

7. QUALITY OF LIFE

Nottinghamshire is unique in the diversity of its regions, varying from the 'rural idyll' of some of the villages in the south and east of the county to the industry-affected settlements in the north and west. In spite of extensive programmes of renewal to refresh local villages and to reclaim waste and brownfield sites, the environmental impact of heavy industry and the legacy of purpose built high-density housing still affects many areas. The industrial past has not only affected the environment of many communities, but has also impacted on their social and economic stability.

Recent surveys show however, that residents of North Nottinghamshire are generally proud of their areas, but want to see improvements in:

- Crime reduction and fear of crime
- The quality of their environment - particularly cleanliness
- Access to good schools, health services and jobs
- Access to the countryside
- Availability of leisure facilities, parks and amenity areas - particularly for young people.

The well-being of people is a central strand of the Council's strategic plan. The quality of the environment has a major impact on many aspects of community life and many environmental measures have a positive social and economic regeneration impact. There is also clear evidence that the response of individuals to their environment is closely linked to the quality of their everyday surroundings (including public spaces and streetscape), it affects the pride that people have in their community and has a major influence on their outlook on the wider world.

In the following sections, a number of factors important to the county's quality of life and additional to the shared and local priorities in this Plan, are considered. These relate to the quality of the physical environment, access to the countryside, education, social needs, crime and fear of crime, noise and needs of the disabled. Engaging with the community to deal with these aspects through a partnership approach is seen as essential.

7.1 PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

In the first LTP, the County Council developed a very successful model for establishing the wider needs of a community and the capability to deliver those needs. It is intended that this strategy is developed further in LTP2 as Local Accessibility Transport Studies (LATS) and this is detailed within section 2.5, Consultation.

The culmination of this community activity is the development of an agreed and fully supported Action Plan for the community. Inevitably this Action Plan will include a wide range of proposals which may include requests for better litter cleaning, more play areas, removal of graffiti, provision of parks and trees, as well as a range of transport measures. With the right level of support from a range of agencies, many of these issues can be tackled. The funding available from the LTP can also be used to match-fund wider work. For example in Harworth a community project is being developed to establish an urban park and improve the quality of life for nearby residents. The park will include an element of funding from the LTP to provide a safer route to school, a cycle route and additional lighting for safety. This funding has helped to release substantial partnership funding from various grant funding agencies (£200K from WREN, £168K from ERDF and £1K from TWEEG, a local environmental group) enabling the proposals to include comprehensive measures, e.g. nature trails, performance areas, play areas etc. This partnership approach has also engaged the Police to address issues of safety in the park, with the area being declared a zone of special policing.

7.2 STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

The transport strategy throughout this Plan contributes to people's quality of life within the Plan area. Some key elements of how the transport strategy can contribute to a better quality of life are to:

- Target urban areas of deprivation to complement the work of the 'Neighbourhood Renewal' initiatives. These areas, five in Mansfield and four in Ashfield, have been identified by Central Government as being within the top 10% of deprived wards in the country
- Give priority to communities with a perceived low quality of life (these areas correspond closely to areas of deprivation, but may also affect areas of relative prosperity but with intrusively high volumes of traffic)
- Work in partnership with the community to develop comprehensive plans for their areas
- Combine measures in a package approach to add value and to give value for money
- Improve links with health, education, police, social and economic agencies. Understand and bring forward their agenda to integrate with plans
- Provide the funding and capacity to implement agreed programmes
- Raise awareness of environmental issues.

Table 7.1 below highlights how measures and policies in the transport plan will help to address these quality of life factors.

Quality of life issue	How transport strategy will help	Engagement
Physical Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of perception studies, consultation and partnership working to identify priorities • Link to wider agenda from other agencies • Improve environmental awareness throughout the county to reduce waste, energy usage and unsustainable transport • Link to regeneration proposals • Invest in the infrastructure of town centres, particularly market towns, to ensure that they remain or become vibrant and attractive places to work and visit • Locate funding sources • Link transport measures with Building Better Communities initiative • Support the development and implementation of town centre renewal plans • Support local partnerships • Increasing interest in local marketing and supply • Crime prevention measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LATS/Local Development Framework • Partnership working • Consultation • Building Better Communities • Grant Funding Bids • Sustainability initiatives
Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise accessibility planning techniques to identify and respond to need • Complement local health, education, policing and social initiatives • Target these areas to improve walking, cycling and access to leisure facilities • Encourage sustainable and attractive developments • Link to wider agenda from other agencies • Improve access to education and skills training • Improve access to employment zones • Encourage the development of skilled/knowledge industries in target areas suffering from unemployment and low paid work through the provision of quality sites with good access • Increase local awareness of environmental issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LATS • Accessibility Planning • Local news reports • County Council publications • Media press releases
Needs of the Disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of perception studies, consultation and partnership working to identify priorities • Support and consult with local interest and user groups • Implement Disability Discrimination Act requirements, follow best practice to ensure availability of physical access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LATS • Accessibility Planning • Consultation • Equality Impact Assessment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise accessibility planning techniques to identify and respond to need Provide appropriate access to information 	
Social Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of perception studies, consultation and partnership working to identify priorities Provide improved public transport infrastructure Improve transport services to towns and district centres where jobs are concentrated Use accessibility planning techniques to assess problem areas Complement and promote access to local health, education, policing and social initiatives Utilise accessibility planning techniques to identify and respond to need Provide safe attractive environments with good quality schools and services to encourage skilled people to stay in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LATS Accessibility Planning Community empowerment
Community and Personal Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of perception studies, consultation and partnership working to identify priorities Support local partnerships and initiatives to combat crime Promote 'safe by design' measures Measure and provide information on real statistics Crime prevention measures (eg, improved lighting) Invest in local infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership working Consultation LATS Accessibility Planning
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate traffic management measures Environmental weight restriction Noise reduction measures (fencing, bunds, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LATS/Local Development Framework Partnership working Consultation Building Better Communities

Table 7.1 Measures and policies in the transport plan to help address quality of life factors

7.3 SOCIAL NEEDS

At the core of the County Council's wider policies, is the desire to create sustainable and cohesive communities. The Nottinghamshire Community Strategy seeks to tackle social exclusion in its widest sense. In the development of this Plan, much greater effort has been made to support the integrated needs of the community, with the transport strategy detailed throughout this Plan. The benefits of this type of approach have become more and more obvious during the course of the first LTP, and this Council has embraced that change by developing new integrated ways to engage with the needs of communities using Local Accessibility Transport Studies (LATS) as described in section 2.5.5, Future Consultation. The development of the Accessibility Strategy and the impact accessibility planning techniques will have on shaping the direction, priority and response of proposed measures will specifically address a variety of social needs, as described in Chapter 5, Accessibility.

The LTP2 will also seek to support regeneration schemes that will enhance the viability and vitality of towns and villages to encourage greater inward investment from businesses with the intention of addressing the issues of low income and unemployment.

7.4 NEEDS OF THE DISABLED

The County Council is well aware of its core statutory obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act and has long been involved in promoting its policy of equal opportunity for the whole community. The ability to move around the local community in a comfortable, safe and quick way, with a choice of modes of transport, is an essential aspect of our quality of life.

The County Council is committed to the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunities in employment and service delivery regardless of race, disability, gender, age and sexual orientation. The Council has already achieved level two of the Local Government Association Equality Standards.

The County Council has therefore developed the Service Diversity Review process to ensure all policies, practices and functions meet the equal opportunities commitments. Service Diversity Reviews assess if a service has adverse impacts on any community and where this is the case, and it cannot be justified, then the service is adjusted or amended accordingly.

Areas where the LTP plays a significant role in meeting the needs of disabled users are:

- Understanding the needs of the community through partnership working and appropriate consultation. In the North Nottinghamshire Plan area, the legacy of the mining industry has resulted in higher than average numbers of the community being incapacitated and disabled
- Physical access to the transport network across a range of modes. This is particularly important for public transport as many disabled people will not have access to a car
- Access to information about transport service provision and choices.

7.4.1 Consultation and awareness

Key to the process of understanding the needs of a wide range of people with differing abilities in our communities is communication and partnership working. It is important to understand the needs of disabled users. Disability Discrimination Act training was given to highways and transportation practitioners in 2004. During 2005 workshops were also carried out for Council and partner organisation highway design and operations staff, along with external partners at district councils, and contractors on the subject of highways infrastructure. These exercises have helped to raise the needs of disabled people further amongst staff who provide highway improvements for them. Such training will continue to be delivered as needs arise to ensure officers consider the needs of disabled users. Whilst consultation with disabled groups takes place on a regular basis further measures have been developed to enhance this, such as those detailed below:

- The County Council has developed a 'public engagement policy' as detailed in section 2.5 (Consultation) and the engagement of all service users (including vulnerable road users) is a key feature of the policy. Vulnerable groups, including disabled groups and disabled service users are consulted on a variety of transport and individual scheme issues
- Ensure that people with a disability are included within public consultation exercises. Consultation on the provisional and final LTP2 has included an extensive range of stakeholders (including those representing disabled groups). In fact 32% of respondents to surveys on the integrated transport measures programme to be included in the final LTP2 considered themselves to have a disability.
- An 'Equalities Impact Assessment' (which has now been succeeded by Service Diversity Reviews) has been undertaken on both the provisional and final second LTPs as part of the consultation
- Local Accessibility Transport Studies aim to improve the local mobility needs of all groups, with a particular emphasis placed upon vulnerable road users (as detailed within section 2.5.5 Future Consultation) Extensive consultation has taken place with disabled organisations in all of the locations where these types of studies (previously MMAAs) have been carried out.
- Public meetings and consultations are carried out at buildings that have access for the mobility impaired.

7.4.2 Physical access and infrastructure

A new non-motorised road user audit system has been put into place and it is intended that it will be used for all highway schemes to ensure that quality standards are maintained for vulnerable road users. It allows for the reasons to be formally documented wherever there is a good reason to deviate from the normal standards or guidelines, but also seeks that measures be put in place to ensure that this does not disadvantage non-motorised road users.

Mobility standards are set out in the Council's Highway Network Management Plan, which have been developed with reference to national standards such as the DfT's 'Inclusive Mobility' and 'Guidance on the use of tactile paving'.

The Council is proactive in constantly upgrading pedestrian provision at junctions for mobility, safety, quality of life and making best use purposes. Access improvements are in progress at signalised junctions, with the upgrading of all sites in the county with full pedestrian green man provision so that they have up to date dropped kerb and tactile facilities. In addition to this, sites with partial and no green man stages are being investigated on a priority basis in order to enhance pedestrian provisions at these locations. Both sets of work help to make access easier, and therefore improve the quality of life, for the visually and mobility impaired.

Budgets are also made available each year for the planned programme of improvements to, and installation of, dropped uncontrolled crossings in all areas of the county. Opportunities are also taken to introduce new dropped crossings as part of highway improvement and maintenance schemes.

In terms of physical environment improvements for disabled users, the County Council intends to continue many of the measures already being implemented during the period of the first LTP. These include:

- The installation of raised kerbs at bus stops (52.7% installed at the end of March 2005). This extensive programme of improvements continues based on priority routes as well as through co-ordinated maintenance programmes
- The continually increasing availability of accessible transport in Nottinghamshire, through grants for operators to modify non-accessible vehicles in order to make entry for wheelchairs easier, ie, through ramps and lowered floors
- Maintaining and improving the pedestrian environment
- The County Council's programme of access improvements at signalised junctions:
 - Phase one comprised the upgrading of existing signal crossing facilities to meet BVPI 165. As of March 2006 all sites fully comply with this performance indicator. This is an example of the County making 'reasonable adjustments' for users as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act
 - Phase two will include reviewing all 47 signal junctions that have no controlled pedestrian facilities. An initial appraisal has been completed for the 19 highest priority sites. Further survey work, feasibility and draft improvement designs must now be carried out, commencing with the top 19 locations, with a view to installing full or partial controlled provision in the future at the top ranking locations
 - Eighty signal locations have partial green/red man provision. Viability work is being carried out with regards to upgrading these to full provision at the locations wherever this is suitable and where the on-site constraints allow
- Assessments and upgrades of all zebra crossings in the county have been carried out to provide paving and dropped kerb heights wherever possible to improve access for mobility and visually impaired people. New crossings will continue to be provided to meet these standards
- Provision of tactile paving at uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points at all locations along distributor roads and on routes to shops/schools. It is also a requirement that all new developments have tactile paving at dropped kerbs

- Existing uncontrolled crossing points are monitored and annual improvements are made to such crossings on a priority basis as budgets allow. For example, tactile paving is added to locations where this has not been present before, or trip hazards and faults caused by wear and tear are addressed
- The County's recent 'Parking Provision for New Developments' document means enhanced standards of disabled parking provision, with at least 5% of all spaces being required for blue badge holders in car parks at sites of employment and 6% or more at shops or leisure locations. Partnership working with district councils on development control matters will help to ensure that these standards are applied across the Plan area
- Access to Council buildings, such as libraries, were assessed in 2003/04. Items such as new ramps, dropped kerbs, and high visibility markings to warn of hazards and handrails have been introduced wherever this requirement was identified. The Council will ensure that access to new Council buildings continue to meet the needs of disabled users
- Accessibility audits are currently being carried out on the rights of way network, giving an insight into the needs of all users (including those whom are blind, partially sighted and those with mobility problems). The audits will be developed into action plans to improve access for all users. Consultation with disabled users is also underway through the rights of way improvement plan. A programme of works will be developed to address the needs identified in the audits, where practical.

7.4.3 Information

As detailed earlier, careful scrutiny of strategy and policy to ensure that the needs of the disabled are not being overlooked is vital, as is the dissemination of relevant information in a variety of forms and media to reach all groups. Information on public transport and highways proposals is available in a variety of formats. These include audio and large print versions of documents. The Council's hotline contact number has a minicom and publicity is available in braille and on tape upon request. Public meetings and consultations are always carried out at buildings that have access for the mobility impaired.

The County Council has developed the TATA (Transport Accessible to All) guide, which was published in 2005. The guide aims to help people, who for reasons of disability or isolation, need to use accessible transport to reach the essential services, lead a more independent and fulfilling life. The guide aims to provide information on a number of public transport services, including social car schemes, minibus schemes, flexible bus schemes and dial-a-ride.

7.4.4 Other issues

Nottinghamshire will be introducing a revised concessionary fares scheme from 1 April 2006 which plays a significant role in helping disabled public transport users to access services they need. The new scheme will offer off-peak travel free of charge.

Accessibility planning techniques will be used to help identify the needs of all vulnerable road users including those with a disability, as well as identifying measures to improve access to such measures and therefore their quality of life. Section 5.6, Accessibility of this document gives further information on the vulnerable road users strategy.

7.5 EDUCATION

One of the County Council's top priorities is to provide an environment that encourages learning and LTP2 will play an integral part in the County Council's strategy to drive up educational attainment and access to quality employment. Education and training has a fundamental impact on the well-being of individuals and affects their ability to secure good quality jobs, their appreciation of leisure and cultural activities, and their health which has a significant impact on the development and cohesion of communities. Access to education and training, as part of the accessibility planning process, forms a cornerstone of this transport Plan and is detailed within chapter 5, Accessibility.

The accessibility planning work will be able to define, over the plan period, those areas of the county that have the greatest problems with educational attainment, skills training and access to employment sites. Measures will be developed to improve access for those communities.

To improve the quality of its educational establishments, the County Council has embarked on a major programme of school rationalisation and renewal in Mansfield and Bassetlaw using the Private Finance Initiative process. The benefits of these new schools are considerably enhanced when linked to good and easy access arrangements with the communities they serve and strong links have been established between education, road safety and transport officers to maximise these benefits.

One of the main ways that quality of life will be improved is by improving accessibility to training sites. Much of this work is detailed within chapter 5, Accessibility, and in the accompanying accessibility strategy, however some of the measures that will be explored and/or promoted during the period of this plan are:

- Travel plans at colleges of further education, including area based travel planning solutions
- Install public transport information kiosks at colleges of further education, including the installation of electronic departure boards for inter-site and the general bus network
- Promote the take-up of cycle training.

7.6 HEALTH

Transport provision affects the way people choose to travel, and the way people choose to travel is closely linked to health. Transport helps contribute towards developing healthy communities and addressing health inequalities, and can therefore help improve both quality of life and life expectancy. The obvious links between transport and health include the fact that around 3,200 people are killed in addition to 31,000 seriously injured each year on UK roads, and traffic levels are one of the predominant factors in contributing towards exceedences of national air quality standards. A 2005 study by the European Commission calculated that poor air quality is thought to result in over 32,000 premature deaths in the UK alone each year.

A Health Development Agency report in 2005 reported that ensuring people have easy access to health facilities and services, leisure facilities, employment, education and healthy food provision can all contribute to preventing ill health. The Government White Paper, 'Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier' also states that improved access and individual lifestyle choices will result in healthier communities.

It is therefore considered that there are four key areas that transport influences health:

- Improving road safety
- Improving air quality
- Increasing accessibility
- Encouraging more physical activity.

7.6.1 Road safety

The perception of road safety contributes to deterring people from using more sustainable and healthy modes of transport, such as cycling and walking. The use of publicity campaigns to address these pre-conceptions is therefore vital to help people make the change, as well as providing training to help people of all ages cycle and walk safely.

Good progress is being made on meeting the 2010 casualty targets of 40% reduction in killed or seriously injured (KSI). In 2004, when compared to 1994-98 baseline average the number of KSI casualties in North Nottinghamshire has decreased by 17%. Full casualty details and the strategy to meet these targets is detailed within section 3.2, Problems and Opportunities and Chapter 6, Safer Roads of this Plan.

7.6.2 Air quality

Whilst no Air Quality Management Areas have been declared in North Nottinghamshire there is still room to improve air quality across the Plan period. Air quality assessment, monitoring and strategy is detailed within section 3.5, Problems and Opportunities and Chapter 9, Air Quality. The strategy to help manage current traffic levels and stem future traffic growth are detailed within chapter 8, Congestion.

7.6.3 Accessibility

As detailed elsewhere within this chapter, accessibility plays a major role in improving a person's quality of life. In relation to health, this is both in terms of access to services, such as doctor's surgeries, health centres and hospitals, as well as access to leisure facilities that provide healthy activities. Access to these types of services are detailed within Chapter 5, Accessibility.

Access to the countryside

The quality of the local environment is important. However, good access to the countryside is also fundamental for our wider quality of life. Not only will better connectivity between the town and countryside reduce the problems of rural isolation, but it will encourage a healthier lifestyle for urban residents. The natural environment and country parks, with opportunities for sports, recreation and exercise can contribute to health and well-being, tourism and the local economy as well as quality of life. The county's built and archaeological heritage also makes a significant contribution to local distinctiveness and quality of life.

The county has a wide range of significant natural assets with areas such as Sherwood Forest and the Trent Valley. The 'On Trent' initiative has recently underlined the importance of the latter and has drawn attention to the potential of other waterways such as the Grantham and Chesterfield Canals. Wetlands and flood plains, some of which are the product of earlier extractive industries, are key natural assets, which are not only important for wildlife but also offer recreation and economic opportunities.

Details of the developing Rights of Way Improvement Plan are given below.

RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

All local highway authorities are required (under Section 60 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000) to develop a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) by November 2007.

After the passing of the CROW Act, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) required the Countryside Agency to develop best practice guidance for use by all local authorities. In order to achieve this, the Agency identified eight exemplar local authorities to take part in producing pilot ROWIPs from which best practice could be drawn. Nottinghamshire County Council was selected as an exemplar authority and Nottinghamshire's Pilot ROWIP was published and submitted to DEFRA in March 2004.

Links to transport objectives

The ROWIP has clear links with the County's quality of life objectives. One of the three key strands, as stated by the ROWIP statutory guidance, is an assessment of the opportunities provided by public rights of way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the countryside.

Clearly, any work to enhance the public rights of way network will encourage greater use and lead to improvements in overall health and well-being. The network has a major role to play in quality of life, particularly in areas on the urban fringe.

Overall, the ROWIP and network are intrinsically linked with wider quality of life issues. These include:

- Social inclusion: rights of way are available to use for all; they are free to use and link all members of the community with friends, relatives, services and leisure facilities
- Land use and planning: rights of way contribute to providing an attractive environment to live and work. Corridors are retained and protected providing a relief from development and reclamation
- Environment: rights of way enable users to access and understand both the built and natural environment and their culture and heritage. This is particularly relevant when linking urban centres with the peace and tranquility of the countryside
- Wildlife and biodiversity: not only do rights of way link users with the natural environment, the rights of way network itself provides a green corridor and refuge for flora and fauna
- Education: rights of way provide excellent opportunities for studying both the built and natural environment and they are a very important part of our history and heritage
- Sporting activities: opportunities arise from the use of rights of way for a whole range of sporting activities from jogging, access to water based activities, cycling, climbing and horse riding to motor sport. They are also used for other interests such as bird watching, orienteering, photography and dog walking
- Local economy: visiting the countryside and using rights of way contributes to tourism, and the local and regional economy directly through user spend thus ensuring the viability of local services and employment (particularly in rural areas)
- Health: the use of rights of way through walking, cycling, riding and other physical activities contribute to overall health and well being. The very nature of the countryside enables users to relax, unwind and enjoy fresh air.

