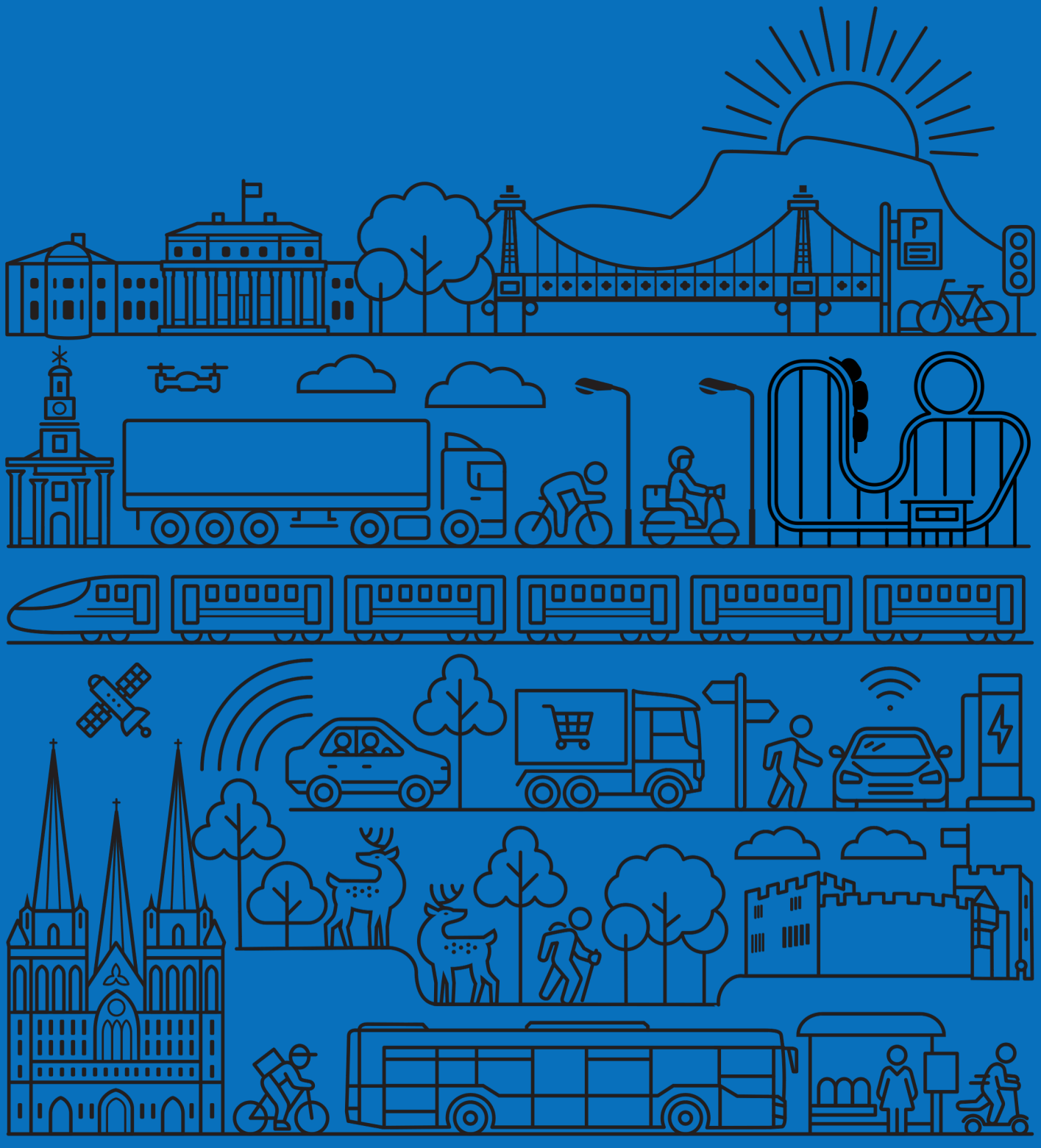
STAFFORDSHIRE

Local Transport Plan

2026



Staffordshire County Council

Contents

Appendices

Chapter 1

Chapter 3

Chapter 4

Chapter 5

Executive Summary

This can be found in a separate document.

Foreword

Our roads and transport are an enabler of economic growth, social interaction, positive health and wellbeing outcomes, and environmental improvement.

There has never been a more critical time to produce a new Local Transport Plan. The challenges are significant. They require difficult decisions around priorities, and the stakes are high for the transport network as a whole. The focus is on the practical actions that we can take to improve connectivity within Staffordshire and provide genuine travel options as widely as possible.

Through this plan, we want to increase the travel options available to residents and businesses, allowing them to make informed decisions regarding how, when, where, and if, they travel. We are committed to making it easier for people to walk, cycle, and use public transport, alongside private cars, because having different travel options is key to a modern, multi-modal transport system. We recognise the freedoms and opportunities that cars can provide. Most of us use a car and, for many people, they would struggle to get around the county without one, and we recognise this in this plan. The plan aims to deliver economically sustainable, safe and environmentally aligned choices.

Increasing levels of digital connectivity within the county will enable people to access certain jobs and services, without the need to physically travel. At the same time, by investing in digital technologies, we can help our roads flow more smoothly, with fewer queues.

Town centres, residential areas, and local communities need to be vibrant places to live, work, and visit. We want better connectivity between and within our towns and we want to see more children walking, wheeling and cycling to school. For Staffordshire to prosper, our transport infrastructure must connect people to jobs, and businesses to markets. This plan is our strategic vision for our transport network; it will transform how we manage, maintain and improve our transport system, ensuring it is well-planned and invested in so that it runs effectively and congestion is minimised.

This is an ambitious plan that we cannot deliver alone. It requires commitments from key stakeholders and National Government. This plan will be continually monitored and updated to ensure the most appropriate, cost-effective and beneficial interventions are delivered.

Councillor Andrew Mynors Cabinet Lead for Connectivity

Councillor Peter Mason Cabinet Lead for Highways

Chapter 1: Overview and Objectives

1.1 Introduction

Transport is the movement of people and goods, which is enabled by the county's road and rail networks. It is fundamental to delivering a vibrant economy that allows people to meet, access jobs, education, goods and services. The LTP seeks to deliver the right types of schemes to allow our economy to grow, our residents to be healthy and happy, and our environment to thrive.

It provides the strategic outline business case for investment, setting out our vision for the county's road and transport network, and our asks of National Government and stakeholders. It includes our five-year investment asks and longer-term objectives. The asks represent our estimates, based on current information, of how much investment Staffordshire is likely to need to make progress towards achieving the LTP objectives. With lower levels of investment, the LTP's outcomes will take longer to achieve. Scheme investment programmes will be developed and approved as resources become available.

The LTP will be used as one of the conditions for future devolution agreements. It will help to define our future key route network; provide a basis for our formal partnerships with National Highways and Great British Railways; and inform the transport priorities for our future Local Growth Plan and Spatial Development Strategy.

Comprehensive and wide-ranging engagement activities took place during 2023 and 2024. This helped us to understand the views of our residents, businesses and stakeholders. A summary of the activities and our responses to the feedback we received can be viewed in Appendix 1.1.

In 2025, we consulted residents, businesses, key stakeholders and the council's Economy, Infrastructure and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on our draft LTP. This final version of the LTP recognises the outcome of this exercise. Appendix 1.2 sets out the results of the public consultation and highlights the changes that have been made to the LTP to reflect the feedback we received.

Sitting beneath the LTP are more detailed, theme-based strategies, including the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan, the Traffic and Network Management Plan, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, and the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Our aim is to deliver an integrated transport network in Staffordshire, which aligns with the National Government's five missions. These are to:

- Kickstart economic growth.
- Make Britain a clean energy superpower.
- Take back our streets.
- Break down barriers to opportunity.
- Build an NHS fit for the future.

National Government has also identified five strategic priorities that put transport at the heart of a mission-driven government. The theme-based chapters within the LTP explain how we align with the five priorities, which are:

- Transforming infrastructure to work for the whole country, promoting social mobility and tackling regional inequality.
- Improving bus services and growing usage across the country.
- Better integrating transport networks.
- Delivering greener transport.
- Improving performance on the railways and driving forward rail reform.

An Integrated Impact Assessment, which covers the assessment required when a new LTP is prepared, is found in Appendix 1.3 and summarised below. It has been prepared alongside the LTP and considers the likely significant economic, social, environmental and cultural effects the LTP may create. Where there is a risk of negative impacts arising from the LTP, measures have been taken to mitigate these. Conversely, where there are positive impacts, these have been maximised.

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

The IIA comprises the requirements of a:

- Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA);
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA);
- Community Impact Assessment (CIA); and
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).

It has the following 14 objectives:

1. Improve air quality.
2. Reduce tailpipe emissions from road transport.
3. Reduce the dependency on cars, especially for short journeys.
4. Reduce the risk of flooding and increase the resilience of the road and transport network to extreme weather.
5. Facilitate future development while not impacting on greenfield sites and high-quality soils.
6. Protect and enhance protected habitats, sites, species, valuable ecological networks; promote ecosystem resilience and functionality; and deliver Biodiversity Net Gain.
7. Reduce nitrate deposition on Cannock Chase SAC.
8. Conserve and enhance heritage assets and the wider historic environment.

9. Promote the prudent use of finite natural resources when undertaking road improvements and maintenance and reduce the level of waste generated.
10. Promote strong economic growth.
11. Reduce levels of inactivity and obesity across the population.
12. Promote greater equality of opportunity for all.
13. Improve road safety and reduce the number of road traffic collisions, particularly those involving high-risk road users.
14. Address fear of crime and antisocial behaviour on the transport network.

The LTP was revised following the IIA process and it now delivers more favourable outcomes, particularly in relation to air quality, the economy, health, wellbeing, and community safety. Overall, it is considered that the LTP represents a well-balanced approach in terms of sustainability performance across the full range of potential key effects.

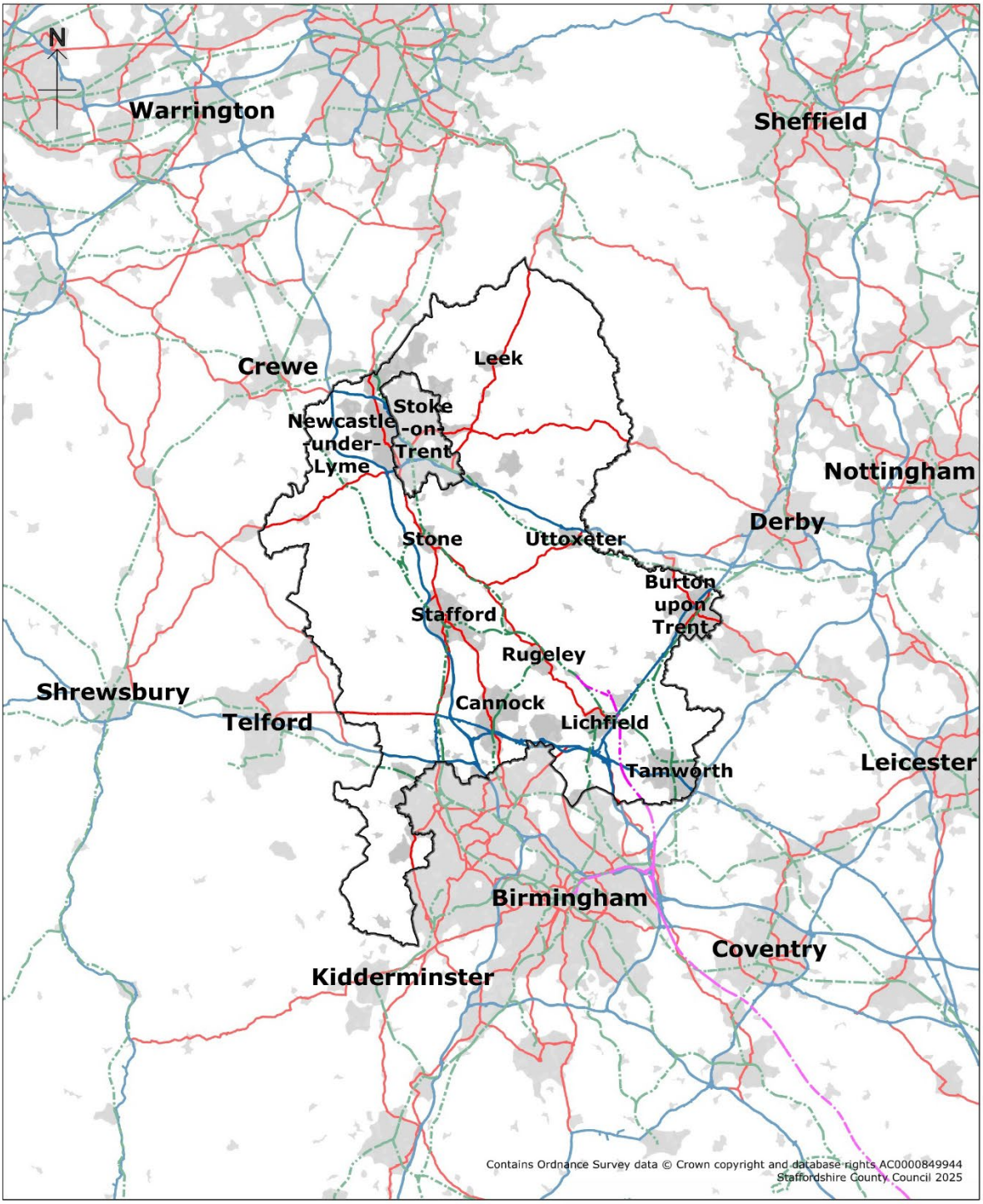
The LTP has also been subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), which was undertaken in parallel to the IIA process. It is a legal process to determine if the LTP is likely to have a significant negative impact on European protected sites, such as Natura 2000 sites. At the screening stage, it was determined that the LTP was not a 'Plan' in the context of the Habitats Regulations because it did not contain detailed proposals. It concluded that the LTP was a "statement of general aspiration, or political will or general intentions". However, in the interest of transparency, a HRA document was produced to record the decision-making process that allowed this conclusion to be made. A copy of the HRA document is provided in Appendix 1.4.

1.2 Travel in Staffordshire

A well-functioning transport network in the county is critical to unlocking greater connectivity between our towns in Staffordshire and to the rest of the country, especially to the Midlands and the North of England. Our strategic location, with access to major national routes, such as the M6, A50, A38 and the West Coast Main Line (WCML), emphasises the county's importance for the UK's freight and logistics sector.

Figure 1.1 shows how Staffordshire's strategic transport network provides links within Staffordshire and to neighbouring areas. It highlights where the rail network runs parallel to our strategic and major road networks, offering strong potential for modal shift from road to rail, and network resilience. This is particularly evident for north to east and north to south movements, between northern Staffordshire and Derbyshire, and northern Staffordshire and the West Midlands conurbation. Conversely, it identifies the lack of east to west public transport connections.

Figure 1.1: Location of Staffordshire



Major Road Network

Strategic Highway Network

Rail Network

HS2 Route

Staffordshire County Boundary

Scale: 1:650000

Staffordshire County Council

Two thirds of Staffordshire residents work within their district, borough, or city boundary. This ranges from 56% in South Staffordshire to 75% in Stafford Borough. Overall, self-containment for work purposes within Staffordshire, including internal movements between districts and boroughs, is above 80%. This indicates that the county has strong functional economic areas.

Within the sub-region, there are high levels of movement between areas, particularly Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands. Looking further afield, there are high levels of movement in and out of Staffordshire to the east and south, including:

- East Staffordshire to Derbyshire.
- Southern areas of Staffordshire to the West Midlands conurbation.
- Tamworth to Warwickshire.

An extensive evidence base has been established to identify travel patterns by all modes of transport in Staffordshire. The results of the data analysis, provided in the LTP's appendices, has been used alongside our engagement activities to help inform the LTP's proposals. The main datasets used were:

- 2023 Staffordshire Household Travel Survey, showing why, how and when people travel.
- 2024/25 Vehicle satnav data, showing how far and where people are travelling to, and where this is resulting in traffic delays.
- 2025 Accessibility analysis, showing journey times to services and facilities by different modes of transport.
- 2021 Census, showing car ownership levels and journey to work.
- 2024 Traffic volume data, showing trends and peak travel times at key locations.
- 2024/25 Public transport patronage and reliability.
- 2022 Carriageway condition surveys.
- 2024 Bus stop audits.

Household Travel Survey 2023

A household travel survey was conducted in June 2023 to understand the travel behaviours of Staffordshire's residents. The survey asked about modes of travel to different destinations, distance of travel, and considerations such as health and wellbeing. The survey received 2,472 responses. As part of the survey, 1,935 respondents also completed a one-day travel diary, which provided greater insight into the pattern and purpose of travel within the county. Detailed findings from the survey are included in Appendices 1.5 to 1.13. A summary of the travel diary data is provided in Chapter 5 - Land Use and Transport Planning. In 2031, we will repeat the Household Travel Survey to see whether travel has changed following delivery of the LTP's five-year investment programme.

1.3 Vision and Strategic Objectives

The LTP's long-term vision is that Staffordshire will have:

An integrated and efficient transport system that delivers economic prosperity, creates healthy and safe communities, and improves the environment.

Sitting beneath the vision are four strategic objectives, which are:

1. Deliver a whole-systems approach to transport and road management that grows the economy.
2. Deliver safe, well maintained local roads, footways and cycleways that create a sense of place and healthy communities.
3. Improve physical and virtual connectivity, whilst addressing inequalities.
4. Improve air quality and protect the natural and built environments.

Figure 1.2 shows how the strategic objectives, along with the vision, link with wider council strategies, whilst Table 1.1 details how the LTP contributes towards their delivery.

At a sub-regional level, we have previously produced a **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Strategic Transport Statement**, alongside Stoke-on-Trent City Council. It seeks to address our shared transport challenges and sets out how we will work together to unlock economic growth and improve quality of life. The version of the Statement that was agreed in March 2025 is provided in Appendix 1.14 and may be reviewed in the next few years.

Figure 1.2: Linkages Between the LTP and Wider Council Strategies and Plans

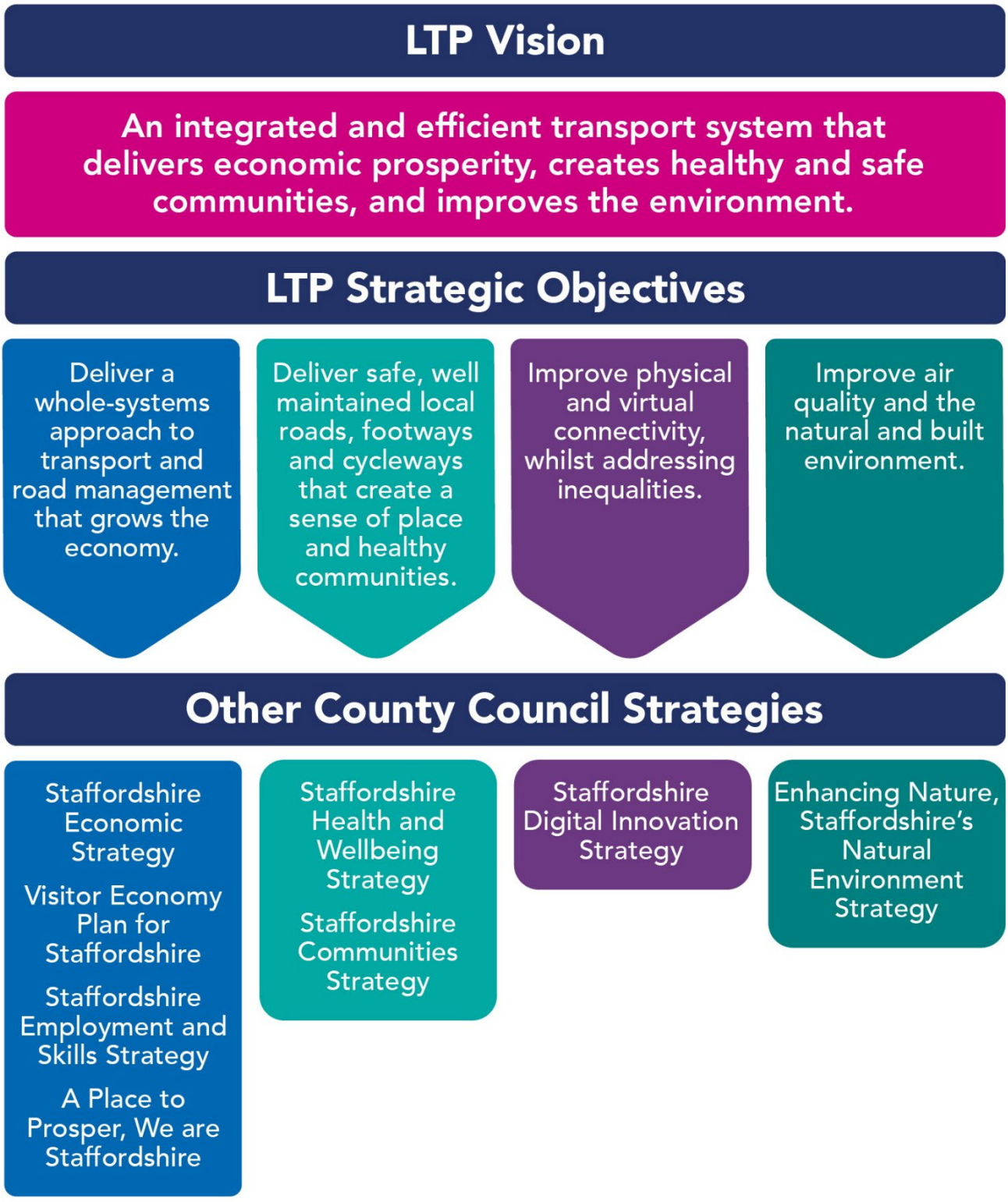


Table 1.1: LTP's Contribution Towards the Delivery of Wider Council Strategies

Other County Council Strategies	LTP's Contribution
Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2022	Increasing levels of walking and cycling will support the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board's priorities of healthy ageing, good mental health and healthy weight.
Staffordshire Economic Strategy, 2023	Better transport connectivity supports the regeneration of our town centres, and enables people to benefit from better paid, local jobs, and aspirations for the A50/A500 A38 and A449 corridors.
A Place to Prosper, Invest in Staffordshire, 2023	Better transport connectivity supports the promotion of strategic development sites, the visitor economy, and access to learning, particularly for those without a car.
Visitor Economy Action Plan for Staffordshire, 2023	Improved access to key tourist destinations will contribute to economic growth, supporting the quality of our tourism offer.
Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy, 2023	Better access to education, training and employment opportunities will benefit people, communities, and the economy. The LTP supports economic and social inclusion by making access to these opportunities easier, which can lead to increased employment rates, higher incomes, and improved quality of life.
Enhancing Nature, Staffordshire's Natural Environment Strategy, 2024	The LTP plays a crucial role in protecting and enhancing our natural environment, both now and for future generations. When delivering the LTP it is vital that opportunities to enhance the environment are maximised and any negative impacts are minimised or mitigation measures put in place.
Staffordshire Communities Strategy, 2024	Better transport connectivity fosters social inclusion by enabling access to essential services, employment, education, and social opportunities. Whilst transport and roads can negatively impact public health, they can also promote physical activity and reduce health inequalities.
Staffordshire Digital Innovation Strategy, 2024	Increasing use and integration of digital technologies, data and connectivity when managing the local road network, will improve safety, efficiency, and the overall customer experience.

An **Integrated National Transport Strategy for England** is expected to outline a vision where transport is safe, reliable, and accessible for everyone; where people are encouraged to undertake journeys by public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling; and where people experience a truly integrated transport network that works for them. The LTP has been written with this document in mind and if required, it will be refreshed once the Integrated National Transport Strategy is published.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has updated the **National Planning Policy Framework** to deliver new homes, create jobs and deliver new and improved infrastructure. The Planning and Infrastructure Bill (March 2025) introduced Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) as a key mechanism to accelerate development.

SDSs will be produced by upper tier authorities, with LTPs providing the transport direction. All Local Plans must be in general conformity with their area's SDS.

The LTP complies with the changes to **The Highway Code** that were made in 2022 that introduced rules about the new 'Hierarchy of Road Users'. The hierarchy places those users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy. The hierarchy does not remove the need for everyone to behave responsibly. The road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision are pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists, with children, older adults and disabled people being more at risk.

1.4 Delivery Principles

Five Delivery Principles have been established to ensure that the choices made on which schemes to deliver have a sound business case, add value, contribute to social good, and protect the natural and built environment. We will target our spend where it delivers the greatest outcomes measured by our Key Performance Indicators. The Delivery Principles are:

1. *Enable People to Make the Right Travel Choice*
   - The needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users should be considered.
   - Contribute to an integrated transport system that allows people to switch seamlessly between different modes.
   - Communicate information about travel choices.
   - Digital connectivity must provide the option not to travel.

2. *Create Vibrant, Prosperous and Attractive Places*
   - The public realm should be accessible and welcoming to all.
   - Features that encourage social interaction, such as green spaces and seating, should be considered.
   - Local arts, culture, and heritage should be promoted to foster a sense of place and identity.
   - The character of Conservation Areas should be protected.

3. *Create Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities*
   - Communities should be actively involved at the earliest opportunity, giving them a voice regarding proposals and their design.
   - Schemes are accessible to everyone, particularly disabled people by making 'reasonable adjustments' (Equality Act 2010).
   - Increase people's ability to walk, wheel and cycle, including for leisure purposes.
   - Consider the security of lone and vulnerable travellers, and include 'Security by Design' features, where appropriate.
   - Focus on a proactive and people-centred approach to reducing the risk and severity of road collisions and recognising the road user hierarchy.

4. *Enhance the Natural Environment*

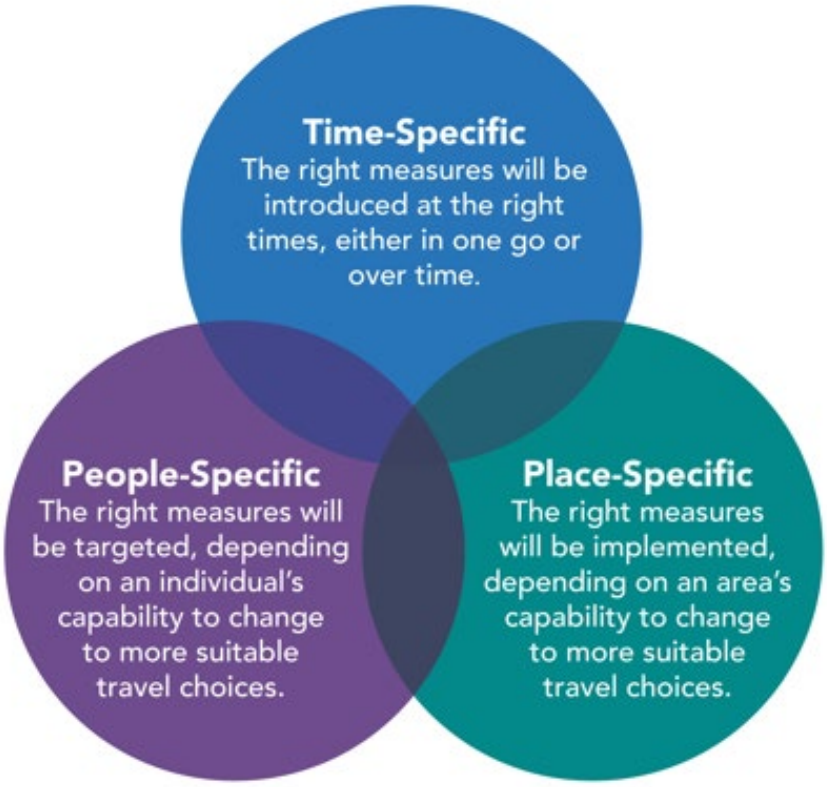
- Improve biodiversity, incorporating features that provide environmental and social benefits, such as managing stormwater, improving air quality, and creating habitats.
- Further the purposes of protected landscapes.
- Support people and businesses that want to use low emission vehicles.

5. *Adopt an Infrastructure-light Approach*

- Avoid unnecessary works or consider different scheme components or designs that use fewer materials.
- Extend scheme lifespans by re-using, repairing or refurbishing scheme components.
- Recycle waste components.
- Future-proof schemes wherever possible to include digital integration and enhanced resilience to external factors.
- Deliver a cost-effective maintenance programme that adds life to our highway assets and minimises the rates of deterioration.

There is no one-size-fits-all with regards to LTP delivery; what might work well in one part of the county or targeted towards a particular group within the population, may not necessarily be successful, applicable or cost-effective in another part, or for another group. As a result, LTP delivery will be time-, people- and place-specific, as illustrated in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: Time-, People- and Place- Specific Delivery Principles



Time-Specific Delivery

We need to deliver schemes at the right time to ensure a whole-road, whole-asset approach to scheduling planned works, fixing as much as we can in one go to reduce disruption and repeat visits. Through effective programme management, we will consider when the right time is to deliver a scheme, giving time for thorough community engagement and scheme option appraisal. We will prioritise schemes within our programme to ensure we meet funding deadlines.

People-Specific Delivery

The way people travel depends on their circumstances, characteristics and choices. Their age, gender, disability, ethnicity and socio-economic status, can all have an influence on their travel choices. People can also be placed into different audience segments, depending on their attitudes and ability to change travel behaviour. We will make improvements for the people who need it the most, and for those who will benefit the most from greater travel choice.

Schemes will be designed with the least mobile in mind, thereby delivering inclusive mobility. Designing schemes that help to improve the health of the population and reduce inequalities, which are especially felt by people from lower socio-economic groups, women, older people, disabled people, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Schemes developed through the LTP will support the Equality Act 2010 and thereby protect the rights of individuals and improve equality of opportunity for all.

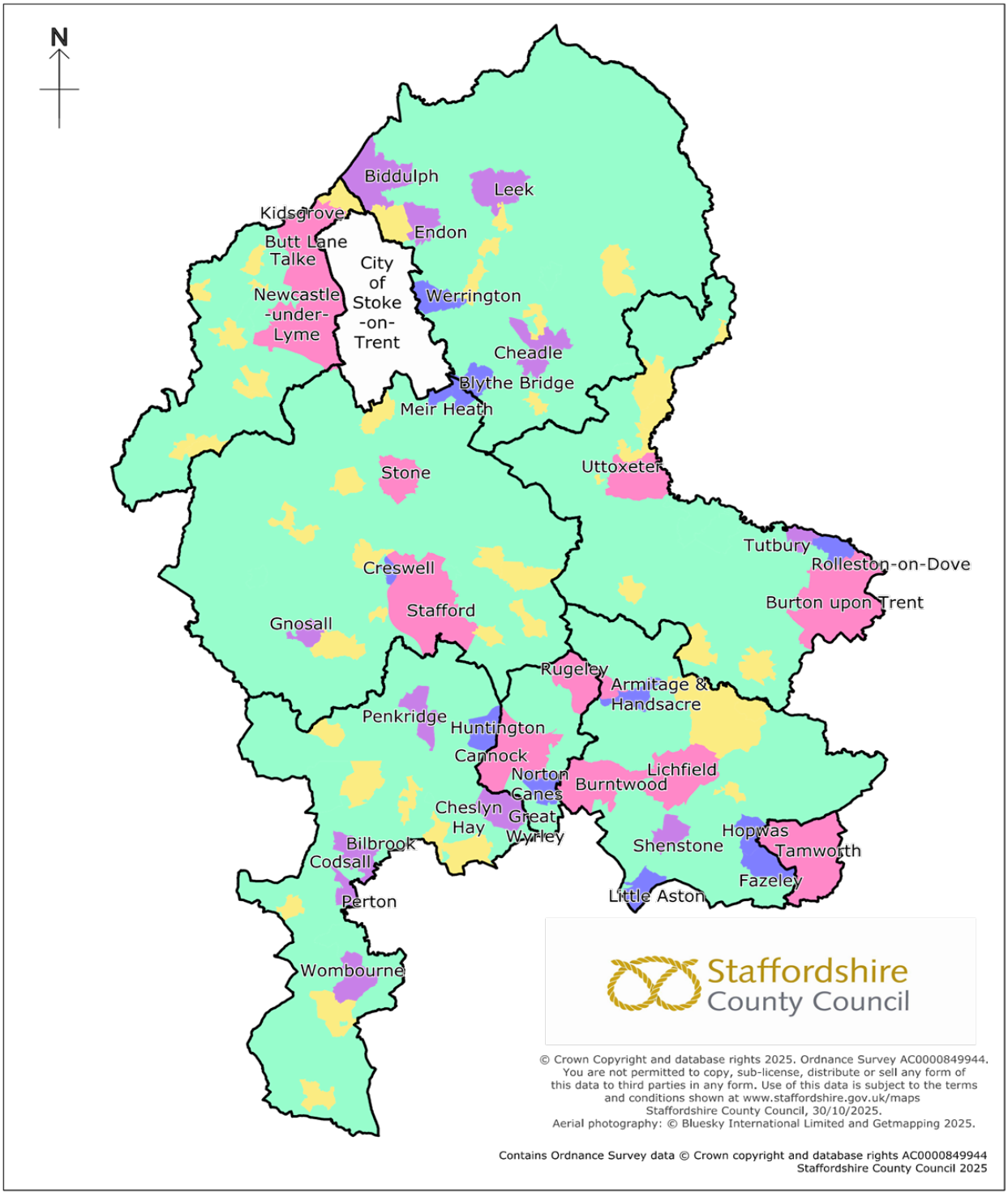
Place-Specific Delivery

We will choose the right location to deliver a scheme to ensure that we are achieving the greatest benefits in the most cost-effective manner.

In terms of informing where we should focus our delivery, we have developed a settlement hierarchy, called the Capability to Achieve Suitable Travel (CAST). Figure 1 shows how Staffordshire is broken up into five different types of places; each place type will require different types of interventions to achieve the LTP's vision. Appendix 1.15 provides a more detailed explanation of the CAST place types.

Over time, if transport infrastructure, bus services and the availability of local facilities changes, a settlement in terms of its CAST rating will be re-assessed.

Figure 1.4: Capability to Achieve Suitable Travel



1. Settlements with travel options available and close proximity to facilities
2. Settlements adjacent to those with travel options and facilities
3. Settlements on key transport corridors with some facilities
4. Settlements with bus services and limited proximity to facilities
5. Settlements with very limited transport infrastructure and remote from facilities

Scale: 1:400000

1.5 Review of LTP 2011

The previous LTP was produced in 2011. During the period of 2013 to 2018, we produced eight integrated transport strategies to reflect the transport challenges and opportunities within the local planning authorities' Local Plans. To complement these, theme-based strategy documents were also produced, covering highway asset management, walking, cycling, buses, rail and freight.

The 2011 LTP contained the following eight outcomes:

- Improve journey time reliability in Stafford, Burton upon Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme.
- Maintain the current condition of the highway network.
- Increase bus patronage levels.
- Improve access to town centres.
- Reduce cost of travel for the young, elderly and those with disabilities.
- Reduce the number of road casualties.
- Reduce road transport CO_2 emissions.
- Maintain levels of recreational cycling.

Appendix 1.16 describes our progress in achieving these outcomes.

1.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Our success in delivering the LTP will be dependent on receiving our funding asks of National Government and developing cost-effective programmes of schemes. We will also need to gain the necessary commitments from key stakeholders. Each year, we will complete an Annual Progress Report (APR) that will highlight what we have been able to achieve and where there have been barriers to success. The funding ask beyond five years and the associated forward programme of schemes will be developed as levels of available funding become more certain.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) listed in Chapters 2 to 7 will help us understand the impact the LTP is having. We plan to add weightings to these, to ensure that we are making a fairer, more accurate assessment of the LTP. The KPIs will continually be reviewed, taking account of additional data, insight, new funding streams, legislation and policies.

A full review of the LTP will be undertaken every five years.

Chapter 2: Public Transport

2.1 Introduction

Public transport can be cheaper than owning a car, and can provide an accessible, efficient and greener way to travel. For the most disadvantaged groups in society, such as children, older people, people on low-incomes, people who are neurodivergent or with long-term health conditions, public transport can be their only means of travel.

Working with transport operators, we want to create a joined-up network that caters for multi-modal journeys, places the user at its heart, and enhances the journey experience. Expanding the availability and strengthening the offer of public transport services will be essential to deliver the LTP's vision. Further details on our proposals to improve bus services and infrastructure can be found in our separate Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

The focus of this chapter is on rail and bus travel, with recognition of the role of other public travel options including, taxis, coaches, community transport and shared cars and bikes. We also consider the movement of freight by rail and how this competes with rail passenger service provision.

2.2 Theme Objectives

There are four LTP theme objectives relating to public transport. Table 2.1 shows how these link to the Department for Transport's priorities.

Table 2.1: Linkages between the Theme Objectives and the Department for Transport's priorities

Theme Objectives	Department for Transport's Priorities				
	Transforming infrastructure	Improving bus services	Integrating transport	Greener transport	Rail reform
1. Ensure multi-modal connectivity for all, to, from and within rail stations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Improve rail passenger and freight services	✓		✓	✓	✓
3. Deliver high-quality bus services that are reliable, accessible and easy to use	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4. Provide other public travel options where frequent bus services are not available			✓	✓	

2.3 The Current Situation

2.3.1 Rail Travel

Staffordshire is at the heart of the UK rail network. Key national rail lines serve the county, as well as important regional and local lines, linking to the West Midlands conurbation, the East Midlands and the North-West. There are high numbers of rail passengers moving cross-boundary, between:

- East Staffordshire and Derbyshire;
- South Staffordshire, Lichfield, Cannock, Tamworth and the West Midlands conurbation; and
- Tamworth and Warwickshire.

Figure 2.1 shows the passenger rail network in Staffordshire provided by Avanti West Coast, Cross Country, East Midlands Railway, Northern, Transport for Wales, and West Midlands Trains / London Northwestern Railway.

The West Coast Main Line (WCML) runs through Staffordshire and is one of the busiest rail lines in the UK. The WCML accommodates a mix of long distance and local passenger services, and long-distance freight services, and acts as a nationally significant diversion route. Stations on the WCML include Kidsgrove, Stone, Stafford, Penkridge, Rugeley Trent Valley, Lichfield Trent Valley and Tamworth.

The Birmingham to Derby line is a key local and long-distance route for passenger and freight services, linking the West Midlands, Staffordshire, the East Midlands and the North of England. Stations on this line include Tamworth and Burton upon Trent.

Other lines (and stations) in Staffordshire include:

- Chase Line (Landywood, Cannock, Hednesford, Rugeley Town and Rugeley Trent Valley).
- Cross City Line (Shenstone, Lichfield City and Lichfield Trent Valley).
- North Staffordshire Line (Uttoxeter and Blythe Bridge).
- Cross Country Line (Wilnecote)
- Shrewsbury Line (Bilbrook and Codsall).

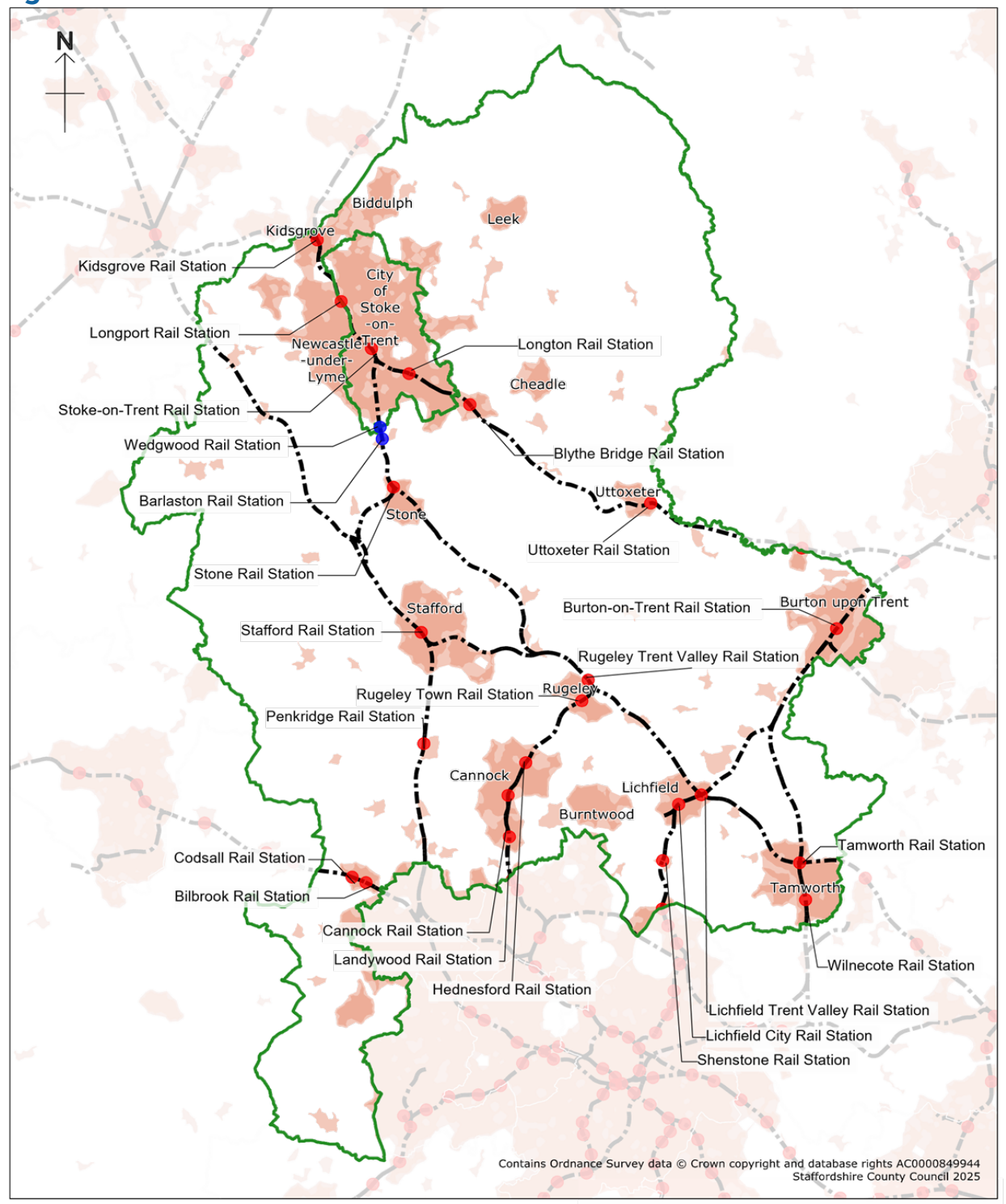
We are a partner authority of the West Midlands Rail Executive (WMRE) and a non-voting member of Transport for the North (TfN). Through these partnerships and regular meetings with train operators, we aim to influence how local rail services operate in terms of timetabling and frequencies.

WMRE currently specifies and manages the West Midlands Railway part of the West Midlands Trains service contract. From 1 February 2026, changes will take place, as the whole of the West Midlands Trains service contract will move to the Department for Transport Operator (DfTO). As a member authority of WMRE, any substantial change to the relationship between WMRE and the DfT must gain prior approval from member authorities by Special Resolution. It is confirmed that Staffordshire County Council will

support WMRE in their negotiations on a revised collaboration agreement with DfT to facilitate this change and ensure the successful future operation of West Midlands Railway beyond February 2026.

Just over 9 million passengers boarded a train in the county in 2024/25. The busiest station is Stafford with over 2 million passenger journeys per year in 2024/25. Data shows that the top destinations from Stafford are London Euston, Birmingham New Street, Manchester Piccadilly, Wolverhampton and Stoke-on-Trent, which account for around 60% of all journeys originating from the station.

Figure 2.1: Staffordshire's Rail Network



County Boundary

Rail Line

Rail Station (Open)

Rail Station (Bus Replacement Service Only)

Urban Area

Scale: 1:400000

Staffordshire County Council

Staffordshire's Rail Network

Table 2.2 displays the change in station usage between 2023/24 and 2024/25, alongside a comparison with 2019/20 usage, which was before the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Table 2.2: Annual Rail Station Usage

Station	Total Passengers 2023/24	Total Passengers 2024/25	Percentage change 2023/24 to 2024/25	Percentage change 2019/20 to 2024/25
Bilbrook	135,478	139,092	+2.67%	+12.36%
Blythe Bridge	77,568	103,852	+33.89%	+13.97%
Burton upon Trent	705,092	913,000	+29.49%	+7.66%
Cannock	314,972	329,244	+4.53%	+66.51%
Codsall	122,224	135,854	+11.15%	-6.03%
Hednesford	253,538	276,156	+8.92%	+57.70%
Kidsgrove	243,534	287,730	+18.15%	+21.99%
Landywood	159,556	168,684	+5.72%	+50.87%
Lichfield City	750,518	777,334	+3.57%	-6.09%
Lichfield Trent Valley	727,448	887,958	+22.06%	-19.59%
Penkridge	261,144	292,594	+12.04%	+6.92%
Rugeley Town	164,120	185,286	+12.90%	+56.23%
Rugeley Trent Valley	169,364	201,346	+18.88%	+14.32%
Shenstone	141,974	149,888	+5.57%	-16.12%
Stafford	2,028,558	2,456,512	+21.10%	-5.18%
Stone	232,624	246,412	+5.93%	+33.56%
Tamworth	1,030,316	1,240,246	+20.38%	-2.40%
Uttoxeter	160,532	188,406	+17.36%	+13.65%
Wilnecote	80,390	98,734	+22.82%	-15.73%
Total	**7,758,950**	**9,078,328**	**+7.39%**	**+1.91%**

Office of Rail and Road estimates of station usage, November 2025

Passenger numbers are growing at all the county's stations, and 12 out of 19 have returned to pre-Covid-19 levels. For example, passenger numbers at Lichfield Trent Valley and Shenstone are just under 20% lower. Some of this reduction can be attributed to the rise in home working, which has reduced the number of people commuting from these stations.

Passenger numbers have increased on pre-Covid-19 levels at all stations on the Chase Line. This is attributed to the electrification of the line in 2018, which has resulted in a more regular and reliable rail service. We would like to see further growth on this line as road traffic data shows significant road traffic flows between Cannock and Walsall, and Cannock and Rugeley.

Our 2023 Household Travel Survey shows that although travelling to work by rail remains important, accessing leisure is overtaking commuting for work as the most frequent reason for using rail services. This was especially prevalent for residents in Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafford and Tamworth. Overall, 11% of respondents said that rail was their main mode for leisure travel, yet only 5% said that it was their main mode for work. Of those travelling for education purposes, 4% said rail was their main mode.

Rail Station Facilities and Accessibility

Rail is part of a multi-modal journey, and improving access to rail stations and integrating rail with other modes of transport is key if we are to deliver modal shift. At the same time, it will also improve journeys for people who face physical barriers to accessing rail services.

The level of passenger facilities provided across the county's rail stations varies considerably. In part, this is determined by whether the station is staffed and its level of patronage. Table 2.3 shows the facilities at each of Staffordshire's rail stations.

Table 2.3: Passenger Facilities at Rail Stations

Station	Station Facilities					
	Staffed	Ticket Office	Ticket Machine	Waiting Shelter	Waiting Room	Cycle Parking
Bilbrook	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Blythe Bridge	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Burton upon Trent	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cannock	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Codsall	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Hednesford	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Kidsgrove	Y *	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Landywood	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Lichfield City	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lichfield Trent Valley	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Penkridge	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Rugeley Town	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Rugeley Trent Valley	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Shenstone	Y *	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Stafford	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Stone	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Tamworth	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Uttoxeter	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Wilnecote	N	N	Y	Y	N	N

** Staffed for only a short period of the day*

Less than half of the county's rail stations (42%) have inclusive access to all platforms. There are access issues at Rugeley Trent Valley, Stone, Shenstone, Wilnecote, Cannock and Codsall stations.

Table 2.4 shows the level of inclusive accessibility at and to/from our rail stations. The stations are ordered from our busiest station (Stafford) to our quietest (Wilnecote). A score of 7 indicates inclusive access, high-quality cycle routes, and access to a range of bus services with at least a half hourly service frequency.

Table 2.4: Inclusive Access at and to/from Rail Stations

Station	Level of Accessibility					
	Patronage 2024 / 25	Inclusive Access	Cycle Access to station	Access to bus services	Overall Access score (out of 7)	Comment
Stafford	2,456,512	Y	2	2	5	
Tamworth	1,240,246	Y	2	2	5	
Burton upon Trent	913,000	Y	3	3	7	
Lichfield Trent Valley	887,958	Y	2	2	5	
Lichfield City	777,334	Y	2	3	6	
Cannock	329,244	N	3	2	5	Ramps are too steep
Penkridge	292,594	Y	0	1	2	Cycle access to the station to be considered as part of a development proposal
Kidsgrove	287,730	Y	1	2	4	Cycle access to the station to be considered as part of the redevelopment of the station building and forecourt
Hednesford	276,156	Y	1	2	4	
Stone	246,412	N	1	1	3	Stepped footbridge to Northbound platform
Rugeley Trent Valley	201,346	N	1	0	2	Stepped footbridge to Northbound / Chase Line platforms
Uttoxeter	188,406	Y	2	2	5	
Rugeley Town	185,286	N	2	2	4	Stepped footbridge between platforms
Landywood	168,684	Y	1	1	3	
Shenstone	149,888	N	1	1	2	Northbound platform stepped access only. The only practical solution needs to be completed as part of a development proposal adjacent to the site
Bilbrook	139,092	N	2	1	3	Ramps are too steep
Codsall	135,854	N	1	1	2	Ramps are too steep
Blythe Bridge	103,852	Y	1	1	2	
Wilnecote	98,734	N	1	1	2	Southbound platform stepped access only

Rail Services

Rail passengers require services that provide a pleasant journey where they can work, relax and not feel uncomfortable due to lack of space or capacity. Crowding and standing on journeys at peak hours is common, including on some Saturday services. This can have an impact on the reliability of services, with passengers struggling to board trains.

The current rail fare system is complex and does not make it easy to find the cheapest priced journeys. The eventual roll out of 'Pay as You Go' rail fares in the West Midlands (through the WMRE) will provide an opportunity for passengers boarding at a Staffordshire station to get the cheapest fare for their journey.

Through partnership working with the rail industry, we have seen recent improvements to rail services including additional stops being provided on Avanti services at Stafford, Lichfield Trent Valley and Tamworth. However, there are still significant issues that need to be resolved and some of these are described below.

- West Coast Main Line

  The cancellation of HS2 (High-Speed 2) Phase 2a has the potential to lead to significant capacity constraints on the WCML. This could directly affect the ability to maintain and improve local rail services and move more goods by rail freight.

  Studies undertaken by Network Rail have indicated that the proposed services utilising the HS2 Phase 1 line to Handsacre Junction to access the WCML cannot be accommodated within the existing timetable without capacity interventions. Without increased capacity on the WCML, existing local services may have to be removed, resulting in reduced connectivity for Staffordshire residents. For example, there is the concern that important fast services calling at Lichfield Trent Valley and Tamworth may not be able to be accommodated.

  Separate workstreams are being undertaken by Network Rail and the Department for Transport to determine the level of service required by the rail industry, focusing on the Birmingham to Manchester corridor. We need to ensure that the workstreams reflect Staffordshire's needs and aspirations.

- Birmingham to Derby Line

  Rail capacity is expected to be an issue on the Birmingham to Derby rail line due to potential competing issues along the line. Midlands Rail Hub (MRH) East is examining the need for additional services and capacity into Birmingham from the East, including the Leicester and Derby corridors. Both studies will inform service provision along this line, and it is essential that the outcome of both studies recognises the need to continue to provide local rail services that serve Staffordshire, particularly at Tamworth and Burton upon Trent stations.

- North Staffordshire Line

  The Stoke-on-Trent, Uttoxeter and Derby corridor is strategically important and is being promoted as the Midlands Growth Corridor - Fifty500 Project. Analysis of road traffic data shows high flows along this corridor, mainly on the A50. In terms of rail, the corridor is only served by one train per hour, stopping at all intermediate stations, which constrains journey times and limits its potential to attract new passengers. Data indicates that currently only a small proportion of people commute by train along this line.

  Improving rail service journey times and frequencies along this corridor will encourage modal shift and promote investment into the area, contributing to the aspiration of developing a multi-modal clean energy super corridor.

- Direct Services between Stone, Wolverhampton and Birmingham

  Services from Stone to Wolverhampton and Birmingham ceased in 2023 and were replaced with a shuttle service from Crewe to Stoke-on-Trent, Stone and Stafford. The shuttle service requires a change at Stafford for journeys further south.

  However, West Midlands Trains is proposing the introduction of a new service to Manchester Airport, beginning in December 2026, that will replace the Crewe to Stafford shuttle service. This is supported as it will benefit Staffordshire residents. It will enable direct connectivity again from Stone to Wolverhampton and Birmingham, alongside new direct connectivity to Manchester Airport from Stafford, Stone and Kidsgrove rail stations.

- Services to Barlaston and Wedgwood

  Barlaston and Wedgwood rail stations have been closed since the WCML redevelopment works in 2003 and, since then, these communities have been served by a rail replacement bus service, funded by the rail industry. WMRE are completing a business case to determine the value for money of re-opening either Barlaston or Wedgwood rail stations, or whether there is a case to open a new rail station at Trentham. The council's view on the need for a rail station at any of these locations will be determined by the outcome of this study.

  If there is no business case for a rail station, there will be no requirement for the rail industry to continue to fund the replacement bus service. The service will therefore be withdrawn leaving no bus service for Barlaston to Stone and Stoke-on-Trent, unless it can be funded by a bus operator or subsidised by the council.

- Lichfield Trent Valley to Burton upon Trent Line

  The rail line between Lichfield Trent Valley and Burton upon Trent carries freight services and has occasional use as a diversionary route for longer distance passenger services. A business case is required to determine whether there is the justification to open the route to passenger services in terms of deliverability and the potential to attract rail passengers. In the long-term, it is an aspiration to electrify the line to enable it to operate as part of the Cross City Line.

  Passenger demand would be dependent on the potential for existing car users in this corridor to choose to travel by rail. Analysis of road traffic data does not indicate a significant existing demand for travel between Lichfield and Burton upon Trent, however there could potentially be housing and employment growth along this corridor through emerging Local Plans that could contribute to passenger demand.

  In terms of deliverability, re-opening the line for passenger services is unlikely to be possible without the creation of a second platform at Lichfield Trent Valley to allow services to call in both directions. Without the second platform, provision of turnback facilities would be required to the south of Lichfield to allow services to turn around without blocking the existing lines. It is unclear if the unused Anglesea

junction line could be used for this purpose. A new south-facing bay platform would also be required at Burton upon Trent, along with signalling work.

The cancellation of HS2 Phase 2b will have an impact on the potential to provide the rail capacity required to deliver passenger services on the Lichfield to Burton upon Trent Line, due to complex competing demands for services. For example, with the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2b, the fast train services between Birmingham and Nottingham will now need to remain on the existing network, limiting the potential to create new local services along this route.

- The Ivanhoe Line

The aspiration for re-opening the Ivanhoe line for passenger services between Burton upon Trent and Leicester has previously been considered as part of the Restoring Your Railways project. The business case needs to be revisited as there is uncertainty in terms of deliverability and the potential to attract rail passengers.

Although the proposal could potentially provide an alternative to the A511 corridor between Burton upon Trent and Leicestershire, 2021 census data shows that less than 1% of the population travel between East Staffordshire and Leicestershire for work purposes.

There is unlikely to be the available capacity to provide both the re-opening of the Lichfield to Burton upon Trent line and the Ivanhoe Line for passengers, due to competing demands on capacity into Burton upon Trent rail station. The council cannot confirm support for either proposal until business cases have been completed.

- Stoke-on-Trent to Leek Rail Line

The aspiration for re-opening the Stoke-on-Trent to Leek rail line has previously been considered as part of the Restoring Your Railways project. We recognise that rail services along this line could help to remove traffic from the A53 and improve public transport links to Staffordshire Moorlands, however an up-to-date business case is required to justify the proposal.

There are several significant practical challenges that need to be overcome. For example, reconnecting the line and signalling; providing a turnback facility or south-facing bay platform at Stoke-on-Trent rail station; and creating additional capacity at Stoke-on-Trent rail station. At Leek, a new station, track and signalling would be required, along with the potential upgrade of 15 at-grade crossings and 41 bridges.

2.3.2 Rail Freight

The movement of freight by rail (for most of its journey) rather than road has several benefits. For businesses, it can be cheaper, provides greater journey time reliability, and supports their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda. For communities in certain locations, it can reduce disturbance (from noise, vibration, and anti-social driver behaviour), improve road safety and reduce traffic delays.

The main rail freight flow through Staffordshire is container traffic along the WCML from seaports in the south of England, travelling to destinations in the North-West and through to Scotland. Another important route is the Birmingham to Derby Line, which runs through Tamworth and Burton upon Trent. It carries freight to and from the East Midlands Gateway Rail Freight Terminal and Kingsbury Oil Terminal.

In recent years, rail freight movements have declined. While rail lends itself to the bulk movement of goods, retail trends are demanding lower volume and more dispersed movements, which is more suited to road freight. Further growth in rail freight is constrained by passenger rail services, which take priority, especially on busy routes such as the WCML.

National Government has set a target of growing rail freight by at least 75% by 2050. The creation of the West Midlands Freight Interchange (WMI) at Four Ashes will contribute towards this target. It will be a strategic intermodal freight terminal with direct connections to the WCML, capable of accommodating up to 10 freight trains per day. Work has commenced on the WMI, with the entire site projected to take up to ten years to complete.

We are aware that the WMI may lead to more freight movements on our roads, especially accessing and exiting the site. We will monitor movements and its use, to see if we can optimise our locational advantage.

2.3.3 Bus Travel

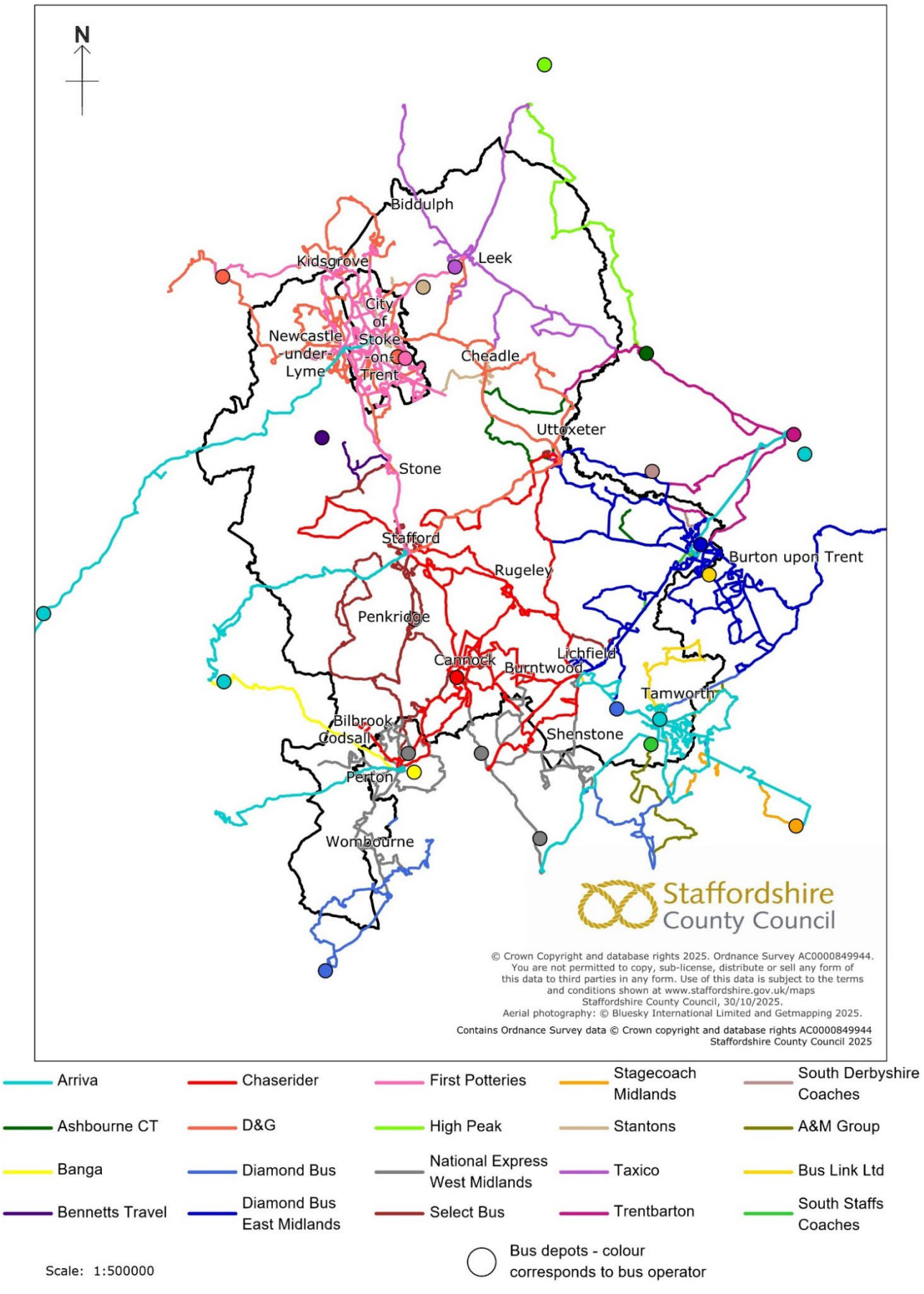
Buses are the main mode of public transport in Staffordshire, with 16 million journeys made in 2022/23. In June 2024, we published our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). It sets out plans on how we, along with bus operators and other key stakeholders, intend to grow patronage by making buses more frequent, reliable, faster, cheaper, easier to use, better to ride in, accessible and inclusive. Bus routes need to work for residents as best they can, but we must also ensure that funding decisions are cost-effective.

Currently 19 bus operators serve the county, running over 200 separate services. The biggest operator in terms of the number of services is Diamond Bus EM who run 20% of the county's bus services. Other large operators include D&G, Chaserider, Select and Arriva Midlands. Collectively, these five operators run almost two-thirds (64%) of bus services and 64% of all commercial services. Nine operators run services from depots within Staffordshire and tend to cover specific areas as shown in Figure 2.2.

Bus Use

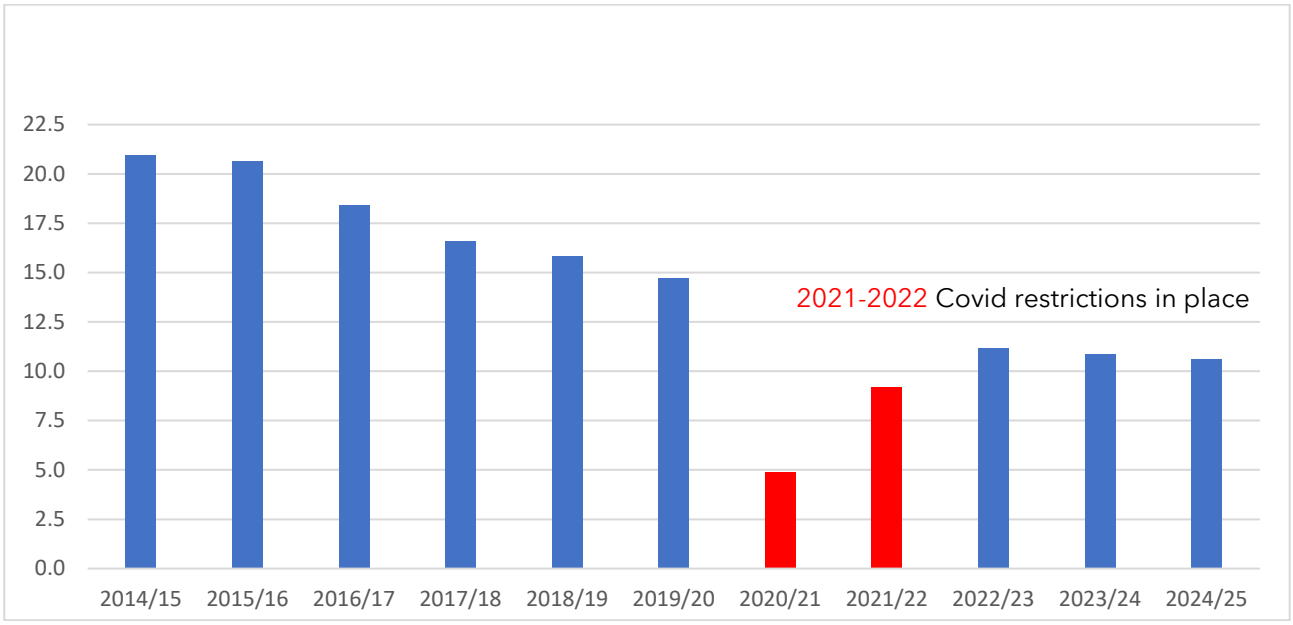
Access within 400 metres to a frequent bus service in Staffordshire has dropped slightly over recent years. In 2017, 78.9% of households countywide were within 400 metres of an hourly or better bus service and this figure is now at 77.2%. However, this is despite the number of households increasing by 8.6%. The highest figure is in Lichfield where the accessibility level is 97.4%. Stone and Rugeley have the lowest levels of accessibility across our larger CAST 1 settlements (Appendix 1.15), at 56.0% and 87.1% respectively.

Figure 2.2: Bus routes, Depots and areas of Operation, October 2025



Whilst accessibility levels have remained relatively constant since 2017, the total number of bus passenger journeys has fallen by around 48% as shown in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Annual Bus Passenger Journeys (millions) between 2014/15 to 2024/25



Department for Transport Bus Statistics, November 2025

Table 2.5 provides an overview of bus stop patronage for one month. The stops with over 10,000 boarding passengers are in the town centres of Cannock, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafford, Burton upon Trent, Lichfield, and Tamworth, and at Keele University.

Table 2.5: Bus stop patronage across Staffordshire, September 2023

Number of Boarding Passengers	Number of Bus Stops
0	749
1-249	2,549
250 – 2,499	675
2,500 – 7,499	51
7,500 – 10,000	12
Over 10,000	13

The routes with the highest number of passengers are listed in Table 2.6. Whilst most are cross boundary, the numbers relate to passengers boarding within Staffordshire. It highlights where a consistently high standard of bus service and infrastructure is required.

Analysis of road traffic data highlights significant car movements between towns in the south of Staffordshire and the West Midlands, further emphasising the need for high quality bus provision on cross boundary corridors, particularly where there is no rail service.

Table 2.6: The Highest Patronage Bus Routes, September 2023

Route	Route Description
3/ 3A/ 4/ 4A (Services now replaced by routes 38/ 38A/ 39/ 39A/ 103)	Hanley (City Centre) - Crewe (Bus Station) via Tunstall, Kidsgrove and Alsager Hanley (City Centre) - Talke Pits via Tunstall and Kidsgrove Hanley (City Centre) - Waterhayes via Festival Park, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Chesterton Hanley (City Centre) - Kidsgrove via Festival Park, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Chesterton and Talke Pits
25	Hanley (City Centre) - Keele (University) via Stoke-on-Trent Rail Station, Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme
101	Hanley (City Centre) - Stafford (Rail Station) via Newcastle-under-Lyme, Tittensor and Stone
110	Tamworth – Birmingham
9	East Midlands Airport & Gateway to Ashby, Swadlincote, Burton upon Trent, and Queens Hospital
74*	Cannock – Stafford
8*	Stafford – Parkside – Redhill – Stafford
X51	Birmingham – Walsall – Great Wyrley – McArthur Glen – Cannock
7* (Service now replaced by routes 875/876)	Stafford – Moss Pit

**These routes are wholly within Staffordshire.*

Our 2023 Household Travel Survey found that 3% of people usually use a bus to travel to work. Of those people in education, the percentage was much greater, at 14%. The other reasons for bus travel are summarised Table 2.7.

Table 2.7: Journey Purpose of Bus Users (excluding education and work), June 2023

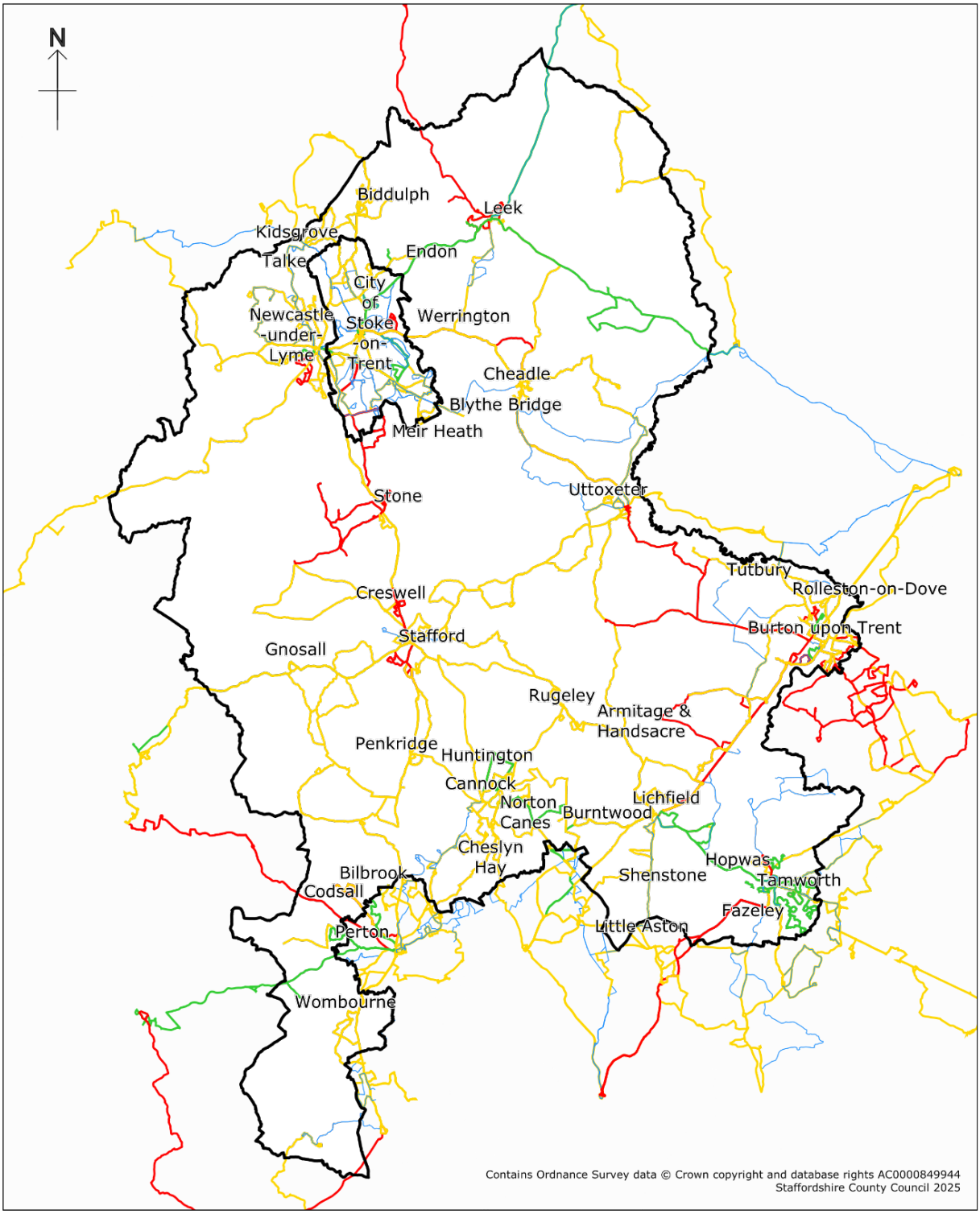
Journey Purpose	Percentage of people usually travel by bus
Food shopping	4%
Other shopping	8%
Socialising	7%
GP appointment	4%
Hospital appointment	8%
Leisure destinations within your hometown	7%
Leisure destinations outside of your hometown	4%

Bus Reliability

The percentage of the county's bus journeys running on time were examined in September 2023[1], and the results are shown in Figure 2.4. The unreliable services were examined further, and it was identified that there are a significant proportion related to extended periods of traffic management, beyond the control of operators.

[1] The Department for Transport's Bus Open Data Service (BODS) provides data including timetable and reliability information. We estimate that approximately two-thirds of Staffordshire services are included within this dataset. Bus reliability data was extracted for September 2023 and was analysed to identify services operating within a window of 1 minute early and up to 5 minutes 59 seconds late. Services outside this window are unreliable.

Figure 2.4: Bus reliability in Staffordshire, November 2024



Less than 60% on-time

Between 60-80% on-time

More than 80% on-time

Data Unavailable

Scale: 1:400000

Staffordshire County Council

2.3.4 Other Public Travel Options

Taxis

Hackney carriages and private hire vehicles play an important role in the county's transport mix, providing flexible, convenient, and essential transport, especially for those with mobility issues or living in areas where there is little or no public transport. During our engagement activities we heard from people with limited mobility who were unable to use public transport so heavily relied on family members and taxis.

Taxis can reduce the need for private car ownership; provide door-to-door transport for those that are not able to travel via other modes; deliver home-to-school transport; and play an important role in our night-time economy, getting people home safely late at night.

There are just under 700 hackney carriages, and over 1,100 private hire vehicles licensed in Staffordshire. Of these, it is estimated that around 14% are wheelchair accessible and 18% are electric or hybrid. There are many more taxis and private hire vehicles operating in the county that are registered in other parts of the country, where it is cheaper and quicker to obtain a license and where vehicle standards are lower.

Staffordshire's taxi operators face various challenges, including low demand (at certain times of the day and in certain areas), high operational costs, inadequate infrastructure and technology, and competition from taxis licensed outside of the county. Whilst we are not responsible for taxi licencing and have limited influence over the sector, we are keen to work with operators to ensure a high standard of provision.

Coaches

Coaches are used for our home to school transport provision, and privately-operated coach companies support our leisure and tourism industry. Staffordshire is not well-served by commercial long-distance coach services, as there is only one long-distance

overnight scheduled coach service between Manchester and London that only stops once in Staffordshire, at Penkridge.

There are around 50 privately-operated coach companies serving the leisure and tourism industry in Staffordshire. However, they are facing cost pressures (such as the cost of fuel and essential maintenance, and driver recruitment and retention), which are restricting their growth and, in some cases, their viability. Adequate coach parking is required at key tourism destinations, such as Lichfield City.

Community Transport

The number of community transport schemes (e.g. voluntary car clubs, community minibuses and dial-a-ride services) in the county has shrunk over the last decade. Where they are present, they can provide a point-to-point transport service for people who do not have access to conventional transport or are unable to use it. They provide a transport solution of both a general and specialist nature, such as medical appointments, whilst combating social and rural isolation.

Our engagement activities highlighted the challenges faced by community transport schemes, both from an operator and user perspective. The challenges faced by operators include difficulty attracting and retaining volunteers, lack of income and funding, training for drivers, and obtaining necessary insurance cover. The challenges faced by users include lack of coverage, the criteria for use, and vehicle accessibility.

Shared Car and Bicycle Schemes

There is a potential to grow other shared travel options, such as shared cars and bicycles. Many large UK cities have successful sharing services, which have replaced trips made by private cars and filled in the gap in the "first and last mile" of longer journeys. We will investigate the introduction of both car-based shared travel schemes

(such as car clubs, lift-sharing and car-pooling), and micromobility schemes (such as e-bikes and cargo bikes). Regarding the micromobility schemes, we are aware that it is currently illegal to use privately-owned e-scooters on public roads and in most public spaces.

2.4 The Way Forward

We have identified the following asks of National Government and key stakeholders, along with making our own commitments to ensure increased provision, and use, of public transport in Staffordshire.

2.4.1 **Objective 1:** Ensure multi-modal connectivity for all, to, from and within rail stations

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask to enhance transport connections to four of the county's rail stations as identified in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8: LTP Objective 1 - Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Tamworth Rail Station	• Improves active and public transport access to Tamworth station to support housing growth to the north of the town.	2,100	50
Stafford Rail Station	• A pedestrian route through the rail station and enhanced pedestrian provision along Newport Road are required to improve connectivity between the Stafford Rail Station Gateway Project and the town centre. • An enhanced rail station will enable economic and housing growth and give people the choice of rail or road along this strategic north-south corridor.	2,100	-
Uttoxeter Rail Station	• Achieves high quality public transport to support our Fifty500 economic growth aspirations. • Supports our rural leisure economy by providing onward bus journeys linking to Staffordshire Moorlands and Alton Towers. • To improve walk and cycle access to Uttoxeter town centre and the rail station.	1,100	1,000
Hednesford Rail Station	• Improves public transport access to one of our gateways to Cannock Chase, supporting our leisure industry. • Improved walking and cycling access to Hednesford Station across Market Street from the town centre bus stops on Victoria Street.	1,100	-
Total		**6,400**	**1,050**

Asks of the Rail Industry

- Ensure all rail stations in Staffordshire are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. In the short-term, it is essential that Shenstone rail station is made compliant as part of an adjacent housing development proposal.
- Provide high quality waiting facilities at all stations, including ensuring that all shelters and seating are of a consistent standard.
- Support WMRE on the future roll out of 'Pay as You Go' ticketing on rail services to/from the West Midlands.
- Ensure that developers provide appropriate contributions to improve access to rail stations by active travel modes.

2.4.2 **Objective 2:** Improve rail passenger and freight services

Asks of the Rail Industry – Passenger Services

- Ensure capacity on the county's local, regional and national rail services are appropriate, allowing for future passenger growth, whilst offering a pleasant travelling experience with simple and easy to understand fares.
- With the transition to Great British Railways, consideration is given to future housing and employment growth as set out in the county's Local Plans.
- West Coast Main Line: Partnership working with National Government to address capacity constraints, following the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2a.
- Birmingham to Derby Line: Improve local rail services, particularly in Tamworth and Burton upon Trent, and increase high speed services to Nottingham.
- Stoke-on-Trent to Derby Line: Prepare a business case for rail capacity and service improvements to give people the choice to use rail instead of the A50 and to add value to the Fifty500 Project.
- Lichfield to Burton upon Trent Line: Prepare a feasibility study that considers the benefit of options to provide a passenger service along this route. Options could include an hourly Lichfield City to Burton upon Trent service or an extension of a Cross City Line service to Burton upon Trent. A potential new station on this line could also be considered to serve proposals for new housing developments, as well as Alrewas and the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA).

Asks of the Rail Industry – Rail Freight

- Be an advocate for infrastructure enhancements, such as additional passing loops and gauge clearance projects, to accommodate larger freight trains and increase network capacity.
- Electrify key freight corridors (e.g. Birmingham to Derby Line), thereby reducing the need for diesel trains, which emit pollutants.

- Support the development of intermodal terminals, such as the WMI, to facilitate efficient transfer between road and rail, reducing traffic delays and emissions.
- Encourage the adoption of innovative logistics solutions, such as the use of alternative fuels and digital technologies, to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

2.4.3 **Objective 3:** Deliver high-quality bus services that are reliable, accessible and easy to use

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask for the county's bus network as identified in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9: Objective 3 – Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Costs (£000)	
		Capital	Revenue
Support for bus services	• Prioritises investment in services that are likely to achieve the greatest growth in passengers. • Provides better cross-boundary bus connections that are not served by rail. • Supports town centre economic growth proposals.	-	65,000
Young Person's Travel Card	• Aligns to the age range for a young persons' rail card. • Supports access to jobs and education. • Embeds good travel behaviour from an early age, delaying the time, or removing the need, for car ownership.	-	6,000
Fare Promotions	• Makes bus travel financially more attractive. • Supports access to jobs and education.	-	6,000
The Knot Ticket	• Removes the need to buy multiple tickets if travelling on more than one bus route. • Cost savings for bus passengers.	-	50
Bus stations and bus stops	• Investment in Lichfield bus station will make bus travel more attractive and supports economic growth proposals. • Upgraded bus stops so that they meet minimum stands, will make passengers feel safer, more comfortable and informed. For example, bus stops will have raised kerbs, lighting, seating, RTPI and totems. If space and location permits, bus stops with the highest use will have shelter, raised kerbs, lighting, and RTPI.	4,100	475

Access to bus stations and stops	• Improved accessibility to Cannock and Stafford bus stations. • Walking routes between bus and rail services in Kidsgrove and Stafford will facilitate multi-modal journeys. • Helps deliver the Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).	4,250	1,350
Bus information	• Accurate and reliable real time passenger information displays will make passengers feel in control. • Standard bus stop information will improve the customer experience. • The Staffordshire Journey Planner will mean real time bus information will be more accessible.	1,500	450
Total		**9,850**	**79,325**

Asks of Bus Operators and the Bus Enhanced Partnership[2]

- Agree to refreshing the Enhanced Partnership agreement to ensure it can deliver the Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- Buses take people where they want to go, at a time that is right for them.
- Journeys are swift and run on-time.
- Fares are simple to understand and cheaper than car travel.
- Ticketing is seamless between bus services and integrated across transport modes.
- Passengers have a strong voice and influence regarding how the bus network runs.
- Stops, stations and interchanges are accessible, safe and well-maintained.
- Information is widely available, in various formats, and accessible to all users.
- Buses are accessible, low emission, with high-quality on-board environments.

Our Commitments

- Undertake a Bus Network Review that recommends the changes required to our bus services to enable growth in passengers.
- Explore the options for bus franchising.
- Review procurement arrangements and bus contracts, placing greater emphasis on achieving bus patronage growth.
- Undertake bus passenger surveys and create a bus user forum.
- Work with neighbouring authorities on integrated ticketing.

[2] The Staffordshire Bus Enhanced Partnership is a collaborative initiative between Staffordshire County Council and local bus operators. It was established in August 2023, under the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and aims to improve bus services within the county.

2.4.4 **Objective 4:** Provide other public travel options where frequent bus services are not available

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask for other public travel options as identified in Table 2.10.

Table 2.10: Objective 4 – Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Taxi Vouchers	• Supports residents who do not have access to a regular bus service.	-	250
Rural Mobility Hub Pilot	• Provides an almost door-to-door service that can support people with limited mobility. • Helps people and communities to access job opportunities, which may be better suited to shift patterns. • Acts as a feeder service to existing bus and/or rail services. • Enables travel at a more convenient time, compared to a fixed timetable with limited frequency.	4,750	250
Keele University Mobility Hub Pilot	• Supports the development of an integrated and inclusive public transport network. • Raises the profile of shared services. • Helps tackle the rising cost of living.	1,250	-
Total		**6,000**	**500**

Our Commitments

- Support local communities to develop community transport schemes.
- Work with key stakeholders to make taxi and private hire vehicle standards higher and more consistent for users.
- Explore opportunities for shared travel schemes, such as car clubs and e-bike hire.

2.5 Long-term Vision

Rail services will operate at times that people want to travel and offer suitable capacity such that people do not have to stand except for very short periods of time. The complex nature of the rail fares system will be amended to ensure passengers always pay the least for their journey, regardless of their start and end point.

Rail stations will be fully accessible and inclusive for all users and will offer a consistent level of facilities. Passengers will easily and safely be able to walk or cycle to their nearest rail station and access a consistent standard of service and network information.

Greater capacity will be available on the rail network for freight trains. Businesses who move large quantities and bulky items, will use rail freight as it is greener, cleaner, safer and more reliable.

Buses will become the preferred mode of travel for short to medium length journeys. Bus infrastructure will be designed to a high and consistent standard, commensurate with the route that it is serving and the accessibility benefits it can achieve. Bus infrastructure will be located close to key facilities and in walking distance to other travel interchanges.

Bus travel will be cheaper than car ownership. There will be an easy to understand and consistent fare structure across the county, which will give passengers greater clarity and certainty regarding what they need to pay.

There will be widespread use of a single, fully integrated, and intuitive digital ticket, which can be used across all modes – buses, shared cycle and car schemes, trains, and taxis. In so doing, users will have complete flexibility to choose the most suitable mode of transport for each leg of their journey. This will have positive impacts beyond increasing bus patronage as it also creates a practical alternative to car use and ownership, giving people a choice as to which mode of transport they use.

We need to remove the uncertainty of waiting for the bus. Travel information will be easily accessed via bus operator and journey planning websites and apps; passengers will have information at their fingertips, including bus times, accessibility information, fares, live running, and a 'read out loud' facility for people who need it.

As we move forwards, we must think beyond traditional forms of travel and capitalise on the newer forms of publicly available travel options (e.g. mobility hubs, car-sharing and e-bike hire), especially as they can play a role in filling the gaps in the transport network and the first and last legs of journeys. These schemes will rely on the availability of high-speed broadband and 5G connectivity to enable users to plan, book and buy tickets for the various travel options. It is vital that we improve availability of high-speed broadband and 5G connectivity, as well as address digital exclusion so these travel options are available to all.

2.6 Key Performance Indicators

The KPIs in Table 2.11 will be used to monitor the theme objectives relating to public and shared travel.

Table 2.11: Key Performance Indicators

Theme Objective	Key Performance Indicators
1: Ensure multi-modal connectivity for all, to, from and within rail stations.	• Number of DDA compliant rail stations • Number of passengers using rail stations
2: Improve rail passenger and freight services.	• Number of new rail services • Number of rail services cut
3: Deliver high-quality bus services that are reliable, accessible and easy to use.	• Number of bus passenger journeys • Percentage of people satisfied with local bus services • Percentage of households within 400 metres of an hourly service (within CAST 1 settlements) • Percentage of buses running on time
4: Provide other public travel options where frequent bus services are not available.	• Percentage of home-to-school taxis that are single occupancy • Number and coverage of community transport schemes

Chapter 3: The Road Network

3.1 Introduction

National Highways manage the Strategic Road Network (SRN), which comprises motorways and trunk roads. We, on the other hand, are the local highway authority, local traffic authority, local transport authority and network management authority for the local road network. With these, come several duties.

Under Section 108 of the Transport Act 2000, we must develop policies that promote and encourage safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within our area, and carry out functions to implement these policies; under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980, we must look after highways that are maintainable at public expense; and under Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 we have a duty to manage the road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable, the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network. This relates to people using our network, not just vehicles.

3.2 Theme Objectives

There are four theme objectives relating to the road network. Table 3.1 shows how these link to the Department for Transport's five priorities.

Table 3.1: Linkages between the Theme Objectives and the Department for Transport's priorities

Theme Objectives	Department for Transport's Priorities				
	Transforming infrastructure	Improving bus services	Integrating transport	Greener transport	Rail reform
5. Improve the safety and efficiency of the Strategic Road Network to deliver a positive impact on the local road network	✓		✓	✓	
6. Improve the safety, efficiency and journey time reliability of the local road network	✓	✓	✓	✓	
7. Deliver a whole-life asset management approach to improve the condition of the local road network	✓		✓	✓	
8. Support the efficient movement of freight whilst minimising the adverse impacts it can have on local roads and communities			✓	✓	

3.3 The Current Situation

3.3.1 Strategic Road Network

National Highways' priorities (2025 – 2030) are outlined in their SRN Initial Report. They are:

- Improving safety for all users. This includes dedicated crossing points for vulnerable users.
- Providing a smooth-running, high-speed road network, keeping the existing network running reliably and in good repair.
- Tackling traffic delays for faster and more reliable journeys. This includes the delivery of committed major schemes, while planning for more smaller schemes.
- Improving the journey experience and making better local connections, aligning investment to LTPs.
- Driving sustainable growth, supporting carbon and environmental targets, applying the PAS2080 hierarchy of building nothing; building less; building cleverly; and building efficiently.
- Delivering efficiently, effectively and rapidly, and embracing new technologies.

National Highways' Route Strategies provide an evidence base that assesses route performance and user satisfaction. The Strategies that cover Staffordshire are summarised in Table 3.2 together with an overview of the main issues highlighted by National Highways.

Table 3.2: Strategic Road Network Route Strategies (2023)

Route Strategy	Issues identified in Staffordshire
London to Scotland West (South) • M6 Corridor	• Some safety concerns on M6 north and south of Stafford
North and East Midlands • A500 • A50	• Some safety concerns on A50 between Uttoxeter and Stoke-on-Trent • Delays on A50 Uttoxeter and sections of the A500
South Midlands • A449 (south of A5) • A5 (A449 – Tamworth) • A38 (A5 – Burton upon Trent)	• Some safety concerns on A38 near Burton upon Trent and short sections of the A5 • Delays along sections of the A5

As described in section 1.2, there are strong traffic movements within the wider area, including Stoke-on-Trent, and in and out of the county, to the East and South.

From our perspective, the key issues on Staffordshire's SRN include:

- Delays and safety issues at junction 15 of the M6, which serves as a key link between the local and national road networks.

- Accessibility issues to strategic employment sites, for example along the A449 economic growth corridor
- Safety and network performance at junctions along the A50, A500, A5 and A38, that could have a negative impact on economic growth.
- Inadequate network of vehicle charging infrastructure on the SRN.
- Restrictions mean that abnormal loads need to leave parts of the SRN and use the local road network. National Highways do not allow routine abnormal loads on the A50 at Dove Bridge Bypass, and the M6 junction 13 Dunston Railway bridge is unable to accommodate the heaviest abnormal loads. Diversion onto local roads causes significant disruption and accelerated carriageway wear.

3.3.2 Local Road Network

The local road network consists of a hierarchy of road types with different needs, priorities and functions, from inter-urban routes with limited frontage, to complex urban networks that have competing demands, ranging from vulnerable road users to the reliable movement of freight. The road designations and classifications of the local road network are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Local Road Network Classifications

Road Types	Purpose
'A' Roads	Major roads providing main links within or between areas and linking to Motorways and 'A' roads designated as SRN Trunk Roads.
Primary Road Network (PRN)	The SRN plus a proportion of our local authority 'A' roads that link primary destinations. The PRN includes the MRN except the A5 (west from Gailey).
Major Road Network (MRN)	Forms a middle tier of the country's busiest and most economically important local authority 'A' roads. The MRN supports the SRN by creating a more resilient road network. It is not as extensive as the PRN. The MRN is shown on Figure 3.1.
'B' Roads	Roads intended to connect different areas, and to feed traffic between 'A' roads and smaller roads on the network.
Other roads	Smaller roads, connecting to 'A' and 'B' roads.

Major Road Network

The Major Road Network (MRN) forms a middle tier of the country's busiest and most economically important local authority 'A' roads, sitting between the SRN and the rest of the local road network. The MRN has five objectives:

- Reduce congestion, making journeys more comfortable and reliable for users.
- Support economic growth and rebalancing, improving capacity, reliability, safety and connectivity.
- Support house building by unlocking land for new housing developments.
- Support all road users, including cyclists, pedestrians, people with limited mobility and public transport users.
- Support the SRN by creating a more resilient road network.

Figure 3.1 shows the SRN, MRN and other 'A' roads. It shows where the MRN runs through many of our main settlements, which creates competing demands along these sections. Within these settlements are where many jobs, schools, shops and services are located, as well as where a significant proportion of our residents live.

Figure 3.1: Competing Demands and Key Destinations along the Major Road Network, 2025

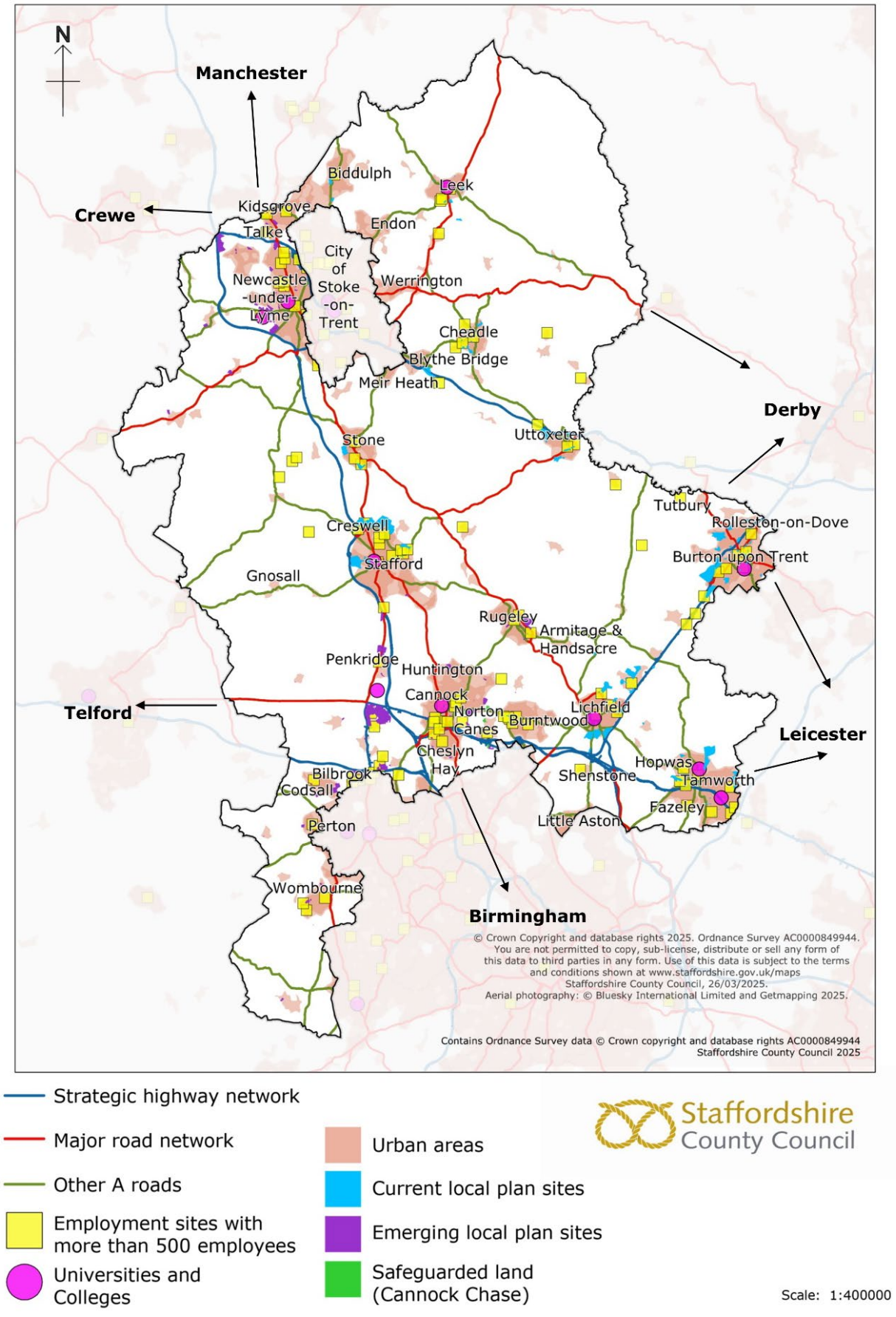


Figure 3.2 indicates where traffic delays are prevalent on the MRN. The orange lines indicate where the travel time can be twice as long as the time taken in free flow conditions, and the red lines indicate where the travel time can be three times as long. The main issues are found in urban settlements and along inter-urban sections.

There are significant structural maintenance issues with some sections of road and bridges along the MRN. Their locations are shown on Figure 3.3 and the types of issues include:

- Safety issues due to poor alignment.
- Restricted widths and headroom.
- Long diversion routes.
- Substandard abnormal load capacity.
- Listed structures.

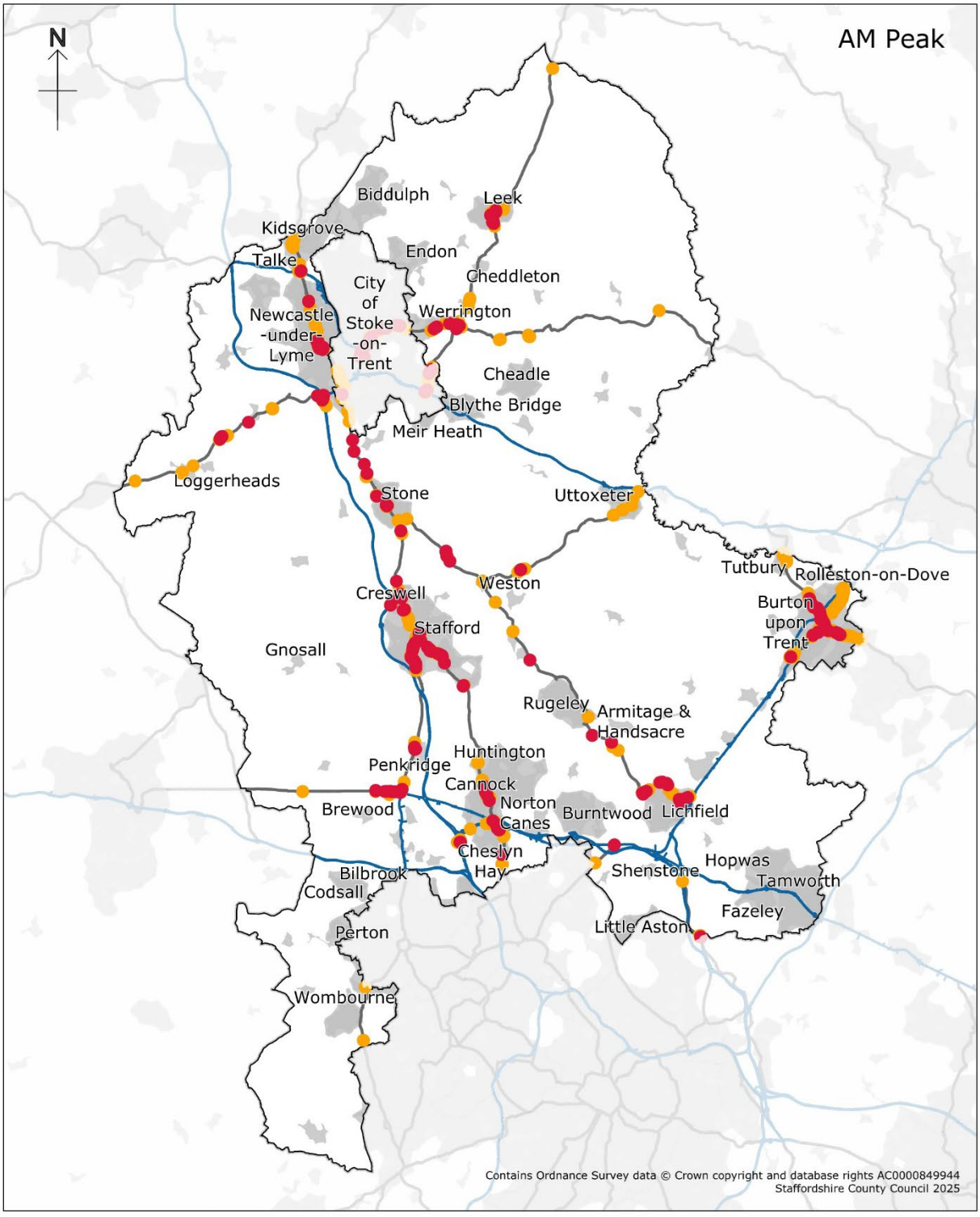
We have improved the MRN through our £20m award via the Levelling up Fund 2. Improvements include:

- A38(T)/A5121 junction improvements in Burton upon Trent. This has helped to accommodate forecast traffic growth, resulting from new development.
- Sections of the A34 in Stafford and Cannock are seeing enhanced provision for active and public transport, thereby contributing to improving health and access to jobs and education, and giving people choice in how they travel.
- The A511 in Burton upon Trent (and along the A34 in Cannock and Stafford) is seeing new, low-emitting buses being introduced. This will improve local air quality and make bus travel more attractive to potential users.

We have completed a study of the MRN in Burton upon Trent, focusing on the A511 and A5121. The main issues raised by the study are listed below and the Executive Summary can be found in Appendix 3.1.

- Lack of pedestrian crossings and concerns about the safety of cyclists.
- High volumes of freight movement accessing local industry.
- The need for network resilience during periods of disruption on the A38.
- Queuing traffic tends to be concentrated in the AM and PM peak periods at key locations such as the A5121/A511 junction (Derby Turn).

Figure 3.2: Traffic Delays on the Major Road Network, 2025



Strategic highway network

Major road network

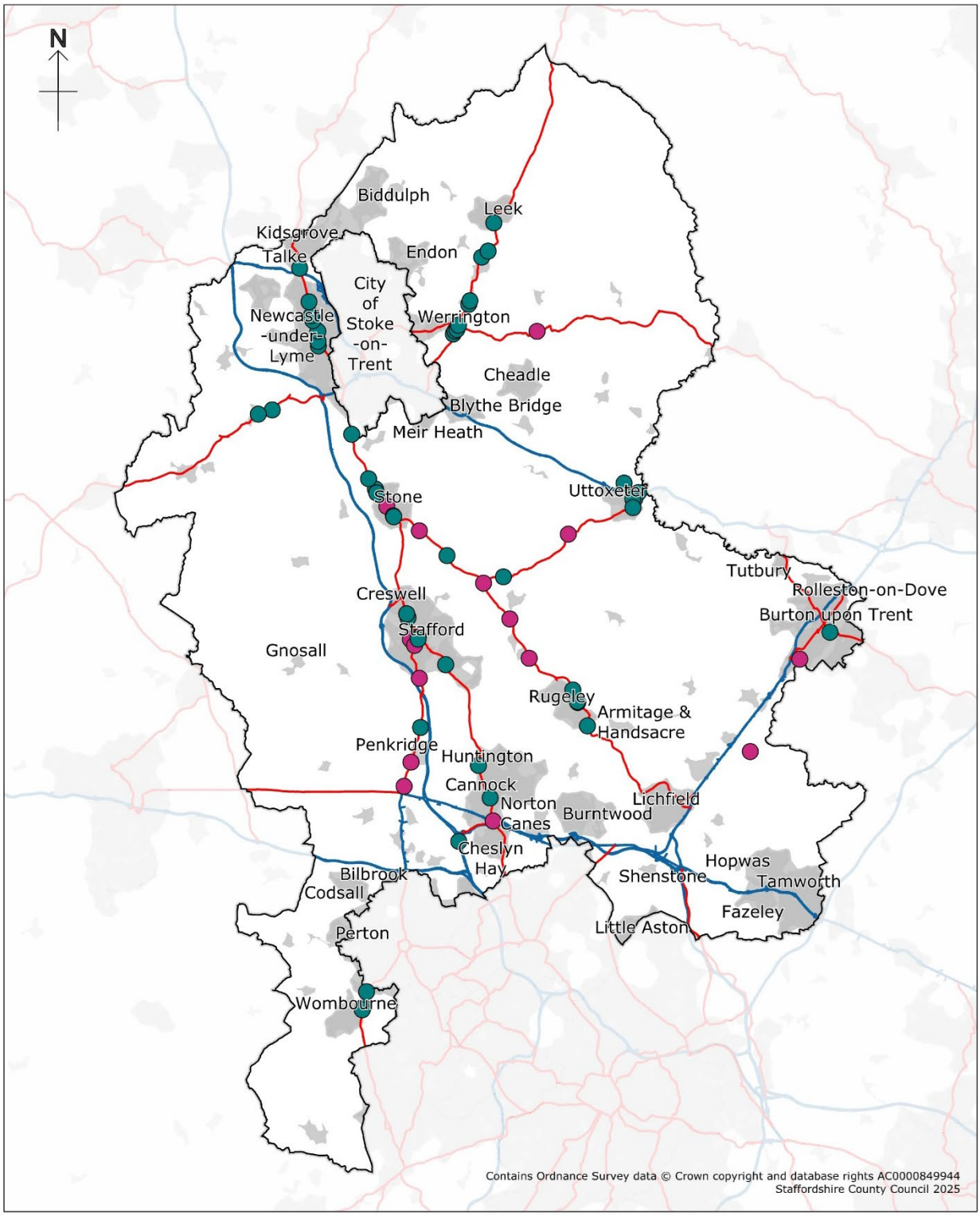
Travel time can be double free flow time

Travel time can be triple free flow time

Staffordshire County Council

Scale: 1:400000

Figure 3.3: Structural Maintenance Issues on the Major Road Network, 2025



3.3.3 Road Safety

The Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership aims to achieve a long-term, sustained reduction in road traffic collisions in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. It aims to do this through joint working with stakeholders, including Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire Commissioner's Office, Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service, and National Highways.

Table 3.4 highlights the main causes of personal injury collisions that have been recorded over the last five years in Staffordshire. Careless driving can be considered as a factor in all causes.

Table 3.4: Main Causes of Personal Injury Road Traffic Collisions

Main Contributory / Road Safety Factor	Percentage of personal injury collisions
Failed to look properly or failed to judge other persons path or speed	30.6%
Poor turn or manoeuvre	8.3%
Slippery road (due to weather)	5.8%
Careless/Reckless/In a hurry	3.6%

Table 3.5 shows that more collisions caused by speeding, occur on rural roads where there are higher vehicle speeds and limited infrastructure, compared to urban roads. Whilst speed limits are designed to reduce the likelihood and impact of collisions, speeding is a frequent concern raised by residents. We are responsible for setting appropriate limits in line with Government guidance and we work through the Safer Roads Partnership to operate the county's mobile and fixed speed cameras to tackle speeding at known speeding locations. The Police are responsible for enforcing speed limits and safe driving behaviour.

Table 3.5: Percentage of Collisions with Speeding is a Contributory Factor by Severity, 2013 - 20

Severity	Urban Roads 20-40mph	Rural Roads 40-60mph
Fatal	28%	33%
Serious	12%	19%
Slight	9%	14%

Table 3.6 shows the proportion of killed or seriously injured (KSI) collisions that involve high-risk road users, such as young drivers. It also demonstrates the need to address the challenges relating to vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, as they are likely to sustain more severe injury if involved in a collision.

Table 3.6: Collisions involving high risk road users, 2019 - 2023

High Risk Road Users	Relative Risk	Percentage of KSIs
Pedestrians	22 times higher risk of being KSI than car occupants	16%
Motorcyclists	1% of traffic	24%
Pedal cyclists	1% of traffic	10%
Young drivers (17-24 yrs)	6.8% of license holders	21% (of fatal collisions)
Mature drivers (65+)	Increasing risk with an ageing population	11%
HGV/LGV/Van	22% of traffic	27% (of fatal collisions)
High risk contributory factors, such as alcohol, drugs, speed, mobile, red light running, no seatbelt		39% (of fatal collisions)

Young Drivers (17 yrs to 24 yrs)

We offer pre and young driver education lessons to all colleges and 6th forms in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on behalf of Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership. This builds upon road safety education delivered in schools and includes topics such as distraction and inattention, managing speed, seatbelts and fatigue. It also includes information for people supporting a young person learning to drive.

Targeted local safety schemes are prioritised in our capital programme, based on the analysis of collision cluster locations that have occurred during the most recent three years of data. The types of measures delivered include vehicle activated signs, junction re-alignments, and crossing facilities. A benefit to cost ratio is calculated to justify delivering the improvement. Each collision saved produces a benefit to society through reduced emergency service involvement and hospital costs, loss of earnings and productivity, and reduced insurance claims.

A road safety audit is carried out on all road scheme designs. The audit is a systematic process that examines the safety implications of a scheme, which is vital to reducing the risk and severity of road collisions.

The need for 20mph speed limits is assessed on a case-by-case basis, using available data and in consultation with residents, businesses, and relevant stakeholders. We also supplement engineering and enforcement measures with publicity campaigns and outreach education programmes that highlight the risks and implications of driving too fast.

Improved design standards and the availability of in-vehicle safety features are increasingly commonplace and standard in the basic specification of many vehicles. These help to protect drivers and passengers and, to some extent, other road users and property. Notwithstanding this, the vehicles on our roads must be well maintained to ensure that they remain safe.

Street Lighting

Roads and off-road footways that are well-lit are perceived as being safer. There are around 115,000 street lighting assets on the local road network that are managed and maintained through a 25-year private finance initiative (PFI) which runs until May 2028.

The PFI costs around £18m a year, which is used to carry out maintenance and renewals. In recent years, the PFI has focussed on transitioning to LED technology, which has improved brightness, uniformity in light distribution, and visibility. It also provides energy savings, a longer lifespan and the opportunity for integrated digital control systems, such as dimming and remote monitoring.

The PFI has a target of achieving 98% of lights lit. In March 2025, it stood at 99.55%. As the PFI is nearing an end, we are working with the Future Highways Research Group to explore what future option is best for Staffordshire.

3.3.4 Managing the Movement of People

Traffic Management

We will manage traffic movements on the local road network and, at the same time, improve active and public transport infrastructure to provide more high-quality travel options, giving people a choice of different transport modes. We expect this to reduce car dependency, which is the main contributor to traffic delays. New road capacity will be considered if it is necessary to deliver economic growth and strategic housing and employment sites.

Traffic delays exist particularly within our urban areas, and they can impact on all road users. High volumes of slow-moving traffic can reduce air quality, which affects pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and passengers of vehicles, and biodiversity. This is particularly evident in the Air Quality Management Areas[3] in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Burton upon Trent. Here, the delays are caused by traffic volumes approaching or above the level of the capacity of the road, together with temporary incidents, roadworks and driver behaviour.

Using traffic data, we have analysed journeys made during the AM and PM peaks on weekdays in September and October 2023, to identify areas of traffic delay. District Transport Data Reports, found in Appendices 1.6-1.13, provide plans that indicate the level of delays that are evident in Stafford, Burton upon Trent, Tamworth, Lichfield, Cannock, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Rugeley, Burntwood, Uttoxeter, Stone and Kidsgrove[4].

Transport modelling provides a tool to help understand how a junction, road corridor or wider network performs. Models enable potential improvements to the network to be tested to help the flow of traffic, particularly through junctions. Modelling is also used to forecast the impact of traffic growth from a new development site to help identify the most appropriate site access arrangement and mitigation required on the wider network.

We manage traffic through physical infrastructure, such as signalised junctions, and through restrictions. Restrictions made through traffic regulation orders, can be static, such as parking restrictions, permit parking schemes, pay and display bays; or moving, such as speed limits, weight restrictions and right-turn bans.

Traffic is controlled at junctions and at locations between junctions to provide safe crossing points for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users. We manage and maintain over 500 signal-controlled junctions or crossings throughout Staffordshire. We vary the timing of signal phases to give priority to individual vehicle movements at junctions, where necessary, and to give priority to pedestrians at crossing facilities to reduce waiting times.

[3] If a Local Authority identifies any locations within its boundaries where the Air Quality Objectives are not likely to be achieved, it must declare the area as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The area may encompass just one or two streets, or it could be much bigger. The Local Authority is subsequently required to put together a plan to improve air quality in that area - a Local Air Quality Action Plan.
[4] This data also reflects delays from temporary roadworks.

As resources permit, traffic signals are being upgraded, which is having a positive impact on the visibility, timing and coordination of signals. Traffic is managed through our traffic signal junctions using the following control systems:

- Fixed time control that is not influenced by pedestrian or vehicle detection.
- Vehicle Actuated control where timings vary in relation to traffic flow.
- Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuated (MOVA) that maximises capacity at the junction.
- Linked junctions where timing is co-ordinated between adjacent junctions.
- Urban Traffic Control (UTC) where signal timings are controlled through a central system.
- Split, Cycle, Offset Optimisation Technique (SCOOT) using real time traffic data to minimise delays in an Urban Traffic Controlled area.

Traffic Monitoring

Capturing traffic and transport data helps to inform decisions on how we manage and improve the local road network. This includes traffic flows by volume and vehicle type, traffic speed, public transport usage, numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, and parking surveys. Temporary and permanent count equipment - such as Pneumatic tubes, radar technology, video camera surveys and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras - are deployed to collect data. Recently, we have purchased an AI solution that can capture and track all movements, by all modes, from a single camera location.

Demand Management

We will manage the demand for travel as part of the solution to reducing traffic delays on the local road network. This includes improving active and public transport infrastructure, subsidising public transport, and promoting the use of active and public transport, giving people a choice of different high-quality travel options.

Managing Temporary Works and Obstructions

We are responsible for coordinating works on the local road network. This includes planned events and emergency road closures to install and improve the apparatus of utility companies; delivery of our road maintenance and improvement programmes; and undertaking works to facilitate new housing and employment sites. All roadworks require temporary traffic management and the demand to carry out work is high. Each year, there are over 40,000 planned temporary roadworks in the county and around 60% of all works are delivered by utility companies and other third parties, such as developers.

When roadworks are required, we aim to minimise disruption to road users. To achieve this, we liaise with utility companies to co-ordinate their works, manage the timing of activities[5], and improve information to the public so that they are warned and informed about the duration of works. Fixed penalty notices and overrun charges can be applied when roadworks go beyond the agreed timeframe or where remedial works are substandard.

[5] Please be aware that many utility companies have emergency powers that enables them to carry out work on a highway with little or no notice in certain circumstances, such as gas leaks or a burst water pipe.

We are considering the introduction of a lane rental scheme, which is an additional, complementary financial incentive to the above scheme, whereby companies are charged a daily fee for occupying the busiest roads, during the busiest times. This can create a stronger financial motivation to minimise disruption and speed up roadworks.

Indiscriminate parking can cause an obstruction to other road users. We already have civil enforcement powers to enforce parking restrictions and the inappropriate use of bus lanes. We are also considering applying to the Department for Transport to enforce moving traffic offences that relate to weight restrictions, pedestrianised areas and School Streets, where they are cost effective.

3.3.5 Maintaining our Road Network

Our Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan details how our highway infrastructure assets are maintained. It seeks to ensure that resources are used effectively to provide the required level of service for roads, footways, drainage, and other highway assets, in a cost-effective way, while also satisfying customer expectations. We know our residents are concerned about the condition of our roads and the backlog of repairs. A recent survey has found that just 36% of residents are satisfied with road maintenance in Staffordshire[6].

High volumes of traffic, especially heavy vehicles, increase wear on road surfaces and are a main cause of costly defects to bridges, kerbs, and gulleys. Congestion can lead to stop/go traffic patterns with frequent acceleration and braking causing roads to deteriorate more quickly.

[6] 2024 National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey.

Asset Inventory

Staffordshire's road network is considerable and is growing in length and quantity. It comprises over:

- 6,000km of carriageway
- 4,500km of footway
- 200km of cycleway
- 4,500km of Public Rights of Way
- 1,200 structures
- 150,000 road gullies
- 115,000 streetlights
- 155km of vehicle restraint systems
- 500 signal-controlled junctions or crossings
- 4,049 bus stops
- 1,088 bus shelters
- 261 electronic warning signs
- 475,000 trees
- 2.2 million square metres of urban grass
- 5,800km of rural grass verges
- 400 milestones and other historic monuments
- 16 pumping stations
- 6 reservoirs

The highway asset also includes road markings, traffic signs, road studs, pedestrian barriers, cycle stands, bollards, hedges, embankments, grit bins, catchpits, lagoons, trash screens, kerbs, laybys, ditches, grips and weather stations.

There are unquantified assets on our network as inventory collection can be challenging and expensive, and some assets are obscured from view. These are likely to be related to drainage, retaining walls and embankments.

Condition survey data is collected to ensure an accurate understanding of the condition and performance of our carriageways and footways. This shows that our current maintenance budget is insufficient to maintain the network in its present condition. Carriageway and footway lifecycle modelling, undertaken in 2022, estimates that achieving a 'steady state' condition, where the overall condition does not deteriorate, would require an average annual investment of £44.6 million for carriageways and £3.4 million for footways. This level of investment is significantly higher than current funding and does not include other critical assets such as bridges, retaining walls, and drainage. It also does not consider the annual growth in our network, which expands by around 6.5km each year.

- Footways, footpaths and cycleways

  Footways, footpaths and cycleways are one of our most valuable highway infrastructure assets, with an estimated replacement cost of £765 million. Footways tend to be where most utility companies place their apparatus, meaning that works are often carried out on them and as a result, their condition can suffer. For example, the rollout of fibre infrastructure is having an impact on the condition of our footways.

  Due to resource constraints, our current footway maintenance programme prioritises the mitigation of serious defects. To make best use of limited funding, we focus on preventative maintenance to slow deterioration and extend asset life. This approach enables us to maintain serviceability across a wider area than would be possible with more costly structural repairs, which are reserved for end-of-life sections of the footway network. There is currently limited alignment between our footway

maintenance programme and the priorities set out in our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This will be addressed in the short term.

- Traffic Signals

Most traffic signals on the local road network are in an "average" or "better than average" condition. However, if the current maintenance budget remains the same over the next 15-years, from Year 11, degradation will increase, with "poor" to "failing" assets appearing in Year 12. By Year 14, there will be 117 assets in "failing" condition, rising to 144 by Year 15.

- Bus Infrastructure

Whilst we manage bus stops and bus stop flags, the ownership and condition of bus shelters varies across the county. We have surveyed all bus stops to determine their current condition, including the availability of a raised kerb, shelter, seating, lighting and bus timetable information. This data will be reflected in the review of our Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan and will help to prioritise infrastructure improvements in line with our Bus Service Improvement Plan.

- Drainage

Road drainage assets include gullies, kerb off-lets, grips, back-drains, soakaways, catchpits, and associated pipework and outfalls. Drainage ensures that surface water is removed from the highway as quickly as possible to avoid ponding and flooding which can impact on road safety. This is achieved through a combination of preventative maintenance and action to deal with reported flooding.

Staffordshire's drainage infrastructure is ageing, and its condition has deteriorated due to settlement, root ingress, and disturbance from third-party works. Evidence shows that they are under increasing pressure from more frequent and intense

weather extremes. Leaks are becoming increasingly common, which can impact on road safety and biodiversity.

We will place greater emphasis on improving flood resilience, which might include improving surface water drainage and promoting the use of SUDS[7], upstream storage and the minimisation of the use of impermeable hard surfacing.

- Structures

Highway structures support the safe passage of highway users over or under an obstacle, such as another highway, a rail line or a river. They are widely varied in form and age, can support essential utilities apparatus and can be part of the resilient network. Our structures asset is currently valued at £2 billion.

Quarter Mile Bridge in Burton upon Trent

The number of bridges in the county with critical components in declining condition is increasing. The annual depreciation is estimated to be around £21 million, and this is expected to increase without additional investment. We target maintenance interventions based on risk to ensure structures remain safe and in service. We aim to move towards a preventative maintenance regime, based on lifecycle planning principles, which will slow deterioration and achieve better long-term value.

Asset Management

We maintain our roads in accordance with the UK Roads Liaison Group's publication, Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice, published in 2016.

Our maintenance activities, include:

- Routine maintenance (e.g. drainage cleansing and grass cutting).
- Reactive maintenance (e.g. responding to inspections, customer reports or emergencies).
- Planned maintenance (e.g. scheduled structural and preventative works).

[7] Sustainable Drainage Systems or SUDS is a method of managing surface water runoff in a more natural, sustainable way by mimicking how water would flow and be absorbed if the land were undeveloped. These systems aim to reduce flooding, improve water quality, and enhance biodiversity.

- Regulatory maintenance (e.g. inspecting and regulating the activities of others affecting the highway).
- Winter maintenance (e.g. salt spreading and snow ploughing).

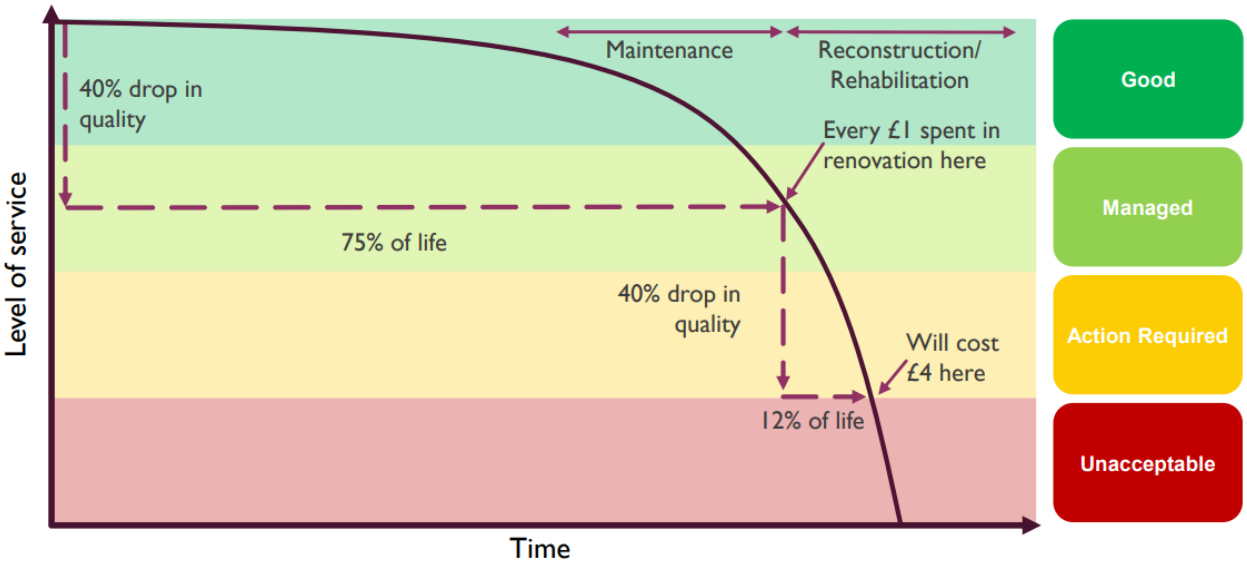
Our approach to asset management is to move decision-making away from the imminent and the urgent, to a planned regime that recognises the overall needs of the asset and delivers greatest value for money. Preventative maintenance treatments are planned as part of a wider whole-life approach, rather than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

Preventative maintenance is generally more cost-effective, allowing us to maintain three or four roads for the same investment required to structurally renew a single deteriorated road. This creates a strategic choice: either commit resources to fully reconstruct the worst roads, while allowing others to deteriorate, or apply essential safety treatments to the worst roads and prioritise preventative maintenance elsewhere. We have opted for the latter, which will arrest decline and preserve network condition more broadly.

Allowing roads to deteriorate to the point where major structural maintenance is needed, places additional pressure on reactive maintenance services and leads to increased customer complaints and third-party claims. Preventative treatment, such as surface dressing, is a well-established method for sealing road surfaces, preventing water ingress and enhancing skid resistance. Advances in surface dressing materials and their application are delivering improved durability and better environmental outcomes, compared to traditional resurfacing approaches.

Figure 3.4 illustrates how effective asset management and early intervention can significantly extend the life of our network. It shows that by maintaining asset condition and limiting deterioration to no more than 40%, the lifespan of the network can be substantially increased. However, once investment ceases and condition falls below 40%, more urgent and costly interventions are required to prevent the network from falling into an unacceptable condition.

Figure 3.4: Highway Asset Lifecycle



In addition to condition surveys that identify where the highest risks are, the current maintenance programme is influenced by:

- Liaison with County Councillors to identify their priorities.
- Availability of the road network.
- Customer enquiries and complaints.
- The requirement to provide a resilient network that ensures access to key services during extreme weather events.

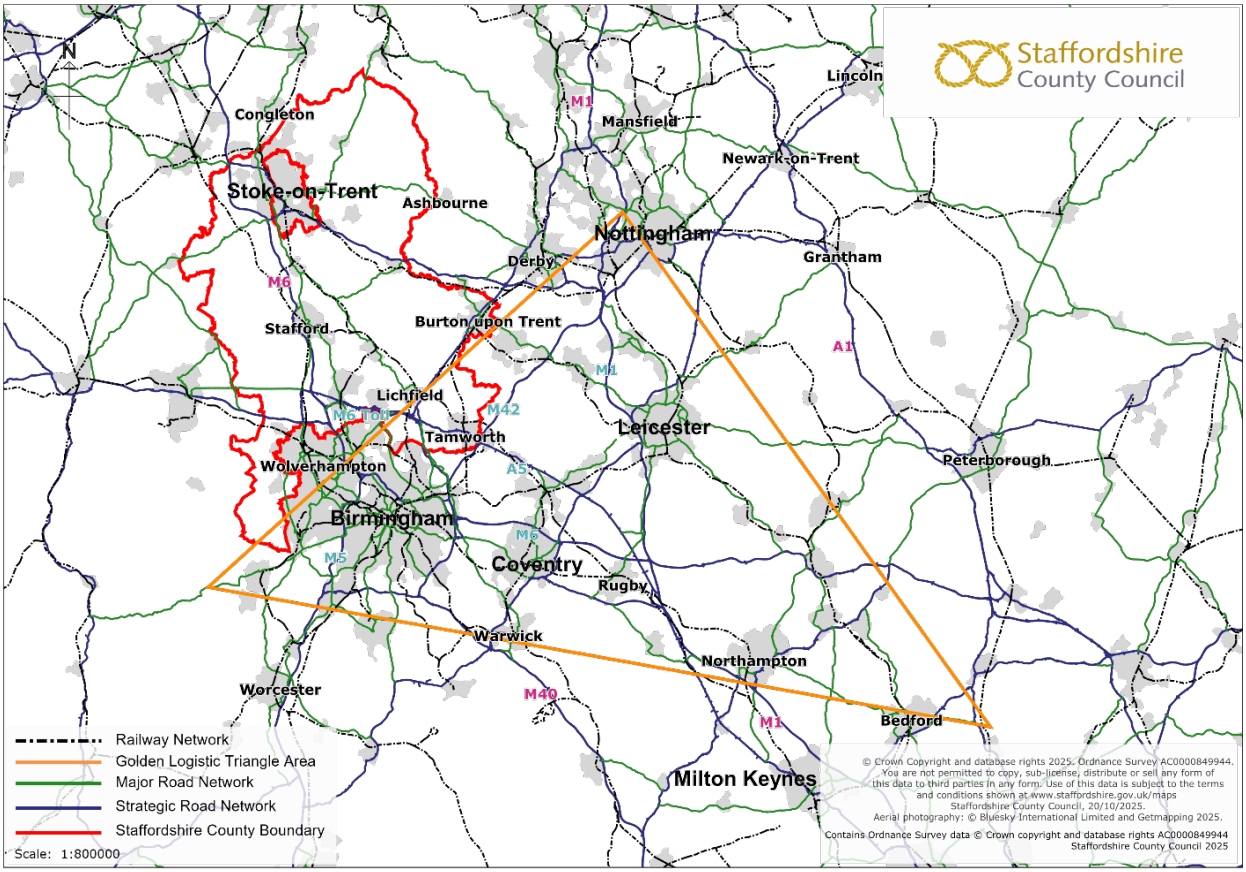
When maintenance works are carried out, this is used as an opportunity to repair or replace other assets where resources allow. For example, dropped kerbs are repaired at identified pedestrian crossing points where re-kerbing or new works are being carried out.

We have developed a risk-based assessment regarding the automatic replacement and potential removal of smaller assets, such as guard rail. In 2024, there were over 300 locations where guard rail was automatically replaced. Through the new assessment, assets will be examined to see whether they remain appropriate and should be replaced, or whether an alternative option, including but not limited to their removal, would deliver better value and improved outcomes.

3.3.6 Freight Movements

Staffordshire sits within the 'Golden Logistics Triangle'[8] as shown in Figure 3.5. Due to its central location and connectivity to the SRN, the county is home to a large freight and logistics sector. According to the 2023 Business Register and Employment Survey, 7.5% of the county's population is employed in the sector, which is above the national average at 5.1%.

Figure 3.5: The Golden Logistics Triangle



Since the Covid-19 Pandemic, there has been a dramatic increase in online sales in the UK, which has been reflected in the number of goods vehicles on our roads, especially vans. Whilst the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) has remained relatively constant between 2005 and 2022, the number of vans registered in the country has risen by around 50%.

We recognise that supply chains, logistics and the effective movement of freight are critical to a functioning and growing economy. However, we also recognise that traffic delays can impose significant costs on the sector, which can be passed onto the customer.

[8] The phrase "golden logistics triangle" is believed to have originated in the late 1980s. It was so called because of its connectivity with the rest of the country. It is estimated that the "golden logistics triangle" is within a four-hour drive of 90% of the British population.

In addition to traffic delays, freight operators also face other challenges when using our roads, including their condition, delays caused by roadworks, and insufficient secure parking and driver welfare facilities. Regarding the latter, National Highways' Lorry Parking Demand Assessment (2023), suggested that additional parking provision is needed in the vicinity of the SRN in Staffordshire. It highlights Newcastle-under-Lyme as lacking in provision, particularly as it is the convergence of the M6, A50 and A52, and known as the 'Gateway to the North' for logistics movements, originating in Birmingham and the East Midlands.

Goods vehicles are a large contributor to poor air quality in the county. We are keen to support the freight and logistics sector to understand their future energy requirements and transition to alternative fuels.

A Freight Routemap has been developed for the region. It recognises the region's strategic location and identifies how freight movements could be improved, through transferring from road to rail and greater integration between freight operators. Further details on rail freight are provided in Chapter 2: Public Transport.

When using the local road network, goods vehicles can negatively impact on some local communities through noise, vibration, air pollution, queuing traffic, inconsiderate driving and parking, and safety hazards. They can create challenges for residents and can affect their quality of life.

The Staffordshire Freight and Communities Forum members are Staffordshire County Council, National Highways, the Road Haulage Association, Staffordshire Police and other key stakeholders. The Forum aims to find genuine solutions to reduce the impact of goods vehicles on local communities and support the businesses that rely on timely transportation and delivery.

3.3.7 Consequential Carbon Benefits

Whilst carbon reduction is not a key decision driver for our maintenance activities, it is a consequential benefit.

PAS2080 was released by the British Standards Institution in 2016 and is the required standard for managing carbon in buildings and infrastructure. It looks at the whole value chain and aims to reduce carbon and cost through intelligent design, construction and use. Whole Life Carbon Management requires the application of the PAS2080 Carbon Reduction Hierarchy (Avoid, Switch, Improve) to scheme development where value for money is demonstrated.

An important focus is considering whether the need for new infrastructure can be avoided by achieving the same outcomes, at a reduced cost, through maximising the performance or extending the life of the existing asset. After this, and if the scheme is still required, focus needs to be on reducing the scale of the design and improving the construction process to reduce the volume and type of materials and energy used. In addition, efforts must be made to:

- Monitor and evaluate the carbon impact of schemes, using a consistent methodology.
- Co-ordinate delivery programmes in the same area to minimise construction impacts.
- Increase biodiversity in scheme design.

Value for Carbon Analysis

Maintenance can result in future carbon and cost savings by delaying the need for extensive reconstruction. When the additional lifespan achieved through maintenance exceeds the annual deterioration, it avoids the more carbon-intensive process of road reconstruction. Value for Carbon is the ratio between future carbon savings and the carbon expended. Achieving a high value is influenced by the underlying condition of the asset and the availability of funds.

Our Value for Carbon for the five-year period up to 2021/22 was 8.8. The network average for all authorities surveyed was 3.7. This resulted in cost savings and consequential Net Carbon Savings across the network over the last five years of 92,612 tonnes.

3.4 The Way Forward

We have identified the following asks of National Government and key stakeholders, along with making our own commitments to improve the way Staffordshire's local road network is managed and maintained.

3.4.1 **Objective 5:** Improve the safety and efficiency of the Strategic Road Network to deliver a positive impact on the local road network

Asks of National Highways

Collaboration will be required on the development of a project pipeline beyond the next five years that considers the needs of emerging Local Plans and the new Strategic Development Strategy. The Government is committed to rebuilding Britain, delivering 1.5m new homes, along with critical infrastructure that underpins economic growth. Staffordshire will need to play its role and therefore, we are seeking investment in the following interventions up to 2030/31.

- M6 Junction 15 Upgrade:
  Improving efficiency and safety at this junction, which serves as a key link between local and national road networks.

- M54 - M6 Link Road:
  A new link road will help to facilitate strategic employment sites, improve network resilience, and relieve pressure on local roads and on communities affected by long-distance through traffic.

- Connectivity to the A5 and A38 Strategic Road Network:
  Improving efficiency and safety at the junctions along the A5 and A38 at Muckley Corner, Swinfen Roundabout and Hilliard's Cross. The Hilliard's Cross scheme will also require associated local road improvements along Wood End Lane.

- Fifty500 Economic Growth Project:
  Improving efficiency and safety at the A500/A50 Sideway, A50 Blythe Bridge and A50 Uttoxeter (McDonalds Roundabout) junctions. This will support the growth in jobs along the A50 and support the wider aspiration to make the A50/A500 corridor the UK's hydrogen valley.

- A50 Structural Maintenance:
  Delivering structural maintenance works on the A50 at Dove Bridge to minimise the need for abnormal loads to use the local road network.

- M6 safety and reliability:
  Improving safety and journey time reliability along the M6 through Staffordshire, linking to Stoke-on-Trent, and delivering structural maintenance works at Junction 13

Dunston Railway Bridge to minimise the need for abnormal loads to use the local road network.

- 'The Central Edge' Economic Growth Corridor:
  Support the new economic growth corridor focused on the A449 from Wolverhampton City Centre to J13 M6 that includes strategic employment sites at i54, Logic54 (formerly ROF Featherstone), West Midlands Freight Interchange and the potential new employment site at J13. The corridor includes both the Strategic Road Network and Major Road Network.

3.4.2 **Objective 6:** Improve the safety, efficiency and journey time reliability of the local road network

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask for improving safety, efficiency and reliability on the local road network as identified in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Objective 6 - Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Major Road Network			
MRN A52 and A53 multi-modal Access	• Improving East to West connectivity between Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands.	24,000	-

for All corridors	The multi-modal Access for All corridors will deliver improved buses, an improved walking and cycling environment for communities along the routes, and technology to improve the flow of traffic, alongside major structural maintenance and bridge renewal schemes.		
MRN A511 and A5121 multi-modal Access for All corridors	• The multi-modal Access for All corridors through Burton upon Trent will deliver improved buses, an improved walking and cycling environment for communities along the route, junction improvements and technology to improve the flow of traffic.	41,000	-
A34 MRN multi-modal Access for All Corridor	• The A34 runs the length of Staffordshire, performing an important diversion route for the M6. It serves competing needs, particularly through the settlements of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stone, Stafford and Cannock. The multi-modal Access for All corridor will deliver improved buses, an improved walking and cycling environment for communities along the route and technology to improve the flow of traffic.	24,000	-
Road Safety			
Local Safety Schemes	• Local safety schemes based on data analysis of accident clusters and recognising community concerns. They include speed limits, junction improvements, crossing facilities, and vehicles restrictions. • Funding includes ongoing maintenance.	1,750	100
Area-wide 20mph speed limits	• Introduced on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with residents.	1,600	400
Road safety education	• Continued investment in road safety education and digital resources.	-	600
Targeted wet road skidding sites	• Premium surface dressing treatment is provided to improve safety at junctions, bends and approaches to roundabouts. • It addresses locations where there have been at least five wet road collisions on a short length of road (i.e. 200m).	1,000	-
Area-wide mass action programme	• Addresses area-wide common type collisions, where there is a common cause, theme or pattern.	750	-

	• Addresses areas with a minimum of three personal injury collisions within three years.		
Proactive Safe Systems approach to road safety	• Focuses on a proactive and people-centred approach to reducing the risk and severity of road collisions • AI / Connected vehicle data analytic tools and sensors delivering proactive casualty reduction. AI analyses driving data, traffic patterns and other variables to identify areas where traffic collisions are at a greater risk of occurring. • Potential to detect and record near-misses so that potential collision hotspots can be identified and remedied.	-	300
Street lighting maintenance and renewal	• Provides asset maintenance and renewal up to and beyond May 2028 when the PFI ends. • Transitioning to LED technology and modern lighting offers greater brightness, more uniform light distribution, improved visibility, reduced risk of collisions, enhanced safety, enhanced attractiveness of public spaces, and better colour rendering making identification of objects and people easier. • LED energy savings and a longer life span. • Integration into digital control systems allowing for dimming, scheduling and remote monitoring, optimising energy use and reducing costs. • LEDs can direct light more precisely, minimising unnecessary light pollution, benefitting wildlife and human health.	22,000	73,500
Managing the movement of people on the local road network			
Traffic signal upgrade programme	• Upgraded signals with improved visibility, timing and coordination. • Modern signals support dedicated pedestrian phases and improved crossing times. • Emergency vehicles can be accommodated, allowing them priority at junctions. • Optimised traffic and pedestrian flows using real-time adjustments based on volume to help manage delays and waiting times for pedestrians. • Dynamic signals can react to changing conditions.	6,500	2,500

	• Signals can be coordinated across a network creating 'green waves' allowing traffic to run smoothly at the same time as reducing pedestrian wait times. • Upgraded signals can communicate with connected vehicles providing drivers with information relating to upcoming signal changes and optimising traffic flows. • Advanced detectors can detect vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, enabling red signal timings to be adjusted. • Modern LEDs consume less energy than standard bulbs, reducing costs and environmental impacts. • Features such as audible signals and tactile pushbuttons can be integrated to assist people with visual impairments. • Data on traffic flow, pedestrian activity and signal performance can be used for planning and optimisation. • Upgraded signals often require less maintenance than older systems, reducing costs.		
Traffic monitoring	• Use of latest technology, potentially increasing value for money. • AI and cameras will also be used to improve data collection and analysis, providing insights into traffic patterns, volume, and behaviour. • Capturing traffic and transport data helps to inform decisions on how we manage and improve the road network in Staffordshire. This includes traffic flow by volume and vehicle type, traffic speeds, road safety data, public transport usage, numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, and parking surveys.	-	250
ANPR enforcement	• Powers to enforce moving traffic offences on Staffordshire's roads will benefit the local area, including safer roads for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. • Fines will be issued for moving traffic offences, and the initial investment should be recovered over time. • Revenues raised will be invested into road improvements and public transport.	800	500
Lane Rental Scheme	• Reduce the impact of temporary works on traffic flow.	-	500

	• Works promoters would be charged for the time that street and road works occupy the road network. • Surplus funds will be kept by the council to recoup costs of enforcement; pay for public transport provision; pay for road improvement projects; or pay for environmental improvements in the authority's area. • Reduced charges would be applied to encourage works to be done outside of peak travel times and to undertake works at the same time as the council or each other.		
Smart digital traffic management	• New emerging technology will be used to monitor and manage traffic more effectively. • Artificial intelligence will be used to create real-time traffic control strategies, addressing complex traffic issues efficiently. Users will resolve traffic issues through software configuration and AI reasoning, utilising detectors and journey time data.	-	350
Total		**123,400**	**79,000**

Our Commitments

Road Safety

- Work with the Safer Roads Partnership to publish a new data-led Road Safety Strategy that focuses on safe roads, safe road users and safe vehicles.
- Embed the principles of the 'Safe Systems' approach across all our works on the road network.
- Use digital technology to identify road safety issues and risk locations.
- Apply the Highway Code's 'Hierarchy of Road Users' to decision-making, so those road users most at risk in the event of a collision are placed at the top of the hierarchy.
- Consider preparing a policy on pavement parking.

Managing the movement of people

- Seek new powers to enforce moving traffic offences.
- Seek new powers to operate a Lane Rental Scheme.
- When we have possession of the network we will complete as much work as possible across the assets in that location.
- Improve communications on roadworks with residents and businesses.
- Consider options that will aid control and management of works on the highway.

3.4.3 **Objective 7:** Deliver a whole-life asset management approach to improve the condition of the local road network

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year maintenance investment ask as identified in Table 3.8. This will bring the overall condition of our network up to a target condition, with ongoing investment to achieve a 'steady state' condition.
- A consistent approach to funding over the next 10 years to enable us to deliver a more efficient service with better condition outcomes.

Table 3.8: Objective 7 – Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000)	
		Capital	Revenue
A513 Chetwynd Bridge	• Removal of a 7.5 tonne weight limit, 2.3m wide width restriction and 20mph speed limit under single way traffic light control. • Avoids potential imminent closure of an 'A' road. • Enables larger vehicles to use the routes that are currently subject to a 20-mile diversion. • The new bridge will require less frequent and lower cost maintenance, reducing long-term costs. • Use of green materials for construction can minimise environmental impacts. • Further details see Appendix 3.2.	26,000	-
A449 Bridge refurbishment and replacement	• Avoids deterioration of bridge structures on the MRN at Rodbaston, Stafford and former Littleton Colliery that support the A449 over railway. • Modern design and construction practices will result in a structure that is more resilient to heavy loads, severe weather and overall deterioration. • A449 Moss Pit footbridge replacement.	6,000	-
Carriageway structural maintenance	• Support movement of goods, services and people, boosting the economy and enhancing quality of life. • Smooth surfaces offer a more comfortable travel experience and reduce damage to vehicles.	93,405	-

Footway structural maintenance	• Minimise trip hazards reducing potential pedestrian injuries. • Smooth, well-maintained surfaces support mobility impaired users, those with pushchairs and older people. • High quality footways are more aesthetically pleasing.	13,143	-
Carriageway preventative maintenance	• Addressing minor defects and skid resistance before they worsen and lead to safety issues. • Lifespan can be prolonged, leading to less disruption and costly repairs. • Generally quicker and cheaper to deliver, causing less disruption. • Reduces the demand for new materials and minimises environmental impacts.	186,811	-
Footway preventative maintenance	• Repairing minor defects reduces the risk of trips and falls. • Vegetation clearance can improve visibility and safety. • Regular maintenance prevents minor issues from escalating into costly interventions. • Ramps, drop kerbs and tactile paving remain in appropriate condition, providing accessible routes. • Contributes to a clean, safe and attractive environment, encouraging walking.	23,688	-
Bridge structural maintenance	• Addressing structural deficiencies prevents failures which may result in serious injuries, road closures, diversions and traffic delays, negatively impacting the local economy. • Protection against harsh weather conditions helps to reduce deterioration and extend the lifespan of an asset. • Proactive maintenance is more cost-effective than extensive repairs and replacement. • Extending the lifespan reduces the environmental impact associated with new building materials and full construction.	110,383	-
Highway retaining wall and	• Prevention of landslides and erosion which may endanger road users, properties and natural habitat.	10,000	-

embankment programme	• Protection of structures and damage to the road surface which can lead to distortion, resulting in safety issues. • Effective drainage systems within retaining walls and embankments prevent water buildup, which can weaken the structures. • Regular maintenance prolongs the lifespan of these structures, reducing costly repairs and the use of new materials, offering environmental benefits. • The need for emergency closures is reduced. • Well-maintained structures prevent soil erosion and sedimentation in local waterways, protecting water quality and aquatic habitats.		
Drainage replacement	• Prevention of water accumulation on road surfaces offers significant safety benefits including reduced glare, aquaplaning and skidding. • Modern systems that minimise water damage extend the lifespan of the road surface and stability, reducing frequency and cost of repair and replacement. • Well-designed modern systems direct water runoff away from the road into appropriate treatment areas, reducing road and property flooding, and preventing pollutants from contaminating local water courses. • Features like permeable pavements and bioretention areas help manage stormwater runoff. • Effective drainage reduces likelihood of road closures.	16,488	-
Minor capital maintenance	• Addressing minor defects before they worsen and lead to safety issues. • Lifespan can be prolonged, leading to less disruption and costly repairs. • Generally quicker and cheaper to deliver, causing less disruption. • Reduces the demand for new materials and minimises environmental impacts.	25,000	-
Vehicle restraint systems	• Absorb and reduce the force of a crashing vehicle, reducing the severity	15,434	-

	of incidents and limiting the level of damage.		
Road signage	• High quality road signage ensures the safety and efficiency of our roads. • Communicate important information to vehicle drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. • Regulate traffic flow and help to prevent incidents.	26,355	-
Road markings	• Enhance visibility particularly during adverse weather and at night. • Prevent incidents and conflicts. • Encourage a consistent speed. • Guide traffic flow.	9,775	-
Road maintenance operations	• Winter services, grass cutting, weed control, gully emptying, safety and routine inspections, routine and reactive maintenance.	-	96,439
Bus stop infrastructure maintenance	• Maintain bus stops and associated infrastructure to a standard that will improve journey quality for bus users and contribute towards increasing bus patronage.	-	3,500
Total		**562,482**	**99,939**

Our Commitments

- Improve the accuracy of our network inventory.
- Deliver a maintenance programme that adds life to our road network and seeks to minimise rates of deterioration over time.
- Consider options for penalising poor reinstatement of carriageways and footways following street works and incentivise good practice.
- Integrate road maintenance and improvement programmes.
- Adopt a risk-based approach to the replacement and potential removal of guard rail and similar assets.
- Consider the appropriate management of highway assets of environmental and historic value in planned maintenance programmes.
- Continue regular inspections and preventative maintenance to minimise flooding problems on our resilient network.

3.4.4 **Objective 8:** Support the efficient movement of freight whilst minimising the adverse impacts it can have on local roads, communities and the environment

Asks of National Government

- Adopt a collaborative approach with the freight and logistics sector to help minimise the impacts of goods vehicles on communities and the environment. This may include improvements in vehicle efficiency, emission regulations, financial incentives, research and development.

Asks of Businesses

- Adopt technology, such as moving to digital platforms to aid route optimisation and reducing trips made by empty vehicles.
- Transition to fuels that are better for the environment.
- Investigate and implement last-mile delivery options, such as cargo bikes and secure local delivery lockers.
- Investigate and implement freight consolidation hubs, whereby goods from numerous suppliers are delivered, stored and combined into more efficient loads.

Asks of Stakeholders

- Local Planning Authorities:
  - Consider the needs of goods vehicles (and their drivers) in new employment developments.
  - Consider allocating land within Local Plans to accommodate secure lorry parking and driver welfare facilities.
  - Identify sites that could be developed as freight consolidation hubs.

- Staffordshire Police:
  - Support the enforcement of Traffic Regulation Orders.
  - Aid the identification and management of appropriate abnormal load and diversionary routes.

- National Highways:
  - Work with us and local communities when establishing diversion routes off the SRN.
  - Explore dedicated freight corridors for large vehicle movements.
  - Improve access to freight and logistics hubs, including A38 Hilliard's Cross junction and on Junction 12 on the M6 that serves the West Midlands Interchange and 'The Central Edge' economic growth corridor.

Our Commitments

- Work with local planning authorities to plan for secure overnight parking and driver welfare facilities, and consider trials for urban-fringe freight consolidation hubs via the Local Plan process.

3.5 Long-term Vision

We will be working closely with National Highways, sharing knowledge and developing joint strategies, to ensure all of Staffordshire's roads provide seamless, safe and reliable connectivity. The local road network will mainly accommodate short journeys, whereas the SRN will accommodate longer journeys.

There will be a reduction in traffic delays on the local road network by providing alternative high-quality travel options, as well as supporting the choice not to travel, giving people a choice of how and whether to travel. Hard demand management measures may be considered if all other avenues have been tried and found unsuccessful.

In the future and beyond the five-year plan period, technology will be used to manage the local road network in the most cost-effective and efficient way. In the future, we expect:

- Autonomous vehicles to communicate with each other, sharing information about traffic and road conditions, and collision warnings.
- Connected vehicles to communicate with road infrastructure, such as traffic lights, road signs and streetlights, to share information about traffic conditions.
- Connected vehicles to communicate with all other networks, such as paying for parking or using the M6 Toll.

Year-on-year progress will mean that deaths and serious injuries from traffic collisions will be reduced to near zero through a holistic system, encompassing safe roads, safe speeds, safe road users, and safe vehicles. When incidents occur, technology will

redirect traffic and provide real-time information to both incident-response teams and the travelling public.

3.6 Key Performance Indicators

The KPIs in Table 3.9 will be used to monitor the theme objectives relating to the local road network.

Table 3.9: Key Performance Indicators

Theme Objective	Key Performance Indicators
5: Improve the safety and efficiency of the Strategic Road Network to deliver a positive impact on the local road network.	• Number of schemes committed in the Road Investment Strategy (RIS)
6: Improve the safety, efficiency and journey time reliability of the local road network.	• Number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) • Number and severity of road traffic collisions • Levels of traffic delays (within CAST 1 settlements)
7: Deliver a whole-life asset management approach to improve the condition of the local road network.	• Percentage of LED traffic signals • Percentage of LED street lighting • Percentage of local roads in good/very good condition • Percentage of people satisfied with the condition of roads • Percentage of bridges that are in good/very good condition
8: Support the efficient movement of freight whilst minimising the adverse impacts it can have on local roads and communities.	• Percentage of people satisfied with routes taken by heavy goods vehicles

Chapter 4: Inclusive and Active Communities

4.1 Introduction

Walking, wheeling[9] and cycling should be seen as a viable travel choice for people, and consideration should be given to these options in scheme design, in line with the Highway Code's 'hierarchy of road users' that puts pedestrians and cyclists at the top. This supports the Department for Transport's ambition to make walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey.

In April 2021, we published our current Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). It aims to improve the safety, comfort and attractiveness of walking, wheeling and cycling in the county. It includes a prioritised list of over 200 schemes that will improve active travel infrastructure for residents, businesses and visitors. It covers the six urban areas of Burton upon Trent, Cannock, Stafford, Tamworth, Lichfield and Newcastle-under-Lyme, which is home to 46% of the county's population.

During 2026, we intend to update our LCWIP to cover the whole of Staffordshire. It will reflect the aims of Active Travel England, a government executive agency, created in 2022 to promote walking and cycling; along with the changes made to The Highway Code to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

4.2 Theme Objectives

There are three theme objectives relating to inclusive and active communities. Table 4.1 shows how these link to the Department for Transport's five priorities.

[9] Wheeling includes people who use wheelchairs and mobility scooters who may not identify with walking.

Table 4.1: Linkages between the Theme Objectives and the Department for Transport's priorities

Theme Objectives	Department for Transport's Priorities				
	Transforming infrastructure	Improving bus services	Integrating transport	Greener transport	Rail reform
9. Ensure the road network provides facilities that make walking, wheeling and cycling convenient and safe for all			✓	✓	
10. Increase the use of our Public Rights of Way network			✓	✓	
11. Deliver promotional activities that complement our active travel infrastructure			✓	✓	

4.3 The Current Situation

4.3.1 The Health of Staffordshire's Residents

Walking is free and, for distances of less than 1km, is usually a quick and efficient way to travel. It is one of the easiest ways, for most people, to get more active, lose weight and be healthier. For example, 1km can be travelled with a 10-minute brisk walk. This counts towards the 150 minutes of weekly exercise, which is the NHS's recommended minimum amount of physical activity for adults.

While Staffordshire's adult population is more physically active than the national average, just over two-thirds (69%) are overweight and of these, 29% are obese. The picture is no better for Staffordshire's children and young people who are less physically active than the national average. A quarter (24.4%) of reception aged children are overweight and of these, over 10% are obese. By the time they reach Year 6, the figures rise to 37% and 23% respectively.

Recorded rates of depression by GPs in the county have been steadily increasing, rising from 6% in 2013 to 13% in 2020. Over half of our districts and boroughs have higher than average recorded rates of depression within their population[10]. While Staffordshire has lower-than-average rates for emergency hospital admissions for adults with mental health diagnoses, it has a higher-than-average rate for suicides[11].

[10] Mental health in adults - Staffordshire Observatory.
[11] Suicide levels in Staffordshire stand at 12.2 per 100,000 people, compared to 10.4 per 100,000 people nationally.

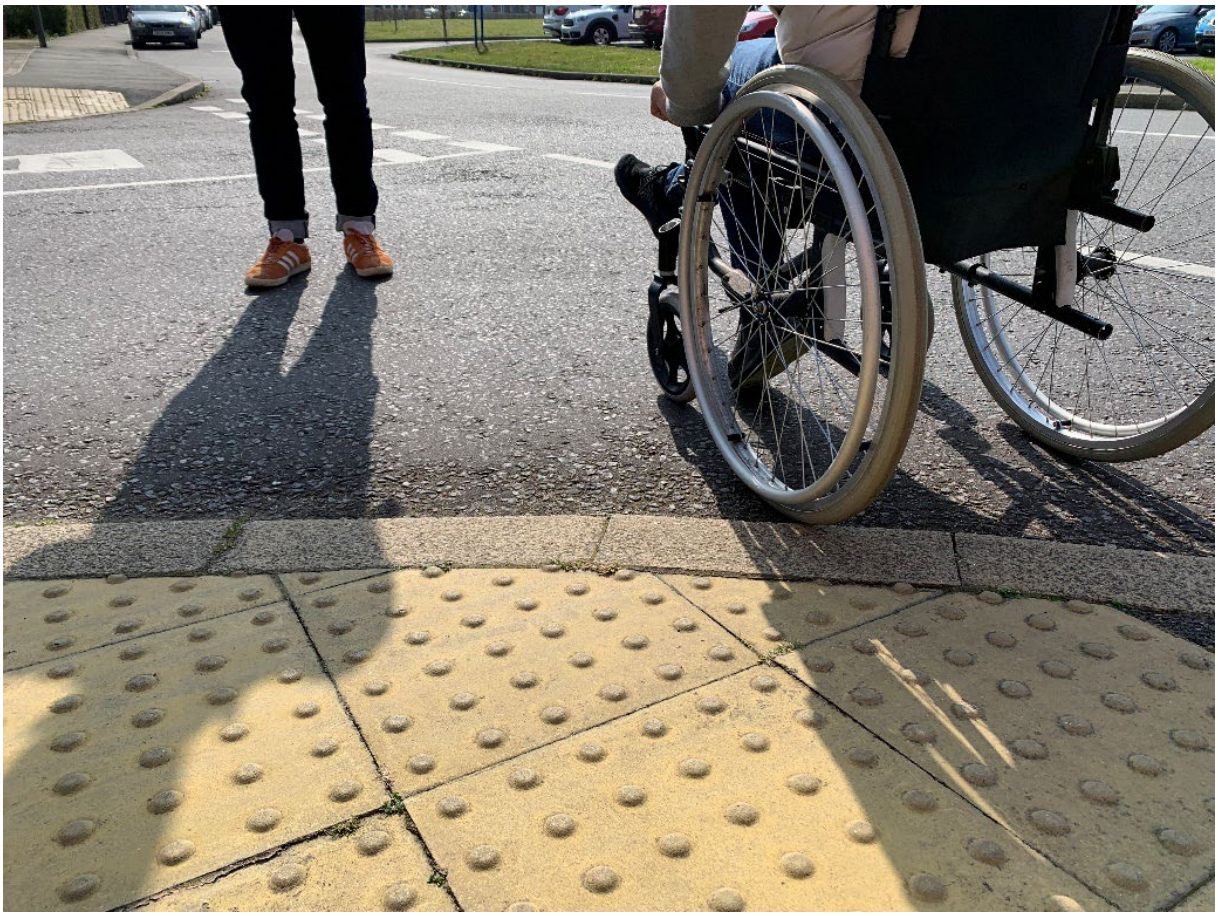
Evidence shows that active travel has clear physical and mental health benefits. Travelling actively can encourage social connections and improve mental health through time spent outdoors. However, while active travel is an important opportunity for savings in terms of preventing ill health, it can be challenging for many people, faced with the reality of day-to-day living and competing priorities.

4.3.2 Inclusive Mobility

Fairness, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do. The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination in wider society. Inclusive mobility therefore needs to be considered from the earliest stage of scheme development, including the accessibility needs of people with physical impairments, mental health conditions, dementia, age-related and non-visible impairments.

In 2018, the then National Government published, The Inclusive Transport Strategy. The objective of the strategy is that public transport should be accessible to everyone who wishes to use it and that all aspects of inclusive transport, from staff, vehicle design and infrastructure, are designed in an inclusive manner. Inclusive access to public transport is covered in Staffordshire's BSIP and in Chapter 2: Public Transport.

