

# **HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN (2013/14 – 2014/15)**

### **STRATEGY AND DELIVERY**

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## Local Transport Plan 2013/14 to 2014/15

Transport is vital to the people of Herefordshire. An efficient transport network is essential for the county's economy and will support recovery from the economic downturn. The ability to access services and maintain independence is also important and particularly challenging in a large rural county with an aging population. This local transport plan (LTP) sets out the Council's strategy for supporting both economic growth and social inclusion and details the programme of investment for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15.

Recognising these major challenges, the LTP is guided by the following key objectives:

- To support a cleaner, healthier, more prosperous county; and
- To maintain connectivity for all and to reduce social isolation for those without access to a car.

### 1. Strategy Overview

The LTP works alongside other strategic plans such as the emerging Core Strategy which will set out land use proposals for sustainable growth for the next 20 years and the Economic Development Strategy which sets out proposals and approaches to support business growth up to 2016. The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership is also developing its Strategy for Growth and partnership working across the Marches area will become increasingly important in sharing resources and attracting inward investment over the next decade.

#### 1.1. LTP Key Objectives

- **Reducing congestion in Hereford City and increasing accessibility by less polluting and healthier forms of transport than the private car.** We aim to:
  - reduce short distance car based trips transferring as many as possible to less polluting and healthier modes such as walking and cycling,
  - reduce the impact of car access in the historic core through traffic management and sign de-cluttering;
  - support the regeneration of the central area by facilitating city centre expansion, ensuring integration with the existing shopping area; and
  - support the successful investment in jobs at the Rotherwas Enterprise Zone by ensuring that its expansion can be accommodated within highway network constraints.
- **Maintaining access for rural residents and people without access to a car.** We aim to:
  - Ensure that the County's extensive highway network remains fit for purpose and safe for the travelling public;
  - Review passenger transport services to ensure that we can continue to provide access for those most in need; and
  - Provide alternatives for longer distance commuters so that they can also reduce their car use and adopt healthier lifestyles.

#### 1.2. Destination Hereford – Getting the Most Out of a Limited Resource

Whilst we will be investing in a range of infrastructure improvements during 2013/14 to 2014/15 we acknowledge that we need to optimise how we use the network and get the most out of the capacity it can provide. This means people adapting their travel behaviour. The Destination Hereford programme will run throughout this period providing high quality, tailored information to travellers, complementing the investment in infrastructure and helping manage how we can get the maximum benefit out of our network.

We know that many people are interested in changing how they travel for a variety of reasons: beating congestion; reducing costs of running a car; improving their health; or concerns about the environment. The Council is fully committed to supporting people in making these changes providing advice and resources for residents, businesses and schools and is leading by example through its own workplace travel plan and approach to flexible working. Whilst the programme focusses on travel into Hereford many of the initiatives will support longer distance travellers such as our countywide programme of park and share sites and promotion of the public transport network.

Types of support provided by the programme include:

- Tailored travel information for residents to help them reduce their car use
- Free cycle training for children and adults – we know that many people lack confidence in taking up cycling
- Funding for businesses and schools to provide cycle storage, changing facilities – relatively small adaptations at workplaces and schools can help people change how they travel
- Working with parishes and other local communities to develop free park and share sites for longer distance commuters – we want to reduce the cars trying to access the centre of Hereford and this community led approach is relatively cheap but very effective
- Working with health providers to support people with health problems and people receiving health checks back into active lifestyles – many people are motivated to make lifestyle changes to improve their health
- Supporting cycle hire in Hereford so that visitors and people without a bike can enjoy the city by bike

### **1.3. Focus on Delivery**

Whilst austerity measures and the need to make year on year savings presents a major challenge for all local authorities, the Council has secured or helped secure funding of around £70M to support this strategy over the next two years.

Funding sources comprise local transport grant, local sustainable transport fund, developer contributions, pinch point funding, revenue funds and the Council's own capital programme. In addition to these sources of funding, the Council will also seek to play a central role in the emerging Marches Local Transport Body which will take over responsibility for the devolved major transport scheme programme.

## 2. Transport Plan for Hereford

At the heart of the County, Hereford City provides the biggest concentration of housing, jobs and shops. This role will be further enhanced through the proposals for sustainable growth set out in the emerging Core Strategy. Supporting the growth of the City is critical not just in terms of recovery but to work towards longer term aspirations to attract and retain young families with more affordable housing and to grow the economy. Ensuring free flowing traffic and efficient access for workers, businesses, visitors and shoppers is key to achieving this wider aspiration.

