



# Leicester Transport Plan (Draft)

2021-2036

Connected, Healthy and Green Transport  
for a Growing City

June 2021

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# Foreword

We are living through the most challenging of times dealing with the serious impacts of COVID-19 alongside tackling climate, health and poverty challenges whilst needing to provide more homes, jobs and business opportunities for a growing city.

The transport options that are made available and the choices people subsequently make on how they travel around Leicester for work, leisure and to access services will play a key role in how we positively respond to these challenges.

To guide our approach to future transport provision we have developed a vision for a city that will be carbon neutral, healthy, well connected, with a good quality of life and which is economically vibrant and growing.

The council has invested heavily in many successful transport improvements over the past 10 years through our Connecting Leicester and Transforming Cities Fund programmes creating many new 'green' commuting routes for people travelling in from our city neighbourhoods, city centre and suburbs by bus, cycling and walking.

If we are to continue to respond positively to our challenges and deliver our vision for Leicester we will need to accelerate investment in high quality, affordable and environmentally responsible transport choices for people. This will be essential to support future business growth and the development of new homes across the city.

The Leicester Transport Plan sets out an ambitious programme of transport improvements for the next decade including transforming our railway station to provide an impressive new gateway into Leicester, delivering an exciting new Greenlines electric express bus network and establishing a world class city wide network of cycleways and paths, aiming for a '15 minute' city where people can access a large range of facilities in 15 minutes using sustainable transport.



Alongside other funding sources to deliver our plans we are investigating a workplace parking levy for Leicester (a Manifesto commitment), and we are looking at how we can use new ways of improving buses from the Government's recent National Bus Strategy. The workplace parking levy has delivered substantial benefits in nearby Nottingham, encouraging people to make more responsible decisions about car use and providing ongoing funding for important sustainable transport projects.

We have been talking to businesses, environmental groups and other organisations in the city about what transport improvements they want to see in Leicester and we now want to hear from other people that live and work in and also visit the city. This is particularly important as we take action to promote recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We very much look forward to hearing your thoughts on our plans.

**City Mayor – Sir Peter Soulsby**



Currently the transport sector is responsible for 25% of the carbon emissions in Leicester. Our Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan has an ambition for the city to become carbon neutral by 2030. The Leicester Transport Plan sets out our proposed actions to deliver more sustainable transport options for people that will help us respond to this challenge.

Evidence is clear that poor air quality causes poor health, and that having cleaner transport alternatives and better active travel options for cycling and walking will greatly improve the air we breathe and lead to more exercise and healthier lifestyles, helping to address obesity and heart disease. Our proposals are also targeted at improving social equity in the city by providing more affordable and inclusive travel solutions to help tackle our poverty challenges.

Our transport strategy is two-fold – encouraging as many journeys as possible to be transferred to active cycling and walking and public transport options; and over time converting all necessary vehicle trips to zero emission.

Leicester is a compact city with comparatively low car ownership. Many journeys that are taken by car are therefore walk-able or cycle-able when the conditions are right.

We are already committed to the delivery of many more facilities to encourage cycling and walking and most recently have delivered 10 miles of pop-up cycleway and paths in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to encourage the many people who have used these facilities and taken up cycling and walking during the pandemic to continue.

The purchase of 13 electric buses for the Park & Ride and Hospital Hopper Services and the launch of Santander Cycles Leicester e-bike scheme with 500 electric bikes this summer signals a big step towards greening transport in the city.

Technology will also play an important part of our transport strategy, for example encouraging the take up of all types of zero emission vehicles and use of fare payment technology making it much simpler and easier for people to travel around Leicester seamlessly.

This plan proposes a big step forward for sustainable transport in the city but we need to hear from you to make sure we are proposing the right schemes that you believe can help us make the city a greener, cleaner and more inclusive place for people.

**Deputy City Mayor for Environment and Transport  
- Cllr Adam Clarke**

# Executive Summary

The Leicester Transport Plan proposes an inspiring way forward for transport building on recent major investments, particularly through the Connecting Leicester programme, to support bus and rail travel, cycling and walking. Although there are big challenges – COVID-19 recovery, climate emergency, improving health and activity levels and Leicester’s considerable growth proposals – this plan sets out an ambitious but deliverable vision and programme of transport improvements for the next two decades.

The transport vision for Leicester is for a carbon neutral, growing, healthy, accessible and connected city, with clean air supporting a high quality of life and travel experience for people and a vibrant local economy.

## The vision is supported by our ambitions for Leicester in 2036:

- 100% zero emission vehicles throughout city (including buses, trains, taxis, fleet and freight)
- Many more people working regularly from home and more responsible use of cars for necessary trips only
- Public transport (including bus and rail), Park & Ride, cycling or personal e-mobility will be the first choice for longer journeys for most people
- Active transport, cycling and walking will be the first choice for shorter journeys for most people
- A thriving, accessible city centre that is easy to move around in and supports economic growth in Leicester
- Healthier neighbourhoods, aiming for all local services to be available by cycling and walking within 15 minutes, with cleaner air and a safer local environment
- A rush-hour free city, gradually managing traffic to reduce peak hour demands

The pathway to deliver this vision which will guide future decisions on transport in the city is shown in Chapter 4. This includes Leicester City Council’s commitments to:

- a travel hierarchy that prioritises reducing the need to travel, walking, cycling and zero emission transport
- support, enable, facilitate and encourage individuals to make responsible transport decisions contributing to improved health and environmental outcomes
- ensure accessibility for all, so that everyone can easily and safely travel round the city for whatever reason
- ensure that the emerging Bus Services Improvement Plan, linked to the National Bus Strategy, becomes a key element of this plan
- support the delivery of priority regional and national inter-city rail improvements linking into Leicester
- maximise the potential of transport to support city centre recovery and future growth
- make the most of technological advances in transport, including smart management of the highway network
- investigate the potential for workplace parking levy as part of wider parking co-ordination activity
- build on the successful Connecting Leicester and Transforming Cities Fund programme
- accelerate cycling and walking improvements following the good examples delivered through the COVID-19 Transport Recovery Plan
- support the delivery of public and private electric vehicle chargers at home and in workplaces to encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles and the conversion of company and bus fleets



Three central themes and associated programmes of work are identified to deliver the vision. These are considered to offer a progressive and integrated set of actions that can transform the travel experience in Leicester.



### Connected Corridors & Hubs

- Connected commuter corridors for buses, cycling and walking
- Greenlines electric bus network
- New and improved Park & Ride sites
- Transformed Leicester Rail Station

### Connected Healthy Neighbourhoods

- Connected cycling and walking networks city centre and local neighbourhoods
- Good local bus network
- Fewer and cleaner vehicles in neighbourhoods

### Managing Demand for Car Use

- Parking management and co-ordination
- Behaviour change
- Smart transport
- Network management
- Workplace parking levy

This plan outlines a challenging and wide-ranging set of proposals that will need the necessary funding resources to be made available for programme delivery. This will include a combination of Government grants, investment from transport operators and local funding sources. The potential for a workplace parking levy for the city is being explored and this could play a key role in providing a sustained and reliable source of transport funding as well as match funding to attract grants which would help to deliver our ambitious transport plans.

The support of transport partners, residents and businesses will also be essential to delivery of the proposals set out in the Leicester Transport Plan. As Leicester City Council and its local and regional transport partner bodies do not control all transport activity in the city, strong partnerships with public transport operators and the national Government will have a particularly significant role to play in supporting the delivery of this plan.



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 A New Transport Plan for Leicester

We are living through challenging times. The COVID-19 pandemic has had and will continue to impact on people's daily lives. Many more people are cycling and walking with fewer using public transport. Changes in retail towards online shopping have accelerated, and consequently efficient local distribution has become much more directly relevant to people. Working from home may continue to be much more common. Technology is increasingly being used in different ways to provide connectivity and reduce isolation.

The impact could be long-lasting. However, it is also an opportunity to ensure that plans for a recovery from COVID-19 – and the benefits gained such as increases in cycling and walking – continue and help to create a significantly better city in the future. This plan shows how this can be done.

Leicester City Council and partners are already taking a lead in tackling the climate emergency with an ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. At the same time, the council is committed to improving air quality and the health of citizens.

The Leicester Transport Plan covers the city of Leicester but also recognises that the city boundary is not relevant when considering transport as a whole. Many journeys begin or end outside the city boundaries, and there is a need to plan for how transport is organised over the whole Leicester Urban Area.

There are plans for substantial new housing and employment developments in Leicester to be delivered by 2036. A new **Local Plan** for Leicester is currently being prepared and this will determine the number and locations of new homes and employment sites within the city by 2036. There will also be new growth in the neighbouring authorities in the Leicester Urban Area which will create challenges and opportunities for transport.

Pre-COVID, Leicester had a remarkable record of success in creating a thriving city centre and growing the local economy, which created a firm foundation for tackling these challenges. However, it is important that the benefits are distributed more equally and the city still has high levels of deprivation in some neighbourhoods which are often not well connected with the rest of the city and need specific

consideration. Taken together, these are serious issues and a considerable step-up in activity, particularly in cleaner air and better connected neighbourhoods, is urgently needed. COVID-19 has only emphasised the need to tackle these issues, as **Public Health England** has shown that it disproportionately affects more deprived communities.

It should be recognised that despite the existing road network being at or near capacity, many Leicester residents and workers feel that they must use cars because alternatives are not available, or are unsatisfactory, unsafe or just too expensive. However, this does mean that there is considerable potential for increasing use of cleaner and healthier public transport, cycling and walking options, as well as taking advantage of innovations and new technology.

A new plan is needed because of this increased emphasis on good quality, clean and healthy transport options. The approach recently outlined in the Campaign for Better Transport's report **Renewing the Transport System** is useful. It focuses on the unique opportunity following the pandemic to increase active travel and the need for a new form of local transport plan that reflects this ambition in an integrated way. It also stresses the requirement for local transport authorities to have a co-ordinated plan to reshape transport networks based on active travel as well as shared and public transport.

### An integrated approach to transport

Transport decisions should be made at the administrative level best placed to make these. Local authorities - or combined authorities where these are in place - are best placed to review local transport needs, plan for how these should be met and to work with operators and other partners to deliver these services.

Local authorities should be required to produce local integrated transport plans that outline how they will permanently reprioritise provision locally to ensure a sustainable transport system based on active travel, shared and public transport (including rail, if devolved) that responds to, and meets, the needs of the community.

*From **Renewing the Transport System**,  
Campaign for Better Transport*

The ongoing delivery of the council's Connecting Leicester programme and success in securing Transforming Cities Fund and Getting Building Fund grants are substantial steps forward in reshaping public, shared and active transport infrastructure in Leicester. This will be delivered over the next four years - though much more will be needed. There may well be further funding opportunities made available by the Government but locally controlled funding would provide more certainty and allow for stable long-term projects, as well as being invaluable as a source of the inevitable match-funding required to leverage and secure these Government funds. Therefore, it has been decided to further investigate the potential of locally based revenue streams such as a workplace parking levy to allow the continuation of the Transforming Cities Fund programme as well as more transport related projects.

The draft Leicester Transport Plan sets the scene as to how transport can contribute to meeting challenges up to 2036. It follows on from and replaces Leicester's Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, and builds on the main sustainability themes from that plan. It follows more recent wider policy objectives as described in Chapter 2, and will become the 'headline' plan for a number of specific themed plans such as the Air Quality Action Plan and the Highways Asset Management Plan.

There are further documents supporting this plan. The **Evidence Base** has more detail about Leicester transport issues, and how they have informed this plan. The **Implementation Plan** has more information on specific early projects. The **Prioritisation Background Paper** and **Targets** and **Monitoring Background Paper** explain the methodologies used in developing the plan.

Overall this is an ambitious but robust, resilient and deliverable plan. The programme is flexible with delivery timescales that can be changed to bring forward or hold back specific elements when required. It does not depend on a few very expensive projects. However, the emphasis evolves over time from one focused on building new infrastructure for improving public transport, walking and cycling (which need to be provided first), to one increasingly focused on prioritising greater use of cleaner and healthier transport across the renewed and improved networks. Delivery of the Leicester Transport Plan does not wholly depend on the implementation of a workplace parking levy, but the plan will show how a local funding scheme like a workplace parking levy might enable and bring forward

key elements of the programme to maximise the impact and benefit of transport proposals in this plan.

Whilst the strategy is ambitious, the proposed policies and projects draw on good practice from elsewhere, with due consideration of Leicester-specific characteristics. With the help of partners and with complementary Government actions, the challenging vision in this plan can be achieved. This plan is dependent on partnerships and needs the appropriate governance arrangements with external organisations. This includes the national government, regional and sub-regional organisations such as **Midlands Connect** and the **Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership**, public transport operators, environmental groups as well as other lobby and user groups.

#### Some examples of required partnerships are:



##### **Rail delivery arrangements**

with Network Rail, East Midlands Railway, Midlands Connect, user groups, developers



##### **Bus partnership**

with bus operating companies and user groups



##### **Transport Forums**

with key employers and employers' organisations

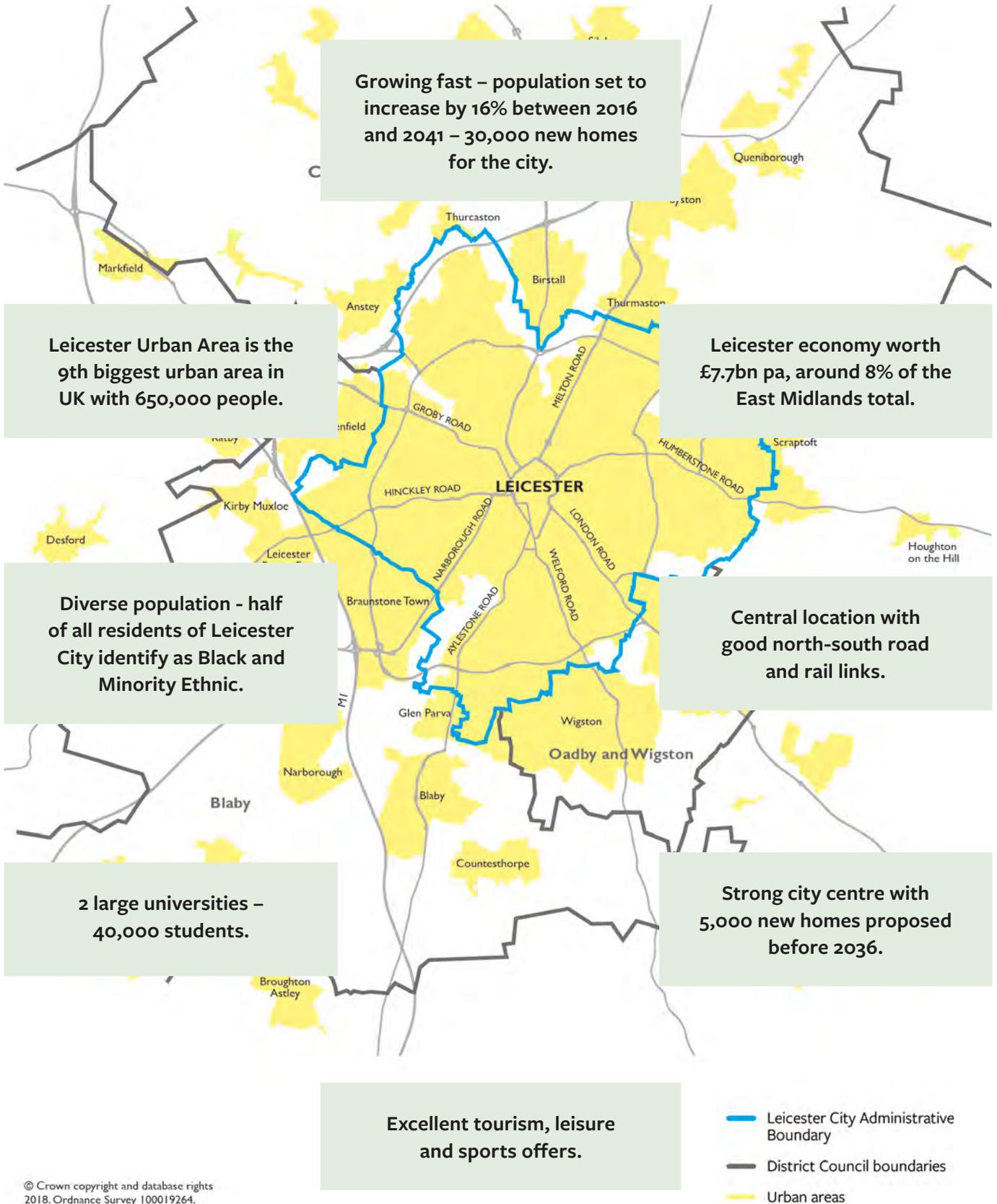


##### **Western Power Distribution (Leicester's Distribution Network Operator)**

to enable a speedy take-up of electric vehicles with an adequate and reliable electricity supply

Predicting what will happen over a long time period is fraught with challenges not least since there may be national policy changes or economic or demographic developments that drastically alter the national or local transport picture. Already there are many innovations and technological changes such as autonomous vehicles, transfer to electric vehicles and changes in behaviour (e.g. more sharing of available vehicles). Undoubtedly there will be many more. Consequently, the plan for the later period will be less detailed than that for the earlier period.

