

Cycling:

Everyone's First Choice

A Cycling Strategy for Leighton Buzzard and Linslade

Recommended to the Local Authorities by
Leighton BuzzCycles - the Leighton Linslade Cycling Forum
2021



Leighton
BuzzCYCLES
Creating a cycling community



Increase mobility
of the nation's **poorest**
families by 25%



Cycling saves a **third of road**
space compared to driving,
helping to **cut congestion**

Investing in cycling in numbers

Danish levels
of cycling in
the UK would
save the NHS

£17 billion
within 20 years



Shifting just **10%**
of journeys from car to bike would
reduce air pollution and save
400 productive life years



Bike lanes can increase
retail sales by a quarter



Bike parking takes
up **8 times less space** than
cars, helping to free up space

Source: Benefits of Investing in Cycling,
Dr Rachel Aldred, British Cycling in
association with Leigh Day (2014)

Highways England S150572

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Foreword

by Andrew Selous MP



It's a great pleasure to be asked to write the forward for this cycling strategy.

People cycle for many reasons. For some, it is a major weekend leisure activity and I have noticed many more Lycra clad cyclists going past my home at weekends. I am more of a functional cyclist, using my bike to make journeys I have to do anyway, and so do more of my cycling in a suit.

There are so many advantages to cycling. It reduces congestion and air pollution, particularly in towns. It is often the quickest way to get around town and our wonderful PCSO Rachel Carne made me smile when she told me that she often gets to the scene of a crime quicker on a bike than her colleagues do in a police car because she knows all the back alleys!

It is also very good for us, mentally as well as physically, and there is growing evidence cycling can support the local economy as people find it easier to stop and go to shops and cafés, provided they can find somewhere safe to leave their bike.

E bikes are opening cycling to older people, people with disabilities, people with longer or hillier journeys and people who need to arrive ready for work.

I am also a motorist and strongly believe that cyclists and motorists should behave respectfully and lawfully towards each other. Sometimes I find it helpful to talk about using the car less rather than to talk about cycling, particularly as far too many very short journeys continue to be made by car. Cycling does need to be safe though, for the many not the brave and we do need to start designing cycle safety into all new roads and housing estates.

“Sometimes I find it helpful to talk about using the car less rather than to talk about cycling, particularly as far too many very short journeys continue to be made by car.” (Andrew Selous MP)

Executive Summary

“We need to change how we use our roads and develop a new vision for how the town looks and operates.” (Councillor Harvey, CBC and LLTC)

We already have a good cycle network – our existing roads and streets. The only problem is that they are full of cars, both moving and parked. We have a chance, through the promotion, incentivising and normalising of cycling for travel, to transform our town into a cleaner, healthier, more liveable community space, filled with people not cars.

Car-filled streets, a lack of attractive walking and cycling infrastructure and poor public transport can trap people without access to cars in their homes. When a town is designed around the need to own a car, those who do not or cannot own one can become marginalised and forgotten.

We need to stop giving the most powerful the most space. Vulnerable road users and the more vulnerable in our communities need to be given spaces where they can safely exercise, breathe, play and travel. While cycle paths across parks may seem like the idyllic solution, not everyone lives next to a park and not every destination is next to a park.

Cars, even electric ones, pollute, create noise, cause congestion and contribute massively to climate change. We should no longer expect to drive around in our cars without facing consequences. If we choose to drive we must be prepared to pay the price, whether financially or through greater inconvenience.

People want choice but at the moment many feel they have no choice but to drive. To give more people the option to choose to cycle and walk for the shorter, everyday journeys in and around our town we have to make these modes of travel more attractive and more convenient than hopping into the car and driving down the road currently is.

The first transport choice for most people living and travelling in our town must become the bicycle. In order to make space for cycling we need to reduce car use and car dependency. And, in line with national targets, we need to work towards the target that at least half of all journeys in Leighton Buzzard and Linslade are walked or cycled by 2030.

“The joy of cycling is that doing it doesn't just benefit you. It doesn't just make you happier. It doesn't just make you healthier. It helps millions of others too It means less pollution and less noise for everyone. It means more trade for street-front businesses. It means fewer cars in front of yours at the lights.” (Prime Minister Boris Johnson)

Introduction and Context: a new approach to local journeys

New policy and guidance from Government

In the summer of 2020 the UK Government published two very important and ground breaking documents relating to the future direction of cycling in and between towns. **Gear Change – a bold vision for walking and cycling** is the new government strategy on active travel and accompanying it comes **Local Transport Note 1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design** the new guidelines from the Department of Transport. This Cycling Strategy for Leighton Buzzard and Linslade should be read alongside these two Government documents.

Both of these Government documents set out a new, bolder vision for cycling as a “mass transit” form of travel¹ with a vision that “Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being walked or cycled by 2030”². “Active Travel” is the new buzzword, with cycling and walking being placed firmly at the heart of all transport, place-making and health policies³. The focus will be on bicycles as vehicles, which should be separated from pedestrians, but also on physically separating cycles from high volume motor traffic through segregated, dedicated cycle tracks.



On-carriageway painted cycle lanes will no longer receive funding under the new government guidelines

¹ Gear Change p21

² Gear Change p12

³ Gear Change p24

Shared use paths and on-carriageway painted cycle lanes will no longer receive funding, except in exceptional circumstances⁴. There will be funding for towns to install direct, main road, segregated cycle tracks⁵ and for up to 12 non-London local authorities to benefit from intensive investment for 'mini-Holland' style schemes that focus on replacing short car trips.⁶

LTN1/20 sets out 22 Design Principles for cycle networks (Appendix 1: Local Transport Note 1/20 Summary Principles

which must be met for schemes to receive Government funding.

The Government has also committed to setting up a new funding body and inspectorate called **Active Travel England** to enforce standards and raise performance⁷. This body will:

- Approve and inspect schemes
- Share training, knowledge and good practice
- Inspect Highways Authorities
- Review major planning applications

Local policy and climate change targets

In addition to these new national publications and announcements, Central Bedfordshire Council has also adopted its own **Sustainability Plan** in which it agrees to:

- Invest in strategic active travel
- Improve connectivity between towns
- Create compact walkable networks within towns
- Encourage micro-mobility and healthier modes of transport
- Improve cycling facilities and paths
- Increase cycle commuting to 10% by 2023 and to 26% by 2030⁸

Getting people out of cars and giving them a real choice to travel by bike or on foot would have a huge impact on local global warming emissions. According to UK government statistics, in 2015, the transport sector emitted 24% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, and 29% of its CO². Road transport (as opposed to air, rail etc.) accounted for 93% of CO², most of this coming from

⁴ Gear Change p17

⁵ Gear Change p16

⁶ Gear Change p19

⁷ Gear Change p33

⁸ CBC Sustainability Plan Section 3.3

passenger cars (62%)⁹. The Propensity to Cycle Tool, funded by the Department for Transport suggests that if cycling levels in England matched those of the Netherlands, there would be around two million fewer car driving commuters. Consequently, English authorities could reduce CO2 outputs by over 1,500 tonnes a year on average¹⁰.

New housing developments and a growing town population

Leighton Buzzard and Linslade is a growing town, with several thousand new houses having been built and still being built around the eastern and southern sides in particular. A bigger population can be a positive thing if these new people bring more money into our local economy through spending in the town centre and with local businesses but if all these new households choose to drive into town our existing roads and parking infrastructure just will not cope. From the moment they move in, our new residents need to feel able to choose cycling and walking and public transport as realistic and preferable alternatives to the private car as a means of getting to town for shopping and services, for getting children to school for commuting to work and to the station and for visiting local leisure facilities and the countryside.

Inclusive cycling

Another important document related to cycling was published in 2020. The Sustrans **Cycling for everyone: A guide for inclusive cycling in cities and towns** argues that “cycling policy has too often served the needs of people that are more likely to already cycle”¹¹. The guide states that there is huge potential for cycling to increase among marginalised and minority groups. For example:

- 55% of people from ethnic minority groups
- 38% of people at risk of deprivation
- 36% of women
- 31% of disabled people

who do not cycle would like to start¹². The Sustrans document provides advice on how to create infrastructure and an environment around cycling that would encourage greater take up among these groups, improving their access to jobs and services and building more resilient and sustainable communities.

⁹ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. Final UK greenhouse gas emissions national statistics. March 2017, Tables 3 & 4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics>

¹⁰ CEDAR. England's Cycling Potential. Feb 2017. www.cedar.iph.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Evidence-Brief-PCT-special-FINAL2-08.02.17.pdf

¹¹ Cycling for everyone p9

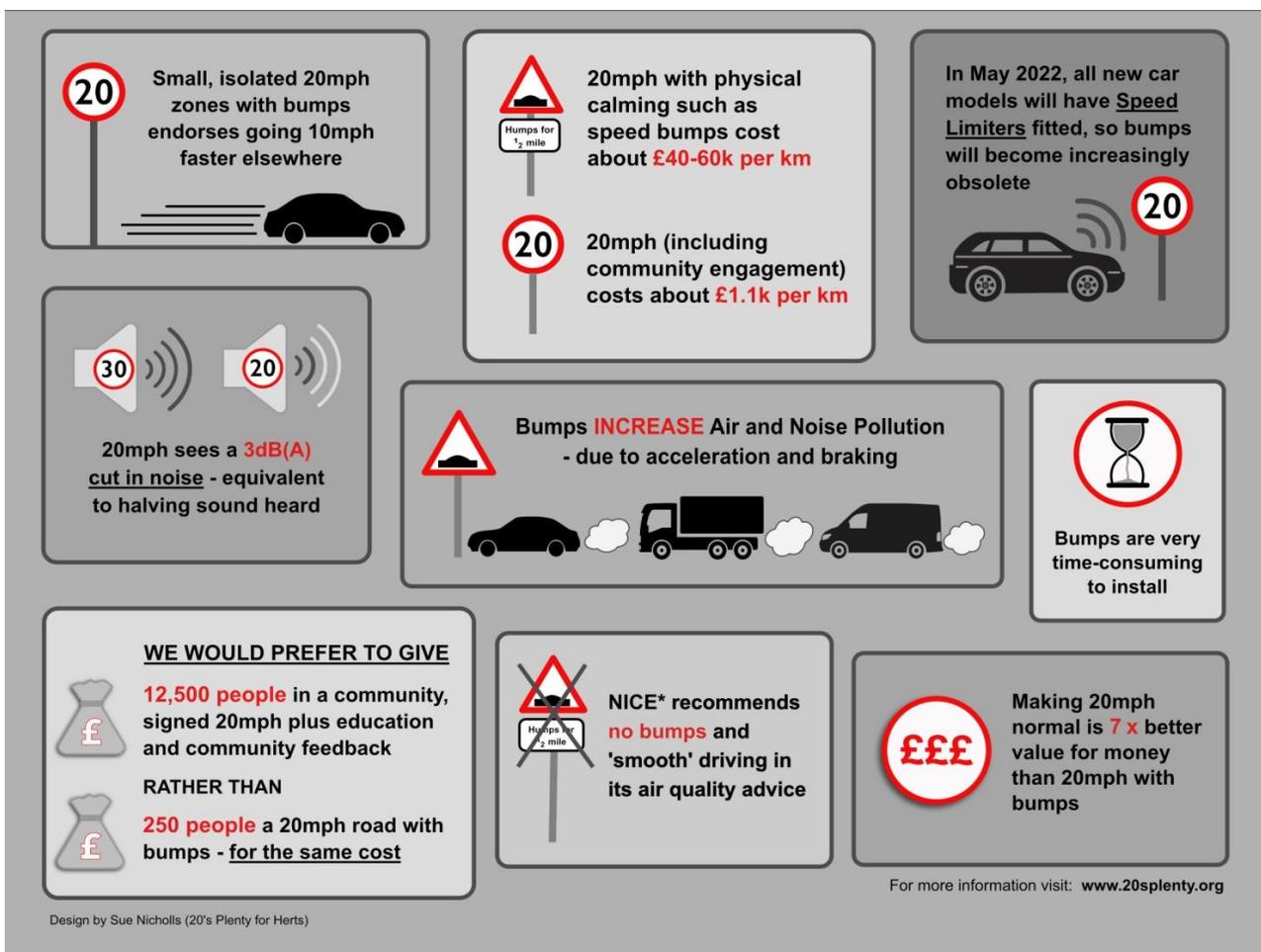
¹² Cycling for everyone p9

20's plenty

A briefing note from the campaign group *20's Plenty for Us*: **Why 20mph limits are being set by local and national governments**, published in January 2021, states that “whilst 20mph gives quick value for money returns to society by crash and casualty reduction, the lower speed limits also become the foundation of local active travel, community connection, noise reduction, air quality and duty of care strategies so further widening the benefit. Wide area 20mph limits are a popular policy that wins economically, socially and environmentally.”¹³ Implementing area-wide 20mph limits is increasingly being recognised as a policy that gives value for money improvements for all road users and for the environment.

Figure 1.

How wide-area 20mph plus engagement is 7x more cost effective than speed bumps



¹³ 20's Plenty for Us briefing "Why 20mph limits are being set by local and national governments"

COVID-19 and working from home

Since Covid-19, there has been an increase in the number of people working from home and thus changing their travel patterns. It is difficult to predict what this could mean at this stage but it may result in, for example, fewer people commuting to London and other places and therefore fewer people cycling to the railway station, more people shopping and eating out locally during the week and in the middle of the day and more families considering the need to own more than one car. This could impact on issues such as on-street parking, the pattern of 'rush-hour' traffic and how children travel to school.

E-Bikes (and scooters)

There has also been a recent large rise in the popularity of electrically assisted bikes, or e-bikes (and also the possible future legalisation of e-scooters and e-skateboards for use on public highways) which are capable of higher speeds, even when travelling uphill.

Careful monitoring and measuring of traffic and travel modes will be needed in the coming months and years to assess the impact of both these factors and to help make considered decisions about how they affect cycling and walking infrastructure requirements.

It is within the context of these new commitments and ideas around sustainable travel and increasing cycling that we write this new Cycling Strategy for Leighton Buzzard and Linslade, and we recommend it to our local authorities.

Our Vision

Cycling will be a realistic first choice for everyone with at least half of all journeys in the town being walked or cycled by 2030

Rationale: Why we need to encourage cycling for local journeys

For the environment:

Mode shift to active transport is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing transport emissions¹⁴

For the economy:

Cycling contributes £5.4bn to the economy per year and supports 64,000 jobs¹⁵ and bike lanes can increase retail sales by a quarter¹⁶

For our health and wellbeing:

Taking up cycling is one of the most effective health interventions a person can make¹⁷

Because there is huge potential to achieve it:

Many shorter journeys could be shifted from cars to walking or cycling. Two out of three personal trips are less than 5 miles¹⁸ (under 30 minutes by bike), and three-quarters of children live within a 15 minute cycle of a secondary school¹⁹. Leighton Linlade itself is an ideal place to get around by bike with most journeys taking 30 minutes or less and few steep hills. The increased uptake of cycling during the Covid lockdown has shown that there is a pent-up demand for cycling and that, given the opportunity, many more people would choose to cycle for regular journeys.

¹⁴ Gear Change p9

¹⁵ Gear Change p9

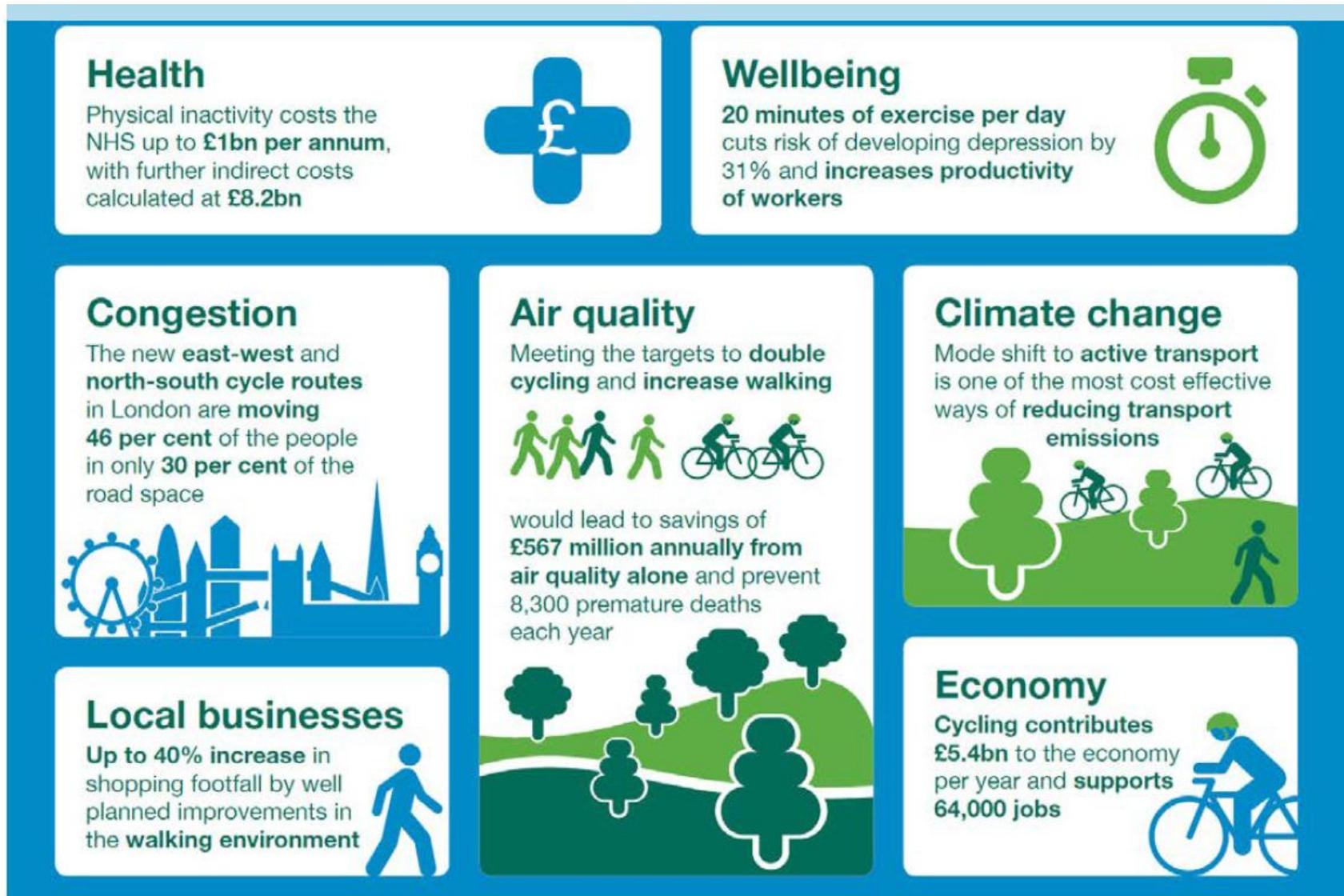
¹⁶ Benefits of Investing in Cycling p2

¹⁷ Gear Change p36

¹⁸ LTN1/20 fig 2.1

¹⁹ LTN1/20 fig 2.1

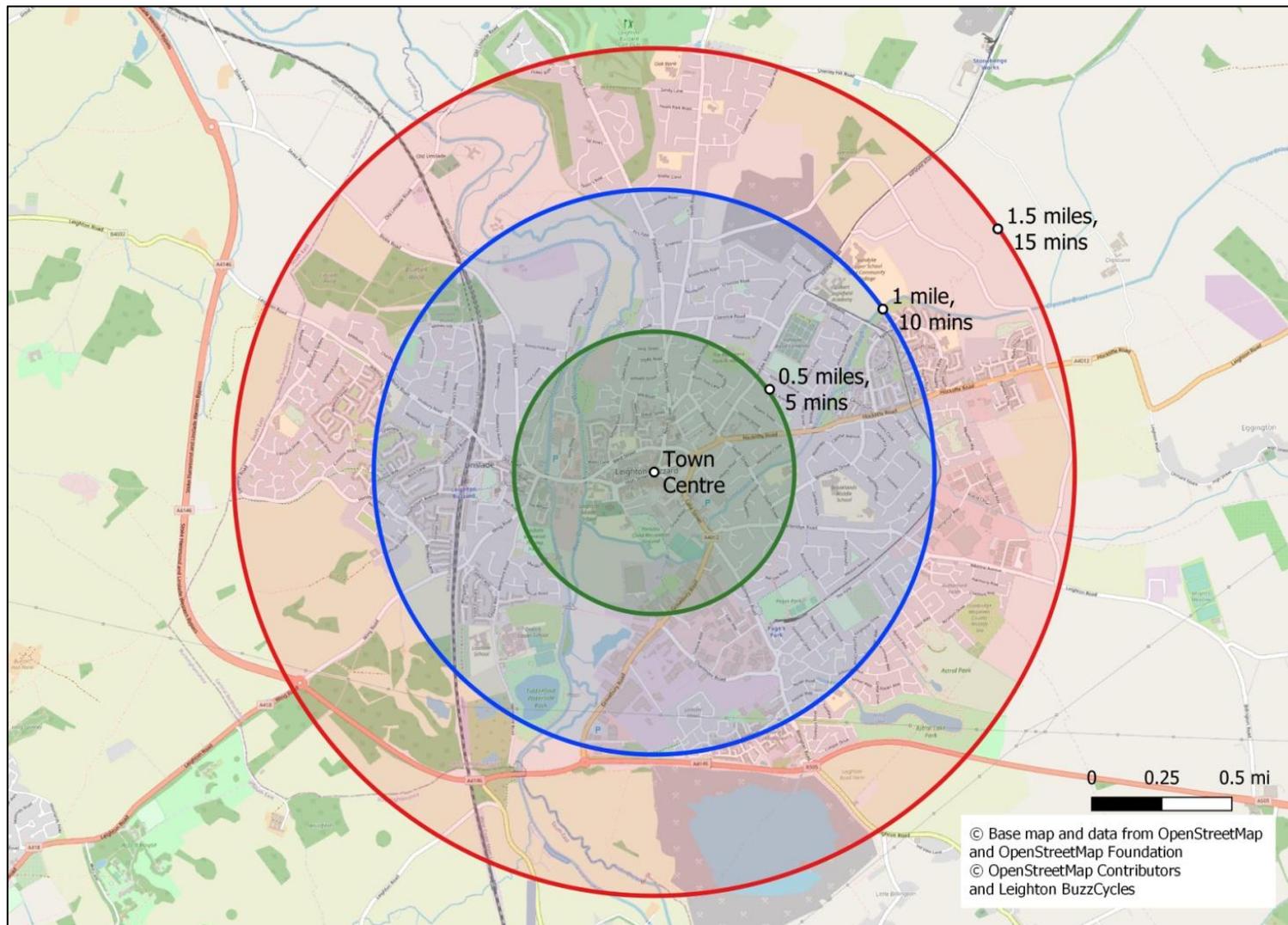
Figure 2.
Why we need to encourage cycling



Source: Government response to Call for Evidence: Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy: Safety Review, DfT, 2018

Figure 3.

Leighton–Linslade is an ideal size for cycle journeys



Leighton Buzzard and Linslade is less than 3 miles across. All residents live within a 20 minute bike ride of the town centre and for the majority this would be just a 10 minute. It takes less than half an hour to cycle right across town.

Outcomes: what will be the effects of implementing this Strategy

Healthier, happier, greener communities

- Improved health and quality of life due to more people walking and cycling
- Reduction in short car trips resulting in cleaner, healthier, safer and quieter streets
- Better urban air quality and reduced carbon emissions

Safer, more liveable streets

- Nobody afraid to cycle from their front door to any local destination
- Every child confident and safe walking or cycling to school
- Respect between road users

Convenient and accessible travel for all

- Everyone has the opportunity to take up walking and cycling
- Recognition that cycling and walking are the most convenient, desirable and affordable way to travel in the local area
- More women and disadvantaged groups enjoy walking and cycling as part of their daily journeys

Cycling and walking at the heart of transport decision making

- Better cycling and walking infrastructure allowing more efficient use of road space to benefit all road users
- Better connections between public transport and walking and cycling
- Cycling and walking measures no longer an afterthought

Outputs: what interventions will be delivered

Data collection, consultation and route auditing...

- that provides information on the journeys people are making and how
- that shows who is cycling, who isn't, and why
- that is fully representative of the local demographic
- to uncover the deficiencies in the current cycle network
- that highlights the priorities and gaps in the cycle network
- that measures our local network against national standards,

Local authority planning policies and highways design standards that...

- embed active travel at their heart
- give more space and choice to the more vulnerable road users
- promote cycling among those demographic groups least likely to cycle
- prioritise infrastructure where local services and public transport provision is lower
- help to reduce social inequality and promote the local economy
- support '20 minute living' where all basic needs are found within a 20 minute return walk of where people live
- reflect how highways users actually behave
- provide experiential training for highways engineers
- develop integration between different sustainable transport modes

A network of 'low-traffic' (and slow traffic) streets or neighbourhoods



- To reach the places that a dedicated cycle network cannot reach
- To provide door-to-door cycle routes for everyone
- To create safe spaces for children to learn to cycle

A Fietsstraat or Cycle Street in the Netherlands, where cars are guests

A local cycling network that is...

- **Direct** – preferably more direct than the route for private motor vehicles
- **Coherent** – connected, simple, intuitive and of consistently high quality
- **Attractive** – places people want to be
- **Comfortable** – well-maintained, quality, smooth surfaces of adequate width with minimal starting and stopping and avoiding steep gradients
- **Safe for all** – be safe and perceived to be safe, gives greater priority to the most vulnerable

Cycle paths and lanes that are...

- accessible to all
- designed to incentivise walking and cycling among everyone, not just those who already cycle
- planned to allow for future expansion in the number of people cycling
- clean and well maintained for the long term
- able to provide access to services where they are not locally available

Cycling information, advice, funding and training that...



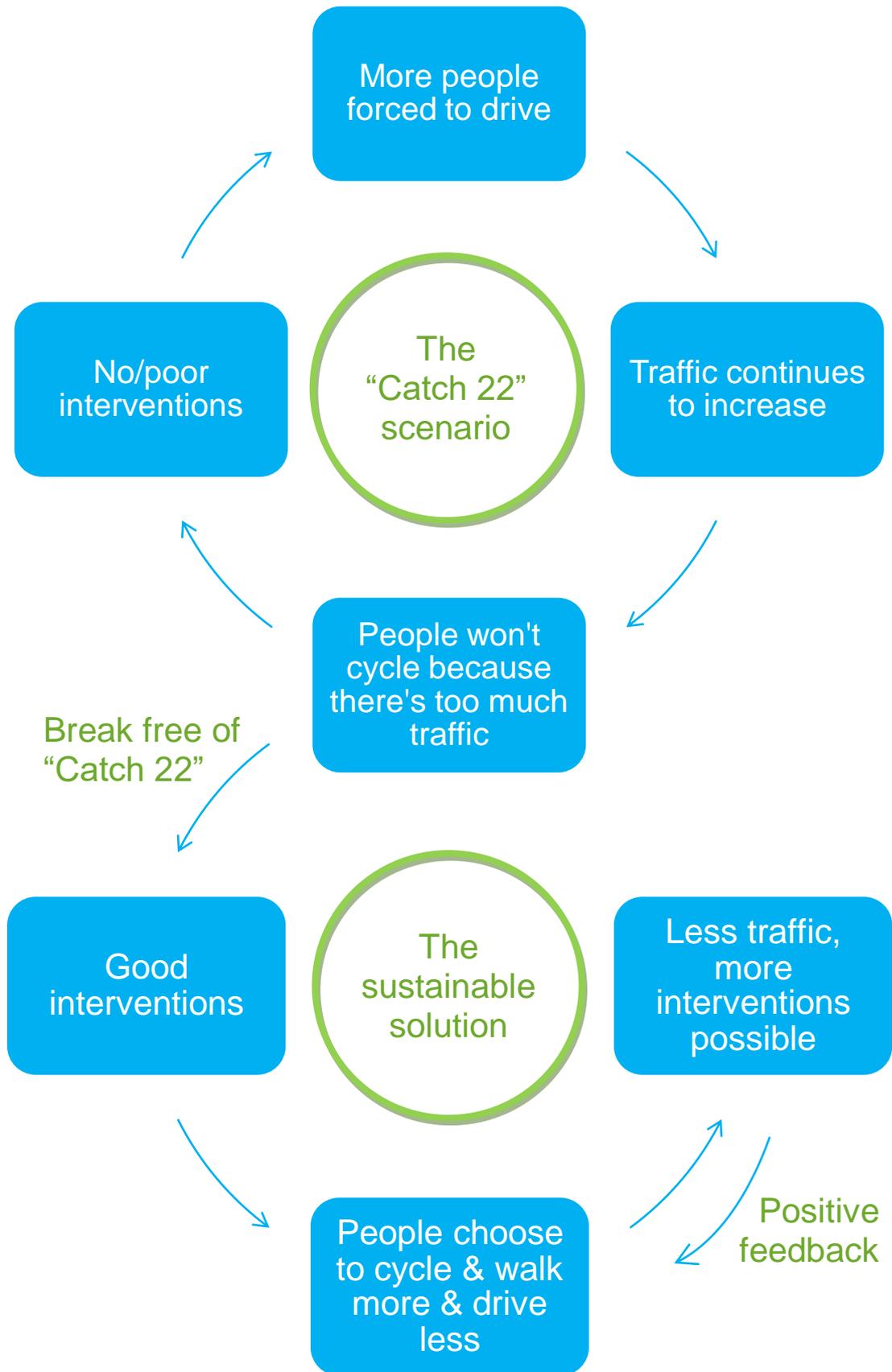
- is available to all especially those who need it most or who are least likely to cycle
- helps people who can least afford it to own or hire the bicycle they need
- emphasises the benefits and shares the joys of cycling
- helps reduce cycle theft
- enables people to look after and maintain their bicycles

Leighton BuzzCycle's cycling information stand at the Canal Festival

Additional facilities, such as...

- secure parking/storage at homes and destinations
- lockers, tools and pumps at places of work

Figure 4.
Breaking the "Catch 22" scenario of ever increasing congestion



Objectives: How we get there

Data Collection, Consultation and Auditing

- In order to make properly informed decisions about cycling infrastructure, much more data is required about who cycles, who doesn't cycle, why people do/don't cycle, where people cycle and where/why people drive.
- Auditing of the cycle network and individual routes to ensure they meet national standards, such as those of the National Cycle Network

Policies and Design Standards

To receive Government funding for local highways investment where the main element is not cycling or walking, there will be a presumption that new schemes will deliver or improve cycling infrastructure to the new standards.²⁰

- All new housing and business developments to be build around sustainable travel as the first choice for journeys - new developments should be easily accessible and navigable by bike and make existing cycling provision better
- Planning policies should already provide for high quality cycling and walking networks and cycle parking and planning decisions should consistently follow these policies
- Cycles routes should be designed by people who have experienced the road on a bicycle
- The local authorities should have a clear stakeholder engagement plan

Low-traffic (slow traffic) streets / neighbourhoods / Cycle Streets

The aim should be for all roads in the town to be made safe and attractive for cycling and walking so that everyone feels confident to cycle or walk from their front door to any local destination. Preferably this will be achieved by decreasing the volume and speed of traffic.

Motor traffic should be:

- reduced (by modal shift to walking and cycling and public transport)
- diverted (by filtered permeability, modal filters and one-way systems)
- slowed down (by road design and 20mph speed limits. See [Map 9](#))

People cycling and walking should have priority on our residential streets where segregated cycle paths are not possible due to width constraints or on-street parking.

²⁰ Gear Change pg43

The Cycling Network – “The Green Wheel”

Where streets cannot be made low-traffic, dedicated segregated cycle routes will be required. These can often be designed to create a more attractive short cut or more direct diversion around areas of high volume traffic.

In Leighton Buzzard and Linslade, the network should create routes into and across the town centre and around the outside of the town centre to link the different estates and destinations more directly. Route into and across town will follow or run parallel to the main spoke roads (see [Map 1](#)) Where necessary, road space needs to be reallocated away from motor vehicles, including parked vehicles, and not pedestrians, to create safer spaces for walking and cycling.

- Cycle routes must be:
 - Direct
 - Coherent
 - Attractive
 - Comfortable
 - Safe for all
- Junctions and crossings must prioritise people on bikes and pedestrians
- Shared-use paths are only acceptable in physically constrained environments, for short stretches as critical links and away from urban streets such as:
 - paths through parks and green spaces, including canal tow paths,
 - paths through housing estates,
 - rural pavements where pedestrian traffic is low
- Existing shared use pavements and on-carriageway painted cycle lanes need to be gradually removed and these new principles applied wherever possible
- People on bikes and walkers should not be expected to take longer, less direct routes than motorised vehicles – cycle paths should follow the most direct, intuitive route and side streets and ‘quieter’ routes should only be used if they are truly direct and provide a short-cut
- Routes should be designed for cycling as a mass transit transport and create provision for a huge increase in people cycling and for non-standard cycles. Ideally cycle paths will be 2m wide in each direction or 3-4m for bidirectional tracks, depending on cycle flows.

These principles should also be applied as soon as possible to new planning guidelines and highways design standards

Training and Promotion

- Bikeability training – free (or at a nominal charge) and freely available to all ages
- Individual Travel Planning and advice available to all, especially people moving into new housing developments
- Buddy rides – showing people where the routes are and giving them confidence for their regular journeys
- Information and advice about bike security and bike registration
- Cycle maintenance training and pop-up, free cycle checks and minor repairs (Dr. Bike)
- Support for local bike shops and businesses that support and promote cycling
- Support for businesses to make local deliveries by cargo bike
- Advice about what bike to get and where to get it including options for cheap, second-hand bikes
- Bike-recycling schemes to encourage people to give away or sell bikes they no longer need. These schemes could be incorporated into youth services or other social services schemes to teach people mechanical skills (BBR, local bike shops)
- Up to date and comprehensive Cycle Route Maps (both on line and printed) and information about local bike rides, clubs and where to get more information and advice
- Information about the health benefits of cycling and linking with local healthcare providers
- Funded schemes to help those least able to afford a bicycle to hire or purchase the bicycle they require. In particular, specialised bicycles for those with disabilities



Cargo bikes are a good way for businesses to make local deliveries

Parking and Storage

- Everyone needs a secure place to store bikes
 - At home
 - At destinations
 - At transport interchanges
- Cycle storage and parking needs to be located where it is needed in safe, secure, well-lit and accessible locations and must be of high enough standard to meet insurance guidelines (see [Appendix 5](#)).
- For long-stay parking, such as at the railway station or for overnight, more secure, covered parking is required, such as cycle lockers
- On-street and communal cycle parking needs to be provided for flats and in neighbourhoods where homes have little storage space, such as terraced streets
- Cycle parking should be considered at bus stops, particularly in villages and rural locations



Communal on-street Bike Hangars such as this one in Waltham Forest can help residents in homes without space for a bike take up cycling. 12 bikes can be stored in the space of one car parking bay

Actions

Immediate priorities (in no particular order and many can run concurrently)

1. Soft Measures

- 1.1. Traffic counts and surveys to identify the busiest routes and measures most likely to effect change
- 1.2. Audit of the existing cycle network and cycle routes (see [Appendix 3](#))
- 1.3. Consultation on all major proposals for change
- 1.4. Regular pop-up Dr Bike Stalls and bike Maintenance classes (see [Appendix 4](#))
- 1.5. Individual Travel Planning and advice, especially for new developments
- 1.6. Extend availability of Bikeability training and set up buddy ride schemes (see [Appendix 5](#))



Pop-up Dr. Bike Stalls are an effective way to get people back on bikes

2. Hard Measures

- 2.1. Wide-area 20mph default across the whole town (with special exemptions for 30mph)
- 2.2. Measures to make the town centre more welcoming to people on bikes (see [Appendix 2](#))
- 2.3. Complete the east-west Clipstone Corridor to create cycle routes to East Leighton/Clipstone Park new housing ([see Map 1](#))

- 2.4. Southern sections of the Green Wheel 'Inner Rim' to create cycle routes to south Leighton new housing ([see Map 2](#))
- 2.5. Design a series of low-traffic streets and neighbourhoods, prioritising those areas where current cycling levels are low and opportunities for segregated facilities are fewer (i.e. those areas not readily connected to the Green Wheel)
- 2.6. Establish the key 'spoke' roads as 'Sustainable Transport Corridors': routes that are designed to advantage movement of buses, pedestrians and cyclists over general traffic. (created by installing bus gates or filtered permeability). ([see Map 5](#))
- 2.7. Complete a north-south Ouzel Valley Corridor to create a route following the river and linking up the various flood meadows and greenspaces en route ([see Map 3](#))
- 2.8. Design a north-south Parks Link spoke to link up Rushmere Park, the new Shenley Hill Park, the Town Centre, Pages, Park Astral Park and the proposed Grovebury Quarry Park ([see Map 4](#))
- 2.9. A robust strategy and adequate budget provision for maintenance of cycling infrastructure
- 2.10. More town centre cycle parking, and provision of secure, long-stay parking in the town centre and at the railway station ([see Appendix 6](#))



Regular maintenance of cycling infrastructure can help avoid costly longer term repairs

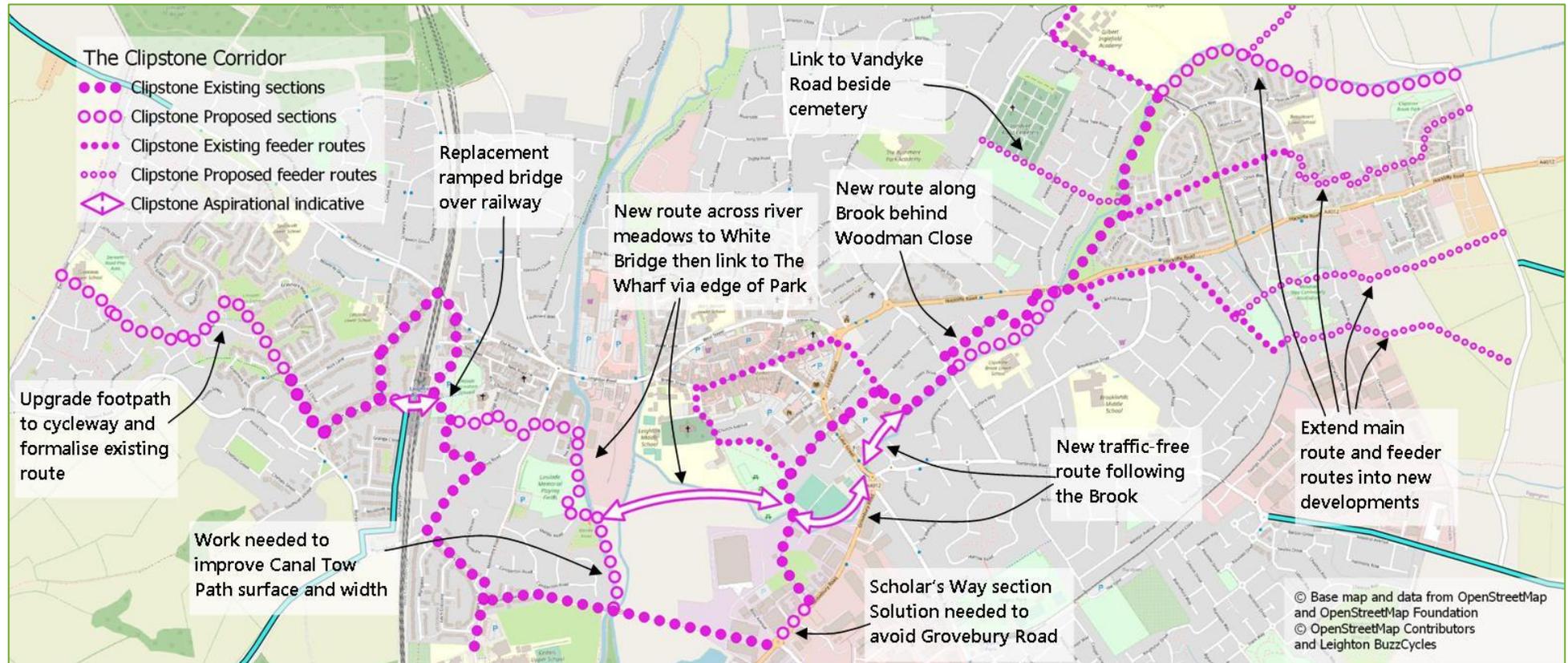
Maps Index

1. [The Clipstone Corridor \(Scholars Way and links to East Leighton\)](#)
2. [The Southern Rim \(links to South Leighton\)](#)
3. [The Ouzel Valley Corridor \(routes to Rushmere\)](#)
4. [The Parks Spoke \(routes to Rushmere and East and South Leighton\)](#)
5. [Proposed Sustainable Transport Corridor spokes](#)
6. [The Complete Leighton Linslade Cycle Network](#)
7. [The National Cycle Network through Leighton Linslade](#)
8. [The Village Links and The Leighton Loop](#)
9. [The Green Wheel Masterplan Existing and Indicative Routes \(July 2019\)](#)

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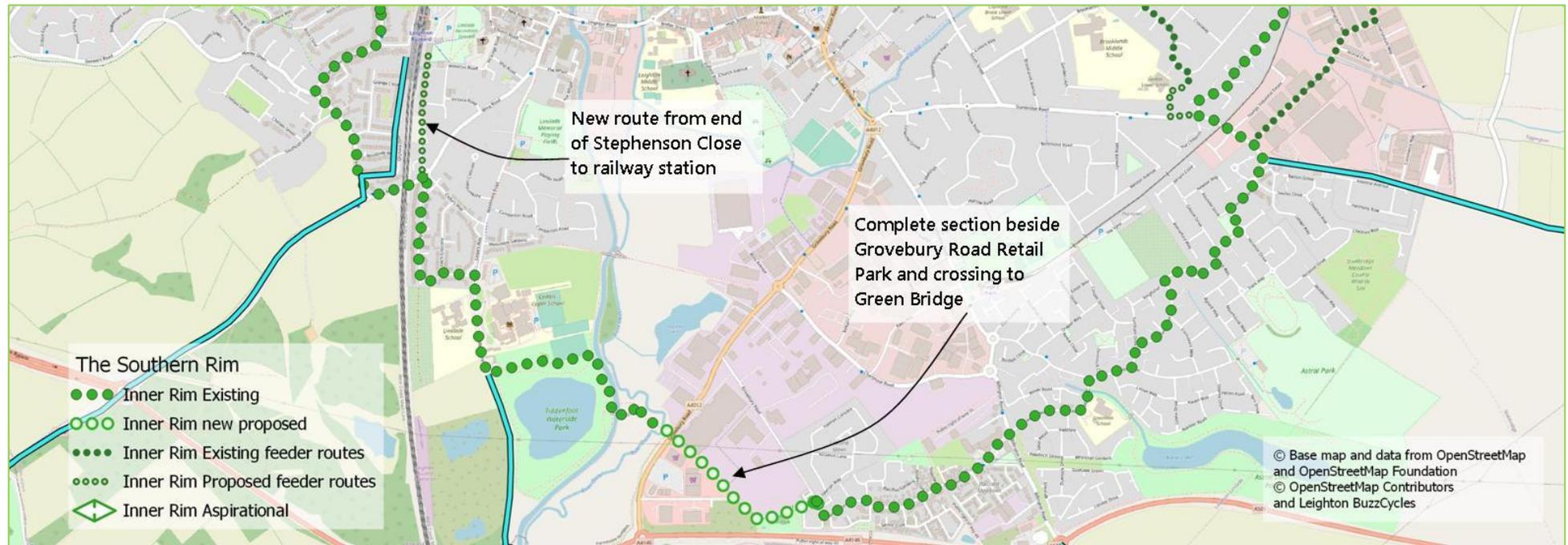
Map 1. Clipstone Corridor Actions



Priority Actions for the Clipstone Corridor

1. Grovebury Road: Solution required to make section in front of Dental Practice traffic-free
2. Canal Tow Path: surface repairs and widening needed between White Bridge and Black Bridge
3. East Leighton: extend route and feeder routes into new housing developments
4. Linslade Memorial Playing Fields: route around edge of park from White Bridge to The Wharf
5. Railway station: Replacement bridge over main line railway
6. White Bridge: wheeling ramp
7. Woodman Close: new route along brook
8. Bideford Green: route through from Rock Lane to Greenleas School

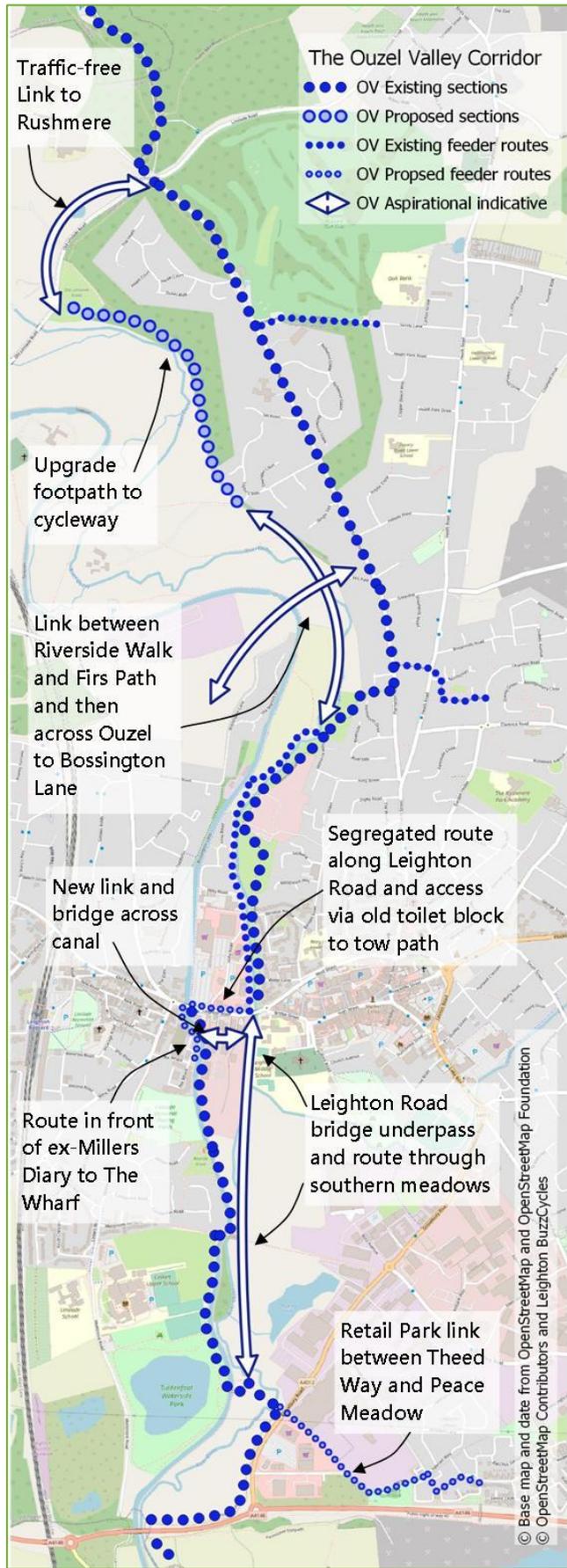
Map 2. The Southern Green Wheel Rim Actions



Priority Actions for the completion of the Southern Green Wheel Inner Rim

1. Complete the route alongside the Grovebury Road Retail Park into the Theed Way estate
2. Install crossing point on Grovebury Road from Retail Park to Peace Meadows
3. Surface path in Peace Meadows
4. Create new route from end of Stephenson Close to railway station via station car park

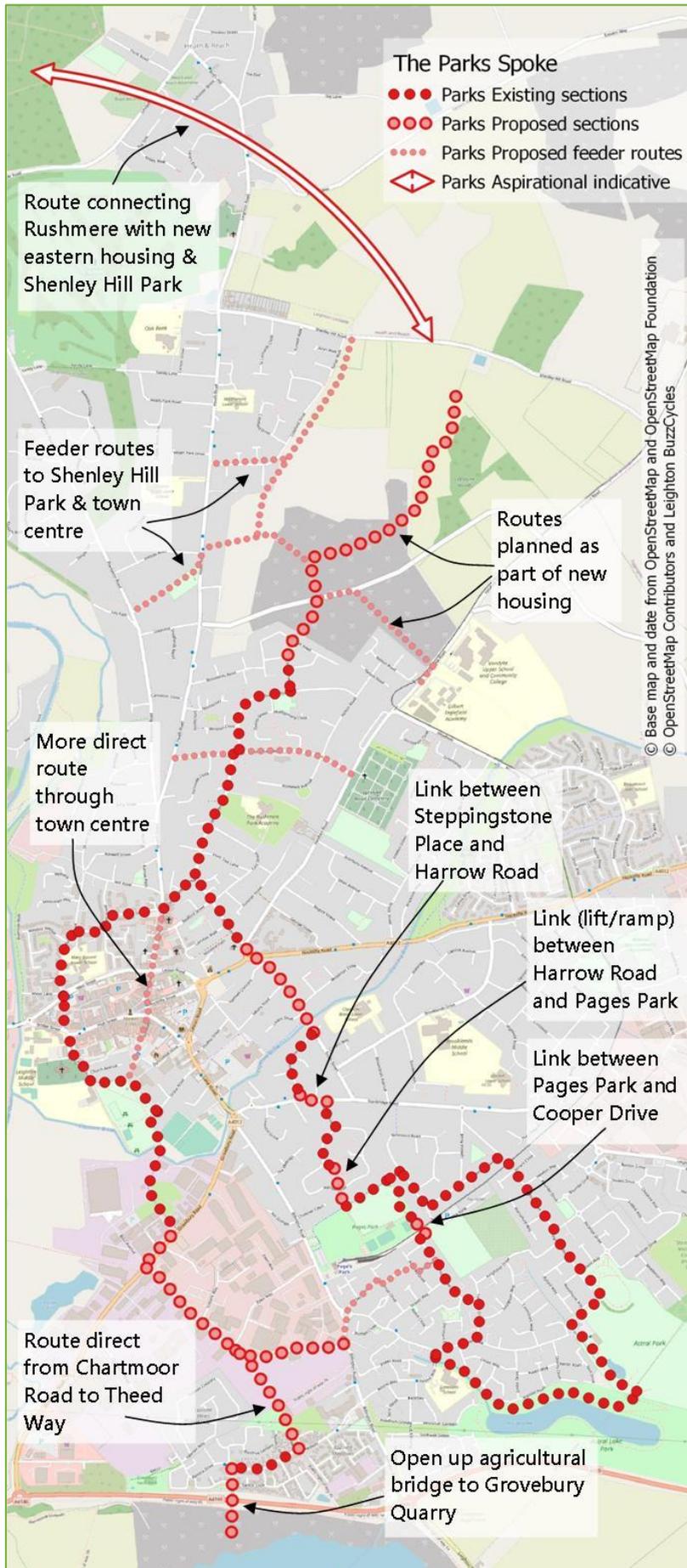
Map 3 Ouzel Valley Corridor Actions



Priority Actions for the Ouzel Valley Corridor

1. Traffic-free routes to Rushmere (Suggested route: Old Linslade Road, Firs Path, and Ouzel Meadows)
2. Grovebury Road Retail Park link between Theed Way and Peace Meadows
3. Segregated route along Leighton Road between Riverside Walk and canal tow path
4. New route along west bank of canal in front of former Millers Dairy to the Wharf to link to Clipstone Corridor and White Bridge via Linslade Memorial Playing Fields
5. Open up underpass beneath Leighton Road bridge
6. Create new route along river through the southern meadows to Peace Meadow
7. New route on south side of Leighton Road with new bridge over the canal
8. New bridges over the river and canal to link Plantation Road with Bossington Lane

Map 4. The Parks Spoke Actions

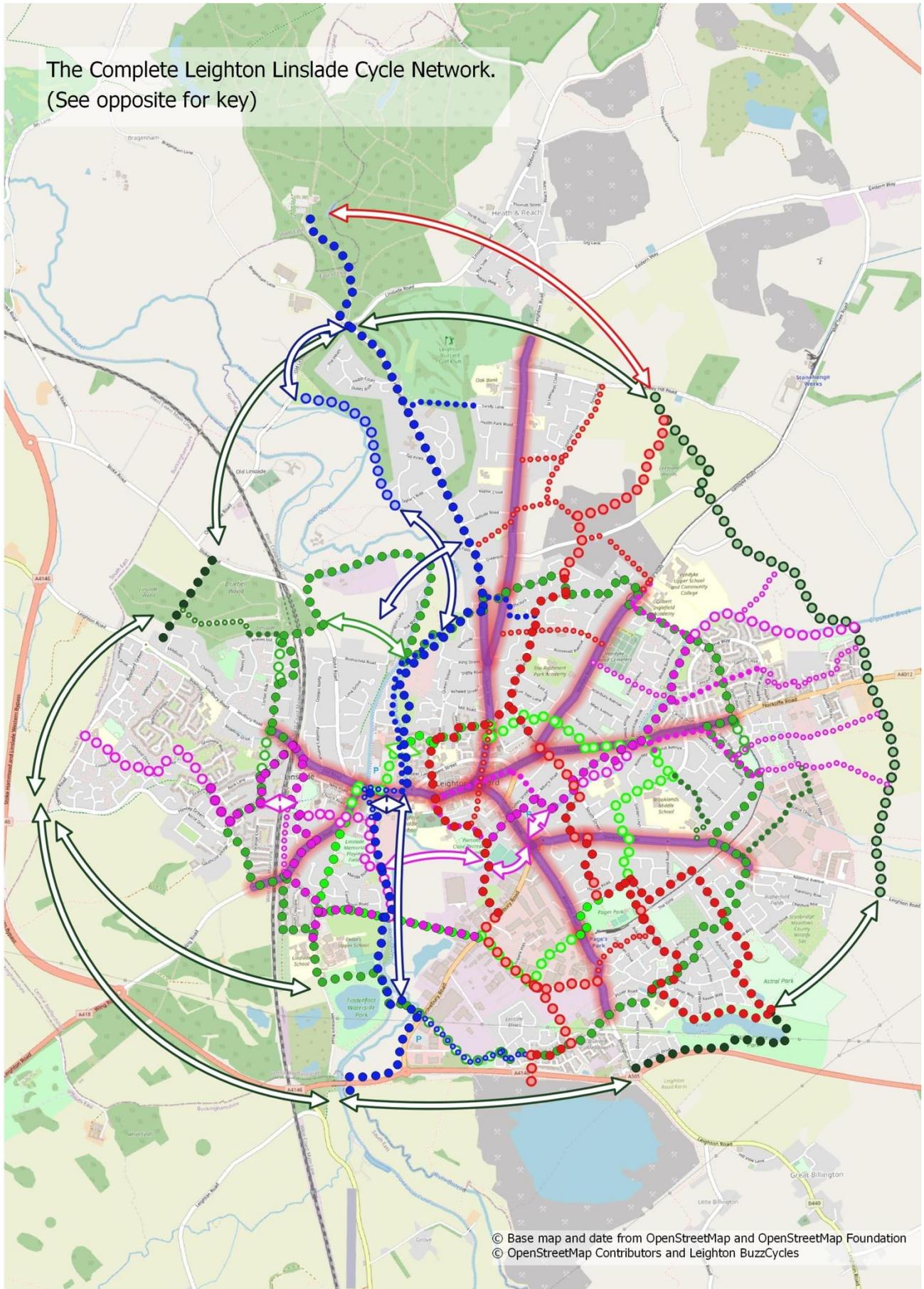


Priority Actions for the Parks Spoke

1. Open up agricultural overbridge to routes south of the bypass and the new Grovebury Quarry open space
2. Traffic-free solution to short section on Grovebury Road
3. Traffic-free route along Chartmoor Road
4. Formalise link between Pages Park and Cooper Drive across Leighton Buzzard Railway
5. Direct connection between Chartmoor Road and Theed Way behind Spinney Pool
6. Traffic-free route to Rushmere from the East Leighton housing developments
7. Routes and feeder routes to the new Shenley Hill Park as part of the Chamberlains Barn development
8. Bike lift or ramp or similar to improve access to Pages Park from Harrow Road
9. Link between Steppingstone Place and Stanbridge Road through to Harrow Road
10. A more direct route through the town centre to Parson's Close via Duncombe Drive car park

Map 6. The Complete Leighton Linslade Cycle Network

The Complete Leighton Linslade Cycle Network.
(See opposite for key)



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Key to Map 6. The Complete Leighton Linslade Cycle Network

Parks Spoke

-  Parks Aspirational indicative
-  Parks Existing sections
-  Parks Proposed sections
-  Parks Proposed feeder routes

Ouzel Valley Corridor

-  OV Aspirational indicative
-  OV Existing sections
-  OV Proposed sections
-  OV Existing feeder routes
-  OV Proposed feeder routes

Clipstone Corridor

-  Clipstone Aspirational indicative
-  Clipstone Existing sections
-  Clipstone Proposed sections
-  Clipstone Proposed feeder routes
-  Clipstone Existing feeder routes

Inner Rim

-  Inner Rim Aspirational
-  Inner Rim Existing
-  Inner Rim new proposed
-  Inner Rim Existing feeder routes
-  Inner Rim Proposed feeder routes

Outer Rim

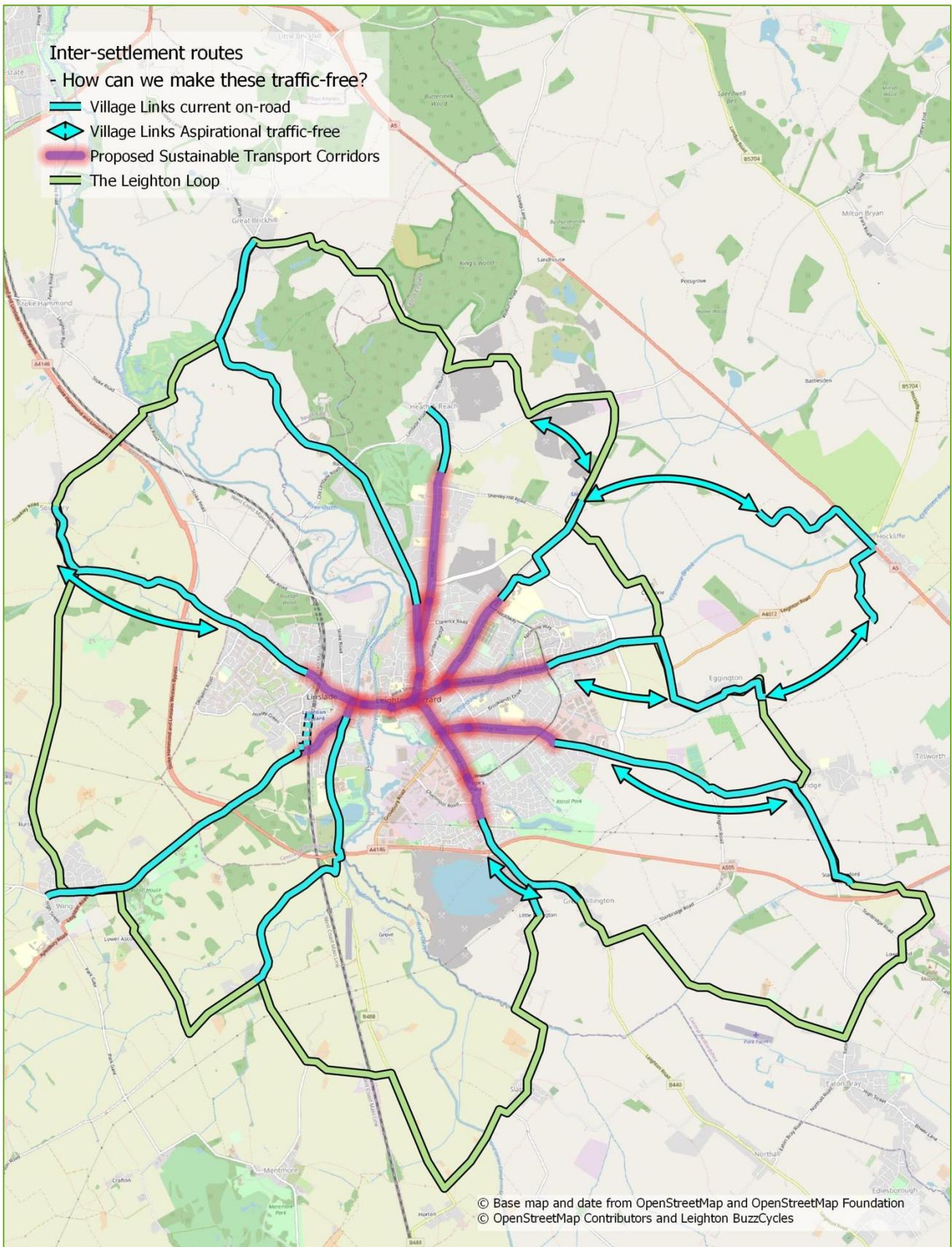
-  Outer Rim Aspirational
-  Outer Rim Existing
-  Outer Rim new proposed

Town Centre Hub

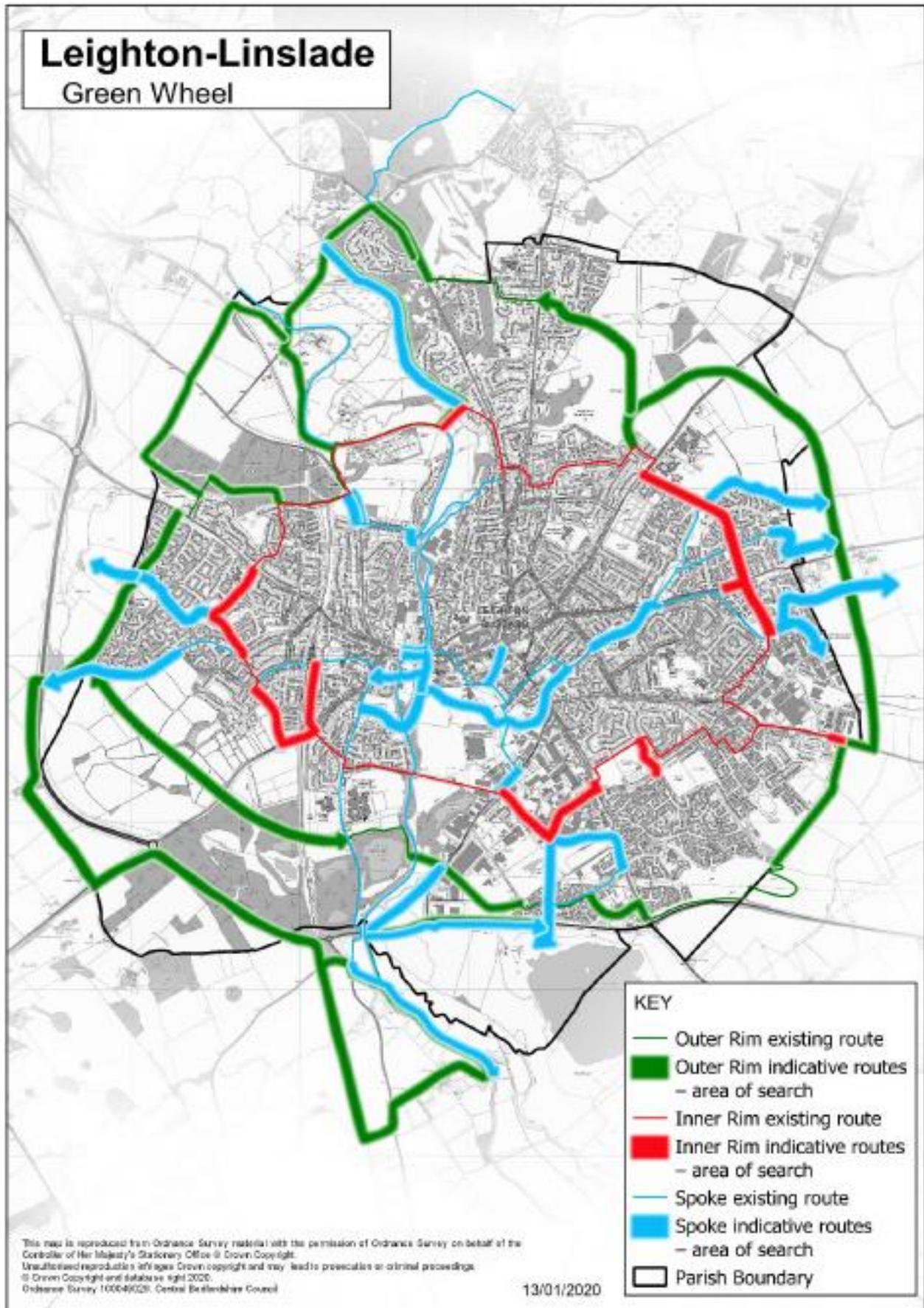
-  Town Centre Hub Aspirational Indicative
-  Town Centre Hub Existing sections
-  Town Centre Hub Proposed sections
-  Proposed Sustainable Transport Corridors

Map 8. Inter-settlement Routes - Village Links and the Leighton Loop

How can we make these all traffic-free?



Map 9. The Greenwheel Masterplan Existing and Indicative Routes (July 2019)



Appendices

1. [Local Transport Note 1/20 – Summary Principles and how to achieve them](#)
2. [Proposals for making the Town Centre more welcoming to people on bikes](#)
3. [Cycle route audit scoring information](#)
4. [Dr Bike & bike maintenance information](#)
5. [Bikeability & Buddy Ride schemes information](#)
6. [Cycle Parking information](#)

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Appendix 1: Local Transport Note 1/20 Summary Principles

The 22 summary principles	... and how to achieve them
<p>1 Accessible to everyone from 8 to 80 and beyond. The opportunity to cycle should be universal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to enhance access for all
<p>2 Cycles must be treated as vehicles and separated from pedestrians</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No shared use paths except away from urban streets such as tow paths, paths through housing estates, parks and green spaces • Create distinct tracks using sloping, pedestrian-friendly kerbs and/or different surfacing
<p>3 Cyclists must be physically separated and protected from high volume motor traffic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically separated facilities • Closure of roads to through traffic using bollards or planters • Consider access to blue badges, buses etc • Kerb segregation • Wands and planters
<p>4 Side streets closed to through traffic can be an alternative to segregated routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only acceptable as a cycle route if they are truly direct
<p>5 Infrastructure should be designed for significant numbers of cyclists and for non-standard cycles with the aim that thousands will use these routes every day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally 2m wide in each direction or 3-4m for bidirectional tracks depending on cycle flows • There may have to be exceptions
<p>6 Consideration of opportunities to improve provision for cycling will be an expectation of future highways schemes funded by government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle Infrastructure requirements should be embedded in local authority planning, design and highways adoptions processes
<p>7 Largely cosmetic schemes which bring few or no benefits will not be funded</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schemes whose main purpose and/or effect is aesthetic improvement must be funded from other budgets
<p>8 Infrastructure must join together</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic planning with local people
<p>9 Cycle parking must be included in substantial schemes including at home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasant • Sufficient • Convenient • Short and long term • Consider needs of all users and a range of cycles • Maintenance facilities

10	Schemes must be legible and understandable for all users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intuitively designed
11	Clearly and comprehensively signposted and labelled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directions at decision points and sometimes in between • Clear, easily visible and legible
12	'Iconic' items must form part of a wider, properly thought-through scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They must form part of an essential, properly connected wider network of good, safe routes and overcome a major barrier on a desire line.
13	Route proposals should include a clear maintenance programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace markings after utility works or when worn away • Repair cracked tarmac • Sweep routes frequently
14	Surfaces must be hard, smooth, level, durable, permeable and safe in all weathers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to maintain surfaces eg asphalt • Avoid brick and stone except for heritage value • Avoid loose gravel
15	Trial schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But design it correctly first
16	Avoid barriers and chicanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schemes should be designed so that barriers are not necessary
17	Simple and cheap can be very effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g. bollards to prevent through traffic
18	Routes must flow, feeling direct and logical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design routes according to how people actually behave
19	Easy and comfortable routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise stopping and starting • Minimise level changes and steep slopes • Minimise traffic calming – traffic should have already been designed out and re-routed
20	Designers should experience the road as a cyclist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle the route and observe users behaviour
21	Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scheme is only as good as its weakest point
22	When to break these principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short stretch of less good provision is better than no route at all

Appendix 2: Proposals for making the Town Centre more welcoming to people on bikes

Leighton BuzzCycles welcomes the creation of a Pedestrian and Cycle Zone in the High Street and believe this makes it a more attractive place to be, to shop and to cycle. It has become a lively space; a space for people rather than for cars.

However, it is evident that, in the rush to put in the trial scheme, access to the town centre by bicycle has been designed out and cyclists no longer feel welcome. This is critical because, if we want to see a reduction in congestion, improved air quality, increased levels of active travel and reduced carbon emissions, we need to be encouraging people to cycle to the shops and to leave the car at home. People who get in their car are always going to be tempted to another town or to an out of town retail park.

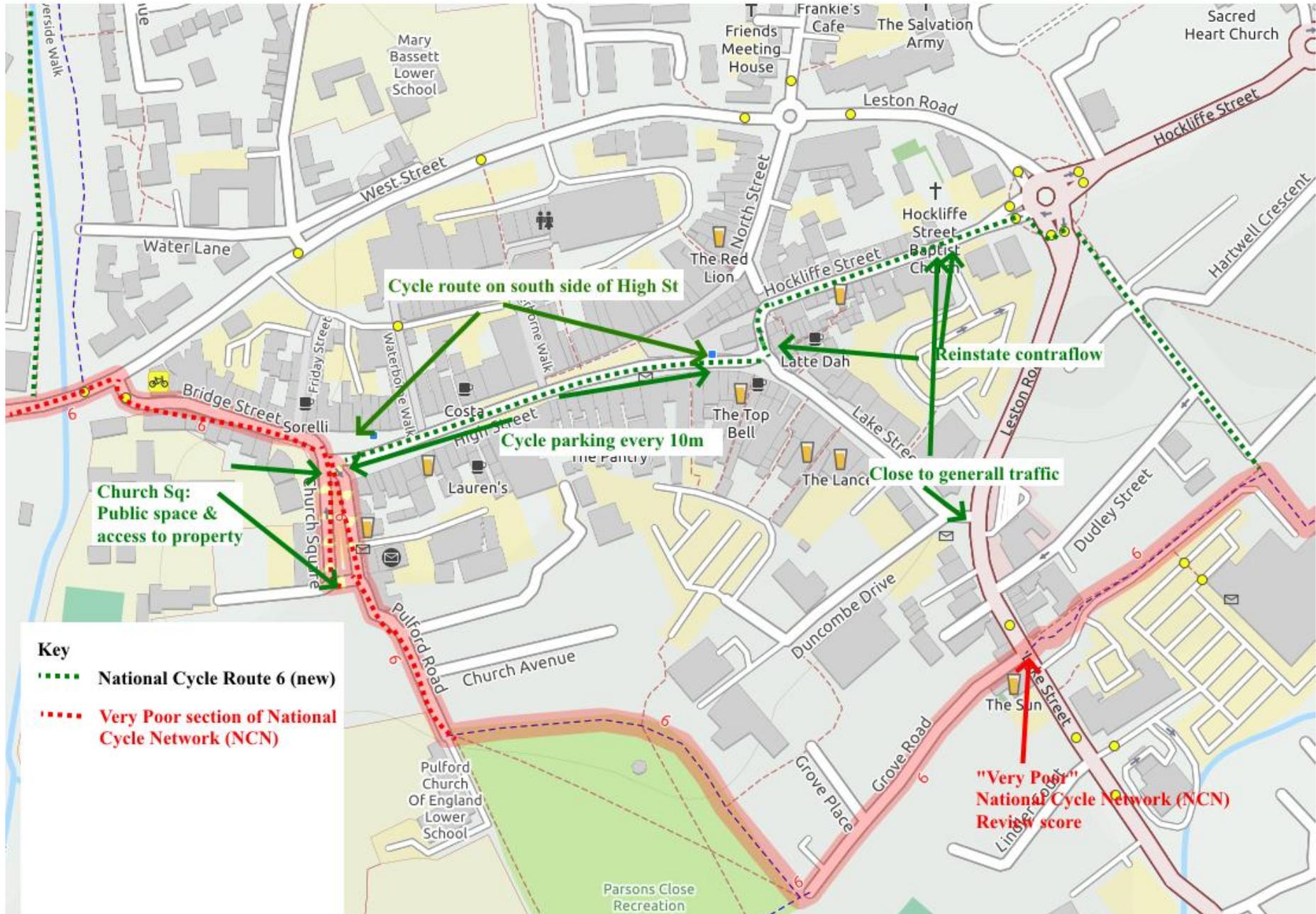
BuzzCycles would like to see the scheme expanded to other streets off the High Street so as to extend the benefits to the whole of the town centre core. We believe that doing this will also ensure that people who want to cycle to the town centre will once again feel welcome.

The pedestrianisation scheme quite rightly encourages people to walk to the shops. But only a limited number of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade residents live within walking distance of the town centre. A larger proportion could be persuaded to leave their cars at home if they felt able to cycle to the town centre. Everything must therefore be done to ensure that shopping by bike is a real option for everyone in the town.

Our specific proposals to improve the scheme are:

(see also map overleaf)

1. Create a cycle lane down the south side of the High Street where the current parking/loading space is
2. Extend this cycle lane on the south side of the new taxi rank to join the road at Bridge Street/Church Square
3. Extend the Pedestrian and Cycle Zone to Lake Street and Hockliffe Street (allow deliveries and blue badge holders)
4. Reinstate the cycle contraflow lane on Hockliffe Street
5. Provide sufficient blue badge parking spaces as required in suitable locations throughout the town centre
6. Turn the car park area of Church Square into a public seating area and make Pulford Road and Church Avenue access only for motor vehicles
7. Reallocate road space and enhance traffic calming on Bridge Street to improve the safety for cyclists and pedestrians
8. Extend the Pedestrian and Cycle Zone to North Street (allow deliveries and blue badge holders)
9. Install more cycle parking (aim for small groups/pairs of parking stands at approx 10m intervals along the High Street)
10. Install at least one set of covered cycle parking stands and re-open the Cycle lockers in the West Street Multi-Storey Car Park



The wider context and some detail

Alongside these improvements to the town centre itself, we need to see **radically improved cycle routes into the town centre** from all parts of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade and surrounding villages, as part of a comprehensive, dedicated cycle network for the town and local area, based on the Green Wheel network of rims and spokes.

The recent publication of policy and guidance from the Department for Transport ([Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking](#) and [Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN1/20](#)) presents a huge opportunity to local authorities to make bold changes to cycle networks in and around towns. They look to a future where cycling is a form of mass transit and not just a sidelined, minority activity and encourage local authorities to plan and enable this modal shift towards active travel.

In relation to the High Street and the town centre, the guidelines cover 'Shared Use' infrastructure (LTN1/20/6.5) and 'Vehicle Restricted Areas (VRAs)' (LTN1/20/7.5).

While we should clearly be cautious about mixing cycles and pedestrians, and infrastructure should be carefully designed and clearly marked, evidence shows that cyclists adapt their behaviour according to the density of pedestrians, cycling more slowly when pedestrian flow increases (LTN1/20/6.5.9).

Both pedestrians and cyclists may say they would prefer clearly defined cycle routes but this can lead to higher speeds and greater potential for conflict with pedestrians. There may be subtler ways to indicate the suggested route for cyclists and this can steer cyclists away from areas where pedestrians might move across their path. Street furniture should not block visibility for any user (LTN1/20/7.4.6).

Providing visible cycle parking at regular intervals within a shared use area or VRA zone will encourage cyclists to dismount and shop (LTN1/20/7.4.3). Cycle parking says 'cyclists are welcome here' in the clearest way possible.

Where the proposed High Street cycle lane passes the new taxi rank at the bottom end of the High Street, a bypass route, such as that now commonly used for 'floating bus stops' could be used (LTN1/20/6.6.8)

Engagement with all relevant parties should be undertaken at an early stage of design for Shared use facilities (LTN1/20/6.5.5) and purely white line segregation should not be used (LTN1/20/6.5.3). However, a shared use footway can be considered in urban areas "in situations where a length of shared use may be acceptable to achieve continuity of a cycle route" (LTN1/20/6.5.6). This may be agreed to be the case along Bridge Street, where the carriageway is probably too narrow for a segregated 3m wide cycle path and where two-way traffic will still need to be catered for.

"A high street is usually the most direct route across a town centre. Requiring cyclists to travel longer distances via routes around the zone, possibly on heavily trafficked roads, will tend to suppress cycle trips and reduce cycle safety" (LTN1/20/7.4.2)

Appendix 3: Cycle route audit scoring information

National Cycle Network Review - Scoring Guide

Overall Score

All sections are scored between 0 and 15.

Only sections that score the full 15 points are considered to meet the Very Good standard.

Lower scores are classified as Good, Poor or Very Poor as below:

Score	15	10-14	6-9	0-5
Classification	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor

Criteria and scoring mechanism

The overall section scores are made up from the combined scores for 4 categories – surface quality, flow, signage and traffic safety:

Surface quality - score from 0 to 3

Question – is the surface smooth enough for all types of cycle to be used here?

- Yes = 3
- Perhaps = 2
- Probably not = 1
- No = 0

Flow - score from 0 to 3

Question - can a relaxed speed (typically around 8 mph) be continually and safely maintained here?

Scores based on the available width and presence of barriers on the route:

- No barriers and width is greater than 2m = 3
- Width is greater than 2m but barrier restrict the route = 2
- No barriers but width is less than 2m = 1
- Barriers restrict the route and width is less than 2m = 0

Signage - score from 0 to 3

Question - can this route be followed without a map?

Scores based on the directional signage on the route:

- Signed in both directions = 3
- Signed in only one direction = 2
- Not signed in either direction = 0

Traffic Safety - score from -4 to +6

Traffic safety has been weighted more heavily than the other categories:

- Traffic-free section = +6
- Road section meeting quiet-way traffic threshold* = +4
- Road section not meeting quiet-way traffic threshold = -4

*To qualify as a quiet-way road the section must have traffic speed and volume equal to or less than the thresholds set out in the table below:

Urban Rural	Average Speed	Traffic Volume Index	Equivalent AADT**
<i>Urban area</i>	<i><=15 mph</i>	<i><=11</i>	<i>2,500</i>
<i>Rural area</i>	<i><=25 mph</i>	<i><=9</i>	<i>1,000</i>

INRIX Traffic Speed and Volume dataset

The quiet-way traffic thresholds are calculated using a dataset known as the INRIX traffic speed and volume dataset.

The dataset contains average traffic speeds and volumes on all UK roads during off peak times and is based on millions of data-points taken from in-vehicle GPS and mobile devices.

- The INRIX average speed data gives the median speed for vehicles travelling along each section.
- The INRIX volume index presents the average traffic volume on the section in an index from 0 - 16 with 1 being very low traffic volume and 16 very high traffic volume

**The volume thresholds have been calibrated against Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) which is a measure of traffic flow and is the total volume of vehicle traffic of a highway or road for a year divided by 365 days

Appendix 4: Background to Dr Bike and bike maintenance sessions

In order to encourage cycling in Leighton Buzzard we need to educate and support cyclists in maintaining their bikes. This should include:

1. Free cycle checks and minor repairs under the banner of Dr Bike. This can be achieved through qualified volunteers running regular stalls either in the High Street or on housing estates. Buzzcycles has run six stalls in the last year under the national Big Bike Revival and the response from cyclists was very positive. It showed that these simple checks (see below) and adjustments will get people back on their bikes and continue riding.
2. There was further interest in providing bike maintenance sessions to show cyclists the basic requirements for maintaining a bike. These sessions would include mending punctures, correct tyre inflation, adjusting brakes, gears, steering and saddles and lubrication of key parts of the bike.

We have two bike shops in the town who would handle the more complicated repairs where parts are required. Confidence that they can carry out regular basic maintenance will encourage cyclists to continue to ride

M-check



- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Front Wheel and Tyre | 6 | Pedals, Cranks and Bottom Bracket |
| 2 | Hub and Axle | 7 | Saddle and Seat Post |
| 3 | Brakes | 8 | Rear Wheel, Tyre, Hub and Axle |
| 4 | Forks, Headset and Handlebars | 9 | Chain and Gears |
| 5 | Frame | | |

M-check

1 Front Wheel and Tyre

- Check that the wheel spins freely, with no excessive wobbles or buckles.
- Check for loose spokes by running your hand over the spokes (when the wheel is stationary).
- Check that the tyre is inflated to a reasonable pressure.
- Ensure that the tread is not excessively worn and that the tyre has no splits, cracks or holes.

2 Hub and Axle

- Check that bolts and quick release mechanisms are securely tightened.
- Wheels should spin freely with no excessive side to side movement.

3 Brakes

- Check the brakes actually work and are properly adjusted. When the brakes are fully on, the lever should have been pulled approximately halfway to the handlebars.
- Rim brakes – check that the brake pads are not excessively worn and that there is at least 1mm between the pad and the rim.
- Disc brakes – check that there is no rubbing between the disc rotor and the pads by spinning the wheel. The wheel should spin freely.

4 Forks, Headset and Handlebars

- Check for damaged or bent forks. If there is visible distortion, the bicycle should not be used.
- Check adjustment of the headset by engaging the front brake and seeing if there is any rocking movement when gently pushing on the handlebars. There should be no movement.
- Handlebars and stem are securely attached.
- Handlebars and stem are straight.
- Handlebar ends have plugs fitted.
- Grips, brakes and gear levers (and bar ends, if fitted) are all securely attached to the handlebars.

5 Frame

- Check for damaged or bent frame. If there is visible distortion, the bicycle should not be used.

6 Pedals, Cranks and Bottom Bracket

- Check that there is no side-to-side movement in the bottom bracket or cranks by holding one crank still and trying to move the other crank.
- Check that the pedals rotate freely.

7 Saddle and Seat Post

- Check the saddle is securely attached to the seat post.
- Check that the seat post is securely fixed into the frame.
- If a quick release seat clamp is used this is set to the closed position.
- Check that the saddle is straight and set to the correct height for the rider.

8 Rear Wheel, Tyre, Hub and Axle

- Check in the same way as 1 Front Wheel and Tyre, and 2 Hub and Axle.

9 Chain and Gears

- Check that the chain is lubricated properly and is not slack or rusty.
- Check that the gears are properly adjusted, lubricated and cables are not frayed.

Parts of a Bike



1 Brakes	8 Head tube	15 Crank
2 Seat stay	9 Forks	16 Chain stay
3 Seat post	10 Tyre	17 Chain
4 Saddle	11 Rim	18 Gear lever
5 Top tube	12 Spokes	19 Handlebars
6 Stem	13 Down tube	20 Brake lever
7 Headset	14 Pedal	

Appendix 5: Background to Bikeability

Many cyclists are now wanting to use normal roads rather than cycle tracks for their daily commute or trip to the shops – it's usually much faster and often more direct. However modern roads and busy traffic can be daunting, and they necessitate a more assertive style of cycling which can be difficult to get used to.

This is where “Bikeability” – the National Standard Cycle Training scheme – can be a big help. It provides a framework of simple tips and ideas that will make cycling in traffic much easier, and more enjoyable too. There are three levels – 1, 2, 3 – which cater for complete beginners right the way up to advanced riding on multi-lane rush-hour roads. Each level is made up of several stages, with each stage building on the previous one. Riders progress to the next stage when they have mastered the previous one and gained some practice with the newly introduced skills.

Level 1 introduces some basic “control” skills for complete beginners, including how to prepare your bike and your clothing, how to get on and off the bike in a controlled way, setting off and stopping, turning corners, gears, emergency stops, looking around and behind without wobbling, and finally signalling left and right. Various fun games and activities are usually used to learn and practice these skills.

Level 2 takes riders onto quiet local roads. Several important skills will be learned, including how to “see”, “be seen” and “communicate” with other roads users. Many riders are surprised to find that “being seen” involves a much bolder riding style, usually one metre away from the kerb and frequently in the middle of their “lane”. Effectively riders are becoming a vehicle in their own right – which is as it should be since cyclists have exactly the same rights (and responsibilities) as any other road user. At this level, skills learned include how to start and stop a journey safely, passing a side-road, U-turns, turning left and right and roundabouts. Practising takes place on progressively busier and more challenging roads.

Level 3 builds on Level 2 and includes how to “negotiate” with other road users, such as how to turn right off a multi-lane road, how to cross crossroads; plus map reading and navigation, and many other advanced skills. After this level riders would normally be able to tackle most roads in a busy town. After some years of practice, those skills would eventually be the basis of riding in rush-hour traffic in large cities.

There are many qualified cycle trainers and cycle training schemes around the UK. One of those local to Leighton-Linslade is “Cycle4LIFE” who be contacted by emailing info@cycle4life.org. Courses can be tailored to any riding ability and any aims.

Appendix 6: Cycle parking guidelines and insurance

A very good example of Cycle Parking guidelines is the December 2017 “Cycle Parking part of The London Plan evidence base from Transport for London” which can be found here https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_plan_evidence_base_-_cycle_parking.pdf

One of the key insurers of bicycles is Butterworth Spenglers Insurance Brokers whose ‘CycleSure’ policy requires the following conditions are met for a bike to be covered²¹ :



Security Requirements

Theft of cycles is the most common cause of claims and, whilst insurance cover will provide protection it is vital that you ensure that you take suitable precautions to prevent theft.

Certain parts of the CycleSure policy make reference to security conditions that should be followed to ensure that cover is not compromised and we would recommend that you read them carefully.

These conditions are summarised below.

Theft from your home will not be covered unless:

- i. Where the cycle is contained within the main residence: the normal security protections of the residence are fully operative and in force and the theft is a direct result of violent and forcible entry to or exit from the premises by the thieves; or
- ii. Where the cycle is contained within any shed, garage or outbuilding at your home: the building is locked overnight and the theft is a direct result of violent and forcible entry to or exit from the premises by the thieves; or
- iii. Where the cycle is contained within a communal hallway: the cycle is secured through the frame by an approved lock to an immovable object within the building

Theft away from your home will not be covered unless:

- i. the cycle is secured through the frame by an approved lock to an immovable object or, if left at a railway station the cycle is locked to an official cycle rack provided by the railway station through the frame using an approved lock; and
- ii. the cycle was not left abandoned by you.

Theft from a motor vehicle will not be covered unless:

- i. the cycle is completely out of sight or secured through the frame by an approved lock to a purpose-built rack fully fitted to the vehicle; and
- iii. the vehicle was fully locked with all security protections in force and the theft is a direct result of violent and forcible entry to the vehicle by the thieves; and
- iv. the cycle is not left in or on the vehicle between the hours of 9pm and 7am unless the vehicle is in a secure car park and in the event of a claim we will only pay if the theft is a direct result of violent and forcible entry to or exit from the secure car park by the thieves.

CycleSure-Security Requirements/June 2019

²¹ Butterworth Spengler Insurance Brokers CycleSure Security Requirements
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