

Exeter Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Update

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the report be noted.

1. Introduction/Background

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) set out the strategic approach for identifying long-term improvements to enable more cycling and walking as well as making the case for funding bids and ensuring infrastructure is delivered through development.

2. Gear Change – raising our ambitions

In 2020 the Department for Transport (DfT) published 'Gear Change'. This set out a bold new vision for cycling and walking, raising the standard of the quality of provision expected from local authorities and others delivering cycling and walking infrastructure. This was complemented by a new guidance document – LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design which is to be followed by new guidance on improving design for walking.

3. Local context

Devon County Council and Exeter City Council have a strong track of working together to enable more people to choose cycling and walking for their everyday travel in the city. Walking levels in Exeter are consistently amongst the highest in the UK and cycling levels continue to grow through projects such as the Exe Estuary Trail and most recently through some of the Emergency Active Travel measures delivered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Looking forward, the Exeter Transport Strategy 2020-2030 sets out the ambition for 50% of work trips originating in the city to be made by cycling or walking by 2030. This links with the Liveable Exeter Vision for redeveloping brownfield land close to the city centre where walking and cycling should be the first choice for the majority of residents' everyday journeys. The Exeter LCWIP will set out the infrastructure measures required to deliver these ambitions.

4. LCWIP process

The DfT LCWIP guidance sets out a six-stage process as set out in Figure 1. These often run concurrently. We been through stages 1 and 2 using a number of tools made available by the DfT as well as local data on travel habits, topography and growth to ensure an objective approach has been taken to the proposals. The Exeter LCWIP is now working across stages 3 - 6.

| LCWIP stage | Detail | Exeter LCWIP |
|--|--|--|
| Stage 1: Determining the scope | Establish the geographical context and arrangements for governing and preparing the plan. | The focus is on infrastructure within the Exeter city boundary, however there are considerations for connections to neighbouring Districts. |
| Stage 2: Gathering information | Identify existing walking and cycling patterns and potential new journeys. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to walking and cycling. Review related transport and land use policies and programmes. | Drawn upon consultation undertaken for Exeter Transport Strategy and extensive knowledge of the project team to identify challenges and opportunities. |
| Stage 3: Network planning for cycling | Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required. | In addition to identifying priority routes, this LCWIP has considered the future role Liveable |
| Stage 4: Network planning for walking | Identify key trip generators, core walking zones and routes, audit existing provision and determine the types of improvements required. | Neighbourhoods can play in increasing uptake of walking and cycling. |
| Stage 5: Prioritising improvements | Prioritise improvements to develop a phased programme for future investment. | An assessment tool has been developed using multiple criteria to prioritise routes. |
| Stage 6: Integration and application | Integrate outputs into local planning and transport policies, strategies, and delivery plans. | Work has commenced to identify and work with stakeholders. |

Fig.1 LCWIP process and Exeter approach

5. Proposals

The following pages detail some of the proposals developed for inclusion in the Exeter LCWIP.

It should be noted that a proposal's inclusion in the LCWIP does not guarantee its delivery. Going forward, schemes will need to undergo further design, stakeholder and public consultation, political approval and specific funding mechanisms will need to be secured.

(a) Network plan for cycling

Building on the existing cycle network, a number of potential high quality, new and improved routes have been identified across Exeter. These have been through the prioritisation stage of the LCWIP, identifying where routes best meet strategy objectives, are likely to have the biggest impact on growth in cycling levels in the city and be practically deliverable during the project period.

The proposed priority cycling routes are illustrated in Figure 2 and detailed below:

E1 - This is the spine of Exeter's cycle network and the most well used route in the city for recreational and everyday journeys. The route is used for trips to Exeter St Davids Station, the city centre, Exeter Quay, Marsh Barton Industrial Estate, and many other journeys. The route is also part of the National Cycle Network – NCN 34 and becomes the Exe Estuary Trail (NCN2) continuing down to the coast at Dawlish and Exmouth.

With a number of the proposed Liveable Exeter sites and development at South West Exeter all close to this route, there is a need to review and upgrade it making it suitable for increasing usage in the future.

E3 – Already partly delivered, E3 runs from the city centre to the new community at Cranbrook through the heart of the residential communities of Newtown, Heavitree and Whipton. It passes several schools Exeter Local Cycling and on route and connects to new employment sites at Science Park, Sky Park, and various freight Depots along the A30 as well as residential development off Tithe Barn Lane before connecting to Cranbrook.