# 1.2 Leicester Context



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### 1.3 Transport in Leicester



Nearly a quarter of a million people live within a 30 minute bus journey to the city centre.

Over 85% of trips taken in outer Leicester are by car.



The number of bus journeys in Leicester has declined by 9% or 2.6m since 2012.

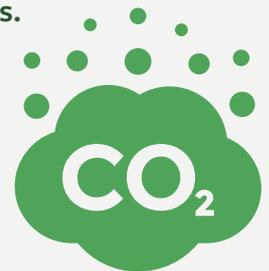


Over 100,000 residents live within a 10 minute cycle ride radius of the city centre.

25% of all car journeys are under 2km and the average trip is only 5km.



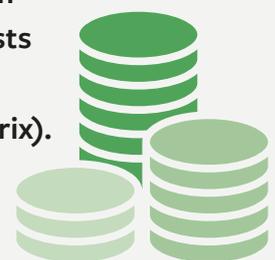
Transport produces 25% of Leicester's carbon emissions.



0.7m PA extra passengers at Leicester rail station (2012-20) but still underperforms.

80% of NO2 in Leicester is produced by road transport, and half of residents are concerned about air quality.

Congestion in Leicester costs drivers over £1000 PA (Inrix).





## 1.4 Recent Transport Improvements

Our ongoing Connecting Leicester vision and programme has seen substantial investment in public and sustainable transport amounting to over £100m since 2011. This has included extensive new high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure, focussed in and around the city centre, and a dramatic improvement in the public realm through revitalised streets and award-winning public squares and spaces. A further £70m is now being made available from the Transforming Cities Fund and Getting Building Fund. The pop-up cycle lanes constructed during the pandemic have received considerable acclaim.

There has also been substantial investment in bus infrastructure including a new bus station at Haymarket, a bus corridor scheme on the A426 (which has seen passenger growth of 13% bucking the national and local trend), bus lanes/gates and camera enforcement, smart ticketing, real time bus information displays and buses retrofitted with clean engine technology. St Margaret's Bus Station is being rebuilt after successfully obtaining Getting Building Funds in 2020. We have worked closely with our local bus operators to bring about improvements in bus priority infrastructure and they have continued to invest significantly in new fleet. Our successful Local Sustainable

Transport Fund and Access Fund behavioural change programmes have introduced many people to cycling and walking.

Many more schemes and initiatives are under development but require additional funding.





# 2.0 Policy Context Overview

The Policy context for Leicester Transport Plan is set out in section 2.1 National and Regional Context. The Leicester Transport Plan has been developed to be aligned with national, regional and local policies, plans and strategies to improve and manage the transport network. It is important to consider existing and emerging policy documents in order to ensure that the Leicester Transport Plan reflects these where possible.

Transport is inextricably linked to several wider policy areas including climate change, air quality, economic and housing growth and social inequalities. These considerations have been included within the document and will play a fundamental role in influencing the future development of transport interventions.

## 2.1 National and Regional Context

### National Context



Figure 1: Associated National and Regional Plans and Strategies

The table below sets out a summary of the key strategic transport priorities for the council and its partners drawn from regional and national bodies and their strategic documents which are fully supported by the council.

Priorities	Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy	EFRA	DfT	Department of Health & Social Care	Public Health England	MHCLG	Midlands Connect	TfEM
Midland Mainline electrification			✓				✓	✓
Rail station improvement			✓					✓
HS2 links	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓
Rail links to other cities	✓		✓				✓	✓
Sustainable transport for growth	✓	✓	✓				✓	
National Bus Strategy		✓	✓					
Decarbonisation of Transport	✓	✓	✓					
Improving air quality	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Modal shift	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
A46 improvements							✓	✓
Technology	✓	✓	✓					
Travel within the city	✓		✓					
City centre			✓				✓	

Figure 2: Key Priorities from Strategic Documents

Figure 2 highlights key national and regional transport policy areas and priorities. These priorities lie within the national and regional context and are supported by the council but they do impact on the city and can benefit transport locally. For example, the delivery of the electrification of the Midland Mainline lies within the remit of the National and Regional bodies rather the Local Transport Authority.

Whilst it is not the aim of the Leicester Transport Plan to repeat these priorities, there are common elements which will impact at a local level that require co-ordination, such as improving rail infrastructure which the Leicester Transport Plan can support through public realm and associated infrastructure improvements to Leicester rail station.



**Regional Context**

**Midlands Connect:** The regional transport strategy has been established through the ‘**Midlands Connect Strategy: Powering the Midlands Engine (2017)**’ This identifies key long term priorities for regional transport investment supporting the economic development of Leicester and Leicestershire. The initiative has identified six ‘growth corridors’ and four major hubs of activity across the wider Midlands area. This identifies key long-term priorities for regional level transport investment, supporting the economic development of Leicester and Leicestershire including:

- Investment in electrification and rolling stock for the Midland Mainline;
- Improved East – West rail links between Leicester and Coventry/Birmingham;
- Proposed rail connections between the Midland Mainline and HS2, North of Leicester at Toton; and
- Improvements along the A46 corridor.

**Transport for East Midlands (TfEM)** provides leadership on strategic transport issues in the East Midlands, agrees major investment priorities and provides collective input into the work of the Midlands Connect, the Department for Transport and its delivery bodies. TfEM and Midlands Connect have agreed a joint statement of investment priorities for the East Midlands:

- Making the most of HS2;
- A Midland Mainline fit for the 21st Century;
- Improving access to East Midlands Airport;
- A46 Growth Corridor and Newark;
- A5 Growth Corridor; and
- Transforming East – West Connectivity.

**Network Rail** publishes five-yearly Strategic Business Plans, accompanied by individual route strategic plans. Network Rail’s current **Strategic Business Plan** and London North-Eastern and East Midlands Route Strategic Plan run from 2019 to 2024. Current priorities are improvements for passengers, jobs and housing and supporting British technology and innovation. This outlines a set of strategic transport priorities for the region.



## 2.2 Local Context:



Figure 3: Local (and Sub-Regional) Associated Plans and Strategies

The context for strategic planning sub-regionally is set out in the **Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan** 2018. It presents the long-term strategy for the future development and proposes overall that most development will take place in major strategic locations.

The plan estimates that Leicester and Leicestershire will need 96,580 new homes and 367 – 423ha of employment land in the period 2011-2031. Beyond 2031, the plan identifies a need for a further 90,500 dwellings and additional employment land. The plan also identifies Leicester, particularly the Strategic Regeneration Area and the A46 Priority Growth Corridor to the south

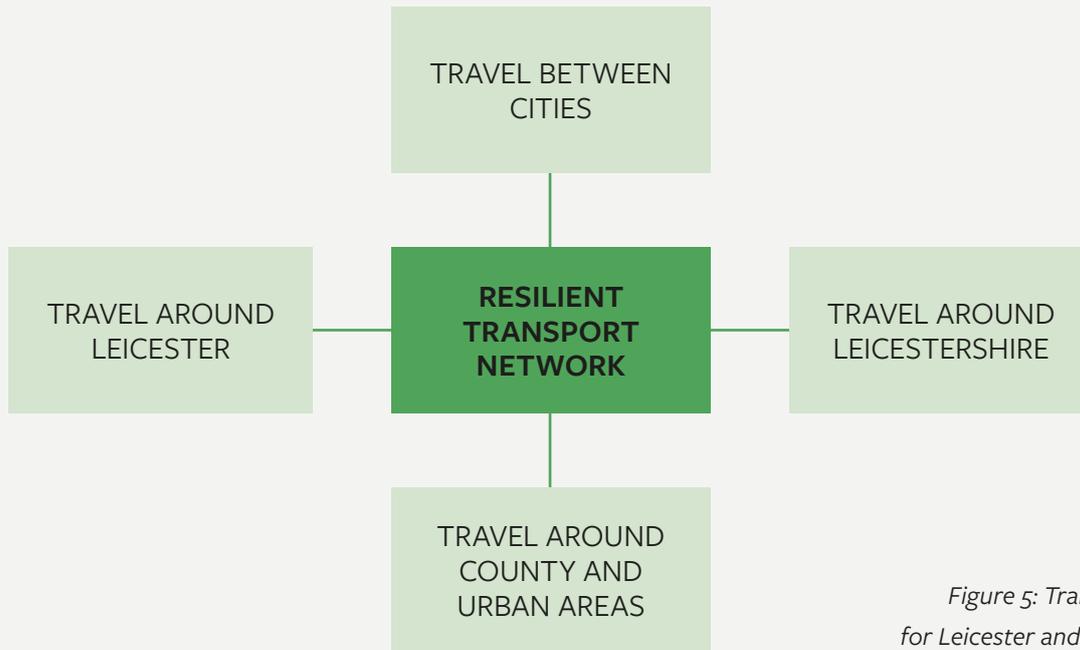
and east of Leicester, as areas to focus future development (see Figure 4). Major infrastructure improvements will be needed to accommodate the growth. The Strategic Growth Plan's aspirations will be delivered through **Local Plans**. Further work is now progressing on an 'Early Transport Work Programme' that will support the Strategic Growth Plan's proposed new spatial distribution for the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area. Transport has consistently been recognised by Strategic Growth Plan and partners as one of the most critical factors affecting the transition to the Strategic Growth Plan spatial distribution.



Figure 4: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan – Spatial Strategy December 2019 (map created by Dinc Creative)

The **Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities** document, supports the principles of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan and sets out the long-term approach to guide improvements over the next 30 years delivered through a range of programmes and packages. It has been developed by both Leicester

City Council and Leicestershire County Council to ensure that the long term development needs and associated transportation requirements are co-ordinated. Five Strategic Transport Themes have been developed (Figure 5) that outline the transport aims, challenges and priorities for Leicester and Leicestershire.



*Figure 5: Transport themes for Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan.*

The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan notes that major infrastructure improvements will be needed to unlock land for development and accommodate new growth focussed on major transport corridors such as:

- Investment in city transport infrastructure to support improved accessibility to and within the city – principally the hub and spoke plan for bus corridors, Park & Ride and cycling / walking corridor improvements;
- Improvements in the city centre to improve it as a travel hub including rail and bus station enhancements together with connecting links;
- A new A46 link road to the south and east of Leicester, connecting the M1 to the south-west and A46 to the north-east of Leicester, to create a new priority growth corridor. Decisions about the route and nature of the link road will be subject to extensive further development work and consultation, with due consideration of any studies by Midlands Connect and the Local Transport Authorities. Connecting infrastructure will be required into the city via radial transport corridors. Opportunities to maximise sustainable transport improvements to support new growth will also be explored, and the carbon and air quality implications will be kept under continual review.
- Improved railway lines and services from Leicester to Coventry and Birmingham, as well as improvements to the Midland Mainline (electrification) and a link to HS2 at Toton.
- Potential new rail services, including the possible re-opening of the Leicester to Burton railway line.
- Identification of, and improvements to, the Major Road Network, including works to reduce congestion, improve safety and address environmental issues along the A511 / A50 corridor.
- Supporting electric vehicles with appropriate infrastructure and incentives.

The **Strategic Economic Plan** 2014-2020, produced by **Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership**, sets out the overarching plan for continued economic growth of Leicester and Leicestershire. Within the Strategic Economic Plan, the role of travel and transport is clearly stated that will meet one of the themes, 'Investing in our Place'. The theme focuses on unlocking key development sites, improving public realm and connectivity to enable the efficient movement of people and goods. Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership is also preparing a new economic growth plan with the intention of identifying areas and sectors of focus to maximise future economic growth and productivity. This will consider the transport requirements both to help promote and support opportunities for economic growth and will draw on the future infrastructure requirements set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities document.

The **Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy**, adopted by the city and county councils in March 2017, identified that Leicester's poor connectivity by rail, except to London, was a key factor that needed to be addressed to support Leicester and Leicestershire's economic growth. This is reflected in the key priorities identified in the Strategy:

- Pressing for the completion of electrification with the minimum of further delay
- To maximise benefit from the Midland Main Line services
- To achieve the best result from the implementation of HS2 Phase 2
- To deliver direct fast connectivity to key regional and national destinations, recognised as currently poor to ensure that rail access and economic development are planned together
- To ensure that rail access and economic development are planned together
- To support modal shift from cars and lorries to sustainable transport

The draft **Leicester Local Plan 2020 – 2036** provides the emerging position on the strategic and spatial vision for the future of the Leicester area (Figure 6 shows the main development sites). The current (May 2021) housing requirement to 2036 is 29,104 dwellings and it is estimated that 45ha of additional employment land is also required. Significant growth is being planned within the wider Leicester Urban Area on the edge of the city by neighbouring authorities in their local plans. It is vital that our transport networks are able to support this growth. The Leicester Transport Plan is being developed alongside the Local Plan to identify a strategy that manages the growth in the number of trips. The council will work closely with the Local Planning Authority and neighbouring local planning authorities to co-ordinate land use and transport planning to ensure that housing is located near to employment and a good public transport network with cycling and walking links where possible, which is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposed development sites, in the draft Leicester Local Plan to 2036 (which are still subject to further local consultation), are shown in figure 6 and are situated in the Central Development Area and in Strategic Growth Areas on the North and West edges of the city.



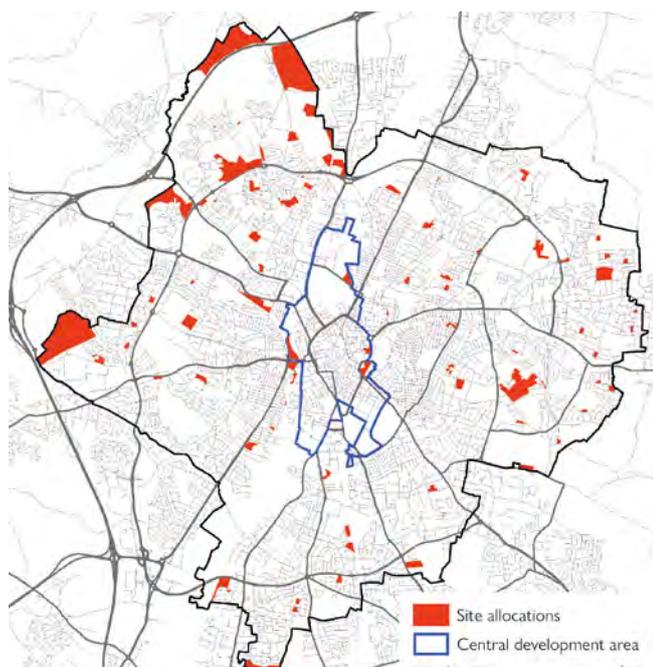


Figure 6: Proposed Local Plan Development Sites to 2036

Growth will inevitably generate additional travel demands that will have implications for the environment and climate change, which transport has a role to play in mitigating this impact. Leicester City Council's **Climate Emergency Strategy (2020-23)** aims for a carbon neutral city by 2030 or sooner, and a 'roadmap' to net zero is currently being developed. The Leicester Transport Plan will need to demonstrate and set out how a transport system can be developed to reduce energy demands, lower carbon emissions, decarbonise transport and address the climate emergency.

**Leicester's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy** sets out its objectives, which is supported by an action plan to 2024. Levels of physical activity and related obesity remain a concern and transport choices can contribute significantly to improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Transport is highlighted as an issue affecting the local environment and actions include promoting the health benefits of sustainable transport and working with the transport sectors to reduce their impact on the environment.

**Leicester's Transport Recovery Plan (2020)** sets out how Leicester's transport system can meet the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and help the city's economy recover, as well as securing longer term environmental benefits. Part of the measures in the plan, a series of 'pop-up' cycle lanes including the first in the UK, have been installed on major arterial routes into the city to enable people to cycle and walk safely.

**Smart Leicester** identifies how we can use smart digital connectivity and accessible data to help us better tackle issues such as the climate crisis, deprivation and poverty and together improve the quality of life in Leicester. This includes a theme on smart buildings and city infrastructure, which promotes the transition to sustainable buildings and transport, powered by clean, low-carbon energy.

### Supporting and Delivery Plans

The Leicester Transport Plan provides the framework for the development of a series of supporting plans and strategies which include specific mode or topic based strategies. For example, the **Cycle City Action Plan** sets out our ambitions for cycling and providing the framework for developing cycling in Leicester working with a number of local, national partners and stakeholders.

The Leicester Transport Plan also aides the delivery of statutory plans, for example, Leicester's (statutory) **Air Quality Action Plan** sets out a number of actions to improve air quality. The supporting and statutory plans set out more detailed information of their investment and programme delivery.

Finally, the **Leicester Street Design Guide** sets out the principles to help build healthier streets in future city redevelopment schemes. The guide shows how the council can prioritise people-friendly urban spaces and public streets, which encourage people to cycle, walk, and use public transport.



# 3.0 Challenges and Opportunities



The Leicester Transport Plan Evidence Base brings together relevant information and expands on Leicester's challenges, opportunities and other issues. Key facts and figures are highlighted in this section and have been used to inform this plan.

## 3.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency

The ambition in the **Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2020-23** is for Leicester to become carbon neutral by 2030 or sooner. The top area considered a priority for action by people consulted on the strategy was 'investing in infrastructure for public transport, walking and cycling'.



### Aim 4 of the Climate Emergency Strategy is:

Reduce carbon emissions from travel and transport towards the goal of becoming carbon neutral, based on walking, cycling, public transport and ultra-low emission vehicles, as well as reducing the need to travel.

Meeting this aim is a major challenge for the transport sector, because:

- Much of the change required is not within the control of Leicester City Council
- Whilst our existing programmes are encouraging lower emission travel, they will all have to be enhanced significantly and new programmes implemented noting the target date for a carbon neutral city
- The level of behaviour change required is unprecedented, and although the pandemic has caused people to question some of their previous travel behaviours, this may not continue in the longer-term without continued support



### Challenges

- Transport currently produces about a quarter of Leicester's carbon emissions, largely from fossil fuelled vehicles, and has continued to rise as a proportion of the total both locally and nationally.
- There will need to be a huge investment in incentives to use electric vehicles as well as electric vehicle charging points with grid capacity improvements in many areas.
- Transition to electric vehicles whilst maintaining the current growth in car ownership does not reduce congestion or improve certain types of air quality.

### Opportunities

- Electric vehicles are expected to become as cheap as fossil fuelled cars by 2024, and are already cheaper to run.
- According to First Group, every customer journey on an electric bus saves around 2kg CO<sub>2</sub> compared with driving.
- Bus priority helps address climate change. If everyone switched just one car journey a month to bus that would mean **one billion fewer car journeys** in the UK, saving 2 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.
- In the Leicester 'Engaging Business' survey 2020, half of the petrol or diesel car commuters surveyed would be encouraged to change to an electric vehicle or hybrid if their company installed charging points at work.



## 3.2 Enabling Growth

Leicester is one of the fastest growing cities in the country - a 13% increase in population between 2016 and 2036 is estimated. This new growth will place an increased demand on the transport system as it will result in more trips being made to, and within, Leicester.

Jobs and investment in Leicester have also been growing strongly, but the associated increase in activity and demand for travel also contribute to congestion and poor air quality. Significant growth (including 5,000 new homes) has been located in the centre of Leicester to reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable travel. Outside of the city centre the development of strategic housing and employment sites are planned to be brought forward to provide new locations for new development. The Ashton Green housing development is continuing during the Local Plan period.

Although to a certain extent congestion is an indicator of a vibrant and growing city, it eventually starts to act as a 'drag' on the local economy. Vital traffic and buses are delayed, it causes unnecessary stress and business disruption, and is a major contributor to poor air quality. In Leicester there is very limited ability to extend the road network, and in fact the **Campaign for Better Transport** has shown that increasing road capacity may only be a temporary solution as more people drive more, supply generating its own demand. Solutions instead depend on making alternatives to the car more attractive and giving people better choices, at the same time managing the road network to prioritise necessary traffic and these alternatives - by making journeys more reliable and safer. In addition, innovation can replace some car journeys and replace them with more sustainable options e.g. zero emission vans or drone deliveries.

### Challenges

- The draft **Leicester Local Plan** proposes 30,000 new homes through proposed major urban extensions mainly to North and West of city and the central Leicester regeneration area. In December 2020, a further 35% uplift on the existing housing target was required. The distribution of the additional growth with neighbouring authorities is still to be agreed.
- Planned future housing growth to 2050 to South and East of Leicester of nearly 40,000 homes through **Strategic Growth Plan** proposals. Many of the strategic growth opportunities are located close to neighbouring authority areas and addressing the scale of the challenge (in terms of likely exponential increase in cross-boundary cumulative impacts of growth) would require a holistic approach.
- Nearly half the Leicester workforce commutes by car, with over 30,000 people travelling by car into the city centre in the morning peak, even though it can take 50 minutes to drive a journey that would take 30 minutes with no congestion.

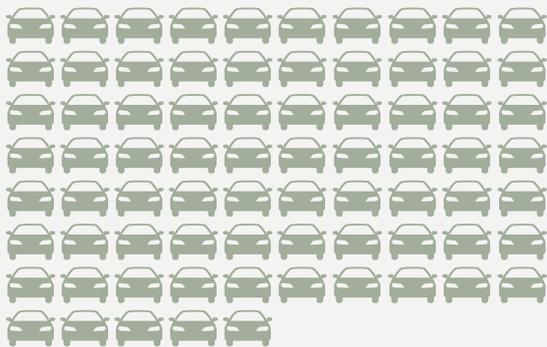
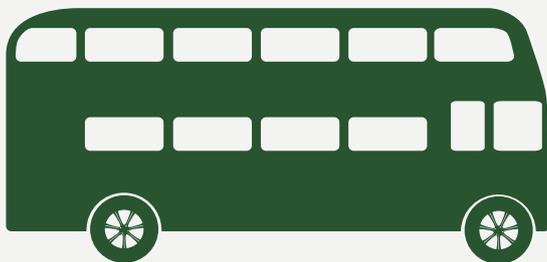
- Although there has already been major growth in Leicester Rail Station patronage (**Office of Rail Regulation**) - 4.8m pa (2012/13) to 5.3m pa (2019/20), it is still underperforming when compared to other cities.
- Leicester is ranked 11th for congestion in the UK by INRIX (2019).

### Opportunities

- The **University of Leeds** estimates that nationally buses contribute £64 billion of economic output each year.
- The **Confederation of Passenger Transport** estimates that bus passengers contribute around 1/3 of city centre spending, and are vital in supporting shops in city centres.
- If 10% of motorists can be encouraged on to public or active transport during morning peak times, it would reduce congestion to levels more like those during school holidays.



## An articulated bus (or a double decker bus)



can take up to 75 cars  
off the road

## 3.3 Improving Health and Activity Levels

Life expectancy in Leicester remains lower than the England average and although it has continued to improve over the past decade it has shown a slower improvement than England overall. There is also a gap within Leicester between more deprived and more affluent communities. A lack of physical exercise is one of the major factors that contribute to health inequalities, and persuading people to cycle and walk more can help significantly.

Around one in two women and a third of all men in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity, costing an estimated **£7.4 billion a year** in the UK. Physical inactivity is the fourth largest cause of disease and disability, and 1 in 6 (17%) of deaths in the UK. This makes it as dangerous as smoking. If being active was a pill, we would be rushing to prescribe it. A wealth of evidence shows that an active life is essential for health. Activity reduces the risk of many preventable diseases, from cancer to diabetes, and conditions like obesity and depression. Being active increases your chances of staying independent in later life. The benefits don't stop there. Being active is also good for children's educational attainment, it can boost workplace productivity and reduce sickness absence and it can even reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.



Accessibility to services is also important to health. This does not only mean accessing medical services, but also work opportunities, parks, community and educational facilities.

There is already a significant programme of road safety work, focusing on 20mph zones, school safety initiatives and projects within the **Road Safety Partnership**. However, more needs to be done to ensure that people feel confident to cycle and walk as a preferred transport choice.

Air pollution also affects people's health. It is responsible for an increased number of adults dying early from stroke, heart disease and lung cancer and for more people being admitted to hospital with respiratory and cardiovascular problems. In 2010 there were an estimated 162 premature deaths where air pollution was a contributory factor in Leicester, or 6.6% of all adult deaths. As a comparison there were 434 premature deaths from cigarette smoking. Not everyone is affected in the same way from air pollution. Those with existing conditions or those who live in more deprived communities suffer the greatest impact from poor air quality.

In the UK Leicester is one of over 200 local authorities with a declared Air Quality Management Area where action is required to meet air quality objectives for nitrogen dioxide.

## Challenges

- The **Leicester Health and Well-being survey 2018** found that a third (33%) of Leicester residents are physically inactive compared to the UK average of 26%, and two in five Leicester residents do less than the recommended 150 minutes of exercise a week.
- Only about 2% of Leicester residents currently cycle to work, despite considerable increases 2008-17, partly because of fear of cycling on busy roads.
- There were 4 fatal and 99 serious road accidents in 2019 in Leicester (though figures can be variable over different years).
- 80% of NO<sub>2</sub> in Leicester is produced by road transport.
- The **Leicester Health and Well-being Survey 2018** found that half of Leicester's residents are concerned about air quality in the city, and residents who live in deprived areas or who have underlying health conditions are more at risk from poor air quality.
- People in the UK are 64 times as likely to die of air pollution as those in Sweden and twice as likely as those in the US. According to the **Royal College of Physicians**, the estimated cost of these health impacts is £20bn every year.



### Opportunities

- In Leicester, 25% of all car journeys are under 2km and the average trip is only 5km – many could be walked or cycled instead.
- In the Leicester Business Engagement Survey 2020, over half (58%) of car users in Leicester could be encouraged to cycle to work. The most popular incentives were access to discounts on bikes or accessories (33%) and a company cycle to work scheme (22%).
- The **BMJ** notes that regular cycling to work is associated with a 45% lower risk of developing cancer, and a 46% risk of lower risk of developing heart disease compared to commuting by car or public transport.



- According to **RoSPA**, 20mph zones save lives. At 20mph there is a 1.5% chance of being fatally injured, compared to an 8% chance at 30mph.
- **OECD** reports that more cycling leads to fewer accidents.

## 3.4 Improving Accessibility and Transport Choice

Outside the city centre, the car is very much the dominant mode of travel, partly because bus services and cycle routes are not comprehensive or perceived as reliable. People use cars because they believe they are quicker and more reliable. More work needs to be done to make buses, cycling and walking more attractive to residents and visitors to the city with Park & Ride sites also key.

12 Hour Outer Ring Road Inbound Modal Share 2019

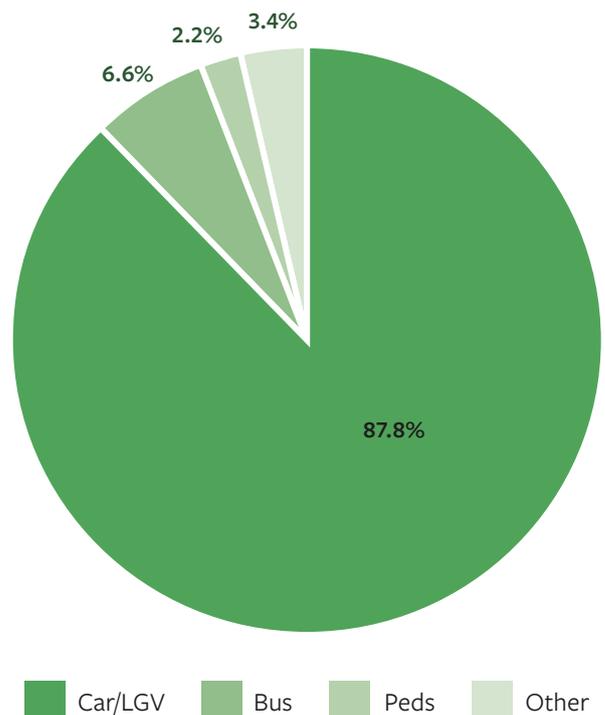


Figure 7: Modal Share in Leicester





Overuse of cars tends to mean the road network eventually becomes inefficient and subject to daily congestion as well as additional delays caused by unexpected events. To improve efficiency, the network must be managed to allow more priority for alternatives to the car.

There is considerable scope for more use of and further development of technology, for example:

- Personal pre-trip planning – use of an app to provide information on relative costs, speeds, pollution and carbon costs of different forms of transport, allowing the user to make more informed decisions
- Smart highway management - giving priority to buses and other key vehicles at junctions and helping to manage the network when disruption occurs
- Parking availability and payment apps – helping to find available parking spaces without the need to search, and to be able to pay for them by phone

Unusually for a British city there is no single dominant bus operator in Leicester and the two main operators are First and Arriva. 90% of the network is operated commercially and Leicester City Council does not control fares or routes. In many areas suitable bus services are either not available at all or are not fast, frequent and reliable enough to encourage people to use them. Waiting facilities, real time information and lack of integrated ticketing also need attention.

## Challenges

- On average, Leicester residents only make 76 bus trips per annum (which is about half the number in the best performing comparable cities) and bus use to employment, health and educational destinations outside the city centre is particularly low.
- Bus passengers have been subject to **fare increases since 2006** at more than double the rate of inflation.
- The number of bus journeys starting or ending in Leicester has declined by 9%, or 2.6m since 2011/12 (England 8%).
- A typical commuter parking space in a public car park in Leicester's city centre costs £3-5, whilst a day bus ticket is £4.30. 29% of travellers to the city centre use the bus (Nottingham 37% on bus and tram).
- In a **recent national survey**, a third of motorists said they had become more dependent on their car over the last year and more than half said they would use their car less if public transport were better.
- **Transport Focus** found that bus passengers now want services running more often and going to more places that are on time at their bus stop. Better value for money is still important, as are buses arriving at their destination on time.

## Opportunities

- Leicester is a compact city with nearly a quarter of a million people within a 30-minute bus journey to the city centre and over 100,000 residents live within a 10-minute cycle ride radius of the city centre so there is considerable potential for increasing bus use, cycling and walking.
- The Government's **National Bus Strategy** includes new initiatives to work with bus companies to improve bus quality.
- In the Leicester Engaging Business survey 2020, a third of car commuters would be encouraged to catch the bus to work if they received discounts on tickets and over half would try to use the bus if they were offered a free 4-week bus ticket.



## 3.5 Impact of COVID-19

Although full ongoing impacts are not yet completely known, COVID-19 experiences will undoubtedly contribute to future challenges – for example, ensuring that public transport fulfils its role in the future integrated transport system, while respecting any remaining infection controls and restrictions. Whilst the circumstances of the lockdown were unique and not replicable, it did demonstrate it is possible to achieve large-scale changes in behaviour for short periods. Lessons can be learnt to inform future transport proposals.

### Challenges

- Bus use reduced to about 17% of normal levels during lockdown, although as at April 2021 total levels of car use have largely returned to pre-lockdown levels, albeit spread more throughout the day.

### Opportunities

- Traffic fell by about 50% during the first lockdown and NO<sub>2</sub> levels fell by a similar amount.
- Cycling and walking increased during the first lockdown, doubling in some areas, and the pop-up cycle routes proved popular
- Continued flexible working arrangements including homeworking can potentially reduce congestion, particularly during peak travel periods.

*Note: Figures are from Leicester COVID-19 Transport Recovery Plan*



# 4.0 Transport Vision

## 4.1 Introduction

The transport vision for Leicester is for a carbon neutral, growing, healthy, accessible and connected city, with clean air supporting a high quality of life and travel experience for people and a vibrant local economy.

The vision is supported by our ambitions for Leicester in 2036:

- 100% zero emission vehicles throughout city (including buses, trains, taxis, fleet and freight).
- Many more people regularly working from home and more responsible use of cars for necessary trips only.
- Public transport (including bus and rail), Park & Ride, cycling or personal e-mobility will be the first choice for longer journeys for most people.
- Active transport, cycling and walking will be the first choice for shorter journeys for most people.
- A thriving, accessible city centre that is easy to move around in and supports economic growth in the whole city.
- Healthier neighbourhoods, aiming for all local services to be available by walking or cycling within 15 minutes, with cleaner air and a safer local environment.
- A rush-hour free city, gradually managing traffic to reduce peak hour demands.

The vision and ambitions illustrate how Leicester could change over the next 15 years. This vision cannot be achieved without help and co-operation from partners including transport operators, developers and Government, and of course, local residents and businesses.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the climate emergency have led to a reconsideration of transport and its potential to contribute to a different and better world. The pandemic has demonstrated the fragility of some of the day to day practices of modern life (commuting, shopping, leisure) and has shown that there are alternatives to what had become ‘normal’.

The likelihood is that some previous patterns of travel behaviour will return, although possibly in a different form – for example, many more people have tried cycling and hopefully will continue, but use of public transport has been seriously limited due to the need for social distancing. There will need to be much more confidence in bus use to at least return to previous patronage levels.

In some ways, threats from the pandemic have also focused people’s minds on threats from the climate emergency. **Surveys show** that there is a strong majority in favour of a ‘green’ recovery, with a substantial transport element that emphasises active travel and zero emission vehicles. Leicester has pioneered the creation of pop-up cycle lanes and many cities now are widening footways, pedestrianising more city centre streets and creating low traffic neighbourhoods.

These can be seen as exemplars for the future, but must also be part of a strategy to facilitate returning to a fully functioning and growing economy to create jobs and raise levels of health and prosperity. We can capture the opportunities this provides and shape the vision of how transport could be in Leicester in 2036.

The **Campaign for Better Transport** has developed a helpful diagram showing the key elements of a national vision that will support the recovery from COVID-19 while also leading the way on planning for the future. We believe these are the right elements for inclusion in the Leicester Transport Plan.



**A transport-led recovery should deliver:**



A world leading public transport system and improved connectivity through more local transport connectivity through more local transport authority involvement in planning and coordinating local networks, with reforms to the bus and rail sectors.



100% zero emission road transport and railway with support for UK-based manufacturing.



Permanent improvements to sustain greater levels of walking and cycling at the local level.



Changing the way transport is paid for, including new means to raise revenue and refocusing government funding.

Source: Campaign for Better Transport's Covid-19 Recovery: Renewing the transport system



## 4.2 Wider Objectives

The following wider objectives build on our vision and ambitions and have been distilled from the policy analysis in Chapter 2 and the Challenges and Opportunities outlined in Chapter 3.

**Climate Emergency** requires a faster progression to transport that minimises emissions of greenhouse gases. This means minimising journeys overall and a transfer to public transport, cycling and walking, and to zero emission vehicles.

**Growing City** requires a step change in public transport options and interchanges to serve both new and existing residents. This will give residents and visitors good quality alternatives to the car.

**Healthy People** requires significantly better cycling and walking options and improved air quality, creating a safer, cleaner and more attractive environment for residents and visitors.

**Connected City** requires improved choice and efficiency of transport options, as well as encouraging behaviour change and managing parking. This will mean prioritising sustainable modes of transport on the highway network and where possible, rebalancing pricing signals that don't support sustainable transport.



Figure 8: Wider Objectives

## 4.3 Transport Objectives

More detailed transport objectives have been derived from the four wider objectives.

	Transport objectives	Example projects
1	Reduce the need to travel by car	Improved public and active travel options
2	Support zero emission vehicles and new models of transport	Electric car and bike hire, extensive charging infrastructure
3	Make transport more resilient to planned and unplanned events such as flooding or pandemics	Increased options for travel, more responsive highway network management
4	Make public transport, Park & Ride, cycling or e-bikes the first choice for longer journeys for most people.	Public transport infrastructure with improved services
5	Make city centre interchanges easy and attractive to use for everyone	Bus and rail station improvements
6	Make the city centre easy to get around by foot or cycle	Connected Leicester pedestrian priority schemes
7	Ensure new developments are well served by sustainable transport options	Innovative public and active transport schemes like Arriva Click
8	Make active transport the first choice for shorter journeys for most people	Cycle and walking links, bike hire and share schemes
9	Make zero emission vehicles the first choice for remaining car journeys	Electric charging points, incentives
10	Ensure neighbourhoods are better connected throughout the city	Cycle and walking links, safety schemes, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods
11	Manage the road network, and improve public transport, to tackle congestion across the urban area	Smarter traffic controls, digital bus ticketing
12	Improve air quality across the city	Encourage active travel options
13	Improve road safety across the city	Vehicle speed reduction and improved infrastructure

Figure 9: Summary of objectives and example projects



# 4.4 Strategy

The strategy for achieving the vision consists of:

- **Guiding principles and policies** – which will inform decisions on transport (section 4.5)
- **Themes** – these are the specific transport schemes and initiatives that will help to meet the objectives (chapter 5) (**Leicester Transport Plan Implementation Plan**)

Progress will be monitored and targets will be developed when a new baseline can be established following COVID-19 disruptions to travel patterns. Targets for the first stage of the plan, to 2024, are those already stated for the Transforming Cities Fund programme:

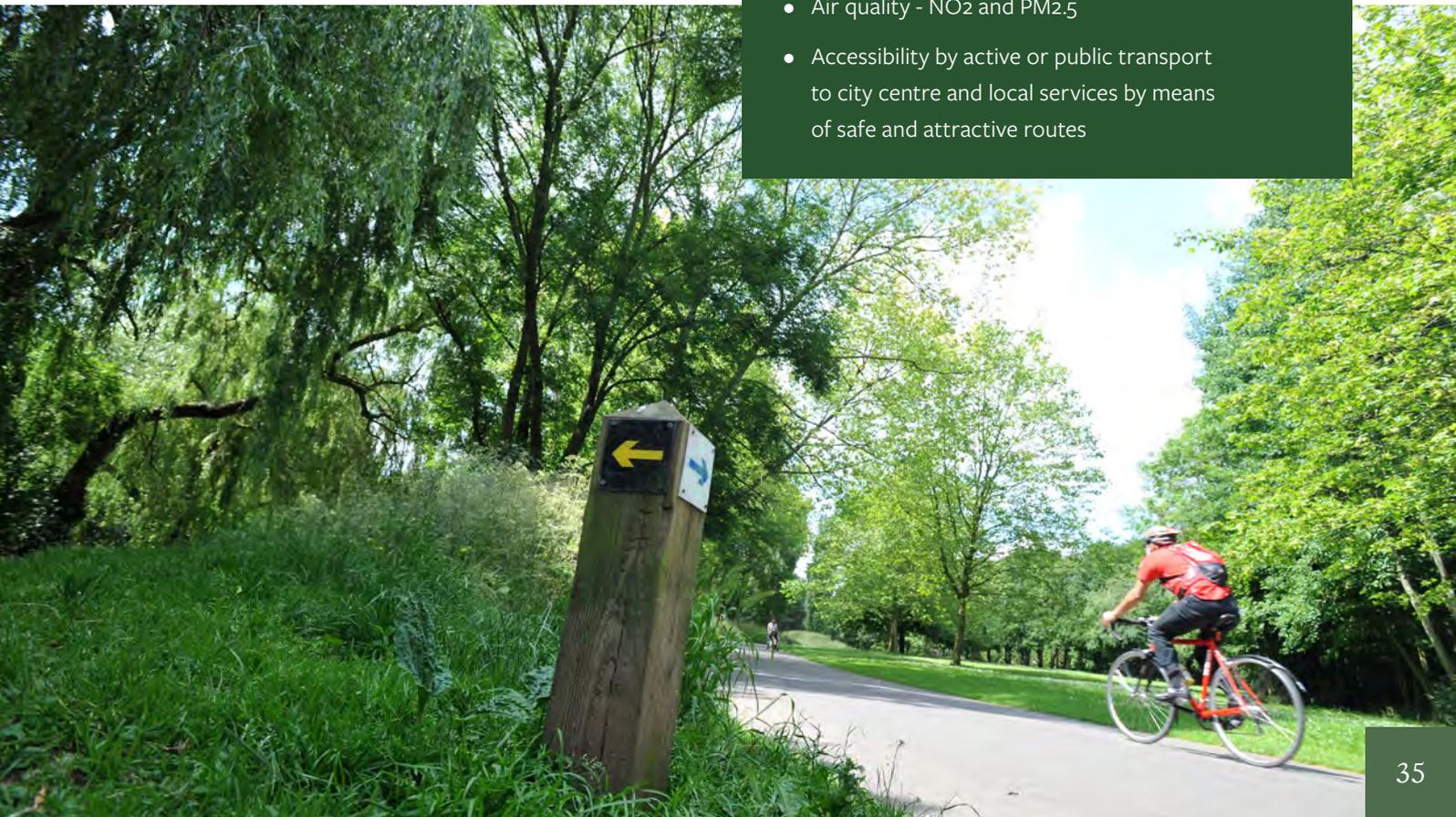
- Cycling doubled and walking up by 20%
- Bus patronage up by 10% on green growth corridors
- Increase in rail passengers at Leicester station 33% (to 2036)

Targets for the second part of the plan will be developed later as the Transforming Cities Fund proposals are completed. Further details can be found in the **Monitoring Background Paper**.



## Summary of proposed monitoring to 2036

- New vehicles registered in Leicester City Council’s area (to individuals or businesses) - for emissions monitoring
- Number of new electric charging points
- Active transport mode share in specific locations
- Public transport mode share in specific locations
- Rail passengers at Leicester rail station
- Congestion – journey time/speed/reliability on major routes by transport mode
- Deaths, seriously injured and minor injuries on Leicester roads
- Air quality - NO2 and PM2.5
- Accessibility by active or public transport to city centre and local services by means of safe and attractive routes



# 4.5 Guiding Principles and Policies

These guiding principles and policies will shape the way that transport will develop over the next 15 years. They are a combination of statements of intent and criteria for making decisions. These guiding principles and policies, together with the key themes and related projects set out in chapter 5, will form the strategy to meet the objectives listed in section 4.3.

**1. Leicester City Council will follow a travel hierarchy that prioritises reducing the need to travel, active transport and zero emission public transport when making decisions, and uses a combination of improved infrastructure, incentives and regulation to ensure the hierarchy is maintained.**

This confirms the travel hierarchy established in the **Leicester Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2020-23**. The proposed hierarchy shows that the first priority is reducing the need to travel, followed by active transport, public transport, shared mobility and finally private vehicles. All vehicles should be zero emission in line with the ambition for 100% zero emission vehicles by 2036. Future decisions on transport priorities, bidding for funds, and partnership projects will be considered against this hierarchy, with projects higher up the hierarchy given more priority.

The ‘reducing the need to travel’ priority will be achieved by means of land use planning policies (see **Local Plan**) and contributions in this plan to the **Smart Leicester** aim to better connect people in Leicester digitally, physically and socially. For example, by creating more accessible and attractive neighbourhoods that are more likely to attract and maintain local facilities.

Most transport projects are cross-sector and involve working with partners – this is particularly true for encouraging the take-up of zero emission vehicles. Western Power Distribution as well as employers, schools, Government, developers and others are all important participants. Close links with **Smart Leicester** and other **energy efficiency initiatives** are vital.

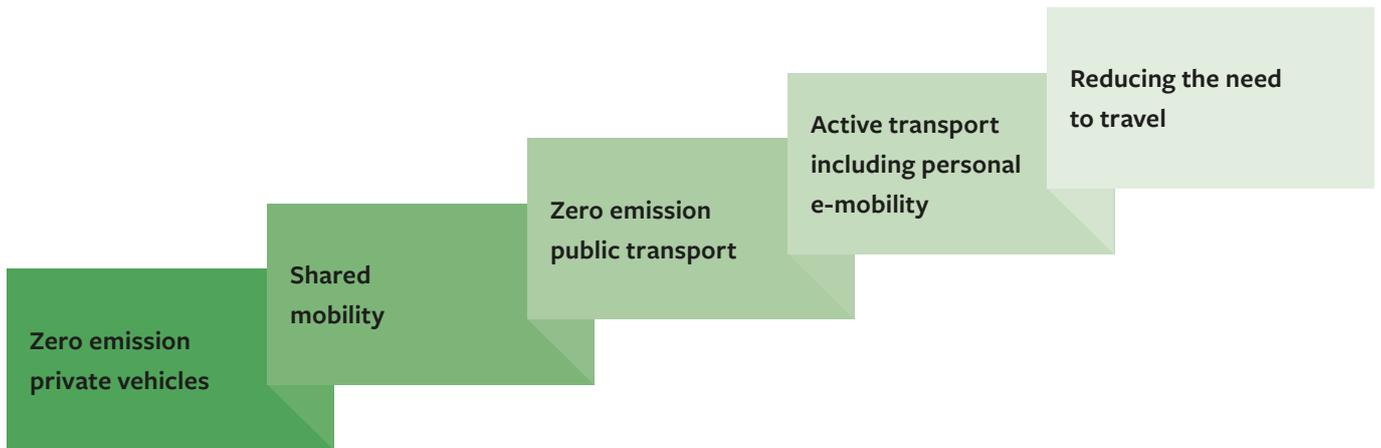


Figure 10: Transport Hierarchy



**2. Leicester City Council will support, facilitate, enable and encourage individuals to make responsible transport decisions contributing to improved health and environmental outcomes.**

Although the significance of behaviour change is well known, this is often expressed in terms of what can be done to encourage people to change their habits, using persuasion and awareness raising, as well as incentives and occasionally constraints. But relatively little is said about the need for individuals to take responsibility for making the right choices, once suitable alternatives have been identified and installed.

De Montfort University has developed a new concept of **‘Responsible Transport’**, which focuses on the need for the individual to make considered decisions about transport in the light of COVID-19 and the climate emergency.

The concept can be summarised as:

Responsible Transport delivers safe, secure and equitable mobility that embeds social, economic and environmental wellbeing at the heart of post-COVID transport policy, planning and operations and enables individuals to make considered transport choices.

Whilst this plan focuses on providing sustainable transport alternatives, the choices and responsibility remain with individuals to act in a way that demonstrates consideration for the well-being of others and for the environment. Some examples are:

- Deciding whether you really need to travel for a work-related activity or whether the meeting/ conversation/event could be held via video call or other digital means.
- Whether physical travel is necessary, considering all the possible modes of transport, selecting the one which has the lowest environmental and social impact.
- Considering the impact your travel choices have on others and the local environment (in terms of noise, congestion, safety), and indeed yourself in terms of health and well-being.
- Petitioning employers to incentivise and support more sustainable travel options and reduce the need for commuting through flexible homeworking and the provision of suitable IT infrastructure.
- Individuals, as far as possible given good comparative transport information, having responsibility for risk assessing their own journeys and acting accordingly.

### 3. Leicester City Council will priorities accessibility for all.

Responsible transport choices can only work if people have good and easy access to suitable transport options and choices. This means that additional efforts have to be made to ensure that existing and new transport services meet the needs and requirements of everyone in the community, including accessibility to and within the city from new developments in the Leicester Urban Area. This also includes working with developers on sites at an early stage of planning to ensure that cycling, walking and public transport links form part of the design from the outset. Travel plans will continued to be secured for new developments through the development control process. Section 106 contributions will be sought from developers to pay for the necessary transport infrastructure improvements and designs to make their developments acceptable.

Ensuring accessibility for all not only includes physical accessibility (e.g. wheelchair accessible vehicles) but also financial accessibility (e.g. bus fares at affordable levels) as well as having the right services available and accessible where people live and their travel destinations.

The council will work to eliminate barriers to use of transport, for example financial barriers for young people not in employment as well as many different types of barriers for people with disabilities, including neuro-diverse conditions including for example autism, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Getting this right depends greatly on engagement with local people and organisations involved in promoting accessibility like Leicester Disabled Persons Access Group and the Older Persons and Bus Users Forums.

It is proposed that a starting point for accessibility considerations could be the following equality objectives drawn from work by **Transport for London**:

1. Ensure our services will be accessible to more people, with consistent customer service that meets the needs of all customers
2. Ensure that more customers will have access to the information they need to make the most of travel in Leicester
3. Improve the accessibility of Leicester's transport infrastructure to enable more people to make the most of life in the city
4. Ensure that travel in Leicester is safer and fewer young people, women and ethnic minorities are deterred from travelling because of safety concerns
5. Ensure we offer value for money with a fare structure which is clear and well communicated
6. Ensure that our transport system promotes and improves the health of all residents
7. Achieve a workforce which is reflective and representative of the diversity of Leicester
8. Ensure all future and current employees are supported to make the most of their skills and talents
9. Encourage more of our partner organisations to have diversity as a core value
10. Engage with more of Leicester's diverse communities to effectively inform, develop and deliver our strategies, services and programmes





**4. Leicester City Council will promote a ‘Leicester Bus Services Improvement Plan’ as a key part of its commitment to delivering quality mass public transit in the city.**

Given the unprecedented impact of COVID-19 on bus travel, the bus sector requires additional focus and support in the short term while patronage recovers from the low levels seen during 2020 and early 2021 to pre-COVID levels. Any local action must be coordinated with the provisions of the **National Bus Strategy** published by the Government in March 2021.

The council is therefore developing a Bus Services Improvement Plan in association with bus operators and other stakeholders over the next year. Its aims and objectives will reflect both the National Bus Strategy and this wider transport plan. The overall objective is to increase annual bus passengers across the whole network by over 10% over a ten year period.

It intends to establish an Enhanced Partnership Scheme with bus operators to deliver this goal. However, it will consider other options such as franchising and municipal bus ownership should this approach not succeed.

**The strategic approach is likely to be:**

1. Immediate actions to support bus services following the COVID-19 pandemic:
  - Developing an Enhanced Partnership Scheme with bus operators setting out respective plans for improving bus services in the city.
  - Working in partnership with operators to maintain a comprehensive bus network, including additional ongoing financial support where possible.
  - Working in partnership with operators to integrate timetables on key bus corridors – to maximise operational efficiency and user benefits.
  - Early implementation of proposed bus lanes and enforcing them more effectively.
  - Improved real time information and waiting infrastructure at bus stops, together with a new bus station at St Margarets.
  - Working with operators to introduce automated digital ticketing with ‘best fare’ capping.
  - Working with operators to promote safe use of the bus network.
  - Good value and expanded Park & Ride to encourage parking away from the congested central area.
  - Selective discounted fares for specific groups.

2. Any longer-term plan for Leicester’s public transport needs to be:
  - Geographically wide-ranging and not focussed specifically on one isolated corridor being able to support and facilitate future growth predicted within the Leicester Urban Area.
  - Flexible in its development to accommodate dynamic changes taking place.
  - Quickly deliverable and affordable in order to address immediate problems.
  - Carefully implemented and not disrupt the road network for a sustained period of time.
  - Work in partnership, and not in competition with, the existing improving commercial bus network provision.
  - High quality and good value in relation to other alternatives, particular car.
  - Address both longer distance travel - often with modal interchange – and also shorter urban travel.
  - Of high environment impact to improve air and noise pollution.
  - Affordable to develop and maintain.



3. Any intervention is likely to take more than one approach in order to address the various travelling markets:
  - Improving bus options along the key commuting corridors.
  - Improving accessibility to housing and employment located off the main ‘high-demand’ corridors.
  - Addressing affordability aspects related to commercial ticketing – looking at discounted ticketing for key groups.

## Priorities

- **Resolving short term post-COVID impacts across the whole bus network** – maintaining a comprehensive network, via increased financial support and timetable integration
- **Fares and affordability** – working with operators on provision of special fares and/or discounted tickets for particular groups of people
- **Maintaining and improving bus services across the whole network** – through enhanced tendered service revenue support and partnership work to integrate timetables
- **Greenlines** strategic electric bus services with a comprehensive range of associated measures. These will be limited stop services serving Park & Ride sites, employment sites and residential areas including growth areas, providing fast and frequent service between these areas and to the city centre
- **Free city centre circular bus service** serving key destinations around the city centre
- **Orbital service improvements** – e.g. Service 40, providing direct travel between certain well-used Park & Ride sites, employment areas and residential areas
- **Integrated digital ticketing with ‘best-fare’ capping** – giving passengers easier and better value tickets that can be used for different bus operators
- **Bus priority on roads with suitable enforcement** – giving buses priority over other traffic at key junctions and ‘pinch points’
- **Improved bus stations, bus stops and information** – Haymarket Bus Station has already been refurbished, St Margaret’s Bus Station is being rebuilt, and waiting and information facilities across the city will be improved to match the standard of the bus stations



**5. Leicester City Council will support the delivery of priority regional and national inter-city rail improvements linking into Leicester.**

Although rail service improvements normally fall outside the control of the council, there are opportunities for promotion of required projects and to accelerate delivery. Improving rail connectivity from Birmingham and Coventry to the west, as well as maximising the benefits to Leicester of HS2, are key aims for the **Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities document**. The council will support the measures to achieve the aims as put forward in the Transport Priorities document. The council will also support feasibility work for Ivanhoe Line Stage II, the re-opening of the railway line to passenger traffic between Leicester and Burton-on-Trent.

**6. Leicester City Council will act to maximise the contribution of transport to city centre recovery and growth.**

Transport has a major contribution to make to the recovery and future growth of the city centre, and proposals are outlined throughout this plan. They can be summarised as follows:

**Expanding Connecting Leicester** – the existing **Connecting Leicester programme** has already been successful in making the city centre more attractive and safer for cycling and walking. This will be expanded to include links into the city centre from surrounding neighbourhoods and employment areas. This will assist in creating a cyclable and walkable city centre neighbourhood where travel is quick, convenient, safe and healthy.

**Sustainable growth plans** included in the **Draft Local Plan** focus regeneration and development on the city centre, and it is likely that more development will be necessary to comply with Leicester’s requirement for housing growth. This has many advantages – making use of sites and premises that may not be required for retail in the future; providing more activity and purchasing power to help to revive the city centre economy; and creating a more sustainable settlement where residents can take advantage

of the excellent public and active travel options available. However, despite a focus for a substantial shift to carry more people by sustainable modes there will be a large number of cars that remain on the network. Significant investment may be required to unlock new developments to tackle congestion ‘hotspot’ areas and the reallocation of road space where appropriate.

**Improvement to main transport interchanges** will help the city centre economy by making necessary journeys easier and safer. The new St Margaret’s Bus Station will support regeneration and private sector investment to the north of the city centre. Leicester’s rail station transformation will similarly create a 21st century interchange that will also generate additional employment and retail development. The associated public realm will complement the existing Connecting Leicester cycling and walking improvements in the area.

**A parking co-ordination plan** will support the city centre by considering rationalising both on-street and off-street parking provision and improving its quality and management.

**An Electric Charger Implementation Plan** working with other public and private organisations to ensure there are the right number of electric charging points to support the shift to zero emission vehicles, especially for those which journey to the city centre. This will be linked to improved incentive schemes.



## 7. Leicester City Council will make the most of technological advances in transport.

**Smart Leicester** states that Leicester needs to take full advantage of technological advances, especially digital technology and real time data. There is no doubt that there will be other opportunities presented by technology and new models of operation will be harnessed to help meet the challenges, although some may need further regulation. A vast array of innovations are now coming to the fore, including autonomous/connected vehicles; drones and robots; integrated digital ticketing; sharing and hiring business models; micromobility such as e-bikes and ways of encouraging behaviour change (for example, pre-trip planning apps, sometimes including booking and payment mechanisms).

One of the most significant applications is the smart management of the highway network to increase the efficiency of the space available, and to prioritise sustainable modes of transport. Examples are better management of junctions, special provision for zero emission vehicles and more active enforcement of restricted areas.

It is not possible to predict exactly what type of opportunities will appear, but the Government's **Future of Mobility principles** provide a good basis for considering innovative and technology based proposals:

1. New modes of transport and new mobility services must be safe and secure by design.
2. The benefits of innovation in mobility must be available to all parts of the UK and all segments of society.
3. Walking, cycling and active travel must remain the best options for short urban journeys.
4. Mass transit must remain fundamental to an efficient transport system.
5. New mobility services must lead the transition to zero emissions.
6. Mobility innovation must help to reduce congestion through more efficient use of limited road space, for example through sharing rides, increasing occupancy or consolidating freight.
7. The marketplace for mobility must be open to stimulate innovation and give the best deal to consumers.
8. New mobility services must be designed to operate as part of an integrated transport system combining public, private and multiple modes for transport users.
9. Data from new mobility services must be shared where appropriate to improve choice and the operation of the transport system.



**8. Leicester City Council will investigate the potential for workplace parking levy as part of wider parking management and co-ordination activity.**

The availability and price of parking are important considerations when individuals are deciding which form of transport to use. When parking is unnecessarily cheap or free it can prejudice the choice towards greater car use. At the same time, having adequate parking is vital to support, for example, a vibrant city centre, and currently having easily accessible parking at home is considered an absolute requirement by many households. These different demands and needs must be balanced, but we will also move incrementally towards more sustainable solutions.

A workplace parking levy is potentially one of these solutions. It is a local charging mechanism that charges employers for certain workplace parking places. It is up to the employer whether they pass the cost of the levy on to employee car commuters. Workplace parking levy contributes both by acting as a demand management mechanism (as the levy charge encourages employers to review and manage their on-site parking and also encourages car commuters to consider other modes of transport) and as a source of funding for public transport and active travel alternatives to the car.

Details of the proposed workplace parking levy, including level of charge and expected receipts, are currently being developed, and if taken forward will require approval by the Secretary of State for Transport. If approved, workplace parking levy receipts would contribute to the objectives of this plan post 2024. Outline proposals for a workplace parking levy for Leicester will be subject to consultation at the same time as this draft Leicester Transport Plan is made available.

**NOTTINGHAM workplace parking levy**



Nottingham City Council started charging a workplace parking levy in 2012. £75m has been invested so far, mostly in the NET tram network. Public transport use, cycling and walking have all increased and area-wide traffic has decreased. One **study** suggests that 8.6% of commuters currently travelling by sustainable modes switched from the car at least partly because of the workplace parking levy.

**9. The Leicester Transport Plan will build on the successful Connecting Leicester and Transforming Cities Fund programmes.**

The Connecting Leicester proposals were further developed for the Transforming Cities Fund programme bid and are now being implemented with funding from that source and from the Getting Building Fund. This whole programme will be expected to be completed by 2024.

The Transforming Cities Fund 'Connected Leicester' programme was predicated on a 'Hub and Spoke', concept with the hubs being the main city centre transport interchanges – the two bus stations and the rail station. Haymarket Bus Station has recently been improved and St Margaret's Bus Station rebuilding is currently underway. The Connecting Leicester programme of cycling and walking links between the interchanges will be completed by 2024. Improvement of the rail station is the remaining key project that still requires additional funding.

The 'Spokes' are the high quality public transport, cycling and walking radial routes. This programme is now installing the infrastructure necessary to encourage people to use these sustainable modes, as well as bringing forward additional features such as integrated digital ticketing.

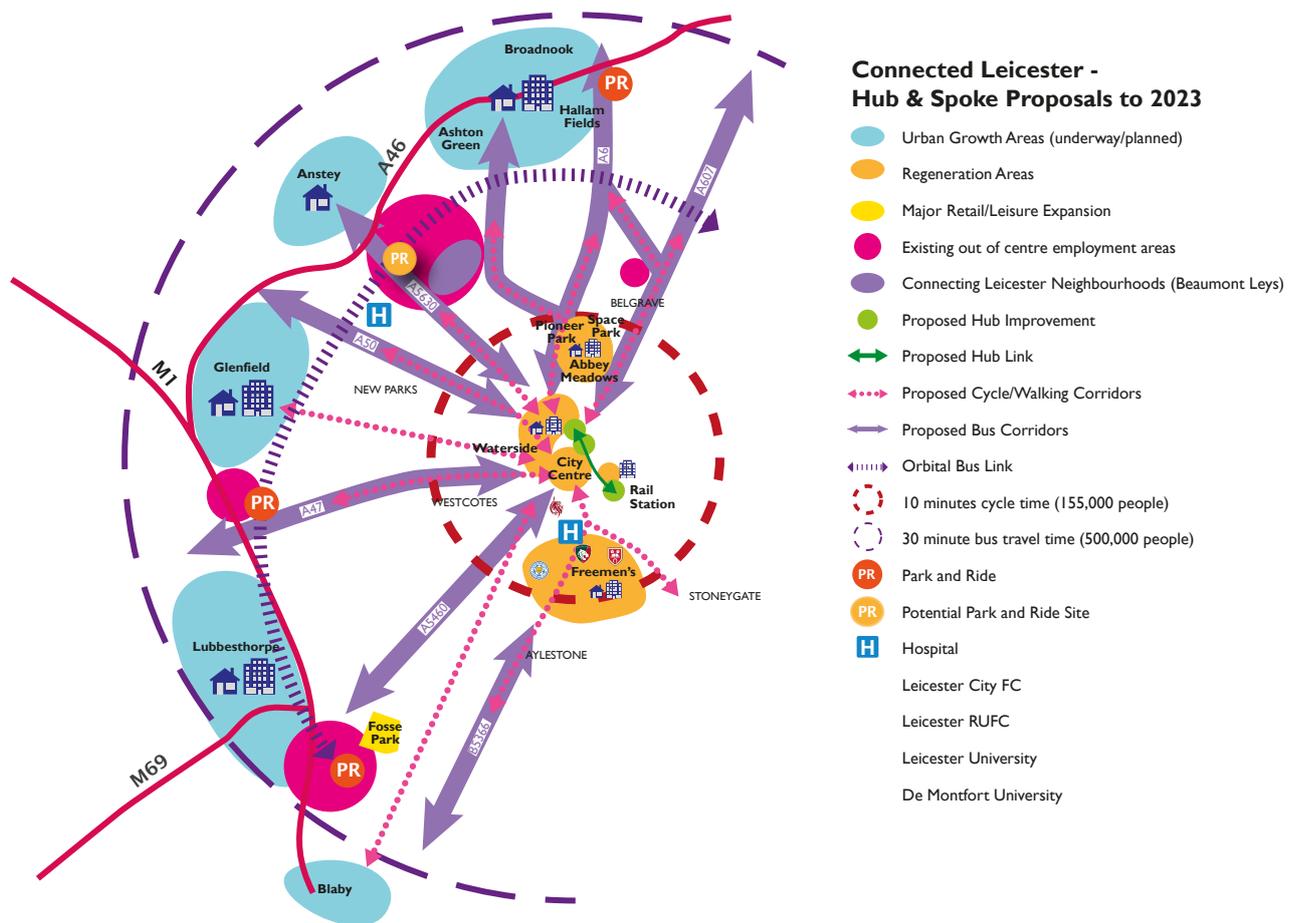


Figure 11: Transforming Cities Fund 'Connected Leicester' Hub and Spoke Plan

**10. Leicester City Council will accelerate cycling and walking improvements following the good examples delivered through the COVID-19 Transport Recovery Plan.**

During the first lockdown in 2020, Leicester succeeded in delivering 11 miles of pop-up cycle routes in 9 weeks, including routes catering for key workers. This resulted in large increases in cycling in specific areas, including nearly 200% in Braunstone Park and Riverside Way. Where possible, successful pop-up routes will be made permanent.

