Reimagining transport in the West Midlands:

Local Transport Plan Core Strategy - Summary

Transport for West Midlands

Contents

Introduction

'Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands' is the fifth Local Transport Plan for the West Midlands' seven metropolitan districts/boroughs.

This is the summary of the Core Strategy of the Local Transport Plan - the overarching document that sets out our aims, vision, approach, and a framework for action.

After the publication of our Green Paper for 'Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands' we asked for the views of stakeholders through a *conversation about change*. The engagement used a variety of channels including surveys, market research and online and in-person workshops.

Those we spoke to when we engaged on the Green Paper agreed that we need an emission free transport system that's fairer, safer and healthier. It also needs to be a transport network that gets people to places without clogging up our streets or causing climate change and making pollution worse.

The issues raised around our 5 Motives for Change resonated with those who responded. Climate change and addressing inequality were the areas of most concern.

There was a clear sense from responses that the current approach to transport was not delivering sufficient improvements, or that things were getting worse.

The new plan shows how the transport system will be developed and managed in the region and we've already started talking to people and businesses about it and about how it can meet our future needs.

There are difficult decisions to be made; people know we can't build our way out of all our problems or rely on new technology, like electric cars, to solve them.

92% of respondents were concerned by **climate change**

83% agreed that a key policy aim should be to tackle **inequalities in transport access**

2/3 of people felt that levels of **traffic on local roads** were now a problem.

The majority thought increasing **active travel** is important, but that **dangerous and busy roads** were holding people back.

Whilst the car is still going to be important in future, the majority agreed that **car use needed to reduce.**

The shift to electric vehicles was supported but there was concern that **electric vehicles wouldn't solve the wider issues**

People felt that we can't build our way out of all of our problems – we need to focus on **using existing infrastructure better**

68% of polled respondents to our green paper consultation said **'sticks' are needed** to achieve significant change in travel behaviour.

Feedback from engagement on our Green Paper

Walsall

Wolverhampton

Sandwell

Dudley

Birmingham

Solihull

Coventry

Our aims

Whatever happens it's clear that there needs to be a change in our travel habits and behaviours.

To address the big social, economic and environmental issues we face, the objectives in the new plan are framed around 5 'Motives for Change' where we think that changing transport could help us better support inclusive growth by providing a transport system that's fair to everyone and the environment.

There are three key changes needed in our transport system to make this happen - we need to improve accessibility, reduce traffic and electrify transport. That means using our cars less and accessing what we need in a different way.

Why change?

- Sustaining economic success
- Creating a fairer society
- Supporting local communities and places
- Becoming more active
- Tackling the climate emergency

To achieve this we need to...

- Improve accessibility
- Reduce traffic
- Electrify transport

Meeting commitments to decarbonise

Tackling the climate emergency is just one of our Motives for Change. It is unique because it requires a definitive pace and scale of change.

There are national legal targets to reach "net-zero" carbon emissions by 2050, and local ambitions within our WM2041 agenda to reach net-zero by 2041. But whilst those end dates are important, national targets and local ambitions also require us to hit carbon reduction milestones along the way.

Shifting to zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) like electric and hydrogen powered vehicles is important but not enough to meet these decarbonisation goals. We also need to reduce the amount we are using our vehicles.

By 2031, we think we would need to deliver the following scale of change to meet national obligations or to go above and beyond to deliver local ambitions.

National targets (net-zero by 2050)	Local ambition (net-zero by 2041)
10% reduction in car mileage	**35%** reduction in car mileage
Accelerate ZEV uptake by **1 year**	Accelerate ZEV uptake by **5 years**

The vision

Although private vehicles will still be important in the future, we want the West Midlands to be a place where people can thrive without having to drive or own a car.

We have developed a vision for a well-connected 45 minute region and 15 minute neighbourhoods, where people can travel to access what they need through a mix of walk and wheel, cycle and scoot, and ride modes.

It means that a good range of everyday services in our neighbourhoods can be accessed in a round trip of no more than 15 minutes, and a good range of places across our region to undertake work, leisure and socialising can be accessed within a 45 minute trip.

This system will be supported by shared mobility services. These are services like car and van clubs so you don't have to own an expensive vehicle, or bike and scooter hire schemes to use in places where perhaps you couldn't bring your own bike or scooter – for example when you've caught the bus or train into your town/city centre and need a quicker way to get around once there.

All of this will be connected by interchanges providing convenient and helpful amenities where you can conveniently access a range of transport services. So as well as catching a bus, you might be able to access car and van clubs, hire an e-scooter, charge your electric vehicle or perhaps make use of a parcel drop off and pick up point.

