



Telford & Wrekin Council

Cycling & Walking Strategy

February 2017



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Foreword

The benefits of cycling and walking to improve personal health and fitness levels are widely accepted and offers an alternative mode of transport. In recent years Telford & Wrekin Council has taken a number of steps towards encouraging more people to use their cycles for both leisure and commuting to work and the Council has also sought to promote walking – again for leisure through our gardens and parks and for walking to access work and social facilities.

Now, we must build on current progress and make every effort to work towards an environment in which cycling and walking is considered on a daily basis as a safe, attractive and accessible alternative to the car.

At the heart of this strategy and action plan is a commitment to establishing links with all sectors of the community and to continue to work closely with those individuals and organisations that are already engaged with us on delivering a safe, integrated and sustainable transport system for the borough.

It will take some time to change people's attitudes and travel behaviour but the policies and proposals outlined in this strategy have been designed to lead to increased numbers of people cycling and walking throughout Telford & Wrekin not only for leisure purposes, but also for access to a whole range of facilities and opportunities.

The implementation of the action plan of this Cycling and Walking strategy will also assist with the delivery of the borough's Local Transport Plan for 2011-2026 and by encouraging more people to take regular exercise will contribute to people in Telford & Wrekin enjoying healthier, happier and longer lives.



Cllr Richard Overton
Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for
Housing, Leisure & Health



Cllr Angela McClements
Cabinet Member for Transport,
Customer & Neighbourhood Services



1 Introduction

As a new town developed in the 1960's and 70's Telford was built with the car in mind. The Borough has a high capacity road network that often causes severance for our communities. Generally the Borough has good cycling and walking infrastructure, however infrastructure on its own is not enough in order to change people's behaviour towards actively cycling and walking.

Previous studies have shown that the proportion of people cycling and walking in the Borough is far lower than in many other areas and many of the trips in Telford are only short in length and could be undertaken by cycling and walking. That being said there is evidence of cycling taking off as a sport across the Borough through the new BMX facilities in Dawley and cycling in Newport including the Newport Nocturne. It is this momentum that the strategy needs to capitalise on to increase cycling and walking to everyone.

This strategy therefore seeks to provide a long term vision for increasing cycling and walking in the Borough, ensuring that it becomes part of people's everyday activities whether it's travelling to the shop or going for a walk.

The objectives of the strategy are to increase the number of people cycling and walking, by making these viable and attractive alternative modes of transport for everyday journeys, including leisure and tourism trips. By encouraging greater levels of physical activity in the Borough, the strategy will help contribute towards improving the health and wellbeing of its residents.

The Strategy will be used to influence and complement wider policy documents such as the [Marches LEP Strategic Economic Plan](#); [Telford & Wrekin Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2019](#); the [Telford & Wrekin Local Plan](#); and the [Telford & Wrekin Local Transport Plan 3](#).

2 Purpose, Vision and Objectives

Purpose

The Cycling and Walking Strategy sets out a long-term plan to encourage and support the residents and visitors of the Borough to cycle and walk more in their everyday lives. The Action Plan that supports the Strategy will guide priorities and funding on those measures that are considered to be the most effective methods to improve cycling and walking rates in the Borough. The Action Plan and the Strategy will therefore identify awareness raising measures, new and improved infrastructure and wider supporting initiatives required to be in place. These shall meet the Council and its partner organisations' objectives and emphases, as set out below.

Vision

The vision adopted for the Cycling and Walking Strategy supports "Vision 2026" developed for the borough Community Strategy and used in the Local Transport Plan 3. The vision for this Strategy is:

"To provide a safe and attractive network of cycling and walking routes to support successful, prosperous and healthy communities."

The benefits of cycling and walking are well documented and active travel is able to address a number of issues associated with health and wellbeing, physical inactivity, congestion and the environment. It can also help to support access to employment and education, increase economic activity in town and local centres and attract visitors and tourists.

Cycling and walking have benefits for both the individual and the community, including:



A healthier population – it has been proven that walking briskly for 30 minutes a day can help reduce obesity levels and reduce disease. While people that regularly cycle to work take less sick days compared to colleagues who do not cycle to work.

Improved economy – Customers who walk or use public transport to get to shops spends more time and money than car users, despite a perception that more parking is needed to increase retail sales

A more attractive area – integrating walking and cycling as a leisure activity can allow residents to enjoy their environment more and discover areas which cannot be reached by car.

