

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
DATE
3 rd December 2024
LEAD OFFICER.
James Sutton, Sustainable Transport Manager

1. Summary description of the proposed change

What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed?
How does it compare with the current situation?

A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. It will act as an evidence base for developing existing and future walking and cycling networks and help Medway attract external funding in the future.

Adopting the Medway LCWIP provides a 10-year strategy for developing the walking and cycling network in Medway and an opportunity for the council to build upon the success of the Cycling Action Plan and Active Travel Fund schemes. The LCWIP has been delivered in line with guidance set out by the Department for Transport (DfT) and is the government's preferred method for local authorities to plan and deliver walking and cycling networks. The plan is vital in showcasing the council's commitment to active travel and reducing local traffic congestion and carbon emissions. It makes a stronger case for investment in walking and cycling infrastructure, especially when accessing capital and revenue funds from Active Travel England (ATE) and other national funding bodies.

2. Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

E.g., Feedback from consultation, performance information, and service users.
E.g.: Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

According to 2021 Census data, cycling only makes up a small percentage of trips to work in Medway (0.7%), much lower than DfT's 2030 goal of 50%. Driving is the most common mode of travel with 52.4% driving to work (not including passengers in a car or van).

More recent data from 2019-2020 from the [DfT](#) shows that the proportion of adults that cycle for travel at least once per month in Medway is 3.2%, compared to 7.2% in South East England. Similarly, the proportion of adults that walk for travel at least once per month is also below the average of the South East Region, [32.5% compared to 36.4%](#). Medway also has a lower proportion of adults who do any walking or cycling for any purpose than the average for the South East Region.

To increase the uptake of active travel modes, there is a need to increase the attractiveness of the walking and cycling network by investing in high-quality infrastructure that suits the needs of the residents. An LCWIP will provide the

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framework for future investment in the delivery of an improved walking and cycling network.

Medway commissioned SYSTRA to deliver the LCWIP in 2022. All stages of the LCWIP process have been completed, including a public consultation delivered over a six-week period between January and March 2024. The consultation sought the views of Medway residents, visitors and businesses on their current rates of walking and cycling as well as highlighted issues and barriers to walking and cycling they currently encounter. Consultation respondents were also invited to provide their views on 'concept' designs for a number of identified priority walking and cycling routes across Medway. Online and face-to-face engagement events were delivered to enable residents to express their views on the plan. The consultation resulted in 358 responses; an additional 64 emails were received to a dedicated consultation mailbox, plus two letters of representation.

Overall, the consultation showed that residents are broadly content with the LCWIP, with most interventions achieving 50% or above agreeing with most interventions proposed. There was widespread support for most interventions, except Cycle Route 2 in Rainham.

There was strong support for interventions improving walking conditions, such as widening and uncluttering pavements. In relation to cycling, there was strong support for segregated cycling facilities but less for shared-use facilities, highlighting the potential case for road reallocation and provision of more space for walking and cycling on Medway's network.

It is important to note that the Medway LCWIP does not commit the council to deliver any of the schemes detailed at the consultation stage. Rather, it provides a framework for the delivery of an improved walking and cycling network over a 10-year period and will be used to help attract investment from the central government and other bodies. This DIA therefore focuses on the impact of the LCWIP as an overall strategy seeking to improve conditions for walking and cycling rather than on any specific scheme.

3. What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	Yes
Disability	No	Yes	Yes
Gender reassignment	No	Yes	Yes
Marriage/civil partnership	No	Yes	Yes
Pregnancy/maternity	No	Yes	Yes
Race	No	Yes	Yes
Religion/belief	No	Yes	Yes
Sex	No	Yes	Yes
Sexual orientation	No	Yes	Yes
Other (eg low-income groups)	No	Yes	Yes

4. Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

All groups- The LCWIP is likely to have a positive impact on a wide range of groups across Medway. While residents living in close proximity to potential walking and cycling interventions will be primary beneficiaries, the scheme could have positive impacts on the wider community, particularly for those who commute along the improvement areas or use them for leisure purposes. The LCWIP aligns with the One Medway Council Plan, which has 'clean, green, safe and connected communities' as one of its key priorities. All groups could benefit from a safe and convenient walking and cycling network through infrastructure improvements.

Age- An increase in walking and cycling can reduce exposure to air pollution and road danger through a reduction in vehicle journeys. Specific age groups will benefit from this more significantly. [Data](#) shows that air pollution is most vulnerable to newborns and young children. [Children under the age of 12](#) are most likely to suffer from a road traffic collision. The peak time for pedestrian injuries from vehicles is during the morning rush hours, which includes the school run.

The LCWIP proposes future active travel schemes to encompass highway interventions to ensure the safety of road users (e.g. new pedestrian and cycle crossings, segregated footways and cycleways). Moreover, it promotes transport equity by enhancing the transport modes available to children as they cannot drive.

Air pollution disproportionately affects [older people](#), with spikes in particulate matter associated with increased strokes and hospitalisation. Census 2021

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shows that the percentage of people aged 50 to 64 years rose by 13.3% compared to the 2011 Census, meaning a higher proportion of Medway's population is prone to such risk. The LCWIP aims to reduce reliance on single occupancy private vehicles by encouraging a higher uptake of walking and cycling in Medway. This reduction in reliance on private vehicles not only improves air quality but also reduces traffic congestion, making the roads safer and more pleasant for all road users.

Disability- The LCWIP proposes future active travel schemes to encompass highway interventions to ensure people with disability or reduced mobility can travel at ease. This includes raised tables at junctions and crossings, which level with the footway, and the review of tactile paving in accordance with current accessibility standards. People 'wheeling' (using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, pushchairs or other self-propelled wheeled vehicles) have been considered during the development of the network as part of this LCWIP. All designs are compliant with the DfT's Local Transport Note 1/20 which details the need to consider all users when designing walking and cycling networks.

Deprivation- Medway ranked 98 out of 317 local authorities in England on Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019. One of the domains of the IoD is health deprivation and disability, for which the borough ranked 117. The LCWIP promotes a cleaner and more affordable form of transport, which reduces residents' exposure to poor air quality and helps to reduce the impacts of air pollution, which could lower the level of deprivation in the area.

According to Census 2021, 19% of households in Medway have no cars or vans, whilst 35% of the households are deprived in one dimension. Dimensions of deprivation are education, employment, health and housing. [Research](#) shows that support for access to transport, targeted at people with low incomes, has a direct positive relationship with promoting equality. For example, improving provision for cycling can have a positive impact on employment opportunities. The LCWIP stimulates the development of Medway's walking and cycling network, ensuring affordable means of transport are readily available in the area for everyone.

Sex- There is [evidence](#) showing women's experience of transport and travel is different to men. A well-used, defined cycle network will potentially improve perceptions of personal safety, save women time and help embed physical activity into everyday activity. Improving road safety through infrastructure design, promoted by the LCWIP, benefits women and does not compromise men's ability to walk and cycle.

There is no impact anticipated on other characteristic groups such as race, religion or sexual orientation.

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5. What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

The Medway LCWIP is a long-term framework for investment in improving conditions for walking and cycling across Medway. Development of any further schemes is subject to the Medway Council's formal process. Hence, there is no adverse impact on any protected characteristic groups outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

The emerging strategy received both positive and negative feedback. The council will continue to engage and understand the opinions of Medway residents, ensuring informed decisions are made based on what is desired locally.

6. Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Maintaining communication with local stakeholders on emerging strategies	TBC	TBC
Act on the lessons learned from the LCWIP consultation	TBC	TBC
Address concerns raised from Cycle Route 2 in Rainham	TBC	TBC

7. Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

It is recommended that the LCWIP be adopted as it will provide a long-term strategy for developing the walking and cycling network in Medway. An LCWIP is the DfT's preferred method for local authorities to plan and deliver on walking and cycling targets across the country. Having an LCWIP in place will better position Medway Council to access funding from the central government via the DfT and their executive agency responsible for walking and cycling, Active Travel England (ATE).

8. Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

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Date of authorisation