



# High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy

January 2024

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# Executive Summary

The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Vision sets out the overall direction of travel and the scale of ambition for the town’s transport system. It has three layers, the sum of which constitutes the Vision Statement, three ‘Connecting’ themes, and a set of key outcomes for each of those themes.

The Vision Statement and three ‘Connecting’ themes are:

**By 2050, High Wycombe will be among the best connected and most innovative towns in the Thames Valley, where all journeys, from start to finish, are low emission, seamless, and safe for all residents, businesses and visitors.**

Connecting locally	Connecting regionally	Connecting green spaces
<p>Allowing everyone to access key destinations, services and travel hubs by providing and promoting attractive alternatives to the car, making best use of technology; as well as reducing the need to travel and reducing the distance travelled every day.</p>	<p>Strengthening connectivity – digital, energy and transport – to support the movement of people and goods within the Thames Valley and to London, Heathrow Airport, Oxford and beyond.</p>	<p>Enhancing health and wellbeing by providing safe, accessible routes to and throughout the town and its unique natural surroundings, including The Chilterns and Rivers Wye and Thames.</p>

A growing population, more employment opportunities, more housing, planned economic regeneration and increasing prosperity will lead to more journeys being made in High Wycombe in the future. ‘Business as usual’ for transport will not work. Many more trips made by private car on High Wycombe’s constrained highway network; with its limited space for increasing road capacity, will result in more congestion and longer journey times. Heavy traffic flows and congestion will further impede bus journey times and make walking and cycling environments less safe and attractive due to worsening road safety and air quality. As such, **a balanced approach to transport planning and provision** is required to support growth and prosperity in High Wycombe.

The Transport Strategy has been designed to be able to flex over time in response to new technology, challenges and opportunities. A package of 26 initiatives across six different intervention categories have been set out which address the challenges ahead and seek to deliver the vision that by 2050 all journeys in High Wycombe will be low emission, seamless, and safe for all residents, businesses and visitors. These include:

- **Walking and cycling:** support people to walk or cycle for their shorter everyday trips in and around High Wycombe. Proposed initiatives include:
  - ‘Healthy Neighbourhood’ schemes: reducing rat running, and making it easier and safer to travel on foot or by bicycle.
  - Dedicated active travel infrastructure on arterial corridors and key routes as well as ‘quiet way’ style networks.
  - Development of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to identify a future town-wide walking, wheeling and cycling network for High Wycombe.
- **Public transport:** higher quality, more frequent and wider coverage of public transport services, particularly local bus services, to make travelling by public transport an easier, more viable and attractive alternative to going by car.

Key proposals include:

- Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park from High Wycombe

neighbourhoods.

- Expansion of London’s PAYG fare zone to include High Wycombe.
  - Development of north-south and east-west bus priority corridors on the A404 and A40.
  - Trains that travel into the new Old Oak Common railway station to provide an alternative terminus to London Marylebone for Chiltern services and make it easier for passengers to access Crossrail, High Speed 2 and other services.
- **Shared and new mobility:** shared and new mobility modes should be embraced where there is evidence that they will support people in choosing alternatives to car and help reduce single car occupancy trips. Key initiatives include:
    - Demand responsive flexible bus services that adapt to passenger needs.
    - Integrated multi-operator ticketing within a High Wycombe travel zone.
    - Providing car club spaces as standard in new developments and in the town centre.
    - An e-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme in High Wycombe.
  - **Highways and congestion management:** optimise the existing highway network through new technologies and manage the level of traffic congestion experienced. The key schemes include:
    - Optimisation of town centre traffic signals to reduce queuing and improve air quality.
    - Smart, networked traffic-lights to manage queues along main road corridors (e.g. A404) by synchronising signals.
    - Repurposing or redesigning the A40 Abbey Way flyover in the town centre.
  - **Land-use, planning and parking:** land-use, planning and parking policies which make better use of the available land in High Wycombe and which serve to support future trends in travel habits and transport technologies. The key initiatives include:
    - A readily accessible local electric vehicle charging point network.
    - Parking standards that support car-light living.
  - **Modal Shift schemes:** support modal shift by making it easier, safer and more attractive to switch between transport options. To promote and support the uptake of more sustainable forms of travel (cycling, wheeling, walking and public transport) as alternatives to single-person car trips.

In developing the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy, we have reviewed national, sub-national and local policies, plans and strategies. We have collated and analysed various datasets to provide as detailed a picture as possible as to how High Wycombe’s transport network performs and where the key challenges and opportunities lie. We have also engaged extensively with Council officers and Members, technical stakeholders such as transport operators, local business leaders as well as people who live, work and visit High Wycombe.

However, we do recognise that existing data, current opinions and transport behaviours are likely going to change over the life of the transport strategy. The emergence of new technologies such as automation of vehicles and transport systems, on-demand mobility services and alternative fuels such as hydrogen, biofuels and electric car engines, will lead to faster and more efficient transport systems.

While it can be difficult to predict the future of transportation and the socioeconomic impacts of new transport technologies and systems, we have confidence that the schemes outlined in this transport strategy constitute the right combination of options to deliver the transport vision. The strategy has also been designed to adapt to paradigm shifts brought on by new technologies in order to deliver the long-term ambition for 2050.

# 1. Introduction

## What is the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy?

- 1.1 The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy sets out the pathway for High Wycombe’s future transport system. The Vision is a clear statement of intent for how High Wycombe’s transport system should unlock, support and enhance the wellbeing and prosperity of its residents, visitors and businesses in the longer term.

By 2050, High Wycombe will be among the best connected and most innovative towns in the Thames Valley, where all journeys, from start to finish, are low-emission, seamless, and safe for all residents, businesses and visitors.

- 1.2 Looking ahead over a thirty-year time horizon – beyond traditional planning and forecasting timescales – affords the opportunity to look objectively at current challenges, to consider carefully what must and should change, and to be on the front foot of future trends and opportunities.
- 1.3 How people travel within, through and out of High Wycombe in 2050 will inevitably be very different to what we experience today. Therefore, a longer-term holistic approach is necessary to ensure that positive trends are prepared for and harnessed, and that trends with potentially undesired effects are rejected or mitigated. The Strategy creates a framework for assessing the value of new forms of travel and technologies to a future High Wycombe.
- 1.4 Investment in High Wycombe’s transport is key to delivering sustainable growth by increasing competitiveness, supporting employment and creating opportunity across the town. The Transport Strategy reflects the ambition that residents, businesses and other stakeholders hold for High Wycombe as a place in which to live, work or play, and identifies the role that an enhanced transport system has in achieving that ambition.
- 1.5 The Transport Vision articulates the level of ambition for how High Wycombe should look and feel by 2050 and the transition from now to then. The Transport Strategy is the implementation plan for the Transport Vision; it describes the key transport schemes required in the next five, ten and fifteen years and beyond to deliver the Vision.
- 1.6 The Transport Strategy considers all forms of travel and all areas of High Wycombe, as well as connections to and from the town. It also considers the opportunities of new and ‘disruptive’ technologies in transport such as on-demand and shared mobility.



## Development of the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy

- 1.7 Buckinghamshire Council appointed transport, infrastructure and cities consultancy Steer to support the preparation of the Transport Strategy, covering the period to 2050.
- 1.8 National, sub-national and local planning and transport policy, combined with an evidence-led review of High Wycombe’s transport network’s current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were considered in order to set the overarching context for the Transport Strategy.
- 1.9 The development of the Transport Strategy involved the consideration of several potential future scenarios that could transpire by 2050. Different transport initiatives were tested in the High Wycombe ‘decision-informing tool’ – Steer’s online Urban Dynamic Model (UDM) – to provide an indication of how the different interventions would perform in combination, and how resilient the different combinations were to the future scenarios identified.
- 1.10 Throughout the process of developing both the Transport Vision Statement and the Strategy itself; the team engaged with Council officers, local members, technical stakeholders such as transport operators, local business leaders as well as people who live, work and visit High Wycombe. This programme of stakeholder engagement identified local ambitions and priorities for High Wycombe’s future transport network, forming the foundations of the Transport Strategy in terms of overall ambition, themes and detail of the Transport Strategy.
- 1.11 A public consultation on the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the draft High Wycombe LCWIP took place in tandem over an 8-week period between 14th October and 12th December 2022. The primary objective of the public consultation was to understand the views of people who live, travel, work or study in the High Wycombe area on the two draft plans, in order to inform the direction of the proposed initiatives. Headline consultation findings found the majority of the respondents were supportive, and feedback received was used to make amendments to the final documents.



## Council Policy Context

### 1.12 Buckinghamshire Corporate Plan 2020-2025

The corporate Plan sets out the following priorities:

- Increasing prosperity
- Strengthening communities
- Improving the environment
- Protecting the vulnerable

The High Wycombe transport strategy will complement the corporate direction and contribute to the achievement of all four priorities.

### 1.13 Buckinghamshire's Economy: Succeeding as a place, succeeding as a county

Buckinghamshire has a strong £14.6bn economy with the 11<sup>th</sup> highest GDP per head in the country. However, traffic congestion has been identified as one of the constraints to future economic growth in the county and the initiatives proposed in this strategy will form part of the efforts to tackle this issue.

### 1.14 Buckinghamshire Regeneration Framework

The High Wycombe transport strategy outlines the transport elements needed to support the overarching principles of the Buckinghamshire-wide Regeneration Framework. These will be deployed through the High Wycombe Regeneration Strategy.

### 1.15 High Wycombe Regeneration Strategy

The Regeneration Strategy proposes an ambitious target for economic growth in Wycombe by 2040, and identifies transformational plans to enhance economic vitality, sense of place and people's enjoyment of High Wycombe.

The Wycombe Regeneration Strategy and High Wycombe Transport Strategy were developed in tandem between 2019 and 2021, with the respective teams sharing information and ideas about the overall direction of these strategies. Transport is largely a 'derived demand' (a consequence of demand generated by travel for economic activity, education, leisure and so on), therefore it was important for the Transport Strategy to reflect and build on the economic ambition set out in the Regeneration Strategy.

To do this, an additional economic and land-use scenario was considered in the High Wycombe decision-informing tool. The performance of different combinations of transport interventions were tested under this additional scenario. This additional scenario was called the 'high growth' scenario (with the other being the 'standard growth' scenario), and it reflected the higher levels of growth aimed for in the Regeneration Strategy.

