

Essex Cycling Strategy

Place Services and Economic Growth
Policy and Scrutiny Committee

21st March 2024

What is the Essex Cycling Strategy?

High-level plan for cycling in the county, detailing how we will increase cycling to support our wider Sustainable Transport ambitions

The Strategy will include the following key elements:

- **Strategic Vision** for cycling in Essex
- Six overarching **Outcomes** that we want to achieve
- Linked **Activities** and **Actions**, that we are committed to, to make this happen
- **Targets** to monitor our progress

Will sit 'under' the new Local Transport Plan (LTP 4)

Replaces the existing 2016 Essex Cycling Strategy

Will help us to seek wider funding to invest in improving the network



Our asks of Scrutiny

- What do you think about the overarching targets for the Strategy?
- What do you see as a measure of success for each of the Strategy outcomes?
- What does success look like for your residents?
- How will you use this Strategy?

Why now?

Ambitions around cycling are changing

Bolder ambitions for cycling within Government policy:

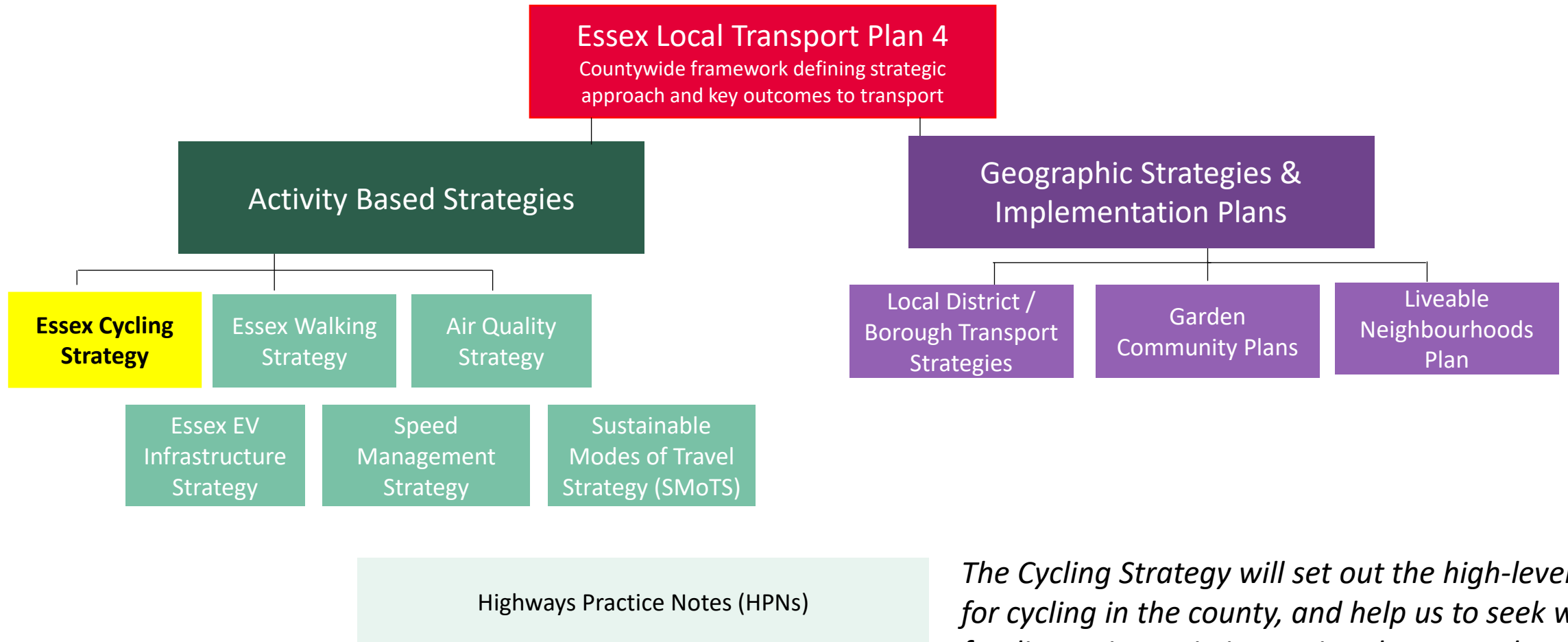
- ❑ **Active Travel England** established as executive agency – aiming for half of short journeys in towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030
- ❑ Publication of **DfT's Gear Change** and new guidance on the design of cycle infrastructure and release of **LTN 1/20** - new, bolder cycle design guidance
- ❑ Refresh of **Highway Code**, which recognises all carriageway users and protects those who are most vulnerable
- ❑ **Future of Mobility (Transport): Urban Strategy 2019** (and **Rural Strategy** in development)
- ❑ The **National Planning Policy Framework (2021)** - positions cycling and walking as a core consideration when designing new developments

