

Chapter 4

Supporting Strategies

Chapter Overview

This chapter sets out in more detail the Council's Supporting Strategies for delivering the objectives of the Local Transport Plan. It is from these strategies that the Actions set out in Chapter 3 were developed. The strategies therefore form the backbone of the Council's approach to tackling the transport problems that are set out in chapters 6 to 11.

Network Strategy

The County Council's Strategy for the development of the highway network is summarised below in three parts:

- > The County Council's proposals for meeting its duties under the Traffic Management Act;
- > The recommendations for network development made in the Transport Networks Review;
- > The County Council's proposals on lorry routeing.

In addition the proposals for network development need to be read in conjunction with the County Council's proposals for asset management.

Network Management Duty

The Traffic Management Act invokes a Network Management Duty on all Local Traffic Authorities (LTAs) as of January 2005. This requires LTAs to manage their highway network with a view to ensuring safe and effective movement of traffic, including both pedestrians and cyclists. This applies not only on the parts of the network for which they are directly responsible but also on networks, strategic and local, for which other traffic authorities are responsible.

When the Act is fully in force, Government, through a series of orders enabled by the Act, will provide LTAs with the powers and responsibility to provide better conditions for all road users and a tool kit with which to proactively manage the road network. In order to carry out the duty effectively Oxfordshire has put in place a structure which can deliver on three levels: long term strategic, short/medium term planning and operation and day to day management. This will be carried out in such a way as to deal equitably with both the county's own road space needs and those of third parties.

The County Council has had for some time, a team dedicated to coordinating the day-to-day operation of the network. Notices are placed on the streetworks register for the County Council's own works as well as for the works of third parties and legitimate obstructions are licensed and inspected and action is taken with regard to unlicensed obstructions.

Oxfordshire export the data held on the streetworks register to the Electronic Local Government Information Network (Elgin), in order that works information can be viewed on the internet in a graphical context both by the public and neighbouring authorities at www.empress.gov.uk. Many of Oxfordshire's neighbouring authorities have also committed to exporting data to Elgin and this will ensure that effective cross boundary coordination can be more easily achieved.

In addition, and in recognition of the particular issues of carrying out highway works in and around a major city, the County Council set up the post of Oxford City Coordinator four years ago, with a responsibility to coordinate all highway related stakeholder interests in Oxford including those relating to both regular and one off "events". This role involves regular contact with stakeholders, including maintaining a particular understanding with local public transport providers and the police. This level of coordination coupled with a high level of open and honest stakeholder contact and early publicity has proved to be very successful in avoiding serious congestion and public complaint during a period of extensive highway works.

This valuable Network Management experience gained prior to the Act will be focused to establish the most efficient and effective way of delivering the Network Management Duty, and the good practice established within Oxford City is being extended to the remainder of the county.

One of the ways that information about road works is made available to the public is through the Roads online system on the County Council's public website.

A private contractor carries out the enforcement of parking regulations in Oxford. This allows resources to be diverted or increased to target particular areas of the network during road works to keep diversion routes clear and also gives the flexibility to carry out enforcement campaigns from time to time in conjunction with the local police. Maintaining the flow on main bus routes is a priority.

The road network in Oxfordshire is not only influenced by the strategic routes running through it, but also by the M1 and M4 motorways passing through adjoining counties. The coordination of incident management is already an important part of the County Council's liaison with other LTAs, but existing arrangements will be reviewed to ensure that the requirements of the Act are met, particularly in respect of dealing with the new Highways Agency Traffic Officers.

Oxfordshire has also been working closely with the police to treat major congestion on local roads as a Major Incident, which impacts on the well-being or the economic viability of the community and invokes our Multi-Agency response for events. This approach will assist the travelling public, and the economy of the area. The Traffic Manager forms part of the Emergency Planning Team, in order to consider/ and minimise as far as is reasonable, the impact on the network of any Major Incident.

The County Council intends to embrace the spirit of the Act and, through a combination of organisational and procedural change to encourage an holistic approach to network management, and the employment of relevant technology, will fully discharge its Network Management Duty. The Traffic Management Act requires all Highway Authorities to appoint a Traffic Manager. The breadth and scope of the Network Management Duty and the need for a "whole authority" approach argue for this position to have status and influence within and beyond the County Council, and be both a focal point and champion. For this reason the role has been integrated into that of the Head of Transport.

To support the Traffic Manager in carrying out this duty the County Council has established a Network Coordinator at a high level, but outside of the existing remits of responsibility of the three existing Assistant Heads of Transport, to manage the operational requirements of the network and feed into the strategic planning process. The Network Coordinator will introduce a small but focused network coordination team to build on our successful coordination experiences within Oxford. Furthermore, the team will manage the existing New Roads and Street Works Act function in order to establish impartiality in monitoring works on the highway, and ensuring equity between works of the Highway Authority and that of third parties.

As legislation and guidance is implemented, new processes and procedures will be developed and introduced and new systems established to augment those currently in place. In addition clear responsibility will be given to the Assistant Heads of Transport for the strategic planning of the network, for optimising its use and for ensuring the proper day-to-day management of all interventions and obstructions by co-ordination and control. For example co-ordination will allow the County Council to review road layouts when implementing maintenance schemes and vice-versa.

In order to assist in integrating Network Management into existing working practices a Network Management Plan is being developed to complement the Local Transport Plan, Transport Asset Management Plan, and Highway Maintenance Policy. This plan will detail policy and strategy for Network Management over the immediate, medium and long terms in order to work towards delivering a coordinated and holistic approach to the management of the Network. It is intended that this will be a corporately owned Plan, to ensure that the requirements of the Network Management Duty are extended beyond that of those groups directly affecting the Network. A Network Management Board has been set up, comprising of the Traffic Manager, Network Coordinator and the Assistant Heads of Transport, to

ensure that the County is meeting the requirements of the Duty. The board will effect compliance with the Network Management Plan and ensure that its delivery is both adequately resourced and within the timescales set.

The County Council is already in contact with other relevant LTAs in order to establish appropriate coordination protocols and to share best practice. There remain some historic cross-border differences between Oxfordshire and its neighbours which will either need to be resolved or firmly established as policy so that they can be properly considered in relation to the discharge of its Network Management Duty.

The Transport Networks Review will form the basis for strategic decisions and close working will be required between the Council's planning, delivery and maintenance teams to develop strategic policy. This will be followed in developing our own works programmes and with regard to external development programmes. The new Civil Enforcement powers will be used and the parking enforcement team strengthened to make best use of the opportunities that those powers bring. A countywide SPA will be introduced by the middle of the Plan period.