This vision is not meant to be prescriptive. We recognise that everyone travels for different reasons, to different places and using different modes, and places themselves are different. So what works in one neighbourhood might not work in another. But it does give us something to aim for where everyone will have good options and choices to access what they need.
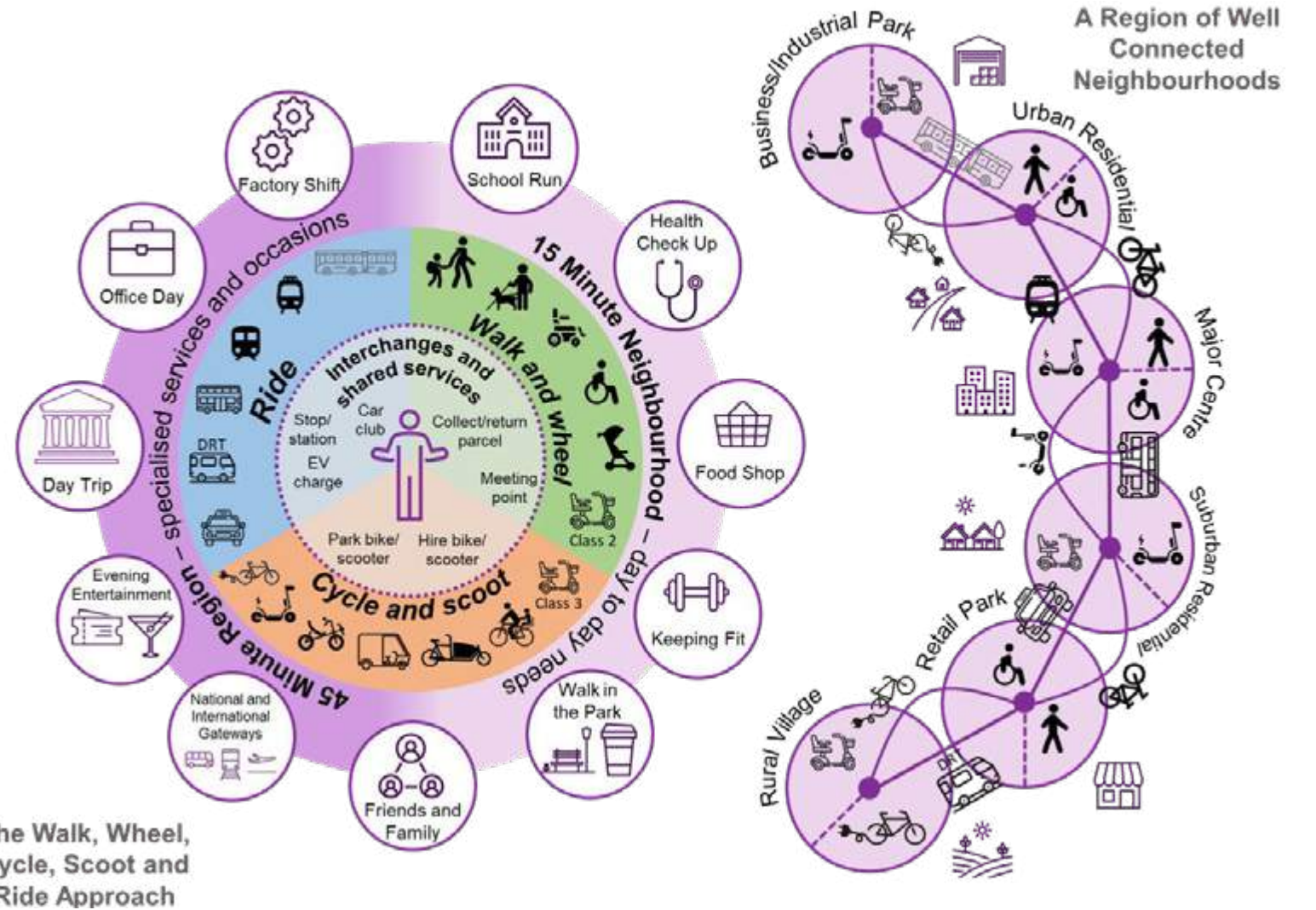
The Walk, Wheel, Cycle, Scoot and Ride Approach

Walk and wheel

Walking and wheeling includes pedestrians, but it also includes people who use mobility aids such as powered/unpowered wheelchairs.

The use of prams and trolleys by those travelling also needs to be considered as well as other aids such as guide dogs, sticks and canes.

Cycle and scoot

Cycling and scooting includes a range of pedal powered, electrically powered, and pedal assisted personal vehicles.

