

POLICY REVIEW

Relevant policies have been reviewed as part of this LCWIP. The full list of policies reviewed, and a summary of key takeaways are set out in this appendix.

National Policy

This LCWIP has been produced to align closely with national policy priorities, which emphasise the importance of promoting active and sustainable travel. This should support LCWIP schemes in gaining active travel funding from central government.

GEAR CHANGE: A BOLD VISION FOR CYCLING AND WALKING (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2020)

Sets out Government's vision for delivery of far higher quality cycling infrastructure, focusing on segregated cycle routes with local authorities being expected to deliver a step change in the Level of Service for cycling and walking. It establishes "Active Travel England" that will assess local authorities' performance on active travel, with findings influencing the funding authorities receive across all transport modes. The accompanying Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design sets out new ambitious cycle design standards.

GEAR CHANGE: ONE YEAR ON (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2021)

This update issued by the DfT highlights the progress made since the release of Gear Change and shares the latest research on active travel interventions since the original publication. These findings and examples of best practice have been considered during the development of infrastructure proposal in this LCWIP.

LOCAL TRANSPORT NOTE 1/20: CYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2020)

LTN 1/20 builds on the ambition set out within Gear Change, by developing technical guidance on the design of cycle infrastructure. The guidance sets out core principles that those designing for cycle traffic should follow, whilst also outlining technical and geometric requirements. Future rounds of cycle infrastructure funding are expected to be contingent on designs following the guidance. Infrastructure proposals within this LCWIP have been designed to be LTN 1/20 compliant.

THE SECOND CYCLING AND WALKING INVESTMENT STRATEGY (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2022)

Sets the ambition that 50% of all journeys in towns and cities should be walked or cycled by 2030. The strategy sets out how the government intends to target investment in active travel through to 2025. The strategy supports locally targeted investment identified via LCWIPs to connect people with places – creating vibrant, healthier and productive places and communities.

A MOMENT OF CHANGE: INCREASING CYCLING UPTAKE (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT & SUSTRANS 2021)

The DfT commissioned this study to identify policy priorities that can deliver increased cycle uptake during recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. A range of behaviour change measures were identified that could be delivered at a national and local scale to bake in sustainable travel behaviour.



FUTURE OF MOBILITY: URBAN STRATEGY (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2019)

Nine principles to address the challenge of transforming towns and cities to meet current and future transport demands. Includes the principle that 'walking, cycling and active travel must remain the best option for short urban journeys.

THE INCLUSIVE TRANSPORT STRATEGY (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2018)

This paper sets out the Government's plans to make transport systems more inclusive, and to make travel easier for disabled people. The plan has a core focus on the inclusion of disabled people, sets out measures to ensure disabled people to have the same access to transport as everyone else, and to be able to travel confidently, easily and without extra cost.

INCLUSIVE MOBILITY: MAKING TRANSPORT ACCESSIBLE FOR PASSENGERS AND PEDESTRIANS (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2022)

This document outlines best practice on inclusive design of pedestrian and transport infrastructure and provides detailed information on features that need to be considered in the provision of an inclusive environment, as well as highlighting issues related to disabling barriers, the use of technology, maintenance, awareness of the needs of disabled people, and engagement.

Inclusive design requires that the needs of all disabled people are considered from the outset of any transport and pedestrian infrastructure. This guidance is pertinent to the LCWIP development process, as LCWIPs identify improvements to build active travel networks and key routes fit for all users.

CLEAN AIR STRATEGY (DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD & RURAL AFFAIRS, 2019)

Outlines how achieving modal shift is key to delivering a reduction in the emission of key air pollutants. LCWIPs have a part to play in tackling the climate emergency by reducing emissions through the delivery of walking and cycling options for journeys.

DECARBONISING TRANSPORT: A BETTER, GREENER, BRITAIN (DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, 2021)

Sets out the Government's commitments to reduce carbon emissions through investing in walking and cycling networks with the aim of half of all journeys in towns or cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. This will support their overall vision to achieve a NetZero transportation sector by 2050.

Local Policy

The local policy context within Wokingham has been considered in detail, along with emerging details from policy under development.

WOKINGHAM LOCAL PLAN (CURRENT)

The Wokingham Borough Adopted Core Strategy recognises the current high car ownership levels in the borough and the frequent congestion facing the town centre area in particular. As such enhancing the local transport system forms a key part of the strategy. It highlights the importance of improving accessibility to Wokingham Railway Station and the town centre area for cyclists and pedestrians, specifically noting the need to develop new cycle paths. The Core Strategy actively encourages all new housing and employment developments to promote active

travel, including a wider development of the cycle network in partnership with neighbouring authorities, linking employment and residential areas.

The Core Strategy also states that children of primary school age must have access to a school within walking or cycling distance of their home (3-4km) along a safe route. These routes are to be supported by the wider development of the cycle network linking new and existing school sites to residential areas, as well as improvements to crossing points and signalised junctions creating a safer environment for children.

Fundamentally, the population of Wokingham Borough is growing. The latest government projections state that the population of Wokingham Borough will grow by around an average of 811 people or 455 households each year between 2018 and 2036. As new development comes forward in the borough it will be essential that active travel connections to key destination, via high quality infrastructure, are in place to support sustainable development and minimise the potential for car-dominated travel patterns to form.