E4 – Already partly delivered, E4 connects Exeter St Davids Station to the University before continuing through residential communities around Stoke Hill and Beacon Heath. It passes St James's and Willowbrook School and leisure facilities at Exeter Arena before continuing past development along Cumberland Way to employment at Science Park.

E5 - connects the St Thomas residential area and local centre to and through the city centre, continuing up to the Stoke Hill area where it links to the east west E4 route. The route seeks to tackle some of the most challenging areas for cycling in the city where space is dominated by heavy traffic. These include, Cowick Street, Exe Bridges, Fore Street, Sidwell Street, Odeon roundabout and Old Tiverton Road.

E6 'The Nurses Way' - There is an absence of coherent north/south cycling routes within the city. E6 links major residential areas to two of the city's largest employers at the Royal Devon Exeter Hospital and County Hall as well as linking with routes to the new Marsh Barton Station and Industrial estate.

E9 – Already partly delivered, E9 connects the city centre with several Exeter's largest employment sites at Devon County Council, the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital and Pynes Hill Business Park as well as the growing Newcourt residential development and the historic town of Topsham. The route passes through the existing residential areas of St Leonards and Wonford linking into the local area centres of both communities.

E10 – Already partly complete but with some missing links E10 is a linking route to and through employment sites at Pynes Hill, Sowton and Exeter Business Park that can be used for commuters getting to and from work as well as journeys between businesses throughout the day. The area of Sowton has some of the highest car mode share figures in the city, even over relatively short distance journeys. It also passes through the residential communities at Clyst Heath, close to Digby and Sowton Station and through the retail park at Exeter Vale.

E12 – Work commenced on this route as part of the Emergency Active Travel Fund from the DfT, E12 closely follows the alignment of Exeter's Northbrook watercourse.

As a result, for a hilly city the route is comparatively flat. There is an absence of coherent north/south cycling routes within the city. This strategic route passes close to major residential areas and key employment sites at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital as well as linking with routes to the Marsh Barton estate. In addition, the route could be used as part of education journeys to a number primary and secondary schools in the city.

E14 - Connecting future Liveable Exeter sites at Marsh Barton and Water Lane to leisure opportunities at Exeter Quay and onwards to the city centre as well as link to the new Marsh Barton rail station.

E15 - Connecting from the new school and residential development at South West Exeter via a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the A379 through Alphington and the Marsh Barton Industrial Estate to the cycle network at Exe Bridges. The route will also link through the proposed Marsh Barton Liveable Exeter site

E16 - Route E16 connects the new South-West Exeter residential development at Matford to the Exe cycle route at Flowerpot playing fields via the existing residential communities of Alphington and St Thomas as well as passing West Exe College.

E20 & E21 – E20 connects Exeter St David's station to the southern end of the city centre at South St and the future 'South Gate' Liveable Exeter site. There is also a Liveable Exeter site 'Red Cow' at St David's Station that will also benefit from this route. E21 is a spur route off E20, this route will improve cycling and walking connections to the High Street via Queen Street.

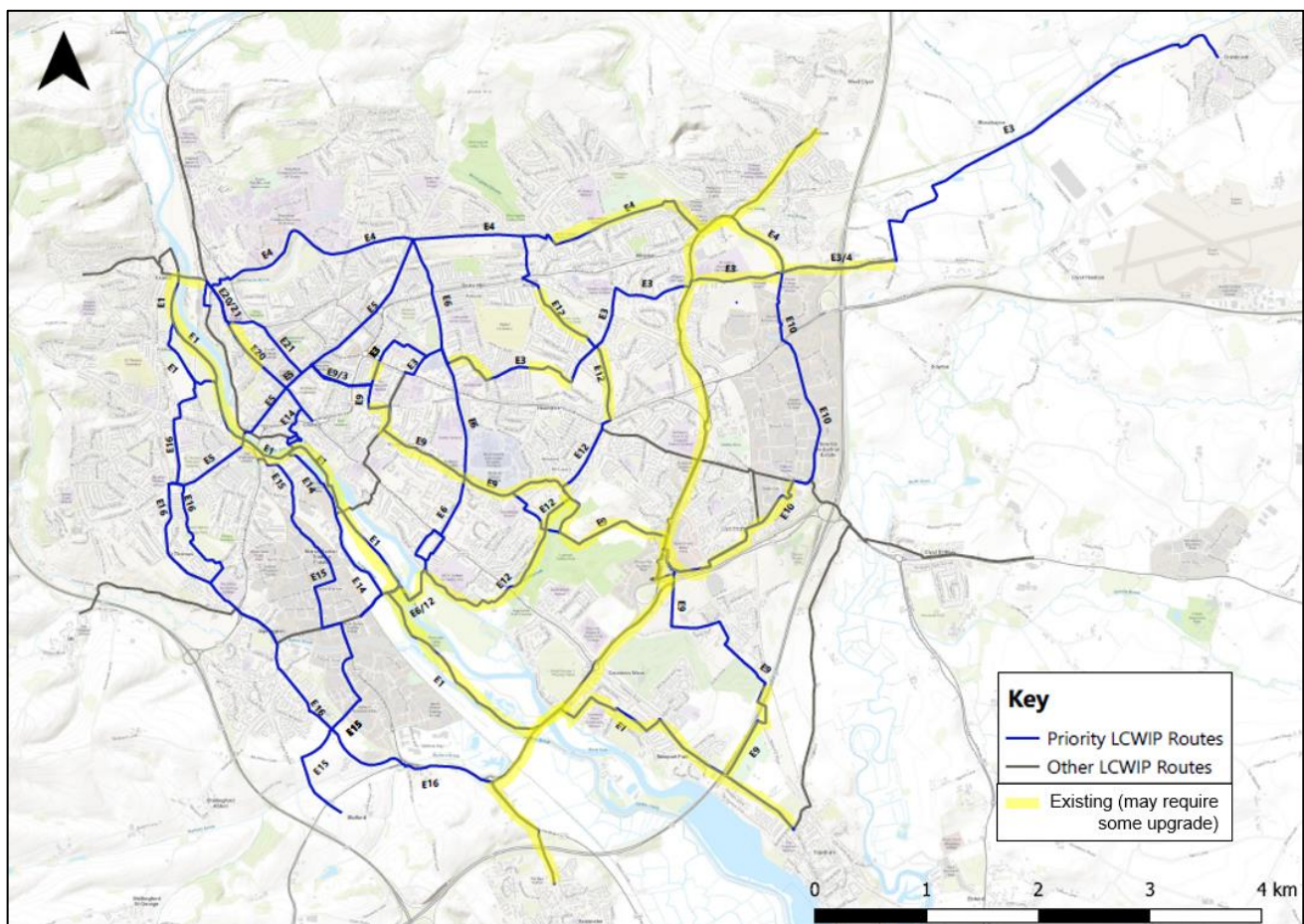


Figure 2: Exeter LCWIP Proposed priority cycle routes

(b) Network plan for walking

Many of the proposals for cycling, incorporate walking improvements such as where work is needed to aid crossings at busy junctions. In addition, a network of potential walking improvements is under development, predominantly focused around city centre and district centres. An early draft of this is included in Figure 3.

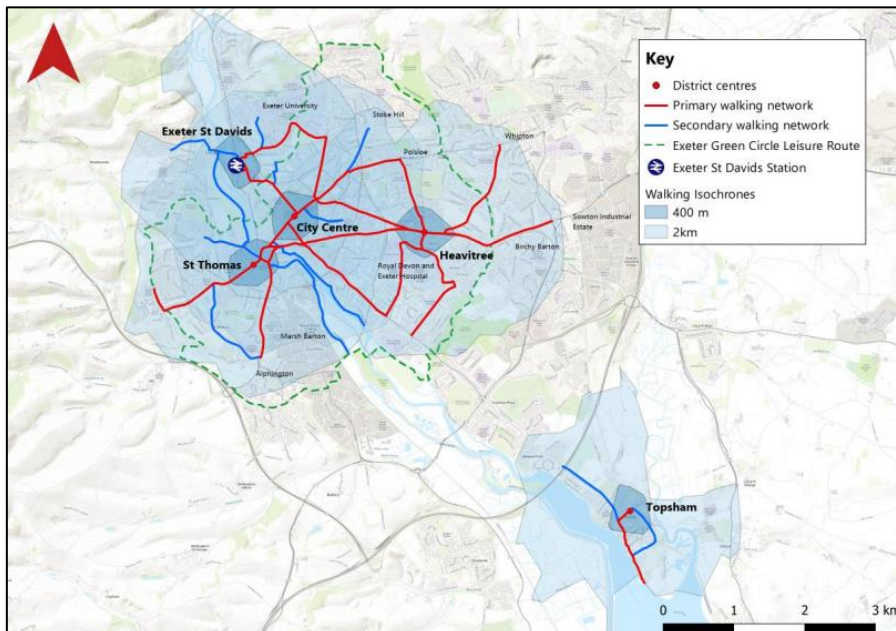


Figure 3: Exeter LCWIP core walking zones and walking network

(c) Liveable Neighbourhoods

Liveable Neighbourhoods or Low Traffic Neighbourhoods aim to reduce the impact of traffic on residential streets as an approach to rebuilding community by creating safer and more pleasant environments where people can more easily choose to chat, meet friends, play, walk and cycle.

This is achieved by reducing the amount of through traffic that uses residential streets while still allowing easy access to homes and businesses. Measures such as modal filters are used that include bollards, planters but also bus gates, and one-way systems. A pilot Liveable Neighbourhood is being drawn up for the Heavitree and Whipton area of the city.

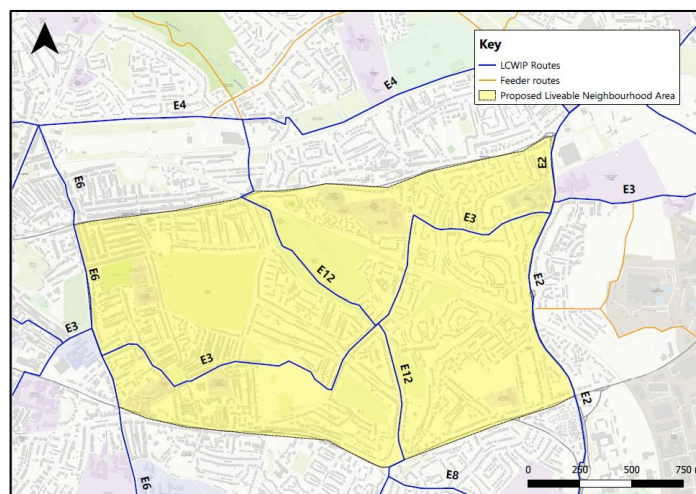


Figure 4: Exeter LCWIP Proposed Heavitree and Whipton Liveable Neighbourhood

(d) Wider connections

As part of the Exeter LCWIP, potential opportunities for improved cycling and walking connection to communities outside of the city for leisure and commuting have been identified and are illustrated in Figure 5.

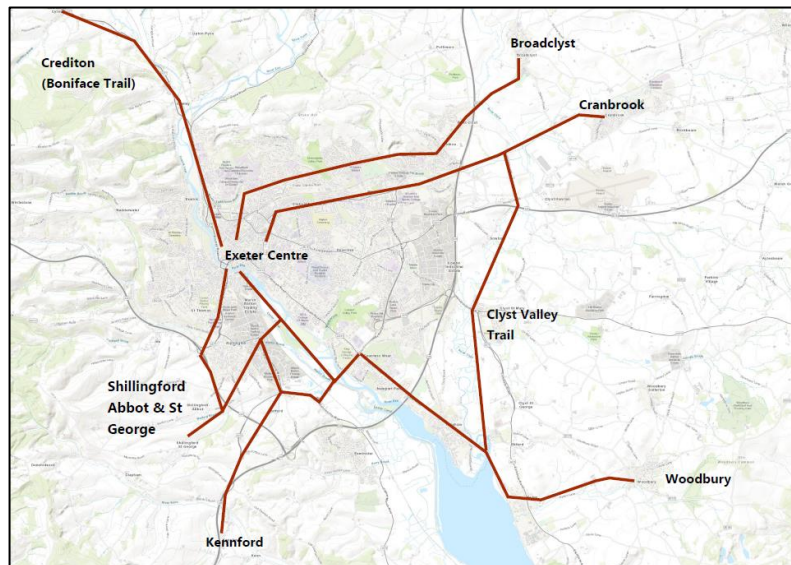


Figure 5: Exeter LCWIP Proposed wider connections

6. Consultation

Devon County Council Cabinet portfolio holder for Highways has given approval to engage stakeholders and go to consultation over the summer and early autumn.