Changing priorities and ambitions at a local Essex level:

- ❑ **Everyone's Essex** - a refreshed plan for cycling is needed to better support the creation of
 - A strong, inclusive & sustainable economy
 - High quality environments
 - Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages
 - A good place for children & families to grow
- ❑ **Local Transport Plan 4** - bolder ambitions for sustainable travel, decarbonisation, place-making in the emerging, of which cycling has a key role to play
- ❑ **"Safer, Greener, Healthier"** transport vision
- ❑ **Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral Essex** - recommendations focused on increasing active and sustainable travel provision; reducing reliance on the car; and creating new sustainable routes from/to key destinations

Role within wider policy

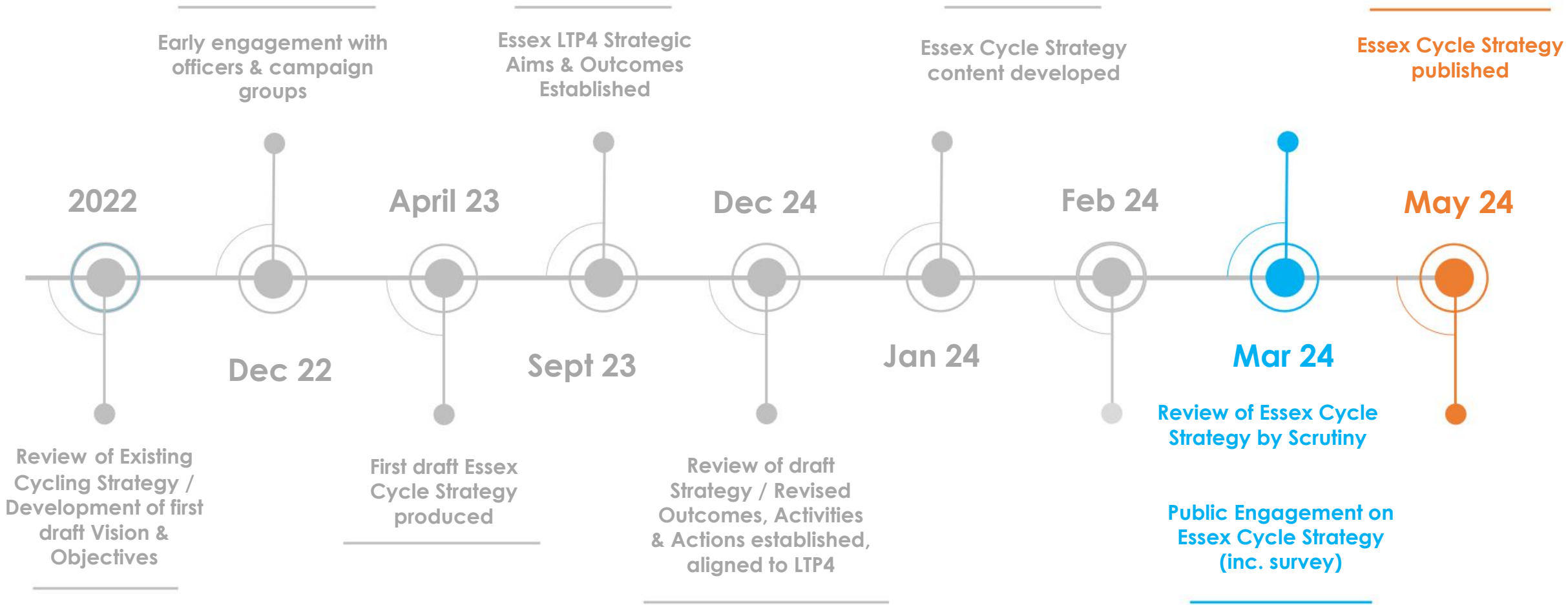
The Essex Cycling Strategy is part of a wider set of strategies that aim to make Essex safer, greener and healthier, and to provide more sustainable transport choices for everyone.



