Local Transport Plan 4

2023

WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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START

Executive summary

The Wokingham Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a strategic document that sets out the approach for all aspects of transport across our borough. The LTP identifies and supports future transport interventions for funding and ensures that we are addressing the priorities of our residents whilst ensuring we meet the requirements of national and local objectives.

The LTP is supported by 'daughter documents' that provide greater detail in the numerous topic areas. Two such documents have already been adopted by the Council, these being the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

Our third LTP (termed LTP3) was written in 2011. With a significant part of the strategy having been delivered and changes in technology, policy and demographics, there is a need to produce a new transport strategy.

This draft transport strategy, referred to as LTP4, looks back at what has happened since 2011 and considers the views of our residents and their changing and current travel habits and trends. It also takes account of changes in national and regional policy, and the council's own updated goals and objectives from its various strategies and the emerging Local Plan.

There are two background documents to LTP4 that provide more detail on the data used in developing the new Plan. Annex A is the LTP4 Evidence Base, which includes an overview of empirical data and changes in the borough since the last Plan in 2011. Annex B is the LTP4 Engagement Report which summarises the results of our early engagement with residents in March 2023.

An analysis of travel patterns and socio-economic data suggests four geographic areas around which LTP4 policies can be determined and directed. These are:

- Earley, Woodley and Shinfield which includes the most urban areas of these towns where the main destination for travel outside the borough is towards Reading;
- North Wokingham, which includes Twyford and is mainly rural with high car dependency;
- South Wokingham, also generally rural and which also has relatively high car dependency; and
- Wokingham and Winnersh, the central area of the borough which has the highest levels of "self-containment" and active travel.

The characteristics of these four areas have been used to develop place-specific solutions where we know that specific interventions will benefit certain travel types; it also means that, although the Local Plan will have a transport hierarchy and promotes active and sustainable travel, we must accept and support our residents who are dependent on their private car.

The Local Transport Plan supports our local priorities. The LTP Vision has three key themes:

Create Healthy and Safe Places

The LTP will help to build and maintain healthy communities, attractive environments and work towards reducing negative impacts associated with road transport such as injuries from traffic collisions, noise and emissions.

Targets include a reduction in those harmed on our roads, which aligns with the national objective for 50% of trips in towns to be made by walking and cycling.

For rural areas, this theme includes measures to improve the vitality of rural service centres and access to active travel routes, in part with a network of lower traffic routes.

Develop the Economy

We will work with our partners and stakeholders to protect and enhance our strategic road and rail connectivity.

We will work with and encourage rail operators to improve services at our railway stations, support measures to decarbonise the railway and complement these with improvements to station interchange and access for all.

Maximising our existing assets is vital in keeping the borough moving, and a well-maintained transport system is a priority.

Reduce Environmental Impacts

Consistent with local, regional and national targets, the LTP will support the transition of the transport sector to carbon neutrality. Achieving this will require improved travel choice and changes in travel behaviour for all to reduce travel and congestion. This includes promoting low emission vehicles, developing a core network of attractive bus and cycle routes across the borough, and the removal of all air quality exceedances in the borough.

Measures to achieve this strategy are set out on the following pages.

The LTP is supported by an Action Plan which identifies some of the actions proposed to deliver the objectives of the Plan.

1. Background

Wokingham Borough is a thriving area with great opportunities and is one of the fastest growing Local Authority areas in the country.

Transport infrastructure plays a significant role in creating a successful economy whilst also enabling residents to access a range of services and amenities.

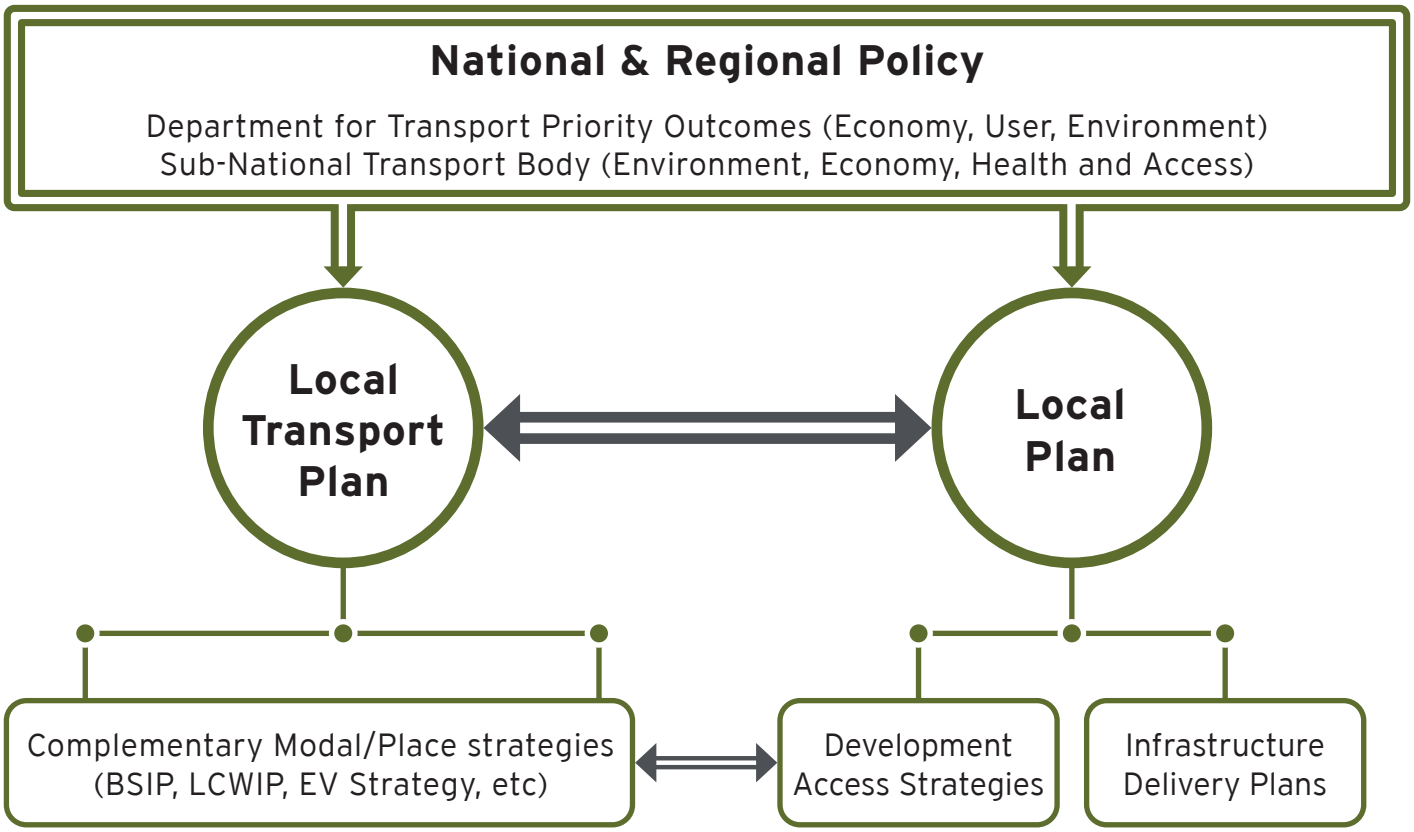
Health and wellbeing are at the core of planning and policy making and is a theme running through the LTP4. Research has shown that investing in our transport networks to create opportunities to walk, cycle and use public transport for the things we do every day can help our local shops, schools and healthcare, and improve access to social spaces such as parks and leisure centres. People that cycle to work are generally healthier and living longer than those who commute by car, and those who walk to work and cycling commuters also have lower rates of heart disease.

The Plan has an emphasis on providing opportunities for all to access services and employment, increase physical activity and shape the quality of the places where we live. Changes to the transport system provide an opportunity to improve our health and opportunities, and reduce the negative impacts of air pollution, noise and road traffic collisions.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a strategic document that sets out the approach for all aspects of transport across the borough.

The LTP aligns with other Council plans and strategies, such as the Local Plan and Council Plan, and national and regional strategies such as the Transport for South East sub-national transport body (STB).

The LTP is supplemented by several detailed strategies for different travel modes and places, such as the Bus Service Improvements Plan (BSIP), Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Electric Vehicle Strategy.



