beyond into Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and Somerset.

As well as these between-settlement 'strategic' routes

we will embark on a programme of delivering Active Travel Neighbourhoods to improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel for residents, businesses and visitors in our towns and villages.

Improving access to key facilities and improving the public realm in town and village centres – making popular areas feel cleaner, greener and more attractive for active travel and for residents and visitors to just 'dwell' – is crucial to getting people out of their cars and onto their feet and their cycles; for the good of themselves, the economy and the environment.

Providing this infrastructure is important to shift trips to walking and cycling as a safe, attractive travel choice. However, without sufficient awareness boosting, all potential users (everyone in North Somerset) will not be aware of the active travel option and all the benefits that come along with it.

We will increase Education, Training and Promotion (ETP) for active travel, for events and for all existing and new active travel infrastructure across North Somerset.

Only with this intervention will we achieve any meaningful shift towards the greener, lower-carbon transport choices of walking and cycling; enabling residents and businesses to choose active travel as the natural choice for regular journeys and for this to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.



SECTION 3:

Challenges and opportunities

Of course, there are a number of challenges for active travel success. The most important challenges are identified below, along with an opportunity that is available to be harnessed from each challenge.

Challenges...

Culture shift: creating a positive attitude to active travel

Road safety and air quality concerns breeding a lack of confidence

Lack of awareness of active travel routes and options

Lack of appropriate active travel infrastructure

Lack of funding for active travel infrastructure, historical and present

Failure to manage demand for private car

Geography of North Somerset

Economy of North Somerset

Creating equal and fair access

Opportunities...

Harness the momentum from growth in active travel seen during COVID-19 lockdown and from growing acceptance of urgency of climate emergency

Traffic calm and reallocate road space to footway, cycleway, public open space in areas of most need (town/village centres, tourist spots, road safety hotspots)

Increase Education, Training and Promotion of cycling on the highway and awareness boosting of off-road/segregated/ Quiet Lane cycle and walking routes

Deliver enhanced programme of active travel infrastructure including Active Travel Neighbourhoods and strategic cycle network

Maximise fresh impetus in national funding for active travel and reprioritise internal investment for active travel first within transport, planning and maintenance

Start to use demand management tools such as reallocating highway and parking spaces in town centre areas for walking, cycling and public open space

Continue to upgrade the strategic network along flat land and valley floors between settlements. Promote awareness of electric bikes for hills and longer distances

Deliver and document the positive impact of prioritising active modes and reducing car dominance in driving economic success

Providing facilities for all forms of disability. Ensure our work improves conditions for the poorest and most disadvantaged in society

SECTION 4:

Objectives and interventions

Objective 1: Deliver safe and frequent active travel

1.1 Deliver infrastructure and awareness

North Somerset Council has a well-established track record in delivering active travel schemes and supported by Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) programmes of support. We must build on this success and further accelerate strong growth in active travel seen during the COVID-19 crisis. During lockdown we saw a situation where people took to using the transport network for walking and cycling, despite the provision of active travel infrastructure still being well below acceptable levels for new and lower-confidence pedestrians and cyclists. A big factor in this increase was due to a reduced level of car use. We are going to learn from this and actively prioritise our networks for walking and cycling.

Delivery and design standards

The good design of walking and cycling infrastructure is key to increasing the usage and maximising the impact of facilities. All new walking and cycling facilities must be designed to current best practice design standards whilst existing infrastructure needs to be reviewed and upgraded to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and of a condition which provides safe and comfortable access for all users. All our highway

engineers need to be familiar with the latest guidance and best practice – for example LTN 1/20 – we intend to run training workshops to ensure this.

We will:

- run workshops to ensure that all internal NSC highway engineers, planning, regeneration, Elected Members (and all other relevant or interested teams and officers) are familiar and comfortable using latest guidance and best practice design standards for walking and cycling infrastructure, learning from national and international best practice
- deliver on the five design principles set out by the Department for Transport which are the essential requirements to achieve more people travelling by active modes, based on best practice both internationally and across the UK.

Networks and routes should be Coherent; Direct; Safe; Comfortable and Attractive. Inclusive design and accessibility are to run through all five of these core design principles, in order to provide infrastructure that caters for the

broadest range of people. Walking and cycling infrastructure should be accessible to everyone from 8 to 80 and beyond: it should be planned and designed for everyone. The opportunity to walk and cycle in our towns and villages should be universal.

For existing infrastructure, and where pedestrian and cycle desire lines have been identified, the LCWIP audit process will be followed before any changes to a route are carried out. This will ensure opportunities for improvements are not missed. It will also guide which routes should be prioritised for investment. Multi-modal audits will be carried out at all stages of a scheme to ensure active mobility is not compromised.

We will use audit processes (both LCWIP and multi-modal) to prioritise important, quick-win and value-for-money infrastructure improvements to our existing walking and cycling network.

All walking and cycling provision must be designed or adapted to facilitate access by disabled people which is of the same standard as that provided for able-bodied people. This includes those who use wheelchairs, mobility aids, and cycles of various kinds as mobility aids, as well as people with sensory impairments.



Case study: West of England LCWIP

The priorities of walking and cycling infrastructure for the West of England is shaped by a vision for investment in strategic and local infrastructure. The West of England wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has developed packages to improve walking, cycling and other forms of active travel, as well as public realm.

The West of England LCWIP is a significant step towards transforming active travel in the region. The Plan proposes investment of £411m by 2036, improving the environment for cyclists and pedestrians, focussing on 30 local high streets as well as improvements along 55 continuous cycle routes across the West of England region.

The five West of England authorities, Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire councils and the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), are aiming to provide high quality infrastructure to ensure the West of England is a region where cycling and walking are the preferred choices for shorter trips and to access public transport.

This plan was adopted in June 2020 and builds on the draft published as part of a public consultation held earlier in the year – receiving nearly 2,000 responses from across the region. North Somerset Council have adopted the proposed infrastructure improvements for North Somerset within this Active Travel Strategy (please see Appendix 2 for more details).

Surfaces and access points must be smooth, free draining, and designed to accommodate walkers and cyclists of all abilities whilst gates and access controls should be omitted where possible. Where not possible, for design and inclusivity purposes, a cycle should be considered as a vehicle 1.2m wide by 2.8m long, as per Highways England's Interim Advice Note 195/16 (IAN 195/16).

While in some cases deviations from design standards may be required due to a site's particular conditions, such deviations should be a last resort and only used where no practical alternative exists. One example is where livestock must be controlled and no other solution found. RADAR gates can also be used but should also be a last resort.

Prior to the design, construction, or adoption of any walking or cycling facility, a literature review should be undertaken to ensure that current design standards and best practices are being followed where relevant. The most relevant current guidance which should be listed in the following box.

Current design guidance:

- Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020). This replaces previous guidance LTN 2/08 and LTN 1/12
- Local Transport Note 1/04 'Planning and Design for Walking and Cycling'*
- Interim Advice Note 195/16 Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network – HE
- NSC Highways Development Design Guide (currently being updated, to be adopted early 2020)
- Planning for Cycling – CIHT
- Guide to Inclusive Cycling (2019) – Wheels for Wellbeing
- Designing for Cycle Traffic, International principles and practice – ICE

It should also be recognised that walkers and cyclists have different needs that unless considered carefully can lead to conflict. The specific needs of all users should be considered at all stages of the design process. Shared spaces in urban environments should be avoided if at all possible. Where (lesser used) rural paths are shared adequate provision, such as width and forward visibility, should be provided, and equestrian needs considered.

Wherever practical and where it does not compromise safety, priority will be given to walkers and cyclists as opposed to vehicular traffic; for example, at access ways or junctions of roads with lower levels of traffic. The alignment of new paths will be segregated from carriageways as much as possible, for example, by including grass verges or studs in between paths and the carriageway edge.

Frequent access points should be provided on cycle paths where adjacent to carriageways as a way of encouraging users to exit and join the carriageway with ease. Crossing points should be frequent, on all desire lines, and with good visibility. Controlled crossings should provide for cyclists wherever necessary.

The needs of visually impaired users will continue to be accommodated including, where relevant, consideration of strong contrasting colours and tactile features to indicate where surfaces are to be shared or segregated.

We will design and build infrastructure to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and segregate paths away from traffic wherever possible. This will transform our transport network from spaces where people are 'able' to walk and cycle to environments in which they are 'invited' to walk and cycle.

Enhancement features

Walking and cycling are much slower and interactive modes of transport compared to travelling in vehicles. As a result, the inclusion of interactive features can greatly enhance the enjoyment, and hence likelihood of repeated use, of walking and cycling routes. Such features can also enhance inclusivity by providing stopping or resting points for less able users. These features enhance walking and cycling routes, and more generally our popular places and spaces, and will be maximised wherever possible.

This will help us to deliver the wider economic and social need for streets that invite us to linger and dwell, to socialise and play. The creation of low-traffic or traffic-free spaces mean children can enjoy being more active and sociable, allowing our streets to be transformed into cleaner, safer and more welcoming places for people of all ages. Some of the key interventions can consist of the following:

- seats and benches (these help older and disabled people consider a walk or make it easier for them, particularly on steep hills)
- public art and displays
- interpretation and notice boards
- planting, trees, landscaping and picnic areas
- mileposts
- ecological features.

Case study: Cycling and Walking Journey Distances and Times

We recognise that for many people, cycling is more attractive than walking. For many other people, walking is more attractive or may be the only option. Cycling is not more important than walking, but in this Active Travel Strategy it may sometimes seem that cycling is being emphasised and referenced more often than walking.

The infographic to the right shows routes providing a 10-minute walk (in blue) and a 10-minute cycle (in green) to Nailsea & Backwell Railway Station from the Nailsea & Backwell area.

The map shows that nearly the whole of Nailsea and Backwell are within a 10-minute cycle from the station, whereas the relatively small areas in south Nailsea and north-west Backwell (shaded in blue) show how walking to the station within 10 minutes is far more limited. Cycling can therefore offer a far greater reach in terms of the shorter journey times and greater distances for those choosing to or are able to cycle instead.



As a result, many of our active travel improvement schemes prioritise improving the environment and infrastructure for cycling to local facilities such as shops, schools, workplaces and transport interchanges as it unlocks a far greater area and number of people to choose active travel to get to where they need to be quickly, safely and conveniently.

We continue to understand the huge role of walking on a more local level to get people to their destinations on a regular basis. We remain committed to investing in making walking and other forms of active travel such as jogging the natural choice for shorter, local journeys or to public transport options to go further afield.

Sometimes enhancement features may be implemented across both new and existing infrastructure, for example mileposts or public art trails. It may also be possible to find funding for enhancement features beyond the scheme construction budget, for example, Arts Council funding.

We will incorporate the attractive features such as benches, public art, notice boards, planting and landscaping on or close to walking and cycling routes wherever possible.

Wider Infrastructure

A multi-modal design approach will help deliver the strategy by overcoming barriers.

The interventions below are required to achieve and maintain the necessary behavioural change; encouraging and empowering more residents to travel actively for shorter journeys, instead of driving when making new trips.

As set out in the DfT's Cycling Delivery Plan (2014)

we will seek also to 'cycle proof' the road network – to ensure that active modes are considered as first priority at the design stage of new or improved road infrastructure.

The Government and NSC want to ensure that all cycling interventions, wherever possible, benefit both the walking and cycling environment and, by considering the most vulnerable road users first, avoids bringing pedestrians and cyclists into conflict.

North Somerset Council's position on new road infrastructure:

As specified in North Somerset Council's Executive Committee decision to adopt the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) in February 2020, the Council's position on the building of new road infrastructure is as following:

'We will only construct new roads to provide access to major development sites, to improve transport corridor flow at pinch-points that will have benefits for public transport connectivity, air quality, public realm or to provide road safety improvements, or to reallocate road space to more sustainable modes on existing roads (to optimise the use of highway space).'

This shows the Council's commitment to enabling a carbon neutral North Somerset transport network by 2030, by only building new road infrastructure to facilitate improvements to other, less carbon-emitting transport choices.

This Executive Committee Report is available to view on the North Somerset Council website.

Concerns over safety are often cited as one of the main reasons why people do not cycle or walk. Perceptions as well as real road dangers need addressing in tandem (for example nationally those who already cycle have better perceptions of cycling safety than non-cyclists). For people to choose to walk or cycle the conditions needs to be right. The street environment can be a discouragement to walking and cycling with a real or perceived threat of high traffic speeds, road safety, noise and poor air quality. Poor signage and route legibility also contribute to a hard to follow and therefore less attractive walk, jog, wheel, scoot or cycle.

We will develop an infrastructure network of high capacity, quality cycle tracks along main road corridors as well as a plan for strategic cycling infrastructure to address missing links, pinch-points and safer cycling within neighbourhoods.

There are many different types of interventions we will use to deliver safe and frequent active travel:

- traffic calming
- speed limits
- reallocation of road space, including on-carriageway cycle lanes and advance stop lines
- contra-flow cycle lanes
- implementation of road user hierarchies

- use of Intelligent Transport Systems
- pedestrian crossings and footway maintenance
- designing out crime, such as increasing natural surveillance (for example avoiding largely hidden, narrow alleyways)
- improved signage and route legibility
- urban realm improvements
- public cycle pumps and parking.

We will use a package of measures as part of our Active Travel Neighbourhood programme, to prioritise walking and cycling, reduce vehicle dominance and improve public open space in town and village centres.

Cycle parking

Cycle parking makes a statement that cyclists are welcome, enables cycles to be parked conveniently and securely at facilities, businesses and homes, and encourages cycling.

A cycle audit of North Somerset's main towns was completed in 2017 to inform the need for the increased provision.

Adequate cycle parking, normally in the form of 'Sheffield' stands, needs to be provided at convenient locations – including shops, tourist attractions, workplaces, schools, leisure centres and railway stations. After all, per square metre, cycle parking can deliver 5 times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking. Further to this, a compact town optimised for walking and cycling can have a "retail density" (spend per square metre) 2.5 times higher than a typical urban centre¹.

North Somerset Council's Parking SPD sets out minimum cycle parking standards for new developments. Cycle parking needs to be further addressed on-street and at local town, village and retail centres over this Strategy period. This is most effective as small groups of stands in lots of places rather than large banks of racks and should be convenient to building entrances. Grant match-funding for cycle parking has been provided to schools and workplaces over the past



Photo: Aliaksander Karankevich/Shutterstock.com

seven years through our 'Claim a Stand' scheme, and subject to funding will continue.

We will work with private businesses, organisations and stakeholders to fund and improve cycle parking provision both on-street and at town, village and retail centres. This includes working to provide secure bike storage for people living in HMOs (houses of multiple occupancy) or flats/apartment blocks, where people living in small or crowded accommodation are likely to struggle with bike storage. Where this is not possible we will work to promote the use of folding bikes for easier storage and more active and green travel choices.



Holistic Interventions and awareness boosting

Without knowledge that a route exists, or that a journey is achievable by active means, then infrastructure improvements will not meet their full potential. This is recognised by the DfT who recommend a reasonable proportion of an infrastructure scheme budget should be spent on so called 'soft' measures. To achieve the highest Benefit/Cost Ratios (BCRs) for the improvement scheme, the principle has been established that capital investment should be balanced by revenue supported Education, Training and Publicity (ETP).

Research for the DfT ('Finding the Optimum: Revenue / Capital Investment Balance for Sustainable Travel', 2014) has shown that nearly all infrastructure (capital) schemes are more effective when complemented by an element of revenue funded education, training and promotion (ETP).

