

Cycling and Walking Strategy and LCWIP Summary

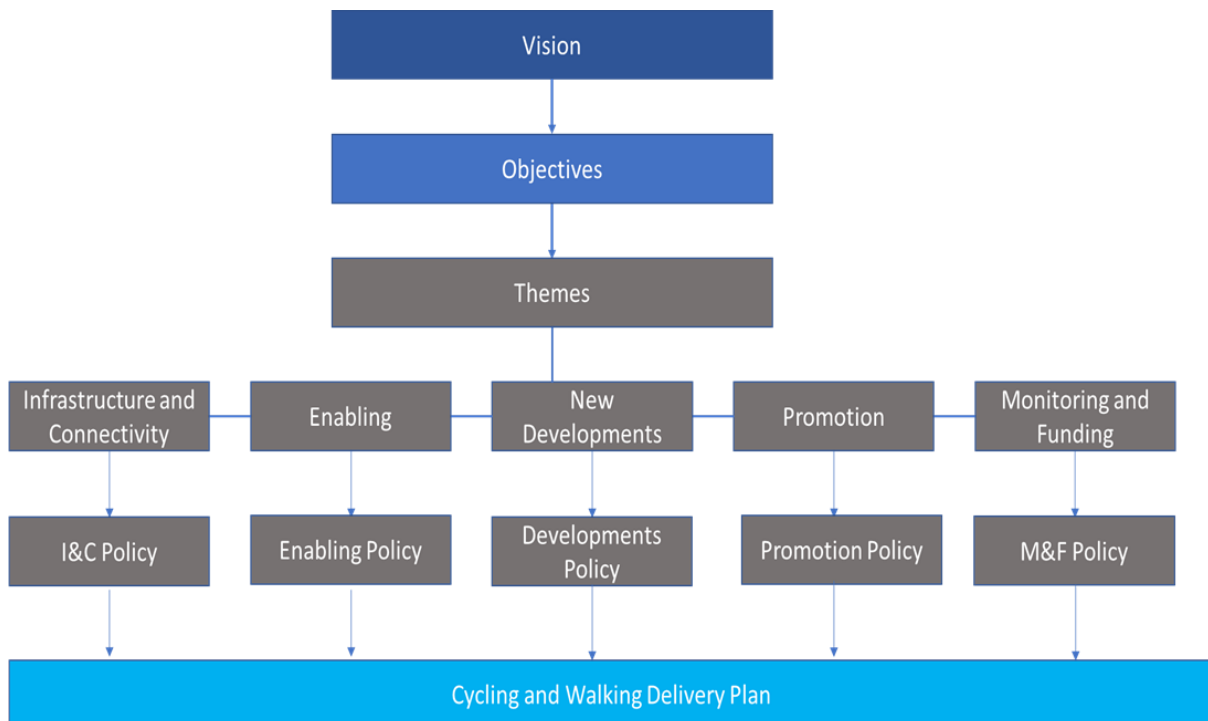
The Cycling and Walking Strategy presents the overall strategic approach to active travel in Solihull. It sets out a vision to deliver high quality cycling and walking infrastructure, further promotional and behavioural change programmes and new initiatives in the future. The Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy is a key step in the approach to accommodating growth in travel demand on the Solihull transport network in a manner that retains the character of the borough.

The Council's Transport Strategy, 'Solihull Connected' acknowledges that there is a risk that without a properly planned transport system growth could cause ever-increasing congestion on our roads; stifling our economy, worsening our quality of life and hampering our transition to a sustainable low-carbon economy.

In support of the policies and objectives set out in Solihull Connected, and in line with Government policy, a cycling and walking vision has been established through the Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy:

Develop Solihull into a Borough where cycling and walking are the most convenient modes of travel for local journeys. Developing a network of safe, attractive and direct cycle and walking routes, improving physical activity and wellbeing'

To support the vision, the framework presented below has been adopted for the strategy (further information presented below)



In order for the vision to be realised in the borough, a range of objectives have been identified. The objectives presented below will be achieved through policies set out in 5 key themes (further detail on which is provided below). The objectives for the