It includes vehicles that can currently legally be used on public highways and cycleways (such as pedal bikes), as well as new devices that Government is trialling and proposing to legislate for (such as escooters).
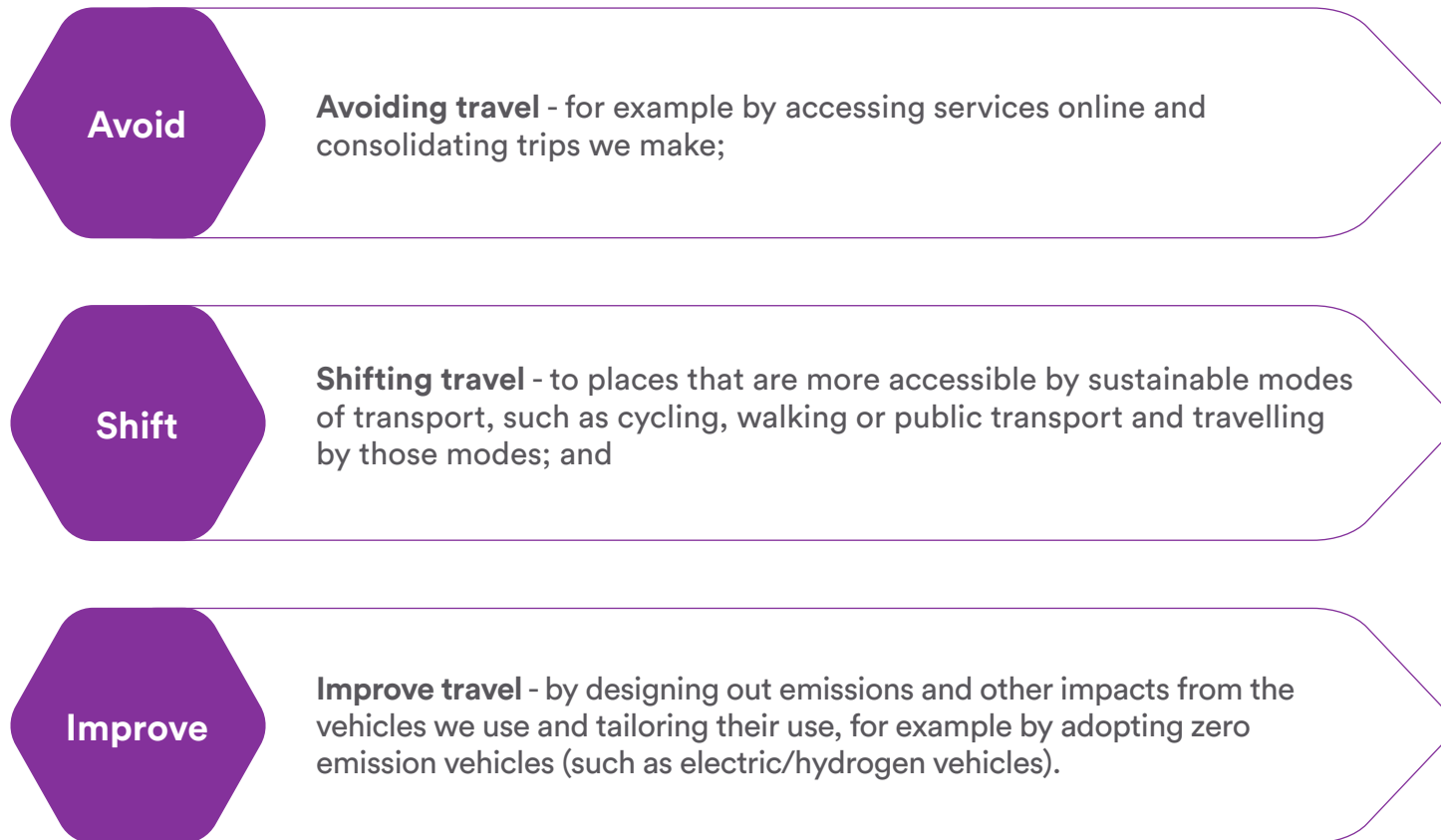
Ride modes

Fixed public transport

Fixed public transport includes public transport services that run to a fixed timetable, routes and stops.

They include services like buses, trains and trams.

On-demand services

On-demand services include a range of services available to the public which can be requested on on-demand and are not constrained by timetables, specific routes and stops.

They include services like taxis, community transport, and Ring and Ride, and liftsharing.

