



Bridgwater Town Council

A SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT POLICY FOR BRIDGWATER

Vision: Bridgwater Town Council's transport policy will make everyday lives better, support businesses and encourage travellers to be healthier and make Bridgwater greener. This will take account of health and safety, affordability and environmental issues. The Council will encourage complementary, rather than competitive, transport systems and achieve accessibility for all. Good transport networks are vital to community well-being. Creating ease of access and egress to town and surrounding areas is vital to the development of our community and local economy.

The Bridgwater Transport Forum will work on the following plans in consultation with users' groups, Councils, businesses and public to develop the Framework for a Sustainable Transport Policy for Bridgwater.

What will success look like?

The Council will know when it's been successful in delivering the vision, with the following changes resulting from key areas of work:

- active travel - more journeys being made actively by cycling and walking;
- bus service improvement and increased use;
- better connectivity with rail;
- lower demand for parking - fewer car journeys being made, particularly to work and school;
- climate change action - lower greenhouse gas emissions from road transport; and
- BTC Transport Forum – regularly lobbying Somerset County Council on Bridgwater's transport priorities.

Indicators showing how transport will deliver against the key areas

- Putting pedestrians, children and cyclists first - safer transport systems and regular audits of street and pavement safety along with promotion of safe cycling in schools and via social media;
- Improving well-being and physical health - increased number of people walking and cycling via promotion of cycle paths, shared pavement;
- By reducing congestion – contributing to a more vibrant economy;
- Campaigning to reduce income inequality – with improved travel choices and cheaper fares;
- Protecting the environment – lower carbon emissions and improved air quality;

- Seeking to hold Somerset County Council accountable as the Transport Authority – promoting the Town Council’s Transport Strategy through regular liaison via a re-established County Transport Forum; and
- Bridgwater Town Council will actively promote walking, cycling and bus travel in a variety of ways.

Plans Required:

- **Active inclusive travel plan for walking and cycling;**
- **Public Transport Services Development Plan including both buses and rail;**
- **Parking Plan; and**
- **Each plan will feed into the Greener Bridgwater Climate Change Plan.**

STRATEGY

A. BUSES

- Rail /bus integration vital. The Celebration Mile project is crucial to this;
- Bus companies need to do wider consultation/market research to develop new routes, answer need and avoid multiple companies chasing same route; and
- BTC should take part in or develop a ‘use it or lose it’ campaign

B. CARS

- Key through-routes into town centre to be identified;
- Cars should be barred from accessing town centre via Eastover and Town Bridge crossing;
- Development of Park and Ride facilities on a North/South axis essential; and
- Promotion of electric vehicles and development of sites for re-charging them

C. CYCLING

- Better and more logical provision of cycle routes and paths;
- Wider pavements, to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians;
- Proper audit of cycle routes;
- Cyclists code to be promoted locally; and
- All new roads should include cycle provision.

D. HIGHWAYS

- The town’s internal road infrastructure remains largely that of a mediaeval town, with narrow roads and pavements;
- Audit of roads in and around town required to assess suitability/availability/diversions required, etc.; and
- Aim to reduce accessibility of private cars to the town centre but to access edges with increased parking and linkage and therefore more pedestrian friendly central location.

E. PARKING

- Parking options for traders required in streets otherwise closed to private parking;
- Better provision for private parking in town centre vital;

- Better enforcement of parking restrictions required; and
- Residents parking zones to be encouraged where majority residents support provision + increased monitoring and seepage into early evening to allow residents to benefit after work.

F. **PEDESTRIANS**

- Wider pavements required;
- Meeting needs of disabled, children and elderly to be more consistently practised;
- Safety of pedestrians the key factor; and
- Audit of pedestrian provision including drop kerbs.

G. **TAXIS**

- Confirm adequacy of taxi rank provision and/or amend accordingly.

H. **TRAINS**

- Increased ticket office opening hours necessary to meet needs of growing population;
- Planned improvements for bus and taxi access to station forecourt;
- Advertising of train services in town centre;
- Increase in number of HST trains stopping at Bridgwater; and
- Better provision to meet the gap between platform and train such as Harrington Humps.