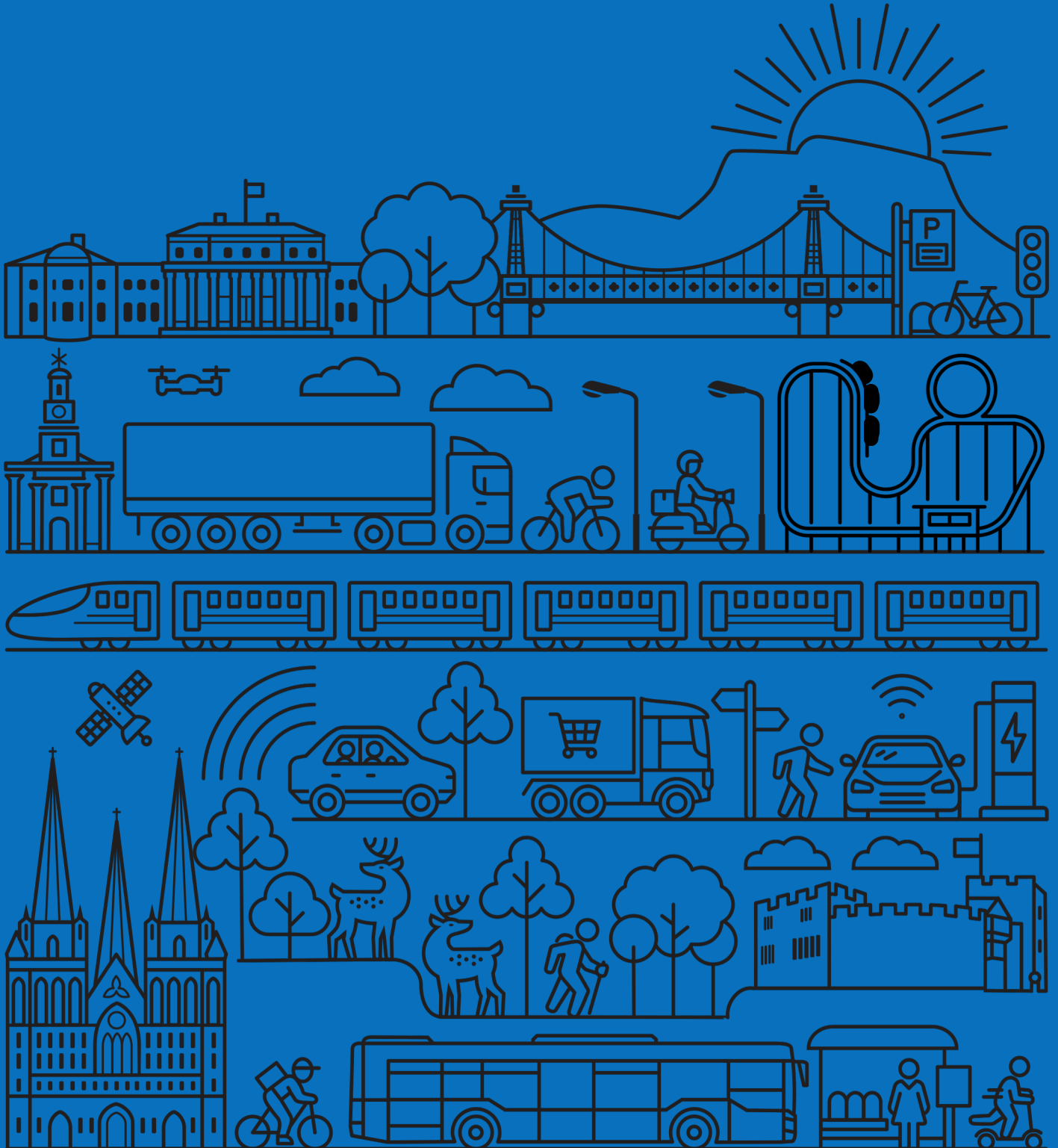


STAFFORDSHIRE

Draft Local Transport Plan

2025

Review of LTP3



Staffordshire
County Council

Review of Local Transport Plan 2011

The previous Local Transport Plan Policy Document was produced in 2011. During the period of 2013 to 2018, we produced eight District/Borough integrated transport strategy documents to reflect the transport challenges and opportunities within adopted Local Plans produced by our local planning authorities. To complement the integrated transport strategies, theme-based strategy documents were produced covering highway asset management, walking and cycling, buses, rail and freight.

Eight outcomes were included in the 2011 Local Transport Plan Policy document. An overview of how successful we were in delivering these outcomes is provided below

Improve journey time reliability in Stafford, Burton and Newcastle

Traffic management schemes such as junction modifications and traffic signals in urban areas have sought to facilitate the expeditious movement of people and goods in Staffordshire's main towns. New roads, such as Stafford Western Access Route, have created additional road capacity, freeing up space on more congested roads. However, data from the National Highway and Transport (NHT) Satisfaction Survey shows an 8% fall in levels of satisfaction with addressing congestion between 2008 and 2022.

The focus has not just been on Stafford, Burton and Newcastle as there has been significant housing and employment growth in other urban areas that has had an impact on traffic growth. This has required the delivery of infrastructure to accommodate this growth in the form of access roads and junctions. Examples include Lichfield Southern Bypass, A50 Uttoxeter, access works to development sites including Meaford, Kingswood Lakeside, Redhill, Keele University Science Park, Four Ashes, Lichfield Park, Chatterley Valley, Branston Locks and West Midlands Designer Outlet. The Etruria Valley Link Road linking Newcastle with Stoke-on-Trent has also supported economic growth.

Maintain current condition of the highway network

Maintaining the condition of the highway network has been challenging since 2011 due to reduced Government funding, rising costs and increased road usage. Existing budgets are insufficient to maintain the highway asset in line with best practice.

Users of our road network remain concerned about the state of the highway network and the backlog of repairs. Only 36% of respondents to the 2024 National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey were satisfied with highway maintenance in Staffordshire.

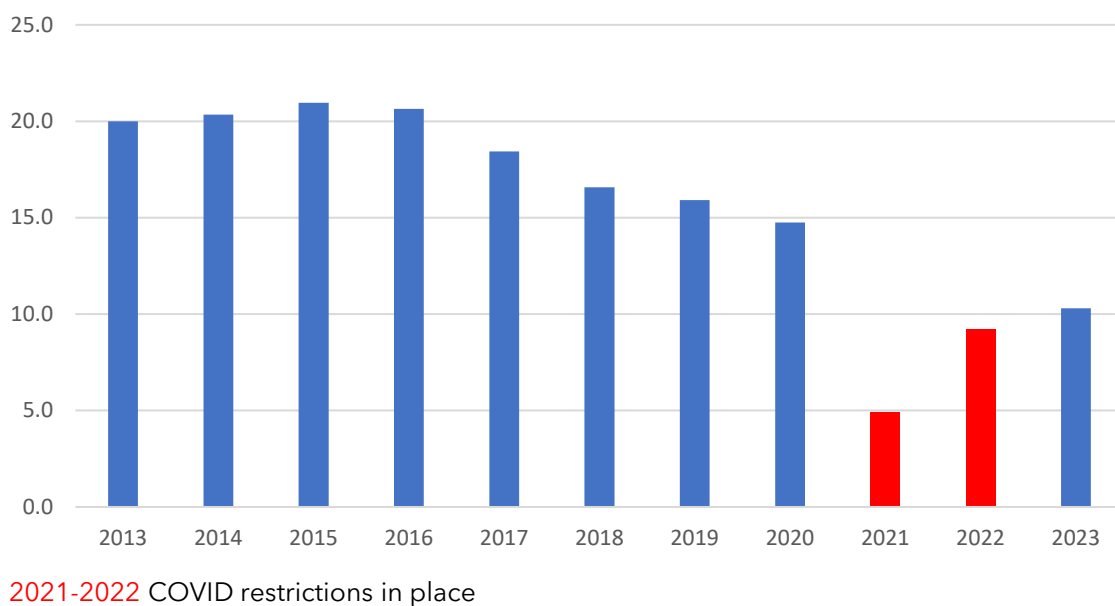
The Council's approach has been to move decision making away from the imminent and the urgent, to a planned regime that recognises the overall needs of the asset and delivers greatest value for money. Preventative maintenance treatments are planned as part of a wider whole-life approach, rather than focusing on a worst-first priority.

Increase bus patronage levels

Following national trends, bus patronage has declined since 2011. In 2009/10, levels stood at 22 million passenger journeys and in 2018/19 this dropped to 15.9 million. Although this decline was occurring prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was severely exacerbated by the pandemic, which saw patronage levels decline to 9.1 million in 2021/22. Other significant contributory factors include reductions in bus subsidies, non-commercial evening services being cut, along with the cessation of the young persons' travel card in 2019.

There are some bus services that have seen growth, including in Tamworth and between South Staffordshire and the West Midlands Conurbation. There has also been continued investment to make bus travel more attractive, including investment in bus stops, real-time passenger information (in the main urban areas) and interchange facilities.

Figure 1: Annual Passenger Journeys in Staffordshire (millions)



Improve access to town centres

Improved access to town centres to support regeneration schemes has been delivered across Staffordshire, including:

- Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre public realm and bus station improvements

- Lichfield Southern Bypass reducing delays and improving access to the town centre
- Burton upon Trent public realm, removal of through traffic from the High Street, an enhanced access to the rail station and Union Street traffic management
- Stafford town centre public realm focusing on the Riverside shopping centre
- Improved sustainable connectivity between Tamworth town centre, Ventura Retail Park and the rail station
- Improved connectivity between Cannock town centre, the rail station and the West Midlands Designer Outlet
- Rugeley canal towpath public realm
- Leek public realm
- Improved connectivity to Biddulph along the Biddulph Valley Way
- Kidsgrove rail station improvements

Reduce cost of travel for the young, elderly and those with disabilities

Schemes have sought to reduce the cost of travel for young, elderly and those with disabilities, including the concessionary fare scheme for people over 66 years, the concessionary fare scheme for disabled people, Staffordshire Young Persons' Travel Card, and the Wheels 2 Work Scheme. The latter two have since ceased, but at its height in 2014, the Young Persons' Travel Card had 35,000 card holders and 2.375m journeys were being made. The Wheels to Work scheme supported 1,750 people over its life and it ceased in 2021.

Reduce the number of road casualties

Reducing road casualties has been a priority. The overall trend in the number of road collisions is improving.

There have been countywide programmes such as Safer Routes to School and Bikeability focus on children – one of the county's main vulnerable road user groups. It is estimated that around 120,000 pupils have received Bikeability training since 2010 - Level 1 playground-based training, Level 2 road training and Level 3 advanced road training.

Clusters of accidents have been addressed through local safety scheme measures such as anti-skid surfacing, average speed cameras, junction modifications, traffic calming, speed limit reviews, gateways, signing and improved road markings.

Reduce road transport CO₂ emissions

CO₂ emissions from road transport on the local road network is estimated to have fallen from 1659.8 kilo tonnes in 2008 to 1173.7 kilo tonnes in 2020. This is in part due to the advances in vehicle and fuel technology made over this time. This advancement is also evidenced by the number of Air Quality Management Areas

(AQMAs) in the county. Since 2011, six AQMAs have been revoked. Whilst 11 remain, many of those on the local road network are showing improved air quality.

Maintain levels of recreational cycling

Sustainable and active travel is an increasing priority for the Council and significant levels of funding have been made available to facilitate this. Investment has been made to improve sections of the National Cycle Network, including routes linking to Stafford and Newcastle, as well as cycle connections serving Uttoxeter, Burton and the Staffordshire Moorlands.

The Staffordshire Moorlands Pedal Peak scheme was funded via the National Park Cycle Fund. It delivered 14km of new off-road cycle track, along the Caldon Canal towpath, and 22km of new on road improvements, signing the section from Leek to the Tittesworth Reservoir and from Cheddleton to the Manifold Track at Waterhouses.