Our third and current LTP (LTP3) was written in 2011. LTP3 compiled five strategic goals within the plan: Highways; Active Travel; Public Transport; Smarter Choices; and Demand Management. Good progress has been made delivering its policies.

With a significant part of the strategy having been delivered alongside changing technology and government policy, and a better understanding of travel habits and climate change, there is a need to refresh our LTP and transport strategy to address current priorities and the needs of our communities.

The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has committed to doing as much as possible to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Significant changes in travel behaviour and vehicle propulsion, and at a faster rate than that observed to date, will be required to get to carbon neutrality.

Transport policy therefore needs to strike the right balance between improving people's quality of life, supporting the economy and reducing the environmental impacts of transport.

Work to understand travel patterns, trends and emerging opportunities, and engagement with local and regional stakeholders has been undertaken in the development of this new LTP.

A Vision for the LTP has been developed from existing national, regional and local policies to support local priorities. This has led to three key themes that deliver local priorities:

Create Healthy and Safe Places;

Develop The Economy; and

Reduce Environmental Impacts.

We are consulting on this draft LTP to get your views.

2. Looking Back

Our current and third LTP was produced in 2011 and a lot has changed. New transport infrastructure has been delivered and the borough's population has grown. With the growing influence of digital services and further shifts in travel behaviour since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the way we access services and amenities has also changed.

The LTP sets out a pipeline of interventions to support a changing borough. We have made good progress to deliver these improvements. This includes:

- New relief roads at Shinfield, Winnersh and Arborfield, the extension to Nine Mile Ride and the North Wokingham Distributor Road.
- Improvements to public transport, including the upgrade of Wokingham Station and park and ride sites (albeit their usage since 2020 has been impacted by the pandemic).
- Wokingham Town Centre and Peach Place improvements.
- New facilities for walking and cycling, including Greenways, to improve access and leisure opportunities for all throughout the borough; and
- New facilities for walking and cycling, including our ambitious Greenways network to improve access and leisure opportunities throughout the borough; and
- A 45% reduction in injuries from road traffic collisions since 2008.

Along with the new infrastructure, we have improved our engagement to promote safer and more sustainable travel with the creation of My Journey. As part of a comprehensive programme and promotion of sustainable travel and behaviour change campaigns, My Journey manages our Modeshift awards scheme with local schools, our Bikeability programme helping to ensure every child can learn how to safely ride a bike, and provides travel information to new developments that help to reduce car travel and promote lower carbon travel choices.

Having started in 2012, My Journey Wokingham has grown into is a borough-wide active and sustainable travel behaviour change campaign that aims to help and inspire Wokingham residents, employees, and visitors of all ages to walk, scoot, cycle and use public transport.

my Journey HELPING WOKINGHAM GET AROUND

Successes of My Journey to date include providing travel information packs to encourage sustainable travel from new development sites and a DEFRA funded Air Quality Project, running until October 2023, to increase active travel and encourage behavioural changes to improve air quality in the borough.

My Journey also works with primary and junior schools in the borough, training over 80% of Year 6 students in Bikeability Level 1 and 2. It is providing a range of resources to schools to achieve their national Modeshift STARS award. My Journey is proud to have been awarded Local Authority of the Year in 2020 at the national Bikeability awards.

Wokingham is one of the fastest growing local authorities in the UK. In addition, we are living longer. As a result, our population has increased by 15% over the last decade, from 157,000 in 2011 to 177,500 in 2021. As you might expect, a growing population can increase demand on the transport system.

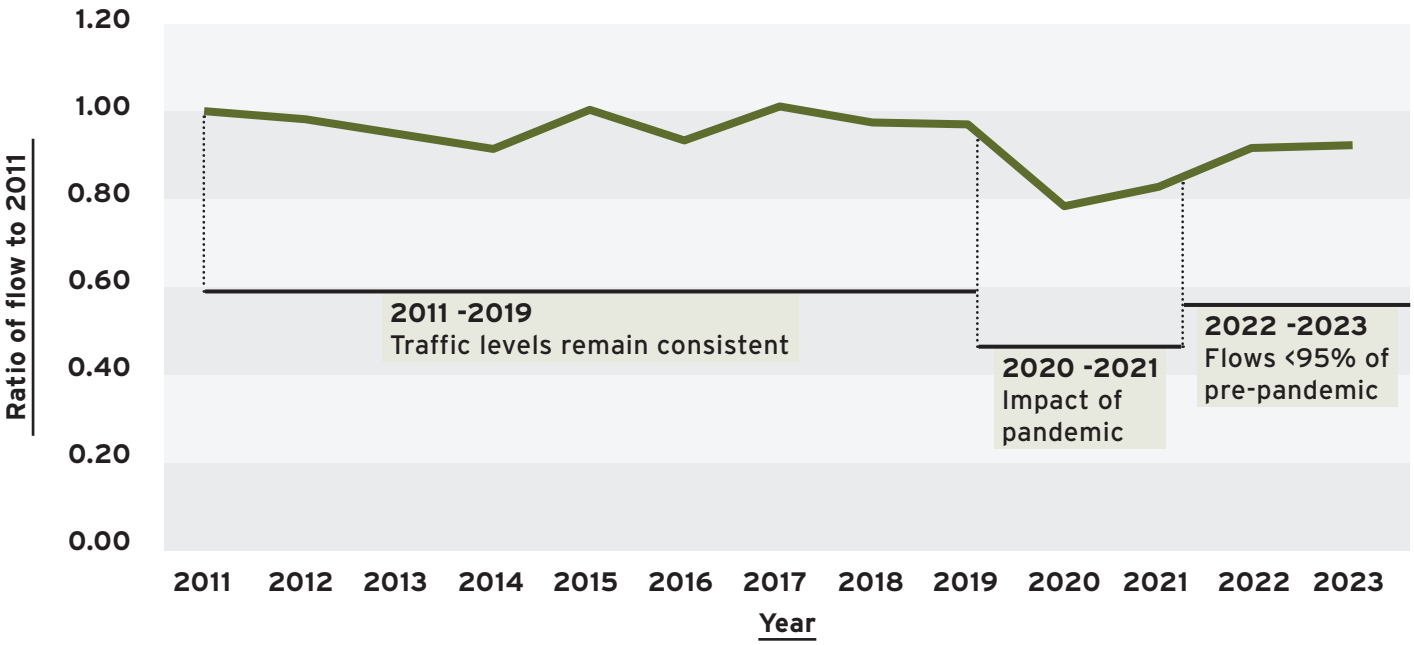
Significantly, the way people access services has also been changing, notably through a growing use of digital services.

The number of cars owned in the borough has increased over the last decade and Wokingham has one of the highest levels of car ownership in the country. However, each car is being used less than before and this growing car ownership has not led to additional travel. Overall, traffic volumes have not increased, instead remaining relatively stable despite the growth in population.

The number of trips made by individuals has also been reducing, with the National Travel Survey showing that each person made 12% fewer trips in 2019 than they did in 2000.

There appears to be a reduction in private car use when compared with pre-pandemic use, and the times at which people travel has also changed slightly. However, overall traffic volumes have remained relatively steady (excepting the pandemic period) due to a higher number of goods vehicles and 'white van' trips on our roads such that traffic levels in the borough during summer 2023 were only a few percent below the pre-pandemic traffic levels.

Wokingham Borough Traffic Flows 2011 – 2023



Many of the changes to why and how often we travel have been accelerated by the pandemic in 2020. For example, home working, made possible by new technology, is a realistic choice for some. While it is too early to tell the long-term impacts of the pandemic on transport, it shows the potential for significant changes in behaviour to take place in a relatively short period of time.

3. Spring 2023 Engagement

A survey seeking resident's views on transport in Wokingham, how they travelled and potential changes was conducted in early 2023.

The Spring 2023 consultation survey received feedback from a range of stakeholder organisations and 750 public responses across the borough. A full report of the survey and analysis of the results is provided in Appendix B as part of the draft LTP consultation material.

Although the responses were spread by location across the borough, engagement varied by age group. For example, 60% of respondents were aged between 25 and 64, comparable with the 53% of borough residents in this age group. However, almost 40% of respondents were over 65 whereas less than 1% were under the age of 24. This is a recurring concern of the council and we will seek to improve the response rate for those below 65 to ensure better representation of views of our residents both for consultation on this LTP and for policies and schemes arising from it during the Plan period.

