

Oxfordshire Active Travel Strategy

A contribution to Oxfordshire's Local Transport Plan for 2011 to 2030

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1 Introduction

The [Department for Transport's national overarching goals for transport](#) are:

- 1.1 to **support** national **economic** competitiveness and **growth**, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks;
- 1.2 to reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of **tackling climate change**;
- 1.3 to **contribute to better safety, security, and health** and longer life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health;
- 1.4 to **promote** greater **equality of opportunity** for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society;
- 1.5 to **improve quality of life** for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a **healthy natural environment**.

Walking and cycling – together, separately, and in conjunction with public transport - have important roles to play in achieving these goals, but for them to do so there need to be changes in the ways provision is made for walking and cycling in Oxfordshire.

The groups below believe Oxfordshire County Council has a key role to play in making active travel a real transport choice throughout Oxfordshire. We put our trust in the Council to make this LTP deliver a tangible, positive change and offer the following help and suggestions for consideration.

Contributions from:

CTC Oxfordshire
CycloX - the cycle campaign for Oxford
Living Streets - Witney
Oxford Pedestrians Association
Sustrans - Oxford
WitneyBUG

Supported by:

CulBUG
HarBUG
Low Carbon Wolvercote
Sustainable Charlbury
Sustainable Woodstock
Transition Eynsham
Transition Thame & District
Wychwood Network

2 Taking Action on Active Travel

Active travel is seen by a wide range of public health bodies to be an everyday activity which could reverse the damage manifesting itself in our health and wellbeing. The following actions from [Sustrans' Active Travel Policy](#) seek to provide all individuals with a real, safe, practical choice. The LTP can significantly contribute to improving public health.

- 2.1 **set ambitious targets for a growth in walking and cycling – and ensure they are met:** publish a coherent strategy for growth in walking and cycling, based on experience of what works; monitor and performance-manage progress; give transport departments a clear public health objective, and make clear the roles of other government departments and other partners
- 2.2 **invest at a realistic level:** commit 10% of transport budgets to walking and cycling immediately, and in future ensure that transport funds are allocated proportionate to the new, ambitious target levels
- 2.3 **create safe, attractive walking and cycling conditions,** with coherent high quality networks linking all everyday destinations, so that walking and cycling are faster and more convenient than motor travel, backed up by individualised travel marketing, school and workplace travel plans, practical walking promotion programmes and high quality cycle training
- 2.4 **make 20mph or lower speed limits the norm for residential streets** and those used by shoppers, tourists and others, close to schools or public buildings, or important for walking and cycling or children's play. In urban areas only the busiest strategic traffic routes should now qualify for higher speed limits
- 2.5 **tackle bad driving,** through improved driver training and awareness campaigns, backed by stronger and better enforced traffic laws
- 2.6 **'health check' every transport and land use decision,** focusing on the potential impact on levels of walking and cycling and other aspects of health; invest public money to the benefit of public health, and reject proposals whose impact on walking and cycling will not be positive.

The sustainable transport charity Sustrans has taken the Government's own methods of assessing the economic benefits of transport schemes and applied them to a number of local walking and cycling routes. The results show them to have a benefit to cost ratio of 20:1. This is in stark contrast to the typical ratio of just 3:1 for other transport schemes such as rail and roads. Sustrans' analysis shows how money spent on creating the right environment to encourage more walking and cycling could result in massive cost savings for the Treasury and major benefits to public health.

<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/resources/research-and-monitoring/economic-appraisal-of-cycling-and-walking-schemes>

In order for the goals and objectives of the Oxfordshire Active Travel Strategy to be met we believe it is imperative that at least 10% of the local transport budget is invested in walking and cycling.

