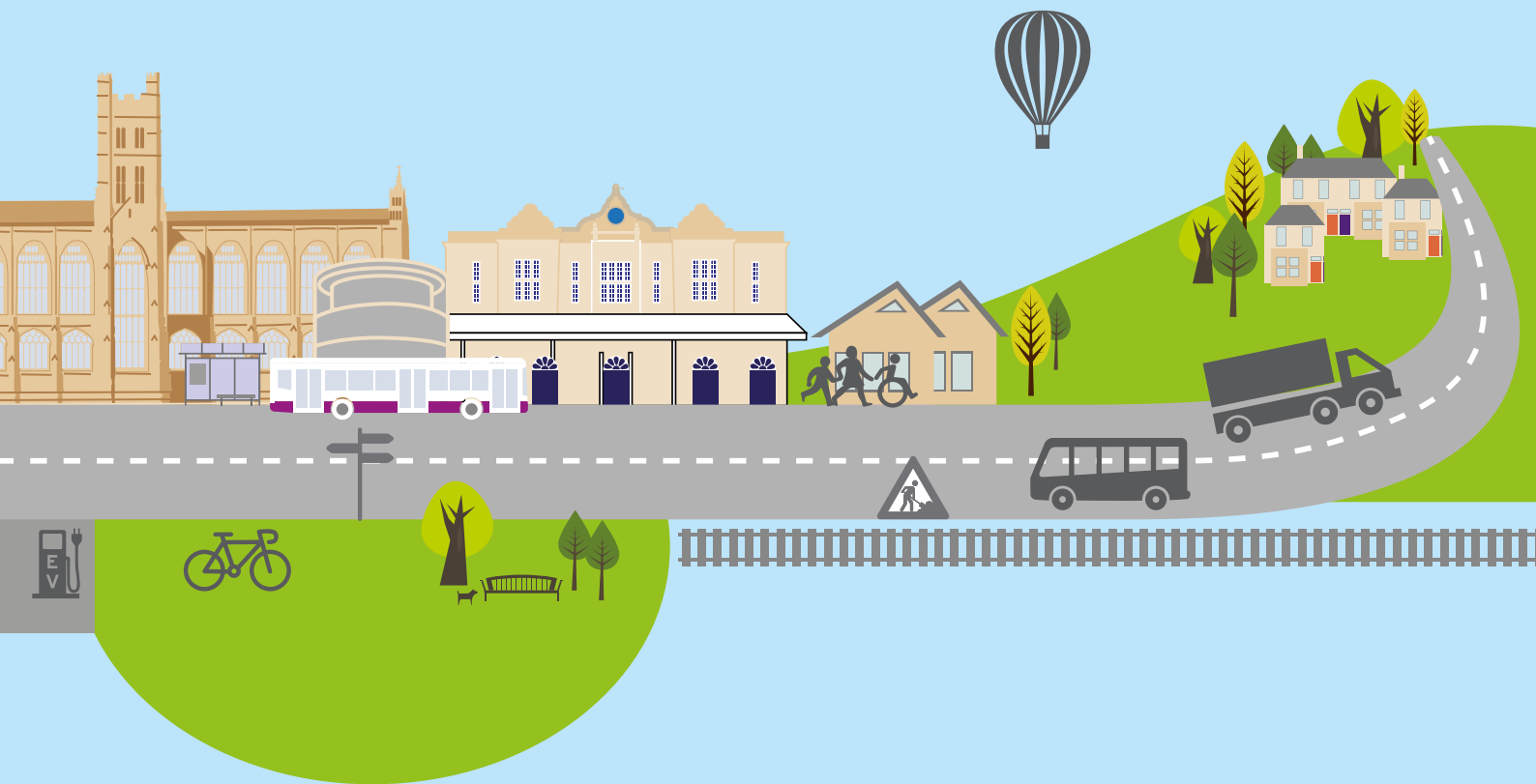


Our plan to get Bath moving



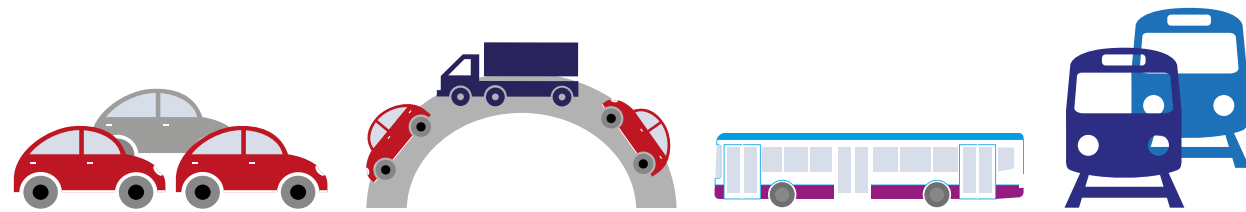
Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Our plan to get Bath moving

The way we travel affects us all. Dealing with transport issues is therefore an important part of improving the quality of life for local people, unlocking economic growth and managing the increasing demand on our road network in the future.

No single transport initiative has the power to transform our travel choices, cut congestion, improve air quality or ease parking issues. That's why we're implementing a package of joined-up transport improvements to help meet rising demand and reduce the impact of traffic on local people.

This document focuses on the city of Bath, its major access routes and the transport needs of people living, travelling to and working in the city.



Parking on the outskirts of the city

Existing parking such as the three Park & Ride sites are an important part of the wider transport measures to encourage drivers to park on the outskirts of the city and use alternative means, for example cycling and buses, to travel into the city centre. The aim is to provide more short-term parking to support local businesses.

The Council remains committed to providing appropriate out-of-town parking as well as tackling congestion and air quality on all major routes into the city.

Championing an A46-A36 Link Road

Around 12% of traffic entering the city each day is through-traffic that doesn't stop in Bath. Plans for a new Link Road connecting the M4 / A46 directly to the A36 in the east of the city would effectively remove one third of this through-traffic from the A4 London Road and A36 Bathwick Street. This equates to removing well over 2,000 vehicles a day from the city centre, including c.900 HGVs. Because the Link Road would join two trunk roads, the decision to fund and build the road rests with Highways England.

Improving bus journeys

We're working in partnership with bus operators to improve the reliability of journey times, encourage the adoption of greener buses and promote quicker payment methods, such as mobile ticketing. To improve passenger comfort we've recently completed a programme of bus shelter refurbishment, including real-time information displays and raised kerbs. We continue to encourage rural services, subsidising essential and voluntary services where needed.

Improving local rail