Responses to the Spring 2023 survey aligned with the evidence base in Appendix A in that car is the most popular mode of transport for travel, accounting for most trips over five miles. Walking, and to a lesser extent cycling, also accounted for a significant proportion of short trips by residents of Wokingham, Winnersh, Woodley, Earley and Shinfield.

The most raised concerns about current transport facilities were:

- The safety of children walking and cycling to school.
- Maintenance of roads and footpaths in the borough.
- A lack of travel options.
- That current infrastructure is not cycle friendly

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of several measures in urban centres. The top three themes were:

- Pedestrian Safety
- Clean Air
- Traffic Congestion

Views on several statements for change listed in the consultation were sought to understand priorities for residents. The findings indicated varying levels of support with 90% agreeing on the need for air quality to be within legal limits, 60% willing to change their travel habits to reduce emissions, but with only 40% agreeing with the concept of parking charges based on vehicle emissions.

Level of Agreement on Potential Transport Changes

Statement	Level of Agreement
Air quality should be within legal limits	Very High
The LTP should help reduce emissions from transport	Very High
Rural lanes be made safer for walking and cycling	High
I would accept slightly longer journeys by car to make it safer to use active travel modes to school	High
I would be willing to change my travel habits to reduce emissions	High
I support redesignation of roads in my nearest town to provide more outdoor spaces for businesses, provided access was retained	High
Reducing on street parking in nearest town to provide more outdoor spaces for businesses,	More in favour than against
Would accept slightly longer journeys by car if it meant less traffic on the streets where respondents tend to go.	More in favour than against
Different parking charges based on vehicle emissions	More against than in favour
Access charges for the most polluting vehicles to improve air quality	More against than in favour

Formal responses were also received from stakeholder groups, including Parish Councils, Reading Buses, Cycling UK, the British Horse Society and the University of Reading. Points raised by these groups included:

- Concerns about traffic speed and safety.
- A need to link bridleways / rights of way with shared use paths.
- The impact of planned and emergency roadworks on public transport.
- Make alternatives to driving as easy and as cheap as possible.

The consultation feedback provided a guide to local priorities from the borough's residents and stakeholders to help shape and inform the LTP. We have also drawn on findings from other engagement, such as the National Highways and Transportation survey (NHT), to provide a comprehensive picture of residents' views.

The responses highlighted areas of concern around maintenance and safety for active travel, and indicated support to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions.

4. Places and Travel Characteristics

Travel for work can be broadly summarised as:

35% of residents work within the borough. Short distance urban trips are typically made on foot or by cycle, but with use car dominant in more rural areas.

35% of residents travel to nearby destinations, including Reading, Bracknell, Slough, Maidenhead and Windsor.

30% of residents travel elsewhere, with around 10% of residents working in London and typically travelling by public transport, and 20% to other regional destinations with the private car used for over 90% of these trips.

Reduce Environmental Impacts

Most of our population live in the urban areas in the north and west of the borough and along the A329 corridor. Travel patterns vary across the borough with travel and socio-economic data analysis suggesting there are four areas with distinct travel characteristics. These are:

- Wokingham and Winnersh
- North Wokingham
- Earley, Woodley and Shinfield
- South Wokingham

Woodley, Earley and Shinfield

High draw to Reading. Many of which made sustainably, especially by bus

Close proximity to services

Higher density and walk/cycle

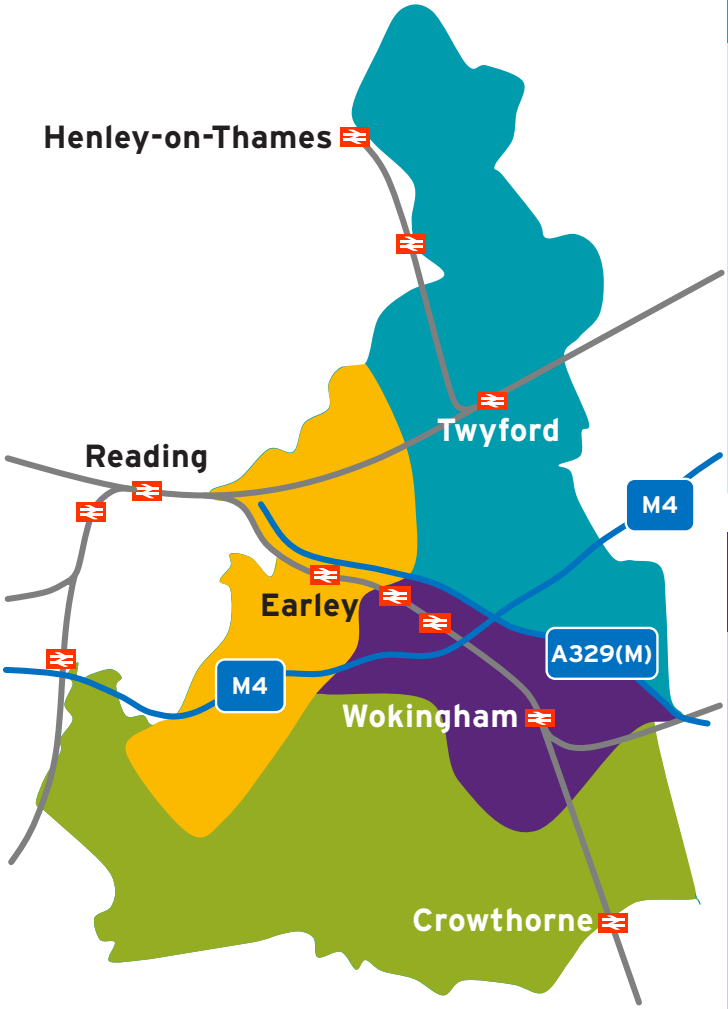
Wokingham South

Travel to range of destinations

Development at Arborfield Green

Higher walk/cycle than rural north

Limited public transport routes



Wokingham North

Draw to the east and to Reading

Highest car ownership

High rail usage inc. Elizabeth Line

Wokingham Town and Winnersh

High levels of self containment

Out commuting to Bracknell.

Highest levels of Active Travel

A329 corridor

Wokingham and Winnersh

Wokingham and Winnersh have the highest levels of self-containment and active travel in the borough. A quarter of residents work in Wokingham or Winnersh and the proportion of internal commuting trips made by foot/cycle is similar to that made by car. Most residents also live within walking distance of a primary or secondary school and shops and have the have the greatest potential to walk and cycle.

Bracknell is the most common destination from this area for work outside the borough followed by Reading. Railway stations at Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle and Wokingham, and 15-minute frequency bus services along the A329 provide public transport connections to Reading and Bracknell. There are also hourly bus services between Wokingham and Twyford, Barkham, Finchampstead, Arborfield and Shinfield.

The A329 can suffer from traffic congestion, impacting journey times and causing poor air quality. The Winnersh Relief Road has helped to alleviate congestion at Winnersh Crossroads and improvements to Market Square has enhanced the urban realm in Wokingham town centre, but there remains an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Wokingham town that covers Peach Street, Broad Street, Shute End, Denmark Street and London Road, with the greatest levels of pollution at Shute End.

There is new development located to the north and south of Wokingham. New infrastructure such as the North Wokingham Distributor Road has been completed and includes a new north-south crossing of the railway. In addition, the first section of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) has been built connecting the A329 to Waterloo Road and enabling the closure of Waterloo Road level crossing. The remaining sections of the SWDR will come forward as the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL) is built out over the coming years.

North Wokingham

The North Wokingham area comprises predominantly rural areas to the north of the A329(M) including Remenham and Twyford. Travel from this area is typically along the east-west corridors such as the A4 and M4, and by train using GWR and Elizabeth Line services towards Reading in the west and Slough, Windsor and London to the east.

Lower population densities in rural areas typically results in fewer local services and facilities, and this is reflected in higher car ownership than in our urban areas. Nevertheless, a smaller proportion of these residents drive to work compared to urban areas. Reasons for this include more rural residents accessing services digitally and a higher proportion of travel by rail, especially from Twyford station.