### 1.16 Opportunity Bucks

Under the Buckinghamshire Levelling Up framework, 'Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for All' seeks to address disparities between Buckinghamshire communities. The programme has identified six wards in High Wycombe: Abbey, Booker, Cressex & Castlefield, Ryemead & Micklefield, Terriers & Amersham Hill, Totteridge & Bowerdean and West Wycombe where parties will be brought together to tackle local priorities for improving standards of living, safety and pride of place, and health and wellbeing. This strategy's initiatives cover all these wards and will support the levelling up framework through its active travel and healthy neighborhood initiatives as well as proposals to improve access to public transport.

**1.17 Buckinghamshire Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy 2021**

The proposals in the transport strategy will constitute measures to tackle air quality challenges, manage congestion and reduce carbon emissions in line with our local target of net zero by 2050.

**1.18 Local Plan for Buckinghamshire**

The new Local Plan's vision and objectives has been developed alongside the new Local Transport plan's (LTP5) vision and objectives. This integration of development and transport will ensure that future growth is achieved in an economic and sustainable way.

**1.19 Buckinghamshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2025**

The High Wycombe Transport Strategy includes a range of active travel and healthy neighbourhood initiatives that will improve health and wellbeing, improve public realm conditions and provide accessible transport options for vulnerable and disabled road users and residents.

**1.20 Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5)**

The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy will form one of a suite of more detailed place- and modally focused sub documents to the new Local Transport Plan 5, which is expected to be adopted by the Council in 2024 following public consultation.

**1.21 The High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)**

The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP have been developed in parallel to ensure alignment and collaboration. The transport strategy, supported by the LCWIP, will ensure that the Council has a clear policy direction and set of transport priorities for High Wycombe that can be taken forward for further development, future funding applications and delivery.



## 2. Travel and transport in High Wycombe: challenges and opportunities

### About the network

- 2.1 The M40 motorway links London, Oxford and Birmingham and it lies to the south of High Wycombe, marking the southern boundary of the urban area. Junction 4 of the M40 connects to High Wycombe via the A404 which connects the M40 to the M4.
- 2.2 The A404 north and the A40 cross in High Wycombe's town centre forming north-south and east-west connections through the urban area of High Wycombe.
- 2.3 There is a railway station in High Wycombe which is served by Chiltern Railways. Services from High Wycombe Train Station run on the Chiltern Rail main line to London, Oxford, Birmingham and Kidderminster. There is also a branch line that offers services from High Wycombe to Aylesbury via Princes Risborough.
- 2.4 High Wycombe is Buckinghamshire's busiest railway station and as of 2017-18, usership had grown by 37% since 2008-09; a higher rate of growth than any other Buckinghamshire station on the same line.
- 2.5 Bus services in High Wycombe are principally operated by Arriva Beds and Bucks, with Carousel, Red Line and Red Eagle also providing some services. The bus station is located on the western side of the town centre, on Bridge Street.
- 2.6 There is a Park and Ride hub, located to the south of the town at the Handy Cross Coachway. Express coach connections also operate to various destinations including Heathrow Airport, London and Birmingham. The Park and Ride service currently calls at the rail and bus stations, Eden shopping centre and Wycombe hospital.
- 2.7 The town's cycling network is limited. There are no National Cycle Network routes through the town, although the Chilterns Cycleway passes through West Wycombe. There is an 'East-West' cycle route running along the river valley, from Desborough to Loudwater, which has some signage, but is not fully signed as a cycle route and does not meet current cycling design standards along most of its length.
- 2.8 The A40 Abbey Way flyover in the town centre, forming the roof of part of the Eden shopping centre, has a segregated on-carriageway cycle lane eastbound; however, it connects two large roundabouts with no dedicated cycling infrastructure at either end.
- 2.9 The town centre is partially pedestrianized along High Street, Church Street and up to Frogmoor. The Eden shopping center also allows people to move around the town centre away from vehicles, providing a welcoming environment for pedestrians.

## Use of the network

- 2.10 Journey to work data (Census 2011) provides useful insights into the main ways people travel. Most High Wycombe residents travel to work either within the town (43%), or within the former Wycombe district (56%). A notable proportion commute to central London, Heathrow, Reading and Aylesbury. People travelling to High Wycombe for work also come mostly from the former Wycombe district or neighbouring districts.
- 2.11 When considering what type of transport is used, across the top 20 work destinations of High Wycombe residents, 68% drive, 12% walk, 7% take the bus, 6% get a lift in a car, 5% take the train and 1% cycle. Though proportions vary by destination, driving journeys continue to be high amongst those residents who work within the wider former district (61%); though walking is also high at 19%.
- 2.12 For those journeys to work that both start and end in High Wycombe town, driving is lower at 57% and walking journeys are higher again at 24%. For comparison, 55% of journeys to work are made by car in England on average. The data demonstrates that High Wycombe's residents are more likely to drive than the England average, but other methods of travel are largely in line with the England average.
- 2.13 There are a high number of schools in High Wycombe and some of the schools draw pupils from a wide catchment area due to their good reputation. There is a particular cluster in the Daws Hill area with stakeholders and residents reporting a significant problem with school traffic congestion in this area associated, which have a total roll of around 3,000 pupils.
- 2.14 Promisingly, data from a sample of 12 primary schools in the town suggests over half of all pupils walk to school (school travel plan data sample 2017-18). However, car travel accounts for almost a quarter of trips to school and a further 13% are dropped off nearby and walk the final leg. Data for the secondary schools is not available.



## Impacts of current levels of use

### *Congestion*

- 2.15 The road network is very congested during rush hour ‘peak times’ on key routes. This is perhaps unsurprising given the high levels of car ownership and use. Key roads with notable delays (which is those that record speeds in the morning peak which are less than 50% of ‘free flow’ speed) include the A404 south of Handy Cross, the A40 corridor (London Road) and the A404 through the town (Marlow Hill, Amersham Hill). The A4010 (New Road, Chapel Lane, Bradenham Road), the A40 (West Wycombe Road) and the A4128 (Hughenden Road) also record speeds in the morning peak between 50% and 70% of free flow speed.
- 2.16 There is a high volume of ‘through-traffic’ which is journeys that do not start or end in the town. Traffic modelling<sup>1</sup> identified the relative contribution of through traffic to overall traffic volumes. The modelling showed that morning and evening peak time traffic had similar patterns, comprising:
- 31% internal trips within High Wycombe;
  - 46% either originate or end in High Wycombe; and
  - 23% through trips.
- 2.17 The greatest through traffic flows are along Hughenden Valley, Marlow Hill and through Handy Cross, with a secondary flow along New Road / Chapel Lane.
- 2.18 Significant investment in the local road network has been made over recent years to add space, or ‘capacity’, to the road network. However, current conditions indicate that this has had only a marginal effect on congestion levels. This is in line with national and international evidence which shows that increasing highway capacity in towns and cities does not result in less congestion in the long term.

### *Road safety*

- 2.19 Over the period 2018 to 2023, the town’s roads have seen several fatal (3), serious (61) and slight (487) collisions. The council’s intervention levels identify areas where mitigation measures are needed and in 2023 there were measures introduced between the A40 Junction – Desborough Park Road and Cressex Road – Coronation Road. There is also an extensive scheme aimed at anti-social driving behaviour and inappropriate speed in the Castlefields area which is in the early stages of development in 2023/24.

### *Air quality*

- 2.20 The former Wycombe District Council declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) covering High Wycombe’s town centre and key access roads at the end of 2017.
- 2.21 To combat the challenge of poor air quality, the Council published an Air Quality Action Plan in 2018 detailing a series of measures to improve air quality. Continued intervention is required to ensure that the levels can be reduced below EU limits and to limit the need to declare an extension of the AQMA. Emissions from transport, particularly cars and vans, is the primary contributor to poor air quality across the town.
- 2.22 In March 2020, the Council also adopted an Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document to the Local Plan which sets out guidance on development requirements for mitigating air quality impacts.
- 2.23 In 2021, Buckinghamshire Council adopted the Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy which aims to:

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<sup>1</sup> High Wycombe Area Transport Study, 2014

- achieve net zero carbon emissions for Buckinghamshire as a whole by 2050
- achieve net zero carbon emissions for the council no later than 2050, potentially as early as 2030
- to improve air quality across Buckinghamshire

## Future travel and transport challenges in High Wycombe

- 2.24 How we travel and the number of journeys we take within, through and out of High Wycombe in 2050 is likely to be significantly different to what we experience today. An increasing and ageing population, different patterns of economic activity, new technologies and new forms of mobility will influence the demand for travel, where trips are made from and to including why and how those trips are made.

## Planned and forecast future growth

### *Population growth and change*

- 2.25 The Office of National Statistics' (ONS) detailed population projections go as far ahead as 2041 and forecast that the population of the former Wycombe district will grow from a total of 175,400 in 2016, to 182,300 in 2030, and 185,900 in 2041. This population growth is equivalent to 6% increase between 2016 and 2040.
- 2.26 The structure of the population is also forecast to change between now and 2041, with more elderly people compared to today, both in absolute and relative terms. The number of people aged 65 and over is predicted to increase by 46%, while the number of young people (0-14) is expected to reduce by 4%. The number of very elderly people (aged 90+) is expected to increase by 180%, which equates to an additional 2,700 people aged 90 and over in Wycombe in 2041.

### *Housing*

- 2.27 The Wycombe District Local Plan (adopted August 2019) identifies that the housing target – the number of new dwellings required to be built by the Government – for the district for the plan period 2013-2033 is 10,925 homes, of which 6,350 homes are to be built within the High Wycombe urban area. The sites where these new houses are to be built have been allocated within the Wycombe District Local Plan.
- 2.28 Buckinghamshire's new Local Plan and Housing Strategy will set out the areas where new development is likely to happen. The plans will set out clear priorities that provide affordable, accessible, suitable and sustainable choices for all.
- 2.29 Although the sites that will accommodate any new homes required beyond 2033 are not yet known, it is likely that existing sites in the High Wycombe urban area will be 'densified'. This has the potential to change how people live and move around High Wycombe as people will be able to live closer to the town centre, where services and transport options are easily accessible. This would mean that trip distances are likely to be shorter and walking and cycling would be a more viable mode of travel for many everyday trips.

### *Employment and the economy*

- 2.30 The Wycombe District Local Plan (2019) forecasts employment growth of just over 7,650 full time equivalent jobs across the district in the period 2013-2033, most of which (c.5,000) will be in the 'B use' class sectors of office, industrial and warehousing.
- 2.31 Policy CP5 of the Local Plan safeguards strategic and local employment areas and aims to

support High Wycombe as a location for high quality offices. It allocates some employment land on the edge of the town.

- 2.32 If employment land is provided to 2033 as planned, predominantly focusing on the protection or intensification of existing space rather than the creation of major new employment sites, then the distribution of employment/jobs in High Wycombe in 2033 will likely be similar to what they are today, with businesses and jobs concentrated in the town centre and Cressex Business Park. The High Wycombe Regeneration Strategy outlines the principles for supporting business growth, improving the public realm and planning for an increased demand for urban living. The implication for the High Wycombe Transport Strategy is to ensure that transport supports the continuing and future prosperity of the town centre and business parks.

#### *Future transport provision*

- 2.33 Future planned growth in population and employment will be supported and mitigated to an extent by various local (and some national and sub-national) transport projects which are due to be, or could be, implemented within the lifetime of the High Wycombe Transport Strategy.
- 2.34 The notable national and sub-national schemes include: East-West Rail; High Wycombe to Old Oak Common single rail line upgrade, and improvements to the A404 M40 Handy Cross interchange, Westhorpe interchange and at Bisham Junction.
- 2.35 Local transport projects, some of which have funding committed, include:
- road network capacity enhancements including junction reconfigurations (e.g., Gomm Road / London Road, Kingsmead Road / Abbey Barn Road / Abbey Barn Lane and Heath End Road / Abbey Barn Lane);
  - bus service improvements including smart ticketing, capacity enhancements to High Wycombe Bus Station, the introduction of demand responsive transport services, and additional bus services for major development sites;
  - highway and environmental improvements on roads in the town centre from the High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan; and
  - highway and cycling improvements linked to the Southern Quadrant Transport Strategy.

### **Implications of growth and future trends**

- 2.36 Changing social trends, in conjunction with rapid change in the technology and digital spheres, mean that it is increasingly difficult to make robust predictions about how we will travel in 10, 20 or 30 years. There are many factors which could combine in different ways that will affect total demand for travel in and to High Wycombe.
- 2.37 Despite these inherent challenges, it is possible to make informed predictions, drawing upon evidence from experts in the field and an appreciation of the key drivers of travel demand, and identify the more, or most, likely manifestations of certain trends and technologies to 2050. The following statements are such predictions for High Wycombe:
- It is likely that **total demand for travel in High Wycombe will increase** during the Local Plan period and continue increasing, albeit at a moderate rate compared to other areas, to 2050, mostly driven by population and employment growth.
  - It is likely that **traffic congestion in and around High Wycombe will continue to be an issue**. This is a product of demand increasing through population and employment growth, and supply decreasing through measures to reallocate road space to other forms of transport. No course of action will ever entirely 'solve' the problem of congestion – new road capacity in urban areas is quickly filled as people choose to make new and different trips (a phenomenon known as 'induced demand') – but it should be possible to manage congestion and mitigate its impact on High Wycombe's residents and economy.



- It is likely that an ageing population, and increasing absolute numbers of older people, will mean that **the transport system needs to be more accessible, and more inclusive, than it is today.**
- It is likely that **increasing numbers of petrol and diesel vehicles in High Wycombe will be replaced with electric vehicles.** Although predictions for uptake of electric vehicles vary, it is expected that electric vehicles will account for the majority of new car sales from the late 2020s.
- It is likely that **an increased number of High Wycombe's residents will be able to satisfy their everyday travel needs without owning or using a private car.** New development in High Wycombe, in and around the town centre and public transport hubs, will locate residents near to their jobs, services and leisure opportunities. This will likely reduce the distances travelled, making walking and cycling a more suitable way to travel.

2.38 The likely impacts of new transport technologies and systems on travel in High Wycombe are still too uncertain to call. For example, the development of autonomous vehicles such as Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs) is predicted to revolutionise freight and public transport, whilst the integration of artificial intelligence in drone technology is likely to play a role in the future of deliveries. Given the very broad range of potential impacts it is important for future iterations of the Transport Strategy to consider what will be acceptable and what will be unacceptable. This will ensure the strategy allows benefits to be captured, while avoiding unacceptable outcomes.



## 3. The High Wycombe Transport Vision

- 3.3. The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Vision sets the overall direction of travel and the scale of ambition for the town's transport system. It has three layers, the sum of which constitutes the Transport Vision. It consists of a Vision Statement, three 'Connecting' themes, and a set of key outcomes for each of those themes.

### **The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Vision Statement**

By 2050, High Wycombe will be among the best connected and most innovative towns in the Thames Valley, where all journeys, from start to finish, are low emission, seamless, and safe for all residents, businesses, and visitors.

### **What does the Vision Statement mean?**

#### ***By 2050...***

- 3.4. The Transport Vision sets the direction of travel in the long-term. The Transport Strategy identifies the key initiatives required to support High Wycombe, recognising that major transport projects and changing behaviours can take a generation to achieve and deliver.

### ***High Wycombe will be among the best connected and most innovative towns in the Thames Valley***

- 3.5. The Transport Strategy will support High Wycombe by galvanising its position within the Thames Valley – supporting high-growth, high-value, knowledge-intensive jobs in digital technology and science sectors through supporting strategic connectivity and embracing digital, energy and transport innovation. High Wycombe will be a testbed for new ideas and their roll-out.

### ***All journeys, from start to finish, are low emission, seamless, sustainable and safe for all residents, businesses and visitors.***

- 3.6. As explained in Section 2 a 'business as usual' approach to travel in the future will not work. As the population and number of jobs grow, more trips will be made by private car resulting in more congestion as well as negative economic, health and environmental impacts. Unless desirable and convenient alternatives are made available.
- 3.7. There are limited opportunities to increase highway capacity in High Wycombe, as well as a robust body of evidence which shows that increasing highway capacity only has a short-term impact on congestion levels.
- 3.8. Even if opportunities for effective highway capacity enhancements were to exist in High Wycombe, such enhancements would not address issues regarding the negative impacts of road traffic, including air pollution, carbon emissions, road safety, and wider public health. Heavy traffic flows and congestion would further impede bus journey times and make walking and cycling environments less attractive.
- 3.9. High Wycombe, like any other town, has areas where health, work and education outcomes are poorer. Opportunity Bucks; the council's programme to improve opportunities for people in Buckinghamshire, has identified six wards in High Wycombe (Abbey, Booker, Cressex & Castlefield, Ryemead & Micklefield, Terriers & Amersham Hill, Totteridge & Bowerdean, West Wycombe) where interventions are needed to help improve standards of living and health and wellbeing. The proposed initiatives in this strategy will play a role in addressing disparities between Buckinghamshire communities by increasing transport choices and improving accessibility for all.

- 3.10. A successful transport network is one which:

- operates as a coherent system – integrated and seamless – achieved through integrated travel information, ticketing, embracing new travel options (e.g., cycle hire), and improved facilities at points of interchange between travel options;
- provides access for all residents to jobs and employment opportunities, key services, and local amenities by sustainable transport options – where everyone has their accessibility and mobility needs met through excellence in design, transport choices for those without access to a vehicle and timely infrastructure delivery;
- provides reliable, resilient options for supply chains and the movement of goods;
- connects to labour markets, major economic hubs, and international gateways;
- supports future development sustainably; and
- protects and enhances the environment, tackles climate change and harmful emissions, and is resilient to climate change, extreme weather events, and disruptions on the network.





## Key transport themes and priorities for High Wycombe to 2050

- 3.11. Three transport and mobility themes cascade from the Vision Statement. These ‘Connecting’ themes, and associated outcomes, provide a framework for the Transport Strategy in terms of the opportunities to be realised and the outcomes that the Transport Strategy will help to achieve.

Connecting locally	Connecting regionally	Connecting green spaces
<p>Allowing everyone to access key destinations, services and travel hubs by providing and promoting attractive alternatives to the car, making best use of technology; as well as reducing the need to travel and the distance travelled every day.</p>	<p>Strengthening connectivity – digital, energy and transport – to support the movement of people and goods within the Thames Valley and to London, Heathrow Airport, Oxford and beyond.</p>	<p>Enhancing health and wellbeing by providing safe, accessible routes to and throughout the town and its unique natural surroundings, including The Chilterns and Rivers Wye and Thames.</p>

### Connecting locally: key outcomes

- The town centre, neighbourhood centres, travel hubs, business parks and other key destinations will be well integrated with each other and the rest of High Wycombe.
- The town centre will be a destination of choice, bolstered by streets that are inclusive, accessible and safe by design – it will be a vibrant place to live, shop, visit and conduct business.
- Information on travel options in High Wycombe will be accessible and make best use of technology, allowing people to make informed choices.
- Congestion in High Wycombe will be managed by providing and promoting attractive and sustainable alternatives to the car, and by making best use of technology. The structure of the local transport network will support people to walk or cycle for most of their everyday trips in and around High Wycombe.
- High Wycombe’s transport network will be safer for all users.

### Connecting regionally: key outcomes

- High Wycombe’s rail and coach infrastructure and connections will continue to be a significant asset for people living, working, and doing business in or visiting the town.
- The ease and comfort of journeys by rail and coach will be improved.
- High Wycombe’s business parks and industrial estates will be well connected to the public transport travel hubs and the Strategic Road Network.
- Full use of appropriate technological solutions will be made to improve journey times, reliability, safety and the resilience of the road and rail network, for the movement of people and goods.

### Connecting green spaces: key outcomes

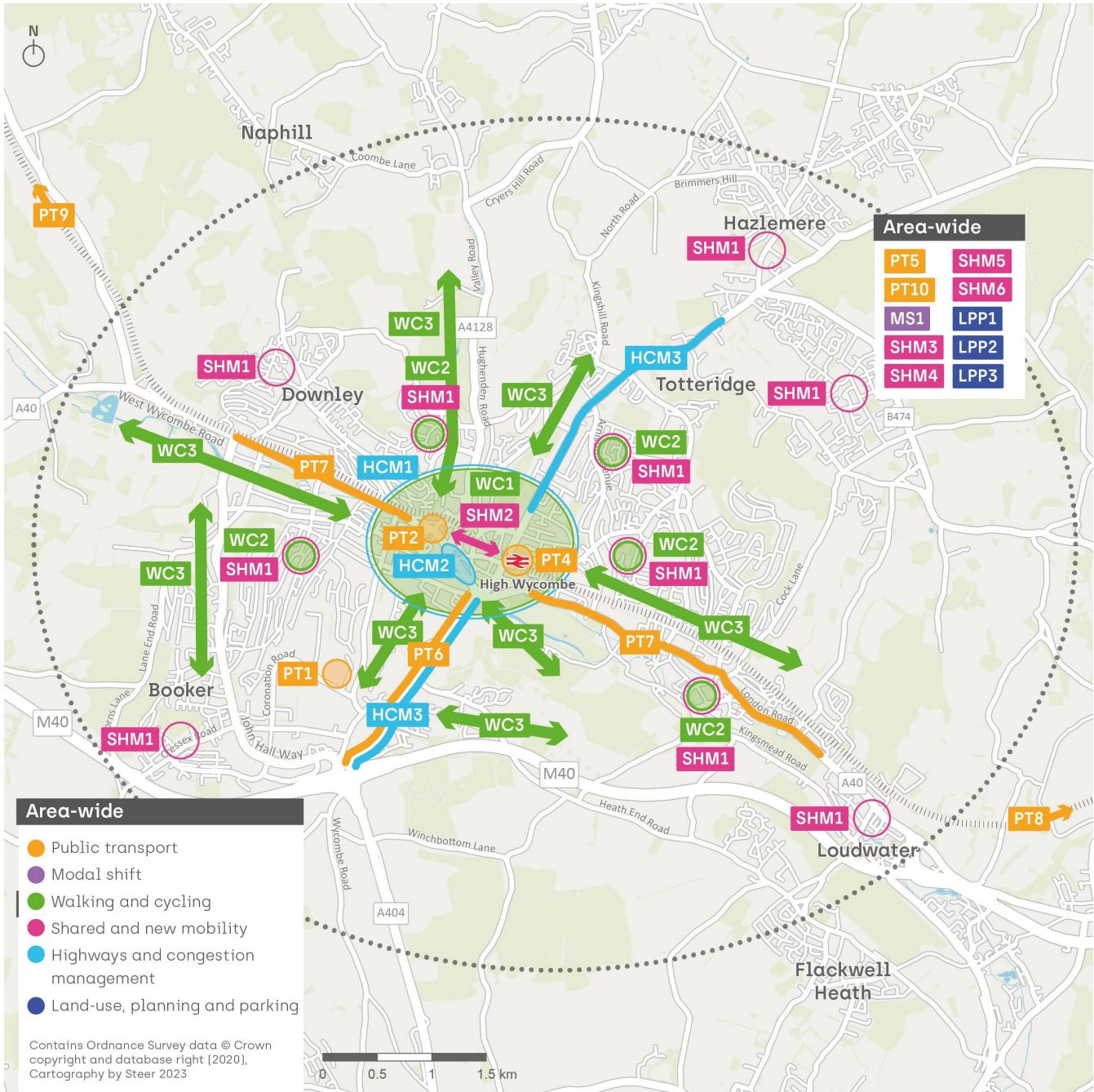
- It will be the norm to engage in safe and easy active travel in and around High Wycombe.
- Sustainable connectivity to and from the valley to the plateaux and surrounding higher areas will be made easier. Sustainable connections to nearby surrounding settlements will also be improved.
- Everyone living, visiting, working and doing business in High Wycombe will have an equal opportunity to visit and enjoy the green spaces in and around the town by foot, by bicycle, or by other non-motorised modes of transport.
- The access and quality of the existing network of green corridors and infrastructure will be expanded in line with Buckinghamshire-wide Regeneration and Levelling up Frameworks. This will give everyone living, visiting, working and doing business in High Wycombe everyday access to a pleasant, attractive, natural environment.



## 4. The High Wycombe Transport Strategy

- 4.4. The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy flows from the Transport Vision. It represents the plan for delivering the ambition and outcomes described in the Transport Vision.
- 4.5. A growing population, more employment and housing, and economic regeneration and prosperity will lead to more journeys being made in High Wycombe in the future than today and we have explained why 'business as usual' for transport will not work.
- 4.6. Additionally, the significant variations in outcomes in High Wycombe would need to be addressed in partnership with council wide efforts for decreasing disparities between communities.
- 4.7. As such, a balanced approach to transport planning and provision is required to support growth and prosperity in High Wycombe. Measures to increase transport choices, improve accessibility and connectivity and promote sustainable modes of transport must be prioritised in order to deliver the ambition of raising living standards whilst managing traffic levels and tackling congestion.
- 4.8. The initiatives and policies which form the Transport Strategy are set out in the sections that follow according to the 'Connecting' theme that they support most.
- 4.9. It is important to note that the initiatives detailed here is not an exhaustive list of all schemes that will be provided in High Wycombe from now until 2050. The exact schemes and strategies deployed to deliver the Transport Vision across its thirty-year lifespan will necessarily evolve over time as new information, challenges and opportunities emerge.
- 4.10. Buckinghamshire Council would be reliant on external funding sources to deliver many of the proposed schemes and there is great uncertainty on how it would be secured. Furthermore, funding is unlikely to be available for all the schemes in parallel. Therefore, further work to prioritise and align the schemes with any available funding will be required. Advocacy will also play an important role in promoting the schemes that are not with the council's remit for delivery.
- 4.11. Nevertheless, the initiatives and policies outlined constitute the best package at this time in terms of alignment with the Transport Vision, the outcomes it is expected to deliver, and the scale of ambition that stakeholders have for High Wycombe.
- 4.12. The map overleaf in Figure 4. shows all the initiatives that form the Transport Strategy and the approximate locations where they will be delivered.

Figure 4. High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy Initiatives



These illustrations are indicative. The exact interventions and their locations will be subject to further development, engagement, and public consultation, if and when they are taken forward subject to funding availability.

**Table 4. High Wycombe Transport Strategy Initiatives - Index**

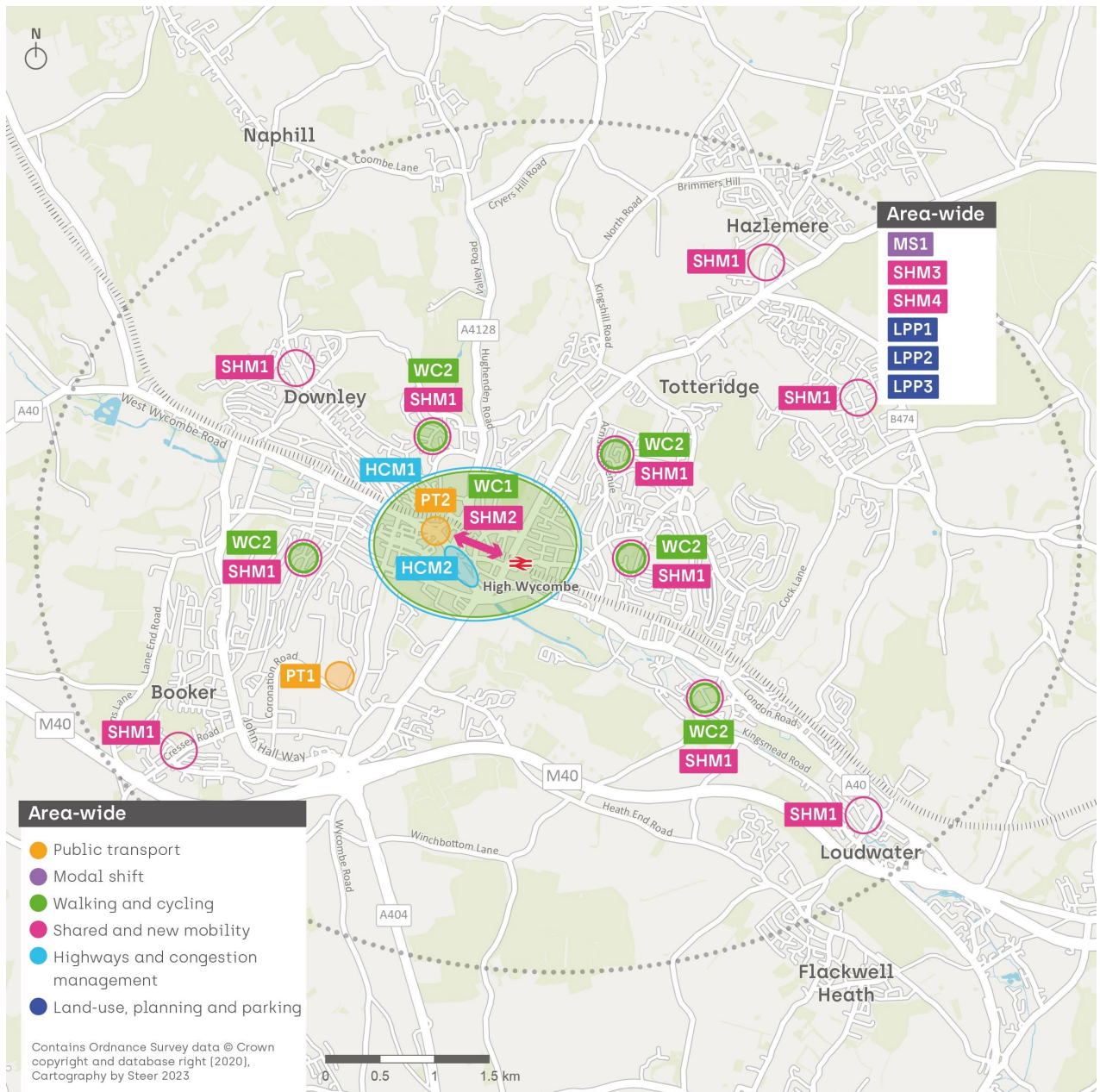
Ref.	Scheme description
WC1	Town centre wayfinding signage scheme
WC2	'Healthy Neighbourhood' schemes
WC3	Dedicated active travel infrastructure on arterial corridors and key routes as well as 'quiet way' style networks
PT1	Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park from High Wycombe neighbourhoods
PT2	Additional layover space for buses and dynamic bus stand allocation
PT3	Fast, affordable, reliable bus services
PT4	Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel area to High Wycombe
PT5	Development of a High Wycombe and surrounding towns travel zone
PT6	North-south bus priority corridor on the A404 Marlow Hill
PT7	East-west bus priority corridor on the A40 London Road and West Wycombe Road
PT8	Old Oak Common connectivity interventions
PT9	Increase capacity on the rail line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury
PT10	Conversion of existing bus fleet to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
SHM1	'Mobility hubs'
SHM2	Autonomous shuttle between the bus and rail stations
SHM3	Demand responsive flexible bus services and integrated ticketing
SHM4	Car club spaces as standard in new developments and the town centre
SHM5	E-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme
SHM6	E-bike hire scheme for longer-term trial rental periods
HCM1	Optimisation of town centre traffic signals
HCM2	Repurposing the A40 Abbey Way flyover
HCM3	Smart, networked traffic-lights to manage queues on A404
LPP1	Town-wide electric vehicle charging infrastructure
LPP2	Parking standards to support car-light living
MS1	High Wycombe modal shift schemes



### Connecting locally

- 4.13. The schemes which support the ‘Connecting locally’ theme are schemes which, in combination with each other, are designed to allow everyone to access key destinations, services and travel hubs by providing attractive, affordable and sustainable alternatives to the car. The emphasis of this combination of schemes is to encourage and support people in making more of their local journeys by active and sustainable means; to make best use of technology; and to reduce the need to travel overall. The schemes are shown in Figure 4.1.
- 4.14. With those objectives in mind, the ‘Connecting locally’ initiatives are focused on improvements to local public transport services, neighbourhood-scale, and town-wide improvements. Improvements to walking and cycling journeys easier, safer and more attractive, and measures that provide more transport choices to help reduce car use for their regular, local journeys.

**Figure 4.1 'Connecting Locally' Initiatives**



**Table 4.1 'Connecting Locally' Initiatives - Index**

Ref.	Scheme description
WC1	Town centre wayfinding signage scheme
WC2	'Healthy Neighbourhood' schemes
PT1	Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park
PT2	Additional layover space for buses and dynamic bus stand allocation
PT3	Fast, affordable, reliable bus services
SHM1	Mobility hubs
SHM2	Autonomous shuttle between the bus and rail stations
SHM3	Demand responsive flexible bus services and integrated ticketing
SHM4	Car club spaces as standard in new developments and the town centre
HCM1	Optimisation of town centre traffic signals
HCM2	Repurposing the A40 Abbey Way flyover
LPP1	Town-wide electric vehicle charging infrastructure
LPP2	Parking standards to support car-light living
MS1	High Wycombe modal shift schemes





## Modal shift schemes

- 4.15. Many of the everyday trips that High Wycombe residents, employees or visitors make within and around the town are of a distance and nature that they could be made without a car, using public transport, on foot or by cycle. A town-wide modal shift scheme (**BC1 – High Wycombe modal shift schemes**) would be a holistic programme of campaigns focused on encouraging and supporting people to use sustainable modes of travel for journeys to the shops, for leisure, to work and/or to school, college or university. The package would be developed and implemented alongside the other initiatives listed in this strategy across its 30-year lifespan and will adapt to the magnitude of modal shift needed to achieve the anticipated outcomes. Some of these would include the development and implementation of workplace and school travel plans, delivery and servicing plans (to better manage first and last mile freight activity), active travel challenges and car-free days.
- 4.16. By thinking holistically about how people travel, initiatives like the provision of travel information, integrated ticketing or well-appointed active travel routes would make modal shift towards public transport and active travel more attractive and convenient.

## Walking and cycling

- 4.17. At less than 1km wide, High Wycombe's town centre is reasonably compact and most journeys between the town centre destinations could be walked. Delivering **WC1 – Town centre wayfinding signage scheme** would provide people with on-street directions (through maps, signposts and indications of journey times) to and between destinations such as the train station, the bus station, Eden shopping centre and Buckinghamshire New University, giving them the confidence to make these journeys on foot.

### WC2 – 'Healthy Neighbourhood' scheme

- 4.18. This is a package of neighbourhood-based initiatives to reduce traffic volumes or 'rat-running' on local streets, making them more suitable for journeys on foot and by bike. Measures could include: road closures outside schools during pick-up and drop-off times (e.g. 'school streets' events), contra-flow cycling (allowing cycling in both directions on one-way streets), improved pedestrian crossing points, and public realm improvements to promote a sense of community and wellbeing. Further detail on potential Healthy Neighbourhood schemes will be set out in a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for High Wycombe.

## Public transport

- 4.19. The Transport Strategy includes three public transport schemes in the 'Connecting locally' theme:
- Cressex Business Park in High Wycombe and the Globe Business Park in Marlow are important local and sub-regional employment destinations, but there are local access issues, particularly at Cressex, where drivers can become stuck in queues of traffic at the end of the working day. We need to support people to use public transport to commute to these destinations by delivering **PT1 – Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park from High Wycombe neighbourhoods**. Though local bus services serve both Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park, we could enhance the existing services by extending service hours to evenings and weekends and by introducing more frequent direct services.
  - High Wycombe's bus and coach station is a modern facility on the western side of the town centre, next to the Eden shopping centre. It currently has 18 stands, but more space is required to accommodate more vehicles while they are not in service, and to make the process of arriving at the bus station quicker and reduce bus delays. **PT2** will provide **additional layover space for buses and dynamic bus stand allocation at the bus station**.

- **PT3 – Fast, affordable, reliable bus services**, including a review of existing route services and frequencies to identify where improvements could be made to improve connectivity across High Wycombe and support economic growth. Improvements could also include exploring the potential for through-services for longer distance journeys, avoiding the need to interchange in High Wycombe town centre.

## Shared and new mobility

- 4.20. The delivery of **SHM1 – ‘Mobility hub’ schemes** would run in parallel to **WC2 – ‘Healthy Neighbourhood’ schemes**. The ‘Mobility hub’ concept is one where a small amount of on- street space is given over to public and shared mobility modes (in the same place, at a central, convenient focus point in the neighbourhood), i.e. the bus stop would be co-located with space for a car club, secure space to park bikes, and e-bikes for hire, to enable easy changing between the different options.
- 4.21. Mobility hubs can offer residents a viable alternative to car usage and car ownership, increasing their mobility options and providing them with a low-cost, low- barrier opportunity to carbon-light transport. Mobility hubs can also act as the gateway towards permanent ownership of e-bikes or e-scooters, allowing residents to conveniently try before they buy. Mobility hubs could operate in locations such as Downley, Booker, Totteridge, Loudwater and Hazlemere. Within High Wycombe town centre, larger mobility hubs could be located alongside the train and bus stations.
- 4.22. High Wycombe’s bus and rail stations are approximately 700 metres apart as the crow flies, and it takes between 12-15 minutes to walk between the two. Options to provide an autonomous (self-driving) shuttle bus service between the bus and rail stations are being explored (**SHM2 – Autonomous shuttle between the bus and rail stations**), with the objective of making the journey between bus and rail quicker and easier.
- 4.23. **SHM3 – Demand responsive flexible bus services and integrated ticketing** is an initiative designed to make using public transport services in and around High Wycombe far easier (and therefore an attractive alternative to using the car). The scheme was introduced in High Wycombe on a trial basis funded by the Government’s Rural Mobility Fund. It involves the use of high quality smaller-capacity vehicles (e.g., mini-buses and people carriers) and people wanting to make a journey can book and pay via a smartphone app or phone number. There is real time information to the user's smartphone app, no fixed timetable and pick-up and drop-off points are flexible and are typically closer than stops for traditional ‘fixed route’ bus services. Fares also vary according to how many people are sharing a single journey together.
- 4.24. The public consultation feedback highlighted the need to define the role of this service to enhance public transport provision in the hillier areas of High Wycombe. A review will be carried out at the end of the trial in 2024 to inform this proposal, bearing in mind that expansion of the current service would be dependent on funding availability.
- 4.25. **SHM4 – Car club spaces provided as standard in new developments and in the town centre** aims to support residents, particularly younger residents living in or near to the town centre, to live without owning their own car. The Council will require space for car club vehicles as standard in new developments to support ‘car-light’ living.

## Highways and congestion management

- 4.26. **HCM1 – Optimisation** (i.e., linking and optimisation) **of town centre traffic signals** is an initiative that aims to deliver more reliable journey times for traffic, particularly buses, through the town centre using modern signals technology such as SCOOT (Split Cycle and Offset Optimisation Technique). A network of linked traffic lights would be used to coordinate, adjust and respond to traffic volumes or temporary changes in traffic patterns such as accidents and traffic fluctuations, to reduce vehicle delays and provide good progression of vehicles along main routes. Smooth traffic flow through the town centre would have additional benefits of improving air quality.

*The A40 Abbey Way flyover*

- 4.27. The Council has held an aspiration to limit the number / type of vehicles using the A40 Abbey Way flyover for several years in order to reduce the volume of through-traffic within the town centre.

In developing the Transport Strategy it has been determined that **HCM2 – Repurposing the A40 Abbey Way flyover** is consistent with the Transport Vision, but it is recognised that a specific, focused study is required to assess the different options that are available. The first step is to undertake a structural review of the flyover to thoroughly assess its condition and lifespan. Further to this, any proposed changes to the town centre highway network will be subject to detailed traffic modelling to understand the impacts on traffic flows through the town centre and on any alternative routes.

- 4.28. The two options that have been considered include a reduction in the number of lanes used and one that would remove vehicles completely. Both of these would enable the structure itself to be repurposed as a potential green corridor and give the opportunity for redevelopment of the areas underneath and immediately adjacent. This proposal received positive feedback from the public consultation however, the nature and timing of any closure (in full or part) will be determined by more detailed technical studies and further discussions between the Council’s planners, regeneration team and leaders and further engagement with local residents.

### Land-use, planning and parking

- 4.29. The Government has a commitment to end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2035. Predictions for the uptake of electric vehicles vary, but it is likely that electric vehicles will account for the majority of new car sales from the late 2020s. Therefore, it is imperative that the charging network keeps pace with demand. **LPP1 – Town-wide electric vehicle charging infrastructure** is an initiative that will support the rapid expansion of High Wycombe’s charging points in on-street and off-street locations. It will involve public sector subsidy of charging infrastructure (including bidding for central government funding), as well as working with the private sector (including developers) to require private sector provision of charging infrastructure. Buckinghamshire Council adopted an Electric Vehicle Charging Plan in 2022 which sets out a 5-year Action Plan to support the transition to Electric Vehicles. This includes plans to increase charging infrastructure in High Wycombe at Railway Place, the Swan Multi-Storey car park and Easton Street car park.

- 4.30. **LPP2 – Parking standards to support car-light living** seeks to build on both the national trend for lower rates of car ownership and use amongst younger people (see **SHM4 – Car clubs**) and realise the opportunity for car-light living, particularly in areas well served by public transport. A parking study undertaken for the Council in 2020 concluded that:

- lower rates of car ownership and observed under-occupation of residential car parks in the town centre would justify a lower maximum residential parking standard for future town centre developments;
- as areas of the town centre are redeveloped, reduction in town centre parking may be possible *if* an assessment of the supply and demand for public car parking shows that there is adequate provision across the town; and
- loss of publicly available parking to the Eastern Quarter development may not need to be replaced in full in order to meet demand for parking in the town centre.

- 4.31. This initiative will therefore deliver a revised parking standard for new developments in High Wycombe, i.e., Buckinghamshire Council will set a new reduced maximum number of parking spaces for new developments, including provision of a car club where practical.

## Additional demand management / pricing mechanisms

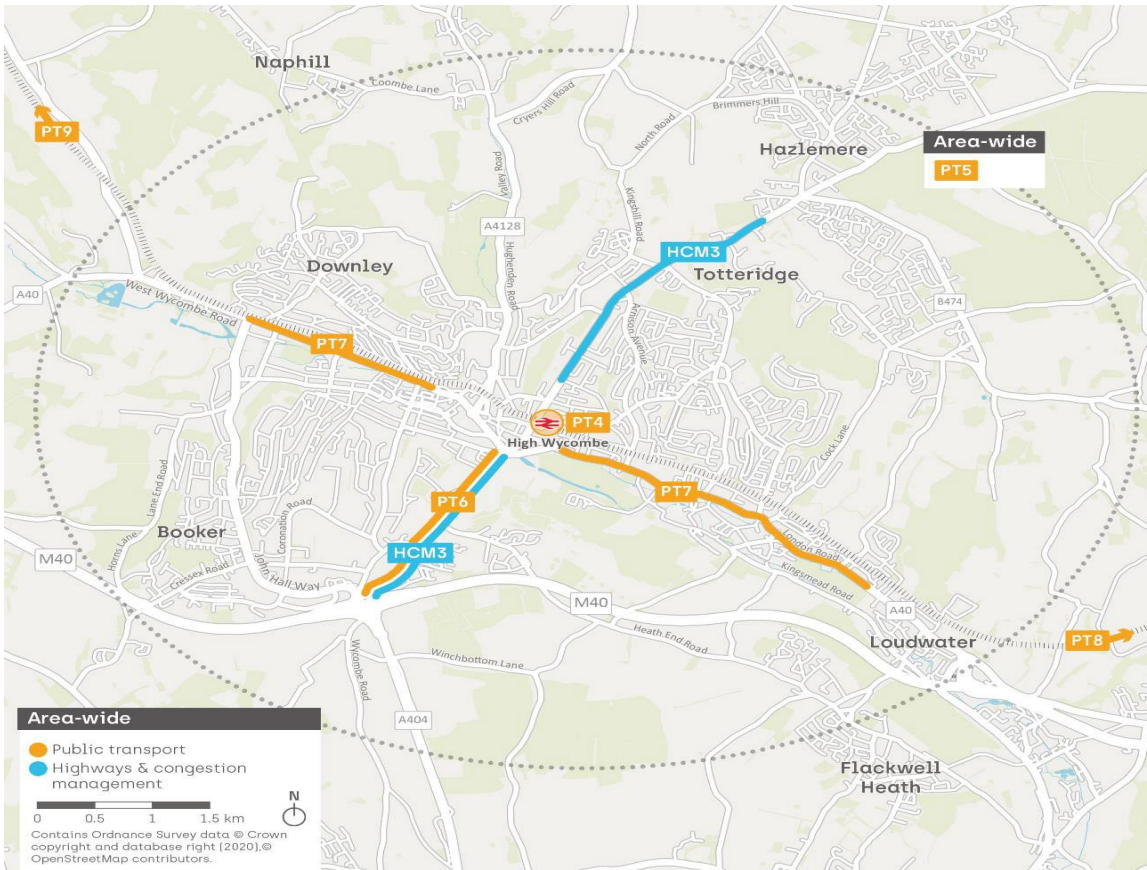
- 4.32. In order to achieve net zero carbon by 2050, **LPP3 - Additional demand management/pricing mechanisms** will likely be required within High Wycombe as a means of managing the number of people travelling to High Wycombe by car. Demand management can be achieved through interventions such as: reprioritising space for greener modes of transport such as buses; using dynamic pricing to divert trips to alternative parking locations according to demand levels; reduced car parking provision (see **LPP2 – Parking standards to support car-light living**); or undertaking behavioural change programmes (see **B1 – High Wycombe Behavior change package**).
- 4.33. The type of demand management or pricing mechanism would need to be assessed for suitability through a review of existing transport infrastructure and services. This would take into account the local transport needs and surrounding environment, to identify where interventions can be made without inhibiting connectivity, economic growth and accessibility for all.
- 4.34. These interventions seek to tackle congestion, improve air quality and create safer streets which will in turn enable and encourage more people to walk, cycle or take public transport.
- 4.35. Further benefits would include increased revenue collected from charging measures and more land being made available for appropriate use and/or redevelopment, which could be used to fund transport improvements in the local area. Therefore supporting the delivery of the Transport Strategy as a whole.
- 4.36. Initiatives for first and last mile freight activity such as the use of collection points, consolidation centres and possibly autonomous delivery systems will help to mitigate the increase in HGV traffic from the rise in deliveries, caused by a growing population and the increase in online shopping.





### Connecting regionally

4.37. The initiatives which support the ‘Connecting regionally’ theme are designed to strengthen High Wycombe’s connectivity to surrounding areas. The emphasis of the combination of initiatives proposed is to facilitate seamless, safe and sustainable movement of people and goods throughout the region. As the journey distances are longer than those for local journeys within and around High Wycombe, the focus of these proposals is on enabling those journeys to be made by public transport rather than the private car. The initiatives in this theme are shown in Figure 4.2.



**Table 4.2 ‘Connecting Regionally’ Initiatives - Index**

Ref.	Scheme description
PT4	Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel area to High Wycombe
PT5	Development of a High Wycombe and surrounding towns travel zone
PT6	North-south bus priority corridor on the A404 Marlow Hill
PT7	East-west bus priority corridor on the A40 London Road and West Wycombe Road
PT8	Old Oak Common connectivity interventions
PT9	Increased capacity on the rail line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury
HCM3	Smart, networked traffic-lights to manage queues on A404

## Public transport

- 4.38. High Wycombe has excellent rail connections and services. There are frequent and fast services from High Wycombe to various destinations in the morning peak, allowing residents to travel by rail to access jobs and business opportunities in London, Aylesbury, Bicester, Oxford and beyond. High Wycombe currently falls outside of London's travel zone system and the Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) area, meaning that people travelling between High Wycombe and London cannot take advantage of the more flexible fare structures that PAYG affords. **PT4 – Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel area to High Wycombe** would extend the London PAYG fare zone to High Wycombe rail station, allowing people travelling by rail to make their journeys seamlessly (through the use of contactless ticketing) and cheaper.
- 4.39. Bus services in High Wycombe operate from the bus station located in the town centre and there is a Coachway interchange close to junction 4 of the M40 motorway at Handy Cross. Services provide regional connectivity with key destinations such as Oxford, Heathrow Airport and Gatwick Airport.
- 4.40. **PT5 – Development of a High Wycombe and surrounding towns travel zone and fare structure** would seek to build on the delivery of **PT4** and existing multi-operator ticketing products by introducing a High Wycombe travel and fare zone for bus and rail services. A multi-operator 'smartcard' ticketing system and fare structure for all bus and rail services in High Wycombe/Buckinghamshire would help to make journeys by public transport easier.
- 4.41. There are two recommendations for bus priority corridors:
- **PT6 – North-south bus priority corridor on the A404** (Marlow Hill between High Wycombe town centre and the Handy Cross Coachway)
  - **PT7 – East-west bus priority corridor on the A40 London Road and West Wycombe Road**
- 4.42. At present there is limited infrastructure that gives any priority to buses on the A404 and the A40 which are key bus corridors (particularly the A404, which is the route for the Park and Ride buses). Feedback from public consultation has highlighted that there is a need for improved and reliable bus services to the town centre along the main routes especially during peak travel times to schools, shops, employment zones and health services. However, buses are subject to the same congestion and delays as other traffic. Initiatives for bus priority corridors could be provided through timed bus lanes, bus gates (where a bus takes an alternative lane to 'jump' to the start of a queue) and/or priority at traffic lights. Benefits could include reduced delays which would encourage people to use buses over car use. The exact nature of both schemes, the impacts on traffic flow and how they would be enforced would be subject to further options testing and feasibility assessment.
- 4.43. Scheme **PT8 – Old Oak Common connectivity interventions** is a package of major rail schemes which would ultimately provide an alternative terminus to Marylebone (Paddington) for Chiltern services as part of HS2 works. The existing Wycombe line would be double-tracked and upgraded to 80mph. Delivery of this scheme would provide up to four trains per hour into Old Oak and Park Royal, as well as connectivity to HS2 services, the Great Western Main Line and Elizabeth line (Crossrail) services. This project would need to be delivered in partnership with the rail operator and Network Rail. Buckinghamshire Council will advocate for this scheme to promote it within the partners' decision-making processes.
- 4.44. Initiative **PT9 – Increase capacity on the rail line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury** is a major rail project involving adding another track to the line ('twin-tracking') which would allow direct services between High Wycombe and Milton Keynes (and beyond), thereby enhancing High Wycombe's regional connectivity. Again, this project would need to be delivered in partnership with the rail operator and Network Rail.

## Highways and congestion management

- 4.45. High Wycombe’s road network can be congested during peak times. However, as discussed in previous sections there are limited opportunities to introduce more capacity by widening roads, adding lanes or similar – indeed, there is a body of evidence that shows that adding capacity to a congested network only delivers a short-term benefit, with the network returning to pre-intervention levels of congestion in a short space of time. This is one of the reasons that the Transport Strategy is focused on supporting people to make more journeys by a means other than the private car as this is the only real option there is for managing congestion in the longer-term.
- 4.46. With that said, the use of demand responsive traffic signals offers the opportunity to optimise traffic movements within the physical constraints of the existing road network. ‘Smart’ or demand responsive signals are already in place on the A40 and have helped to improve journey time reliability along this corridor. Scheme **HCM3 – Smart, networked traffic-lights to manage queues on the A404 corridor** would see the installation of the same type of signals technology to deliver similar – although modest – improvements on traffic flow the A404. This reduction in queuing would also improve air quality along the corridor.

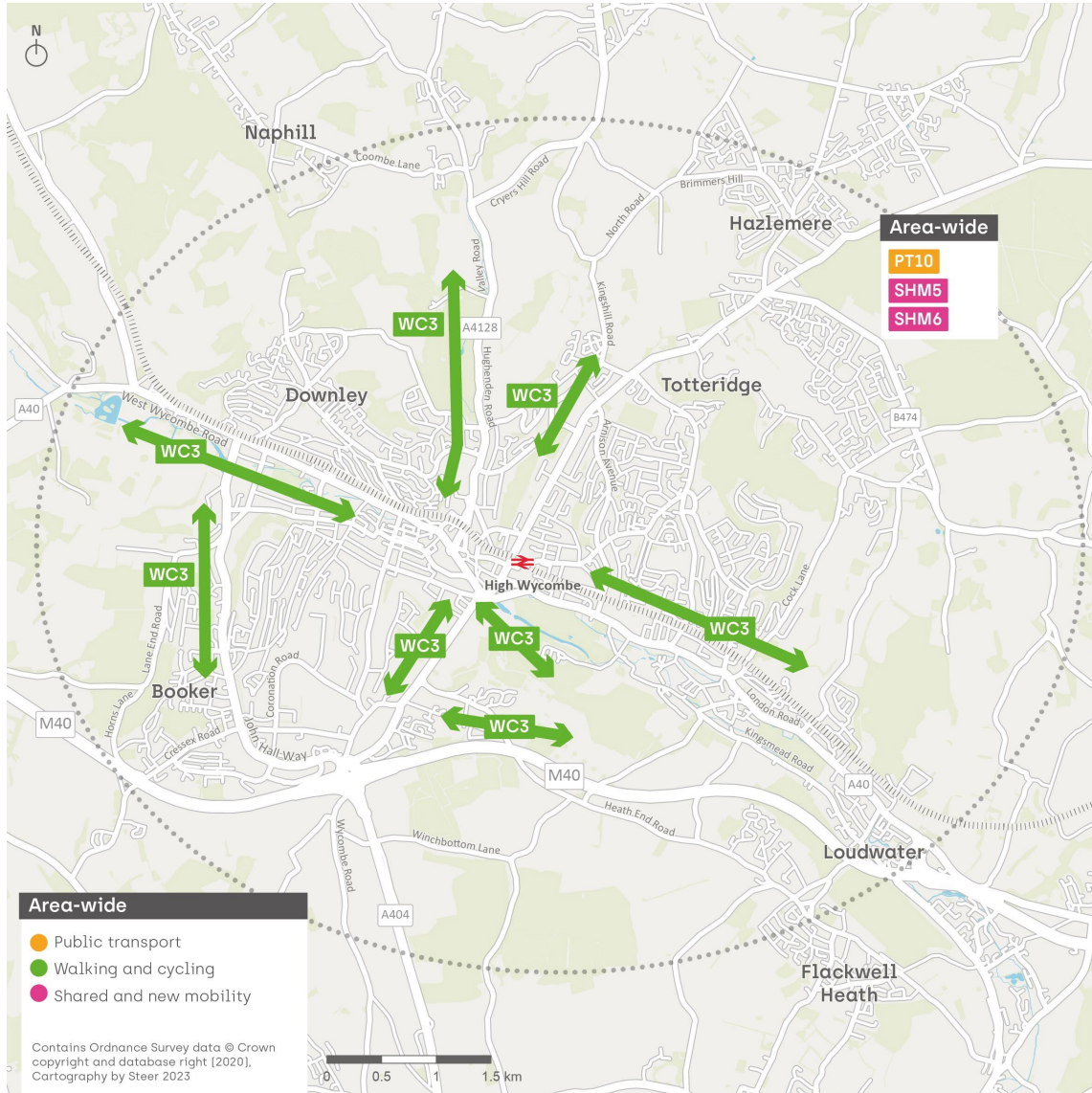




### Connecting green spaces

4.47. The initiatives which support the ‘Connecting green spaces’ theme are proposals which are designed to enhance health and wellbeing by providing clean, safe and accessible routes to and throughout High Wycombe and enable people to have equal opportunity to reach the surrounding green spaces that make High Wycombe so unique. They are shown in the map below:

**Figure 1.3 ‘Connecting Green Spaces’ Initiatives**



**Table 1.3 ‘Connecting Green Spaces’ Initiatives - Index**

Ref.	Scheme description
WC3	Dedicated active travel infrastructure on arterial corridors and key routes as well as 'quiet way' style networks
PT10	Conversion of existing bus fleet to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
SHM5	E-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme
SHM6	E-bike hire scheme for longer-term trial rental periods

## Walking and cycling

- 4.48. Walking accounts for almost a quarter (24% (Census 2011)) of trips to work made by High Wycombe residents. Cycling typically varies between 0-1% rising to 2% for journeys within High Wycombe.
- 4.49. A review of existing cycling and walking networks identified that the current provision is highly variable. This variability can be seen in the quality and width of walking infrastructure as well as the limited provision of dedicated cycle routes.
- 4.50. High Wycombe's hilly topography is often cited as a constraint to walking, cycling and wheeling. Intervention measures specific to hilly neighbourhoods would need to be considered and integrated in the infrastructure design to encourage uptake. Incorporating landscaping and greenery, street amenities and resting points can enhance the experience, make it more visually appealing and comfortable to travel and take breaks. Furthermore, not all cycle trips in High Wycombe need to be routed through the hilly areas. For example, east-west movement along the valley floor is relatively flat and this is where higher population densities and key destinations are located, such as the town centre, hospital, university, bus station and rail station.
- 4.51. **WC3 – Dedicated active travel infrastructure on arterial corridors and key routes as well as 'quiet way' style networks** is an initiative designed to realise more of the potential for journeys to be made on foot or by bicycle in High Wycombe by providing high-quality, safe and direct routes to key destinations. The High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) will set out a future walking and cycling network for the town in detail.

## Public transport

- 4.52. **PT10 – Conversion of existing bus fleet to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles** is an initiative which will involve working with local bus operators to support and accelerate the conversion of their current fleets to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, through the allocation of subsidy and through bidding for central government funding.

## Shared and new mobility

- 4.53. **SHM5 – E-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme** is designed to support residents, employees and visitors in making more journeys by bicycle, rather than by car or public transport. As mentioned above, some journeys in High Wycombe will involve more challenging topography and it is likely that the gradient of Amersham and Marlow Hills deters some potential cyclists. Electric bikes give assistance to the rider and so represent a good active transport solution in hilly areas. The future roll-out of an e-scooter hire scheme is subject to the outcomes of the current trial that is underway in High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Princes Risborough.
- 4.54. In addition, and to encourage people to purchase their own electric bike for more regular use, the initiative **SHM6 – E-bike hire scheme for longer-term trial periods** would be a Council- operated (or tendered) hire scheme. Residents of High Wycombe would be invited to hire an electric bike for up to six months to 'try before you buy'. Benefits could include introducing non cyclists to cycling or encourage those deterred by High Wycombe's topography to cycle more frequently and for longer distances.



## 5 Funding

- 5.1. The High Wycombe Transport Vision and Strategy is long-term in its outlook and has identified a programme of schemes that will require funding and/or financing. **It is important to recognise that the schemes identified within this Transport Vision and Strategy document would be subject to securing funding.** For many of the options being proposed, current funding sources may not be appropriate and the ability of Buckinghamshire Council and local partners to respond effectively to new funding opportunities will be hugely important.
- 5.2. As a local authority, we are heavily reliant on external funding and the most suitable sources of funding are likely to be grant funding from central government, developer contributions resulting from planned growth and new developments (particularly the Community Infrastructure levy funding). Local funding alone is likely to be insufficient to fund the full programme so further prioritisation of options as well as aligning options to any available funding sources will be required over time.
- 5.3. This funding could be further increased through use of “new” central government funding allocated directly to Buckinghamshire Council and the Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership, or from competitive bidding processes for grants. There could, in the near future, also be funding and powers devolved to England’s Economic Heartland Sub-National Transport Body which could benefit transport locally.
- 5.4. Undoubtedly, there is great uncertainty over the funding opportunities that might arise from central government over the next few years and in the longer term. The outcome of central government budgetary and spending decisions will influence the direction of travel for implementing the proposed plans. Whether government funding is available or not, further work will be required to review the proposed initiatives, their feasibility, value for money and deliverability. This is in order to evolve and adapt to future challenges and opportunities to support the goals of the strategy.
- 5.5. Investment in larger transport projects is increasingly requiring the ability to draw down and generate funding from multiple sources. Partnerships with the private sector and innovation bodies could align well with shared and future mobility schemes.
- 5.6. The following table identifies sources of funding and financing. The likely usefulness of each funding source or financing option is indicated with a tick-based system of least useful or least applicable to most useful or most applicable (i.e., ✘, ✓, ✓✓, ✓✓✓).

**Table 2.1 Potential and typical funding sources and financing options**

Category	Funding	Applicability
Central government grants – capital to Local Authorities	Integrated Transport Block	✓
Central government grants – capital to Local Authorities	Highway Maintenance	✓
Central government grants – capital to Local Authorities	Active travel funds (e.g., School Streets)	✓
Central government grants – capital to Local Authorities	Public transport funds (e.g., Electric Bus Town Scheme)	✓
Central government grants – capital to Local Authorities	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (for electric vehicles)	✓
Central government grants – capital to Local Authorities	Bids for external grant funding	✓✓
Central government grants – capital to Sub-national Transport Bodies	Funding negotiated under bespoke arrangements	✓✓
Central government grants – capital to Arm’s Length Bodies	National Highways/Department for Transport: National Roads Fund (including Strategic Road Network, Major Road Network, and Large Local Majors)	x/✓
Central government grants – capital to Arm’s Length Bodies	Network Rail/Department for Transport: Control Period process	✓✓
Central government grants – capital to Arm’s Length Bodies	Innovate UK funding for research and innovation	✓
Central government grants – capital to Arm’s Length Bodies	Sub-National Transport Bodies: Funding negotiated under bespoke arrangements	✓✓
Central government grants – capital to Arm’s Length Bodies	Active travel funds (e.g., Access to Rail Fund / Cycling and Walking to Work Fund, “Bikeability”, Walking Cities)	✓
Local government	Council Tax	x/✓
Local government	Parking charges and other local charges/fees	✓
Private Sector	Developer contributions	✓✓
Private Sector	Community Infrastructure Levy	✓✓
Private Sector	Business Rates	x/✓
Private Sector	Other (e.g., private sector investment in bus services, car clubs, bike hire, electric vehicle charging points)	✓✓
Financing	Government loans (e.g., Public Works Loan Board)	x
Financing	Capital markets	x
Financing	New models requiring legislation (e.g., Land Value Capture, Bonds)	x

## 6 Delivery Plan

6.1 The High Wycombe Transport Strategy looks into the long-term, spanning the period to 2050, beyond the current Local Plan period to 2033. To understand how the initiatives could be delivered over this timeframe, the proposals have been phased into the short, medium and long term:

- Short term: next five years to 2028.
- Medium term: five to 15 years, including the lifetime of the current Local Plan covering High Wycombe.
- Long term: 15 to 30 years, out to 2050

6.2 The tables on the following pages show how the initiatives will be phased. The tables include a high-level cost assessment for each scheme and identify potential funding sources and delivery partners. Each initiative is linked to the goals and priorities supporting the Transport Vision.

6.3 Because this strategy looks so far ahead to the future it largely consists of projects that are at a very initial, “pre-feasibility” stage of development. As such, all initiatives proposed here will be subject to further design and option development. Projects should then come forward for delivery through Buckinghamshire Council’s standard processes. Where the projects are to be delivered by a lead partner and not the Council, advocacy remains important to promote the schemes within the partners’ decision-making processes.

6.4 It is unlikely that funding will be available to develop all initiatives in parallel. The delivery plan indicates a phasing approach for the initiatives which can support their prioritisation. However, further work will be required to align the proposals with the Council’s strategic priorities and understand each initiative’s potential impacts and value for money, but also its deliverability, including funding availability. For example, should central government funding be made available for conversion of bus fleets to zero emission vehicles, such a scheme might be prioritised for development earlier in order to make a compelling case for funding.

**Table 3.1 Delivery Plan for 'Connecting Locally' Initiatives**

Ref	Scheme description	Capital cost estimate	Revenue/ operating cost estimate (per annum)	Potential funding sources/delivery partners	Phasing		
					Short (0-5yrs)	Medium (5-15yrs)	Long (15-30yrs)
WC1	Town centre wayfinding system	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ <£10,000	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL			
WC2	'Healthy Neighbourhood' schemes	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/ delivery in kind/CIL			
PT1	Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park	£££££ N/A	£££££ £50,000-£99,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL; Operators			
PT2	Additional layover space for buses and dynamic bus stand allocation	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Developer contributions/CIL			
PT3	Fast, affordable, reliable bus services	£££££ >£10 million	£££££ <£10,000	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL			
SHM1	'Mobility hub' schemes	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL			
SHM2	Autonomous shuttle between the bus and rail stations	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £50,000-£99,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government;			

Ref	Scheme description	Capital cost estimate	Revenue/ operating cost estimate (per annum)	Potential funding sources/delivery partners	Phasing		
					Short (0-5yrs)	Medium (5-15yrs)	Long (15-30yrs)
				Developer contributions/CIL; Operators			
SHM3	Demand responsive flexible bus services and integrated ticketing	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ >£500,000	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL; Operators			
SHM4	Car club spaces as standard in new developments and the town centre	£££££ N/A	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Developer contributions / delivery-in-kind / CIL; Operators			
HCM1	Optimisation of town centre traffic signals	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ <£10,000	Buckinghamshire Council; Developer contributions/CIL			
HCM2	Repurposing the A40 Abbey Way flyover	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government			
LPP1	Town-wide electric vehicle charging infrastructure	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ £100,000-£249,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions / delivery-in-kind / CIL; Operators; private sector			
LPP2	Parking standards to support car-light living	£££££ N/A	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council			
MS1	High Wycombe modal shift schemes	£££££ N/A	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions			



**Table 6.2 Delivery Plan for 'Connecting Regionally' Initiatives**

Ref	Scheme description	Capital cost estimate	Revenue/ operating cost estimate (per annum)	Potential funding sources/delivery partners	Phasing		
					Short (0-5yrs)	Medium (5-15yrs)	Long (15-30 yrs)
PT4	Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel area to High Wycombe	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ <£10,000	Buckinghamshire Council; Transport for London; Central government, Operator(s)			
PT5	Development of a High Wycombe and surrounding towns travel zone	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ £100,000-£249,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Operators			
PT6	North-south bus priority corridor on the A404 Marlow Hill	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL; Operators			
PT7	East-west bus priority corridor on the A40 London Road and West Wycombe Road	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL			
PT8	Old Oak Common connectivity interventions	£££££ >£20 million	£££££ £100,000-£249,999	Central government/Network Rail/HS2			
PT9	Twin track rail line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury	£££££ >£20 million	£££££ £100,000-£249,999	Central government/Network Rail			
HCM3	Demand responsive signals on A404	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL			

**Table 6.3 Delivery Plan for 'Connecting Green Spaces' Initiatives**

Ref	Scheme description	Capital cost estimate	Revenue/ operating cost estimate (per annum)	Potential funding sources/delivery partners	Phasing		
					Short (0-5yrs)	Medium (5-15yrs)	Long (15-30 yrs)
WC3	Dedicated active travel infrastructure on arterial corridors and key routes as well as 'quiet way' style networks	£££££ £5-10 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Developer contributions/CIL			
PT10	Conversion of existing bus fleet to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles	£££££ N/A	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Operators; Central government;			
SHM5	E-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme in High Wycombe	£££££ £1-5 million	£££££ £10,000-£49,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government; Operators			
SHM6	E-bike hire scheme for longer-term trial rental periods	£££££ <£1 million	£££££ £50,000-£99,999	Buckinghamshire Council; Central government			

# 7 Monitoring Plan

Monitoring and evaluation is an important element in project planning in order to identify, after implementation, whether the desired outcomes of the transport improvements are being achieved. This strategy has set out a plan for monitoring the overall performance of the strategy over time, against the 'connecting themes', and their associated outcomes.

Many of the timeframes for impacts and monitoring are indicative as they are highly dependent on the implementation of the proposed transport improvements. Therefore, a detailed monitoring plan will need to be prepared for each initiative as and when it is developed.

It should be noted many of the longer-term highway improvements will not show significant benefits until after all the associated construction traffic ceases and road users adapt their routing according. Consequently, some of the indicators related to highway improvements should continue to be collected beyond the lifetime of the strategy to determine the true impacts.

Table 7.1 below outlines the indicative performance indicators and suggested frequency for gathering and updating data for monitoring purposes:

**Table 7.1 Monitoring Plan**

**Connecting locally**

Initiative	Scheme Description	Performance Indicators	Data Source	Suggested Frequency
WC1	Town centre wayfinding signage scheme	Number and quality of information boards at stops, stations and streets  Community feedback	Site audits  Community surveys	Every 5 years
WC2	'Healthy Neighbourhood' schemes	Traffic Volumes on local streets  Levels of Cycling, Walking and Wheeling	Community surveys Traffic data  Cycle count data	Continuous monitoring, review every 5 years
PT1	Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park from High Wycombe neighbourhoods	Public Transport Service coverage, frequency and punctuality.  Accessibility  Queue lengths and delays on strategic routes	Bus Service and passenger count data  Continuous engagement with bus operators  Travel surveys	Continuous monitoring, review every 5 years
PT2	Additional layover space for buses and dynamic bus stand allocation		Site audit	Continuous monitoring, review every 5 years
PT3	Fast, affordable, reliable bus	Bus service coverage, frequency and punctuality.	Bus service operator data	Continuous monitoring,

	services	Levels of Bus usage	Passenger count data	review every 5 years
SHM1	'Mobility hubs'	Number of hubs, transport modes available and level of usage Public perception of mobility hub provision Accessibility	Aim for CoMoUK Accreditation	Aim for accreditation within 5 years
SHM2	Autonomous shuttle between the bus and rail stations	Passenger count data if implemented	Passenger count data	TBC
SHM3	Demand responsive flexible bus services and integrated ticketing	Levels of Bus usage Journey time reliability	Bus service operator data Passenger count data	Continuous monitoring, review at the end of Rural Mobility Fund period
SHM4	Car club spaces as standard in new developments and the town centre	Number of spaces available Level of car hire usage	Service provider data	Every 5 years
HCM1	Optimisation of town centre traffic signals	Queue length and delays at key junctions	Traffic data	Continuous monitoring, review every 5 years
HCM2	Repurposing the A40 Abbey Way flyover	Public perception	Public consultation	TBC
LPP1	Town-wide electric vehicle charging infrastructure	Number of EV charging spaces available Level of usage	EV charging data	Continuous monitoring, review at the end of the Buckinghamshire EV Action Plan period (2027)
LPP2	Parking standards to support car-light living	Parking space availability and usage	Travel survey Parking data	Continuous monitoring, review every 5 years
<b>Connecting regionally</b>				
Initiative	Scheme Description	Performance Indicators	Data Source	Suggested Frequency
PT4	Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel area to High Wycombe	Expansion of the PAYG travel zone	Engagement with TfL	Within 10 years
PT5	Development of a High Wycombe and surrounding towns travel zone	Implementation of the zone	Engagement with Public Transport operators	Within 5 years
PT6	North-south bus	Post implementation:	Traffic data	Continuous

	priority corridor on the A404 Marlow Hill	journey time reliability Queue lengths and delays Annual mean concentration of NO2 levels and operational CO2 emissions	Air Quality data	monitoring following implementation, review every 5 years
PT7	East-west bus priority corridor on the A40 London Road and West Wycombe Road	Post implementation: Journey time reliability  Queue lengths and delays  Annual mean concentration of NO2 levels and operational CO2 emissions	Traffic data  Air quality data	Continuous monitoring following implementation, review every 5 years
PT8	Old Oak Common connectivity interventions	Implementation of direct link from High Wycombe to Old Oak Common		TBC
PT9	Increase capacity on the rail line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury	Post implementation: Trains per hour between Princes Risborough	Train service operator data	TBC
HCM3	Smart, networked traffic-lights to manage queues on A404	Post implementation: Queue length and delays on the route Traffic volume	Traffic data	TBC
<b>Connecting green spaces</b>				
Initiative	Scheme description	Performance Indicators	Data Source	Suggested Frequency
WC3	Dedicated active travel infrastructure on arterial corridors and key routes as well as 'quiet way' style networks	Length from end to end	Walking and Cycling network High Wycombe LCWIP monitoring plan	Every 5 years
PT10	Conversion of existing bus fleet to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles	Number of low emission buses	Bus service operator fleet data	TBC
SHM5	E-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme	Number of bikes and spaces available Level of e-bike/escooter hire usage	Service provider data	Continuous monitoring, review post-trial scheme (2024)
SHM6	E-bike hire scheme for longer-term rental periods	Number of bikes and spaces available Level of long-term e-bike hire usage	Service provider data	Continuous monitoring, review post-trial scheme



# 8 Reviewing the Strategy

As the strategy takes a long-term view, it will most likely evolve over time to remain relevant to local, regional and national policy. The progress of the strategy will be linked to the outcomes set out for each of the connecting themes and data collected against the performance indicators will form part of this review, which will typically be carried out every five years.

Considerations should be made for any changes in policy context at a local, regional and national level, future funding opportunities and whether the scale of growth and phasing has changed and what impact this has on the transport proposals.

The outcomes of the ongoing monitoring plan should identify areas where objectives are being met and whether key learnings can be taken from the development of schemes and any delays to schemes that are yet to be moved forward.

By reviewing the strategy regularly, there will be opportunity to take advantage of future policy, funding and innovations in transport technology and data collection to deliver the transport vision.



**Buckinghamshire  
Council**

**Buckinghamshire Council**

Walton Street Offices, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 1UY

[www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk](http://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk)