Smart choices, better places

A Transport Strategy for Stevenage

2018 - 2031

Draft – November 2018

SteVenage
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Foreword

Stevenage Borough Council recognises that giving people a choice in how they travel and encouraging and enabling people to walk and cycle, and make use of public transport, can have huge benefits for the community. Environmentally, it can improve air quality and reduce congestion on our roads: Socially, it allows people to interact and has many health benefits, and: Economically, it can improve business connections, access to the workplace and encourage a healthier workforce.

Stevenage was built around the principles of sustainable transport and self-containment, and has world-class walking and cycling facilities that have the potential to enable healthier travel choices. Whilst we recognise that car use plays an important role in the way that people and businesses connect, we want to improve and enhance our offer, to give people the opportunity to make choices in terms of the way they travel and the way their streets are used.

As a Borough Council, we have already taken a number of significant steps towards achieving some of the benefits that active (walking and cycling) and sustainable travel, and more liveable local streets can bring. Our Healthy Stevenage Strategy and the emerging Local Plan, in particular, set out specific policies and objectives that seek to achieve this aim. Council employees are encouraged to make use of a small fleet of electric pool vehicles through the Green Travel Plan, a cycle hub has recently been introduced at Fairlands Valley Park and a number of other schemes are already underway.

However, we recognise that we cannot achieve this aim alone. There are a wide range of partners involved in delivering transport infrastructure, whose decisions and plans will impact upon the choices people make. The Transport Strategy seeks to pull together the short, medium and long term plans, strategies and projects of all relevant partners and to provide a series of action plans, which identify who will deliver the projects and plans, the timescales involved and how they will be funded.

As a Co-operative Council, Stevenage strongly believes that communities must be at the heart of the decisions we make. This Strategy, and the actions that it sets out, seeks to inspire and empower communities to make behavioural changes and to lead the implementation of projects in their neighbourhoods, that will encourage them to travel more sustainable and make better use of their streets.

Cllr. Ralph Raynor

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

## Why do we need a Transport Strategy?

The Stevenage context

1.1 As Britain's first New Town, Stevenage has a unique history. Its New Town design means it has a relatively compact urban form, focused around a pedestrian town centre – the first in the UK, and with jobs available for residents in a distinct employment area close to public transport links. Stevenage was designed to enable its residents to move around the town in safety on a network of cycle and pedestrian routes, segregated from the road system. These routes remain a strong legacy of sustainable transport for us to build on.

Figure 1: Stevenage transport network

1.2 Stevenage was built around the concept of self-containment, with distinct neighbourhoods each containing their own local neighbourhood centre, providing shops and services for communities. Networks of dedicated cycleways and pedestrian routes connect these neighbourhoods, with Stevenage offering world-class facilities, often compared with those of some European cities, where cycling thrives.

1.3 Stevenage's railway station is on the East Coast Mainline and is also connected to Thameslink. Long distance direct services to the North and Scotland and also to the South Coast are available from Stevenage. Whilst commuter services connect the town to Kings Cross, Cambridge and Peterborough as well as nearby towns including Hitchin, Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City. However, the existing railway station has been underinvested for some time. The station requires an upgrade to increase capacity, but also to create a more appealing gateway into the town, thus helping to attract private investment opportunities.

1.4   Local buses service the town and also connect Stevenage to the wider local area, to towns such as Hitchin, Letchworth and Hertford, as well as the surrounding villages. National bus services are also available, with a National Express stop in the Town Centre that connects Stevenage to Stansted Airport and Northampton, Coventry and Birmingham. Stevenage has one of the most extensive networks in Hertfordshire. However, in line with national and regional trends, some bus services are under threat from reducing subsidies and low usage making them unattractive to commercial providers. A reduction in bus services would be particularly detrimental to isolated and vulnerable residents, who may rely on these services to get around.
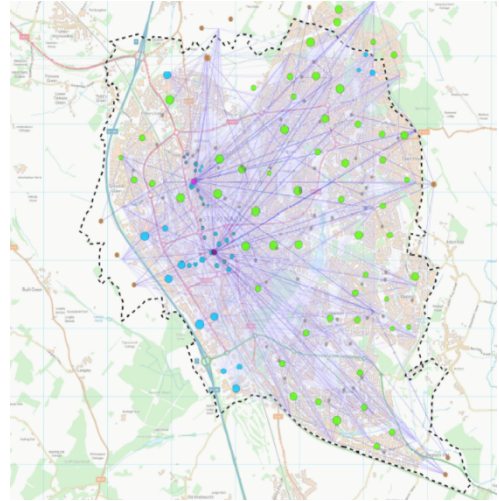
1.5   Stevenage is connected to Junctions 7 and 8 of the A1(M), which links London to the north. The A602 connects Stevenage to Hitchin and Ware, whilst the nearby A505 provides connections between Luton Airport and Cambridgeshire.

1.6   Despite its innovation at the time, the design of the New Town did not fully predict the rise of the motor car and the residential roads were not designed to accommodate such an increase in traffic and on-street parking. Whilst the network handles the number of journeys fairly well, increase in car use in Stevenage has led to an underuse of the pedestrian and cycle network, and an increase in parking problems on residential streets.

1.7   Parking at residential properties is now a common concern for many residents. When the new town was developed, in some areas it was envisaged residents would be happy to park their cars to the rear of their properties or in garage courts, but, ease of access and visibility benefits, means that parking in front of homes is the preferred choice. This has resulted in congestion on local streets and an uninviting environment for residents.

1.8   The underuse of the pedestrian and cycle network, and the preference for private car use, has resulted in funding being directed away from these assets, resulting in a lack of maintenance. There are also perceptions of anti-social behaviour associated with these routes, due to the lack of visibility resulting from the segregated nature of these facilities. Opportunities must be taken to make improvements to the network, and to break down any barriers to its use.

The future of Stevenage

1.9 The period to 2031 will be the next step in the evolution of the New Town. The emerging Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP) sets out policies to bring forward at least 7,600 new homes for our residents, together with new jobs and community facilities to support this growth. This includes the large-scale regeneration of the town centre, helping to stimulate interest in Stevenage as an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest.

1.10 Key to delivering this growth sustainably is ensuring that the infrastructure required to support this growth is available and of a high quality. The SBLP recognises that peak time congestion on the transport network, even without growth, is a considerable local issue, and delivering this growth with a "business as usual" approach to car-based transport patterns is not an option.

1.11 At the county level, Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) also recognises these issues and identifies that expanding the road network to accommodate the level of growth proposed across Hertfordshire is not sustainable for a number of reasons. The quantity of new roads that would be required would have a significant adverse impact on our local environments, and would continue to increase greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to poor air quality locally. It would also be costly and would not necessarily solve the problems. It is clear that another approach is required.

1.12 Consequently, the SBLP includes a Mobility Strategy, which sets out the Borough Council's commitment to prioritising sustainable and active travel modes of transport and to changing behaviours across the town. It seeks to mitigate the demands of the Local Plan, but to go beyond this, with a reduced reliance on the private car and more active and integrated communities, thus also offering health and other social benefits to the people of Stevenage.

1.13 Local policies also recognise that technological advances and lifestyle changes will continue to influence the way we connect with people and businesses. The way we use services and spaces is changing. Increasingly there is no longer a need to make a physical journey to obtain information, goods or services, or even to provide labour. Many of these things can be delivered remotely, and this will increasingly influence our relationship with our transport systems.

1.14 Alongside these changes, where a physical journey is required, new technologies are continuing to alter the way we move. Electric vehicles and bicycles are becoming more common place, and solutions such as driverless vehicles and on-demand public transport services are starting to emerge.

The benefits of growth

1.15 As well as being a driver behind this push towards sustainable and active travel, the emerging SBLP also brings forward opportunities to make this change happen.

1.16 Sustainability is at the heart of the plan and development is directed to locations that can be effectively connected to the existing pedestrian and cycling networks. As opposed to trying to retrofit solutions, new development can be planned with active and sustainable travel principles in mind, to ensure that local facilities are provided on-site, where appropriate, and that walking and cycling take priority over car use.

1.17 A key element of the SBLP is its ambitious proposals to regenerate, rebrand and reimagine the central area of Stevenage, known as Stevenage Central. This offers significant opportunities to improve the experiences of residents and visitors through good urban design that helps create a sense of place. This is a unique opportunity to take a holistic view of the centre and to re-think the existing transport nodes, integrating sustainable transport infrastructure more effectively into the built environment and breaking down some of the barriers to movement that currently exist.

1.18 Transitioning from the private car to sustainable and active forms of transport will have benefits for all members of society:
   - Local streets will change from being places to park and drive cars to places which local communities can enjoy.
   - The local and wider environment will benefit as fewer emissions are emitted, improving local air quality and reducing the effect transport has on climate change.
   - Residents and visitors will gain health and economic benefits by getting out of their cars and making shorter journeys by foot or on a bike.

What is the Stevenage Transport Strategy?

1.19 The Strategy sets out Stevenage Borough Council's approach to sustainable transport; providing a strategy for coordinated action by a wide range of agencies and institutions, and a framework for planning and decision-making which emphasises the sustainable development of transport networks and modes. It draws together the aims of national, county, and local policy documents in relation to this issue, and identifies the principal existing and future challenges affecting transport in Stevenage, taking account of future growth in population and jobs. It will enable the Council to prioritise and bid for external funding for specific works.

1.20 It establishes the key local transport issues and opportunities which exist in Stevenage, and sets out a vision and objectives for what will be delivered in the future. The Strategy seeks to establish Stevenage as a leader in sustainable transport, reflecting its original New Town design objectives.

1.21 The Strategy provides a comprehensive schedule of plans and projects already underway in and around Stevenage as well as those that are planned or proposed for the future in the form of short and medium-term Action Plans. The Borough Council is only one of the many stakeholders involved in achieving this strategy and the Action Plans identify the contribution of the wide range of agencies and institutions involved.

1.22 As Stevenage's strategic transport document, the Strategy does not provide detail on specific plans and projects which are already included in other plans or project documents. It acts as a co-ordinating and promotional instrument to provide an overview of the actions proposed that affect the Borough.

1.23 The Strategy will guide the Council, relevant stakeholders and the public on key projects and requirements to achieve truly sustainable transport. All future local transport projects should contribute to meeting the objectives included in this document to ensure that transport investment in Stevenage is joined up, maximising the benefits to all residents and businesses.

1.24 As noted above, the Borough Council is not the sole provider of local transport projects. Hertfordshire County Council is the Highway Authority, and has been involved in the preparation of this Strategy. The County Council, alongside other stakeholders such as Network Rail, public transport operators and Highways England, will be crucial to delivering on the objectives of this Strategy and it is important that they share its objectives when progressing their projects locally.

1.25 This Strategy will sit above the strategies and projects linked to specific modes and delivery of projects, to provide an overview of what we are seeking to achieve. This will include those already complete, which will continue to have an important role in delivering the objectives of this document.

Structure of the Strategy

1.26 Following the Introduction, this document notes the Policy Context (Chapter 2) and the Challenges and Opportunities facing Stevenage in transport terms by mode (Chapter 3), and then states the Vision (Chapter 4) and the Strategic Objectives (Chapter 5).

1.27 The substantive content of the Strategy focuses around a comprehensive schedule of transport-related plans and projects in and around Stevenage, including what we have achieved so far and projects that are underway (Chapter 6), to those that are planned or proposed for the future in the form of short and medium-term Action Plans (Chapters 7 and 8, respectively). Each of the projects and plans is presented in a standard format, with a schedule setting out key dates for achieving actions, identifying who is responsible for delivering the task, and where the money will come from.

1.28 Towards the end of the Strategy, the longer term aspirations are discussed (Chapter 9), which recognises that the future, particularly in terms of technological change, is unknown, but that it is important to consider how we future-proof any infrastructure to ensure we can adapt when needed. The final chapters (Chapters 10 and 11) cover Implementation and Delivery, and then Monitoring, respectively.

Consultation

1.29 At this stage, the Strategy is a consultation document, and the Council is seeking the full participation of all communities and stakeholders involved in the promotion and achievement of sustainable transport outcomes. Stevenage Borough Council will work with communities to improve their services and standard of living as well as with Hertfordshire County Council and other key stakeholders such as Network Rail and Highways England.

How communities can get involved

1.30 Stevenage is a co-operative Council which recognises that services that are planned with local communities are more likely to be successful. The Strategy offers an opportunity to encourage real participation in many elements of the plans and projects proposed, rather than seeking responses to published documents which tend to reach a similar section of the population each time. The intention for this Strategy is an extended initial consultation period to seek how best local communities may become involved in local projects which directly benefit their area.

1.31 Some of the schemes and projects identified in this strategy will have already been subject to consultation and engagement, for example those contained within the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, which sets out the high level plans for Stevenage Central, including the relocation of the bus station, improvements to the railway station and bus priority measures, amongst other things, and the Stevenage Mobility

Strategy. However, further detailed discussions and consultation activities will be required for all of these significant proposals, once they begin to progress.

1.32 Furthermore, there are many potential projects within the Strategy that residents and local community or stakeholder groups may be able to more actively participate in, potentially with Council or other institutional support.

1.33 These may include projects such as improvements to the Council's underpasses, which are often perceived as locations for anti-social activities, deterring people from using them. Local communities could 'adopt a street or underpass' with the aim of improving and using them as spaces for local community use or reducing their often intimidating nature.

1.34 The Council's Co-operative Neighbourhood Management (CNM) approach provides the capability of implementing smaller projects. For example, funding may be available to improve the lighting, appearance, and maintenance of underpasses, and where appropriate, the redesign of these will be carried out in partnership with local communities.

1.35 Other issues for community involvement may include responses on how to reduce the use of private vehicles and affect peoples' behaviour with regard to short journeys. Specifically, the Council is already supporting initiatives to increase cycling by providing riding events, education and training to build rider's confidence and riding ability, to embed this into personal lifestyles.

1.36 Community consultation will aim to be more focussed and will promote trial and demonstration projects to make residential streets more "liveable". Local communities may nominate their local street for consideration as a trial or demonstration project on reapportioning and greening up streets so that walking and cycling is safer and local environmental conditions are improved.

1.37 Other forms of community participation may include involvement in 'walking buses' to schools and joining a recreational cycling club or visiting a cycling hub. There may be other types of local projects that can help to create a connected and sustainable transport future for Stevenage and these should be nominated in response to consultation.

Institutional response

1.38 As well as recognising the key role of Hertfordshire County Council in both the preparation of the Strategy and implementation of plans and projects, there will also be extensive consultation with businesses and other stakeholders (including Network

Rail, bus and rail operators, Highways England, local interest and user groups, and other public agencies and institutions) to ensure that their interests are taken into account.

1.39   A multi-agency approach will be required if we are to make a real difference with regards to movement in Stevenage. Many local businesses, including those global commercial organisations represented in Stevenage, are already taking a proactive approach to sustainable transport, by encouraging staff to make use of sustainable transport modes by offering schemes such as pool bikes and car sharing incentives, and by being members of the employee benefit scheme, SmartGo Stevenage. We will continue to encourage local businesses to get involved in helping to achieve the aims and objectives of this strategy.

1.34   Environmentally oriented organisations such as Living Streets and SUSTRANS may also be involved in local projects which seek to achieve the Strategy's objectives.

1.   Policy Context

2.1   This section briefly outlines current national, County-wide and existing Borough policies which establish the scope of this Strategy. This Strategy forms a "bridge" between these policies, and the projects and action plans which will deliver sustainable transport outcomes over the coming 15 years.

National policy

2.2   National transport policy is determined primarily by the Department for Transport (DfT), which states that:

> "safe and dependable transport is essential to UK society and the economy. The government is working to make rail, road, air and water transport more efficient and effective, keep them safe and secure, and reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions1"

2.3   This vision is an intrinsic element of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published originally in 2012 and revised in 2018. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied, providing a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

2.4   The NPPF emphasises the importance of rebalancing the transport system in favour of sustainable transport modes, whilst encouraging local authorities to plan proactively for the transport infrastructure necessary to support the growth of ports, airports and other major generators of travel demand. The Framework recommends that Transport Assessments and Travel Plans should accompany applications for developments that generate significant amounts of movement, although it recognises that the opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.

2.5   Other key national policies include:
- National policy statement for national networks, DfT, Dec 2014 - sets out the need and government policies for nationally significant infrastructure rail and road projects for England.
- Connecting People: A Strategic vision for rail, DfT, Nov 2017 - describes the government's strategic vision for the railways, and the actions they are taking to make it a reality.
- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, DfT, April 2017 - sets out the government's ambition for cycling and walking.

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1 https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/transport

- A green light for better buses, DfT Nov 2012 – sets out Government plans to improve bus services by reforming the Bus Service Operators Grant, encouraging more passengers to use buses and cutting transport emissions.
- Inclusive Transport Strategy, DfT, Aug 2018 – sets out the government's plans to make our transport system more inclusive and better for disabled people.
- Rail Freight Transport Strategy, DfT, Sep 2013 - outlines the government's strategy to promote freight transport by rail to limit road congestion and reduce transport carbon emissions.

2.6 National policy relating to air transport is set out in 3 strategies, The Aviation Policy Framework (2013), UK Airspace Policy (2017), and Beyond Horizon, Making the best use of existing runways (2018). These set out how air travel can contribute towards economic growth and sets out a framework for the utilisation of airspace, as well as encouraging making best use of runways.

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Policies

2.7 As the lead transport authority, HCC has responsibility for investing in and maintaining the transport network, and the County Council has recently adopted its Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) which switches the focus of investment towards active and sustainable transport modes, away from the traditional investment in road infrastructure, with the aims of delivering prosperity, enhancing places, and supporting people.

2.8 Work has commenced to produce the North Central Growth and Transport Plan (GTP), which largely covers the Stevenage and North Hertfordshire local authority areas. The GTP is being developed by HCC, with the support of Stevenage Borough Council. The GTP will develop and justify packages of transport-led improvement schemes and priority action plans to deliver the objectives of LTP4.

2.9 It will be critical to building a thorough understanding of current and future growth and transport challenges in North Central Hertfordshire, and informing decision-making on what appropriate actions should be taken. This plan is likely to be more strategic than the Urban Transport Plan, which it will replace.

2.10 The Local Transport Plan includes the following supporting documents, which are currently being reviewed to ensure that they deliver LTP4 policies:
- Active Travel Strategy – sets out how greater emphasis can be given to walking and cycling
- Intalink Bus Strategy – sets out how the local authorities work with the public transport providers around infrastructure, information, ticketing and marketing.

- Rail Strategy, June 2016 – seeks to ensure that the railway in Hertfordshire can support economic growth and development by agreeing investment priorities for the next fifteen years and beyond. It sets the strategic framework against which decisions regarding future franchises and investment in key elements of infrastructure can be identified and prioritised.
- Speed management strategy, March 2014 – sets out a consistent approach to setting speed limits and implementing traffic calming measures, how speed management schemes are selected and funded and education and publicity programmes.
- Roads in Hertfordshire – Highway Design Guide, 2011 – sets out how improvements to the highway network must be designed to follow a philosophy of sustainability. It recommends shared use and designs less dominated by motorised traffic.

Stevenage Borough Council Policies

2.11 The emerging Stevenage Borough Local Plan, supported by the Mobility Strategy sets out how Stevenage will develop over the period 2011-2031. The Plan promotes sustainable transport movements, with walking and cycling prioritised in new development, and infrastructure improvements being carried out across the town from the value generated by new development. Improvements to the town centre will be crucial to this, enabling better connectivity by rail, bus, cycle and foot.

2.12 The setting of parking standards in Hertfordshire is devolved to the Local Planning Authorities and car and cycle parking standards for new developments are set out in the Parking Provision Supplementary Planning Document (Parking Provision SPD). The last version was adopted in 2012.

2.13 The Stevenage Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) includes all the projects that will be delivered to support the growth set out in the Local Plan. It is a schedule of projects with delivery partners, and estimates of timeframes and costs associated with them.

2.14 The Stevenage Central Framework is the overarching regeneration strategy for the development of the centre of Stevenage including the establishment of investment priorities, partnership working and physical interventions over the next twenty five years. The aim of the Framework is to make sure that Stevenage Central once more plays as full a role as possible in the lives of Stevenage residents, ensuring that it becomes the place that provides real and tangible benefits for the wider community population of the district and the wider region.

2.15   The Healthy Stevenage Strategy, 2018-2022, sets out the vision for health and wellbeing in Stevenage. It has been agreed by the Healthy Stevenage Partnership, which is a multi-agency partnership including the following organisations; SBC, HCC, Public Health, East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group, East and North Herts NHS Trust, Mind in Mid Herts, Healthwatch, Stevenage Football Club Foundation, Citizens Advice Stevenage, Children Centres, Stevenage Leisure Limited, Stevenage Sporting Futures, among many others. It sets out an action plan and priorities for improving the health of our population. It recognises that healthier travel choices can have a significant impact on people's health and wellbeing, thus this Strategy can have a significant role to play in improving the health of our residents.

3 Challenges and Opportunities

3.1 Change and growth bring challenges and opportunities as an increasing population requires new and better services. The relationships and connections between places will change as economies shift, development is completed, and lifestyle patterns change. Planning seeks to ensure that complementary uses are located near each other, making more journeys multipurpose, and thereby reducing the number of journeys required overall.

Challenges

3.2 Creating a significant shift to sustainable modes of transport helps to ensure that Stevenage can accommodate the growth that it needs to deliver across the town in order to meet housing and economic need. Without planning for this shift towards more sustainable modes, development is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the existing transport network leading to congestion, both on roads, and on public transport, and parking pressures.

3.3 Growth, particularly when located at the edge of an urban settlement, has the potential to be less well connected than areas closer to the centre. It will be important to ensure that the new settlements are well connected to Stevenage's existing transport networks so that residents have adequate access to jobs and services.

Opportunities

3.4 The growth of Stevenage, as set out in the policies of the Local Plan, provides opportunities to ensure that active travel and sustainable modes of transport are integrated at the early stages of new development. The Council will encourage new settlements to become exemplars of how a more sustainable way of living can be achieved.

3.5 Enabling residents' continued excellent access to jobs and services is central to this strategy. Residents currently have access to London, Cambridge, and many other significant towns and cities by rail and bus, as well as to many others by road.

3.6 Gunnels Wood, Pin Green, the Lister Hospital, Old Town, and Stevenage Central are significant elements of the local economy. This strategy will seek to ensure that movements between them are as easy as possible, offering improved opportunities to make some or all of the trips by public or active transport modes.

3.7 The benefits of moving to sustainable and active modes of transport are numerous, from shared and individual health benefits, contributing to tackling climate change, to

freeing up capacity on roads, thereby creating quicker overall journey times. Further, by increasing the number of journeys made by sustainable modes of transport, behaviour and funding will shift towards supporting and maintaining their continued use.

3.8   Climate change is a pressing issue, and the Council is keen to encourage behaviour change to shift transport patterns away from the use of the private car. By doing this we will play our part in reducing the emission of carbon and other emissions into the atmosphere, benefitting global ecology, as well as local air quality.

3.9   Active transport has the potential to significantly benefit local resident's health. Even cycling or walking a short distance contributes to a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle, and will help to reduce health costs, and by reducing time taken off work, boost local productivity. Encouraging healthier ways of moving around will be directly in line with the Council's Healthy Stevenage Strategy.

3.10   Local Enterprise Partnership funding has the potential to help support the improvements needed to make Stevenage a major sub-regional centre, attracting more growth which will benefit local residents and strengthen Hertfordshire's economy.

3.11   The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will provide a new opportunity to secure revenue from new developments to help to deliver sustainable transport infrastructure. CIL operates through the collection of a flat rate for most new floorspace constructed, with the revenue required to be spent on local infrastructure projects.

Walking and Cycling

3.12   Walking and cycling are together known as 'active travel' modes and are the most sustainable ways for people to move around. There are many benefits to increasing levels of active forms of travel including:
- Health - increased levels of physical activity (in line with the Council's Healthy Stevenage Strategy);
- Social - enables people to interact with their local environments and communities, gives people more choice in how they travel;
- Economic – increased footfall for retail uses, plus the indirect benefits of a healthier workforce;
- Environment – reductions in car use and congestion, leading to lower emissions and better air quality.

3.13   Stevenage is a rare example of a town being planned with a dedicated cycling and pedestrian network, a legacy of the New Town principles. The network is world class, and due to the compact nature of the town, cycling is often the quickest way to get between places in Stevenage. However, there are challenges that need to be addressed.

Figure 2: Stevenage cycle network

3.14   Some of the routes suffer from maintenance issues, missing connections, and poor lighting and signage. There is also a perception that parts of the network are unsafe and susceptible to crime. These issues are most prevalent in relation to the underpasses, which form a key part of the network. Due to their segregation from the road network, the underpasses do not benefit from overlooking and, where signage is lacking, they can be disorientating for users. They are also often not well-lit and do not provide an attractive and appealing environment that people want to experience.

3.15   The walking and cycling networks across the town are not generally well used and trips that could be made by bike or on foot are often made by the private car. This makes investing in improvements to the network more difficult to justify, which has the potential to create a spiral of decline, unless investment and participation are both increased.

3.16   There is, at present, a lack of good quality and secure cycle parking in the town centre. Additionally, there are not always secure cycle parking spaces in people's homes and places of work. Without these facilities there is a fear that bikes will be damaged or stolen when parked, and this discourages cycle journeys. A lack of changing and showering facilities in workplaces also presents challenges to encouraging active travel as a method of travelling to work.

3.17   The Stevenage Central Framework identified a number of significant barriers to

movement around the town's central area, in particular the ring road, which currently offers no at grade crossings and separates the railway station from the shopping area. The bus station also presents a challenge in terms of its location, creating a barrier to movement from the Town Square towards the railway station and Danestrete.

3.18 There is a need to reprioritise local streets for walking and cycling, and make improvements to enable local destinations to be more easily accessed by foot and by bike. Additionally, work is needed to improve safety on the network by increasing activity in areas with a currently high perception of crime, notably underpasses. There is an opportunity to promote the bike as the fastest way around Stevenage through local projects which remind residents about the benefits and enjoyment that can come from cycling.

3.19 The fact that the town already contains extensive cycling and walking networks means that significant large-scale infrastructure is not required. As such, lower costs will be involved in making those improvements required to make the network more user-friendly. Smaller scale improvements such as lighting, signage, art installations, highlighting key routes, increasing and securing cycle parking, and promotional campaigns can be sufficient to have a real effect on the use of the network.

3.20 New settlements provide the opportunity to integrate active travel into the design and layout of new places and to successfully connect them to the existing network. Walking and cycling should be prioritised when considering access options and the provision of neighbourhood centres, which provide local services and facilities, will enable walking or cycling to become the obvious choice for everyday trips.

3.21 The regeneration of the town centre offers a unique opportunity to remove the barriers to walking and cycling that currently exist within the central area and to improve facilities, such as cycle parking, which are key to encouraging a change in travel behaviours to more active modes.

3.22 Stevenage has many large organisations that are committed to the town, and the Borough Council itself is a key employer. Businesses have the potential to make a significant contribution to meeting active travel objectives, and some already employ environmental officers and have comprehensive Workplace Travel Plans in place. Increased communication with employers will be crucial to encourage change by employees. Improving the links between the regenerated town centre and Stevenage's employment areas has the potential to improve satisfaction for the local workforce, as well as providing increased revenues for local town centre businesses. Much of Gunnels Wood employment area is less than a five minute bike ride to the

town centre.

Local Streets

3.23   Residential streets are considerable local assets. They not only provide access to the wider world from people's homes, but spaces in which neighbourhood activities can take place, from organised street parties to chance interactions as people walk down the street.

3.24   At present, many of our residential areas are not providing people with an enjoyable environment to spend time in. Both car use and parking levels have vastly exceeded the capacity envisaged when the New Town was designed, creating capacity issues. Residential streets are often dominated by parked cars or traffic moving at high speeds, which is causing increasing concern for communities. Parked cars dominating residential areas means there is less space for walking and cycling, on-street social interaction, and local bus services to get through, making movement through these areas more difficult and less safe for other users.

3.25   As a co-operative council, Stevenage believes that local people should be at the heart of decision making. Opportunities exist to make use of local knowledge and views about what issues exist within their communities and what the solutions to these could be. Communities should be asked why they do not chose to make use of their local spaces currently, what would make them change their behaviour in the future, and what could improve their area. Engaging local residents and stakeholders in implementing projects to make multifunctional use of the local streets will create spaces that local communities feel safe in and are proud of.

3.26   The 'Liveable street' concept seeks to ensure that towns and cities are designed to be used by people and not dominated by cars. Through a reorientation of local streets to living, as well as for transport purposes, improvements to local environments will create more appealing routes for walking and cycling, and will increase the value of local streets to local residents by improving them as assets for living in, as well as for travelling through. This can lead to health benefits by increasing the number of people choosing to walk in their local areas, and social, cultural and economic benefits by increasing the number of interactions within local neighbourhoods.

3.27   The concept has been successful in many cities across Europe, but is also emerging increasingly in the UK, with SUSTRANS and Living Streets often leading projects to implement more innovative solutions to improving local connections. Community engagement is essential to ensuring any interventions are successful. Schemes can

include:

- Reducing or preventing through traffic on local roads
- Slowing down traffic, particularly around sensitive uses such as schools.
- Shared spaces and streets
- Prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists
- Prioritisation of buses
- Ensuring parking does not dominate.

Rail

3.28   Rail journeys are comparatively carbon efficient compared to the private car. Stevenage is less than half an hour from London by train and the tube network is accessible in 20 minutes. As an East Coast Main Line station, Stevenage also has excellent links to the north, with services to cities such as Leeds, York and Edinburgh. Stevenage station is a crucial asset for businesses in the local area, and a major gateway for visitors to Stevenage. A reliable, frequent service is required to ensure that residents are able to depend on the rail service for their trips to London and the wider area.

3.29   The recent timetable changes to the Great Northern line offer an even greater range of destinations to Stevenage residents, including direct connections to South London, Gatwick, and Brighton and important new links within the city, such as London Bridge and Farringdon. The introduction of the new timetable should be seen as a long term benefit to Stevenage, although it is recognised that the service needs to be reliable in order for local residents to depend on it for regular travel.

3.30   Stevenage railway station serves as a sub-regional hub in Hertfordshire, accepting national and regional intercity services, as well as local services, and serving as the terminal for services along the Hertford loop. However, east-west rail services are not available, making train travel difficult if you want to reach destinations such as Luton or Bishops Stortford. At present, as the Thameslink timetable is implemented, there is not forecast to be capacity for Hertford loop services to terminate on the four existing platforms, which will be required for intercity and semi-fast services. Funding has been agreed for the construction of a fifth platform dedicated to Hertford loop services.

3.31   There is currently congestion on trains and platforms at peak times, which limits the appeal of rail travel to users and creates safety concerns, particularly around the stairways. The station itself is also dated and does not provide a particularly positive experience for users or an attractive gateway for visitors arriving into the town.

There are issues around the size and quality of the waiting area and booking hall, and the small-scale nature of the retail offer makes it a relatively unattractive place to wait.

3.32   Connections between the railway station and other sustainable modes of transport, (the bus station and cycling links, particularly) require improvement. At present, there is a poor relationship between the bus station and the railway station, inadequate secure cycle parking at the station, and poor connections for cycling to and from the station from all directions, with some walking routes also creating safety concerns. This diminishes opportunities to encourage journeys to be continued by sustainable modes.

3.33   The regeneration of Stevenage Central creates significant opportunities to improve connections from the station to the town centre, and westwards towards Gunnels Wood. Opportunities exist to take a holistic approach to sustainable transport and ensuring intermodal connections are improved. Linked to the fifth platform and the recent timetable changes, with the introduction of Thameslink, these improvements should allow the full potential of the railway station to be realised and for Stevenage's excellent connections, particularly to London, to be utilised to their full potential in encouraging investment within the town.

Bus

3.34   Stevenage has a comprehensive bus network which links the town centre with other parts of town, as well as to towns and villages across Hertfordshire, and Luton and Stansted airports. The bus network has a particularly important role in linking areas to the east and west of Stevenage, which the rail network does not cover.

3.35   The frequency of local buses is generally quite good, with services running around Stevenage every ten to fifteen minutes on most local routes. Frequencies to inter-urban destinations are less frequent (30 minutes to Luton, Hemel Hempstead or Letchworth, and up to once every three hours to Bishop's Stortford). Improving the reliability, frequency, and quality of services on these routes will be important in underpinning economic growth in Hertfordshire.

3.36   Buses offer clear benefits when compared to the private car; buses are generally greener than the private car on a per passenger basis, they occupy less road space, and provide a safe and accessible form of transport. They also offer the ability to work or relax whilst making a journey. As the car sector begins to transfer towards electric vehicles, there is potential for the electrification of bus services too, bringing even more benefits to this mode of transport.

3.37   However, buses have long suffered from being viewed as unfashionable forms of transport, generally providing a less convenient, comfortable, and flexible approach to travel than the private car. Following the capital outlay of buying a car, the bus is also often perceived to be more expensive per trip than making a private car journey.

3.38   The viability of bus services is a key issue affecting their future. Some services are subsidised, and cuts to subsidies have been threatening bus services, to the detriment of the town.

3.39   The regeneration of Stevenage Central offers a unique opportunity to provide an improved and relocated bus station within the central area, and to improve links between the bus and train station facilities. Opportunities also exist to improve bus connections between Gunnels Wood, Pin Green Industrial Estate, and Stevenage Central, potentially through the consideration of bus priority measures.

3.40   New technologies offer opportunities for buses to be more responsive to demand in the future, and are being tested in other areas. It will become easier for users and providers of bus services to understand when people want to travel. Similar to the way the private hire vehicle sector is moving towards an app-based model, local residents who can be specific about what bus journeys they need, should benefit from bus services being delivered that meet their needs. Opportunities to promote bus use, alongside more innovative ways of making them more cost-effective, will enable services to become more commercially viable.

3.41   Buses can also benefit from electric vehicle technologies that are becoming more commonplace. Opportunities exist to future-proof new infrastructure to ensure it takes into account the need for electric bus charging technology in the longer term.

Road

3.42   Cars have become the mode of transport of choice for many people in the UK and throughout the world. They are comfortable, affordable, and provide a door-to-door connection. The road network is a vital asset for local businesses who rely on it operating efficiently to guarantee movements of products and materials.

3.43   However, this success has led to issues of congestion on parts of the road network. In the Stevenage area there is regularly congestion, on both the A1(M) and parts of the local road network, at peak times.

3.44   In recent years, awareness of the impacts on our climate, both globally in terms of climate change, and locally in the form of air quality, has increased. Approximately a quarter of the UK's carbon emissions come from transport uses. The true ecological footprint of owning a car is not solely down to the fuel burned, it also includes the materials and energy used to build the car, and these contribute to UK residents having some of the highest ecological footprints in the world.

3.45   Car parking is an issue, particularly on local residential streets, many of which were not designed to accommodate high levels of on-street parking. Parking problems can contribute to congestion and create a hostile environment for walking and cycling.

3.46   Whilst this strategy focuses on encouraging sustainable forms of transport, there is recognition that for particular trips the private vehicle will continue to be the most logical mode. Road journeys will remain an important part of the suite of transport modes that facilitate transport movements within and around Stevenage.

3.47   The upgrade of the A1(M) around Stevenage to a SMART motorway, with all lane running, provides an opportunity to reduce congestion along the town's strategic road links, thus freeing up some capacity for growth and change within the Borough. Whilst improvements are welcomed, there are concerns around safety and emergency vehicle access that come with these proposals, and questions around whether or not all-lane running is sufficient, or whether 3 full lanes are actually required.

3.48   Schemes such as car clubs, car sharing and car-pooling are re-shaping how we use the car, and our roads, in the future. Traditionally a private car spends a great deal of time parked, either at home, or at a place of work. With the advent of real-time information technology this may no longer need to be the case, and this could have significant impacts on the number of cars, amount of parking space, and how intensively roads are used within Stevenage.

3.49   The move to smart transportation also has significant implications for the car industry and our roads. The technology allowing cars to drive themselves (autonomous vehicles) is available and is growing. With it comes significant potential benefits for local users; cars will no longer need to be tethered to their operators, potentially changing forever the need for parking to be provided next to developments. Other identifiable benefits from this technology change will include the ability to be productive while on the move, as the car driver is freed from their driving responsibilities. Cars will be programmed to run more efficiently, both in terms of space used on the road, and in terms of the fuel they consume and emissions they emit. Safety will be improved as the element of human error is

removed.

3.50   It is already clear that smartphone apps are having an impact on how users access transport, with examples such as Uber disrupting the taxi industry around the world. This change is likely to increase in the coming years, potentially in ways we cannot yet foresee. What seems likely is that user's expectations about how transport provides for their needs will increase, and providers will need to meet that challenge.

Electric Vehicles

3.51   Over the next 20 years, an increasing number of vehicles will run on electricity rather than fossil fuels. Electric vehicles (EV) for personal use are not limited to cars; electric bicycles are already in use by many, alongside other powered vehicles such as scooters and skateboards.

3.52   To enable the use of electric vehicles, specific infrastructure in the form of electric vehicle charging points is required. Whilst Stevenage has EV charging points within some of its public car parks already, the spaces with this technology are limited. In addition, existing residential areas are not likely to have these facilities in close proximity to people's homes and there are practical and legal obstacles to retrofitting these technologies that need to be carefully considered. 'Destination charging' – within neighbourhood centres and the town centre offers a more practical solution.

3.53   New developments, including the regeneration of Stevenage Central, provide the opportunity to integrate charging point technology into all new schemes from the outset. There are also opportunities to further promote the use of electric vehicles across the town, to make better use of its potential.

Figure 3: Electric vehicle, *www.eta.co.uk*

3.54   This is a rapidly changing field, and infrastructure which is state of the art today could prove to be redundant in five years. With this in mind there needs to be a flexible approach to new infrastructure.

Air

3.55   Stevenage is in close proximity to London Luton Airport, and lies under the flight

path for arrivals. The proximity of the airport means that Stevenage benefits from being connected to many long-distance national and international destinations, at affordable prices, within convenient travel times of home. This is of particular benefit to local businesses who value the freight access to international markets, as well as the ability to network internationally. Local people also benefit from having access to jobs that come directly, and indirectly, from the airport and the connectivity it provides.

3.56   However, noise, environmental pollution, and the impacts of surface access to the site are concerns to local residents. These issues have the potential to be exacerbated in the future with the proposals for expansion of operations at the airport to increase passenger numbers significantly.

3.57   There are opportunities for residents and businesses to benefit from improved access to a growing Luton Airport, making new jobs more accessible and taking advantage of the improved transport links. Improved public transport links between London Luton Airport and Stevenage would help in sharing these economic benefits of airport expansion with the residents of Stevenage.

4   The Vision

4.1   Drawing on national, county and existing local policy, including emerging and proposed projects, the Transport Strategy will promote the following vision:

A town where we prioritise sustainable transport, where residents and businesses are well connected with a range of opportunities, where all stakeholders work cooperatively across all neighbourhoods to create living streets that local people can enjoy. Stevenage has a proud history, and the creation of the New Town incorporated sustainable infrastructure in the form of dedicated cycle tracks, a network of local bus routes, streets and squares for residents to enjoy, and a mainline rail station. We will work together with partners to make the most sustainable use of the outstanding connectivity that has been so important to the success of the town.

5 Strategic Objectives

5.1   The Strategy seeks to achieve four primary objectives:

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1. Connectivity

Improve connections between our residents to jobs and services, and business to markets.

    A.   Improve access to and from the town by bicycle and a wide range of public transport modes

    B.   Improve connections within the town for walking, cycling and public transport modes

    C.   Maintain, enhance, and improve Stevenage's roads, cycleways, and footpaths, including underpasses

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2. Liveable Streets

Restore neighbourhood streets to places that our community can enjoy and be proud of

    A.   Work co-operatively with residents to pilot approaches that enhance their streets

    B.   Reduce the speed of traffic on local roads to improve safety

    C.   Free up road space for other uses

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3. Active and Healthy Travel

Achieve a greater mode split for active travel

    A.   Increase cycling by ensuring it is the quickest, healthiest, and most enjoyable way to get around town

    B.   Increase walking by making routes and local destinations more attractive and interactive by foot

    C.   Create behavioural change to encourage active and healthy travel

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4. Green Travel

Reduce the carbon footprint of Stevenage's travel movements and improve air quality

    A.   Increase the use of more environmentally sustainable modes of transport

    B.   Support provision of new town centre sustainable transport improvements

    C.   Support and increase the use of electric vehicles, including e-bikes and buses

    D.   Encourage car sharing and car-pooling as widely as possible

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5.2   To achieve the strategic objectives, plans and projects will be delivered by a range of agencies and these will include infrastructure improvements, new developments and policies delivering desired outcomes. Through this strategy, SBC will seek to ensure that all stakeholders and partner organisations are clear on the Borough's vision to create integrated and sustainable transport outcomes.

6 Completed Plans and Projects

6.1 A number of plans and projects, generally started before the adoption of the SBLP and LTP4, have already been undertaken in Stevenage. These projects are already delivering useful outputs, embracing the principles of sustainable transport in Stevenage, and providing the foundations for future actions.

Active Travel Strategy, HCC, Apr 2013

6.2 Hertfordshire's Active Travel Strategy sets out how the County Council and its partners will identify, deliver and promote interventions to increase the numbers of people walking and cycling in Hertfordshire. Schemes promoted through this strategy include the reallocation of road space, implementation of road user hierarchies, creating new pedestrian crossings, footway maintenance, applying 'designing out crime' principles, improving signage, delivering urban realm improvements, and assisting in personalised travel planning and promotion. The aim is to increase the proportion of journeys made by walking or cycling to improve individual health, quality of life, the environment and the economy.

6.3 The Active Travel Strategy is currently being revised in line with LTP4 and will include the Healthy Streets concept. It is due to be published in 2019.

Stevenage Cycle Strategy Action Plan, SBC, Apr 2018

6.4 The Cycle Strategy Action Plan was prepared by the Borough Council to define behaviour change initiatives and infrastructure improvements that will be required over the Local Plan period (to 2031) to increase cycling within the Borough. The strategy is people-focussed and covers all stages of life from early childhood until retirement. The Cycle Strategy Action Plan aims to restore Stevenage's cycle network to its former status, improving, repairing and rebuilding it, where it has been eroded, and extending it to reach into the new development areas of the town.

6.5 To inform this plan, an audit of the existing cycle network was carried out, identifying and prioritising a set of potential infrastructure improvements, including upgrades of the Cycleway network, missing Cycleway Links, and

improvements to wayfinding.

6.6   A review of our existing cycle parking standards is recommended, which will
        eventually be incorporated into an update to the Parking Standards SPD (as
        discussed in para xxx). Initiatives to improve cycling to school, cycling to work
        and improving cycling within the town centre are also proposed.

Rail transformation project, Network Rail

6.7   Network Rail is undertaking a modernisation of the UK's rail network, which
        includes the Great Northern services through Stevenage.

6.8   Thameslink services have been introduced to Stevenage, which offer direct
        services, through London, to Brighton and Gatwick Airport. There are an
        increased number of faster trains to Kings Cross, and trains now run through
        Farringdon, offering easy access to Crossrail services (which link directly to
        Heathrow Airport). Stevenage will continue to be a key stop on fast routes, with
        the growth of the town helping to cement its
        place within the network as a sub-regional hub.

6.9   These service improvements will work together
        with planned improvements to the station's
        appearance and connections (as discussed in
        para's xx and xx) to encourage the use of
        Stevenage station and rail services more
        generally.

Figure 4: Thameslink train,
railwaygazette.com

Green Travel Plan 2013-2018, SBC, 2013

6.10   The Borough Council adopted a Green Travel Plan in 2013, which aims to reduce
        car use by encouraging staff and councillors to use alternative modes of
        transport when travelling to and from work, and when carrying out official
        duties.

6.11   As a large employer, the Borough Council is keen to minimise the negative
        impact that over-reliance on car travel can have on the environment. As the

majority of staff working at the Council do not live far from the office, there is considerable scope for an increase in the proportion of journeys that are made on foot or by bike.

Figure 5: SBC Green Travel Plan

6.12　　The current Green Travel Plan included an objective to introduce pool cars and bikes for staff to make use of to carry out council business. Since the adoption of the plan, two electric pool bikes, four standard bikes and four electric pool cars have been made available. The cars are also available for use by local residents as part of an e-car club scheme.

6.13　　The Green Travel Plan now requires review to consider what has been achieved so far, to update its objectives and to investigate what can be achieved in the future (as discussed further in para xxx).

SmartGo Stevenage, SBC

6.14　　SmartGo Stevenage is a part of a national scheme to help employers encourage low-carbon transport by providing offers on buses, trains, bikes, gyms and more. It was introduced in Stevenage in xxx, and has been successful in getting over 30 employers on board, representing over 15,000 employees, approximately 10% of whom are registered with SmartGo.

6.15　　A steering group meets on a quarterly basis to enable members to discuss benefits, share experiences and to encourage more joint working between all parties.

Bus Strategy 2011-2015, HCC, Jan 2015

6.16　　The Bus Strategy sets out the County-wide approach to supporting bus services in Hertfordshire. It sets out the framework of strategic and detailed policies, the current situation and the challenges facing Hertfordshire specifically. This provides the basis for the development of the network and infrastructure, and in particular

the corridors on which action will be focussed to achieve greatest benefit.

6.17 The Strategy sets out detail on the required standards for facilities including bus stops and services, and determines which routes should receive subsidy to continue to run, and where improvements may be possible or use can be increased to help services run more efficiently. It also investigates opportunities to develop more innovative ways of attracting extra funding streams to help deliver current and future service provision.

Stevenage Cycle Hub, SBC

6.18 The Stevenage Cycle Hub at Fairlands Valley Park was opened in October 2018. It is one of four cycle hubs located across the county and is operated by Watford Cycle Hub on behalf of SBC. It is open 6 days a week and provides a one-stop shop for cyclists. People can visit the hub to hire bikes, learn about new routes, join in with organised bike rides, for bicycle servicing and cycling lessons/courses. The aim is to get people on their bikes and more active.

6.19 The cycle hub provides the following services/facilities:

- **Service maintenance and repairs** – The Hub will serve as a place for people to get their bikes repaired, at a reasonable charge. Along with courses for people to learn how to maintain their own bikes.
- **Led rides** – The Hub's location, within Fairlands Valley Park, acts as a natural start or finish point for a bike ride. The Hub itself, along with partner organisations such as We Are Cycling UK – Stevenage Branch, HSBC UK British Cycling Breeze programme and Herts Disability Sport Foundation, will deliver a programme of led rides for beginners, families, through to more avid cyclists.
- **Learn to Ride programmes** - including courses specifically for adults, children and toddlers, women and road safety training.
- **Go Ride Club** - HSBC UK Go-Ride is British Cycling's development programme for young people. The programme provides a fun and safe way to introduce young riders to the world of cycle sport and provides a platform to improve bike handling skills. Through the Hub, a Go Ride club will be developed so there is a pathway for local young people with an interested in cycling to learn new skills, meet new people and maintain their health and wellbeing.

- **Inclusive Cycling** - Through a partnership with Herts Disability Sports Foundation, access to cycling for people with impairments and disabilities will be offered. Adapted bikes will be available for led sessions and groups rides including carers or family members.
- **Upcycling and bike sales** - The Cycling Hub has already started a partnership with Hertfordshire Constabulary via Stevenage Police Station where unclaimed stolen bikes will be upcycled ready to sell on as a fully serviced recondition bikes.
- **Bike Hire** – The Hub has a fleet of adult and junior bikes for hire. With excellent cycle networks, people are able to enjoy the different parks and sights scattered across the town.

Healthier, Safer, Greener Journeys to School: Hertfordshire's Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS), HCC, Aug 2018

6.20   The SMoTS sets out the vision of Hertfordshire County Council to increase opportunities for children and young people to travel to, from and between schools and colleges by sustainable modes. It provides a breakdown of existing school travel patterns and outlines the actions and processes that will be adopted to improve the viability of sustainable travel.

6.21   The Strategy seeks to reduce the significant transport pressures around local schools during peak times, including heavy parking levels and clashes between students and parents arriving by car, on foot, or by bike.

6.22   The aims of this strategy include reducing private car use for journeys to and from educational establishments; improving accessibility by other modes; improving road safety for children; improving child health through active travel and an improvement in air quality around schools; and improving the local environment by reducing traffic.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2017/18 – 2027/28 (RoWIP), HCC, July 2017

6.23   The third edition of the RoWIP provides the context for the future management of and investment in the rights of way network and other access activities, to

meet people's needs and demands from 2017/18 to 2027/28. Local people were consulted to understand how the networks are used and the various issues that might be associated with them. Their responses highlighted a number of things that people were keen to see including; more circular routes, better information about the network and how to access it, dog mess, litter and vandalism to be addressed and routes free from obstructions such as busy roads to cross.

6.24   The Plan sets out recommendations for the future management of, and investment in, the rights of way network.

Community Transport Service, SBC

6.25   The Borough Council provides a Community Transport Service aimed at vulnerable and older people within the town. The service has two vehicles and provides daily local lunch club journeys and weekly leisure trips to destinations outside of Stevenage.

Verge and footway controls, SBC

6.26   The 2004 xxx Strategy committed SBC to seek to "introduce an effective mechanism that permits enforcement to be carried out to deal with parking on grassed areas and to use it to deal with general verge parking and parking on ornamental areas" and to ensure that "access for pedestrians is maintained". On this basis, restrictions prohibiting parking on the verge or footway were introduced in Pin Green, St Nicholas and Martins Wood (2007), Bedwell (2010), Chells and Manor (2011), and Shephall and Bandley Hill (2013).

6.27   Consultations on similar controls in Roebuck and Longmeadow ended earlier this year, and are scheduled to be implemented in 2019.

7.   Short Term Action Plan

6.1   Projects which will be delivered in the period 2019-2022 are set out in the Short Term Action Plan. Some projects identified are updates of the existing Plans identified in Chapter 6. These are required to ensure the Council's suite of Plans and Projects are in line with the greater emphasis on creating sustainable travel patterns identified in LTP4, the emerging SBLP, and this Strategy. Detailed schedules are provided for each project setting out key dates for achieving actions, identifying who is responsible for delivering the task, and where the money will come from, where known.

6.2   The short term action plan has been split into two parts, the first covering the first 12 months (2019-2020), which will generally include schemes that are already underway or have already been scoped and have funding allocated to them.

Part 1: First 12 months (2019 – 2020)

Designation of Stevenage as a Sustainable Travel Town, SBC & HCC

6.3   HCC's LTP4 sets out its intentions to designate a number of urban areas as Sustainable Travel Towns. Within these areas, comprehensive packages of schemes and behaviour change initiatives aimed at achieving a significant modal shift to non-car modes, demand management, and a reduction in single occupancy car use will be considered. Implementation is scalable with flexibility over timescales, level of mode shift targeted and package composition. Sustainable Travel Towns provide the potential for greater housing density and car free development, and could support the future delivery and development of local land use plans.

6.4   Stevenage will bid to become a designated Sustainable Travel Town. The detailed criteria for any settlement to be included in the Sustainable Travel Towns programme will be subject to further local discussion, to ensure that the town has the full support of key stakeholders and the wider community. For Stevenage, it is considered this Strategy goes some way towards demonstrating the Council's commitment towards sustainable travel and implementing change within the Borough.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Nomination of Stevenage as a Sustainable Travel Town	2019	SBC - Planning	No budget implications
Determination of applications against criteria	2019	HCC	
Adoption of Stevenage as a Sustainable Travel Town	2019	HCC	SBC – future departmental budgets Expected S106/CIL income HCC

Liveable Streets Pilot Projects, SBC

6.5   The Council will identify a minimum of three 'Liveable Streets' projects in Stevenage. These will be pilots to help understand what types of projects and schemes people want and what will be successful in enhancing the local street environments in residential areas of Stevenage. Local communities will be at the heart of these projects. The Council will seek to bring communities together to help them re-imagine and re-design their streets and public spaces to make them more attractive, more enjoyable and safer places to live.

6.6   Schemes to tackle issues such as antisocial parking by cars and vans, and vehicle obstruction, to slow traffic down, and reduce or prevent through-traffic, can help to transform residential streets from those dominated by cars and traffic, to places that encourage walking and cycling and interaction between neighbours and communities. Physical improvements should be accompanied by promotional and educational activities to encourage behavioural change leading to more sustainable travel choices.

Figure 6: Oxford Liveable Streets

6.7 The Council will work with experts such as Living Streets and SUSTRANS, who have proven experience of what can be achieved.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Funding
Scope potential pilot projects	Dec 2018	SBC-Planning, Communities	Link to CNM programme and future budgets
Select initial projects	Jan 2019	SBC-Planning, Communities	Expected S106 / CIL income
Consultation with local community	Feb 2019	SBC-Planning, Communities	Existing and future departmental budgets – Planning and Engineers
Procure delivery body, as necessary	Mar 2019	SBC-Planning, Communities	
Commence physical work	Apr 2019	SBC-Planning, Communities, Engineers	
Complete all pilot projects	Feb 2021	SBC-Planning, Communities, Engineers	

Bus station relocation, SBC/HCC

6.8 The relocation of the bus station is required to enable some of the earlier phases of the SG1 programme of works. Its relocation to a site in closer proximity to the railway station has the

Figure 7: Bus station design ideas

potential to significantly improve Stevenage Central as a sub-regional transport hub. In addition to improved bus-train connections, there will be improved cycle and pedestrian links into the regenerated town centre, as a result of a reconfigured Lytton Way.

6.9 In considering the design of a new bus station, steps will be taken to ensure it is future proofed to take into account likely technological changes, for example, the introduction of electric buses and likely future capacity requirements.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Consultation on design and location of site	Dec 2018	SBC - Regen	Funding agreed in principle by LEP Board in 2016
Consultation on finalised designs	Jan 2019	SBC - Regen, Planning, HCC	
Submit planning application	Feb 2019	SBC - Regen, Planning HCC	
Procurement of construction contractor	Mar 2019	SBC - Regen	
Work to start	Apr 2020	SBC - Regen	
Completion	2021	SBC - Regen	

SBC Workplace Travel Plan, SBC

6.10 The Council is a significant source of local trips in Stevenage, and needs to lead the way in promoting sustainable transport modes. An update to the Green Travel Plan will be undertaken, in line with HCC's travel plan guidance, to take into account changes in circumstances and technologies since the last iteration was adopted.

6.11 It will include additional measures to get more staff walking and cycling to work,

as well as ensuring that, wherever possible, services are carried out by sustainable modes of transport. A refreshed and updated Travel Plan will help to encourage a healthier workforce, thereby driving better value for local taxpayers, as well as helping to improve Stevenage's environment, and decreasing congestion.

6.12   The Council is already taking a leadership role by having a small fleet of electric vehicles for staff operations (which are also available for the public to hire). The update to the Green Travel Plan will set out how the Council can go further in promoting the use of the electric vehicles to staff. The new Travel Plan will also consider implementing different types of bikes (i.e. cargo bikes, trikes, adapted bikes) and incentivising bike use (publicising the fact that mileage can still be claimed if staff use their own bikes).

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Draft Workplace Travel Plan	Jan 2019	SBC-Engineers	Existing and future SBC Engineers budget
Consultation	Feb 2019	SBC-Engineers	
Adoption of Workplace Travel Plan	May 2019	SBC-Engineers	

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan, SBC & HCC

6.13   In September 2017, the Borough Council and HCC jointly won a bid for DfT support to produce Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plans (LCWIPs). The programme makes available technical expertise to local authorities wishing to develop their local cycling and walking networks.

6.14   LCWIPs are identified in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy as a tool to identify strategic cycling and walking improvements at the local level. They seek to identify a costed and prioritised set of improvements and extensions to the cycle network. Work is currently underway to produce these plans for Stevenage.

6.15   The LCWIPs will use exiting tools and evidence to analyse trip origins and destinations to identify the key walking and cycling routes within the town. These

will then be analysed using the LCWIP methodology, which seeks to essentially put an economic benefit value on the interventions that are being considered.

6.16   This method of prioritisation for schemes, aligns with the DfT methodology for allocating funding for sustainable transport projects, and should enable the Council to attract external funding more easily in the future.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Identify key routes	Sep 2018	SBC – Planning, HCC	Existing and future Planning Policy budget
Assessment of routes	Oct 2018		
Identify, cost and score the impact of potential improvements	Nov 2018		
Completion	Dec 2018		

Cycle Hire Scheme, SBC/HCC

6.17   Cycle hire schemes are now a common sight in many cities around the world. There is an aspiration to introduce a cycle hire scheme into Stevenage, which would mean that not owning a bike is no longer a barrier to cycling.

6.18   Locating bikes in close proximity to the improved bus and rail facilities will establish a seamless intermodal network between locations around the town centre and employment areas, and will help visitors to the centre or railway station to continue their journey by bike. It will also enable local residents to make quick ad-hoc journeys around the town whenever it suits them.

6.19   The Council has begun discussions with potential providers for implementation by mid-2019.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Agree scope of initial cycle hire scheme with preferred operator	Dec 2018	SBC-planning	Cost neutral

Implement first stage of the cycle hire scheme in town centre/ rail station	Mar 2019		

Parking Standards SPD, SBC

6.20 In line with the recommendations of the Cycle Strategy Action Plan, the Council will be updating the Parking Standards SPD to ensure that aspirational levels of cycle parking are provided by new developments in Stevenage. The SPD will also provide an update to the types of cycle parking provision that should be required, including private, secure cycle parking for residents and workers, as well as easily accessible, but still high quality cycle parking spaces for shorter-term visitors to new destinations.

6.21 An updated SPD will set out the levels of vehicle parking expected in all new developments. This will aim to encourage users of sites to use more sustainable modes of transport, whilst still ensuring appropriate provision exists to avoid parking problems occurring. It will have strong links to the implementation of Liveable Streets concepts in new developments.

6.22 The new Parking standards SPD will also require new development to be able to accommodate electric vehicles. This will enable local residents and visitors to the town to more easily transition to using electric cars in the future. A minimum standard for EV points, for both residential and commercial uses, will be included within the revised SPD.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Draft Parking Standards SPD for consultation	Early 2019	SBC – Planning	Future Planning Policy budget
Public consultation	Mid 2019		
Amend and adopt final Parking Standards SPD	End 2019		

New developments, SBC & HCC

6.23 All new development schemes will be required to accord with the transport hierarchy set out in LTP4, which places greater emphasis on active travel than less sustainable transport modes. Developers will be challenged, through the pre-application process, to come up with innovative solutions to access and parking to ensure sustainable development takes priority and that local streets are designed for use by all and not dominated by cars.

6.24 The Council will require walking and cycling provision to be prioritised in all developments and high quality links both to and from existing networks, and within the scheme, will be required. The Liveable Streets concepts discussed in para xx of this strategy will be considered best practice, and developers will be encouraged to follow this approach to design in developing their schemes. Discussions will be held to ensure streets will be developed to an adoptable public highway standard, rather than being left as private streets, which can create difficulties in terms of maintenance.

6.25 New developments should also be designed to enable easy access to and from the site by bus. Buses should be prioritised over private car use and this may include upgrades of bus stops, road adjustments (e.g. bus lanes, gates or signalling priorities), or in larger developments, such as growth areas and urban extensions, rerouting or extending existing routes, or the creation of additional services. These will be secured through the completion of Transport Assessments and Statements, and Travel Plans secured alongside new planning approvals.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Ensure new developments deliver on the requirements of the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan regarding sustainable travel objectives	ongoing	SBC – Planning, HCC	Future Planning budget – application fees

Intalink Bus Strategy, HCC

6.26 This pan-Hertfordshire partnership seeks to promote an integrated, high quality,

well-publicised passenger transport network, with consistent ticketing across the county. It seeks to establish a consistent website and branding approach to buses in Hertfordshire which will create greater assurance and simplicity for users.

6.27 In the context of the recently adopted Local Transport Plan 4, which places stronger emphasis on prioritising sustainable journeys above those made by private car, and new powers enabled by the Bus Services Act (2017), HCC is looking to strengthen its partnership working arrangements with local bus operators through the Intalink Quality Partnership.

6.28 The intention is to use Enhanced Partnership powers to establish a statutory partnership, replacing the existing voluntary arrangements, to deliver actions against the following five objectives:

- Prioritising bus services in traffic
- Improving the image of buses
- Upgrading bus infrastructure
- Closer integration of the bus network
- Smarter use of data and information

6.29 The revised partnership arrangements will oblige bus operators to meet progressive standards of reliability, punctuality and vehicle specification. In return the county council will deliver schemes to unlock traffic bottlenecks which impact on bus operation and promote bus priority measures, as well as a range of hard and soft measures to promote and develop the de-regulated bus market.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Draft new Intalink Bus Strategy	Feb 2019	HCC	HCC resources
Consultation on the Draft Intalink Bus Strategy	Aug 2019		
Implement the new Intalink Bus Strategy	End 2019		

Bus user enhancement, Arriva

6.30 Stevenage bus station provides real time information to passengers at the station and through a smartphone app. However, Arriva have committed to a number of steps to improve the bus user experience in Stevenage.

6.31 Arriva's entire fleet of buses will be replaced with new vehicles on a rolling basis in the near future. Whilst there are no plans to make these electric at present, due to the number of miles covered per day, it will be considered for the future. Contactless payments are being trialled in other areas, with Arriva committed to the introduction of contactless payments on their buses by mid-2019.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Replacement of bus fleet	End 2019	Arriva	Arriva funding allocation
Introduction of contactless payment on all Arriva buses	End March 2019		

Removal of mopeds from Stevenage cycleways, HCC

6.32 When the Stevenage cycle network was first created the mopeds of the time, which were much lower powered than now, were permitted to use them. This was seen as safer than mopeds using the dual carriageways, in particular. More powerful modern scooters continue to use the cycleway network, which because of changes to vehicle types is not strictly lawful, but cannot be prevented given the wording of the tertiary legislation for the cycleways. Mopeds using the cycleways are reported to be intimidating and deter their use both by cyclists and by pedestrians.

6.33 HCC are working to bring the tertiary legislation up to date, in order to remove mopeds from the cycleways. This depends on both the making of appropriate Orders, and replacement or renewal of signage at entry points that will both clearly exclude mopeds and improve the profile of the cycleways (HCC are in the process of undertaking surveys to determine what is needed). Media engagement will be required to help publicise the change and encourage mopeds to comply; enforcement will then be down to the Police.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Scope of work to be considered and agreed	End 2019	HCC	Future HCC budgets SBC – future Engineers budget
Update of legislation and signage	End 2020	HCC	Future HCC budgets SBC – future Engineers

			budget
Media campaign	End 2020	HCC, SBC	Future HCC budgets SBC – future Engineers budget

Part 2: Following 2 years (2020 – 2022)

5th platform at Stevenage station, Network Rail

6.34 Construction of a dedicated platform for services around the Hertford Loop, which terminate at Stevenage, is essential to ensuring accessibility between north London, East Herts and Stevenage is improved in the future. At present these services depart from Platform 4, which also accommodates an increasing number of stopping mainline services. The new train timetables, with faster mainline trains, mean there is no room in the schedule for trains to branch off to Hertford. This problem will only be solved when a fifth platform is built at Stevenage railway station to accommodate these services.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Agree Design of 5th Platform	March 2019	Network Rail, SBC - Regen	Existing Network Rail transformation budget
Commence construction	2019	Network Rail	
Completion	2021	Network Rail	

Railway Station improvements, Network Rail, SBC

6.35 In addition to adding a fifth platform and improving connections to the station, improvements to the station to enhance the user experience will include better cover for those waiting for trains, an improved range of services for passengers, and an improved footbridge to the town centre. Together, the improvements to

the bus and rail stations will play an important role in the regeneration of Stevenage Central.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Consider scope of improvements	End 2019	SBC-Planning, Regen, Network Rail, HCC	SBC – Future Regen budgets
Consult on project details, and likely disruption	Feb 2020	SBC-Planning, Regen, Network Rail, HCC	LEP Board funding agreed in principle in 2016
Commence improvements	2021	Network Rail	DfT funding opportunities
Completion	2022	Network Rail	Future Network Rail and Rail operator funding

Extend contactless payment to Stevenage, DfT, Rail Operator

6.36 Approximately 12% of Stevenage's residents travel to work in London, with most of them doing so by rail. Ensuring that Stevenage is covered by London's contactless/Oyster card functionality will help to ensure that their journeys are as frictionless as possible. It will also help local businesses to attract workers from London as they will not need to buy separate tickets. Stevenage station already has the infrastructure to handle contactless ticketing, but at present the TfL pricing structure doesn't extend to Stevenage.

6.37 The Department for Transport, in conjunction with the train operator, would be responsible for implementing a change such as this. However, SBC, and particularly SBC Councillors, can also be involved in pushing this agenda via a lobbying role. The current rail franchise ends in September, and the renewal process will provide the opportunity for lobbying for Oyster if it is not in place by then.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Lobbying	End 2019	SBC – Members	None required
Introduce contactless	End 2021	DfT, Rail operator	Future DfT/Rail operator budgets

Stevenage Gateway – Improve intermodal connections at Stevenage Station, SBC/HCC

6.38 At present Stevenage station lacks good quality connections from the rail station into the town centre and surrounding residential and employment areas. The relocation of the bus station to create improved links between bus and rail will be an important change, but opportunities to reconfigure Lytton Way and redevelop the leisure park will create improved pedestrian and cycle-friendly environments, which will better serve as gateways for rail users into the jobs and services Stevenage has to offer.

6.39 The addition of a bike hire offer at the station will further benefit rail users who wish to complete their journey by bike, without having to carry their own vehicle on the train. A cycle hub, including secure cycle parking and other facilities will be provided at the station to ensure those cycling from near and far are able to confidently and easily switch between modes.

6.40 The Council, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, will consider the preparation of a planning document for the Stevenage Gateway area.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Agree scope of planning document	End 2019	SBC – Planning	Future SBC departmental budgets
Draft plan	End 2019		
Consultation on draft plan	End 2020		
Finalise plan	End 2022		

A1(M) Smart Motorway, Highways England

6.41 The A1(M) is a route of strategic importance linking London and the South-East

with the East Midlands, Yorkshire and the North-East. The A1(M) between Junction 5 and 9 is in the top ten busiest sections of the entire London to Leeds (East) route with existing capacity problems. The implementation of a SMART Motorway on this section of the A1(M), to include the use of the hard shoulder to enable "all lane running", will increase capacity on this part of the network. The scheme aims to reduce congestion and delays, improve journey time reliability, maintain a high standard of safety, and support economic growth and job creation. It will also create opportunities within Stevenage by moving through traffic back onto the strategic road network, thus freeing up capacity on local roads.

6.42 This project is already funded via the Roads Investment Strategy funding stream, and work is scheduled to begin in 2020. Further lobbying is likely to be required to push for full widening to deal with safety and congestion concerns.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Design stage	2019	Highways England	Highways England – already funded through Roads Investment Strategy funding stream
Work to begin	2020	Highways England	
Work to be completed	TBC	Highways England	

Parking Strategy, SBC

6.43 An update to the 2004 Parking Strategy will be produced, setting out how public parking will be managed across Stevenage. This will be a key tool in managing overall demand for the private car in Stevenage and should tie in with the other projects set out in this strategy to seek outcomes that reduce the dominance of on-street car parking in Stevenage, thereby creating space for liveable streets. It should also consider the implementation of EV charging points and whether there are other ways to future proof the infrastructure.

6.44 Car sharing, car-pooling, and car clubs are methods which promote the use of the car as a communal vehicle rather than a private vehicle. Incentives to encourage this should be considered, for example, designated car parking spaces at places of work for those who are car sharing.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Scope of work for Transport Strategy	End 2019	SBC – Engineers	SBC Engineers future departmental budgets
Draft prepared	July 2020		
Consultation	Nov 2020		
Adoption	March 2021		

Stevenage Travel Choice Business endorsement, SBC

6.45 Employers can have a significant role to play in encouraging their employees to consider behaviour change. Introducing a Stevenage Borough Council endorsement in the form of a logo/stamp of approval for employers who actively promote sustainable and active travel, could encourage businesses to get involved in meeting our objectives. The endorsement would be given to businesses who implement a set number of the included initiatives.

6.46 This could include initiatives such as:

- Offering incentives to encourage active travel
- Rail and bus discount cards
- Reducing on-site parking provision
- Promotion of car sharing and car clubs
- Improved cycle parking and facilities
- Implementing home working opportunities
- Introducing electric vehicle charging points

6.47 This has strong links to the SmartGo scheme (discussed under para xx), which many employers in Stevenage already sign up to, with the potential to use this existing communication network to promote such a scheme.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Liaise with SmartGo Stevenage consultants and	Jan 2020	SBC – Planning,	Costs

business network – understand links and scope of employers involved		Engineers	would largely be staff time.
Scope of scheme – initiatives to be put forward, practical arrangements. Identify examples from elsewhere.	Mar 2020	SBC - Planning	
Design of logo/stamp	Apr 2020	SBC - Communications, Planning	
Promotional activities	Apr 2020	SBC – Communications, Planning	
Expand to more businesses	May 2020	SBC – Planning, Communications	

Cycle training and education, SBC

6.48   The Stevenage Cycle Strategy Action Plan recommends training and education as a way to encourage increased cycling across the town, to ensure that residents feel confident, and are capable of accessing the cycle network. This can include on-bike training to familiarise people with cycling, maintenance courses, and more specific initiatives such as education on cycle locks to help reduce theft.

6.49   Engagement with schools and workplaces will be key in enabling this. Cycle training in schools, particularly, can help make an important step change in terms of travel behaviour early on. HCC already lead on the bikeability programme within some primary schools, which is part subsidised by DFT. Work should be undertaken to encourage the programme to be taken up in all schools. Stevenage Cycle Hub also has the ability to offer bike ability courses to children that fall outside of the school offer.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Create/extend "offer" to schools, and advertise	Sep 2020	SBC – Planning, HCC	Will require external bids for funding
Advertise potential offer to	Sep 2020		

schools			
Phased implementation	Mar 2021		
Fully operational	Sep 2021		

London Luton Airport expansion

6.50 Luton Airport has recently set out plans to increase its capacity again from 18 million passengers per annum to 36-38 million. Whilst the positive impacts of airport growth must be recognised, there are significant noise impacts from planes taking off and landing at Luton airport on the resident of Stevenage. The Borough Council will continue to lobby LLA to minimise the impacts of this growth on its residents, and seek the best outcomes for local residents.

6.51 Additionally, the Council is keen to see the economic benefits of the growth of the airport being shared with those it impacts, including the residents of Stevenage. Key to this, will be ensuring better links are provided between London Luton Airport and Stevenage for people to access the airport using public transport. Responses to the public consultation on airport expansion will be made, to ensure noise and surface access implications are fully considered.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Initial (non-statutory) consultation	Aug 2018	SBC – Planning	None
Formal consultation period – may require commissioning of noise consultant (by Herts authorities) to assess proposals relating to noise	Mid 2019	SBC – Planning HCC	Future SBC departmental budgets
Engagement and feedback	Late 2019	SBC – Planning, HCC, LLA	
Submission of DCO application and Examination	Late 2020	LLA	
Decision made by SoS for Transport	Early	LLA, SoS	

	2021		

8.   Medium Term Action Plan

6.2   The Stevenage Local Plan and HCC Local Transport Plan both have timeframes running until 2031 and the following projects and plans will be implemented during the period 2022-2031. These projects are generally not yet funded, but through being identified in this strategy, will become priority projects that the Council will seek to secure funding from a wide range of sources to ensure delivery.

Promote Stevenage as a destination for innovation in sustainable transport, SBC

6.3   Stevenage's unique and extensive infrastructure network offers an ideal location, within which the testing of new transport technologies could take place. Driverless car technology is advancing quickly, with cars currently being tested across the world. New ideas will need to be tested in a safe environment and Stevenage provides an ideal opportunity to promote itself as a location that encourages this type of innovation. With many high-tech companies already located within the town, businesses should be encouraged to get involved in these schemes and to make use of the town's infrastructure.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Consult with local businesses	Apr 2022	HCC	Unknown
Advertise Stevenage as a potential destination for trial projects more widely	Apr 2022	SBC – Planning	
Consult on any potential trial projects	Jun 2022		
Implement trial projects	Dec 2022		

Stevenage Outer Orbital Path (STOOP) Improvements

6.4   Stevenage has a community-identified orbital walking route (STOOP), which uses established rights of way to establish an informal, circular route around the town. This provides a great leisure facility for residents and the route is generally well

maintained and signed.

6.5   The Council will work with communities and surrounding authorities to promote this route to residents and visitors and ensure routes to and from the STOOP are well maintained and accessible to all.

6.6   There is some further potential to investigate opportunities to improve and expand the existing Rights of Way network across the town, and to investigate whether some pony tracks should be upgraded to bridleways so that they could be used for cycling as well.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Consult with STOOP to discover potential improvements	June 2022	HCC, SBC – Planning, North Herts, East Herts	Future S106 / CIL income
Consult on potential improvements with general public	Sept 2022		
Implement potential improvements	Jan 2023		

Underpass improvements, SBC/HCC

6.7   At present the underpasses which link Stevenage's segregated walking and cycling networks suffer from a perception of antisocial behaviour and crime. They form a crucial part of the transport network, and their increased use will over time help to improve their status. Many of the projects listed above will contribute to the improvement of the underpasses in Stevenage. However, it may also be appropriate to consider some specific exemplar projects to demonstrate what could be achieved with more innovative design solutions. Links

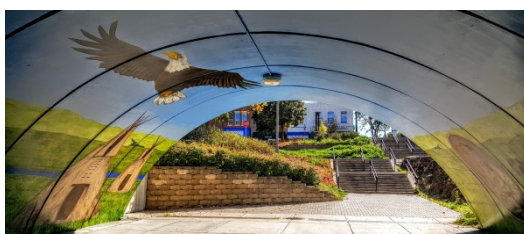Figure 8: Stevenage cultural strategy

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Figure 9: Holmes Street Tunnel, Shakopee (right). Wandsworth underpass improvement project (left)

with the Council's Stevenage Re-Imagined: A Ten-Year Arts and Heritage (Cultural) Strategy should be made, as improvements have the potential to look back to Stevenage's heritage, particularly around public art and architecture, for inspiration.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Create report setting out the issues and challenges of Stevenage's underpasses	Mar 2022	HCC, SBC – Planning, Regen, Engineers, Communities	Future Regen budgets
Consultation on the suite of potential improvements that could be made to them	Apr 2022		External bids i.e. to Arts Council
Identify pilot improvements	Aug 2022		Potential future CIL/ S106 monies
Implement pilot improvements	Sep 2022		Potential bid to the LEP in the future
Roll out upgrades across the network	Sep 2024		

Park and Ride schemes, HCC

6.8 There may be an opportunity to establish a network of park and rides, to intercept private vehicle trips between Hitchin, Letchworth and Stevenage, to maximise the public transport trips made into these centres. Demand would need to be tested with local bus operators and significant bus priority measures would be required to incentivise the use of such a service, alongside a potential reduction of parking availability within the town centre.

6.9 A park and ride scheme has the potential to provide cheaper parking for visitors, and reduce congestion in the town centre. Electric buses should be used to maximise carbon efficiency. Route must be quick and comfortable to provide an attractive alternative for car users.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Identify potential Park & Ride locations in/ around Stevenage		HCC, SBC – Planning	HCC budgets Future S106/CIL income
Consultation on the new facilities and range of destinations			
Implement the Park & Ride scheme			

Bus priority measures, HCC, SBC

6.10   Bus priority measures, to ensure buses are not held up in traffic congestion, can be key to improving the punctuality of buses, which is a priority for bus users. Making travel times quicker and more reliable by bus than by private car can make a significant impact in terms of encouraging their use. Stevenage does not currently have many dedicated bus lanes, or junctions where buses have priority over other road users (only one along Lytton Way, south-bound). There may be opportunities to make improvements to public transport efficiency in Stevenage, particularly along an enhanced North - South bus corridor, linking the town's employment uses and Stevenage Central.

6.11   Bus priority measures can include bus only links, signal prioritisation and bus lanes, and would need to be brought forward by HCC, as the Highway Authority, in partnership with the bus operators.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Consider outcomes of studies (Growth and Transport Plan and Intalink Bus Strategy particularly) that might recommend route options	2021	HCC, SBC – Planning, Regen	HCC future budgets Future S106/CIL income
Detailed design of priority measures on a sample scheme	2022		
Completion of works	2025		

Promote Electric Vehicle use, SBC

6.12 Consideration will be given to the development of an elective vehicle (EV) policy for the Borough. Whilst the revised Parking Provision SPD will set standards for EV provision in new developments, there are often difficulties associated with retrofitting charging points into existing properties. Providing charging points within public parking areas at neighbourhood centres and the town centre (destination charging) can offer a more practical solution. The development of an EV policy will provide the opportunity for a solution for existing neighbourhoods to be fully considered.

6.13 At present, the Council offers four electric car club vehicles for public hire around the town. The Council will seek to expand and promote its offer to encourage its use. This will be complemented with an increased provision of rapid charging points around the town to enable users to keep moving.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Implementation of more charging points	From 2019 (ongoing)	HCC, SBC – Engineers	Future SBC departmental budgets
Consideration of the need for an EV policy document (further timescales will depend on outcome of initial scoping work)	2020		

Electric bike hire scheme, HCC/SBC

6.14 Electric bikes allow a much greater range than traditional "push" bicycles. They do not offer the same health or environmental benefits, but will be a useful tool in getting some people onto bicycles who may not normally consider doing so. As such they have the potential to be a part of Stevenage's transport ecosystem, and we envisage an electric bike hire program being be trialled at the upgraded Stevenage railway station.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Identify potential provider for the scheme	2022	SBC – Planning	Unknown
Ensure delivery of necessary infrastructure	2023		
Implement delivery of the electric bike hire scheme	2024		

Route change proposals at Luton Airport

6.15   As part of the national airspace change programme, London Luton Airport (LLA) is required to update all of its departure procedures in a move towards improved satellite based technology. London Luton Airport (LLA) is using this opportunity to identify the most environmentally efficient way of managing airspace, with the main focus being on reducing the noise impact associated with aircraft operations. The proposed designs will look to replicate as closely as possible the routes being used today but they will also look at how they can move flights away from areas of population to reduce the noise in those communities.

6.16   Accordingly, LLA has scheduled a programme of works for improving and rerouting current departure routes using precision navigation technology called RNAV to enable aircraft to fly more precise routes. The departure route that flies over Stevenage is called '08 Match/Detling' and the engagement process on this route should be starting next year although completion is not expected for a number of years.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Trial new departure arrival routes	*Confirm with LLA*	LLA	London Luton Airport
Analyse implications of modified routes			
Update flight paths			

London Luton Airport rail link

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6.17 The Borough Council will work with neighbouring authorities and HCC to consider how access between the airport and Stevenage could be improved. Developer contributions to improve and enhance public transport to and from the airport will be sought. This might include more frequent bus services in the shorter term, and the consideration of a Stevenage to Luton Airport rail light link in the future.

6.18 It is envisaged that in the longer term, work could be undertaken in partnership with neighbouring local authorities and London Luton Airport (LLA), to investigate the potential for such a link in the future.

Action	Deadline	Who?	Potential funding sources
Respond to LLA consultations on airport expansion	End 2020	SBC – Planning, HCC	None
Consideration of Luton – Stevenage rail link	2031	LLA, SBC, NHDC, HCC, LBC	Unknown

9. Looking into the Future

6.1 Technological change in transport is moving at an ever increasing rate, and beyond the Local Plan period (post 2031), it is difficult to imagine potentially revolutionary changes in transport modes and functions. Whilst the National Transport Model predicts that car miles will continue to grow, certain academic research suggests that the average number of miles driven by car per person per year has reached a peak ('peak car'), and will remain static in the future or begin to decline.

6.2 With big investments being by many high tech players in the communications and transport industries particularly, it is nearly impossible to consider to the technologies that might need to be accommodated in the future.

6.3 Whilst it is not appropriate to attempt to prepare an Action Plan for post 2031, it is possible to suggest some longer term directions for transport policy which the Council might seek to maintain progress towards to achieve sustainable transport outcomes. Potential directions for policy may take account of a number of technological advances and institutional responses to issues such as major congestion, air pollution, climate change and so on.

Electric and autonomous vehicles

6.4 With the continuation of the transfer of automotive power to electricity as opposed to fossil fuels, it is likely that public infrastructure provision for electric vehicles will need to make a step change in the future. Will all vehicles eventually become electric? All modes will be affected, including cars, public transport, commercial vehicles, bikes and pedestrian assistance such as skateboards and scooters.

6.5 Trials of autonomous vehicles are underway across the globe. Opportunities for major change will arise through the increased use of automated driver assistance, leading to completely driverless vehicles eventually becoming common place. This may permit more efficient use of existing infrastructure, especially road space. Fleets of driverless vehicles could enable considerable reductions in the numbers of cars in use, through car sharing opportunities and reduced congestion offering journey time efficiencies. However, it could also result in more users

taking to the roads, due to opportunities to make use of private cars opening up to those who currently don't drive (particularly the elderly and younger population).

Technological advances

6.6   Another element in this changing scene relates to technological advances, which will enable many of the new developments to take place. The Borough Council and its partners will need to keep abreast of these innovations to make the best use of resources. Technologies such as 3D printing, the 'Internet of Things' and Blockchain advances, for example, may offer unforeseen opportunities to increase convenience, reduce resource use and improve environmental conditions.

6.7   Delivery companies are already investigating the use of drones and robots for homes deliveries, with the world's first commercial offering of autonomous package delivery on the ground recently being launched in Milton Keynes. These technologies are predicated to become more widespread.

Public transport advances

6.8   As well as the technologies relating to vehicles themselves, public transport is set to change as customers become more able to tailor their requirements to the more responsive transport which will be available. Demand Responsive Transit, using portable apps like Citymapper, may not need timetables and be able to seek passengers and respond more directly to their needs.

6.9   New technologies could also enable public transport to become faster and more convenient that other modes. Superfast trains could become reality in the future. The previously tested Hyperloop uses a combination of technologies to enable passengers and/or freight to travel at velocities approaching the speed of sound.

A non-transport future?

6.10   Improved communications technologies are already offering opportunities to reduce the need to travel altogether. Increasingly workplaces are making use of virtual communications such as Skype and videoconferencing in place of physical meetings, offering cost and time savings. This trend is expected to increase as technologies improve and progress. Reductions in peak hour travel may arise from more working from home and flexible working hours.

6.11   The emphasis for travel may well move away from work towards recreation and leisure activities which will have a major impact on the use of networks and modes.

6.12   Stevenage is particularly well placed to benefit from such innovation; both by virtue of its physical form as well as the presence of high end technology establishments which may be involved in research and development in new modes, propulsion fuels, guidance systems and so on. Future transport strategies will be concerned with a vastly different context in which Stevenage should aim to contribute to pioneering new solutions for as yet unknowable travel requirements.

6.13   All of these potential changes will have impacts on the way people and things connect and are moved around. As these technologies continue to develop, steps will need to be taken to ensure infrastructure is designed with future use in mind.

10.   Implementation and Delivery

Implementation

6.14   This is a strategy document, which contains the Council's aspirations to achieve an integrated, efficient transport network for Stevenage. Detailed estimates of costs, benefits, and time-scales for projects are presented in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

6.15   There will be several sources of funding for the projects and plans included in this strategy and while some projects have identified funding, many are the subject to future budget decisions.

6.16   The Borough Council will seek to use its own resources to maximise the benefits that projects can deliver against the objectives of this Strategy including acting in partnership with other stakeholders.

6.17   The Council will use this strategy to negotiate with partners at HCC and elsewhere on budget prioritisation.

6.18   The Council is currently taking steps towards the adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule which will secure a new funding stream for new infrastructure associated with new development. CIL is expected to be implemented in 2019, and will capture money from developments granted planning consent after this date.

6.19   Whilst the majority of CIL income can be used to deliver any infrastructure schemes across the town, 15% of CIL revenue is required to be spent within the area in which development takes place. This will potentially be allocated through the Community Neighbourhood Management (CNM) programme, as this identifies local improvements rather than those which are more strategic in scale.

Delivery

6.20   As noted previously, the Borough Council is not the sole provider of local transport projects. Hertfordshire County Council is the Highway Authority, and has been involved in the preparation of this Strategy. The County Council, alongside other stakeholders such as Network Rail, public transport operators and Highways England, will be crucial to delivering on the objectives of this Strategy.

6.21   Parts of the growth areas on the edge of Stevenage lie in East Herts and North

Herts District Councils. Stevenage Borough Council is working closely with our cross-boundary neighbours to ensure that the extensions to Stevenage have sustainable transport connections that will serve both future new residents and also benefit existing Stevenage residents.

6.22   Network Rail has overall responsibility for ensuring that the rail network is maintained, while the operation of services is the responsibility of the local franchisee. The Council will work with both of these bodies to ensure the best possible services are delivered, and the council's aspirations for an enhanced network and station facility are delivered.

6.23   Highways England has responsibility for maintaining and improving the strategic road network. This consists of the A1(M) through Stevenage, but it is recognised that other changes to the network could impact on Stevenage.

6.24   Luton Airport Ltd owns and operates Luton Airport, and the Council will be making representations about how the impacts of expansion there will impact on Stevenage. The Council will aim to secure the most beneficial outcome for Stevenage in terms of noise and other environmental impacts, transport benefits, and economic growth benefits.

7   Monitoring and Review

7.1   Monitoring is important to record what has been delivered and whether the aims of each strategy are being delivered, to inform what changes and new projects may be required in the future. It is intended that this document will be updated annually to take into account updates to projects. Informing any changes to this document will be a monitoring report containing on overview of what has changed in the previous 12 months. In addition to reporting on the progress of transport projects and strategies, the following existing Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) indicators will also be used:

1. To reduce the distance travelled to work

2. To increase the use of passenger transport

3. For 100% of residential completions to be within a 30 minute walk of key services

4. For all major applications to include a Travel Plan