



The Essex Cycling Strategy

2024

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Foreword



Cllr Tom Cunningham

Essex County Council Cabinet
Member for Highways Maintenance and
Sustainable Transport

Essex is a great place to live, work and spend time – we have a dynamic and growing population, a thriving economy, and beautiful countryside and heritage.

But we also have many challenges to face – including climate change, clean air, the cost of living – and we need to take immediate, rapid action to tackle them. Addressing these challenges needs to be at the heart of everything we do – and one of the best solutions, with the most benefits, is to help people move around more easily, more cheaply, and in an active way for those trips for which it is viable.

Up until now, dependence on cars has restricted opportunities for walking and cycling in our county. There is a need to rebalance this so that we can all cycle and walk safely, and experience the benefits that it can bring, not only to us as individuals, but to our growing families, our communities and our local environment.

In our towns and cities, we want cycling, alongside walking and public transport, to become, and be recognised as, the most convenient means of travel – so that we can reduce growing pressure on our network and tackle poor air quality. But across the county more widely, increasing the number of us who are able to get on a bike, and get out of our cars when we can, even just for a few short journeys, will help create nicer environments to live and spend time in, improve social interactions and strengthen communities, and we will be healthier and happier because of it.

To get to a place where cycling truly is a real and viable travel option for everyone for some journeys, we have work to do, and this will take the collective might of everyone in Essex and beyond.

This Essex Cycling Strategy is our roadmap to a safer greener, healthier and happier Essex, where cycling is part of everyday life, and is part of our long-term transport plan, setting the context for future investment. The following pages set out our draft vision, the outcomes we want to achieve and the role the council can play to enable, develop and inspire more cycling across the county.

We recognise that we cannot deliver this vision on our own, and we would like to thank all of our partners who have already, and will continue to, contributed to make this happen.

Introduction

Cycling is a great way to enjoy Essex and make it a better and healthier place for everyone. Not only can it be a cheap and convenient form of transport, it can help us tackle many of the big issues we face, such as helping disadvantaged groups, improving health, the environment, congestion and the economy. It can also be a fun and easy way to get around, especially for short trips.

Essex County Council wants to support more people to cycle more often, and that's why we have developed this Cycling Strategy. It sets out our vision, outcomes and actions for cycling in the county for the next few years.







This Strategy will help us secure funding to improve cycling facilities and infrastructure, and to promote cycling as a normal and attractive option for travel and leisure.








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

We have worked with our partners and stakeholders to produce this strategy, based on the latest policy, evidence and best practice from around the world.

Why is Cycling important to Essex

(Note, sources for figures shown below are provided in Appendix E)

Challenges	Opportunities
Too many short journeys by car In England, 72% of car trips in 2021 were under 5 miles. ^[1] Up to 43% of car trips in Essex are under three miles. ^[2] 	These journeys would take around 15 minutes to cycle. 30% of people in Essex live less than 3 miles from their job. ^[3]
Safety Pedestrians and cyclists are more vulnerable. 	More life-years are gained from regular cycling than lost through injuries. ^[4] 
Poor Air quality 49% of CO ₂ emissions are from transport in Essex. ^[3]  In 2019, air pollution was attributed to at least 26,000 deaths in England. ^[5]	Reduced Emissions CO ₂ emissions per mode (per passenger km) ^[6] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car = 160g • Bus = 120g • Rail = 68g Cycling = 0g Shifting just one trip from car to cycle per day saves the average person 3.2kg of carbon. ^[7]
Inactivity 30% of people in Essex are found to be physically 'inactive' (<30mins of physical activity per week). ^[8] Over 20% of 10–11-year-olds are obese. ^[9]  The estimated cost of inactivity in Greater Essex to the NHS is £58million. ^[10]	Physical Activity By doing 30 minutes of physical activity a week can increase life expectancy by more than a year. ^[11]  As little as 20 miles a week on a bike can halve the risk of coronary heart disease. ^[12]
Social Isolation Over 80,000 Essex residents are statistically likely to be lonely. ^[13] 37% of residents said they feel lonely at least some of the time. ^[13]	Better Communities & Social Cohesion Due to increased opportunities for interaction, regular cyclists are found to be more caring towards their communities than drivers. ^[14] Bike-friendly communities have higher levels of mental health and wellbeing. ^[15]

Poor Mental Health	Improved Mental Health & Happiness
<p>1 in 6 of our residents are known to be living with mental illness. ^[16]</p> 	<p>Those who regularly cycle have a significantly lower risk of feeling stressed. ^[17]</p>  <p>Studies show that English cities with higher rates of cycling are happier overall. ^[18]</p>
Growing population & network pressure	More efficient use of space
 <p>Essex population is projected to grow 9% between 2023-2043, to 1.7 million. ^[19]</p> <p>Car dependency in Essex is high.</p>	<p>A moving car requires 14 x more space compared to a moving bike. ^[20]</p>  <p>For every 1 car, you could park 6-7 bikes. ^[21]</p>
Limited Travel Choice	Increasing Travel Choice
<p>16% of households in Essex do not own a car. ^[22]</p>	<p>Essex Pedal Power initiative provided over 3,700 bikes to residents over the last 3 years. ^[23]</p>
Cost of living & deprivation	Cheaper alternative
<p>Over 123,000 people in Essex live in the bottom 20% most deprived areas of the UK. ^[24] As of November 2021, a total of 76,549 Essex households were claiming Universal Credit ^[25]</p> 	<p>A new car costs more than the average annual household income; bicycles and e-bikes, cost less than 6%. ^[26]</p> <p>In 2017, running a car cost on average £732 per year in the UK; compared to £396 for a bike. ^[27]</p>
Cost (£ and time) of congestion	Saving time and money
 <p>In 2019, Brits wasted 115 hours in congestion - costing the country £6.9 billion, an average of £894 per driver. ^[28]</p> <p>The cost of congestion in urban areas in Essex was estimated at over £120million in 2018 ^[29]</p>	 <p>By reducing congestion, cycling can save drivers and businesses time and money, and save the economy millions.</p>

Section 1: Vision and Outcomes for Cycling



Our Vision

Our vision for Cycling in Essex is:

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

We are passionate about cycling in Essex. Whether you are young or old, beginner or expert, cycling is for everyone. It's a great way to stay healthy, enjoy the outdoors and explore our beautiful county.

By choosing to cycle more often, you are also helping to make Essex safer, greener and healthier. You are reducing traffic, pollution and carbon emissions and creating a more liveable and vibrant community.

Essex County Council and its partners are working hard to make cycling easier and safer for our residents. We are building and improving cycle paths, lanes and routes. We are offering training and support for cyclists of all levels. We are promoting cycling as a smart and sustainable travel option.

We believe that cycling can transform Essex for the better.

Cycling Outcomes for Essex

To achieve our vision where everyone who wants to can enjoy the benefits of cycling, we have identified six key outcomes to guide our actions and investments. These are:

- ❖ **Outcome 1:** Cycling is a normal and attractive option for people and businesses in Essex [CO1]
- ❖ **Outcome 2:** The current and future cycle network in Essex is safe, convenient and accessible for all types of trips [CO2]
- ❖ **Outcome 3:** Cycling helps to create more inclusive and connected communities, as well as improving health and reducing inequalities [CO3]
- ❖ **Outcome 4:** Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success and dynamic local communities [CO4]
- ❖ **Outcome 5:** Cycling improves the environment in Essex by reducing emissions, noise, congestion and enhancing the quality of life [CO5]
- ❖ **Outcome 6:** Essex is a popular destination for leisure cycling and tourism [CO6]

To achieve these outcomes, we have identified a range of **Activities** and **Actions** that we will deliver as a Council, working with our partners and stakeholders. You can find more details about these in Section 2 – Delivering the Strategy.

This Essex Cycling Strategy, alongside other transport, planning and wider policies, will be key in enabling the delivery of our Essex Local Transport Plan. How we deliver cycling in different areas of the network will be guided by the new Essex Place and Movement Framework, which is a key policy and delivery framework within the Local Transport Plan. More information on this delivery framework can be found in Appendix B.

The below diagram demonstrates how the outcomes of this Cycling Strategy will support the three Key Aims of the Local Transport Plan.

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	●	●				

The diagram to the left indicates how achieving each of the Essex Cycling Strategy Outcomes supports the Local Transport Plan Aims and Outcomes.

The dots demonstrate a recognition of the links between outcomes, with the darker green dots demonstrating a stronger, more direct relationship.

Whilst the Essex Cycling Strategy Outcomes collectively support all areas of the Local Transport Plan, this Strategy most strongly supports outcomes around **improved physical health and wellbeing**, and the **reduced impact on the environment**.

Some detail about each of our six Cycling Outcomes is provided on the following pages.

Outcome 1: Cycling is a normal and attractive option for people and businesses in Essex

To achieve a growth in cycling, it is not just about providing new and improved infrastructure – it is also about changing mind-sets, so that everyone feels that cycling is a safe and convenient option for them.

We want cycling to be a part of everyday lives in Essex, and for people to see cycling as a real option for travel, especially when thinking about shorter journeys to school and work, and for leisure and socialising.