Twyford railway station has a large catchment area and, despite a drop in use during Covid-19, rail services and car parking continues to be in demand. The station is served by frequent Elizabeth Line services to Reading, Maidenhead and London. Wargrave station is on the Henley Branch Line and connects to the Elizabeth Line at Twyford.

There are regular bus services on the A4 London Road corridor towards Reading, but services are less frequent than elsewhere in the borough. However, some community transport services operate to provide travel opportunities to residents in these areas.

Earley, Woodley and Shinfield

Areas in and around Woodley, Earley and Shinfield abut the Reading conurbation. Travel to Reading accounts for nearly a third of trips from these areas.

The area benefits from high bus frequencies radiating out from Reading and consequently has the greatest levels of bus usage in the borough. Reading Borough Council's BSIP identifies Fast Transit Public Transport Corridors (FTPT) along the A327 and A329 routes into Wokingham, as well as quality public transport corridors connecting Woodley to Twyford, and Reading to Shinfield and Arborfield. If delivered, these routes would enhance the existing bus services and benefit the residents of Wokingham Borough.

Rail represents a smaller proportion of travel from this area than Wokingham and Winnersh or North Wokingham. Earley railway station is served by trains to Reading, Wokingham and London Waterloo, and the new Reading Green Park station by trains to Reading and Basingstoke and is well located for residents of Shinfield.

There are a number of services, amenities and jobs located in Earley and Woodley and walking and cycling accounts for a third of internal commuting trips. Overall active travel accounts for 10% of all commuting trips in this area, with levels towards Reading low given that many jobs and amenities in Reading are within cycling distance.

South Wokingham

Residents in the generally rural areas of South Wokingham and including the larger settlements of Arborfield and Finchampstead show a more diverse range of travel destinations when compared to other parts of the borough and a more limited range of public transport options.

The Leopard bus route connects Arborfield to Wokingham and Reading via Finchampstead and Shinfield. The frequency of this service was reduced to hourly following the COVID-19 pandemic, but a growing population along the route will provide new travel demand to support increased bus service frequency.

The new community at Arborfield continues to grow. Among the 3,500 allocated dwellings, over 1,000 have been completed along with new primary and secondary schools. The A327 Arborfield Cross Relief Road (Observer Way) was completed in 2020 to support the development and to reduce traffic passing through Arborfield Cross. The Nine Mile Ride extension to and through Arborfield Garrison and connecting to the A327 was completed in 2022.

The new community has higher levels of walking and cycling than other rural areas, which is a positive travel trend that should be developed further, and benefits from the California Greenway route to Finchampstead.

There are no railway stations in South Wokingham, although Crowthorne station provides an alternative to Wokingham for residents in Finchampstead and Green Park Station for services to Reading and Basingstoke from areas in the west.

5. Travel and Transport

Strategic Transport Network

The borough is well connected to major strategic roads. The M4 motorway crosses east to west through Wokingham, and the A329(M) provides a similar role north-south between Reading and Bracknell. These roads are accessed at Coppid Beech, Winnersh Triangle, Thames Valley Park and at M4 Junction 11 near Shinfield. Significant local roads also include the A4, A33, A321, A327 and A329.

Access to these strategic routes supports our local economy and enables residents and business to access services and amenities regionally and nationally. We will work with our partners and stakeholders to protect and enhance our strategic road and rail connectivity. This will help to effectively transport people, goods and services within the borough and to neighbouring areas.

Local Highway Network

Maximising our existing assets is vital to keep the borough moving. A well-maintained transport system is a priority for the council and was supported in the Spring 2023 consultation.

We will trial changes, investigate new approaches using technology to better monitor the network, and align proposed improvements with planned maintenance schedules to reduce disruption. We will also reduce the carbon footprint of highway maintenance and construction activities.

Continuing the current trends which has seen injuries from traffic collisions reduce over the last 15 years, an objective of the LTP will be to help achieve a further 50% reduction in serious and fatal road traffic collisions. Improvements will include targeted measures at areas with the highest collision rates including the A329, A4 and B3349 Barkham Road corridors.

Measures to reduce injuries to vulnerable road users will also be progressed. Areas that currently experience a higher number of collisions include Twyford and Remenham in the north, Arborfield and Newland in the south, and in and around the town centres of Woodley and Wokingham.

Health and Wellbeing

Transport plays a significant role in people's health and wellbeing. This can include enabling access to services, physical activity and the impact of emissions and noise on health.

Typically, Wokingham has a healthy population. Healthy life expectancy is above the national average and Wokingham is one of the top local authorities for physical activity in adults. However, the borough was in the bottom 20 for physical activity in children and young people. Levels of obesity are double for year 6 children compared to reception aged children, and those in more deprived areas are more likely to be obese than average.

Improving physical activity levels in children and young people, such as through making active travel an easy and accessible choice, can be a key component in achieving a healthier Wokingham and to reduce preventable difference in health and opportunities.

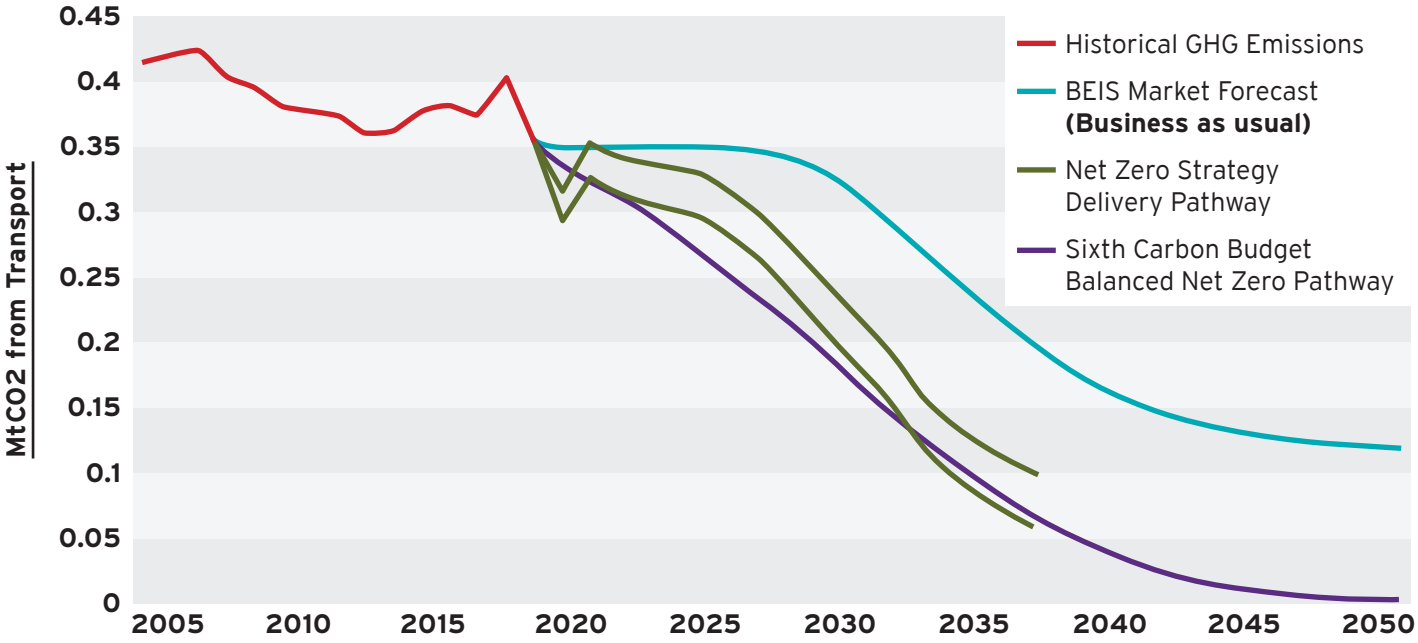
Environmental Impacts

Local transport accounts for a third of the carbon emissions in the borough. In addition, there are similar levels of carbon emissions arising from major transport links through the area, such as the rail network and the M4.

The council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has committed to doing as much as possible to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Achieving this will require significant changes in travel behaviour and vehicle propulsion.