This LCWIP therefore considers where strategic development locations identified in the Local Plan are situated, and this forms one criteria in how out network plans and route selection process has been determined.

WOKINGHAM LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN LTP3 (2011-2026)

We are aware of the upcoming LTP4 document which will supersede LTP3, and this LCWIP will be reviewed and updated in due course following the release of LTP4

The Wokingham Local Transport Plan (LTP) aims to provide an inclusive transport network that enhances the economic, social and environmental prospects of the Borough, whilst promoting the safety, health and well-being of those who use it. The LTP outlines how the council will work with partners to promote walking and cycling as a health-enhancing physical activity for all residents. It aims to provide:

- A well-connected, safe and convenient pedestrian network across the Borough;
- New cycle ways which integrate with the existing cycle network; and
- Improved cycle parking at stations businesses and school.

This is of direct relevance to our LCWIP which has been developed to support achieving this goal.

WOKINGHAM CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (2020)

In 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) advised that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C in order to avoid the devastating impacts of climate change on our planet. This means that there are only 12 years left (until 2031) to take the actions required to avert a crisis.

In July 2019, in response to the findings of the IPCC, Wokingham Borough Council joined councils around the world in declaring a Climate Emergency. This forms its first step to becoming carbon neutral at a local level by 2030, working with residents, businesses, charities and schools to work alongside the council to help reduce emissions in Wokingham to support the overall climate change issue at an international level.

In January 2020, the council published its first Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP). The plan identifies road transport as one of the two highest emitters (along with domestic gas) of carbon dioxide in the borough. As such, the first of the nine priority areas in the CEAP is to “Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport”.

The first action identified to help with this priority area is “Promoting Active and Sustainable Transport Modes”. The plan highlights that avoiding the use of private cars where possible is a council priority and it identifies the ongoing “My Journey” behaviour change programme as a key component of its plan to support this. “My Journey” aims to



encourage walking, cycling, bus and train travel as viable alternatives to the private car, with the additional outcomes of reduced congestion, improved air quality and improved mental and physical health.

The CEAP also states that additional components of the council's plan to promote active and sustainable transport are that it "has recently adopted the Rights of Way Plan and plans to increase the number of cycle lanes in the borough".

To that end, this LCWIP will help support the development of a joined-up cycling and walking network, helping to promote and encourage people to travel in a more active and sustainable manner. This in turn should help reduce carbon emissions from transport in Wokingham and help the council achieve the goals set out in its CEAP, the most important of which is the target of being net zero carbon by 2030.

WOKINGHAM ACTIVE TRAVEL PLAN (2011-2026)

The Wokingham Active Travel Plan pledges to 'work with partners to promote walking and cycling as a health-enhancing physical activity for all our residents and as a viable alternative to travelling short distances in cars'. The plan identifies the contribution and impact active travel has on the local economy, health and air quality within the local areas. Four objectives of the plan are presented, namely:

- 1** To work in partnership with businesses to encourage walking and cycling to centres of employment
- 2** To actively encourage walking and cycling to schools, colleges and other education facilities.
- 3** To improve and encourage active travel access to town and local centres, public open spaces and public transport interchanges
- 4** To work with partners to promote the benefits of active travel to reinforce public health messages.

To encourage residents to consider using active modes of travel, future infrastructure improvements must consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists whilst accommodating the movement of motor vehicles. To achieve this, the plan recommends a borough-wide audit of pedestrian and cycle facilities, followed by a route branding and mapping exercise for both cycling and pedestrian routes. This objective can be achieved through the LCWIP process, by developing comprehensive pedestrian and cycling networks linking existing and new development, and key local destinations.

WOKINGHAM JOINT HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY (2018-2021)

The Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Strategy's key objective is to create a healthy and resilient community, by encouraging people within the Borough to be more physically active. At present, only 16% of Wokingham's young people were physically active for 1 hour per day and 13.8% of 10-11-year olds in Wokingham are considered obese. The borough wide campaign is helping and inspiring residents to consider choosing active travel as a feasible alternative to the private car for their journeys to school or work.

The strategy aims to improve physical health for all ages, and lower the percentage of overweight people, thus, by providing a walking and cycling network through the LCWIP process, residents will have access to safe, attractive routes which will contribute to the wider health and wellbeing goals of this strategy.



Regional Strategy

TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH EAST

The Transport Strategy has identified the South East as a crucial part of the UK economy, and forms the nation's major international gateway for business. To support the growth and development of this region, it is essential to provide a reliable, high quality, sustainable, integrated transport system that improves access to opportunities for everyone.

The report pledges to ensure the delivery of a transport system that works to improve safety, quality of life and access to opportunities, including a safe and sustainable transport network across all modes, and improving accessibility within deprived communities to support sustainable economic growth.

THAMES VALLEY LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (LEP)

The Thames Valley LEP has identified several infrastructure programmes across Berkshire, which includes improvements to the National Cycle Route 422, a programme which is led by Wokingham Borough Council. The route will begin in Newbury and extend to Ascot via Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell to create a network approximately 50km in length. This LCWIP considers how further localised investment in active travel infrastructure can add further value to the development of strategic routes that connect areas across the Thames Valley.