

Exeter Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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

1) Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (a) the proposed changes to the Exeter Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), following consultation, be endorsed by this Committee, prior to formal adoption of the LCWIP at Cabinet in due course; and
- (b) the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the local members, to make minor alterations to the Plan.

2) Introduction

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are strategic documents identifying cycling and walking improvement priorities at a local level. The LCWIP framework is set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, which forms an important part of the Government's strategy to increase the number of active travel trips. LCWIPs are also an important tool in realising the Government's *Gear Change* and *Transport Decarbonisation Plan* aims and objectives. This expects local authorities to deliver high quality cycling and walking infrastructure which represent a step-change in the level of service for active travel. Critically, going forward, LCWIPs are an important part of local authorities making the case for future active travel funding.

The Exeter LCWIP aims to:

- Support Devon County Council's response to the climate emergency.
- Promote increased active travel to support physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Encourage inclusivity and accessibility across the Exeter active travel network.
- Deliver economic benefits to Exeter.

The LCWIP fulfils these aims by setting out active travel proposals that take account of evidence and data on existing and future demand, ensuring proposals meet the latest design standards and prioritising infrastructure schemes in readiness for funding bids. LCWIPs will be an important document in leveraging Government funding by evidencing that investment is targeted where it can have the greatest impact.

The LCWIP aligns closely with the wider transport strategy for the city. The Exeter Transport Strategy 2020-2030 sets the ambition for 50% of work trips originating in the city to be made by cycling or walking by 2030. This target also complements the 'Liveable Exeter' vision for redeveloping brownfield sites close to the city centre, such that walking and cycling becomes the natural first choice for residents' everyday

journeys. The Exeter LCWIP will set out the infrastructure interventions required to deliver against these ambitions.

The Exeter LCWIP is one of a suite of LCWIPs being developed across Devon. The *Heart of Teignbridge* and the *Barnstaple with Bideford and Northam* LCWIPs have been endorsed by their respective HATOCs. Subject to this LCWIP being approved in principle, these LCWIPs will be presented at a future Cabinet to be formally adopted and will provide an important supporting strategy to the new Devon Local Transport Plan, which is in development.

3) Proposals

Exeter has a strong track record of supporting increased active travel, with walking and cycling mode share for work journeys amongst the highest across the UK's cities. The core focus of the Exeter LCWIP will be within the administrative boundary of the city. However, it will also consider opportunities to support active travel accessibility from nearby villages and to provide strategic connections to nearby edge of city growth areas.

To this end, the Exeter LCWIP (Appendix 1 and listed below), sets out 20 cycling routes and 5 city-centre walking routes, strategically identified as 'missing gaps' in the existing walking and cycling network.

Cycling Routes

- E1 – Exeter St David's Station to Topsham
- E3 – City Centre to Cranbrook
- E4 – Exeter University to Science Park
- E5 – Stoke Hill to St Thomas
- E6 – 'Nurses Way' Stoke Hill to Marsh Barton Station and Industrial Estate
- E7 – Exeter St David's Station to Exeter Quay
- E8 – Wonford to Sowton Industrial Estate
- E9 – Topsham/Newcourt to City Centre via Wonford and St Leonards
- E10 – Pynes Hill Business Park to Sowton Industrial Estate and Exeter Business Park
- E12 – Beacon Heath to Marsh Barton Station and Industrial Estate
- E13 – Clyst St Mary to Topsham via Clyst Road
- E14 – Marsh Barton Station to city centre via Water Lane development and Exeter Quay
- E15 – South West Exeter development to Exe Bridges
- E16 – South West Exeter development to River Exe via Alphington and St Thomas
- E17 – Ide to Marsh Barton and Industrial Estate
- E18 – Exwick Heights to Exeter St David's Station
- E19 – Cowley Bridges to Exeter St David's Station
- E20 – Exeter St David's Station to South Street via Iron Bridge
- E21 – Exeter St David's Station to city centre via Queen Street
- E22 – Newtown to Water Lane development via St Leonards.

Walking Routes

- W1 – Exeter Quay/Haven Banks to city centre via South Street
- W2 – Exe Bridges, Fore Street, High Street, Sidwell Street and St Annes Roundabout
- W3 – Exeter St David's to city centre via Queen Street

- W4 – Barnfield Road to Princesshay
- W5 – New North Road and Longbrook Street to Paris Street

Delivery Prioritisation

The priority for delivery and indicative costs for packages of proposals are also detailed in the LCWIP. Prioritisation was based on a multi-criteria exercise which identified 10 priority routes that are considered deliverable within the next 10 years, subject to suitable funding sources being identified. These routes are:

- E1 – Exeter St David’s Station to Topsham
- E3 – City Centre to Cranbrook
- E4 – Exeter University to Science Park
- E7 – Exeter St David’s Station to Exeter Quay
- E9 – Topsham/Newcourt to City Centre via Wonford and St Leonards
- E10 – Pynes Hill Business Park to Sowton Industrial Estate and Exeter Business Park
- E12 – Beacon Heath to Marsh Barton Station and Industrial Estate
- E14 – Marsh Barton Station to city centre via Water Lane development and Exeter Quay
- E15 – South West Exeter development to Exe Bridges
- E20 – Exeter St David’s Station to South Street via Iron Bridge

The prioritisation exercise also highlights key routes for short, medium and long term delivery. Each route was scored against a range of quantitative and qualitative criteria, with the scores compiled to provide an overall ranking of the routes. The criteria included:

- Propensity to cycle¹
- Relation to Liveable Exeter sites and other development areas
- Sport England physical activity score
- Collisions data
- Population density
- Workplace population
- Estimated construction cost
- Feasibility
- Political Support
- Stakeholder Support
- Status of routes in progress

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, public consultation, committee approval, with funding secured. Government will expect grant-funded schemes to be compliant with Local Transport Note 1/20 design guidance.

4) Options

Do Nothing – Without an approved LCWIP, the Exeter area will not be well placed to secure future walking and cycling investment from central Government. A coherent, strategic, and evidence-based approach to the identification and delivery of new active

¹ Propensity to cycle tool is an online, interactive planning support system which shows the cycling potential across England.

travel interventions is essential to securing the benefits afforded by active travel. The Exeter LCWIP is part of enabling the area to accommodate housing growth, respond to the climate crisis and support the health and wellbeing of its residents.

Route specific alternatives and proposals are covered in Section 5 of this report.

5) Consultations

Public and stakeholder consultation has been a critical part of the development of the Exeter LCWIP as detailed below.

Stakeholder Engagement

The development of the LCWIP has built upon previous engagement undertaken in relation to active travel in Exeter. This included a comprehensive consultation with the public and stakeholders in 2019 as part of the development of the Exeter Transport Strategy 2020-2030. The results of this consultation can be found on the Exeter Transport Strategy [website](#).

Public Consultation Arrangements

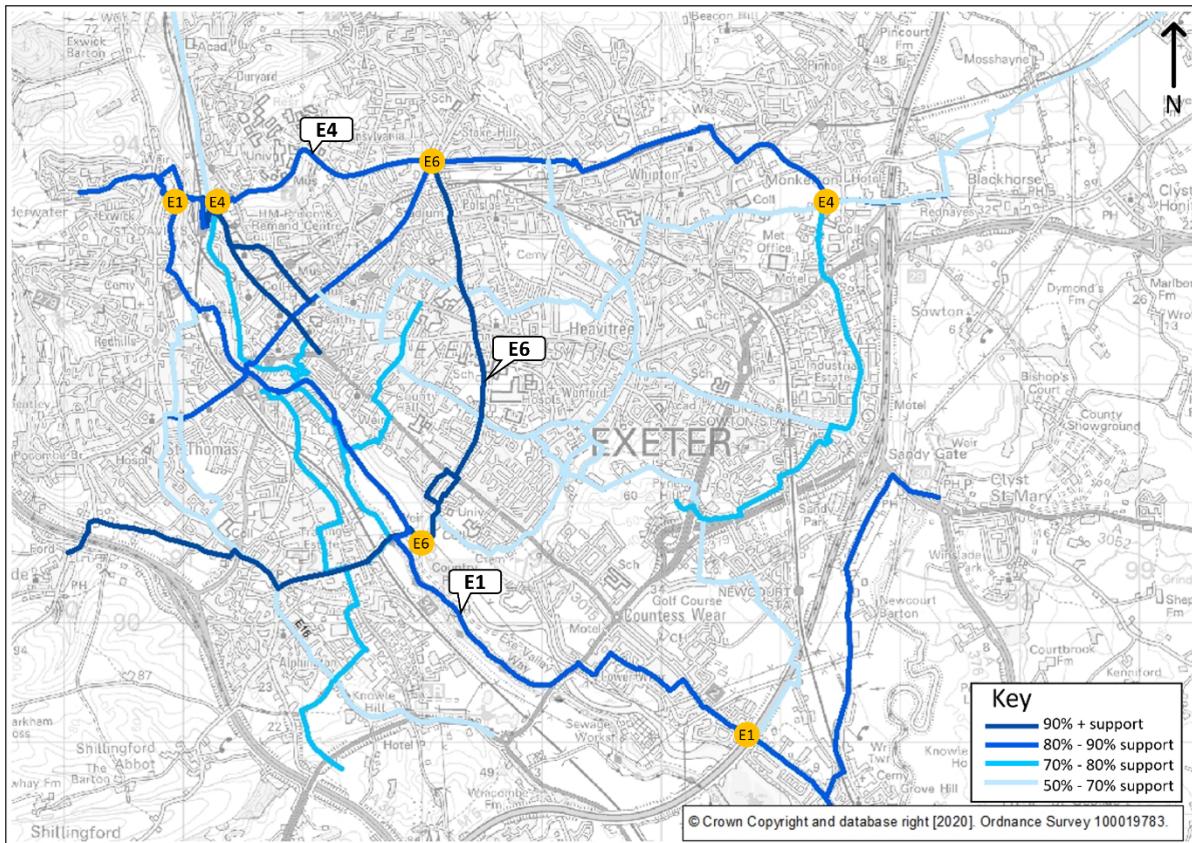
A public consultation was held between 1st February 2023 and 31st March 2023. The consultation was hosted on the Devon County Council 'Have Your Say' website. It was advertised through press releases, social media, and adverts in the local press. Four public exhibitions were held, attended by over 200 members of the public, and a questionnaire was published to collect public feedback. A total of 726 completed questionnaires were received within the consultation period, as well as a number of emails from the public, stakeholders and organisations.

Public Consultation Results

Members of the public, organisations and stakeholders wrote responses to the consultation. Most respondents were in support of the LCWIP but made suggestions on how to improve it as a whole or through comments on specific routes.

The majority of respondents were supportive (54%) or unsure (21%) of the proposed walking routes, with 39% stating it would improve accessibility to their desired destinations. Suggestions of additional places that should be connected mainly showed a desire for extensions into residential areas. Equally, a majority of respondents were supportive (54%) or unsure (16%) of the proposed cycling routes. Similar to the walking routes, 39% said it would improve their accessibility to desired locations. Respondents who did not support the proposed network largely stated that this was due to the proposals not being ambitious enough, in terms of geographical coverage, the number of routes or proposed speed of delivery.

All individual cycling routes in the LCWIP received at least 50% support. The routes with the greatest levels of absolute support were E1, E4 and E6, whilst the route with the greatest level of opposition was E9. Many of the comments relating to E9 were regarding a lack of support for existing schemes (modal filters on Dryden Road and Wonford Road) or stating a preference to have an alternative route (such as along Topsham Road). The walking routes all received more than 80% support but had significantly fewer responses than the cycling routes.



Various themes arose from the responses, including safety concerns of shared use paths, and suggestions that further measures be used to reduce vehicle dominance in the city, but many of the comments were very specific and can be addressed when routes are progressed to the detailed design stage.

A comprehensive public consultation report is available to view at: devon.cc/exeterlcwip.

Updated Exeter LCWIP document

The outcomes of the public consultation will be used to update the LCWIP document, with the following changes:

- **Prioritisation of Routes.** The levels of support for the various routes within the public consultation, will be fed into the prioritisation of the routes alongside the other factors previously considered, for instance noting strong public support for E6, which was not one of the original prioritised routes.
- **Mapping.** Comments noted that the maps were difficult to read and understand. In response, significant improvements are planned. Some of the more notable edits are that colours have been changed to be more easily differentiated, inaccurate labels and keys have been rectified, and unnecessary detail has been removed. The new approach to mapping will be consistent between all route maps. Where relevant, maps will be split into multiple sections to make them easier to read.
- **Shared Use Paths.** Concern was expressed about shared use paths in the proposed network, with a preference for segregated paths wherever possible, or contra-flow cycle lanes. The planned differentiation between segregated and shared use paths will be removed from the maps, and instead this will be considered in the design stage, which will need to take into account the local context and feasibility of

achieving segregation. LTN 1/20 compliance will be expected for all future Government-funded schemes.

- **Pedestrians.** Some consultation respondents thought that pedestrians do not benefit from this LCWIP as much as cyclists, and therefore the pedestrian routes should be extended. The revised LCWIP will better emphasise how pedestrians will also benefit from the improvements proposed within cycling routes, i.e. highlighting having better segregation from cyclists or quieter routes making it easier for pedestrians to cross roads.
- **Key Terms.** Some key terms will be better explained and clarified in the document, such as 'quietways'.
- **Funding.** The document will further clarify the nature of external funding and delivery constraints.
- **Graphics.** The graphics within the LCWIP will be updated to better represent Exeter.

Some common suggestions have not been actioned for the following reasons:

- **Network Expansion.** Many who opposed the proposed LCWIP network argued that it is not ambitious enough and needs to be expanded, either using additional routes or by extending individual routes to specific locations. The LCWIP provides an initial proposed network, with indicative alignments and interventions. Should funding be received to develop the schemes further, this opportunity will be taken. Furthermore, this network is not all projects planned in Exeter, and other schemes may come forward in the future. Some suggested extensions fall into other LCWIPs, either already prepared or forthcoming, or are being considered in projects elsewhere. For example, links between Exeter and Crediton (the Boniface Trail project) will be picked up by the Devon Countywide LCWIP, which will focus on the strategic, longer distance trails. Furthermore, to extend the LCWIP further would make it unrealistic in terms of funding and resource likely to be available in the future.
- **Speed of Delivery.** The rate of possible change and development will be influenced by the availability of external grant funding. Due to the nature of local authority funding, the majority of funding is likely to come from competitive bidding processes to central government; however, it will also enable negotiations with developers for contributions. The future funding streams are nevertheless unclear, and it is not possible to commit to exact delivery timescales. There will need to be a flexible opportunistic approach in securing funding, something which the County Council has a strong track record on.
- **Direct routes.** Many respondents to the consultation queried why there are a lack of routes on arterial roads. This is because, in many cases, there is already cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, existing or in the works, such as along Topsham Road. The historic nature of Exeter's road network, constrained by railways and limited river crossings, mean that the arterial roads need to continue to serve as the primary routes for traffic including bus and goods vehicles from the wider catchment of Exeter. There are also physical constraints, such as pinchpoints, which means it is not possible to provide a consistent standard of high quality, segregated active travel provision on these high volume roads. Instead, routes have been chosen which run parallel to these arterial routes, offering safer and a more attractive environment for less confident or inexperienced cyclists.
- **20mph Speed limits.** It was a frequent comment for a 20mph speed limit to be extended across Exeter, to increase safety for cyclists and pedestrians. There is a framework in place for assessing and prioritising 20mph speed limits which was

agreed by Cabinet in December 2021 and enables elected Members to make representations for their communities where it is felt that the introduction of a 20mph speed limit would be beneficial.

- **Junctions and Crossings.** Feedback highlighted junctions and crossing points which need improving, which have been logged for future consideration and can be considered when developing proposals. The LCWIP document does not represent all schemes and improvements in the Exeter area.
- **Motor Vehicles.** Concern was raised that people who need to access areas with motor vehicles will be prohibited to do so if this network is implemented. The principle of the LCWIP is to create a high quality cycle network across the city to encourage mode shift towards more active travel modes for shorter distance journeys. The primary arterial roads remain important for the movement of goods and vehicles, which is why proposals have generally focused on cycle routes between the main roads. Vehicles will continue to be able to access all destinations across the city; although as with recent modal filter schemes like Wonford Road, Ludwell Lane and Chard Road, the route vehicles take may in some cases be different. At this stage of the process, no decisions are being made on the detail of the schemes and there will be further design, consultation and committee approvals for individual schemes.

6) Strategic Plan

The Exeter LCWIP is well aligned with several of the priorities and actions within the Strategic Plan, by improving walking and cycling infrastructure and connectivity.

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	Prioritise sustainable travel and transport	+3 (large positive)
	Encourage sustainable lifestyles	+3 (large positive)
Supporting sustainable economic recovery	Secure investment in transport infrastructure	+3 (large positive)
	Maintain and, where necessary, improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options	+2 (moderate positive)
Improving health and wellbeing	Give people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity.	+3 (large positive)
Help communities to be safe, connected and resilient	Enable a range of transport options, including public transport	+2 (moderate positive)

7) Financial Considerations

The approval of the Exeter LCWIP will not result in any financial commitment from Devon County Council. The LCWIP document recognises that, due to the nature of

Local Authority funding, the majority of funding for proposals is likely to be realised through bids to central Government. Funding sources are also likely to include S106 developer contributions including from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Having an approved LCWIP will aid the negotiations to secure the funding necessary to delivery active travel improvements.

Any future commitment of funding towards either the development or delivery of active travel schemes would require further committee approvals, i.e. through the transport capital programme or scheme specific reports.

8) Legal Considerations

There are no specific legal considerations. Where relevant these are considered in reports on individual schemes, such as where land negotiations or traffic regulation orders may be necessary.

9) 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 country. 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 infrastructure, supporting modal shift and tackling transport emissions and poor air quality.

The Devon Strategic Plan 2021-25 includes 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 supports these aims.

10) 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.

In progressing the draft Exeter LCWIP document, an Impact Assessment was prepared and has been published at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/>. The Impact Assessment highlights that, overall, the LCWIP will benefit all residents by improving walking and cycling links to employment, education, and services. The proposed infrastructure will cater for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages, abilities, and confidence levels. Therefore, it may enable certain individuals to travel independently by removing transport-related barriers to opportunities. Where proposals involve re-allocation of road space to pedestrians and/or cyclists at the expense of general traffic, journey times by motor vehicle may increase, but the proposals are expected to encourage modal shift and greater levels of cycling and walking.

11) Risk Management Considerations

The LCWIP is an ambitious set of active travel interventions for the Exeter area. Subject to the availability of funding and the further development of individual schemes, it may not be possible to deliver all interventions as set out in the document. The delivery of proposals will need to be flexible and adapt to changing circumstances and funding opportunities.

For most proposals, a Road Safety Audit will be carried out prior to delivery. This is a formal, independent process for assessing the risks to different roads users during the development and post implementation of schemes.

12) Summary

The Exeter LCWIP is an ambitious plan for transformative walking and cycling interventions in Exeter, which aligns with several of the Strategic Plan priorities. It will enable the County Council to be in a strong strategic position to secure future funding and ensure that it delivers active travel schemes in locations that deliver maximum impact. The document has undergone public consultation which has demonstrated support and route priorities have been amended in response to the feedback received. The Exeter LCWIP document will contribute towards the development of the Local Transport Plan 4 as part of a suite of LCWIPs for Devon.

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Electoral Division: All in Exeter

Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper Nil

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