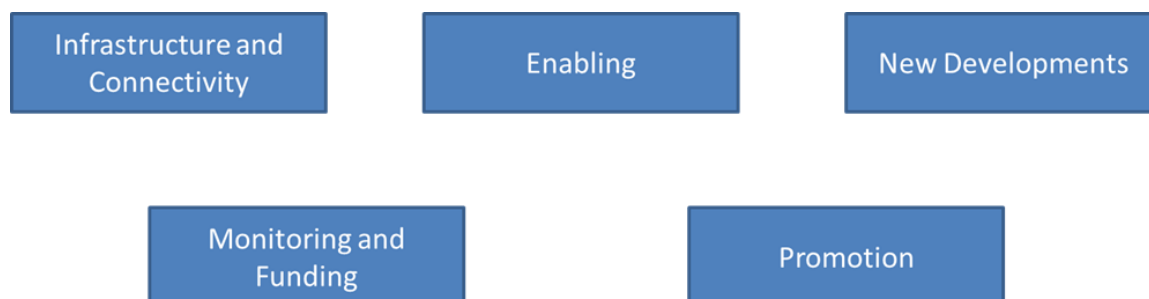
Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy are to:

- Increase the number of people cycling and walking in Solihull; contributing towards the national target of 50% of short distance journeys undertaken by cycling and walking within the town centre.
- Improve the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure, increasing the number of segregated cycle routes, making active travel more convenient for short distance journeys;
- Improve cycling capability throughout the borough by providing cycle training and initiatives; including Bikeability for children across the borough
- Make cycling and walking 'the norm' through targeted promotion, particularly working with local schools;
- New developments to include high quality cycle and walking infrastructure and facilities; and
- Increase leisure journeys through improved cycling and walking provision within and connecting to green spaces and improved promotion to encourage physical activity.

The Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy sets out five key themes which are closely aligned to the objectives. The themes will help to help shape the future direction of cycling and walking in the borough. The themes are underpinned by key programmes and initiatives which will be delivered across Solihull over the coming years. These themes have been identified, with consideration given to:

- The wide variety of topics and projects relating to cycling and walking in the borough
- Support the overall Cycling and Walking Strategy vision
- Acknowledgement of the need to improve cycling and walking infrastructure
- Tackling the challenges faced by air quality and physical inactivity
- Maximising opportunities presented by new development; and
- Better promoting cycling and walking across Solihull

The Solihull Cycling and Walking themes are presented below:



Across the five themes, a number of policies have been developed with examples presented below. The policies will help deliver the strategies objectives and overall vision.

- Cycle infrastructure schemes will meet National Cycling Standards set out within Local Transport Note 2/08
- Improve the walkability of Solihull, providing pedestrians with increasing priority on the network and improving the public realm.
- We will prioritise active travel investment in routes and locations with key employment and education sites.
- We will work with local schools to provide Bikeability (level 1-3) to primary and secondary school children.
- Development proposals should incorporate appropriate safe and convenient access to walking and cycling routes, linking to existing cycling and walking provision where possible.
- We will promote all new cycling and walking infrastructure through various engagement methods
- Develop a funding process to ensure delivery of cycle and walking infrastructure and associated programmes

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (also known as LCWIPs) are a new, strategic approach that analyses local travel patterns to help identify where best to invest in cycling and walking infrastructure. The LCWIP process enables the identification of cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. The process enables a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10-year period.

The purpose of the Solihull LCWIP is to:

- Analyse where people are currently cycling and walking and predict future demand based on growth forecasts in the Borough;
- Identify a long term Cycling Network Plan – linking residential areas to major destinations including Solihull Town Centre and Railway Station and major employment sites;
- Identify key routes for cycling – these routes will then be prioritised for funding; and
- Determine improvements to the pedestrian environment including access to Solihull Town Centre

As part of the LCWIP process, key transport corridors within Solihull with current demand for cyclists have been identified, as well as those where people are likely to cycle in the future. The Propensity to Cycle (PCT) tool developed by the Department for Transport has been used to identify where people are likely to cycle in the future using census data.

The PCT is a strategic transport planning tool, which considers various scenarios of change to represent different visions of the future based on the Department for Transport's Cycling Delivery Plan target to double cycle usage in a decade. On a wider scale, the tool highlights the potential increase in cycle usage in different regions, cities and parts of cities. On a more local scale, the PCT tool can be used to forecast levels of cycling and mode share along particular roads / corridors, helping to inform decisions regarding road-space allocation policies and infrastructure requirements.