Environmental benefits – cycling or walking short distances rather than using the car can help reduce local traffic congestion, noise and air pollution levels.

A happier community – Walking for Health states that *'physically active people have up to a 30% reduced risk of becoming depressed, and staying active helps those who are depressed recover.'* Walking is an accessible exercise which can help prevent and treat certain mental health issues.

Objectives

Objectives	Goals
<p>Objective 1: Taking a holistic approach to improving health and wellbeing through walking and cycling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing the percentage of people who are physically inactive. • Improving the awareness of the health benefits from healthier and more active lifestyles to school children and their families. • Improving the health of all people in the area by encouraging walking and cycling as attainable exercise modes which can be incorporated into their everyday lives. • Improving mental health as a result of increased physical activity. • Reducing early deaths and costs to the NHS for diseases which may be avoided through a more active lifestyle.
<p>Objective 2: Create long-term behaviour changes towards more sustainable and healthier travel choices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a mode shift away from the car towards public transport, walking and cycling, especially for shorter journeys. • Encouraging all or part of the journey to work, school or other amenities to be conducted by walking or cycling. • Providing additional training and support to people to make these lifestyle changes.



<p>Objective 3: Make the cycle and walking network more accessible to residents and visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing a programme of improvements and maintenance for the existing infrastructure to include quality of the surface, appropriate segregation from traffic and between pedestrians and cyclist as well as lighting, signage, and planting. • Adding additional infrastructure in any ‘missing gaps’ in the network. • Provision of secure cycle parking stands and lockers in town and village / local centres, schools, workplaces and health centres etc. • Considering a target density for the walking and cycling network in the urban areas, for example, all residents in Telford to be within 300m of a dedicated cycle route. • All schools and employment locations to be subject to a cycle and walk audit and to draft a travel plan to provide improved cycling and walking facilities and support measures. • Ensuring the signage to and along walking and cycling routes is visible, coherent, and consistent. Signage that includes distances and time markers on appropriate routes to be considered as well as ancillary and promotional information about the local area. • Making information more readily available through paper maps, websites and apps. • Implementing a cycle hire scheme or implementing a “try a bike scheme” as well as introducing a recycle or reuse bike scheme in order to provide universal access to cycles.
<p>Objective 4: Integrating community resources to deliver the strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring local groups with an interest in walking, cycling, local accessibility etc. are clearly represented at a council level and have clear contact points to the appropriate people within the Council. • Local businesses to increase involvement through implementation of travel plans, providing staff incentives and trials to walk and cycle to work, including sustainable travel and active travel in their corporate responsibility considerations, and including walking and cycling in their promotional products. • Using the extensive and active network of local community and special interest groups to help with maintenance of the network. • Increasing awareness to residents of walking and cycling groups.
<p>Objective 5: Integrate walking and cycling with other modes of public transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with public transport through consideration of cycle and walking access routes to the stations and stops as well as availability for additional storage on board trains (and, where appropriate, on buses). • Providing secure cycle parking stands and lockers at major transport hubs. • Make provision for electronic bikes at stations and town centres, including a network of charging stations to cater for and encourage this growing trend.



Within the overall principles set out above the Cycling and Walking Strategy will target:

- Improving the walking environment and cycling connectivity around the principle trip attractors – transport hubs; town and village centres; education facilities; hospitals and health centres; and places of employment. Figure 3 in Appendix 9 shows the location of these trip attractors.
- Promoting and signposting links between urban areas and the surrounding countryside to encourage leisure walks and bikes rides.
- Promotion of the tourism aspects of cycling and walking – encompassing shared-use or specific ‘cycling’ only or ‘walking only’ routes to and between tourist attractions such as around Ironbridge Gorge. The promotion of these activities is to be promoted as a tourist attraction in their own right, for example around The Wrekin.
- Behaviour change measures will be tailored to the different target groups. Firstly the ‘Areas of Enhanced Opportunity’ includes people who are already active and may walk or cycle for leisure but where they still use the car for short utility journeys and could be persuaded to walk to the shops, school and work etc. or use good quality pedestrian routes to run or jog. Those encompassed under the ‘Areas of Greatest Opportunity’ include those who are either less active or do not have amenities available to assist in a more active lifestyle. Encouraging a more active lifestyle here will result in the greatest gains in terms of health benefits but it is recognised that a greater level of support and concentrated investment is required. The strategy proposes to use the active local community groups to ensure more sustained results where people are supported to embed walking within their everyday lives, both for commuting and leisure purposes. Cycling is to be encouraged through training and cheap hire or buy schemes and routes to be accessible and attractive to use.
- A focus on children across the Borough is considered to be of prime importance to encourage active lifestyles from an early age and using the children’s influence, to encourage families to adopt healthier lifestyles.