Our actions

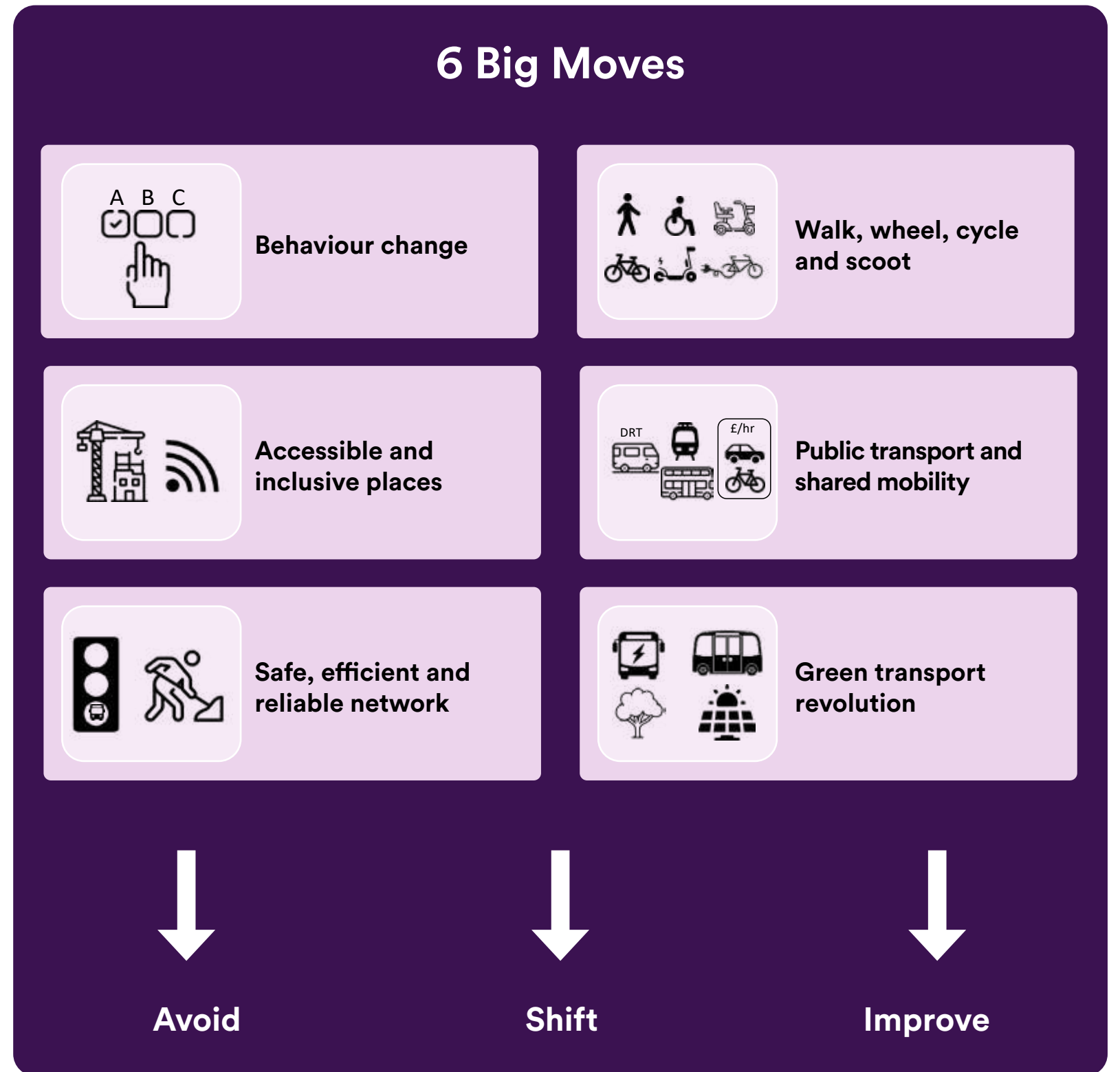To help deliver the changes needed we will focus on action across 6 'Big Moves'.

These Big Moves are a framework for the actions we will take to improve accessibility and encourage **avoid, shift and improve** behavioural changes.

Avoid
: **Avoiding travel** - for example by accessing services online and consolidating trips we make;

Shift
: **Shifting travel** - to places that are more accessible by sustainable modes of transport, such as cycling, walking or public transport and travelling by those modes; and

Improve
: **Improve travel** - by designing out emissions and other impacts from the vehicles we use and tailoring their use, for example by adopting zero emission vehicles (such as electric/hydrogen vehicles).

For our new Local Transport Plan to be effective in reducing car use and improving access by other modes of travel it must include actions to:

- **Invest in better provision** for alternatives to our cars; and

- **Manage demand** by discouraging the behaviours we want to do less of, such as using our cars.

An overview of each of the Big Moves is presented on the following pages. The LTP will include six detailed strategies for the 6 Big Moves setting out challenges, opportunities and principles to consider across the region. Four Area Strategies will then set out how actions across the Big Moves are applied in specific places as appropriate to local views and context.

6 Big Moves

Behaviour change	Walk, wheel, cycle and scoot
Accessible and inclusive places	Public transport and shared mobility
Safe, efficient and reliable network	Green transport revolution

Avoid   **Shift**   **Improve**

Behaviour change

- How the public sector can take a leadership role to change behaviours in the region, and how we will do that with a vision-led approach that focusses on where we want to be not where we predict we'll be.

- How we will focus our work towards policies and decisions which understand the users of our networks, their needs, the barriers they face and how they make choices. This will be inclusive of all users to ensure the West Midlands transport system works for all, not just the majority.

- How we can manage the demand for transport in our region to help us meet the objectives of the LTP Core Strategy.

- How we will engage with the public to help them to understand the problems and issues we're facing, what they can do to help tackle the big challenges and, importantly, how they will be part of the decision making process to reshape our streets.