A combination of objective and subjective measures will be developed to assess how well the County Council is discharging its Network Management Duty, and to ensure compliance with future legislation and guidance as it becomes confirmed. Targets will be set relating to both the organisational aspects of the work and those which relate to the overall Local Transport Plan objectives, such as managing congestion. Feedback from stakeholders will play a major part in assessing how successful the County Council has been and performance data from a variety of sources, for example feedback from the recently introduced "Real Time Bus Information" system in Oxford will provide a constant and timely record of performance on the premium bus routes.

Network Development

The Transport Networks Review (TNR) was a major study undertaken for the County Council between 2002 and 2004 to develop a longer-term strategy for the development of the county's strategic transport networks, covering all modes. The following gives some of the recommended actions that have emerged from the Review. Some work is still ongoing to finalise the proposals necessary to implement the Review.

Roads & Routeing

The TNR has allowed the County Council to develop a detailed road hierarchy. The purpose of this hierarchy is to assist the County Council in decision making on vehicle routeing and signing, development control decisions and, to an extent, the standard of the route (in terms of the alignment, speed limit etc). Levels of maintenance are related to demand as opposed to status within the hierarchy. Changes in status will not therefore directly affect the amount of maintenance, although if this

affects the level of traffic on a road, and in particular the number of lorries, then this would reduce the need for maintenance on it.

The hierarchy is as follows:

Route type	Primary Role	Route Treatment
Trunk Roads	Longer distance trips, particularly freight	Based on Government criteria - very limited access
National Primary Routes	Longer distance trips but also some intra-county movements	Higher standards of alignment and speed; normally bypassing settlements; limited development access; signing for longer distance destinations
County A-Roads (major)	More important movements within the county	Generally good standard of alignment, although some poorer sections possible; occasionally passing through settlements; some limited flexibility on development access; signing for both local and longer distance destinations
County A-Roads (minor)	Linking settlements to major roads and providing missing links	Generally good standard of alignment, although some poorer sections likely; often passing through settlements; reasonable flexibility on development access; signing for both local and longer distance destinations
B-Roads	Linking A-roads to local areas and between local areas	Variable standards; generally passing through settlements; reasonable flexibility on development access; signing for local destinations only
Unclassified roads (i)	Main access routes to local villages	Generally more than 4m wide; signing for local destinations
Unclassified roads (ii)	All other routes	Generally less than 4m wide; only signed where no alternative route exists

Where roads are not currently of a standard which is appropriate for their role in the hierarchy then the Council will implement appropriate measures. Where roads are suggested for upgrading in status then this will not generally occur unless the route is of the appropriate standard.

The following changes were suggested as being needed in the Transport Networks Review:

Road	Location	Measure Suggested
B4100	Bicester to A43	Upgrade to A road
B430	M40 J10 to A34	Downgrade to unclassified (with weight limit)
A4095	Bicester to A4260	Downgrade to B road (with weight limit)
B4030	A44 to A4260	Weight Limit
B4027	A40 to A44	Downgrade to unclassified (with weight limit)
A4260	Kidlington	Downgrade to B road
A40	M40 J6 to M40 J8	Downgrade to B road
B4015	A4074 to b480	Downgrade to unclassified
B4508	Shrivenham/Faringdon	Downgrade to unclassified
A4095	Faringdon to Witney	Downgrade to B road
B4477	Witney to Carterton	Upgrade to A road
A424	Burford to Stow-on-the-Wold	Downgrade to B road with weight limit (subject to agreement with Gloucestershire C.C.)
A44	Oxford to Moreton-in-Marsh	Signing to discourage HGVs. Possible change in status in longer term (dependant upon improvements on alternative A40 route and subject to agreement with Gloucestershire C.C.)

Comments on the above proposals were received as part of the consultation on the TNR - both where the proposal was to increase or reduce the status of the road. It is clear that these are highly sensitive issues and as a consequence further investigation is required to develop a programme to fully implement the strategy. In advance of this, it is proposed that the first measure to be introduced should be the proposal to sign northbound lorries away from the A44. This would match southbound signing already in place within Gloucestershire. This proposal requires no statutory orders and was opposed by no group in the consultation.

Information and Technology

Following the recommendations of the TNR the County Council will be actively investigating the provision of intelligent transport systems including roadside real time variable message signing to allow drivers to avoid congestion by re-routeing and to inform drivers of parking availability within towns, particularly Oxford. Such a system could play a major part in the County Council's strategy to fulfil its Network Management Duty.

Freight

Freight Quality Partnership

A Freight Quality Partnership for Oxfordshire was set up in 2003. The partnership comprises representatives from transport operators, businesses and business groups, local councils and local residents. In its first two years the Partnership has focused on the issues of countywide lorry routeing (see below) and Oxford city centre deliveries. In May 2005 the Partnership decided that four issues would be investigated in the future:

Topic	Key Issues and Actions
Oxford City Centre	Develop and take forward action plan to disseminate previous research Co-ordinate action with other work in city centre
Lorry Routeing	Continue to support lorry routeing map Consider locations of and facilities at rest areas Signage and enforcement Cross-boundary issues
Rail Freight	Potential demand and Supply of rail freight in and near Oxfordshire Identify opportunities for achievable solutions for rail freight
Policy	Delivery times Working time directive issues

Lorry Routeing

The FQP has considered the most appropriate routes for freight movement across the county and deliveries to main locations within the county. As a result of this an advisory lorry route map has been produced.

This map shows:

- > Lorry routes for through movements;
- > Routes suitable for local access;
- > Towns/villages considered unsuitable for through lorry traffic;
- > Height and length restrictions on routes; and
- > Locations of services open to lorries.

In addition the map shows the most suitable routes for deliveries into Oxford city centre from the Ring Road.

It is intended that, where appropriate, the routeing shown on the map should be reflected by signing on the ground. The implementation of the routeing measures recommended in the Transport Networks Review offer an opportunity for this.

HGV Restrictions

In the Transport Networks Review a number of locations were identified as being suitable for new weight limits. Equally a number of the suggestions for changes to the classification of routes were based on the desire to discourage lorry use on unsuitable roads.

As well as formal restrictions the County Council will consider whether advisory signing (either on to favoured routes or away from unsuitable routes) can be used more widely as a means of re-enforcing the route hierarchy.

