



# Title of report: Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan Scrutiny Report

**Meeting: Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Tuesday 9 September 2025**

**Report by: Transport Planning Services Manager**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

To seek the views of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee on the draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), prior to its consideration by Cabinet. The committee is invited to scrutinise the plan, provide feedback, and endorse its strategic direction. The report also outlines key findings from the public consultation and proposes next steps for refining and implementing the LCWIP.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

**(a) the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee reviews the draft LCWIP and provides feedback on its content and priorities;**

**(b) the committee endorses the LCWIP for Cabinet consideration.**

## Alternative options

1. There are no alternative options. Scrutiny of the LCWIP is a key part of the governance process to ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with community needs prior to Cabinet decision.

## Key considerations

2. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is a vital strategic document that enables Herefordshire Council to plan, prioritise, and deliver improvements to walking, cycling, and wheeling infrastructure. It is a requirement set out by the Department for Transport and Active Travel England (ATE), and its adoption is essential for accessing future funding streams and improving the council's standing as an active travel authority. Councils with higher ratings are more likely to receive substantial funding and support. By adopting and implementing the LCWIP, Herefordshire positions itself to pursue a higher rating in the 2027 review cycle, which would unlock greater investment opportunities and national recognition. Without a strategic plan, Herefordshire would be unable to demonstrate its commitment to sustainable transport or respond effectively to community needs.
3. The LCWIP supports national objectives outlined in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and Gear Change policy, which aim to make active travel the natural choice for short journeys. It also aligns with the NHS Long Term Plan, which promotes walking and cycling as key contributors to public health. ATE's funding criteria emphasise the need for high-quality infrastructure, community engagement, and alignment with local needs. The LCWIP provides the framework to meet these expectations and to demonstrate the council's capability and readiness to deliver impactful schemes.
4. Adopting the LCWIP offers multiple benefits. It enables the council to take a proactive and evidence-led approach to transport planning, ensuring that active travel is embedded in decision-making processes. It supports public health by encouraging physical activity, reduces carbon emissions, and improves air quality. It also enhances access to education, employment, and services, particularly for those without access to private vehicles.
5. Importantly, the LCWIP is not a fixed document—it is designed to evolve over time. It will be updated to reflect community feedback, emerging needs, and new opportunities. This flexibility ensures that the plan remains relevant and responsive, and that it continues to reflect the aspirations of Herefordshire's residents. The council will remain open to suggestions and will use the LCWIP as a living framework to guide future investment. The plan also reflects broader trends in active travel, particularly in rural areas.
6. It is also important to emphasise that the LCWIP is not an anti-car policy. The council recognises that many residents, especially in rural communities, rely on private vehicles. The LCWIP seeks to provide viable alternatives for short journeys, reduce unnecessary car trips, and improve safety for all road users. It promotes choice, not restriction, and aims to create a transport system that works for everyone.

## Community impact

7. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) contributes directly to Herefordshire Council's corporate objectives and national strategies focused on health, wellbeing, and inclusive communities. It supports the Herefordshire Council Plan's ambition to create a healthier and more connected county, and aligns with national frameworks such as the NHS Long Term Plan and Active Travel England's cycling and walking investment strategy.

(CWIS2), which promote active travel as a means to improve public health and reduce inequalities.

8. Walking, cycling, and wheeling are proven to deliver substantial physical and mental health benefits. Regular active travel helps reduce the risk of chronic conditions such as heart disease, type-2 diabetes, and obesity, while also improving cardiovascular fitness, joint mobility, and immune function. From a mental health perspective, walking and cycling are associated with reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, improved mood, and increased self-esteem. Studies show that just 30 minutes of walking or cycling can significantly boost mental wellbeing, with effects lasting for hours afterwards.
9. The LCWIP also addresses transport affordability and accessibility. By improving infrastructure and connectivity, the plan enables more residents to choose low-cost, zero-emission modes of travel. This is particularly important in rural areas and among lower-income households, where access to private vehicles may be limited. Schemes such as the Beryl bike share in Hereford offer flexible, affordable transport options that reduce reliance on cars and support independent mobility.
10. As a corporate parent, the council has a duty to promote the wellbeing and life chances of children in care and care-experienced young people. The LCWIP supports this responsibility by improving access to education, services, and social opportunities through safe and inclusive transport networks. Enhanced walking and cycling routes can help children and young people travel independently, access green spaces, and participate in community life. The plan also considers the needs of vulnerable users, including those with disabilities, ensuring that infrastructure is designed to be accessible and welcoming for all.
11. Through its emphasis on community engagement, health, affordability, and inclusion, the LCWIP represents a strategic investment in the wellbeing of Herefordshire's residents and supports the council's role as a responsible and proactive corporate parent.

## Environmental Impact

12. Herefordshire Council is committed to improving environmental sustainability and achieving carbon neutrality, and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) plays a central role in delivering these ambitions. The plan supports the County Plan's success measures by promoting active travel, reducing carbon emissions, and improving air quality across the county.
13. Sustainable travel offers significant environmental and health benefits, particularly in rural areas like Herefordshire where car dependency is high. Walking and cycling are zero-emission modes of transport that reduce congestion, lower noise pollution, and improve public health. The county already benefits from a strong foundation of active travel infrastructure, including over 2,100 miles of public footpaths and a growing network of cycle routes. These assets are complemented by initiatives such as the Beryl bike share scheme, which has become a key part of Hereford's sustainable transport offer.
14. Since its launch in 2019, the Beryl scheme has facilitated over half a million journeys in Hereford, covering nearly 1.2 million kilometres and generating 147,000 hours of physical activity. According to industry estimates, this has saved approximately 46 tonnes of carbon emissions. Importantly, 68% of Beryl users in Hereford reported replacing car, van, motorcycle or taxi journeys with bike trips – 14% higher than the national average across similar schemes. Furthermore, 60% of users said they cycle more often since joining the scheme, and 46% have

reduced their car use. These figures demonstrate the potential for well-designed infrastructure and services to shift travel behaviour and reduce environmental impact

15. Improved infrastructure is key to unlocking further benefits. National research shows that investment in walking and cycling routes leads to increased physical activity, especially in areas with previously low levels of active travel. Projects such as Connect2, which upgraded 84 routes across the UK, saw the greatest increases in walking and cycling in deprived areas and among groups with historically lower participation rates. Features such as traffic-free paths, safe crossings, and accessible design were found to be particularly effective in encouraging use
16. The LCWIP also aligns with national policy priorities. Active Travel England's 2025–2026 Business Plan sets out a vision for safe, inclusive, and accessible infrastructure that supports healthier lifestyles and reduces transport emissions. The UK Government has committed nearly £300 million to walking, wheeling, and cycling schemes, aiming to enable 30 million more active travel journeys annually and reduce pressure on the NHS through improved public health.
17. In developing the LCWIP, Herefordshire Council has sought to minimise adverse environmental impacts and maximise opportunities to enhance sustainability. This includes prioritising low-impact materials, integrating green infrastructure, and promoting active travel as a viable alternative to car use. The plan will help make Herefordshire's towns and villages healthier, greener, and more connected places to live.

## **Equality duty**

18. Due to the potential impact of this project being low, a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However, the plan considers accessibility for all users, including those with mobility impairments, and aims to reduce transport inequalities.

## **Resource implications**

19. The LCWIP is supported by existing budgets and external funding sources. Detailed financial implications will be set out in the Cabinet report and accompanying business case.

## **Legal implications**

20. The council is the local highway authority for the purposes of the relevant legislation.
21. As identified above, producing and adopting an LCWIP is required by the Department for Transport and Active Travel England (ATE) and is essential for accessing future funding streams and improving the Council's standing as an active travel authority.
22. The Transport Act 2000 requires the Council to produce and keep under review a Local Transport Plan setting out its transport policies and plans. The Council's Local Transport Plan 2016-2031 details, at Policies LTP AT1 and LTP AT2 the Council's commitment to maintaining, improving, extending and prioritising the active travel network in Herefordshire. Production of the LCWIP therefore appears to be a logical and natural step towards implementing the policies of the Local Transport Plan.

## Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Public dissatisfaction if feedback is not reflected	Amend LCWIP to incorporate consultation findings
Funding constraints may delay delivery	Prioritise schemes with strong support and seek external funding
Missed opportunity to embed active travel in planning	Integrate LCWIP into decision-making and policy frameworks

## Consultees

23. A multi-channel consultation approach was undertaken to inform the development of the LCWIP, including:

a. **Online engagement via Commonplace:**

The consultation platform attracted 1,648 visitors, with 199 respondents contributing 760 comments and agreements. This included feedback on proposed routes, infrastructure priorities, and missing links.

b. **Interactive mapping and surveys:**

Respondents were able to comment on specific locations and suggest improvements, such as off-highway routes, Quiet Lanes, junction upgrades, and better connections to key destinations like Hereford County Hospital and Ledbury.

c. **In-person engagement events:**

Public drop-in sessions were held in **Hereford and Ledbury**, attended by a significant number of residents. These events provided opportunities for face-to-face discussions with officers, viewing of draft proposals, and direct feedback. They were particularly valuable in reaching individuals who may not engage online and helped ensure a broader demographic was represented.

d. **Community feedback sessions and stakeholder engagement:**

Targeted discussions were held with local groups, parish councils, and accessibility

advocates to ensure the plan reflects diverse needs, including those of children, older adults, and people with disabilities.

- e. Working with colleagues within the Children directorship specific and targeted communication was sent to children and young persons which allowed them to be engaged in the development of the plan.
- f. **Ward member engagement:**  
Local councillors were invited to provide input on priorities within their wards and to share feedback from constituents.
- g. **Public feedback analysis:**  
Key themes from the consultation included strong support for safer infrastructure, improved connectivity, and removal of barriers to walking and cycling. This feedback has directly informed the recommendations and will guide revisions to the LCWIP.
- h. The below in priority order are the infrastructure that is supported by the public
  - designate and enhance Quiet Lanes
  - create and improve off highway routes
  - upgrade junctions for safety and accessibility
  - introduce traffic calming
  - manage and improve footways
  - implement modal filters
  - integrate green infrastructure
  - Improve routes to school
  - provide additional cycle parking
  - enhance signage and wayfinding
  - install gateway features
  - improve street lighting
- i. The responses showed a 42% support of the routes proposed. However there was 32% dissatisfaction on the routes; we have received a 100's of route suggestions from the public

which are being reviewed and added into the LCWIP and will be presented to Cabinet in the final draft.

j. In addition to the additional routes identified through the consultation the key proposal include the below –

- Strengthening links to Hereford County Hospital
- Creating better connections between Lugwardine and Hereford City
- Improving links between Stretton Sugwas and Hereford City
- Upgrading walking and cycling infrastructure in Ledbury
- Delivering local “quick wins,” such as removing chicanes and barriers that hinder walking and cycling
- Providing additional crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists

24. Further consultation will be undertaken as part of scheme development and delivery. Feedback will be communicated to consultees via the council’s website and direct updates where appropriate.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – LCWIP, part 1

Appendix 2 – LCWIP, part 2

Appendix 3 – LCWIP, part 3

## **Background papers**

None identified

## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Danial Webb	Date 28/08/2025
Finance	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Legal	Marc Sorrentino – Senior Lawyer	Date 29/08/2025
Communications	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Equality Duty	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Procurement	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Risk	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
Approved by	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.

## Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

LCWIP – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

LTP – Local Transport Plan

ATE – Active Travel England

DfT – Department for Transport