Rights of way also serve as functional routes, especially in the urban fringe, and have a role to play in improving accessibility to local schools and other facilities. (For more specific accessibility opportunities afforded by the rights of way network see the Local Accessibility Action Plans within the accompanying Accessibility Strategy).

As part of the ROWIP the Council will identify and enhance routes that link to the wider transport network, with emphasis on the development of linear access, such as former railway corridors and riverside paths and towpaths.

The following list gives examples of potential schemes that will make a significant contribution to the shared LTP2 and ROWIP objectives:

- Trent Riverside Path
- Extension of Silverhill/Teversal Trails
- Other railway lines as part of the strategic multi-use network, for example: Bevercotes, High Marnham, Bilsthorpe, Rainworth, Ollerton and Newark to Bottesford
- Whitewater Bridge, Ollerton.

Partnership working has been key to the success of several schemes. The Council will continue to build upon this. For example, a major £50 million bid and project to set up a regional park in the Sherwood Forest area includes a significant element of improving access for all in Nottinghamshire and importantly, regionally into the surrounding counties. The ROWIP and LTP will play a major part in achieving this.

The County Council will continue to seek to ensure the widest participation in the planning and delivery from all stakeholders. A comprehensive business plan will be developed in parallel with the ROWIP, with particular emphasis on building upon the ROWIP action plan. The provisional key objectives will be worked on in recognition of the key findings from the needs consultation and assessment of the network, and linked with the LTP's shared objectives.

Many of the Council's ROWIP provisional objectives, key themes and actions align with the LTP and therefore assist in delivering wider transport and quality of life objectives. The ROWIP also meets other objectives not directly linked with the LTP, such as wider health benefits and targets, recreational activities (e.g. Sport England objectives) and education through history and heritage. We will continue to work with our partners in achieving these 'other' shared objectives.

In order to achieve these objectives the Council recognises that more resources are needed. However, by working more efficiently and prioritising, working closer with our partners and seeking new funding opportunities, improvements, benefits and best value to all sectors of the society will be possible. This type of working is already producing benefits.

The production of Nottinghamshire's acclaimed pilot plan, drawing upon best practice (such as adopting York City Council's whole network approach rather than individual routes), guidance and the work completed so far, will ensure that Nottinghamshire produces a productive and forward thinking ROWIP in Spring 2007. This will contribute to the overall LTP shared objectives and prepare this new priority area for full integration into the LTP process.

In order to enable the ROWIP to be implemented in parallel with the LTP a funding contribution will be made from the LTP throughout the Plan period. In Nottinghamshire, £50,000 per year for rights of way improvements and £20,000 per year for signing improvements has been provisionally allocated from LTP funding, in addition to £200,000 revenue funding. Further LTP funding is also available for specific identified schemes during the Plan period. This will be supplemented with bids for external funding from Landfill Tax opportunities and Aggregates Levy funding, as well as important contributions in kind from local stakeholders.

Progress summary

The Council is progressing well towards the submission of its final ROWIP. Consultation on, and amendments to, the pilot plan have been undertaken and a draft of the final version is planned for public consultation in October 2006. Publication of the final Plan is still on schedule for March 2007.

For the purposes of the pilot, a smaller area was identified on which to test a series of principles covering the districts of Ashfield, Broxtowe and Gedling (and therefore stretching into the Greater Nottingham Plan area).

The pilot ROWIP provided a well researched overview of the problems and opportunities for rights of way in three of the seven districts in Nottinghamshire. It also set a framework for the preparation of the full ROWIP by November 2007. A considerable amount of data collection on the condition, use and demand of the network was undertaken. A large number of provisional policy statements and an action plan were identified, which required evaluation and consultation (detailed below) before being taken forward into the full ROWIP. Some key areas for development emerged from the pilot including:

- More awareness raising about the network
- Better standards of provision on existing routes
- A more connected network
- Safer and more accessible environment for users
- More pro-active procedures for planning and 'definitive map' work
- Better information on user distribution and network conditions.

A Local Access Forum was established in July 2003 as a requirement of the CROW Act 2000 which incorporates a ROWIP sub-group. The role of this consultative sub-group is to advise and make recommendations to the County Council on the development of the ROWIP.

The pilot ROWIP has been very well received by all, including the sponsors of the pilot plan, and a lot of the thought process, layout and policy will be used as the basis for the draft final ROWIP.

The County Council has continued to work towards the development of a full ROWIP for submission by the Government's deadline. Work has focused on five key areas which are detailed below.

1. Ascertain the needs and demands of different users (walkers, horse riders, cyclists, less able, carriage drivers, motorised users etc.)

During the last year a major consultation exercise was undertaken, consisting of:

- A detailed and comprehensive survey of 14,000 County Council employees, which had a 10% response rate
- A smaller survey, based on the above questionnaire, of visitors attending two major Nottinghamshire public events, resulting in over 500 returns
- Bespoke user surveys aimed at individual user groups (walkers, horse riders, cyclists and recreational motorists) have been distributed widely and subsequently collated from individuals and organisations interested and involved in Nottinghamshire's rights of way network
- A specific 'land manager' survey has been distributed to both members of land owning/management organisations as well as individual farmers. The Countryside Access team attended an agricultural event to gather farmers'/land managers' views and priorities on access
- From the pilot plan it was identified that there is a lack of information on the density and distribution of horses. Consequently, a survey of the number and location of horses in the county has been embarked upon. This information will be used to identify priorities in the bridleway and byway network
- External research specialists have carried out a series of three focus groups (established users, the 'general public' and land managers) on our behalf focusing on a series of access related issues
- The pilot plan has provided valuable data for a particular geographic area of Nottinghamshire and this information will be integrated into the main ROWIP document
- Key trends have been identified from the consultation so far: a full analysis is in progress and the results will form the action plan and policy setting in the full ROWIP. These initial findings have helped us formulate immediate short-term and medium-term plans such as a signing and waymarking programme aimed at increasing user confidence of the network thus providing, for example, viable sustainable transport alternatives, recreational opportunities, healthier lifestyles, greater social inclusion for disadvantaged groups and rural economic regeneration.

It is intended that the consultation process and analysis will be completed by March 2006.

2. Assess the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and other forms of outdoor recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area

As part of the ROWIP, councils are required to assess their definitive map and statement, requests for improvements, the condition of the current network and assess the wider non-definitive network. The County Council has started this exercise by examining, in detail, four areas in the county and recording the findings on GIS software. The main thrust of this mapping exercise is to examine all current rights of way unsurfaced roads, permissive paths, open access, commons, etc. This will identify a large number of issues; for example, the current state of the network regarding condition, maintenance and missing links; incorrect status of routes; required improvements; the ease of making these improvements; resource requirements; and the nature and extent of barriers – both built and natural. A detailed review of non-definitive access countywide, including GIS mapping is also being undertaken. These exercises will help the Council produce a business plan to roll out for the whole of the county.