Bus Strategy

Buses are at the heart of the County Council's 2nd Local Transport Plan. The Bus Strategy builds upon the past success of Oxfordshire in enabling and encouraging a growth in bus use. It describes how the Council creates the conditions in which commercial bus services can thrive, whilst ensuring that subsidised services are provided where necessary to supplement the commercial network, which best meet local needs and provide best value for money. It identifies a hierarchy of services:

- > Premium Routes, running without subsidy at "Turn up and go" frequencies with high quality infrastructure;
- > Hourly services, some running commercially and some with subsidy, with selected infrastructure enhancements to improve attractiveness and viability;
- > Local services, provided in a variety of ways to serve the lightly populated areas off main routes.

Through this strategy, the County Council aims to achieve an overall 12% growth in bus use between 2005/06 and 2010/11.

Premium Routes

A programme to develop these high frequency core services - including longer distance expressway services from Carterton/ Witney, Didcot/ Abingdon, and Bicester to Oxford - has been developed. Measures to be taken to support this network include:

- > Ensuring buses have excellent access to main centres
- > Ensuring major new development is located where it can be served by these routes
- > Bus lanes and bus gates to protect buses from traffic delay
- > Bus priority at traffic signals
- > Management of parking and road works to minimise delays to buses
- > Effective enforcement of traffic laws on bus routes
- > Careful design of traffic calming to minimise impact on buses
- > High quality bus stop infrastructure
- > Further improvement of Park & Ride sites and investigation of remote

Park & Ride

- > Quality Partnerships with bus operators
- > Real Time Information

Hourly services

These routes will run at least hourly at standard times between 0700 and 1900 on Mondays to Saturdays. All settlements of over 1000 population will be on the network. Whilst some will no doubt require subsidy, the viability of the network will be improved through good access and facilities in town centres and high quality facilities at other principal stops.

Local Services

It is recognised that most of these services will require subsidies. Subsidised services will be reviewed on an area-by-area basis, with two areas programmed for review each year and contracts normally lasting four years. Characteristics of subsidy review will be:

- > Home to School and public transport contracts reviewed together
- > On bus surveys of usage by Council staff, supplemented by information from Parish Transport Representatives.
- > Work with stakeholders to explore public transport accessibility in the area
- > Consultation with bus operators
- > Full consultation on all proposals with Parish Councils - including assistance with parish surveys, liaison with appointed parish transport representatives, and a joint meeting
- > In most cases, tenders invited for services
- > Achievable standards set for service quality
- > Preference given to tenderers proposing higher quality vehicles
- > Specific policies set for some (but not all) categories of service
- > Subsidy decisions by Council Committee, on the basis of best value for money
- > Alternatives to conventional bus services encouraged where appropriate:
 - Community transport (with the assistance of officers employed to support and assist CT operators)
 - Spare time in social and health care vehicles' schedules to provide public services.
 - Taxibuses, demand responsive services, feeder services in particular circumstances.

Other Supporting Policies

Further policies are in place to support services at all levels in the hierarchy:

- > Provision of high quality interchange facilities where services meet one another (or trains)
- > Development of improved ticketing arrangements; a pilot enabling

travel on a single ticket from outlying areas of the county to hospitals in Headington is to be trailed; if this proves popular and successful other through, joint or network tickets will also be explored.

- > Ensuring high quality information as laid down in the Information Strategy for Bus Services.
- > A proactive approach to ensuring provision for people with disabilities, including vehicles, stop infrastructure and driver training on conventional services, provision (in partnership with District Councils) of extra Dial A Ride services specially for people with disabilities and support and advice for voluntary groups in providing transport.
- > Working in partnership with health trusts and others to improve and develop viable bus links to major traffic generators outside traditional town and city centres
- > Active steps to further improve air quality on bus routes, including a drivers code of conduct, standards set in Quality Partnerships and subsidy contracts, ticketing and other measures to reduce bus stopping times and traffic management to ensure smooth bus movement.
- > Continuing to provide facilities for express coaches in Oxford City centre and exploring additional stopping points elsewhere
- > Continuing to encourage development of commercial services by bus operators, seeking a Quality Contract to give the Council overall network control only in the event that operators are unwilling to cooperate in commercial service development.

The Council is confident that all of these measures, taken together, provide a firm framework for increasing the contribution that bus services make to tackling congestion and delivering accessibility.

Park & Ride

Park & Ride has played a major role in the development of transport policy within Oxfordshire; its growth to date is described in the "History" section.

There was a significant addition to Oxford's Park & Ride capacity in December 2003 with the opening of the 800-space Water Eaton site, linked to the city centre with a new bus service.

The other four Park & Ride sites are now 25 to 30 years old, and a programme of bringing these up to a modern standard has commenced. A new bus interchange and terminal have been designed for Thornhill and it is anticipated that this will be built during 2006. The interchange building will provide high quality facilities for inter-urban coaches and local bus services, in addition to the Park & Ride service to the City Centre. Construction of a new terminal is about to commence at Redbridge, and the County Council is also working in partnership with Oxford City Council on terminal buildings for Pear Tree and Seacourt.

The Transport Network Review has identified potential for “remote” Park & Ride to cater for journeys to Oxford from Witney, Abingdon and Bicester; consideration of “parking pockets” close to existing bus routes; and Park & Ride for Banbury. A study has identified that remote Park & Ride is potentially feasible in a few cases, subject to sufficient demand, the ability to offer good bus priority on route, a bus service which also serves other significant areas of population, and a suitable site. A site in Bicester is now being investigated in detail, with others possible in the longer term. Use of the existing Park & Ride sites will also continue to be reviewed to ensure that sufficient capacity exists to meet growing demand from city centre developments e.g. the Westgate shopping centre. It is anticipated that some expansion of the existing sites will take place during the current plan period.

Real Time Information (RTI)

Technological advance now provides a means of delivering up-to-date information to passengers waiting at bus stops and to those with access to the internet. The first phase of a county-wide system is now operating in the Kidlington and Banbury Road (Oxford) areas. On-street signs provide a list of predicted arrival times of buses at stops. A website provides ‘virtual displays’ of anticipated arrival times at stops across a wider network. The provision of information that has taken into account any delays caused by traffic congestion or other disruption is intended to give bus passengers greater confidence about the time their bus will arrive, which will allow them to manage their time more effectively.