"The amount of people I know who get in the car to go to shops less than five minutes walk away is ridiculous. People don't think about it it's just a **state of mind**. Leave house…get in car! We have made the **car and roads god**. Walking and cycling are less of an option because it's harder to get places using legs and two wheels."
45 - 64, Sandwell, 1 car in HH, No licence

"I think that changes to our streets and the way we travel is very important for a healthier future. Having more **green spaces, better footpaths, cycle lanes, bus lanes, affordable transport** etc. are all positive things which encourage people to partake in such activities."
25 - 44, Coventry, No cars in HH, Driver

Accessible and inclusive places

- How we will define and measure accessibility for future decision making. We need to move away from previous definitions which simply looked at journey times to access jobs and services, and instead recognise that people's accessibility is more complex than that. Our new way of thinking about accessibility for our residents and businesses will be crucial to our future decision making.

- How we need to think differently about our plans for changes in land use across the region, for both new developments and how our urban and rural areas evolve over time.

- How we need to incorporate digital connectivity into all of our thinking. As technology evolves it has a greater and greater potential to reduce our need to travel and is a vital tool to help us meet traffic reduction targets.

"By staying local we could get around by active travel and wouldn't miss our cars. Active travel has environmental and health benefits and we can go at our own pace. Also **staying local helps the local economy and the increased use of local amenities will generate increased revenue which can be used to improve local services**."
Female, 60+, Dudley.

"It makes things more accessible without a car. Currently it feels like the world is built for those who drive and the assumption is always that you will / do drive. I'd like everyone being on a level playing field, the bettering of public transport links and the cleaner air from less pollution."
Female, 25 34, Sandwell

Walk, wheel, cycle and scoot

- How important leadership will be in making bold decisions to create the best possible walk, wheel, cycle and scoot facilities for our residents and visitors.

- How we will plan and deliver infrastructure and networks which are compliant with the government's highest design standards (LTN1/20).

- How we can support more people to get access to vehicles (e.g. powered scooters/ hire bikes etc) to give them real choice for their journeys, and how we can integrate these with the wider public transport network.

- How we can raise the awareness, skills and knowledge of the options and opportunities available to people to help them travel confidently and safely.

How would less cars on the road make it easier/ better to travel by alternatives?

26% say that cycling would be more safer/ accessible

"I think it would encourage people to cycle more especially. I am aware of several people who would like to become cyclists but are currently too fearful to give it ago and the volume of traffic around makes them feel unsafe to try."
Female, 60+, Dudley

However, **concerns around safety and cost** are holding back around one third, particularly from using a cycle or scooter.

26% say that cycling would be more safer/ accessible

"Please consider those with accessibility needs, create an inclusive environment for all."
Female, 16 24, Birmingham

Public transport and shared mobility

- How we will plan for and create a truly integrated transport system, not just between different public transport modes but also across all methods of travel. This is about providing real choice to people as to how they can make any journey.

- How we will support access to shared services that allow people to access vehicles (including bikes, scooters, cars or vans) to drive without having to own one. This is useful to citizens of the West Midlands when they might not be able to own a vehicle, they might need to access a vehicle away from home, or they might need a specialist vehicle to meet a less frequent need.

- How, as part of the integrated system, we will plan for and deliver well designed and safe interchanges which provide connections between services and are gateways to/ from places

- How we will manage the overall system and make it as simple and easy as possible to use. This includes common branding, ticketing, information and promotion, supported by smart technology; with accessible design deployed throughout all elements of the system.

"An extremely efficient public transport system, with buses or trams that cover all areas of the West Midlands, with people having to walk no more than 2 minutes to reach a bus stop regardless of where they live, and buses or trams arriving every 5 minutes. As part of this system would be a regular service for collecting and dropping off elderly and infirm like a ring and ride, but with more vehicles on the road."
25 - 44, Dudley, 1 car in HH, No licence

"Shared transportation is better for the environment. But, it has to be attractive enough to tempt motorists out of their cars and use public transport. Public transport and any shared transport reduces the number of cars on the roads, which in turn reduces congestion and pollution. Reduced vehicles on roads also results in fewer accidents"
45 - 64, Birmingham, No cars in HH, Driver

Safe, efficient and reliable network

- How we will think about planning, developing and making investment decisions to improve the network for current and future generations.

- How we will effectively manage the performance of the highway network to make sure it is reliable and safe and provides good access to opportunities for all road users.

- How we will maintain the existing highway network to a high standard for everyone who uses it.

"A healthier life expectancy is more beneficial however sometimes it's hard to remember that when you're running late or you're tired and it is just easier to hop in the car. **I think if we knew that the public transport were more reliable and less crowded I believe more people would be inclined to use it more**."
25 44, Birmingham, 2 cars in HH, Driver

"**Good connectivity, ample car parking** at bus/coach stations, airports and railway stations. **Regular and reliable bus transport . Trains that run on time** and aren't cancelled all the time. Cost of transport should be **affordable as well**, maybe cross subsidised by heavy fines for those that don't pay when they use public transport."
25 - 44, Birmingham, 2 cars in HH, Driver

"The local community **should use public transport more and use the car less**, so we have less air pollution. **The planet as a whole should contribute to the green environment**."
16 - 24, Birmingham, One car in HH, Driver

"I would like to see everyone have a long term benefit to an active lifestyle which means I will have a longer life expectancy, and I would also like people to be surrounded by **environmentally friendly modes of transport** which don't deteriorate their health."
16 - 24, Dudley, 2 cars in HH, No licence

Green transport revolution

- Supporting the transition to a zero emission vehicle fleet in the West Midlands to radically reduce transport emissions. This requires the right recharging and refuelling network to support an accelerated shift away from internal combustion engines; and requires investment to support rapid transition of the public transport and shared transport fleet to zero emission vehicles.

- How we will ensure that all decisions we make will consider the impacts on and seek to improve the quality of built and natural environments.

- How we will embed innovation into our way of working through partnerships, both within the public sector and with the private sector. We are seeking to maximise the opportunities of the assets we hold, the expertise in our teams and the data we collect.

"Our **local high street is one of the most polluted in the midlands**, both our kids have been in and out of hospital with breathing conditions exacerbated by pollution. **Reduce the amount of standing traffic. Pedestrianise the high street!**"
45 - 64, Sandwell, One car in HH, Non licence holder

"It is very important to reduce or carbon emissions. Not only is it healthier for ourselves, but is good for the environment. Polluting our planet is not something that we should continue to do as the knock on effect will be effect for years to come"
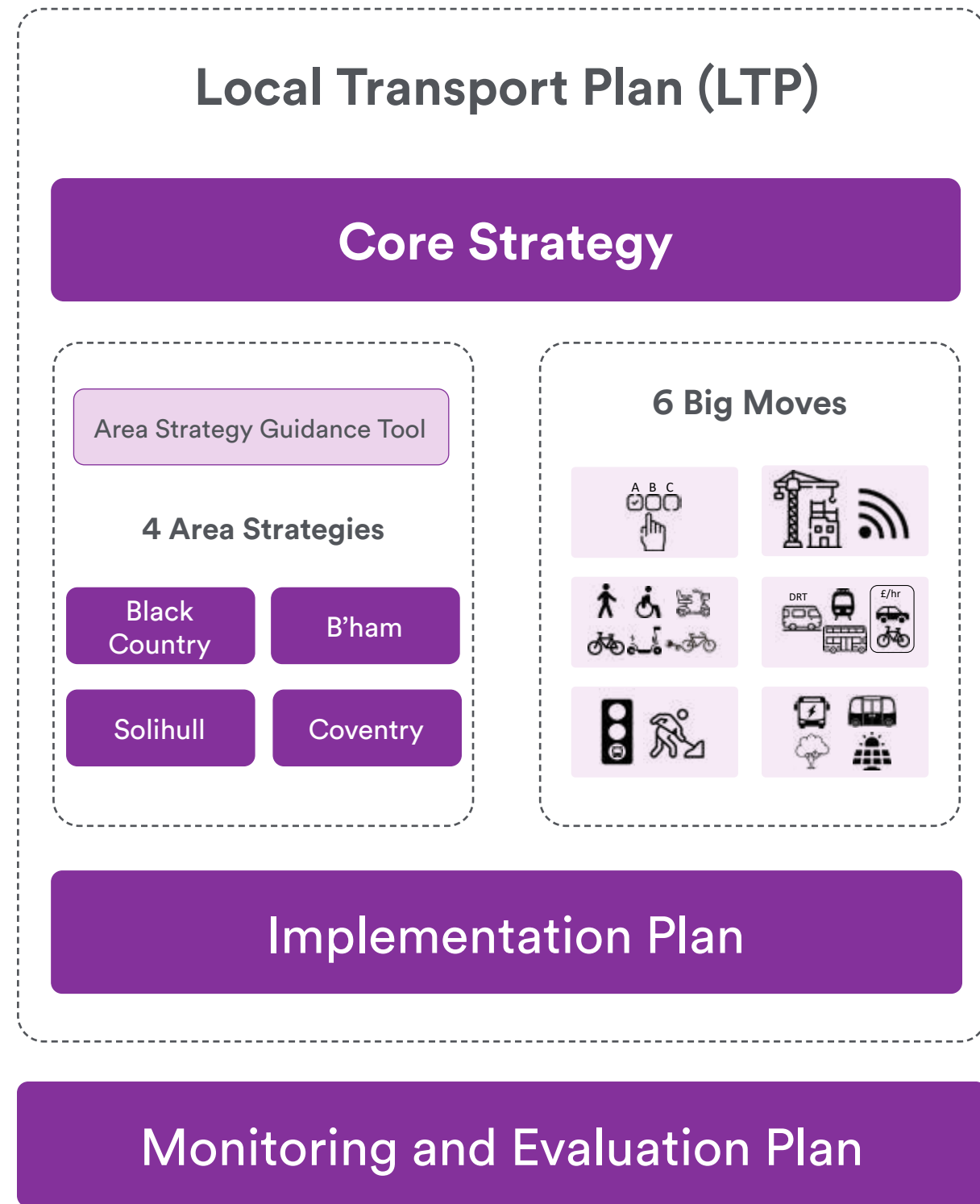25 - 44, Birmingham, 2 cars in Household ,Driver

"Car ownership has risen overtime and will continue to do so, but the **cars we use will gradually change to more environmentally friendly models such as electric cars**, but this will take time similar to the switch from leaded to unleaded petrol."
65+, Dudley, 1 car in HH, Driver

Implementing our new Local Transport Plan

Integrated Sustainability Assessment

Local Transport Plan (LTP)

Core Strategy

Area Strategy Guidance Tool

4 Area Strategies

- Black Country
- B'ham
- Solihull
- Coventry

6 Big Moves

Implementation Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Other Strategies and programmes as required by Government (examples below)

Bus Service Improvement Plan

Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan

Zero Emission Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement

The LTP will inform the approach and priorities under other strategies and programmes. And the resultant implementation proposals from these strategies and programmes will form part of the LTP implementation plan.

This LTP proposes a wide programme of improvements to provide better alternatives to the private car.

We have recently approved a £1.05bn funding programme to improve the transport system. This City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement will allow us to continue to invest in better public transport, opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling and help to make our roads safer and places greener and cleaner.

It does this by investing in measures that support better access to what people need via these alternatives. But alongside this investment there will also be a need to manage demand by discouraging the behaviours we want people to do less with the possible use of physical measures like bus lanes, which remove the amount of road space available to cars and other vehicles.

As we develop and implement our plan we will foster and encourage collaboration to solve the problems in places that face similar challenges. We will use new ways of engaging and communicating to help people understand the changes required and how they can benefit them.

We will develop these strategies in partnership with local authorities, ensuring that the identification of the measures needed will be problem led rather than solution led to help us create a more prosperous and better connected West Midlands which is fairer, greener and healthier.

Policy Summary

Aims

Policy - Aims - LTP Objectives

Our objectives for this LTP are framed around 5 Motives for Change. These are five areas where changing transport could help us better support Inclusive Growth by improving the impacts of transport on people, and the places and environment on which they depend.

Policy - Aims - Reimagining Transport

Reimagining transport in the West Midlands to better support inclusive growth means we need to reduce the harmful impacts of transport on people, places and the environment, while ensuring we improve access equitably.

In determining how our LTP measures affect accessibility, we will seek to understand this by considering how accessibility is affected by the transport system, the way land is used and telecommunications.

The way we assess accessibility will not just account for the availability and qualities of infrastructure, it will also account for the capabilities and concerns of different people.

Aside from travelling less and increasing the segregation between people and traffic, there are two universal ways to reduce the impacts of vehicles and traffic:

- Use vehicles with higher occupancy ; and/or
- Use more energy efficient vehicles (by reducing power, weight, and/or speed).

This provides us with a basic framework for our LTP of mobility options that can help us enhance our physical mobility to provide better access to opportunities whilst reducing the negative impacts of travel.

Policy - Aims - Primary Transport Outcomes

There are three primary changes to the transport system that will help us understand whether we have struck the right balance between providing access and managing the impacts of transport that is needed to address our Motives for Change.

These are:

- Improving accessibility we will improve the range of opportunities that people can access without a car.
- Reducing traffic we will reduce the total number of vehicle kilometres travelled per year by motor vehicles (cars and all heavier vehicles); and
- Electrifying transport we will reduce the number of vehicles powered by internal combustion engines (e.g. petrol and diesel fuelled vehicles).

Policy - Aims - Behaviour Change

The behaviour changes that are needed to make progress against our Motives for Change are described by the "avoid, shift, improve" framework. Our actions will be designed to result in behaviour change across this framework.

Policy - Aims - Scale and Pace of Change

We have translated the need for urgency into the scale of change of behaviours that will need to be delivered in the next 10 years both to meet Government's commitments and our local WM2041 commitments. We will assess our progress against this scale of change as we deliver the LTP.

Policy - Aims - Citizen Focussed Mobility

Achieving a good customer experience will be integral to the success of the proposed measures we wish to introduce as part of this LTP. This will help to influence consumer choice and make sustainable transport choices an obvious and viable option for travel, and it will also help us improve accessibility for all.

In order to best understand our citizens needs, we will also need to put them at the heart of our conversations on how to change transport through engagement and co development.

Vision

"Using the big ideas of the people and businesses of the West Midlands, we will show the world how we reimagined and decarbonised our transport system."

"Our choices will create safe, reliable and affordable connections for everyone that are healthy, sustainable and efficient. This will create great places where generations will thrive."

Policy - Vision - The vision for travel

Whilst we expect private motor vehicles to play an important role in our future transport system, we still envision a system where everyone can thrive without a driving licence and the need to own an expensive vehicle a system that better caters for the 1 in 4 households in the West Midlands who do not have access to a car.

We have conceptualised what this could look like with our vision for 15 minute neighbourhoods within a 45 minute region. The vision is based on a combination of walking and wheeling, cycling and scooting , and riding travel options that require neither an expensive private vehicle or a full driving licence.

