



Joint Local Access Forum (JLAF)

for Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol City and South Gloucestershire

March 2024 JLAF: Background Papers

Some items on the agenda are addressed verbally at the meeting, therefore, papers are not available for every item on the agenda.

B: MAIN BUSINESS

B1: Active Travel Masterplan

1. Introduction

We need to make walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choice for a lot more of our journeys. Currently, over a third of car trips across Bath and North East Somerset are less than 5km.

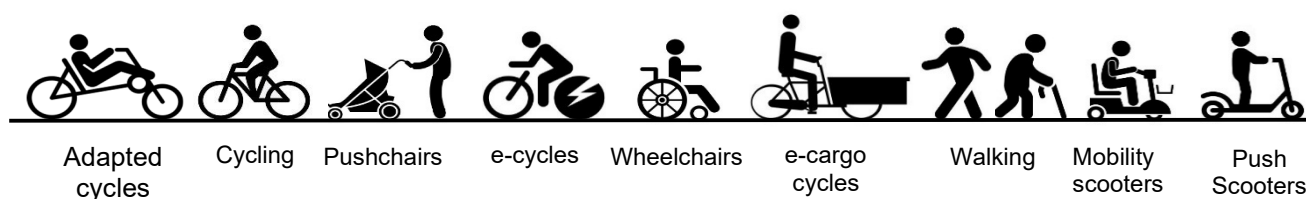
The importance of walking, wheeling and cycling, or ‘active travel’ as an affordable and accessible mode of transport has become increasingly apparent over recent years. Increased active travel can help tackle some of the biggest challenges we face as a society - improving air quality, combatting climate change, improving health and wellbeing, addressing inequalities, and tackling congestion on our roads. Bold action is needed to help create the places we want to live and work – with better connected, healthier and more sustainable communities. It will help deliver clean growth, by supporting local businesses, as well as making it more pleasant to move around and between our rural areas, towns, and city.

“We want – and need – to see a step-change in cycling and walking in the coming years. The challenge is huge, but the ambition is clear. We have a unique opportunity to transform the role cycling and walking can play in our transport system, and get England moving differently”. Gear Change – A Bold Vision for Cycling (2020)

Work has already begun developing the planning policy we need to enable more people to travel via active modes through the delivery of the Transport and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document sets out our approach and expectations for new developments and re-developments in relation to transport, including active travel.

The term ‘active travel’ within the Active Travel Masterplan refers to walking and cycling, as well as wheeling which includes the many other modes of wheel-based travel that supports the aims of the Active Travel Masterplan to

enable and encourage a shift away from journeys being made by a private car. Active travel therefore encompasses all the various modes, including people with disabilities and mobility impairments, as shown in figure 1 below.



2. What is the Purpose of the Active Travel Masterplan?

The Active Travel Masterplan will be a comprehensive plan that sets out the existing and future active travel infrastructure required to enable and provide for sustainable and healthy forms of transport in order to reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions across Bath and North East Somerset. The plan will be for all types of active travel whether it's for commuting, leisure or utility.

The Active Travel Masterplan will support the existing Local Plan framework and call upon those policies already included in other transport plans and strategies including the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), The Journey to Net Zero transport plan, the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), and the Transport & Development SPD. These documents have set out the policy framework including what we want to achieve and why. The Active Travel Masterplan will take this a step further by identifying how we achieve this by identifying where the improvements and measures that are needed to allow people to make the change in their travel habits as well as identifying how we can ensure that more of our roads and public spaces are able to be used by those on active modes.

By implementing infrastructure improvements and behaviour change campaigns, the Active Travel Masterplan will improve the safety, accessibility, and attractiveness of active travel options, while contributing to reducing carbon emissions from transport and promoting the health and wellbeing of residents through modal shift.

3. Active Travel and the Local Plan

Bath & North East Somerset Council (B&NES) is in the process of developing a new Local Plan for the district. This will establish the planning framework for Bath and North East Somerset up to 2042. It will contain a vision, strategy, and policies to guide and manage how the district grows and changes over the next 20 years, and how planning applications for new developments are decided.

The current ways in which we travel will not get us to carbon neutrality by 2030. The way in which we plan and provide new houses and jobs has a material impact on the way in which people choose to travel. Planning for

people results in developments and places for people, however planning for cars results in places that are dominated by cars. The New Local Plan is an opportunity that must be seized to make a real difference in how we provide for our journeys to enable people to travel by more sustainable and active modes of transport including walking, wheeling and cycling. Failure to seize this opportunity will result in more of our communities being dependent on vehicles that continue to emit harmful emissions.

In line with the Council's Corporate Strategy, one of the central aims of the New Local Plan is to respond to the challenge of the climate emergency and facilitate the goal of net zero carbon by 2030. Another key issue that the New Local Plan seeks to address is to set an approach to sustainable transport and movement which facilitates behavioural change and provide key facilities within walking or cycling distance. This approach will also help influence existing trips to be undertaken by sustainable modes as well as just those generated by new development.

The New Local Plan is a critical tool in helping deliver the active travel infrastructure needed, not just for those developments contained in the plan but for the wider community. In order to ensure that those dedicated and protected routes identified in the Active Travel Masterplan are not compromised or prejudiced by development, existing and proposed active travel routes will be safeguarded through the Local Plan. Any development proposals that would reduce, sever or adversely affect their delivery, use or attractiveness, or prejudice the planned development of the network will not be permitted unless acceptable provision is made to mitigate these effects such as through its diversion or replacement. The Local Plan will also require developers to demonstrate that any alternative provision is deliverable, convenient and safe.

The Active Travel Masterplan will play a pivotal role, serving as a key pillar of our transport strategy for the Local Plan. The sites outlined in the Local Plan are instrumental in realising the Active Travel Masterplan and advancing our efforts to decarbonise our transport sector.

B2: B&NES Local Plan

The Local Plan Options document, recently approved by the Cabinet on 1st February, marks a crucial step in shaping the future of our district. We value your input and invite you to participate in the eight-week consultation, which will run from **12th February to 8th April**.

Options for addressing our future development needs, including the delivery of new homes and jobs across Bath and North East Somerset, as well as policies addressing a range of issues including the climate and ecological emergencies, are presented for your consideration and comment. These options align with the council's Corporate Strategy and Economic Strategy, aiming for a fairer, more prosperous, and sustainable economy.

Residents and stakeholders are encouraged to share their thoughts on the proposed options by responding to an interactive version of the Local Plan online at <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/localplanoptions>, as well as taking part in a series of in-person events.

Representations can be made through the Council website or by post to Planning Policy, Bath and North East Somerset Council, Lewis House, Bath, BA1 1JG. Please note that we will not be accepting representations sent by email.

Find out more

Videos on the council website will give step-by-step guidance on 'How to Comment on the Local Plan' and explain 'What is a Local Plan' as well as outlining how the various options would help to deliver the council's priorities on housing, the climate emergency and sustainable transport. A second set of videos discuss specific locations identified in the Options report, as alternatives or options for potential development.

A series of drop-in sessions where people can discuss the options with council officers have been arranged at the following locations:

- Keynsham Community Space, 22 February
- Trinity Church, Radstock, 26 February
- Saltford Hall, 29 February
- The Hive, Peasedown St John, 1 March
- Bath Cricket Club, 4 March
- Whitchurch United Reform Church, 6 March
- Farrington Gurney Village Hall, 13 March.

All the drop-in events run from 3pm to 7pm.

Printed copies of the plan are available at Bath Central Library; Keynsham Library; Midsomer Norton Library; Bath Housing, Welfare and Advice Services and community libraries.

Consultation dates

The consultation opens today (**12 February**) and runs for eight weeks until **8 April**. You are encouraged to respond online on the council website:

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/localplanoptions>

Next steps

Following the consultation, the issues raised in all comments and feedback will be carefully considered, and a Draft Local Plan will be produced, which will be subject to further consultation. The Draft Local Plan and comments received on it will then be submitted to the Secretary of State and examined by an independent planning inspector in 2025. If approved, it will be adopted by the council.

For more information about the development of the new Local Plan please visit the council's website.

B3: Access Land

Use your right to roam

You can access some land across England without having to use paths - this land is known as 'open access land' or 'access land'.

Access land includes mountains, moors, heaths and downs that are privately owned. It also includes common land registered with the local council and some land around the King Charles III England Coast Path.

Your right to access this land is called the 'right to roam', or 'freedom to roam'.

What you can and cannot do

You can use access land for walking, running, watching wildlife and climbing. There are certain activities you cannot usually do on open access land, including:

- horse-riding
- cycling
- camping
- taking animals other than dogs on to the land
- driving a vehicle (except mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs)
- water sports
-

But you can use access land for horse-riding and cycling if:

- the landowner allows it
- public bridleways or byways cross the land – horse riders and cyclists can ride along these
- there are local traditions, or rights, of access

Dogs on open access land

You must keep your dog on a lead no more than 2 metres long on open access land:

- between 1 March and 31 July - to protect ground-nesting birds
- at all times around livestock

On land next to the King Charles III England Coast Path, you must keep your dog under close control.

There may be other local or seasonal restrictions. These do not apply to public rights of way or assistance dogs.

Excepted land

On access land some areas remain private ('excepted land'). You do not have the right to access these areas, even if they appear on a map of open access land.

Excepted land includes:

- houses, buildings and the land they're on (such as courtyards)
- land used to grow crops
- building sites and land that's being developed
- parks and gardens
- golf courses and racecourses
- railways and tramways
- working quarries

C: ITEMS TO REPORT/ FOR INFORMATION

C1: News from the Public Rights of Way (PROW) teams



South Gloucestershire Council Rights of Way Update for JLAF 7/3/24

Lindsay Saunders, Senior Public Rights of Way Officer

England Coast Path – Most of our section is now open but the part between Aust ferry and the old Severn Bridge has still not progressed and the diversion order for the public footpath has still not been submitted. There are some final information boards to go up at the south end but the majority of the signage is in place.

Volunteer work parties continued every week until January but the wet weather has now brought these to a standstill because they cannot get onto the land. Nonetheless, since the last JLAF Kingswood and Southwold Ramblers have been busy in Rockhampton, Falfield, Wickwar, Little Sodbury, Tytherington, Winterbourne and have installed 14 kissing gates and 3 pedestrian gates (without pens). The Cotswold Wardens continue to be busy doing running repairs and vegetation clearance throughout our part of the AONB.

Legal Orders

Highways Act Path Orders – We have 5 active applications at various stages and 3 awaiting certification.

Town & Country Planning Act Path Orders - We have 20 applications at various stages; all but 2 are confirmed and awaiting completion of development before they can be certified.

DMMO – We have 16 applications: 3 are waiting for other matters to be resolved; 1 is awaiting withdrawal; 5 have not yet been started and date from June 2021 or later; 3 went to committee at the end of November and are in the process of orders being made; 2 are with PINS; another has returned from PINS confirmed with a modification and notices have been placed on site.

Capital works

All the capital works have had to stop due to the wet conditions so the stoning works on bridleways at Oldbury and Tytherington have not taken place.

However, a pathway alongside the Ham Brook off a road named The Stream at Hambrook now has EA consent for works to rebuild the bank on which it

runs and is being funded by S106 money from the Crest Nicholson development at Harry Stoke. Work should be starting in April. We are also trying to obtain EA consent to works on a bridleway at Wixoldbury Farm in Wickwar where it crosses the Ladden Brook via a ford. The consent is proving difficult to obtain.



Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way team

March 2024 JLAF report

PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

Town & Country Planning Act

BCC/6 & 17	Ballast Lane, Avonmouth	Confirmed 18.01.2024	Improvements to the route secured from the developer
BCC/5 & 18	Wessex Water Works, Kings Weston Lane, Avonmouth	Currently being advertised	Diverted route around site of new water works development
BCC/482 & 478	Brislington Meadows, Brislington East	Currently being advertised	A number of routes added over the Homes England site.

Highways Act

BCC/80	Romney Avenue, Lockleaze	Confirmed 07.11.2023	Diverted onto desire line away from obstructed route
BCC/160	Manor Road, Frome Vale	Confirmed 01.08.2023	Diverted into open field, away from newly built houses and associated attenuation basin

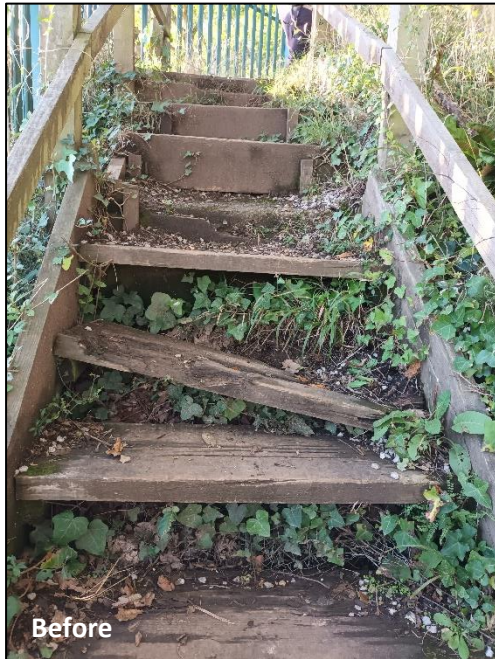
2023/24 PROW IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Capital improvement programme



1. Sea Mills Severn Way Bristol Link, Stoke Bishop (BCC/598, BCC/599). Install glass reinforced recycled plastic boardwalk and handrail under railway bridge, and clearance height signage. *Completed – see before and after photos above.*
2. Lamb Hill, St George Trooper's Hill (BCC/363). Removal of fallen bank materials, restoration of revetment walling, drain and gully clearance, and pedestrian road crossing measures. *TTRO applied for commencing 01/05/2024*
3. Cherry Orchard Lane/ Trym Valley, Westbury-on-Trym (BCC/89, BCC/90). Surface improvement. *Works underway Feb 2024*

4. Sir John's Lane/ South Purdown, Lockleaze (BCC/227). Surface improvement and drainage work. *To be scheduled 2024/25.*
5. Nibley Road Playing Fields, Shirehampton (BCC/544, BCC/596). Installation of surfacing and improvements to route condition. Works underway March 2024.



6. Severn Way Bristol Link at Horseshoe Bend, Shirehampton (BCC/597, BCC/588). Refreshment to existing path infrastructure including new steps, railings, and levelling of stairs. *Completed January 2024 – See before and after photos above.*

Externally funded projects

1. England Coast Path, Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston (BCC/543). Signage, waymarking and other improvement prior to England Coast Path opening (DEFRA funding). *Underway, to be completed Summer 2024.*
2. Grove Wood, Frome Vale (BCC/153). Renewal of steps, surface improvement, wall repair and removal of fallen trees (S106 funding and Enforcement). *To be scheduled 2024/25.*
3. Corbet Close, Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston (BCC/11). Surface improvement (S106 funding). *To be scheduled 2024/25.*

DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER CLAIMS

Claimed footpath at South Hayes and Parkside Gardens, Lockleaze – Prioritised as the most pressing application of those outstanding, based on the date of validation, and current status as obstructed. A report on this application has been written and will be presented to the Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee in Spring 2024.

Claimed footpath at Argyle Place, Cliftonwood - The Property Portfolio Officer was in the process of arranging the transfer to and adoption of the land by the Council, as required by a S106 Agreement. A report on this application is underway, to be presented to the Bristol City Council Public Rights of Way and Greens Committee in Spring 2024.

Team resource

Bristol City Council's Public Rights of Way team consists of two full time Officers and one part time officer working three days per week. A retirement of the part time officer is expected in 2024.

After the resignation of a full time Officer in July 2023, a new full time Public Rights of Way Officer was recruited in November to assist with the responsibilities of the team.

An external consultant will also be contracted in Spring 2024 to deliver DMMO application reports and address a longstanding backlog of applications. As of February 2024, this is in the tendering process with consultant evaluations made at the end of February.

Bath & North East Somerset Council PROW Update for JLAF 07/03/2024

Definitive Map

Somerdale Link, Keynsham – Following an investigation and public consultation, the Authority has determined that a DMMO should be made to record a public footpath commences from public footpath BA27/5 and proceeding adjacent and then under the railway line to public footpath BA27/87. The Order will be made shortly and both known landowners have indicated that they are not opposed to the recording of the route.

Lyncombe, Bath – The Authority is currently consulting with affected and adjacent landowners regarding the existence of public rights of way in what was previously the Lyncombe Ward and which now are part of Moorlands, Oldfield Park, Odd Down and Combe Down wards.

Stockland End Lane, Stowey Sutton – The Authority is currently investigating an application to record a route which was historically known as Stockland End Lane in Bishop Sutton as a public footpath. A public consultation will commence shortly.

Public Path Orders

Consultations – The Authority is currently consulting on proposals to divert:

- divert public footpath CL20/29 near Bishop Sutton Pumping Station in Stowey Sutton

Orders made – Following the completion of public consultations, the Authority has advertised the making of orders to divert:

- public footpath CL10/20 at Pitway Lane, Farrington Gurney
- public footpath CL21/48 at Slight Farm in Timsbury
- public footpath CL18/21 at Wick Lane in Stanton Drew
- public footpath CL16/56 at Westview, Paulton
- public footpath BA17/8 & 9 at Bath Mill Lodge Resort in Newton St Loe

Opposed Orders – The Planning Inspectorate have concluded the exchange of written representations in respect of the following opposed orders and decisions are expected imminently:

- public footpath BC16/1 near Kelston Road in Newbridge
- public footpath BA19/22 at Skylark Farm in Peasedown St John

Maintenance

BA2/5 (Riverpath), Batheaston

Public footpath BA2/5 which follows the northern bank of the River Avon in Batheaston has been closed following the collapse of the river bank at several sections. The Council is working with Atkins to identify and carry out the most appropriate remedial works so that the popular footpath can be safely reopened for the public.

BA12/34 & BA13/20 (Pipehouse Lane), Freshford & Hinton Charterhouse

Pipehouse Lane has been closed following significant water erosion which has left a 1m deep trench running along a section of the byway. The Council is working with Atkins to identify and carry out the most appropriate remedial works so that the byway can be safely reopened for the public.

Capital Works

As part of the 2023/24 capital programme the following improvements have been carried out on the rights of way network.

BA12/12 at The Tynning, Freshford

The Council has surfaced and constructed revetments along a 110 metre long section of public footpath BA12/12. The works ensure a firm and level surface along a section of footpath which had become muddy and was subsiding.

Before



After



BC33/8, Southdown

The Council has adopted the majority of public footpath BC33/8 which connects Ivy Avenue with Coronation Avenue in Southdown, Bath. As part of the adoption the Council has surfaced the adopted section of the path and refurbished the flight of steps.

Before



After



Other news

Cheryl Hannan retiring on 26th January following over two decade with the Authority's PROW Team. Cheryl has made a significant and lasting contribution to the PROW network and we are very grateful for her hard work and dedication. A recruitment freeze prevents us from filling this vacancy, so at present we are only able to address issues in the Eastern area where there is an immediate health and safety risk to the public.

C2: Somer Valley cycling improvements

CRSTS programme update

Context

In April 2022, the West of England Combined Authority was awarded £540m to improve the transport system in the West of England region, with the aim of providing more sustainable travel choices for residents, helping to achieve targets for net-zero Carbon whilst also working to level-up the region and deliver growth and productivity. This funding grant, for capital infrastructure, is known as the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS).

The Combined Authority has been working collaboratively with Bath & North East Somerset Council to develop proposals across the area, with a programme of investment focussed on a range of projects spanning public transport, walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Previous information sharing

In 2023, information was presented to various area fora meetings specifically to update on projects that were taking initial concept design proposals to public engagement. This included:

