



Active Travel Capital Fund 2026/27

Decision maker: Cabinet member transport and infrastructure

Report by: Service Director – Environment , Highways, & Waste and Transport Planning Services Manager

Date: 1 September 2026

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To present the proposed allocation and planned expenditure of the 2026/27 Active Travel Grant and set out how the funding will be used to deliver Herefordshire Council's priority integrated transport policies and strategies. The report outlines selected project for capital investment and seeks formal approval from the Chief Operating Officer and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure to proceed.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) The proposed allocation of the 2026/27 Active Travel Grant is approved, enabling delivery of the council's approved integrated transport projects as outlined in the Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan that was adopted by Cabinet; and
- b) Authority is delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure, to take all operational decisions necessary to implement and vary the allocations of the approved programme within the available grant funding and in accordance with the council's governance and procurement procedures; the budget holder is able to vary the plan within the budget.

Alternative options

1. Do not approve the proposed 2026/27 Local Transport Grant allocation

This option was discounted because it would prevent the council from undertaking essential statutory and high-priority transport activities. Without approval, the council would be unable to commit funding to core integrated transport project. Failure to utilise the grant effectively may also undermine the council's position in future funding allocations.

2. Delay approval until later in the financial year

This option was discounted because delaying approval would significantly shorten the delivery window for 2026/27 programmes. Early approval allows time for scheme design, procurement, mobilisation and coordinated delivery. A delay would increase the risk of under-spend, contractor availability issues, and reduced programme effectiveness. It would also constrain the council's ability to manage seasonal works efficiently, particularly those that must be delivered in specific weather or daylight conditions.

Key considerations

3. The Active Travel Grant is allocated annually by the Active Travel England (ATE) to support local authorities in delivering active travel infrastructure. The funding forms a core element of Herefordshire Council's active travel capital programme and underpins delivery of key priorities within the Local Cycling Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan (LCWWIP).
4. The capital grant allocation for Herefordshire Council for 2026/27 financial year is £234,354
5. The amount allocated is dependent on the capability level of the Council; Herefordshire Council are considered level 2 however in the recently adopted LCWWIP we are progressing to a Level 2 which could increase the grant funding when it is next assessed for 2027/28 financial year.
6. The projects proposed within the LCWWIP form the priority list of projects to be constructed and designed. The LCWWIP was approved by Cabinet and as such the strategic direction, priority schemes and required actions within the plan carry Cabinet endorsement.
7. The allocation proposed in this report therefore gives effect to those previously agreed commitments. Approval of the 2026/27 programme enables officers to progress delivery of the LTP actions within the timelines, funding framework and statutory responsibilities

Project Element			Proposed Budget 2026/27	Total
LCWWIP – Ledbury safer routes to school			£ 234,354	£ 234,354
TOTAL			£ 234,354	£ 234,354

Community impact

8. The proposed 2026/27 Active Travel Capital programme supports delivery of several priorities within the Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan, including improving connectivity, enabling sustainable communities, and promoting health and wellbeing through increased opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling. The programme is underpinned by the Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan (LCWWIP), which provides the strategic framework for prioritising active travel investment.

9. The programme is also aligned with the adopted Local Transport Plan (LTP) and contributes to the council's wider strategic commitments on carbon reduction, addressing inequalities, and improving inclusive access to key services.
10. Improving the safety and accessibility of active travel routes is central to the wellbeing of residents, particularly for children and young people. As part of the 2026/27 programme, the council will deliver a priority safer routes to school scheme in Ledbury, upgrading the existing route between new residential development to the south of the town and John Masefield High School. This scheme responds to the need to provide safe, direct and attractive routes for school travel, and is expected to reduce road danger, encourage active travel and support safer movement within the local community.
11. Alongside scheme delivery, the council will be progressing the implementation of the LCWWIP by developing a pipeline of future active travel schemes and embedding best practice in design and delivery, in line with national standards. This strategic approach will support increased levels of walking, wheeling and cycling across the county, contribute to improved public health outcomes, and help reduce transport-related carbon emissions, while ensuring that investment is targeted where it will deliver the greatest benefit to communities.

Environmental impact

12. The proposed 2026/27 Active Travel Capital programme supports these aims by investing in improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure that encourage safer, more reliable and more attractive sustainable travel.
13. Enhanced active travel infrastructure can help reduce carbon emissions by enabling modal shift from private car use to walking, wheeling and cycling, particularly for short local journeys such as school travel, and by supporting more direct and convenient route options.
14. Each individual project within the programme will be subject to its own design development and environmental assessment, where required, to ensure that environmental impacts are fully considered and that appropriate mitigation measures are identified and incorporated at scheme level. This will include consideration of biodiversity, landscape, drainage and materials, in line with relevant guidance and statutory requirements.
15. At this stage, there are no identified significant adverse environmental impacts arising from approval of the overall programme allocation. The proposed works will be delivered in accordance with the council's environmental policy commitments, relevant legislation and best practice guidance, with a focus on delivering schemes that contribute positively to climate objectives and the local environment.

Equality duty

16. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that it is paying 'due regard' in its decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
17. The mandatory equality impact screening checklist has been completed for this decision and it has been found to have a low impact for equality.
18. Due to the potential impact of this decision being low, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However, the following equality considerations should be taken into account when making this decision:

- a. The delivery of improved walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure through the LCWIP will seek to enhance accessibility for all users, including disabled people and people with mobility impairments, by applying inclusive design principles in line with national guidance.
- b. The proposed safer routes to school scheme in Ledbury will consider the needs of children and young people, as well as parents, carers and those accompanying pupils, by ensuring routes are safe, direct and suitable for a wide range of users.
- c. The programme will support improved access to local services and education for people without access to a private vehicle, including young people, older residents and lower income households, helping to reduce transport-related inequalities.

Resource implications

- 19. DfT, through Active Travel England (ATE), has confirmed the council's active travel funding allocation for the period from 2026/27. The 2026/27 Active Travel Capital programme will be funded through this grant allocation and will be used to deliver schemes identified through the Local Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), as detailed in this report. The capital funding must be spent within the financial year and is subject to monitoring and review. Staffing costs associated with managing delivery of the programme will be allocated to a dedicated project code and will be monitored through timesheet recording and approval processes.
- 20. Any revenue implications arising from the delivery of the scheme will be managed within existing budgets; however, the intention is to minimise any additional ongoing revenue costs through scheme design and delivery.
- 21. Procurement of works and services will be undertaken in accordance with the council's contract procedure rules to ensure value for money. The procurement route will be set out in the relevant record of officer decision.

Legal implications

- 21. There are no specific legal implications within this report.
- 22. The relevant legal provisions for this decision can be found in the council's constitution, www.herefordshire.gov.uk/constitution.

Risk management

- 23. Below table outlines the risks and opportunities' that the project provides

Risk	Mitigation
If the programme is not approved in good time, there is a risk that active travel schemes cannot be progressed through design, procurement and delivery within the 2026/27 financial year. This may result in delays, under-delivery of the programme or the need to reprofile funding.	Approve the programme.
There is a risk that, without a clearly defined and approved programme, the council may be unable to demonstrate sufficient progress against LCWIP priorities, Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives and Active Travel England (ATE) funding expectations.	Approve the programme.
Non-delivery or poorly co-ordinated delivery of the active travel programme may lead to public dissatisfaction, negative community feedback and reputational impact for the council and elected members.	Approve the programme.

Delays or changes to the programme could slow progress on improving active travel infrastructure, including key routes such as the safer route to school in Ledbury, potentially limiting opportunities to improve safety, accessibility and uptake of sustainable travel.

Approve the programme.

Opportunity

The grant provides a direct opportunity to progress priority schemes identified through the LCWIP, supporting delivery of the council's long-term vision for an inclusive and sustainable active travel network.

The programme enables delivery of targeted interventions, such as safer routes to school, providing a significant opportunity to improve safety, increase levels of walking, wheeling and cycling, and support healthier lifestyles across communities.

The LCWIP-led approach provides opportunities to work closely with schools, local communities, developers and stakeholders to deliver schemes that respond to local needs, strengthen partnerships and maximise the impact of investment.

Consultees

24. Internal consultees such as Highways, finance, transport, planning etc have had the opportunity to input on the allocation
25. Each individual project will have their own consultees who will be involved and engaged.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None