To be carbon neutral in line with local (2030) or national (2050) targets we will need to make significant changes and at a faster rate of change than that observed to date. In the following diagram, the red line to 2020 indicates our progress to date and the purple line where we would need to go to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Historical Transport Emissions, business as usual and Net Zero strategy pathways



Changing Population

It is expected that the population of the borough will increase to 200,000 over the next 10-20 years. Changing demographic characteristics are likely to change the demand for travel. Older age groups make different types of trips to those of working age, including higher levels of concessionary bus travel, and families moving into new housing tend to make more trips than more established residential areas. Of interest, we have noted higher levels of active travel in the new Arborfield Garrison development.

Air Quality

Wokingham Borough has three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA), which are where pollution has exceeded legal limits. These are located in Wokingham Town Centre, at Twyford Crosswords and along the M4 motorway running east-west across our borough. Noise pollution is also highest adjacent to the M4 motorway. Clean air in our communities was identified as a priority from the spring 2023 consultation. The removal of all air quality exceedances in the current AQMAs in Wokingham town centre and Twyford will be a short-term priority for the LTP.

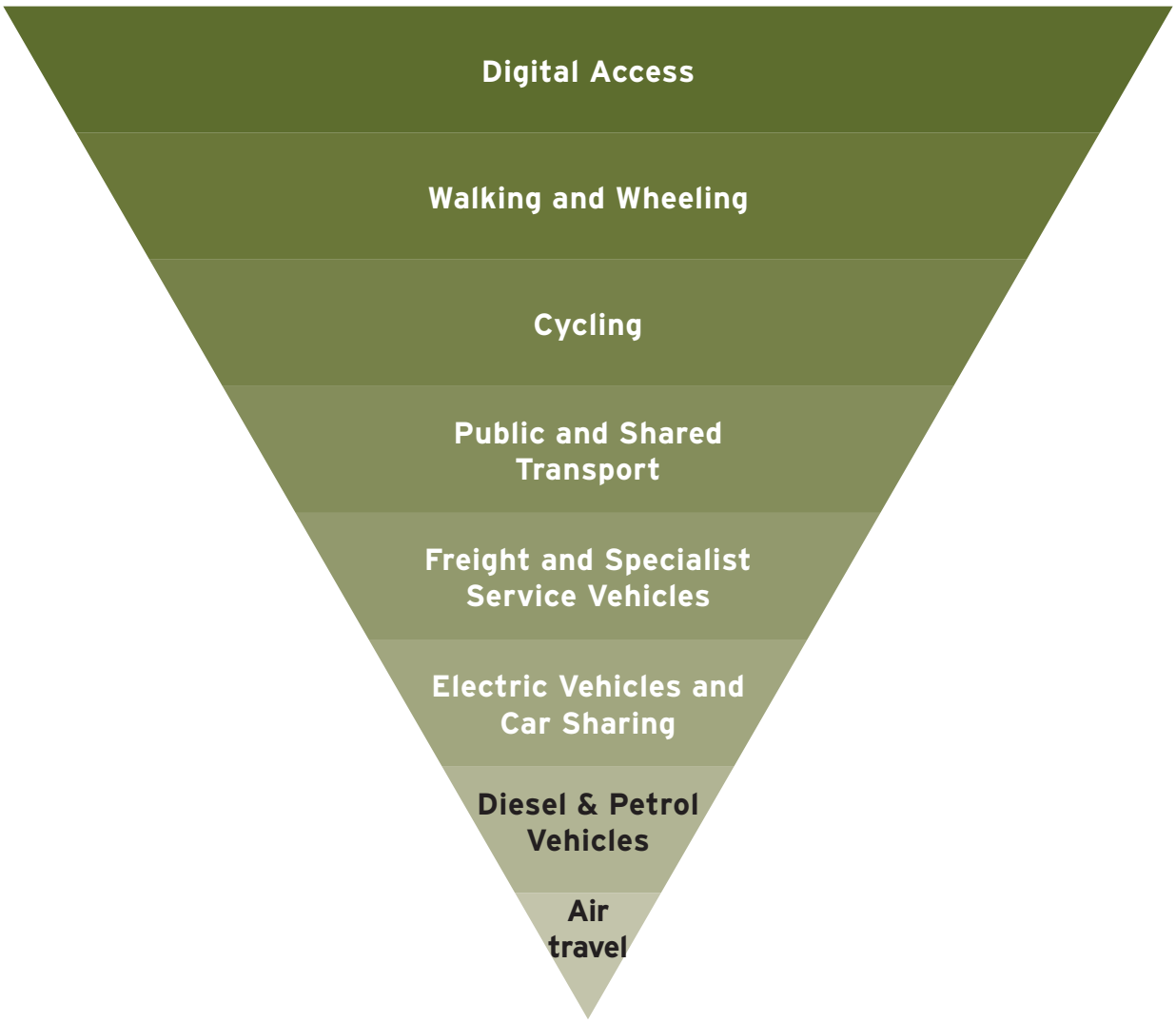
A new Local Plan

A new Local Plan to allocate further housing and employment development in the borough is being developed by the council. The 2021 Local Plan consultation proposed continued development at Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) in Arborfield, South Wokingham and Shinfield and a new SDL at Hall Farm between Shinfield and Earley. These will provide new homes to thousands of future residents along with new education, retail and employment facilities.

The LTP will complement and align transport strategy with the emerging Local Plan. Infrastructure delivered in the larger developments will need to provide safe walking, cycling and attractive public transport routes within and from these developments to support and enable sustainable development and appropriate infrastructure for new and existing residents.

Hierarchy of Transport

In line with national policy, the following diagram sets out a hierarchy of transport provision for the LTP, clearly placing the most sustainable forms of travel and access first and with less sustainable modes having a lower priority. At the top is Digital Access, which contributes to reducing the need to travel, for example to work and shopping (however, we recognise that this can also have a negative impact on the economy). Next is walking and wheeling, which is the term used for wheelchairs, scooters and pushchairs. Although private cars are shown to be our lowest priority, we know that many of us will continue to rely on the private car and simply could not (due to ability or other circumstances) switch to more sustainable modes even if there was appropriate infrastructure and services.



Digital Access

Technology has already had a significant impact on how we live our lives and the need for and how we travel. Consistent with the aims in the Wokingham Borough Council Plan and Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), the LTP will support growing use of digital technology. This includes improving digital accessibility and promoting remote working where possible and placing it top of the hierarchy for travel.

We will also expand the role of My Journey to help individuals, schools and businesses develop bespoke travel policies, promote car sharing schemes and active travel opportunities.

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

Aligned with national policy, there will be an objective for 50% of trips in our towns to be made by active travel. Those residents living in urban areas are generally closer to services and employment, have more travel choice and the greatest potential to walk, cycle or use public transport.

This will be achieved by delivering the active travel infrastructure in our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), improving facilities for walking, cycling and wheeling and reducing the dominance of road traffic in urban centres where supported. We will also improve cycle parking and access and investigate the potential for an on-street cycle or e-scooter scheme through the production of a Future Mobility Strategy.

The priorities for active travel are identified in our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. These include but are not limited to:

- A329 Reading - Winnersh - Wokingham - Coppid Beech Roundabout;
- B3349 Barkham Road;
- Reducing through traffic and increasing active travel facilities in Wokingham Town centre;
- Finchampstead Road.;
- Lower Earley Way; and
- links to Twyford and Twyford Station.

Outside of urban areas, rural villages and local towns bring communities together and provide local services and employment that reduce the need to travel. We will support vibrant rural centres by improving access and public realm, providing local parking facilities, and helping to enable local communities to provide events in their area.

Delivery of the LCWIP and sections of the Greenways network will bolster active travel commuting and leisure opportunities by walking, cycling or wheeling in our rural areas. It will, however, take time to create a network of new off-road routes. Therefore, we will also trial locally supported changes to increase the network of low traffic routes for walking, cycling and horse riding, with priority given to those that improve access to services and amenities such as education and the Greenways.

To enable more walking, cycling and wheeling to school and to promote increased physical activity in young people, we will develop a sustainable routes to school strategy. This will look at public transport and active travel access to schools and where targeted changes could improve access and safe routes for all that enable and support independent access to schools, shops and other amenities. We will also investigate locations to introduce school streets.