The nature of the engagement and consultation is still being finalised but is likely to follow that established for the 'Heart of Teignbridge' and 'Barnstaple, Bideford and Northam' LCWIPs. This would include:

- **Stakeholder Engagement Workshops**
 - o Involving Councillors, internal Devon County Council and Exeter City Council officers, external stakeholders and local interest groups.
- **Public Consultation**
 - o Likely to comprise a combination of potential accessible drop in sessions and hosting of materials on Devon County Council's 'Have Your Say' website and promoted via advertising, press releases and social media activity.

Following the stakeholder engagement and public consultation, detailed proposals will be finalised and costed. Work will then be undertaken on stage 6 of the LCWIP, Integration and application. This will ensure the LCWIP is embedded in documents such as the new Exeter Local Plan, the next Devon Local Transport Plan and other relevant strategies and programmes. This will enable external grant funding and developer contributions to be secured more easily. The ambitions set out in the Exeter LCWIP cannot be delivered by partners or individuals working in isolation and both Devon County Council and Exeter City Council will work together with other stakeholders to ensure shared ownership of delivery.

7. Strategic Plan

The Exeter LCWIP is well-aligned with a range of actions within the Strategic Plan 2021-25, insofar as it would prioritise walking and cycling over vehicular traffic, and therefore encourage more people to walk and cycle. Delivering the schemes identified in the final plan will be the main mechanism for achieving the Exeter Transport Strategy 2020-2030 ambition for 50% of work trips originating in the city to be made by cycling or walking by 2030.

Many of the schemes that will be the result of this plan will improve the urban environment in the city, creating safer, quieter, and more pleasant places for community activity. The plan will also support a green economic recovery from COVID-19 for businesses by making it easier to walk or cycle to local and district centres and making these important areas more attractive spaces for people to dwell, enjoy and ultimately spend money .

The table below summarises how the proposals would impact achievement of relevant Strategic Plan actions according to a seven-point scale, whereby -3 represents a large negative impact and +3 represents a large positive impact.

| Strategic Plan priority | Strategic Plan action | Alignment |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Responding to the climate emergency. | Support a green recovery from COVID-19. | +2 (Moderate positive) |
| Responding to the climate emergency. | Prioritise sustainable travel and transport. | +3 (Large positive) |
| Responding to the climate emergency. | Encourage sustainable lifestyles. | +3 (Large positive) |
| Investing in Devon's economic recovery. | Secure investment in transport infrastructure. | +3 (Large positive) |
| Investing in Devon's economic recovery. | Maintain and, where necessary, improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options. | +3 (Large positive) |
| Improving health and wellbeing. | Give people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity. | +3 (Large positive) |
| Helping communities to be safe, connected and resilient. | Enable a range of transport options, including public transport. | +2 (Moderate positive) |

8. Financial Considerations

There are no financial implications with this report.

9. Legal Considerations

There are no specific legal considerations.

10. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The delivery of active travel interventions are an essential part of driving down transport emissions in the Exeter area. Transport contributes approximately 27% of Devon's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and is the sector with the largest GHG emissions across

the county. Reducing transport GHG will be essential to meet both national and local climate commitments.

The Devon Carbon Plan identifies that reducing the need to travel and shifting to sustainable transport options such as cycling and walking are the most important ways to tackle transport emissions. The Exeter LCWIP represents a strategic plan for the delivery of improved active travel provision, supporting modal shift and therefore tackling the area's transport emissions.

The Devon Strategic Plan 2021-25 has responding to the climate emergency as one of its key priorities and identifies the need to prioritise sustainable travel and transport with more opportunities for cycling and walking. This document support these aims.

11. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

An Impact Assessments will be carried out to inform the detailed development of this stakeholder engagement and public consultation process. This will ensure that our approaches are as accessible and inclusive as possible and that we proactively seek views from a diverse range of groups including those who may be marginalised or disadvantaged including disabled people. This will influence the final detailed route development.

12. Risk Management Considerations

No risks have been identified.

13. Public Health Impact

The scheme will have a positive public health impact by enabling people to build walking and cycling into their everyday travel habits for workplace and education journeys as well as for leisure.

More people choosing to walk and cycle rather than drive and projects such as Liveable Neighbourhoods should reduce peoples exposure to pollutants and have a positive impact on air quality across the city.

14. Summary

This report is for information. The conclusions of the stakeholder engagement and public consultation will feed into the final Exeter Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan that will be presented for endorsement at a future Exeter HATOC ahead of Cabinet approval.

Meg Booth
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Electoral Divisions: All in Exeter

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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| Background Paper | Date | File Reference |
|-------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
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Nil

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