- **Somer Valley Links**, which seeks to provide improvements to public transport, walking, wheeling, and cycling, and better ways of transferring between different transport modes, focused on travel to, from, and within the Somer Valley area and along the key corridors of the A37, A362 (towards Bristol) and the A367, towards Bath. Information on the concept proposals and public engagement was presented by Combined Authority and B&NES officers at the Somer Valley, Chew Valley, Keynsham, and Bath area forum meetings in July 2023 during the public engagement period. A written update was taken to the Bathavon forum.
- **A4 Bath to Bristol strategic corridor**, which seeks to provide improvements to public transport reliability, journey times, and accessibility, and provide improvements in end-to-end walking, wheeling, and cycling improvements along the A4 corridor. Information on the concept proposals and public engagement was presented by a B&NES officer at the Keynsham and Bath area forum meetings in July 2023, ahead of the public engagement which took place between August and October 2023.
- **Bath city centre**, which proposed two sets of proposals for changes to transport in the city centre area, including: a better, safer and more direct route for cyclists through the city centre – connecting to existing cycle routes; and changes to St James's Parade and the Ambury Gyratory to speed up bus journeys. A brief trailing of the public engagement was given at the July 2023 Bath area forum meeting, with the public engagement subsequently taking place between November 2023 and January 2024.
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All materials that formed part of these public engagement exercises are available on the 'Have Your Say West' website (<https://haveyoursaywest.co.uk/>) which is managed and maintained by the West of England Combined Authority.

Current project status and updates

Somer Valley Links

Following last summer's public engagement exercise, the Combined Authority has developed the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme, which sets out the justification for the project proposals and rationale to continue with the further development, review, and refinement of proposals and their design. The results of the public engagement exercise have been collated and are presented in the 'Engagement Report'. This contains factual information on the responses received. This report is publicly available and can be accessed via the 'Have Your Say West' website, or via the following link:

<https://haveyoursaywest.co.uk/documents/Somer%20Valley%20Links%20engagement%20report.pdf>

The OBC was considered by the West of England Combined Authority Committee meeting on 26 January 2024. A decision was taken at that Committee meeting to approve the OBC and to approve the draw-down of funding to develop the proposals in more detail, including production of the Full Business Case (FBC). It was also noted that, going forward, further development of the project would be led by B&NES, rather than the Combined Authority.

Presently, the commissioned consultants are involved in the update and refinement of proposals to consider feedback received at the public engagement exercise, and further comments received following technical review and more detailed information on highway widths being made available. The revised proposals will be considered at a further public consultation event later in 2024, anticipated to take place in the summer.

A4 Bath to Bristol

A public engagement on the initial concept proposals was held between 21 August and 10 October 2023; attendance at the public events was high, and there were a large number of responses to the questionnaire and additional feedback provided by individuals and communities. An 'Engagement Report' is currently being prepared by the appointed consultants on behalf of the Combined Authority; it is intended that this will be published on the 'Have Your Say West' website once complete.

Some initial work has been undertaken to develop some components of the proposals further, but the main refinement to incorporate feedback from the public engagement and to fix the designs to measured highway widths will take place should the project progress to the next phase.

Currently, it is planned that the Outline Business Case (OBC) is taken to West of England Combined Authority Committee, scheduled for 15 March 2024. Should approval be given at that meeting for the project to continue, further work to refine designs and further develop the scheme proposals could then be undertaken, with a corresponding public consultation on the revised proposals being held later in 2024.

The project will continue to be led by the West of England Combined Authority.

Bath city centre

The initial public engagement for the Bath City Centre project completed on 02 January 2024. The responses to the public engagement are currently being reviewed and collated as part of the process to ensure all feedback can be appropriately captured and summarised in an 'Engagement Report'. It should be noted that, to date, the project has been led by the West of England Combined Authority with support from B&NES. It is currently anticipated that the project will be handed over to B&NES for further development and delivery during March 2024.

Other CRSTS projects coming forward in 2024

In addition to the above projects, the following schemes that are also part of the CRSTS programme are planned to be developed and have public engagement in 2024. Further detail on these schemes will be made available later in the year.

- **Bath Sustainable Walking and Cycling Links**, which will consider improvements to several routes in Bath identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP) to improve facilities for walking, wheeling, and cycling users;
- **Midsomer Norton and Westfield Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Links**, which will consider improvements to two routes between Midsomer Norton and Westfield, as identified in the LCWIP, improving facilities and accessibility for walking, wheeling, and cycling users.

Future updates

As plans for the projects progress, we will bring additional updates to the area fora at appropriate times. Dependent on the stage of the project, this may involve more detailed presentations, or further written updates.