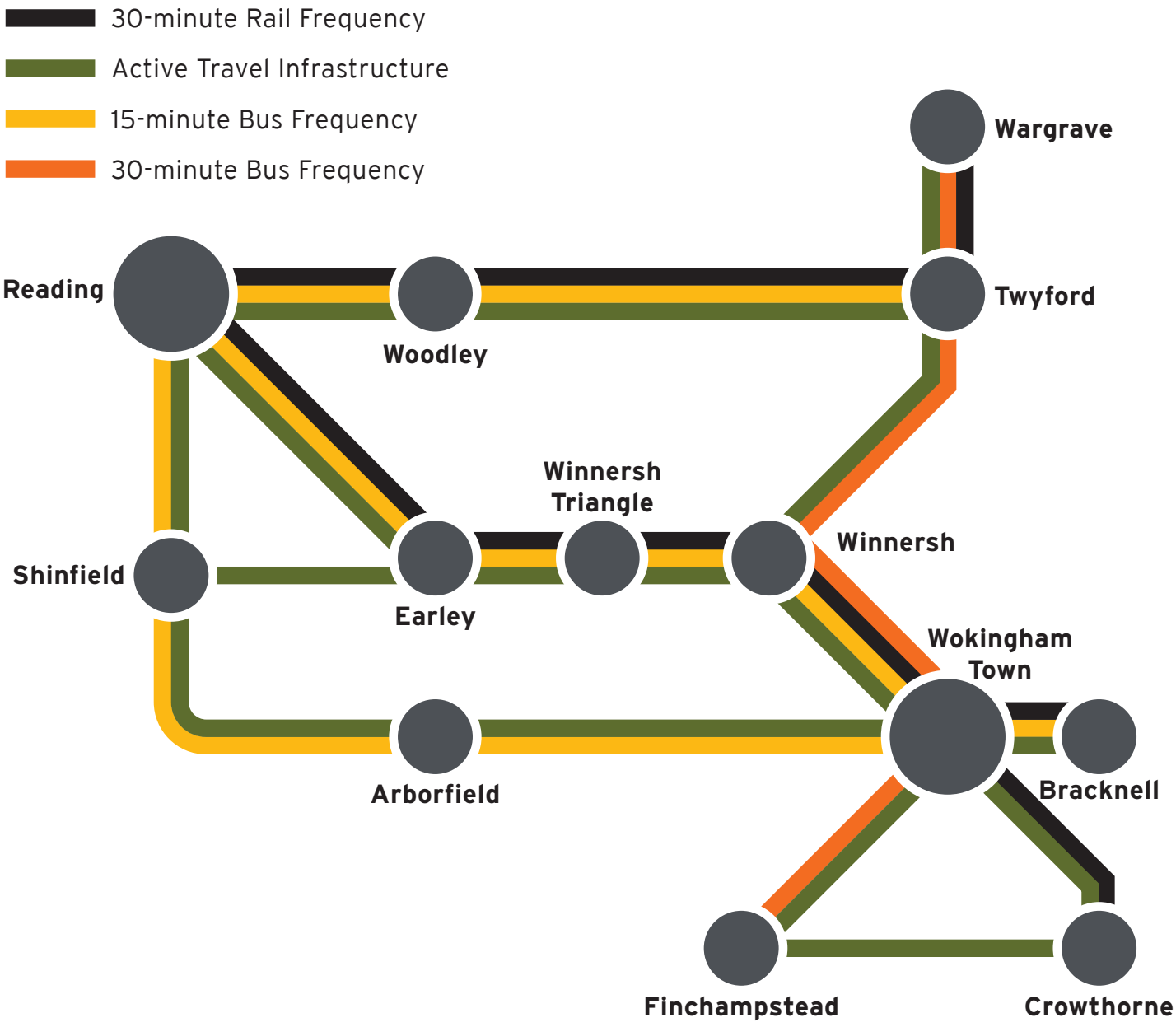
Public Transport

Reading has one of the highest levels of bus use per head in the country and those parts of the borough adjacent to the Reading including Earley, Woodley and Shinfield, and along the A329 and A4 corridors, benefit from the most regular services. Outside of the urban areas, provision is varied with typically less frequent services between Wokingham, Arborfield and Finchampstead, and between Wokingham and Twyford.

We will implement proposals in the Bus Service Improvement Plan targeted at those areas serving the greatest number of people and where improved bus services can be viable. This includes increasing service frequencies and reliability on higher frequency routes and expanding the bus network to support our growing population.

The strategy will seek to improve travel choices and safety by implementing high-quality travel corridors for walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport to provide a core network of attractive cycle and bus routes.

Aspirational Sustainable Travel Network



We will also investigate and deliver measures to improve access for all. This includes seeking lower fares for bus travel, improvements to the railway crossing at Tan House/Carnival Hub to provide a step free railway crossing and continuing to fund dial-a-ride services to serve rural communities. Support to improve bus services and interchange to Crowthorne Station will also be explored with local stakeholders.

Park and ride services provide additional capacity into Reading and access to a high-quality bus service that is not always viable in lower density rural areas. The park and ride sites at Mereoak and Thames Valley Park are linked by a single, high frequency bus service via Reading town centre or the hospital. Coppid Beech and Winnersh Triangle park and rides are not currently operating as demand for park and ride services has not yet recovered after the pandemic. Nevertheless park and ride is an important part of the transport network and we will seek to further enhance facilities at these, including interchange and electric vehicle charging facilities.

We will work with and encourage rail operators to increase capacity on the North Downs Line and to introduce a Winnersh Triangle stop on the existing Reading-Guildford-Redhill rail service as well as supporting improved services at our railway stations, interchange and measures to decarbonise the railway.

Twyford station has also benefitted from the introduction of electrified rail services and Elizabeth Line operations providing a direct service into and across central London to Shenfield. To complement the enhanced services, we will support improvements to interchange and access for all at Twyford station.

Electric Vehicles and Car Sharing

To facilitate the transition to zero emission vehicles, we will deliver electric vehicle charge points in areas with limited off-street parking and the highest density of housing, including Wokingham town centre, Winnersh and Earley. To further increase the range of charging options, we will investigate opportunities to generate energy at our park and ride car parks and promote the sharing of existing private charge points, known as peer-to-peer charging.

We will produce an electric vehicle strategy setting out priorities. To reflect the growing and changing technology this will be updated periodically throughout the LTP period. There will also need to find innovative ways of increasing access to zero emission vehicles including the development of a Car Sharing Strategy.

While the transition to zero emission vehicles will help to reduce our emissions, they will still contribute to air and noise pollution. Their contribution to reducing carbon emissions is also small in the short term before widespread uptake. As such, changes in our behaviour and travel in the short term will also be required. Achieving this will require a reduction in total traffic across the Borough and changes to speed limits, with the priority being those that improve road safety and/or air quality.

Freight

We will produce a freight strategy to better manage the growing number of light and heavy good vehicles, with initial focus on Wokingham Town Centre.

Our Strategy

Detail on the measures to achieve our strategy is set out on the following pages.