The Cycling Strategy will set out the high-level plan for cycling in the county, and help us to seek wider funding to invest in improving the network

Next Steps for the Cycling Strategy

SAFER **GREENER** **HEALTHIER**



The value of Cycling to Essex

Investing in cycling has health, climate and wellbeing benefits and also offers a way to create green jobs, boost the economy and support the creation of safer streets.



ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY

Shifting **just one trip** from car to cycle per day saves the average person 3.2kg of carbon [\[1\]](#)

Doubling cycling and increasing walking as alternatives to car transport would **save £567mil per year** though improved air quality [\[2\]](#)

Physical activity **reduces the risk of heart disease** by as much as **35%** [\[3\]](#)



IMPROVES HEALTH & HELPS PREVENT CRONIC DISEASES

Shifting short journeys from cars to active travel would **save the NHS £17 billion** over 20 years through improved health and wellbeing [\[6\]](#)



REDUCES CONGESTION & PRESSURE ON NETWORK

Study finds cycling contributes roughly **£520m to British tourism** every year [\[5\]](#)

Up to 43% of car trips in Essex are **under three miles**, which would take around 15 minutes to cycle [\[4\]](#)



IMPROVES MENTAL HEALTH & RELIEVES STRESS

Research shows that those who regularly cycle have a **significantly lower risk of feeling stressed** [\[8\]](#)



CREATES JOBS & SUPPORTS THE LOCAL ECONOMY

About **1 in 6 of our residents** are known to be living with mental illness [\[7\]](#)



BETTER COMMUNITIES & SOCIAL COHESION

In 2019, Brits wasted **115 hours in congestion** - costing the country £6.9 billion, an average of £894 per driver [\[9\]](#)

Building cycle lanes one of the top measures for immediate job creation per £1 million investment



UNLOCKS ACCESS TO JOBS & OPPORTUNITIES

In 2017, running a car cost on average **£732 per year in the UK**; compared to £396 for a bike [\[10\]](#)



SAVES TIME & MONEY

Vision and Outcomes



The Vision

Our vision for Cycling in Essex is:

“To see more people, of all abilities, ages and backgrounds, cycling in Essex, more safely and frequently.”



Overarching Outcomes

- **Outcome 1:** People and businesses consider cycling as a normal, everyday choice and are empowered to cycle [CO1]
- **Outcome 2:** The existing and future cycle network is fit for purpose, so people are able to cycle for more of their daily trips [CO2]
- **Outcome 3:** Cycling has a positive role in connecting communities and tackling poverty, improving health and reducing inequalities [CO3]
- **Outcome 4:** Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success and dynamic local communities [CO4]
- **Outcome 5:** The environment in Essex is improved as a result of an increased uptake in cycling, including air quality, noise, carbon and 'reduced' congestion [CO5]
- **Outcome 6:** Essex is considered a desirable destination for leisure cycling [CO6]



Strategy supports all areas of the LTP

- Green dots demonstrate stronger relationship
- Pale orange dots represent lesser relationship

LTP4 - Strategic Aims and Outcomes	Essex Cycling Strategy Outcomes					
	CO1	CO2	CO3	CO4	CO5	CO6
LTP Strategic Aim 1: Supporting People, Health, Well-being and Independence						
Outcome 1: People have inclusive and affordable access to key services	●	●	●			
Outcome 2: People have improved physical health and wellbeing	●	●	●		●	●
Outcome 3: The transport network is safe, and feels safe, for all users	●	●				
LTP Strategic Aim 2: Creating Sustainable Places and Communities						
Outcome 1: The business potential of Essex is maximised	●	●	●			
Outcome 2: Developments are designed sustainably from the start	●	●	●			
Outcome 3: Transport has a reduced impact on the environment	●	●	●		●	●
LTP Strategic Aim 3: Connecting People, Places and Businesses						
Outcome 1: The business potential of Essex is maximised	●	●		●	●	●
Outcome 2: People have inclusive and affordable access to education, employment and training	●	●	●	●		
Outcome 3: The transport network has a secure and long-term future	●	●				

Outcome 1: People and businesses consider cycling as a normal, everyday choice and are empowered to cycle *[CO1]*

Outcome Focus:

- For cycling to become a **viable option for travel**, specifically for shorter journeys, to school, work, for leisure and for socialising
- For it to be considered a **'safe' travel option** – which involves removing the perceived barriers to cycling, providing the tools and training required to empower our people to cycle safely and confidently
- Shifting mind-sets to see cycling as a **'normal'** everyday travel choice in Essex
- Encouraging **businesses to embrace cycling**, and specifically cargo bikes, as a normal alternative for business activities
- Increasing awareness of the opportunities cycling can deliver and **promoting educational programmes and initiatives** to deliver changes in hearts and minds.



Outcome 1: People and businesses consider cycling as a normal, everyday choice and are empowered to cycle *[CO1]*

Example Activities & Actions:

In order to see more people in Essex enjoying the benefits of cycling, whether it's for health, fun, or convenience, it needs to be seen as a normal everyday choice for anyone who wants to get around in a green and active way. That's why we are working hard to provide safe and attractive cycle facilities, as well as education, training, and behaviour change programmes that promote cycling as a normal and everyday choice. To enable this shift in mind-set, we are committed to a number of linked activities and actions:

Linked Activities:	Example Actions:
1. Changing the perception of cycling for individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working with schools and colleges to educate and instil sustainable travel behaviours, and associated benefits, in children from an early age
2. Promoting the benefits of cycling to businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working with large scale organisations and workplaces to educate and encourage more people to cycle for business purposes
3. Supporting local organisations and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting community organisations and charities to deliver initiatives aimed at promoting and increasing cycling
4. Improving cycle safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivering improvements to local streets and spaces with cycle safety in mind e.g. speed reduction schemes, School Streets principles, Well-Designed Neighbourhoods and other public realm improvements
5. Improving cycling skills and capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increasing the number of children, adults and families attending national standard cycle training through continued training of qualified instructors, increased funding for training and wider promotion
6. Improved information for cyclists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improve the availability and sharing of information around cycle routes, training and community activities within a centralised and user-friendly online platform
7. Promotion of strong cycling advocacy across the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To set up a Sustainable Travel Charter and encourage all officers, senior leadership and Members to sign up

Outcome 2: The existing and future cycle network is fit for purpose, so people are able to cycle for more of their daily trips [CO2]

To achieve our vision of seeing more people of all ages and abilities cycling, we need a network that is fit for purpose

Our current network is not good enough – we need to change that and make sure that cycling is a viable option for more journeys.

Outcome Focus:

- **Investing in existing network** and building new, high-quality routes and infrastructure that follow the latest best practice guidance
- Ensuring that the **cycle network is safe** and accessible for all users
- Providing the **supporting infrastructure** needed to allow people to cycle more often – e.g. secure cycle parking, bike maintenance stations, way marking and signage
- **Working with developers** to ensure that new developments include high-quality cycling infrastructure and provision from the start



Outcome 2: The existing and future cycle network is fit for purpose, so people are able to cycle for more of their daily trips [CO2]

Example Activities & Actions:

We know that having good, safe, inclusive and attractive cycle infrastructure in the right places is essential - and will be a key in enabling more people to cycle for more of their daily trips.

To ensure our cycle network is fit for purpose into the future, we are committed to a number of specific activities and actions:

Linked Activities:	Example Actions:
1. Transformational funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>To continue to lobby central government to secure long term, multi-year active travel funding</i>
2. Maintaining existing cycle networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Prioritising the identification of funding to support more frequent maintenance and asset renewal of the Cycle Network</i>
3. Network planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>To regularly review and expand cycle network plans for Essex – to identify and prioritise new opportunities for cycling not yet picked up, and in light of new destinations and trip generators</i>
4. Best practice cycle design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Adoption of latest guidance in the design of cycle schemes from the outset, and utilising best practice from elsewhere</i>
5. Delivery of effective cycle networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Delivery of LTN 1/20 (or subsequent) compliant cycle infrastructure on Primary and Secondary routes to create a high quality Strategic Cycle Network for Essex</i>
6. Delivery of high-quality cycle parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>To deliver conveniently located, high-quality, secure, and easily accessible cycle storage at key public destinations within the highway network (in line with EPOA parking standards)</i>
7. Cycling in new developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>New development cycle measures to be reviewed and approved by the Essex Active Travel Infrastructure Advisory Group</i>
8. Creation of attractive cycle environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>To work with wider teams within the County Council to ensure the ambitions and needs for cycling are considered in all areas of policy, planning and design (including Speed Management, Place Making, Health etc).</i>

Outcome 3: Cycling has a positive role in connecting communities, tackling poverty, reducing inequalities and improving health [CO3]

We want cycling to be an option for everyone, but some people face challenges that prevent them from doing so. We want to change that and make cycling more accessible and inclusive for all.

Outcome Focus:

- Focus will be on **breaking down existing barriers** (e.g. cost / physical ability) to cycling - through improved and ease of access to bikes, e-bikes and modified cycles
- **Improving access to cycling for all demographics and abilities**, so people can get to where they want to go easily and affordably
- Allowing all ages and demographics to feel the benefits of cycling:
 - providing younger people with their first taste of independence
 - enabling older people to be independent and active for longer
 - improved communities and social cohesion
 - improved general health and fitness and wellbeing



Outcome 3: Cycling has a positive role in connecting communities, tackling poverty, reducing inequalities and improving health [CO3]

Example Activities & Actions:

We recognise that increased cycling could have a real and positive impact on connecting communities across Essex, and in doing so can become a facilitator of improved physical and mental health, and improving social inequalities that exist in different areas of the county.

To realise the social benefits increased cycling can bring for Essex, we are committed to a number of linked activities and actions:

Linked Activities:	Example Actions:
1. Improved access to quality bikes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continued roll out and expansion of bike rental schemes (including everyday bikes, cargo bikes and e-bikes) in existing and new areas across Essex
2. Reaching under-represented groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To support the delivery of targeted outreach initiatives and schemes aimed at removing barriers and reducing access costs to cycling for hard to reach groups, e.g. 'Bicycle Loan' and 'Social Prescribing' schemes
3. Promoting the health & social benefits of cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Capture and promote evidence that demonstrates the health and social benefits of cycling

Outcome 4: Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success [CO4]

Cycling has significant economic benefits - for individuals, cities, and society - and has great potential to drive continued and inclusive economic success in Essex.

Outcome Focus:

- Embracing the **opportunity for Essex to grow its cycling economy**, creating jobs and opportunities in various sectors
- Great opportunity within Essex to enhance and promote cycle tourism as a means to **support the local economy and generate job growth**.
- Utilising our rich heritage and coastline to **grow our cycle tourism** offer in Essex, to generate more income and employment for our region
- Working with local communities and **business create cycling-related jobs**, increase spending, and ensure Essex is a destination for cycle tourism.



Outcome 4: Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success [CO4]

Example Activities & Actions:

Cycling has the potential to bring about huge benefits to the local economy of Essex, both directly - through increasing spending on the high street, strengthening of the rural economy and tourism, and bringing about new jobs and industry, but also indirectly - through indirect economic savings associated with improvements to public health, improvements to the environment and also improved access to jobs and education.

To realise the economic benefits of cycling in Essex, we are committed to a number of linked activities and actions:

Linked Activities:	Example Actions:
1. Building the cycle economy in Essex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>To support and promote local cycle business and linked business (such as cafés/tourist attractions)</i>
2. Promotion of cycling as a cost-effective travel option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Introducing effective means of capturing data on economic impact of cycling in Essex</i>

Outcome 5: The environment in Essex is improved as a result of an increased uptake in cycling [CO5]

Cycling is a great for our environment. It doesn't produce any harmful emissions, it uses less road space than cars, and it can help reduce traffic jams and noise pollution.

As set out by the Climate Commission, there is a need to support active travel and prioritise walking and cycling - and promote them as the natural choice for shorter journeys.

Outcome Focus:

- Reducing car dependency and opening up wider, more sustainable travel choices
- Make cycling an easy and enjoyable option for everyone, so that we can all play our part in making Essex a better place for future generations
- Making cycling a natural and attractive travel choice for short journeys
- Promoting the environmental benefits of cycling, as a low impact, zero emissions means of getting from A to B



Outcome 5: The environment in Essex is improved as a result of an increased uptake in cycling [CO5]

Example Activities & Actions:

We recognise the key role cycling, alongside other forms of sustainable transport, needs to play in helping Essex become NetZero by 2050. In order to ensure we achieve the necessary shift in transport, we are committed to the following activities and actions to ensure cycling plays its role in improving the environment in Essex:

Linked Activities:	Example Actions:
1. Reducing car dependence in Essex	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To work with wider teams, local stakeholders and organisations to ensure broader strategies align to reduce reliance on private vehicles (e.g. through address second car ownership, availability of parking etc)
2. Cycling as the normal travel choice for shorter journeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To deliver the cycle network improvements (outlined within this Strategy) to make cycling an attractive travel choice for short journeys
3. Mode shift targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To ensure appropriate mode shift targets are incorporated into all Travel Plans, and that these continue to be reviewed and monitored
4. Promoting the environmental benefits of cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To deliver education initiatives around air quality (through workplaces, schools and other avenues), and promotion of cycling as a cleaner form of transport

Outcome 6: Essex is considered a desirable destination for leisure cycling [CO6]

Many people enjoy cycling just for fun – and for the many benefits it brings, including improved physical and mental health, increased time spent outdoors and as an enjoyable, social activity.

Essex is a wonderful place to cycle, and we want to make it even better - we want to make Essex a top destination for cycling, where you can find amazing routes that are easy, safe, and fun to use

Outcome Focus:

- To build on Essex's potential as a leisure destination for cycling
- To have a network of leisure and recreational routes that are high-quality and fit for purpose
- To ensure residents and visitors have access to high-quality and up to date information on routes and attractions
- To increase availability and access to community clubs, platforms and sporting events.



Outcome 6: Essex is considered a desirable destination for leisure cycling [CO6]

Example Activities & Actions:

We recognise the importance of enhancing the cycling opportunities within our more rural areas and communities, to enable Essex to become an attractive place for leisure and recreational cycling, and to bring about both the social and economic benefits associated with cycle tourism. wider leisure and tourism benefits that such opportunities can facilitate.

For us to be able to position Essex as a desirable destination for leisure cycling, we are committed to the following activities and actions:

Linked Activities:	Example Actions:
1. Delivery of High-quality Leisure and Recreational Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To define a network of Leisure and Recreational cycle routes across Essex
2. Promoting Leisure Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support and promote engagement in sporting activities and competitions related to cycling, through community platforms, clubs and events
3. Supporting Local Businesses and Tourist Destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting local businesses (cafés, shops, pubs, restaurants etc) and tourist destinations in attracting and accommodating cyclists

Overarching Targets

An overarching target over the short (next 5 years) and long term (2030-onwards) have been set for the Essex Cycling Strategy:

	Short Term Targets (next 5 years)	Longer Term Targets (2030-onwards)
Overarching Targets:	To increase the proportion of journeys in Essex’s towns and cities being cycled	To achieve the ATE objective of half of journeys in Essex’s towns and cities being cycled and walked by 2030

Outcome Specific Targets

A number of specific targets for each Outcome are also being considered. An example target for each outcome are shown below:

	Short Term Targets (next 5 years)	Longer Term Targets (2030-onwards)
CO1: People and businesses consider cycling as a normal, everyday choice and are empowered to cycle	Increase the number of schemes or initiatives delivered on the network that create a safer cycling environment <i>(data source: ECC information)</i>	Increase the proportion of people that see cycling as a feasible travel option for everyday trips <i>(data source: survey)</i>
CO2: The existing and future cycle network is fit for purpose, so people are able to cycle for more of their daily trips	Reduce the number of defects identified on the existing cycle network <i>(data source: ECC Asset Management information)</i>	To deliver all Primary and Secondary cycle routes <i>(data source: ECC information)</i>
CO3: Cycling has a positive role in connecting communities, tackling poverty, reducing inequalities and improving health	To increase the proportion of residents from under-represented groups cycling at least once per month <i>(data source: NTS Data)</i>	To reduce the number of Essex adults that are considered 'inactive' <i>(data source: Active Lives Survey)</i>
CO4: Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success	<i>No specific target yet identified</i>	<i>No specific target yet identified</i>
CO5: The environment in Essex is improved as a result of an increased uptake in cycling	To increase the number of mobility hub type infrastructure across Essex <i>(data source: ECC information)</i>	To achieve a reduction in emissions at air quality monitor sites across Essex <i>(data source: ECC Air Quality Data)</i>
CO6: Essex is considered a desirable destination for leisure cycling	Increase the number of people that cycle for leisure <i>(data source: survey)</i>	<i>No specific target yet identified</i>

Our asks of Scrutiny

- What do you think about the overarching targets for the Strategy?
- What do you see as a measure of success for each of the Strategy outcomes?
- What does success look like for your residents?
- How will you use this Strategy?