Along with Network Rail and Great Western Railway, we're planning to improve the frequency of trains between Bath and Bristol within five years by extending the MetroWest rail service. This will feature more frequent, half-hourly stops at Keynsham and Oldfield Park to support the development of homes and businesses along Bath's riverside.

We are also exploring the economic feasibility of a light rail rapid transit system (trams) as a way of moving large numbers of people rapidly into the city centre reducing overall congestion. This is a first step towards wider studies to assess technical feasibility by 2020.



Tackling the presence of goods vehicles

Getting the balance right between supporting businesses and limiting intrusive traffic is important for a city with World Heritage status. That's why we're working with the industry to help drivers identify appropriate routes around the city, and restricting access and loading times in busy shopping and tourist areas. These measures help to limit congestion and make Bath a nicer place to live, work and visit.



Improving the road network

Investment in the quality and safety of our roads is a key priority. This involves removing pinch points that cause congestion, creating better signage to direct traffic, repairing potholes, and working with utility companies undertaking work on our highways. Our intention is to improve the flow of traffic along safer roads with more reliable journey times.



Improving air quality

Queuing traffic – particularly from older

diesel vehicles – is contributing to higher than average levels of nitrogen oxides in certain areas of Bath. Tackling this requires a range of measures that help to reduce emissions and limit congestion, such as the adoption of greener buses, improving walking and cycling routes, providing more charging points for electric vehicles, and encouraging people to use alternative means of travel or public transport from the existing parking sites on the outskirts of the city such as the Park & Ride.



Improving traffic flow with technology

We're harvesting and sharing real-time transport data for online journey-planning apps, car parking signs, bus stop displays and variable message signs on routes into Bath. This information helps people make informed choices about their journey and boosts confidence in public transport and estimated travel times. Real-time information is particularly helpful following incidents and during events.