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling?fbclid=IwAR0pAvkhZl8lW6Qip6J0gcbBEFhNNN20shahqc8AZybYbg4_SvCJjrKQuA#

The amount that's appropriate can vary significantly. For example, a network of new and improved routes in a town with a low baseline of cycling will require a whole change in culture to maximise the full potential benefit of these. This is because cycling, and to a lesser degree walking, require more than just the provision of routes to encourage greater uptake. A holistic approach is required that overcomes all the potential barriers to more active travel. Marketing of existing and new infrastructure is essential to maintain current users and encourage uptake. Those already active need targeting to ensure they are aware of new provision and this includes potential visitors from outside of North Somerset.

As part of their 'Moving the Nation' framework (2018), the Cycling and Walking Alliance prioritised five policy changes to begin the transformation of our roads and streets and trigger wider societal change towards active travel. Along with Speed, Space, Safety and Priority, Culture is an important strand that will need to adjust for us to meaningfully alter the status quo on our transport networks to active travel priority but also our attitude towards active travel as a realistic, attractive and first choice form of transport for as many short and medium journeys as possible.

Active mobility culture is a powerful instrument for building sustainable, healthy, and equitable places which can catalyse widespread change through

movement away from the negative norms of car-centric development; segregated, congested, unhealthy and polluted communities. The social, environmental, and economic drawbacks of over-reliance on private cars have become overwhelmingly clear. In response to this, we will build a mainstream, inclusive, district-wide cycling culture as well as project specific promotions.

We are committed to giving people a realistic choice to travel actively so that anyone, of any age, gender, fitness level and income can make this their choice. The case for shorter journeys is strong, and the resulting benefits are wide reaching – to the economy, to the environment, to the health of individuals and communities. A real step change cannot be achieved overnight, and it requires strong leadership and commitment and vital long-term planning for incremental changes to take place until active travel becomes the norm for everyone.

In order to deliver an active-travel supportive culture we will require a suite of engagement and promotional activity.

We will develop and coordinate the following:

- Education and training:
 - Support and where possible arrange led-rides and other promotional events, especially when new flagship cycle infrastructure is completed.

- Bike maintenance for adults of all ages and abilities.
- Cycle training for all children during their primary and secondary school years and embed a culture of walking and cycling throughout the school curriculum.
- Adult cycle training programmes.
- Support community groups to develop bike recycling, disability cycling programmes and other initiatives.
- Media:
 - We will develop a range of media promotional activities, as part of a mainstream, inclusive, public-facing media strategy. This will include but not be limited to:
 - Digital and paper mapping of our active travel network, including journey planner functions.
 - Various media publicity, including North Somerset Life magazine and through various NSC social media channels (including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube at present).
 - Including press releases (NSC website and local media outlets) at key stages of a project to promote schemes and improvements under development, ready for their completion.

- Other promotions:
 - Facilitate a grants programme to support active travel infrastructure and events.
 - Develop 'Bike Park' mountain biking events.
 - Develop a festivals, community – and led-rides programme to engage the wider community.
 - Continue to engage stakeholders, community groups, volunteers, advocates, funding and delivery partnerships to enable strategic delivery.



Bikeability

North Somerset Council operates Bikeability in schools, to ensure that habits are formed from an early age and young people develop cycling as a habit, and then continue this into adult life. The Bikeability scheme is one of a series of measures that the DfT put in place to improve safety on British roads. It has links to the sport strategy – Sporting Future – from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport which stresses the importance of ensuring that children are given the opportunity to get involved in cycling and be active from a young age. Bikeability teaches young people the necessary skills to ride on today's roads while encouraging them to be healthy and active.

There are three levels to Bikeability, and additional Bikeability Plus options including:

- **Level 1 (red badge)** – covers basic bike handling skills and is delivered in a traffic-free environment, such as a playground.
- **Level 2 (amber badge)** – is taught on quiet roads but in real traffic conditions and covers simple maneuvers and road sense.
- **Level 3 (green badge)** – covers more complex situations and equips the cyclist to handle a wide range of traffic conditions and road layouts.

- **Bikeability Balance** – is a series of school-based sessions that aims to prepare children with the skills that they will need to take part in Bikeability Level 1, by using games and balance bikes to develop their handling and awareness. North Somerset Council does not currently provide Bikeability Balance.
- **Bikeability Fix** – sessions teach Bikeability trainees how to perform basic maintenance on their bikes and, when run prior to courses, also serves to make sure that bikes are roadworthy when they are brought to training sessions.

We will aim to train 50% of pupils to Bikeability Level 1 by the end of year 4, 50% of children to Level 2 by the end of primary and 20% of children to Level 3 by the end of year 9.

We currently have DfT Access Fund and Bikeability Funding until March 2021 and this supports the majority of our ETP work including leaflets for cycle schemes, Modeshift STARS work, adult cycle training, cycle parking. A replacement external funding source for this workstream will need to be found if this work is to continue achieve its full range of benefits.

Adult cycle training

For those who haven't ridden a bike for a while, or perhaps never learnt to cycle, North Somerset Council offers the opportunity of free sessions with a trainer. You can have up to two sessions, either on a one-to-one basis, with a partner or friend, or as part of a group. The trainer will go to a person's location of choice, adjust their bike and even accompany them on a given journey. Advice is provided on planning a journey and local facilities can be highlighted by the trainer. The purpose is to give participants the skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle whichever journeys are important to them. This will require additional funding – We will seek all opportunities to continue to deliver this.

We will continue, where funding allows, to coordinate adult cycle training to enable people to boost their skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle the journeys that they wish to.

Cycle hire

Cycle hire offers visitors the opportunity to cycle when it may be difficult to transport their own cycles, or when cycling is unplanned. It also enables residents who do not own cycles to try cycling without making a large investment, perhaps trying a new kind of cycle such as electric assisted cycles (electric bikes). Commuters can also benefit by not having to take their own cycle on crowded public transport. Further to this,

we will deliver a dedicated Cycle for Weston centre at Weston seafront offering a wide range of cycles for hire, cycle maintenance, and a shop/café if possible.

Events and guided rides

We have previously publicised very popular mass rides to launch and publicise routes such as the Strawberry Line and Brean Down Way.

We will continue to publicise mass rides to help ensure new infrastructure gets off to a flying start.

We can also publicise smaller rides, aimed at for example, employees at a workplace to discover local routes.

Maps

Awareness of new routes and the network as a whole, will be raised through comprehensive signing, North Somerset Council's free cycle map, articles in the council's magazine 'North Somerset Life', its website and social media accounts. In addition, the West of England initiative www.betterbybike.info is a comprehensive sub-regional resource promoting local cycling routes and resources. We have published our ever-popular North Somerset Cycle Map for nearly two decades. It maps our cycle route network and routes; this is available to all via its website to help keep information up to date. Even in this digital age a hard copy map has a place to instantly see the network of routes available, and to plan and follow journeys. It's an important part of publicising new routes to ensure they are known about. Funding permitting,

we will continue to update and distribute the North Somerset Cycle Map as well as producing online versions.

From time to time we also publish other more local maps – for example detailing all paths in certain urban areas.



Travel plans – workplace and residential

Workplace travel planning and residential travel plans are a planning requirement for larger developments. They are a means to encourage cycling and walking and make employees and residents aware of new opportunities and the health benefits of active travel. A revised Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is being prepared outlining the expectations on developers to deliver these.

Personal Travel Planning (PTP)

PTP is a proven and cost-effective way of creating modal shift in favour of sustainable transport. It often involves travel advisors visiting households interested in exploring sustainable travel options. They assess people's current travel situation, establish travel desires and provide information and incentives specific to their needs. It provides information for local authorities about what the public want to help them change their travel behavior as well as creating good will, as people feel they are being listened to. PTP can also be performed in other settings, such as in workplaces and schools. PTP is often funded by a development as part of a Travel Plan.

Borrow a Bike

Since 2012, residents have been able to borrow a bike, for free, for two to four weeks to see how they get on. The scheme is aimed at those in work or job-seekers, to encourage more sustainable commuting. Conventional, electric-assist and folding cycles are available with the bikes being provided by The Bicycle Chain – a local shop. Since 2010, there have been over 500 cycle loans. We plan to continue this, subject to funding.

Cyclists Welcome

'Cyclists Welcome' (www.cyclistswelcome.co.uk) is a listing scheme managed by Cycling UK (the largest UK cycling organisation) to help cyclists find welcoming establishments which meet their needs.

As our network of tourism friendly routes grow North Somerset intends to take a proactive role in encouraging local businesses such as; bed and breakfasts, cafes, pubs, and leisure facilities to sign up to the scheme, which can be enhanced with a dedicated website (for example – www.cyclescottishborders.com). Cyclists are more likely to book accommodation in the area if they know there is somewhere safe and dry to leave their bike and eat a hearty meal. Some establishments provide tool kits, workshop pumps and bike wash facilities.

1.2 Achieve meaningful health and social benefits

Transport in general has direct and indirect impacts on health through transport-related accidents, physical activity levels and well-being, air quality and access to a range of services, employment and training. It is well-evidenced that active travel provides an extensive range of health benefits, both physical and mental.

The health benefits of increased active travel have been modelled. Over the period 2012-31 DfT calculated that roughly £17BN could be saved nationally by an increase in cycling and walking levels over the 20-year period². £9BN could be saved through the reduced cost of type 2 diabetes alone. In addition to the potential savings, the 'cycling economy' contributed £2.9BN to the UK economy in 2010³.

Increases in regular walking and cycling are proven to have a substantial impact on the health and wellbeing of an individual. This means a reduced bill for the NHS, reduced sick days and stress and a healthier and happier North Somerset.

² Davis, A, Claiming the Health Dividend: A summary and discussion of value for money estimates from studies of investment in walking and cycling, DfT, 2014

³ Grous, A., 2011 The British Cycling Economy, the Gross Cycling Product Report, London: LSE

Figure 2.3: Effects of cycling investment



Source: Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, DfT, 2016

The negative effects of transport are more likely to affect people living in more deprived neighbourhoods and the effects of lack of access to transport particularly affect those in rural areas. This problem is even worse for lower income groups. People living in the least prosperous areas are twice as likely to be physically inactive as those living in more prosperous areas.

This physical inactivity is a major public health issue, directly contributing to one in six deaths in the UK. Around half of women and a third of men in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity, failing to achieve a minimum of 30 minutes of activity a day. In some communities only one in ten adults are active enough to stay healthy.⁴

Walking and cycling for transport are the most appropriate physical activity options, as they are low impact and safe. Increasing walking and cycling reduces health inequalities and we know that interventions are effective for individuals as well as being cost effective. Additionally, the risk to health from physical in-activity far outweighs the risks from being a road casualty (ref PHE report for directors of Public health).

We will increase active travel investment in or linking to rural and deprived areas of North Somerset to level up on health inequalities across the district.

Building physical activity into everyday life through active travel is the most cost-effective and sustainable way to encourage people to meet their recommended levels of physical activity. More than half (55%) of UK adults say they are willing to walk more often in order to reduce their impact on the environment, and one in four (27%) say they are willing to cycle more⁵. However, many do not feel safe enough to do so, as a study compiled by Brake and Direct Line indicated that as many as one in three non-cyclists would be persuaded to cycle if there were safe local cycling routes⁶. Currently, only 15% of North Somerset residents cycle once a month, compared to a South West average of 16.6%. North Somerset also has the second lowest percentage of people in the West of England who walk for 30 minutes, five times a week (Public Health England). It is clear that we need to get North Somerset moving.

We will monitor requests using public interaction sites for active travel such as Widen My Path and Space to Move, for active travel improvements from North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors to develop and deliver improvements wherever possible.

⁴ Everybody Active, Everyday (Public Health England, 2014)

⁵ Attitudes and behaviour towards climate change, Department for Transport, 2011

⁶ Brake and Direct Line Report on Safe Driving: A Risky Business, Brake, 2011

Public Health England and the Local Government Association outline in their paper; [Healthy people healthy places: briefing on Obesity and the environment](#) (ref PHE and LGA, Healthy people, healthy places briefing) a number of steps that can be taken to increase individuals' levels of physical activity through active travel. This includes the recommendation of prioritising active travel in local transport plans, and outlines several steps that local authorities can take to increase active travel. NSC is committing to these interventions, by confirming that

we will:

- invest in localised cycling infrastructure appropriate for different locations and complexities

- identify and investigate proposals for active travel routes to provide 'health loop' routes. Incorporating local schools, shops and other facilities, they will enable people to hit their 10,000 daily steps by making safe and attractive routes following on from other nearby trips (for example a local walk or cycle after taking children to school)
- use shared space developments where safe to do so to encourage increased footfall in town centres
- use local research and consult and collaborate with residents, businesses and stakeholders to inform active travel planning

- implement 20mph zones in town and village centres and residential areas, prioritising schools and health care facilities
- use the Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) and the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) to estimate cost effectiveness of active travel interventions.

These strong interventions will ensure that walking and cycling quickly become the natural choice, for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.

1.3 Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners

NSC has a long history of successful collaboration and partnership working with both internal stakeholders and local and regional external partners. Internal partners have included health, leisure, sports and active lifestyles and public rights of way expertise and external partners have been varied between national organisations such as Sustrans, regional groups such as Bristol Cycling Campaign and more local stakeholders such as town and parish councils and local activist groups (for example via the North Somerset Cycle Forum). This enables us to maximise our collective experience and resources to result in the best possible outcomes for active travel improvements.



**Case Study: Brean Down Way
(North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route)**

North Somerset Council opened the most southern leg of its flagship Coastal Towns Cycle Route in July 2017. The three-mile Uphill to Brean section has been an exemplary project showing how we work with a very wide range of partners, volunteers and funding sources, and the determination to realise a long-held ambition. It was jointly led by North Somerset Council and national cycling charity, Greenways and

Cycleroutes Ltd. It also involved the Environment Agency, Wessex Water, Natural England, Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council and their contractors, Brean Parish Council, the National Trust and landowners.

The route continues for three-miles to the tip of Brean Down, which used to look close to Weston-super-Mare, but the barrier of the River Axe and poor connecting paths meant holiday makers and residents had to drive, take two buses, or cycle the busy, narrow and circuitous Accommodation

Road, which was also three-miles longer. Since the opening of the route in July 2017 up until the end of December 2017, there were over 47,000 pedestrian and cycle users on the route and numbers have further increased since then. Almost all the active travel journeys are new leisure trips, which were not possible or desirable before. The route won the Highway Partnership Award at the Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE) South Western awards in May 2018.

Photo: Anna Jastrzebska/Shutterstock.com



An example of this strong and continuing collaborative way of working was the opening of the Brean Down Way in 2017, as the first part of NSC's flagship strategic cycle route the North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route.

Engagement with both the public and our internal and external stakeholders helps ensure infrastructure and other measures are fit for purpose.

We will improve further our collaborative way of working with internal and external stakeholders and funders to secure important active travel improvement schemes and measures across North Somerset.

Cycle Forum

North Somerset Council has had an active and very positive Cycle Forum for over a decade. Local cycling organisations are represented as well as individuals, who play a great advocacy role in the District. The Forum is consulted and given the opportunity to comment on all our cycling schemes and initiatives and bring forward their own ideas (FFI see www.n-somerset.gov.uk/cycleforum). Wider public consultation will be used where appropriate for all our active travel schemes.

We will continue to use the Cycle Forum as the voice for North Somerset cyclists to aid our active travel improvement planning. We will also work with the new North Somerset Citizens' Panel once it is set up to understand further how we can help less confident cyclists to feel comfortable choosing cycling as the first choice for small and medium journeys.

Business engagement

As improvements to benefit commuters have been made, our sustainable travel business engagement officers have targeted employers to ensure their employees are aware of the improvements and how they can benefit. With routes connecting to Bristol we have ensured that our Bristol counterparts have also been aware of these routes to encourage commuters to travel to Bristol via bicycle, bus or car share.

We also have 25 successful Active Travel Champions, based at many of our larger employers, established through the Access Fund.

Case study: Active Travel Champions

The purpose of the Champions project is to get more people walking or cycling to work through peer lead support. Our champions are empowered and supported to make positive changes within their organisation and change the behavior of those around them. Some of the ways in which they can do this is through the organisation of free bike health check events, bike loans, cycle confidence training, led rides, personalised travel planning, organisation travel challenges and the provision of maps, walking and cycling accessories and an Emergency Bike Repair Kit for all staff to use.

We will continue to engage with businesses to increase awareness of existing active travel options and seek guidance on future improvements that will deliver a further increase in cycling to employment and services across North Somerset.

Without collaboration with internal and external partners, we would struggle to implement effective, the most appropriate and well-publicised active travel improvements for North Somerset.

School Engagement

Building active adults starts at school and within families. We have a programme of activities that help to increase children's physical activity, reduce congestion and improve safety around schools and take part in national promotions which schools can participate in increase to encourage active travel journeys, such as Bike Week.

Children who walk or cycle to school tend to be more attentive and achieve better results and cycle-friendly environments promote more physical activity in later years⁷.

We will:

- continue to develop resources, incentive schemes and events to help all schools take part in activities to encourage active travel and we will work harder to deliver work in schools (for example through assemblies and classroom sessions, alongside outdoor practical lessons such as learn to ride, cycle maintenance and bike breakfasts)
- further develop our programme of Safer Routes to Schools and access restrictions to support children's safe walking and cycling to schools across the district.

⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling?fbclid=IwAROpAvkhZI8lW6Qip6J0gcbBEFhNNN20shahqc8AZybYbg4_SvCJjr-kQuA#



Objective 2: Tackle the Climate Emergency

2.1 Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency

Significant progress has been made both nationally and within North Somerset in the last twenty years to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels such as gas, oil and coal and increase the proportion of our energy sources coming from renewable energy sources. Even better than this, efforts are being made to reduce the amount of energy we are using full stop.

However, progress is not being made fast enough. Much of the world is continuing with 'business as usual'. The depletion of reserves of fossil fuels is continuing at an alarming rate and as such, fuel costs are likely to continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

As warned by the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we will require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society to avoid a rise in temperatures of just 1.5 degrees, which could lead to ecological, environmental and humanitarian disaster. This is especially true for the transport sector which, at 32%, is the largest single source of carbon emissions in the South West. For the West of



The Somerset Levels flooding in January 2014 flooded the London and Exeter main railway line (pictured) and local roads and paths leaving thousands cut off. Extreme weather events like this are expected to become more common with climate change.

England transport CO2 emissions will rise by a further 22% by 2036 if we don't act – increasing the risk of droughts, floods and extreme heat not just globally but also for the South West region.

Consequently, North Somerset Council (NSC) and the other four authorities in the West of England have declared climate emergencies and are urgently working on action plans to mitigate this. The Active Travel Strategy is an important part of North Somerset's carbon reduction action planning.

For transport in North Somerset, despite a 25% increase in cycling since 2016/17, we have continued to rely heavily on the private petrol or diesel car for transport, with 74% of journeys to

work made by car in North Somerset (Census 2011)⁸. In the West of England region, 2 of every 5 journeys under 2km are made by car. There is clearly work to do to achieve this mass shift to active travel, helping us to decarbonise the transport network and tackle the climate emergency.

Active travel provides a sustainable alternative not just for economic and environmental benefits, but also social benefits, as we set about retrofitting and creating a transport network designed for the benefit of people and not just motor vehicles as is present.

⁸ 2011 Census data. Includes those 'driving a car or van' plus those as a 'passenger in a car or van', divided by the total number of North Somerset residents in employment and therefore travelling to work.

Reducing speed and improving road safety

One important way for us to facilitate the growth in active travel is to reduce vehicle speeds and improve actual and perceived road safety. Lower speeds help release suppressed demand and encourage active travel through addressing actual and perceived danger. NSC has developed and approved a revised 20mph policy. 20mph zones have been demonstrated to both encourage walking and cycling and make the roads safer for all by reducing the speed of moving vehicles and raising awareness of the importance of slower speeds. They can help lead to more vibrant and economically successful areas as movement between businesses is easier, as seen with the highly successful low traffic neighbourhoods in the 'Mini-Holland' at Waltham Forest in London (see case study box below). Any loss of time for vehicle journeys is minimal within built up areas due to the impact of queuing – balanced by easing exiting parking and joining primary routes.

Our emerging Road Safety Strategy sets out a range of measures to address the real and perceived threat of road traffic accidents as these act as a considerable deterrent to increasing active travel. These measures form some important interventions from NSC to delivery growth in active travel and tackle the climate emergency:

We will:

- use DfT Modeshift STARS to target the delivery of sustainable travel training skills in order to increase levels of sustainable and active travel and to document road safety concerns and requests for highway improvement
- continue to deliver Bikeability training in accordance with best practice
- continue to facilitate child pedestrian training to children in KS1
- offer a traded school crossing patrol service to schools.
- work with the police to identify the most appropriate tool to encourage drivers to slow down. These include: Community Speedwatch, Vehicle Activated Signs, mobile safety camera enforcement and static safety camera installation
- work with the Police where our data shows that speeding is a contributory factor in collisions and reviewing speed limits.
- develop highway schemes to tackle speed of motor traffic as a significant cause of road danger for vulnerable road users at identified and high-risk road safety hotspots.

- expand the number of 20mph zones covering built up areas and expand 40mph limits on minor rural roads to make our roads and streets safer for everyone.

All of the above will allow us to increase resilience by providing active travel alternatives to reliance on fossil fuels (continued high levels of dependency on private petrol and diesel vehicles). This will help us break away from 'business as usual' to bring about a change in culture from car-dominated travel to active travel as the natural choice.

2.2 Improve air quality and public realm

North Somerset has not had an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) since 2002, that is an area that exceeded regulatory amounts of nitrogen dioxide (or other harmful gases) as part of annual air quality monitoring. However, there are many areas of North Somerset, particularly in town and village centres and along major transport corridors, where air quality is noticeably poor. These are due to the high levels of private petrol and diesel vehicles. As well as the perceived safety concerns of traffic dominating our transport network spaces, the poor air quality is a strong suppressor of demand for active travel.

Taking the 'Moving the Nation' framework as our starting point we have considered how NSC will enact measures to address these issues within its powers. By adopting and ensuring consistent application of existing 'best-in-class' infrastructure design standards we can create safe, attractive and inviting places for people of all ages and abilities. When people are given high quality and segregated walking and cycling spaces, people then chose to walk and cycle. The Waltham Forest 'Mini Holland' scheme provides a great example of what can be achieved, subject to adequate funding.

Photo: Edward Crawford / Shutterstock.com



Case study:
Waltham Forest 'Mini-Holland':
Low Traffic Neighbourhood

The London Borough of Waltham Forest, through its Liveable Neighbourhood project, has bucked the trend of worsening air quality, and over the course of a decade, reduced the number of residents exposed to dangerous levels of nitrogen dioxide by 85%. The council engaged closely with residents and businesses, involving them as closely as possible with the project through design workshops, drop-in sessions, and door-knocking. Changes on the ground in Waltham Forest have involved giving pedestrians and cyclists priority and junctions, with widened pavements and segregated cycle tracks, and removing the opportunities for rat-running through residential streets.

Although there was some initial resistance to the changes, Waltham Forest is seeing significant behaviour change, with more people from a range of backgrounds starting to cycle, and increased life expectancy for the borough's children. While schemes to prevent through traffic were initially divisive, follow-up evaluation of the schemes revealed a change in attitudes, and local businesses have flourished since through-traffic bans were introduced.

We will use existing 'best-in-class' infrastructure design standards to create cleaner, attractive and inviting places for people of all ages and abilities. They will be able to enjoy the improved air quality from the reduction in motor vehicles in town and village areas and along our strategic cycle routes between places.

By creating Active Travel Neighbourhoods in our towns and villages, supported by an enhanced and safer strategic cycle network (that is off-road or on quieter roads wherever possible), we will deliver increases in active travel as residents, businesses and visitors alike increasingly choose the healthier, lower-carbon way to travel.

Objective 3: Drive local economic development

Walking and Cycling: Economic benefits

- Well designed and located walking infrastructure has the potential to deliver very high benefit to cost ratios, of up to £37.6 per £1 spent, according to recent research. Well-planned improvements to public spaces such as pedestrianisation can boost footfall and trading by up to 40% ('The pedestrian pound...', Living Streets, 2013).
- The pedestrian environment is crucial for town and village retailers. In Bristol for example, just 22% of shoppers arrive by car, with the majority arriving by foot. A multi-year study on London town centres showed that shoppers on foot spent 40-65% more than those who travelled by car.
- Walking projects have also been found to increase land values. A review of earlier literature suggests retail and commercial rates increase in the range of 10-30% (The Value of Cycle Tourism: Opportunities for the Scottish Economy – Sustrans, 2013).

- Cyclists visit local shops more regularly, spending more than users of most other modes of transport.
- Per square metre, cycle parking delivers five times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking.
- A compact town optimised for walking and cycling can have a "retail density" (spend per square metre) 2.5 times higher than a typical urban centre.
- Public realm improvements, including those that cater for cycling, have been shown to result in increased trade at local businesses
- Neighbourhoods with cycle-friendly characteristics – low traffic volumes, walkable, close to off-road cycle paths – are more desirable or have higher property values.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/509587/value-of-cycling.pdf

We are determined to debunk the common misconception that the higher the access for motor vehicles and parking outside local shops, the increased economic vitality. Multiple studies both in the UK and abroad have shown that increased active travel access to local centres such as town and village high streets has led to higher numbers of people accessing the shops and more money being spent. Shoppers and visitors that arrive by foot or cycle on average spend significantly more money locally than those that arrive by car. For example, Public realm improvements, including those that cater for cycling, have been shown to result in increased trade at local businesses; up to 49% in New York City⁹. The improved environment or 'public realm' encourages them to spend longer and 'dwell' in cleaner, safer and less motor-vehicle dominated environments around shops, leading to further spending. Most businesses significantly over-estimate the economic contributions of car users and by the same token under-estimate the positive benefits of pedestrians and cyclists.

Walking and cycling schemes typically have a much higher cost-benefit ratio than road or public transport schemes, which means that they are relatively low cost to deliver and provide far-reaching economic benefits including:

⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-value-of-cycling-rapid-evidence-review-of-the-economic-benefits-of-cycling?fbclid=IwAR0pAvkhZl8lW6Qip6J0gcbBEFhNNN20shahqc8AZybYbg4_SvCJjr-kQuA#

- **Connecting people to employment opportunities.** People living in deprived areas with low car ownership particularly benefit from such schemes. Those living in deprived areas generally need better places to walk the most. In 2011, 25 per cent of households in the UK did not have access to a car, and households in the highest income quintile travelled just over three times further by car than the lowest income quintile¹⁰.
- **Enhancing the retail environment.** Studies show that pedestrians and cyclists spend more money than people arriving by car, due to more time to browse with no restrictive parking time allocation. Providing better access to town centres and high streets and improving a better walking environment will increase trips and spend, boosting local businesses.

¹⁰ The pedestrian pound: The business case for better streets and places (Living Streets, 2013).

Cycling: Economic benefits

Cycle tourism contributes £2.24bn to the UK economy each year. Although overnight trips make up less than 1% of the overall volume, their economic contribution is just under 20% of the total value of cycle tourism. The significant difference between the value and volume can be attributed to the expenditure behaviour patterns and the contribution of accommodation costs to the total expenditure. Expenditure from single-day trips averages £15, and mainly includes the cost of food and refreshments, while accommodation expenditure for overnight trips alone averages £27 per person per night.

The average multi-day cycle trip is 7.7 days and the direct expenditure per trip averages £350. As such, it will be beneficial to focus development of leisure cycle activities on multiple day tours rather than single day trips. This is mainly due to accommodation expenses, but also to the greater propensity to spend more on multi-day trips. Larger groups tend to spend more per cyclist per day. Those who are on cycle holidays for a longer time would be likely to spend more money per day per cyclist. On average event participants staying away from home overnight spent £65.90 per day, while visitors staying only for a single day spend £16.40.

Many rural pubs have closed in recent years – nationally at 29 per week (CGA figures, June – Dec 2014, twice the closure rate of 2011) where located on or near appropriate routes, the encouragement of cycling can help make a real difference to their viability.

3.1 Improve access to services, jobs and training

Key to improving active travel access to services and jobs is investment in the infrastructure and facilities of the active travel network. This will allow residents, businesses and visitors to access our local shops and facilities via healthier and more sustainable forms of travel such as walking and cycling, which has proven to increase footfall and economic vitality of shops in other areas.

Invest and Improve

We will invest an increasing proportion of our resources to improve walking and cycling networks and deliver benefits for active travel modes.



'Moving the Nation' (The Cycling and Walking Alliance, 2018)

The Cycling and Walking Alliance, a group of the UK's leading walking and cycling organisations, has published 'Moving the Nation'. This identified a set of priority policy changes that would begin the transformation of our roads and streets and trigger wider societal change. These are:

- Speed
- Space
- Safety
- Priority
- Culture

NSC is broadly supportive of the national proposals for change contained within this document, which for example, include more specific speed limit changes, the adoption and consistent application of best infrastructure design standards, revisions to the Highway Code to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, the prohibition of pavement parking and the provision of cycle training for children throughout their school years.

Previously, appraisal methodologies underestimated the contribution of these schemes due to difficulties in defining social cost benefit, suppressed demand and health benefits. However, with new tools such as the Active Mode Appraisal Tool (AMAT), we are now able to better calculate the likely benefits of active travel improvement schemes.

Photo: Simon Pugsley/Shutterstock.com



Taking the 'Moving the Nation' framework as our starting point we have considered how NSC will enact measures to address these issues within its powers. The Speed, Space and Safety elements are covered under Sections 2.1 and 2.2 above and Culture under Section 1.1. Here we look at how 'Priority' can transform our roads and streets to trigger wide societal change and make active travel the first choice for short and medium length journeys.



Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) – the cycling priority transport guidance

Released in July 2020, LTN 1/20 goes further than any other national government transport guidance with regards to the priority and importance given to cycling infrastructure. From now, cycling must be placed at the heart of the transport network, with capital spending, road space and transport planning attention to benefit this central role. Cycling must no longer be treated as marginal, or an afterthought. It must not be seen as mainly part of the leisure industry, but as a means of everyday transport. The Department for Transport state that 'it is of the utmost importance that local authorities follow this guidance closely in designing any cycle infrastructure scheme in future'.

Most current cycle provision is squeezed into spare space or on the margins of roads. It reflects a belief, conscious or otherwise, that hardly anyone cycles, that cycling is unimportant and that cycling provision must not affect more important road users, such as motor vehicles and pedestrians. However in some places, even without much special provision, cycling is already mass transit.

To achieve the significant increase in cycling that is required for us to become carbon neutral by 2030, the quality of cycling infrastructure must sharply improve. This new guidance reflects current best practice, standards and legal requirements. LTN 1/20 states that physically

segregated bike lanes, cycle-safe junctions and low-traffic streets to encourage people to cycle must become the norm. The design options include segregation from traffic, measures for cycling at junctions and roundabouts, and updated guidance on crossings, signal design and the associated traffic signs and road markings. Inclusive cycling is an underlying theme throughout so that people cycling of all ages and abilities are considered.

The Government are also in the process of setting up a new national cycling inspectorate to examine all proposed schemes against the new LTN 1/20 guidance before funding is agreed, and that finished schemes will be inspected to ensure that they have been delivered in compliance. The DfT also state that funding will be returned to national government for any schemes built in a way which is not consistent with the guidance, ensuring that these new standards are met.

Updates to the Highway Code are also being consulted on, with the proposed changes set to better protect and prioritise cyclists and pedestrians against motor vehicles. These include providing guidance that drivers and riders should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross the road; turning drivers to give priority to cyclists travelling straight ahead at junctions and finally on safe, wide passing distances and speeds when overtaking cyclists and horse riders.

Priority

The adopted Highway includes footways and usually the verges. However the carriageway often provides the only available space and so more must be done to meet active travel demand and safety concerns.

We will reallocate carriageway space to active modes to improve safe walking and cycling provision.

Pavement parking creates real problems and jeopardises safety, particularly for those with limited mobility, and those with young children. It needs to be prohibited (subject to national legislation and Police enforcement) or deterred to create safer and more accessible streets.

We will work with the police and lobby national government to make illegal and enforce pavement parking bans. We will then prioritise streets for improvements according to the scale of nuisance and danger caused.

In July 2020, the Department for Transport released the priority-shifting Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20), as an updated cycle design guidance note (replacing LTN 1/12 and LTN 2/08). For the first time in national government transport guidance, cycling must be placed at the heart of the transport network and no longer treated as marginal or an afterthought.

A summary of these important is provided in the case study box on the previous page. This important guidance will enable NSC to ensure that the increase of cycling through high-quality infrastructure will be at the heart of all of transport improvement schemes going forward.



Photos: Wheels for Wellbeing, Guide to Inclusive Cycling, 2017

Accessibility and mobility

The “first and last-mile” connection describes the beginning or end of an individual trip made primarily by another (often public transport) mode. In many cases, people will walk or cycle if they are enabled to do so; if it is close enough

and there is a perception of safety. The first and last mile trip concept is particularly relevant in neighbourhoods, as mode choice for longer trips is likely to be determined by the choices available to travel the first mile i.e. from home. The first and last mile of longer journeys to key destinations such as employment and leisure sites should be targeted for switching to active modes. This will be supported by, and build on the benefits being generated, from shorter trips being made by non-car modes.

We will work with public transport operators to ensure that it is easy to make the first and last of public transport journeys by active travel modes such as walking, scooting and cycling, by facilitating cycle parking at transport hubs and allowing easy access and storage for cycles and scooters on buses and trains.

Reducing the number of neighbourhood car journeys can have wide reaching benefits. Journeys within neighbourhoods are short, and for pedestrians, most neighbourhoods already have an extensive network of footways and Public Rights of Way. Fewer car journeys can increase the attractiveness of other modes, such as the use of scooters, particularly by younger children, to access local destinations. The importance of reduced traffic on equestrian links, can also not be overlooked in some areas.

Walking and cycling to/from public transport services can play a large role in encouraging physical activity and improving health. Knowledge and accessibility to legible information are required about how to travel without a private car, supporting equal access opportunities for people in all neighbourhoods. Another measure that we will consider is the creation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. This is a similar concept to TfL’s Liveable Neighbourhoods as described in the Waltham Forest case study box. In Low Traffic Neighbourhoods motor traffic is either discouraged or removed, typically resulting in reduced traffic speeds, and quieter and safer feeling streets. This change to the physical environment enables and encourages residents and visitors to switch to more healthy and active modes such as walking and cycling.

We will integrate active travel improvements with public transport modes to provide improved options for local accessibility between active travel and public transport as the ‘first and last mile’ of journeys to services, jobs and training.

The DfT “[Inclusive Transport Strategy: Achieving Equal Access for Disabled People](#)” (July 2018 –) notes that local authorities are responsible to ensure any pedestrian environment scheme, including a shared space, is inclusive and meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. NSC will consider our duties to deliver inclusive

pedestrian environments and will also engage with all road users, at an early stage of scheme development, to enable concerns to be raised and acted on effectively.

We will ensure that the transport network is reshaped so that people with limited mobility are able to move around freely through the pedestrian environment, and use it to access other modes of transport.



(Wheels for Wellbeing, Guide to Inclusive Cycling, 2017)

Cycle provision must be inclusive. This is a Local authority duty under the Equality Act 2010. For many people a cycle is a mobility aid, which may be a conventional or adapted cycle. Data collected by Transport for London found that the proportion of disabled Londoners who sometimes use a cycle to get around (15%) is only slightly less than for non-disabled Londoners (18%), demonstrating that cycling is an important mode of transport for everyone. (Wheels for Wellbeing, Guide to Inclusive Cycling, 2017).

3.2 Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities

Since both the declaration of the Climate Emergency by NSC in February 2019 (and subsequent ongoing carbon reduction action planning) and also the adoption of the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) as our regional transport planning and policy framework, changes have been made to increase the proportion of our annual expenditure on active travel improvements.

Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme

Both the Climate Emergency and the JLTP4 have helped shape how we develop our annual Integrated Transport delivery programme, as part of our Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme (that also includes a Highway Maintenance Programme). For the 2020-23 Integrated Transport Programme, a scheme scoring and prioritisation process was developed to ensure that only schemes that fit strongly against a set of selected scoring categories made it onto the delivery programme. The scoring process is described in more detail in the case study box below, but it has ensured that our Programme has the most active travel schemes and highest percentage of expenditure on active travel than ever before.

Although our capital programme is a three year programme, it is updated annually to reflect resources, progress and bidding opportunities. The Scheme Proposal Evaluation process will be reviewed to ensure it is up to date and used again in putting together the 2021-24 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, using the principles set out above and the latest best practice guidance such as LTN 1/20.

Supported by the delivery of our annual, three year Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme,

we will work to ensure that:

- our towns are served by a core network of segregated cycle routes and networks of walkable routes to and within centres
- communities have access to green spaces and are connected by traffic-free cycling and walking networks for all
- rail and bus stops are attractive for people travelling on foot or by bike and have facilities that prioritise cycling and walking
- families have routes to walk and cycle to school in safety and with confidence, gaining essential life skills
- we provide opportunities and support for people to take up walking and cycling, through programmes in schools, workplaces and local communities.



Scheme Proposal Evaluation:

Creating an active travel-focused Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme

The below categories, based on the HM Treasury's best-practice 5 Case Model Approach, were designed to ensure an active-travel focussed, value for money and deliverable Integrated Transport Programme. This has been a success with more active travel schemes included than ever before, where active travel schemes generally scored well across the five cases.

Strategic case:

- Contribution to JLT3 objectives (now updated to JLT4 objectives, since this was adopted in March 2020):
 - reducing carbon emissions
 - supporting economic growth
 - accessibility
 - safety, security and health
 - quality of life.
- Strategic reach
- Contribution to NSC Corporate Plan objectives
- Access to development sites

Economic case:

- Economic, environmental and social effects

Financial case:

- Estimated cost to budget; Funding sources; Estimated ongoing maintenance costs; potential to generate income/provide an ongoing saving

Commercial case:

- Procurement; Risk Management

Management case:

- Project management and reporting; External stakeholder involvement; Consultation

Maintenance

Maintenance schemes also create opportunities to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists that add relatively little or zero cost, such as cycle lanes, pseudo pavements in constrained villages, and Advance Stop Lines for cyclists. Changes to road markings can be used to encourage drivers to take more care (such as removal of the centre line).

We will actively consider, in programming our Highway maintenance, whether 'like for like' is the most appropriate course of action by carrying out an active travel audit, to be incorporated into our procedures.

Routes for active travel such as provision of shared-use paths, require regular maintenance to ensure they are safe and attractive to use. Funding needs to be and will be dedicated for this purpose.

Over the past year we have used the DfT's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) methodology¹¹ to identify the highest priority cycling and walking routes we should be delivering in North Somerset. This national best practice process includes a detailed audit of routes to set out interventions required to bring

infrastructure up to a standard that will increase walking and cycling. To date the highest priority routes have been audited and recommendations put forward. These are included in the Schedule of Routes and in the LCWIP document which covers the whole West of England and contains more detail for the highest priority routes. Over time,

we will audit more routes to prioritise further rounds of improvements. Audits will also be used for new build and more general Highway schemes to ensure opportunities are not missed.

Other necessary maintenance includes; keeping vegetation cut back and removing litter, fly-tipping, leaf fall and broken glass to keep pedestrians and cyclists safe and feeling welcomed. Without such maintenance walkers and cyclists are more likely to drive or use the carriageway – falling on ice is one of the most common types of cycling injury accounting locally for 17% of cycling accident hospital admissions¹².

We will review the case for where winter salting of key commuter routes should be introduced especially on bends, steep sections and where adjacent to busy roads.

Highway-based schemes are covered by the Council's obligation to maintain the Highway,

and funding for these is provided by the DfT. DfT guidance now suggests that 9% of maintenance budgets be spent on active travel infrastructure¹³. As the Highway is an essential element of the cycle route network we need to be mindful that it needs to be properly maintained for both the safety and comfort of cyclists. The edges of the Highway in particular can be subject to poor surfaces, sunken gulleys, overhanging vegetation and other litter/debris. This may cause a cyclist to divert suddenly (or be thrown) into traffic. Potholes need to be addressed promptly. North Somerset Council recently adopted a risk-based approach to Highway maintenance, which is used as the basis to prioritise spending on highway, footway and cycleway maintenance¹⁴.

Our Highway Maintenance Programme, part of the Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, does not require schemes to be tested through the Scheme Proposal Evaluation process. Instead, the maintenance schemes we allocate our funding to are identified using survey condition data, accident records, customer request reviews and officer identified schemes. However, since the Climate Emergency and the rapid need to decarbonise by 2030, we have been making a number of changes to ensure that our Maintenance Programme is helping

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plans-technical-guidance-and-tools>

¹² <https://bristolcycling.org.uk/cycling-hospital-admissions-in-2016>

¹³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/390216/highways-maintenance-explanatory-note.pdf

¹⁴ <http://www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org/en/guidance/index.cfm>

contribute to increasing active travel. These include:

- An 408% increase on the expenditure on Footway and Cycleway Maintenance from the 2019/20 Programme, encouraging more journeys by walking and cycling via a better overall maintained network of footways and cycle paths. Additionally, the commitment to maintain the highway network benefits not just car users, but also cyclists, equestrians and pedestrians (as well as public transport), all of which share the public highway.
- Incorporating a review of highway lining and signing to include an improvement to active travel provision wherever possible. For example, instead of relining a stop line for all vehicles at a traffic signal junction, we would review and incorporate where possible an Advanced Stop Line for cyclists ahead of motor vehicles to give cyclists a safe place to stop at busy crossings and allow a head start ahead of motor vehicles as the traffic signals change.

We will continue to significantly increase the proportion of Highways Maintenance Programme spend on Footway and Cycleway maintenance

Non-Highway routes (for example, across private land or other NSC land) can stretch the existing dedicated revenue budget. It is not possible to secure funding for these from typical funding sources such as DfT, Local Growth Fund (LGF) and developer contributions (S106 Agreements). We are grateful to Sustrans volunteer rangers who carry out regular vegetation cut backs on selected NCN off-highway routes but new routes will require additional funding for maintenance.

We will continue to work with external organisations and volunteers to help maintain off-road vegetation management on our footpaths, footways and cycleways.

Bidding opportunities

At North Somerset Council we remain reliant on funding opportunities to deliver our ambitious active travel programme of infrastructure improvements and awareness campaigns. We have a good track record with competitive bidding opportunities, securing numerous external funding in the last five years alone, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Housing Infrastructure Fund (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) – for the Banwell Bypass and secondary school at Locking Parklands



- Emergency Active Travel Fund (Department for Transport – additional funding awarded due to the strength of the bid) – for a range of active travel and COVID-19 response schemes across the district including at Nailsea, Portishead, Clevedon, Weston-super-Mare and Worle
- National Productivity Investment Fund (Department for Transport) – for the Weston Town Centre Transport Enhancement Scheme at Alexandra Parade and Walliscote Road, Weston-super-Mare
- MetroWest Phase 1 (Department for Transport – additional funding awarded due to strength of project) – for the reopening of the Portishead to Bristol Railway Line
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) – for the Weston-super-Mare to Clevedon segment of the North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route
- Users and Communities Fund (Highways England) – as above
- Local Growth Fund (West of England Local Enterprise Partnership) – various walking and cycling schemes across the district, including the Uphill Road North cycle improvements and Alexandra Parade improvements, both in Weston-super-Mare (latter of which is also funded by the DfT’s National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF)).

All of these schemes either have, or are planned to encourage active travel uptake, albeit to varying extents. The Emergency Active Travel Fund and Users and Communities Fund are solely for active travel improvements (including segregated cycle lanes, point closures to through traffic and improved pedestrian environments). Even the lesser active travel focused MetroWest Phase 1 and the Housing and Infrastructure Fund funded projects will be required to deliver significant and high quality active travel improvements.

The national, regional and local stances on implementing meaningful active travel infrastructure improvements, are now more closely aligned than they have been in the past. This has meant that as of the summer of 2020, funding opportunities are increasingly tailored towards achieving meaningful alteration of the status quo of road space in favour of active travel. This has been significantly helped by the substantial increase of active travel during the COVID-19 lockdown and reopening periods, and subsequent reduction in public transport usage due to the current and ongoing public health concerns. Funding opportunities such as the Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 (DfT), have enabled ambitious active travel and social distancing schemes to reallocate road space to widened footways, segregated cycle lanes and point closures to through traffic. These schemes, and subsequent ambitious proposals as



Emergency Active Travel Fund measures to support active travel and social distancing measures at busy town centre locations, such as on Waterloo Street in Weston-super-Mare

part of the EATF Tranche 2 funding bid (submitted August 2020, result expected September/October 2020) – to improve segregated cycling, public realm and facilitate the released demand for active travel – are only set to become more popular with funding opportunities increasingly tailored towards these types of interventions.

We will continue to maximise external funding opportunities for active travel at the national and regional level.

Objective 4:

Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an enabling planning system

It will take significant, sustained and collaborative investment to retrofit our car-dominated transport network to shift the priority to active travel and succeed in our aim to increase cycling by 300% by 2030. To avoid further, more resource-consuming intervention to retrofit our network, it is imperative that we ensure that all new developments are planned and delivered in a way that truly makes active travel the natural choice for short and medium journeys, and as the first/last mile for longer journeys.

4.1 Guide development planning to create active travel communities

We have a certain degree of control in shaping our future developments to enable active travel to have priority over other transport choices, such as creating our own Local Plan to guide development and adopting planning guides like our Highways Development Design Guide (HDDG). First published in 2015 and updated in 2020, this helps guide development planning and delivery to create new safe and active travel communities. We also use external best practice guidance such as the [National Institute for Health Care Excellence \(Ref NICE Guidance PH43 and PH8\)](#), including the below strong direction for active travel focused new communities. In this guidance it is recommended that local authorities

and their partners adopt a series of interventions to increase active travel. In this Active Travel Strategy, NSC commit to delivering active travel growth by saying that

we will:

- Adopt the road user priority hierarchy to protect those who use active forms of transport. We will ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority when developing and maintaining our streets and roads.
- Ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people (including those whose mobility is impaired) to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life.
- Plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes for walking, cycling and using other modes of transport involving physical activity.
- Ensure public open spaces and public paths can be reached by foot, bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity.



For smaller development sites that do not require the provision of on-site facilities or services such as shops and employment, there will be an even stronger emphasis on working with developers for transport improvements and mitigations to include high quality, direct walking and cycling linkages to off-site local facilities. Accessibility will be maximised through a consistent walking and cycling-focused street pattern, ensuring the necessary safe and direct cross-site permeability that makes active travel attractive. Clear priority for pedestrians and cyclists at junctions will be incorporated. With integrated on-site provision and access, more trips are retained within local areas so people are not forced to travel to access basic services, thereby encouraging the use of more active modes. The improvement and expansion of our segregated walking and cycling network, including strategic cycle routes to link new developments, villages and towns, is critical to providing access to local services to aid a green economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the planning process, we will continue to use existing mechanisms such as developer contributions to leverage support for constructing high quality active travel infrastructure and people-friendly, attractive public realm in new developments from the outset.

We will guide development planning by identifying active travel schemes either to be delivered by the developer as part of development construction or where appropriate through developer contributions to help create communities centred around sustainable and active travel.

The West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4), adopted in March 2020 as NSC's overarching transport planning and policy framework, outlines how walking and cycling needs to be prioritised in the design of new developments under the below interventions:

We will:

- continue to encourage new developments in locations that are accessible by existing walking, cycling and public transport networks, and discourage proposals that fail to actively encourage mode shift away from the private car

- engage with developers at the start of the planning process to ensure key services to be provided on site, based on the thresholds included in guidance, are high-quality, but also in the best location to maximise their accessibility via active travel modes and public transport
- work with developers to ensure they are using existing street design principles, but increasingly focus on providing an attractive, integrated network that offers segregated areas for active modes
- work with developers to ensure the high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure provided on-site does not stop at the site boundary, but integrates into the wider walking and cycling network, facilitating

seamless onward active travel for the necessary journeys between villages, towns and city neighbourhoods

- work with developers to ensure that routes within and connecting to new development sites feel safe and are overlooked by occupied buildings, ideally with plentiful doors and windows at the ground level. Promoting 'active frontage' is a key urban design principle that is likely to come through in the government's new national model design code.

These interventions are brought through to this Active Travel Strategy as firm commitments for NSC to work with developers to ensure the designing and building of all new developments prioritise active travel.



4.2 Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth

The JLT4 clearly sets out the direction that all new developments must be active travel neighbourhoods from the outset. The interventions stated in this regional, West of England policy framework allows us to build on these commitments and go further at the local level. Through our emerging Local Plan, guiding residential and employment growth in North Somerset to 2038, and other bespoke local policies and supplementary planning documents (SPDs), we will ensure that local policies will help to expediate active travel growth. This will be crucial in our efforts to ensure a green, active and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and become carbon neutral by 2030.

Local Plan 2038

- North Somerset Council has commenced a new Local Plan which will set the framework for development across the district to 2038. The new Local Plan will shape investment and funding for the infrastructure which will support new homes, workplaces and community facilities for the next 15 years and beyond. Once adopted, all applications for planning permission in North Somerset will be assessed against our new Local Plan.



This first stage of Local Plan consultation focuses on the challenges we believe we face in North Somerset and the issues the plan needs to address. This went out to public consultation in Summer 2020 and once responses to this consultation have been taken on board, we will begin to develop spatial options for where to locate growth. This will form a second stage of consultation on the choices we face around development types and locations. A draft plan will follow in Spring 2021 with the final version due to be published in 2022.

Transport officers have been involved in developing our Local Plan from the very beginning, to ensure that active travel priority and provision is placed at its very core. This is an unmissable chance to ensure that all new developments are truly active travel neighbourhoods from the outset.

We will use our emerging Local Plan to ensure that active travel priority and provision is at the very core of this planning framework to assess all developments in North Somerset up to and beyond 2038. This will ensure that all new developments and communities are active travel neighbourhoods from their inception.

As our fellow West of England authorities develop their Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) as the overarching planning policy framework for the rest of the sub-region, we will stay informed of plans, policies and commitments that border with North Somerset here and in other neighbouring authorities such as Somerset and Sedgemoor.

We will keep informed and involved in policies, plans and commitments that have meaningful impacts on North Somerset from the neighbouring local authorities, such as the emerging SDS as the planning policy framework for our fellow West of England authorities.

North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2020-24

The Corporate Plan is NSC's overarching strategic document which sets out our priorities for the area to 2024. Approved and adopted by the NSC's Executive Committee in February 2020, the vision is for 'An open, fairer and greener North Somerset'. We have reflected on all aspects of this in developing this Active Travel Strategy.

- 'Open' means that we engage with and empower our communities, are realistic about our challenges and transparent in our decision making.
- Becoming 'fairer' means aiming to reduce inequalities and promote fairness and opportunity for everyone.
- Becoming 'greener' means leading our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.

Active travel has a clear role to play in each of the above themes. Priorities are then grouped under three broad aims, and the key areas related to this strategy are described below:

1. A healthy, sustainable and thriving place
 - A great place for people to live, work and visit.
 - Safe, welcoming, clean and vibrant communities.
 - A reduction in our carbon footprint to net zero by 2030.
 - A transport network which promotes active and low carbon travel.

2. A council which empowers and cares for people
 - A commitment to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities.
 - A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes and encouraging healthier lifestyles.
 - An approach which enables children, young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives.

3. As an open and smart organisation,

we will:

- engage with and empower our communities
- collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes.

This Active Travel Strategy builds on these commitments with strong alignments with the green, inclusive and active travel focused Corporate Plan for North Somerset.



North Somerset Council Core Strategy

Both the Corporate Plan (above) and this Active Travel Strategy align with the North Somerset Council Core Strategy, which in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), includes the following transport requirements under Policy CS10:

- Enhance the facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and other users such as cyclists.
- Improve road and personal safety and environmental conditions.
- Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport and contribute towards carbon reduction.
- Mitigate against increased traffic congestion.

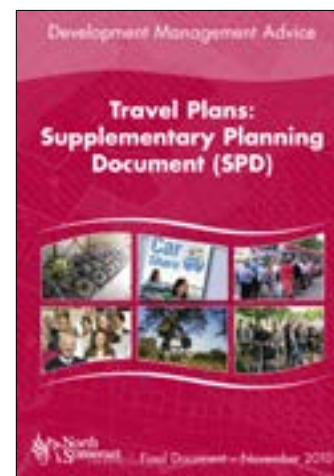
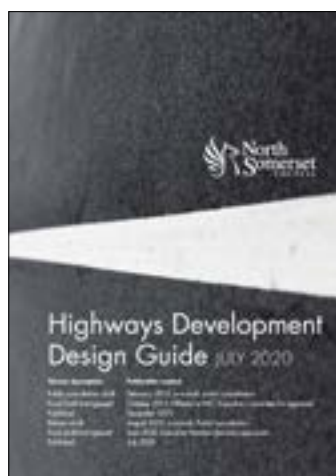
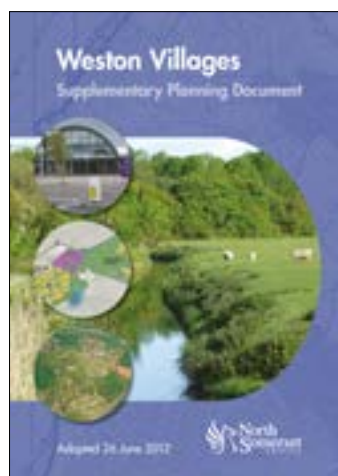
The Core Strategy and this Active Travel Strategy has been developed using the following relevant strategies and SPDs to ensure that all local supporting policies and SPDs are helping to expediate active travel growth (all of which are available to view in full using Appendix 1 below):

- **Travel Plans SPD** – Large new developments are required to develop Travel Plans to reduce car travel and encourage sustainable travel, especially walking opportunities for journeys less than one mile. This is due to be updated in 2020/21.
- **Parking SPD** – All new developments are required to provide minimum levels of convenient and secure cycle parking. This is being updated at present and is expected to be adopted later in 2020.

- **Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Regeneration SPD** – This outlines many public realm and street improvements which are aimed at increasing levels of cycling and walking and reducing the dominance of motor traffic. These are included in the Examples of Proposed Early Interventions.
- **Weston Villages SPD** – This includes how the walking and cycling network will be developed across this substantial development. The plans are included in the Examples of Proposed Early Interventions.
- **Highway Development Design Guide (HDDG)** – a more technical guide covering wide-ranging standards, guidance and specifications for highway works, but also helps guide development planning and delivery to create new safe and active travel communities.

- **North Somerset Local Development Plan**, consisting of: North Somerset Core Strategy (2017); Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (2016); Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018); West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011); Backwell Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015); Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015); Claverham Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018); Yatton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019); Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019).

Additional relevant studies and documents are included at Appendix 1.



SECTION 5:

Funding and delivery

This Active Travel Strategy is intentionally ambitious. It will require an unprecedented level of both capital (one-time investment of money to deliver physical infrastructure improvements) and revenue (day-to-day running costs) with a large acceleration in spending on active travel from previous levels. However, active travel measures usually have high benefit-cost ratios and therefore provide high value for money, resulting in a wide range of public health, decarbonisation, social and economic benefits. This helps to place high confidence in their investment.

Funding

Although this Active Travel Strategy does not provide detailed costings of all our proposed active travel improvement schemes and Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) work, it is clear that significant resource will be required to deliver on our ambitious aims to get North Somerset moving. The drastic, ongoing resource pressures from the COVID-19 outbreak has undeniably caused a prolonged period of uncertainty both locally and nationally (and globally). This has made us all more acutely aware of the importance of measures that we need to take to support public health and community resilience.

What remains constant however is the Climate Emergency, which will continue to shape decisions and investment not only in transport



and active travel but in every aspect of everyday life, way beyond the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the need to rapidly decarbonise our transport network to become carbon neutral by 2030 remains the overarching and consistent short, medium and long term challenge for North Somerset Council with regards to transport and active travel provision.

National government and the Department for Transport (DfT) have recognised the opportunities to harness the significant increase in walking, cycling and other forms of active travel during the COVID-19 lockdown and recovery periods and positively use these unexpectedly positive impacts from the virus outbreak to decarbonise and activate our transport network for the better.

In May 2020, the DfT announced the Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF). This fund is split into two 'tranches', with Tranche 1 allocated to authorities to provide emergency relief, quick-to-implement schemes that aided social distancing and active travel at busy town and village locations, either around shops and services, schools or other pinch-points. North Somerset Council implemented the following emergency temporary schemes on High Streets, popular leisure destinations and schools.

These Tranche 1 temporary measures are under continuous review. North Somerset's EATF Tranche 2 bid to the DfT was submitted in August 2020. A full consultation will happen on the scheme proposals contained within the Tranche

2 bid package in October/November 2020. The bidding requirements for this funding clearly set out national government's expectations for the type of active infrastructure that would and would not be funded. This was stronger than any previous direction nationally on the level of quality and segregation required for walking and cycling infrastructure:

- Local authorities need to make clear that they have **quick and meaningful plans to reallocate road space to both cyclists and pedestrians**, including on strategic corridors.
- Schemes need to show real ambition and **must meaningfully alter the status quo on the road, otherwise they will not be funded.**
- All cycling schemes, permanent or temporary, **will need to include segregation or point closures to through traffic.** White paint advisory cycle lanes will not be funded!

This clearly set out the Government's position on high-quality, segregated infrastructure for cycling, walking and other active travel choices as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and refocus on the decarbonisation work required from everyone to meet the Climate Emergency challenge.

The EATF funding is only one part of national government's funding commitment to increase the uptake of active travel across the UK. Announced in February 2020 but launched in July 2020,

national government are committing £2 billion for walking and cycling as a core part of the Government's work to create a long-term cycling programme and budget. As part of this all new routes will be built to robust new design standards, ensuring more people can cycle safely and making getting around by bike a more convenient option. It is likely that further active travel funding opportunities for local authorities will come from this £2 billion investment and it is positive that any improvements funded from this must meet the guidelines to ensure high-quality infrastructure with segregation and priority over motor vehicles.

North Somerset Council remains reliant on funding opportunities from central government and other sources such as external agencies including Highways England and rail operators (for example Network Rail and Great Western Railway) for significant capital investment to decarbonising our transport network through active travel. Regionally, we continue to rely on funding opportunities from the Local Enterprise Partnership such as the Local Growth Fund to add significant capital to our resources to deliver our ambitious programme of improvements.

Photo: Joe Dunckley/Shutterstock.com



We will need to ensure that our developments contribute appropriately to both local and area-wide infrastructure mitigations that support active mobility, as well as ensuring all new developments are planned and delivered in a way that prioritises active travel modes.

Despite the positivity around the increase capital funding opportunities for active travel investment, there has been a consistent lack of long-term revenue funding, with projects and programmes such as Local Sustainable Transport Fund (delivering travel behaviour change), running only for short periods. Revenue budget pressures within Councils are continuing.

We will continue to lobby central government to increase the amount of revenue funding available to support new infrastructure schemes with the essential ETP and media awareness campaigns.

This type of investment and work is critical to change attitudes and behaviours towards active travel as well as raise awareness of the new and existing active travel options as realistic choice for short and medium length journeys.

At the local level, we are doing all in our power to prioritise funding to be spent on expediting the growth of active travel. As described in Section 3.2, we have revamped our 2019/20 Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works

Programme, to ensure that it has a strong fit against active travel and value for money objectives.

We will continue a further review into how we allocate funding to the 2021-2024 Programme as we develop it through the Autumn (and each annual programme) to ensure that COVID-19 social distancing and improvement schemes that meaningfully alter the status quo of road and public space to active travel form the vast majority of the allocation.

It is not just national, regional and local government funding that will enable us to ensure that active travel becomes the natural choice for short and medium journeys (and the first and last mile for longer journeys). It will require continued positive collaborative work with and funding support from local, stakeholders, organisations and pressure groups in partnership with North Somerset Council to achieve our common goals for active travel growth.

We will continue to collaboratively work with external stakeholders, organisations and other groups to progress, fund and deliver active travel improvements both physically and to raise awareness of active travel options in North Somerset.

Delivery

Delivery of our active travel ambitions will come through a number of different channels, including our Local Plan to 2038, which will ensure that all new development sites are delivered as Active Travel Neighbourhoods. Supporting policies, including Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) such as an Active Travel Neighbourhood SPD and updates to our Travel Plans SPD and Parking SPD, will support the Local Plan guidance for the types of active travel infrastructure we will require as part of development growth in North Somerset.

Internal and external funding will allow us to plan, programme and deliver changes to expediate active travel growth on our transport network through our Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme. Here we outline four showcase schemes to show our ambition for active travel in North Somerset, each of which directly contribute towards achieving the four objectives of this Active Travel Strategy:

Showcase scheme 1:

Churchill Academy Safe Route to School

Objective 1:

Deliver safe and frequent active travel

Details: Churchill Academy and Sixth Form (secondary school) is set in a rural location on the edge of the village of Churchill and the mixture of narrow lanes and the busy A368 mean that walking and cycling to the school is unattractive at best and intimidating and unsafe at worst. This scheme will provide an off-road path for students to walk and cycle to school from nearby Sandford and Winscombe villages. It will provide a safe route to school and allow students to embed active travel into their daily journey to school and also reduce the need for home to school bus services as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

North Somerset Council's EATF Tranche 2 bid to the DfT includes an interim scheme to reallocate road space, slow traffic and create a safer environment for the pedestrians and cyclists by creating a Pedestrian and Cycle Zone along the length of Sandmead Road and Churchill Green using planters, barriers and a 20mph zone, alongside measures to improve access to the Public Right of Way forming part of the Safe Walking Route. This is only an interim scheme however while we progress a more attractive, long-term scheme to reallocate road space on local links and provide an off-road path for pupils to both walk and cycle along.





Showcase scheme 2:

Weston to Clevedon Cycle Route

(North Somerset Towns Coastal Cycle Route)

Objective 2: Tackle the climate emergency

Details: This exciting scheme will provide a continuous cycle route from Weston-super-Mare to Clevedon via Tutshill Sluice, connecting two of North Somerset's largest towns and tourism centres. This would provide a 'Pier to Pier' connection for residents, commuters and visitors alike. Highways England are part-funding the scheme through their Users and Communities Fund, with the M5 motorway causing significant severance and a very unattractive cycling route between the two towns. This scheme will replace this unattractive and unsafe cycle route along the A370 via Congresbury and reduce the journey distance between Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon by a full 4 miles.

This opens up this new route to be a highly attractive commuter route as well as a very scenic leisure route parallel to the Severn Estuary and is the latest part of North Somerset Council's flagship strategic cycle network improvement scheme: the North Somerset Towns Coastal Cycle Route, with the most southerly section already delivered between Brean and Weston-super-Mare enjoying over 100,000 users annually.

Showcase scheme 3:
Clevedon Seafront and Hill Road

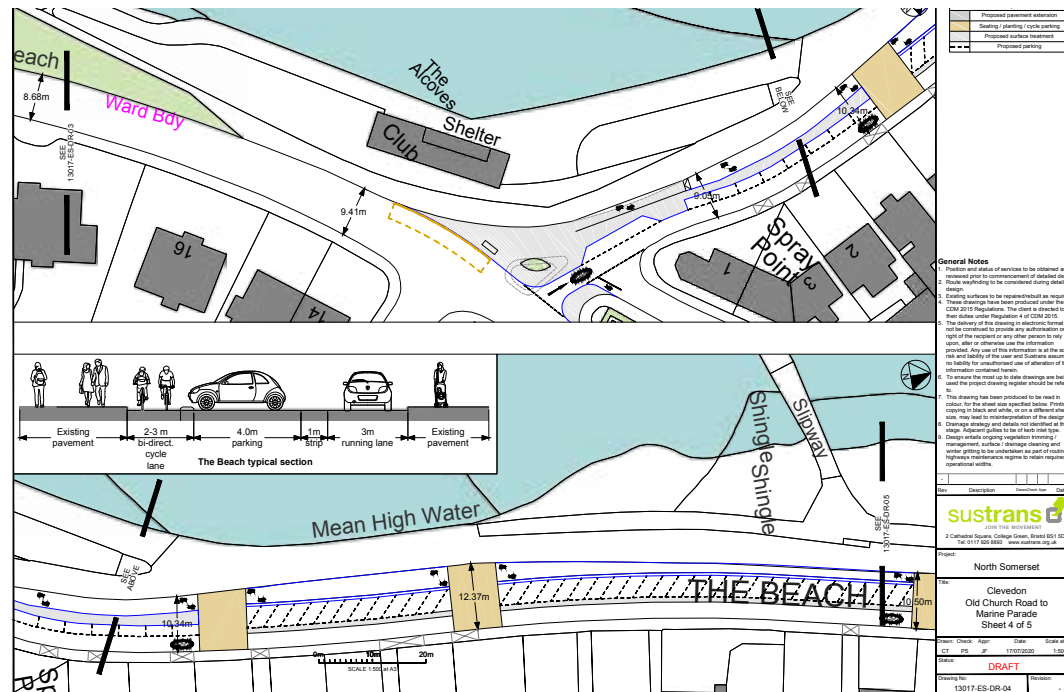
Objective 3: Drive local economic development

Details: This exciting proposal is to provide a permanent, segregated, cycle route from the ever-popular Clevedon seafront into the bustling retail, business and dining area at Hill Road. A new one-way system and 20mph limit along The Beach and Hill Road will meaningfully alter the status quo of these roads by reallocating road space to segregated cycling and making a safer environment for pedestrians. This will be supported by making the connecting roads

in the seafront and Hill Road neighbourhood area one-way and introducing 20mph zones to facilitate further safety improvements for both cyclists and pedestrians. We will further enhance the area using greening and street trees, as well as installing cycle parking pods to support cycle ownership for residents. This will help harness and further increase the high levels of walking and cycling in this area and along the promenade, where at present pedestrians and cycles are experiencing a conflict with space and social distancing.

In the short term, cycling will be able to replace public transport journeys as we continue to

recover from the COVID-19 crisis. The scheme will link into the flagship North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route as part of the strategic cycling network in North Somerset. The scheme package will improve the provision and awareness of safe walking and cycling facilities to local shops and businesses, reduce private car dominance of this popular seafront space and improve road safety perception. The overcoming of these short-term challenges will help North Somerset Council achieve strong progress against the wider challenges of public health, carbon reduction and the car-dependency and congestion culture.



Part of the proposals to increase active travel provision along The Beach at Clevedon Seafront



Showcase scheme 4:

Nailsea Youngwood Lane cycle path to station

Objective 4: Create an enabling planning system

Details: As part of the development appeal process, a planning application to build 450 houses at Youngwood Lane, in south-west Nailsea, resulted in developers being required to provide either funding for or the construction of a high-quality, off-road walking and cycling path linking down to Nailsea and Backwell Railway Station to the south-east of the site.

This was a good example of North Somerset Council's use of the planning system to enable growth in active travel via securing a significant contribution to a high-quality active travel commuter link to the transport interchange at Nailsea and Backwell. There are future aspirations to connect the station to the existing Festival Way commuter cycle route that provides off-road cycling access to Bristol city centre from the south-east corner of Nailsea via Flax Bourton, Long Ashton and the Long Ashton Park and Ride.

It shows how we are able to use the planning system to ensure that new sites are properly connected to nearby existing and planned transport networks for both active travel and public transport, as well as local shops, services and facilities and also secure appropriate contributions from developers.

We have a full pipeline of active travel schemes, including both strategic cycle network schemes (linking our towns and villages), key corridors (within towns) and active travel neighbourhood schemes. We are still developing our prioritised list of active travel schemes, but the target is that

we will deliver:

- at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood pilot scheme per year
- at least 2 20mph zones per year
- at least 1 High Street or district centre active travel improvement scheme per year
- make annual progress on the delivery of our strategic cycle routes (either in full or in phases)
- increase participation in cycle training, Dr. Bike cycle maintenance and other cycle training or promotional events.

It is only by committing to ambitious delivery plans that we will make any notable progress towards enabling the decarbonisation of our transport network to carbon neutrality by 2030. A robust prioritisation process will test all of the contending schemes to be delivered each year. This process will most likely be the same or similar process as the scoring and prioritisation process we developed to decide which active



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travel schemes were to be included within our Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) Tranche 2 bid in August 2020. A briefing note explaining this process is not available online but can be shared on request.

A list of our Examples of Proposed Early Interventions is included at Appendix 2. This is not an exhaustive list however as we are consistently developing both existing and new active travel schemes. These are regularly identified by officers and also residents, businesses and stakeholders using such portals as the Space to Move and Widen My Path websites.

Delivery of the all-important support work through Education, Training and Publicity will be delivered by a combination of in-house resource from experienced transport officers, and external support such as Sustrans or external consultants. This will enable us to develop a strong programme consisting of:

- **Education:** including led-rides, promotional events, bike maintenance.
- **Training:** including cycle training for children, adults and community groups.
- **Publicity:** including a range of media publicity, communications, press releases, social media campaigns and other promotional media.

Without this vital work we will be extremely limited in our ability to promote enough awareness of existing and new walking and cycling routes to enable a culture shift to active travel as a realistic, attractive and natural choice for short and medium journeys (and for the first and last mile of longer journeys). This will enable us to harness, reinvigorate and further increase the culture shift towards active travel that was happening during the early and mid-lockdown periods of the COVID-19 outbreak, which happened without infrastructure intervention. This is a key lesson learned for transport planners and decision makers at the local (and national) level: that attitudes are key to significant uptake. The ETP work is therefore vital in securing this all-important shift.

SECTION 6:

Monitoring and evaluation

In March 2020, the West of England Joint Committee adopted the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) – this strategy aims to achieve a number of improvements for active travel, including:

- A step change in the number of healthy, low carbon walking and cycling trips.
- A continued reduction in the number of road casualties on the transport network.

In line with JLTP4, this Active Travel Strategy aims to significantly increase the number of cyclists and cycle trips, and walking trips, amongst people of all ages and abilities in North Somerset in line with the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) national targets (to be achieved by 2025).

We will aim to:

- increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030
- double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55%.

With road safety,

We will aim to:

- reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England’s roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled, each year
- reverse the decline in walking activity, measured as the total number of walking stages per person per year.

To achieve these targets we are very much dependent on sufficient funding being made available by national Government to roll out our programme of improvements. Without a substantial increase we will likely fail to do this.

Table 2: Walking and cycling data for North Somerset from the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey (2017/18)

	Walk or cycle at least five times/week	Cycle at least once per month	Walk at least once per month	Cycle at least three times per week	Walk at least three times per week
Any purpose	39.9%	21.3%	82.8%	8.6%	45.1%
Travel (inc commuting)	-	11.4%	73.7%	3.3%	29.9%
Leisure	-	16.7%	42.2%	5.3%	15.7%

These statistics and many more, including demographics, are available at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/walking-and-cycling-statistics

The typical North Somerset sample size is 690 individuals per survey.

Baseline data

The most reliable data source to measure progress is the Census. According to the 2011 Census ('usual mode of travel to work') cycling made up 1.1% of commuter trips by North Somerset residents and walking made up 2.2%.

More recent data (2017/18) is available through the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey, as detailed below. This data is less robust due to the comparatively small data sets but covers non-work-related active travel.

School travel data is collected annually through the use of the DfT tool use DfT Modeshift STARS. In 2018 cycling made up 3.7% of school trips (Primary and Secondary average, 2018). Walking was 54.0%, and bus 4.6% (which would usually involve a short walk).

We are also progressing a new Road Safety Strategy. Our 2020 target is a 40% reduction in KSIs compared with the 2005 to 2009 baseline average. This is in line with the national framework set out in the DfT's Strategic Framework for Road Safety (2011).

Additionally, we target a 40% reduction in all road casualties by 2020. This stretches a 30% target originally agreed with the West of England (WoE) Partnership.

The DfT report "The Road Safety Statement 2019, A Lifetime of Road Safety" announce in their two year action plan that a review of research on road safety targets and their effectiveness will be commissioned.

Our short-term target ambition is to simply project the current 2020 target to 2021, at this point all targets will be reviewed following the release of the DfT research.

Monitoring and evaluation approach

We must monitor and measure the achievements of our active travel interventions to evaluate their success. Section 7 summarises the interventions we are committing to as part of this Active Travel Strategy. This section also outlines what type of interventions we are making to achieve the ambitious but achievable targets in this strategy, along with the timescales to achieve them, the North Somerset Council service to deliver the intervention and finally the resource implications of each intervention.

Further to this, the targets outlined in this strategy will be monitored through the following means:

Census data

This provides the most reliable way to measure how journeys to work are made on a District and Ward wide basis. The next census is due in 2021. This provides useful background for national trends and comparative purposes. The data is broken down to District level but is less robust than the Census due to the smaller data set.

The National Travel Survey (NTS) and Active Lives Survey

This provides useful background for national trends and comparative purposes. The data is broken down to District level but is less robust than the Census due to the smaller data set.

West of England Travel to Work Survey

An annual survey offered free of charge (subject to ongoing resources) to employers with more than 50 employees including North Somerset Council.

Other travel to work surveys

Some large employers in North Somerset run their own surveys to meet travel plan monitoring requirements or other needs – we expect annual or bi-annual data from Bristol Airport, Weston General Hospital and Weston College amongst other employers.

School travel data

This data is collected every year through a 'hands up' survey. As well as active modes, recording bus use is also important as the journey includes an active travel element. While transferring bus travel to active travel can lead to revenue savings for the Council reducing car journeys is the greater aim.

Automatic counter data

North Somerset maintains around twelve automatic cycle counters (including two combined walking and cycling counters) installed on dedicated cycle and walking routes throughout the district. These provide feedback on whether new facilities have achieved their aim (often required by funders and helpful for new funding bids) and in the long-term help monitor the general level of cycling across the District.

SECTION 7:

Summary of interventions

Table 3: Summary of objectives and interventions

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
Section 2: Foundations for future success				
We will accelerate improvements to our strategic cycle network routes, allowing medium to long distance active travel for leisure, education and commuter trips (via segregated cycle paths, cycle lanes and active travel focused 'Quiet Lanes')	Strategic infrastructure	All	Transport	High
We will embark on a programme of delivering at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood per year, to improve the safety and attractiveness of active travel for residents, businesses and visitors in our towns and villages	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport	Medium
We will increase Education, Training and Promotion (ETP) for active travel, for events and for all existing and new active travel infrastructure across North Somerset	Education, Training and Publicity	Short (2023)	Transport and Marketing and Communications	Medium
Section 4, Objective 1: Deliver safe and frequent active travel				
1.1 Deliver infrastructure and awareness				
We will run workshops to ensure that all internal NSC highway engineers, planning, regeneration, Elected Members (and all other relevant or interested teams and officers) are familiar and comfortable using latest guidance and best practice design standards for walking and cycling infrastructure, learning from national and international best practice	Education, Training and Publicity	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure, Planning, Regeneration	Low
We will deliver on the five design principles set out by the Department for Transport which are the essential requirements to achieve more people travelling by active modes, based on best practice both internationally and across the UK	Planning and Policy	Short (2023)	Highways	Low
We will use audit processes (both LCWIP and multi-modal) to prioritise important, quick-win and value-for-money infrastructure improvements to our existing walking and cycling network	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Highways	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will design and build infrastructure to give priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and segregate paths away from traffic wherever possible. This will transform our transport network from spaces where people are 'able' to walk and cycle to environments in which they are 'invited' to walk and cycle	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will incorporate the attractive features such as benches, public art, notice boards, planting and landscaping on or close to walking and cycling routes wherever possible	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure, Environment Team	Low
We will seek also to 'cycle proof' the road network – to ensure that active modes are considered as first priority at the design stage of new or improved road infrastructure	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will develop an infrastructure network of high capacity, quality cycle tracks along main road corridors as well as a plan for strategic cycling infrastructure to address missing links, pinch-points and safer cycling within neighbourhoods	Local infrastructure Strategic infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will, as part of our Active Travel Neighbourhood programme, use a package of measures to prioritise walking and cycling, reduce vehicle dominance and improve public open space in town and village centres	Local infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium
We will work with private businesses, organisations and stakeholders to fund and improve cycle parking provision both on-street and at town, village and retail centres	Stakeholder collaboration	Medium (2026)	Sustainable Travel	Low
We will build a mainstream, inclusive, district-wide cycling culture as well as project specific promotions	Education, training and publicity	Long (2030)	Sustainable Travel and Marketing and Communications	High

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
<p>We will develop and coordinate the following:</p> <p>Education and training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and where possible arrange led-rides and other promotional events, especially when new flagship cycle infrastructure is completed. • Bike maintenance for adults of all ages and abilities. • Cycle training for all children during their primary and secondary school years and embed a culture of walking and cycling throughout the school curriculum. • Adult cycle training programmes. • Support community groups to develop bike recycling, disability cycling programmes and other initiatives. 	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel	Medium
<p>We will develop a range of media promotional activities, as part of a mainstream, inclusive, public-facing media strategy. This will include but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital and paper mapping of our active travel network, including journey planner functions. • Various media publicity, including North Somerset Life magazine and through various NSC social media channels (including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube at present). • Including press releases (NSC website and local media outlets) at key stages of a project to promote schemes and improvements under development, ready for their completion. <p>Other promotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate a grants programme to support active travel infrastructure and events. • Develop 'Bike Park' mountain biking events. • Develop a festivals, community-and led-rides programme to engage the wider community. • Continue to engage stakeholders, community groups, volunteers, advocates, funding and delivery partnerships to enable strategic delivery. 	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel and Marketing and Communications	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will aim to train 50% of pupils to Bikeability Level 1 by the end of year 4, 50% of children to Level 2 by the end of primary and 20% of children to Level 3 by the end of year 9	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Medium
We will, where funding allows, continue to coordinate adult cycle training to enable people to boost their skills, confidence and knowledge to cycle the journeys that they wish to	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel	Low
We will deliver a dedicated Cycle for Weston centre in Weston-super-Mare town centre offering a wide range of cycles for hire, cycle maintenance, and a shop/café if possible	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will continue to publicise mass rides to help ensure new infrastructure gets off to a flying start	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel and Marketing and Communications	Low
We will continue to update and distribute the North Somerset Cycle Map as well as producing online versions	Education, training and publicity	All	Sustainable Travel	Low

1.2 Achieve health and social benefits

We will increase active travel investment in or linking to rural and deprived areas of North Somerset to level up on health inequalities across the district.	Local infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure	High
We will monitor requests for active travel improvements from North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors to develop and deliver improvements wherever possible. One new way we will do this is by using public interaction sites for active travel such as Widen My Path and Space to Move	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	High

We will:

- invest in localised cycling infrastructure appropriate for different locations and complexities
- use local research and consult and collaborate with residents, businesses and stakeholders to inform active travel planning

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use shared space developments where safe to do so to encourage increased footfall in town centres implement 20mph zones in town and village centres and residential areas, prioritising schools and health care facilities use the Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) and the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) to estimate cost effectiveness of active travel interventions. 				

1.3 Collaborate effectively with internal and external partners

We will improve further our collaborative way of working with internal and external stakeholders and funders to secure important active travel improvement schemes and measures across North Somerset	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
We will continue to use the Cycle Forum as the voice for North Somerset cyclists to aid our active travel improvement planning. We will also work with the new North Somerset Citizens' Panel once it is set up to understand further how we can help less confident cyclists to feel comfortable choosing cycling as the first choice for small and medium journeys	Stakeholder collaboration	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel	Low
We will continue to engage with businesses to increase awareness of existing active travel options and seek guidance on future improvements that will deliver a further increase in cycling to employment and services across North Somerset	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Sustainable Travel, Regeneration, Economic Development	Medium
We will continue to develop resources, incentive schemes and events to help all schools take part in activities to encourage active travel and we will work harder to deliver work in schools (for example through assemblies and classroom sessions, alongside outdoor practical lessons such as learn to ride, cycle maintenance and bike breakfasts)	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Travelwest roadshow Team	Medium
We will further develop our programme of Safer Routes to Schools and access restrictions to support children's safe walking and cycling to schools across the district	Local infrastructure	Medium (2026)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
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Section 4, Objective 2: Tackle the Climate Emergency

2.1 Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and car dependency

We will use DfT Modeshift STARS to target the delivery of sustainable travel training skills in order to increase levels of sustainable and active travel and to document road safety concerns and requests for highway improvement	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Low
We will continue to deliver Bikeability training in accordance with best practice	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Low
We will continue to facilitate child pedestrian training to children in KS1	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Schools	Low
We will offer a traded school crossing patrol service to schools	Education, training and publicity	Short (2023)	Road Safety, Schools	Low
We will work with the Police to identify the most appropriate tool to encourage drivers to slow down. These include: Community Speedwatch, vehicle activated signs, mobile safety camera enforcement and static safety camera installation	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Road Safety	Low
We will work with the Police where our data shows that speeding is a contributory factor in collisions and reviewing speed limits	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Road Safety	Low
We will develop highway schemes to tackle speed of motor traffic as a significant cause of road danger for vulnerable road users at identified and high-risk road safety hotspots	Local infrastructure	All	Road Safety	Low
We will expand the number of 20mph zones covering built up areas and expand 40mph limits on minor rural roads to make our roads and streets safer for everyone	Local infrastructure	Medium (2026)	Transport and Infrastructure	Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
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2.2 Improve air quality and public realm

We will use existing 'best-in-class' infrastructure design standards to create cleaner, attractive and inviting places for people of all ages and abilities. They will be able to enjoy the improved air quality from the reduction in motor vehicles in town and village areas and along our strategic cycle routes between places

Planning and policy

Short (2023)

Transport and Infrastructure

Low

Section 4, Objective 3: Drive local economic development

3.1 Improve access to services, jobs and training

We will invest an increasing proportion of our resources to improve walking and cycling networks and deliver benefits for active travel modes

Local infrastructure

Short (2023)

Transport and Infrastructure

Medium

We will reallocate carriageway space to active modes to improve safe walking and cycling provision

Local infrastructure

All

Transport and Infrastructure

Medium

We will work with the police and lobby national government to make illegal and enforce pavement parking bans. We will then prioritise streets for improvements according to the scale of nuisance and danger caused.

Stakeholder collaboration

Short (2023)

Transport and Infrastructure

Low

We will work with public transport operators to ensure that it is easy to make the first and last of public transport journeys by active travel modes such as walking, scooting and cycling, by facilitating cycle parking at transport hubs and allowing easy access and storage for cycles and scooters on buses and trains

Stakeholder collaboration

Short (2023)

Public Transport

Low

We will integrate active travel improvements with public transport modes to provide improved options for local accessibility between active travel and public transport as the 'first and last mile' of journeys to services, jobs and training

Planning and policy

Medium (2026)

Transport

Low

We will ensure that the transport network is reshaped so that people with limited mobility are able to move around freely through the pedestrian environment, and use it to access other modes of transport

Local infrastructure

Long (2030)

Transport and Infrastructure, Accessibility

Medium

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
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3.2 Guide spending priorities and maximise funding opportunities

We will, through the delivery of our annual three year Transport and Infrastructure Capital Works Programme, work to ensure that:

- our towns are served by a core network of segregated cycle routes and networks of walkable routes to and within centres
- communities have access to green spaces and are connected by traffic-free cycling and walking networks for all
- rail and bus stops are attractive for people travelling on foot or by bike and have facilities that prioritise cycling and walking
- families have routes to walk and cycle to school in safety and with confidence, gaining essential life skills
- we provide opportunities and support for people to take up walking and cycling, through programmes in schools, workplaces and local communities.

We will actively consider whether 'like for like' is the most appropriate course of action when programming our highway maintenance by carrying out an active travel audit, to be incorporated into our procedures

We will audit more routes to prioritise further rounds of improvements. Audits will also be used for new build and more general Highway schemes to ensure opportunities are not missed

We will review the case for where winter salting of key commuter routes should be introduced especially on bends, steep sections and where adjacent to busy roads

We will continue to significantly increase the proportion of Highways Maintenance Programme spend on Footway and Cycleway maintenance

We will continue to work with external organisations and volunteers to help maintain off-road vegetation management on our footpaths, footways and cycleways

	Local infrastructure	Long (2030)	Transport and Infrastructure, Streets and Open Spaces, Public Transport, Schools, Local Stakeholders	High
	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Highways	Low
	Local infrastructure	Short (2023)	Sustainable Travel, Highways	Medium
	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Highways	Low
	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
	Stakeholder collaboration	Short (2023)	Sustainable travel, Local stakeholders	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will continue to maximise external funding opportunities for active travel at the national and regional level	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Transport	High

Section 4, Objective 4: Shape active travel neighbourhoods through an enabling planning system

4.1 Guide development planning to create active travel communities

<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the road user priority hierarchy to protect those who use active forms of transport. We will ensure that pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority when developing and maintaining our streets and roads. • Ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people (including those whose mobility is impaired) to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life. • Plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes for walking, cycling and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. • Ensure public open spaces and public paths can be reached by foot, bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. 	Planning and policy	All	Transport	Medium
We will guide development planning by identifying active travel schemes either to be delivered by the developer as part of development construction or where appropriate through developer contributions to help create communities centred around sustainable and active travel	Planning and policy	All	Transport	Low
We will continue to encourage new developments in locations that are accessible by existing walking, cycling and public transport networks, and discourage proposals that fail to actively encourage mode shift away from the private car	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
We will engage with developers at the start of the planning process to ensure key services to be provided on site, based on the thresholds included in guidance, are high-quality, but also in the best location to maximise their accessibility via active travel modes and public transport	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Medium
We will work with developers to ensure they are using existing street design principles, but increasingly focus on providing an attractive, integrated network that offers segregated areas for active modes	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
We will work with developers to ensure the high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure provided on-site does not stop at the site boundary, but integrates into the wider walking and cycling network, facilitating seamless onward active travel for the necessary journeys between villages, towns and city neighbourhoods	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
We will work with developers to ensure that routes within and connecting to new development sites feel safe and are overlooked by occupied buildings, ideally with plentiful doors and windows at the ground level. Promoting 'active frontage' is a key urban design principle that is likely to come through in the government's new national model design code	Planning and policy	All	Transport, Planning	Low
4.2 Ensure local supporting policies and SPDs help to expediate active travel growth				
We will use our emerging Local Plan to ensure that active travel priority and provision is at the very core of this planning framework to assess all developments in North Somerset up to and beyond 2038. This will ensure that all new developments and communities are active travel neighbourhoods from their inception	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport, Planning	Medium
We will keep informed and involved in policies, plans and commitments that have meaningful impacts on North Somerset from the neighbouring local authorities, such as the emerging SDS as the planning policy framework for our fellow West of England authorities	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport, Planning Policy	Low

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
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Section 5: Funding and delivery

We will need to ensure that our developments contribute appropriately to both local and area-wide infrastructure mitigations that support active mobility, as well as ensuring all new developments are planned and delivered in a way that prioritises active travel modes	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport, Planning	Low
We will continue to lobby central government to increase the amount of revenue funding available to support new infrastructure schemes with the essential ETP and media awareness campaigns	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport	Low
We will continue a review into how we allocate funding to the 2021-2024 Programme as we develop it through the Autumn (and each annual programme) to ensure that COVID-19 social distancing and improvement schemes that meaningfully alter the status quo of road and public space to active travel form the vast majority of the allocation	Planning and policy	Short (2023)	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
We will continue to collaboratively work with external stakeholders, organisations and other groups to progress, fund and deliver active travel improvements both physically and to raise awareness of active travel options in North Somerset	Stakeholder collaboration	All	Transport and Infrastructure	Low
<p>We will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood pilot schemes per year (with a detailed review and prioritisation of each enabling the most successful to become permanent the following year) at least 2 20mph zones per year at least 1 High Street or district centre active travel improvement scheme per year make annual progress on the delivery of our strategic cycle routes (either in full or in phases) increase participation in cycle training, Dr. Bike cycle maintenance and other cycle training or promotional events an increased Education, Training and Publicity programme to raise awareness of existing and new active travel routes and options. 	Local infrastructure and strategic infrastructure	All	Transport and Infrastructure, Schools, Marketing and Communications	High

Interventions	Intervention type	Timescale Short (2023) Medium (2026) Long (2030)	Delivery by	Resource implication
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Section 6: Monitoring and evaluation

We will aim to:

- double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of bicycle stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school from 48% in 2013 to 55%.

With road safety, we aim to:

- reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled, each year
- reverse the decline in walking activity, measured as the total number of walking stages per person per year.

Planning and policy

Long (2030)

Transport and Infrastructure

High

Planning and policy

Long (2030)

Road Safety, Transport and Infrastructure

High

SECTION 8:

Conclusions and next steps

This Active Travel Strategy seeks to raise the bar and go further than any previous strategy to improve and promote active travel within North Somerset. It provides a step change in our planning, prioritising and delivery of segregated cycling, high-quality public realm, significantly enhanced pedestrian facilities, where people are prioritised over the private motor car.

We are committing to our vision statement:

'Making walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.'

In order to help achieve this vision and achieve carbon neutrality for North Somerset by 2030:

We will increase walking and cycling trips by at least 300% by 2030.

We will achieve this by delivering:

- at least 1 Active Travel Neighbourhood pilot schemes per year (with a detailed review and prioritisation of each enabling the most successful to become permanent the following year)
- at least 2 20mph zones per year
- at least 1 High Street or district centre active travel improvement scheme per year
- make annual progress on the delivery of our strategic cycle routes (either in full or in phases)



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- increase participation in cycle training, Dr. Bike cycle maintenance and other cycle training or promotional events
- an increased Education, Training and Publicity programme to raise awareness of existing and new active travel routes and options.

The main challenges to our success will be:

- Securing sufficient resourcing and funding, both externally and internally, to match our ambitious plans for the active travel transformation of North Somerset.
- Commitment from all key stakeholders to champion and deliver these ambitious, exciting schemes for active travel, regardless of whether they seem unpopular to some at

the outset. Similar schemes elsewhere in the country have flourished and become very popular with businesses, residents and visitors alike after being unpopular to start with. We must use these examples and be strong and positive in our engagement with local communities and stakeholders to help them realise the significant benefits available for all.

It is only by overcoming these challenges and committing to ambitious delivery plans that we will make any progress towards enabling the decarbonisation of our transport network to be carbon neutral by 2030 and ensuring a green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. This will make for a happier, healthier, cleaner and more active North Somerset.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1:
Policy framework and additional
studies/documents

Appendix 2:
Examples of Proposed Early
Interventions

Appendix 3:
Additional health and social benefits of
active travel

Appendix 1: Policy framework and additional studies/documents

The ATS is a local policy strategy that supports a number of other strategies and plans at the local, regional and national level. More than ever before there are a number of converging and strengthening policy changes that guide our need to make urgent and substantial changes to the way we travel, in favour of active modes.

National policy context

Key points:

- Support for active travel should be integral to the local planning process.
- Current government policy and funding streams support active travel.
- The DfT has developed a ten year plan for walking and cycling with an aim to double funding for these modes in England, but a funding commitment on the scale required is still awaited.

In 2012 the British Medical Association highlighted the link between Transport and health through its policy paper entitled “healthy transport = healthy lives”, which asked the government to do more to promote active travel,

¹ Add reference to latest version of CDP.

such as investing in appropriate infrastructure. The report states that the health of people and the built environment are closely linked. It emphasises planning for accessibility by walking and cycling.

Planning

The National Planning Framework states that active travel should be a key consideration when making decisions about new developments.

‘In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.’

As stated by the framework, local policies, plans, and planning decisions should consider the provision and availability of active travel options between residential, employment, service and leisure sites. This Active Travel Strategy goes further than the comparatively loose statement above by ensuring that active travel provision must be the first thought when master planning a site, not ‘where reasonable to do so’. Master planning will enable us to strategically consider the right blend of development types that support local trips by active travel modes.

Planning for the Future White Paper

Changes are being proposed to the planning system, which might affect the way that this Active Travel Strategy will be applied in the future. The changes proposed in the White Paper are relevant to this strategy, as the new planning system would show commitment to climate change action, focusing on design codes, which could also include design guidance for this type of infrastructure. Updates will be made to this strategy as and when planning changes are made as a result of this Planning for the Future White Paper consultation.

Transport

Despite this, only two percent of total transport spending nationally is on cycling and walking. Cycling UK, Living Streets and Sustrans say this should rise to at least five percent by 2020, and 10 percent by 2024, with a large proportion of this allocated to support local authorities’ plans to increase cycling and walking.

In response to the need to encourage wider active travel in England the DfT has produced their [Cycling Delivery Plan](#)¹ which sets out their aspirations for active travel until 2025. It makes it clear that walking and cycling is a top priority for the government and makes a commitment to

double the level of cycling funding in England from £5 per person to £10 per person each year by 2021. The Cycling Delivery Plan invites local authorities to apply for funding by submitting expressions of interest, which the West of England Partnership has done. However, there is a requirement that we produce our own ten year walking and cycling plan, which is fulfilled by this Active Travel Strategy.

Supporting this, its **Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS)** is a long-term vision which became law July 2015. In the Chancellor's March 2020 statement, £2bn was allocated for active travel nationally. There is also a legal requirement to report to Parliament on the progress made in terms of targets. National walking and cycling targets are set out under the Aims and Targets section of this document. The Strategy must be reviewed at least every five years.

Although both CWIS and the EATF welcome increase in active travel funding, they are not seen as being sufficient to enable local authorities to become carbon neutral through active travel infrastructure improvements and subsequent uptake.

Despite the lack of central Government funding that will be required to deliver the outcomes the DfT expects, over the past five years NSC has secured circa £5Million for walking and cycling schemes. This has been sourced from a wide range of funders, usually through competitive

bids. Included within this is our wider holistic approach consisting of education, training and publicity.

Regional policy context

Our **Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4)** is our principal transport policy document, and was developed in partnership with the other West of England authorities. It reflects all the key policy areas above and this strategy is part of a suite of documents that provides further information on specific areas within the JLTP.

The West of England **LCWIP** (Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan) is the key regional active travel strategy for walking and cycling improvements. Many principles and North Somerset related improvements are included within this North Somerset Active Travel Strategy.

Local policy context

At the local level, these include:

Climate Emergency

- North Somerset Council has declared a 'Climate Emergency' and are committing resources to address this emergency. The council will take active steps to make North Somerset carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions.

Placemaking and regeneration

- A range of local planning policy and SPD documents seek to:
 - enhance facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and cyclists
 - improve road and personal safety and environmental conditions
 - reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport and contribute towards carbon reduction
 - mitigate against increased traffic congestion.
- North Somerset seeks to improve opportunities for active travel by those living in the most deprived areas (all within South or Central wards of Weston-super-Mare), to improve access to work and training via low-cost travel and provide healthy active leisure opportunities.

The **NSC Corporate Plan's** proposed vision is: An open, fairer and greener North Somerset. Under this vision, priorities are grouped under three broad aims:

- a healthy, sustainable and thriving place;
- a council which empowers and cares for people; and
- an open and smart organisation.

For a more detailed local and national policy background refer to the **Section 4.2**.

Additional background papers/studies

- North Somerset Local Plan 2038:
Challenges consultation
- North Somerset Corporate Plan 2020-24
- North Somerset Core Strategy
- Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Parking SPD
- Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Regeneration SPD
- Weston Villages SPD
- North Somerset Highways Development Design Guide (HDDG)
Available on request
(transport.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk)
- Climate Emergency Strategy
- Climate Emergency Action Plan

Appendix 2: Examples of Proposed Early Interventions

The following tables list a range of schemes which we are committed to or for which funding has been applied for. Additional schemes indicated as ‘outline proposal’ give a flavour of further schemes we would like to pursue and will generally be subject to further prioritisation work and funding opportunities. Other schemes not listed here may be delivered before these, particularly those which are development-led.

The LCWIP proposals referred to, and additional ones, are detailed in the Final West of England Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan available at <https://travelwest.info/projects/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan>. This used a Department for Transport prioritisation process to identify where active travel improvements would be most effective, and these are mostly urban. More information on this is included within the main strategy above, at [page 18](#).

North Somerset Council also maintains a full register of wider active travel scheme proposals to ensure future opportunities for delivery are not missed. These are under continuous review and refinement, but the schemes below represent the top priority schemes at the time of publishing this strategy.

A [full map of already delivered cycle routes in North Somerset](#), is available.

Scheme	Summary	Status
High Street or district centre active travel improvement schemes		
Weston High Street (part of LCWIP Weston Cycle Route 2 and Walking Route 1)	Permit cycling where north – south links are otherwise poor. Improve walking facilities and public realm to encourage not just walking but dwelling in a more attractive, inviting High Street	Options assessment
Clevedon Seafront and Hill Road (part of LCWIP Clevedon Walking Routes)	A segregated cycle route along the ever-popular Clevedon seafront to Clevedon Pier and on into the bustling retail, business and dining area at Hill Road. Widened footways along Hill Road and an enhanced pedestrian area outside of the Pier will make walking around this historical seafront more comfortable and enjoyable	Bidding
Orchard St and Meadow Street (part of LCWIP Weston Cycle Routes 1 and 6)	Reduce dominance of cars and traffic, possibly through a shared space arrangement. Improve public realm with clear benefits for walking	Options assessment
Worle High Street	Reduce or remove through traffic to improve pedestrian and cyclists’ safety. This will encourage active travel to the High Street and to nearby schools. Improving public realm will encourage people to spend time and money in a more attractive, cleaner and safer Worle High Street	Outline proposal

Scheme	Summary	Status
Clevedon Triangle and Old Church Rd (part of LCWIP Clevedon Cycle Routes 1 and 2 and Walking Routes)	Reduce or remove through traffic to improve pedestrian and cyclists' safety, encourage these modes and improve public realm. More attractive streets and central areas in Clevedon will help to give the town centre a new lease of life by being cleaner, greener and more attractive/inviting	Outline proposal
Portishead High Street (part of LCWIP Portishead Cycle Routes 1 and 2 and Walking Routes)	Reduce through traffic, provide consistent improved walking experience, improved crossing points, and a segregated cycle route where possible	Outline proposal

Active and Green Neighbourhoods

School Pedestrian and Cycle Zones	Package to significantly alter the status quo of roads and create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists on thirty-nine different streets around seven of North Somerset's schools; Yatton Infant and Junior, Churchill Academy, All Saints (Clevedon), St Nicholas Chantry (Clevedon), St Peters (Portishead), West Leigh (Backwell)	Bidding
Christchurch, Weston-super-Mare	To include the residential area bounded by Meadow St Baker St, Milton Rd, Ashcombe Rd, Locking Rd. A significantly enhanced active travel experience for residents, businesses and visitors alike	Outline proposal
Backwell (forms part of LCWIP Backwell Walking Route)	To include the residential area west of Station Rd and bounded by the A370, and West Leigh School, which is well-used for walking and has high cycling potential	Options assessment
Clevedon Hill Rd Alexandra Rd area	To include the residential area bounded by Hill Rd, Bellevue Rd and Seavale Rd and The Beach. To be delivered in association with Clevedon Seafront and Hill Road scheme. Significant enhancements for active travel in this historic area that has seen suppressed demand for active travel facilities released during 2020	Bidding

Scheme	Summary	Status
20mph Zones		
Uphill Village	Scheme covers whole village improving the on-carriageway sections of the Coastal Towns Cycle route and wider benefits to the village, including two schools and Weston General Hospital	Options assessment
Pill and Easton-in-Gordano	Village-wide 20mph zone will help to secure benefits of new railway station and encourage walking and cycling to schools	Options assessment
Weston Town Centre 20mph Zone	An easily understood 20mph zone covering the area of Weston Town Centre where pedestrian and cycle movements are most concentrated	Options assessment
Long Ashton Village Enhancement scheme: Phase 2	20mph limit through the village centre, improved formal and informal crossing points and aim to deter drivers from using Weston Road/Long Ashton Road as a commuter route	Options assessment
20mph Request Process	We receive a range of requests from different town and parish councils, as well as from residents, businesses and other stakeholders. We remain committed to reviewing proposals for 20mph zones and limits. Where possible and where funding allows, we will implement any that are a strong fit against the criteria as part of our three year delivery programme (which is refreshed annually). This means that schemes that we will deliver are not limited to those listed currently	Options assessment

Schools pedestrian and cycle zones and priority walking schemes

It should be noted that the schemes in the High Street or district centre active travel improvement schemes, Active and Green Neighbourhoods and 20mph Zones schemes sections all have strong benefits for walking.

Yatton High Street Improvements package (relates to LCWIP Walking Route Yatton)	Improved pedestrian and cycle access to Yatton School grounds. Traffic calming, 20mph zone, new raised Zebra crossing by B3133/Cherry Grove, tightening of junction bell mouths	Committed
Bristol Road Pedestrian Facilities, Portishead	To improve pedestrian facilities along and across Bristol Road, which includes two schools, bus stops, housing, a football club and an office park located in close vicinity	Options assessment

Scheme	Summary	Status
School Pedestrian and Cycle Zones Programme	Annual programme of school pedestrian and cycle zones, locations to be prioritised this year, with the highest scoring against a set criteria being implemented first. To improve facilities for walking, cycling and other active travel such as wheeling and scooting around schools across the district. Can include but not be limited to: point closures to through traffic, reallocating road space to walking and cycling, use of planters/barriers/signage to increase active travel space and reduce car parking (maintaining residents' access)	Committed

Strategic urban cycle routes

LCWIP Weston Cycle Routes 4 and 6 – Weston Town Centre to Locking Castle)	Improve route from Worle Station to Summerlands Way and extend along Milton Road, Baker Street, Meadow Street, and Regent Street, to create an active travel priority route into the heart of the town centre and seafront	Bidding – Milton Rd and Baker St
LCWIP Weston Cycle Routes 3 and 7 – Weston Town Centre to Locking Parklands (includes Weston Station Active Travel Gateway/Hildesheim Bridge)	In particular, improve railway crossing points (Winterstoke Rd and Hutton Moor Lane/Aisecome Way area). Extend existing routes over Hildesheim Bridge and significantly alter the status quo of this entry point into Weston-super-Mare town centre, its railway station and forthcoming bus interchange	Bidding – Weston Station Active Travel Gateway Committed – Winterstoke Rd Bridge
LCWIP Cycle Routes Clevedon 1 and 2 – South West Clevedon to Clevedon School	Provide new segregated cycle lanes and traffic calming/reduce traffic to connect existing paths, providing a continuous route. Improve Clevedon triangle area for all directions of travel	Outline proposal
LCWIP Cycle Route Portishead 1 and 2 – Ashlands to High St and Gordano School	Provide new/improved segregated cycle lanes and traffic calming to connecting the north east to the south west of the town, incorporating the High Street and the proposed railway station	Outline proposal
LCWIP Cycle Route Nailsea 1 – Town Centre to Nailsea and Backwell Station	Provide a direct high-quality route, segregated where possible or otherwise traffic calmed	Outline proposal

Scheme	Summary	Status
Strategic inter-urban/rural cycle routes		
North Somerset Moors Super-Cycle Network	Point closures to through traffic using modal gating to reduce traffic flows and rat-running along the flat, direct lanes of the North Somerset Moors network, linking Clevedon, Nailsea, Yatton, Backwell and NCN33	Bidding
The Strawberry Line Extension (Yatton to Clevedon)	Continuous route based on former railway from Yatton Station to Clevedon connecting communities to rail network	Bidding
Weston-super-Mare – Clevedon ‘Pier to Pier’ section of North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route	New shared-use path at Yeo and Oldbridge rivers (Tutshill), connecting existing lanes and improvements in Weston and Clevedon areas to provide a complete ‘Pier to Pier’ route	Bidding
The Gordano Greenway	New off-road shared-use path parallel to the B3124 connecting Clevedon and Portishead	Outline proposal
River Avon Trail (Pill Path)	Significant upgrade (to commuter standard) of riverside path from Ham Green to Bristol Cumberland Basin (in partnership with Bristol City Council)	Outline proposal
Segregated cycle lanes		
A371 Weston outskirts to Banwell	Continue A371 provision from Locking to within Banwell 30mph zone (shared use but low pedestrian demand)	Committed
Long Ashton Rd to Park and Ride	Connect Long Ashton Rd to Park and Ride Site to improve connectivity of village to Bristol and access public transport	Bidding
Engine Lane to Nailsea Town Centre (LCWIP Cycle Route Nailsea 2)	Provide segregated path along north side of Queens Road and transition points. Continue route along Mizzymeard to town centre	Outline proposal
A38 – various corridor improvements	Study underway to review demand and what’s possible in association with proposed new development	Outline proposal

Appendix 3: Additional Health and Social benefits of Active Travel

Physical activity greatly reduces the risk of ill health and premature death including reducing the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, falls and mental health problems. Illness as an outcome of physical inactivity has been conservatively calculated to directly cost the NHS up to £1.0 billion per annum (2006-07 prices). Indirect costs have been estimated as £8.2 billion per annum (2002 prices).² If current trends continue, the increasing costs of health and social care will destabilise public services and take a toll on quality of life for individuals and communities.³

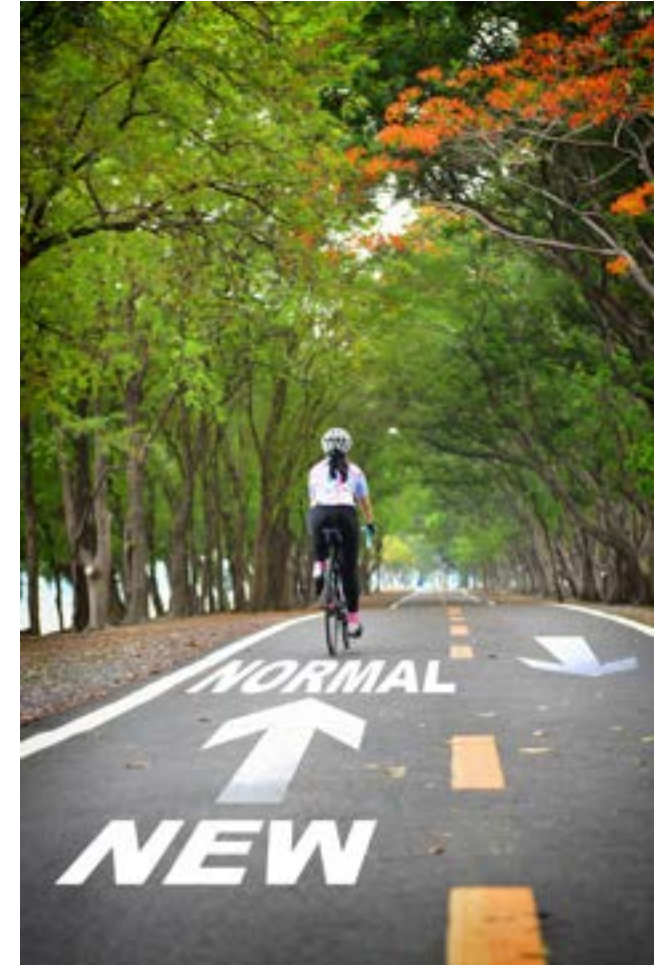
One outcome of increasingly sedentary lifestyles is the increased rates of overweight and obesity. Levels in the UK have been increasing over recent decades for both adults and children. Current estimates of levels of obesity in North Somerset (22.7%) are similar to the average for England (23%). In childhood, levels of obesity rise with age from 8.07% in 4-5 year olds to 16.6% in 10-11 year olds. In North Somerset the proportion of 4-5 year olds who are overweight and obese is slightly higher than the average for England at 24%. Being overweight or obese puts

people at greater risk of death from a number of conditions including, cancer, heart disease, and stroke. Children need at least an hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day, 30 minutes of which can be provided in school time. The journey to school is one way to help incorporate this.

According to the UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines⁴ children and young people (aged 5-18) should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. This can include all forms of activity such as physical education, active travel, after-school activities, play and sports.

Each week, adults (aged 19-64) should accumulate at least 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity activity (such as brisk walking or cycling); or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity (such as running); or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity (such as sprinting or stair climbing); or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity. Each week older adults (65+) should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity aerobic activity, building up gradually from current levels. Children reach a

peak of physical activity at five years which tends to decline into adulthood. As such, ensuring that all children are as active as possible throughout childhood is important for current and future population health.



² Claiming the Health Dividend: A summary and discussion of value for money estimates from studies of investment in walking and cycling (Dr Adrian Davies / DfT, 2014).

³ Everybody Active, Everyday (Public Health England, 2014).

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/832868/uk-chief-medical-officers-physical-activity-guidelines.pdf, 2019



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