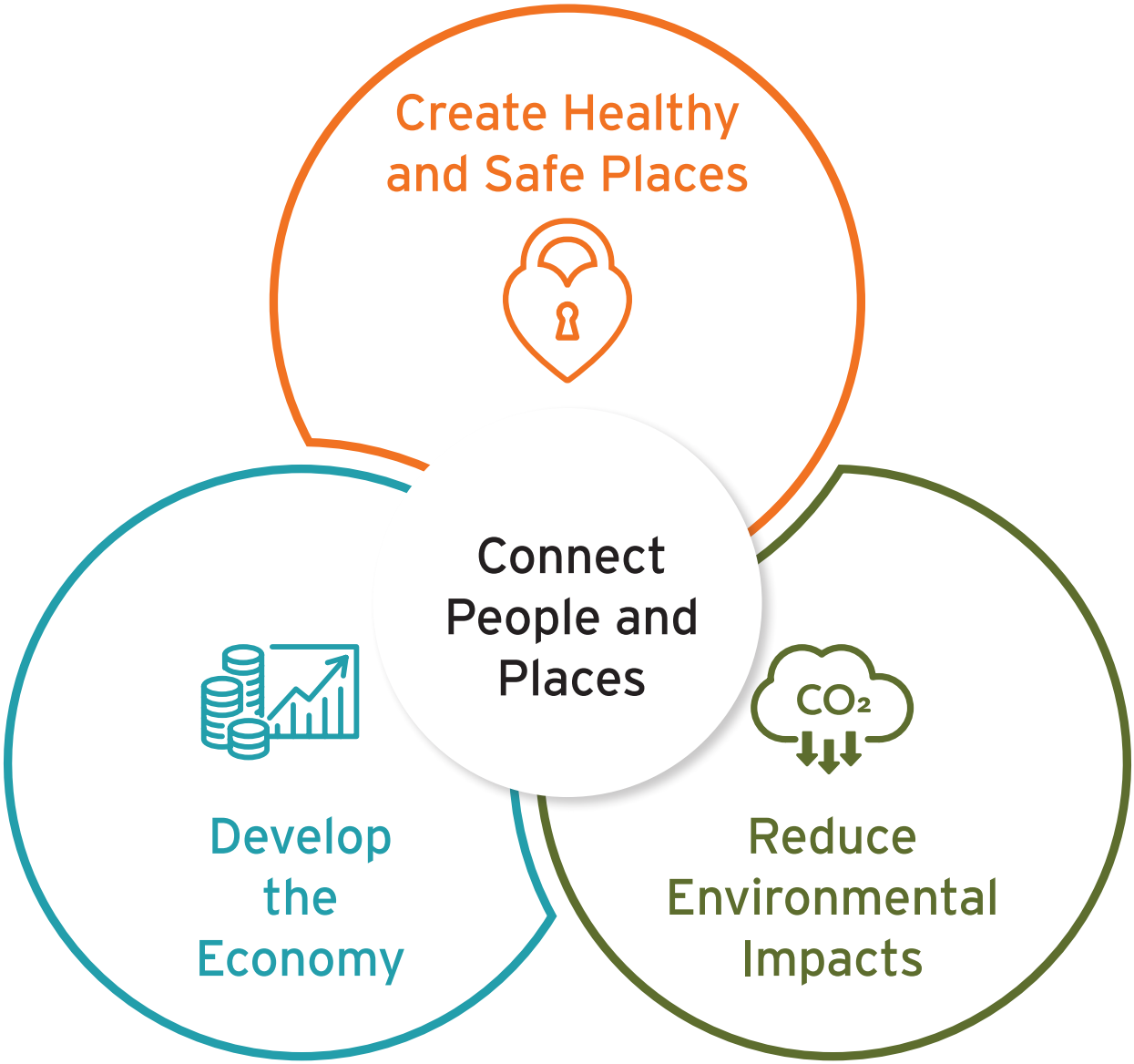
6. Our LTP Vision and Themes

The Local Transport Plan supports our local priorities.

The LTP Vision is to connect people and places.

The Vision is supported with three themes:

- Create Healthy and Safe Places
- Develop the Economy
- Reduce Environmental Impacts



The LTP has three key themes:

Create Healthy and Safe Places

The LTP will help to build and maintain healthy communities, attractive environments and work towards reducing negative impacts associated with road transport such as injuries from traffic collisions, noise and emissions.

Targets include a reduction in those harmed on our roads, which aligns with the national objective for 50% of trips in towns to be made by walking and cycling.

For rural areas, this theme includes measures to improve the vitality of rural service centres and access to active travel routes, in part with a network of lower traffic routes.

Develop the Economy

We will work with our partners and stakeholders to protect and enhance our strategic road and rail connectivity.

We will work with and encourage rail operators to improve services at our railway stations, support measures to decarbonise the railway and complement these with improvements to station interchange and access for all.

Maximising our existing assets is vital in keeping the borough moving, and a well-maintained transport system is a priority.

Reduce Environmental Impacts

Consistent with local, regional and national targets, the LTP will support the transition of the transport sector to carbon neutrality. Achieving this will require improved travel choice and changes in travel behaviour for all to reduce travel and congestion. This includes promoting low emission vehicles, developing a core network of attractive bus and cycle routes across the borough, and the removal of all air quality exceedances in the borough.

The themes are supported by objectives. These are detailed in the following paragraphs along with measures and actions we might consider to satisfy the objectives.

The LTP is supported by an Action Plan, detailed in the Appendix, which identifies some of the actions proposed to deliver the objectives of the Plan.

Create healthy and safe places

- **Objective: Safer streets for All**

  Outcome: Safer environment for all road users, with a reduction in serious injuries from road traffic collisions

  Measures and actions:

  - Targeted infrastructure and speed limit changes to improve road safety at identified cluster sites, including Wokingham Town Centre, A4 and B3349 Barkham Road.
  - Trial and delivery of School Streets, safer routes to school for all across the borough and develop a sustainable routes to school strategy.
  - Increase the network of quieter rural roads and residential streets.
  - Boroughwide audit of the road and cycling network to indicate the level of skill needed to travel by bicycle which would be used to inform the need for cycling infrastructure.

- **Objective: 50% Active Travel in Towns by 2030**

  Outcome: Healthier and more active towns that prioritise the movement of people with 50% of trips being made by foot or cycle.

  Measures and actions:

  - High quality cycle facilities as identified in the borough's LCWIP.
  - Reduce through traffic in Wokingham Town Centre
  - Reduce the dominance of vehicles to enable improved pedestrian environment and space for businesses in urban centres
  - 20mph speed limits in urban centres, where supported, to improve safety for walking, cycling and wheeling in towns.
  - Consider e-scooter hire schemes to improve door-to-door transport options.
  - Improve access to green space for all, especially across Lower Earley Way and to the river Loddon.
  - Increase engagement through My Journey and expand its support and promotion of road safety, public transport and active travel.
  - Secure cycle parking, including adapted cycle parking, at local destinations.

- **Objective: Thriving Villages and Rural Centres**

  Outcome: Villages and local centres that support local communities through a transport system that works for them.

  Measures and actions:

  - Enhance pedestrian access, safety, EV charging, secure cycle parking and motorcycle parking facilities at local destinations.
  - Support opportunities for temporary highway closures for local events to support vitality of rural villages.
  - Delivery of Greenways, to create safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians, cyclists, wheeling and, where appropriate, horse riding.
  - Identify local priorities for improving walking, cycling, wheeling and horse riding and trial changes to increase network of low traffic rural/green lanes.
  - Update of active travel route web-based mapping and physical activity challenges.

Develop the economy

- **Objective: Protect and Enhance Strategic Connectivity**

  Outcome: Retained and enhanced strategic road and rail network for effective travel and freight movements.

  Measures and actions:

  - Maintain safe and efficient access to the A329(M) and M4.
  - Support increased service capacity along the North Downs Line.
  - Support increased service frequency on the Reading to Waterloo rail line.
  - Support development of Heathrow western rail link.
  - Continue working with neighbouring authorities through the informal freight partnership to effectively manage freight across the region.
  - Develop and implement freight management policies.

- **Objective: A Well-Maintained Transport Network**

  Outcome: A transport network that is well maintained for all modes, and which provides attractive and comfortable transport links for all users.

  Measures and actions:

  - Test and trial measures that could reduce maintenance needs, and contribute towards targets for active travel, air quality, biodiversity and/or road safety.
  - Identify opportunities to link enhancement schemes with highway maintenance.
  - Adaption of network maintenance to increase resilience to a changing climate.
  - Work with operators to share operational and real time data to improve transport services and maintenance.
  - Increase use of lower carbon, lower maintenance and/or recycled materials in construction, maintenance and highway renewals.
  - Higher priority given to footpath and cycle path maintenance and gritting.

- **Objective: Support Sustainable Development:**

  Outcome: Attractive transport connections and sustainable communities.

  Measures and actions:

  - Development layouts in accordance with Wokingham 'Living Streets' design guide to provide streets that are attractive to and permeable for pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Continue to promote contributions to My Journey for all new developments as an option instead of Travel Plans.
  - Provide and retain appropriate levels of secure cycle parking, vehicular parking and electric vehicle charging provision.
  - High quality sustainable travel options to/from all strategic development locations.
  - Delivery of off-site infrastructure required to support new strategic development.

Reduce environmental impacts

- **Objective: High Quality Travel Corridors**

  Outcome: Increased attractiveness and convenience of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport through improved facilities, better frequency and integration.

  Measures and actions:

  Boroughwide

- Improve access to public transport, the quality of bus stops, disabled parking provision and level access at stations.
- Work with partners to develop a lower fares structure through the Enhanced Bus Partnership
- Continue to support community dial-a-ride services.