To make this happen, there is work to do to change mind sets and remove the perceived barriers that stop people from cycling. Often people wonder whether they are fit enough to cycle, whether it is safe enough, whether they have the right equipment and clothing and how the logistics of riding will work as part of their day-to-day life. These concerns are not always the reality for cycling. There are lots of trips (or parts of longer trips) that happen across Essex on a daily basis, that could easily be made by bike, by normal people, in normal clothing, without the need to shower and change.

To help drive this shift in mindset, we recognise that there is a need to provide the right tools and information to help equip us all to cycle safely and confidently more often. This includes making cycle training available to everyone and promoting safe riding and driving behaviours so that we can keep everybody safe.

We also want businesses to embrace cycling, both as a greener way for employees to travel to work, but also for business activities. Alternatives, such as cargo bikes present huge opportunities for businesses to reduce their impact on the environment and on individuals – and benefit from

reduced delays, more efficient movements from A-B, and an improved reputation by demonstrating care for their local environment community.

We want cycling to be something that is achievable for everyone and not just for the few, for at least some of their trips. The more of us that embrace this mind-set, the greater the rewards for everyone.

The [Activities and Actions](#) we see as necessary to achieve this Outcome are outlined in Section 2.



Outcome 2: The current and future cycle network in Essex is safe, convenient and accessible for all types of trips.

To achieve our vision of seeing more people of all ages and abilities cycling, we need a network that is fit for purpose. That's why we are committed to creating a network that is easy, safe and fun to use and connects to the places you want to go.

We know that our current network is not good enough for many of you. Some parts of it are outdated, incomplete or in poor repair. We need to change that and make sure that cycling is a viable option for more of your journeys.

We will do this by investing in our existing network and building new, high-quality routes and infrastructure that follow the latest best practice guidance, (such as Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20). We will make sure that the network is safe and accessible for all users, no matter what your level of experience or confidence.

We will also provide you with the support you need to cycle more often, such as secure cycle parking, maintenance stations, way marking and signage.

We will also work with developers to ensure that new developments include high-quality cycling infrastructure and provision from the start, so that cycling is an attractive and convenient choice for new residents.



The [Activities and Actions](#) we see as necessary to achieve this Outcome are outlined in Section 2.

Outcome 3: Cycling helps to create more inclusive and connected communities, as well as improving health and reducing inequalities.

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

By improving the cycle network in Essex, we can help people who have low incomes or disabilities to get to where they want to go easily and affordably. They can access more opportunities for work, education, leisure and socialising. They can also feel more connected to their communities and spend more time outdoors in their neighbourhoods.

We also want to embrace the new possibilities that e-bikes and modified cycles offer. They can help people overcome some of the physical and mental barriers that stop them from cycling. They can make cycling more fun, comfortable and convenient for everyone.

Cycling is not only good for our social well-being, but also for our health. It can help us stay fit, lose weight, reduce stress, sleep better and help prevent diseases. It can also help us live healthier lifestyles and be happier.

We have a vision of creating better connected places in Essex through cycling. We have a strategy and a plan to make it happen. We want to make cycling a viable option for everyone and share the social benefits that it brings.



The [Activities and Actions](#) we see as necessary to achieve this Outcome are outlined in Section 2.

Outcome 4: Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success.

Cycling is not only good for your health, but also has many cost saving benefits, for individuals, cities, and society - and has great potential to drive continued and inclusive economic success in Essex.

Cycling can support our local economy by improving access to employment, providing opportunities for sustainable freight movements, and reducing costs associated with congestion. Research also shows that people who cycle more tend to take less leave and are more alert, leading to a more resilient and robust working population, and reduced health costs.

A report by the Cycling Organisation 'Sustrans' shows that active travel boosted the UK economy by £36.5bn in 2021¹. People who walk, wheel or cycle tend to spend more money at local businesses, especially food and drink outlets, than car drivers. They also shop and dine more frequently.

Essex has a huge potential to grow its cycling economy, creating jobs and opportunities in various sectors. From bike manufacturing and retail, to infrastructure and tourism, cycling can be a catalyst for innovation and development.

Essex has a rich heritage and a beautiful coastline that attract many visitors. By investing in safe and attractive cycling routes and facilities, we can enhance our cycle tourism offer and generate more income and employment for our region.

We want to work with local communities and business create cycling-related jobs, increase spending, and ensure Essex is a destination for cycle tourism.



The [Activities and Actions](#) we see as necessary to achieve this Outcome are outlined in Section 2.

¹ Sustrans, 20 October 2021 The Cost of Living: Economy-boosting benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling

Outcome 5: Cycling improves the environment in Essex by reducing emissions, noise, congestion and enhancing the quality of life.

The UK Government has a vision to reach Net Zero by 2050 and we know that transport is a crucial part of this. The Essex Climate Action Commission's report 'Making Essex Carbon Neutral' plan outlines how the Council can support active travel and make walking and cycling the preferred options for shorter trips.

Cycling is a great way to get around. It is healthy, affordable and kinder to the planet. It doesn't produce any harmful emissions, it uses less road space than cars, and it can help reduce traffic and noise pollution. By encouraging more of us to cycle, we can make our road network more efficient and improve the quality of life for everyone in Essex.

We want cycling to be a key contributor to a safer, greener, and healthier Essex. That's why our Cycling Strategy aims to create a safe, convenient and attractive cycling network that connects people to the places they need to go. Making cycling an easy and enjoyable option for everyone will help us all play our part in making Essex a better place for future generations.

We want to promote the benefits of cycling and inspire more people to give it a try. By making cycling the natural choice for short journeys, we can reduce reliance on car use and its impact on our environment.

Outcome 5 of our Cycling Strategy focuses on how cycling can help us achieve our environmental objectives, such as improving air quality, reducing noise and congestion, and enhancing our natural surroundings.



The [Activities and Actions](#) we see as necessary to achieve this Outcome are outlined in Section 2.

Outcome 6: Essex is a popular destination for leisure cycling and tourism.

Many people enjoy cycling for leisure, it is a fun activity and a convenient way to get around. Others enjoy cycling for the health benefits it brings to both mind and body. Cycling boosts your physical fitness and wellbeing, helping you to feel happier and healthier. It connects you to the great outdoors and allows you to see, feel and hear the beautiful scenery within Essex, while experiencing the joy of movement. By cycling for leisure, you can also support your local communities through facilities such as bike kitchens, restaurants and cafes, tourist attractions and places of interest.

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 enthusiasts, where you can find interesting routes that are easy, safe, and fun to use. We also want to help you discover new places and experiences, by providing you with the best information and resources on cycling in Essex. We want to connect you with other people who cycle, through clubs, platforms and events that celebrate cycling in all its forms.

Cycling should be an activity that you can enjoy freely and safely. But to make Essex a haven for Cycling cannot be achieved alone. We need the help of everyone from central government to individual Essex residents.



The [Activities and Actions](#) we see as necessary to achieve this Outcome are outlined in Section 2.

Section 2: Delivering our Strategy.

By achieving the vision for this Strategy, we hope to create attractive and welcoming places for cycling all across Essex, and see more people, of all abilities, ages and backgrounds, cycling more safely and more frequently.

We have a clear plan to achieve our vision, based on the six key Outcomes for cycling in Essex. These will be delivered through a joined-up approach, working with partners and stakeholders and alongside other policies and strategies, ultimately feeding into the wider aims of the Local Transport Plan 4.

Section 2 of this document outlines a set of **Activities** and **Actions** that we will carry out as a County Council to make this happen. You can find out more about these on the next pages.

Partnership Working

We will work closely with the following partners and stakeholders to deliver this strategy.

Government and Public Sector	Local and Community Organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District / Borough / City Councils Neighbouring Local Authorities ActiveEssex Department for Transport National Highways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycle Campaign Groups Community Groups Local Cycle charities and voluntary organisations
National Organisations	Private Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustrans British Cycling Cycling UK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers Developers Businesses



Activities and Actions: Cycling Outcome 1 That Cycling is a normal and attractive option for people and businesses in Essex:

In order to see more people in Essex enjoying the benefits of cycling, whether it's for health, fun, work or convenience, it needs to be seen as a normal everyday choice for anyone who wants to get around in a healthy, environmentally friendly, affordable and active way. That's why we will continue to work 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, particularly for shorter journeys.

Below are some key **Activities** and **Actions** that we will be undertaking to help change the perceptions of cycling in Essex:

Outcome 1	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
<i>Cycling is a normal and attractive option for people and businesses in Essex</i>	1.1 Increasing Engagement with Cycling in Essex	➤ Continue to work with partners and deliver behavioural change and marketing programmes both locally, regionally and nationally aimed at normalising and encouraging cycling
		➤ To raise awareness and increase visibility of the variety, benefits and opportunities available with cycling, including non-standard cycles
		➤ Actively promote the benefits of cycling, good news stories and any increased uptake in cycling across the county
		➤ Working with schools and colleges to educate and instil sustainable travel behaviours, and associated benefits, in children from an early age
		➤ Working with large scale organisations and workplaces to educate and encourage more people to cycle
		➤ Support the delivery of cycle challenges and incentive schemes to encourage cycling uptake
		➤ Encourage high profile Essex locals to endorse cycling and active travel
		➤ Partaking in and hosting high profile industry conferences such as Cycle County Active County, Essex E-cargo bike revolution
		➤ Supporting and encouraging the delivery of local high visibility events such as Car Free days, Cycle to Work days, Employer Sustainable Travel days and Bike Festivals
	1.2 Improving Cycle Safety	➤ Support and encouraging the delivery of mass participation events – such as the 'RideLondon Essex'.
		➤ Designers to adhere to latest cycle design guidance and best practice related to improving the safety, and perception of safety, for cyclists
		➤ Supporting the delivery of bolder Speed Management approaches across Essex
		➤ Design of cycle schemes to ensure safety for cyclists – particularly at junctions and key intersections with other modes
		➤ Delivery of 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
		➤ Work with Essex Police and partners to educate road users on responsible and safe behaviour around cyclists, including the promotion of responsible riding
		➤ Promotion to the public of improved safety for cyclists through new infrastructure and schemes, increased levels of cycling and other safety specific measures

Outcome 1	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
	1.3 Supporting Local Organisations and Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supporting community organisations, cycle campaign groups, charities and other advocates to promote and encourage cycling
	1.4 Improving Cycling Skills	<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
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Providing increased cycling skills training including basic bike maintenance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working with partners, community groups and businesses to encourage cycling within the community, through led rides, community bike clubs etc).
	1.5 Better 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
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved public access and visibility of plans for cycle investment and schemes across the county
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure the continuation of consistent and accessible signing and wayfinding across the county
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that up to date cycle information is provided as part of ECC's Travel Planning package for new developments
	1.6 Promoting the benefits of cycling to businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with organisations and workplaces to educate and encourage adoption of sustainable travel planning for business purposes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage workplaces to provide supporting facilities, such as secure cycle parking, lockers and shower facilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure large employers, schools, major hospitals and council offices in Essex have active travel plans in place that promote cycling, and are regularly monitored
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To support more cycling for business purposes through implementation of methods to limit access for vehicles to inner city/town areas
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identifying a cargo bike design champion to be a member of Essex Cycling Infrastructure Advisory Board (or equivalent)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote the benefits of e-cargo/cargo bikes to businesses and encourage an uptake in use - through free trial/low-cost rental schemes and cargo bike libraries
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introduce freight consolidation hubs outside of city/town centres, with opportunities for deliveries serviced by cargo bikes and other low emission vehicles
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Favouring cycle logistics in procurement procedures and tenders for major projects and infrastructure
	1.7 Promotion of strong Cycling Advocacy across the council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Officers, Senior Leadership and Members to be high-profile advocates and champions of cycling in Essex
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with our cycling advocates to ensure there is political will and support for all cycling proposals
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To encourage all officers, senior leadership and Members to sign a commitment to Sustainable Travel in Essex (Sustainable Travel Charter)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For the County Council to lead by example in encouraging staff to travel sustainably, and carrying out adequate monitoring of the impacts
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Making Active Travel, and specifically cycling (including cargo bikes) central to ECC policies
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build strong relationships with, educate and inspire elected members, stakeholders and the wider community to support and promote the Essex Cycling Strategy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To work collaboratively with County/District/Borough and City officers to ensure ambitions around cycling are aligned to this strategy, and to empower them to promote cycling locally.

Example Projects supporting Outcome 1

E-Cargo Bike Pilot, Colchester (Kim Barnettson – Childminder)



We are encouraging a step-change towards the use of cargo and e-cargo bike use across Essex. The E-Cargo bike pilot in Colchester is a great example of how we are promoting and encouraging their more widespread use, as an answer the challenges faced in our towns and cities.

Colchester is the first city in Essex to take up the pilot, which is focused on the opportunities for e-cargo bikes to improve businesses' efficiency and reduce their carbon footprint.

Continued and wider roll out of similar schemes and initiatives related to the promotion and adoption of cargo and e-cargo bike use, for both business and personal purposes, will be a key aspect of the Strategy going forward.

Cycle Training in Essex



We are actively investing in and seeking funding to support and promote cycle training in Essex to ensure our people have the practical skills and tools necessary to feel confident and safe on a bike.

In late 2023, we secured a grant of £800,000 from Bikeability Trust UK to provide cycle training to primary school children, with funding to be used up to 2025. In 2023 alone, over 5,000 bikeability courses were completed in Essex, and we are now offering free cycle training for adults and families.

As part of this Strategy, we are committed to increasing the number of children, adults and families attending national standard cycle training through continued training of qualified instructors, increasing funding and wider promotion. **I think this is where we could have the section what does this mean for me and what can I do to help?**

Activities and Actions: Cycling Outcome 2 That the current and future cycle network in Essex is safe, convenient and accessible for all types of trips:

We know that having good, safe, inclusive and attractive cycle infrastructure in the right places is essential. We are always looking for new and innovative ways to design and deliver cycle solutions that meet the needs and aspirations of our residents and communities. We are inspired by the best examples nationally and internationally, and we want to bring them to Essex.

Below are some key **Activities** and **Actions** that we will be undertaking to ensure the existing and future cycle network across Essex are and remain fit for purpose:

Outcome 2	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
<i>The existing and future cycle network is fit for purpose, so people are able to cycle for more of their daily trips</i>	2.1 Best Practice Cycle Design	➤ Adoption of latest guidance in the design of cycle schemes from the outset, and utilising best practice from elsewhere
		➤ As part of the early design stage, designers are to cycle the route of proposed measures to experience and understand the challenges first hand
		➤ Training of all relevant highway staff in cycle and active travel friendly design
		➤ Developing and communicating ECC's position on cycle standards and design via the Essex Active Travel Design Portal
		➤ All highways and transport schemes to follow the Active Travel Design Manual process (including independent peer reviews) to ensure alignment with latest guidance and ECC Safer, Greener, Healthier ambitions
		➤ Establish Essex as a vanguard of new and innovative approaches to active design, including Healthy School Streets; Well-designed Neighbourhoods; and re-considering Highway Network Hierarchy.
	2.2 Transformational Funding	➤ To continue to prioritise ECC funding for the delivery of cycle schemes and infrastructure across Essex
		➤ To utilise S106 and S278 developer funding to support the delivery of appropriate cycle schemes, where possible
		➤ To identify wider funding opportunities for the delivery of cycle schemes through alternative funding sources, such as central Government grants/allocations, developer contributions etc.
		➤ To continue to lobby central government to secure long term, multi-year active travel funding
	2.3 Improving Maintenance of Existing Cycle Networks	➤ Prioritising the identification of funding to support more frequent maintenance and asset renewal of the Cycle Network
		➤ Explore the use of new technology to identify efficiencies in inspection, prioritisation and materials.

	2.4 Strategic Network Planning	➤ To define a Primary and Secondary network of priority cycle routes for investment, that are well-connected, driven by key demand routes, and linked into onward travel
		➤ To regularly review and expand network plans for cycling – to identify and prioritise new opportunities not yet addressed within existing strategic plans, and in light of new destinations and trip generators
	2.5 Effective Cycle Networks	➤ To review the existing cycle network in light of LTN 1/20 guidance (and subsequent guidance) and identify opportunities for improvement - including filling gaps in the network and removal of barriers
		➤ Delivery of LTN 1/20 (or subsequent) compliant cycle infrastructure that supports all types of cycles on Primary and Secondary routes - to create a high-quality Strategic Cycle Network for Essex, without unduly disadvantaging other sustainable modes
		➤ Delivery of high quality, LTN 1/20 compliant cycle infrastructure as part of all wider transport schemes
		➤ Delivery of cycle infrastructure that seeks to support a balance between modes, in line with agreed priorities for the network
		➤ Delivery of high-quality, well-placed cycle signage that is clear and consistent across the county.
		➤ Carry out effective consultation and engagement on all schemes and initiatives, early on in the process, to ensure a shared understanding and ability to shape delivery
	2.6 Cycle Parking that is high-quality and convenient	➤ To deliver, and encourage wider provision of, conveniently located, high-quality, secure, and easily accessible cycle storage at key public destinations (in line with parking standards)
		➤ To ensure all public cycle parking installations include spaces for non-standard cycles (such as adapted cycles used by disabled people, or cargo bikes)
	2.7 Cycling to be 'designed-in' to New Developments from the start	➤ Update of ECC Planning Guidance to reflect the Essex Cycling Strategy and latest Active Travel guidance
		➤ To work with the Planning Team and developers to ensure new developments are designed with cyclists as a priority and are delivered in line with Well-Designed Neighbourhoods guidance
		➤ To ensure cycling is 'designed-in' to new developments from the start, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery of well-placed, high-quality, secure and easily accessible cycle storage in all new developments ○ Delivery of routes that connected into existing cycle networks and infrastructure
		➤ New development cycle measures to be reviewed and approved by the Essex Active Travel Infrastructure Advisory Group
		➤ To ensure Travel Plans are in place for new developments that encourage and facilitate cycling, and travel planning mechanisms are followed in line with ECC Travel Planning guidance
	2.8 To create safe and welcoming environments for cycling	➤ Ensure the ambitions and needs for cycling are considered in all areas of policy and design within the County Council, including Speed Management, Place Making, Health etc.
		➤ Raising awareness of the Cycling Strategy across ECC teams and with districts

Example Projects supporting Outcome 2

Broomfield Road Cycle Corridor



As part of the Chelmsford City Growth Package, Essex Highways has delivered a new high quality, flagship cycle route on Broomfield Road. The improvements have included the installation of hybrid cycle tracks, where cyclists can now be separated from pedestrians and the carriageway.