The proposals for Hereford City are informed by the following factors:

- Around a third of car journeys in the morning and afternoon peaks (when congestion occurs) are less than 5km – a short distance which can be easily cycled in 20 minutes or less;
- Much of the A49 is an air quality management area, illustrating the pollution problems relating to traffic in the city;
- Some of the city's wards exhibit the highest incidents of obesity in the County and are above the national average;
- The expansion of Hereford shopping area will complement the historic central area attracting more people into the city; and
- Hereford will remain an important destination for rural residents, longer distance commuters and commercial traffic and traffic improvements are required in advance of longer term schemes such as the relief road.

The transport improvements in Hereford City are designed to reduce the number of short distance trips made by car and to reduce the overall impact of car use in the central area. The diagram below helps illustrate the basic principles. The whole urban area (enclosed in the 10 minute cycle zone) carries 30-40,000 vehicle trips each morning and afternoon – a third of these are entirely within the 10 minute cycle zone. Many of the vehicle trips into the centre (along the key access corridors) involve further circulation around the inner ring road as traffic seeks to access specific destinations including office parking, schools and public car parks. In addition, some of this is through traffic which currently has no realistic alternative other than to travel through the centre of Hereford.



## 2.1. Delivery – The Historic Core

Hereford central area and the historic core (within the ring road) is a special environment where pedestrians must have top priority. We want to encourage more access into this area, the County's primary shopping location, whilst reducing access by car and the impacts of traffic. How will we do this?

### **Schemes for 2013/14 to 2014/15:**

- Introduce an area wide 20mph scheme, focusing on the gateways into the historic core so that drivers appreciate the priority for pedestrians and cyclists
- Develop comprehensive cycle access and provision in one way streets – tying into a wider network of cycle routes throughout the city and supporting cycling
- Remove redundant/duplicative signage and introduce coherent and uniform tourism/visitor signing
- Upgrading Newmarket Street to ensure safe and convenient pedestrian access between the new development and the historic core so that visitors will come to enjoy the whole city centre
- In the longer term (after 2014/15):
  - Reducing parking particularly for commuters through redevelopment
  - Introducing on street parking charges are other forms of management to further reduce traffic in the centre
  - Public realm enhancements to improve the overall quality of the environment

## 2.2. Delivery -The wider central area

The wider central area (within the 10 minute walk zone on the diagram) provides us with further opportunities to influence travel behaviour. This is the area in which the majority of publicly available parking spaces are located. We want to consolidate parking so that we can manage its use more effectively and encourage commuters to park further from the central area, utilising parking closest to the radial road along which they enter the city. This will reduce traffic overloading at a number of the junctions in the centre of the city where congestion is most pronounced. In the short term we have identified some junction improvements which will ease traffic flows at 3 congested junctions in the city. Within this area we also need to address barriers to walking and cycling trips, which result from the relatively high volumes of traffic on the A49 trunk road and other radial routes which converge on the inner ring road.

This wider central area also includes important public transport facilities such as the rail station and country bus station. It is likely that closer integration between rail and bus services will be delivered through the implementation of the city link road, which will open up the rail forecourt for redevelopment. However, much needed access improvements are due to be implemented at the rail station in the next two years.

### **Schemes for 2013/14 to 2014/15:**

- Potential relocation of parking with the disposal of Merton Meadow car park – this is dependent on the urban village housing development progressing
- Improve walking and cycle access and overcoming barriers at King Street, Edgar Street, Barton Road and St Owen Street
- Traffic improvement measures at Edgar Street roundabout, Asda roundabout and Starting Gate roundabout
- Construct the city centre link road providing access to the urban village development and supporting city centre affordable housing and opportunities to improve access to the rail station and integration with bus services

- Provision of lifts at Hereford Rail Station, providing fully accessible platforms