  Earley, Woodley and Shinfield:

- Increased bus frequency and improved bus journey times along priority bus corridors including the A4, A321, A33, A329 and A327.
- High Quality cycle facilities as identified in our LCWIP including
    - A329: Winnersh Triangle – Earley - Royal Berkshire Hospital; and
    - Lower Earley Way
- Improved interchange and access facilities at Earley rail station.

  Wokingham & Winnersh:

- Delivery of a high-quality sustainable transport corridor along the A329 between Reading, Winnersh, Wokingham, Coppid Beech Roundabout and Bracknell.
- Improve access to and facilities at stations along the North Downs Line.
- Access for all at Tan House Crossing.

  South Wokingham:

- Increase bus service frequency between Wokingham Town, Arborfield and Finchampstead, initially to half hourly with aspiration to develop a 15-minute service.
- Upgrade active travel facilities along the B3349 Barkham Road to create an active travel corridor connecting Arborfield and Wokingham Town Centre.
- Upgrade active travel facilities along the A321 Finchampstead Road.

  North Wokingham:

- Improve the forecourt and interchange facilities at Twyford station with consideration of parking issues at the station and surrounding area.
- Reduce bus service journey times and improve reliability along the A4 corridor.
- Improve active travel facilities into Twyford including to and from Wargrave.

- **Objective: Net zero carbon emissions**

  Outcome: Reduced impact on the environment of transport and new innovative measures to support the transition to net zero emissions.

  Measures and actions:

  - Reduction of total traffic movements on Wokingham Borough Council roads.
  - Collaborate with supporting partners and innovators in developing new solutions for decarbonising transport, including proposals from neighbouring Local Authorities.
  - Support improved digital accessibility for residents and businesses.
  - Electric vehicle charging infrastructure in areas with limited off-street parking.
  - Promotion of peer-to-peer electric charging networks to meet growing demand for electric vehicle charging.
  - Energy generation at park and ride sites.
  - Explore potential for a network of shared electric vehicles (car clubs).

- **Objective: Clean air, removal of all air quality exceedances**

  Outcome: Improved air quality and the removal of all air quality exceedances in the borough.

  Measures and actions:

  - Reduction of traffic and/or changes to access and speed limits, to reduce pollution and remove air quality exceedances in Wokingham town centre.
  - Wokingham Town Centre Freight Strategy
  - Twyford village centre improvements – improve air quality, safety for cycling and pedestrians, and reliability of public transport services.
  - Support the transition to zero emission buses and new vehicles across the borough.
  - Support rail industry and train operators to decarbonise the rail network.

This section has listed the themes and objectives, and the measures and actions to be included in our LTP. These are summarised in an Action Plan which is detailed in the Appendix.

Appendix: LTP Action Plan

The LTP Action Plan identifies some of the actions proposed to deliver the objectives of the plan. The detail captured in the Action Plan is outlined in the Section 6.

Create healthy and safe places

Category	Action
Objective: Safer Streets for All	
Road Safety	Targeted infrastructure, interventions and speed limit changes to improve road safety, including the A4 and B3349 Barkham Road
	20mph speed limit in urban centres
	Ongoing Cycle Training Program to schools (Bikeability) and Adult Cycle Training
	Boroughwide audit of the road and cycling network to indicate the level of skill needed to travel by bicycle
School Travel	Promote sustainable and active travel for all at schools through the school Modeshift Awards scheme
	Deliver infrastructure to enable and support independent travel for all to schools and colleges
	Develop a Sustainable Routes to School Strategy
	School Street Pilot(s)
	Roll out of School Streets
Objective: 50% Active Travel in Urban Centres	
Infrastructure	High quality walking, cycling and wheeling facilities and routes as identified in the boroughwide LCWIP
	Reduce dominance of vehicles in urban centres and residential areas
Access to Cycling	Provide a range of secure cycle parking options at local destinations
	Investigate feasibility of on-street cycle or e-scooter hire scheme
Standards	New Active Travel Design guidance
Engagement	Promotional campaign to promote active travel for all
	Increase My Journey engagement to promote sustainable and active travel for all

Create healthy and safe places

Category	Action
Objective: Thriving Villages and Rural Centres	
Rural Centres	New electric vehicle charge points and secure cycle facilities at local centres
	Enhance pedestrian access for all and safety in local service centres
	Enable and support local events that support vitality of rural villages
Active Travel	Continued delivery of the LCWIP and network of Greenways
	Identify local priorities for quiet rural roads/green lanes to improve walking, cycling, wheeling and horse riding
	Update of active travel route web-based mapping
	Improved walking, cycling and wheeling routes within Twyford and between Twyford and Wargrave

Develop the Economy

Category	Action
Objective: Protect and Enhance Strategic Connectivity	
Strategic Network	Maintain safe and efficient access to the M4 and A329(M)
	Encourage and support National Highways to reduce noise and air pollution from the M4
Public Transport	Improving walking, cycling and wheeling access for all at interchange facilities and stations in the borough
	Support increased capacity along the North Downs Line
	Support additional services between Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell
Freight	Establish a forum to collaborate with neighbouring authorities and freight operators
	Develop and implement domestic and industrial freight management policies
Objective: A Well-Maintained Network	
Operational Maintenance	Increase the use of lower carbon materials in construction and highway maintenance
	Test and trial measures that can support LTP objectives and reduce maintenance
	Align proposed improvement schemes with the maintenance program.
	Work with operators to share data to improve maintenance activities in Wokingham

Develop the Economy

Category	Action
Objective: Sustainable Development	
Development Policy	Update of Wokingham Borough Council Living Streets design guidance
	New development layouts designed to Living Streets design principles (or any successor document)
	Promote "My Journey" for Travel Plans and monitoring of travel impacts for all new developments
Sustainable Development	Appropriate secure cycle parking, electric vehicle charging facilities and identify suitable mobility hub provision for all new development
	Provide high quality sustainable and active travel facilities for all in and to/from all strategic development locations
Public Transport	Provide high quality bus stop infrastructure to serve new developments
	Simplification and enhancement of 'Leopard' bus routes serving new development
Infrastructure Delivery	Complete the South Wokingham Distributor Road and active travel package
	Infrastructure required to support new strategic scale development
	Complete the active travel, Greenways and Loddon Long Distance path in the Loddon Valley

Reduce environmental impacts

Category	Action
Objective: High Quality Sustainable Travel Corridors	
Access for All	Access improvements for all at Tan House/Carnival Hub crossing
	Development of lower fares structure through the Enhanced Bus Partnership
	Continue to fund community Dial a Ride services
	Data sharing with operators, partners and innovators to improve performance and customer information
	Implement a high-quality sustainable transport corridor on the A329 between Reading, Winnersh, Wokingham and Bracknell.
Public Transport	Increased bus frequency and improved bus journey times along priority bus corridors on A327
	Increased bus frequency and improved bus journey times along priority bus corridors on A4/A321
	Increased bus frequency and improved bus journey times along A33 from Mereoak Park and Ride and south of M4
	Wokingham Town to Arborfield, half hourly bus service with aspiration to provide a 15-minute frequency
	Half hourly bus frequency between Wokingham and Twyford
Cycle Network	Deliver high quality cycle facilities, including those in the Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP)
	Active travel facilities between Arborfield and Wokingham town centre along the B3349 Barkham Road
	Active travel facilities between Finchampstead and Wokingham town centre
	High quality cycle facilities along Lower Earley Way

Reduce environmental impacts

Category	Action
Objective: Net Zero Emissions	
Road Traffic	Reduce the impact of traffic movements on Wokingham Borough Council roads
	Promote car sharing for business
Digitalisation	Improved digital accessibility for local residents and business
	Encourage online service delivery
	Support the development and delivery of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) applications
Zero Emission Vehicles	Increase the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure
	Promote and encourage community electric vehicle charging
	Communication to publicise and promote benefits of electric vehicles
	Energy generation and electric charge points at car parks and park and ride sites
Objective: Clean Air	
Access	Twyford Crossroads environmental improvements
	Reduce through traffic and speed limit changes in Wokingham town centre
	Wokingham town signage review and refresh
Freight	Wokingham town centre freight strategy
	Support transition to cargo bikes
Public Transport	Transition to zero emission buses across the borough.
	Support decarbonisation of rail services in Wokingham

WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL