Agenda Item No:

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 28 May 2020

Report Title: Ashford's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2019 – 2029

Report Author & Job Title: Ian Grundy, Team Leader, Spatial Planning
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Portfolio Holder Portfolio Holder for: Cllr Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development and Cllr Forest, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Leisure.

Summary:

The report introduces the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020 -2029 (LCWIP) attached as Appendix A, summarises its development and seeks Cabinet approval for adoption. This will enable Ashford Borough Council to bid for appropriate funding from the Department for Transport and other appropriate sources as it becomes available.

The report also updates Members on consultation as part of the Council's adoption of the Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy (refer Appendix B) which demonstrates strong support for its approach. The DfT also supports this strategy and the emerging Ashford LCWIP and has allocated £500,000 to help deliver these local plans.

Both documents will inform action which the Heads of Planning & Development; Culture, Leisure & Tourism in consultation with their Portfolio Holders will prioritise, monitor and review.

Key Decision: Yes

Significantly Affected Wards: All

Recommendations: **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

I. Approve the Ashford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020 – 2029;
II. Note the outcome of the consultation for the Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 – 2029;
III. Provide delegated authority for the Heads of Planning & Development, and Culture, Tourism & Leisure, in consultation with their Portfolio Holders to put in place

	all measures that enable the effective delivery of the Ashford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 - 2029, developing action plans accordingly; and with the Director of Finance and Economy in consultation with their Portfolio Holder, allocating external spending that has or will be secured.
Policy Overview:	The Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 sets out the Council's direction and key priorities and particularly refers to the development of a "cycle town" strategy as part of establishing an "Active and Creative Ashford". In 2019, the Borough Council adopted the Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 -2029 and this LCWIP sets out a series of routes and projects that will help deliver the aspirations set out in the Strategy. Both documents will prove vital to support Ashford's recovery of the coronavirus, and support the Council's carbon neutrality ambitions as well as ensure Ashford is well placed to secure further funding.
Financial Implications:	£500,000 has been secured from the DfT to support walking and cycling schemes in Ashford. This funding will enable the priorities informed by both the Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy and LCWIP to move forward. Continued support for cycling and walking provision will include working with partners particularly Kent County Council (KCC) to secure external funding for key projects throughout the life of the strategies.
Legal Implications:	None identified at this time
Equalities Impact Assessment:	See Appendix C
Data Protection Impact Assessment:	See Appendix D
Risk Assessment (Risk Appetite Statement):	The Council will work with partners to secure funding for new and existing projects from the most appropriate source and in line with the priorities identified in the action plans. Operationally, the Council is a key partner, with a central role to play in facilitating delivery. Partnership working is recommended as part of the delivery of the LCWIP and Cycling and Walking Strategy and the Council can act as a central point of contact for local cycling and walking messages and help steer action plan implementation. Internally this will involve support from officers across a range of disciplines but mainly from the Culture and Planning teams.

	An assessment of adopting the policy has been made against the Council's risk appetite. Adopting the policy will assist the Council in delivering its strategic aims. There are no financial or compliance risks and therefore the adoption is well within the council's risk appetite.
Sustainability Implications:	The promotion of cycling and walking in the Borough are key components of the delivery of sustainable development and will be a key part of the Council's carbon neutrality ambition.
Other Material Implications:	
Exempt from Publication:	**NO**
Background Papers:	Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019-2029
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Agenda Item No.

Report Title: Ashford's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) 2019 - 2029

Introduction and Background

1. In March 2019 Members approved the Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019-2029 subject to consultation. The strategy provides a framework for supporting relevant Cycling and Walking initiatives that is key to encouraging greater participation in these healthy and environmentally friendly activities.

2. Results of the consultation can be found in Appendix A which shows support for the objectives and aims of the Strategy. Over 500 people responded to the survey and 99.9% agreed with the approach that was being undertaken. The survey was completed by residents across the borough of all ages and backgrounds.

3. One of the strategy's key actions has been to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) that will enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle. It is also timely, as Council's across the country aim to maximise the change in people's thinking and behaviour to both the environment and their mode of transport due to the coronavirus lockdown.

4. Before the coronavirus crisis, Ashford was chosen by the Department for Transport (DfT) as a pilot area to trial the preparation of LCWIPs, which were introduced in the Government's Cycling and Walking investment Strategy in 2017. Ashford has received support from consultant's Mott MacDonald in the preparation of the LCWIP via DfT by agreeing to produce an LCWIP that meets their criteria.

5. It is recognised that Ashford borough has an excellent network of well used cycling and walking routes already in place in the urban area which incorporates parts of the national cycling network that passes through the borough. The main routes are incorporated into the green corridor network that follow the river corridors and converge on the edge of the town centre. There have been significant new routes delivered including the link from Park Farm to the Designer Outlet across the Willesborough Dykes and the route from Godmersham to Chilham in the rural area. Many of the routes are dedicated off-road routes that are shared with pedestrians. There has been a significant increase recorded in the number of cyclists accessing the domestic railway station on a daily basis.

6. The LCWIP, attached as Appendix B, aims to build on the excellent work that has already been achieved by analysing use of local census data to establish the most heavily used cycling and walking routes where key improvements would secure the greatest benefits.

7. The Ashford LCWIP follows the technical guidance around integration of cycling and walking with transport planning and land use planning. It has been prepared in consultation with Kent County Council (KCC) as the highway authority and reflects proposed known development and growth areas.

8. Whilst cycling and walking routes are the responsibility of KCC as the Highway Authority to deliver and manage, Members are asked to adopt this LCWIP as the Council has a key role in enabling collaboration and securing partnership working to facilitate route feasibility work and attract funding for delivery of projects as soon as they are ready. The LCWIP also provides a strong evidence base for approaching developers for contributions to schemes when appropriate.

LCWIP Approach

9. The Ashford LCWIP seeks to deliver a cycling and walking network linked to the main town centre area where there is greatest footfall and links to businesses, schools and commuter routes. The aim will be to provide high quality infrastructure that is safe and accessible, to encourage a greater uptake of cycling and walking.

10. The Ashford LCWIP has been produced in line with DfT guidance and has been ratified by Mott McDonald as DfT lead consultants, ensuring it is compliant and meets the requirements for supporting future funding bids.

11. DfT guidance ensures a consistent approach to developing LCWIP's which have four main aims:
    - Provide a network of primary, neighbourhood and strategic greenway cycle corridors to act as core routes for the highest volumes of journeys.
    - Improve journeys into the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists.
    - Create networks of quieter streets where children play out, neighbours catch up, air pollution is lower, and cycling and walking are the natural choice for everyday journeys.
    - Increase the proportion of active travel journeys in the borough, utilising the economic benefits for business that can come from customers switching from car journeys to more sustainable travel modes.

12. Having undertaken detailed route assessments and considered a range of factors that affect potential routes and their suitability for development, the LCWIP has identified key cycling and walking routes in the Ashford urban area using the key data from a variety of sources including census data and detailed site studies by Mott McDonald personnel and key KCC staff. The town centre remains the main focus of the LCWIP due to the trip generators in and around the town centre.

13. The key route corridors set out in the LCWIP are as follows (not in priority order):

- Hythe Road – Mace Lane
- Canterbury/Faversham Road
- Highworth/A20
- Repton
- Victoria Park
- Ashford Oak (Arlington-Jemmett Road- Victoria Park)
- Jemmett Road
- Beaver Road
- Newtown

14. More detail is provided on each of those routes in the main body of the LCWIP, which then goes on to suggest key changes, improvements and amendments to those route corridors.

15. As has already been noted, the existence of an LCWIP gives the Council some priority in terms of bidding for DfT funding for local cycling and walking projects. In February 2020, the government announced significant funding for cycling and walking projects and specifically indicated that it would be allocated to towns and cities with well-developed plans for cycling and walking networks, such as those set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).

16. The Government has also indicated a significant interest in funding projects, which support active travel plans in light of the current Covid 19 situation, which can both help to reduce social interaction on public transport and encourage engagement in healthy lifestyles and activities. Therefore, Ashford will be well placed to pursue funding for relevant projects by adopting the proposed LCWIP.

17. Officers will continue to work with all major partners in seeking appropriate funding for the borough and work with local communities to ensure a strategic approach to delivering schemes is achieved and is particularly keen to implement interventions at the earliest possible opportunity to ensure the public have access to safe walking and cycling routes.

18. In addition to approving the adoption of the LCWIP, Members are asked to approve a spending plan for use of £500,000 of funding that Ashford Borough Council has already secured from the DfT for walking and cycling projects. It is proposed that ABC commissions a series of feasibility studies of the routes identified above to enable more detailed, costed assessments of each route to be completed in turn. Those assessments will include a review of realistic funding opportunities, so that informed choices can be made on which projects should be actively pursued over the short, medium and long term.

Equalities Impact Assessment

19. Members are referred to Appendix C assessment. The key issues arising are that the strategies under consideration will not have a negative impact on people with protected characteristics. However, work will be required to ensure people of all abilities are able to benefits from projects as they are developed.

Consultation Planned or Undertaken

20. Part of the LCWIP process has meant comprehensive consultation with the highways authority (KCC). Consultation has also taken place with the DfT on the LCWIP report. This report has yet to be shared with the general public. However, it is proposed that consultation takes place as part of the development of the route assessments.

21. It is also suggested that the LCWIP is presented to the Joint Transport Board to help future partnership working.

Other Options Considered

22. The other option would be to develop individual walking and cycling routes on their own and not as part of the overarching LCWIP process. That would lead to development of proposals on a project-by-project basis without the benefit of an integrated approach based on clear DfT guidance that will enable the Council to bid for external funding.

Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended

23. The approval of the LCWIP will enable the Borough Council to bid for significant DfT funding for cycling and walking projects. It has been made clear by the DfT that bids for funding would be allocated to towns and cities with well-developed plans for cycling and walking networks, such as those set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and that meet their criteria for assessment.

24. By adopting the LCWIP, Ashford will continue to develop a programme for delivering sustainable transport routes that are linked to the Council's emerging Carbon Neutral Strategy, as well as the current Local Plan.

25. This is an exciting opportunity for Ashford to remain at the forefront of developing sustainable transport routes, in partnership with key stakeholders for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

Next Steps in Process

26. If Members are minded to adopt the Ashford LCWIP, officers will set up an Officer Steering Group and agree a comprehensive spending plan that allows officers to commission individual route assessments as described in paragraph 18 above. Work can than continue on securing funding to implement the proposed projects set out in the detail of the LCWIP on a priority and deliverability basis.

Conclusion

27. The Ashford LCWIP sets out a clear set of proposals to improve cycling and walking in the borough and is an important part of implementing the Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 - 2029. This will promote sustainable development and contribute to the Council's carbon neutral ambitions. The approval of the document will enable the Council to bid for significant DfT funding which has recently been announced for cycling and walking infrastructure and other new funds that become available. It will also enable Ashford to continue delivering routes with its partners based on strategic assessment and in line with other relevant strategies.

Portfolio Holder's Views

28. Cllr Shorter - Awaited

Cllr Forest

This infrastructure plan is a crucial step towards the delivery of an active and creative Ashford. Encouraging cycling and walking will deliver advantages in so many areas. It will contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents, benefit the environment, and help to reduce traffic and ease congestion.

With Coronavirus now on our minds, it will also provide an essential framework to integrate cycling and walking into our recovery plans, and I urge colleagues to accept this proposal as a matter of urgency."

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Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

2019 – 2029

ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Vision for Ashford

We envisage delivering a network of routes, through provision of quality infrastructure, to enable a greater uptake of cycling and walking across the borough.

Our proposed approach to deliver this transformative change is to:

- Provide a network of primary, neighbourhood and strategic greenway cycle and walking corridors to act as core routes for the highest volumes of journeys
- Improve journeys into the Town Centre for pedestrians and cyclists
- Create networks of quieter streets where children play out, neighbours catch up, air pollution is lower, and cycling and walking are the natural choice for everyday journeys
- Increase the proportion of active travel journeys in the borough, easing congesting, supporting the council's carbon neutrality agenda and to improve health.

The LCWIP process undertaken in Ashford follows principles and this document is structured into chapters which reflect this process as follows:

- ***Chapter 1*** provides a background to the LCWIP and the scope of the area. It will provide details of engagement plans with the community and how the LCWIP will be structured.

- ***Chapter 2*** covers the 'Evidence Base' upon which the cycle and walking network is to be developed. It provides details of the relevant policies that already exist, active travel patterns in the area and the residents' current patterns of travel. It provides details on the current road safety information and the resident's views of cycling and walking in the area at present.

- ***Chapter 3*** looks at the network planning for cycling and the route selection providing a background to each route and detail of the proposed schemes with potential costings.

- ***Chapter 4*** looks at the network planning for walking and the route selection providing a background to each route and detail of the proposed schemes with potential costings.

- ***Chapter 5*** details the prioritisation of schemes for cycling with explanations and the rationale for the categories.

- ***Chapter 6*** explains the integration and application of the LCWIP to policy and its links to wider strategies along with funding and monitoring of the schemes.

Definitions

The term 'cyclist' throughout this document refers to any one person who chooses to use a cycle as a mode of transport (including as a mobility aid). This includes children, elderly and inexperienced cyclists, as much as 'commuter' cyclists who tend to be adults who cycle on a regular basis. It also includes those benefiting from electrically-assisted pedal cycles (e-bikes).

When referring to "pedestrians" or "walking" it is intended that this refers to wheelchair, mobility scooter users as well those with prams and pushchairs. When a place works well for people in wheelchairs it works for everyone.

Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 - What is the LCWIP?

On 12th August 2013, the Prime Minister announced his intention to "kick start, a cycling revolution which would remove the barriers for a new generation of cyclists". The draft Cycling Delivery Plan published by the Department for Transport (DfT) on 16th October 2014 demonstrates the significant role cycling and walking can play as a sustainable transport mode and congestion reliever, the trigger for the creation of good quality public realm and liveable communities which bring significant economic returns, and - perhaps most significantly - a major driver to improving the nation's health through its physical activity benefits.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), have been introduced in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (2017). They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle (i.e. active modes of transport).

Cycling and walking both generally have two main purposes; utility and leisure:

- **Active travel involves making a journey for the main purpose of doing an activity at the journey's end, such as work, education or shopping.**

- **Leisure walking (including running) and cycling, whether undertaken independently, as part of social activities or within competitive sport, delivers substantial health, social and wider community benefits.**

The LCWIP focuses on providing fit for purpose walking and cycling infrastructure as a means of everyday transportation, from point A to B to access employment, education and retail, and leisure opportunities.

The process includes analysing local census data to establish the most heavily used cycling and walking routes where key improvements would secure the greatest benefits.

Ashford Borough Council was selected by the Department for Transport (DfT) as a pilot project to trial the preparation of LCWIPs and has received support from consultants, Mott Macdonald.

The Ashford LCWIP follows the Technical Guidance around integration of cycling and walking with transport planning and land use planning. It has been prepared in consultation with Kent County Council as the Local Highway Authority. KCC will be responsible for implementing the actions within the LCWIP.

Cycling and walking as modes of transport have many similarities, however the LCWIP process outlines separate approaches to planning and identifying walking and cycling improvements.

The key outputs of the LCWIP are:

- ***A network plan for cycling and walking which identifies preferred routes and core zones for focusing the improvements***

- ***A prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment***

- ***A report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network (This document).***

The LCWIP guidance sets out six stages to achieving cycling and walking improvements through the LCWIP process:

1. **Determine Scope** – define where, geographically, an LCWIP is appropriate and arrangements for governing and preparing the LCWIP plan.
2. **Gathering Evidence / Information** – Identify existing patterns of walking and cycling to understand where people walk and cycle now. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to cycling and walking and where infrastructure investment could strengthen and expand active travel activity.
3. **Network Plan for cycling** – Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required.
4. **Network Plan for walking** – in many places people and bikes won't mix that well, so define key walking zones and required improvements separately.
5. **Prioritise Improvements** – Prioritise which improvements deliver maximum value for money and develop a phased programme for future investment.
6. **Integration and application** – Integrate outputs and embed LCWIP plans into other local planning policies, strategies and delivery plans.

1.2 - Scope of the Ashford LCWIP

The Town Centre is the main focus of the LCWIP due to the high level of trip generators in and around the town. The evidence based on a 5km cycle and 2km walking distance from Ashford Town Centre as shown in the map on page 10.

Also due to the large geographic physical size of Ashford borough (225 square miles), it was considered important to identify specific areas for targeted improvement, rather than implement isolated schemes on a borough-wide basis.

Residential development and more people living in Ashford's Town Centre is fundamental to the borough council's Local Plan. It will drive vitality, activity and increase footfall to enable regeneration, as well as providing new homes for local people.

The key streets in the Town Centre have already been successfully pedestrianised and enhanced to a good quality.

A number of factors affect the tendency to walk and cycle but if made difficult, people are less likely to do it – particularly if they don't have to. Councils need to make it easy and safe for people to follow the route that they want.

Map 1: LCWIP Area

Safe and secure network

Well designed, reactive pedestrian crossings can benefit all road users. Everybody should be able to cross the road safely, directly and with little delay. Crossings should be positioned in the right place and give everyone enough time to cross the road. Signalised crossings should prioritise people on foot with short wait times and comfortable crossing times.

Footways are provided for pedestrians only. Encroachment by vehicles parking or loading reduces the comfort and ease of use of footways, forcing pedestrians into the carriageway to pass the vehicles (especially people using wheelchairs and pushchairs). Equally where vehicles are parked over a cycleway, the need to avoid results in cyclists going into the road.

Concerns relating to personal security can discourage people from walking and cycling, particularly after dark. There are a wide range of factors which impact on this issue which the key stakeholder has some influence on include:

- **The existence and quality of street lighting**
- **Vegetation and tree cover which can make some paths feel unpleasant and increase the perceptions that they are unsafe places to walk**
- **Considerations of ways to increase footfall along remote underpasses by improving maintenance, sign posting and lighting.**

Quality Network
The desire to cycle and walk is influenced not only by distance, but also by the quality of the experience. A 20-minute walk alongside a busy road can seem endless, yet in an interesting town centre environment, the journey can pass without noticing.

The removal of street clutter, including redundant signing, benefits the pedestrian by reducing confusion and creating a more attractive walking environment. This is the key concept to Ashford Borough Council's shared space in the town centre design.

Accessible network
Ashford's population is getting older and more people have long term illnesses and conditions. Many streets require improvement to the latest accessibility standards so that Ashford's residents and visitors are more mobile.

At many locations across the borough, full height kerbs present a significant barrier to mobility. At locations where pedestrians are expected to cross, dropped kerbs should be provided to enable access to all users.

Existing networks should be upgraded where practical during maintenance or improvement schemes. Section 106 developer contributions and other external funding may also be available in specific locations to support this activity. A key point to achieve is that a resident or visitor can visit any shop in the town centre and leave your cycle in a safe and secure place within 25 metres.

1.3 – Statement of engagement

As schemes included within the LCWIP are developed, it is important that communities are engaged to ensure they have a chance to input concerns and ideas. It will be vital to ensure those that are engaged include under-represented under the Equalities Act 2010 are consulted.

This will in turn support behavioural change and other non-infrastructural plans. It will also be important to promote community-led design as part of cycling and walking projects. This can be achieved with events such as face to face workshops and the use of social media and online questionnaires (using platforms such as Survey Monkey, Microsoft Survey Maker and MS Forms).

In the recent past there has been various commissions of a number of local intervention schemes including Bike to Work, pedal free bikes, bike maintenance and recycling old bikes. This has provided residents and businesses in the area an insight into how cycling can benefit their everyday lives. There has also been a number of healthy walks schemes across the borough, which has increased interest and the number of volunteers taking part over the last decade.

Further engagement on specific issues and proposals are being reviewed for future delivery. The LCWIP will be a live document subject to periodic review and consultation.

Chapter 2 – Evidence Base

2.1 - Related Policies and Strategies

Active and sustainable modes of transport, such as cycling and walking, support good health and wellbeing by reducing inactivity, improving air quality and road safety. They also provide the most efficient use of street space and help to create a more attractive local environment for residents, visitors and businesses.

Ashford Borough Council is not the decision making body on highways and planning policies, these are made by Kent County Council (KCC) as the highway authority. To deliver the LCWIP programs Ashford Borough Council will need an endorsement and support from KCC.

On the 18th of July 2019, Ashford Borough Council pledged to become carbon neutral as a council and as a borough before 2030. This commitment is setting in motion several changes within the council, and the borough, a lot of them directly or indirectly supporting active travel. Indeed, to become carbon neutral, the borough will need to reduce carbon emissions stemming from its transport operations.

The Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 – 2029 will be adopted.

The adopted Local Plan 2030 is also ensuring that cycling and walking are fully incorporated into development schemes across the borough. With proposals to build around 13,000 homes in the Chilmington Green, Kennington and Town Centre areas and creation of 11,000 job opportunities, Ashford is presented with a significant opportunity to promote active travel. Improving and increasing the network of cycling and walking routes as well as enhancing facilities for cyclists can be achieved through the planning process.

In the UK, several authorities, including Transport for London, have also adopted a Healthy Streets Approach. Healthy streets are streets with clean air, where everyone feels welcome, that are easy to cross, that provide shade and shelter that have places to stop and rest, are not too noisy, where people choose to walk and cycle, where people feel safe, where there are things to see and do, and where people feel relaxed. The borough will aim to design and create more healthy streets within the borough to increase its residents' well-being, promote active travel, and reduce air pollution.

The network plans and improvement lists created as part of this LCWIP will be considered to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) (as standalone or part of other emerging SPD projects chosen will benefit both pedestrians and cyclists). Changes will be about giving pedestrians and cyclists priority and improving the safety of all road users. Projects will also balance larger infrastructural projects that may be less popular, with smaller softer non-infrastructural interventions.

Policies include the following:

- **Policy TRA5 –** Planning for pedestrians, requires that all development proposals demonstrate how a safe and accessible pedestrian access and movement routes will be delivered in the context of wider movement networks around the sites.

- **Policy TRA6** seeks to improve conditions for cyclists through promoting and developing the cycle network by requiring developments, where opportunities arise, to connect to the networks and to provide cycle parking facilities on-site or financial contributions to those at the town centre, stations and major public buildings.

- **Policy TRA8** requires that all relevant planning applications should be accompanied by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and Travel Plans which outline the developer's proposals for walking and cycling infrastructure that will be built as part of the scheme. (KCC Highways and Transportation are consulted routinely on planning applications).

- **The LTP 4** – Delivering Growth Without Gridlock 2016 – 2031 (www.kent.gov.uk/localtransportplan) has 5 Outcomes (1 – Economic growth and minimised congestion, 2- Affordable and accessible door to door journeys 3 – Safer travel, 4 – Enhanced environment, 5- Better health and wellbeing). These outcomes will help deliver the ambition for Kent: **To deliver safe and effective transport, ensuring that all Kent's communities and businesses benefit, the environment is enhanced and economic growth is supported.**

Transport is an essential part of the lives of the community as it connects with jobs, education, healthcare, shopping and a wide range of leisure activities. It is a key component of the economy as it links businesses with their workers, customers and clients, whilst providing for the delivery of goods.

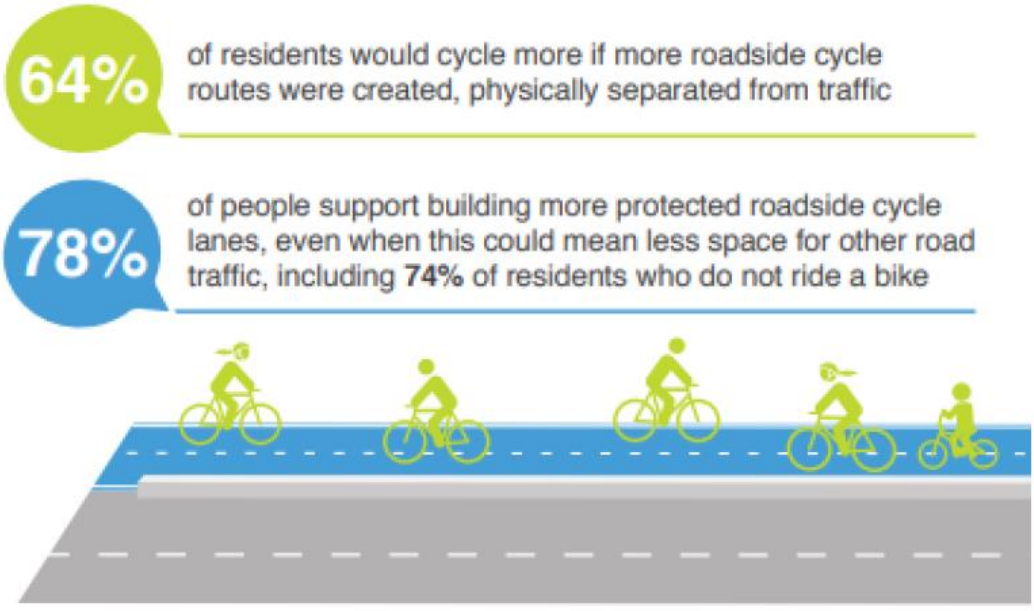
Transport shapes our neighbourhoods and influences our lifestyles. Our choice of transport impacts on us as individuals and on our wider environment.

It is a well-documented fact that cars make poor use of available street space and offer a less efficient means of travel compared to cycling and walking. Motorised transport is also a major cause of harm to the environment including air pollution, noise and its impact on the living environment.

Wheels for Well Being 2017 survey of disabled cyclists showed that 69% of respondent's found cycling easier than walking. The majority, 52% used an ordinary cycle as a mobility aid and 18% used an electric bike.

In 2016, 62% agreed that "It is too dangerous for me to cycle on the roads" (The British Social Attitudes Survey). This rises to 68% for non-cyclists, the people we're aiming for.

The 2017 'BikeLife' survey commissioned by Sustrans found that:



2.2 - Existing active travel network

Ashford as a borough is a significant land area and consists of 225 square miles, particularly of rural areas. It is traversed by a number of major trunk routes, railway lines and water courses, which provides a number of challenges and barriers to extending the cycling and walking networks.

Ashford's current cycling network consists of a combination of on and off road routes. In the last survey in 2014 it was reported that there are over 13 miles of surfaced segregated cycle paths and just under 8 miles of unsurfaced paths.

The current network is in most places good and form the foundations for a high quality network for active travel, but there are gaps in network coverage and variations in quality across the current network.

In the past 8-10 years Kent County Council (KCC) and partner agencies have implemented the following into the Ashford borough:

1) **Footway / cycleway bridge over the M20 to link Sainsburys on Simone Weil Avenue with The Eureka Leisure Park**
2) **Willesborough Dykes footway / cycleway providing a link between Park Farm and Ashford Town Centre**
3) **Footway / cycleway into Finberry from the A2070 together with an improved crossing across the A2070**
4) **Footway / cycleway between Park Farm East and Finberry to provide a direct route to Finberry Primary School**

Shared use paths – There are many existing shared use paths which form an extensive neighbourhood route network across parts of the Ashford area. Some of these are on purpose built footway/ cycleways such as the Willesborough Dykes footway and within Victoria Park.

Many new-town roads which have been constructed from local development sites have been fitted with a shared use path adjacent to the road. For example, the new paths constructed on the new Repton Park development.

In spring 2008, the shared space area was introduced in Elwick Place in Ashford town centre (see photo on page 16). The scheme replaced a section of Ashford's former four-lane ring road with two-way streets on which drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians have equal priority. Unnecessary street furniture, road markings and traffic lights have been removed and the speed limit cut to 20 mph. The scheme has been claimed to have improved safety records. Between November 2008 and January 2011, there has been four road casualties. Even though the shared space has increased the accessibility to cycling and walking in the town centre area, it is still a very car dominated urban environment.

In places, the combination of shared use paths and greenways provide a good network of traffic free or very lightly trafficked routes.

Transport challenges

Without a transformational change to the way that people travel there is a risk Ashford could become a less desirable place for people to live, work, play and invest in. An aspiration for Ashford is to create an active travel destination that is not dominated by car movements and where streets provide a space for people to gather that is pleasant to be in.

A comprehensive, high quality and well used cycling and walking network will support and enable the developmental aspirations of the Borough. This network needs to be dense and continuous and 'through' traffic needs to be reduced to lessen congestion, encourage active travel, improve air quality and improve perceptions of safety.

It is also important to identify future changes to transport and land use that may be completed within the timescale of the LCWIP. Transport and land use changes will be necessary since additional traffic calming measures may not actually deliver modal shift. Indeed, an example of this can be seen from examples such as Waltham Forest's Mini-Holland programme, where infrastructural changes and traffic management needs to be implemented in order to make streets truly friendly for pedestrians and cyclists. Thus, to achieve significant modal shift, partner organisations will need to implement well-thought out large infrastructure redesign projects linked with behaviour change programmes and the LCWIP is the first step towards identifying these types of projects.

Ashford has an extensive network of cycling and walking routes through the town centre and some semi-rural areas. Ashford's cycling and walking networks have developed over time as funding has become available and as infrastructure development has come forward and so can be disjointed.

Image of shared use path at Repton Park

On-road – There are a number of roads in the Ashford borough that follow historic highway patterns and there is insufficient room to retrofit improved pedestrian cycling and walking infrastructure. Many of these areas are also built up with houses close to the footways so shared paths are also not an option. The main areas that present with this issue are Newtown, Hythe Road and Willesbourgh.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods – Recently KCC and partner agencies have closed Highfield Lane in Ashford to vehicular traffic as part of the employment proposals at Junction 10a to provide a better pedestrian / cycle environment between Mersham and Ashford Retail Park.

Public Cycle Parking – Within Ashford Town Centre there is cycle parking in all major hubs and there is also a new cycle parking hub at the Ashford International Train station. All the train stations in the area provide some cycle parking but conditions of these and amount, do vary.

2.3 - Existing Patterns of Travel

Identifying barriers to movement

Barriers to movement were identified to understand how they may impact on potential cycle movements. The existing Ashford cycling network is strongly influenced by several constraints and barriers both natural and man-made. These include:

- **A busy road network that is difficult to cross (for example the M20 motorway).**
- **Main roads with little or no movement to gain cycle lanes**
- **Current cycle routes that do not link up**
- **Poorly maintained routes**
- **Inadequate storage and changing facilities**

Ashford has very high car ownership levels of 81% and this is also well above the 74% national average.

2.3.1 – Active Travel

Data sourced from Active Lives data provided by Sport England and shows Ashford's current cycling and walking rate is slightly lower than the county average. In a report by the Department for Transport, Walking and Cycling Statistics: England 2018; it reported that Ashford has currently between 68 – 71% of adults walking at least once a week. This is classified as mid ground.
12 – 17% of adults reported to cycle at least once a week again seen as mid ground.

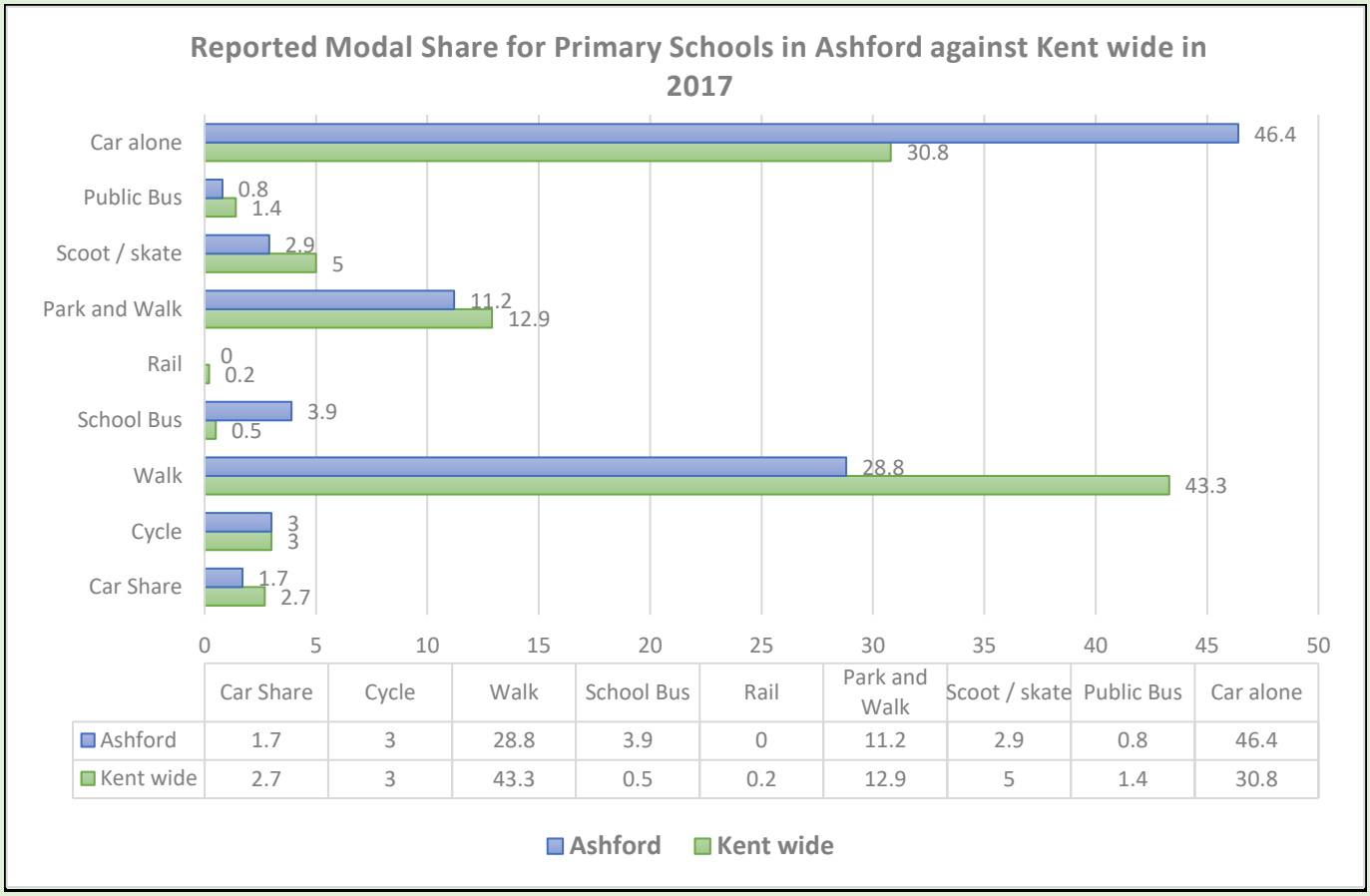
Travel to work

Purely in terms of travel to work, most short journeys are still made by car. The South East is slightly higher at 71% than the national average of 67%.

These car trips contribute to congestion on the roads, poor air quality and contribute to poor health caused by inactivity.

Travel to school / college –

Travel associated with education generates a substantial number of trips. Children can get their daily dose of physical activity without even thinking about it, just by cycling/scooting and walking all or part of their journey.



	Car Share	Cycle	Walk	School Bus	Rail	Park and Walk	Scoot / skate	Public Bus	Car alone
Ashford	1.7	3	28.8	3.9	0	11.2	2.9	0.8	46.4
Kent wide	2.7	3	43.3	0.5	0.2	12.9	5	1.4	30.8

Above is a chart displaying the modal share for Primary schools in the Ashford area against Kent wide data. Ashford has a high percentage of students that travel to school in a car and a smaller percentage of students that travel to school by foot or other modes of transport

Ashford has 43 primary schools and 7 secondary schools and these are split between the urban town (within 10 minutes' walk of the Ashford town centre), the outskirts of Ashford and the rural areas of Ashford. Ashford is made up of a town centre and suburb areas that present their own travel issues. The Table 3 shows the split of the schools in the area.

Table 3: Schools in Ashford

Type of School	Town Centre (within 10 minute's walk from the town centre)	Outskirts/suburbs which are located 10 minute drive from town centre	Rural
Primary	7	16	22
Secondary included 6th forms	3	2	2
SEN (special educational Needs)	0	1	1
Independent	1	0	3
College	1	0	0
Total	**12**	**19**	**28**

2.3.2 - Public Transport

Cycling and walking in Ashford should also be an attractive option for the first and last mile of a person's longer journey. Within Ashford town centre there are various other means of transport, including trains, buses and bicycle hire (available at the International Station e.g. Brompton cycles cost £3.50 for 24 hours as of October 2019).

Rail – It is estimated that over 3.9 Million people use Ashford International Train Station each year. The station connects to London via the High Speed 1 line and also to the continent via the Eurostar. Services within the borough include; Pluckley, Hamsteet, Appledore, Charing, Chilham and Wye.

There is a contained bike storage area located at Ashford International Station that can house up to 454 Cycles. There are bike storage areas at the station and at other rail stations within the borough.

Bus - Stagecoach is the main bus provider within the Ashford borough and in the year 2016 – 2017 they recorded 3,503,817 passengers. Many services are centred on the town centre interchange providing a circular route. This provides good access to the town centre, but travel across the Borough is less convenient.

2.4 – Road Safety

The safety of people cycling, in terms of actual number of collisions and subjective (how safe a journey feels) clearly has an impact on the attractiveness of cycling and walking in Ashford. Concern about safety on the roads is a key barrier to people getting on their bikes and travelling on foot.

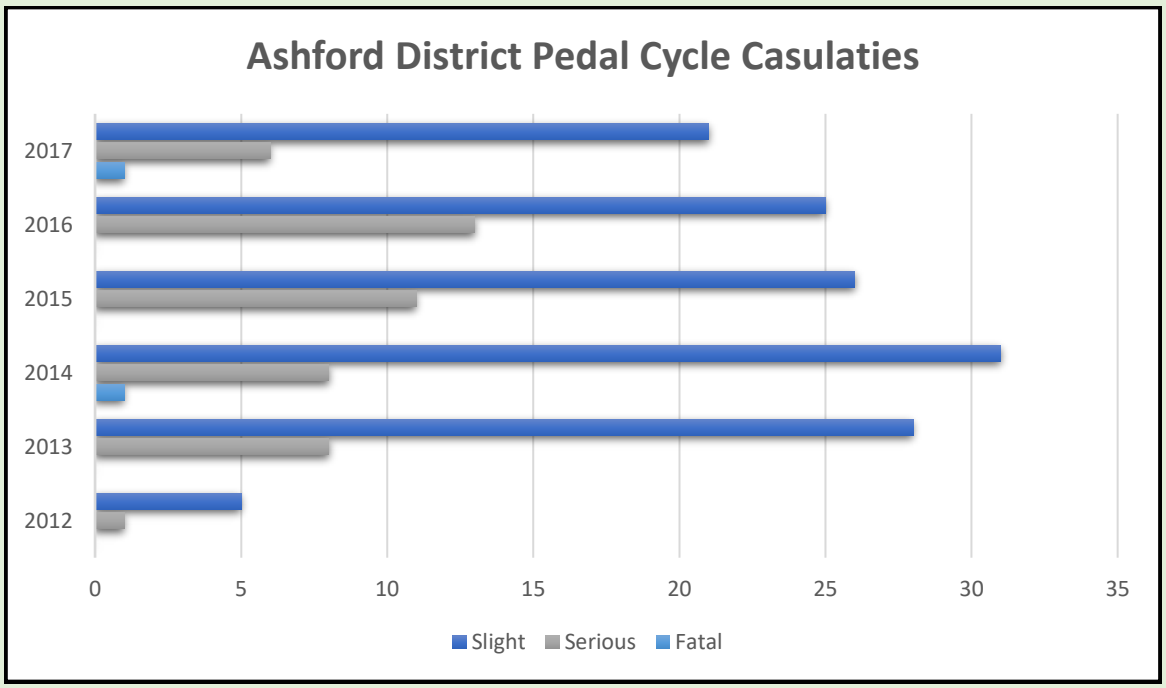


Chart shows KCC Personal injury collision and casualty data for the Ashford Borough for the 5 year period to 30th September 2017

Ashford has seen significant improvements in road safety for cyclists over the last 10 years with a spike in casualties to 2014 and then a gradual downward trend since then. It was reported that there was one pedal cycle cluster site (based on 3 or more collisions within 50 miles over the last three years).

This was at the junction of A2042 Station Road J/W Tannery Lane (601207 / 142553); This cluster site is investigated annually by KCC to identify engineering measures that can apply remedial action to the site.

Nationally, only 6% of deaths and 14% of serious injuries are amongst cyclists, although over four times as many pedestrians (25%) are killed in road collisions.

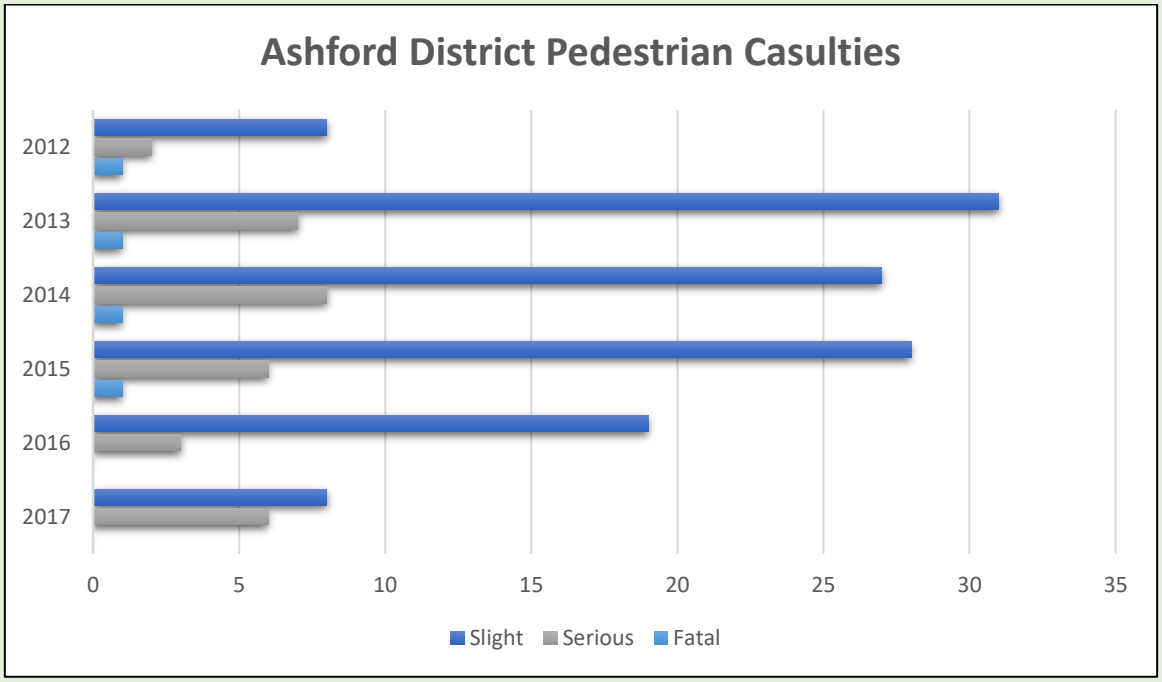


Chart shows KCC personal injury collision and casualty data for the Ashford Borough for the 5 year period to 30th September 2017

The picture is slightly different for pedestrians, with no cluster site there has been a decrease in pedestrian casualties since 2015. The main ward identified in the casualty data is Victoria Ward which encompasses the town centre and identified core walking zone which is explained further in chapter 4.

2.5 – Local residents views on cycling and walking

The initiative to promote Active Modes of travel has been outlined in the recently produced Draft Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019-2029[i]. The objectives of the Cycling and Walking strategy are as follows:

- ***To provide and improve the cycling and walking network***
- ***To increase cycle parking around the borough***
- ***Maintaining the existing cycling and walking network***
- ***Focusing on safer cycling***
- ***Promoting cycling and walking in the borough***
- ***Increasing opportunities for cycling and walking tourism***

The Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 – 2029 went through a first round of consultation in the summer of 2019. Feedback from 532 residents from this consultation confirmed that most people ride their bike for leisure. The main reasons as to why people do not currently cycle or do not cycle regularly include; safety concerns about sharing the road with cars, particularly in locations where no alternative cycle paths are available, medical concerns, not owning a bike, lack of existing pathways, or a lack of a connected cycle network, especially in more rural locations.

Additionally, the consultation feedback stated that people would be encouraged to walk more often, if safety and visibility was increased with better lighting, therefore potentially reducing crime. Other points stated were; if infrastructure and facilities were improved, and the quality of walking routes were enhanced this could increase people walking. This includes suggestions such as quality pathways, more seating along the routes, and more, sensibly placed crossings. Walkers stated they wish to have attractive and interesting destinations to visit with a variety of routes and paths.

Finally, the consultation clearly identified that residents' desire more paths and routes to cycle and walk. Key to this is a connected network of paths, so that residents can get to where they need to safely and efficiently. New and existing paths are to be well maintained – e.g. free of potholes, debris and overgrown foliage. These paths should be well signed so they can be located easily, and maps should be available. The council should promote the pathways to encourage people to use them.

Key aspirations of the consultation were:

Safety for all*:* To make cycling and walking an enjoyable, safe and easy way of moving around, Ashford will improve road conditions for pedestrians and cyclists by making routes safer by providing designated car and cycle areas so that the roads can be used more easily by everyone.

Vibrant Town Centre*:* To ensure the scheme benefits the whole community by reducing traffic congestion in some areas, the scheme will ease parking pressures, reduce pollution and noise levels, and create a greener environment for residents to enjoy. The community will also benefit by being involved in the development of relevant schemes, which in turn could support the local economy, enabling Ashford to become a vibrant and attractive location for businesses, residents and visitors.

Connected borough*:* To ensure the borough's Town Centre is better connected via cycling routes and improve the way in which all are connected to neighbouring settlements and boroughs. The cycling and walking networks are to be continuous throughout our borough, allowing residents to enjoy Ashford's unique natural assets and better connecting our vibrant rural communities.

Improved well-being**:** To use the scheme (LCWIP) to increase the levels of cycling and walking amongst residents. Getting more residents to use a bike or walk will improve mental and physical health and fitness levels in the borough. With that in mind, it is important to recognise that people need to feel confident cycling and walking so in addition to making routes safer, it is important to offer a range of activities to increase their confidence levels.

Cycle to work schemes – Kent County Council operate a sustainable travel grant scheme for schools and businesses which informs and promote sustainable travel choices, working with students, employers and employees to understand the barriers to making more sustainable journeys and where possible instigate change. In addition, jobseekers also receive advice on their travel options to different job destinations which can increase their employment opportunities.

The main promotional tool in Ashford to support cycling is a Cycle Route Map. This has been developed by Visit Kent with the help of many partners, and is regularly reviewed and updated when new routes are built. This is accessible in paper form for many outlets in the town centre and also online through the Visit Kent Website (www.visitkent.co.uk). There is also the Kent Connected webpage which gives personalised travel planning options (www.kentconnected.org)

Data from the 2011 Census shows that only 2% of Ashford's resident's cycle to work. Ashford Borough Council target is 5% of residents cycling to work by 2029. If this target is to be met and ease the burden of traffic to make it easier for people to use other means of transport. This means having two and a half times more people regularly using their bike to get to work. This will not happen overnight and will not occur without significant and sustained interventions. However, whilst the growth target is ambitious, it is attainable.

Chapter 3 – Network Planning for Cycling

3.1 – Cycle Route Selection

Converting desire lines into routes for inclusion in LCWIPs is an iterative process, and is one of the most important elements of the LCWIP.

