



# SOLIHULL **CONNECTED**

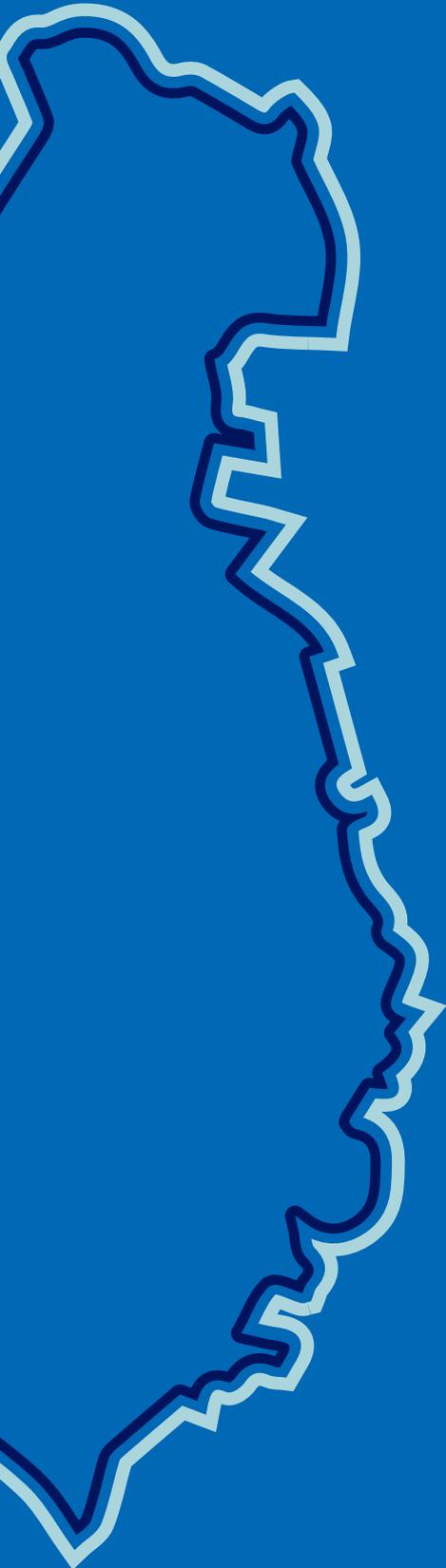
Transport Strategy 2016



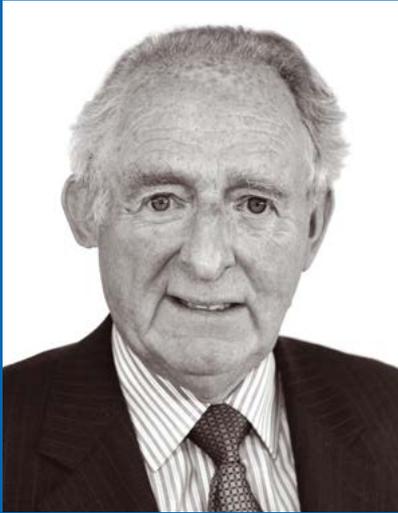


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# Foreword



**Councillor Ted Richards OBE**  
Cabinet Member for Transport  
and Highways

These are exciting times for the Borough with significant opportunities for investment to ensure our environment and economic health are maintained and enhanced. Solihull Council is embarking on a strategy of 'Managed Growth' through the promotion of 'UK Central'. This plan brings together all of the economic assets of the Borough, including regional business parks, town centres, Jaguar Land Rover, the Airport, future HS2 and the NEC. The Council is determined to make this vision of 'managed growth' a reality.

It is hugely important for us to clearly make the case for investment and demonstrate how we will manage growth in a sustainable way. Having a clear transport strategy will be timely for the arrival of HS2 and development opportunities.

With the first station north of London, HS2 is helping to put the Borough on the transport investment map and the Council is looking to capitalise on this to secure local network improvements.

The ambition behind 'Solihull Connected' is to create balanced investment in transport infrastructure that recognises the need to cater for cars and places appropriate and increasing emphasis on alternatives; such as:

- Options for game-changing public transport schemes that will be competitive, fast, reliable and frequent on key corridors across the Borough. We need to serve important destinations including the Airport, Jaguar Land Rover and Birmingham and Coventry city centres;
- High-quality cycling networks to encourage our residents to cycle to work; and
- Community-focused initiatives to encourage healthier transport choices where possible.
- This document represents our policy position on transport investment. It comes about following the publication of the Green Paper in 2015 and a six-month period of consultation and discussion. During this time we had excellent inputs from the public and stakeholders, who endorsed our overall vision for transport.

This final strategy document will be accompanied by a detailed Delivery Plan, which will set out our transport investment strategy, in the autumn of 2016.



# Background and introduction

This document presents the transport strategy for Solihull. It marks out our vision for how we will deliver transport infrastructure and initiatives in the future, how we will accommodate growth in travel demand on our network and how we will seek to maintain Solihull's character.

The timing of this strategy is crucial. It sets out our aspirations at a time when the West Midlands is going through a crucial phase. The Devolution Deal, signed with the government in 2015, puts a large part of our future in the hands of the new West Midlands Combined Authority. Solihull Connected gives our Borough a loud voice at the table, being clear what we're asking for and providing the evidence as to why investment should be directed here.

Solihull Connected links directly with our plans for economic growth set out by our Council Managed Growth priorities and promoted by UK Central. 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. Solihull Connected sets out how we can achieve both a strong, growing economy and still maintain the unique character and high-quality environment of Solihull.

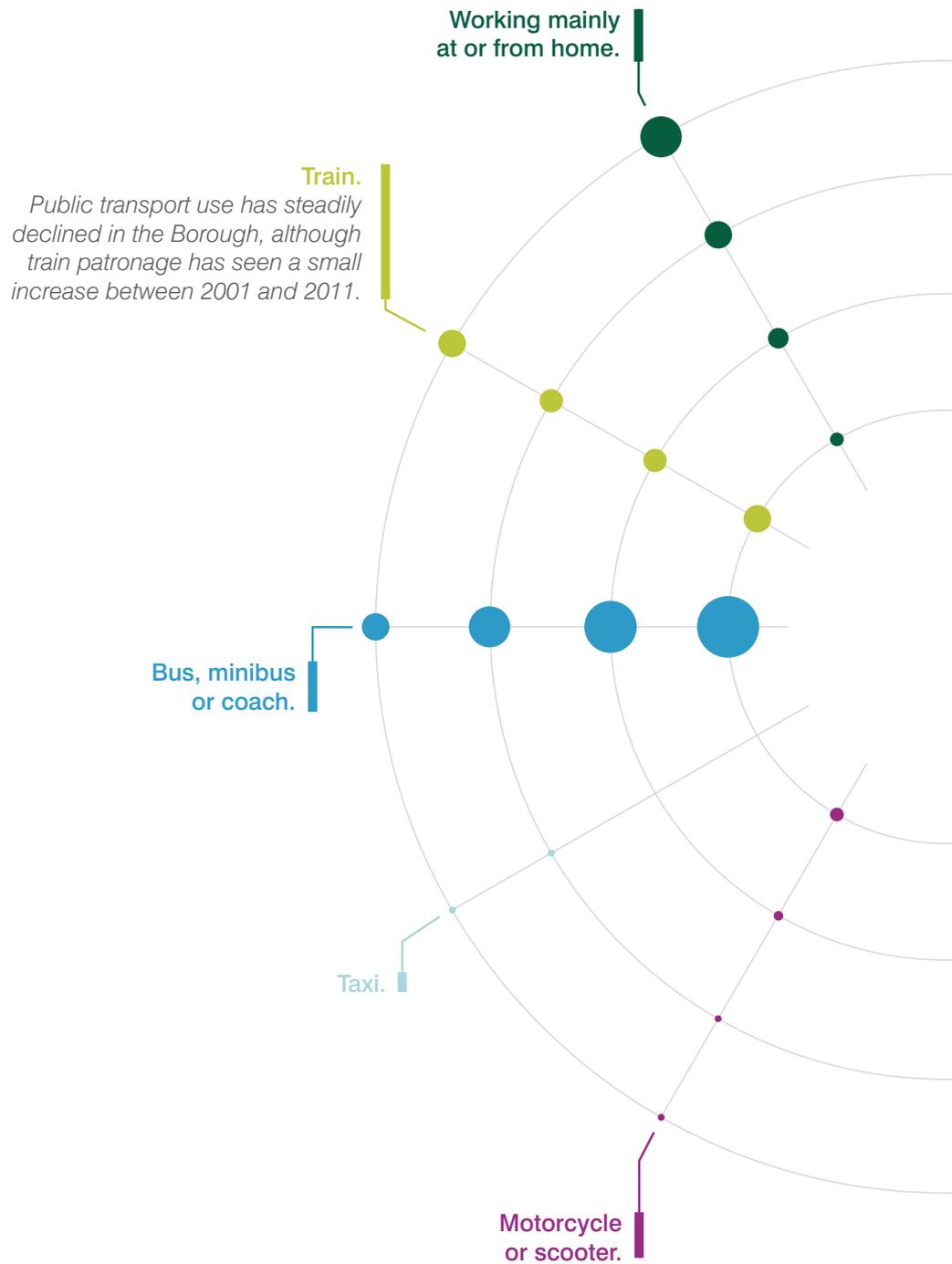
This document moves forward the initial vision and ideas set out in the Green Paper, published and consulted on over the summer of 2015. That consultation gave us a ringing endorsement of the overall vision for an emphasis on sustainable forms of transport: investing in high-quality public and active transport to provide our residents and workers with much wider opportunities to choose sustainable modes.

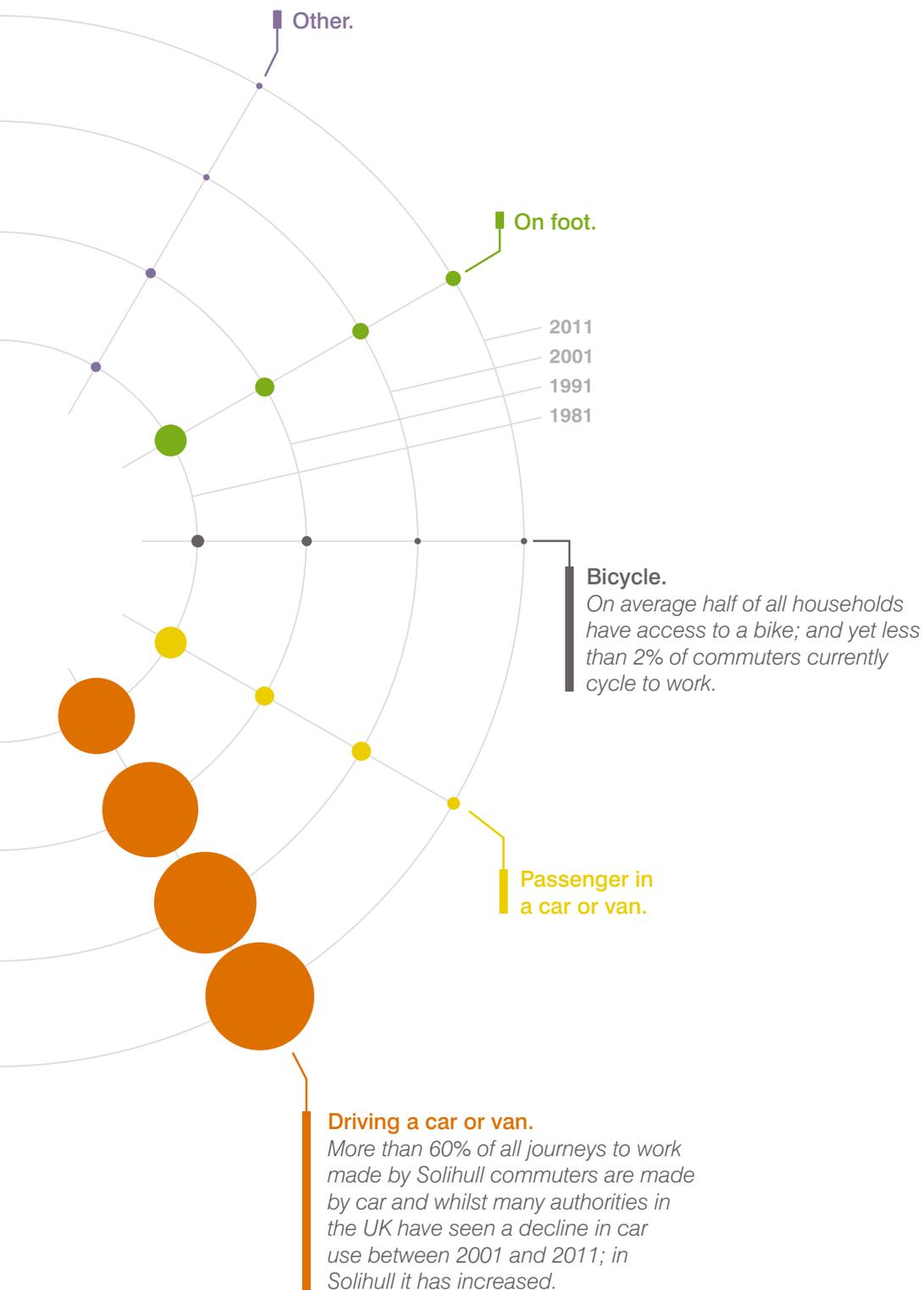
To accompany this strategy document we are currently developing a Delivery Plan. This will set out a prioritised list of schemes and initiatives, all of which will be focused at the objectives of Solihull Connected. The Delivery Plan will be the culmination of a series of detailed technical studies which will generate the schemes and initiatives and demonstrate their contribution to the Borough.





**Method to Travel to Work, Solihull Residents: Changes from Census Data 1981 to 2011**





# Role and purpose of Solihull Connected

## Why do we need Solihull Connected?

The Borough needs this strategy so that we have a long-term strategic vision for how we manage the extra travel demand brought about by the predicted economic and population growth; both in the Borough and across the West Midlands.

Solihull Connected is linked to the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan 'Movement for Growth' which has been published by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). That document provides the strategic direction for transport across the region, whereas Solihull Connected is taking that overall direction and showing how it can be specifically applied within the Borough.

In addition, Solihull is a partner in Midlands Connect, which is developing a strategic transport strategy for the whole of the Midlands area (East and West Midlands); aiming to identify the important pieces of road and rail infrastructure which will have the biggest impact on the regional economy. With our location at the heart of some of the UK's most important pieces of transport network (M42, M6, West Coast Main Line, HS2, etc.) we are working with Midlands Connect to identify what the strategic infrastructure investment strategy should be.

The big catalyst for the need to plan for this growth is the arrival of the HS2 Interchange in 2026. This national-level infrastructure being located in the Borough presents huge opportunities for us to attract investment, housing and jobs growth. However, we must plan carefully to ensure that potential negative impacts from added congestion are minimised on our transport and street networks.



This transport strategy will help us create the conditions which encourage people choose sustainable forms of transport (walking, cycling and public transport).

As well as accommodating growth in trip making there are many other reasons to promote these modes.

They are:

- Healthier
- More equitable
- Better for the environment
- Reduce casualty rates from collisions and
- Create a more pleasant urban environment

Finally we want to use investment in transport to improve the Borough as a whole. If congestion rises or we have to build wider roads or bigger junctions then we risk harming the character of Solihull. We want Solihull Connected to provide great streets; allowing more choice for people to move and travel, whilst enhancing the character of the Borough.

### **A growing borough**

We have significant growth plans for Solihull over the next 20 years or more:

- Solihull town centre has the capacity and desire to grow, both in terms of its retail offering but also providing high-quality 'city centre' style accommodation and other new job opportunities
- We can take advantage of the new HS2 station, to be located near the airport, and the opportunities that provides for us to open up growth areas for new jobs and accommodation
- Major employers in the Borough, such as Jaguar Land Rover, recognise the advantages of our location and are seeking to expand and grow their operations here
- Other locations, such as Blythe Valley, have opportunities to grow and provide areas for new homes and jobs

In total, assuming HS2 is completed, there could be as many as 32,000 more jobs and 8,000 new households in the Borough over the next 20 years or so; which will represent a 30% and 9% increase on today. We would then expect further growth around the HS2 Interchange beyond the 20-year horizon of the initial Solihull Connected document.

These are significant numbers which present both opportunities and challenges for us all.

This level of growth will bring challenges to our transport system. For example, we estimate that Solihull residents alone currently generate around 572,000 daily trips by all modes (walking, cycling, car and public transport) and this could rise to 675,000 within 20 years with the increase in households.

In addition, we know from the 2011 census that there are around 50,000 people who come into the Borough each day to work, representing approximately 50% of our jobs being taken up by people travelling in from elsewhere. In addition, around 60% of Solihull commuters travel out of the Borough for work each day. If the current patterns continue then in 20 years there could be as many as 120,000 people travelling in and out of the Borough each day for work, making 240,000 trips; of which 164,000 will be by car.