The Oxfordshire Real Time Information system is being developed on a partnership basis with bus operators. Given the quality of management and control information that the system delivers to operators, it is accepted that they will meet all the costs of the on-bus and in-depot equipment for commercial services, whilst the Council meets the cost of the central server, radio infrastructure and on-street signs. The Council will seek to ensure that subsidised services are also equipped for the system wherever appropriate.

Following the successful implementation of the Banbury Road/Kidlington pilot Real Time Information project, the system will gradually be extended across Oxfordshire. The Council will invest in on-street signs at the busier stops, to reflect the geographic spread of equipped buses. In addition to those on-street signs at bus stops the County Council will also seek provision of information screens listing expected departures from other nearby stops at rail stations, shopping centres and other appropriate sites served by equipped buses, in partnership with site operators. The Council will also develop the functionality and legibility of the RTI website, and will investigate the feasibility of delivering a Text Messaging facility. It will also investigate the feasibility of linking with other Local Authority RTI systems, so that the arrival of buses from surrounding areas can be predicted on Oxfordshire signs and the website.

The RTI system also interfaces with traffic signals through the satellite automatic vehicle location technology, enabling buses to be given selective priority depending on their earliness or lateness. This capability is being trialled in the Kidlington area, and if proved successful, will be used elsewhere across the County.

Public Transport Information Strategy

The strategy defines the Council's requirements for information about local public transport services, and how it feels this information should be disseminated. It describes the Council's standards for timetable leaflets, the need for timetable displays at bus stops and other forms of information provision.

It clarifies the share of responsibility between transport providers and the Council itself, and also lays down the Council's expectation for financial investment in information. This underpins the Council's belief that improvements in the provision of information about public transport will result in increased passenger numbers. It also stipulates the requirements and responsibilities for delivery of the regional telephone and internet travel enquiry service, both in terms of the provision of information and of financial support.

Rail Strategy

The County Council has limited but clear opportunities to work with the Train Operating Companies to influence rail use to, from and within Oxfordshire. It is recognised that schemes primarily aimed at extending or improving the strategic rail network are not appropriate for inclusion in the LTP. However, measures designed to achieve low-cost, effective improvements to train services and rail stations to aid accessibility, provide information and promote use will contribute to achieving LTP objectives. The Council will endeavour to secure contributions from developers and other third parties towards rail improvements. In all cases the County Council will continue to work closely with the rail industry, and where relevant other stakeholders and local authorities, to deliver these improvements and add value to other investment in services and infrastructure.

The Greater Western franchise runs from April 2006, and offers a unique opportunity to deliver significant improvements in station facilities through partnership working, and it will be especially important to co-ordinate delivery of improvements with the new franchise obligations. The County Council hopes that those local authorities demonstrating a funding commitment will benefit from greater investment in their stations, and intends to build on its existing relationship with the rail industry to maximise the benefits for Oxfordshire.

A section of the local rail network in Oxfordshire runs parallel to the A34 and increased use for local and strategic freight and passenger movement

would help reduce the pressure on this congested trunk road. The County Council submitted a detailed response to the Strategic Rail Authority consultation on the Greater Western franchise in 2005 and is pleased that the proposed reductions in service to the two designated growth areas of Bicester and Didcot are not included in the franchise. The County Council expects the new franchise to provide a reliable railway that meets the needs of existing and future users through provision of an appropriate level of service, within an integrated transport network. The Council will continue to develop plans for improvements on the Cotswold Line and Bicester Line. The last of these links closely with the strong regional aspiration for East-West Rail, between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Bedford. This proposal is supported by the Regional Transport Strategy and local authorities along the route and is tied to the Government's housing growth agenda for Milton Keynes/South Midlands and the identification of Bicester as one of Oxfordshire's growth towns in the South East Plan.

The role of Oxford Station is integral to the effective performance of Oxford as a transport hub. This is recognised in the Regional Transport Strategy and its expansion to provide more track capacity and a modern high-quality transport interchange forms the focus of transport improvements in the urban regeneration of Oxford's West End.

Alongside aspirations for these more significant schemes, the Rail Strategy focuses on improving facilities at key local stations where there is potential for growth in use and modal shift. The core elements of the Rail Strategy are set out below:

Station improvements

These will include:

- > Oxford station expansion - to improve operational flexibility by creating additional track capacity, and give Oxford a gateway to cater for the anticipated growth in rail journeys befitting its regional hub role. This project is linked to Network Rail plans for resignalling;
- > Didcot Parkway - to create a multi-modal interchange incorporating better cycle and walking routes, and bus and car parking facilities within a redesigned station forecourt; and
- > Targeted improvements to facilities at local stations where there is potential for growth in use and modal shift - included in this are better waiting facilities, improved security, secure cycle parking, good signage, better walking routes and more car parking to improve overall accessibility.

Information and Promotion

The County Council will:

- > Work closely with Train Operating Companies and local councils to provide good quality rail and bus information, local community,

leisure and tourist information and links to the Public Rights of Way network to promote and market rail use, especially for off-peak travel;

- > Continue to develop community involvement at stations and explore the role that Community Rail Partnerships might play in protecting and promoting local rail services on some lines in the longer term; and
- > Co-ordinate the introduction of Real Time Bus Passenger Information with rail station improvements.

Casualty Reduction Strategy

Reducing casualties by improving and maintaining the county's roads and educating people in safer travel behaviour is a cornerstone of this Plan, with Safer Roads being one of the five LTP objectives. Chapter 3 has identified the main issues concerning road safety, which include:

- > The relatively high risks and accident levels associated with private travel, despite significant and welcome reductions in recent years;
- > The strong public appreciation of the importance of road safety as a key strand of community safety, as demonstrated for example through consultation on community strategies;
- > The County Council's clear objectives to meet (and hopefully exceed) national casualty reduction targets set for 2010;
- > The links between safer roads, casualty levels and particular sections of the community - notably people living in disadvantaged areas, users of rural roads (in relation to severity of injury) and powered two-wheeler users; and
- > How meeting road safety objectives can demonstrably contribute to wider policy objectives, for example improving health and economic performance.

The County Council's strategy for reducing casualties includes reducing the number and severity of accidents by improving the design and layout of the highway where necessary to address known safety problems identified through accident statistics.

Improving the design and layout of the highway

Changes to the design and layout of stretches of road and junctions where accident statistics identify a clear road safety problem will be taken forward. Sites have already been identified for treatment in 2006/07 and the County Council's accident database will be closely monitored to identify problem sites to be investigated for appropriate treatment. Measures to improve road safety will also be built in to schemes which are primarily designed to meet other Plan objectives and into the design of new developments.