The PCT tool is based predominantly on Census data, which means that development that has taken place since the last Census in 2011 and that which is planned, is not taken into account. The PCT analysis has therefore been complemented with information on approved planning applications and the Council's Draft Local Plan Review proposals, along with key stakeholder input, to identify the following corridors as forming the draft Solihull Strategic Network:

- Acocks Green/Olton to Solihull
- Balsall Common to Coventry
- Balsall Common to UK Central (Regional LCWIP – A452 corridor)
- BIA/NEC/Elmdon to Solihull (Damson Parkway and Bickenhill Lane)
- Blythe Valley/Monkspath to Solihull
- Castle Bromwich/Chelmsley Wood to BIA/NEC (plus Marston Green connection)
- Dorridge/Knowle to Solihull
- Grand Union Canal Towpath (connections to Acocks Green, Catherine de Barnes and Knowle)

- Meriden/Hampton in Arden to Solihull
- Sheldon/Hatchford Brook to BIA/NEC (A45 corridor)
- Sheldon (Solihull border) to Solihull (Lode Lane corridor)
- Shirley to Blythe Valley (A34 corridor)
- Stratford Canal towpath (Solihull Lodge, Dickens Heath, Shirley, Illshaw Heath)
- Wythall/Dickens Heath to Solihull
- Solihull Lodge/Shirley to Solihull

The corridors identified above tend to link several locally important trip attractors along their length, and it is likely that many trips will be between places along the corridor (for example, passenger trips on a local bus or rail route) rather than end to end. The corridors above are spread across the Borough, however there is a focus on improving cycle connectivity into Solihull Town Centre due to the latent demand presented by more dense employment, retail and educational development. Specific infrastructure requirements at trip attractors, such as cycle storage and parking provision, will be considered as part of the detailed design stage when developing scheme proposals for individual corridor improvement.

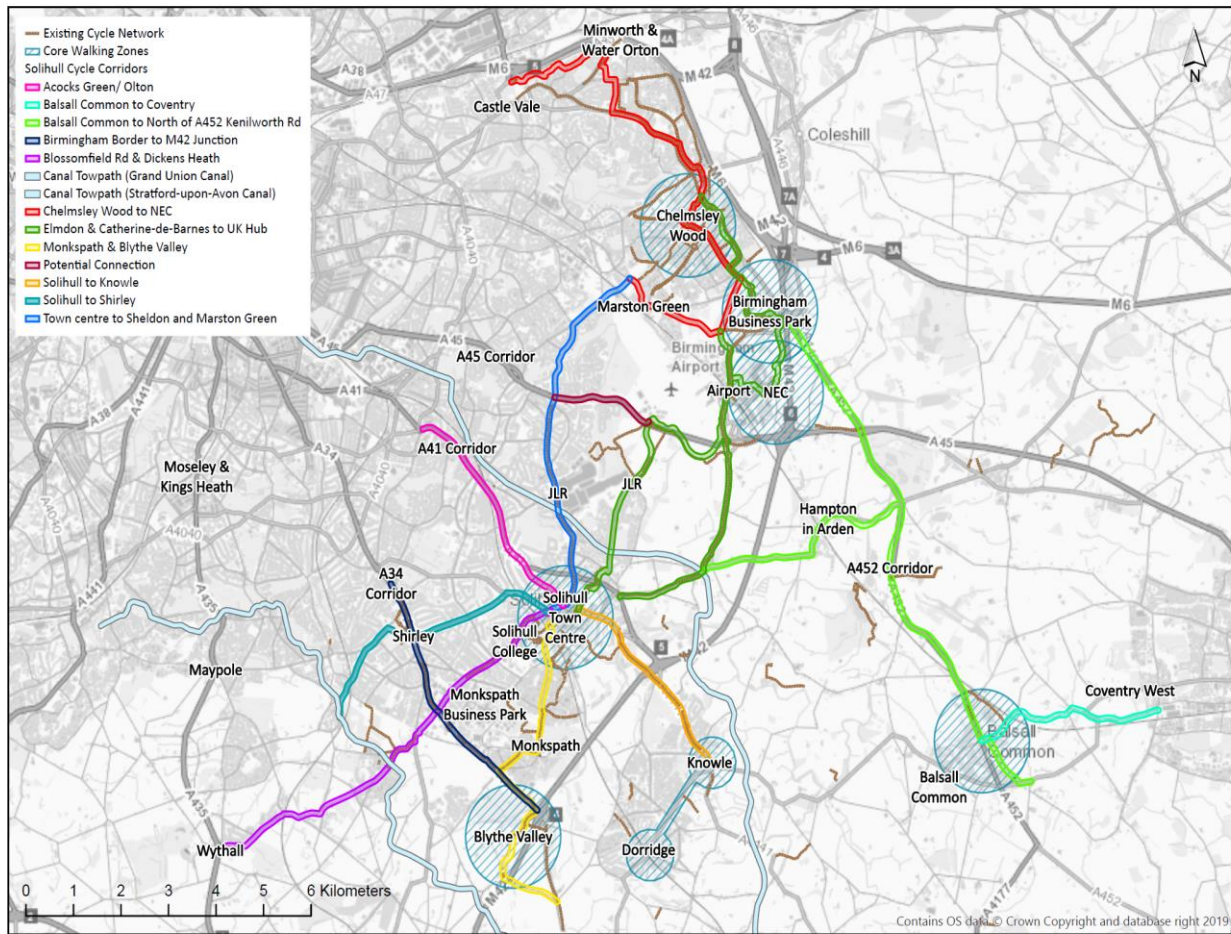
The Strategic Cycle Network will be complemented by a secondary tier, in which more localised routes are considered in locations where demand is likely to be lower. It will be important to provide convenient connections to the Strategic Cycle Routes in order to fully maximise the benefit they can provide. Furthermore, connections will be required in some of the more remote, rural areas within the Borough; although demand in such areas will inevitably be lower due to longer travel distances, improvements will be required to enable travel in a convenient and safe manner. Improvements are likely to include surface and visibility improvements to improve conditions for all road users.

The draft Solihull Cycle Network is presented overleaf. The initial map presents the Strategic Cycle Corridors followed by the draft Solihull Cycle Network including secondary (local) corridors.

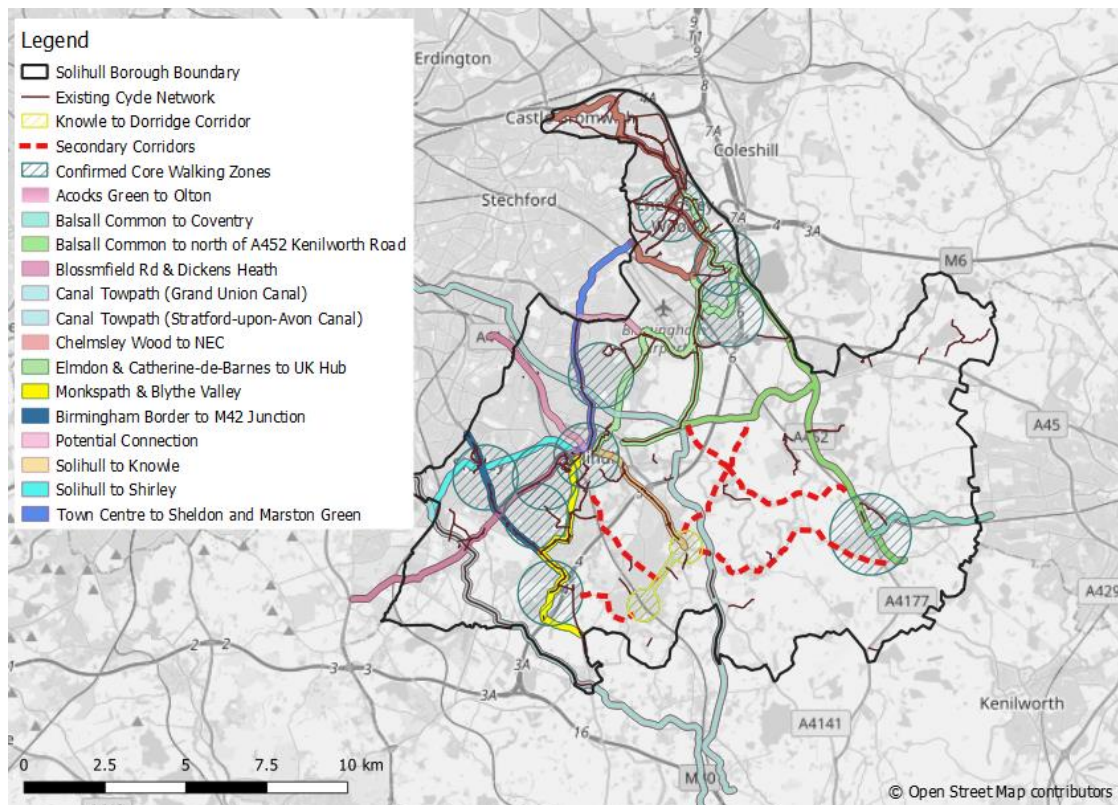
The network plans highlight the recommended Strategic Cycle Routes, along with thoughts on local routes. One of the primary purposes of the consultation is to receive suggestions on potential second tier routes, as local knowledge and experience will be key in their establishment. We anticipate adding further local routes to the Solihull Cycle Network following consultation.

A finalised high quality GIS network plan will be produced of the Solihull Cycle Network following consultation.

Solihull Strategic Corridors



Solihull Cycle Network (including Secondary (local) Corridors)



Following the identification of the Strategic Cycle Corridors within the draft Solihull Cycle Network, eight of the routes were selected for audit in Summer 2019. Routes selected for auditing have been identified as potential short to medium term priorities and therefore appropriate for auditing at this stage of the LCWIP development process.

The audit process explores the practicalities of developing high quality cycle infrastructure along each corridor, and in doing so, helps to inform the scale of capital works that will be required to make the necessary improvements.

The aim of the audit process was to identify how current provision for cyclists can be improved to ensure that it is safe and convenient for all users.

The following corridors were subsequently selected for auditing:

- Dickens Heath to Solihull Town Centre
- BIA/NEC/Elmdon to Solihull - Lode Lane/Damson Lane and Damson Parkway
- BIA/NEC to Solihull via Bickenhill Lane and Catherine de Barnes
- Blythe Valley/Monkspath to Solihull (including local spur to Cheswick Green)
- Castle Bromwich/Chelmsley Wood to BIA/NEC (plus Marston Green connection)
- A34 Shirley to Blythe Valley Park (Stratford Road Corridor)

- Shirley to Solihull Town Centre
- Knowle to Solihull Town Centre

For walking as part of the LCWIP process, through analysis of key trip attractors and locations having high footfall, six core walking zones were identified as having a high propensity for trips to be made on-foot.

The six core walking zones (CWZs) are:

- Solihull Town Centre
- Monkspath/Blythe Valley
- Shirley/ Solihull Retail Park
- Jaguar Land Rover site on Lode Lane
- Chelmsley Wood/Marston Green/Birmingham Business Park/NEC
- Balsall Common

As part of network planning for walking, a high-level overview has been undertaken across the CWZs to identify their strategic relevance and to identify the main corridors within each CWZ. A “Level of Service” audit has been undertaken to identify existing conditions and to develop interventions required within each CWZ.

Audits of the main routes were undertaken within each CWZ to identify key interventions which will address issues such as severance and safety. The results of the CWZs are currently being analysed, and interventions will be determined in due course.

LCWIP – Prioritisation of Cycle Routes and Next Steps

Following the audit process, and engagement with stakeholders and local forum groups, a prioritisation process was undertaken. The prioritisation process has identified the top three priority cycle corridors in the borough. The top two/three corridors (dependent on available funding) identified will be put forward for business cases and detailed design. This will help ensure those schemes can secure the funding necessary to ensure their delivery.

It should be noted that, although the LCWIP will set out a rolling-programme of route improvements (with business cases for each to be developed on a sequential basis), the intent to develop business cases for two/three routes initially is based on the level of scheme development funding currently available to the Council. Funding will be sought to develop further business cases in due course.

The three priority cycle routes were identified through the LCWIP process, and further reinforced through consultation in early 2020:

- Knowle to Solihull Town Centre
- Dickens Health to Solihull Town Centre
- Castle Bromwich/Chelmsley Wood to UK Central Hub.

It should be noted that work will continue on all corridors identified within the Strategic Cycle Network, with further audits to be conducted in due course. Future developments will also continue to be monitored to ensure the cycle network is up to date and meets the current and future demands expected across the borough.

As referred to above, this consultation seeks to gain input from local residents and businesses regarding local connectivity improvements, particularly in the rural parts of the Borough. It is imperative that, moving forward, local connectivity improvements are developed which allow easy access to local services and to the proposed strategic network plan corridors. It should be noted that the LCWIP is a document that should be reviewed on a regular basis to take into account changing circumstances (such as new development for example); it is therefore intended that work will remain on-going with local representatives and forum groups beyond this consultation, and beyond adoption of the LCWIP, to continually seek to identify the need for further improvements.

You can view the full Cycling and Walking Strategy and LCWIP here:

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-travel-roads/SolihullConnected/Cycling-walking-strategy>