

Appendix 1 – Telford & Wrekin Cycling & Walking Strategy in context

Telford & Wrekin supports a population of 166,413 (based on 2011 census data) concentrated in the Telford urban area and the market towns of Wellington, situated in the centre of the borough and Newport to the north of the Borough. There are also a number of rural communities such as Little Wenlock, High Ercall and Lilleshall. The mixed urban and rural nature of the area means that distances to shops, health centres, schools and jobs varies considerably across the Borough with many people having little alternatives other than the car for these journeys. There are good public transport services in the urban centres, with railway stations at Oakengates, Telford Central and Wellington along with a good urban bus service network. The strategy shall incorporate using cycling and walking as a way to reach these modes of public transport for longer journeys.

The Borough has three distinct areas. The urban area of Telford covers 7,200 hectares, including the town of Wellington, the market-town of Newport covers 300 hectares, and a large rural area of 21,400 hectares covers almost three quarters of the Borough. The rural landscape consists of the flatness of the Shropshire Plain in the north, the high ground of The Wrekin hill (the northern most extent of the Shropshire Hills) in the west and the steeply sloping wooded sides of the Ironbridge Gorge in the south. The River Severn flows from west to east through the Ironbridge Gorge.

As stated in the Telford & Wrekin [Transport Growth Strategy](#) (January 2016) *'Telford was designed for the car and has a high capacity road network which means currently there is relatively little congestion, which is an attractive incentive for encouraging businesses to invest in the area.'* However, despite the lack of traffic congestion, the Telford Urban Area was declared as one of the 65 areas in England affected by annoyance evoked from road and rail transport noise.

Whilst the area's connectivity to strategic roads nationally, particularly the excellent links to the M54 from the centre of Telford are an asset to the local economy, these strategic highways and major traffic junctions also present a barrier to movement for walkers and cyclists. Walking and cycling is a growing leisure and tourist activity across the area, particularly around The Wrekin, Ironbridge and enhancing cycle routes and walking facilities can support this important economic activity.

Within Telford and Wrekin an extensive walking network already exists with segregated walkways within the Telford urban area with many highways providing footways on both sides elsewhere in the Borough. There are a few notable longer-distance leisure walking routes that also support tourism. Walking for utility trips requires direct routes, connected street and path networks, good links between residential areas and public transport and other trip attractors. As identified through the stakeholder's workshop, residents were either unfamiliar with them or found routes disconnected. An audit of parts of the network also shows a variation in the quality of the routes, with maintenance of the surface and vegetation being particular issue on some routes.