3 Local Transport Plan Draft Goals and Objectives

	OCC's draft goals for consultation	OATS amended draft goals
3.1.	To support the local economy and the growth and competitiveness of the county	To support the county's transition to a low-carbon economy
3.2.	To make it easier to get around the county and improve access to jobs and services for all by offering real choice	To improve access to jobs and services for all by offering real choice
3.3.	To reduce the impact of transport on the environment and help tackle climate change	
3.4.	To promote healthy, safe and sustainable travel	To provide the physical environment that enables people to travel actively
3.5.		To improve quality of life

	OCC's draft objectives for consultation	OATS amended draft objectives
3.6.	Improve the condition of local roads, including resilience to flooding	Improve the condition of local roads, footways and greenways, including resilience to flooding
3.7.	Reduce congestion	Reduce congestion for all modes
3.8.	Make journey times more reliable	Reduce reliance on single or low-occupancy private cars
3.9.	Reduce casualties and the dangers associated with travel	Reduce casualties and the dangers associated with travel, prioritising vulnerable users
3.10.	Improve accessibility for all to jobs, goods, services and leisure	Improve accessibility for all to jobs, goods, services and leisure, by means other than the private car unless disabled
3.11.	Secure infrastructure and services to support development	Ensure that all development meets the PPS eco-towns standard for transport (ET 11)
3.12.	Reduce carbon emissions from transport	Reduce carbon emissions from transport and improve air quality
3.13.	Improve air quality and enhance the street environment	Enable the creation of streets for people and liveable neighbourhoods
3.14.	Develop and increase the use of high quality, welcoming public transport on main routes	Develop and increase effective use of high quality, welcoming public transport and provide good quality information
3.15.	Promote and support cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health	Develop and prioritise cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health

4 Active Travel Supporting the DfT's National Goals and the LTP

Our recommendations for helping walking and cycling achieve the five goals in Oxfordshire are:

- 4.1 **support** national **economic** competitiveness and **growth**, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks;

How walking and cycling contribute:

- 4.1.1 Reduced motor vehicle congestion is a key to improving the reliability of journeys. Both modes are the most reliable for shorter journeys – they make the best use of space and are unaffected by motor vehicle congestion.
- 4.1.2 Short journeys made on foot and bicycle, instead of in cars, create road space for others to use.
- 4.1.3 More efficient use of transport space - people on foot or bicycle take up less room.
- 4.1.4 Better alertness and health of workers who commute on foot or bike. Less tendency to road rage.
- 4.1.5 Journeys made during the day for business purposes are more reliable and consistent. Because journey origin to final destination times are more dependable, time is not wasted (no late arrivals; no early departures just in case of disruption)
- 4.1.6 Walking and cycling are resilient to disruption of travel networks through (e.g.) vehicle collisions/crashes, transport worker strikes, road repairs, terrorism.
- 4.1.7 Individuals who walk or cycle are also more resilient, can find alternative routes.
- 4.1.8 Increased oil prices and supply fluctuations have no impact on active travel modes.
- 4.1.9 Cost of collisions reduced through modal shift which brings fewer collisions and less severity.

What could be done in the next LTP:

- 4.1.10 Walking and cycling take place on every road – not just where “facilities” are provided. Review cycling and walking networks and invest to remove barriers, increase permeability, improve through-route signage, remove unnecessary stoppages at traffic signals, and bring quality walking and cycling to the whole street network.
- 4.1.11 Review and improve phasing of traffic signals, especially at pelicans and toucans, to avoid motor vehicles being stopped on red long after a pedestrian or cyclist frustrated by delay has already crossed.
- 4.1.12 Invest in good quality installation and maintenance of walking and cycling networks and ensure resilience to increasingly heavy rainfall.
- 4.1.13 Business parks – provide safe walking (including to/from public transport) and continuous cycling routes for 5 miles in every direction.
- 4.1.14 Invest in pool bikes, couriers, rickshaws, load carrying, Bikeability training, cycle mileage allowances, relaxation of dress codes, practical bikes (mudguards, chain guards, lights).
- 4.1.15 Implement travel plans and accompanying safe infrastructure for every workplace.
- 4.1.16 Review the costs of providing and maintaining car parking – implement ‘California Law’ to reward those who do not occupy a car parking space at or near work.

- 4.2 reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of **tackling climate change**;

Ninety five percent of the fuel used in a car journey is consumed merely to move the vehicle – not the person. Short car journeys are where car engines are working at their lowest efficiency. Petrol consumption rates are greatly increased during starts-from-cold - urban cycle is typically two-thirds as fuel-efficient compared with extra-urban.

How walking and cycling contribute:

- 4.2.1 Walking & cycling in towns produce almost no carbon emissions or other pollutants. The climate costs of producing bicycles, and clothing for use in walking and cycling are very low.
- 4.2.2 The climate costs and the whole life financial costs of walking and cycling infrastructure are far lower than that needed to facilitate motor vehicle movements. (Sustrans research)
- 4.2.3 Better access to public transport enables replacement of car journeys, and more efficient operation of public transport.
- 4.2.4 Enabling children to travel independently replaces the School Run.
- 4.2.5 Enabling intermediate distances to be covered when combined with public transport - very important for climate change in terms of CO2.