Encouraging walking and cycling

Choosing to walk or cycle around the city and to public transport hubs is not only healthier than taking the car, it can ease the pressure on our transport network as the city grows, including pressure on parking. We're therefore reviewing and improving our network of walking and cycling routes and installing better signage. This work includes adequately linking up Bath's new riverside development to public transport hubs and the city centre, and building a new pedestrian bridge at Bath Quays.

Wider parking plans



In line with our aspiration to reduce car use in the city, we will encourage drivers to use parking on the outskirts of the city or alternative means of travel to allow an increased mix of short term and disabled parking in the centre. This will make it easier to park whilst supporting economic growth for local businesses. The council will continue to support cycling, rail and buses as well as exploring other



alternative means of travel – such as making better use of the river – to meet the demands created by more people wanting to live and work in the city.

More charging points for electric vehicles and secure cycle parking will encourage greener ways of travelling, and there are proposals to provide long-stay coach parking in non-residential areas, supported by additional drop off points in the centre. Other key initiatives include increasing traffic management before and during events.

Working with schools and large employers

We're working closely with our schools and largest employers to help them promote and incentivise alternatives to driving, such as walking, cycling and using public transport. Initiatives include: supporting employers to access grants for electric pool bikes and improved cycling facilities; extending our safer routes to school network; helping our largest employers to create travel plans; and encouraging schools to become accredited Modeshift STARS, an awards scheme that promotes sustainable travel and road safety.

Our Transport Plan – in summary



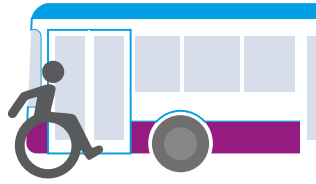
We're also championing the installation of superfast broadband across the area – including rural areas – so that home working is a possibility for more people.

Connecting new development



The area's planned economic growth means more pressure on our transport network. We need to ensure that significant developments are built in or next to existing urban centres, with good access to public transport links. This means greater opportunities to move residents and workers to their final destination using public transport, reducing the impact of future growth on the existing road network. New transport alternatives being explored, such as a rapid transit system (trams), all contribute to reducing pressure on the network as the economy grows.

For example, Bath's new riverside development will be designed in such a way to reduce the need for people to travel by car – supported by a new bus service, more frequent trains



from Oldfield Park, and well-designed walking and cycling routes to public transport hubs. This includes a new pedestrian bridge across the river at Bath Quays.

Improving access for people with restricted mobility

We are making it easier for people with restricted mobility to get around the city and access public transport. We've raised kerbs at main bus stops in Bath and the majority of buses now have lowered floors to assist access. A review of access around the city will inform improvements to roads, paths and crossings for people with restricted mobility.

Our improvements to busy shopping streets and tourist areas, such as levelling pavements and restricted vehicle access are already helping people with mobility scooters, wheelchairs and prams to move around the area freely. We've also improved our car parks to make them more accessible, widening disabled and family bays and lowering pavements.



Other ideas

The Council regularly receives suggestions from the public on ideas for sustainable transport. For example, the River Avon has the potential to become part of Bath's transport network, running river taxis to help move tourists, commuters and shoppers around the city.

We are also looking into other alternatives including the feasibility of a light rail, rapid transit system (trams) capable of moving large numbers of people rapidly to their destination, connecting to the key transport hubs in the city, large employers and new developments. Other initiatives being looked at include smarter ticketing that would allow a single ticket to be used on a number of different types of transport – making journeys easier – reducing reliance on the car.



Looking ahead

Some of these projects are relatively easy to achieve and already underway; others are more complex requiring planning consent and the agreement of the Department for Transport and Network Rail. Others, such as river transport, are just ideas at this time. Our aspiration is to see projects already in the pipeline completed within the next 20 years. You can find out more about them overleaf.

More information

For more information, you can also refer to the our Transport Strategies for Bath, Keynsham and the Somer Valley; the West of England's Combined Authorities' draft Joint Transport Study; our new Parking Strategy and Creating the Canvas for Public Life in Bath – A Public Realm and Movement Strategy for Bath City Centre.

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