Also in these four areas, the Council has consulted in detail on satisfaction levels and work priorities with parishes, parishioners, land managers, borough and district councils and user groups including people with disabilities. This will include the production of a local 'wish list'. This

list will be used not only to make a priority list of improvements but will provide the Council with an example of a structured and costed programme to use as a model for the rest of the county.

The assessment will be taken together with a review of current management, strategies and policies to identify priorities, gaps and missing links in the county's network. The assessment will be finished and completed by Easter 2006. This 'case study' data will be summarised and fed into the main ROWIP document and the full studies annexed. Findings will also be used as part of the proposed business plan.

3. Accessibility of local rights of way for blind and partially sighted people and others with mobility problems

A full accessibility audit has been completed in one of the four network assessment areas. This survey, undertaken by the Fieldfare Trust has given an invaluable insight into the needs of all users in a 'typical' path network in Nottinghamshire. The survey has highlighted the challenges ahead in improving access, through identifying and surveying the natural and built network environment; for example, cross and linear gradients, surfacing, furniture, resting places and rural gateways. The findings will be progressed into an action plan on improving and opening up the countryside to all users. Consultation is on-going with disabled users through individual interviews, organisations and the Local Access Forum, both on wider access issues and on the access audit. This qualitative data will feed into the action plan.

As part of the pilot ROWIP process a detailed policy document on network structures and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been developed. This has enabled the County Council to be more proactive and structured in its approach with reference to the replacement and installation of new structures. The Council will continue to build upon this whereby the provision of the least restrictive option becomes part of everyday work programmes. To complement this, the provision of clear information (to enable someone to make an informed decision of whether to use a particular route) will be enhanced thus promoting confidence and independence. The Council's ROWIP consultation process on the needs of the network identified this of being of particular importance in enabling 'an access network for all'.

4. Reviewing the relationship of the ROWIP to plans, strategies and other documents

In the pilot plan the Council emphasised the importance of the ROWIP in picking up key themes and complementing the aims and objectives of existing plans and strategies. The Council will continue to build upon this work and ensure the integration of the ROWIP into wider policies and plans (nationally, regionally, county and district, and parish and community).

5. A review of existing internal policies

The Council will keep under review its existing policies relating directly to rights of way areas of work such as those regarding motor vehicles in the countryside, Disability Discrimination Act policy in relation to stiles and gates and crime and rights of way.

High level statement of policies and objectives for improving the rights of way network

As part of the pilot ROWIP 18 policy statements were drafted: 11 relating to network improvement, six to network users and one on supporting partnerships. The policy statements are detailed in nature and will form the basis of the first draft of the full ROWIP which will be subject to consultation in 2006.

The objectives of the ROWIP recognise the Council's statutory duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy the public rights of way network, and to maintain an accurate and up-to-date definitive map. The full ROWIP also needs to recognise the interests of agriculture, forestry and other land occupiers in the management of the public rights of way network.

The provisional key objectives of the full ROWIP are:

- a. To protect, maintain and seek to enhance the network for all lawful users
- b. To improve access to the network for all, including those with visual impairment or mobility problems, by adopting the principle of the least restrictive option
- c. To improve the safety and connectivity of the metalled road and rights of way network
- d. To increase awareness of the network and the understanding of the wider benefits arising from its use, such as leading an active and healthy lifestyle, and making a positive contribution to the local economy
- e. To ensure that both the LTP and ROWIP complement and assist each other in the delivery of their common objectives
- f. To provide a complete and up-to-date definitive map and statement, with particular reference to map anomalies and the 'Lost Ways' project.

Table 7.2 below sets out some provisional actions included in the pilot ROWIP (and likely to be included in the full ROWIP) and an indication as to which provisional objectives they link to.

Actions	Objectives					
	√√ = direct link		√ = indirect link			
	a	b	c	d	e	f
Network Maintenance						
Signing and waymarking	√√	√	√	√	√	√
Structures	√√	√√			√	
Surfaces	√√	√√			√	
Ploughing and cropping	√√	√√				
Enforcement	√√	√√			√	
Network Enhancement						
Disabled Enhancement	√√	√√	√	√√	√	
New and enhanced routes	√√	√√	√		√√	√√
Road safety and connectivity	√		√√		√√	√
Planning and development	√√	√√	√	√	√√	√
Transport interchange / gateways to countryside paths and sites	√	√√	√	√√	√√	
Network Awareness						
Publicity and promotion	√√	√√	√	√√	√	
Information on the accessibility of routes 'for all'	√	√√	√	√√	√√	
Definitive Map						
Up to date	√√		√		√	√√
Up to date information conveyed to external agencies	√	√	√	√√	√	√√
Ensure users / landowners are confident regarding legal status	√			√	√	√√
Lost ways	√		√	√	√	√√
Partnerships						
Land occupiers / farmers	√√	√	√	√	√	√√
Parishes	√	√	√	√	√	√√
Internal colleagues	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√

Other public and private bodies	√	√	√	√	√	√
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Table 7.2 Provisional actions included in the pilot ROWIP

7.6.4 Encouraging physical activity

The health community has particular priorities associated with tackling health inequalities, obesity and coronary heart disease. The LTP offers a significant opportunity to contribute to meeting these health priorities and other objectives through measures to promote cycling and walking, increase accessibility to health establishments, and reduce congestion, air pollution and accidents. Transport's main contribution towards people undertaking more physical exercise is a two-pronged approach, promotion/marketing and infrastructure.

The first LTP began to address the dominance of the car in provision of road space, with greater emphasis being given to cyclists and pedestrians, and this is something LTP2 hopes to build upon. The provision of safer walking and cycle routes will create more opportunities for people to exercise with new facilities providing the basis for a more active lifestyle and creation of safer communities.

The continued development of walking and cycling networks includes traffic free routes attractive for promoting physical activity, which will be implemented and improved over the Plan period. Extensive sections of canal towpath have been upgraded to form high quality cycle and pedestrian routes and it is envisaged that the links to the wider network will be improved during the course of LTP2 (Figure 7.1 shows the current national and regional cycle network in Nottinghamshire).

The continued provision of highway infrastructure to enable people to cycle and walk, as well as ensuring the rights of way network is available, offers further opportunities to encourage people to lead more healthy lifestyles. This work will also help deliver wider health benefits and targets as well as those aimed at recreational activities, such as Sport England's objectives.

One of the key benefits of the County Council's initiative to improve the environment has been the provision of better quality and safer public open spaces, which also encourage healthy activity. Under the Building Better Communities programme, which specifically targets the most deprived wards in the county, major investment in urban parks and amenity areas has taken place around the county which have been integrated with transport programmes. Examples of this successful partnership can be found at Harworth, where community 'planning for real' exercises identified the need to develop Snipe Park as a hub for recreational activity as well as an important route to school for local children, which in turn encourages children to walk to school.