Better management of vehicle speeds

Measures, including new/extended speed limits, traffic calming and speed-reactive signs can be employed where speed is a factor. Changes to speed limits will be considered in line with the County Council's agreed criteria covering 20, 30, 40 and 50mph limits respectively. The County Council will work closely with the Police and other agencies in the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership, to ensure that enforcement is properly targeted. Through this partnership work, the County Council is already considering how the changes announced recently to the funding arrangements for speed camera partnerships can be best integrated into our overall road safety strategy to maintain casualty reduction in Oxfordshire.

Providing effective road safety education, training and publicity

The County Council will continue to provide and develop training programmes and other activities to improve road use skills and behaviour, to help to raise awareness and contribute to a culture of safe road use.

Examples of these will include:

- > The 'Footsteps' programme for children, providing parent-focused child pedestrian training from aged 2. This provides tailored guidance and resources via Health visitors using DVD/video and supporting material;
- > The 'sitting tight' programme, to provide advice on correct fitting of child car seats;
- > Cycle training in primary schools; and
- > Promotion of targeted, specialist campaigns raising awareness of, for example, the dangers of drink driving, mobile telephone use and fatigue.

Cycle training and the Footsteps programmes are supported by a total of around 1200 volunteer members of staff.

Ensuring that new development is planned in such a way as to prevent road safety problems being created.

This will be done by providing targeted advice to planning authorities and building in (or securing contributions to) provision of safe transport improvements both on-site and on the local highway network.

Parking Strategy

The management of parking is one of the most effective means of tackling congestion and its worst effects, such as air pollution, delay and unreliability of journeys. However, the ease with which visitors and shoppers can gain access to a place by car can influence its overall attractiveness and success. A balance therefore has to be struck between managing parking for transport purposes, offering attractive and viable alternatives, and maintaining a welcoming environment for those who, for whatever reason, need or choose to use their car.

Well-planned location, availability, price and enforcement of parking can contribute significantly to easing traffic flows, especially in the peak periods, making all journeys more reliable. It can also stimulate demand for bus services and thereby increase travel choices. This has been especially successful in central Oxford, where a managed approach to city centre parking, coupled with a well-established Park & Ride system and a comprehensive network of commercial bus services, has led to traffic flows on the approaches to the city centre being held at a constant level for almost 3 decades.

Controlled parking zones (CPZs) in residential areas protect local streets from intrusive long-stay commuter parking. They also have a strategic importance in keeping down the overall level of peak hour traffic. Problems have been particularly acute in parts of Oxford, where parking associated with hospitals and university establishments has encroached onto residential streets and consequently traffic levels into and within the area are high. To meet the mutual aims and objectives of the County Council and the Health Trusts in this area, the programme for introducing new CPZs in this area has been accelerated to deal with these problems. The introduction of a charge to cover the full costs of administration and enforcement would bring the city zones into line with existing zones elsewhere in the county and ensure that resources are not deflected away from implementing new necessary zones.

Whilst it will be difficult to replicate elsewhere the conditions that led to the successful approach in Oxford, some of the same principles of effective management can be applied across the county and contribute to achieving progress against LTP objectives. The following section outlines the main elements of the Parking Strategy:

Park & Ride

The County Council will:

- > Continue to invest in high quality facilities, in particular introducing modern terminal buildings with a range of facilities for the public;
- > Explore the market potential and transport benefits of introducing remote Park & Ride sites and services. In the interim, expand existing car parks as necessary to ensure capacity keeps ahead of demand, in particular that which is likely to arise from new development such as the expanded Westgate shopping centre;
- > Maintain or increase the difference between parking charges at Park & Ride and central Oxford at the appropriate times of day - this could be done through a combination of removing the parking charge at Park & Ride (which has already been introduced at two sites in Oxford), which would bring a spin off benefit of single ticketing, and/or increasing charges in the city centre;
- > Work closely with City and District Councils to deliver these improvements.

Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs)

The County Council will:

- > Accelerate its programme to deliver new CPZs to protect local streets and achieve the strategic management of traffic, especially in the Headington/Marston area;
- > Consult on the introduction of a permit charge to cover costs and limit unrestrained demand.

Enforcement

The County Council will:

- > Introduce a Countywide Special Parking Area (SPA) to ensure on-street parking controls are effective; and
- > Target enforcement on main roads and bus routes to keep traffic moving and reduce congestion.

Public Parking

The County Council will:

- > Manage the overall availability and price of on-street parking to maintain the local economy, keep traffic levels down (particularly at peak travel times) and support alternatives like Park & Ride;
- > Work closely with the City and District Councils to ensure good co-ordination and compatibility of the approach to parking and improve the quality of car parks;
- > Identify key rail stations across the county where parking facilities can be improved to support increased accessibility to rail services; and
- > Provide formal parking spaces where requested for people with disabilities.

Parking Standards

The County Council will work with planning authorities to apply parking standards for new development that help to deliver transport benefits, generally maintaining an element of restraint in towns centres where alternative transport is more readily available and applying realistic standards elsewhere to ensure parking overspill does not cause local amenity problems.

Travel Plans Strategy

The County Council recognises the significant role travel plans can have in meeting the LTP objectives. It is estimated that around 20% of peak hour traffic is created by the 'school run'. Although, for some, the car is the only available means of travelling to school for many others there are alternatives that would reduce traffic problems around school sites if used more extensively, including congestion and safety hazards. School Travel Plans (STPs) are a tried and tested means for schools to embrace the principles of sustainable travel and potentially secure investment in

complementary facilities both on- and off-site to promote less reliance on the car. The Government's School Travel Action Plan target for all schools to have a school travel plan by 2010 is a key County Council commitment. Targets to increase walking and cycling on the journey to school will be included in Oxfordshire's Children and Young People's Plan and a comprehensive School Travel Strategy has been developed and will be consulted upon during summer 2006. Staff and revenue resources have been reviewed in order to advance the programme of assistance to schools in developing STPs, and offer more support to more schools more quickly.

Workplace travel plans are increasingly enabling employers to make financial savings and reduce the environmental impact ("footprint") of their organisation. Oxfordshire County Council has itself adopted a Travel-for-Work policy and action plan that includes a broad range of measures to reduce unnecessary car use; in particular, a travel loan scheme offering discounts and interest-free loans for cycles and bus and rail season tickets to all Council employees. It has also embarked on a "Future First" initiative which incorporates commitments to reducing impacts of staff travel including high energy consumption, poor air quality, road congestion and inefficient land use.