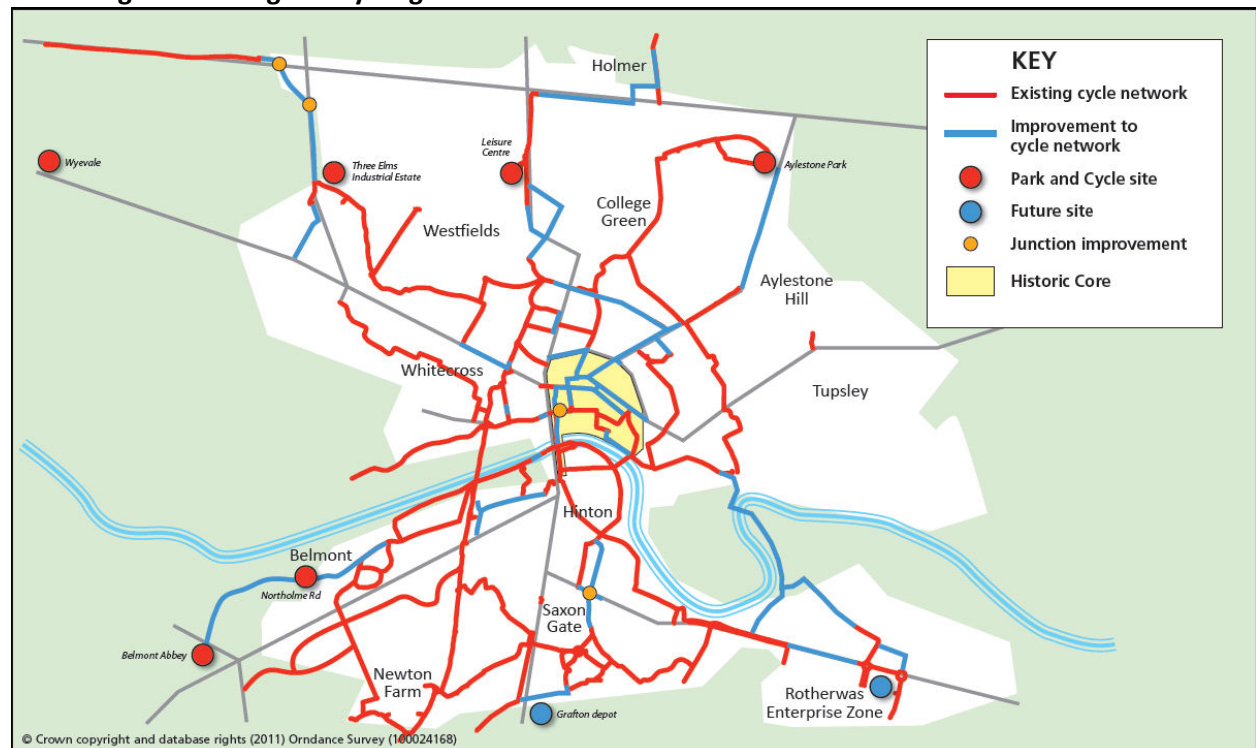
### 2.3. Delivery – Residential Areas/Urban Fringe

The residential areas and urban fringe (within a 10 minute cycle ride of the city centre) are where most people live in Hereford and a lot of people work and attend schools, colleges and hospitals. It includes the arterial 'A' roads, which converge on the city centre and carry large volumes of commuting and commercial traffic but also provides local access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. Our strategy for our residential areas is to put in place measures that will give people more confidence to walk and cycle rather than use the car for short distance journeys.

#### Schemes for 2013/14 to 2014/15:

- Utilising the additional funding secured through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and developer contributions we will deliver a comprehensive programme of cycle schemes and pedestrian improvements to provide better connectivity for local residents. These are identified on the plan below.
- Construct the Connect 2 scheme and new river crossing which will provide direct access to Rotherwas, supporting the investment in jobs in the Enterprise Zone.
- To assist longer distance commuters coming into Hereford we will expand our range of park and share/cycle sites, connecting up with the cycle network and also linked in to local bus services.
- Implement further 20mph schemes in residential areas, to encourage walking and cycling.

#### Extending the walking and cycling network in Hereford



### **3. Transport Plan for Rural Herefordshire and the Market Towns**

Rural Herefordshire is characterised by a very low population density and an extensive road network. For most people the car is and will remain the main mode of transport, and road freight has a fundamental role in our economy, so maintaining the quality and safety of our road network is vitally important to ensure connectivity and reduce the risk of accidents. However, with an increasing elderly population, families on low incomes and young people without their own transport many people are reliant on public transport and other transport services to access education, work, shopping and health care. We are particularly aware that transport services are vital in helping elderly people and people with disabilities to remain independent and that this is very important for their wellbeing and helps reduce overall costs of healthcare.