To complement the development of infrastructure, promotion and marketing of physical exercise will be undertaken. The Council already works in partnership with organisations, such as primary care trusts and the Obesity Strategy Prevention Steering Group to promote healthier lifestyles and travel choices, and this work will continue during the lifetime of this Plan.

Whilst the Council has been a partner in setting up health linked programmes, such as adult cycle training courses in partnership with primary care trusts, much of this work has been developed through effective travel planning.

The implementation of workplace travel plans is a key tool in improving the health and well being of the workforce, and the new LTP will seek to build upon the existing schemes in place, which currently cover around 10% of employees. Travel plans help raise awareness of sustainable alternatives to car trips and promote the benefits of walking and cycling to work, helping to improve levels of fitness through the encouragement of cycling and walking.

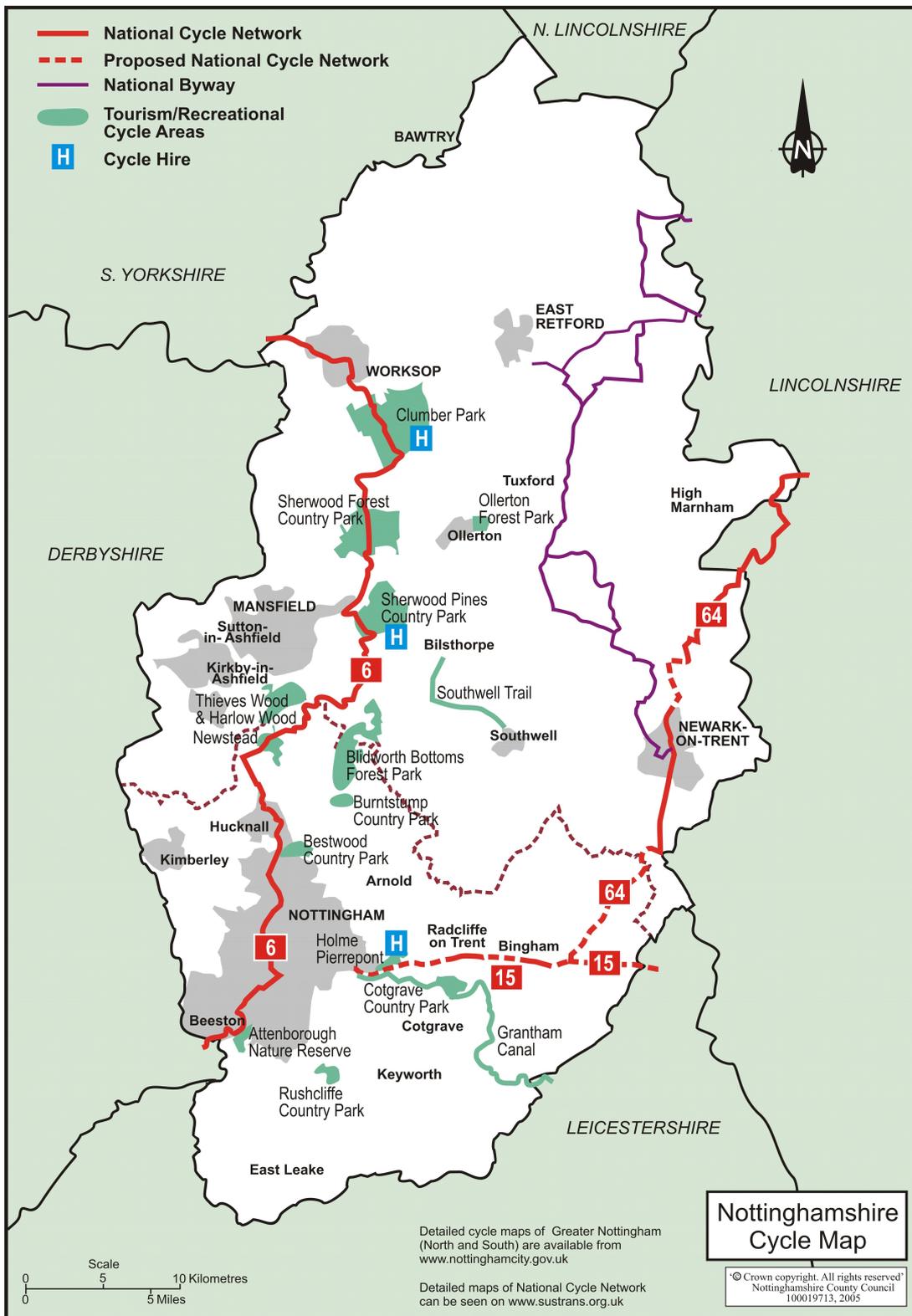


Figure 7.1 Cycle network in Nottinghamshire

TransACT partnership funding can further influence this by providing on-site infrastructure such as changing and storage facilities for those who walk or cycle to work. The Smarter Choices programme of work will continue to offer opportunities to help address health issues through the development of plans as well as active travel campaigns carried out to support national campaigns such as 'National Bike Week' and local campaigns such as the 'Walk Week' which is carried out in conjunction with 'Walk to School Week'. The opportunity to carry out local active

travel campaigns is also likely to feature as part of LATS. The smarter choices programme of work also plays an active role in Nottinghamshire's Obesity Prevention Strategy through membership of the Obesity Strategy Prevention Steering Group.

Similarly school travel plans play a vital role in encouraging children to lead more healthy active lives. Plans are even more effective when they are developed in conjunction with the 'Healthy Schools Initiative' and therefore schools are encouraged to develop the links between the two initiatives jointly whenever possible.

The County Council is also currently investigating the feasibility of adopting a similar marketing concept to the Greater Nottingham Plan area's 'Big Wheel' branding in North Nottinghamshire. Whilst any such branding would be associated with all modes of transport, it could be utilised to convey the importance of the link between the way people travel and health benefits.

More detail on Smarter Choices is detailed within Section 8.2 of the congestion strategy.

The amount of exercise undertaken by the Nottinghamshire public will continue to be monitored through the personal travel survey to be undertaken towards the end of the Plan period and via Sport England's Active People Survey.

7.7 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The attractiveness of the physical environment plays a vital role in creating sustainable communities, thereby reducing the need to travel, and the County Council's Highway Design Guide and Sustainable Develop Guide detail the standards that are required of developers so that they provide high-quality spaces for people, that are not dominated by motor vehicles.

By making town centres, other shopping areas, residential streets, and rural roads places for all road users, the quality of life in these areas can be greatly improved. Making better provision for walking and cycling facilities can also contribute to wider objectives such as improving community health. The County Council has therefore invested substantially over recent years in supporting environmental improvement programmes that have benefited the centres of Mansfield, Kirkby in Ashfield, Newark, Retford, Southwell, Tuxford and Worksop.

The County Council recognises that the design and maintenance of public transport infrastructure (e.g. bus stops and shelters, stations and interchanges) are also important in improving perceptions of the ease, security and comfort of travelling by public transport to deliver the congestion, pollution, accessibility, and safety benefits of increased public transport patronage. Consequently there is a programme to upgrade all bus stops in the county (as detailed within the accompanying bus strategy) and the provisions of improved interchanges are included within this document in both the major and minor schemes detailed in Chapter 12, Five year Programme.