Throughout this Plan period, the County Council will engage stakeholders in both the development of and consultation on a workplace travel strategy for the county, which will identify key areas for action and targets to change how people travel to work in Oxfordshire.

Personalised travel planning is a concept new to Oxfordshire and one that will require additional resources to develop further. The County Council will, during the life of the LTP, research the benefits and value for money of personalised travel planning and where possible, seek to integrate pilot initiatives with its work on school and workplace travel planning.

The Travel Plans Strategy comprises the following elements:

School Travel Plans

- > Consult on and adopt an Oxfordshire School Travel Strategy 2006;
- > Work towards all schools having a travel plan in place by 2010 (School Travel Action Plan target);
- > Set targets to reduce car use on the journey to school and increase walking and cycling.
- > Deliver effective, low-cost complementary improvements at schools through the transport capital programme;
- > Work with schools successful in small capital grant applications to identify potential modal shifting improvements, for delivery through the Better Ways to School programme;
- > Road safety education, training and publicity including cycle training; and
- > Work across service and organisational boundaries, e.g. with District Councils, health promotion agencies, Property, Children, Young

People's and Families' Directorate, to co-ordinate resources, messages and processes to promote safety and sustainable travel and development.

Workplace Travel Plans

- > Review the approach and resourcing for workplace travel planning with a view to implementation during the Plan period; Develop and consult on a strategy for workplace travel during 2006/07;
- > Increase take-up of the County Council's travel loan scheme;
- > The Oxfordshire Community Partnership has a priority action to encourage businesses to promote sustainable methods of transport, especially amongst small and medium-sized enterprises; and
- > Pursue development control policies to ensure travel plan principles are built into development processes.

Development Control

The design of developments can play an important part in determining the amount and type of travel generated by them. Large new residential developments in particular offer the opportunity to encourage more sustainable travel and help meet a range of policy objectives. The County Council places a high priority on ensuring that all developments:

- > Are located in accordance with Development Plan policies;
- > Have the minimal adverse impact on the transport network, including addressing any problems that they might create through the provision of (or contributions towards) infrastructure and services and the adoption of Travel Plans; and
- > Are designed in accordance with the County Council's Residential Design Guide (which has been developed in consultation with the District Councils), national guidelines and guidance on parking provided in PPG3 and PPG13.

To achieve this, the County Council will, in this Plan period:

- > In accordance with its Structure Plan policies, concentrate significant development in a limited number of locations (Oxford, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Grove and Witney) with the aim of developing sustainable settlements that have a balanced mix of residential development, employment opportunities and services;
- > Establish the overall infrastructure and service provision required to accommodate development and secure Developer Contributions for transport and other infrastructure and services as part of an overall coherent approach for providing the necessary facilities to promote sustainable development and enhance the transport systems in these settlements; and
- > Provide practical design information (including advising on parking standards for cars and cycles) and policy support, to inform and guide developers to create developments which:

- Encourage more sustainable travel by minimising the need for car travel, particularly for shorter trips to local facilities;
- Identify integrated planning and transport project teams in order to co-ordinate the County Council's response to major planning applications on strategic sites;
- Encourage layouts that promote public transport use, walking and cycling and, where appropriate, build in the concept of Home Zones;
- Include the adoption of effective, monitored Travel Plans to reduce the level of car-borne travel, for office development in particular; and
- Encourage planning applications for new developments that will create high quality street environments and improve quality of life for all.

Active Travel Strategy

Many of the journeys by car in or into the county's congested urban areas are less than 5km and so could be easily walked or cycled by most people. If more of these journeys were made attractive enough for people to walk or cycle them, there could be significant benefits gained in terms of reducing congestion, addressing accessibility, improving air quality and contributing towards delivering the other LTP objectives, including improving cycle safety by ensuring that routes are well-maintained.

Detailed Walking and Cycling Strategies were developed in 1999 and were included in Oxfordshire's first LTP as stand alone "daughter" documents. Broadly speaking, the principles underlying the existing strategies remain valid. However, the actions and programmes of work that flow from these underlying principles are currently being reviewed to ensure that they support the objectives of the second LTP as fully as possible. A new document, with the two previous strategies combined and widened to include consideration of the needs of wheelchair users, is therefore under development. This single strategy is known as the Active Travel Strategy (ATS). A draft will be consulted upon in spring 2006.

The main purpose of the ATS will be to outline policies and standards that ensure active modes of travel (walking, cycling and wheelchair use) support the objectives of the Local Transport Plan as effectively as possible. The ATS will help to ensure investment is as focused as possible on the LTP objectives by acting as a guide in deciding where and how LTP funding should be used for active modes.

The ATS sets out the principle that all LTP funding on active modes must be spent on schemes that directly contribute to the LTP objectives. Broadly speaking therefore the Council's strategy for active modes is to:

- > Positively promote the use of active modes at locations where a modal shift from motorised to active modes will help to address significant congestion, air quality, or street environment problems.

The Council will promote the use of active modes by:

- Identifying and addressing deterrents of all kinds to travel by active modes
- Marketing the benefits of active modes
- > Provide links suitable for use by all active modes for communities with poor access to essential goods and services, by identifying and addressing barriers to travel by active modes.
- > Address known road safety problems affecting pedestrians and cyclists to reduce casualties.

The ATS outlines the County Council's approach to creating conditions conducive to travel by active modes and its proposals for marketing the use of modes. In seeking to address deterrents to active modes, the ATS identifies different user types according to their experience and/or confidence. Infrastructure improvements and marketing should be aimed at all cycling and walking user types wherever possible as this will guarantee the largest possible take-up. However, in some situations, it simply will not be possible to cater for all types of user and in these cases an assessment will need to be made of which user type should be targeted to deliver the maximum possible take-up. This assessment should take into account a range of factors and is likely to consider:

- > The nature of the origins and destinations (e.g. schools, business parks etc)
- > The nature of connecting infrastructure (there is usually little point creating a section of route suitable for use by novice cyclists and walkers if the route cannot be continued to a useful destination at a sufficient standard)
- > The cost of providing for each user type.

Deterrents to Cycling

Listed below are a number of factors which deter people from cycling. The order of the factors listed below is probably most appropriate for novice cyclists - the order is likely to be slightly different for intermediate and experienced cyclists.