This scheme has provided LTN 1/20 compliant cycle infrastructure along a major route, providing improved sustainable access into Chelmsford City centre from the north, and improved connections to Broomfield Hospital.

Continued delivery of new and innovative cycle improvement schemes on key corridors across Essex will be an important facilitator in making cycling a more attractive, alternative travel choice.

Cycling as a key consideration across all highways improvements



We recognise the importance of integrating high quality cycle design into every scheme that we deliver, in order that we can create better experiences for cyclists across wider areas of the network.

To properly achieve this, it is important that cycling, along with other forms of active travel, are considered at the earliest stages of highway design. We recognise this need and are updating our Essex Design Manual accordingly to align with Active Travel England's requirements and ultimately to achieve better outcomes for cyclists.

An example of how we already starting to deliver bolder, more inclusive improvements for cycling and active travel is the Army and Navy Sustainable Transport Package – which will deliver significantly improved cycle connectivity through one of the main junctions into Chelmsford. The improvements are a long-term, sustainably focused solution that will allow better access into the city by active modes.

Enhanced Cycle Parking



In 2023, 11 brand new cycle parking spaces have been installed across Clacton and Jaywick as part of the Essex Pedal Power (EPP) project, working in partnership with Cyclehoop. The new cycle parking has been installed in convenient and high demand areas, guided by data obtained from the bikes themselves.

The new cycle spaces and bike lockups provide cyclists with safe spaces to place their bikes whilst they travel around the district. It provides freedom for the cyclists and the chance to increase their activity levels when travelling to their destinations. As part of this Strategy, we will seek to fund and deliver more high-quality cycle parking across wider areas of Essex - as we learn more about where people want to cycle and park their bikes.

New Guidance on Designing-in Cycling in New Developments



ECC are currently in the process of adopting new guidance around new developments, which will set out new standards for how they should be designed to promote the use of walking, cycling and sustainable transport.

Alongside this, we are also developing Travel Planning Guidance for developers to ensure they are properly considering how cycling is integrated within their developments, and to ensure new mode share targets can be met.

Adoption of this new guidance will help to ensure that cycling is designed-in to housing developments from the start across Essex and will better enable us to achieve our specific outcomes around cycling, as well as wider outcomes around the creation of healthy communities and places.

I think this is where we could have the section what does this mean for me and what can I do to help?

Activities and Actions: Cycling Outcome 3 Cycling helps to create more inclusive and connected communities, as well as improving health and reducing inequalities.

We recognise that increased cycling can have real and positive impacts 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 the following **Activities** and **Actions** to help us achieve Outcome 3 of this strategy.

Outcome 3	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
<i>Cycling has a positive role in 'connecting communities' and tackling poverty, improving health and reducing inequalities</i>	3.1 Improved access to quality bikes	➤ Continue to support community and work-based solutions which improve access to cycles – including delivering of Cycle to Work schemes and pool bike provision
		➤ Working with partners and stakeholders to expand opportunities for bike trials and loans, for both standard and adapted cycles (with training and support) e.g., free trial schemes and bike libraries
		➤ Continued roll out and expansion of bike rental schemes (including everyday bikes, cargo bikes and e-bikes) in existing and new areas across Essex
		➤ Support the delivery of schemes and initiatives that allow ease of transition between sustainable modes for end-to-end journeys e.g., Mobility Hubs, 'Mobility as a Service' solutions and Bike Share
	3.2 Improving access to cycling for hard-to-reach groups	➤ To continue to review and understand the barriers that exist to cycling for hard-to-reach groups, through monitoring and engagement activities
		➤ 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
	3.3 Promoting the Health and Social Benefits of Cycling	➤ To capture data and information on the social and health impact of cycling, through increased physical activity and time spent outdoors, better connectivity among communities and improving access to jobs, services and opportunities.
		➤ To utilise data to promote the social and health benefits associated with cycling, to encourage further uptake

Example Projects supporting Outcome 3

Essex Pedal Power



Essex Pedal Power is one of the flagship programmes of the Active Essex Local Delivery Pilot (LDP). The scheme provides free bikes to residents in the county's most disadvantaged communities, to significantly increase cycling, active travel and physical activity levels.

Working together with Active Essex, The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWs) and other key partners, the inclusive programme aims to make cycling accessible for everyone providing access to employment, training and educational opportunities or key local services. The plan is to give away over 5,000 bikes by 2025 focusing on the six Levelling Up areas recognised by Essex County Council.

Further expansion of Essex Pedal Power to wider areas, and continued delivery of initiatives aimed at improving access to bikes is a priority for this Strategy.

Essex Mobility Hub Design Guidance

ECC are in the process of developing guidance to support the delivery of Mobility Hubs in Essex. A mobility hub is a place where people can switch from one mode of transport to another with convenient facilities that encourage sustainable travel decisions. Mobility hubs can exist in a variety of contexts: urban, suburban and rural, and the form they take will vary depending on the specific requirements and geographical context.

The case for mobility hubs centres around reducing the compromises people need to make when deciding to switch to more sustainable transport modes, such as buses, by reducing barriers to catching the bus and introducing appealing incentives or motivators to using more sustainable forms of transport. The delivery of Mobility Hubs in Essex will support the delivery of this Cycling Strategy, by enabling greater availability and ease of transitions to bike and e-bike rentals.



Removing Perceived Barriers to Cycling

We are providing financial support to local and community cycling initiatives through our Essex Cycle Grant programme, aimed at increasing local, inclusive cycling opportunities and target those who aren't regular cyclists, or are new to cycling, to regularly take part.

This includes initiatives that seek to remove existing of perceived barriers around cycling, such as costs associated with bike maintenance and lack of experience of new riders. Some examples of initiatives that have been supported through the cycle grant fund are outlined below:

Supported Organisations	Support Provided
JoyRiders Britain CIC	Funding has supported the provision of Learn to Ride and basic cycle skills, and led rides, o help women gain confidence in riding a bike
BikeKitchens	Grant funding has supported the Jaywick and Clacton bike kitchens to purchase tools, bike parts and other equipment
Care 4 Calais	Continuation of reconditioning donated used bikes, paying for helmets, lights, locks, puncture repair kits, services, parts and delivery, for asylum seekers to access vital services.
Active Wellbeing Society	Funding has supplied active Essex Pedal Power participants with equipment to support the carriage of children, e.g., rear fitting child seats; kickstands; children's helmets; high visibility jackets, amongst other things
Colchester Life in the UK	Funding has supported the organisation in providing technical bike training, equipment and support to people who have come to the UK – this has also included providing bikes for disabled adults and bicycle trailers



I think this is where we could have the section what does this mean for me and what can I do to help?

Activities and Actions: Cycling Outcome 4 Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success:

Cycling has the potential to bring about huge benefits to the local economy of Essex, both directly - through increasing spending and visits to local 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, education and training.

To achieve a future where cycling contributes to a strong and inclusive economy in Essex, we are committed to the following **Activities** and **Actions**:

Outcome 4	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
<i>Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success</i>	4.1 Supporting the Cycling Economy in Essex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To support and promote local cycle business and linked business (such as café's/tourist attractions)
	4.2 Promoting the Economic Benefits of Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To capture data and information around cycling and impact on the local economy at an individual, business and wider economy level, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost savings to individuals and businesses - associated with lower running and maintaining costs ○ Cost savings and benefits to the wider economy - associated with reduced healthcare, congestion and maintenance costs, and increased spending, new industries and entrepreneurial opportunities etc
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To utilise data to promote the benefits and cost savings associated with cycling, to encourage further modal shift

Example Projects supporting Outcome 4

Supporting Cycle Tourism in Essex

Cycle tourism will benefit local economies as cyclists will ride around Essex, eat out in local pubs and restaurants, and visit local tourist attractions. As the popularity of cycling grows, so too does the cycle tourism sector in Essex – and we want this to continue to contribute to the economic success of our county, and the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

We will continue to support cycle businesses and incentives that encourage people to get out on their bike and spend money at local shops, cafes and attractions across Essex.



The Cake Escape is an ongoing loyalty card scheme, supported by ECC, which promotes local cafes and businesses, and rewards Essex residents for getting out on their bikes. The scheme encourages local businesses to be more 'cycle friendly', by requiring participating businesses to provide

safe and convenient parking, bike repair equipment, and cycle maps and tourist information. It also encourages cyclists to visit and spend money in the local area, which benefits the local economy.

Promotional Campaigns

ECC will seek to promote the economic benefits of cycling through promotional campaigns and activities, such as the recent 'Saving the Day' campaign, shown below.

This campaign was launched in October 2023, aimed at raising awareness of the benefits of cycling, and other forms of active and sustainable travel, highlighting how swapping some journeys to these modes can save the people of Essex time, money and hassle. It also celebrates the everyday heroes who are already helping reduce traffic congestion by using more sustainable modes of transport.

The Saving the Day campaign includes various online, social media and outdoor advertising.



Activities and Actions: Cycling Outcome 5 Cycling improves the environment in Essex by reducing emissions, noise, congestion and enhancing the quality of life:

We recognise the key role that 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, and improve the environment of Essex as a result of an increased uptake in cycling, we are committed to the following **Activities** and **Actions**:

Outcome 5	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
<i>The environment in Essex is improved as a result of an increased uptake in cycling</i>	5.1 Normalising cycling for shorter journeys	➤ To ensure policy and design facilitate a mode shift towards cycling for shorter journeys, with a primary focus on urban areas and other areas facing particular air quality challenges
		➤ To improve the cycle experience through the delivery of green infrastructure, which will have additional benefits to local air quality
		➤ Delivery of promotional campaigns to show cycling as both an attractive and normal way to travel for short journeys
	5.2 Setting of and monitoring appropriate Mode Shift Targets	➤ To ensure appropriate mode shift targets are incorporated into all Travel Plans, and that these continue to be reviewed and monitored - including for New Development Travel Plans, but also large-scale workplaces and education facilities
	5.3 Promoting the Environmental Benefits of Cycling	➤ To capture data and information around cycling and the impact on the local environment, through continued air quality monitoring across Essex
		➤ To utilise data to promote the environmental benefits associated with cycling, to encourage further modal shift
		➤ To deliver education initiatives around air quality (through workplaces, schools and other avenues), and promotion of cycling as a cleaner form of transport

Example Projects supporting Outcome 5

Air Quality Educational Initiatives

In 2023, through support from DEFRA, we launched a new website ‘Essex Air’ to raise awareness of air pollution in Essex and highlight the actions people can take to reduce emissions and help protect themselves and their families – and promoting the benefits of more sustainable travel.

Alongside the website, the funding was used to deliver an innovative theatrical educational air quality program which toured almost 100 schools in Essex teaching more than 5,000 primary school children. It was also used to undertake air quality monitoring around primary schools in Essex – getting the children involved using backpack mounted sensors on their journeys to school.

A wider understanding of both children and adults about air quality and the impacts is key, and we hope will be a key driver for people to make more informed and cleaner travel choices in future and allow cycling to play a role in reducing air quality in Essex.



Wider Air Quality Monitoring across Essex

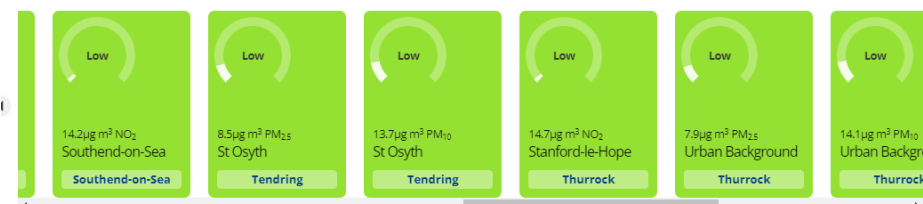
Given cycling is considered an effective low emission travel option, if we are able to achieve a shift to cycling for short trips, or longer trips combined with public transport, this could make a significant contribution to reducing air pollution in Essex.

Therefore, the continued investment in air quality monitoring across Essex will be a key for the Essex Cycling Strategy, to understand the wider impact of our increasing investment and uptake in cycling, alongside other behavioural change and modal strategies.

Live Monitors

NO₂ PM₁₀ PM_{2.5} All

Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a gas that is produced along with nitric oxide (NO) by combustion processes (i.e. burning of fossil fuels). Particulate matter (PM) is a generic term used to describe a complex mixture of solid and liquid particles of varying size, shape, and composition. PM is often classified according to its size. PM₁₀ is coarse particles which are less than 10 microns (µm) in diameter. PM_{2.5} is fine particles which are less than 2.5 microns (µm) in diameter.



I think this is where we could have the section what does this mean for me and what can I do to help?

Activities and Actions: Cycling Outcome 6 Essex is a popular destination for leisure cycling and tourism.

Alongside our Strategic Cycle Networks, we recognise the importance of enhancing the cycling opportunities within rural areas and communities, and in particular, the leisure and tourism benefits that such opportunities can facilitate, to bring about social and economic benefits. We also know that more people will cycle for travel if they enjoy cycling for fun.

Below are some key **Activities** and **Actions** that we will be undertaking to help us position Essex as a desirable destination for leisure cycling:

Outcome 6	Linked Activities	Specific Actions
<i>Essex is considered a desirable destination for leisure cycling</i>	6.1 High-quality Leisure and Recreational Routes	➤ To define a network of Leisure and Recreational cycle routes across Essex
		➤ Delivery of improvements to leisure and recreational routes in line with latest best practice guidance
		➤ To capture opportunities for additional leisure and recreational routes
	6.2 Promoting Leisure Cycling	➤ Promote leisure cycling in Essex through campaigns and activities, such as Cake Escape
		➤ Improve the availability and sharing of information around leisure cycling through the provision of enhanced mapping and signposting to user friendly platforms e.g., Komoot / Strava
	6.3 Supporting Local Businesses and Tourist destinations	➤ Support and promote engagement in sporting activities and competitions related to cycling, through community platforms, clubs and events
		➤ Supporting local businesses (cafés, shops, pubs, restaurants etc) and tourist destinations in attracting and accommodating cyclists

Example Projects supporting Outcome 6

Investing in Leisure and Recreational Routes



A key action of this Strategy is to expand our cycle Network Plans for investment out to wider areas across Essex, to ensure we are able to deliver high-quality cycle connectivity, not just in urban and town areas, but in our more inter-urban and rural areas too.

We recognise that there is great opportunity for increased cycling levels in these areas, to bring about health and connectivity benefits for individuals, but also to increase cycle tourism and contributions to the wider Essex economy.

We are already actively supporting the investment in improvements to leisure routes across the county, working with key delivery partners to secure funding and deliver upgrades. However, a priority for this Strategy going forward will be to seek further opportunities to identify pathways to overcome legal, maintenance and land ownership challenges, and secure

funding to better enable the delivery of high-quality leisure routes across the county.



In November 2023, ECC reached a three-year agreement to host Ford RideLondon for the next three years (2024 to 2026). The agreement includes the Ford RideLondon-Essex mass participation events and two stages of the Ford RideLondon Classique.

Ford RideLondon is organised by London Marathon Events. To date, the London Marathon Foundation has awarded Essex £1.75 million in funding, to inspire physical activity and promote cycling and walking in the county.

The funding is managed by Active Essex and has already supported more than 15,000 residents to take part in funded activities since May 2022. Essex will remain one of the London Marathon Foundation's core funding areas for the next three years.

Supporting Local Leisure Cycling Events

Through our Essex Cycle Grant fund, we provide financial support to local leisure cycling initiatives and events, such as the Tour de Tendring. We recognise the importance of supporting and promoting local community events, such as these, to raise the profile of cycling as a fun enjoyable activity and to bring wider tourism to local areas.



Love to Ride Essex Community Platform

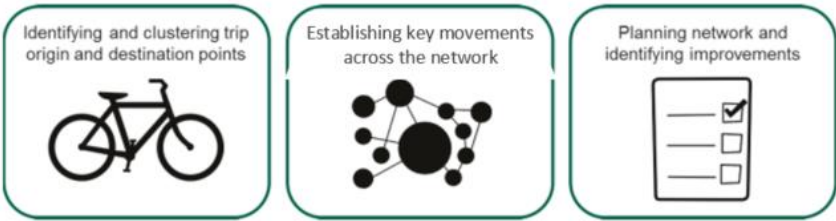
Love to Ride Essex is a community platform for Essex residents, employees and families, aimed at getting more people cycling more often. The platform acts as an online community, encouraging community interaction through online challenges and prizes, logging and sharing of rides, and provides information and training aimed at all types of riders.



I think this is where we could have the section what does this mean for me and what can I do to help?

Cycle Network Planning

For investment in cycling to be successful, alignment to the cycling outcomes is vital. Equally important is planning the network as this is a crucial step in the delivery of improvements to the cycle network on the ground and will support us in seeking opportunities for funding moving forward.



Following advice from the Department for Transport, we have developed plans for better cycle routes in our major towns across Essex. The plans show the main routes for cyclists that we want to improve first, chiefly because they have the most people who could cycle and benefit from the changes.

But we know that rural routes are important too, and in 2023 we undertook a review of our plans to expand their reach to wider areas of the network, including to capture new developments and wider inter-urban and rural areas.

Our priority routes are outlined in the [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans](#) on the Essex Highways webpage. As per guidance, the Strategic Network Plans are subject to consultation and ongoing review to ensure they remain relevant and up to date.

Adoption of Latest Guidance and Designs

As part of the delivery of this Essex Cycling Strategy, the County Council are committing to the formal adoption of latest best practice cycle design guidance, as directed by Active Travel England, to facilitate the creation of safe and high-quality cycle environments.



To ensure latest guidance is considered in the design of new cycle schemes, ECC are following a new 'Active Travel Design Process'. The process sets a requirement for all transport schemes to be assessed against latest cycle design principles at the very early stages, and throughout, the design process.

In every case, scheme designs will be required to achieve compliance with latest best practice design as far as possible. However, it is recognised that this won't always be possible, due for example to network constraints. In line with recommendations from ATE, where compliance with these standards is not feasibly possible for justifiable reasons, flexibility will be given, and work will be carried out to identify opportunities for improvement.

Appendix C provides more detail on the current guiding principles for cycle design in Essex, as outlined in the Government's design criteria LTN 1/20.

Prioritising our Delivery

Scheme Design

To make sure that we deliver high quality cycle schemes that are well used and provide great connections to places we want to visit, as well as other cycle routes, it is important that we prioritise our investment into the right facilities in the right areas to ensure our residents can get the best from the investment.

We are developing and adopting new tools to help us identify which cycle routes and schemes we should invest funding in order of priority. These tools support us in assessing our cycling plans and schemes in Essex at various development stages, across a number of high-level criteria, including:

- **Strategic / Policy** – *how the scheme supports current transport policy outcomes*
- **Connectivity** – *how well a route connects people and places, and expected demand*
- **Feasibility** - *how technically feasible the scheme is to deliver*
- **Deliverability** – *how achievable it is to deliver, in terms of funding, political will and public acceptability*

The six Cycling Outcomes of this Cycling Strategy, alongside outcomes from other relevant policies such as the Local Transport Plan, are key elements of our assessment of schemes.

How we progress cycle schemes through the design and delivery process will be prioritised based on their ability to meet the above criteria.

Delivering new routes

Once our cycle schemes have been prioritised and designed, how they are programmed for delivery on the ground will be determined by a variety of factors, including the availability of funding, local priorities (as outlined in Local Transport Strategies), political support and linkages with wider transport projects.

Maintaining our Cycle Network

Once the schemes have been delivered on the ground, we recognise the importance of ensuring that the route and/or network is well-maintained so that it can continue to support our cyclists by providing infrastructure that is fit for purpose and safe to use. However, given the limited budgets available, there is a need to prioritise how we deliver maintenance across the network so that the most important routes are prioritised first, closely followed by those most in need of maintenance.

Funding Opportunities for Cycling

Our ambitions for cycling depend on our ability to secure funding. This strategy shows our commitment to cycling, and how it aligns with our broader plans for developing great places to live and work and high-quality transport improvements and are absolutely needed so that we can attract the necessary funding and to help speed up the delivery of improvements.

We, as a County Council, will continue to fund cycle schemes and initiatives in line with this Strategy, through our own funding. But to achieve our ambitions, we will need to support this with wider funding from external sources. We have been successful in securing external funding for cycle schemes and infrastructure in the past, and this will be a key focus for the future.

We expect that most of the funding for cycling will come from the Central Government department for active travel - Active Travel England. This department is the new executive agency of the Department for Transport that is responsible for implementing the Government's national policy aimed at improving cycling - Gear Change – DfT's long term plan for walking and cycling. This aims to make walking or cycling half of all journeys in towns and cities by 2030.

Moreover, the stronger link between cycling and other policy areas, such as the new Local Transport Plan and place-making principles, offers more opportunities for funding beyond dedicated highways and transport sources. This could be obtained through public realm schemes, housing-delivery, regeneration, developer contributions and place-based funding opportunities.

Possible wider funding opportunities to support the delivery of cycle schemes and initiatives include:

- Specific government funding for transport schemes e.g., through Active Travel England
- Central Government Capital and Revenue Funding including Department for Transport (DfT).
- Specific grants (e.g., Sustrans, Lottery Funding, Public Health, Sport England)
- Contributions from Third Parties – e.g., District contributions, Active Essex
- Essex Local Highways Panel (LHP) prioritised funding
- Developer contributions – e.g., through Section 106/278 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding
- Any future devolved funding opportunities via regional or sub regional bodies
- The acquisition and investigation of corporate sponsorship opportunities for any high-profile public cycle schemes/events.
- External transport bodies – e.g., Network Rail and rail operating companies.
- Other central government funds e.g., through Department for Health, Homes England, National Highways and the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

New and innovative forms of funding schemes are always being considered, and the County Council will work with partners and stakeholders to investigate new ways to bring schemes forward for development.

Section 3: Monitoring and Review

Monitoring is essential to the success of this Strategy. It will help us understand what aspects are working well and what aspects need further review. It will allow us to track progress and ensure we are going the right way towards achieving our vision.

Cycling Data

We will continue to use a combination of both old and new information to assess how well our cycle projects are doing, and whether we are achieving our Cycling Strategy outcomes. The table on the right shows some of the main information sources we use. As we move forward, we will continue to expand the data we have with new counters and methods and will explore new and innovative sources of data, as cycling and technology in Essex change over time.

We know it's not just about how many people cycle, but also how they feel about it. That's why we also want to measure things like people's 'attitudes' and 'opinions' on cycling – these aspects can also be great signs of success for this Strategy.

To obtain this type of data and learn more about cycling in Essex, we'll carry out a dedicated Cycling in Essex survey. This survey could be combined with other surveys and will help us understand more about how people cycle and what they think of it and the facilities we implement. It will add to the data sources we already have. We'll repeat the survey on a regular basis to see how things are changing over time, and to measure how we're progressing.

Example Cycling Data available for Essex	
Infrastructure	
Cycle Route Improvements	Miles of cycle route improvements delivered (including Strategic and non-strategic cycle route improvements)
Cycle Parking	Number of Cycle Parking spaces / facilities delivered (both by ECC and others)
Cycle Route Maintenance	Annual maintenance spend and percentage of network actively maintained
Cycling Levels and Pathways	
VivaCity Sensors	93 sites across Essex (further expansion planned) providing continuous information on the number of cyclists, cyclists pathways and speeds
DfT Traffic Count Sites	Various locations across the county, providing continuous information on the number of cyclists
ECC Cycle Counters	Various cycle counters located across Essex, providing continuous information on the number of cyclists
Travel Plan Monitoring Data	Percentage cycling mode share in schools, large organisations and new developments that have an active Travel Plan in place
Essex Pedal Power – SeeSense GPS Data	Data obtained through Essex Pedal Power programme – providing data on observed patterns of movements, speeds and dwell times
External Surveys	Such a Sport England's Active People Survey (reporting annual cycling for leisure and travel figures by local authority) and National Travel Survey
Logged rides on Community Platforms	Number of cycle trips and miles cycled recorded on community platforms (Love to Ride and Strava)
Cycling Satisfaction Levels	
National Highways & Transportation (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey	Collects public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, Highway and Transport Services in Local Authority areas
Cycling Safety Data	
Essex Police Collision and Casualties Data	Number of Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) / Number of collisions involving cyclists in Essex
British Transport Police Data	Number of Bike Thefts in Essex
Cycling Training Data	
Qualified Cycle Coaches	Number of qualified cycling coaches and ride leaders in Essex
ECC Cycle Skills Training	Number of courses completed (at various levels)
Wider Cycle Training	Number of people participating in wider cycle training initiatives i.e., Bike Maintenance Training
Engagement in Community Clubs and Platforms	
ECC Cycle Grant Data	Number of organisations supported through the ECC cycle
Platform Engagement	Monitoring of participation levels on community platforms Love to Ride and Strava
Registered Cycle Clubs	Number of registered Cycling Clubs and registered Members in Essex
Air Quality Impact	
ECC Air Quality Monitoring Data	Air quality monitoring data can be utilised to review the impact of wider and combined efforts to reduce the carbon impact of transport in Essex

Targets & Monitoring

Our vision is to see more people cycling in Essex, particularly in our towns and cities. By 2030, we hope that half of the trips in these places will be by bike or on foot, in line with Active Travel England's goal.

As a starting point, we have set some overarching targets for the Essex Cycling Strategy (outlined to the right of this page). However, we recognise that in order to set meaningful, outcome specific targets for this Strategy, we first need to understand the current situation for cycling in Essex. And this is what we are in the process of doing now, through undertaking the Cycling in Essex survey, and through review of our cycling data.

Once the baseline position has been established, specific targets related to each of the six cycling outcomes will be set. Some of the targets will be short term (over the next 5 years) and others will be longer term (to be achieved by 2030 onwards).

The targets will be communicated in a Monitoring Plan for this Strategy **by the end of 2025**. Going forward, they will be used to monitor how well we are doing with our Cycling Strategy, and to help identify areas where we need to do better.

The table overleaf outlines some of the success indicators we are considering to help develop outcome specific targets. These indicators will be refined and developed into measurable targets in the Monitoring Plan.

The Vision: *We want to see more people, of all abilities, ages and backgrounds, cycling in Essex, more safely and more frequently. The more of us who choose to cycle, the closer we will get to achieving our vision of a safer, greener and healthier county*

Essex Cycling Strategy Overarching Targets	
Short Term Target (over next 5 years)	To increase the number of cycle trips at specific locations across Essex
Long Term Target (2030-onwards)	To achieve the ATE objective of half of journeys in Essex's towns and cities being cycled and walked by 2030

Ongoing Review

Alongside regular monitoring of progress against our **Targets**, we will continue to review the wider strategy at appropriate milestones to ensure it remains up to date and reflective of our priorities for cycling in Essex.

Outcome Success Indicators *(to be refined and developed into specific targets, outlined in the Monitoring Plan)*

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

- The number of schools actively engaged with across Essex related to cycling and behavioural change
- Levels of engagement with Essex businesses related to cycling (both for business travel and logistics)
- The number of schools and businesses / organisations with an active Travel Plan and monitoring in place
- The number of new community organisations and charities supported through Cycle grant funding
- The proportion of people that see cycling as a feasible travel option for everyday trips
- The amount of cycle skills training provided and instructors trained
- The proportion of children cycling to school and adults cycling to education and work

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

- The annual spend per head on cycling in Essex
- The level of funding for maintenance of the Essex cycle network
- The number of defects identified on the Essex cycle network
- The number of Primary and Secondary cycle network plans delivered
- The number of cycle storage / parking spaces across Essex

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

- The number of Essex adults that are considered 'active' and 'inactive'
- The level of cycling in under-represented groups
- The number of community cycle activities supported

Outcome 4: Cycling contributes to continued and inclusive economic success

- The number of cycle related businesses in Essex

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

- To proportion of short urban and town trips made by different modes
- The number of mobility hub type infrastructure across Essex
- The number of freight consolidation hubs in town and city centres
- The level of emissions at air quality monitor sites across Essex

CO6: Essex is considered a desirable destination for leisure cycling

- The number of leisure and recreational cycle routes
- The number of people that cycle for leisure
- The number of registered quiet lanes and green lanes across Essex

Appendices

Appendices to this Strategy are provided on the following pages, as per the below:

- Appendix A – Links with Wider Policy
- Appendix B – Essex Place & Movement Framework
- Appendix C – Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 Cycle Design Guidance
- Appendix D – Glossary of Terms
- Appendix E – references and sources of data used in the “Why Cycling is Important to Essex” section of this document

Appendix A: Links with Wider Policy

The emerging Local Transport Plan (LTP) is being updated to reflect the latest national policy changes which prioritise cycling as a sustainable and active mode of transport for a greener and healthier future.

The Government has set out a bold vision for Cycling in the UK in the DfT's Gear Change Walking and Cycling Plan, which aims to transform the way people travel and enjoy the benefits of active travel.

The plan addresses some of the most pressing challenges of our time - improving air quality, combatting climate change, improving health and wellbeing, addressing inequalities and tackling congestion on our roads.

To support this vision, Active Travel England was created in August 2022 as an executive agency of the Department for Transport, with the goal of making half of short journeys in towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030.

We recognise that the Local and National policy context around Cycling is changing rapidly. That is why we are committed to being bold in our plans for Cycling in Essex and delivering high-quality infrastructure and services that enable more people to cycle safely and confidently.

Cycling is more than just a way of getting around - it's a way of transforming our communities for the better. That's why the Essex Cycling Strategy is aligned with the local policy context, which has four key aims: boosting the economy, protecting the environment, improving health and wellbeing for all ages, and supporting children and families, as set out in the Everyone's Essex plan.

Local Transport Plan

The new Essex Local Transport Plan 2024/25 (LTP) recognises the diverse needs of transport users and offers more options for travelling in a sustainable way, to help achieve these wider aims and ambitions. It envisions a future where travel in Essex is Safer, Greener and Healthier, and where cycling is easy, safe and fun for everyone.

Cycling is a vital part of the plan for transport going forward, and it can contribute to each of the three LTP Strategic Aims (shown below).

LTP Strategic Aim 1: Supporting People, Health, Wellbeing and

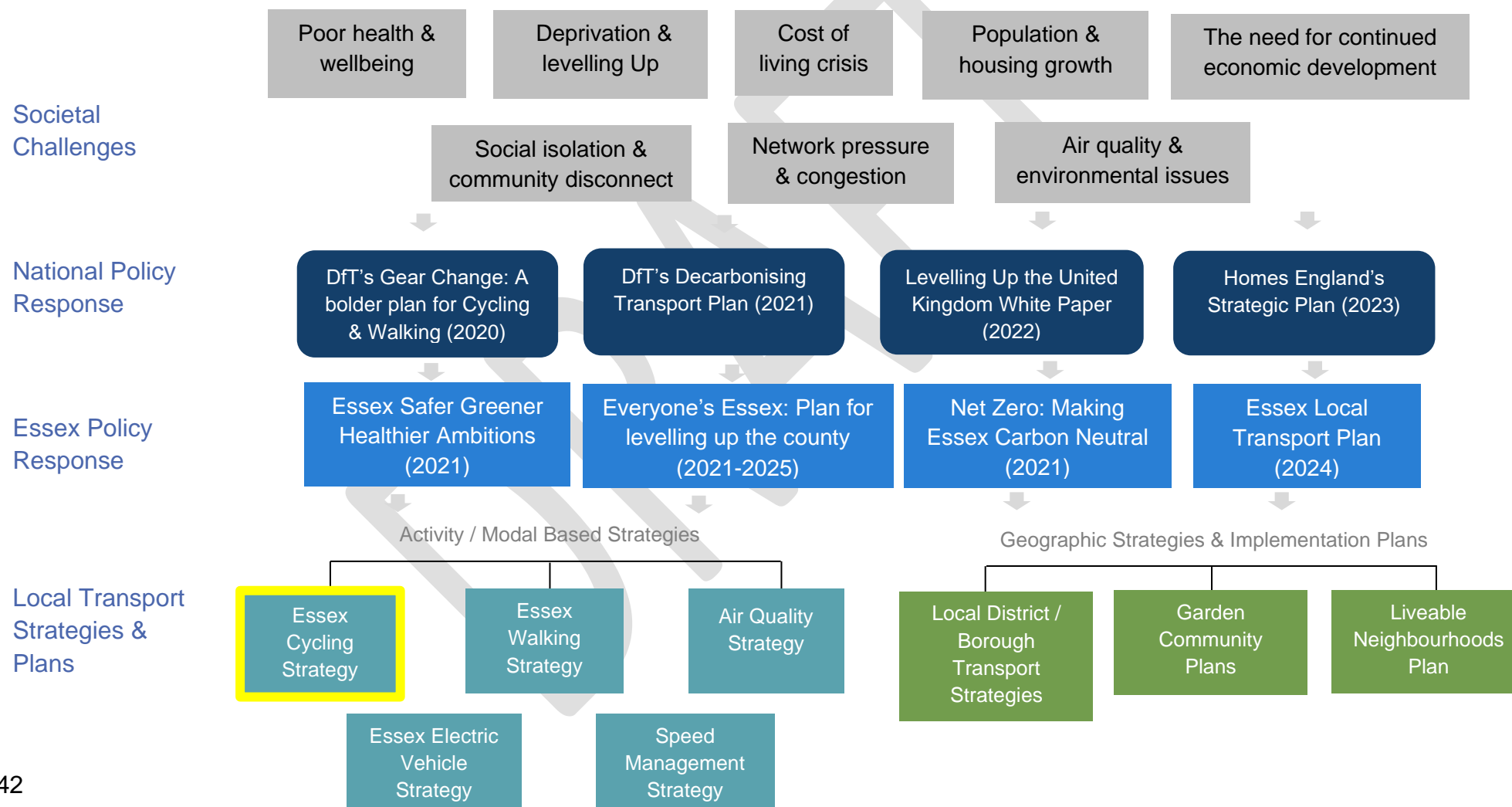
LTP Strategic Aim 2: Creating Sustainable Places and Communities

LTP Strategic Aim 3: Connecting People, Place and Businesses

The relationship between the LTP Strategic Aims and Outcomes and this Cycling Strategy is shown on Page 9.

The Cycling Strategy, along with many other ECC Strategies, will help to realise the vision of the new Local Transport Plan, and it is a key way of creating better, more sustainable places to live and spend time.

The below diagram outlines how the Essex Cycling Strategy fits within the wider policy picture for Essex, and its role alongside other transport and planning strategies.



Appendix B: Essex Place and Movement Framework

Delivering for Cycling across the Network

How we deliver this Strategy on the ground, and the standards we want to achieve for cycling will vary from place to place across Essex, as the geography and way people use different areas varies across the network.

The new Place and Movement network classification (referred to on page 7 of this document) will be used as the overarching delivery framework to guide how we deliver on our ambitions for cycling across the network.

This delivery framework will help create local Places that are more accessible, safer and attractive for everyday living, and as part of this, will ensure cycling becomes an attractive and viable transport choice for local journeys, particularly in urban and urban hub areas. A key focus of the new approach is on enabling the creation of higher quality places and environments that support all users across Essex.

Alongside the LTN 1/20 requirements for cycling, the broad standards that we want to achieve for cycling across different streets, places and spaces in Essex are as follows – as Place and Movement is adopted, we expect specific standards for each of the Essex Place and Movement Street Types to be.

Across the whole network

Across the whole network, we want to achieve the following for people who cycle:

- → People of all ages, backgrounds and abilities have the opportunity to cycle safely
- → Cycle routes join up into a coherent and convenient network, offering access to destinations or onward travel options
- → Accessible cycle parking is readily available
- → Cycle facilities are designed to accommodate non-standard and adapted cycles
- → Regular, well-maintained surfaces
- → Interaction with large vehicles is minimised

defined. As a general rule, the expectations set out here will apply to facilitate and encourage cycling.

In our more 'place' focused areas

These are our destinations, where we live and spend time. Here, we aim to achieve the following standards for cycling:

- → Cyclists provided for as a priority mode
- → People on cycles feel safe sharing the road due to reduced presence and impact of vehicles, due to lower speeds and movements
- → Street layout keeps both speed and volume of motor vehicle traffic low
- → Infrastructure reflects cyclists as a priority user, with cycle friendly crossings and protected spaces where appropriate
- → Safe and secure cycle parking is available in regular, convenient locations
- → Vehicle parking is managed in a way that does not hinder people who cycle
- → Easy connections to onward cycle routes are available
- → Because of the above, people feel encouraged to cycle for shorter journeys

On our cycle routes

These routes provide connections between where we live and our key destinations. Here, we want to achieve the following standards for cycling:

- → People on bikes, of all ages, abilities and purposes, are able to use these routes to connect to key destinations safely
- → Routes are well-lit, well-signposted, well-maintained and well-connected
- → Good cycle connectivity is created, allowing route alternatives that are more convenient than driving
- → On lower speed routes, dedicated cycle lanes are provided with priority for cyclists at junctions
- → On higher speed routes, alternative cycle routes are provided away from the main carriageway where possible. Where not possible, physical segregation from motor vehicles is provided
- → Conflict at junctions is evaluated and managed through design choices, with safety of cyclists and pedestrians as the priority

Appendix C: Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 Cycle Design Guidance

As of March 2024, the following principles apply to the design of cycle schemes in Essex, as outlined in [Local Transport Note \(LTN\) 1/20 Cycle Design Guidance](#).

LTN 1/20 Core Design Principles

LTN 1/20 sets out five core design principles which represent the essential requirements to achieve more people travelling by cycle or on foot, these are:

- Coherent- simple to navigate and of a consistently high quality
- Direct - at least equally as direct as motor vehicle routes
- Safe - cycle infrastructure should be safe for all, and always perceived as safe
- Comfortable - good quality, well-maintained surfaces
- Attractive - public spaces should be well designed for people to spend time

Application of Standards

The guidance principles (outlined on the following page) and associated tools provided by ATE allow the County Council, along with other local authorities, flexibility on infrastructure design and sets a measurable quality threshold to achieve when designing cycling schemes.

All transport scheme designs in Essex will be subject to a review against LTN 1/20 standards as part of the Active Travel Design Process.

The Cycling Level of Service (CLoS) and the Junction Assessment tools (JAT) are new mechanisms introduced to set minimum quality criteria, and will be used to support the assessment of cycle schemes within Essex.

The aim will be for all scheme designs to achieve a minimum score of 70% under the CLoS, no critical fails and under the JAT no red-scored turning movements – to strengthen our ability to achieve funding.

Where schemes do not meet these minimum criteria for justifiable reasons, such as network limitations, these schemes will still be considered for delivery if they meet specific needs and priorities. In these cases, work will be undertaken to ensure the scheme is as close as possible to LTN 1/20 standards to strengthen the case for the scheme, and support applications for funding.

LTN 1/20 Summary Principles

The LTN 1/20 summary principles are based on lessons learnt from cycle infrastructure delivered across the country to date. These guiding principles will be adhered to going forward, to ensure we are able to deliver high quality cycle infrastructure across Essex:

1. Cycle infrastructure should be accessible to everyone from 8 to 80 and beyond: it should be planned and designed for everyone. The opportunity to cycle in our towns and cities should be universal.
2. Cycles must be treated as vehicles and not as pedestrians. On urban streets, cyclists must be physically separated from pedestrians and should not share space with pedestrians. Where cycle routes cross pavements, a physically segregated track should always be provided. At crossings and junctions, cyclists should not share the space used by pedestrians but should be provided with a separate parallel route.
3. Cyclists must be physically separated and protected from high volume motor traffic, both at junctions and on the stretches of road between them.
4. Side street routes, if closed to through traffic to avoid rat-running, can be an alternative to segregated facilities or closures on main roads – but only if they are truly direct.
5. Cycle infrastructure should be designed for significant numbers of cyclists, and for non-standard cycles. Our aim is that thousands of cyclists a day will use many of these schemes.
6. Consideration of the opportunities to improve provision for cycling will be an expectation of any future local highway schemes funded by Government.
7. Largely cosmetic interventions which bring few or no benefits for cycling or walking will not be funded from any cycling or walking budget.
8. Cycle infrastructure must join together, or join other facilities together by taking a holistic, connected network approach which recognises the importance of nodes, links and areas that are good for cycling.
9. Cycle parking must be included in substantial schemes, particularly in city centres, trip generators and (securely) in areas with flats where people cannot store their bikes at home. Parking should be provided in sufficient amounts at the places where people actually want to go.
10. Schemes must be legible and understandable.
11. Schemes must be clearly and comprehensively signposted and labelled.
12. Major 'iconic' items, such as overbridges must form part of wider, properly thought-through schemes.
13. As important as building a route itself is maintaining it properly afterwards.
14. Surfaces must be hard, smooth, level, durable, permeable and safe in all weathers.
15. Trials can help achieve change and ensure a permanent scheme is right first time. This will avoid spending time, money and effort modifying a scheme that does not perform as anticipated.
16. Access control measures, such as chicane barriers and dismount signs, should not be used.
17. The simplest, cheapest interventions can be the most effective
18. Cycle routes must flow, feeling direct and logical.
19. Schemes must be easy and comfortable to ride.
20. All designers of cycle schemes must experience the roads as a cyclist.
21. Schemes must be consistent.
22. When to break these principles. In rare cases, where it is absolutely unavoidable, a short stretch of less good provision rather than jettison an entire route which is otherwise good will be appropriate. But in most instances it is not absolutely unavoidable and exceptions will be rare

Appendix D: Glossary of Terms

Actions	A key element of this Essex Cycling Strategy. Actions are the specific steps identified by the County Council as necessary to achieve each Cycling Outcome
Active Travel Design Process	A new design process adopted by the County Council and Essex Highways, for the design of all transport schemes.
Activities	A key element of this Essex Cycling Strategy. Activities are areas of focus for each of the Cycling Outcomes, under which specific actions sit.
ATE	Abbreviation for Active Travel England. Active Travel England is the government's executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England.
Cycle Routes	General term referring to our designated connections for cycling across Essex (covering cycle paths, segregated paths, cycle lanes, or sections of highway which has been duly designated by the County Council)
DfT	Abbreviation for Department for Transport. Department for Transport is a ministerial department responsible for transport in the UK.
ECC	Abbreviation for Essex County Council, the county council that governs the non-metropolitan county of Essex and acts as the Highways Authority.
Essex Cycle Grants	The Essex Cycle Grant is provided by Active Essex and Essex County Council to support organisations throughout the county engage with more people to get them cycling.
Essex Design Guide	A reference guide to help create high quality places with an identity specific to its Essex context, which is updated with latest guidance
Essex Highways	A partnership between Essex County Council and Ringway Jacobs, responsible for managing, maintaining, and improve the highway in Essex.
Essex Place and Movement Approach	The approach taken to adopt the new functional route hierarchy (network classification) for Essex, which recognises both the place and movement function of roads and streets
Healthy School Streets	A new approach for streets outside schools, focused on improved access to schools by sustainable modes
Network Hierarchy / Functional Route Hierarchy	A classification of the road network in Essex
LCWIP	Abbreviation for Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. A strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements at a local level, directed by central government in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

LTP	Abbreviation for Local Transport Plan. A statutory document which sets out the plan for transport in Essex, including strategic aims, outcomes and policies related to all areas of transport.
Cycling Outcomes	A key element of this Essex Cycling Strategy. The Cycling Outcomes are the results we want to achieve, related to cycling
Section 106	Contributions that can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, as outlined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – commonly known as S106.
Section 278	
Strategic Network Plans	Our plans priority plans for cycle route improvements across Essex
Sustrans	Sustrans is a United Kingdom-based walking, wheeling and cycling charity, and the custodian of the National Cycle Network.
Targets	A key element of this Essex Cycling Strategy. The Targets are what we are aiming for, and are a key success
Travel Plans	A package of actions designed by a workplace, school or other organisation to encourage safe, healthy and sustainable travel options.
Vision	A key element of this Essex Cycling Strategy. The vision is our ultimate goal that we want to achieve by delivering this Strategy
Vision Zero	Vision Zero is the County Councils ambition to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on the county's roads by 2040
Well-designed Neighbourhoods	An approach to the design of neighbourhoods, focused on improving safety, health, inclusivity and the creation of attractive places.

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