In most cases, there will be a clear preferred cycle route, which is usually the most direct. However, in some cases there may be more than one potential route between origin and destination points or a reason why the most direct route is not suitable for cycling. There will always be conflicting demands when it comes to selecting routes. As such, it is important that the needs of all users are considered when selecting routes, and that the wider transport priorities for specific roads, junctions and spaces are understood in unison.

This section presents what the latest datasets, forecasts and models show about potential corridors and locations where current and future cycling demand could justify future investment.

Making Ashford Cycle friendly

Based on an evidence led approach as outlined within this report, the development of a network plan will identify core cycling corridors particularly in the town centre.

This network needs to be appealing, easy to use and safe to increase cycle numbers. Cycle routes only work if they connect places people want to go. The network infrastructure identified in this section will help people make journeys to work, school, shops and for other utility trips as well as for leisure.

There are different types of cyclists and each has their own preferences with regards to cycling facilities.

- **Experienced cyclists generally prefer more direct on-carriageway routes with minimum delays along the route.**
- **New or inexperienced cyclists may only feel confident cycling away from traffic or on quieter roads and place more emphasis on safety rather than directness**.

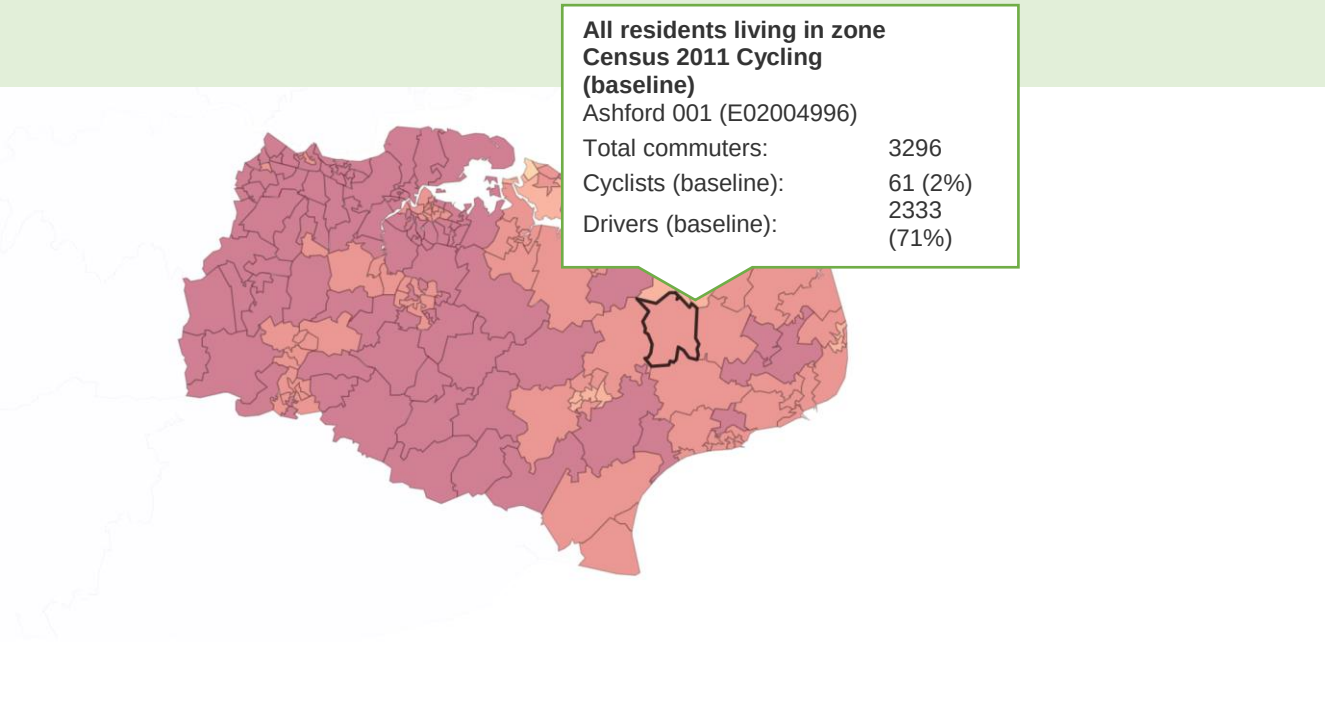
In view of this, providing for the needs of different cyclists within the available resources can sometimes be difficult.

The following sections outline the stages that have been applied to identify a cycle route network. This firstly involved identifying desire lines for travel to work trips using the Propensity to Cycle Tool and then applying these desire lines to the road network. Secondly, non-workplace trip attractors such as retail and schools were identified and, thirdly, potential demand associated with new and future development sites.

3.1.1 Propensity cycle tool and travel to work desire lines

The first step in testing the opportunity is to examine current travel patterns, including the origin, destination and length of short car trips, to gain a better understanding of the potential for cycling across the Borough.

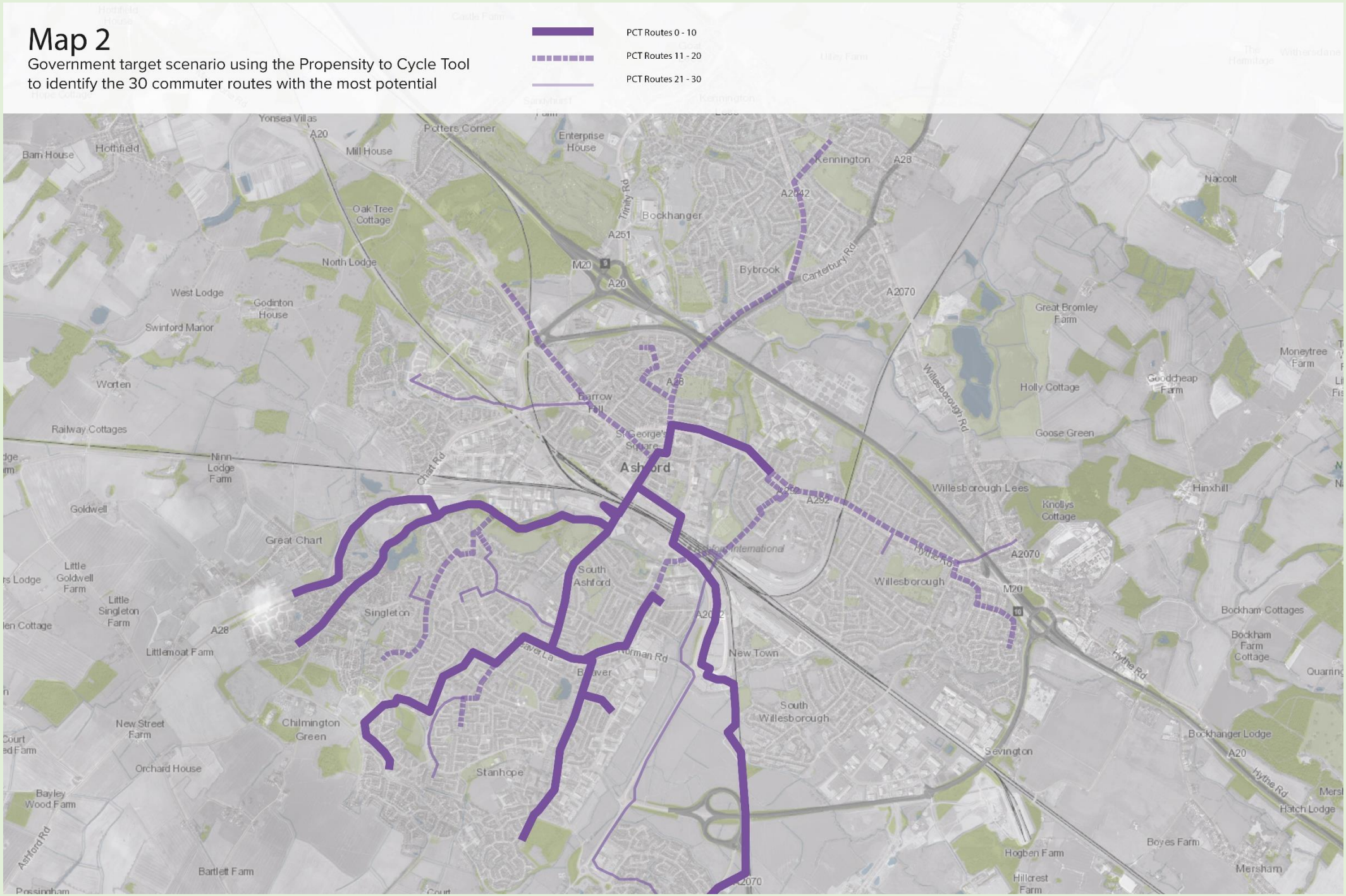
A good starting point to increase cycling in Ashford borough would be to enable cyclists to cycle much more and for a wider range of journeys. The image below, obtained from the Propensity to Cycle Tool, show the percentage of commuters that cycle to work as per the Census 2011.



The Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) for England and Wales, provides an evidence base to inform cycling investment. It was designed to assist transport planners and policy makers to prioritise investments and interventions to promote cycling. The PCT answers the question: 'where is cycling currently common and where has cycling the greatest potential to grow?

Map 2

Government target scenario using the Propensity to Cycle Tool to identify the 30 commuter routes with the most potential



3.1.2 – Non workplace trip attractors

All trips have an origin and a destination. The DfT guidance states that identifying demand for a planned network should start by mapping the main origin and destination points across the geographical area to be covered by the LCWIP.

A variety of major trip attractors within Ashford LCWIP area have been identified through site assessments, assessments of relevant data and consultation with key stakeholders. These strategic locations attract a significant number of trips, and as such they could have the potential to attract a sizeable number of future cycling trips.

The DfT guidance identifies that it may be appropriate to include only the most significant trip generators. Some types of destination were excluded (e.g. schools, individual retail stores) to create a manageable number of destinations.

It was decided to not include primary and secondary schools at the strategic level, but to focus on the larger educational trip generator at Ashford College site located in the Town Centre. Primary and secondary schools will be considered when looking at local connectivity to ensure that there are appropriate connections within local areas and to the strategic network

The following trip generators were plotted onto Map 3 (shown on page 29):

Healthcare – The approach was applied to healthcare establishments such as the William Harvey Hospital and key Health Centres in the area. The smaller providers (such as GP surgeries) sites will be introduced when looking at local connectivity. The William Harvey Hospital is not shown in Map 3 as it is located outside of the town.

Transport - The transport interchange was identified as the Ashford International railway station as this is the major rail station in the area. The other railway stations in the borough of Ashford including Appledore, Charing, Chilham, Hamstreet, Pluckley, and Wye. All these stations are served by Ashford International Station.

Social/leisure – The main leisure centre within the town is the Stour Centre and retail outlets being in Ashford town centre, the McArthur Glen Designer Outlet Centre and Eureka Park.

Map 3

Major Trip Attractors in the Area

Clustering
As part of the LCWIP process once the significant trip origin and destination points were identified and mapped, the next step was clustering. This involves grouping trip generators within proximity to each other into clusters allowing for the identification of significant trip generation. However, it is vital that the clustering exercise doesn't exclude some trip types, including:

Leisure/Recreation – Significant focus of the LCWIP is centred on catering for utility trips but leisure cycling will not be neglected as it has been shown that this can encourage future utility trips as well as providing huge health benefits.

Cross Boundary – Although the LCWIP focuses on shorter trips within the urban area, desire lines for longer trips, such as those to/from neighbouring wards are also present. Travel between wards and parishes in Ashford is important and will need to be considered as part of improvements to the overall cycling network.

3.1.3 - Developments

Map 4 (on page 31) highlights that within the Local Plan 2030 the urban developments including housing, commercial, leisure hubs and the green corridor. Within the Ashford Urban area it is expected that over the next 10 years (2018 – 2030) that 2649 housing units will be built. Connections to the development allocations have been considered in the development of the cycle network and the borough council intend to seek extensions to the network to serve these through the planning process.

3.1.4 Identifying routes
The main purpose of the Route Selection Tool (RST) is to assess the suitability of a route against a set of core deign outcomes. The RST enables a route to be assessed in both its existing state and potential future state, if improvements were made. These are the routes that where assessed within the area and the RST results will be displayed in the following chapter.

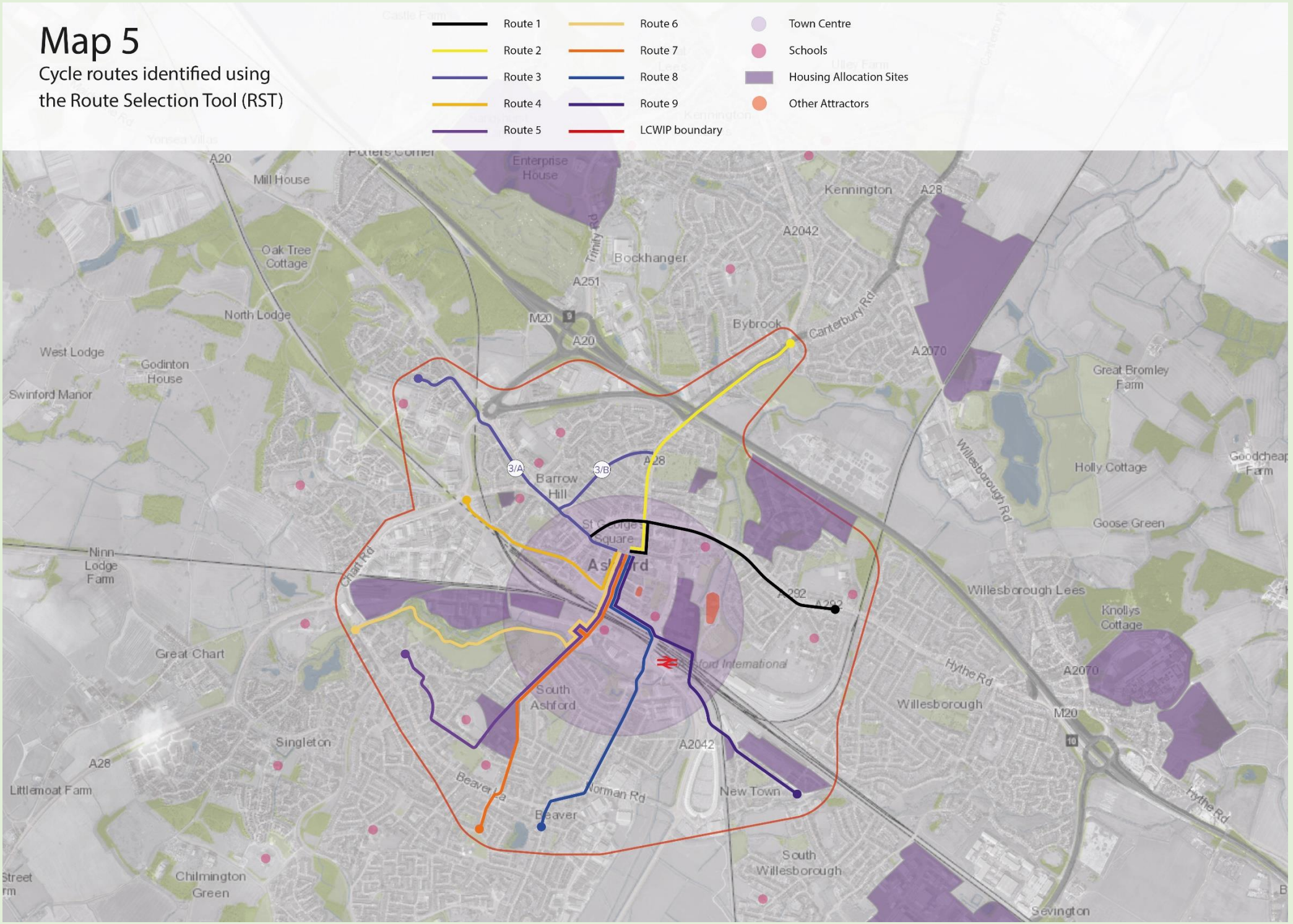
Map 4

Housing site allocations
from the Local Plan 2030

Housing Site Allocation

Map 5

Cycle routes identified using the Route Selection Tool (RST)



3.2 – Cycling Route assessment

An audit was undertaken of the existing infrastructure in areas identified as being key to providing a high quality network to serve existing and potential cycle journeys. Gaps in provision, suitable schemes and additional links were then identified.

Based on this audit a programme of works, including specific 'cycling' projects as well as improvements secured as part of new developments, regeneration projects and wider schemes, and will proactively identify funding opportunities.

3.2.1 - Introduction

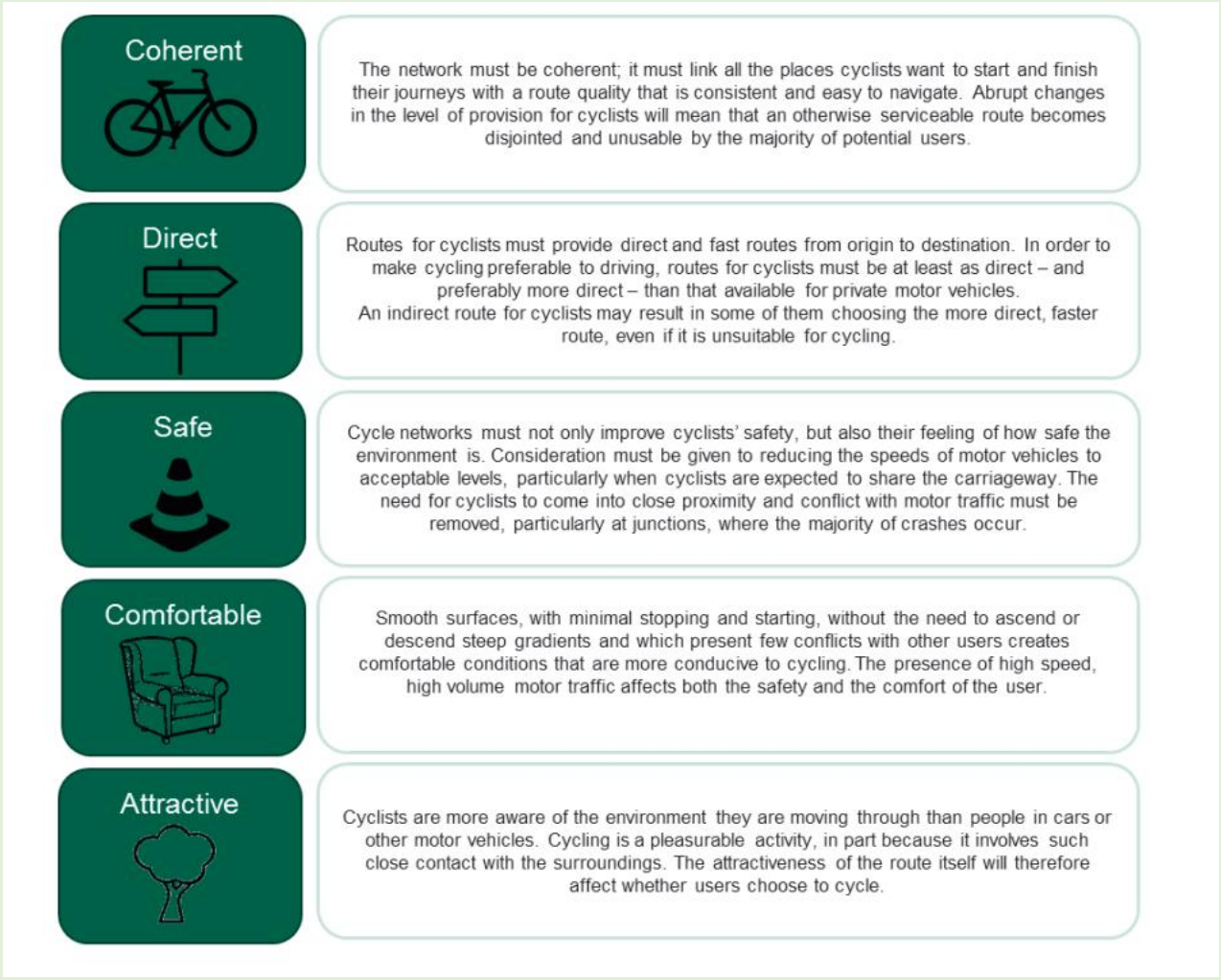
To help assess and compare potential routes for inclusion in the network, a Route Selection Tool (RST) was developed.

The primary function of the tool is to assess the suitability of a route in its existing condition against the core design outcomes and then compare it with the potential future state, if improvements were made. It also enables the merits of alternative routes to be easily compared.

Route Selection Tool Criteria

The RST uses a range of criteria to assess how well a route meets the core design outcomes for cycling ranging from 5, being the highest, to 0, being the lowest. The criteria are:

- directness
- gradient
- safety
- connectivity
- comfort



A number of critical junctions are also recorded to enable a high level evaluation of both links and junctions within one tool.

A Critical Junction is defined as one that has characteristics that are hazardous for cyclists e.g. high volume, lack of priority or segregation, crossing high speed on-off slip roads or large roundabouts.

3.2.2 - RST Score Summaries

Table 4 shows the outcomes of this on the routes identified. The target is to score at least a 3 within each category. Some routes are not achieving this, but future feasibility work may alter this score and ranking.

Route No.	Route Name	Directness		Gradient		Safety		Connectivity		Comfort		Ranking (1 is priority)
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	
1	Hythe Road – Mace Lane	5	5	2.25	2.25	2.0	4.51	4.34	2.57	0	2.79	4
2	Canterbury Road	5	5	2.37	2.37	2.51	0	3.31	3.31	0.26	1.79	2
3a	Highworth School – A20 Road	5	5	4.22	4.22	3.78	0	4.49	0	1.00	4.17	7
3b	Highworth – Magazine Road	5	5	4.26	4.26	4.28	4.28	0.96	0.91	0	2.91	2 in conjunction with 3a
4	Repton Way	5	5	3.68	3.68	3.81	3.81	3.62	1.67	2.68	3.79	9
5	Victoria Park	5	5	3.83	3.83	4.64	4.64	1.20	1.20	2.62	3.28	9
6	Ashford Oaks	5	5	3.93	3.93	2.94	4.39	4.00	0.94	3.04	3.02	5
7	Kingsnorth Road – Jemmett Road	5	5	3.73	3.73	3.40	4.33	3.81	0.93	3.79	2.89	6
8	Beaver Road	5	5	4.18	4.39	3.32	3.85	2.70	2.00	3.18	2.22	1
9	Newtown	5	5	3.44	3.44	4.13	5.00	5.00	5.00	2.19	2.19	8

3.23 - Details of proposed cycling route schemes with costings

Route No.	Route Name	Sub Description	Project Description	Estimated cost	Total Cost (including approx. 44% fees (contingency, contractor etc.)
1	**Hythe Road – Mace Lane**	Bridge – petrol station	20Mph Limit Public Realm Improvements Crossing Points	£132,930.00	£15,500,000.00
		Petrol station – roundabout	20Mph Limit Public Realm Improvements Crossing Points	£143,010.00	
		Roundabout – town centre	Segregated cycle way Public realm improvements	£10,000,000.00	
2	**Canterbury Road**	Canterbury road crossing – Bridge	Light segregation Toucan Crossing	£79,000	£10,000.000.00
		Bridge - Town centre	Living Street Approach Improvement to bridge Improvements to public realm Traffic flow study Small improvements to pavement	£8,000,000.00	

			Linking bridge to Heathfield Road		
3a	**Highworth School – A20 Road** **Highworth – Magazine Road**	Orchard Heights – Drovers Drovers – Barrowhill	Widen footpath cycleways Move bus stop Toucan crossing Potentially continue footpath cycleway northbound Reduce capacity to provide segregated cycle lane North or South bound to be establish which is best. Toucan crossing	£162,828.00 £221,320.00	£580,000.00
3b		Barrowhill - Town Centre	Reduce capacity roundabout north bound to provide space Raised table entry Barrowhill Increase width shared footpath Northbound Lidl car park Improve junction car parks Lidl and Barnardos	£146,880.00	£200,000.00

4	**Repton Way**	Tank RB - Western Avenue JCT	"Toucan Crossing 20 mph Living street Drop kerbs	£150,440.00	£310,000.00
		Western Avenue JCT – Bolt	"Raised table Speed cushion Signage 20mph"	£59,240.00	
		Bolt – Cinema	NA	NA	
		Cinema - Town Centre	NA	NA	
5	**Victoria Park**	Brookfield road - Hillbrow lane	NA	NA	£105,000.00
		"Hillbrow lane - Victoria park Fountain	NA	NA	
		"Victoria park Fountain - Cinema "	Toucan crossing	£55,000.00	
		Cinema - Town Centre	NA	NA	

6	**Ashford Oaks**	Arlington - Noakes Meadow	20mph	£17,250.00	£180,000.00
		Noakes Meadow Jemmett Road	NA	NA	
		Jemmett Road - Victoria park Fountain	"Improve shared footpath cycleway Signage + Painting Parking restriction to widen footpath"	£48,590.00	
		Victoria park Fountain – Cinema	NA	NA	
		Cinema - Town Centre	Toucan crossing	£55,000.00	

7	**Kingsnorth Road – Jemmett Road**	Woolreeds Road Beaver Lane Junction	"20mph 1 raised table Remove guardrail Toucan crossing"	£105,750.00	£305,000.00
		Beaver Lane - Junction Victoria Park "	"Resurfacing 20mph 2 raised tables"	£84,250.00	
		Victoria park Fountain – Picturehouse Cinema"	NA	NA	
		Picturehouse Cinema - Town Centre	Toucan crossing	£55,000.00	
8	**Beaver Road**	Beaver Lane - Bus Gate	"Reduce carriageway width 20mph"	£92,850.00	£200,000.00
		Bus Gate - Town Centre	"Segregated cycleway or shared use Signage"	£60,880.00	

9	**Newtown**	Newtown - Outlet Centre	20 mph - not sure if this is acceptable	£17,250.00	£30,000.00
		Outlet -Train station	S106 money allocated for this project	NA	
		Train station - underpass	Unknown	NA	
		Under pass - TC	Unknown	NA	

All costs are indicative at this stage and are subject to feasibility studies, site investigation and detailed design. Initial costs have been based on those made available by Wiltshire County Council. These costs may vary locally and be subject to inflation. Ashford Council at this time in writing does not have access to in-house design and costing experience.

Chapter 4: Network planning for walking

4.1 Walking Route Selection

As active transport modes, many of the benefits of cycling and walking are shared and very often improvements for one will affect the other as large parts of the two networks overlap. For example, pedestrians and cyclists are often in close proximity and may share routes and crossings.

In most places a comprehensive network which accommodates most pedestrian trips already exists. Ashford Town Centre is well provided with paths and footways which offer an extensive network of routes many of which are traffic free and follow greenways and make use of open spaces and parks.

However, main roads which tend to be the most direct routes often have a poorer physical environment including narrow pavements with overgrown vegetation, infrequent crossing points, uneven surfaces and poorer air quality. People may be deterred from using them due to several issues, e.g. need to cross busy roads or because the facilities are poorly designed or maintained.

The main focus of the LCWIP is therefore to improve and in some cases extend the existing walking network in order to encourage people to make more short trips on foot.

With its good public transport connectivity, the Town Centre will be a focus for new business development – putting business at the heart of Ashford. The delivery of this major change programme in the heart of Ashford means that there needs to be a step change in street purpose and design. For each walking audit written comments and notes were taken as well as photos. Following each walking audit the loops were given preliminary scoring and a photo evidence document was created.

Once all the routes had been audited, the scoring was revised, moderated and the audit spreadsheet finalised. The spreadsheet was reviewed by another member of the team to provide unbiased judgement on the final scoring.

The next task involved creating summary tables to provide an overview of the walking routes and identify sections where projects would be implemented. The first summary table (4) provides the final total scoring for each category (attractiveness, comfort, directness, safety, coherence) for each walking loop as well as summarised written comments. This first summary table provides an overview of each walking loop.

A second summary table was produced. This one divided the large 2km walking routes into smaller sections allowing for a review of each route. A scoring for each category for each section was provided as well as a more detailed summary for each section. This second table served as a basis to divide each walking loop by section in order to identify specific projects and interventions.

An intervention spreadsheet was then created for the walking routes. This involved dividing each walking loop into smaller sections (the sections were informed by the summary tables aforementioned). Each section obtained a scoring (using the same methodology as for the walking audit looking at attractiveness, comfort, directness, safety and coherence for each section). This scoring was compared to the overall scoring that the entire walking loop obtained. Out of a total scoring of 40, sections that ranked from 0 to 20 were categorised as

‘red’, from 20 to 30 as ‘amber’, and from 30 to 40 as ‘green’. This spreadsheet detailed the problems identified for each section as well as the potential interventions

This spreadsheet was used to produce maps representing each walking route and to spatially locate problems and their associated locations.

Finally, the intervention spreadsheet was used to complete the prioritisation spreadsheet which follows a similar format as the one produced for the cycling routes. This prioritisation spreadsheet looks at the proposed projects for each section, their costs, their effectiveness, economic value, deliverability and prioritisation.

4.1.1 - Establishing Core Walking Zones

Map 6 (page 45) show the the CWZs identified for Ashford. It is based on a 400M radius around the Town Centre and Ashford International Train station.

4.1.2 – Walking Network Plan

Walking audits were conducted for five identified loops: four of these loops span 2km outwards starting from the ring road around Ashford’s town centre and one loop is our core walking route through Ashford’s town centre. Map 6 on page 45 shows main walking routes that were audited using the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT)

Map 6

Main walking routes were audited using the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT)

4.2 – Walking Route Assessment

4.2.1 – Introduction

The audits followed the LCWIP Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT) which assesses the five core design outputs including, attractiveness comfort, directness, safety and coherence of a route using a red (0); amber (1); and green (2) scoring system.

Five core design outputs from the WRAT assessment are as follows:

Attractiveness: The audits evaluated the attractiveness of the walking routes by assessing the maintenance of footways, the presence of littering, the condition of street furniture, evidence of vandalism, whether there is natural surveillance or isolated routes, the levels of traffic noise and pollution, the presence of lighting, the use of guardrails and bollards, as well as the use of temporary features.

Comfort: Comfort was evaluated by looking at the condition of footways, the presence of crossovers resulting in uneven surface fretted or subsided pavement uneven patching or trenching, by estimating footway width and occasions of 'give and take', as well as looking at footway parking. The width on staggered crossing pedestrian islands and refuges and the gradient of slopes were evaluated. Temporary obstructions, barriers and gates restricting access, bus shelters restricting clearance width, and poorly drained footways were assessed.

Directness: The directness of footway provision and their ability to cater for pedestrian desire lines was evaluated. The location of crossings in relation to desire lines was assessed. The audits also looked at whether or not there were any delays in using the crossings by looking at the gaps in traffic. The impact of controlled crossings, such as single phase pelican puffin or zebra crossings on journey time were assessed by looking at whether or not any delays were created. Green man time was also assessed to determine if pedestrians would benefit from extended green man time.

Safety: Safety was assessed by looking at traffic volume and pedestrians' ability to keep distance from traffic. Traffic speed was also evaluated as well as visibility for all users.

Coherence: For coherence, the audits looked at the provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

4.2.2 - WRAT score summaries

Table 6 shows the score obtained by the routes using the walking route audit tool (WRAT)**.** The target is to score at least 70%, some routes are not achieving this, but future feasibility work may alter this score and ranking.

Route no	Route name	Attractiveness	Comfort	Directness	Safety	Coherence	Total (Score)	Total (%)	Ranking
W1 – S2	Town Centre High Street – Somerset Road	5	5	5	5	5	25	100	1
W1 – S3	Town Centre Bank Street – Elwick Road	5	5	5	5	5	25	100	1
W4 – S1	Hythe Road – Newtown Road	4	4	4	4	5	21	84	3
W3 – S3	Beaver Road – Beaver Lane	4	5	4	5	3	21	84	3
W2 – S5	Templar Way – Elwick Road	4	4	4	5	4	21	84	3
W1 – S4	Town centre – Beaver Road	5	3	4	4	4	20	80	6
W2 – S3	Maidstone Road – Repton Manor	5	4	4	3	3	19	76	7
W3 – S2	Beaver Road – Beaver Lane	5	3	4	4	3	19	76	7
W3 – S5	Jemmett Road – Victoria Park	4	4	4	3	4	19	76	7

W1 – S1	**Town Centre – East Hill**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**18**	**72**	**10**
W5 – S1	Kennington – Canterbury Road	4	4	4	3	2	17	68	11
W3 – S4	Beaver Road – Beaver Lane via Cryol Road	4	4	3	3	2	16	64	12
W2 – S2	Maidstone Road - Repton	3	3	3	4	3	16	64	12
W2 – S4	Repton - Repton	3	3	3	4	3	16	64	12
W5 – S3	Kennington – Bybrook	2	2	3	3	3	13	52	15
W3 – S1	Beaver Road – Beaver Lane	3	3	3	2	2	13	52	15
W5 – S6	M20 Road – Maidstone Road	2	2	4	3	2	13	52	15
W4 – S4	Hythe Road - Newtown	3	3	2	3	2	13	52	15
W5 – S5	Kennington – Bybrook Road	3	3	2	2	2	12	48	19
W5 – S4	Kennington – Park Vale Road	3	2	2	3	2	12	48	19

4.2.3. Details of proposed schemes and costings (Table 6)

Included in the total cost is allowances for design, project management, public consultation and road safety audits.

Route	Description	Sub-Description	Projects details	Estimated cost	Total cost (including approx. 44% of on costs, contingency, contractor etc.)
W1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	High Street- North Street- Somerset Road Crossing	Resurface cobblestones on High Street (200 meters total) 3 CCTV Camera on High Street and clean tags to increase safety Remove broken/bended guardrails on end of North Road- 2 guardrail Add 1 refuse bin on end North Road/Somerset Road crossing and organise collection	£76,000 (£380/meter) £1,500 £5,000 £200	£125,000

W1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	Bank Street- Tufton Street- Vicarage Lane- Church Road- Elwick Road	Resurface Tufton Road (50m each side) Resurface Vicarage Lane (50m each side) Resurface Church Road (75m each side) Add tactile paving and dropped kerb on Tufton Road (for 4 crossings) Add tactile paving and dropped kerb on Vicarage Lane (for 4 crossings) Add tactile paving and dropped kerb on Church Road (for 8 crossings) Place-making interventions shared space (rethink shared space and increase safety/comfort of pedestrians add colourful crossings modal filter or Copenhagen crossings)	£18,000 (£180/meter) £18,000 (£180/meter) £27,000 (£180/meter) £10,000 (£105 for 10 Surface Mounted Tactile Paving Tiles & Adhesive and £360 for 2 dropped kerbs for a 2-2.5m footway) £10,000 (£105 for 10 Surface Mounted Tactile Paving Tiles & Adhesive and £360 for 2 dropped kerbs for a 2-2.5m footway) £20,000 (£105 for 10 Surface Mounted Tactile Paving Tiles & Adhesive and £360 for 2 dropped kerbs for a 2-2.5m footway) £100,000	£303,000

W4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	Start Tesco at Mills Court- Hythe Road to M20 Junction including Criquet Footway and Footway Hythe Road to Highfield Road	Add 5 highlighted crossing and traffic calming measures along Hythe Road with dropped kerbs and tactile paving Add 5 refuse bins on Hythe Road. Resurface Hythe Road (beginning) (50 meters each side) Remove guardrails- minimum 15 guardrails Add dropped kerbs on Hythe Road crossing and pedestrian islands (Mabeldon Avenue and Romney Road) (for 5 crossings on each side/total 10) Remove 2 signage for public footways Clean public footways- maintenance	£38,000 £1,000 £18,000 £15,000 £10,000 £500 (£250 for removal signage) £3,000	£125,500

W3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	Stanhope Road to Athol Road	Cut overgrown vegetation on Stanhope Road before roundabout- maintenance Add 4 highlight crossing and pedestrian island on Stanhope Road Roundabout with dropped kerbs and tactile paving and remove existing pedestrian island. Use continuous footway crossing if possible. Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving for Stanhope Road Roundabout crossing (for 8 crossings 4 crossings each side) Remove guardrails on Stanhope Road- old guardrails at least 30-50 meters	£500 £30,000 £5,000 £30,000	£95,500

W5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	Start Council- Green Path from Mill Court to Raymond Fuller Way	Paint lines on walking cycling shared path (removal and repainting) for 200 meters (use colourful crossing with community input) Cut overgrown vegetation along walking cycling shared path- maintenance Add 1 CCTV in tunnel Add permanent lighting in tunnel Address desired crossing lines before tunnel- place-making intervention Remove tags on bins at start of path- maintenance	£7,200 (£29 per meter for removal and £7 per meter for painting) £1,000 £500 £3,000 £5,000 £500	£34,500
W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	Orchard Heights Residential Streets: Landburry Walk- Warren View- Orchard Heights	Cut overgrown vegetation- maintenance Add minimum 3 signs through residential streets	£1,000 £1,200	£3,200

W3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	Beaver Road- Kingsnorth Road until Stanhope Corner	Resurface Beaver Road - especially in front of Beaver Inn (100 meters each side) Resurface Kingsnorth Road (100 meters each side) Remove guardrails (especially crossing to Kingsnorth Road and intersection Christchurch Road)- minimum 20 guardrails Add 5 highlighted crossings on Beaver Road with dropped kerbs and tactile paving	£36,000 £36,000 £20,000 £30,000 (£5,000 per crossing £360 for 2 dropped kerbs and £105 for paving)	£232,000
W3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	Jemmett Road- Victoria Park- End Victoria Park Bridge	Plant 10 tree on Jemmett Road for shading Remove tags on Victoria bridge- maintenance Change cycle counter in Victoria Park	£10,000 £500 £10,000	£30,500
W1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	Elwick Bridge to Victoria Road- Leacon Road- Victoria Road- Beaver Road Crossing- End Curious Brewery	Clean tags on Elwick Bridge- maintenance Resurface stairs Elwick Bridge (10 meters total) Add 3 CCTV camera to Elwick Bridge to increase safety Plant 10 trees along Victoria Lane for shading and add bees patch on bus shelters. Add zebra crossing on Victoria Road (Aldi) Add 2 pedestrian islands along Victoria Road with highlighted crossings	£1,000 £1,800 (£180/meter) £1,500 £10,000 (£100 per tree) £30,000 £30,000 (£10,000 per pedestrian island and £5,000 for pedestrian island)	£115,000

W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	Templer Way- Godinton Road- Carlton Roundabout- Sackville Crescent- Godinton Road- End Elwick Road	Place making intervention for Carlton Roundabout (link with Chilmington Green junction improvement introduce play streets modal filters and colourful crossing) Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Godinton Road crossings for 10 crossings (5 each side) Resurface potholes Godinton Road (100 each side) KCC	£1,500,000 (see Chilmington) £30,000 £36,000	£2,066,000
W4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	Residential Roads: Highfield Road- Sevington Road- Church Road	Add highlighted crossing end of Church Road to reach church courtyard with dropped kerbs and tactile paving Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving at Julien Place Luckhurst Road and Pemberton Road (3 crossings)	£7,000 £5,000	£22,000
W5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	Residential Streets: Raymond Fuller Way- Clarke Crescent- George Williams Way to Canterbury Road- Willesborough Road	Cut overgrown vegetation on George Williams Way- maintenance Add 3 pedestrian islands with tactile paving and dropped kerbs on George Williams Way roundabout crossing	£500 £40,000 (£10,000 per pedestrian island)	£60,500

W1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	Start Council- East Hill	Pedestrianise East Hill (place-making interventions such as colourful crossings or the use of modal filters or school speed restrictions) Remove guardrails (if pedestrianised everywhere- if not pedestrianised everywhere except in front of school) - 1 to 15 guardrails	£50,000 £1,000-£15,000	£71,000 - £95,000
W4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	Bentley Road- Hunter Avenue- Tunnel New Town Road	Add 1 zebra crossing on Hunter Avenue with dropped kerbs and tactile paving Plant 10 trees on Bentley Avenue for shading	£35,000 £10,000	£65,000
W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	Repton Manor Residential Streets: Barley Mow View- Sir John Fogge Avenue- Repton Avenue	Add 1 zebra crossing on Repton Avenue (Waitrose) Remove guardrails at crossing with Templar Way- minimum 10 guardrails	£30,000 £10,000	£60,000

W4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	New Town Road to Tunnel to Train Station- End Train Station	Add 3 highlight crossing for Newtown Road lateral crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving Add 1 zebra crossing on Newtown Road reaching Ellison Road Add 3 refuse bins on Newtown Road Remove broken street furniture on Newtown Road- maintenance Add CCTV tunnel to station Add permanent lighting in tunnel to station Remove tags tunnel- maintenance artwork by community	£20,000 £30,000 £600 £3,000 £500 £2,000 £2,000	£90,000
W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	Start High Street- New Street- New Street and Chart Road Roundabout- Maidstone Road to Templer Way Roundabout	Resurfacing paving around Chart Road Roundabout (50 meters total) Remove tags on street furniture on Chart Road- maintenance Remove guardrails on Chart Road and Maidstone Road- up to 20 guardrails	£9,000 (£180/meter) £500 £20,000	£40,000

W3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	Residential Streets Athol Road- St Stephens Walk- Cryol Road- Beaver Lane	Add 2 refuse bins on Cryol Road Modify crossing at the Athol Road/St Stephens Walk and at Cryol Road/Beaver Lane: remove pedestrian islands and add four highlighted crossings with dropped kerbs and tactile paving per crossing use continuous footway crossing if possible Resurface Beaver Lane (100 meters each side) Plant 10 trees on Beaver Lane for shading	£500 £60,000 £36,000 £10,000	£160,000
W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	Maidstone Road - Orchard Heights Roundabout	Add 3 double highlighted crossings on Maidstone Road to reach bus stops with dropped kerbs (total 6 crossings due to length of road and tactile paving Add 4 signage to indicate end of path Add 4 CCTV for security along Maidstone Road	£36,000 (£5,000 per highlighted crossings with £360 for 2 dropped kerbs and £105 for paving) £1,600 (£400 per signage) £2,000	£60,000

W5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	Canterbury Road from Willesborough Road crossing to M20 Crossing	Add 4 highlighted crossings on Canterbury Road especially near bus stops with dropped kerbs and tactile paving Add traffic calming measures on Canterbury Road- minimum 2 splitter islands and think about using modal filters Resurface Canterbury Road (start/end) (500 meters each side)	£30,000 £20,000 (£10,000 per splitter islands) £180,000	£330,000
W5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	Canterbury Road from M20- Magazine Road- Malvern Road- Quantock Drive - End Maidstone Road	Add 1 puffin crossing at Magazine/Canterbury Road crossing Add traffic calming measures on Canterbury Road- minimum 2 splitter islands and add of modal filters and colourful crossings	£55,000 £20,000 (£10,000 per splitter islands)	£125,000
W5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	Brybrooke Road- Kinney Lane	Plan 10 trees for shading on Brybrooke Road and add bee patch on bus stops Place-making Kinney Lane, pedestrianise for access to shared path (private road ownership issue) Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Brybrooke Road crossings (for 10 crossings 5 per sides) Resurface Brybrooke Road (100 meters per side)	£10,000 £50,000 £12,000 £36,000	£158,000

W3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	Start Train Station-Beaver Road and Jacques Faucheux Crossing- Beaver Road until Bond Road corner	Address lights at Jacques Faucheux crossing (red light shorter/green light longer for pedestrian) Resurface Beaver Road (100 meters each side)	£500 £36,000	£56,500
W5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	Faversham Road from crossing with Canterbury Road-Park Road-Park Vale	Remove guardrails on Faversham/Canterbury crossing- minimum 10 guardrails up to 20 guardrails Add 3 zebra crossing across Faversham/Canterbury crossing Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Park Road (for 6 crossings) Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Park Vale (for 4 crossings)	£30,000 £10,000-20,000 £5,500 £3,500	£69,000 - £89,000

All costs are indicative at this stage and are subject to feasibility studies, site investigation and detailed design. Initial costs have been based on those made available by from Wiltshire County Council. These costs may vary locally and be subject to inflation. Ashford Council at this time in writing does not have access to in-house design and costing experience.

Chapter 5: Prioritisation of schemes

This chapter sets out the approach of prioritising the cycling and walking infrastructure improvements in the short, medium and long term.

- Short term (typically <3 years) – improvements which can be implemented quickly or are under development
- Medium term (typically <5 years) improvements where there is a clear intention to act, but delivery is dependent on further funding available
- Long term (typically > 5 years) more aspirational improvements or these awaiting a defined solution.

All planned infrastructure changes that impact on residents will go through the appropriate consultation process required with direct discussion with affected users groups and with reference to relevant design guidance, e.g. consultation with mobility groups such as RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People), Ashford Access Group and use of documents such as the “Wheels for Wellbeing guidance”.

5.0 - Ashford Walking and Cycling Prioritisation and rationale of schemes

Cycling schemes have been prioritised against a range of criteria as follows:

Effectiveness Criteria

Existing **Route Comfort and attractiveness** were assessed during the route project/scheme selection process. An identified project which improves the route comfort and attractiveness for users is likely to attract and encourage increased future usage and therefore where a benefit is identified, a project/scheme is scored positively.

Links with existing route/network is an important consideration when assessing whether a project is likely to make improvements which will encourage increased usage of cycle paths and pedestrian footpaths.

Whether a project/scheme leads to creating a **Road safety improvement** is an important aspect of assessing its effectiveness. Where projects are likely to improve security and safety measures for cyclists and pedestrians by raising awareness of cyclists/pedestrians in the area, reducing speeds of other modes of transport, or segregating the active mode from traffic, this project will score more positively.

Policy Links - The Ashford Green Corridor Network is an important aspect of the towns green infrastructure, but also a key movement network for pedestrians and cyclists which is mostly vehicle free. The recently adopted Green Corridor action plan[1] and Local Plan Policy ENV2[2] encourages improvements and enhancements to the network.

[1] https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/5476/green-corridor-action-plan-2017.pdf
[2] https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/7542/adopted-ashford-local-plan-2030-2.pdf

Improving links to schools and local services such as transport hubs, retail, community and leisure facilities for the active travel mode is a key aim of the project. Determining the purpose of users' journeys, and in particular between children and adults is identified as an important aspect of prioritisation assessment within the AMAT tool (2.5). When undertaking the route selection process, which are located around the Town Centre, it was identified that many of the active mode users were school children accessing the several schools with the routes, and adults accessing the town centre shops and services or commuting to work or the train station, which links several of the routes. Part of the assessment therefore scores projects positively where they will be likely to improve accessibility by active mode to one of these key areas, and have safety and time saving impacts.

Table 7 shows the prioritised cycling schemes

Scheme Description					Effectiveness					Economic		Deliverability			Prioritisation	
Route	Description	Sub-Section	Sub-Description	Projects details	Route Comfort and attractiveness improvement	Links with existing route/ network	Creates Road safety improvement	Link to Green Corridor network	Links to Schools and local services	Value for money	Funding potential	Political Support	Timescale	Feasibility	Total Score	Ranking
1	Hythe Road - Mace Lane	B	Petrol Station - Roundabout	20mph public realm improvements crossing points	0	2	2	1	2	2	0	2	1	1	13	9
1	Hythe Road - Mace Lane	C	Roundabout - Town Centre	Segregated cycleway and public realm improvement	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	12	11
1	Hythe Road - Mace Lane	A	Bridge - Petrol Station	20mph public realm improvements crossing points	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	2	1	1	9	18
2	Faversham - Canterbury Road	A	Faversham Road - Bridge	Light segregation Toucan	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	2	1	2	16	2

2	Bridge - Town centre	B	Bridge - Town centre	Living street Approach Improvement to bridge Improvement to public realm Traffic flow study Small improvement to pavement linking bridge to Heathfield Road	2	2	2	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	10	17
3	Highworth/ A20	B	Drovers - Barrowhill	Reduce capacity to provide segregated cycle lane North or South bound to be establish which is best. Toucan crossing	2	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	12	11
3	Highworth/ A20	C	Barrowhill - Town Centre	Reduce capacity roundabout north bound to provide space Raised table entry	2	2	2	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	12	11

				Barrowhill Increase width shared footpath Northbound Lidl car park Improve junction car parks Lidl and Barnardos												
3	Highworth/ A20	A	Orchard Heights - Drovers	Widen footpath cycleways Move bus stop Toucan crossing Potentially continue footpath cycleway northbound	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	7	19
4	Repton Way	B	Western Avenue JCT - Bolt	Raised table Speed cushion Signage 20mph	1	1	2	0	2	1	0	2	1	2	12	11
4	Repton Way	A	Tank RB - Western Avenue JCT	Toucan Crossing 20 mph Living street Drop kerbs	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	6	21

4	Repton Way	C	Bolt - Picturehouse	NA	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	22
4	Repton Way	D	Cinema - Town Centre	NA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
5	Victoria Park	C	Victoria park Fountain - Pitcurehouse	Toucan crossing	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	1	2	16	2
5	Victoria Park	A	Brookfield road - Hillbrow Lane	NA	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	22
5	Victoria Park	B	Hillbrow Lane - Victoria park Fountain	NA	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	22
5	Victoria Park	D	Picturehouse - Town Centre	NA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28
6	Ashford Oak	A	Arlington – Noakes Meadow	20mph	1	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	15	4
6	Ashford Oak	B	Noakes Meadow- Jemmett Road	NA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	27
6	Ashford Oak	C	Jemmett Road – Victoria Park Fountain	Improve shared footpath cycleway, signage and painting parking restriction to widen footpath	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	19	1
6	Ashford Oak	D	Victoria Park fountain – Picturehouse	NA	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	22

6	Ashford Oak	E	Pitcurehouse – town centre	Toucan crossing	1	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	1	2	14	5
7	Jemmett Road	A	Woolreeds Road – Beaver Lane Junction	20mph 1 raised table Remove guardrail Toucan crossing	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	11	15
7	Jemmett Road	B	Beaver Lane – Junction Victoria Park	Resurfacing 20mph 2 raised tables	2	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	1	2	13	9
7	Jemmett Road	C	Victoria Park fountain – Picturehouse	NA	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	22
7	Jemmett Road	D	Picturehouse – town centre	Toucan crossing	1	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	1	2	14	5
8	Beaver Road	A	Beaver Lane – Bus gate	20mph	1	2	1	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	14	5
8	Beaver Road	B	Bus gate – town centre	Segregated cycleway or shared use Signage	2	2	2	0	1	0	2	2	1	2	14	5
9	Newtown	A	Newtown – Outlet Centre	20mph	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	7	19
9	Newtown	B	Outlet Centre – Train station	Tidy and signage	1	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	11	15

Table 8 Walking Scheme Prioritisation

Scheme Description					Effectiveness					Economic		Deliverability			Prioritisation	
Route	Description	Sub-Section	Sub-Description		Route Comfort and attractiveness improvement	Links with existing route/ network	Creates Road safety improvement	Link to Green Corridor network	Links to Schools and local services	Value for money	Funding potential	Political Support	Timescale	Feasibility	Total Score	Ranking
W 1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	S 2	High Street- North Street- Somerset Road Crossing		2	2	1	0	1	2	1	2	1	1	**38**	**1**
W 1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	S 3	Bank Street- Tufton Street- Vicarage Lane- Church Road- Elwick Road		1	2	2	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	**37**	**2**
W 4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	S 1	Start Tesco at Mills Court- Hythe Road to M20 Junction including Criquet Footway and Footway Hythe Road to Highfield Road		2	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	0	1	**34**	**3**

W 3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	S 3	Stanhope Road to Athol Road		2	2	2	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	**33**	**4**
W 5	Conningbr ook Kenningto n Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	S 1	Start Council- Green Path from Mill Court to Raymond Fuller Way		2	1	1	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	**33**	**4**
W 2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	S 3	Orchard Heights Residential Streets: Landburry Walk- Warren View-Orchard Heights		1	1	1	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	**32**	**5**
W 3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	S 2	Beaver Road- Kingsnorth Road until Stanhope Corner		2	2	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	**32**	**5**

W 3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	S 5	Jemmett Road- Victoria Park- End Victoria Park Bridge		2	1	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	**32**	**5**
W 1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	S 4	Elwick Bridge to Victoria Road- Leacon Road- Victoria Road- Beaver Road Crossing- End Curious Brewery		2	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	**31**	**6**
W 2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	S 5	Templer Way- Godinton Road- Carlton Roundabout- Sackville Crescent- Godinton Road- End Elwick Road		2	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	**29**	**7**
W 4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	S 2	Residential Roads: Highfield Road- Sevington Road- Church Road		1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	**28**	**8**
W 5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	S 2	Residential Streets: Raymond Fuller Way- Clarke Crescent- George Williams Way to Canterbury Road- Willesborough Road		1	1	1	1	0	2	2	2	1	2	**28**	**8**

W1	Town Centre Core Walking Route	S1	Start Council- East Hill		2	1	1	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	**27**	**9**
W4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	S3	Bentley Road- Hunter Avenue- Tunnel New Town Road		2	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	2	1	**26**	**10**
W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	S4	Repton Manor Residential Streets: Barley Mow View- Sir John Fogge Avenue- Repton Avenue		1	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	**25**	**11**
W4	Hythe Road to Newtown Road	S4	New Town Road to Tunnel to Train Station- End Train Station		2	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	**25**	**11**
W2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	S1	Start High Street- New Street- New Street and Chart Road Roundabout- Maidstone Road to Templer Way Roundabout		2	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	**24**	**12**

W 3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	S 4	Residential Streets Athol Road- St Stephens Walk- Cryol Road- Beaver Lane		2	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	**24**	**12**
W 2	Maidstone Road to Orchard Heights and Repton Manor	S 2	Maidstone Road - Orchard Heights Roundabout		1	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	**22**	**13**
W 5	Conningbr ook Kenningto n Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	S 3	Canterbury Road from Willesborough Road crossing to M20 Crossing		1	2	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	**21**	**14**
W 5	Conningbr ook Kenningto n Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	S 6	Canterbury Road from M20- Magazine Road- Malvern Road- Quantock Drive -End Maidstone Road		1	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	**21**	**14**

W 5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	S 5	Brybrooke Road-Kinney Lane		2	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	**20**	**15**
W 3	Beaver Road Stanhope and Beaver Lane	S 1	Start Train Station- Beaver Road and Jacques Faucheux Crossing- Beaver Road until Bond Road corner		1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	**19**	**16**
W 5	Conningbrook Kennington Faversham Brybrooke Canterbury Road	S 4	Faversham Road from crossing with Canterbury Road-Park Road-Park Vale		1	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	**19**	

The following details how prioritisation of the categories was decided on walking routes:

- **Attractiveness:** The audits evaluated the attractiveness of the walking routes by assessing the maintenance of footways, the presence of littering, the condition of street furniture, evidence of vandalism, whether there is natural surveillance or isolated routes, the levels of traffic noise and pollution, the presence of lighting, the use of guardrails and bollards, as well as the use of temporary features.

- **Comfort:** Comfort was evaluated by looking at the condition of footways, the presence of crossovers resulting in uneven surface fretted or subsided pavement uneven patching or trenching, by estimating footway width and occasions of 'give and take', as well as looking at footway parking. The width on staggered crossings pedestrian islands and refuges and the gradient of slopes were evaluated. Temporary obstructions, barriers and gates restricting access, bus shelters restricting clearance width, and poorly drained footways were assessed.

- **Directness:** The directness of footway provision and their ability to cater for pedestrian desire lines was evaluated. The location of crossings in relation to desire lines was assessed. The audits also looked at whether or not there were any delays in using the crossings by looking at the gaps in traffic. The impact of controlled crossings, such as single phase pelican puffin or zebra crossings on journey time were assessed by looking at whether or not any delays were created. Green man time was also assessed to determine if pedestrians would benefit from extended green man time. Other directness aspects inspected included routes to and from bus not accommodated, steps restricting access for all users, and confusing layout for pedestrians.

- **Safety:** Safety was assessed by looking at traffic volume and pedestrians' ability to keep distance from traffic. Traffic speed was also evaluated as well as visibility for all users.

- **Coherence:** For coherence, the audits looked at the provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

The process undertaken to prioritise the identified projects follows the principles set out in the Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Technical guidance (Chapter 7) [1] whilst also taking into consideration the DfT Active Mode Appraisal guidance (AMAT)[2] and a range of local assessments. This includes assessing the effectiveness of the project when assessed against a range of criteria, including links to local policies.

The prioritisation process also makes an assessment of each project based on an economic assessment which considers whether the project is value for money and can attract funding and overall deliverability. This assesses the timescales for delivery of the project over the short, medium and long term, and deliverability of the projects based on likely political support and feasibility.

[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/607016/cycling-walking-infrastructure-technical-guidance.pdf

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/webtag-tag-unit-a5-1-active-mode-appraisal-may-2018

The scoring method is below:

0	No Positive Impact
1	Low Positive Impact
2	High Positive Impact

The scoring criteria assessments are explained in more detail below:

Effectiveness Criteria

Existing **Route Comfort and attractiveness** were assessed during the route project/scheme selection process. An identified project which improves the route comfort and attractiveness for users is likely to attract and encourage increased future usage and therefore where a benefit is identified, a project/scheme is scored positively.

Links with existing route/network is an important consideration when assessing whether a project is likely to make improvements which will encourage increased usage of cycle paths and pedestrian footpaths.

Whether a project/scheme leads to creating a **Road safety improvement** is an important aspect of assessing its effectiveness. Where projects are likely to improve security and safety measures for cyclists and pedestrians by raising awareness of cyclists/pedestrians in the area, reducing speeds of other modes of transport, or segregating the active mode from traffic, this project will score more positively.

Policy Links - The Ashford Green Corridor Network is an important aspect of the towns green infrastructure, but also a key movement network for pedestrians and cyclists which is mostly vehicle free. The recently adopted Green Corridor action plan[3] and Local Plan Policy ENV2[4] encourages improvements to the network

Improving links to schools and local services such as transport hubs, retail, community and leisure facilities for the active travel mode is a key aim of the project. Determining the purpose of users journeys, and in particular between children and adults is identified as an important aspect of prioritisation assessment within the AMAT tool (2.5). When undertaking the route selection process, which are located around the Town Centre, it was identified that many of the active mode users were school children accessing the several schools with the routes, and adults accessing the town centre shops and services or commuting to work or the train station, which links several of the routes. Part of the assessment therefore scores projects positively where they will be likely to improve accessibility by active mode to one of these key areas, and have safety and time saving impacts.

Value for money and funding potential assesses the cost of the project, either low, medium or high.

Political support (elected members, members of the public and government agencies) is crucial for a number of reasons when agreeing suggested improvements.

Delivery Timescales and whether realistically the scheme can be delivered within a short, medium or long term aspiration

[3] https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/5476/green-corridor-action-plan-2017.pdf
[4] https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/7542/adopted-ashford-local-plan-2030-2.pdf

Feasibility of delivery is one of the key aspects, there are a number of factors including land ownership, impact on other users, costs, ongoing maintenance, and the quality of the land, heritage factors and demand.

5.1 – Route Rationale with stakeholders

This section categorises each route as high, low and medium priority. This reflects the above prioritisation exercise, together with review by KCC as the Highway Authority with responsibility for implementing these measures.

Route 1 - Hythe Road – Mace Lane

Priority = High
Timescale = Long
Feasibility = Medium

***Link 1*: Somerset Road/Mace Lane (between Forge Lane – Mill Court Roundabout)**
Little design scope (even for shared use facilities) within the existing highways configuration, particularly between Forge Lane and Wellesley Road) for improving cycle facilities. This section would need significant investment and re-design to deliver high quality cycle infrastructure. Space for protected cycle facilities and improved cycle facilities could be gained from reducing existing lane widths and removal of central median. Complimentary junction improvements would also be required along the route.

***Link 2*: Hythe Road (between Mill Court Roundabout – Mabledon Avenue (Esso Garage)**
The design for the whole route is most constrained between the roundabout and Esso Garage, and there is little scope for installing segregated facilities. An alternative approach could be to focus on streetscape improvements that improve the overall environment for pedestrians and cyclists without protected cycle facilities. Any improvements for cycling would require modifications to existing kerbside restrictions.

***Link 3*: Hythe Road II (Mabledon Avenue (Esso Garage) – Railway Bridge)**
Introduction of new on-street cycle facilities could be created through removal of existing central hatching between Esso Garage and the Railway Bridge. Any improvements for cycling would require modifications to existing kerbside restrictions.

***Link 4*: East of Railway Bridge**
Connect route beyond the railway bridge
Essella Road – Osbourne Road link has been considered as a complimentary feeder route.

Route 2 - Canterbury / Faversham Road

Priority = High
Timescale = Medium
Feasibility = Medium

***Link 3*: Canterbury Road to road bridge at junction with Simone Weil Avenue**
The Junction would need upgrading to incorporate cycle facilities. Junction with Bybrook Road would also need improving.

Link into Kinney's Lane should also be upgraded and made easier to connect too.
Convert existing NB cycle facilities into permanent protected facilities. Design would include floating bus stops, revised kerbside restrictions and treatments of side-entry arms.
Existing SB cycle facilities could also be upgraded to segregated cycle facilities. There is scope to introduce protected cycle facilities within the existing SB bus lane by reducing width of central hatching/median.

Existing footways over M20 bridge would need upgrading to shared use as there isn't sufficient width available for protected facilities. Junction with M20, slip would require incorporation of cycle facilities e.g. ASLs.

***Link 4a:* Bridge to Town Centre**
Existing shared use facilities are substandard and not wide enough to be comfortably shared by cycles + pedestrians.
Section between M20 junction and Magazine Road could incorporate protected cycle facilities through removal of central hatching. Side-entry junctions, including Heathfield Road, will need lightening.

***Link 4b*: Bridge to Town Centre**
Design scope is limited by narrow carriageway and narrow footways. Recommendation to consider 'Healthy Streets' measures to calm traffic and reduce speeds = sinusoidal humps + reduce speed limit.
Consider cycles negotiating the Somerset Road junction? Existing crossings are toucans but the islands are very narrow on the junction.

Recommendation - Consideration to the onward connection into the town centre. Cyclists will use Park Street. Improvement needs to take place to be more amenable environment for cycling.

Route 3 - Highworth /A20 = Long Term

Priority = Medium
Timescale = Long
Feasibility = Low

Link 1: **A20 (Orchard Heights – Drovers Roundabout)**
Scope for improvement on cycle/footway.
- North side - as route appears to end and narrow after Orchard Heights. This gap in route should be filled. Headway treatments at junctions with Campion Close should be considered.
- South side – install new path to connect between bus stop and Orchard Heights junction.

Link 2**: A292 (Drovers to Barrow Hill)**
Existing shared use facilities require significant investment to be considered comfortable for pedestrians and cycles to use, and the alternative for introducing dedicated cycle facilities will require redesign of existing corridor.

Existing shared use facilities on north side are of poor quality – they would require widening and headway treatments. South side is not currently labelled as shared use and is not suitable for conversion either.

Any significant improvements for cycling on Link 2 would require reconfiguration of existing highways layout including the Gyratory system around the Barrow Hill Veterinary School.

Link 3**: A292 (Barrow Hill to Forge Lane Junction)**
Existing shared use facilities are narrow and part of popular walking route to town centre. Similarly, to Link 2, significant rethink of existing highway layout would be required to introduce protected cycle facilities.

Link 4: Magazine Road (Barrow Hill – Canterbury Road)
Existing shared use facilities are narrow and compromised by frequent vehicle crossovers and side entry junctions. Small improvements could be made at junctions and pinch points but the route would still not generate a high score from the RST. The design scope for wider improvements depends on the available widths

Route 4 - Repton

Priority = Medium
Timescale = Short
Feasibility = High

Link 1: Carlton Road (Tank Roundabout - Western Avenue)
Improve entry treatment of Bridge Road/Carlton Road and continue cycle facility north towards Tank Roundabout. Remove existing verge and convert to shared use path.
Install crossing facility on Carlton Road to connect existing cycle facilities from railway bridge.

Link 2**: Godinton Road (Western Avenue – West Street**)
Improve tie-in of existing cycle link at junction of Gasworks Lane. Reduce corner radii and consider raised table. Consider 'Healthy Streets' measures to calm traffic and reduce speeds = sinusoidal humps + reduce speed limit.

Link 3**: Elwick Road (West Street – Bank Street)**
Existing on-street conditions are sufficient

Link 4: Bank Street

Route 5 - Victoria Park

Priority = High
Timescale = Short
Feasibility = High

Improved scores for Comfort for park sections as I think existing facilities should be considered as 3- 3.5m wide.

Route 6 - Ashford Oak

Priority = Low
Timescale = Medium
Feasibility = High

Link 1: **Arlington – Noakes Meadow**
Cyclists could be on carriageway - Route would benefit from traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and make more comfortable for cycling. Junction of Noakes Meadow/ Jemmett Road should be upgraded to raise awareness of cycle manoeuvres at junction.
Route would require wayfinding as otherwise could be quite hard to find in residential area.

Link 2**: Noakes Meadows – Jemmett Road**
Cyclists could be on carriageway - Route would benefit from traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and make more comfortable for cycling. Good existing connection from Noakes Meadow across playing fields.

Link 3: **Jemmett Road – Victoria Park**
Cyclists could be on carriageway - Route would benefit from traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and make more comfortable for cycling. Existing shared use path on western footway is very narrow and cycling on carriageway would be more comfortable.

Route 7 - Jemmett Road

Priority = High
Timescale = Short
Feasibility = High

Link 1: **Woolreeds Road**
Considered raised table at junction with Cryol Road to provide link into park, and at junction with Arcon Road to improve link into shared use path. Consider traffic calming on Woolreeds Road to improve cycle comfort. Reduce speed limit to 20mph. De-clutter shared use path between Arcon Road and Beaver Lane. Install toucan/parallel zebra crossing across Beaver Lane and convert adjoining footways to shared use.

Link 2: **Jemmett Road – Noakes Meadow**
Cyclists could be on carriageway - Route would benefit from traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and make more comfortable for cycling

Route 8 - Beaver Road

Priority = Medium
Timescale = Medium
Feasibility = High

Introduce segregated cycle facilities on Beavers, possibly as part of wider corridor improvements on Beavers Lane and Brookfield Road. No cycle facilities at Beaver Lane/ Beaver Road/ Norman Road junction.

Link 1: **Beaver Road North – Bus Gate**
Narrow carriageway and on-street parking restrict design scope for Beaver Road. Traffic calming such as Sinusoidal Humps would help to create more comfortable conditions for cycling and reduce vehicle speeds.

Link 2**: Bus Gate – Bridge**
Existing streetscape is very industrial and not conducive to cycling, and the current shared use facilities are of poor quality. Unclear of the extents of the shared use facilities at junction with Victoria Road and how cyclists join them. Carriageway is very wide.

Route 9 - Newtown

Priority = High
Timescale = Medium
Feasibility = Medium

Link 1: **Newtown Road (Turner Close to Outlet Entry)**
Junction improvements at junction of Turner Close/Newtown Road to raise profile of junction and merging cycle routes. Raised junction would help achieve this.
Consider ‘Healthy Streets’ measures on Newtown Road to calm traffic and reduce speeds = Sinusoidal humps + reduce speed limit. Scope for protected cycle facilities is limited by existing narrow carriageway dimensions and bus facilities further complicate.
Existing roundabout is not suitable for cycling and crossing facilities are also poor for pedestrians.

***Link 2*: Station Access Road (Outlet Entry to Town Centre)**
Existing facilities could be improved by incorporating adjoining verge within shared use. Consider junction improvements at junction of Station Access Road/ Park/ Car Park Access to raise awareness of pedestrians and cycles using the junction.

***Link 3:* Station onwards to town centre**

Chapter 6: Integration and application

6.1 - Policy integration

6.1.1 - Links to wider strategies and complementary measures

Recommendations

- Council will consider adoption of LCWIP as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (As standalone or as part of other emerging SPDs)
- To consult on LCWIP and promote its adoption by elected members as supporting evidence to the Development Plan
- Linking the LCWIP to the Carbon Neutral by 2030 Pledge
- Linking the LCWIP to the Corporate Plan objectives. Recommendation would be that if and when the LCWIP is adopted it is reviewed every 5 years
- Linking the LCWIP to the implementation of the Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy 2019 - 2029.

6.2 - Funding and implementation

Delivery of key elements of this cycle network is dependent on available funding. A variety of funding sources are available to us, but at time of publication there is no specific government funding for delivering LCWIPs. All applications for external funding will be sourced alongside key stakeholders.

Securing substantially increased funding for cycling in Ashford is key to truly integrating cycling into all local transport and planning projects, to ensuring that cycling provision is ambitious and designed to a high standard, and to ensuring that cycling is integral to other transport networks.

The identified infrastructure will be delivered via a variety of mechanisms, including delivery by the Council and its partners and through development proposals. As well as its own internal resources, the Council will pursue external funding, particularly given that many of the proposed actions will have positive benefits for many stakeholders

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a mechanism introduced under the Planning Act 2008 which aims to provide a more consistent approach to determining financial contributions from new development towards local infrastructure provision. The proceeds of the levy can contribute towards local and sub-regional infrastructure to support the development of an area in line with local authorities' development plans, which can include roads and transport schemes. These projects are identified in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The Council is considering how to bring forward CIL in the borough of Ashford, and intend to consult on proposals in early 2020 but projects identified in the LCWIP could be included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and funding statement.

These mechanisms together will assist to enable ABC to seek appropriate contributions to the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure identified in the LCWIP through CIL funding or planning agreements in the form of Section 106 obligations or Section 278 highway agreements.

6.3 - Monitoring

The Ashford Local Plan 2030 was adopted in February 2019. It includes requirements under policies TRA5 and TRA6 to plan for pedestrians and cyclists as part of development schemes. Policy TRA8 of the Local Plan 2030 requires Transport Assessments or Statements to be submitted as part of larger schemes, which would need to address walking and cycling and local and wider connections to active travel modes. The effectiveness of these policies are monitored annually as part of the Authority Monitoring Report, through indicators set out in Appendix 6 of the Local Plan.

Ashford will also consider incorporating an adopted LCWIP and/or identified projects from the LCWIP into emerging Supplementary Planning Document/s (SPD) where it is able to support adopted Local Plan policies, but this will be required to go through public consultation stages. It is also recommended that this LCWIP will be updated periodically, to ensure that the identified projects are still relevant. This will enable the review of the relevant Local Plan policies to incorporate recommendations and/or projects contained within the most up to date LCWIP.

As important as building a route itself, is maintenance post construction. The value of an enhanced network of facilities is greatly reduced if the network is not maintained.

Arrangements for ongoing maintenance should be included when considering the design detail, e.g. materials used, extreme weather, landscaping.

Active travel corridors need special consideration in terms of ongoing maintenance. With sufficient funds this could include regular sweeping, surface repairs, gritting in cold weather, drain clearance and lighting repairs.

Monitoring and evaluating the benefits of investment in delivering the cycle network will be critical, and will enable organisations such as councils to make the case for future investment in the area. Monitoring will be carried out for individual schemes and the whole programme of network improvements.

Chapter 7 – Bibliography

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ASHFORD CYCLING & WALKING STRATEGY 2019-2029

ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy brings together policies and related actions to promote walking and cycling and the delivery of related infrastructure in Ashford Borough with the aim of increasing the proportion of journeys made by these active travel modes

The Strategy provides a basis for making bids for improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in Ashford Borough.

The Strategy will help to secure support for walking and cycling for other possible funding streams eg. Developer funding via s106 obligations and CIL

The emphasis of the Strategy has been on identifying the improvements required to deliver a comprehensive and well connected walking and cycling network which will help to make both cycling and walking more attractive for journeys within the borough.

The Ashford urban area is served by an excellent network of cycleways and footpaths, many of which are based along the existing river corridors and have been delivered as part of the green corridor project

The number of cyclists using the routes to commute to the station has increased significantly so there is already a significant amount of existing infrastructure in place and a key challenge is to increase awareness and promote its use whilst also making sure the infrastructure is improved and extended where possible.

The Strategy also seeks to increase cycling participation for recreation and leisure and daily journeys by promoting cycling as a key priority, providing new facilities and enhancing existing facilities and promoting local participatory events.

BENEFITS OF CYCLING AND WALKING

In towns and cities across Britain, increasingly cycling and walking are becoming more and more popular and is regarded as the preferred means of travel – it is a quick, easy and green way of getting around – whether for work, going to school , or simply leisure and fitness.

HEALTH – by making cycling and walking the norm and incorporating it into everyday life, particularly in making short trips, this improves physical activity and fitness, and contributes to the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

ENVIRONMENT – cycling and walking are low impact, zero emissions means of getting from A to B and by replacing car journeys with trips by bike it will help to improve air quality and create a better living environment.

TRANSPORT – travelling by bike can help to reduce congestion and free up road space for businesses and other road users.

SOCIAL INCLUSION – cycling and walking provide an affordable way of getting around for people who do not have access to a private car.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH – building cycling and walking infrastructure into new developments can make sure that they are fully integrated into the developments from the outset and ensure that they are linked to the wider network of existing and proposed routes .

SAFETY – the more people who travel by bike, the more it helps to change the perception of cycling as a means of travel.

TOURISM – promoting cycling and walking tourism benefits related businesses – cafes and pubs, local attractions benefited such as museums and historic houses and accommodation providers. It can also lead to the promotion of local businesses catering for the needs of cyclists.

4% In 2013, 4% of UK residents said they cycled at least once a day

43% This compares to 43% in the Netherlands where 27% of all trips are made by bike

and where in cities such as Utrecht that has a population of 345,000, 125,000 people use a bike on a daily basis

3% Currently only 3% of trips in Ashford are made by bike

6% The target for the Strategy is to increase that to 6% over its lifetime

The Government's targets to reach by 2025 are:

- Double cycling from 0.8 billion to 1.6 billion stages (a stage is a unit of travel when there is a change in the mode of transport ie. a journey cycling to a railway station to catch the train to work is one cycle stage. This allows cycling and walking to be included and counted in journeys when they are not the main mode.)
- Increase walking to 300 stages per person per year
- Reduce the number of cyclists killed or injured each year
- Increase the percentage of school children (5-10 years) that walk to school from 49% to 55%

By 2040 the government's ambition for cycling and walking is to deliver,

BETTER SAFETY

'A safe and reliable way to travel for short journeys'

- streets where cyclists and walkers feel they belong, and are safe
- better connected communities
- safer traffic speeds, with lower speed limits where appropriate to the local area
- cycle training opportunities for all children

BETTER STREETS

'Places that have cycling and walking at their heart'

- places designed for people of all abilities and ages so they can choose to walk or cycle with ease
- improved public realm
- better planning for walking and cycling
- more community-based activities, such as led rides and play streets where local places want them
- a wider green network of paths, routes and open spaces

BETTER MOBILITY

'More people cycling and walking – easy, normal and enjoyable'

- more high quality cycling facilities
- more urban areas that are considered walkable
- rural roads which provide improved safety for walking and cycling
- more networks of routes around public transport hubs and town centres, with safe paths along busy roads
- better links to schools and workplaces
- technological innovations that can promote more and safer walking and cycling
- behaviour change opportunities to support increased walking and cycling
- better integrated routes for those with disabilities or health conditions

THE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Local Transport Plan – Delivering Growth Without Gridlock 2016-2031 – identifies the transport priorities for Kent through appropriate strategies, policies and action plans. The LTP specifically seeks to deliver a safer road, footway and cycleway network to reduce the likelihood of casualties, to deliver schemes that reduce the environmental footprint of transport, and to provide and promote active travel choices for all members of the community to encourage good health and wellbeing, and implement measures to improve local air quality.

The LTP aims to make active travel – which means walking or cycling as a means of transport rather than for leisure purposes – an attractive and realistic choice for short journeys. It can benefit health and wellbeing by incorporating physical activity into everyday routine as well as reduce the number of vehicles on the road and improve air quality.

KCC manages a network of 7,000km of public rights of way. People use this network to access the countryside, as a means to enjoy beautiful landscapes, to improve their health and wellbeing, and to support the rural economy. Much of the network still fulfils the purpose from which it evolved: providing motor-vehicle free access to schools, public transport hubs and local amenities. It has been demonstrated that walking, cycling and access to green spaces improves overall health – including lowering blood pressure, reducing stress, and improving mental health. Further, the attraction of these routes draws visitors to Kent, and countryside recreational activities benefit the local economy, which in turn supports essential services in rural areas.

The LTP specifically identifies Ashford as a Cycling Town. The delivery of an improving cycle network and the doubling of cycle parking at Ashford International Station in 2015 (as well as its 2010 Station of the Year award in the National Cycle Rail Awards) provide opportunities to capitalise on the use of this mode of transport.

ASHFORD'S CORPORATE STRATEGY

Ashford's Five Year Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 sets out the Council's direction and key priorities and specifically highlights the importance of sustainable modes of transport and in particular includes two priorities below.

PRIORITY 3 - ACTIVE AND CREATIVE ASHFORD – Healthy Choices through Physical, Cultural and Leisure Engagement – develop a "cycle town" strategy.

PRIORITY 4 – ATTRACTIVE ASHFORD – Countryside and Townscape, Tourism and Heritage – Develop cycle town strategy and connections between green spaces via cycle and footpath links.

LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS (LCWIP)

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), as set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a new, strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level.

They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10 year period, and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by bicycle.

The Borough Council was part of a Department of Transport pilot project to trial the preparation of LCWIPs and received support from consultants to analyse local census data to establish the most heavily used cycling and walking routes where key improvements would secure the greatest benefits. The key routes are set out in the delivery plan.

While the preparation of LCWIPs is non-mandatory, it has been indicated by the DfT that those local authorities who have plans will be well placed to make the case for future investment.

OUR AMBITIONS

- Ashford Borough is recognised as a cycling and walking friendly borough
- Cycling and walking routes are high quality, safe, accessible, well maintained, integrated, signed and promoted
- More people are cycling and walking for everyday journeys
- There are more opportunities for sustainable travel to work, school and key services and reliance on cars is reduced
- Drivers are more aware of and considerate towards cyclists and walkers
- Cyclists and walkers are more aware of their rights and responsibilites to other road and path users
- Off road cycling and walking networks are mainatined and improved
- Cycling and walking contribute to the visitor economy
- To secure a significant modal shift from cars to cycling and walking to reduce air pollution and carbon emissions and improve overall air quality.

OVERALL AIM OF THE CYCLING AND WALKING STRATEGY

> To encourage walking and cycling as the natural choices for shorter journeys in Ashford Borough – or as part of a longer journey – regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.

OVER-ARCHING PRINCIPLES

1 PROVIDING AND IMPROVING THE CYCLING AND WALKING NETWORK

New routes will be provided as safe, continuous links between communities and popular destinations such as shops, schools, leisure centres and work places. New developments will be expected to deliver cycling and walking routes within them and provide linkages to the wider network including sections of the National Cycling Network.

Principle 1 – A network of high quality cycling and walking routes will be completed or improved in Ashford town, Tenterden, Charing, Hamstreet and Wye. This will connect with the Borough-wide network of cycle and pedestrian routes including the National Cycling Network. Detailed recommendations for new and improved routes can be found in the Appendix (p24) of this report.

Principle 2 – Wherever possible measures will be provided which give cyclists and pedestrians priority over motorised traffic in terms of accessibility and journey time.

2 CYCLE PARKING

Cycle parking needs to be convenient, safe and secure and there is a specific requirement in the Ashford Local Plan (policy TRA6) that it is provided as part of new development. Cycle parking can be complemented by related facilities for cyclists including secure storage or drying facilities for clothing and equipment and can incorporate showers and changing facilities.

Cycling can form part of longer journeys if there is good integration with public transport and high quality, safe and secure cycle parking is essential to this. There is substantial cycle parking provision at Ashford Station that was extended and increased in 2015. The existing station cycle parking is extremely well used on a daily basis and this has been complemented by the Brompton Dock cycle hire scheme. Cycle parking at other public transport hubs should be well provided and should be kept under review.

Principle 3 – Cycle parking/storage will be provided in all developments in accordance with Policy TRA6 of the Ashford Local Plan and at key public transport links and all public buildings.

3 MAINTENANCE OF THE EXISTING NETWORK

There is extensive existing network of cycleways and pedestrian routes throughout the Borough that unless they are maintained to an appropriate standard will quickly fall into disrepair and will be difficult to use. It is imperative that the network is maintained with structural maintenance and more regular cleansing and cutting back of vegetation. This also includes ensuring that roads frequented by cyclists are maintained, with whipping branches and vegetation kept cut back. Similarly, there is a need to improve and provide appropriate signage and way-marking and lighting that is appropriate for its location.

Principle 4 – The Borough Council will work with its partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks and pedestrian routes within the Borough.

4 SAFER CYCLING

A key barrier to the increase in cycling within the Borough is the perception of relative safety of bicycle users on existing routes and roads. There are a number of ways in which this can be tackled including considering detailed design and layout of new routes or adapting existing routes. Cycling to school is an important consideration as it promotes healthier lifestyles, can reduce congestion and establishes a long term commitment to cycling so paths and routes to schools are important as well as traffic calming around schools. Equally bike handling training for children is important to increase confidence and Bikeability training comprises three levels of competency based training and has been supported for some time by the Borough Council.

Principle 5 – The Borough Council will ensure that the safety of cyclists is considered as a priority in the provision of new routes and the adaptation and re-configuration of existing routes, particularly around existing and proposed schools. The Borough Council is committed to its support of the roll out of Bikeability training within the Borough.

5 PROMOTING CYCLING AND WALKING IN ASHFORD

Ashford town has one of the best developed network of cycleways/footpaths in Kent that has developed over a number of years but the perception is that the network is not as well used as it should be and is not being used to its full potential. It is essential therefore that there is more promotion of the positive benefits of cycling and walking and alternative means of travel.

It is essential that cycling and walking are actively promoted otherwise the use of cycle routes and footpaths is unlikely to increase. The 'Explore Kent' and 'Visit Kent' initiatives provide useful information on cycling and walking routes in the Borough. The Borough Council's website will be kept up to date with information regarding cycling and walking within the Borough. All cycleways and footpaths will be fully signposted and local clubs and cycle shops could help to promote cycling within the borough. The Council will ensure that its published information regarding cycling and walking is kept up to date.

Principle 6 – Ensure cycleways and pedestrian routes are fully advertised and appropriately signposted and cycling and walking mapping is available for all routes.

6 TOURISM

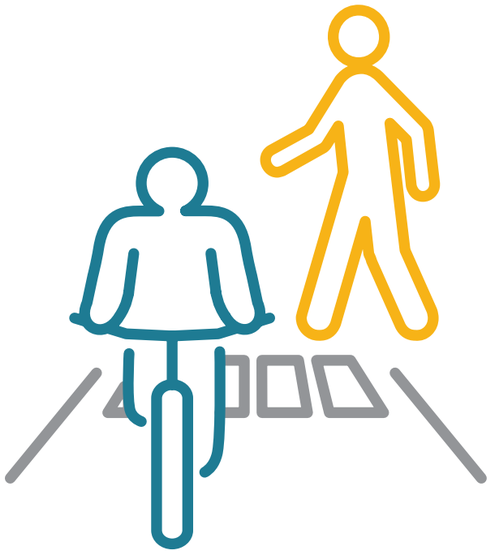
Cycling and walking can be an important source of tourism and in particular there are cycling opportunities within the Borough that could be exploited as part of an improved visitor offer.

The proposal to upgrade the existing public right of way which runs parallel to the Royal Military Canal to a shared path/cycleway, is an ambitious project that will provide a unique opportunity to travel through the rural Romney Marsh area in a healthy and sustainable manner. By upgrading and promoting the route it will encourage healthy lifestyles for people of all abilities; encourage managed access to the countryside by working with local landowners and partner agencies; encourage visitors and tourists to the area which will benefit existing local businesses and potentially encourage new businesses to develop; help to celebrate and promote the unique heritage of the area and enjoy the unique and diverse wildlife in the area.

This multi-faceted project that will deliver against the following corporate priorities: **Corporate Priority 1 – Enterprising Ashford** by stimulating interest in the rural economy and support for allied businesses. **Corporate Priority 3 – Active and Creative Ashford** by encouraging physical activity and engagement in cultural and leisure activities. **Corporate Priority 4 – Attractive Ashford** by strengthening the local tourism offer for the Romney Marsh and surrounding areas, as well as linking to associated tourism providers further afield in the Borough.

Ashford Borough Council is keen to work with landowners and stakeholders to ensure a sympathetic and sustainable route is created that can eventually join with existing and proposed sections of the Royal Military Canal shared pathway along its entire 28 mile length.

Principle 7 – The Borough Council will support and promote cycling and walking projects that contribute to the overall tourism offer in the Borough.



THE DELIVERY PLAN

The delivery plan sets out the proposed projects that are required to enable the Strategy to be implemented and sets out the long term, local approach to deliver cycling and walking projects in the Borough over the lifetime of the Strategy.

It focusses on enabling cycling and walking for everyday journeys to reduce the reliance on car travel and create confident, active and healthy communities. It is focused on the six over-arching principles set out previously.

- Providing and Improving the cycling and walking network
- Cycle Parking
- Maintenance of the Existing Network
- Safer Cycling
- Promoting Cycling and Walking in Ashford
- Tourism

FUNDING

The draft Strategy proposes the initial funding of projects in the town centre and rural areas. In recent years there have been significant central government initiatives to promote cycling and walking with substantial funding available to identified locations. The Council's Strategy and in particular the Council's participation in the DfT Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan process means that the Council will be best placed to take advantage of further central government funding for cycling and walking infrastructure.

PARTNERSHIPS

There are clearly some keep partner organisations that can assist with project implementation.

- Department for Transport
- SUSTRANS
- Parish and Town Councils
- Kent County Council
- Relevant landowners

A PICTURE OF CYCLING AND WALKING IN ASHFORD TODAY

Ashford has shown the greatest percentage increase in the number of residents cycling to work over the period 2001-2011 at 8%. In overall terms, the total number of residents cycling to work was second only numerically to Canterbury – a university city of course which typically has higher numbers of cyclists.

In 2017, nationally the average person made 17 cycling trips and cycled 60 miles, made 2% of all their trips by cycling and covered just 1% of all their distance. Nationally, interestingly the most common purpose for cycling trips was commuting/ business (37%) followed by cycling for leisure (36%).

Ashford actually has one of the best developed network of cycleways in Kent with a mixture of off road dedicated routes and on road segregated road space.

8%

of residents cycling to work over the 10 years between 2001-2011

The Ashford Local Plan 2030 in policy TRA5 states that

Development proposals shall demonstrate how safe and accessible pedestrian access and movement routes will be delivered and how they will connect to the wider movement network. Opportunities should be proactively taken to connect with and enhance Public Rights of Way whenever possible, encouraging journeys on foot.

The Ashford Local Plan 2030 in policy TRA6 specifically seeks to improve conditions for cyclists through the following measures

- Promoting and developing a Borough-wide network of cycle routes
- Developments should, where opportunities arise, include safe, convenient and attractively designed cycle routes, including, where possible, connection to the Borough Wide cycle network
- Promoting and providing cycle parking facilities in town centres, at railways stations and at major public buildings, and requiring new development to provide cycle parking facilities in agreement with the Council
- Taking opportunities to consider active travel when designing new routes and establishing connections with existing routes, encouraging journeys by bike

The green corridor network of routes in the Ashford urban area has enabled the establishment of key pedestrian and cycleway links through the town. There has been an increase in cycling commuting principally to the station taking advantage of the network of off road routes. National Cycle Route NCN18 crosses the Borough in a linking rural Tenterden to the Ashford urban area and then out to the north and Wye in the direction of Canterbury. National Cycle Route 17 also is within the Borough boundary.

There have also been significant off-road dedicated cycle routes built and provided which have helped to improve connectivity and accessibility. Principally the South Willesborough Dykes route now links Park Farm to the international Station and in the rural area there is an off-road link from Godmersham and Chilham (part of NCN18).

The Council has worked closely with SUSTRANS who have carried out an extensive audit of the existing routes in the Ashford, Tenterden, Charing, Hamstreet and Wye. Those audits form the basis of the proposed improvements and projects in the delivery plan.

There are four dedicated cycle clubs within the Borough with large memberships promoting recreational cycling at all levels together with sporting activities related to two triathlon clubs.

APPENDIX – DELIVERY PLAN

1. Providing and Improving the Cycling and Walking Network

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Audit and assess priority routes, networks in smaller settlements and key routes linking them using DfT's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and Living Streets School Route and Community Street Audits Routes including: • Ashford Town Centre • Tenterden – provision of a network of pedestrian/cycle routes building on existing routes and providing routes as part of new development – TENT1A and B • Wye • Charing • Hamstreet – provision of a network of pedestrian/cycle routes for the village as part of the SUSTRANS report findings – linking to the Royal Military Canal project **Ashford circular route** – long term project to provide a linked network of pedestrian/cycle routes around the Ashford urban area that builds on existing routes but provide new routes as part of new development – Chilmington Green / Court Lodge / South of Kingsnorth / Park Farm / Park Farm South East / Cheesemans Green / Finberry / Waterbrook/ Sevington / Willesborough Lees/ Conningbrook/ Kennington site S2 / Eureka	ABC, Parish and Town Councils, KCC, Sustrans,	H
Carry out feasibility and outline design for LCWIPs in and between key settlements focussing on key routes as follows: 1 Beaver Road, Victoria Way and Jemmett Road areas 2 Repton – tank r/b through Godinton Road 3 Highworth School r/b to Lidl and off to Magazine Road areas 4 Canterbury Road to Magazine Road and Green Corridor (Ashford Rugby Club) areas 5 Hythe Road to Mace Lane and green corridor to Mabledown Road areas 6 Newtown Road from Outlet Centre to and from the station areas	ABC, Parish and Town Councils, KCC, Sustrans,	H
Conningbrook – Wye cycleway – provision of a dedicated off road cycle / pedestrian route linking the Conningbrook country park and associated residential development and the village of Wye that will improve accessibility to and from Wye and link into the wider rural network and connect to cycleway links to Canterbury	ABC, KCC, Wye PC	H
Charing Heath – Charing Greenway – provision of a dedicated cycle/ pedestrian "green-way" between Charing Heath and Charing to improve accessibility to the village	ABC, KCC, Charing PC	H
Replace expired monitoring-counters at 10 sites and install permanent counters at 10 additional sites	KCC	H
Produce LCWIP for Ashford Town Centre	ABC	H
Embed LCWIP in the Ashford Planning tool	ABC, KCC, Charing PC	H
Secure funding through LCWIPs from developers via Section 106	ABC, KCC	H

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Require that new developments and new roads include best practice pedestrian and cycling routes which are direct, well designed and permeable, take priority over motor traffic and are well connected to surrounding networks	ABC, KCC, developers	H
Require new workplace buildings to have Travel Plans which are active travel friendly, with sufficient cycle parking and facilities for showering/changing	ABC, KCC, Workplaces	M
Use best practice design guidelines to attract users of all ages and abilities and ensure a good quality and consistent experience	ABC, KCC	H
Construct priority routes identified in LCWIP for the town centre and Sustrans work in rural areas	ABC, KCC, Town Council and Parish Councils	H

2. Cycle Parking

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Delivery of cycle parking in accordance with Policy TRA6 of the Ashford Local Plan – policy TRA6 of the Local Plan requires (amongst other things) the promotion and provision of cycle parking facilities – in particular there is a requirement that new development provides appropriate levels of cycle parking	ABC, KCC	H
Ensure all staffed Council buildings have sufficient cycle parking which complies with modern standards	ABC	H
Ensure all railway stations have sufficient cycle parking which complies with modern standards	ABC, KCC, Charing PC	H

3. Maintenance of the Existing Cycling/Walking Network

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Establish a system for management of the cycling and walking network through maintenance and inspection, and assist in the reporting of maintenance and signage issues to ensure resolution	ABC, KCC, Parish Councils	H
Ensure all new routes have required permissive access and lease agreements	ABC, KCC	H
Improve existing key routes as part of a prioritised programme identified through route assessments	ABC, KCC	H
Audit and upgrade NCN routes	ABC, KCC	H
Signing – provision of improved signage where appropriate and maintenance of existing route signage	ABC, KCC	H
Line marking/segregation – maintenance of surface markings to ensure clear segregation	ABC, KCC	H
Legible Cycling wayfinding	ABC, KCC	H

4. Safer Cycling

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Implement enforcement practices that contribute to the safety and attractiveness of cycling and walking to make sure that • drivers are more aware of and considerate towards cyclists and walkers and • cyclists and walkers are more aware of their rights and responsibilities to other road and path users	ABC, KCC	M

5. Promoting Cycling and Walking

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Ensure the Borough's commitment to cycling and walking is recognised regionally and nationally	**ABC**	**H**
Work with cycling and walking groups, forums and partnerships as a mechanism for providing information, monitoring progress and budget allocation and consulting on proposals. Eg establishment of Cycling Forum or Bicycle Users Group	ABC	H
Support the production and actions of Travel Plans, support promotional campaigns, challenges and events	ABC	H
Continue rolling out Bikeability training for children	KCC	H
Produce town cycling maps which include guidance on safer cycling to include information for drivers on safe conduct, via the website	ABC, KCC	H
Provide cycle maintenance training	ABC	M
Establish the Borough Council as an active travel employer with the provision of adequate showers, changing, bike storage and parking	ABC	H
Work with local schools to promote active modes of travel for travel to school trips	KCC	M
Encourage development and usages of related apps to promote cycling and walking on a regular basis	ABC, KCC	M

6. Tourism

Project	Delivery Lead and Partners	Priority (H/M/L)
Produce borough wide cycling maps and available online via the Council's dedicated and tourism website	ABC	H
Promote newly improved and new routes	ABC	H
Encourage e bike tourism by working with local businesses and entrepreneurs to promote rental/bike hire schemes	ABC, private businesses	H

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736909/walking-and-cycling-statistics-england-2017.pdf

https://www.cyclinguk.org/statistics

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ASHFORD
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ASHFORD CYCLING & WALKING STRATEGY 2019 - 2029

OUR VISION

> To encourage walking and cycling as the natural choices for shorter journeys in Ashford Borough – or as part of a longer journey – regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.

OUR AMBITIONS

2019

- Ashford Borough is recognised as a cycling and walking friendly borough
- Cycling and walking routes are high quality, safe, accessible, well maintained, integrated, signed and promoted
- More people are cycling and walking for everyday journeys
- There are more opportunities for sustainable travel to work, school and key services and reliance on cars is reduced
- Drivers are more aware of and considerate towards cyclists and walkers
- Cyclists and walkers are more aware of their rights and responsibilites to other road and path users
- Off road cycling and walking networks are mainatined and improved
- Cycling and walking contribute to the visitor economy
- To secure a significant modal shift from cars to cycling and walking to reduce air pollution and carbon emissions and improve overall air quality.

2029

POLICIES – LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS (LCWIP)

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP), as set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a new, strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at local level.

They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks and form a vital part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by bicycle.

The Borough Council was part of a Department of Transport pilot project to trial the preparation of LCWIPs and received support from consultants to analyse local census data to establish the most heavily used cycling and walking routes where key improvements would secure the greatest benefits.

OUR STRATEGY

The Ashford urban area is already served by an excellent network of cycleways and footpaths, many of which are based along existing river corridors and have been delivered as part of the green corridor project. The number of cyclists using the routes to commute to the station has increased significantly due to the extensive existing infrastructure in place, but the key challenge going forward is to increase awareness and promote its use to local residents and visitors to the borough, whilst also ensuring the infrastructure is improved and extended where possible.

The Ashford Cycling and Walking Strategy therefore brings together policies and related actions to promote walking and cycling and the delivery of related infrastructure around Ashford Borough with the aim of increasing the proportion of journeys made by these active travel modes.

The Strategy also seeks to increase cycling participation for recreation and leisure and daily journeys by promoting cycling as a key priority, providing new facilities, enhancing existing facilities and promoting local participatory events.

4% In 2013, 4% of UK residents said they cycled at least once a day

43% This compares to 43% in the Netherlands where 27% of all trips are made by bike

3% Currently only 3% of trips in Ashford are made by bike

6% The target for the Strategy is to increase that to 6% over its lifetime

CYCLING TRENDS IN ASHFORD

In overall terms, in Kent the total number of residents cycling to work was second only numerically to Canterbury.

Ashford has one of the best developed network of cycleways in Kent with a mixture of off-road dedicated routes and segregated road space.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736909/walking-and-cycling-statistics-england-2017.pdf
https://www.cyclinguk.org/statistics

A PICTURE OF CYCLING AND WALKING IN ASHFORD TODAY

The Ashford Local Plan 2030 in policy TRA6 specifically seeks to improve conditions for cyclists through the following measures

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- Promoting and providing cycle parking facilities in town centres, 7 at railways stations and at major public buildings, and requiring new development to provide cycle parking facilities in agreement with the Council
- Taking opportunities to consider active travel when designing new routes and establishing connections with existing routes, encouraging journeys by bike.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The green corridor network of routes in the Ashford urban area has enabled the establishment of key pedestrian and cycleway links throughout the borough.

National Cycle Route NCN18 crosses the Borough, linking rural Tenterden to the Ashford urban area and then out to the north and Wye in the direction of Canterbury. National Cycle Route 17 is also within the Borough boundary.

There has also been significant provision of off-road cycle routes, which have helped to improve connectivity and accessibility. Principally, the South Willesborough Dykes route now links Park Farm to the International Station and in the rural area there is an off-road link from Godmersham and Chilham (part of NCN18).

The Council has worked closely with SUSTRANS, who have carried out an extensive audit of the existing routes in Ashford, Tenterden, Charing, Hamstreet and Wye. Those audits form the basis of the proposed improvements and projects in the delivery plan.

THE BENEFITS

In towns and cities across Britain, cycling and walking are becoming increasingly popular modes of transport and are regarded as the preferred means of travel; they are quick, easy and green ways of getting around – whether for work, going to school or simply leisure and fitness.

HEALTH – by making cycling and walking the norm and incorporating it into everyday life, particularly in making short trips, this improves physical activity and fitness, and contributes to the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

ENVIRONMENT – cycling and walking are low impact, zero emissions means of getting from A to B and by replacing car journeys with trips by bike it will help to improve air quality and create a better living environment.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH – building cycling and walking infrastructure into new developments can help to ensure that they are linked to the wider network of existing and proposed routes.

TRANSPORT – travelling by bike can help to reduce congestion and free up road space for businesses and other road users.

SOCIAL INCLUSION – cycling and walking provide an affordable way of getting around for people who do not have access to a private car.

SAFETY – the more people who travel by bike, the more it helps to change the perception of cycling as a means of travel.

TOURISM – promoting cycle tourism also has benefits for local businesses – local cafes, pubs and local attractions can all benefit from increased cycle tourism

OVERALL AIMS

1. **PROVIDING AND IMPROVING THE CYCLING AND WALKING NETWORK**
   New routes will be provided as safe, continuous links between communities and popular destinations. A network of high quality cycling and walking routes will be completed or improved in Ashford borough, Tenterden, Charing, Hamstreet and Wye.

2. **CYCLE PARKING**
   Cycle parking needs to be convenient, safe and secure and there is a specific requirement in the Ashford Local Plan (Policy TRA6) that is provided as part of new development. Cycle parking/storage will be provided in all developments in accordance with this policy and at key public transport links and all public buildings.

3. **MAINTENANCE OF THE EXISTING NETWORK**
   There is extensive existing network of cycleways and pedestrian routes throughout the Borough that unless they are maintained to an appropriate standard will quickly fall into disrepair and will be difficult to use. The Borough Council will work with its partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks and pedestrian routes within the Borough.

4. **SAFER CYCLING**
   A key barrier to the increase in cycling within the Borough is the perception of relative safety of bicycle users on existing routes and roads. The Borough Council will ensure that the safety of cyclists is considered as a priority in the provision of new routes and the adaptation and re-configuration of existing routes, including those around existing and proposed schools.

5. **PROMOTING CYCLING AND WALKING IN ASHFORD**
   Ashford borough has one of the best developed network of cycleways/ footpaths in Kent that has developed over a number of years, but the perception is that the network is not as well used as it should be and is not being used to its full potential. It is essential therefore that there is more promotion of the positive benefits of cycling and walking as alternative means of travel, and that cycleways and pedestrian routes are fully advertised and appropriately signposted.

6. **TOURISM**
   Cycling and walking can be an important source of tourism and in particular there are cycling opportunities within the Borough that could be exploited as part of an improved visitor offer. Ashford Borough Council is keen to work with landowners and stakeholders to ensure sympathetic and sustainable routes are created which will encourage healthy lifestyles for people of all abilities.

ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cycling and walking strategy

RESULTS REPORT

For more information, please contact:
tellusyourviews@ashford.gov.uk

Summary

Most respondents ride their bike for leisure (84%) and to keep fit (64%). Most respondents walked for leisure as well (81%) and to keep fit (62%).

Respondents who do not currently cycle cited problems with the roads (such as potholes and traffic) as the main issue, as well as personal reasons (e.g. lack of confidence when cycling). Popular locations to ride bikes were "around Ashford," near to the respondents home and to Ashford Town Centre.

Respondents would be encouraged to walk more often if crime was reduced and visibility was improved (e.g. through lighting and signage), if there was more, better quality infrastructure in place and a greater number of routes.

Respondents thought the strategy was "somewhat clear" (45%) or "very clear" (28%). Most respondents "strongly support" the proposed strategy (59%). Most respondents either "agree" (42%) or "strongly agree" (29%) with the proposed approach to cycle and pedestrian routes

The main issues and concerns around cycling and walking in Ashford were about safety, visibility and crime. There were also concerns about the routes not being connected sufficiently and the lack of maintenance of the paths and roads. In order to increase cycling and walking the council should address these concerns, as well as deliver more education, run events and clubs, increase and maintain the infrastructure, and better promote and sign the routes.

Background

The Cycling and Walking Strategy is a joint strategy which revises the council's previous Cycling Strategy approved in 2015. The strategy now focuses on both cycling and walking, which aims will bring benefits in health, transport and the economy. It is part of a wider strategy to improve overall sustainable transport, in particular making the town centre more accessible.

The Cycling and Walking Strategy has six main aims:

- To provide and improve the cycling and walking network
- To increase cycle parking around the borough
- Maintaining the existing cycling and walking network
- Focusing on safer cycling
- Promoting cycling and walking in the borough
- Increasing opportunities for cycling and walking tourism

The draft strategy was approved by the council's Cabinet to go out to consultation, to gather public views, gauge the level of support and make any changes to the strategy accordingly. The consultation ran from 10 May 2019 to 21 June 2019.

Methodology

The council ran an online questionnaire that was open to responses from members of the public and organisations. Some organisations were invited to take part via email. Residents could also comment on the strategy by emailing the TellUsYourViews inbox. The consultation ran for a period of 6 weeks, and was advertised on the website and council's social media pages. In total, 532 responses were recieved.

Section 1: About you

We asked for some personal information so we could assess which demographics within the borough have taken part, as well as which groups are cycling and walking the most at present.

Q1: What is your age group? Respondents were mainly from the 45-54 age group, with 150 respondents stating they were in this group. This was followed by 124 respondents in the 35-44 age group. Engagement was low in under 18s and 18-24 year olds.

Q2: Do you consider yourself to have a disability? A large majority of respondents do not consider themselves to have a disability (486 respondents). There were a few respondents who consider themselves disabled (25 respondents) and 11 individuals preferred not to say whether they consider themselves to have a disability.

Ward	Number of respondents
Biddenden	65
Furley	19
Victoria	18
Tenterden St Michaels	17
Willesborough	15

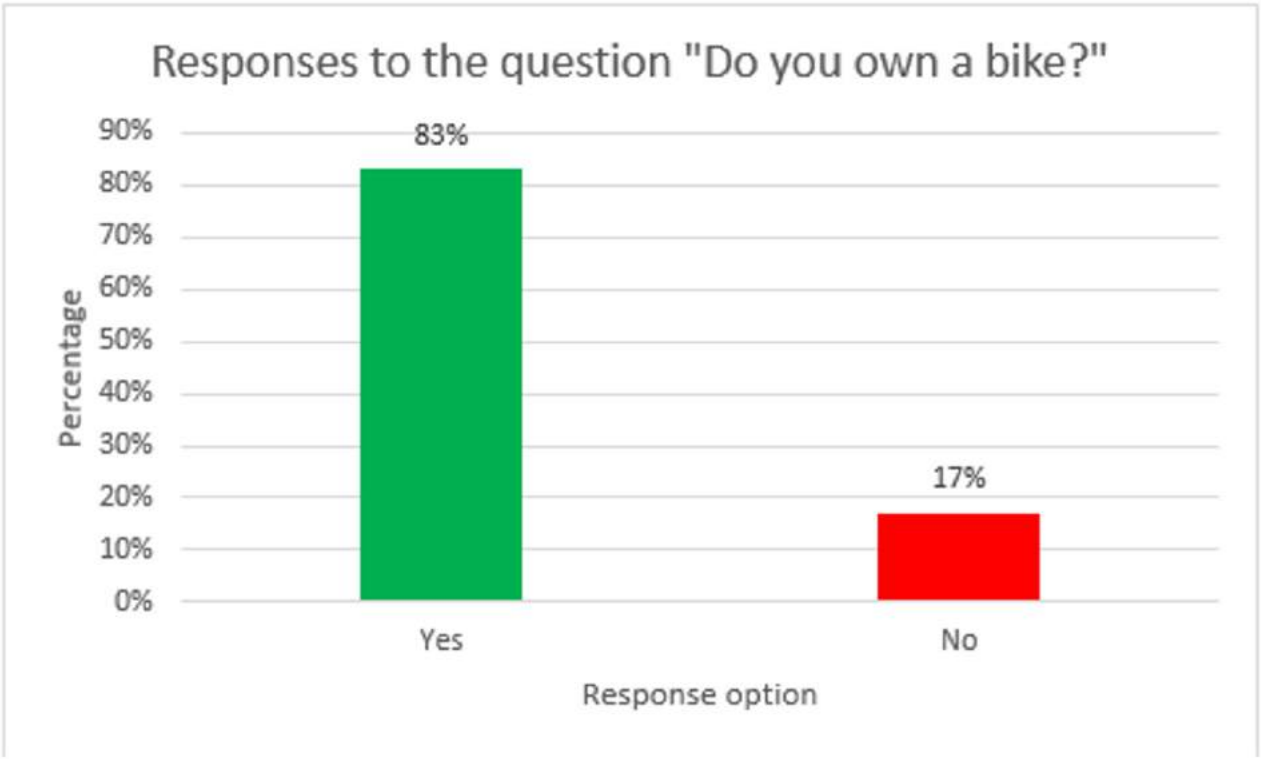
Q3: What is your postcode? A large number of respondents were from Biddenden ward. The consultation attracted responses outside of Ashford, from neighbouring districts such as Folkestone, Tunbridge Wells and Canterbury.

Q4: Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? Most respondents were responding as an individual, but several organisations also responded.

Q5: Which organisation are you responding on behalf of? Of the organisations, 2 were clubs and trusts, 7 were miscellaneous or commercial organisations, and 4 were council organisations.

Section 2: Cycling

Q6: Do you own a bike? Most respondents who took part in the survey own a bike (83%). Respondents who selected "no" (17%) were routed to question 9.



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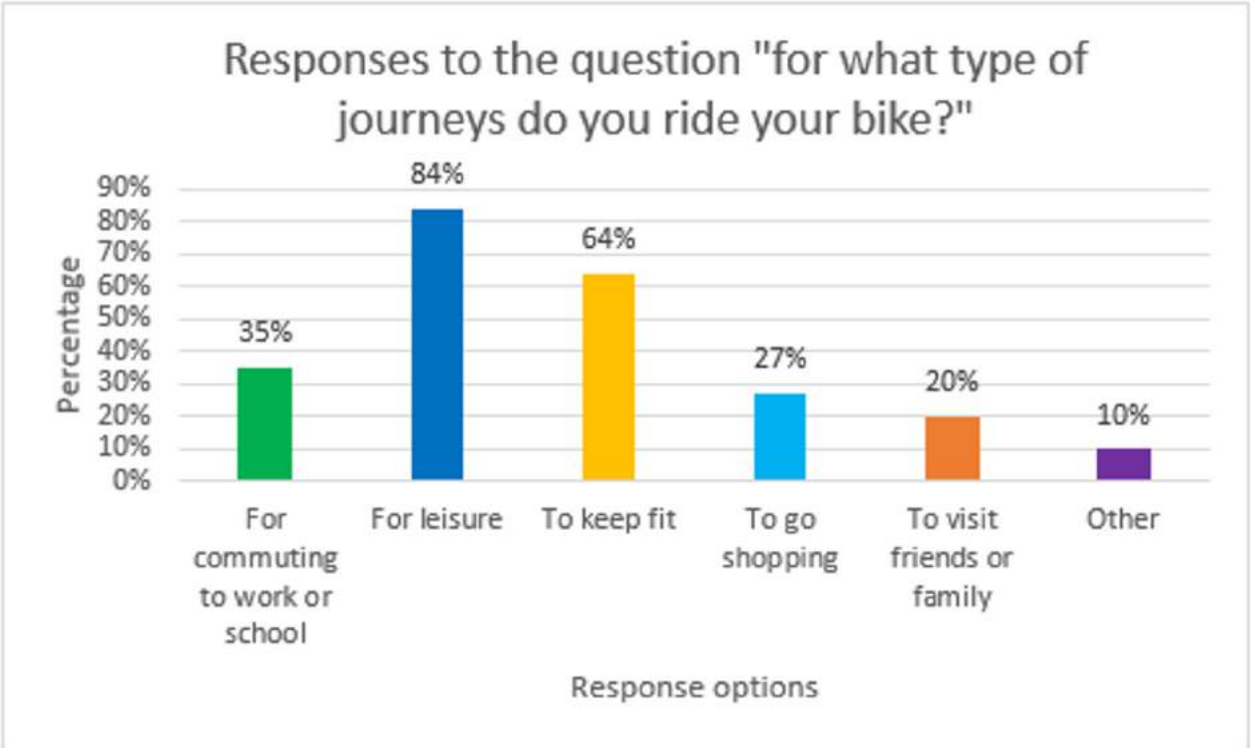
Q7: Where do you currently ride your bike? Answers to this question varied from giving a specific location to more general answers. “Around” Ashford was the most common response, followed by Near Home/Locally. The Town Centre was also a popular destination to cycle to. Some riders choose to cycle on roads, but others opted to use existing paths where they could.

Response given	No. of respondents
"around" Ashford	64
Near home or locally	44
Town Centre	43
All over Kent	39
On existing paths	36
On roads	35
Tenterden	32
In the countryside and rural areas	26
Off road	23
All over Ashford borough	16

n=406

Q8: For what type of journeys do you ride your bike? Respondents could select more than one option for this question. The most popular option was to ride a bike for leisure, followed by “to keep fit”. If the respondent chose “other” they could state other reason for riding their bike; such as errands, training and as part of club activities.



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Q9: If you do not currently cycle or do not cycle regularly, please let us know why this is? Most comments on this topic identified problems with the roads as a main reason for not cycling. These were mainly safety concerns about sharing the road with cars, particularly in locations where no alternative cycle paths were available.

Personal reasons was also a major cause of discouragement from cycling. These ranged from medical concerns to not owning or being able to ride a bike.

Problems with the routes related to a lack of existing pathways, or a lack of a connected cycle network, especially in more rural locations.

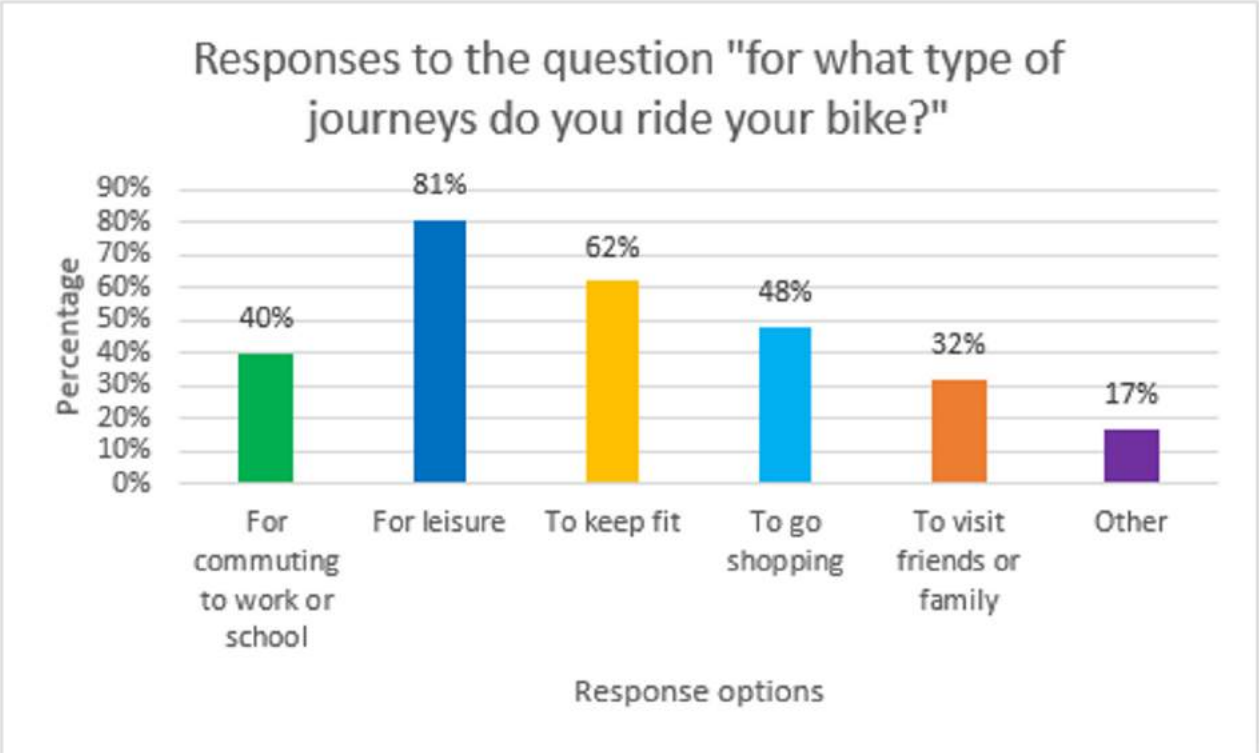
Personal safety and crime concerns were also a major concern. Many respondents were fearful of mugging, theft of their bike and being harassed by other cyclists or vehicles.

"I do not cycle as regularly as I like as we have young children and it is impossible to cycle out of the village without going on roads, which are too dangerous for children our age and we cannot transport all 4 bikes by car to somewhere suitable."

"The condition of the country lanes is very poor in places. The roads around Biddenden have become increasingly busy and drivers do not expect anyone elseto be using the roads making it feel very unsafe. I do not take my children out on their bikes. I think that you need to open the disused rail line between Tenterden and Headcorn as this would create a road free link for many communities to shops, schools and public transport."

Section 3: Walking

Q10: For what types of journeys do you walk? As with cycling, the main reasons behind journeys made on foot is for leisure, followed by keeping fit. It should also be noted that walking was a more popular option than cycling overall. When respondents selected “other” as an option, they could elaborate on activities missed by the multiple choice. The most popular other suggestion was “dog walking”.



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Q11: What would encourage you to walk more often? Safety, visibility and crime reduction were the main responses given. Respondents don’t feel safe on the roads or existing paths, as consistent with responses to other questions. Safety concerns arise from fear of being mugged or harassed, and poor lighting on some of the routes.

Improvement to infrastructure and facilities was also key to encouraging more people to walk. This includes suggestions such as quality pathways, more seating along the routes, and more, sensibly placed crossings.

Better routes overall were a popular idea, as walkers stated they want attractive, interesting destinations to go to. More routes and paths overall were desired for variety and convenience. Information about the routes should be communicated and promoted.

Addressing traffic concerns and segregated pathways were also suggested, but was less important in regards to walking than in regards cycling.

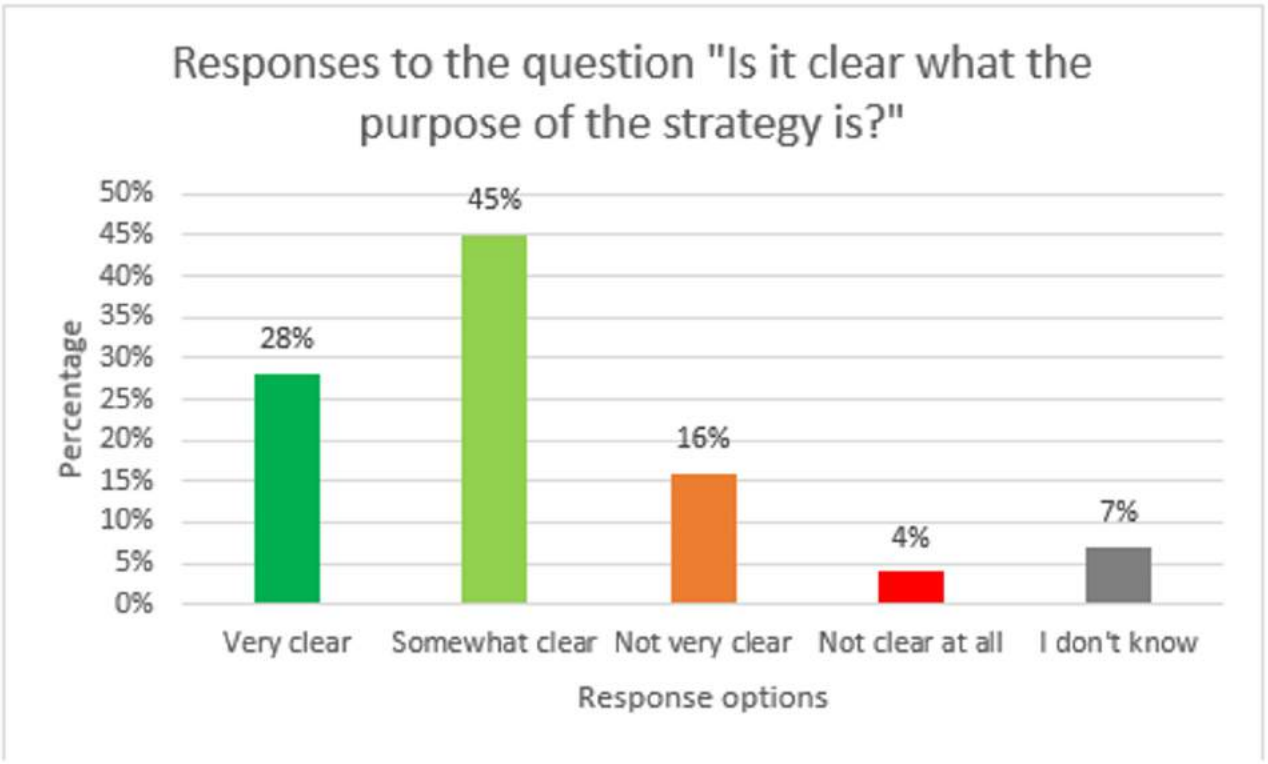
"Better maintained and flagged footpaths, with solid stiles or gates and waymarkers."

"Better rider shared paving. Traffic calming. Trim back hedgerows on corners that obstruct walkers seeing on-coming traffic."

"Proper walking paths. From where I live to go to Ashford there are no pavements. I would need to go on the road. If there were proper paths my whole family would definitely walk more to go and see their friends or to go to town."

Section 4: The Strategy

Q12: Is it clear what the purpose of the strategy is? Somewhat clear was the most selected response, followed by very clear. Overall the strategy has a clear purpose and was understood by respondents.



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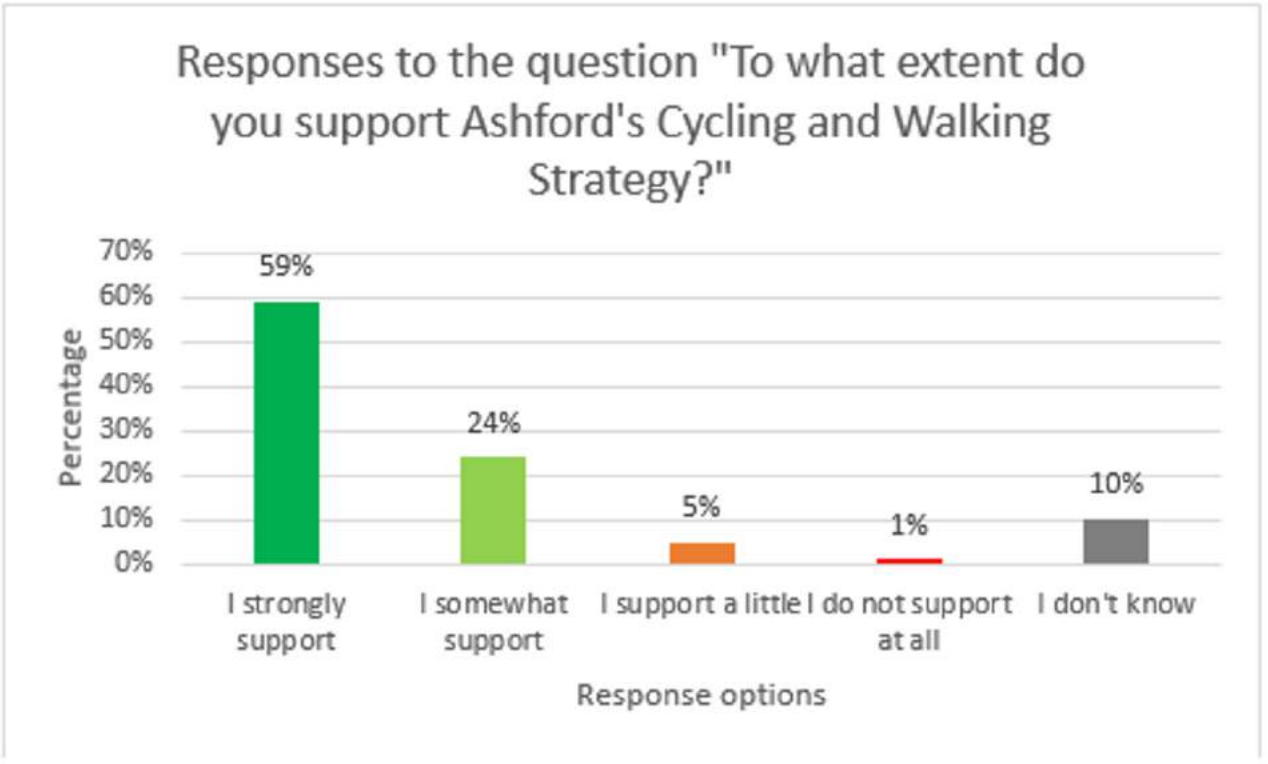
Q13: To what extent do you support Ashford's Cycling and Walking Strategy? Respondents mostly “strongly support” the strategy, with 109 selecting that the somewhat support the strategy. Only 4 respondents do not support at all.



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Q14: What do you think the main issues and concerns are about cycling and walking in Ashford? Issues and concerns with cycling and walking seem to be mainly routed in the lack of available paths, or the lack of a connected network of paths. This means that some cyclists and walkers will walk on the road, which they regard as putting themselves in danger and acts as a deterrent. Vehicles are identified as particularly dangerous, with a poor cyclist-vehicle relationship (e.g. not giving enough space when overtaking), and the volume and speed on some roads put cyclists at risk. Some suggested that better education and enforcement would make them feel more comfortable cycling on the road. Others felt that cyclists and cars should be segregated (although some also felt that there should be entirely separate paths for walkers and cyclists.

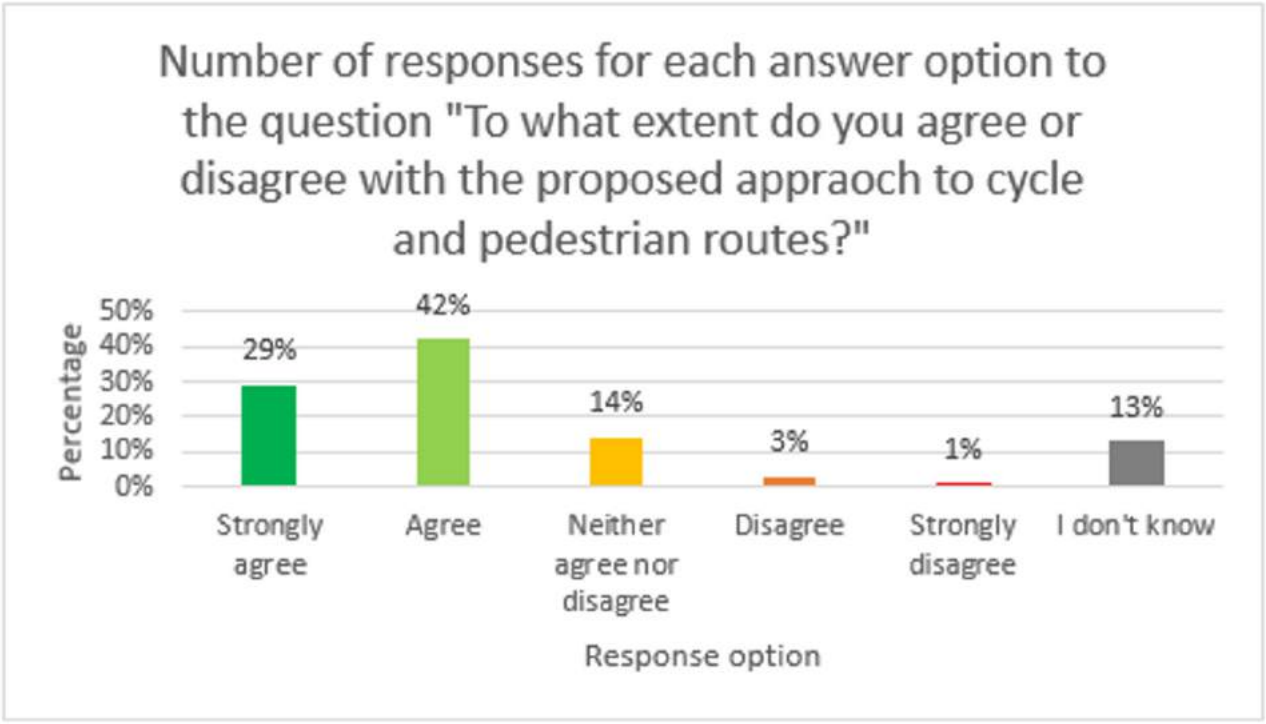
Poor infrastructure also acted as a deterrent. Many commented on the maintenance of the pathways, including the number of cracks and potholes, and overgrown hedgerows. Some were concerned about the lack of good lighting, which makes them feel unsafe when using the pavements. There were a number of concerns around poor signage of the paths, as well as the faded colour of the tarmac on shared pathways. Infrastructure was suggested to favour car usage instead of alternative transport.

A connected, well-signed and well maintained network of pathways were recommended, as a few respondents stated that it will make cycling and walking more efficient as a mode of transport and will encourage residents to use the routes.

"Safety, signage, convenience, lack of appropriate/direct routes, confidence on or near roads, infrastructure that is not designed with the needs of walkers or cyclists in mind, attractiveness of routes."

"Making sure that all routes are clearly marked and say to follow. Existing paths are not always maintained and where one path joins another the division between walkers and cyclists changes sides which can be confusing. Too often walkers walk in the cycle designated areas often with dogs on long leads. Some of the paths are loose gravel. A lot of bikes cannot be used on this surface. It is also a poor surface for children or inexperienced riders to ride on."

Q15: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed approach to cycle and pedestrian routes? Most respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposed approach to cycle and pedestrian routes. Only 2 respondents strongly disagreed with the proposed approach.



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Q16: What else can be done to encourage more people to cycle or walk in the borough? Again, safety, visibility and crime reduction were the main responses given. Respondents stated that they would feel more comfortable walking and cycling if they felt safe (on the roads or on existing paths). Storage for bikes fell within this somewhat – more, secure storage would mean the threat of bike theft, currently a deterrent, is reduced. Some stated that there should be more enforcement, e.g. speed restrictions, policing.

More paths and routes would encourage people to cycle and walk more, according to respondents, mainly as this would give more options to residents, and would mean more convenience. Key to this is a connected network of paths, so that residents can get to where they need to safely and efficiently. New and existing paths are to be well maintained – e.g. free of potholes, debris and overgrown foliage. These paths should be well signed so they can be located easily, and maps should be available. The council should promote the pathways to encourage people to use them.

"Better facilities/infrastructure for walking and cycling - accessible, safe, good flow, good signage, direct routes, better public transport availability that can take bikes, more affordable public transport, training for people of all ages, make it less convenient to use a car/motorised transport, easier to access affordable bikes/schemes."

"A direct cycle path running into the town centre from each residential area of Ashford e.g. Willesborough Kingsnorth Kennington South Ashford Singleton etc."

"Provide safer, properly segregated cycle paths in a more joined up network, and convenient but safe parking. Encourage the use of e-bikes for day-to-day cycling not just tourism, with electric charging points. Encourage services, cafes, pub, restaurants etc. to have cycle parking. Better cycle parking in healthcare e.g. the hospital and GP surgeries, so people are more likely to pop somewhere on their bike rather than get in the car. You have to make it easy for them to make the shift."

Q17: What else can be done to encourage more children and young people to cycle or walk in the borough? Safety was an even greater issue here than for children than adults. In the absence of existing paths, some said that they would not allow their children to cycle on roads due to the dangers of traffic. Many respondents felt there should be more paths and routes, particularly near schools, and that traffic should be kept away from schools, with enforcement. Respondents were also keen to have segregated pathways to keep children away from traffic.

Schemes, education and groups and events were popular suggestions. For instance, schemes where children could borrow or buy bikes cheaply, and have discounts on repairs. A cycling proficiency test and education in schools about road safety were also popular suggestions. Clubs and groups such as walking and cycling clubs were also suggested to encourage children. Getting schools on board to help deliver this was important.

A response unique to this question was related to parental responsibility and encouragement of the parents. A number of respondents felt that it was ultimately down to the parents to encourage their children to walk or cycle.

One way of ensuring this occurs is to encourage parents to do these activities with their children. A few respondents mentioned parents may feel more comfortable with the idea of their children walking and cycling if they are convinced it is safe.

"Probably comes down to safety: parents may be more comfortable letting their children cycle to school or to friends if they are cycling on off-road segregated cycle paths. For walking, there needs to be more crossings in strategic places."

"Good routes to schools etc. Publicity campaign to encourage parents not to drive to schools - often they drive as they thing it is safer. In the past it was much more common for children to walk, cycle, or take the bus or train to school on their own. Culture to encourage this."

"It is parents of children who really need convincing. This will only be achieved if the parents feel it is safe, which requires infrastructure. Where infrastructure is not possible or practical (such as on narrow, residential roads), then 20mph limits make a big difference."

Q17: Would you like to suggest any other initiatives which could help to support the actions in the draft Cycling and Walking strategy? The main suggestion for this question was to ensure good infrastructure is in place, such as a greater number of quality pathways, good signage and bike storage to prevent theft. These should be integrated into all new developments, rather than added later.

Schemes were also suggested again, such as discount and rental schemes – integral to this was getting employers on board to ensure that workplaces can accommodate bike-riders. As with responses to previous questions, the importance of clubs, groups and events was highlighted to encourage people to cycle and walk.

Education (of cyclist, car drivers) and enforcement (of speed restrictions, policing) were highlighted in the responses. Education will enable cyclists to feel more confident on the road, and may influence drivers to be more careful, increasing a feeling of safety.

"Train planning officers and other relevant staff on how to design and implement excellent facilities for cycling and make it a priority to ensure that cycling and walking are not an afterthought by having a masterplan for the Borough. Gain inspiration from successful schemes like Waltham Forest. Implement changes to infrastructure that make it easier to walk or cycle than drive."

"More cycle paths integrated along green infrastructure, new housing developments with cycle/foot path connections to existing routes."

"Help to buy bike scheme, incentives for the walks like with the snow dogs people had incentive to walk places so there should be trails along walks like the Gruffalo or other kid book basis to make people and family's want to walk and explore."

Next steps

Your feedback has demonstrated strong support for the proposed Cycling and Walking Strategy. Many of the concerns mentioned and initiatives suggested are already addressed in the draft strategy. With the public's support, we can begin taking steps towards implementing the strategy. Keep an eye on the council's website or social media pages for updates!

For more information on Cycling and Walking in Ashford Borough, please go to: https://www.ashford.gov.uk/your-community/visit-ashford-and-tenterden/cycling-and-walking-in-the-borough/

For more information about the Cycling and Walking Strategy, please go to: https://www.ashford.gov.uk/your-community/consultations/cycling-and-walking-strategy-consultation/

Equality Impact Assessment

1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in its decision-making. Although there is no legal duty to produce an EIA, the Council must have **due regard** to the equality duty and an EIA is recognised as the best method of fulfilling that duty. It can assist the Council in making a judgment as to whether a policy or other decision will have unintended negative consequences for certain people and help maximise the positive impacts of policy change. An EIA can lead to one of four consequences:

   (a) No major change – the policy or other decision is robust with no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. Opportunities to promote equality have been taken;

   (b) Adjust the policy or decision to remove barriers or better promote equality as identified in the EIA;

   (c) Continue the policy – if the EIA identifies potential for adverse impact, set out compelling justification for continuing;

   (d) Stop and remove the policy where actual or potential unlawful discrimination is identified.

Public sector equality duty

2. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:

   (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

   (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

   (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (ie tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups).

3. These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

Protected characteristics

4. The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics for the purpose of the equality duty:

   - Age
   - Disability
   - Gender reassignment
   - Marriage and civil partnership*
   - Pregnancy and maternity
   - Race
   - Religion or belief
   - Sex
   - Sexual orientation

*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

Due regard

5. Having ‘due regard’ is about using good equality information and analysis at the right time as part of decision-making procedures.

6. To ‘have due regard’ means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This can involve:

   - removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
   - taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics when these are different from the needs of other people.
   - encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where it is disproportionately low.

7. How much regard is ‘due’ will depend on the circumstances The greater the potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. Examples of functions and decisions likely to engage the duty include: policy decisions, budget decisions, public appointments, service provision, statutory discretion, decisions on individuals, employing staff and procurement of goods and services.

8. In terms of timing:

   - Having ‘due regard’ should be considered at the inception of any decision or proposed policy or service development or change.
   - Due regard should be considered throughout development of a decision. Notes shall be taken and kept on file as to how due regard has been had to the equality duty in research, meetings, project teams, consultations etc.
   - The completion of the EIA is a way of effectively summarising this and it should inform final decision-making.

Armed Forces Community

9. As part of the council’s commitment to the Armed Forces Community made through the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant the council’s Cabinet agreed in November 2017 that potential impacts on the Armed Forces Community should be considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment process.

10. Accordingly, due regard should also be had throughout the decision making process to potential impacts on the groups covered by the Armed Forces Covenant:

    - Current serving members of the Armed Forces (both Regular and Reserve)
    - Former serving members of the Armed Forces (both Regular and Reserve)
    - The families of current and former Armed Forces personnel.

Case law principles

11. A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:

    - Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have ‘due regard’ to the equality duty and so EIA’s must be attached to any relevant committee reports.
    - Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.

- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
- The duty is a continuing one so that it needs to be considered not only when a policy, for example, is being developed and agreed but also when it is implemented.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
- A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has produced helpful guidance on "Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making" (October 2014). It is available on the following link and report authors should read and follow this when developing or reporting on proposals for policy or service development or change and other decisions likely to engage the equality duty. *Equality Duty in decision-making*

Lead officer:	Simon Harris, Community Projects Manager
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Decision: • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop	Agreement to adopt the Ashford Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2019 -2029
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	28th May 2020
Summary of the proposed decision: • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes	The Report seeks Cabinet endorsement and adoption of the proposed plan. The Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 sets out the Council's direction and key priorities and particularly refers to the development of a "cycle town" strategy as part of establishing an "Active and Creative Ashford". In 2019 the Borough Council adopted its Cycling

• Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected?	and Walking Strategy and this LCWIP sets out a series of actions and projects that will deliver the aspirations set out in the Strategy. The entire population and visitors to the area/borough could be affected by the changes in infrastructure.
Information and research: • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings.	In 2019 the Council adopted its Cycling and Walking Strategy having worked closely with key partners, including SUSTRANS who have carried out detailed route assessments and in particular the Council has worked with consultants Mott MacDonald, appointed by the Department for Transport (DfT) to enable a comprehensive cycling and walking strategy to be produced and endorsed by the DfT. The key route corridors set out in the LCWIP are as follows: • Hythe Road – Mace Lane • Canterbury/Faversham Road • Highworth/A20 • Repton • Victoria Park • Ashford Oak (Arlington-Jemmett Road- Victoria Park) • Jemmett Road • Beaver Road • Newtown **See attached report for methodology.**
Consultation: • What specific consultation has occurred on this decision? • What were the results of the consultation? • Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? • What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics?	Part of the LCWIP process has meant exhaustive consultation with the highways authority (KCC). Consultation has also taken place with the Department for Transport (DfT) on the LCWIP report. This report until now has not been shared or consulted with the general public and other stakeholders until sites have been given the go ahead for viability work and from those results further consultation will take place.

Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.

When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Protected characteristic	**Relevance to Decision** High/Medium/Low/None	**Impact of Decision** **Positive** (Major/Minor) **Negative** (Major/Minor) **Neutral**
AGE Elderly	High	Positive (major)
Middle age	High	Positive (major)
Young adult	High	Positive (major)
Children	High	Positive (major)
DISABILITY Physical	High	Positive (major)
Mental	High	Positive (major)
Sensory	High	Positive (major)
GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT	High	Positive (major)
MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	High	Positive (major)
PREGNANCY/MATERNITY	High	Positive (major)
RACE	High	Positive (major)
RELIGION OR BELIEF	High	Positive (major)
SEX Men	High	Positive (major)
Women	High	Positive (major)
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	High	Positive (major)
ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY Regular/Reserve personnel	High	Positive (major)
Former service personnel	High	Positive (major)
Service families	High	Positive (major)

Mitigating negative impact: Where any negative impact has been identified, outline	Unknown at this stage. Once agreed and viability work can take place, any negative impacts will be identified.

the measures taken to mitigate against it.	

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?

Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's *Essential Guide*, alongside fuller *PSED Technical Guidance*.

Aim	Yes / No / N/A
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	N/A
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	N/A
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	N/A

Conclusion: • Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish.	Due regard has been made to the equality duty, throughout the development of the masterplan and will continue during the delivery phase
• There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above).	There will be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision
• Advise on whether the proposal meets the aims of the equality duty or whether adjustments have been made or need to be made or whether any residual impacts are justified.	The proposal meets the aims of the equality duty as all sections of the community including those with protected characteristics will benefit from the enhancements to the boroughs networks.
• How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported?	Monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation will be undertaken and reported by a possible stakeholder group
EIA completion date:	30th April 2020

ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Project Name: Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2019 - 2029	Approved by: Cabinet tbc 28 May 2020
Author: Simon Harris	Date: 18 May 2020

Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) are tools which can help Ashford Borough Council (ABC) identify the most effective way to comply with its data protection obligations and meet individuals' expectations of privacy. An effective DPIA will allow ABC to identify and fix problems at an early stage, reducing the associated costs and damage to reputation which might otherwise occur. DPIAs are an integral part of taking a privacy by design approach, and are a legal requirement under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) whenever a 'process is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of natural persons'.

Overview

Explain what the project aims to achieve, what the benefits will be to ABC, to individuals and to other parties.

The Ashford LCWIP seeks to deliver a cycling and walking network, through provision of high quality infrastructure, to enable a greater uptake of cycling and walking across the borough. The proposed approach to deliver this transformative change is to; firstly provide a network of primary, neighbourhood and strategic greenway cycle corridors to act as core routes for the highest volumes of journeys. Secondly to improve journeys into the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists. Thirdly; to create networks of quieter streets where children play out, neighbours catch up, air pollution is lower, and cycling and walking are the natural choice for everyday journeys. Fourthly, to increase the proportion of active travel journeys in the borough, utilising the economic benefits for business that can come from customers switching from car journeys to more sustainable travel modes.

Data Protection Impact Assessment Screening

These questions are intended to help ABC decide whether a DPIA is required to be conducted. If the answer is yes to any of the questions a DPIA will be required.

Will the project involve the collection of new data about individuals?	No
Will the project compel individuals to provide data about themselves?	No
Will data about individuals be disclosed	

to other organisations not previously privy to the data?	N/A
Will data about the individuals be used for purposes it is not currently used for?	N/A
Does the project involve new technology that might be perceived as being privacy intrusive?	No
Will the project result in making decisions or taking action against individuals in ways which could have a significant impact on them?	**No**
Is the data about individuals of a kind particularly likely to raise concerns e.g. health records, criminal records which may be considered private?	N/A
Will the project require contact to individuals in ways they may find intrusive?	No

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Data Protection Impact Assessment Need	Summarise why a DPIA is required, this can draw on your answers to the screening questions.
Information flows	Describe the information flows of the project. Explain what information is used, what it is used for, who it is obtained from and disclosed to, who will have access, and any other necessary information.
Consultation outcome	• Consultation is an important part of the DPIA and allows people to highlight privacy risks and solutions based on their own area of interest or expertise. • Consult internally with a range of internal stakeholders to ensure that all relevant perspectives are taken into account. • Consult externally providing the

	opportunity to get input from the people who will ultimately be affected by the project and to benefit from wider expertise.

Identify Privacy and Related Risks

Risk	Solutions	Result	Approved Solution	Approved by	Evaluation
ABC should identify any privacy risks to individuals, compliance risks and any related risks for the council; such as fines for non-compliance with legislation or reputational damage leading to loss of business.	ABC needs to identify possible privacy solutions to address the risks that have been identified.	Possible solutions for addressing each risk that have been identified and state whether each option would result in the risk being: • eliminated, • reduced, or • accepted.			Is the final impact on individuals after implementing each solution a justified, compliant and proportionate response to the aims of the project?

Assessment carried out by