What could be done in the next LTP:

- 4.2.6 Enable people who use cars to do so less wastefully – provide incentives not to drive alone.
- 4.2.7 Enable more independent car-free journeys by those who do not or cannot drive (e.g. the young, the old, the poor, the unqualified).
- 4.2.8 Build high levels of active travel into new developments e.g. Great Western Park in Didcot.
- 4.2.9 Connect all villages within 5 miles of a main town (e.g. Bicester, Banbury, Didcot, Abingdon, Thame, Henley) to that town by safe continuous uninterrupted cycle routes (as for example in Cambridge).
- 4.2.10 Invest to enable safe, convenient and uninterrupted walking and cycling to public transport interchanges. Provide cycle parking at bus stops.
- 4.2.11 Increase the catchment areas of bus and train by investing to enable cycling trips up to 5 miles to/from public transport.
- 4.2.12 Provide filtered permeability at junctions – as advocated in the DfT Manual for Streets – to provide positive advantages for sustainable modes.
- 4.2.13 Encourage car free developments – both business and residential.
- 4.2.14 Encourage and facilitate Car Sharing Clubs.
- 4.2.15 Invest in Personalised Travel Planning – to both old and new settlements.
- 4.2.16 Reallocate road space to sustainable modes.
- 4.2.17 Reduce speed limits on all roads – most walking and cycling takes place along bus routes where the greatest risk to pedestrians and cyclists exists.

- 4.2.18 Introduce satellite Park and Ride, including bike parking provided to enable Park & Cycle, e.g. at the edge of county towns.
- 4.2.19 Ensure Park & Ride bus services operate all day and evening every day.
- 4.2.20 Introduce a Congestion Charge for single occupancy cars.
- 4.2.21 Implement Carbon Reduction plans.
- 4.2.22 Introduce a Workplace Parking Levy to help pay for walking, cycling and public transport improvements.

- 4.3 **contribute to better safety, security, and health** and longer life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health;

How walking and cycling contribute:

- 4.3.1 By enabling people to make some journeys, or parts of them, actively.
- 4.3.2 By enabling journeys to be diverted from cars, reducing the number of vehicle journeys made – especially shorter journeys where congestion may be greatest, and where air pollution from cold vehicle engines (both CO₂ and NO_x), and from PM₁₀ particulates from diesels, is greatest.
- 4.3.3 By creating safer streets through Safety in Numbers – more people walking and cycling makes streets and places more alive and welcoming to others who decide to venture out of doors because they feel more secure. The ‘casual surveillance’ available when others are about gives assurance to people that they can go outdoors safely.
- 4.3.4 Active travel brings benefits to all, both those who participate and those who benefit from less noise, air pollution, and stress due to streets overcrowded with motor vehicles.
- 4.3.5 By reducing the adverse impacts of motor traffic on health – sedentary effects of car, van and lorry travel, and pollution. Reduction of per-trip Killed and Seriously Injured due to fewer motor vehicle journeys.
- 4.3.6 There is an overall positive benefit of active travel, which exceeds any increase in injury rates due to more people out and about on foot or bicycle.
- 4.3.7 Fewer motor vehicles means less severance – Motor traffic can sever communities, regardless of the power source. This applies as much to electric & hydrogen powered vehicles as to internal combustion engines.
- 4.3.8 Walking and cycling increase independent mobility and personal development of children, whereas car based travel limits the freedom of those who do not drive.

What could be done in the next LTP:

- 4.3.9 Make walking and cycling into activities that can be undertaken 24 hours a day, every day of the year.
- 4.3.10 Implement 20mph in all urban areas, including bus routes and mixed priority streets.
- 4.3.11 Review all existing cycling and walking ‘facilities’ in the light of a changed focus to encourage active modes.