- > Traffic danger (e.g. speed and volume of traffic and proximity to that traffic)
- > Poor accident record known to public
- > Other hazards to personal safety and property (e.g. quality of surface, lighting)
- > Journey time (e.g. directness of available route(s))
- > Comfort (e.g. quality of riding surface, width of route)
- > Lack of information about cycling and cycle routes
- > Concerns about image and culture

Deterrents to walking & wheelchair use

The order of the following factors is probably most representative of confident pedestrians - the order may well be slightly different for cautious pedestrians.

- > Journey time (e.g. Directness of available route(s), Delays at crossings and junctions)
- > Personal Security (e.g. lighting)
- > Traffic danger (e.g. speed and volume of traffic and proximity to that traffic)
- > Poor accident record known to public
- > Pleasantness of available route(s), including quality of street environment
- > Exposure to cyclists
- > Quality of surface - dropped kerbs, potholes, tactile paving, awkward cross-gradients etc.
- > Level of street clutter

The ATS gives guidance about how to address these (and other) deterrents in order to make sure that active modes support the delivery of the LTP objectives.

Wheelchair Use and Accessible Environments

National policy (as set out in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's "Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres" issued in 2005) states that local strategies should proactively develop and regenerate existing town centres to be more accessible for people with mobility difficulties. In this context, as opposed to the context outlined in the Framework Accessibility Strategy, accessible means:

"Ease and convenience of access by a choice of means of travel including the quality, quantity and type of car parking; the frequency and quality of public transport services and the range of customer origins served; and the quality of provision for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people and the ease of access from main arrival points to the main attractions." (PPS6 4.4)

When planning and designing new schemes, and improvements to existing facilities, the County Council will consult with local access groups and individuals, as well as seeking expert advice to ensure that the final outcome is a satisfactory and useable facility for everyone. The following features, which have been identified by the County Council, help disabled people to move around the built environment safely and independently. The County Council will prioritise the provision of these features at every available opportunity to ensure that the built environment is accessible to everyone:

- > level or flush crossing points (dropped kerbs),
- > the correct installation of tactile paving surfaces,
- > signalized crossings (including rotating cone devices),
- > colour/tonal contrasted marking of street furniture and railings,
- > segregated pedestrian cycle facilities prioritised over unsegregated facilities,
- > information both electronic and hard copy,
- > accessible walks,
- > parking facilities,
- > real time information,
- > a commitment to bus driver disability equality training, and
- > bus stop infrastructure.

The County Council has a team of Disability Equality Advisers whose main focus is to promote the inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of the County Council's work. They do this by:

- > promoting the 'social model of disability';
- > offering advice and information so that disabled people can choose how to access the highways, the countryside, the built environment and public transport;
- > contributing to policy development within the authority when it might impact on disabled people, as measures to assist people with disabilities will often benefit other users as well, such as people with pushchairs, shoppers and young and elderly people.

The County Council is working with the District Councils to introduce more "Shopmobility" schemes across the county. These schemes can considerably ease problems of access to shops for people with mobility impairments.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)

The County Council has adopted its Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) which will act as a solid foundation for improvements to public rights of way, and also for the incorporation of Rights of Way planning into local transport planning.

Within Oxfordshire there are approximately 2,500 miles of Public Rights of Way. According to current classifications:

- > The entire rights of way network should be available to walkers
- > 840 miles of it should also be available to horse riders and cyclists (Bridleways, Byways and Roads used as Public Paths)
- > 190 miles should be available to horse carriage drivers (Byways and Roads used as Public Paths) and
- > 40 miles should be available to motorised users on Byways (with possible rights of use on a further 150 miles of Roads Used as Public Paths).

The distribution of the network varies across the county, and public rights of way are often fragmented by roads and rivers, or they do not join up each other when they are intersected by roads. This can affect the amount of traffic-free or quiet countryside that is available to users, which can especially affect equestrians. The fact that the rights of way network gives such extensive coverage of the county means that improvements and additions to it have great potential to contribute towards delivering the objectives of this LTP rather than simply existing as a leisure resource in its own right. Indeed, a large number of sections of the rights of way network (particularly in the urban areas) already serve a useful transport function.

The vision of Oxfordshire's RoWIP is therefore:

"To improve the existing public rights of way network for all users and would-be users, and improve the extent, use and understanding of the network, so that public rights of way fulfil their role as a vital part of life in the county."

To realise this vision, it is necessary to achieve the following four Aims:

- > Public rights of way are protected and well-maintained
- > A better joined-up network that meets the needs and demands of users whilst accommodating the interests of land managers, the natural environment and our cultural heritage
- > A public rights of way network which enables access for all
- > A thriving countryside where residents and visitors are able to understand and enjoy their rights, in a responsible way

This vision statement is combined with the nine outcomes and twenty-eight strategic actions in the RoWIP Statement of Action. This serves as a basis for developing an annual delivery plan. If appropriate any identified RoWIP schemes that will help to address identified transport problems will be considered for inclusion in the five year programme of the LTP.

In developing a RoWIP for Oxfordshire, the County Council consulted and liaised with key organisations including:

- > neighbouring highway authorities,
- > district, town and parish councils,
- > the Countryside Agency, AONB offices,
- > user and land management groups and organisations, and
- > interested individuals.

The Oxfordshire Citizens' Panel has also been used to assess levels of satisfaction with the rights of way network together with focus groups of Panel members to gain a deeper understanding of local views.

The County Council's main partner throughout the development process has been the Oxfordshire Countryside Access Forum, a Local Access Forum

established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to give advice on improving access to the countryside. This group is made up of countryside users, land managers and other related interests, who have helped in the processes of assessment of need, definition and refinement of the action plan and drawing up a Statement of Action.

Powered Two Wheeler Strategy

Powered two wheelers (PTWs) is the collective name for all motorcycles, scooters and mopeds. Nationally they are becoming increasingly popular and there has been a resurgence in ownership of them, with increases in registration of over 200% since 1993. Whilst PTWs have a role to play within the transport system their riders are vulnerable road users and as such their needs must be taken into account in the development of transport policy, particularly by promoting safety measures. In order to develop and deliver a PTW Strategy Oxfordshire County Council will work with the police, those groups that represent the PTW community and others who have a key role to play. This strategy supports the Department for Transport's Motorcycling Strategy, published in 2005. In keeping with the overall approach of this Local Transport Plan, the County Council will only consider encouraging additional use of PTWs where such use will help towards solving identified transport problems.

Emissions and Pollution Issues

On average, the emissions performance of PTWs compares favourably with that of cars, although on an individual basis this assessment is dependent on the pollutant under consideration, the type of motorcycle and the way it is ridden. However, the total level of urban emissions from PTWs is minimal compared to other traffic sources.

With the new more stringent emission standards for new PTWs to be introduced from 2006/7, the emission performance of new PTWs will come closer to those of new cars, and better with respect to oxides of nitrogen.

From 2005/6 significant additional emission reductions will be introduced for new cars and other vehicles that will further reduce oxides of nitrogen and other emissions. This means that the relative contribution of PTWs to the emission of these pollutants will increase and, especially for mopeds, the relative emissions of hydrocarbons (HC) could increase substantially, possibly resulting in the need to explore tighter controls.

Parking

PTWs can be particularly vulnerable to theft when parked and so ways and means to make parking more secure is a very important consideration when designing parking facilities for PTWs. Therefore the County Council will encourage appropriate provision of convenient, sufficient and secure facilities for PTW parking. Whenever the County Council is considering whether PTW parking needs to be improved, it will consult county-wide motorcycling representatives and also local PTW riders, where possible.

Where parking is provided for PTWs, the correct type of device is crucial for their security, giving the rider the confidence to leave their PTW parked for any length of time. The availability of secure parking spaces is particularly important in areas such as public transport interchanges, workplaces and shopping and entertainment centres where medium to long term parking may be anticipated. Good lighting and CCTV could add to the level of security and parking should be located in full view of passers by. The Transport Act 2000 clarified the role of highways authorities in regard to the provision of secure PTW parking devices, giving them the legal powers to provide and maintain them.

Signing

Although parking areas for cars are generally well signed on the approaches to town centres this is not the case for PTW parking, even where this is provided. Where new PTW parking is provided then the County Council will ensure that this is adequately signed.

A majority of PTW parking areas are marked only with white paint on the ground surface, which can be hard to see from a distance unless riders know they are there. By providing a good level of signing, it will help PTW riders find PTW facilities more quickly and safely. At present signing of PTW parking areas require special authorisation, but it is expected that the current revision of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions will include a supplementary plate that will indicate parking places reserved for PTWs and so dispense with the need for special authorisation. This should lead to the greater use of these signs for PTWs.

Bus Lane Use

Whilst current DfT guidance on bus lanes recommends against allowing PTWs to use bus lanes, in some areas local authorities have allowed PTWs to use bus lanes. Evidence nationally has suggested that there are no apparent safety disbenefits from allowing PTWs into bus lanes, although there remain doubts about the suitability of allowing PTWs into bus lanes shared by significant numbers of bicycles. There is scope for investigating the potential for shared use to be trialled in Oxford. Any location for such a trial will need to include careful consideration of current layout, numbers of buses and the number and segregation of cycles.

Oxfordshire Motorcycle Forum

The County Council intends to set up a county wide Motorcycle Forum to provide advice and feedback on any proposal that affects PTWs. Initial contacts have already been made with the British Motorcyclist Federation (BMF) to explore issues that they wish the County Council to consider in its LTP, including the setting up of such a forum. Such a forum will include as well the County Council and BMF, the police and those groups that represent the PTW community and others who have a key role to play in the promotion of safe and sustainable use of PTWs.

Safety and Road Design

The County Council will continue to address the issues of PTW safety through its ongoing highway maintenance programme. In most situations, PTWs will have no difficulty in negotiating roads which have been designed to accommodate a wide range of other vehicles. Nevertheless there are some characteristics of PTW design that do warrant attention in the design of roads for particular situations. These are principally related to susceptibility of PTWs to the nature of the road surface and the vulnerability of riders if accidents do occur. Concerns include, for example, manhole covers with inadequate skid resistance or located in the carriageway where PTWs could be leaning into a bend; poor or infrequent maintenance; inadequate reinstatement after works in the road that leave potholes or uneven surfaces which can destabilise two wheeled vehicles; and safety barrier posts or other street furniture located where there is a risk of PTWs hitting them.

Motorcycle Training

Training courses are not considered an effective use of funds as experience shows those keen to participate are usually willing to pay while less responsible riders are reluctant to undertake training. However, in partnership with the police and motorcycle organisations, county council road safety officers attend rallies and meetings to seek to subtly educate riders who are also invited to talk about other aspects of motorcycle riding or training. The emphasis of the message can be influenced by an analysis of current accident trends and the benefit of training is promoted and police initiatives, such as the red and yellow card campaign, are supported. In addition to the police, the County Council will continue to work with Ambulance Trust in promoting safe riding and holding joint partnership events at various locations during each year.

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

The five district councils in Oxfordshire are responsible for the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles, licensing drivers and for creating taxi ranks.

The County Council recognises that taxis and private hire vehicles play an important and integral role in complementing the public transport network by offering efficient and cost effective transport for people at times and in circumstances where public transport cannot be provided cost efficiently. This applies particularly in:

- > Smaller settlements away from the main transport corridors;
- > Evening travel outside of Oxford; and
- > Journeys involving the carriage of heavy or bulky goods.

As part of the Accessibility Strategy taxis and private hire vehicles could provide a key role in increasing accessibility in many areas, both urban and rural, particularly during off peak periods. They provide a safe means of

transport both in terms of being able to collect people from their homes and take them straight to their destinations, so reducing their sense of vulnerability which they may feel when standing at a bus stop, particularly during the hours of darkness. In many areas, they may be the only form of transport available to those who do not have access to a private car.

Each of the five District Councils in Oxfordshire has in place its own local policies on the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles. These are summarised below:

District Councils' Policies on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles

Local Policies

Cherwell District Council

Restricted number of taxis. Licensing Committee decided to remove restriction in January 2004 but the matter is still pending with the Council.

Oxford City Council

Restricts the numbers of hackney carriages; sets fares for hackney carriages; does not restrict the number of private hire vehicles; does not licence vehicles older than 6 years; vehicles safety monitored every 6 months; issues licences after stringent tests: checks with CRB, DVLA and medical examinations.

De-restriction of hackney numbers would exacerbate Oxford's traffic problems (including congestion and air pollution issues) to no apparent benefit - regular surveys do not indicate any un-met demand.

South Oxfordshire District Council

No restriction on the numbers of licences issued.

Vale of White Horse District Council

No restriction on the numbers of licences issued. System found to be self-regulating over the years.

West Oxfordshire District Council

No restriction on the numbers of licences issued. System found to be self-regulating.