3 Telford & Wrekin Cycling & Walking – Why do we need to Change?

- **Nearly a 1/3** of adults are obese
- **Nearly ¾** of people drive to work
- **Child obesity** levels are around 2 percentage points higher than the national average
- Significant variations in **Perceived Health** across the Borough
- 19% of all adults walk as a major part of their **commuting trip**
- **41%** of all resident’s commuter trips are less than 5km
- **2%** of travel to work trips are made by bike

Overweight and obesity levels of adults in Telford and Wrekin is very high in relation to the national statistics and when compared with the wider West Midlands. While the levels for children aged 10-11 are statistically similar to the England average. For example, the prevalence of obesity for 2013-2015 was recorded as 31.1% for adults and 21.8% for children ages 10-11 years of age, in contrast to national statistics of 24.4% and 19.8% obesity levels for adults and children respectively. Having a more active lifestyle and making cycling and walking more attractive and easily integrated into everyday lives is an important aspect to reducing the overweight and obesity rates in the area.



Car ownership data for the area shows that 79.4% of households own a car and 70% using their car to drive to work, in comparison to the national average of 57% and the average across the West Midlands conurbation of 65%.

In contrast car ownership in some areas of the Borough is not a viable economic option. 14% of the Boroughs Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) are amongst the 10% most deprived on a national level.

Presently there is a reasonably well developed network for cyclists and walkers to use around the Borough but the modal share of cycling and walking remains low.

Participation in general physical and sport activity is statistically similar to the England average. In 2015 53.8% of the borough's population were taking part in at least 150 minutes of physical activity a week compared to 57.0% for England. Physical inactivity in adults in the Borough for 2015 is 28.5% compared to England average of 28.7%. Incorporating cycling and walking into the daily routine could contribute towards more people achieving at least 150 minutes of physical activity a week.

The Borough is served by the National Cycle Network routes NCN 45, NCN 55, NCN 81 and NCN 552; most notable of these is the Silkin Way which routes 23km overall in a North-South direction. Many of the NCN routes are also bridleways and footpaths and these are supplemented by an extensive network of local cycle and walking routes. The rural nature of the Borough means that there are extensive areas of very accessible green space within short distances of peoples' homes that offer significant potential for cycling and walking to become a regular leisure activity for residents.

Areas of greatest opportunity

Areas of greatest opportunity are areas which will benefit most from increased levels of cycling and walking. The areas include those that suffer from multiple deprivation i.e. low income and high levels of unemployment and poor health, including high levels of obesity and premature mortality. In Telford and Wrekin these areas include Telford Town Centre, Wellington, Dawley and Madeley, shown in **Figure 1**.

People living in these areas may tend to have greater barriers to living healthier lifestyles and incorporating moderately intense levels of exercise into their daily lives and will require a higher level of intervention to encourage and embed behaviour changes. It is recognised that many in these areas do not have access to a car and who walk more to access public transport, school and work. Cycling may not be feasible due to lack of access to a bike, the need for cycle training and support to build confidence.

Areas of enhanced opportunity

People living in areas of higher affluence tend to enjoy better health and have lower mortality and obesity levels. These include most rural regions of the area, and the southern regions around Ironbridge shown in **Figure 2**. They have a greater inclination to lead more active lifestyles, cycling and walking more for leisure and having gym memberships etc.



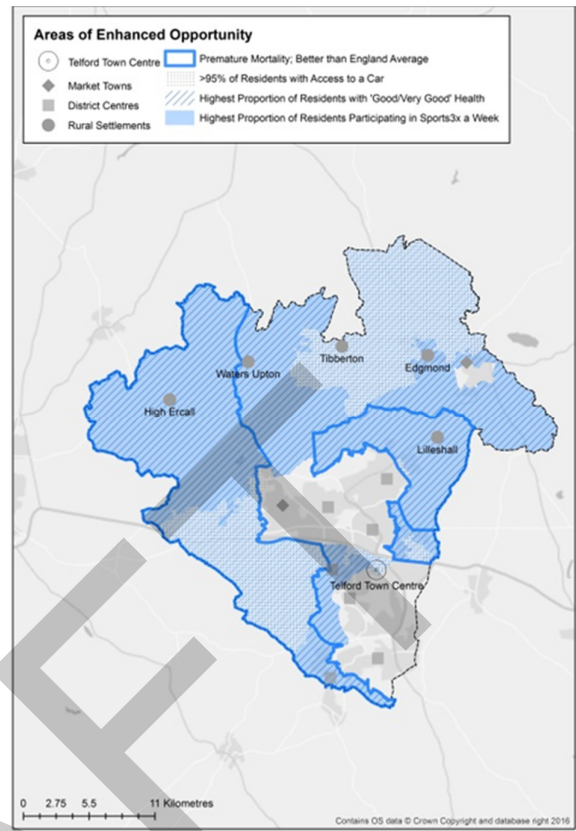
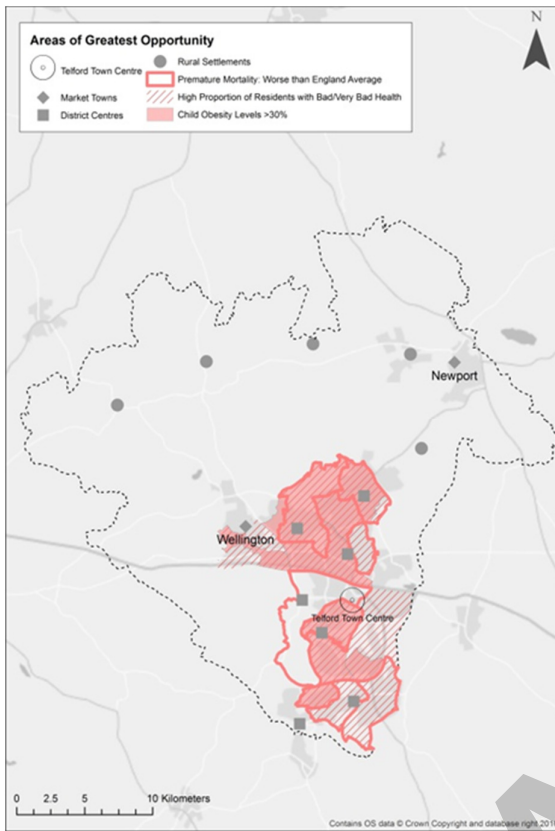


Figure 1: Target Groups for the Areas of Greatest Opportunity Map

**Refer to Figure 6 Appendix 9 for detailed view.*



4 Cycling & Walking Action Plan – How will we get there?

The measures to be implemented through the Cycling and Walking Strategy have been categorised into three categories – infrastructure, awareness and partnership. These categories respond to the objectives of the strategy, which are to:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of residents;
- Create long-term behavioural changes;
- Make the network accessible to all groups;
- Integrate community resources to deliver the strategy; and
- Integration with other modes of transport.

A full data analysis exercise has been undertaken to identify the current conditions and trends across Telford and Wrekin, to help shape and form the action plan. The results of this analysis are shown in the appendices.

In order to employ the action plan, each strategy action has been allocated an appropriate timescale, as shown in **Table 1: Action Plan Programme.**

Measure	Time period	Description
Short	0-5 years	These schemes are to be implemented immediately, either due to the limited amount of time and resources these endeavour, or due to their impact being required to showcase major impacts of the strategy
Medium	5-10 years	These are schemes which may take longer to complete due to planning and time restrictions
Long	10-15 years / continuous	These schemes may require future funding sources to continue their success, each to be analysed on a case-by-case review. These may be major infrastructure changes or changes which are ongoing

Table 1: Action Plan Programme

Short term aspirational measures

Looking towards the future of cycling and walking in the region, our aspirations are to:

- Hold a section of a national cycle race such as a section of the Tour of Britain in Telford & Wrekin
- Be involved in an initiative similar to the Vélo Birmingham / Birmingham Cycle Revolution initiative
- Use of the Telford walking routes for a 'Great Run' route
- Win a national Cycle Planning Award
- Bring cycling and walking activity levels closer to the 'Dutch-standard'



Resources

Telford & Wrekin Council will implement the Strategy and the Action plan in close partnership with Enterprise Telford; Marches Local Enterprise Partnership; Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust and Telford & Wrekin Public Health; Shropshire Council; Telford and Wrekin Council for Voluntary Service (CVS); Shropshire Rural Communities Charity (RCC); Community Council of Shropshire (CCS) and Cycle Experience along with any further organisations with an interest or expertise in the area.