- 4.3.12 Revive unimplemented schemes from the first Local Transport Plan.
- 4.3.13 Continue with the cycling policy to provide separate facilities on faster roads.
- 4.3.14 Address cyclist priority at side road crossings – (ref Cycling England).
- 4.3.15 Install "countdown until walk-time" signals at pedestrian and cyclist signalled crossings
- 4.3.16 In designing signalled junctions, always presume provision of Advanced Stop Lines and Headstart-to-Cyclists signal phase, unless these are demonstrated to be impossible to install
- 4.3.17 Waiting at bus stops – implement the recommendations from 'Making the Connections' (DfT/ Social Exclusion Unit).
- 4.3.18 Provide ample secure cycle parking, well overlooked, including cycle lockers where appropriate.
- 4.3.19 Address antisocial driving – speed and parking are high on list of local concerns.
- 4.3.20 Address pavement cycling: make roads and traffic less hazardous for cyclists - provide street conditions that remove the temptation to cycle on pavements – ensure that those who do must pay a fine or get training.
- 4.3.21 Validate pedestrian-only zones with on-pavement "walk-your-bike" signage
- 4.3.22 Work closely with planning authorities – monitor every development, ensure that cycle parking required by planning permissions is actually installed.

4.4 **promote greater equality of opportunity** for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society;

How walking and cycling contribute:

- 4.4.1 Walking and cycling are very inexpensive for individuals, and need to be supported by institutional investment to ensure active travel can take place
- 4.4.2 Private car creates social exclusion, walking and cycling reduce it.
- 4.4.3 Young and old people can walk and cycle.
- 4.4.4 People without driving skills, or banned from driving, can walk and cycle.
- 4.4.5 Independence comes from walking & cycling – anyone of any age can do it, journeys on foot are consistent and reliable.
- 4.4.6 Walking and cycling create neighbourliness, encourage development of the individual and communities.

What could be done in the next LTP:

- 4.4.7 Invest in walking networks which are level throughout and continuous.
- 4.4.8 Invest in better maintenance and installation of cycling and walking networks.
- 4.4.9 Improve accessibility to public transport by walking and cycling – for cycling, focus on journeys of up to 5 miles.
- 4.4.10 Provide ample secure cycle parking at all local centres, social venues, services.

- 4.4.11 Review and enforce standards of cycle parking provision for flats, to ensure flat dwellers can secure parked bicycles.
- 4.4.12 Encourage and facilitate Pay-As-You-Go Car Sharing Clubs - to increase access to cars without the need to own one, heighten awareness of direct per-trip costs at the margin of making a vehicle journey (for comparison with per-trip costs of public transport) , and encourage car rental for longer journeys.
- 4.4.13 Ensure the requirements of the DDA are foremost in the design and layout of travel facilities for all modes, eg path widths that allow two tricycles to pass.
- 4.4.14 Ensure that parking provision for motor vehicles, motor cycles, bicycles and the disabled (on and off street) is planned together.
- 4.4.15 Increase awareness of battery-assisted bicycles for disabled people.

4.5 **improve quality of life** for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a **healthy natural environment**.

How walking and cycling contribute:

- 4.5.1 Reduced stress through activity, reduced stress, noise and air pollution through less congested streets and communities.
- 4.5.2 Healthy travel contributes to quality of life.
- 4.5.3 Travelling "outside the box" improves casual social interaction and sense of community through better direct eye and ear and face-to-face contact
- 4.5.4 Fewer cars, lower speeds means less road kill of wildlife, and reduced severance of wildlife corridors.

What could be done in the next LTP:

- 4.5.5 Acknowledge the roles of streets as social places – not merely conduits for the passage of vehicles and storage places for private vehicles. Implement street layout and management processes that acknowledge and reflect this.
- 4.5.6 Provide separated cycle routes beside roads with higher speed limits.
- 4.5.7 Reduce speed limits to reduce traffic noise, danger and perception of danger.
- 4.5.8 Apply the recommendations of the Manual for Streets and English Heritage street design manuals to existing streets as well as to new developments.
- 4.5.9 Support and introduce Car Free Sundays in prominent places – good for social interaction and to help nervous cyclists to gain confidence.
- 4.5.10 Design cycle and walking routes as a continuous high quality experience, with good maps and signage.
- 4.5.11 Create better quality bus travel and public transport interchanges – with good walk and cycle routes to/from interchange points, and ample secure cycle parking.
- 4.5.12 Introduce Streets for Play – DIY Streets, home zones, streets closed 2-5 pm weekdays and all weekend.