It means that a good range of everyday services in our neighbourhoods can be accessed in a round trip of no more than 15 minutes, and a good range of places across our region to undertake work, leisure and socialising can be accessed within a 45 minute trip.

These modes will be supported by shared services, granting to access to vehicles without having to own one, and interchanges that bring transport services together to create places with greater amenity.

Policy Summary

Approach

Policy - Approach - Making an Impact

To achieve our aims and the vision to change behaviours without compromising what people can access simultaneous measures would be required to:

- Enable people to travel by better alternatives by investing in measures that support better access to what people need via these alternatives; and
- Manage demand by discouraging the behaviours we want to do less of using physical measures (such as allocating less space to particular vehicles), and regulatory measures (such as increasing the price of travel by particular means, restricting access to particular roads or limiting speeds).

We will take this into account when assessing the case for and impact of proposals.

Policy - Approach - Just Transition

We won't allow fear of change and the challenges of transitioning to paralyse us, but we will ensure a just transition by:

- Distributing the burden of change so those who face lesser barriers and who's behaviours have the greatest inequitable impacts make bigger changes;
- Targeting support towards those facing the greatest barriers with least capacity to overcome them themselves to help them adapt as we transition;
- Setting a pace of change that gives us the momentum we need but at a pace that enables people to adapt; and
- Adopting an innovative spirit to find new ways of accessing what we need that might better help particular groups and places overcome their barriers.

Policy - Approach - Empowering communities

We will promote measures to manage demand through the deployment of this LTP alongside and as part of wider measures. Commitment to deliver such measures has to be conditional on public support.

This requires us to engage with the public to help them make informed choices over how the transport system is governed.

Policy - Approach - A Dynamic Plan

- Our LTP will be dynamic allowing us to make different choices over time and in different places according to:
- Local public appetite to manage demand
- National transport policies and guidance
- Monitoring and evaluation of local transport policy delivery and impacts; and
- Monitoring of external drivers of travel behaviours.

Policy - Approach - Planning for Uncertainty

We will adopt an approach to developing and implementing the LTP that accounts for key uncertainties through approaches such as scenario planning.

In particular, we will use our "within local control" and "bold" scenarios to identify and prioritise resilient implementation proposals, and to work with partners across the region and beyond to raise the appetite for action needed to deliver our LTP aims at a more transformational level.

Scenario planning will help us dynamically manage LTP delivery.

Policy - Approach - Early opportunities

Rapid change is possible, and because of these factors it would likely need early actions that enable and encourage people to:

- Change the way that we use existing infrastructure, by making widespread small scale changes to physical infrastructure supported by local highway regulations.
- Change how we use the buildings in our existing built environment so that people have better local provision of opportunities.
- Make best use of digital connectivity to access what we need without the negative impacts of transport.
- Use personal vehicles which have fewer impacts than cars (e.g. micromobility).
- Use road based public transport such as buses and demand responsive transport.

These would be in addition to other actions that are focussed on longer term change.

Policy - Approach - Area strategies

Working in partnership with our local authorities we will produce Area Strategies for the Black Country, Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry to apply the policy principles and interventions of the Core Strategy with a more detailed understanding of places.

We will enable different plans to be drawn up for different places but we will foster and encourage collaboration to solve the problems in places that face similar challenges.

We will develop these strategies with local authorities, ensuring that the identification of the measures needed will be outcome focussed and problem led rather than solution led. We will produce guidance accompanying this LTP to enable this.

Implementation

Policy - Approach - Sustainable planning and delivery

We will work closely with statutory and wider stakeholders to understand issues relating to key assets for sustainability and develop strategies to enhance and protect these through options to be considered and decisions to be made at all stages of LTP development and implementation (including scheme development and asset operation).

Policy - Approach - Prioritising resource

Where there is flexibility over how resources can be used, resourcing of transport locally will be prioritised based on the following principles:

- We will prioritise critical functions to ensure services for our most vulnerable service users are protected and to ensure our core assets continue to function;
- We will maintain a balanced programme of measures delivering actions across the 6 Big Moves to ensure impacts are felt across our Motives for Change;
- We will seek to ensure as many benefit from our actions as possible by ensuring delivery is felt across our region;
- We will seek to make investments that provide good value for money;
- We will have a balanced programme of short and long term activity; of measures that can be delivered quickly for immediate impacts, and investments that will take longer to develop and deliver; and
- We will minimise redundant work, seeking to "dig once" where possible and otherwise ensuring schemes include future planning to minimise disruption and costs when further schemes are progressed (for example where bus priority schemes may be upgraded to Sprint and/or West Midlands Metro in future).
- We will coordinate schemes either to avoid excessive disruption to our networks or to capitalise on opportunities to reduce costs where multiple schemes can be delivered simultaneously nearby (without excessive disruption)

We will continue to lobby for greater devolution of funding that gives us greater flexibility and long term certainty to enable us to invest in our own priorities for meeting the needs of the West Midlands.

Transport for
West Midlands