7.7.1 Building Better Communities

The Building Better Communities (BBC) programme aims to invest around £25m of Council funds between 2004/05 and 2008/09 in the county's built environment. The initiative will concentrate on physical improvements across the county with an emphasis upon the more deprived wards.

The first year of the project was in 2004/05, with 240 schemes being delivered and 85% of the spend being in the top 25% of deprived wards (based upon Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2000).

Requests for schemes are invited annually on a 'ground up' basis from parish councils/community groups which then need to be endorsed by the local County Council Ward Member to be considered for inclusion in the programme.

Funded projects in 2004/05 were prioritised against the following criteria:

- Maximum impact on improving the appearance of the area
- Impact upon social disadvantage by providing community benefits
- Ease of completion
- Ability to lever in additional funding
- Satisfying a long standing or community defined need.

In addition, requests are taken through a cross checking process that looks at the added value and integration that can be achieved if maintenance issues, transport measures, health and education benefits and additional grant funding bids are packaged together.

There are several examples of BBC and LTP programmes being matched to achieve added value and broaden the extent of the proposals, such as:

1. Carlton Hill Shops. This scheme has been jointly funded through BBC and LTP. The project involves an environmental improvement outside a parade of shops adjacent to an area that benefited from an improvement scheme during the late 1990s. Dropped kerbs were provided and high quality paving materials used to link the shops to the remainder of the shopping area. The improvements have been very well received and have reinvigorated this local shopping area. Upon completion the project was badged as the 300th completed BBC scheme and had good media coverage.
2. Sherwood Drive, Ollerton. Funding for this £300,000 project has been contributed from four different sources demonstrating the cross checking procedure to best effect. The project is essentially an environmental improvement scheme using high quality materials and incorporating widened footways, new street furniture, taxi and loading bays and a dedicated cycle route. Funding for this scheme was made of contributions from: Sub Regional Strategic Partnership (SSP) £95,000; Developer Contributions £60,000; BBC £70,000; and Local Transport Plan £75,000.

More generally, measures will be developed to:

- Enhance the attractiveness, appearance and safety of 'rural' towns and villages to ensure that they are attractive to both businesses and the community. This type of work can be supported by a complementary range of measures within LTP2 such as improvements to pedestrian, cycle and bus facilities
- Target urban areas of deprivation to complement the work of the 'Neighbourhood Renewal' initiatives. These areas, 5 in Mansfield and 4 in Ashfield, have been identified by Central Government as being within the top 10% of deprived wards in the country. Although additional Government funding has been ear-marked for these wards, the County Council is expected to use its existing budgets to provide additional help. This new capital fund will help to complement this process and can be linked to a prioritisation of measures from the LTP2 programme. An example of where this approach has already been effective is in Warsop. The re-shaping and regeneration of the town centre is complementing the 'Making Places' work on the adjacent Royal Estate (one of the Neighbourhood Renewal Area target wards). Substantial community partnership work has already taken place to develop an agreed programme of works that is now being implemented
- Address areas of special need in the county e.g. Worksop with its recent history of job losses. The Bassetlaw Task Force Group has identified a number of economic measures required to stimulate local regeneration. One of the key economic drivers in Worksop has been identified as the town centre. Marrying LTP2 and BBC measures together to support, for example, the Townscape Heritage Initiative, could be used to revitalise run-down retail areas. This approach may also be appropriate for encouraging the redevelopment of under-performing town centre areas such as the 'White Hart Street' area of Mansfield
- Improve environmental awareness throughout the county to reduce waste, energy usage and unsustainable transport
- Integrate accessibility planning analysis, local transport needs studies and economic health-check surveys, to establish appropriate master plans and action plans for towns and villages. Community involvement in this process is essential, together with the support of the local planning authority.

Flexibility to ensure deliverability is retained in the BBC programme by approving a greater number of schemes for implementation in each year than can be delivered. A number of approved schemes are identified for delivery in the subsequent year and these make up the 'front end' of that subsequent year. Should it be necessary to identify additional projects to be built at any time, schemes can be accelerated forwards from this pool awaiting delivery. This ensures a full budget spend annually.

7.7.2 Maintenance

Effective maintenance of the Council's existing assets will play a major role in providing a good quality of life, not only in terms of helping improve accessibility but also in terms of the physical environment. The County Council's strategy to deal with such issues is detailed within chapter 11, Making Best Use.

7.7.3 Heirarchy

An important factor in improving pedestrian routes is a clear road/street hierarchy. The Council's obligations under the Network Management Duty and emerging road user hierarchy (as detailed within Chapter 11, Making Best Use) will help to develop such a hierarchy. A consistent approach to paving, lighting and street furniture provision helps create a sense of place and confidence for unfamiliar users. Government guidance promotes the undertaking of route audits and these are carried out by the County Council as a means of identifying deficiencies that are dealt with through the Council's footway programme to improve discontinuous routes. Such routes will help ensure people feel safer, and through improved lighting, clearer sight lines and slower traffic, are safer, fulfilling the Council's obligations under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

7.7.4 Housing

Whilst the provision of housing is largely out of the County Council's control, close partnership working with district councils in the development of local plans and on new developments helps to ensure that they are located with good, sustainable transport links. Sensitive but effective control of land use planning is vital in delivering a successful sustainable development strategy and consequently 'sustainable communities', and more detail on this is included within the strategy to manage congestion in Chapter 8.

7.7.5 Waste

The effective disposal of waste is vital in delivering a good quality of life. The County Council's strategy for dealing with waste is detailed within its Waste Local Plan which can be found on the County Council's website <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk> and is set within the context of the Nottinghamshire Structure Plan Review. The Plan sets out the policy framework for dealing with future waste management proposals and identifies a range of possible future sites.

7.7.6 Landscape and Biodiversity

The effects of transport on the environment, landscape and biodiversity, including wildlife, is assessed within the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which accompanies this Plan. A summary of the SEA can also be found in Chapter 9, Air Quality. Consultation and close working with the Environment Agency/English Nature on individual scheme selection (including new, renewal and maintenance schemes) and design will also help to protect wildlife from the effects of transport.

Landscapes can make an important contribution to the quality of life of local communities. Not only do they play a role for their natural beauty, but they also offer opportunities for outdoor recreation thereby encouraging physical activity and improving health. The County Council consult local communities and stakeholders on all its policies and schemes, including the impact

they may have on the landscape and biodiversity. These impacts can usually be mitigated through careful, sympathetic design, and this is particularly important within conservation areas, and other rural areas to ensure that they do not increase the urbanisation of the countryside.

When designing all sizes of schemes a variety of alternative schemes are explored to ensure that environmental (as well as other) factors are considered as part of the design process. For example, when designing town centre improvement schemes in Newark and Southwell, the historic landscape of these towns was a major consideration. Similarly, the Council is currently reviewing its cycle design guide, in particular the provision of cycle facilities in rural areas, to ensure that they are suitable for the rural environment. On the MARR major scheme many environmental considerations were made including provision of crayfish ponds, culverts for badgers, water vole protection of riverbanks and planting of wild flowers.