We must also consider the barriers that prevent people from walking and cycling. These can include a lack of travel or transport options or other, more subtle features such as poor provision of rest places, lack of suitable crossing points or obstructions along the route. Infrastructure and some places which were built before the current legislation, can lack sufficient crossing features, such as dropped kerbs and tactile paving which can be a barrier for people.



All transport investment must meet accessibility requirements, ensuring everyone is included and able to play a full role in society. This includes those travelling with small children or who have a temporary mobility impairment. We will also consider socioeconomic factors as these can impact on a person's ability to travel. Communities in areas of economic, health or social deprivation, often need to overcome barriers to accessing employment opportunities and essential services, such as healthcare.

In 2019, Local Trust developed a Community Needs Index[12] based on social infrastructure, connectedness, and active and engaged communities. It found that all districts and boroughs within Staffordshire, other than Stafford Borough, have high community needs, resulting in social and economic exclusion due to poor access to education and facilities, lower life expectancy, poorer health, and increased risk of disease. Therefore, it is essential that these areas of need are considered so that the gap between affluent areas and deprived areas does not widen further.

4.3.3 The Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Network

Active Travel Infrastructure

Apart from bridleways, greenways and the National Cycle Network, our existing cycling infrastructure is mainly located in urban settlements. Our urban cycling network is fragmented and includes missing links. Where off-road routes are provided, they tend to be in the form of shared use facilities with pedestrians. On-road routes do exist, but

[12] localtrust.org.uk

safety concerns remain a barrier to these being used by everyone, except proficient cyclists.

Between 2020 and 2024, we have been making progress on expanding and improving the quality of our cycling network. For example, new segregated routes have been installed in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Cannock, Burton upon Trent and Stafford. These schemes have improved access to town centres and connectivity to other key trip attractors, such as rail stations.

Where possible, we have followed the national cycle infrastructure design guidance, known as LTN 1/20. LTN 1/20's principles can be challenging to apply in some of our towns because it seeks direct, safe, coherent, comfortable, and attractive cycle routes. Such routes require significant space and modern infrastructure, which is often incompatible with the narrow, complex layouts of our towns.

Cycling in Burton upon Trent

In 2023, we installed a segregated cycle route along Station Street and Borough Road to the rail station. This provides a safe and direct route from the town centre. We will be extending this further, to the town hall, to close the gap in the network, which currently exists. This will complete the route from the town centre that allows users to join National Cycle Network 54 and the wider cycling network.

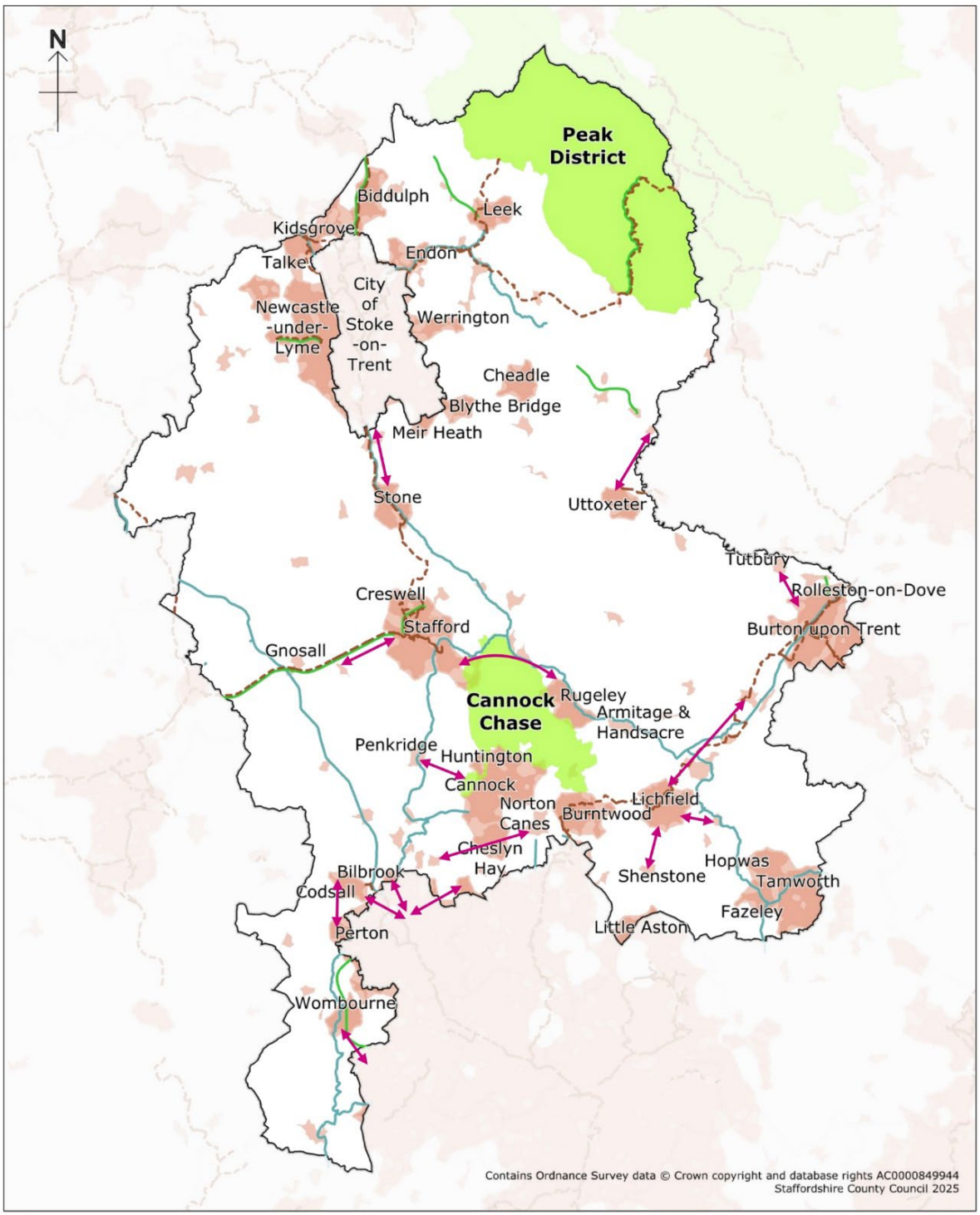
Public satisfaction with overall cycle routes and facilities in Staffordshire currently stands at 47%. This is below the regional and national averages.

To inform our LCWIP, AtkinsRéalis applied a multi-criteria assessment framework to identify and prioritise new cycling corridors between Staffordshire's rural settlements to nearby key destinations. Factors considered in the assessment included cycling demand, topography, and the provision of existing cycling infrastructure. Figure 4.1 shows the priority routes identified by this study.

The new Staffordshire Residential Highway Design Code identifies what we are looking for when new residential (or mixed use) development is being proposed. The Code puts pedestrians, wheelers and cyclists at the fore, giving people the choice to make journeys by active (and public) transport, rather than continuing to accommodate only motor vehicles. Further details on the requirements of developers are provided in Chapter 5: Land Use and Transport Planning.

Footways and pedestrian facilities are designed to support safe and convenient walking routes. Footways include public rights of way, pedestrian zones, local shopping precincts, and footbridges. Pedestrian facilities include tactile paving, dropped kerbs, and various types of crossings such as zebra, puffin, and toucan. These cater to people with different needs and environments, ensuring accessibility for all. Public satisfaction with the condition of Staffordshire's footways currently stands at 46%. This is below the regional and national averages.

Figure 4.1: Active Travel Routes (excluding PRoWs)



National Cycle Network (NCN)

The NCN is a UK-wide network of signed paths and routes for walking, wheeling, and cycling and is managed by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. Staffordshire boasts 12 NCN routes, spanning 200km. They criss-cross the county; 45% are on road, including quiet country lanes, and 55% are off-road, including greenways and canal towpaths.

Canal Towpaths

There are over 240km of canal towpath in the county, most of which are the responsibility of the Canal and River Trust, a UK charity that manages England's and Wales' network of inland waterways. The canal network, with regular access points, has the potential to offer traffic-free cycling and walking routes that cater for local journeys and leisure activities. Canals can play an important role for people who lack the confidence to cycle on the road, which is a major barrier in the uptake of cycling. As most towpaths are unlit, they are not always suitable for commuting.

There are several locations within the county where the NCN follows improved sections of canal towpath. This includes NCN 81 between Bilbrook and Wolverhampton, and NCN 5 between Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent, and in Kidsgrove. However, there are many more sections where the towpath is in poor repair and can become waterlogged and muddy, especially during the winter months. We work with the Canal and River Trust, and where relevant, the Canal Restoration Trust, to improve towpaths and contribute to the visitor economy.

Greenways

We manage and maintain 30km of greenway. These are shared-use paths on undeveloped land, such as disused rail lines. They are enjoyed by a wide variety of users as they are traffic-free and relatively flat. In Staffordshire, greenways can be found between Stafford and Newport, Leek to Rushton, Oakamoor to Denstone, and in Wombourne and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Network

We have a statutory duty to keep the PRoW network safe and accessible. Besides its surface, we must maintain all waymarks, fingerposts, steps, and bridges, whereas landowners must maintain stiles and gates.

The PRoW network promotes active travel and plays a crucial role in promoting public health. It allows people to access and enjoy the countryside and urban fringe areas for recreation and exercise. It can play a role in providing local accessibility to jobs, schools, shops and services.

There are four types of PRoW in Staffordshire, spanning 4,524km (Table 4.2):

- Footpaths can be used for walking, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs.
- Bridleways can be used for walking, horse riding, cycling (including electric assisted pedal cycles), mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs.
- Restricted byways can be used for walking, horse riding, cycling (including electric assisted pedal cycles), mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs, and horse-drawn carriages.
- Byways Open to all Traffic can be used by motorised vehicles.

Table 4.2: Types and Lengths of Public Rights of Way

Type	Kilometres
Footpath	3,778
Bridleway	704
Restricted Byway	2
Byway Open to All Traffic	40

The most well-used PRoWs include promoted trails across and within Staffordshire. These include the Staffordshire Way and the Way for the Millennium. Promoted trails such as these, provide an outlet to support the county's tourism sector. These can be seen in Figure 4.2.

Our Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be updated to identify the enhancements that we would like to make in respect of the management and maintenance of the county's network. It will aim to increase provision for pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and people with reduced mobility. Unfortunately, the current standard of the PRoW network is falling short of the standard it should be. Inadequate surfaces and bridges are not uncommon, impacting on the accessibility of the network. Failure to improve PRoWs and their infrastructure not only misses an opportunity to address wider community issues, but it also creates a greater maintenance burden and increased safety issues.

Figure 4.2: Public Rights of Way Network

Category A public rights of way
Other public rights of way
Heart of England Way
Newcastle Way
The Staffordshire Way
Way for the Millennium

Scale: 1:400000

Staffordshire County Council

Staffordshire's Most Well-Used Public Rights of Way

The Journey to School

Just under half (46%) of primary and secondary school pupils either walk or cycle to school. Over one-third (37%) of school journeys are made by car, which contributes to road safety concerns, queuing traffic and poor air quality in the vicinity of the school. Specific issues highlighted during our engagement activities, included:

- Vehicles parked on yellow zigzag road markings, outside of the school gate, blocking footways and other approaches to the school entrance.
- Dangerous vehicle manoeuvres near schools and vehicles using the school grounds to park or turn around in.
- Speeding vehicles outside of the school entrance.

To improve road safety and encourage active travel to schools, we provide a school crossing patrol service at over 200 locations across the county where significant numbers of children are crossing busy roads on their journey to and from school.

We are also working with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust to deliver School Streets. They are timed access restrictions to motorised traffic at the start and end of the school day on the streets near to the school gates. A Staffordshire School Streets Working Group has been established to identify participating schools, based on a range of criteria including, technical, behavioural, social and environmental factors.

We are exploring the right approach to enforcement to ensure compliance with School Street which may include the council securing powers to enforce moving traffic offences.

Healthy Streets

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust conducted the first Healthy Streets Audit in Burton upon Trent in early 2025 (Appendix 4.1). The Healthy Streets Design Check Tool was used to show how to improve street design and make places healthier and more enjoyable for people on foot and bicycle. Delivery of Healthy Streets follows the Highway Code 'Hierarchy of Road Users' that places those road users most at risk at the top of the hierarchy, which is pedestrians and cyclists. They will only be introduced in Staffordshire where there is local support.

Physical Barriers on the Active Travel Network

Many traffic-free routes for walking, wheeling and cycling have physical barriers or access-control barriers such as A-frames, kissing gates or chicanes. In many locations they are in a poor state of repair and are often serving no useful purpose as they are simply circumnavigated by most users. They are often perceived as needed to prevent anti-social behaviour, but evidence of their effectiveness at achieving this is limited.

Other physical restrictions (e.g. pavement parking, steps, steep gradients and cambers, etc.) can prevent people from accessing and enjoying active travel routes. This is particularly the case for those using adaptive cycles, wheelchairs and mobility aids, mobility scooters, tandems, trikes, utility/cargo cycles and trailers, pushchairs and horse riders.

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust has conducted walking audits[13] of routes within our smaller towns of Biddulph, Burntwood, Cheslyn Hay, Great Wyrley, Kidsgrove, Leek and Rugeley. They focused on routes to key destinations, such as schools and retail areas, with scores being given to five key aspects – comfort, attractiveness, safety, directness and coherence. The audits considered the needs of all users and identified the main issues they may find on each route. The issues included vehicle traffic volumes and speeds, footway widths, crossing points and perceived levels of safety. The results of the audits are provided in Appendix 4.2.

Active Travel Roadshows

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust carried out engagement with Staffordshire's residents at 17 libraries and community events to gather people's experiences of walking, wheeling and cycling in their local area. This identified certain areas for improvement and key barriers to active travel. The main barriers included:

- Uneven surfaces and poor maintenance.
- Narrow routes or obstructed by overgrown vegetation, lampposts, bollards, parked cars, etc.
- Lack of or poorly maintained dropped kerbs to help people with mobility aids or pushchairs.
- Lack of adequate safe and direct routes, cycle parking facilities, clear waymarking.
- Challenging to cross streets safely due to insufficient controlled crossing places.
- Issues with underpasses e.g. flooding and personal safety concerns.
- Disjointed active travel networks, especially for wheeling.
- Cost of cycles and micromobility options.

Cycle Parking

We are working with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust to develop cycle parking strategies for key urban areas in the county. Existing cycle parking facilities have been audited to assess their condition and need for replacement. Initially, we are focusing on improving cycle parking provision in Stafford town centre to ensure that it is accessible. It was also one of the main barriers to cycling highlighted at the Active Travel Roadshow in Stafford.

[13] The walking audits used the Walking Route Audit Tool, known as WRAT, which was developed by Sustrans to assess the condition and suitability of walking routes. It requires evaluation of features along the route, including crossings and dropped kerbs.

4.3.4 Walking and Cycling Levels in Staffordshire

Our 2023 Household Travel Survey found that:

- 45% of residents choose to walk when their place of work is less than a 20-minute walk away (1km).
- 5% of residents choose to cycle when their place of work is less than a 20-minute cycle away (5km).
- 44% of journeys to education are made on foot and 3% by bicycle, despite almost two-thirds (63%) of school journeys being less than 2 miles.

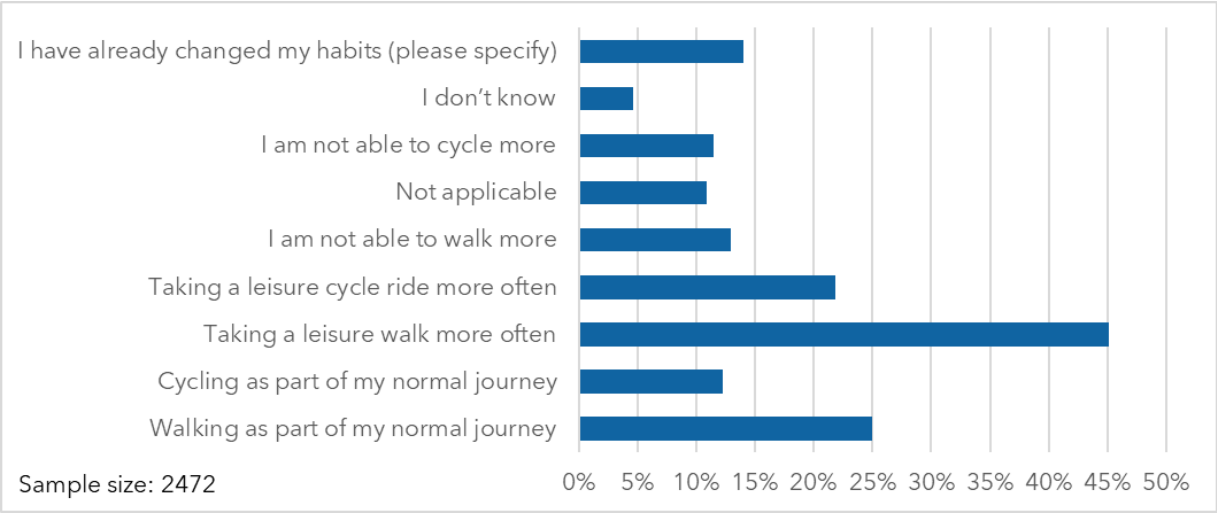
Table 4.3 shows the proportion of respondents that choose to walk or cycle for different journey purposes. More detailed results from the Household Travel Survey, broken down by districts and boroughs, can be found in Appendices 1.5 – 1.13.

Table 4.3: Walking and Cycling Journey Purposes

Journey purpose	Percentage of people who usually walk or cycle
Primary school	52%
Secondary school	42%
Rail station	38%
GP appointments	36%
Leisure within your hometown	35%
Further and higher education	28%
Socialising	18%
Non-food shopping	13%
Work	12%
Food shopping	8%
Hospital appointment	5%

Figure 4.3 shows the responses to whether people could be persuaded to increase the amount they walked or cycled to improve their health and wellbeing. Walking for leisure was the most popular response at 45%, followed by walking as part of a normal journey (25%).

Figure 4.3: Responses to whether respondents would walk or cycle more to improve their health and wellbeing



4.3.5 Active Travel Promotion

Our active travel promotions complement our active travel infrastructure programmes. Promotional activities mostly focus on the school journey and aim to create good travel habits from an early age. We run Modeshift STARS Education Scheme, which is a national programme that accredits schools, depending on their level of commitment in supporting active travel.

Walking Warriors in Burntwood

We offer cycling training and activities that seek to change the school run and make streets and outside the school gate safer, happier and healthier places. Activities include promoting national campaigns (such as Walk to School Week) and creating walking buses. Walking buses are volunteer led walking groups that follow a designated route and enable pupils to safely walk to and from school.

Bikeability

Bikeability is the Government's national cycle training programme. It supports people in learning practical skills and understanding how to cycle on today's roads. Run by professionally qualified cycle training instructors, participants gain practical experience in hazard identification, along with the four key cycling skills: observation, communication, road positioning and understanding priorities. Over the last ten years, 108,284 children in Staffordshire have participated in Levels 1, 2 and 3. Funding for the scheme is provided externally and equates to £35 per child, which also includes delivering other schemes such as Learn to Ride, Balance Bike, and Fix and Ride.

We also deliver initiatives focused on the wider community. INTO (Inspiring New Travel Options) Social-Prescribing is a 3-year pilot project in Newcastle-under-Lyme, launched in 2022. It explores how socially prescribed physical activity (i.e. walking and cycling) can deliver better outcomes, specifically within the five wards of Silverdale, Knutton, Town, Holditch and Silverdale. These wards are relatively deprived, have low physical activity levels and higher than average unemployment rates.

INTO Social-Prescribing Pilot

As of December 2024, over 200 people have participated in the INTO project through either one-to-one coaching or attending a group led walk or cycle. Of these, 60% have been referred by a social prescriber, such as a doctor or link worker, to improve their mental or physical health. Users have shown an increase in confidence, social inclusion, activity generally and an increase in levels of walking and cycling.

4.4 The Way Forward

We have identified the following asks of National Government and key stakeholders, along with making our own commitments to increase levels of walking and cycling in the county.

4.4.1 **Objective 9:** Ensure the road network provides facilities that make walking, wheeling and cycling convenient and safe for all

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask for walking, wheeling and cycling as identified in Table 4.4.
- Update the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS).

Table 4.4: Objective 9 – Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Stafford priority cycle network and walking environment	• Complete a coherent network of cycle routes serving Stafford town centre and the rail station, in line with LTN 1/20, as identified within the LCWIP. Improving access to key destinations will provide options for journeys by cycle and walking.	2,000	50
Burton upon Trent priority cycle network and walking environment	• Extend the existing cycle network by connecting the rail station to the town hall, providing access to the wider cycling network in Burton upon Trent and beyond to NCN 54. This will close one of the significant gaps in the network to key destinations in the town. Improve access to key destinations for pedestrians.	1,000	100
Newcastle-under-Lyme priority cycle network and walking environment	• The vision for Newcastle-under-Lyme is to extend current cycling infrastructure to connect to the town centre, linking to the greenway, and improving walking and cycle connectivity. The town centre will have safe, direct routes for cyclists who can take advantage of the cycle hub at the car park on Liverpool Road for safe cycle storage.	1,000	150
Cannock priority cycle network and walking environment	• Improve links to the town centre following completion of the town centre regeneration scheme.	1,000	-
Tamworth priority cycle network and walking environment	• Enhance the extensive cycle and walking network across Tamworth connecting to the town centre. The aim is to actively encourage residents to use the network, by giving them a genuine choice to cycle for come journeys. This will result in fewer car journeys, improved air quality and improved health.	1,000	-
Lichfield priority cycle network and walking environment	• Improve city centre walking and cycling connectivity from the southeast and north of the city and provide better connections to	1,000	50

	Lichfield City rail station. Close the gaps in the cycling network and encourage cycling journeys to and from the city centre, by giving people a genuine choice to cycle for some journeys.		
Canal network	• Staffordshire has an extensive canal network that can improve mental and physical wellbeing for those who use it. We will work with the Canal and River Trust, and where relevant, the Canal Restoration Trust and Destination Staffordshire, to improve access to the canal network for all and seek to upgrade sections of towpath that are currently substandard.	750	-
Off-road cycle network maintenance and investment in National Cycle Network	• Prioritise investment in maintaining the existing cycle network and work alongside Walk Wheel Cycle Trust to improve access and surfacing of the NCN to assist people to travel to more places by walking, wheeling and cycling.	3,000	1,500
Rural network priority – South Staffordshire	• The developing LCWIP will consider priorities to enhance active travel corridors within and between rural settlements. Our priority for investment is likely to be South Staffordshire.	2,100	100
School Streets	• The first School Streets to be piloted in 2025. They will provide children and families with a safe walking, wheeling and cycling environment to attend school. By reducing vehicular traffic in the vicinity of the school at drop off and pick up times, there will be improved air quality through reduced vehicle emissions.	1,000	1,250
Footway improvement programme	• Improved footway surfacing to support our LCWIP, will make walking journeys more comfortable for pedestrians and wheelers by having a smooth and level surface, encouraging more walking and wheeling trips. This includes safer routes to school.	7,500	1,500
Cycle parking and e-bike hire	• Increased provision of secure cycle parking at key destinations is required to encourage greater	1,000	50

	uptake in cycling. E-bikes are a reliable form of transport and provide the opportunity to cycle longer distances. They are particularly suited to hillier areas, such as Newcastle-under-Lyme.		
Improve cycle accessibility and permeability on the existing road network	• One of the challenges of cycling is a lack of a coherent and convenient network that caters for all movements and the ability to safely re-join and exit the carriageway, particularly at junctions. Improving accessibility and permeability for cyclists on the road network will help to create safer and more direct routes.	7,500	1,500
Healthy Streets	• Improve street design and make them healthier and more enjoyable places for people on foot and bicycle, in line with the Highway Code's hierarchy of road users. • People with the option to take shorter journeys that can be walked and cycled as people will have the amenities they require, close to their home, giving people the option not to travel long distances.	4,000	350
Total		**33,850**	**6,600**

Stakeholder Asks

- Walk Wheel Cycle Trust to promote active travel throughout the county.
- Canal and River Trust to ensure the county's towpaths are well maintained to support the visitor economy.
- Local planning authorities to use the LCWIP to steer Local Plan policy and development management decisions.
- Developers to follow the Staffordshire Highway Residential Design Code and consult the LTP and LCWIP when identifying active travel schemes.
- Schools to encourage their pupils, parents and staff to travel to school by active travel modes.

Our Commitments

- Update Staffordshire's LCWIP to cover the whole of the county.
- Apply Active Travel England toolkits when designing walking and cycling schemes.
- Establish a process for engaging with under-represented groups on highway and transport schemes.

- Adhere to LTN 1/20 design guidance as much as possible when designing walking and cycling schemes.
- Use the LCWIP to secure developer contributions and support funding applications.
- Seek new powers to enforce moving traffic offences to enable the delivery of School Streets.
- Focus investment on better maintaining existing assets, rather than installing new assets.
- Review our policy relating to waiting times at crossings to give greater priority to pedestrians.

4.4.2 **Objective 10:** Increase the use of the Public Rights of Way network

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask as identified in Table 4.5.
- Revise legislation to allow a more proportionate approach regarding how PRoWs are managed, compared to other highways.
- Publish design guidance for standards of different types of PRoWs.
- Review the national digital network and asset data standards to ensure PRoW data is effectively included and aligned with road network and asset data.

Table 4.5: Objective 10 – Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Path network and green spaces route improvements	• As resources permit, deliver a programme of signage, navigation and accessibility improvements for key paths and access to green spaces. This will provide an alternative to road use, giving people confidence to use the network.	3,300	1,000
Path network maintenance	• As resources permit, enable the use of green materials and approaches for maintaining surfaces, signage and infrastructure to improve network accessibility, connectivity and resilience of constructed and natural paths.	2,000	1,000
Community Paths Initiatives	• Enable landowners, groups and communities to maintain paths and install accessible gates.	500	500
Path network bridge maintenance	• As resources permit, start to address missing structures and repair existing ones to prevent failures which may result in serious injury and route closures.	4,200	500
Total		**10,000**	**3,000**

Our Commitments

- Update the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan, focusing on improving the experience of all users, including those with reduced mobility.
- Complete a conditional review of Public Rights of Way paths and associated assets and furniture.

4.4.3 **Objective 11:** Deliver promotional activities that complement our active travel infrastructure

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask as identified in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Objective 11 – Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
INTO/social prescribing	• Build on the successes of the current initiative. • Give people increased confidence to cycle and boost their mental wellbeing.	-	2250
Bikeability training for families, young people and adults, and Walking Buses	• Provide younger generations with the skills and confidence to cycle. By doing this, we hope to encourage an increase in shorter trips travelled by bicycle rather than by car and improve road safety, by increasing the choice of transport modes that people have access to. • Reduce queuing traffic near schools. • Provide a visible sign to the community that the school takes transport seriously. • Raised activity levels and alertness, social inclusion and local area awareness. • Increased pupil attendance. • Deliver walking buses led by volunteers.	-	7500
Travel choice - research and marketing	• Understand how people think when choosing their mode of transport. • Provide a better understanding of the motivations for transport choices of Staffordshire residents which will guide public investment in what infrastructure improvements and promotional initiatives are required.	-	500
Total		**-**	**10,250**

- Engage in national campaigns such as Walking Month and The Big Walk and Wheel.
- Work with businesses who want to develop their own Travel Plans.
- Develop our communications and publicity around active travel and inclusive transport.

4.5 Long-term Vision

Over the coming years and decades, Staffordshire will see improved walking and cycling infrastructure; the gaps in provision will have been closed; and we will have been able to capitalise on future funding opportunities.

During scheme design, construction and maintenance, the needs of pedestrians and cyclists will be recognised in line with The Highway Code's 'hierarchy of road users'. Routes will be accessible, safe and coherent, with traffic-free sections, clear signage, and smooth surfaces to make them accessible to all abilities. We may consider the conversion of road space to create more segregated active travel routes and enhanced public realm where there are clear economic and health benefits.

Active travel modes will be the preferred choice of transport for short, everyday journeys, promoting healthier, greener, and inclusive communities. For longer journeys, active travel modes will be fully and seamlessly integrated with public transport. This will be supported by better infrastructure and planning that makes it easier to link modes, such as safe cycle parking at rail stations and well-connected walking routes to bus stops.

4.6 Key Performance Indicators

The KPIs in Table 4.7 will be used to monitor the theme objectives relating to increasing levels of active travel.

Table 4.7: Key Performance Indicators

Theme Objective	Key Performance Indicators
9. Ensure the road network provides facilities that make walking, wheeling and cycling convenient and safe for all.	• Growth in active travel at monitored sites • Number of active travel schemes in the Capital Programme • Number of School Streets
10. Increase the use of the Public Rights of Way network.	• Percentage of people satisfied with the Rights of Way network
11. Deliver promotional activities that complement our active travel infrastructure.	• Number of Walking Buses • Number of participants in the INTO Scheme

Chapter 5: Land Use and Transport Planning

5.1 Introduction

We are committed to ensuring the delivery of housing and employment growth in the right locations where there are genuine transport choices, especially for journeys on foot, bicycle and public transport, alongside access to good quality local services and facilities. The latter is one of the main ways to improve community cohesion, connectivity, vibrancy and population health.

The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2024, states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals. It says that a vision-led approach to identifying transport solutions will deliver well-designed, prosperous and attractive places.

A vision-led approach requires us to develop a road and transport network that provides high-quality travel options, rather than solely focusing on providing additional highway capacity for cars, based on traffic growth predicted from historic data (often referred to as 'predict and provide'). Evidence confirms that an over-provision of highway capacity can induce more road traffic.

5.2 Theme Objectives

There are three theme objectives relating to land use and transport planning. Table 5.1 shows how these link to the Department for Transport's priorities.

Table 5.1: Linkages between the Theme Objectives and the Department for Transport's priorities

Theme Objectives	Department for Transport's Priorities				
	Transforming infrastructure	Improving bus services	Integrating transport	Greener transport	Rail reform
12. Integrate land-use planning and transport infrastructure and ensure development is located where there are, or will be, travel choices.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
13. Ensure decisions made on the location and design of new development sites,		✓	✓	✓	

provide high quality connectivity by active travel and public transport					
14. Provide high quality active travel and public transport connectivity when reshaping and revitalising our town centres		✓	✓	✓	

5.3 The Current Situation

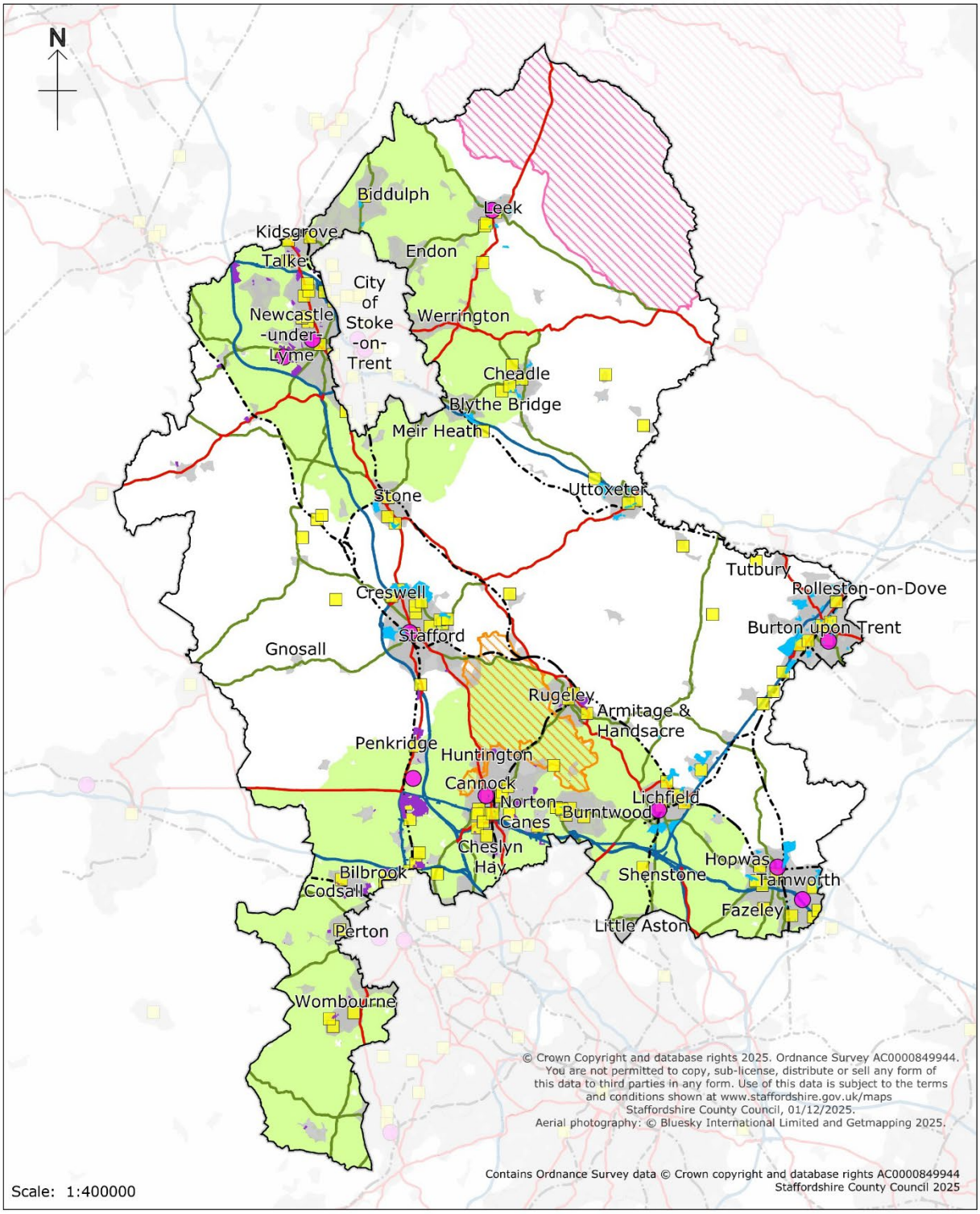
5.3.1 Land Use Plan-making

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill (March 2025) introduced a mechanism for strategic planning to be produced by upper tier authorities, known as Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs). SDSs will be vital for delivering economic growth and addressing key spatial issues, and Local Plans must be in general conformity with their relevant SDS. We are not responsible for developing Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans but, as the local transport and highway authority, we are a key stakeholder.

Our transport planning role is to influence and shape future land use to achieve the objectives of the LTP. We want the LTP to be viewed as the transport evidence base for all land-use plans impacting Staffordshire.

Developers are required to mitigate the impact of their development, particularly in locations where there are constraints on the road network or where the provision of active and public transport infrastructure is limited or unviable. Strategic development constraints and opportunities that exist throughout Staffordshire are presented in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Development Constraints and Opportunities



Locating new housing developments where there are greater job opportunities will help to reduce the need for longer distance travel. Table 5.2 lists the settlements where there are currently more than 2,000 jobs. There are also job opportunities on standalone strategic employment sites outside our settlements.

Table 5.2: Job Opportunities in Staffordshire

Settlement	No. of Jobs	Settlement	No. of Jobs
Stafford	55,675	Uttoxeter	6,642
Burton upon Trent	52,836	Wombourne	5,779
Newcastle-under-Lyme	50,632	Cheadle	4,848
Tamworth	48,691	Biddulph	4,685
Cannock	44,086	Butt Lane/Kidsgrove/Talke	4,210
Lichfield	18,367	Codsall	3,414
Rugeley	16,761	Cheslyn Hay	2,614
Burntwood	13,308	Penkridge	2,599
Stone	12,316	Rocester	2,500
Leek	11,530	Hixon	2,335

Local planning authorities (LPAs) are working towards varying timelines for reviewing and adopting their Local Plans. They are required to have them in place to meet the new housing numbers, which were published alongside the NPPF. Table 5.3 sets out the new housing targets for each LPA, which are significantly higher than previous targets. It is acknowledged that this may require the consideration of large strategic development locations, economic growth corridors and potential new settlements capable of accommodating 5,000-10,000 new dwellings.

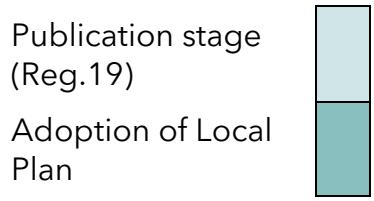
Table 5.3: Staffordshire's Housing Targets, 2024

Local Authority	Previous Annual Housing Requirement	New Annual Housing Requirement
Cannock Chase	248	518
East Staffordshire	417	602
Lichfield	289	745
Newcastle-under-Lyme	330	545
South Staffordshire	223	651
Stafford	358	751
Staffordshire Moorlands (Peak District National Park Authority)	159	454
Tamworth	123	445

Table 5.4 provides the proposed timetables for adopting new Local Plans. The timetables were published by LPAs in October 2025 but will be subject to change.

Table 5.4: Timetable for LPAs to publish a new Local Plan (January 2026)

Local Authority	2026	2027	2028
Cannock Chase			
East Staffordshire			
Lichfield			
Newcastle-under-Lyme			
South Staffordshire			
Stafford			
Staffordshire Moorlands			
Tamworth			
Peak District National Park			



We have strong and established working arrangements with the county's LPAs. Transport planning advice is provided to LPAs to ensure that transport issues and proposed solutions are considered from the earliest stages of plan-making. We are committed to supporting LPAs to ensure that the NPPF's priorities, summarised in Table 5.5, are met.

Table 5.5: Transport Priorities contained in the NPPF, 2024

NPPF Transport Priority	Our Response
Making transport considerations an important part of early engagement with local communities.	We have engaged with LPAs throughout the development of the LTP and the outcome of wider LTP community engagement is available to inform the development of emerging Local Plans.
Ensuring patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.	We have developed a new Staffordshire Highways Residential Design Code that will guide future transport and highway requirements in new developments.
Understanding and addressing the potential impacts of development on transport networks.	We work collaboratively with the LPA through the Local Plan site option selection process, providing advice on transport appraisals and traffic modelling.

	We offer accessibility planning advice to LPAs to help ensure that the right sites are allocated from a transport perspective.
Realising opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated.	The LTP will provide the transport objective and proposals for the period up to 2030/31 and the long-term vision, supported by an evidence base and engagement process. This will be available to inform LPAs as they develop their new Local Plans.
Identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use.	The BSIP and LCWIP set out the proposals for Staffordshire. Delivery will be achieved through seeking necessary funding opportunities, including developer contributions.
Identifying, assessing and considering the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.	The LTP will inform the emerging Local Plans in terms of the impact that integrated land use and transport decisions have on the environment. Highway and transport schemes delivered to accommodate new development will aim to achieve a net environmental gain.

Accessibility of potential development allocations

We offer accessibility planning advice to LPAs to help ensure that the right sites are allocated from a transport perspective. Sites are assessed in terms of their accessibility, pre and post mitigation, against the following criteria. Is the site:

- within 400m of a bus stop served by a bus at least every 30 minutes?
- within 3km of a rail station?
- within a 10-minute or 20-minute walk and/or cycle ride to:
    - primary school?
    - secondary school?
    - GP?
    - town centre?
    - local neighbourhood centre?
- within a 30-minute or 60-minute journey by public transport to:
    - hospital?
    - supermarket?
    - town centre?
- well located to job opportunities?

Infrastructure Delivery Plans

An Infrastructure Delivery Plan is produced by LPAs to identify what is needed to support the delivery of planned growth in their area. A new Infrastructure Delivery Plan is published at each consultation stage of plan-making to set out what infrastructure is required for the development identified in the Local Plan. We, and the LPA, work to

agree on the transport measures included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. These measures will align with the LTP.

Road Schemes

Stafford Western Access Route was opened in 2021. It provides direct access to 2,200 new homes and has reduced traffic levels on Chell Road, Station Road and Foregate Street in the town centre. Lichfield Southern Bypass was opened in 2022 and provides access to 1,350 homes and has also reduced traffic in the city centre on Birmingham Road. Both schemes were delivered to support the adopted Local Plans for Stafford Borough and Lichfield District Councils, respectively. Before and after scheme monitoring will confirm that the desired outcomes have been achieved, or whether further improvements are needed. The following road and major junction improvements are also committed in Staffordshire's adopted Local Plans:

- North of Stafford link road, A34 and Beaconside road widening and junction improvements, serving 3,100 new homes and 36 hectares of new employment land.
- East of Stafford access road between Tixall Road and St Thomas Lane, accommodating housing developments
- Branston Locks link road and A38 Branston Interchange improvement scheme in Burton upon Trent, serves 2,580 new homes and 20 hectares of new employment land.
- Trent Valley roundabout major junction improvement, Lichfield, accommodating around 1,500 homes.
- Chatterley Valley access roads, delivers a 38-hectare strategic employment site.
- Walton-on-Trent bypass provides enhanced connectivity between Drakelow strategic mixed use development site and the A38.

The following new developer funded access routes are being proposed in new emerging Local Plans:

- Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan is proposing the Keele Access Route linking A53 Whitmore Road, Keele University and A525 Keele Road. It will serve 2,254 homes and a potentially significant increase in jobs in the vicinity of Keele University.
- Cannock Chase Local Plan is proposing the Wimblebury Relief Road in Cannock that will deliver new strategic housing developments and ease traffic on the busy Five Ways roundabout.

In 2025, we removed the protection of the Stafford Eastern Distributor Road, between Baswich Lane and the A34 Cannock Road, and the Rowley Link Road, Stafford (A518 to A449).

We are completing a review of other road alignments that we declare on local land searches but are not currently protected for legal reasons or to support road or transport policy. Appendix 5.1 provides a preliminary assessment of protected routes to inform whether to continue with their protection. The routes include:

- Cheadle bypass (A521 to A522)
- Cornhill Link Road, Leek (A520 to A53)
- Ashbourne Road realignment, Mayfield (B5032)
- Newpool Road realignment, Biddulph
- A520 Cellarhead crossroads realignment, Werrington
- Winchester Road extension, Hednesford
- A515 Yoxall bypass
- Amington link road, Tamworth
- A51 Dosthill bypass, Tamworth
- Stafford southern bypass (A34 to A449)

Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans provide communities with the power to develop a shared vision for their area that supports the delivery of strategic policies contained in the Local Plan. Whilst Neighbourhood Plans cannot promote less development, they can shape and direct development that is outside the Local Plan strategic policies.

A parish council workshop was held as part of the LTP engagement activities. Attendees recognised the need to improve public and active transport; provide mobility solutions for people living in more rural areas, including vehicle charging infrastructure; and improve road safety. As Neighbourhood Plans are developed, advice will be provided to parish councils to encourage their plans to align with the LTP.

5.3.2 Land Use Decision-making

We have a duty to assess the transport impact of all planning applications to make sure that they can be satisfactorily accommodated on the road and transport network.

Transport Assessments

Transport Assessments aim to identify and address the transport issues relating to a proposed development at the planning application stage. When required, the assessment must provide a detailed appraisal of the implications of a development within the context of the Local Plan and LTP.

The Transport Assessment should consider the traffic impact of a proposed development and the need to provide high quality travel choices. If evidence suggests that a proposed development could lock in car dependency, we will consider recommending that planning consent is refused.

Transport Assessments are required to demonstrate the need for vehicle parking in new developments. Mitigation should be considered to ensure that parking is not displaced onto nearby roads, particularly where this leads to pavement parking. This should be reflected in Local Plan parking requirements and policies.

A robust estimation of travel generation and mode share requires the use of good quality local data. The local data that has been gathered to inform the evidence base for the LTP is available to developers to support the preparation of Transport Assessments.

Just under two thousand (1,935) respondents completed the one-day travel diary that formed part of our 2023 Household Travel Survey that had an overall sample rate of 2,472. Table 5.6 provides an overview of the reasons why journeys are made in Staffordshire. It shows that 20% of journeys were commutes to work and 43% related to leisure, shopping and personal trips.

Table 5.6: Journey Purposes identified in the Household Travel Survey, 2023

Purpose	Percentage of Journeys
Pick up/Drop off someone	13%
Shopping	15%
School/Education	4%
Go to work	20%
Personal business e.g. library or doctors	6%
Work-related business	4%
Leisure	22%
Other (please specify)	16%

Data from the travel diaries has enabled us to identify whether residents travel from home and make multi-purpose trips (trip chaining), or whether they make a trip for a single purpose and then return home. The data highlights that only 14% of residents chained one or more of their trips. Examples of trip chaining include, 'home > school drop off > work > home' or 'home > doctors > shop > supermarket > home'. Females are more likely to make multi-purpose trips.

The travel diaries have given us greater insight into the number of trips on average made by residents. They have also given us the opportunity to sense-check trip rates

provided by the industry standard, TRICS database. The average person trip rate per day made in Staffordshire is 2.31.

Car trips in Staffordshire contain on average 1.6 people per vehicle. This reduces to 1.2 people per vehicle for commuting trips. These levels are the same as the national averages identified in the 2023 National Travel Survey.

The pattern with which trips are made in the county during the day is shown in Figure 5.2, representing a total number of 4,542 trips. It mirrors the traditional AM peak hour that we see with our one-day traffic counts and highlights that there is now a lower and longer peak time in the afternoons, corresponding with both school pick-up and the evening commute. The midday peak at weekends is proportionally as high as the morning AM peak.

Figure 5.2: Household Travel Diary – Journeys by time of day, June 2023

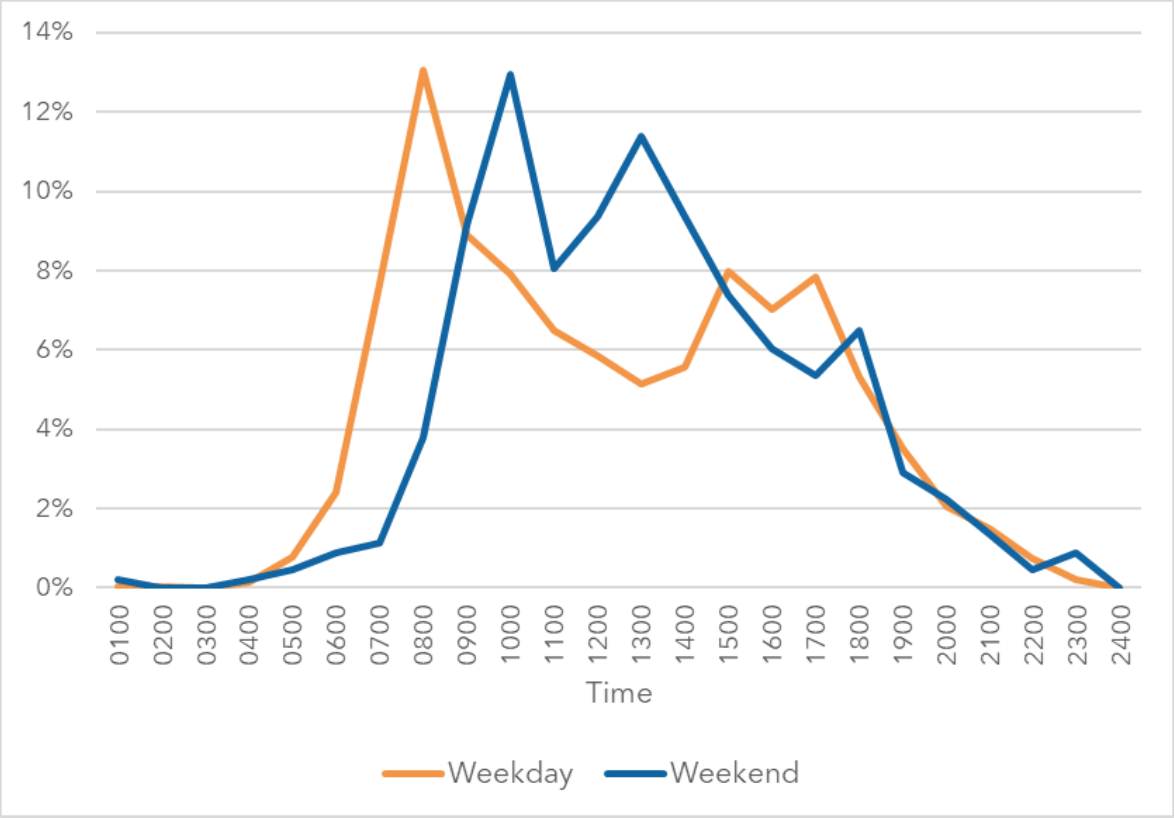


Table 5.7 shows the mode share of trips within Staffordshire from the Household Travel Survey, compared to national averages that were recorded through the National Travel Survey. It shows that on average, there are more car trips and substantially fewer walking trips per Staffordshire household, compared to national figures.

Table 5.7: Staffordshire Journey Mode Share, 2023

Area	Mode						
	Bus	Train	Car	Taxi	Cycle	Walk	Other
Staffordshire	4%	2%	70%	1%	3%	17%	2%
England	4%	2%	60%	1%	2%	29%	2%

Table 5.8 compares the trip rates (for all purposes and all modes) between Staffordshire's districts and boroughs and the national average. It shows that residents in Lichfield tend to make the most trips within a day, followed by Staffordshire Moorlands. Trip rates in Newcastle-under-Lyme and Tamworth are the lowest. The overall 2023 Household Travel Survey has a sample rate for Staffordshire of 2,472. Therefore, this data is more representative of trip rates, compared to the 2023 National Travel Survey that has a sample rate of 1,818 for the whole of the West Midlands.

Table 5.8: District/Borough level person trip rates, compared with National Travel Survey, 2023

Household Travel Survey, 2023	Person trip rate
Staffordshire	2.31
Cannock Chase	2.25
East Staffordshire	2.38
Lichfield	2.53
Newcastle-under-Lyme	2.15
South Staffordshire	2.3
Stafford	2.27
Staffordshire Moorlands	2.45
Tamworth	2.18

National Travel Survey, 2023	Person trip rate
England	2.51
England (exc. London)	2.59
West Midlands	2.32
Urban conurbation	2.29
Urban City and town	2.67
Rural Town and Fringe	2.62
Rural Village, Hamlet and Isolated Dwelling	2.56

Travel Plans

The NPPF states that all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement, should be required to provide a Travel Plan, alongside a vision-led Transport Assessment. Travel plans and Transport Assessments need to be developed iteratively as they influence each other.

Monitoring and evaluating Travel Plans provides a valuable opportunity to learn about whether our transport planning decisions, related to new developments, have achieved their objectives. Establishing measurable outcome targets that are informed by the associated Travel Plan is considered essential. In Staffordshire, Travel Plan monitoring requirements only cease when sufficient evidence is provided to show that the development's travel patterns are in line with the objectives of the Travel Plan and the agreed targets have been met.

In most cases, the requirement for a new school or school expansion is linked to the forecast increase in student intake, directly associated with new residential developments. Therefore, school travel plan and residential travel plan delivery need to be closely interlinked to achieve the greatest impact.

Ravensmead Primary School Travel Plan

The school has been working closely with us to create a school travel plan. It was the one of the first schools in the area to receive training for a new scheme to promote healthy travel initiatives. The scheme empowers Key Stage 2 pupils to become 'Active Travel Inspectors', exploring their school neighbourhood and identifying what helps, or hinders, walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Working in groups, the pupils assessed different aspects of the area, shared their ideas for improvements, and will be able to share their findings with us Modeshift.

We will work with developers to establish the most appropriate Travel Plan targets from a baseline established at site occupation. Target setting considers the following aspects of the development site:

- Accessibility to frequent bus and rail services and the potential for the site to meet the BSIP's targets related to patronage growth.
- The number of trips under 5km made by car within the vicinity of where the development is located. The target required by developers will be related to achieving Active Travel England's target of 50% short distance trips in urban areas to be made by walking and cycling.

Travel Plan requirements are discussed with developers throughout the planning application process from the informal pre-application stage through to post-occupation. We agree baseline data at the pre-occupation stage, and it is a requirement that all data collected by the developer is shared with us. Reviewing the data helps to inform which initiatives have been the most effective, and it allows us to use the data to inform future transport policy, strategy development and land-use planning decisions.

Table 5.9 provides an overview of the modal split that is currently being achieved by new developments in Staffordshire. The mode split for new communities is very similar to the Staffordshire average.

Table 5.9: Mode split on new developments, 2022-2024

	Mode					
	Bus	**Train**	**Car**	**Cycle**	**Walk**	**Other**
Residential developments	5%	3%	66%	4%	18%	4%

School Transport Contribution

The Education Act 1996, as amended by Part 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, places a duty on Local Authorities to make suitable travel arrangements free of charge for eligible children as they consider necessary to facilitate their attendance at school. Where the development is above the walking distance criteria and would require Staffordshire County Council to provide home to school transport, a school transport contribution may be sought.

Where the development is below the walking distance criteria but no safe walking route is available, an appropriate highway contribution to establish a safe walking route from the proposed residential development may be considered.

Staffordshire Residential Highway Design Code

The design of all developments should give priority to access by walking, wheeling, cycling, and by public transport, before considering the needs of access by private car. This is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that sets out National Government's planning policy for England. NPPF (paragraph 117) states that applications for development should:

a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use.
b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport.
c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards.
d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles.
e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

This NPPF policy has guided our new Staffordshire Residential Highway Design Code that sits alongside our LTP. It aims to deliver well-designed places in line with the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. The Code is structured to assist developers throughout the project lifecycle from pre-planning engagement, through to adoption.

The overarching design principles within the Code, which must be addressed by all new developments, are summarised in Table 5.10. All designs will be inclusive, ensuring everyone's needs are considered at the outset.

Table 5.10: Residential Highway Design Code - Overarching Design Principles

Public Realm	Green Infrastructure	Blue Infrastructure
Street networks MUST be designed in a way that delivers a sense of place.	Streets MUST incorporate green infrastructure to enrich Staffordshire's amenity and biodiversity value and improve air and water quality.	Developments MUST incorporate SUDS to improve flood protection and create a county more resilient to extreme weathers.
Connected Networks	**User Hierarchy**	**Functionality**
Developments MUST create connected or 'permeable' networks that enable walking, cycling and wheeling and making places easy to navigate through.	Street networks MUST be designed to respect the 'hierarchy of users' and facilitate all modes of transport.	Streets MUST be designed to meet the movement needs of the volume and composition of users they carry.
Access to Premises	**Servicing**	**Parking**
Streets MUST enable suitable and appropriate access to buildings and land off the public highway.	Street networks MUST enable service vehicles to reach necessary locations within the site.	Car parking is a key function of many streets, although it is not always a requirement.

Road Safety	Security	Lighting
Streets MUST be able to be used safely by a wide range of people, using all modes of transport and for everyday activities.	Street networks MUST be designed to minimise the risk of antisocial and criminal behaviour.	Street networks MUST be provided with street lighting.
Utilities	**Made to Last**	
Streets MUST integrate the requirements of utility providers without compromising the quality of place by obstruction of movement or visual intrusion.	Streets MUST be made to last so that the costs and frequency of repair and renewal are minimised.	

Developer Agreements

A separate programme of developer funded highway improvement works is delivered to facilitate development as part of the planning approval process. In Staffordshire, larger, more complex developer projects are traditionally delivered through Section 278 agreements with smaller scale projects delivered through Section 111 agreements. The primary difference between the two is that in the former, we contract directly with the developer's chosen construction contractor and we maintain absolute control over the works, whereas through the latter, the developer delivers the works directly under our close supervision.

5.3.3 Vibrant Town Centres

Town centre improvements should focus on creating quality places for people and respecting The Highway Code's 'hierarchy of road users'. To do this, we will work closely with LPAs and follow best practice to promote and deliver a positive vision for our town centres, supporting economic growth. The shift from physical to online retail, means that shopping is a far less important driver of footfall in many town centres. Therefore, regenerating, revitalising and reimagining our town centres will be vital if they are to remain vibrant places.

Through our engagement activities, we have heard residents' concerns regarding the number of cars in our town centres. Residents have said this creates traffic delays. They have gone on to say that, having more convenient public transport alternatives would help to reduce traffic levels.

Traffic data recorded on Saturdays throughout 2024 shows that most trips to our town centres are made by residents of that town; they are predominantly travelling by car during the late morning, at a distance of around 2km, which is taking around 5 to 10 minutes. This is particularly evident in Burton upon Trent, Stafford and Tamworth. The town centres that are more likely to attract visitors from other towns are Lichfield, Uttoxeter and Stone. The full analysis of this traffic data is found in Appendix 5.2.

Other common journeys that are made between our towns and other key settlements in Staffordshire (and Stoke-on-Trent) include:

- Stafford to Cannock and Stone.
- Lichfield to Burntwood.
- Newcastle-under-Lyme to Stoke-on-Trent.
- Cannock to Cheslyn Hay.
- Stone to Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and Yarnfield.
- Rugeley to Cannock, Armitage/Handsacre and Lichfield.
- Burntwood to Lichfield and Cannock.
- Uttoxeter to Stoke-on-Trent and Rocester.
- Kidsgrove to Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

There are strong cross-boundary connections between:

- The West Midlands (specifically Wolverhampton, Dudley and Walsall) and South Staffordshire, Tamworth, Lichfield and Cannock.
- South Derbyshire and Burton upon Trent and Uttoxeter.
- North West Leicestershire and Tamworth and Burton upon Trent.
- North Warwickshire and Tamworth.
- Cheshire East and Kidsgrove and Newcastle-under-Lyme.

The potential for residents to access town centres by public transport is influenced by the availability of public transport services. Table 5.11 indicates the accessibility of our town centres by bus. It shows the number of residents that are within a 30-minute journey time of the town centre. The journey time includes the walk time to and from the bus stop. We have compared this with the number of people boarding buses in our town centres. It shows that residents in our larger towns of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Burton upon Trent, and Tamworth have good accessibility by bus, but Stafford residents do not. Out of our smallest town, Uttoxeter residents have good accessibility to the town centre by bus. In comparison, Stone, a similarly small town, has poor accessibility by bus.

Table 5.11: Residents who Live within 30-minutes Travel Time to the Town Centre, September 2023

Town centre	Population	Percentage	No. people boarding bus in the town centre
Newcastle-under-Lyme	79,402	98%	123,766
Burton upon Trent	79,133	99%	71,869
Tamworth	78,646	98%	75,061
Stafford	73,549	61%	64,257
Cannock	65,683	94%	49,979
Lichfield	34,168	91%	41,711
Burntwood	30,446	77%	5,806
Rugeley	26,655	95%	8,913
Kidsgrove	21,634	87%	6,818
Stone	17,276	65%	5,448
Uttoxeter	14,021	100%	6,493

Table 5.12 indicates the number of residents that live within a 20-minute walk or 20-minute cycle ride from our town centres. Out of our larger towns, Cannock has the best accessibility by walking; out of our mid-sized towns, Burntwood has the best; and out of our smaller towns, Stone has the best. Most residents within our towns could cycle to their town centre in 20 minutes.

Table 5.12: Town Centre Accessibility by Walking and Cycling, 2025

Town centre	Population	Percentage - Walking	Percentage - Cycling
Newcastle-under-Lyme	79,402	19%	95%
Burton upon Trent	79,133	18%	98%
Tamworth	78,646	17%	94%

Stafford	73,549	20%	100%
Cannock	65,683	26%	98%
Lichfield	34,168	57%	100%
Burntwood	30,446	65%	100%
Rugeley	26,655	56%	100%
Kidsgrove	21,634	54%	100%
Stone	17,276	75%	100%
Uttoxeter	14,021	61%	100%

Through current funding programmes such as the Levelling up Funds, Future High Street Funds, Towns Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Funds and private developer funding, growth plans are progressing for Staffordshire's main town centres. Table 5.13 summarises the progress that is being made in 2025/26 to revitalise our town centres.

Appendix 5.3 provides a summary of the transport proposals that are required to support Staffordshire's town centre growth plans. Local transport packages will also be developed for our other smaller town centres, supporting our CAST 3 settlements, including Biddulph, Leek, Cheadle, Tutbury, Codsall, Bilbrook, Wombourne, Penkridge, Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley (See Figure 1).

Table 5.13: Growth Plans for our main Town Centres

Town centre	Growth Plans
Stafford	There are transformational plans for Stafford town centre, to support significant housing growth to the west and the north of Stafford and following completion of the Stafford Western Access Route. The town centre market square has been refurbished, and a masterplan is to be developed which will feature proposals that are being developed for the Eastgate quarter of the town, the Guildhall area and the Stafford Station Gateway.
Burton upon Trent	The Meadowside development site is located at the north of the High Street and creates the opportunity to reconnect the town centre to the riverside area. The vision is a town centre that has strong connectivity and supports significant housing growth in the north and west of Burton upon Trent.
Tamworth	The core element of town centre regeneration proposals in Tamworth includes the creation of a College Quarter by relocating Tamworth College to the town centre. This will create opportunities for a mixed-use redevelopment of the Gungate area to the north of the town. Improvements to the town centre will support significant housing growth in the north of Tamworth.
Lichfield City	The completion of the Lichfield Southern Bypass has enabled the delivery of significant housing growth in the south of Lichfield and has also provided the opportunity to remove through traffic from Birmingham Road in the City centre. The Lichfield City Masterplan focuses on the redevelopment of the Birmingham Road site which has a strong connection to Lichfield City rail station. It will also support housing growth in the north-east of Lichfield.
Rugeley	The Rugeley Power Station redevelopment site is located on the edge of Rugeley town centre. The area will be transformed with new

	homes, jobs and local facilities, including a new through school, and will need to have strong connections to the town centre.
Cannock	Cannock town centre is being transformed through levelling up funds. It focuses on the redevelopment of the retail area and improvements to the gateway to the town centre, providing a new pedestrian route across the ring road and enhancing connectivity to the rail station.
Burntwood	Burntwood Town Council has proposals to enhance the pedestrian and retail environment of Burntwood town centre, improving connectivity to High Street from the town centre, encouraging active and public transport and providing Burntwood with a better sense of place. Enhancements to the town centre would support potential growth plans that may be required through the emerging Local Plan.
Uttoxeter	A Masterplan has been developed for Uttoxeter town centre focussing on the redevelopment of the Maltings car park at the heart of the town. The town benefits from a rail station and good access to the A50, as well as good access by bus to the town centre which supports significant potential housing growth.
Stone	There are proposals to review the accessibility to Stone town centre by all modes of transport, focusing on how the town centre ring road works in terms of traffic flow. There is a requirement to improve connectivity between the town centre and housing growth to the west of Stone on Eccleshall Road.
Newcastle-under-Lyme	The vision for Newcastle-under-Lyme is the creation of a well-connected town centre for all, making sure it is a destination of choice for residents, students and businesses. The Ryecroft multi-purpose development site is the focus of the town centre transformation, alongside the redevelopment of York Place and gateway sites at Midway and Zanzibar. The town centre masterplan supports potential housing and employment growth being proposed at Keele University and its Science Park.
Kidsgrove	Kidsgrove is a well-connected town with a well-served rail station on the West Coast Main Line, and connectivity to the A50. Growth plans are maximising the opportunities created by the rail station, complemented by an improved public realm along Market Street. The proposals will support emerging housing growth proposals in the area.

5.4 The Way Forward

We have identified the following asks of National Government and key stakeholders, along with making our own commitments to ensure land use and transport planning is better integrated in the county.

5.4.1 **Objective 12:** Integrate land-use planning and transport infrastructure, and ensure development is located where there are, or will be, travel choices

Asks of National Government

- Guidance on the 'vision-led' approach to transport planning that provides for high quality travel choices rather than solely providing highway capacity to meet forecast traffic growth.

Asks of Local Planning Authorities

- Work collaboratively with us to ensure that land use planning decisions align with the LTP.

Our Commitments

- Provide infrastructure that supports the delivery of adopted Local Plans in Lichfield, Stafford, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Burton upon Trent.
- Provide transport planning advice to LPAs on emerging Local Plans.
- Continue to protect highway routes that are in line with the strategic objectives of the LTP.

5.4.2 **Objective 13:** Ensure decisions made on the location and design of new development sites provide high quality connectivity by active and public transport

Asks of National Government

- Provide updated guidance on Travel Plans and Transport Assessments.

Asks of Local Planning Authorities

- Recognise the objectives of the LTP when identifying development allocations and determining planning applications.
- Put into practice the new Residential Highway Design Code and ensure other Planning Design Codes are aligned.

Our Commitments

- Recognise the objectives of the LTP when considering highway and transport responses to planning applications.
- Put into practice the new Residential Highway Design Code.
- Consider recommending that planning consent is refused if evidence suggests that a proposed development could lock-in car dependency.

- Ensure Transport Assessments use available local transport data.
- Produce annual Travel Plan delivery reports and use them to inform transport policy, strategy development and future land use planning decisions.

5.4.3 **Objective 14:** Provide high quality active and public transport connectivity when reshaping and revitalising our town centres

Asks of National Government

- Funding to meet our five-year investment ask to support town centre revitalisation as identified in Table 5.14.

Asks of local planning authorities

- Work with key stakeholders to take a lead role in promoting a positive vision for our town centres.

Table 5.14: Objective 14 - Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Town Centre	Transport Proposals	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Stafford	• Inclusive access to bus stops and real time information. • Completion of Town centre cycle route (Bridge Street to Broad Eye). • Tipping Street cycle hub and E-bike hire. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Strong active travel connections through town centre development areas and connecting to Stafford Rail Station Gateway proposals. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town.	2,000	-
Burton upon Trent	• Inclusive access to bus stops and real time information and upgrade of New Street interchange. • Enhancements to cycle routes connecting to High Street. • Town centre cycle parking and Meadowside cycle hub and E-bike hire. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas.	1,000	-

	• Strong active travel between development areas and the town centre. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town.		
Tamworth	• Inclusive access to bus stops and real time information. • Town centre cycle parking and Tamworth Castle cycle hub and E-bike hire. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town.	1,500	-
Lichfield	• Completion of town centre cycle routes connecting to the NCN. • Strong active travel connections through Birmingham Road development site. • New on-road bus interchange on Birmingham Road, St John Street and The Friary. • Cycle Hub and E-bike hire at Beacon Park. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town.	1,000	-
Newcastle-under-Lyme	• Completion of town centre cycle route connecting to Midway and Ryecroft development sites. • Strong active travel connections across the ring road, enhancing subways and introducing new at-grade crossing points. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Ryecroft cycle hub and E-bike hire. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town.	1,000	-
Cannock	• Completion of east to west cycle route connecting into the new town centre gateway. • Strong active travel connection across the Ringway. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Town centre cycle parking. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town.	1,000	-

Burntwood	• Town centre cycle parking. • Designation of a key route network serving the town. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas.	1,500	250
Uttoxeter	• Strong active travel connections between the town centre, rail station and Town Meadows Way. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Town centre and rail station cycle parking. • Strong active travel connections through the Maltings development to the bus station and the High Street.	1,000	-
Stone	• Stone rail station cycle hub and additional parking in the town centre. • Increased number of pedestrian and cycle connections across the one-way ring road. • Cycle connection between the canal and the town centre and along Stafford Road connecting to new housing developments in Walton. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas. • Improvements to the key network serving the town.	800	-
Rugeley	• Strong active travel connections across the A51, along and across Power Station Road, connecting to Love Lane, the canal, Forge Lane, Lichfield Street, connecting to Market Square and Rugeley Town rail station. • Improvements to the key network serving the town. • Cycle parking in the town centre. • Speed limit reduction and review the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas.	500	-
Kidsgrove	• Kidsgrove rail station secure cycle facilities. • Improvements to the key route network serving the town. • Speed limit reduction and review of the use of road space in residential and pedestrian priority areas.	500	-

	• Enhancements to the NCN through Kidsgrove. • Traffic management along Market Street.		
Town centres that support our smaller settlements	• Develop local transport packages that support the town centres of Biddulph, Leek, Cheadle, Tutbury, Codsall, Bilbrook, Wombourne, Penkridge, Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley.	2,500	-
Total		**14,300**	**250**

5.5 Long-term Vision

The long-term vision for our town centres to is a reduction in traffic delays and more space being given to the movement of people. We will achieve this by meeting the three overarching objectives identified in NPPF. They are:

- An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right place and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support community health, social and cultural well-being.
- An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and being resilient to extreme weathers.

5.6 Key Performance Indicators

The KPIs in Table 5.15 will be used to monitor the theme objectives relating to land use and transport planning.

Table 5.15: Key Performance Indicators

Theme Objective	Key Performance Indicators
12. Integrate land-use planning and transport infrastructure, and ensure development is located where there are, or will be, travel choices.	• Percentage of new housing allocations within urban areas
13. Ensure decisions made on the location and design of new development sites, provide high quality connectivity by active travel and public transport.	• Number of travel plans meeting their agreed targets
14. Provide high quality active travel and public transport connectivity when reshaping and revitalising our town centres.	• Length of new and improved active travel routes in town centres • Number of bus stop upgrades in town centres

Chapter 6: Digital Connectivity

6.1 Introduction

Transport is a means of allowing people to access what they need, such as jobs, education, goods and services; and for businesses to access customers and new markets. Before the internet, people and businesses were required to physically travel to satisfy their needs. Today, many needs can be fulfilled online, removing the need to travel.

Increasing levels of digital connectivity is important for inclusivity and social mobility as it can overcome the barriers people face when accessing opportunities and services. This is especially true for people with mobility difficulties or who cannot afford the cost of travel. For businesses, it can broaden access to markets and improve productivity.

Transport technology is changing how our road network is managed. It is also improving road users' experiences by delivering live updates and real-time information regarding traffic conditions. Further details on the role of technology are provided in Chapter 2: Public Transport and Chapter 3: The Road Network.

Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce told us that their members believe a reliable broadband connection is critical to their success; their members want reliable mobile connectivity across the county. Improving digital connectivity is vital for economic growth. We estimate that it could see the county's economy (GVA) grow by £1.3bn by 2030[14].

Our Digital Innovation Strategy (2024 - 2029) sets out in more detail how we intend to embrace digital technologies to enhance accessibility, transparency and responsiveness across all our services.

[14] Estimate is based on:

- BT Cebr commissioned report 2023, once 100% of premises in the UK are gigabit capable/full fibre the GVA uplift is forecast to be £72Bn by 2030.
- Openreach assumes 30m premises in the UK.
- Therefore, each property upgraded would increase GVA by £2,400.

6.2 Theme Objectives

There are two theme objectives relating to digital connectivity. Table 6.1 shows how these link to the Department for Transport's priorities.

Table 6.1: Linkages between the Theme Objectives and the Department for Transport's Priorities

Theme Objectives	Department for Transport's Priorities				
	Transforming infrastructure	Improving bus services	Integrating transport	Greener transport	Rail reform
15. Improve digital connectivity to give people the option not to travel and improve the way the road and transport networks operate	✓		✓	✓	
16. Improve sharing of data with partners to enhance the efficient and safe operation of the local road network	✓		✓	✓	

6.3 Current Situation

6.3.1 Digital Connectivity

Broadband

Almost all of Staffordshire's premises (97%) have access to superfast broadband. However, this is being superseded by gigabit broadband, which enables hundreds of devices to be connected simultaneously and at much higher speeds[15]. Currently, 86% of premises have access to gigabit broadband, with 77% having full fibre connectivity as shown in Table 6.2. Cannock Chase District has the highest overall access. Staffordshire Moorlands has the lowest Gigabit access and Tamworth has the lowest access to full fibre, followed by Staffordshire Moorlands.

[15] Gigabit broadband has download speeds of 900 Mbps and upload speeds of 100Mbps. Superfast broadband has download speeds of 61Mbps and upload speeds of 16Mbps.

Table 6.2: Percentage of premises with access to Gigabit and Full Fibre Broadband across Staffordshire's districts, August 2025

District	Broadband Speed	
	Gigabit (DOCSIS 3.1 or FTTP)	Full Fibre (FTTP or FTTH)
South Staffordshire	84.73%	84.57%
Tamworth	95.07%	65.35%
Lichfield	84.71%	72.45%
Cannock Chase	97.49%	96.81%
Stafford	84.39%	72.39%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	85.44%	74.08%
Staffordshire Moorlands	76.53%	67.3%
East Staffordshire	83.88%	83.88%
Staffordshire	**86.15%**	**77.42%**
West Midlands	**91.29%**	**81.53%**
UK	**88.47%**	**79.46%**

source ref: thinkBroadband

Mobile Coverage

Staffordshire's mobile signal coverage has improved significantly over recent years, thanks to initiatives like the Shared Rural Network, which is a collaboration between the National Government and mobile network operators. Staffordshire is ranked 22nd out of 96 areas in the UK for mobile coverage. The mobile coverage for 3G, 4G and 5G for the major networks in Staffordshire is as set out in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Mobile Coverage of Staffordshire's Largest Network Providers, September 2025

Mobile Provider	Indoor/Outdoor	Mobile Coverage		
		3G	4G	5G
Three	Indoor	94%	85.4%	53%
	Outdoor	94%	85.4%	53%
Vodafone	Indoor	91%	91.9%	67.6%
	Outdoor	99.1%	99.7%	67.6%
EE	Indoor	86%	98.5%	93.8%
	Outdoor	95%	100%	93.8%
O2	Indoor	89%	92.7%	14.3%
	Outdoor	99.5%	100%	14.3%
All Providers	**Indoor**	**98.7%**	**100%**	**95.5%**
	Outdoor	**100%**	**100%**	**95.5%**

Currently, between 80% and 90% of Staffordshire is covered by a 4G mobile signal and the Shared Rural Network aims to get to 92% by the end of 2025. This initiative is crucial for enhancing connectivity, ensuring that residents and businesses can access reliable mobile services.

5G mobile networks provide wide bandwidths and fast speeds whilst on the go. As part of the River Severn Partnership Advanced Innovation Region, we have used bin lorries, fitted with 5G data receivers, to map the strength of mobile phone signals across the county. This shows that 95.5% of Staffordshire has 5G mobile coverage at the start of September 2025.

Soon, 5G mobile networks will enable real-time communication between vehicles, infrastructure, and other systems, supporting autonomous driving, optimizing traffic flows, enhancing road safety, and providing comprehensive conditional data reports on highway assets.

Digital Exclusion

For many organisations, digital first is the norm. By making it easier and more convenient for customers to access information and services online, it is giving people the option not to travel if they don't want to. However, organisations need to ensure that they do not exclude people who do not have a digital device, data, skills or confidence to use digital technologies. During our engagement activities, some older residents told us that they struggled to use online services and preferred to physically access services if that was an option; and all age groups had concerns regarding cyber security.

Adult Learning in digital skills

We deliver a broad range of adult learning courses across every district in the county, aimed at addressing digital exclusion. Courses range from those for complete beginners, to people who need up-skilling to enter the job market, to courses for people who want help with specific tasks, such as online banking. During 2023-24, almost 400 people enrolled on courses aimed at improving levels of digital literacy.

6.3.2 Data Sharing

The use of digital information and data sharing is fundamental to the development of a connected, efficient and resilient transport system. It is recognised that the future of transport planning, operations, and investment will be underpinned by the ability of organisations to collect, analyse and act on data collaboratively. As demands on the local road network increase, the importance of timely and integrated data has never been greater.

Sharing data with other transport and highway operators is becoming more common, although it can still be challenging for some organisations, especially in the private sector. Live data on rail delays or closures, if shared in real-time, allows for dynamic traffic management responses, such as adjusting signal priorities or re-routing buses. Similarly, National Highways' traffic flow and incident data, when shared, enables better management of the local road network as a critical diversionary route.

Data sharing will be essential if we are to develop the concept of Mobility as a Service (MaaS). It integrates various transport options like public transport, ride-sharing, bike and scooter hire into a single digital platform. This allows users to seamlessly plan, book, and pay for multi-modal journeys.

Equally important is the need for better data sharing within the council itself. Currently, many transport-related functions, such as highway maintenance, transport planning, flood risk management, and environmental monitoring, work with their own datasets, tools, and planning cycles. However, aligning asset condition data with traffic delay data could help us prioritise maintenance schedules, and using environmental monitoring data could help us better assess the impact of our highway interventions. By breaking down internal data silos and moving towards an integrated, shared data environment, we can make more informed, joined-up decisions.

6.4 The Way Forward

We have identified the following asks of National Government and key stakeholders, along with making our own commitments to improve digital connectivity in the county and information sharing among stakeholders.

6.4.1 **Objective 15:** Improve digital connectivity to give people the option not to travel and improve the way the road and transport networks operate

Asks of National Government

- Review the way the telecoms sector operates and provide infrastructure to avoid the need for multiple operators installing different fibre in the same street. This causes significant damage to the road network and temporary disruption to digital connectivity.

Asks of Broadband and Mobile Network Providers

- Collaborate with National Government to complete the masterplan (Department for Science Innovation and Technology's Project Gigabit) for future digital infrastructure. This will set out a clear understanding of gaps and opportunities, and the economic case for investment to accelerate broadband roll out.
- Roll out gigabit broadband coverage as swiftly as possible across all areas of the county and increase levels of full-fibre connectivity.
- Roll out 5G mobile coverage as swiftly as possible and address the remaining 4G 'not-spots' and hard-to-reach premises.

Our Commitments

- Keep track of the current digital connectivity status of the county and push for faster implementation of high-speed internet and 5G mobile technology (including Fixed Wireless Access), focusing on areas that are hard to reach.
- Consider entering open access agreements, which would allow mobile network operators to utilise our street assets to increase their networks' capacity.
- Consider installing ducting for the use of fibre cabling during the construction or upgrading of the road and footway networks.
- Introduce improvements to make digital support services more accessible and effective.
- Regularly review and identify groups at risk of digital exclusion and work with them, and stakeholders, to meet evolving needs.
- Explore social tariffs for lower-income areas, to enable more people to access broadband services.

6.4.2 **Objective 16:** Improve data sharing with partners to enhance the efficient and safe operation of the local road network

Asks of National Government

- Reform the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regime to allow public bodies to share data with organisations that follow the rules of the UK Digital Identity and Attributes Trust Framework.

Asks of Transport and Highway Providers

- Data sharing between all transport providers must become standard practice.

Our Commitments

- Ensure data sharing between all transport providers becomes standard practice.

- Strengthen the use of digital information and data sharing across highway and transport teams within the council.

6.5 Long-Term Vision

We expect digital connectivity to have an increasing impact on our lives. Even by 2035, broadband and mobile connectivity will be far quicker and have far greater capacity than exists today. We will continue to support our residents and businesses to take full advantage of the advances being made.

Moving forwards, transport is expected to become increasingly automated with self-driving vehicles revolutionising the movement of people and goods. It will also become increasingly connected with vehicles being able to communicate with each other, to highway infrastructure, and to their drivers. Both automation and connected technology have the potential to improve safety, traffic flows, and environmental outcomes.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is likely to revolutionise how we manage and maintain the highway network, improving safety, enabling data driven transport planning and efficient asset management, as well as improving the way the public experiences the county's transport network. To ensure that we are not left behind, we will need to secure the funding to invest in this technology and upskill our workforce.

Digital towns will become the norm regarding how we plan and manage the road network, including traffic signals and street lighting. It is likely to use a centralised control system, powered by advanced AI algorithms, and utilise real-time data from sensors embedded in roads and in vehicles to optimise traffic flows.

Moving forwards, we will work towards a transport system that functions as a single digital ecosystem, where open data, interoperability and predictive analytics are embedded in day-to-day operations and long-term strategy. This approach will deliver smarter infrastructure management, improved public service delivery, and meaningful progress towards the Government's decarbonisation target.

Through strong regional collaboration, internal data integration, and a commitment to data-driven decision-making, we will be equipped to deliver a transport network that is fit for the future: intelligent, resilient, and centred on the needs of people and businesses.

6.6 Key Performance Indicators

The KPIs in Table 6.4 will be used to monitor the theme objective relating to digital connectivity.

Table 6.4: Key Performance Indicators

Theme Objective	Key Performance Indicators
15. Improve digital connectivity to give people the option not to travel and improve the way the road and transport networks operate.	• Percentage of premises with access to Gigabit / full fibre broadband • 5G coverage
16. Improve data sharing with partners to enhance the efficient and safe operation of the local road network.	• Number of forward programmes shared by road and transport operators, and utility companies

Chapter 7: Low Emission Vehicles

7.1 Introduction

Much of the change required to enable the transition to low emission vehicles will require action at a national level. Putting into law the ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel, and some hybrid vehicles from 2035, will have a significant impact on reducing tailpipe emissions and will dwarf any initiative adopted at a local level.

Whilst we will widen the travel options available to our residents and businesses, we will not tell them when, where or how they should travel. Only when there is clear local demand, will we look to provide public charging points in off-street locations. Whilst it is important that the council leads by example and is seen to transition its own fleet to low emission vehicles, it will only do this if the replacement vehicle has the same or better specification and costs the same or is cheaper.

Whilst we recognise that transitioning Staffordshire's private motor cars to low emitting vehicles will make a limited contribution towards the Government's target to decarbonise the UK's transport network, low emission vehicles are not the panacea. During their production, carbon is emitted, and their tyres and brakes release particulate matter when they are driven. Evidence also shows that drivers of low emission vehicles, travel more miles than their petrol and diesel counterparts, which increases traffic delays and potentially locks-in car dependency. Without parallel efforts to promote active and public transport, giving people genuine choice of different modes of transport, unrestricted use of low emission vehicles will continue to lock-in car dependency, create traffic delays, and cause road safety issues.

It is expected that electricity will not be the only fuel source for low emission vehicles in the future. Hydrogen vehicles produce no tailpipe emissions and allow vehicles to travel longer distances, with heavy payload requirements, and with less and faster refuelling. Hydrogen technology is developing and could play a role in the medium to long-term, especially for large vehicles such as buses and HGVs. Biofuels may also play a role in the short-term transition for specialist vehicles and sectors where electrification is less viable.

7.2 Theme Objectives

There are two theme objectives relating to low emission vehicles and Table 7.1 shows how they link to the Department for Transport's priorities. As there are no datasets available for any other fuel type, the two objectives relate to electric vehicles only.

Table 7.1: Linkages between the Theme Objectives and the Department for Transport's Priorities

Theme Objectives	Department for Transport's Priorities				
	Transforming infrastructure	Improving bus services	Integrating transport	Greener transport	Rail reform
17. Facilitate the transition to low emission vehicles amongst residents and businesses by focusing on off-road charging locations			✓	✓	
18. Support the bus industry by enabling investment in low emission buses and charging infrastructure		✓	✓	✓	

7.3 Current Situation

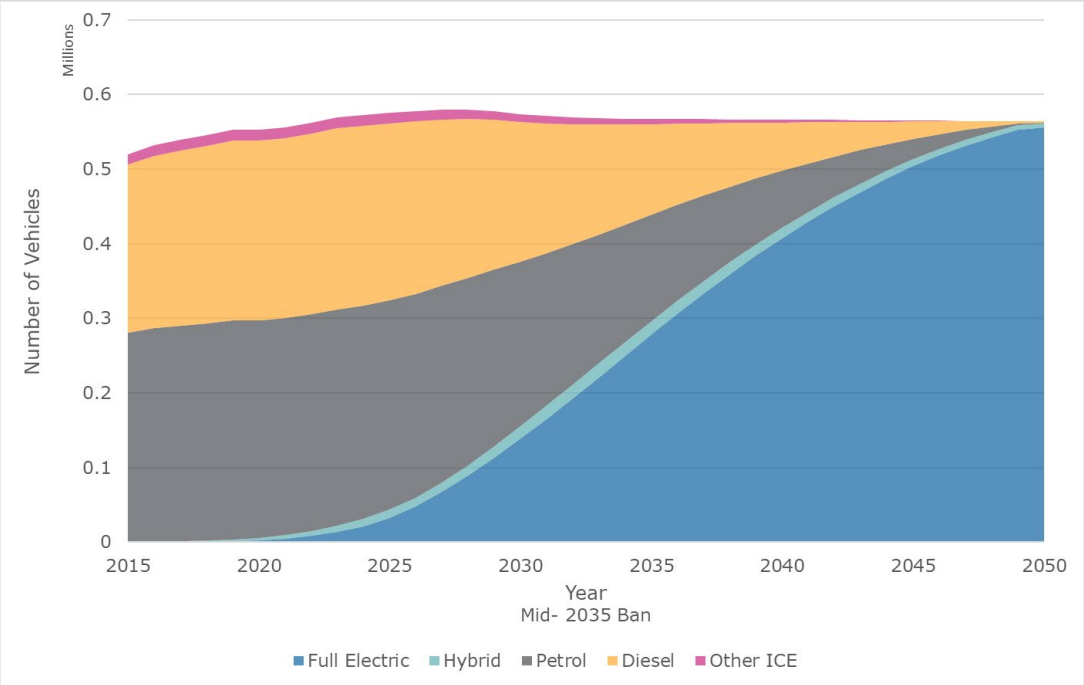
7.3.1 Residents' Vehicles

Staffordshire lags some way behind the West Midlands and the UK in terms of the number and availability of public charge points per 100,000 people[16]. Government data shows that at the beginning of 2024, Staffordshire had just under 600 public charging points. The highest number can be found in Stafford Borough and the lowest, in Tamworth. By 2035, the county needs more than 5,000 public charging points to meet estimated demand[17].

Stafford Borough has the highest number of electric vehicle registrations and Tamworth has the lowest. The Cenex 2024 Insights Toolkit provides a forecast of the required growth of low emission vehicles in Staffordshire and the market share needed to meet the Government's current decarbonisation target as shown in Figure 7.1. It is estimated that by 2035, 49% of vehicles in the county will need to be low emission.

[16] Zapmap (01/01/2025).
[17] Medium scenario of uptake of full electric vehicles (excludes hybrid vehicles).

Figure 7.1: Predicted Market Share of Vehicles in Staffordshire to 2050 by Fuel Type



In 2024, we received over 1,400 responses to our residents' survey regarding electric vehicles. It revealed that almost one-third (30%) of respondents do not intend to own or use an electric vehicle. The reasons given, included:

- Limited battery range and/or life.
- Lack of access to charge points whilst 'on the go'.
- Lack of access to charge points for those without a driveway or with communal parking.
- Inability of the electricity grid to meet demand.
- The cost and time to charge.
- High price point for new electric vehicles.
- Limited availability of second-hand electric vehicles.
- Exaggerated environmental credentials.
- High repair costs.

Whilst the survey revealed concerns about electric vehicles, we have received funding from the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI). As a result, where there is a community need, we will use the LEVI fund to increase the availability of off-street charging infrastructure.

7.3.2 Business Fleet

The Workplace Charging Scheme is a grant provided by National Government to support the installation of charge points in workplaces. To date, it has helped install over 1,100 charge points across Staffordshire. However, it is believed that the total number is much higher as the Scheme is limited to a maximum of 40 points per business.

The current ban on the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles presents one of the biggest challenges within the transport sector. In recognising this and the important role the region plays in moving freight around the country, we need to look at the challenges and opportunities associated with alternative fuels for road freight and assess how these might impact the region.

Whilst the ban on the sale of new diesel Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) does not come into effect until 2040, the Staffordshire Freight Forum - which comprises the Road Haulage Association, National Highways, and the Chamber of Commerce – tell us that larger vehicles will need to rely on ultra rapid charging, which may mean that hydrogen is the best option. Hydrogen offers ultra-fast refuelling and a longer mileage range, meaning vehicles can spend longer on the road. Biofuels could also be used to support the transition from diesel to other fuels in the interim.

Fifty500 Midlands Growth Corridor

Working with neighbouring authorities, we are developing plans for the A50/A500 between Crewe and Nottingham, to become a strategic growth corridor. Businesses along the corridor already specialise in low emission vehicle manufacturing, and research and development into hydrogen. The businesses along this corridor include, Rolls-Royce, JCB, Toyota, Alstom and Michelin. The corridor could see the creation of a regional supplier park that would create hundreds of new jobs.

7.3.3 Our Fleet

As a public sector organisation, we are committed to reducing our impact on the environment by looking at our vehicle fleet and business practices. Our vehicle fleet comprises 231 vehicles, ranging from school minibuses to mobile libraries. Whilst 61% of the fleet are cars and vans, just 3% are electric.

We procure transport specific services, including socially necessary public transport services, almost 200 mainstream school bus services and 940 special educational need (SEN) travel assistance services. None of the vehicles on these contracts are low emission.

Currently there are few alternatives for our specialist highway vehicles (such as gulley emptiers, hotboxes and road planers), that are affordable, reliable, have the necessary power, and the long duty cycles required. However, 37 gritters, 6 library vehicles and vehicles at our Household Waste Recycling Centres run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). HVO is a low-carbon biofuel made from plant waste, oils and fats, making it a greener alternative to diesel.

7.3.4 Bus Fleet

Department for Transport funding awards from the Levelling Up Fund and the ZEBRA fund have enabled the purchasing of electric buses. In 2025/26 electric buses will be introduced on the following services:

- Arriva's service 110 (Tamworth to Birmingham).
- Diamond Bus's services 8/9 (Burton upon Trent, Swadlincote and East Midlands Airport).
- Chaserider's service 74 (Cannock to Stafford).
- Select Bus's service 875 (Cannock to Stafford via Penkridge).

7.4 The Way Forward

We have identified the following asks of National Government and key stakeholders, along with making our own commitments to support the transition to low emission vehicles in the county.

7.4.1 **Objective 17:** Facilitate the transition to low emission vehicles amongst residents and businesses by focusing on off-road charging locations

Asks of National Government

- Commit to investing in the Fifty500 Midlands Growth Corridor.
- Review the disparity between the 20% VAT rate for public charge points and the 5% rate for those charging at home.
- Introduce business tax breaks on low emission vehicles to stimulate the second-hand market.
- Develop a strategy to accelerate the adoption of hydrogen for larger, conventional road transport and facilitate the roll-out of hydrogen fuelling stations.

Asks of Stakeholders

- Distribution Network Operators to ensure an appropriate and equitable distribution, and affordability of charge points across the county.
- Local Planning Authorities to:
    - Deliver the National Government mandate that all new homes and buildings have vehicle charging points.
    - Support planning applications that provide appropriate locations and mixes of public charging points.
    - Promote the uptake of low emission taxis.
    - Assess their own property assets, including public car parks, as potential locations for public charging points.
- Bus operators to invest in electric vehicles.

Our Commitments

- Publish a new Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy.
- Deliver community charging projects as part of the National Government LEVI programme, focusing on the needs of Staffordshire.
- Review our current fleet and plan for the transition to low emission vehicles where it delivers value for money.
- Review our property assets (including highway depots, enterprise parks and schools) as potential locations for electric vehicle charge points.
- Review our procurement contracts to set minimum standards for the emissions of our suppliers' vehicles, ensuring value for money.

7.4.2 **Objective 18:** Support the bus industry by enabling investment in low emission buses and charging infrastructure

Asks of National Government

- Fund our five-year investment ask to support our low emission bus programme as identified in Table 7.2.

Asks of the Enhanced Partnership

- Agree to a refreshed Enhanced Partnership agreement to ensure Staffordshire's bus fleet is contributing to National Government targets.

Asks of Bus Operators

- Provide investment in their electric bus fleet.

Table 7.2: Objective 18 - Five Year Investment Asks, 2026/27 to 2030/31

Proposals	Benefits	Indicative Cost (£000s)	
		Capital	Revenue
Electric vehicle charging infrastructure at bus depots	• Support the uptake of electric buses charging infrastructure at our 19 bus depots. Public funding is likely to be required to support this transition.	1,250	-
Bus rapid chargers at bus stations	• Rapid charging would be required at main town centre off street bus stations including Leek, Newcastle-under Lyme and Cannock.	1,250	-
Electric buses	• Contribute to low emission buses on the busiest bus corridors that also run through Air Quality Management Areas in Burton upon Trent, Leek and Newcastle-under-Lyme. • Contribute to low emission buses that run on the A52 and A53 Major Road Network multi-modal Access for All corridors. • Contribute to low emission buses that run on the A34 Major Road Network multi-modal Access for All corridors that serve the settlements of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stone, Stafford and Cannock. • Contribute Low emission buses that serve the Wolverhampton to Stafford multi-modal new economic growth corridor called 'The Central Edge'. This will support i54 where Jaguar Land Rover is investing in its Electric Propulsion Manufacturing Centre.	10,000	-
Total		**12,500**	**-**

7.5 Long-Term Vision

Currently, National Government has the following outcomes:

- All vehicles to be low emission.
- Public and private charging infrastructure will be widespread, reliable and powered by clean energy.
- The electricity and hydrogen networks will be robust and integrated with transport planning.
- Low emission vehicles will be affordable, accessible, and supported by high levels of public confidence and use.
- The green economy in Staffordshire will thrive, with local skills and jobs, supporting innovation, manufacturing and maintenance in the low emission vehicle sector.

New and revised infrastructure to produce and distribute energy to fuel future transport must be led at a national level. We are keen to work with the Government as Staffordshire is at the heart of the strategic corridors for both north-south and east-west movements and attracts automotive businesses that are leading the way in alternative fuel technology.

7.6 Key Performance Indicators

The KPIs in Table 7.3 will be used to monitor the theme objectives relating to the uptake of low emission vehicles.

Table 7.3: Key Performance Indicators

Theme Objective	Key Performance Indicators
17. Facilitate the transition to low emission vehicles amongst residents and businesses by focusing on off-road charging locations.	• Number of zero emission vehicles registered (based on available datasets) • Number of publicly available electric vehicle sockets
18. Support the bus industry by enabling investment in low emission buses and charging infrastructure.	• Number of zero emission buses • Number of bus depots with charging infrastructure