Funding

This Strategy has been developed in a challenging funding environment, where the case for investment in sustainable travel initiatives must be made in the light of competing priorities. This Strategy aims to position Telford & Wrekin Council to be able to be successful in securing as much funding as possible by taking a plan led approach to increasing walking and cycling in the Borough. As the future funding situation becomes clearer, the action plan for this Strategy will be updated every five years, so as to ensure that the long term objectives can be delivered and vision for the Borough realised.

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Action Plan

Walking				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Infrastructure								
Ensure all future transport improvements are considered with other assigned work to provide a holistic multimodal corridor approach	Whole Borough	Short	All Users					✓
Walking routes to be built between Telford station and the Ironbridge Gorge	Ironbridge	Medium	Everyday users			✓		
			Tourism					
			Leisure					
Introduce a crossing over A464 Naird roundabout (by Stafford Park)	Stafford Park	Short	All Users			✓		
Review wayfinding to attractors and ensure is consistent, visible and clear with both time and distance measured signs	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Investigate the introduction of a phased programme of 20mph areas/zones in residential areas to support cycling and walking. Undertake monitoring and review of early schemes to inform a wider roll out.	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Awareness								
Continue pedestrian training for primary school children and introduce where not currently available, and target further possible interventions	Whole Borough	Short	Schools	✓	✓			



Walking				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Partnership								
Support and encourage routes for exercise and wellbeing such as interest trails, volunteer walking groups and walking buddies etc.	Whole Borough	Short	Sport		✓		✓	
			Leisure					
Encourage the community to undertake audits, especially on how existing infrastructure impacts vulnerable groups around sites such as schools, medical facilities and retirement homes	Whole Borough	Short	All Users				✓	
Community groups to deliver activities, such as led rides/walks targeted at children and disabled persons.	Whole Borough	Short	Schools		✓		✓	
			Leisure					
Maintain and introduce new walking buses to and from schools	Whole Borough	Short	Schools		✓		✓	

Cycling				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Infrastructure								
Provision of a new cycle lane on the A5 (between Shrewsbury and Wellington)	A5 roundabout	Short	All Users			✓		



Implement/improve connections of cycle routes from Shifnal into Telford borough	Outside of borough connection	Short	All Users			✓		
			Workplaces					
Cycling				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Update of the Rough Park/Silkin Way route	Rough Park	Short	All Users			✓		
More defined signage of Silkin Way signposts around Telford centre	Telford Centre	Short	All Users			✓		
Improved cycle link between M54 Junction 6 and Telford Town Centre	M54 Junction 6	Medium	All Users			✓		
Update of NCN 55 from Telford Town Centre to Donnington	NCN 55	Medium	All Users			✓		
Coalbrookdale to Ironbridge (Ironbridge Way Walking Route) to be updated	Ironbridge	Short	All Users			✓		
Update of NCN 81 through Wellington	Wellington	Short	All Users			✓		
Update of NCN 81 from M54 Junction 4 to Oakengates	Oakengates	Short	All Users			✓		
Update of cycle route from Rough Park Way to Dawley	Dawley	Short	All Users			✓		
Update and define route around Stirchley region	Stirchley	Medium	All Users			✓		
Segregated section of cycle route in Dawley to improve condition of route	Dawley	Short	All Users			✓		
Improve both off-road and on-road cycling routes	Whole Borough	Medium /Long	All Users			✓		✓



Maintain current and new cycle infrastructure to a high standard	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
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Cycling				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Establish a consistent approach to regional cycling design from existing UK best practice guidelines, and adhere to them for all highway and cycle designs going forward	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Increase levels of cycle parking at bus stops, interchanges, train stations and facilities for carrying cycles on board	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		✓
Provision of safe and secure cycle parking in schools, with sufficient cycle parking at secondary schools for 20% of the total number of students.	Whole Borough	Short	Schools	✓		✓		
Complete further feasibility studies and/or business cases for other schemes ranked highly in the scheme prioritisation programme, and build on the existing short term schemes to provide a long term cycle network	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Awareness								
Annual audit programme of existing cycle infrastructure in line with Wales/TfL audit tools	Whole Borough	Short	All Users		✓			✓



Establish protocol for district-wide data collection & data assembly to support monitoring and review process	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Invest in smart technology for data collection	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Use a range of marketing tools to promote the benefits of cycling, including engaging with media and social media.	Whole Borough	Short	All Users	✓	✓			

Cycling				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Investigate options for a cycle hire or loan scheme; this could include a Brompton Bike style hire scheme, a public bike share scheme and/or an electric bike hire scheme with docks located at strategic centres, attractor sites and public transport interchanges	Whole Borough	Short	Commuters		✓			
			Leisure					
			Tourism					
Partnership								
Organisation of cycle maintenance groups and awareness/Awareness of these groups	Whole Borough	Short	All Users				✓	
Engage with schools/ universities, businesses, communities and residential developments to establish/ review Travel Plans	Whole Borough	Short	Schools	✓	✓			
			Workplaces					
Affordability schemes set up in deprived areas for reduced rates on bikes	Whole Borough	Short	Everyday users					
			Commuters					



Ensure Bikeability is offered to all primary schools across the region	Whole Borough	Short	Schools	✓				
Set up second hand bike shops	Whole Borough	Short	Everyday Users			✓		
			Schools					
			Commuters					
All major employers signed up to 'Cycle to Work Guarantee'	Whole Borough	Short	Commuters		✓			✓

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General				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Infrastructure								
Update signage and review lighting throughout country lanes	North of Borough	Medium/Long	All Users			✓		
Improve connections and safety between residential areas and Halesfield Industrial Estate	Halesfield	Short	Commuters			✓		
Improve connections and safety between residential areas and Stafford Park	Stafford Park	Short	Commuters			✓		
Improve connections and safety between residential areas and Hortonwood Industrial Park	Hortonwood	Short	Commuters			✓		
At planned new developments ensure provision of a high quality cycling and walking route that are in line with this strategy	Whole Borough	Ongoing	Everyday Users			✓		
Take a whole route approach to review and improve walking and cycle routes and public rights of way	Whole Borough	Short	Everyday Users			✓		
Develop and fund a consistent cycling way-finding programme	Whole Borough	Short	All Users		✓			
Awareness								
Provide clear route maps in a range of formats including using smart technology, apps, personal journey planning etc.	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		



Promote cycling and walking apps currently available.	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
General				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Updates of the Telford and Wrekin website periodically of issues and additional routes	Whole Borough	Ongoing	All Users			✓		
Provide the public with links to online cycling and walking resources through Local Authority and other relevant websites	Whole Borough	Short	Everyday Users					
			Tourism					
			Sport					
			Leisure			✓		
Set up tailored groups for women, less-able bodied, ethnic minorities etc. to support and encourage cycling and walking within these groups	Whole Borough	Ongoing	Leisure		✓	✓	✓	
Introduction of timed, timed/distance signage and wayfinding to destinations	Whole Borough	Short	All Users			✓		
Work with agencies across sport, health and transport agendas to promote the wide range of benefits of active travel and for leisure.	Whole Borough	Medium / Long	Sport					
			Leisure		✓		✓	
Support leisure events and facilities to nurture and develop a culture of cycling and active travel	Whole Borough	Short	Leisure					
			Everyday Users					



			Sport	✓	✓			
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General				Objectives Met				
Measure	Area	Timescale	Target Groups	Health and Wellbeing	Awareness and Behavioural Change	Accessibility	Community Integration	Integration with other transport
Encourage more schools to join Travel Telford School Network which includes Modeshift STARS (online Travel Plan tool) and Junior Road Safety Officer scheme (JRSO) as well as an audit	Whole Borough	Short	Schools				✓	
Partnership								
Integrate local businesses with giving away promotional offers as incentives	Whole Borough	Short	Work Places				✓	
			Commuters					
Engage with schools/ universities, businesses, communities and residential developments to establish/ review Travel Plans	Whole Borough	Ongoing	Workplaces					
			Schools					
			Everyday Users	✓	✓		✓	
Work with local businesses to set up cycling parking outside of shops	Whole Borough	Short	Everyday Users			✓	✓	
After school clubs to deliver walking and cycling activities	Whole Borough	Short	Schools	✓				
Actively promote and incentivise walk to work and bike to work days	Whole Borough	Short	Commuters					
			Workplaces	✓			✓	



Co-ordinate volunteers groups to deal with maintenance of the cycle and walking network	Whole Borough	Ongoing	All Users				✓	
Promote Everyday Telford app to report any issues	Whole Borough	Ongoing	All Users				✓	

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