In the light of these successes, the council intends to accelerate cycling and walking improvements in the city. The existing **Cycle Action Plan 2015-24** will be updated and the Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan will be used to prioritise new projects across the city. These will include both strategic commuter routes following infrastructure improvements and local links between development areas, employment areas and existing residential areas.



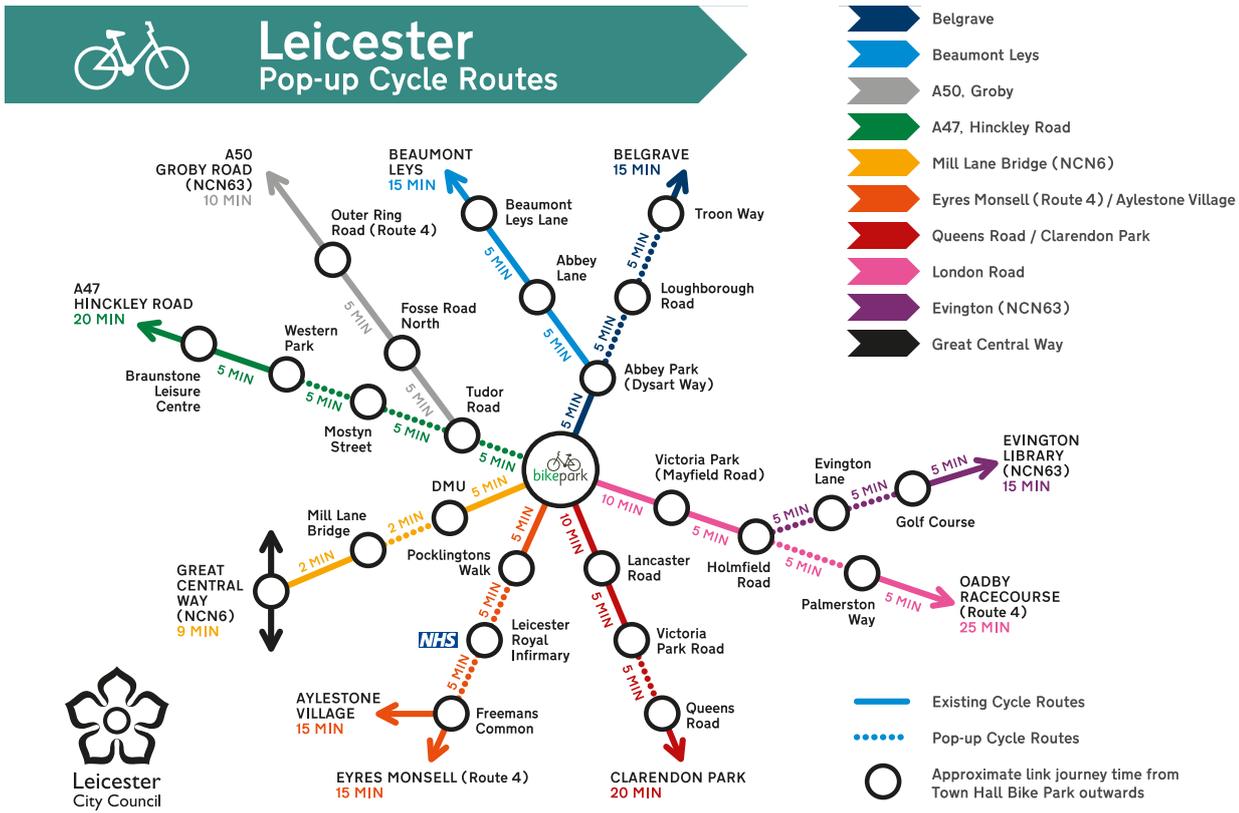


Figure 12: Leicester Pop-up Cycle Routes

**11. Leicester City Council will support the delivery of public and private electric vehicle chargers at home and in workplaces to encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles and the conversion of company and bus fleets.**

The council recognises that an extensive electric vehicle charging network will be required to meet local and national targets and support increased uptake of electric vehicles. The council has been successful in securing electric charging points for public car parks, Park & Ride sites and for on-street charging in trials. However, the long-term solution will inevitably be a blend of:

- “at home” charging;
- publicly available charging (on-street; in car parks / retail & hospitality venues; upgraded filling stations, etc.);
- workplace based charging.

Rolling out the most appropriate and effective charging infrastructure is a challenge which is complicated by a number of key factors that are outside the council’s control.

For example, changing battery technology is increasing the range of vehicles and how fast they can be recharged but the underlying electricity grid cannot support the power requirements of the fastest chargers in all areas of the city. This can limit options for both the type of charger and the charging site. From a user perspective, the electric vehicle charging market is also still maturing with implications for the inter-operability of different charging systems & suppliers (cables / connectors and payment options, etc. and the cost of charging itself. From a traffic management perspective, designating and effectively managing electric vehicle charging bays can pose difficult challenges and choices in local neighbourhoods, particularly in areas where on-street parking is already at a premium and off-street parking options are limited.

Taking due account of the various challenges and working with relevant partners, the council is preparing an Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Leicester which will complement this plan. We will continue to respond to public electric vehicle charging funding opportunities when available and will promote electric vehicle chargers through planning and development control processes, as well as promoting incentives to use electric vehicle. However, significant government investment is required if we are to meet the electric vehicle charging challenge both in Leicester and across the UK.



# 5.0 Key Themes and Proposed Projects



## 5.1 Introduction

This section sets out the council's proposed priority transport themes and projects for the period to 2036. These have been derived from an assessment of the available transport evidence for the city together with consideration of how transport choices and investment can help us respond to the challenges and opportunities facing us. The preceding sections in this plan outline the vision, ambitions, objectives and guiding principles and policies that set the context within which effective transport projects should be delivered for Leicester over the next 15 years.

Project proposals in this section are identified over two phases. Our committed programme to 2024 is focussed on work planned through the Connecting Leicester programme including the Transforming Cities Fund and the Getting Building Fund works, transport behaviour change activity, changes to public transport partnerships and management of traffic:

**New infrastructure** – for example new and improved Park & Ride operations, corridor improvements including new bus priority measures and new/improved walking and cycling routes, improved transport hubs and better facilities at interchanges, electric charging points and improved bus stops.

**Measures to encourage behaviour change** – for example better information about what transport options are available and at what times, ascertaining the specific needs and requirements of particular groups, travel plans and offering advice to employers and schools.

**Partnerships and management** – for example general traffic management, bus priority at signals, partnerships with bus and rail companies on ticketing and effective parking controls.

Despite impacts from COVID-19, particularly in relation to public transport, this plan continues to promote and rely on public transport as a key element of the longer term vision for transport in the city. Public transport will need to play a full part in keeping the city moving in the future as the city grows. COVID-19 has also placed even more emphasis on cycling and walking and this provides a strong platform to accelerate active transport opportunities for people in the city.

The current phase of work to 2024 will make a major improvement to sustainable transport in the city, but much more will be needed to be delivered over the plan period to 2036. A city wide transformation of transport is required, with people, being offered good quality sustainable transport alternatives to allow them to make responsible choices to leave the car at home and travel by public, shared or active transport. This will require full use of all the tools available to the council, as well as considerable support and action from Government and local partners.

## 5.2 Prioritisation

Projects for the Connecting Leicester Transforming Cities Fund and Getting Building Fund programme to 2024 have already been prioritised as part of the process to secure funding and details are included in the **Leicester Transport Plan Implementation Plan**.

Proposed projects for the 2024-36 programme have been grouped into packages and prioritised against the objectives identified in Chapter 4, as well as for deliverability. Details can be found in the **Prioritisation Background Paper**.

## 5.3 Key Themes

Three key transport themes for the Leicester Transport Plan have been identified by grouping together the key schemes identified through the prioritisation process. These provide a strong focus for transformational transport improvements over the plan period and should be read together as a coordinated package of actions. This section identifies key proposed projects to be implemented within the each theme. More information about the projects can be found in the **Implementation Plan**.

The three key themes are shown in the diagram below:



### Connected Corridors & Hubs

- Connected commuter corridors for buses, cycling and walking
- Greenlines electric bus network
- New and improved Park & Ride sites
- Transformed Leicester Rail Station

### Connected Healthy Neighbourhoods

- Connected cycling and walking networks city centre and local neighbourhoods
- Good local bus network
- Fewer and cleaner vehicles in neighbourhoods

### Managing Demand for Car Use

- Parking management and co ordination
- Behaviour change
- Smart transport
- Network management
- Workplace parking levy

Figure 13: Key themes summary

# 5.4 Connected Corridors and Hubs

The focus for this theme is firstly providing direct, fast and high quality public transport, cycling and walking corridors for people travelling into and out of the city principally for work purposes but also supporting visitors to the city for shopping, leisure and tourist purposes. The second focus is providing high quality and integrated transport hubs to move people quickly and efficiently between different sustainable travel modes, for example bus and rail as well as cycling and walking.

## Connected corridors for commuters and others travelling by bus, cycling and walking

The council’s ‘Connecting Leicester’ initiative includes a major ongoing programme of work to improve commuter corridors for people travelling by bus, cycling and walking with the aim of delivering a step-change in the provision of good alternatives to the car across the whole urban area. This will benefit all city residents, businesses and those visiting the city.

Delivery of this priority over the Leicester Transport Plan period will provide high quality sustainable transport connections for existing suburban neighbourhoods and employment clusters as well as people living in

new developments across the city and will help relieve congestion and reduce negative impacts on residents and businesses in the city. It will help tackle air quality and climate emergency priorities, support healthy living objectives linked to active travel and provide more affordable transport options.

To support this priority the council has agreed an £80m programme of works with government for delivery of a ‘Hub and Spoke’ concept plan which is being funded through the Transforming Cities Fund. Delivery is expected by 2024 and will provide a major body of work for the first phase of the Leicester Transport Plan.

### Key projects over the plan period include:

- Infrastructure improvements along main transport radial routes serving growth areas including bus priority measures and dedicated commuter cycle routes. These will be provided initially to the north and west of the city as part of the Transforming Cities Fund programme to 2024 and will then be delivered across the remainder of the urban area through the Leicester Transport Plan period to 2036. Figure 14 shows the concept plan for delivery across the whole city identifying key growth areas and transport improvement corridors
- Provision of safe and attractive cycling and walking routes linking the Connecting Leicester programme improvements being carried out in the city centre to surrounding neighbourhoods

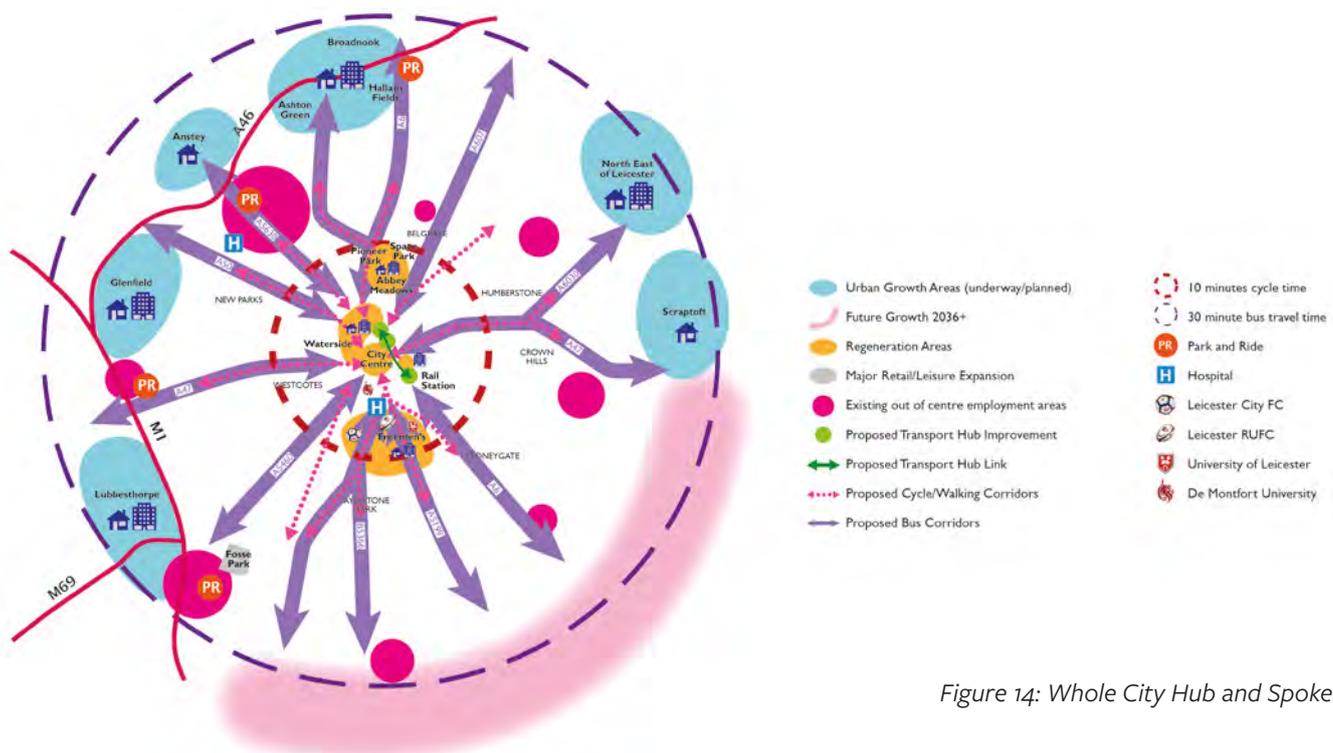


Figure 14: Whole City Hub and Spoke plan



### A new fast and frequent Greenlines electric bus network

A new city bus plan will show how bus improvements across the city can be made and maintained to benefit commuters, visitors to the city and local residents.

A key feature for the plan will be the development of new Greenlines high quality cross-city electric bus services created in partnership with bus operators. Greenlines will serve key destinations on the edges of the city including Park & Ride sites, existing and new employment clusters and housing growth areas, and link to the city centre. The project also includes a new city centre orbital electric link bus and proposed improvements to orbital bus services using the outer ring road. The network will have good quality waiting facilities, improved ticketing for use across different operators, and clear information about services.

This will provide a high quality, cost effective, green, fast and flexible approach to public transport in the city when compared for example with provision of an expensive fixed tram network. Initial investment will be through the Transforming Cities Fund programme with Greenlines electric buses being introduced on existing Park & Ride and Hospital Hopper bus services.





Greenlines electric buses will be delivered in phases as shown in Figure 15. Phase A will commence in the first Leicester Transport Plan period to 2024 with a focus on delivering contracted across city services linking the Park & Ride sites at Birstall with Enderby and also Meynell's Gorse with a new Park & Ride site to the east of the city, potentially at or near to Leicester Racecourse. This phase also includes enhancement to the Hospital Hopper cross city service. We are working closely with commercial operators to develop plans for Phase B of Greenlines electric buses which could be delivered into the second plan period from 2024. Potential routes would link Anstey and Beaumont Leys including a new Park & Ride site at Beaumont Leys Centre being delivered through the Transforming Cities Fund, with Leicester General Hospital and Eyres Monsell with Thurnby Lodge/Scraftoft.

Initial investment will be through the Transforming Cities Fund programme with electric Greenlines buses being introduced on existing Park & Ride and Hospital Hopper services.





## High quality integrated transport hubs

### City centre bus station and interchange enhancement

Leicester has two main city centre bus stations within a few hundred metres of each other to the north of the city centre. These serve city, Park & Ride, regional inter-city/airport link and national services. A programme of work continues with bus operator support to transform the passenger experience and improve connectivity between the two stations.

The new Haymarket Bus Station was opened in 2016 and now provides a high quality interchange. Recent and ongoing improvements are providing excellent cycling and walking links via Belgrave Gate and Haymarket, together with a new taxi rank. A new bus, cycle and pedestrian link road between Haymarket and St Margaret’s bus stations was completed in 2020 with the aim of improving passenger transport interchange between the stations.

#### Connected Leicester - City Centre Hubs

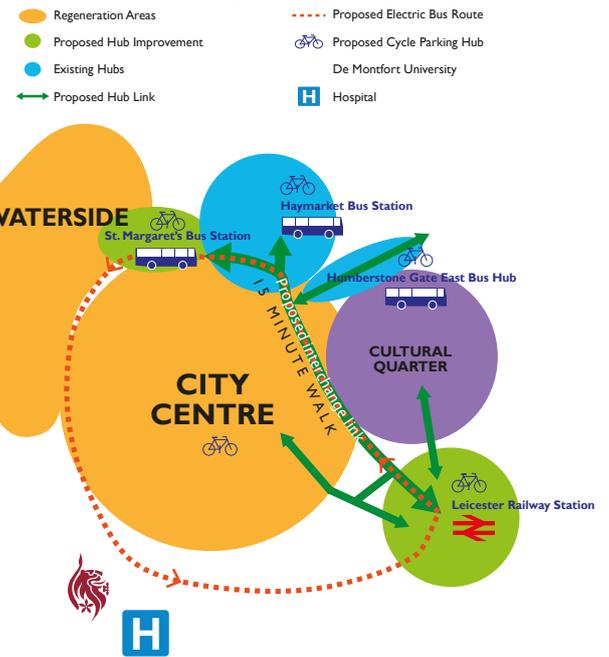


Figure 16: Connected Leicester, City Centre Hubs

Following a successful bid to Government to the Getting Building Fund St Margaret’s Bus Station is being rebuilt as a modern quality bus interchange. This is due to be completed in 2022 and will include improvements to adjacent streets to provide integrated cycling and walking facilities and taxi ranking.

A new city centre electric link bus funded by Transforming Cities Fund for delivery by 2023 will connect both bus stations and the rail station which lies to the east of the city centre.



### Transformed rail station

Leicester rail station is underperforming compared with similar cities, and requires a complete upgrade. Comprehensive scheme proposals have been developed with rail industry partners to include:

- high quality passenger facilities including a new more spacious concourse
- an impressive and welcoming new entrance and public square at Station Street
- improved platforms and related facilities
- replacement platform overbridge from the car park to assist accessibility
- covered porte cochère to be converted as a public space with commercial uses included
- better transport interchange facilities for buses, cycling and walking
- new taxi drop off and pick up zone
- potentially a new multi-storey car park



As part of the **Connecting Leicester** programme of works a major scheme of cycling and walking improvements and bus priority measures was completed in 2020 to the front of the station and along London Road. This has greatly improved integration of sustainable transport modes at the station. The new city centre electric bus link funded by Transforming Cities Fund will build on this work.



Transformation of the railway station would form part of a major area based regeneration scheme proposed by the council including new office and related development. Together these schemes would make a substantial impact on the city economy and also create an exciting new gateway into the city.

Funding for the scheme has yet to be secured and the scheme will involve phased delivery using resources available through the rail industry, Government and local funding sources.

## 5.5 Connected Healthy Neighbourhoods

### Connected cycling and walking networks

The council's successful Connecting Leicester streets and spaces programme has delivered major cycling and walking and public realm improvements in the city centre over the past ten years and in the latest plans links are being made to adjacent neighbourhoods and as part of the connected corridors proposals.

Continued delivery of this programme will see further cycling and walking improvements connecting within, and to, the city centre and expanding the same connectivity principles to neighbourhoods.

An overarching objective of this programme will be to ensure improvements contribute fully to healthy living objectives and also take into account the full range of accessibility considerations for all groups and this will be considered through use of the **Leicester Street Design Guide** including application of the Healthy Streets Checklist to new schemes.

## Connected city centre and neighbourhoods

The pressures brought about through COVID-19 on city centre retailing and other employment uses together with a developing understanding of how to improve mobility within dense city centres provides a significant opportunity in Leicester. A number of cities are looking at how to create neighbourhoods where you can access your most basic, day-to-day needs within 10/15 minutes from your home through improved cycling and walking.

Part of the plan linked to the Leicester Transport Plan will involve a specific aim to create a strong city centre neighbourhood where many more people will live and work and have good local access to services and leisure activities. We are seeing continued major development in and around the city centre, such as Leicester's Waterside, and connecting these areas with adjacent neighbourhoods, such as St Matthews and Westcotes, will become increasingly important to the continued success and growth of the city centre area.

### Key plans for this priority include:

- Continued expansion of the city centre pedestrian priority zone, which is already believed to be the biggest in the country allowing cycle access
- Improved cycling and walking links and related public realm enhancements across the ring road, connecting the city centre to existing and new neighbourhoods
- Introduction of the Santander Cycles Leicester electric bike share scheme funded through the Transforming Cities Fund with consideration of future expansion
- Commencement of the Greenlines electric bus services funded through the Transforming Cities Fund connecting transport hubs, shopping, leisure and business areas, De Montfort University campus and Leicester Royal Infirmary
- New developments through the planning process will provide facilities and connections promoting cycling and walking

## SANTANDER CYCLES LEICESTER



500 electric bikes are available to hire from 50 locations across Leicester's city centre – the largest docked e-bike hire scheme in the UK. The scheme was launched in spring 2021 in partnership with Santander and Ride-On.

## Connected local neighbourhoods

Local neighbourhoods across the city should be well connected to other parts of the city as well as have accessible, safe and convenient means to move around within the neighbourhood to access local services, shops and facilities.

The Connected Corridors priority outlined will provide new and improved bus, cycling and walking connections firstly to neighbourhoods along the main radial routes that connect the city suburbs to the centre and secondly between local neighbourhoods via the city's ring roads. In the first phase of this plan to 2024 this will be funded in the north and west of the city through Transforming Cities Fund. Future phases will build on this and extend across areas of the city.

Within neighbourhoods a number of actions are proposed that will continue the council's investment in supporting accessibility in local areas including local cycle and walking route improvements such as that currently being delivered in Beaumont Leys Estate through Transforming Cities Fund. Community and local workplace cycling and walking facilities such as secure cycle parking will be encouraged through the planning process and with appropriate incentives and grants. Expansion of the Santander Cycles Leicester electric bikeshare scheme into local neighbourhoods will also be considered following the initial scheme rollout.



Micro-mobility includes electric bikes and electric scooters (which are currently subject to restrictions in use), and in the future may also include other forms of low-cost transport for a single person. These types of individual powered transport will be encouraged, subject to regulation and safeguards on safety for pedestrians, as they offer acceptable alternative forms of sustainable transport for some people. It is expected that over time they will form a significant element of integrated transport solutions for Leicester.

### A good local bus network

Local buses provide an important function for many communities, enabling people to get conveniently to local facilities and also to provide links with the proposed Greenlines express buses on main corridors. Local buses are particularly important for older people and others living alone without access to a car and for some people with disabilities. There are various local bus models that serve different purposes, such as demand responsive buses that vary their routes depending on requests, buses subsidised by the council on local routes, and buses funded by hospitals or other services that enable people to attend health and other appointments. The council will work with bus operators to consider how gaps in the existing network can be plugged and how this could be best funded. Options will be considered depending on the precise requirements of the neighbourhood and new development areas.

#### NEW LUBBESTHORPE AND ARRIVA CLICK



Demand responsive ride sharing provided by Arriva and funded by Drummond Estate - the landowners for **New Lubbesthorpe** - and developer contributions.



### Fewer and cleaner vehicles in neighbourhoods

The council has invested substantially in reducing the impact of traffic in local neighbourhoods and supporting safer streets around schools over many years including traffic calming and 20mph zones, improved parking controls, one way systems and road closures to through traffic supporting cycling and walking.



Travel behavioural change and education programmes promoting cycling, walking and bus travel have, over a number of years, been delivered to local schools, community groups, employers and directly to residents through personal travel planning.

These programmes of physical street improvement and behaviour change work are planned to continue to be delivered over the plan period targeting those areas with most need and where there is an opportunity to make a significant impact.

Substantial increases in cycling and walking activity in local neighbourhoods during COVID-19 has created a once in a lifetime opportunity to accelerate the take up of these modes of travel. Pop up cycleways and pavement widening in neighbourhood shopping areas together with support for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have been supported through Government funding, often to try out concepts before making these permanent. The council has delivered a number of schemes of this nature as part of its COVID-19 Transport Recovery Plan and will be considering making many of these permanent as well as trialling similar schemes in new areas in the future.

Encouraging the take up of zero emission vehicles will also form an important aim in the work to deliver clean and healthy neighbourhoods. Further incentives are expected from Government on electric and other zero emission cars, and the council will complement this by providing charge points in local neighbourhoods. About 50% of residential houses in Leicester have no off-street parking so a pilot scheme to introduce on-street charging in terrace streets in Clarendon Park and Westcotes is being delivered in 2021 and this will be reviewed for potential rollout throughout the city.

Sharing and hiring are expected to become more commonplace in local neighbourhoods in the future. The council will support car clubs or similar offering shared electric cars and bike/micro-mobility hire.

## 5.6 Managing Demand for Car Use

For many, cars and other private vehicles will provide the only means to get about the city in the shorter term but if we are to deliver the Leicester Transport Plan objectives related to climate emergency, healthy living, reducing congestion and supporting city growth and businesses, we need to encourage people to use other alternative forms of transport, leave their vehicles at home or convert to cleaner vehicles. Together with our partners involved in delivering transport in the city we need to continually encourage people to consider ‘responsible travel’ options instead of automatic use of the car and other polluting vehicles, especially for short trips.

To effectively manage demand for car use the council needs to improve sustainable transport choices, remove barriers and provide incentives to choose public and active transport. In addition to delivery of the programmes of work outlined in sections 5.4. and 5.5 this plan will do this in the following ways:

### Parking management and co-ordination

The council operates both on-street and off-street parking services in and around the city centre, alongside other private operators, and also operates a Park & Ride service that encourages people to make the last part of their journey into the city centre by bus.

The cost and quality of these parking services is an important part of managing demand for travel and getting the balance of travel patterns and behaviour right at any point in time in so much that they meet the increasing need for people to make sustainable transport choices. In terms of current parking provision the council will:

- review its parking tariffs to ensure they are fit for purpose to encourage sustainable travel, but at the same time recognise that some people will need to use car parking spaces until appropriate alternatives are available
- continue to improve the quality of its car parking provision in terms of the car parks themselves and the use of technology to deliver an improved and efficient user experience

- work with other car parking operators to co-ordinate parking tariffs where possible and support improved car parking facilities and services
- continue to improve Park & Ride services through new and improved sites
- improve on-street parking across the city including Residents' Parking Zones
- include policies within its local plan to control new parking proposals for both freestanding parking provision and parking provision for new development, including promoting alternatives to car use that don't require car parking
- encourage the redevelopment of existing car parks for other uses where these are no longer required and take enforcement to shut unauthorised car parks

### Workplace parking levy

Leicester City Council is committed to investigate the potential introduction of a workplace parking levy for the city to encourage car commuters to consider other modes of transport and to provide a sustained funding source to implement the sustainable transport measures proposed in the Leicester Transport Plan. This is based broadly on the scheme introduced in Nottingham and would mean that employers would be charged a levy on commuter car parking spaces. Any workplace parking levy payments received could only be spent on transport improvements as described in this plan.

Extensive feasibility work and impact assessment as part of a full business case is underway and initial proposals on an emerging scheme and what the levy could fund will be subject to consultation alongside this draft Leicester Transport Plan. Work will include consideration of the potential for parking displacement from existing employer car parks to adjacent residential areas and the need for parking controls to manage this.

If taken forward, the workplace parking levy will require approval by the Secretary of State for Transport. Workplace parking levy receipts would contribute to delivery of the Leicester Transport Plan projects post 2024.

### Behaviour change

The council has been able to deliver an extensive programme of transport behaviour change support over many years to make people aware of new public and active travel options, and offer easy access to those options. These programmes will be largely based in neighbourhoods, employment clusters and schools. Programmes have been funded through a variety of Government and local sources including for example grants, mass and local participation events like Ride Leicester, free bikes and discounted fares for selected groups of people such as key workers. The Bike Aid work introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly successful in encouraging people to cycle more.

These initiatives are considered to be essential parts of the council's strategy to encourage more sustainable travel behaviour in neighbourhoods and complement the delivery of physical infrastructure and other transport services.

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## Smart Transport

Developing and delivering smart transport solutions is a key part of the council's **Smart City Strategy**. This will include using technology to improve the way that existing roadspace is used and helping to manage traffic flows safely and effectively so that congestion is managed down. The use of smart signals and traffic control systems will be key to regulating transport in the city in the future and will increasingly be used as tools to support sustainable transport provision. These technologies can for instance be used to give priority for buses and cyclists where needed, for example at junctions, and can manage road space to reduce the build up of traffic at congestion hot spots thereby minimising pollution.

Part of the smart agenda sees an acceleration in people and businesses choosing electric and other clean vehicles over conventional petrol and diesel engines. The council will take a lead through the purchase of electric buses for its Greenlines services and through conversion of its fleet. Encouragement and support for bus and taxi operators and other city businesses will be provided including identifying and leading as required on any Government funding opportunities.

The council has been successful in securing electric charging points for public car parks, Park & Ride sites and also on-street parking in trial areas. Rolling out charging provision is made complicated by changing battery technology

delivering longer drive time per charge and also changing charging technology itself. Consequently the council will introduce charging provision where it is most apparently needed particularly where this can be supported by Government funding. Trialling provision, as in the local terrace streets pilot, will help to determine the best approach and avoid establishing a costly and underused network of charging points.

## Network management

Management and good maintenance of the transport network will be key to delivery of the Leicester Transport Plan over the plan period. How we use and regulate the available roadspace effectively will determine how successful our sustainable transport strategies will be. Given the limited space available some difficult choices will need to be made and transition of the network from cars to bus and cycle-only lanes will need to be phased in over time as travel mode shift takes place. This may be possible through experiment as we have seen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Government funds have been successfully used to renew many of the main city streets in the recent past and the highway network is generally good. However, the council's finances and Government grants are likely to be more stretched in the future and efficient highway maintenance plans will be needed more than ever.



## 6.0 Delivery and Funding



## 6.1 Introduction

Successful delivery of the projects and programmes in the Leicester Transport Plan will need resources, good management and the right partnerships in place. The current **Connecting Leicester** programme, including Transforming Cities Fund, establishes a strong platform for the delivery of this plan and provides a definite transport investment programme to 2024. Later stages of the Leicester Transport Plan delivery will require additional funding through Government support, local contributions including from the private sector and potentially a workplace parking levy local charging scheme.

## 6.2 Funding Strategy

This plan has a clear funding strategy based around two delivery stages:

- **Definite Stage 1 programme to 2024**

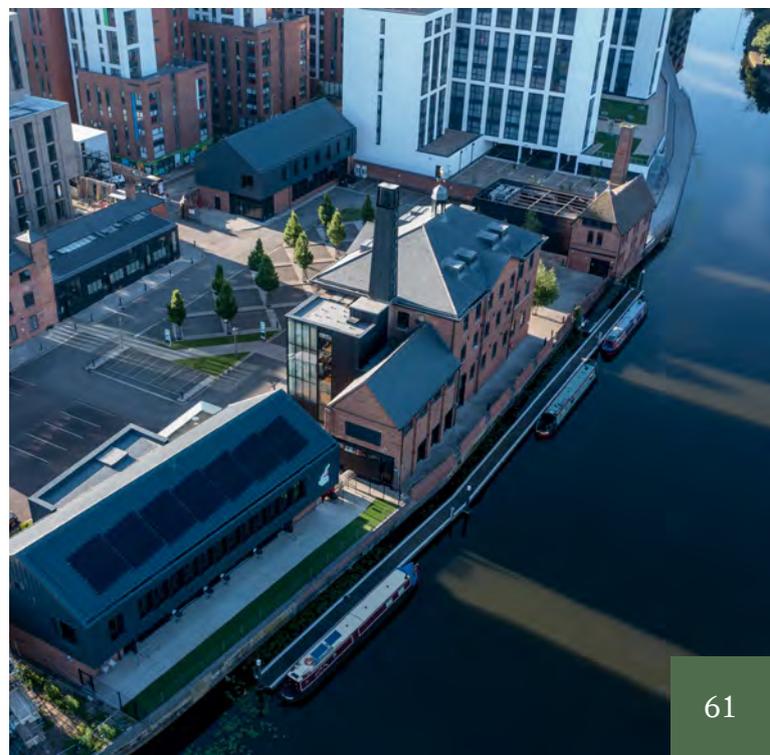
This is funded largely from the council's Connecting Leicester Programme and the Transforming Cities Fund and Getting Building Fund Government grant allocations as described in the Implementation Plan. The major part of the programme consists of the first phase of the Connected Corridors and Hubs theme, together with promotional support for cycling and walking, including in local neighbourhoods.

- **Proposed Stage 2 programme 2024 to 2036**

This is proposed to be funded partly by workplace parking levy receipts, if a workplace parking levy is approved after investigation and consultation. However, it will still require substantial additional funding from Government and other sources.

## 6.3 Potential Sources of Funding

Local government funding for all purposes is continually under pressure and innovative sources will need to be considered as well as those traditionally used for transport. The council, like all transport authorities, is heavily reliant on securing periodic Government funds usually through competitive processes. The council has been very successful in recent years but structured planning and investment is difficult in this context. Packages of funding from different sources will continue to be required and the proposed workplace parking levy, if approved, could not only provide a reliable and continuous source of funding for structure transport investment but would also provide essential match funding to secure additional Government grants.



Area	Funding sources currently available (2021)
National	DfT - National Productivity Investment Fund, Major Road Network, Transforming cities, Getting Building Fund, Large local majors Rail Investment Strategy, Zebra EV Bus fund Treasury/DfT – Levelling-Up Fund Highways England Road Investment Strategy, Designated Funds Defra – Clean Air Funds Homes England - Housing Infrastructure Fund
Regional	Midlands Engine Funds Midlands Connect Funds Rail Operator funds
Local	Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership - Local Growth Funds, Growing Places Fund Pooled local authority, business rates Council’s capital and revenue programmes Section 106 developer funds Parking and enforcement fees and fines Prudential borrowing Charging schemes Bus operator funds

Figure 17: Potential funding sources (adapted from **Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities**)

## 6.4 Need for Additional Powers

Delivery of the Leicester Transport Plan programme would also be supported through the provision of additional powers devolved to local authority level from Government. For example:

- To determine a workplace parking levy scheme at the Local Transport Authority level after proper investigation without recourse to the Secretary of State for Transport (already local authorities have the power to determine a local Road User Charging scheme under the provisions of the Local Transport Act 2008 and London authorities do not need Secretary of State approval for workplace parking levy schemes)
- To easily install temporary cycle routes and improved footways and then, after suitable investigation and consultation, to make them permanent (as established in the COVID-19 pandemic)
- To enforce against moving traffic offences, including stopping in yellow box junctions and driving in cycle lanes, and also pavement parking
- Simpler and locally determined bus franchising powers for all local authorities with planning, transport and highways responsibilities
- Devolve bus service operators grant and registration process to local authority level, enabling the two to be linked with emissions standards within formal franchises/partnerships
- To establish minimum car parking tariffs on private operators to address the cost imbalance between cars and other transport modes



## 6.5 Complementary Government Action and Support Required

For the council to deliver its Leicester Transport Plan effectively over the next 15 years Government support will be essential on a number of matters potentially including the following:

### Active transport

- Continuing the good work post COVID-19 with higher levels of funding for all types of initiatives to invest in infrastructure and behavioural support to encourage cycling and walking (including micro-mobility)

### Public transport

- Consideration of the need to rebalance the relative costs of car travel versus bus travel, including changes to existing subsidies to encourage bus use, especially by those in poverty
- Increase transport capital funding for local authorities, and enable long-term, financial planning
- Post-COVID marketing and awareness raising of the benefits of public transport to encourage growth in patronage longer term
- Additional funding to enable new housing developments to be served by regular and good quality bus services
- Introduce devolved grant system over a sustained period for the uptake of zero emission buses
- De-risk introduction of zero emission buses by small companies through devolved local government leasing mechanism
- Allow staff salary sacrifice for all bus and rail pre-paid season tickets
- Introduce locally administered national concessionary discounted travel scheme for under 18 year olds
- Early electrification of the Midland Main Line
- Committed investment in inter-city rail links, particularly east-west regional connections



## Planning and policy

- Strengthened national planning guidance on sustainable housing and other developments. Eliminate car dependent new developments.
- Grants for electric vehicle charge points for new housing and employment buildings, linked to a new requirement in national planning guidance to provide them.
- Help and encouragement for home working, including tax incentives.

## Zero emission vehicles

- Implement green number plate changes so that zero emission cars can be more easily identified.
- Continuing and increasing Government subsidy for electric vehicles until there is cost parity between electric and fossil fuel/hybrid models.
- Significant increase in funding to install electric vehicle charge points and address any underlying electricity supply issues.
- More funding for air quality monitoring.
- Major expansion of electric car clubs across country.
- More support to organisations (including councils) to electrify their own fleets.
- Investment for businesses or local authorities to introduce sustainable hydrogen production and distribution.

## Highway and Transport Block Investment

- Significant support from Government through the annual Highway Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block funds will be critical in the council being able to develop and deliver sustainable transport programmes in the city. Ideally these should be in five year settlements.



## 6.6 Working In Partnership

Delivery of the Leicester Transport Plan will require close partnership working with Government, regional and local transport bodies, transport operators and local community and business transport forums. These are set out in Section 1.

Recognising that transport movements cross administrative boundaries, the council will continue to work closely with Leicestershire County Council, Transport for the East Midlands and Midlands Connect on the development of transport plans and key programmes and projects for delivery across the sub-region/region.





# Glossary of transport terms

**Accessibility** – refers to both physical accessibility, especially for people with disabilities, and general accessibility whether physical, financial, or lack of information.

**Active transport/travel** – walking, cycling, jogging, or using a wheelchair (includes micromobility options such as e-bikes).

**Air Quality Management Area** – an identified area that exceed / likely to exceed where various air pollutant levels breach national limits.

**Autonomous Vehicles** – self driving cars and other vehicles

**Behaviour change** – initiatives to encourage people to change their form of transport by means of, for example, persuasion, incentives or rebalancing payment mechanisms.

**Bus priority** – engineering and management methods to enable faster and more reliable progress by buses e.g. at junctions.

**Carbon neutral** – carbon emissions are low enough to be off-set so that the result is no increase in carbon in the atmosphere.

**Climate Emergency** – a situation in which urgent action is required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions because of their contribution to global heating and dangerous climate change.

**Connecting Leicester** – a long-term programme to improve cycling and walking mainly in the city centre.

**Connected Vehicles** – a vehicle that can communicate with other vehicles and technology.

**Demand responsive** – a form of public transport that operates without a fixed route and timetabled journeys. The vehicles tend to pick up and drop off passengers in locations according to passengers' need.

**Getting Building Fund** – government funding to deliver jobs, skills and infrastructure across the country.

**HS2** – a new high speed railway linking up London, the Midlands and the North.

**Interchange or Hub** – where in a public transport system passengers can change from one route to another, or from one transport mode to another.

**IRR/ORR** – Inner/Outer Ring Road.



**Local Plan** – a document prepared by a planning authority which sets out the framework for future development.

**Local Transport Plan** – a plan setting out how the local transport authority will maintain and improve transport in its area.

**Low Traffic Neighbourhoods** – an area closed off to through traffic. It stops people using residential roads as shortcuts and makes it safer and easier to walk.

**Micromobility** – individual transport aided by electronic means such as electric bikes, scooters and small disability buggies or scooters. Can also include drones and robots.

**Mode share/shift** – the proportion of population using certain form of transport and the proportion transferring from one form of transport to another.

**National Bus Strategy** – a government long term strategy for buses in England.

**Pop-Up Cycle Route** – are created by reclaiming space from vehicles on roads. It is a temporary measure and is accomplished through the use of bollards, traffic cones, or other devices to establish a safe lane for cyclists.

**Prioritisation** – a technical exercise (advised by Government) to determine priority projects and proposals.

**Residents' Parking Zones** – an area where on-street parking is restricted during specified times.

**Section 106** – a mechanism which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions' along with highway contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

**Shared Mobility** – refers to the usage of a vehicle collectively or over time as a personal rental without owning it.

**Staff salary sacrifice** – an agreement to reduce the employee's entitlement to cash pay, usually in return for a non-cash benefit.

**Smart Transport** – an approach that incorporates modern technologies into the transport system.

**Transforming Cities Fund or TCF** – a Government grant made available in two parts in 2019 and 2020 for sustainable transport projects that must be complete by 2024. Leicester successfully bid for both parts.

**Zero emission** – vehicles that have no measurable tailpipe emissions contributing to the climate emergency or poor air quality, for example, electric vehicles.



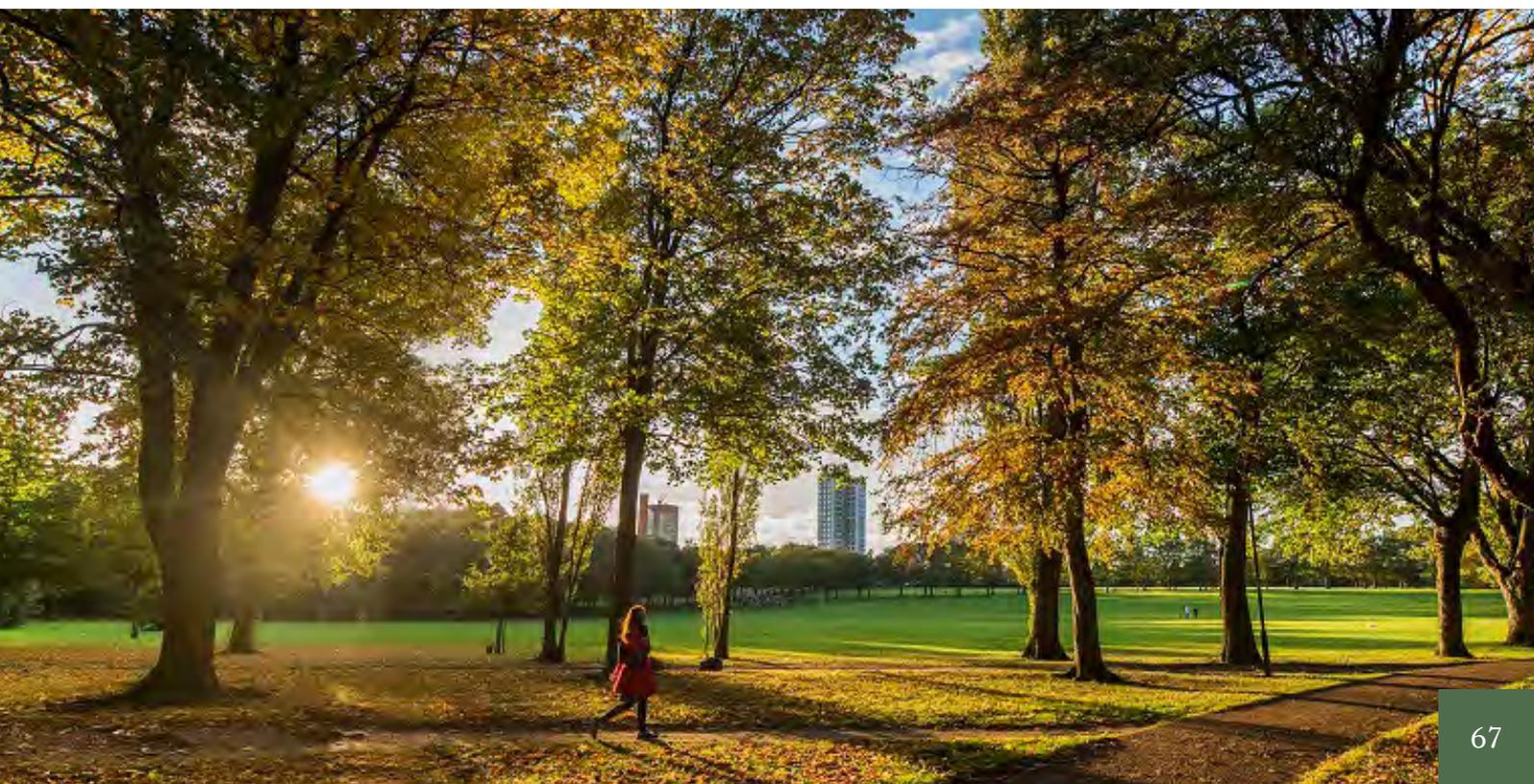
# Part B - Implementation Plan and Supporting Documents

The Leicester Transport Plan strategy document provides a framework for transport improvement in the city for the next 15 years. It is supported by several additional documents that provide background evidence and assessments and more detail on delivery programmes:

- **Leicester Transport Plan Implementation Plan** – provides more information on the programme for implementation in 2020-24
- **Leicester Transport Plan Evidence Base** – lists the sources of information and research that have informed this strategy document and formed the basis for identifying the projects and programmes in the plan
- **Leicester Transport Plan Prioritisation Background Paper**
- **Leicester Transport Plan Monitoring Background Paper**
- Leicester Transport Plan, **Health, Accessibility and Environmental Impact Assessments**

Further detailed plans and strategies have been and will be developed to support this Leicester Transport Plan including:

- **Network Management Plan 2011-15** – to be updated
- **Transport Asset Management Plan 2011-15** – to be updated
- **Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-21** – to be updated
- **Air Quality Action Plan 2015-26** – to be updated
- **Cycle Action Plan 2015 - 2024**
- **Street Design Guide** - adopted 2020





Have your say on Leicester Transport Plan  
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