The Council has designated 25 'notified road verges' as species rich requiring special management. These sites are maintained in separation to the remaining highway verges, and 'hay meadow management' is undertaken to maintain their natural environments. In addition to this there are numerous 'sites of importance for natural conservation' across the county and the Council is reviewing the way that these verges are maintained.

7.8 COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL SAFETY

The creation of safer and stronger communities is an integral part of the Council's Community Strategy. Transport has an important role to play in tackling crime and improving personal security. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created a duty on local authorities to take account of community safety in all areas of their work and this is reflected in the LTP. It includes crimes committed by motorists, individuals on public transport and in terms of people feeling safe whilst using the highway.

The County Council acknowledges that crime and fear of crime is one of the top areas of concern for many of its communities. The Council will therefore continue to work in partnership with district councils, the Police, the local community and other key partners to identify and help fund appropriate measures.

Fear of crime on public transport

Crime and fear of crime on public transport is a major constraint in encouraging people to use more sustainable modes of transport. A DfT study in 2004, 'People's perceptions of personal security and their concerns about crime on public transport' envisaged that effectively introducing measures to enhance personal security would result in a 12% increase in journeys.

To fully address this problem all elements of the public transport journey will be investigated including the walk to and from a bus stop, the wait at the bus stop and the bus journey itself. Similarly measures will be put in place to address such shortfalls, for example improved street lighting, improved waiting infrastructure and CCTV on buses.

Safer Environment

Poor quality public spaces and traffic-dominated environments (such as lack of lighting and poor urban design) can result in people feeling disorientated, isolated, intimidated and unsafe. Investment in measures to address such things are included below and also within section 7.7 of this chapter.

Traffic violations

The Council works in close partnership with the Police to try and ensure effective traffic enforcement. Enforcement of static and moving traffic violations will, however, be considered in due course as part of the County Council's developing decriminalised parking enforcement strategy (which is detailed within Chapter 11, Making Best Use).

7.8.1 Measures undertaken to reduce crime and fear of crime

A range of measures are undertaken to reduce transport related crime and fear of crime to meet the Council's Strategic Plan and transport objectives. These measures include:

- Improvements to street lighting in areas where there is a record of crime or perceived fear of crime. During 2005/06 £50,000 of Council funding (in addition to £100,000 of external funding) was spent on these schemes in North Nottinghamshire and this amount has also been allocated for 2006/07. These schemes are generated by reference to public concerns and crime statistics. In addition partners provide matched funding in some areas. Financial contributions to this work have been received from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and the County Council's Building Better Communities initiative
- Continued partnership working with district councils, parish councils, crime and disorder reduction partnerships, local businesses and the Police to enable CCTV to be installed on the highway and on highway infrastructure where technically possible. Temporary CCTV cameras installed on suitably converted lighting columns have been employed by the police to target crime hotspots. Most town centres have CCTV installed or proposed and these cover identified routes between key facilities. Networks will be encouraged where possible on routes covered by CCTV
- Improved security associated with public transport, such as the use of CCTV on buses, improved lighting at bus stops and the use of CCTV in taxis
- Where appropriate, crime is designed out of all transport infrastructure, for example, open bus shelters
- Partnerships to reduce town centre violence
- Working in partnership with district councils to introduce secure cycle parking. In Mansfield stands covered by CCTV have been built in a town centre car park that is very close to the shopping area. Additionally secure stands have been provided at the Water Meadows Centre a public facility that previously had no cycle parking
- The introduction of procedures to close or divert footpaths and rights of way on crime and disorder grounds, under Section 118/119B of the Highways Act 1980. The agreed protocol identifies closure as a final measure. Initially the local Crime and Disorder Partnership will consider any options to reduce criminal behaviour in the area
- The statutory duty to consider crime and disorder in all that it does under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Section 17 is recognised within the Council's Cross-Service Road Safety Plan 2003-2010, and the Plan has a clear emphasis on speed reduction measures
- As part of the Town Centre Management Partnerships, the establishment of community safety wardens in town centres such as Mansfield
- Integration audits undertaken to identify improvements to links between bus and rail stations, bus stops and cycle and walking routes. Improved security is a key element of this process
- Help points at rural rail stations in Nottinghamshire have been installed by Central Trains as part of a rail quality partnership
- Addressing vandalism issues on the railway. In partnership with the British Transport Police and Railtrack, a series of crackdowns on vandalism and trespass on the Robin Hood Line have been carried out, including an ongoing monitoring process
- Replacing subways with other appropriate forms of crossing (in line with recognised good practice)
- Responding to local concerns, such as 'stranger danger', which may arise from reports from the public or in the preparation and implementation of school travel plans.

7.9 NOISE LEVELS

The UK National Noise Attitudinal Survey 1999/2000 undertaken by BRE for DEFRA surveyed the community response to environmental noise, involving over 5,000 respondents. Of the respondents 84% heard road traffic and 40% were bothered, annoyed or disturbed by road traffic to some extent.

In 2001 the Government published its consultation paper 'Towards a National Ambient Noise Strategy' which recognised the EU policy that was being developed and proposed a phased approach to its implementation.

Phase one (2001-2005) aimed to establish the ambient noise climate in England as well as the adverse effects of ambient noise, paying particular regard to the quality of life. It also aimed to establish the techniques available to improve the situation where it was bad, or preserve it where the situation was good. Phase two (2004-2006) aims to evaluate and prioritise options for action in terms of costs and benefits. And in Phase three (2007) the Government will agree the necessary policies to move towards the completion of the National Ambient Noise Strategy.

The County Council will consider the implementation of Government's noise strategy when it has been defined. Wherever possible, particularly as part of major transport projects and planned structural maintenance, 'quieter' surfacing materials and techniques are used to minimise and reduce noise. Planning policies also seek to protect occupants in noise sensitive developments from traffic noise, by design or insulation, to achieve recommended internal noise standards.

Nottinghamshire County Council will continue to be represented on the Air Transport Forum for Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield, which includes a noise monitoring sub-group to oversee the impact of noise by aircraft movements, including freight, on the local community. The County Council is also keen to input into any noise assessment where freight traffic is a primary cause for concern.

The County Council will review its current policies on environmental weight restrictions to minimise the flow of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) in residential areas where possible. The Council recognises that a number of towns and villages in the Plan area have long standing aspirations for bypasses for their communities to reduce nuisance from intrusive levels of traffic. It has not been possible to include many of those plans in this LTP, however the Council intends to review those schemes to see what low cost traffic management measures could be introduced to reduce nuisance.

The LTP has a major role in reducing and preventing the severance of communities. Substantial elements of the transport strategy detailed within the Plan play a part in reducing severance of communities, for example through strategies to improve accessibility, regeneration, improve real and perceived road safety dangers, reduce congestion and through direct measures such as the provision of infrastructure to remove severance, provision of services within communities, and provision of information to make smarter choices.