It is essential that there is an interaction between Solihull Connected land use plans set out in the Borough's Local Plan and the spatial plans of neighbouring authorities. Land use should be planned alongside transport measures to ensure that developments are more sustainable and can be supported by the transport system. It also means that developments are planned in such a way that will reduce the need to travel: with local amenities within easy reach. To this end there is close liaison between Solihull Connected and the Local Plan as they are developed along similar timelines, in particular to embed Solihull Connected objectives within emerging Local Plan policies.

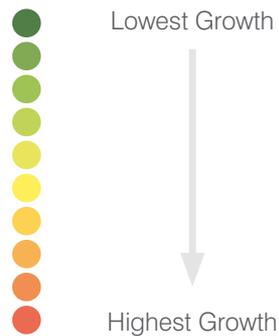
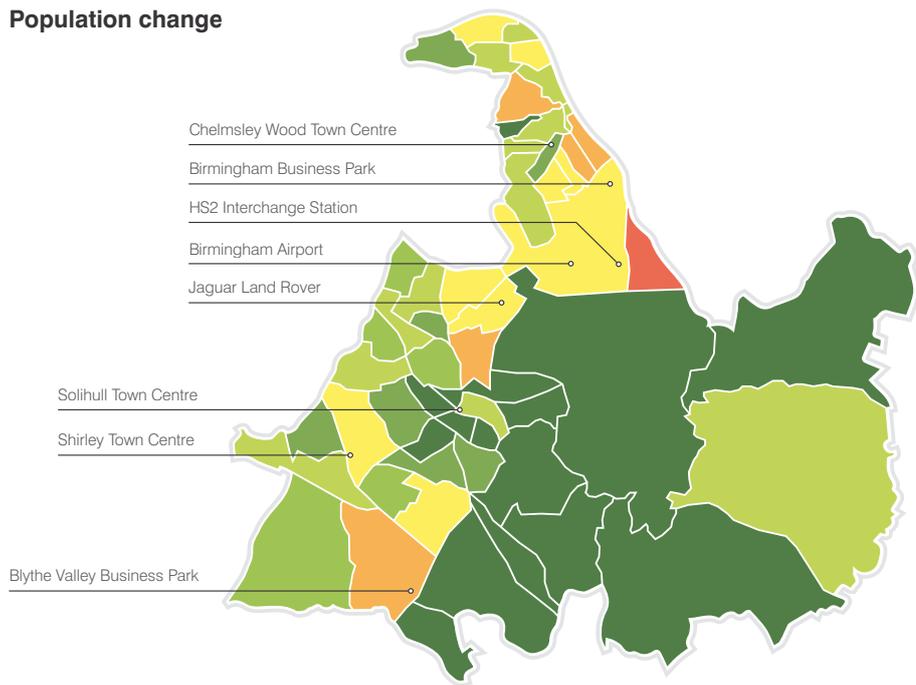
We have to be realistic that building significant amounts of new road capacity will be difficult. That's not to say that specific hotspots of congestion cannot and should not be dealt with and access in and out of particular areas be improved for cars.

It's more that we must recognise that the road network we have now will largely be the same in the future. We therefore need to look at using our existing roads more efficiently. The growth described above will need to be accommodated by other means if traffic congestion is not to get significantly worse across the Borough.

We do though recognise the important role a car plays, and will continue to play, for many people in the Borough.

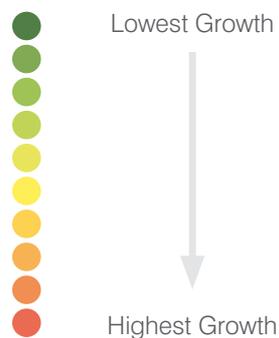
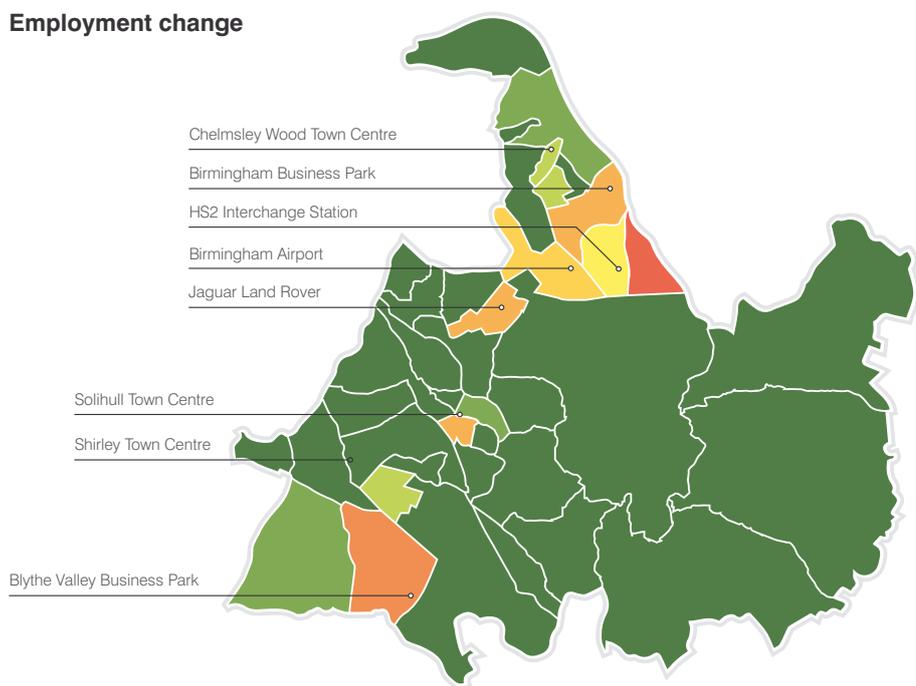
This strategy promotes a solution that allows those who want to use sustainable transport to do so safely and conveniently; encourages others to do so when possible but also keeps the Borough moving for all.

## Population change



*Population growth in the Borough will be reasonably spread out, primarily within the existing urban area. The biggest single growth area will be around the HS2 Interchange which could see up to 2,000 new homes built.*

## Employment change



*Employment growth in the Borough will be concentrated in three areas which are collectively known as the 'UK Central' proposals. These include: 1. The 'Hub' around NEC/Airport/HS2 Interchange, Birmingham Business Park and Jaguar Land Rover; 2. Solihull Town Centre; and 3. Blythe Valley Business Park.*

### **Working across boundaries**

The high level of cross-border commuting highlighted above illustrates the importance of working with neighbouring authorities to ensure seamless journeys. The Solihull Connected transport strategy is therefore aligned with 'Movement for Growth', The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan published in late 2015; and Birmingham Connected, Birmingham's 20-year transport strategy published in late 2014.

High-quality public transport schemes such as Sprint and Metro will cross the local authority borders, as would potential improvements to rail links such as electrification or additional tracks on the Snow Hill line. Such initiatives would make travel easier for people from across the West Midlands. But it's not just about large-scale projects; more local initiatives such as cycle and walking routes also need to connect to routes and places outside Solihull to maximise potential.

### **Low-carbon future**

The Stern Report and the Climate Change Act 2008 highlighted the need for action to reduce carbon emissions and consequences if we fail to act. Transport in the UK accounts for around a fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions, mainly CO<sub>2</sub>, and is globally a significant contributor to climate change, air pollution and health inequalities. According to the National Statistics Local and Regional CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions Report in 2012 transport contributed to 31% of all carbon emissions in the West Midlands and 36% in Solihull. Although there has been a declining trend in road transport emissions since 2005 due to vehicle fleet technology improvements, more fuel-efficient vehicles producing less CO<sub>2</sub> and a shift to diesel, there is a risk of a rise as the economy improves through promoting growth.

To support a low-carbon future Solihull will work in partnership with regional partners and align with the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan 'Movement for Growth', the GBSLEP Low-carbon Transport Strategy, Birmingham Connected and Highways England, in particular to support people making low-carbon travel choices such as walking, cycling and public transport, the market for low-carbon vehicles and investment in recharging infrastructure and new technologies.

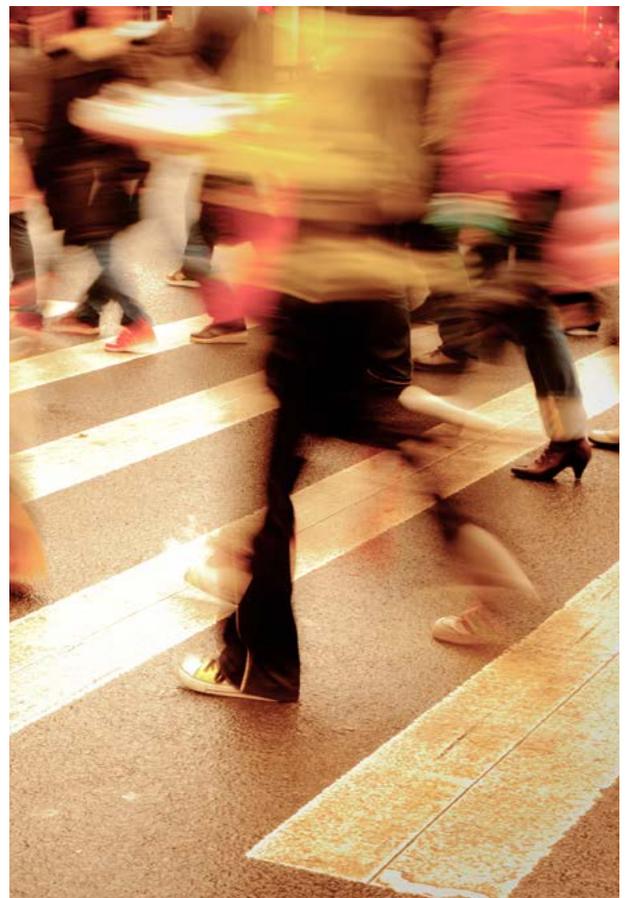
### **Enhancing the character of Solihull**

Solihull is an attractive place to live and work and its 'Urbs in Rure' motto expresses the importance of its green urban character. The availability of transport has wide-ranging beneficial effects but can also harm the attractiveness of urban and rural areas and the wellbeing of the people who live there through the effects of congestion, speeding vehicles, severance, pollution, noise and conflict between local access and through traffic.

In order to maintain Solihull's character and respond to the needs and wellbeing of local people, decisions about the transport investment need to fully consider and be sensitive to these issues. Solihull Connected will ensure that investment to improve transport within the Borough also improves Solihull's quality as a place to live.

### **Securing future funding**

Another important reason for this strategy in place is that it will help us to get access to future funding. The Delivery Plan, which will follow the publication of this strategy, will include a long list of schemes which we believe will be beneficial to help meet the overall objectives. Knowing what our strategic priorities are means that we can be 'shovel ready' when funding from Central Government (e.g. Devolution Deal and GBSLEP), the European Union or private developers comes available. We hope to use this strategy to start getting more than our fair share of investment into our transport system.



# An endorsed vision and direction

Over the summer of 2015, we consulted stakeholders and residents on the Green Paper; published in July 2015.

## Support for the vision and objectives of Solihull Connected

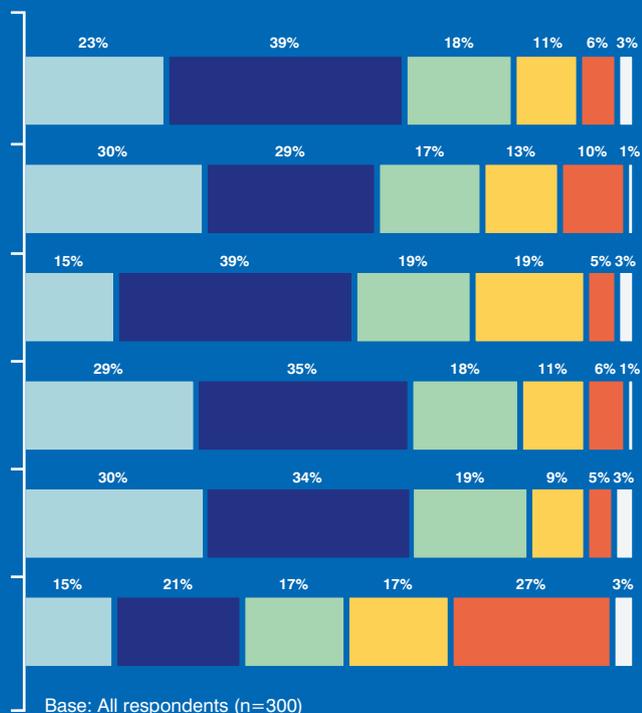
There was broad support for the vision and objectives underpinning Solihull Connected, in particular the need to invest in mass-transit, along with a town centre masterplan and local community infrastructure aimed at encouraging walking and cycling. This support is shown in the below graphs, which show the responses to questions we asked the public and key stakeholders.

## How we consulted

- 300 residents questionnaires
- 37 stakeholder questionnaires
- 16 formal responses
- 63 stakeholder workshop participants
- 27 parish workshop participants
- 87 focus group participants
- 200 school pupil workshop participants

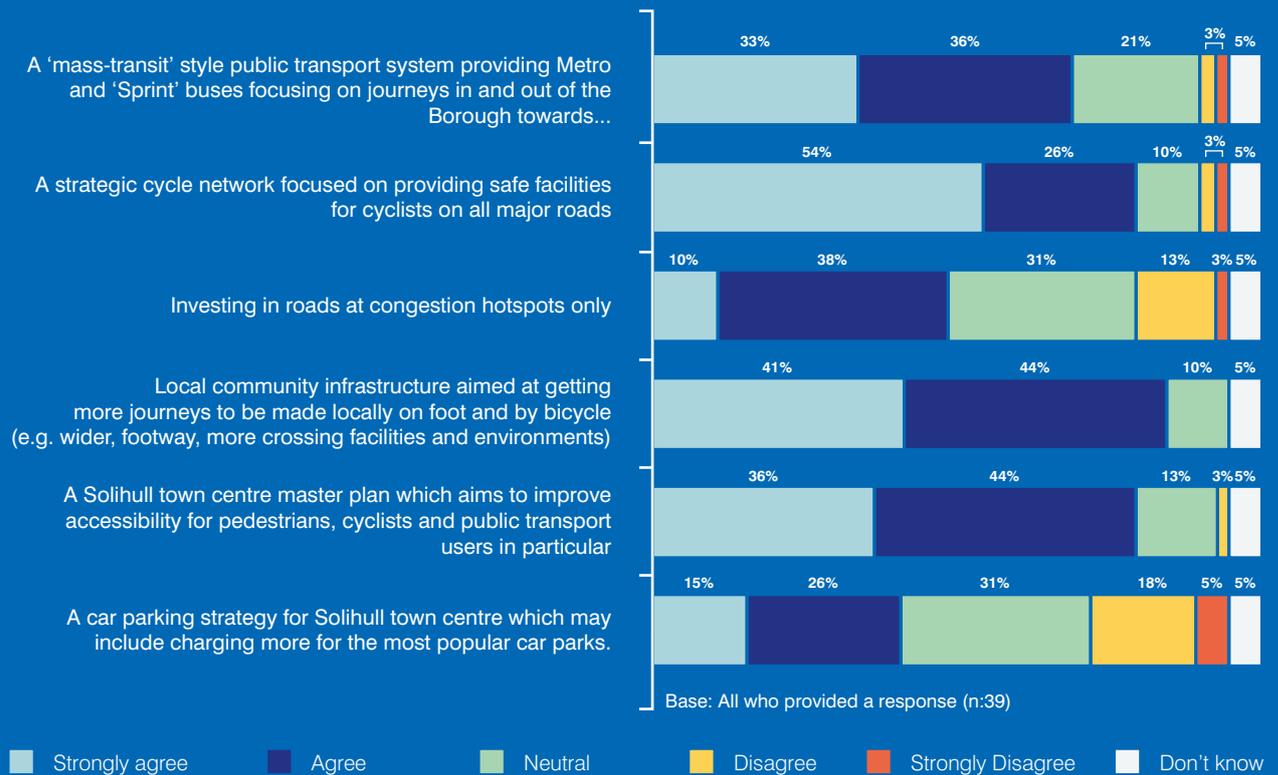
## Residents – agree or disagree with strategy themes?

- A 'mass-transit' style public transport system providing Metro and 'Sprint' buses focusing on journeys in and out of the Borough towards Birmingham and north/south within the Borough itself
- A strategic cycle network focused on providing safe facilities for cyclists on all major roads
- Investing in roads at congestion hotspots only
- Local community infrastructure aimed at getting more journeys to be made locally on foot and by bicycle (e.g. wider, footway, more crossing facilities and environments)
- A Solihull town centre master plan which aims to improve accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users in particular
- A car parking strategy for Solihull town centre which may include charging more for the most popular car parks.



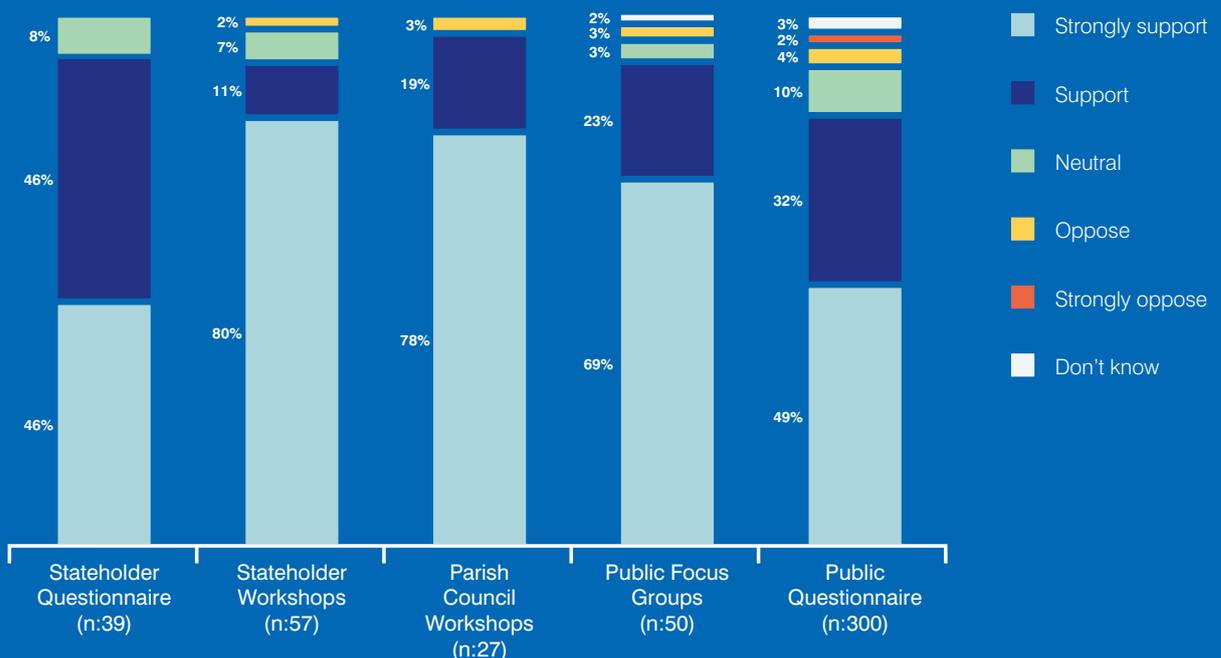
Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly Disagree   Don't know

### Stakeholders – agree or disagree with strategy themes?



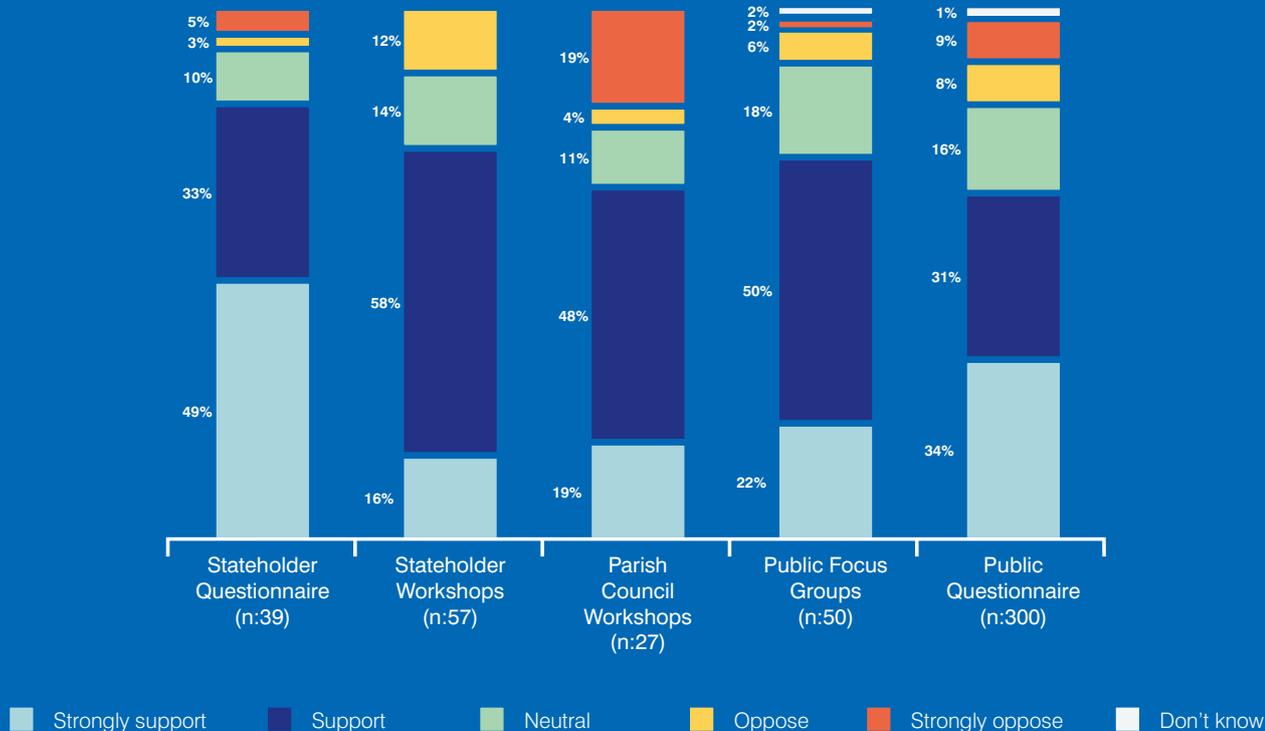
Consultees agreed that growth and development planned for Solihull will create further congestion and capacity problems and there is a need for Solihull Connected to offset those problems. Stakeholders in particular feel that Solihull's limited connectivity is a key barrier to growth.

### The planned growth in jobs and new homes in Solihull will create traffic congestion and capacity problems if no action is taken?



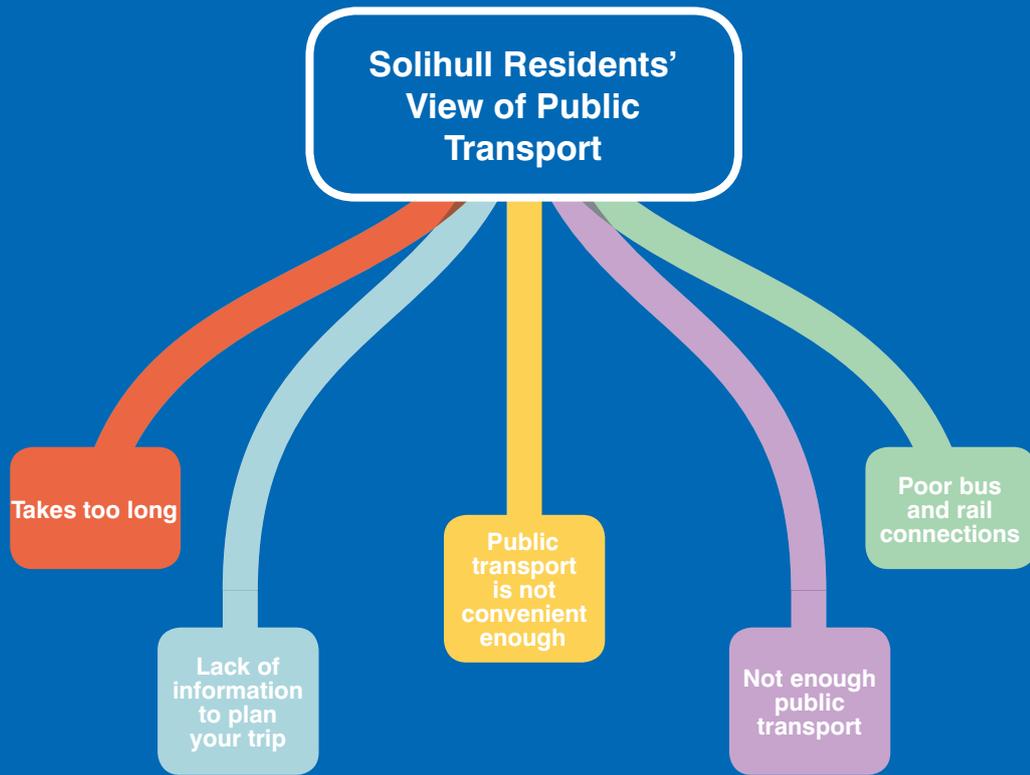
While there is broad support for the Solihull Connected objectives and themes, there is strong feeling that the importance of the car should be recognised and that a balanced approach is required: both relieving congestion at key locations and investing in high-quality alternatives.

### How do you feel about the initial vision?



When asked about the principal ‘**problems**’ facing transport in the Borough, people identified traffic congestion, poor public transport connectivity and the cost of public transport. Residents feel that the traffic congestion is partly caused by traffic signal timings, roadworks and the school run.

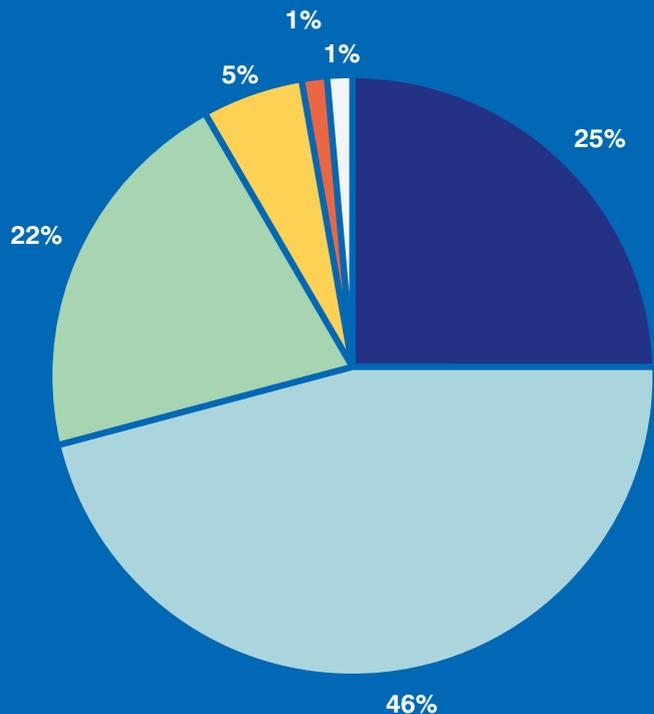
Barriers to using sustainable modes were discussed in detail, and it was felt that public transport services and active modes do not currently provide a realistic or viable alternative for many people. Some of the barriers to people using public transport more frequently included a lack of evening/Sunday services, and long and indirect routes and journey times illustrated below. Residents are particularly concerned about the safety of cycling.



Furthermore, it was felt that people now simply have less time: “We’re too busy these days, rushing around, we don’t have time for walking and cycling” and “We don’t want to add to our journeys by using public transport” or similar were common responses. The local community feels strongly that action needs to be taken to improve Solihull’s transport network and many agree that “to achieve the Solihull Connected initial vision, people and organisations need to change how they travel”.

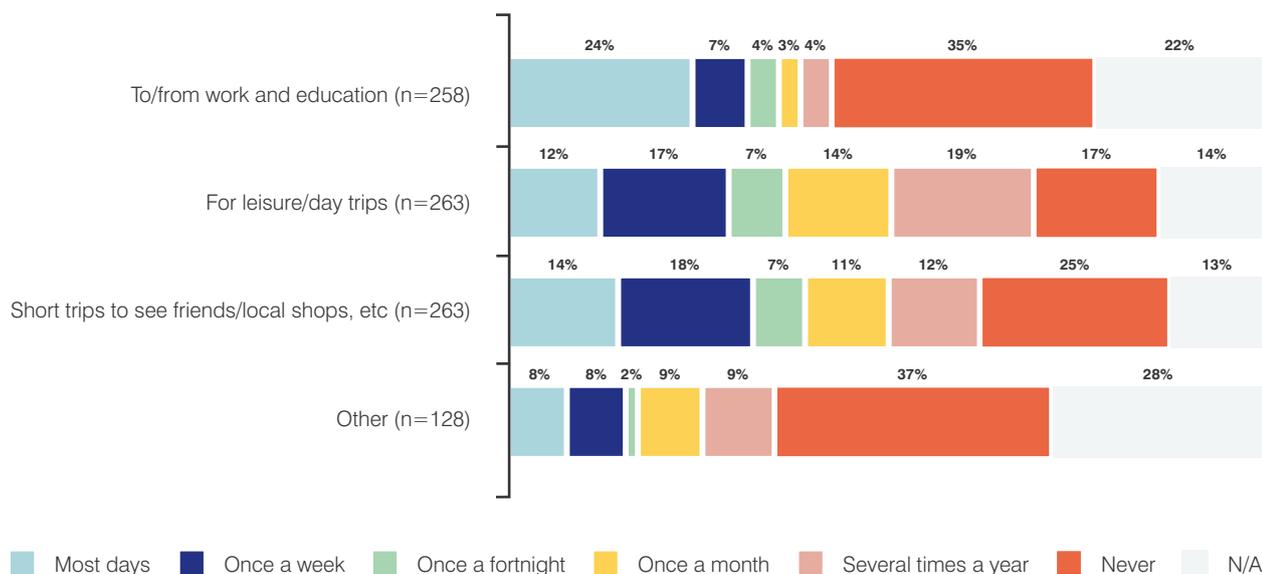
How much do you agree or disagree with the statement: “To achieve the Solihull Connected initial vision, people and businesses need to change how they travel”?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't know



It is clear that a number of barriers to the use of sustainable modes need to be addressed before Solihull residents and workers will consider changing their travel behaviour: alternative modes need to be as convenient (if not more) for people to switch modes. Suggested improvements to public transport range from better connectivity within the Borough and beyond; more frequent and reliable public transport services with a timetable that also includes evenings and weekends; plus changes to ticketing (including price) and better information provision. The environment for active travel, in particular cycling, would need to feel considerably safer for it to become a viable option.

**How often might you use public transport for the following types of journeys if your main reason for not currently using it is removed?**



The consultation on the Green Paper gave us a clear direction:

*The vision for an emphasis on public and active transport was clearly supported but residents and stakeholders alike want high-quality, reliable and safe alternatives before they will begin to use their cars a little less.*

The message to Solihull Council was to continue to develop a transport strategy in the spirit of the Green Paper. This document finalises the vision for transport in the Borough and paves the way for schemes to come forward in the final strategy which support this new direction.

# Solihull Connected – Vision and objectives

Our location at the heart of the Midlands and the country makes Solihull a very attractive place for people to live and for firms to locate. There is a risk that proposed development could potentially increase car trips on our roads significantly and exacerbate the congestion hotspots we currently see every day.

Solihull Connected provides us with the opportunity to develop the best mix of infrastructure and policies which will achieve the growth strategy and still retain the character which makes Solihull unique.

Having Solihull Connected means that we are focused on what our needs are and we can ensure that all schemes and policies that come forward are focused on us achieving a single vision.

Given the above, our vision for what Solihull Connected will focus on achieving is:

*Solihull Connected will enable great mobility and connections for all by attracting major investment in our transport system and places – enhancing the Borough as an attractive, sustainable and economically vibrant place to live, work and visit.*

## Objectives:



### Objective 1

Ensure that major transport investment enables and manages growth to achieve the Council priorities for homes and jobs.



### Objective 2

Support and enable the integrated delivery of sustainable and efficient forms of transport like mass-transit, cycling and walking.



### Objective 3

Contribute to the council priorities to support people's everyday lives and improve health and wellbeing through the promotion of smarter choices programmes linked to major and local infrastructure investment.



### Objective 4

Identify a prioritised short, medium and long-term delivery plan to achieve the overarching vision and objectives whilst recognising the specific needs of the different parts of the Borough.



### Objective 5

Ensure that the objectives of Solihull Connected are embedded in Local Plan and Health and Wellbeing policies to support walking, cycling and public transport use.

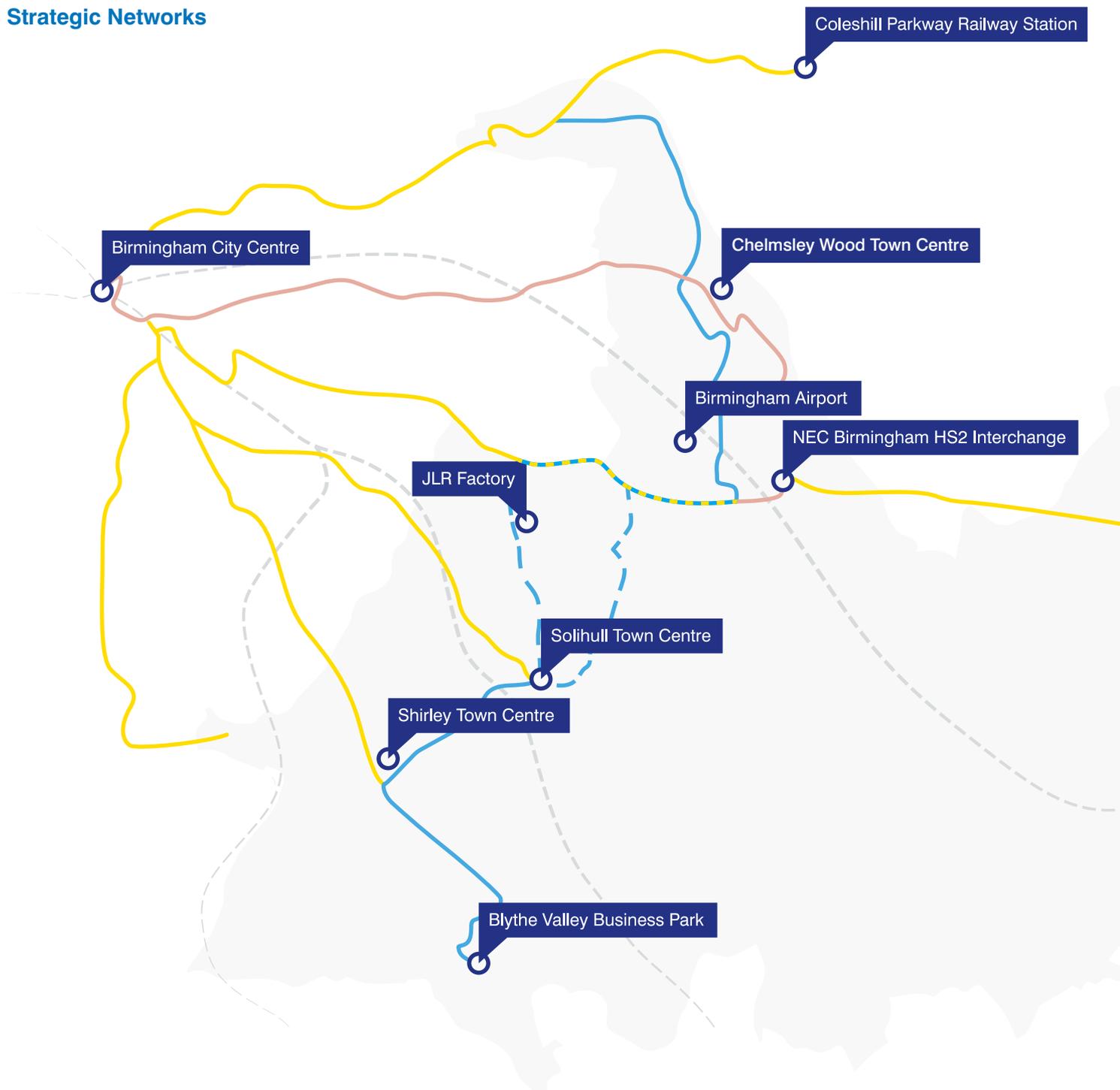
## We've started already

Solihull Connected builds on the transport investment that has been made in the borough over the last few years. Our recent transport schemes have sought to better coordinate and integrate transport investment by ourselves and others, with wider agendas such as economic development, place making and health.

Investment in local centres, cycle networks, travel planning and safety improvements for example, have been successfully delivered through our capital programme, other investment programmes by partners and through developer led projects. Solihull Connected will therefore ensure we continue this process and the strategy will provide us with a definitive direction to follow.

# Strategy Themes

## Strategic Networks



Solihull Connected will create a balanced investment in transport infrastructure that recognises the need to cater for cars but places appropriate and increasing emphasis on alternatives; including innovative and game-changing public transport.

Technical assessments are ongoing to fully understand the scale of the increase in travel demand but we know that the most significant growth will be around the airport/NEC/HS2 Interchange, Solihull town centre and Blythe Valley. We also know that realistically there is limited opportunity to build significant capacity into our road network.

To encourage more people to use public and active transport modes will not be an overnight occurrence.

It will take a carefully considered strategy requiring investment in infrastructure of the right quality; plus the right behaviour change marketing and promotion to ensure that people understand the benefits of using an alternative mode.

## A mass-transit network

For Solihull 'mass-transit' means an interconnected system of public transport modes focused on the most significant demand movements in the Borough. This system, which would consist of rail, Metro and 'Sprint' buses, will be able to carry large numbers of people quickly, reliably and comfortably.

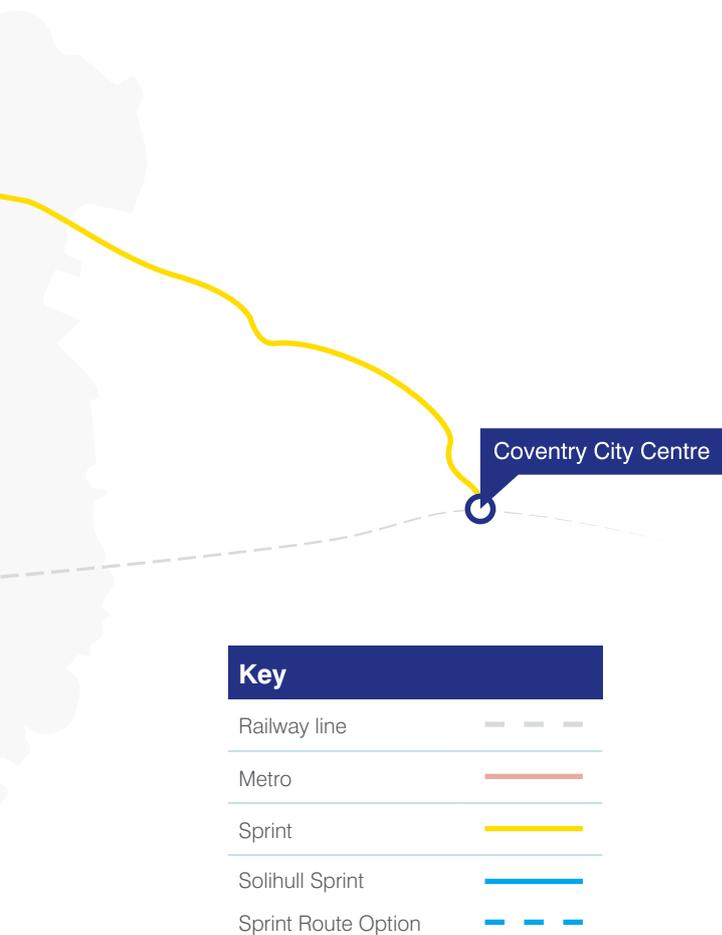
This network would form the pinnacle of a public transport hierarchy which would include local buses serving areas of lower demand and integrating with the mass-transit system.

The plan for the overall network is shown on the following map; this takes the metropolitan network presented by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and expands it to the needs of Solihull. For the most part the network is focused on improved links with Birmingham as we know that this is where the greatest demand will be. This also builds upon recommendations from Birmingham's transport strategy which suggested a number of routes connecting Birmingham and Solihull. However, we have also identified a need for better north/south connections through public transport and this network shows a route linking the three growth areas from Blythe Valley in the south to the airport/NEC/HS2 Interchange in the north, via Solihull Town Centre.

Strategic studies are also suggesting that the development proposals of UK Central will create sufficient demand for a connection towards Coventry in order to get people to/from work at The Hub area, or connect in with HS2.

We will work with delivery partners and funding bodies, such as Centro, the new West Midlands Combined Authority, Midlands Connect and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership to create a mass transit network which serves our needs. This will include:

- A Metro link between the airport and Birmingham city centre
- 'Sprint' bus routes along the A45 and right in the north of the Borough running between Coleshill Parkway and Birmingham city centre
- Potentially a 'Sprint' link out to Coventry from the HS2 Interchange, which could form an extension of the A45 route
- 'Sprint' bus routes connecting Solihull town centre with Birmingham city centre along the Stratford and Warwick roads
- A Solihull-focused 'Sprint' route which would eventually link Chester Road with Solihull Town Centre, via Chelmsley Wood and the airport. There could be two possible routes from there; one via the JLR Factory to provide connectivity to jobs but there's potentially an alternative route via Damson Parkway which could provide a faster link
- Improved interchanges and connectivity at rail stations across the Borough to link passengers into the rest of the mass-transit network.



A detailed technical study is currently underway which is examining how these routes can be accommodated on Solihull's roads; which will include a recommendation as to what level of priority should be given to public transport in different locations across the network. This study will provide a prioritised list of when we believe each of these routes should come forward in order to support the economic growth of the Borough.

To implement a road-based system like Sprint and Metro will require us to balance road space across the needs of different users; in order to improve the system as a whole. The mass-transit modes need to be of such quality that it they attract new users (over the existing bus users), and therefore re-allocated road space is not seen as a "waste" of a scarce resource. Additionally, when people do start to change their travel behaviour and congestion eases a little, it may be necessary to then further lock in some of the released capacity to sustainable modes or the congestion will simply build up again.

An attractive and hence well-used public transport system could be the difference between an economically successful area and daily traffic congestion. Public transport needs a better image for the residents of much of the Borough, but those living in the Urban Core in particular. In general residents of this area are relatively affluent and often have access to multiple cars per household. Public transport is not seen as a suitable alternative to their car for many people. Simple accessibility and frequency of service is not enough for most residents of this area; despite existing services following corridors of high demand. Here the quality, comfort, simplicity of use and reliability of the service being offered is as important to potential users as just the frequency.

If we are to attract people who enjoy the quality of transport using their car provides them on a daily basis then we have to present something that is a step-change from what they see on-street today. We will work closely with Centro to ensure that the quality of public transport on these mass-transit corridors will meet the needs of our residents and workers.

Whilst there are three different service types in this mass-transit network, Rail, Metro and 'Sprint' buses, all three will need to achieve the following characteristics in order for the network as a whole to be successful:

### **1. High quality**

The vehicles, waiting facilities and information must be of a modern and striking appearance which brands the service as part of a West Midlands-wide network.

### **2. An attractive frequency**

Mass-transit users should not need to use a timetable, as services should be based on a 'turn up and go' philosophy which requires high-frequency and high-capacity vehicles.

### **3. Reliability**

This is a critically important feature; if the system cannot be relied upon then people will not use it. For Sprint (and in some places Metro), because it is road based, this may mean physical and technological infrastructure providing priority at some junctions and congestion spots along routes.

### **4. Safety**

Vehicles and waiting facilities should achieve a high degree of safety and security.

### **5. Integration within and outside of the system**

Key to this network will be to achieve a high degree of integration. This will be needed not only between the modes described here but also with the regular bus network; which will continue to operate alongside the mass-transit network. Integration will mean services stopping together at interchange points, timetables being coordinated as far as possible (although a 'turn up and go' frequency should mean this is not such an issue) and cross ticketing to enable a 'whole of journey' fare structure to be put in place.

### **6. Ultra-low Emissions**

It is possible in the future for the entire system to be emissions free at source by using technology such as conductive charging for electric vehicles; which is already being used internationally and as a trial in Milton Keynes.

### **7. A modern and flexible fares and payment system**

The fare system for the mass-transit system needs to be fully integrated into the overall public transport network. It will need to adopt a 'whole of journey' pricing mechanism. Ultimately, the system should aim to be totally cashless and accessible through a variety of means, including: traditional permits and passes, pre-charged or 'top-up' smart cards, contact payments on cash or credit cards, or linked to smartphone applications.

## Heavy rail

Strong growth is continuing in the regional and intercity passenger markets. As a result, many peak services in Solihull are overcrowded and meeting the increasing demand for rail transport requires investment in longer/more frequent trains in the short term and additional infrastructure capability in the medium to long term including the possible electrification of the Snow Hill lines.

Rail services to and from Solihull Station are planned and delivered around historic Birmingham centric commuter routes and do not reflect the town centre's role as an important sub-regional economic hub with a work force approaching 20,000. Rail needs to help maintain and enhance its connectivity and interface with the wider through increased longer distance and inter-regional rail connectivity from Solihull Station.

We cannot deliver these improvements alone and are working with regional partners and the rail industry to develop our short, medium and long-term aspirations for Solihull. This is being done in a number of ways below.

## West Midlands Rail Vision

The West Midlands Rail Vision sets out the high level context and rail-specific regional aspirations for key ongoing (and future) work streams including the significant investment by Government in the new high speed rail line HS2. The vision sets out the current state and identifies long-term investment opportunities to inform Network Rail's Long-term Planning process and local opportunities for improving the passenger experience.

## Midlands Connect

Midlands Connect will provide the evidence base for a package of multi-modal connectivity improvements for delivery in Control Period 6 and beyond. This package will be aligned to ensuring that we can maximise the regional benefits from HS2 and which will support economic growth in line with the HS2 Taskforce recommendations. As such it will build on the rail elements of the initial HS2 Connectivity Package which ideally needs to be developed further as part of the Network Rail/HS2 Integrated Plan work stream, requested by the Secretary of State for Transport.



## Rail devolution

We are a member of West Midlands Rail Ltd and together with our regional partner authorities have been developing a proposal for increasing local involvement and influence over local rail services operating on the new London Midland franchise to commence in October 2017.

This will mean a local rail network that is locally specified and where investment decisions are made both as part of an integrated transport system and in the context of national rail policy, so delivering the greatest economic return for investment.

It will allow the local rail network to be tailored to the needs of the region and will place decision-making to the people that know the local rail network the best.

We will also consider developing a Solihull Rail Vision to identify a detailed specification and delivery plan for passenger facilities in the Borough.

## Investing in our roads

Whilst we strongly believe there is a need to achieve a real and sustained shift from car to public and active transport in order for us to achieve our ambition of 'managed growth'; we also have to be realistic that we cannot take our attention away from managing traffic congestion. By investing where our roads are most congested we can keep the Borough moving for both cars and public transport; thereby also helping to achieve our mode shift aspirations.

We must also recognise that many of our roads serve other functions, such as a local 'high street'. In such cases we will need to find a balance between moving people and creating great places.

We need to focus our investment to ensure we retain competitiveness of our growth areas and local centres.

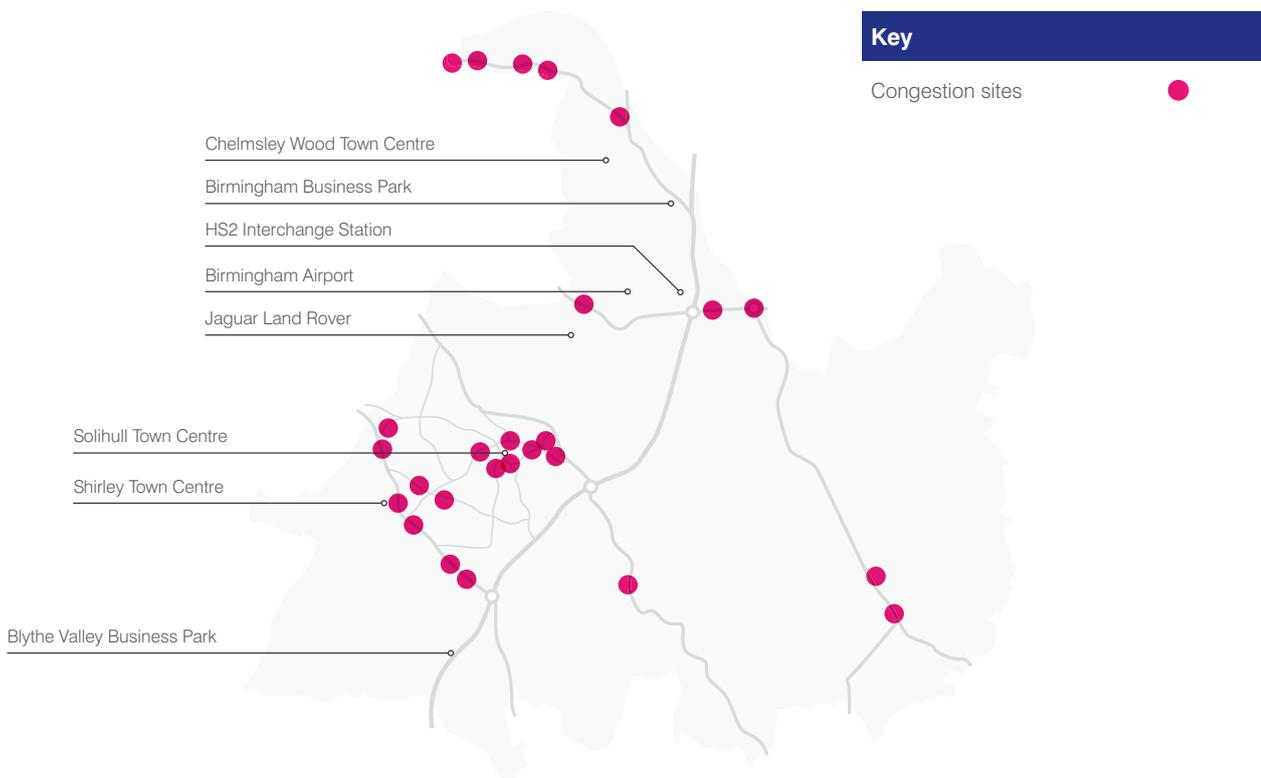
This means focusing on the network which will improve access to the NEC, airport, Birmingham Business Park, Blythe Valley, Jaguar Land Rover, Solihull Town Centre and Shirley and Chelmsley Wood.

Some specific needs for our future roads investment include:

- M42 Junction 6 is a significant congestion issue and a scheme has been committed in Highways England's Route Investment Strategy for completion by 2020.
- New road infrastructure will be needed to support the housing and employment growth at the development around the HS2 Interchange
- Improved access to business parks, such as Birmingham Business Park and Blythe Valley

- Congestion hotspots on arterials approaching Solihull Town Centre and other local centres
- A detailed technical study is currently underway which is examining the needs of the highway network. This will produce a list of specific road upgrade requirements which will support the economic growth of the Borough. The outputs of this study will form part of the Delivery Plan for Solihull Connected, which will follow the publication of this strategy document later in Autumn 2016.
- In addition to managing traffic growth and congestion through key investment in our road network; it will also be important to ensure our parking policies and strategies are aligned to match these investment strategies. Our parking policies will need to be flexible to both accommodate growth and also manage demand where there is a need to limit the number of cars coming to an area. For this reason we will develop a Borough-wide car parking strategy; which will set an overall policy for both residential and commercial parking but also be cognisant of the needs of individual areas.

### Identified Congestion 'Hotspots' Across the Borough



## Freight management

Freight is a major user of our road network and implementing a system that controls and manages the flow of freight will be important for safety, congestion and environmental purposes. It is also advantageous for businesses to have detailed information on road space and loading/unloading slots available in order to optimise their operations and remain competitive.

We need to ensure that we support the businesses within Solihull to effectively manage their operations. The logistics needs of large firms, such as Jaguar Land Rover, are a vital component to the success of their business and therefore a major consideration as to where they locate.

The West Midlands Metropolitan Freight Strategy (2013) includes proposals which affect Solihull directly, including encouraging greater freight use of the M6 Toll, the development of an Urban Road Freight Network and efficient and reliable access to national airports. Other proposals include Freight Consolidation Centres, enhanced local deliveries and strategic rail freight interchanges. This strategy is currently being updated and a key component of this is the ambition to make the West Midlands a hub of logistics best practice, attracting investment while reducing impacts on communities and the environment.

## A strategic cycle network

In addition to the mass-transit system Solihull Connected is planning for cycling to become a mass-participation form of transport for our residents.

The Borough has a number of factors which we can build on to create an environment whereby cycling is more widely used:

- A household travel survey in 2011 suggested that already half of households in the Borough have access to a bicycle; the highest in the West Midlands.
- The same survey suggested that 57% of all daily trips made by Solihull residents are shorter than 5km in length, a total of 320,000 trips every day which are a short walk or cycle distance.
- If we could switch just 10% of its residents' commuter journeys to cycling, based upon conservative estimates of how many could switch at various distances, then we could raise cycling participation from around 6,300 now to over 55,000 trips per day across the Borough.

To get to a position where cycling is a widely used form of daily transport across the Borough we must plan for it in the same way we would plan for any other mode of transport. Cyclists are like any other road user: they want to make their journey as quickly, reliably and safely as possible.

To enable them to do so we need to provide a comprehensive network of cycle routes across the Borough. This would build upon our recent success in delivering the North Solihull Cycle Network and seek to develop high-quality and connected routes across the borough. This will be supported by a range cycle promotion and education activities that promote and encourage use of the new and existing network.

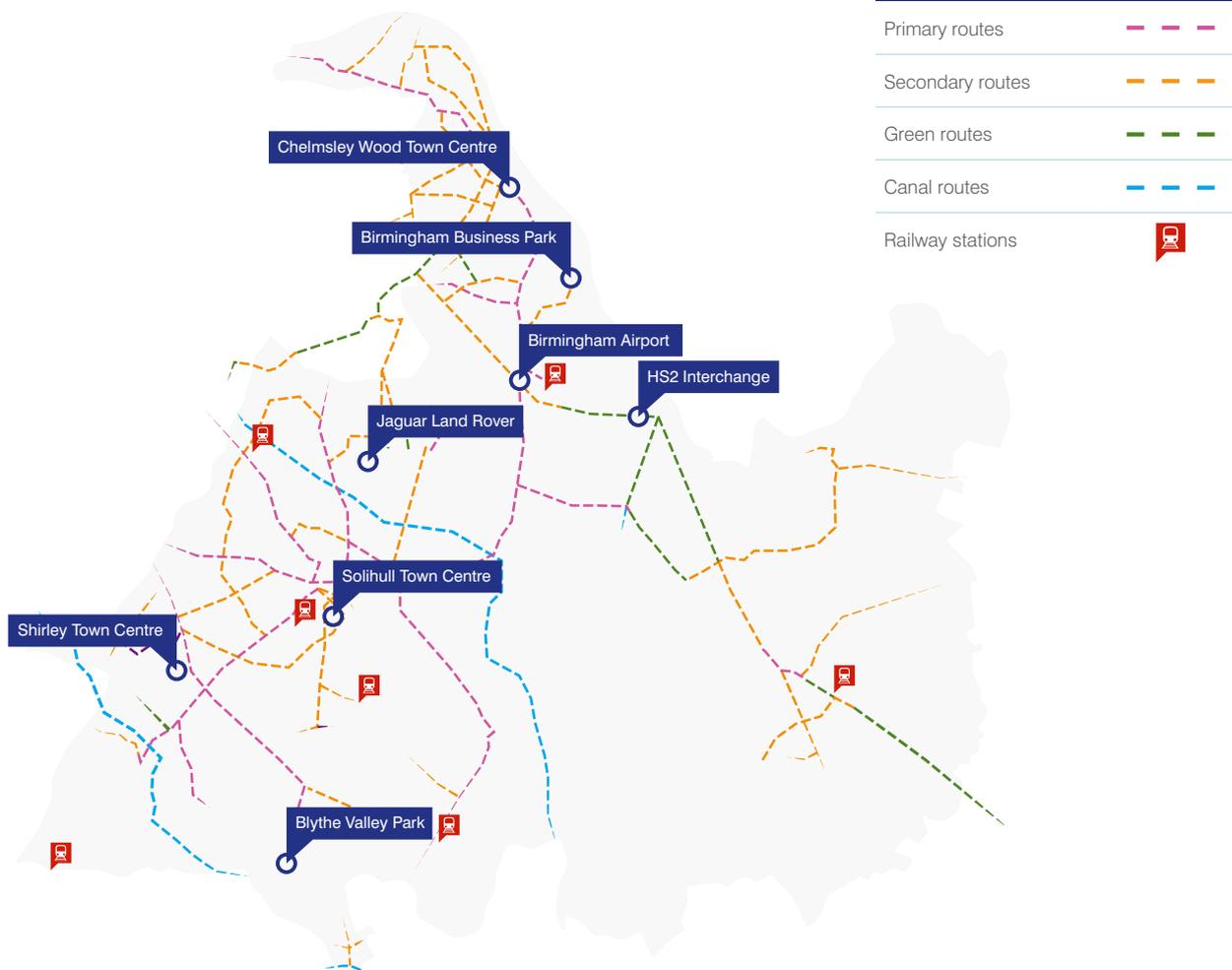


As with the mass-transit network we have the opportunity to tie in to Birmingham's developing cycle network; thereby linking our residents to jobs across our border. To do so we believe we should plan a network which provides a hierarchy of facilities to enable different types of journeys and different levels of cyclists:

1. Primary routes – running along most main arterial roads in the Borough to provide fast and safe journeys to/from our main trip generating locations within the Borough and across the border with Birmingham.
2. Secondary routes – allowing journeys within suburbs and connecting cyclists from their homes to the strategic routes.

3. Local streets – local neighbourhood streets will need to become cycle friendly from all users, enabling journeys to local shops, schools, etc., to be made. This may not require much in the way of physical infrastructure but could mean reducing speeds down to 20mph for most residential streets. The concept of 'active streets' is gaining momentum across the UK and is about recapturing our streets and neighbourhoods from cars and providing safe places for us to walk, cycle and play.
4. Green routes – using facilities such as rights of way and canals we can provide routes which, whilst predominantly focused on leisure cycling, can provide vital links between villages in our rural areas and urban centres. We have the opportunity to link into: a) the Birmingham's 'Cycle Revolution' network which has placed great emphasis on utilising the canal network, b) the planning of green cycle routes as part of the UKC Hub draft concept between HS2 Interchange and the NEC, c) the opportunities identified in the M42 Economic Gateway Masterplan to nurture and create green links and d) Department for Transport sponsored work investigating the potential to deliver a national cycle network aligned with HS2, particularly through the rural east connecting local settlements to UKC growth areas.

### Possible Strategic Cycle Network for Solihull



A detailed technical study is currently underway which is examining the priorities for new cycle routes and how this can be accommodated within the wider network aspirations for better public transport and traffic congestion management at key junctions. This study will provide recommendations for the location of cycle infrastructure across the Borough.

As well as the on-road infrastructure, investment in cycling must also include investment in other aspects, such as secure parking at key locations such as local centres. Persuading more commuters will also require their places of work to have adequate 'end of trip' facilities such as showers and lockers. One of the strands of the current Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), which is being delivered in partnership between Solihull Council and Centro, is to help businesses to provide such facilities. This type of investment, in addition to cycle lanes and segregated cycle-ways, will continue to be a vital strand to our overall policy to encourage more people to ride.

A further output from Solihull Connected will be to produce a walking and cycling strategy under the umbrella of Solihull Connected. This document will reference national and regional best practice as well as setting out specific local policies, infrastructure proposals and promotional activities needed to encourage and enable people to make more use of active modes of travel for both business and leisure trips.

## Creating safer, healthier communities

### Streets, not roads

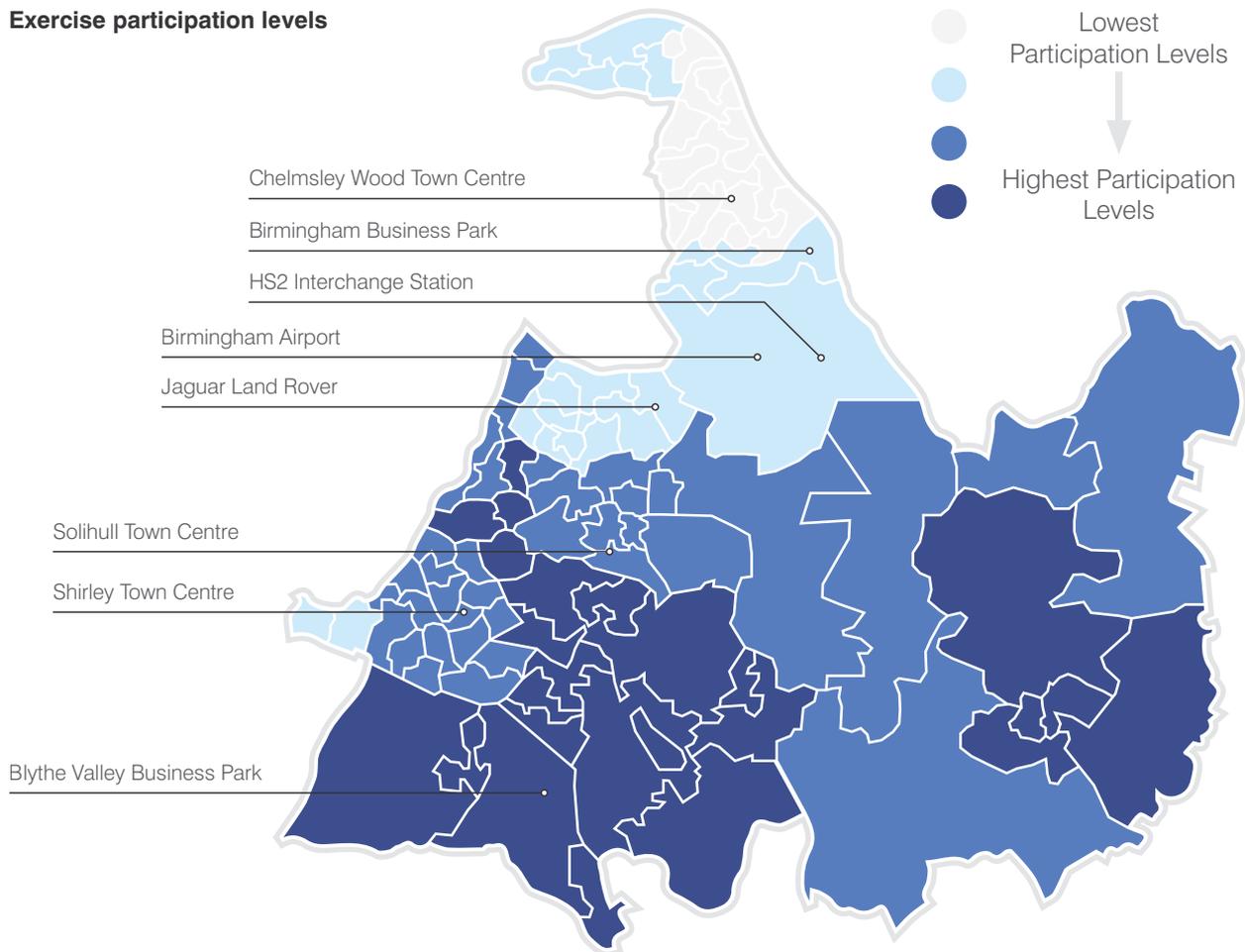
A key part of our strategy for transport at a neighbourhood level will be to plan for communities to reduce the need or desire to make very short distance trips by car. Trip making within individual neighbourhoods to get to local shops, schools, doctors, etc. should be cycleable or walkable. We must recognise that there are reasons why some people currently drive these journeys or even make longer distance journeys by car than absolutely necessary. A big part of this is to ensure that streets are welcoming and safe and barriers to movement are reduced or removed. Getting people using their local streets more has two potential benefits.

We can promote healthier lifestyles through more people walking and cycling; plus we can have an impact on traffic congestion levels by enabling people to access jobs and services more easily without driving short distances. In North Solihull for example, given the number of households not having access to a car and the general health and inactivity levels, we need to do more to encourage people to walk and cycle within their neighbourhood. The North Solihull Cycle Network has been successfully delivered but we need to build upon this.

We will also improve connections between residential neighbourhoods and the jobs and economic assets in or near the area. This would involve linking into Birmingham's cycle network as well as providing a means of penetrating the barrier of the A45 to get cyclists towards the JLR factory and Solihull town centre. If we can achieve these aims then we will be tackling one of the main causes of congestion in the morning peak – the school run; which is particularly a problem on roads in the Urban Core. A study is currently underway within the Council to develop a new initiative by which communities can potentially put forward their desires for local transport improvements. The results of this study and how the programme will be implemented will be presented in the Delivery Plan due for publication later in Autumn 2016.

The Council's current Road Safety Strategy for Solihull comes to an end in 2016. This will be refreshed as a direct output from Solihull Connected and the new Road Safety Strategy will build on the excellent results seen in casualty reduction numbers in recent years and link to the new vision and policies set out in Solihull Connect. This will set out our specific objectives, targets and interventions around changing driver behaviour, engineer interventions and enforcement activities to ensure the road network in Solihull is safe for everyone. The figure below sets out the reduction achieved in the number of killed and seriously injured casualties that have been achieved across the Borough since 1999. The figures include the latest confirmed figures from the Department for Transport up to and including 2014.

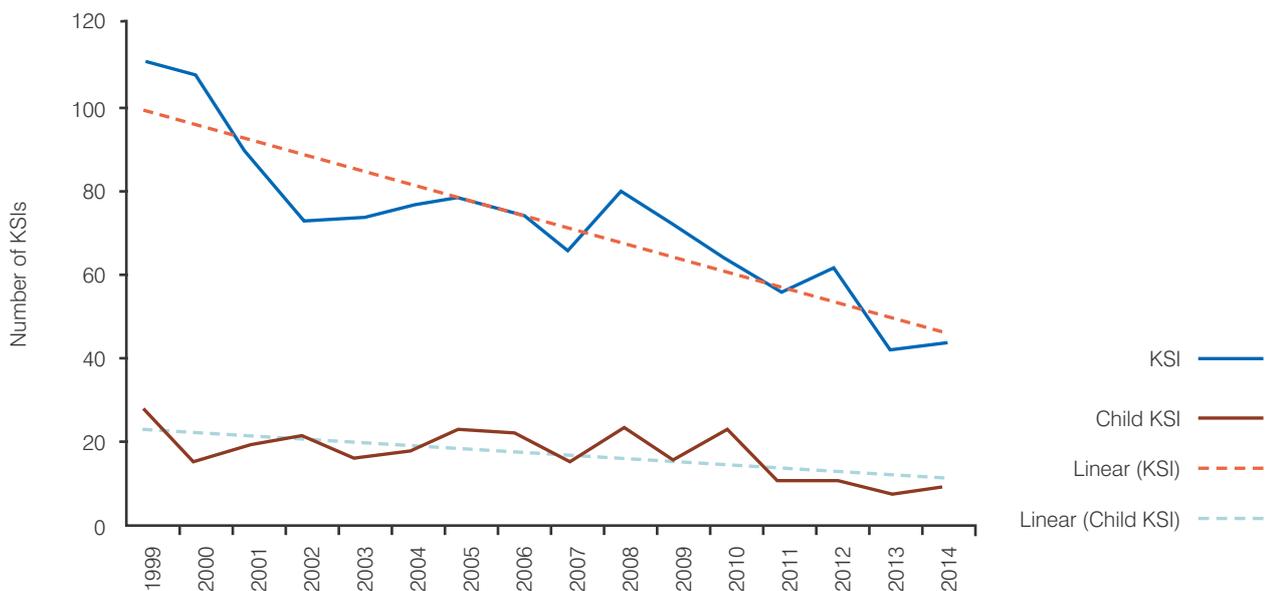
### Exercise participation levels



A survey by Sport England shows how there are big differences in exercise participation across the Borough.

### Trend (1999 – 2014)

#### Killed and seriously injured road casualties





### **Planning for vulnerable users**

A further consideration for Solihull is to ensure that we plan and provide infrastructure which is aimed at the needs of vulnerable users, including: children, visually impaired and older people.

The Borough already has some areas with an older than average-aged population compared with the rest of the UK and is also home to large numbers of people who are of an age where they will retire over the next 10 to 20 years.

Retired people's journeys can often be overlooked when planning for transport as they do not commute or attend school or often go shopping at peak times. Instead older people want to make journeys within their neighbourhood, visiting friends and family. Good street design and infrastructure will help people of all ages to make enjoyable local journeys on foot. We need to listen to the needs of our residents and if possible involve them in the design process to ensure the results are tailored to their needs.

### **Encouraging travel behaviour change**

A stated objective of this strategy is to increase the use of public transport and active modes. We believe if this can be achieved then this will contribute to healthier communities, fewer cars on the road and safer, more pleasant streets.

Analysis was undertaken on the responses from residents when asked questions about their travel habits and perceptions of different modes of transport. The purpose of this analysis was to find out why people chose to make particular journeys by car if other modes were available.

To help people change their travel behaviour, it is essential to provide alternatives of sufficient quality. Many of the initiatives described earlier in this strategy will provide improved public and active transport infrastructure. However, this alone is not enough: residents need to be made aware of the changes and be given the necessary information about how they can access it.

The analysis of the public consultation showed that for many Solihull residents do not perceive that they have an alternative to driving their cars. Research on behaviour change has shown that once a new behaviour is viewed as 'normal' then it is easier to encourage others to follow. That is why we're aiming at the so-called 'early adopters' to be the start of change across the Borough.

There are three types of early adopters: they could be people who are already aware of alternative travel options and will change their behaviour once the alternative is provided (for example, they know they could cycle to work if the route was safer). They could also be those who value attributes such as health or the environment more than others (e.g. change their behaviour because it's the 'right thing to do'). Finally, there are those who might consider a different mode for short trips and leisure. By targeting these early adopters through incentives and marketing will enable us to demonstrate to others that using alternative modes makes those behaviours more 'normal'.

Policies and measures aimed at changing travel behaviours are often collectively described as 'Smarter Choices'. These are collections of non-infrastructure schemes such as travel planning, public transport ticket incentives, car share clubs or car/cycle hire schemes. Solihull Connected will implement such measures further across the Borough; building on the 'Local Sustainable Transport Fund' (LSTF) initiatives being delivered by Centro and Solihull.

### **Getting it right from the start**

It is easier to establish high levels of walking and cycling within new neighbourhoods than it is to change entrenched behaviours of existing residents. We will consider the need for sustainable trip making as we plan the new developments in the Borough. Particularly in areas of high housing growth around Blythe Valley and the HS2 Interchange we will plan the street network to be 'people' focused; but also ensure that there are the correct mix of services and social infrastructure to ensure localised trip making.

## A town centre master plan

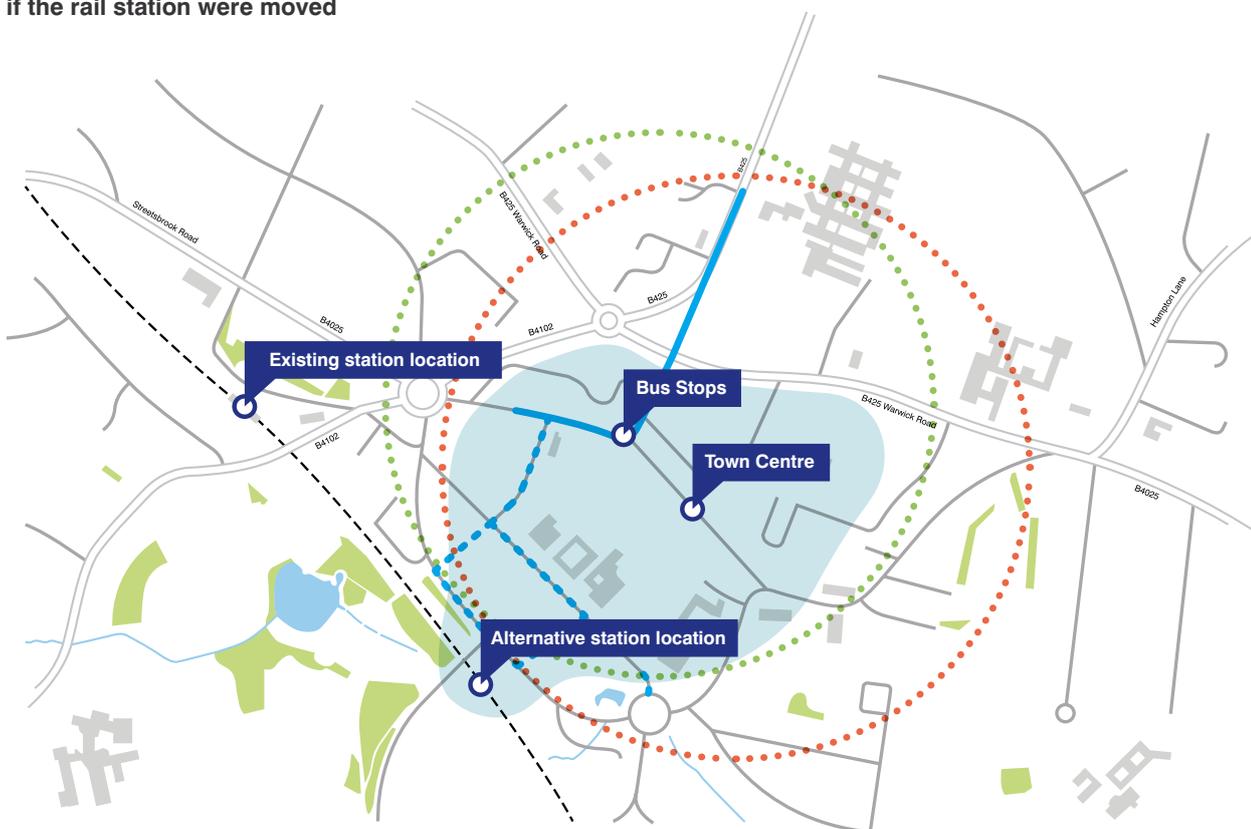
A master planning study is currently underway which is considering the future of Solihull's centre. This will help frame what the town wants to be; how should it grow and to what extent, and what will be the key uses and drivers for its vitality. Movement is a critical element of the success of the town and this is being considered in conjunction with land use.

We are looking at the following aspects in detail and will present plans and schemes in the Delivery Plan:

## Public transport accessibility and penetration

The town centre will continue to be a focal point for public transport. Following the earlier section around a planned mass-transit network, consideration is being given as to how to get this network to best integrate with the town centre. The rail station is key to this discussion. To create a truly integrated network then all mass-transit (which would be 'Sprint' buses in the case of the town centre) must service the rail station. Yet they also need to stop as close to the central area as possible. The exact routing and stopping locations will be determined as part of the masterplan.

## Potential development opportunities if the rail station were moved



### Key

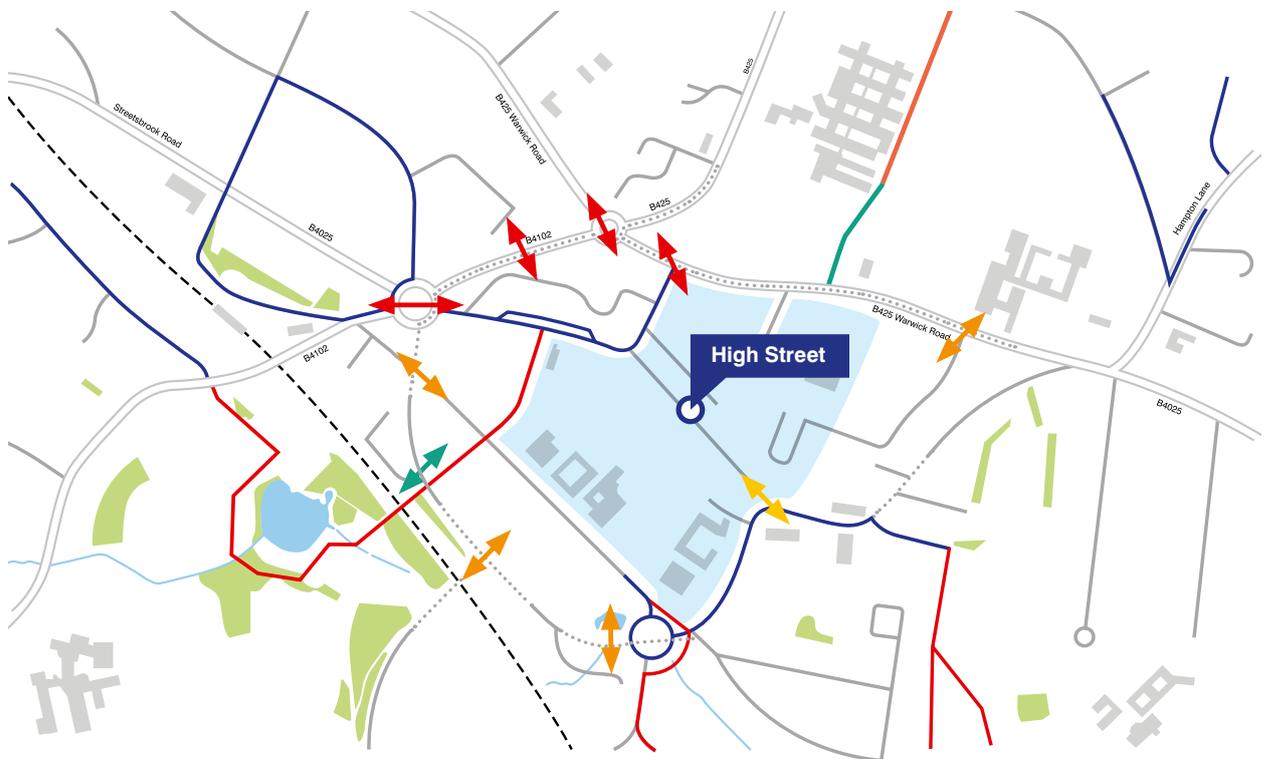
- 10 Minute Walk Distance from High Street .....
- 10 Minute Walk Distance from Bus Stops .....
- Potential Bus Routing if Rail Station is Re-located .....
- Potential Growth Area for Town Centre if Station is Re-located

## Accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists

As part of a full masterplan a detailed audit of walking and cycling access to the town centre will help identify how key routes can be improved; building on the work contained within the 'Town Centre Public Realm Framework'. We are currently developing schemes which will improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians and cyclists to get into the town centre and thereby helping to encourage those travelling short distances to leave their cars at home.

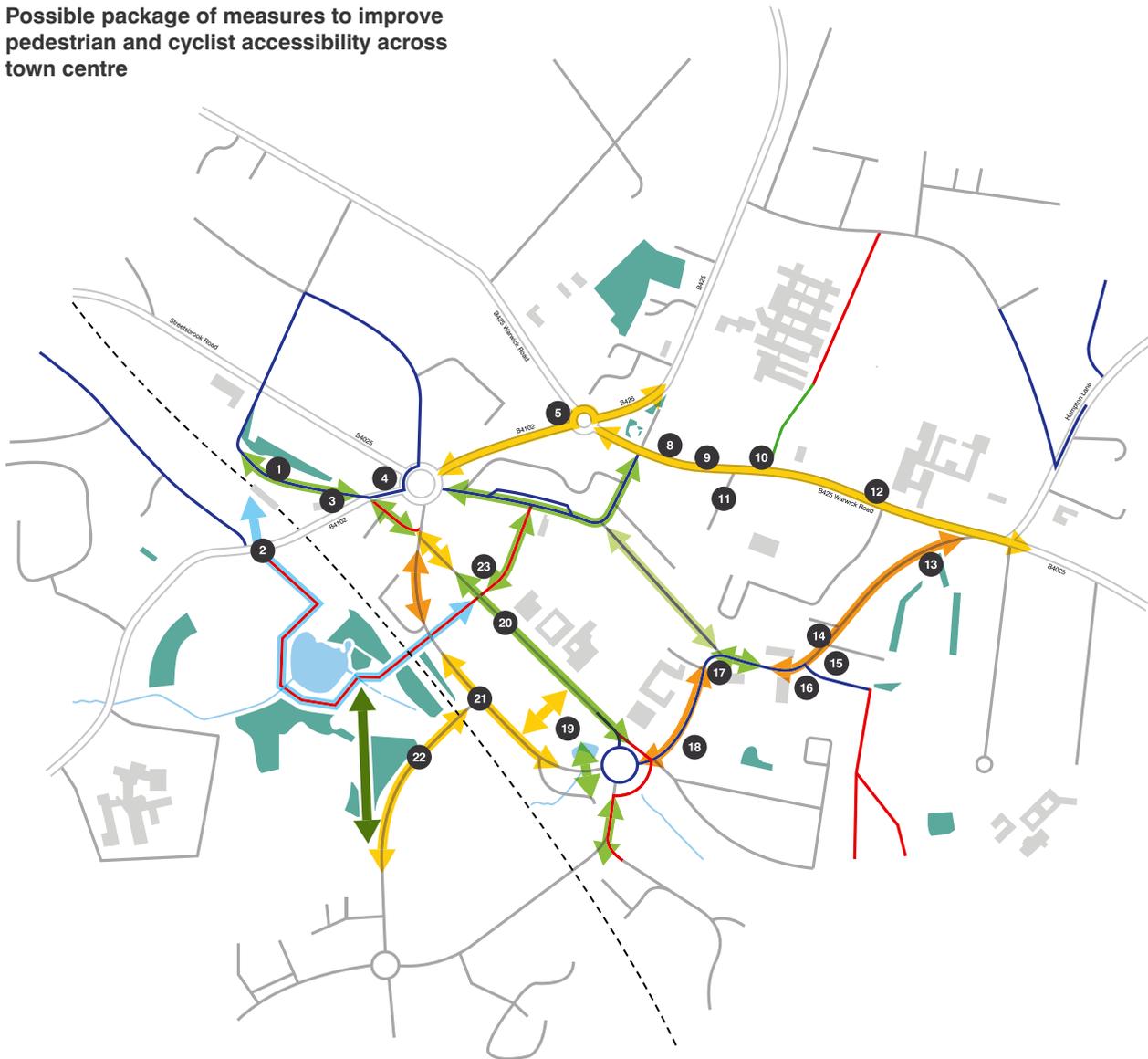
### Pedestrian and cyclist accessibility issues identified across the town centre

There are a number of easily identifiable barriers to movement for pedestrians and cyclists wishing to access the centre. These are primarily concerned with crossing major roads and negotiating busy junctions. Yet the town centre itself is a barrier to cyclists because they are currently not allowed to use the high street.



Key		Quality of Pedestrian and Cyclist Provision at Key Gateways	
Shared use		Significant Access Barriers	
Cycle Route		Some Access Barriers	
Signposted Cycle Route		Minor Access Barriers	
Access Barriers		High Quality Link	
Impassable area for cyclists			

**Possible package of measures to improve pedestrian and cyclist accessibility across town centre**



Key		Potential Walk/Cycle Link Quality	
Shared use		Reasonable	
Advisory Cycle Route		Good	
Signposted Cycle Route		Excellent	

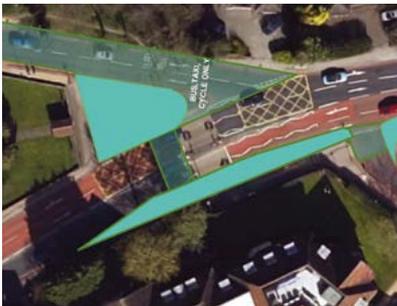
**Recommendations for possible interventions and examples from across the UK**



1. Cycling Hub, Ealing



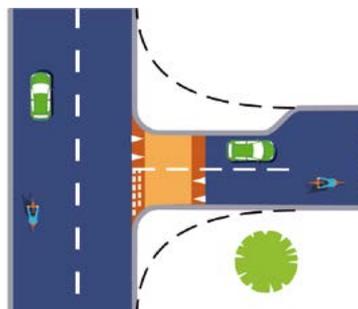
2. Floating bus stop  
3. Improved pedestrian and cyclist provision on station approach



4. Winchester station approach – bus/taxi/cycle only



5. Improved pedestrian connectivity between the town centre and rail station  
6. Floating bus stop  
7. Traffic calming to better accommodate cyclists when passing buses  
8. Improved crossing on key desire line  
9. Side road entry treatment  
10. Provide better cycle facilities along Warwick Road – pavement or carriageway as appropriate



11. Provide cycle lanes from dual carriageway section of New Road to Warwick Road (*on carriageway where possible*)  
12. Provide cycle lanes from dual carriageway section of New Road to Warwick Road (*on carriageway where possible*)  
13. Support leisure cycling route from Malvern and Brueton Park into High Street by improving quality of arrival for cyclists into town centre

- 14. Introduce 20mph zone with cycle markings
- 15. Welcome cycling gateway into High Street. Example Barls Hospital Public Space
- 16. Introduce 20mph zone and possible shared use path
- 17. Strengthen link, widen, more visible
- 18. Introduce a possible 20mph zone
- 19. Advanced Stop Lane, left turn cycle filter lane over footway to bypass lights, with protector island
- 20. Sufficient width to accommodate two way cycle lanes
- 21. Revise crossing with emphasis as key ped/cycle route



22. Widened crossing to create gateway feature, Poynton  
23. Capitalise on segregated southern cycle gateway with link to station via park.

## Car park strategy

Having ample parking for shoppers is a major selling point for Solihull's retail offer. However, there are obviously issues around over demand for some and under demand for other car parks.

This is evident by the long queues often witnessed for people trying to access Touchwood and John Lewis and yet empty spaces in locations such as Mell Square. The expansion of Touchwood will not provide any increase in its immediate car park and accommodating the associated increased demand relies on re-distributing car parking around the town centre. A strategy needs to be developed which would address the current imbalance and help accommodate further growth of Solihull's retail offer. Some strategies being considered include:

- 1. Differential pricing** – Currently car parks cost the same across the town centre. Yet, Touchwood and John Lewis offer a better parking 'service' than others. An option could be that customers are encouraged to park at the less-convenient facilities and those with the spare capacity and pay a higher rate depending on the service quality they receive. Pricing in this way could alleviate some of the queuing as demand across all the car parks in the centre begins to even out.
- 2. Technology** – Some of the delays and queuing at busy car parks is often caused by people circulating to find fewer and fewer spaces. Technology can be deployed to reduce this circulating time including: simple red and green lights above spaces so that people can see availability from further away; numbered allocated spaces printed on tickets upon entry that guide a car to a specific space; or even a premium service via an app which allows people to reserve particular spaces for additional cost.
- 3. Park and ride options** – As the retail offer in the centre grows so the demand for parking will also increase. There may come a point where the opportunities for creating new parking facilities could become an issue and alternative solutions could be required. At this point we may look at the opportunities for a park and ride solution to capture shoppers coming from longer distances, most likely somewhere off the M42 or the A41 Solihull Bypass; although other locations could be explored.
- 4. Long-term Parking Options** – There is currently only one long-stay car park serving the centre located to the south at Monkspath Hall Road. We seek opportunities for another facility to the north of the centre to firstly offer more capacity for long stay demand and also off-set the need for people approaching from the north to travel right through or around the centre to get to Monkspath Hall Road.



## Technology and innovation

Technology advances at such a pace that it is more valuable to consider it as an enabler of overarching objectives, rather than investing in it for its own right. We would therefore need to develop a technology 'roadmap' which sits under Solihull Connected, where transport technology is viewed as a key supporting mechanism for enhancing road use and use of public transport modes.

Some of the possible technology interventions which could be considered include:

### 1. Integrated information management and control system

We already have a traffic management system (the West Midlands 'UTMC') which assists our traffic control centre. However, there is a possibility that by interfacing with other operators such as Highways England, the NEC and Birmingham Airport then we could produce a more integrated system which manages traffic, congestion and public transport priority where needed across our network.

### 2. Real-time information

With the rise of smartphones and tablets ownership the ability to present up-to-date travel information via apps provides many opportunities to provide tailored services to the traveller. The traditional display screens still has a large role to play at places like bus stops, interchanges, shopping malls and other facilities. Social media such as Twitter is also being adopted by authorities to broadcast the latest travel news.

### 3. Smart ticketing

To facilitate ease of payment on public transport a fully integrated smart ticketing system is being rolled out across the West Midlands. Centro's 'Swift Card' has been in use since 2012 on some bus services, but since January of this year it is now able to be used on trains, almost all bus services and the Metro. This is a huge step forward for residents of the region but we should not stop there. There are many exciting things that could be done which may mean we could integrate with other services such as cycle hire or car clubs running from the same payment system. If we can work with our partners we can create a truly integrated system whereby our residents can easily choose any number of different ways to travel and perhaps owning a car or multiple cars per household may become unnecessary.



## Objectives of Solihull Connected

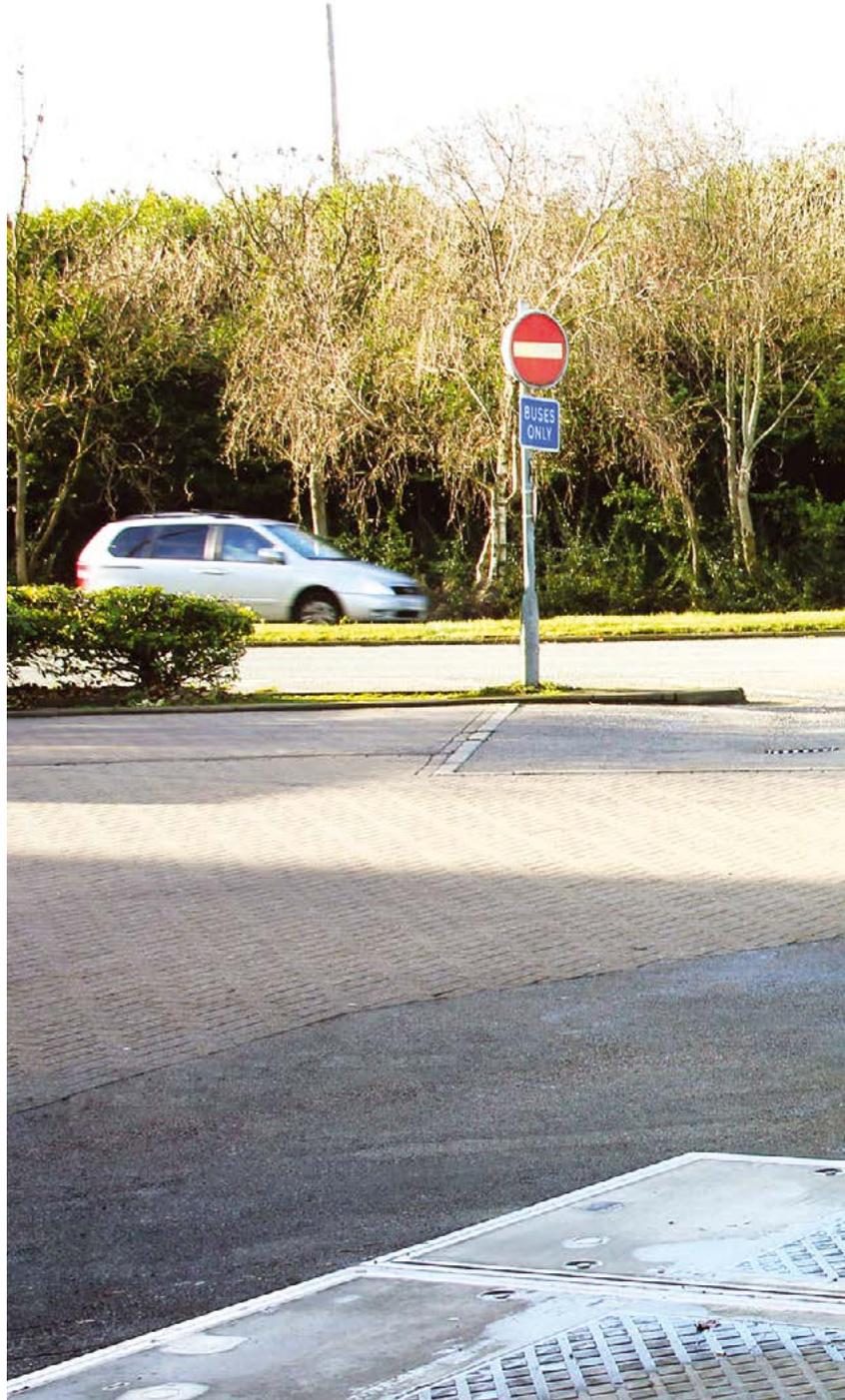
## ITS and Technology Deployment



## Promoting ultra-low emissions vehicles

The government's vision is for every new car or van to be an ultra-low emissions vehicle (ULEV) from 2040 and an effectively zero-emission fleet by 2050. Solihull will work with regional partners to consider;

- The scope and scale of the infrastructure required in order to achieve significant take-up of ultralow emission vehicles.
- Targeting strategic partnerships with vehicle manufacturers (particularly of heavier vehicles) to address specification requirements for green fleets.
- The skills needed for local supply chain companies to address implementation requirements for new technology solutions; and
- Investment and development in the wider renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure (including biomethane, electricity, hydrogen and liquid air) to support ULEV technologies in new vehicle development.





# Next steps – The Delivery Plan

The overarching strategy set out in this document is the future direction for investment in our transport system. What we need to do now is identify specific schemes and interventions which will enable us to deliver on the vision we are promoting.

A number of technical studies are currently underway. These will provide a strong evidence base as to what our future investments should be. Each study is focused on a different aspect of our transport system and their outputs will be tailored towards the objectives stated in this strategy.

The areas of investigation for these studies have been decided upon using the results from the consultation exercise on the Green Paper. The public and stakeholders told us what they supported, what they wanted to see more of and what they wanted more information about. The scope of the studies includes:

- A Town Centre Masterplan – a detailed examination of the land use and commercial potential for Solihull town centre.
- A Town Centre Access and Movement Strategy – closely linked to the master planning, we are examining how to make the centre more accessible for sustainable modes of transport. The study will ensure that the road system is future ready for the mass-transit system and the level of demand for movement by all users that the land use generates.
- A Community Liveability Programme – we are looking at new ways to promote and deliver place and transport initiatives in local neighbourhoods. The aim is to have a funded programme which can be supported by council, partner and community resources to promote great public realm and well-connected communities with safer and healthier transport options to access jobs, health and other services.
- A Smarter Choices Programme – using analysis of the public consultation responses we are developing a plan as to how we can use research into behavioural change and marketing techniques to encourage a greater shift to sustainable modes as we invest in new infrastructure.

- Highways Schemes Identification – we recognise that there are many calls for the space on our roads from cars, buses, cyclists and pedestrians. We are therefore examining how we can allocate space efficiently to different users in different locations around the Borough. We are also looking specifically at known existing and future potential congestion hotspots; particularly in relation to ensuring our economic growth can be accommodated. Finally, this study will also inform us how the mass-transit network, promoted in this strategy, can be accommodated on our roads.
- A Technology Roadmap – a technology ‘roadmap’ which sits under Solihull Connected, where transport technology is viewed as a key supporting mechanism for enhancing road use and use of public transport modes.
- A Solihull Rail Vision – an evidence base for all Solihull stations for improved infrastructure and services to influence regional rail strategies and studies.

Each of these studies will produce schemes and initiatives which will contribute to the objectives of this strategy. We will firstly prioritise these initiatives according to how they well they meet the needs of the Borough and secondly we will bring them together into a Delivery Plan which will set out when we believe each of these initiatives should come forward.

In addition to the technical work being undertaken to directly feed into the Delivery Plan, a number of complementary strategies will be developed or refreshed in the early stages of the Delivery Plan. These include a refresh of the Road Safety Strategy, drafting a ‘Rail Story’ for the Borough to guide our thinking on priorities for heavy rail, a Parking Strategy and a Walking and Cycling Strategy for the borough.

The Delivery Plan is due for publication later in Autumn 2016.



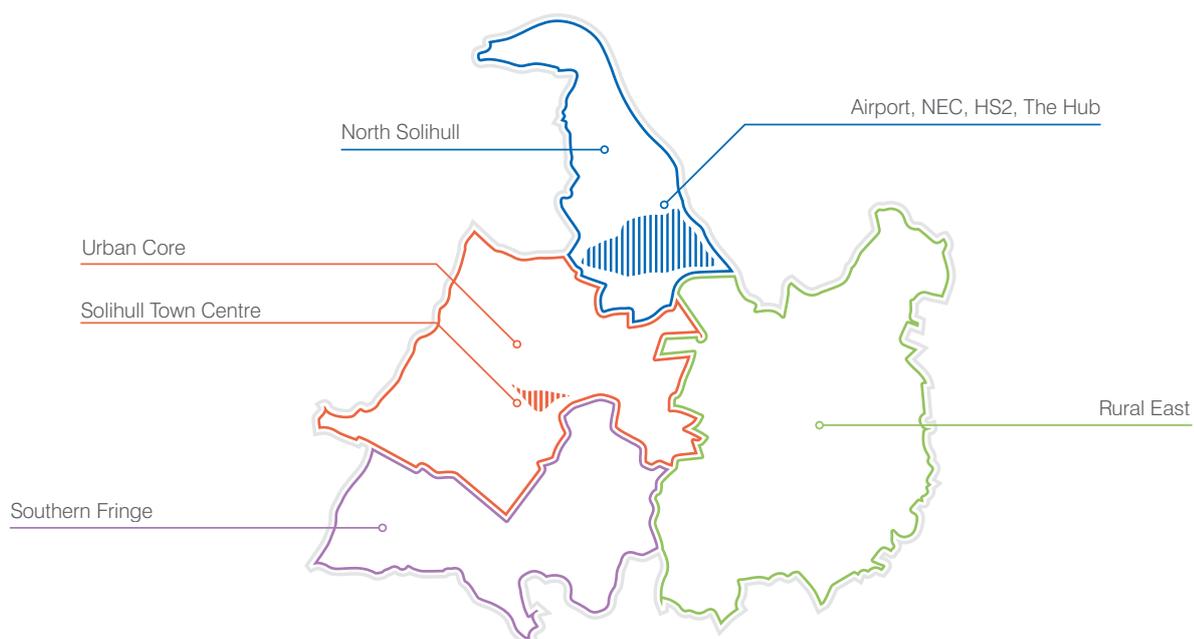


# Appendix A: What are the transport needs of the Borough?

In this section we present some of the issues around transport needs and current travel habits in each area of Solihull. To generate the evidence base we have pulled together information from a wide range of sources. These sources included, but are not limited to: the census, a recent household travel survey, the West Midlands Cordon Count reports, a recent study into congestion 'hotspots' across the Borough and future planning data on population and employment.

Being clear on our transport priorities through identifying our needs for investment will help us build on recent funding success such as recent announcements on:

- The M42 Junction 6 providing better access to Birmingham, Coventry and the HUB;
- The A45 realignment providing for future airport long distance growth at Birmingham Airport;
- The Lode Lane Route Enhancement improving bus journey times, reliability and frequency on our busiest route;
- Solihull Gateway bus interchange improving access to the town centre and connections beyond, the public realm and future growth;
- The 'Journey Time Reliability' five-year programme of road network enhancements to growth centres;
- Local Sustainable Transport Fund of Smarter Choices measures working with the community, schools and employers all supporting people, place and the economy;
- North Solihull cycle network improving access to employment where car ownership is lowest;
- As part of the 2014 Growth Deal, Centro has been provisionally awarded £50m of funding for a Sprint corridor along the A45 Coventry Road between Birmingham City Centre and Birmingham Airport. There is also potential to provide a spur from the route along the Lode Lane, allowing a Sprint connection to Solihull town centre;
- The regeneration of Chelmond's Cross and Smith's Wood Village centres; and
- The HS2 Growth Strategy planning and infrastructure work to enable and encourage managed development at the hub.





Solithull  
6

national express West Midlands





# North Solihull

What we know...



The area is home to **57,361** people, representing 28% of Solihull's population



There are **22,604** jobs in the area (excl. NEC/airport)



The growth plans for the area could see as many as **8,000** more people and just under 8,000 more jobs by 2031



The area has the youngest population of the Borough. **50%** of people are younger than 34

The area has the highest levels of deprivation, with some areas being within the bottom

**10%**

most deprived of the UK as a whole



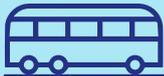
Levels of physical inactivity are low in this area and in general residents are the unhealthiest in the Borough



Car ownership is 0.98 per household with

**34%**

of households not having access to a car



**17%**

of commuters use the bus to get to work, the highest in the Borough



Commuters from this area travel the least distance of all the areas in the Borough



There are good connections into Birmingham from the North, with services running every

**15 minutes**



Connections to the rest of the Borough are poor with services to Solihull Town Centre every

**30 minutes**



Residents of North Solihull make just

**13%**

of their daily trips to Solihull Town Centre and the urban core. This equivalent figure is over 33% for all other areas of the Borough, Demonstrating the lack of connection residents of North Solihull have with the rest of the Borough.



Overall road congestion is low, but there are hotspots along the A452, the A45 and the M42. This effectively creates a barrier to movement in/out of the area.



Traffic along major routes which run through the area is forecast to grow significantly in the future



## What we believe the area needs...

1. Better public transport connectivity to Solihull town centre and central area of the Borough
2. Ensure that the public transport aspirations of Birmingham and the West Midlands that run through the area meet the needs of our residents
3. An even greater focus on providing safe and attractive cycle links
4. A strategy for reducing the barrier effect of the A45 Coventry Road for all users
5. A greater focus on improving local streets and reducing severance from busy roads so that people are encouraged to walk and cycle and are happy to let their children do so.



# Urban Core

What we know...



The area is home to  
**100,561**  
people, representing  
49% of Solihull's  
population



There are  
**44,443**  
jobs in the area  
(including Jaguar Land Rover  
but excluding the Solihull town centre  
which is considered separately)



The growth plans for the  
area could see as many as  
**8,000**  
more people and 6,000  
more jobs by 2031



**60%**  
of residents are less  
than 50 years old



Almost  
**50%**  
of all daily commuters  
in the Borough live in  
this area



Car ownership is 1.4  
per household with  
**16%**  
households having  
no access to a car



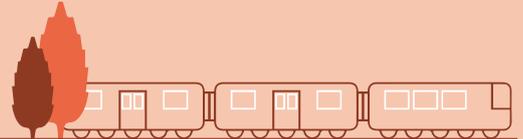
Almost  
**40%**  
of commuters who live  
here travel out of the  
Borough into Birmingham  
each day; with around  
a third of those going to  
Birmingham city centre



**50%**  
of jobs in the area are  
taken up by people who  
do not live in Solihull



Although cycling to work is  
low across all modes, almost  
**60%**  
of people in the Borough who  
do cycle live in this area



Rail trips are highest in this  
area, given that it is in close  
proximity to the main rail station  
of the Borough

There are some high-  
frequency bus services  
in the area. These are  
predominantly focused  
at getting people in/out  
of the Solihull town centre  
and towards Birmingham  
city centre



Although 96.8% of  
Solihull residents can  
reach Jaguar Land Rover  
within 60 minutes by  
public transport, just

**36%**  
can do so within a more  
acceptable half an hour



## What we believe the area needs...

1. Change the perception of public transport in order for it to compete with the car; for peak-time commuter journeys in particular. This will require a step-change in the service offer currently on-street; such as:
  - a. Vehicle quality
  - b. Journey reliability
  - c. Flexible payment systems
2. Provide improved accessibility to rail stations by public transport and cycling to enable commuters to get into the rail system quicker and easier
3. Provide more frequent and reliable public transport connections to the north and south of the Borough
4. Take advantage of the latent demand for cycling from the resident population who already own and use bikes for leisure purposes. Provide a network of cycle facilities which lie along peak demand lines for commuting purposes but also connect parks and rural areas; taking advantage of the 'green lungs' of the Borough
5. Improving local streets and reducing severance from busy roads so that people are encouraged to walk and cycle and are happy to let their children do so to school. In doing so we can alleviate traffic congestion caused by the morning school run



# Rural East

What we know...



The area is home to **14,448** people, representing 7% of Solihull's population



There are **6,327** jobs in the area



The growth plans for the area are **very small** small amounts of growth in population and jobs by 2031



**21%** of the population in this area is 65 and over. A further 32% is aged between 45-64 and may be due to retire in the next 20 years.



Just **5%** of Solihull commuters come from this area



Car ownership is 1.72 per household with **9%** of households not having access to a car



Residents of this area make around a third of their daily trips to the Urban Core and Solihull town centre



The area has both one of the highest proportions of long distance trip making and yet also the highest proportion of trips less than a mile' to 'under a mile

Residents make approximately **70%** of all their daily trips by car; with the average across the Borough being 50%

Public transport options in the area are limited, due to very low population densities meaning that high frequency commercial services are generally not viable but, although some demand responsive services do exist



There is very little in the way of safe cycle infrastructure that either runs between villages or from villages towards the central area



## What we believe the area needs...

1. Better cycling connectivity between and within villages for both leisure purposes but also to provide an alternative to driving for short distance trips
2. Investigation into the best way to serve the area by public transport. Clearly there is insufficient demand to operate high-frequency buses and yet we need to provide accessibility for those who either don't own a car or don't wish to drive particular journeys. Connectivity to Solihull town centre, the airport/NEC and over towards Coventry and Warwickshire is and will be important to this area
3. The effect of traffic and speeds in villages needs to be considered and treated appropriately
4. Ensure that there is sufficient capacity at rail station Park & Ride facilities to provide this area with a viable option to driving to work
5. A greater focus on improving local streets and reducing severance from busy roads so that people are encouraged to walk and cycle and are happy to let their children do so



# Southern Fringe

What we know...



The area is home to  
**28,164**  
people, representing  
14% of Solihull's  
population



There are  
**10,305**  
jobs in the area



The growth plans for the  
area could see as many as  
**1,800**  
more people and 6,600  
more jobs by 2031



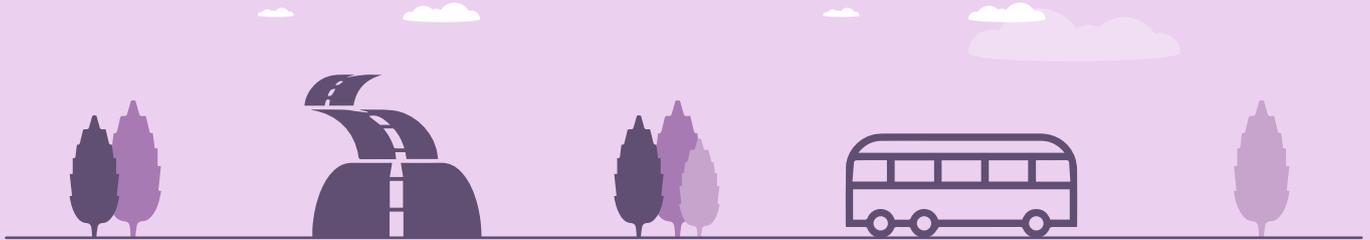
This area has the highest  
employment percentage than  
anywhere in the Borough,  
with around  
**45%**  
of residents in employment



Car ownership is 1.7  
per household with

**8%**

of households not  
having access to a car



People from this area  
travel on average

**14km**

to get to work

The Blythe Valley Business Park is particularly  
poorly connected to Solihull, with just

**13%**

of Solihull residents able to access it  
within half an hour by public transport



## What we believe the area needs...

1. As further development occurs, Blythe Valley Business Park needs vastly improved connections, by public transport and cycling, to the wider Borough and beyond
2. Create alternative southern access to Blythe Valley Park to alleviate congestion
3. Improve the public transport and cycling connections between Cheswick Green, Dickens Heath with Stratford Railway Line, Shirley, Dorridge/Knowle and Solihull Town Centre. Determine the potential for a new orbital bus service linking the communities
4. Ensure that there is sufficient capacity at rail station Park & Ride facilities to provide this area with a viable option to driving to work
5. Integrated active travel choices with environmental assets including a network of country parks
6. Safe Routes to schools programme within the area to include safer/quiet lanes and cycle lanes
7. A greater focus on improving local streets and reducing severance from busy roads so that people are encouraged to walk and cycle and are happy to let their children do so



# Solihull Town Centre

What we know...



The area is home to  
**1,177**  
people, representing  
0.6% of Solihull's  
population



There are  
**14,520**  
jobs in the area



The growth plans for the  
area could see as many as  
**1,200**  
more jobs by 2031



**42%**  
of commuters to the town  
centre travel less than 5km  
and yet walking and cycling  
combined account for just  
7% of mode share



The rail station is currently  
disconnected from the core area and  
requires people to cross a number of  
busy roads to walk between the two.

**57%**

of the population of Solihull live  
within 30mins by public transport  
of the town centre. The equivalent  
figure for Birmingham city  
centre is 75%

Despite the town centre being  
the most accessible place in the  
Borough for public transport, still

**79%**

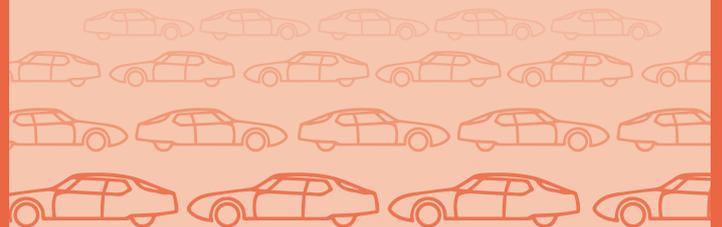
of people arriving do so by car.  
This is the second highest of all  
centres in the West Midlands, with  
only Dudley town centre having  
a higher car usage

There are a number  
of major barriers to  
pedestrian and cyclist  
movement into the town  
centre, including busy  
roads and major junctions

Touchwood and John  
Lewis Car Parks are  
extremely popular  
with queues regularly  
occurring at peak  
shopping times; and  
yet other car parks are  
significantly under-used  
at the same time



The corridors either within or  
approaching the town centre are some  
of the most congested in the Borough  
during commuter peak periods



Travel to the town centre has a very pronounced peak  
between 8am and 9am where around

**7,500 vehicles**

typically enter the area; with an average of around  
4,500 per hour through the middle of the day



## What we believe the area needs...

1. There is a need for a comprehensive master plan for Solihull town centre. This study should take a detailed look at the land use plans and bring together a staged approach to:
  - a. Identify the best land use mix and location
  - b. More fully understand the current and future car parking need and develop a considered strategy for pricing, locations and making the best use of technology
  - c. Ask and answer the question as to whether moving the railway station could result in an improved overall land use pattern for the centre
  - d. Improve the interchange between modes of transport
  - e. Improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists into and across the centre
  - f. Public realm design and the relationship between walking and cycling networks and green space
  - g. Can businesses in the centre collectively encourage more sustainable transport use by their employees; helping to alleviate peak time congestion
  - h. Investigating the possibility of opening the high street to vehicles in the evening in order to 'activate' the area for the evening economy

# Birmingham Airport/ NEC/HS2 Interchange

What we know...



It is one of the most strategically connected locations in the whole of the UK. It lies at the junction of the M6 and M42, has Birmingham International Station on the West Coast Main Line, the prospect of HS2 arriving in 2026 and the airport connects the area to the rest of the world



In all, almost  
**2,000,000**

people across the UK live within an hour's public transport journey of Birmingham International; and yet just 30% of Solihull's population live within 30 minutes



The area currently holds around  
**10,391**  
jobs



This is the area with some of the most significant growth planned in both Solihull and the West Midlands as a whole. In all

**10,000**

more jobs and 2,000 people could be placed in this area by 2031 if HS2 is delivered



We would also expect growth to continue strongly in this area beyond the 20 year horizon of 'Solihull Connected'



74% of people commuting to the area do so by car. If this pattern continues in the future then the number of people driving to the area for work will increase from 7,738 to

**15,658**

by 2031



Just  
**24%**  
of people accessing jobs in the area live in Solihull itself and the average distance travelled to get to work in this area is 17.6 km

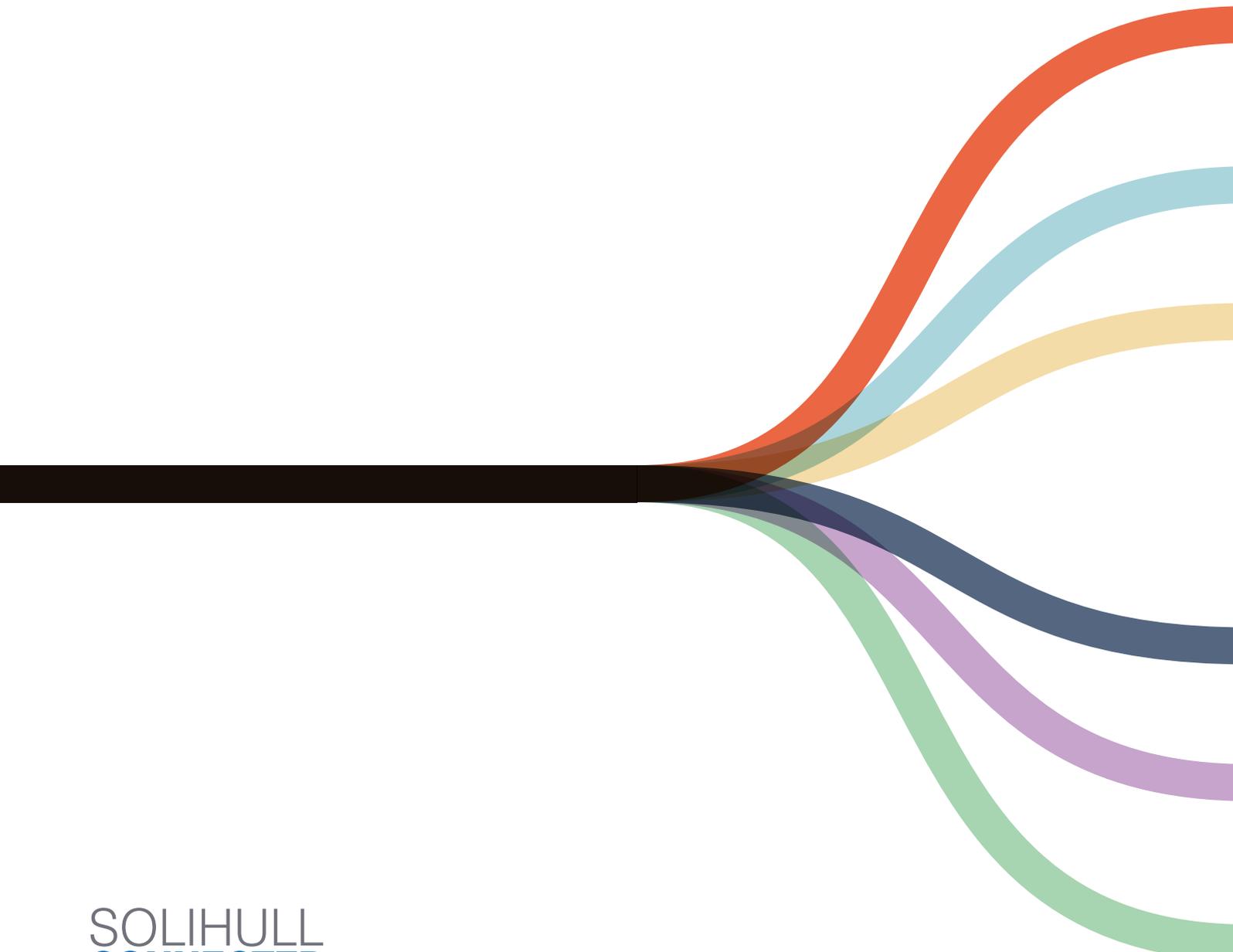


## What we believe the area needs...

1. Improved public transport connections, both to places within the Borough and beyond
2. A land use mix and design that encourages walking, cycling and public transport access and interchange within the area. Specifically infrastructure is needed to overcome severance caused by the M42, the West Coast Main Line and in the future HS2 rail line
3. Enhanced and new cycle and pedestrian links to connect the area with the urban and rural parts of Solihull
4. A high-quality strategic multi-modal interchange
5. Improvements to highways infrastructure (both strategic and local) to accommodate access by car
6. A collaborative approach to dealing with the varied parking needs and provision of businesses in the area







# SOLIHULL CONNECTED

Transport Strategy 2016

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