Our resources to maintain the network and deliver public transport are stretched and this is further compounded by current funding pressures.

In this context our plan for rural Herefordshire and market towns focuses on the key priorities of network maintenance and safety and accessibility for the most vulnerable. This plan also acknowledges the emerging Core Strategy proposals which will support limited development in over a hundred rural settlements, helping sustain rural communities and support rural services.

#### **3.1. Delivery – Maintenance and Road Safety**

Herefordshire has an exceptional track record in reducing the most serious road traffic casualties over the past decade. This has been achieved through a combination of targeted safety improvements, based on an intelligent analysis of accident locations, education and training and integration of safety improvement measures within standard maintenance works. We have reviewed rural speed limits and are designing a more streamlined process for implementing changes which will be rolled out across the County over the next two years.

##### ***Schemes and initiatives for 2013/14 to 2014/15:***

- Deliver over 20 safety improvement schemes
- Provide targeted road safety information to school children, young drivers and older drivers
- Work with the Safer Roads Partnership to deliver targeted speed enforcement and support speed awareness training for those caught speeding
- Implement 100 speed limit changes and regulation orders
- Support Speed Indicator Device programme in villages

Maintaining the overall network to a high standard will be a challenge – as capital allocations have reduced over the past 5 years and revenue funding is under severe pressure. It is critical in this context that we invest the available funding in the most effective way we can. This will mean focussing more of our efforts on preventative maintenance and shifting the balance away from reactive works. This shift in approach will not affect our standards for treating the most serious defects promptly so that safety will be maintained. We are also exploring opportunities to secure investment through the re-procurement of the highways services contract.

We already have a well established parish lengthman scheme which provides resource and support to local communities to deliver some highways services locally. This is a rewarding approach which has seen local communities take control over issues such as local gritting in severe weather, clearing drainage to help reduce flooding problems and verge clearance to improve safety at junctions. We want to develop local delivery of schemes further and will



work with local communities to assess what other highways services can be delivered more effectively by local people.

**Schemes for 2013/14 to 2014/15:**

<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Target</b>
Patching	71 km
Surface Dressing	45 km
Resurfacing	13.5 km
Footway Reconstruction	12 km
Additional Funding	16 km

**3.2. Delivery – Rural Access and Service Coordination**

We have carried out a number of consultations about the future role of the public transport network in the County. It has been clear from the variety of responses that people value the service and wish to see transport services retained. In the consultation on the LTP autumn 2012 there was support for the retention of a 'core network' of bus services which focus on journeys between Hereford and the market towns along main transport corridors with larger rural settlements. People acknowledged that bus services are difficult to sustain in the more sparsely populated areas outside of this core network and that Council should explore opportunities around connecting services and community led services. This view was echoed in the Your Community Your Say consultation autumn 2012.

In view of this feedback we have widened the review to incorporate the full range of services supported by the Council:

- Local buses
- Community transport
- Home to school transport
- Special educational needs transport
- Adult social care transport

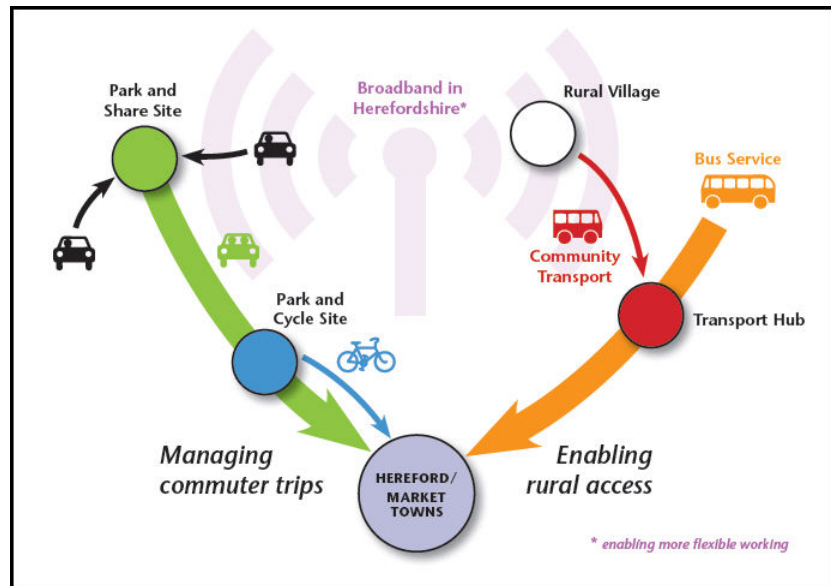
We believe that the solution to maintaining access with reducing funding relies on closer integration of these services so that we can get the best value for money from transport providers. We will be carrying out a review of these services during 2013 with a view to introducing new services from September 2014. We will be consulting users and local communities in more detail as the review progresses but we are particularly interested in exploring the following issues:

- Expanding the range of services provided by community transport
- How we can support connecting services feeding into core bus and rail services whilst reducing impacts for users
- Development of rural transport hubs to support connecting services and car sharing
- Incorporating school bus services within the core bus network
- Developing community led commissioning of local transport services

In addition to the review of passenger transport services we will also be developing rural access improvements around rural hubs and park and share sites. We are developing a network of locations where car drivers or connecting transport services (such as community transport) can meet other drivers to car share or transfer to other modes such as bus, cycling or rail. Typically, these locations will provide free parking and where possible will be

located in rural settlements or businesses increasing opportunity to help sustain the rural economy. For users, this initiative can deliver a number of benefits:

- Reduce costs of parking at the eventual destination and reduce petrol costs on the shared part of the journey
- Provide access to the bus/rail network for those who are not within walking distance of a bus stop/rail station (OAPs and disabled people would then be able to complete their journey for free using their bus pass)



- Enabling rural commuters to incorporate cycling/walking into their trip and avoiding congestion (relates to park and share on the outskirts of Hereford and market towns)
- Free up time for parents and others who might normally drive friends and family all the way to a destination. Similarly, could enable community transport drivers to provide more journeys in rural areas if they make shorter trips to hubs rather longer distance door to door journeys.

### 3.3. Supporting Access by Rail

Whilst our approach to maintaining access for the rural community focuses on the highway network, we appreciate the limited but important role that rail travel plays in the County. Rail services provide good access to Hereford from Leominster and Ledbury (and Colwall) and support longer distance commuting and school/college trips into and out of the County.

Significant investment went into Leominster Station in 2012 with the provision of lifts to provide full access to both platforms and similar provision is planned for Hereford Station in 2013/14. Investment is also planned to upgrade signalling between Newport and Shrewsbury and this will bring additional capacity Hereford Station, helping to reduce cancellations on trains between Hereford and Ledbury.

We were keen to assess the costs and benefits of proposals to provide rail access in to Rotherwas and completed a study in early 2013 in consultation with Network Rail (NR) and Arriva Trains. The study concluded that the construction costs of the scheme would be over £10M and more significantly an on going subsidy of over £10 for every journey would be required to fund a regular service. This would not represent good value for money, particularly in the context of severe pressures on rural bus services. However, following further discussion with NR it has emerged that there might be potential to increase parking at Leominster Station and this would support park and ride for longer distance commuters travelling in to Hereford. We will explore this opportunity in partnership with NR during the LTP period with a view to increasing parking subject to demonstrating sufficient demand and securing funding contributions.

Outside of infrastructure improvements, the Council continues to lobby for basic service improvements including greater capacity on rail services on the Wales and Borders line. The ability to influence current services is very limited as a result of the current franchise

agreements with DfT and Welsh Assembly Government. The Council will fully engage in re-franchising opportunities to secure further service improvements for the County.

***Schemes and initiatives for 2013/14 to 2014/15:***

- Develop rural transport hubs and park and share sites, working with local communities to promote car sharing, connecting services and park and cycle/walk
- Implement review of passenger transport services, including public consultation
- Work with local communities to develop community led transport services
- Introduce new services from September 2014
- Work with network rail and train operating companies to explore opportunities to increase park and ride at Leominster Station
- Continue to lobby Arriva Trains Wales for increased capacity on Wales and Border services and engage in re-franchising consultation as they arise.

**4. Developing longer term strategy**

This LTP is firmly focussed on delivering transport improvements for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15. However, during this period we will be developing a longer term transport strategy for the County in the light of proposals for growth which will be set out in the Core Strategy and other local strategies such as the Local Enterprise Plan's Strategy for Growth.

We will be working closely with local authority partners and the LEP to establish the Marches Local Transport Body (MLTB) which will assume responsibility for the major scheme funding programme. Initial indications are that the MLTB will have an allocation of around £16M to prioritise for the Marches area for the period 2015-19. In working within the MLTB we will seek to secure funding for schemes which will help us deliver our growth and regeneration proposals focused on Hereford and the Rotherwas Enterprise Zone. A number of significant infrastructure projects are already progressing to detailed design and local consultation in support of these strategies including the Belmont Transport Package which will assist the Rotherwas Enterprise Zone, the city link road which will enable regeneration and housing development in the city centre and further development of the Hereford Relief Road and complementary sustainable transport measures which supports the strategic housing proposals for the City and wider county.

We anticipate reviewing this LTP in the light of these emerging strategies and are likely to be consulting on a refreshed LTP in 2015.

## 5. Funding Profile and Programme

The table below sets out the indicative capital funding allocations for transport schemes and project development for the period 2013/14 to 2014/15. The overall allocation comprises:

£19.58M – LTP integrated transport and maintenance grant,  
 £2.441M - additional maintenance funding announced in the autumn statement  
 £2.109M - remaining LSTF capital grant  
 £2.35M – capital programme (Connect 2 scheme)

The Council also allocates significant revenue funds towards routine and reactive highway maintenance and public transport (including concessionary fares). Typical annual revenue spend on both totals of around £10M. The Council is currently reviewing all revenue budgets in order to manage significant reductions and hence it is not possible to identify indicative revenue budgets for 2013/14 to 2014/15 at the time this LTP was printed.

		<b>£000's</b>	
<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
<b>Hereford Transport Plan</b>	Edgar Street Link Road*	TBD	TBD
	A49 junction improvements**	-	-
	Newmarket Street/Edgar Street Pedestrian Scheme***	-	-
	Rail lifts and signal upgrading ****	-	-
	Holme Lacy Traffic Management Scheme	0	200
	Hereford Cycle Schemes (inc Connect 2) inc. signage	3,455	1,104
	Hereford Pedestrian Schemes	30	30
	Hereford 20mph zones and street de-cluttering	63	115
	Hereford bus passenger facilities	30	50
	Hereford Transport Review	0	80
<b>Rural Herefordshire &amp; Market Towns Plan</b>	Park and Share	10	10
	Rural Cycle schemes inc. signage	60	60
	Rural Pedestrian Schemes	40	40
	Safer Routes to Schools & 20mph zones	60	70
	Rural Residential 20mph zones	20	40
	Public Rights of Way	20	20
	Rural bus passenger facilities	150	100
	Rural Transport Review	0	80
<b>Transport Safety</b>	Minor Highway Safety Improvements	250	250
	Speed Management and SIDs	95	95
<b>Highways Maintenance</b>	Highway maintenance (capitalised costs)	9,548	8,405
	Rights of Way Improvement Plan	25	25
	Bridgeworks	900	900
<b>Other</b>	LTP Monitoring	25	25
<b>Total Indicative Allocations</b>		<b>14,781</b>	<b>11,699</b>

\*The Council is finalising costs for the city centre link road and will seek to secure funding from a range of sources including capital programme. Total cost for remainder of project estimated at £22.7M.

\*\* Additional funds have been secured by the Highways Agency to deliver 3 'pinch point' schemes

\*\*\* Developer funding will pay for the upgrading of Newmarket Street and access improvements on Edgar Street

\*\*\*\* Network Rail has secured Access for All funds to provide new lifts at Hereford Station. Additional expenditure is allocated for signal upgrading through the County on the Manchester/Cardiff line.

## 6. Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators which will measure to help us assess the progress we are making with the LTP are:

Performance Indicator	Aim	Target by 2014/15
People killed or seriously injured on the highway network	Reduce numbers of people killed or seriously injured from base line number of 119.	Less than 85 KSI casualties
Highway Condition - Principal Road	Improve condition of principal road network	5% of network needing treatment from 9%.
Countywide passenger transport use (bus and rail)	Increase in bus users	1.3% increase to 4,700 passenger journeys
Average weekday car flows on highways accessing Hereford city centre (peak periods 07:00 to 09:00 & 16:00 to 18:00)	Reduction in car journeys to city centre.	3% reduction to 28,200 car trips
Reduce NOx $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in Hereford AQMA	Improve air quality	5% reduction to 46.9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
Number of weekday cycle journeys in Hereford	Increase in cycling	6% increase to 3,600 journeys