

# North Somerset Council

## 20mph Action Plan

### Active Travel Action Plans 2023-30

One of our seven Active Travel Action Plans (ATAPs) for 2023-30 to help deliver our Active Travel Strategy's vision, to:

**'Make walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset'**

**Plan statement:** This **20mph Action Plan** sets out North Somerset Council's more consistent, transparent and targeted approach to rolling out 20mphs in the appropriate locations where they are most needed and wanted.



## What is Active Travel?

Active Travel refers to the movement of people or goods by using the physical activity of a person for movement. During this Active Travel Action Plan, active travel refers to the most popular forms walking/wheeling and cycling most commonly, but also includes (and is not limited to) important options such as running and scooting.

## What is 20mph?

20mph limits and zones are roads where we reduce the speed limit to 20mph. By reducing speeds these schemes provide benefits for the communities through creating a safer environment to walk, wheel and cycle, as well as creating a more pleasant and healthier environment.

## Equalities impact assessment

North Somerset Council (NSC) welcomes its Equality Act 2010 responsibilities and is committed to meeting them. Our activities are consistent with the council's Corporate Plan vision of an Open, Fair and Green authority and our **Equalities Policy**.

Our Place and Movement Framework and Active Travel Action Plans are consistent with central government Levelling Up priorities by building capability to deliver an inclusive active travel network. All the plans included are about bettering travel choice for all our local residents and include provisions, such as more level pedestrian crossings, tactile paving and removing barriers to travel, particularly for the elderly, disabled, those with mobility issues or people who are visually impaired.

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# 1. Policy context

## Active Travel as a local priority

The **North Somerset Corporate Plan (2020-24)** aims to create an Open, Fair and Green North Somerset with the council being a local leader and the area's largest employer. For transport specifically, the West of England **Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4)**, adopted by North Somerset Council and its West of England neighbouring authorities in March 2020, sets out to:

- take action against climate change and address poor air quality
- support sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- enable equality and improve accessibility
- contribute to better health, wellbeing, safety and security
- create better places.

To help make this a reality, the **North Somerset Active Travel Strategy** (adopted in July 2021) sets the policy background to accelerate North Somerset Council's efforts over the next ten years to 'make walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset'.

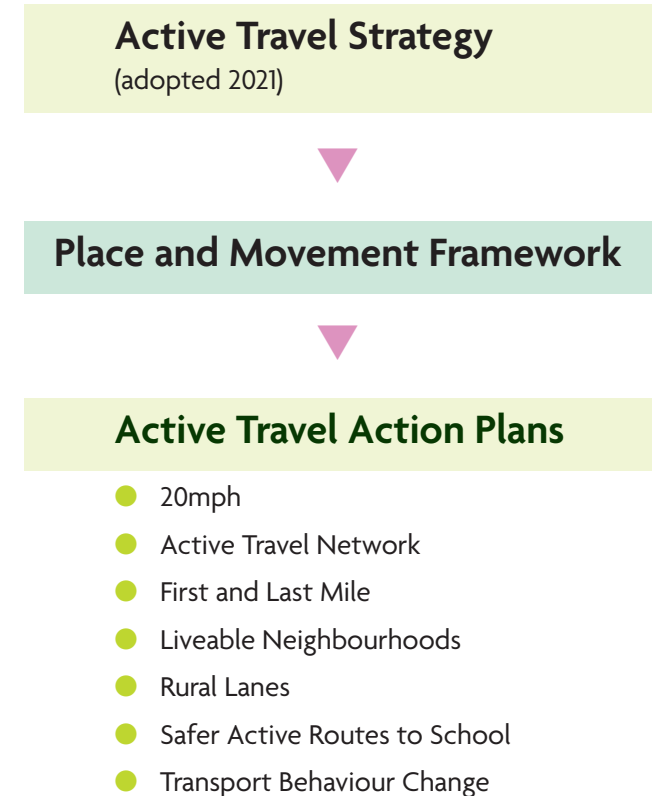
The strategy aims to achieve a number of benefits locally including:

- Safe and frequent active travel to improve public health.
- Reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.
- Support the local economy.
- Help grow more 'liveable neighbourhoods' with our communities.

The Strategy's key target is to increase walking and cycling trips by 300% by 2030.

On adopting the Strategy, North Somerset Council's Executive Committee set out that a **series of action plans would be developed and adopted** to help us make our Active Travel Strategy commitments and interventions a reality, as shown in the following diagram.

**Figure 1:** The North Somerset Council active travel policy framework.



The seven Active Travel Action Plans show the areas of focus for our active travel interventions, to help the council and North Somerset residents, businesses and visitors to choose active travel as the natural choice for the shorter and medium length journeys, and as the first and last mile of longer journeys.

This is part of the council's response to the Climate Emergency, the cost of living crisis and the health emergency by enhancing our transport network for cleaner, cheaper and healthier transport choices.

As shown in the table above, 20mph limits are one of the key interventions that we can make with our communities to improve perceived and actual road safety and enable more people to walk, wheel and cycle in our local areas.

**Plan statement:** This **20mph Action Plan** sets out North Somerset Council's more consistent, transparent and targeted approach to rolling out 20mphs in the appropriate locations where they are most needed and wanted.

## National refocus on Active Travel

Since the launch of central government's **Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking** in July 2020, we have seen an increase in priority of active travel within the national transport agenda. With new strategies, funding opportunities and even a new national agency, active travel is quickly becoming a serious priority for national government's transport agenda and a material requirement for local authorities across the country:

- The Department for Transport's **Decarbonising Transport** plan to 2050, with the top Strategic Priority being 'Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport' so that they 'will be the natural first choice for our daily activities'.
- **Gear Change** and **Local Transport Note (LTN 1/20)**.
- **Active Travel England** are the new government agency with responsibility for assessing and allocating all active travel funding bids for national funding, but also have statutory planning consultee and other support functions, as well as hosting regular local authority self-assessments, to measure authorities' ability to plan and deliver active travel networks.
- **Local Authority Toolkits** – supporting local authorities to promote active travel in their areas.

- **A Moment of Change** – guidance for local authorities to promote an active return to work (following the pandemic and associated lockdowns/homeworking).
- CWIS2 – national government's second **Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy**.
- **Active Travel Funds 2 and 3** – dedicated funding for active travel enhancement schemes.
- Capability & Ambition Fund – national government revenue funding for local authorities to build their 'capability' to plan and deliver active travel networks.
- Local Transport Plan (LTP) guidance is being updated (due to be announced early 2023) and future funding likely to be tied to a decarbonising approach to transport planning and delivery.
- The Department for Transport's **Setting Local Speed Limits** provides evidence-based guidance for Traffic Authorities on limits lower than national speed limit.



## 2. Policy approach

### Understanding 20mph

Reducing speeds to 20mph on appropriate sections of our road network can bring a series of benefits for our communities. Introducing a 20mph speed limit has the principle aim of reducing the speeds of vehicles on our roads.

By reducing speeds to 20mph we are seeking to achieve a number of improvements. Principally, the reduction in speeds seeks to achieve improvements in road safety. Particular benefits of the introduction of 20mph can be realised in enabling active travel through the creation of safe environments for people to walk and cycle within our communities. National research has noted that in some areas the introduction of 20mph can encourage 16% of residents to walk more and 9% to cycle more to local places, Reference: **20mph Research – Purpose, Methodology, and Early Findings.**

In addition to the road safety benefits and the role in enabling active travel choices, reducing speeds to 20mph also has the potential to affect vehicle emissions, air quality and reduce noise levels as a result of reduced average speeds, smoother driving speeds, small scale driving displacement and mode shift.

The following section of the action plan sets out North Somerset Council’s approach to developing 20mph schemes which are fit for purpose, consistent

and provide safety for the people using or crossing roads in our communities.

### Our principles for 20mph proposals

North Somerset Council will align our all 20mph proposals to Department for Transport (DfT) Speed Limit **Guidance**. Below highlights the factors important in delivering a successful 20mph in accordance with the DfT guidance and to maximise the benefits for the communities within which they are introduced.

**Guiding principle:** To ensure that we achieve compliance with 20mph, North Somerset Council will only introduce 20mph where:

- We have an existing 30mph speed limit.
- Active development frontages are apparent on both sides of the carriageway.

More specifically, 20mph limits can be:

- on roads where mean speeds are seen to be 24mph or less. These locations will only require the provision of signage and surface roundels.
- considered where speeds are between 25-30mph. These locations will require traffic calming measures, either horizontal (for example chicanes) or vertical (for example speed cushions).

In alignment with the North Somerset Council policy for a 20mph, we will pursue areas which include a wider selection of roads, beyond the previous approach of targeting single roads, for example outside of schools. Using the emerging Place and Movement Framework as a guiding lens for targeting the most appropriate transport improvements in the corresponding types of roads. 20mph limits or zones will therefore be concentrated around Urban Hubs and other amenities in Urban settlements, such as:

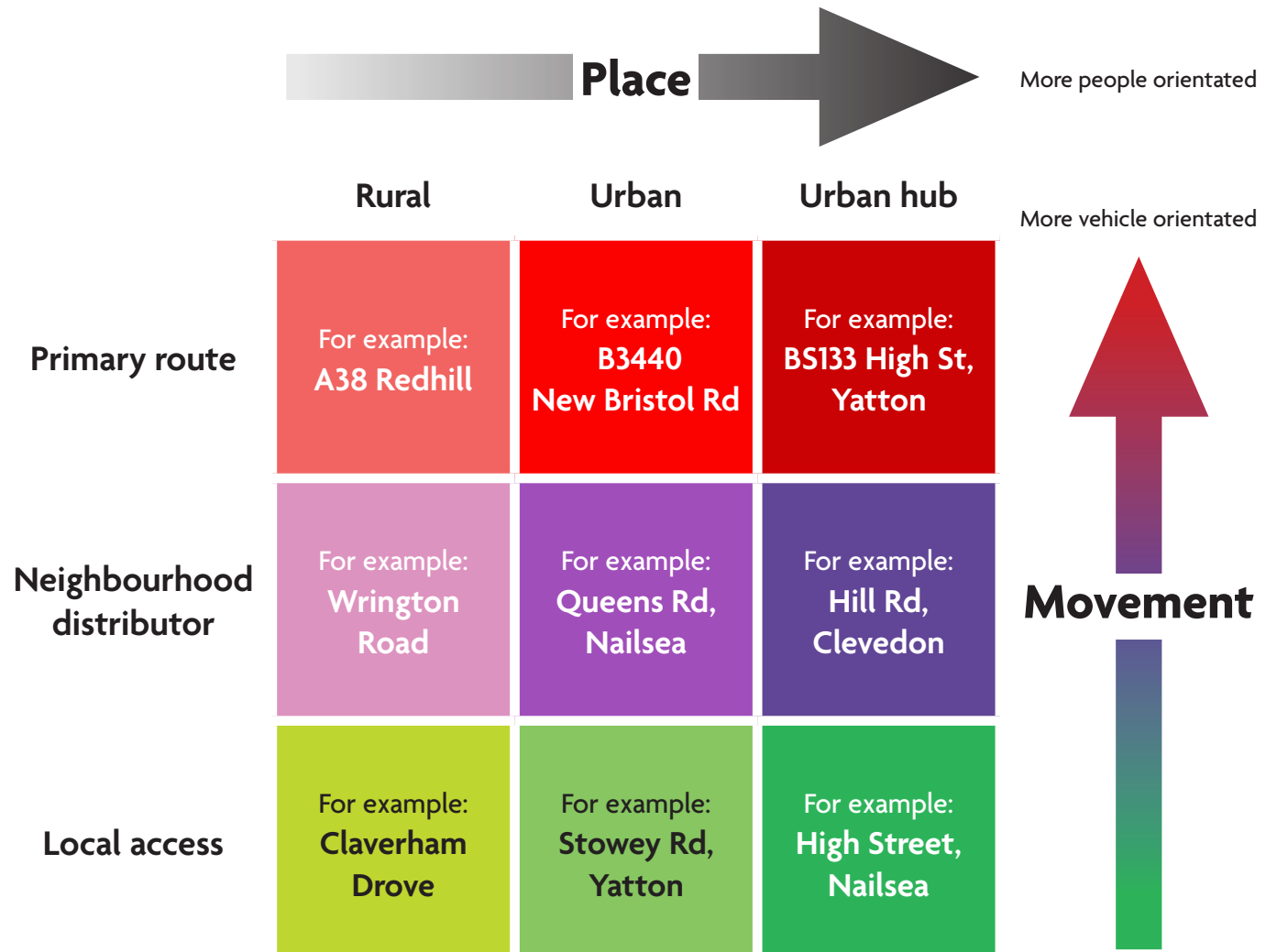
- Schools.
- Shops.
- Markets.
- Playgrounds.
- Places of worship.
- Village Halls.
- Pubs.
- Public Rights of Way.

## Place and Movement Framework

The emerging North Somerset Place and Movement Framework (see Figure 2) will set the guiding principles for our Place and Movement needs and provide a background for the Active Travel Action Plans to help us make our Active Travel Strategy commitments and interventions a reality. It will:

- Set out the rationale for use and purpose of our transport network;
- Provide an Audit process to evaluate road space availability, user needs and priority functions to facilitate early-stage scheme feasibility and evaluation;
- Provide design codes to shape new and improved active travel infrastructure both for our existing transport network and for all new developments;
- Enable the development of Coherent; Direct; Safe; Comfortable and Attractive routes for active travel journeys for people of all ages and abilities;
- Give us the strategy and tools to facilitate mode shift from private cars to active travel and public transport.
- Enable us to enhance the character of our Places and to improve Movement on our network, especially for the most vulnerable users, on the most appropriate routes.

**Figure 2:** Place and Movement Framework classifications for every road, street, lane in North Somerset (with examples). This includes three ‘Place’ categories (Urban Hub, Urban and Rural) and three ‘Movement’ categories (‘Primary Route’, ‘Neighbourhood Distributor’ and ‘Local Access’)



Having regard to the Place and Movement Framework, the road classes below and shown on the map represent the types of route where 20mph could be considered as part of a broader toolkit of measures. This does not mean that 20mph would be introduced on all those routes.

- Urban hub – Local access
- Urban hub – Neighbourhood distributor
- Urban hub – Primary route
- Urban – Local access
- Urban – Neighbourhood distributor

Figure 3 (on Page 8) emphasises the particular importance of facilitating safe active travel within our largest urban areas with each of these potentially walkable within 30 minutes. Cycling reduces this time to a maximum of just 15 minutes.

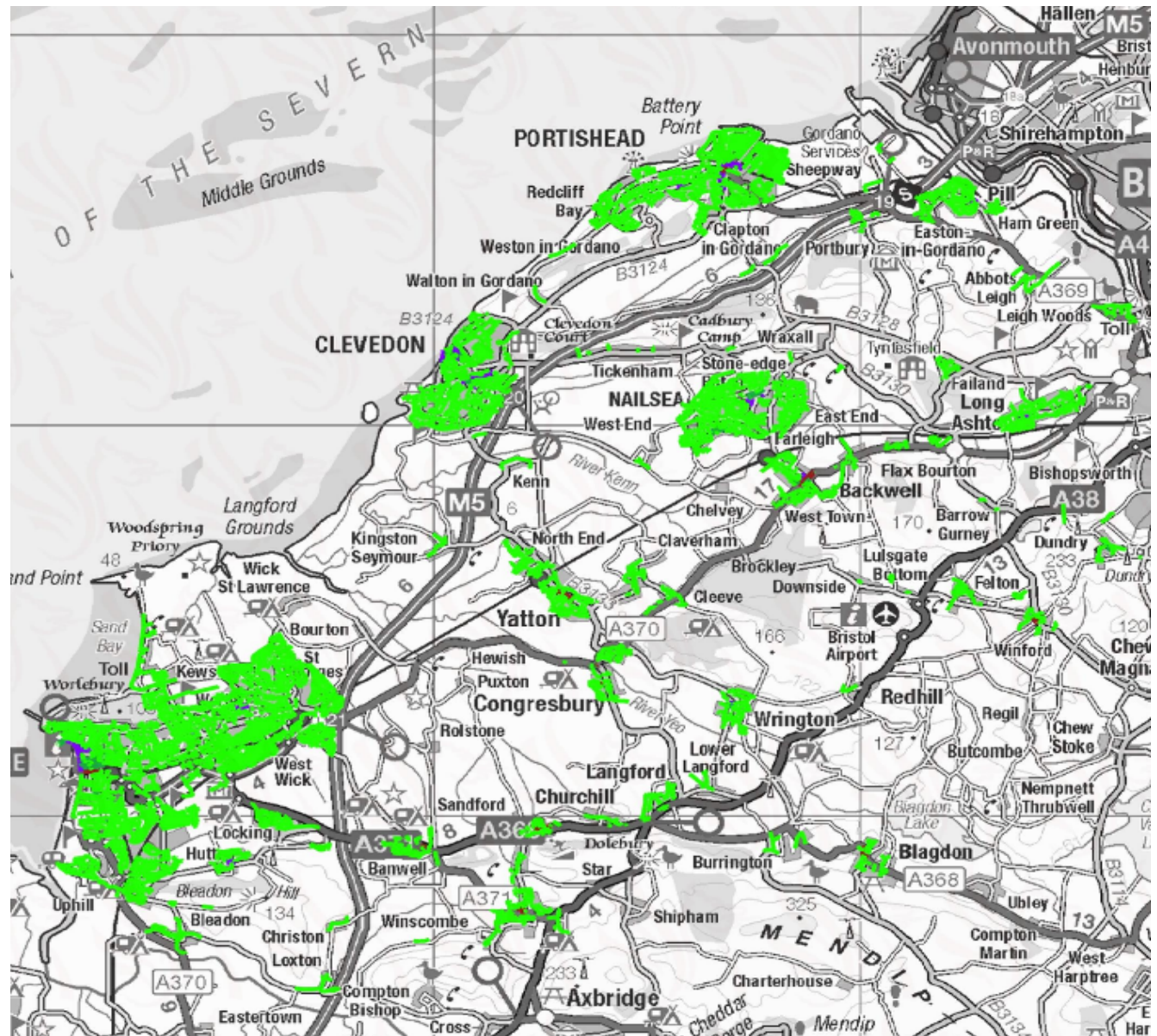
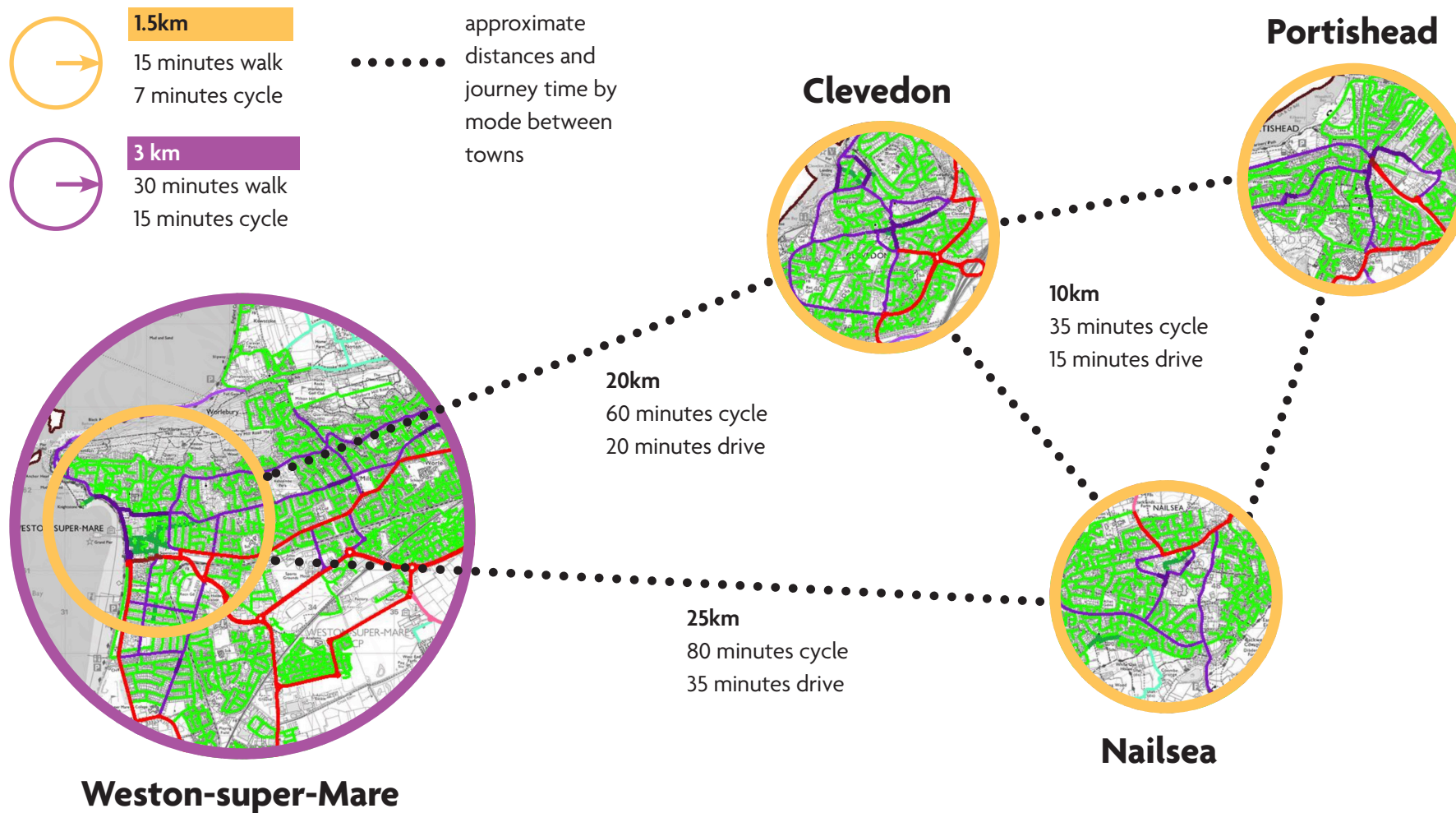




Figure 3: Most of North Somerset's four main town centres are within a 15-minute or 20-minute cycle from anywhere else within the town





## Developing 20mph proposals

20mph may be proposed by any of the following routes:

- Town or parish council may request a standalone 20mph.
- North Somerset Council may propose a 20mph as part of a wider set of improvements in a community.
- North Somerset Council may propose an area wide 20mph which is viewed as being of strategic importance to our active travel network.

Liveable Neighbourhood schemes are an example of how the inclusion of a 20mph element may present the opportunity to further enhance the benefits of a wider scheme, either in the defined Liveable Neighbourhood or in the area directly adjacent. 20mph in this context can help to make a more pleasant built environment as well as further improving the road safety for all users. Similarly, North Somerset's efforts to improve bus services can benefit from 20mph limits or zones being introduced in the immediate locality of bus interchanges to improve the first and last mile experience for bus users. As such, the prioritisation of schemes will also consider linkages to liveable neighbourhoods and public transport interchanges.

20mph also links to North Somerset Council's work to identify appropriate measures for roads around schools. During scheme prioritisation we will identify the linkages between 20mph and creating safer routes to school. We will continue to work closely with schools to ensure that as we design proposals these are fit for purpose and create real improvements for younger people within our communities. For example, in some situations it may be appropriate to include additional crossing points, whilst in other locations where a school is located on a primary distributor a 20mph may not be suitable, assuming high quality active travel infrastructure provision is in place.

## Examples of 20mph in North Somerset

Uphill is a strong example of a scheme which saw great engagement with the community prior to implementation. Along with a physical engagement event, a virtual information event was also hosted, allowing for wider reach including those who were unable to travel to the physical event.



Uphill (Urban, Local Access)

Hill Road is an example of a scheme where 20mph was added to the scheme to maximise the benefits of the changes to the build environment. Together the wider scheme and 20mph deliver a more pleasant environment for residents, shoppers and the wider community, particularly our more vulnerable road users.



## Funding 20mph schemes

Town or parish councils will be expected to fund any scheme proposals themselves, particularly for those requiring signing and lining only. Where additional funding is required, North Somerset will prioritise spend for schemes based on the outcomes of a scheme request's performance through the emerging Scheme development process (see Section 3), including its alignment to the council's adopted policies and strategic ambitions.

North Somerset Council will also look for opportunities to coordinate internally to ensure that we align any works with our ongoing maintenance schedules in order to minimise disruption in our communities and maximise our efficiency.

## Engaging with our communities

It is important that the schemes that we deliver are led by the communities that will interact with them on a daily basis. As such, all 20mph schemes must include engagement as outlined below:

- A minimum initial public engagement period of four weeks.
- A minimum of two weeks' notice of any physical or virtual event.
- Letter drops, posters and press releases
- An e-consult which will be open for the four-week duration.
- A further statutory process will be undertaken following the initial engagement to provide a further opportunity for consultation.

## Links to our other plans, schemes and activities

20mph schemes will be planned with a joined-up approach to other complementary schemes.

Here we set out how this 20mph Action Plan and our resulting 20mph schemes will relate to and work with the six other Active Travel Action Plans (ATAPs), as well as other NSC plans, strategies, schemes and activities (including those of external stakeholders too).

## Active Travel Action Plans

Other plan/activity	How this Action Plan will interlink/work alongside
Active Travel Network Action Plan	20mph can help support sections of the Active Travel Network by creating wider safe environments for active travel and by connecting sections routes where other infrastructure is not possible.
First and Last Mile Action Plan	Opportunity to enhance lower speeds and road safety around or on routes to any mobility hubs, bus stops and larger public transport interchanges.
Liveable Neighbourhoods Action Plan	Further enhance the benefits of Liveable neighbourhoods by reducing speeds to create more pleasant environments for residents.
Rural Lanes Action Plan	Rural Lanes entering an urban hub which meets the 20mph criteria may be considered for a reduced speed limit to 20mph beyond that of the recommended 40mph for wider rural lanes.
Safer Active Routes to School Action Plan/school engagement generally	We will work with local schools when developing proposals to ensure that we consider the needs of young people in our communities.
Transport Behaviour Change Action Plan	Interacting with and involving communities at an early stage helps establish the desired behaviour changes early. Having residents contribute meaningfully makes them more likely to support the changes.

## Other plans

Other plan/activity	How this Action Plan will interlink/work alongside
Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)	We will consider whether 20mph can support BSIP proposals to create a better experience for bus users; either at or on their way to/from bus stops and interchanges.
NSC Integrated Transport Programme	Only the highest scoring scheme proposals will make it onto our three-year Integrated Transport Delivery Programme (see section 3. Scheme Proposals and Delivery Plan for more on the Scheme development process).
NSC Joint Physical Activity Strategy (JPAS)	The emerging NSC JPAS will include a range of barriers to people taking up active travel as a daily or regular transport choice or activity. One of these will be traffic speeds, so we will work with the Public Health team to help ensure the JPAS and this Action Plan are consistent with and support each other on removing these barriers to active travel take-up.
NSC Local Plan	Development sites will be built as 20mph areas for all Urban Local Accesses. Only major development sites with Neighbourhood Distributors within them will be considered for any speed limits higher than 20mph (and will be capped at 30mph).
NSC Maintenance Programme	We will work with Maintenance colleagues to plan and deliver maintenance schemes in synchronisation with our 20mph schemes to save time, funding and disruption to the transport network. This will add value to both Maintenance and 20mph schemes, with both benefitting from the other wherever appropriate (for example a 20 mph scheme area benefitting from resurfaced footways and highways at the same time).

Other plan/activity	How this Action Plan will interlink/work alongside
North Somerset Transport Narrative	All our communications with stakeholders and the public on 20mph scheme proposals will be framed under the emerging Transport Narrative about how NSC are responding to the cost of living crisis, climate emergency and lack of transport options through making shorter and medium journeys more attractive to the cheapest form of transport: active travel.



### 3. Scheme proposals and delivery plan

#### The process for 20mph proposals

There are two distinct origins that a 20mph proposal can come from:

- A request from a town or parish council with the Ward Member and community support.
- Proposed by North Somerset Council as part of wider neighbourhood improvements or with strategic value.

20mph originating from a town or parish council request will also be explored where there is support from the Ward Member and wider community. Members of the public who would like a 20mph scheme in their area should contact their town or parish council.

The process for a 20mph scheme, has been designed to enable open communication and feedback between town or parish councils and North Somerset Council right from its original request through to delivery (if appropriate). This process is set out in the below.

#### Scheme development process

To help fulfil the Open and Fair values of our NSC Corporate Plan, a transparent and consistent process is being developed to give North Somerset and the council a future Integrated Transport ‘Scheme Pipeline’. It has long been acknowledged that a more formal process and centralised database is needed to record, score, prioritise and develop transport network issues or scheme proposals into deliverable transport improvement schemes for and with our communities. This future ‘scheme pipeline’ is also being requested at regular intervals by central government’s Department for Transport via new government agency Active Travel England.

This seven-stage internal process, the Scheme development process, aims to fulfil this by enabling us to sift urgent issues to the right officers and teams at the right stages. For scheme proposals the process tests both the case for investment and their feasibility and deliverability via a transparent, consistent process, before they are allocated funding to progress them to delivery. The process is outlined in Figure 4.

For 20mph, North Somerset Council will work with town and parish councils to take them through the process and provide feedback throughout their application. This will allow for better refined proposals and greater communication on their progress.

#### Draft scheme delivery plan

Below is a list of scheme proposals that we could progress subject to funding and community engagement.

Table 1 below shows examples of scheme proposals that could be developed subject to funding and community support. This list is by no means complete – we want to hear your ideas, issues, and requests for improvements in your area for this Active Travel Networks Action Plan:

Town and parish councils and NSC Elected Members – please use the Highway Improvement Request Form on the NSC website to submit your transport network improvement requests. Issues and scheme requests will be recorded, scored and prioritised against all the other scheme proposals.

Residents, businesses, visitors and other stakeholders – we would encourage you to contact your town or parish council and/or your Elected North Somerset Councillor for your ward area to discuss

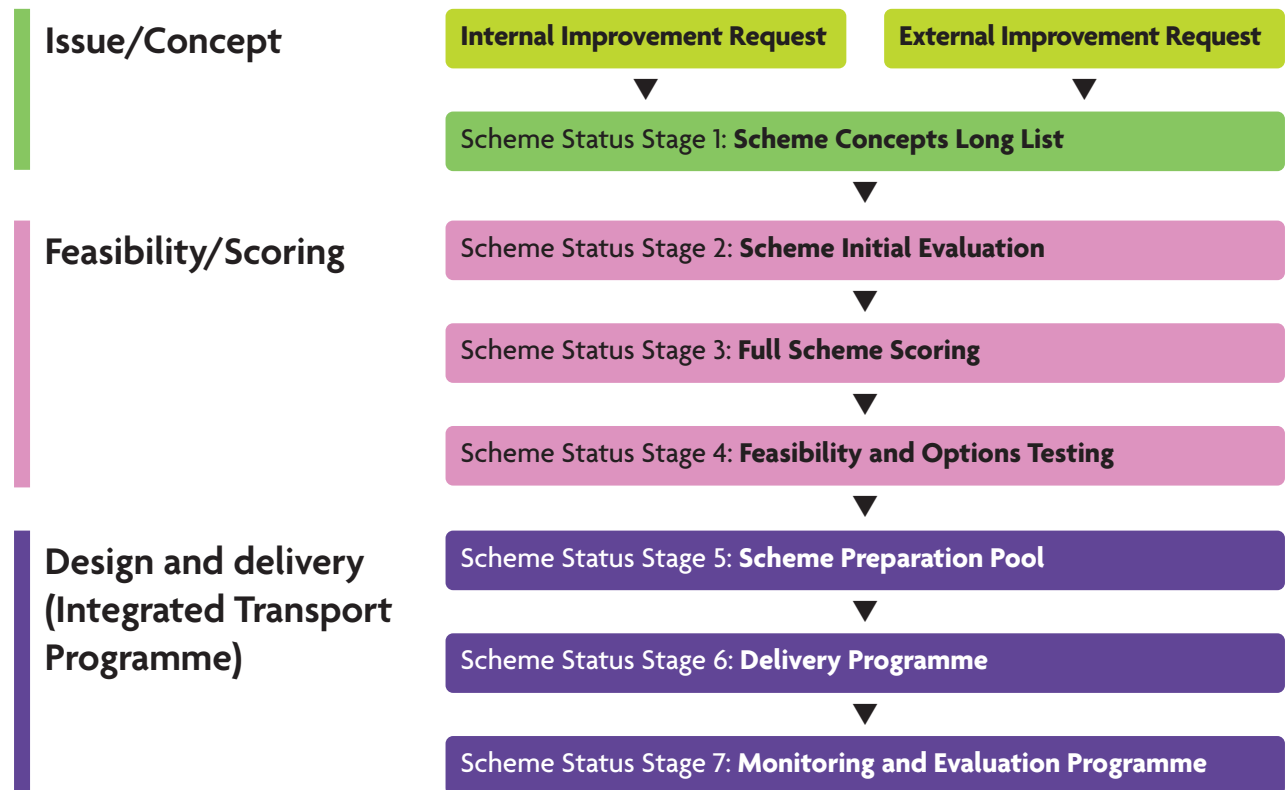
issues in your area. However, we also encourage you to add your requests to the location you feel needs improvements at **Widen My Path**. During and following the consultation on these Action Plans, we will record, score and prioritise all issues/scheme requests that are received and update the Active Travel Action Plans later in 2023 to include the prioritised list of scheme proposals.

It is important to note that the delivery of all integrated transport schemes (including all 20mph) are subject to the council securing necessary funding and internal/external staff resource to progress the scheme proposals through from initial design, engagement, detailed design and delivery.

**Figure 4:** The Scheme development process, which North Somerset Council officers will use to record, score and prioritise all transport network issues/improvement requests.

## Integrated Transport – Scheme development process

Assuming the scheme proposal passes each stage



Scheme location	Brief scheme content	Scheme status*
Pill	20mph across Pill, Easton-in-Gordano & Ham Green	Design
Tickenham	20mph on Clevedon Road	Early Engagement
Hutton	20mph throughout urban areas of Hutton Village	Design
Locking	20mph across village South of A371	Concept
Congresbury	20mph in the centre of the village	Concept
Weston-super-Mare	Milton Road (Baker St – Colonel Stephens Way)	Delivery
Weston-super-Mare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earlham Grove</li> <li>• Worle Hight Street and surrounding residential roads</li> <li>• Milton Road shopping area</li> <li>• Coronation</li> </ul>	Concept

Scheme location	Brief scheme content	Scheme status*
Bleadon	20mph along Purn Way, Coronation Road, Shiplate Road and the adjacent residential roads.	Concept
Backwell	Compliant section of Hyattswood and Oatfield	Concept
Kenn	Kenn Street	Concept
Banwell Bypass (Various)	As part of the mitigation measures for Banwell Bypass, 20mph will be introduced in following surrounding villages. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winscombe</li> <li>• Banwell</li> <li>• Sandford</li> <li>• Churchill</li> </ul>	Design

\*(Concept; Feasibility; Early engagement; Design, Consultation; Delivery)

This publication is available in large print, Braille or audio formats on request.

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For all enquiries please contact the Transport Team  
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