

Local Transport Strategy 2024-2029



Monmouthshire County Council

VISION STATEMENT

We want to develop a future facing integrated transport network that meets the transport needs of our communities in a sustainable way. Our network must address the climate emergency, be attractive to residents and visitors, and responsive to changing technology.

Our vision for Monmouthshire involves focusing services, facilities, new housing, and jobs in and around our key towns, thereby enabling communities to get to key destinations without relying so much on their car.

We want to re-structure our towns around people, making them better places to live and work. Our strategy seeks to embrace changing economic and lifestyle patterns to re-localise society by ensuring access to a wide range of essential goods and services accessible within easy reach of a resident's home, either by walking or cycling. We will build upon the opportunity afforded by lower speed limits, repurposing our streets for commerce, community, and social connection.

We aim to ensure that travel to more centralised or remote facilities, such as for education, healthcare and some workplaces and leisure facilities, are supported by reliable and affordable public transport. High quality, efficient and interconnected public transport services and infrastructure are imperative to interconnect our towns and access local, regional, and national destinations in both directions, helping to strengthen the resilience and competitiveness of our communities and businesses, whilst protecting the environment.

We recognise that, for some the car will continue to be an essential mode of transport. The roll out of EV charging infrastructure is an important part of the future vision, and it is of crucial importance to maintain and improve the quality of the roads network for all users.

New or improved high quality and efficient public transport services and infrastructure is imperative to interconnect our towns and access local, regional, and national destinations in both directions, helping to strengthen the resilience and competitiveness of our communities and businesses, whilst protecting the environment. We will work with our partners to create integrated transport hubs and improve accessibility for all.

Our vision for change is based on the following key principles:

- **Decarbonising transport** – a low carbon reliable and affordable public transport system that supports long term behavioural change.
- **Building better places** – an active travel and public transport system that connects communities to key services and streets are designed for people to walk, cycle and wheel safely.
- **Interconnected public transport** – an integrated multi-modal public transport system with improved connectivity, accessibility, and affordability.
- **Embracing technology and innovation** – reducing the need to travel and making it easier for people and goods to travel more sustainably.
- **Customer centric design** – convenient and reliable interface with real time information through a single portal.
- **Public Value** – Aligning new transport routes with land use development and integration of public and shared transport.

This strategy sets out our priorities over the next five years. Some of these will be in our direct control, others will be in the control of others., We will work with partners for the advancement of our transport vision and priorities.

The Councils Corporate & Community Plan sets our purpose to become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health, and dignity for everyone at every stage of life and we are fully committed to Welsh Government's target for the Welsh public sector to be net zero by 2030. We recognise however, that the delivery of the interventions set out in this strategy cannot be delivered by Monmouthshire alone and will require support at a Regional and National level and that ambitious improvements to our transport system will need to be balanced against short-term affordability challenges.

Our Ambitions:

- Walking, cycling, and wheeling routes established in all of our towns to make them a safe and easy option for journeys less than 3 miles.
- A road network in a good and safe condition for all users;
- For the more urban parts of the county, core bus services to run at least half hourly between 08:00 and 18:00 and at least hourly in the evenings and Sunday;
- A frequent and reliable longer-distance bus network providing access to important destinations such as the Grange University Hospital, Neville Hall Hospital and the Coleg Gwent Usk Campus amongst others;
- Integrated public transport connection and hubs, enabling effective links to rail and long distance coaches, to facilitate sustainable commuting and leisure trips within the wider city-region, Wales, Southwest England and beyond.
- Frequent, reliable, and affordable rail services from Monmouthshire stations to key destinations.
- Realisation of the innovative Magor Walkway station.
- On-demand and community services to help link dispersed rural communities to key services and the wider public transport network.
- An electric vehicle charging infrastructure enabling all vehicle owners to make the most sustainable choice of vehicle, as technology options develop.
- Improvements to High Beech roundabout

The creation of a new access road from the M48 to link to the B4245 and Severn Tunnel Junction



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1. INTRODUCTION

Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) has prepared this Local Transport Strategy (LTS) to establish a strategic framework for the future development of the transport network in our area. We have ensured that the strategy aligns with the shared vision and priority objectives of Llwybr Newydd (the national Wales Transport Strategy), and the Council’s Corporate and Community plan. Core to our approach is environmental sustainability and mitigation of climate change, and accessibility of transport services for all.

Our last Local Transport Plan was produced in 2015. Monmouthshire no longer has a statutory duty to develop a Transport Plan and will instead be included in a South East Wales Regional Transport Plan (RTP). Monmouthshire County Council is currently developing a Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP), which will provide the strategic direction for development of land in Monmouthshire up to 2033.

Monmouthshire is strategically situated on the border with England, and we are one of the most connected counties in Wales. We have two motorways (the M4 and M48), the Severn Bridge and the Prince of Wales Second Severn Crossing provide strategic road access, and Monmouthshire is an important rail connection with stations currently at Abergavenny, Chepstow, Severn Tunnel Junction and Caldicot. Our transport system is essential in helping people and goods get to the places that make our county a place we love to live, work and visit.

This LTS recognises that transport is not limited by authority boundaries and Monmouthshire maintains communications with neighbouring local authorities on both sides of the border to discuss development proposals and identify opportunities to improve transport options connecting our communities, places of employment, services, and visitor destinations. 2.5 million visitors come to Monmouthshire each year, and we benefit from beautiful countryside and diverse landscapes of exceptional quality, connected by the Wye and Usk Rivers, long distance paths such as Offa’s

Dyke Path National Trail, the Wales Coast Path, and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.

Monmouthshire is a rural county, and although its population has risen to nearly 100,000 people, it remains one of the least densely populated counties in Wales. According to 2021 Census data, around half of our population (48% of households) live in the main towns of Abergavenny, Monmouth, Caldicot and Chepstow. An additional 13% of households are in the Severnside towns of Caerwent, Magor & Undy, Portskewett, and Rogiet, meaning 39% of households are in rural parts of the county.

We recognise that due to the rural nature of our County and the relatively limited public transport infrastructure compared to urban areas, there will be a continuing need to use cars for many people and journeys. This strategy aims, nevertheless, to improve sustainable transport provision to provide more opportunities for people to travel by public transport, walking and cycling. Low-income households, the children and young people within them, women and people with disabilities are more likely to rely on public transport, particularly buses. Cost and irregularity of buses in particular, disproportionately affect these groups affecting their life chances, access to health, increasing social isolation and their ability to seek and secure employment. Conversely, a transport system providing accessible and affordable alternatives to private car use offers multiple benefits, including reduced congestion, improved air quality and road safety, the health benefits of exercise and the social advantages of quieter streets.

This strategy considers the local context, supports a healthy and balanced economy, social inclusion, and equality, and aims to reduce the environmental impact of the transport system. The overall strategy presents an analysis of the current transport situation in Monmouthshire, the opportunities and constraints and potential solutions to improve the transport network for all users.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

2.1 Replacement Local Development Plan

MCC is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) covering the period 2018-2033. The RLDP will set out land use development proposals for the County and will identify how much new development will take place to 2033 and where this will be located. It will also identify areas to be protected from development and provide policies against which future planning applications will be assessed. When adopted, the RLDP will be the statutory land use plan supporting the Council’s core purposes set out in the 2022 Corporate & Community Plan.

The RLDP identifies Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth as the county’s Primary Settlements with opportunities at these locations for employment, access to services and sustainable transport. Additional opportunities are found in the wider Severnside area, the Secondary Settlements of Penperlleni, Raglan and Usk, and in a number of smaller rural settlements. Development is to be focused on the county’s primary, and most sustainable settlements, as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 RLDP Preferred Strategic Site Allocations

Site Name	Proposed Use	No of Homes
Abergavenny East	Mixed Use	500
Chepstow	Mixed Use	145
Monmouth	Residential	270
Caldicot East	Mixed Use	735

The key diagram (Figure 2.1) carries forward the strategic links identified in the currently adopted LDP. The following are the key transport schemes that are proposed to be safeguarded from any land use changes that would prevent them from proceeding.

Active Travel Schemes

- Abergavenny and Llanfoist ATS
- Caldicot ATS
- Chepstow ATS
- Monmouth ATS
- Magor and Undy ATS
- Undy to Rogiet ATS
- Usk ATS

Public Transport Improvement Schemes

- Abergavenny Train Station improvements
- Abergavenny Bus station improvements
- Chepstow Transport Hub
- Severn Tunnel Interchange Improvement
- Monmouth Bus/ Coach Stop
- Magor Walkway Station

Road Schemes

- B4245/M48 Severn Tunnel Junction Link Road
- High Beech roundabout improvements

Other key policies relating to transport include:

Strategic Policy S3 - Sustainable Placemaking: supports the delivery of development that incorporates an appropriate mix of uses to minimize the need to travel and maximize active travel and public transport.

Strategic Policy S9 - Sustainable Transport: Development must promote sustainable, low carbon, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel by car. They must also increase the provision for walking and cycling and improve public transport.



2.2 Local and Regional Transport Plans

Statutory Duties

The Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Transport (Wales) Act 2006, introduced a statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) every five years and to keep it under review.

MCC's most recent LTP was approved by Welsh Ministers in May 2015 and included a prioritised five-year programme of projects. A review of the plan has been undertaken which identified the provisional objectives set out in Table 2.3 below, as the basis for the development of this strategy.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 transferred the duty to develop a Transport Plan to the new Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) in Wales. MCC is a member of the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SEWCJC), which has responsibility for preparing Regional Strategic Development Plans, Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) and for doing whatever is deemed necessary to enhance or promote the economic wellbeing of the Cardiff Capital Region.

RTPs will describe the key transport challenges and opportunities relevant to their region and set out policies and interventions for the local authorities to deliver in the five-year period 2025 to 2030, as well as medium and longer-term aspirations up to 2050.

Why have we developed this Local Transport Strategy?

Whilst there is no longer a duty for local authorities in Wales to produce LTPs, MCC have decided to prepare this LTS for two key purposes:

1. The preparation of an up to date, robust evidence base will ensure that MCC is well placed in securing improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure through the development of the SEWCJC RTP. This can be secured by developing the LTS in a way that responds to the requirements of RTP planning, and promoting safe, integrated, and efficient transport infrastructure within Monmouthshire.
2. The parallel development of the LTS with the Replacement LDP will help ensure that land use planning and transport planning are considered in an integrated manner. This will produce better outcomes by ensuring that new homes and jobs are located in places that people can travel to and from sustainably. It will also ensure that transport infrastructure requirements are properly considered and funded as development sites are brought forward.

Theme	Provisional Objectives for the Local Transport Strategy 2024 - 29
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reduce inequalities and support safe, healthy, fair, and accessible communities for both people and place through the provision of transport in Monmouthshire
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To grow Monmouthshire's economy through a prosperous transport system to provide sustainable connections to key market towns and key external destinations, and to ensure social and environmental well-being for current and future generations through sustainable practices
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate the development of an environmentally friendly transport system for all in Monmouthshire and to key external destinations, that dramatically reduces greenhouse gas emissions and prioritises active travel and public transport. To improve awareness of sustainable forms of travel and the consequences of travel choices on climate change, the environment and health
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all Monmouthshire residents and visitors have adequate and equal access to walking and cycling infrastructure, public transport, and low or zero emissions vehicles with respect to the transport hierarchy
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To allow Welsh culture and language to thrive on our transport networks, both within Monmouthshire and to key external destinations

2.3 Wider Policy Content

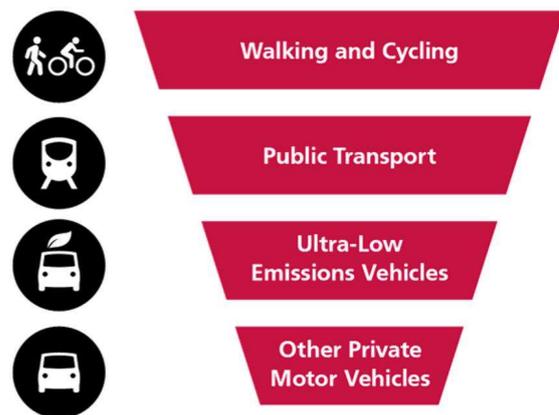
Key policies at national, regional, and local level have been reviewed in the development of this strategy. The key policies have been included within Appendix A together with a summary of the policies of neighbouring authorities.

The key conclusions that are relevant to the development of this strategy are as follows:

- The Well-Being of Future Generations Act requires Public Bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions and maximise contribution to their well-being goals.
- The South East Wales Regional Transport Plan will tailor delivery of the Wales Transport Strategy to our local area and determine the priorities for Monmouthshire.
- Future Wales sets out that new development must promote sustainable low carbon, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel by car.
- Welsh Government declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has a legally binding target to hit net zero by 2050. They have an ambition that the Welsh Public Sector will be net zero by 2030.
- The RLDP states that car reliance and long commuting distances are key issues in the Monmouthshire context. The removal of the Severn tolls in 2018 intensified commuter flows between Monmouthshire and the West of England.
- One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket legislation will provide TfW with lead responsibility to plan and deliver bus network improvements.
- Modal shift is a key requirement of the Wales Transport Strategy and will represent a significant challenge for those planning and providing transport in Wales.

Welsh Government has set out their sustainable transport hierarchy within Llwybr Newydd. This helps to guide decision making by focussing first on the role of place in reducing trips, before prioritising sustainable modes of transport. The Welsh Government has identified a series of targets for transport to help achieve the national strategy, for example 30% of the workforce to work remotely, and 45% of journeys to be made by public transport, walking, and cycling by 2040.

Those aspirations have been considered in developing our strategy and will continue to inform the regional planning process.



Welsh Governments Sustainable Transport Hierarchy.

2.4 Stakeholder Involvement

This strategy has been developed through a series of workshops with stakeholders, further details of which are included in the appendices. A public consultation exercise was held between November 2023 and January 2024 which attracted 2,434 visits to the online exhibition and 335 responses. The results are summarised in Appendix B Participation Report.

3. TRANSPORT CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 Local Transport Context

Monmouthshire has a land area of approximately 880 square kilometres, predominantly rural in area with 3% of the County considered an urban/town area. The County has a population of 95,000 with 48% of households located in the primary settlements of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth. An additional 13% of households are located in the Severnside towns of Caerwent, Magor & Undy, Portskewett and Rogiet, with 39% of households located in rural areas.

While Monmouthshire is generally prosperous, there are pockets of deprivation that contrast with areas of relative wealth. The county has a low population density, with an area equivalent to around one football pitch per resident and with an ageing population. The 2021 Census indicates that there has been an increase of 26.0% in people aged 65 years and over in the last 10 years, a decrease of 3.5% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and a decrease of 8.6% in children aged under 15 years. Demographic forecasts to 2033 indicate that these trends are set to continue.

Public Transport

Monmouthshire's rail network is comprised of the Marches Line, providing north-south connections via Abergavenny, the South Wales Main Line (SWML) with services calling at Severn Tunnel Junction, and Gloucester to Newport Line with stations at Chepstow and Caldicot.

Monmouthshire's bus network typically comprises of core routes, town services and rural services. Core routes connect the key settlements which each other and equivalent settlements outside of Monmouthshire. Town routes serve the key urban areas of Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow and Severnside (or connect to nearby villages e.g., Llanellen).

Other scheduled rural services operate at a lower frequency (typically 3-6 per day), and some services operate less frequently to serve

colleges, or market day services which do not operate daily.

Grass Routes is a community transport service provided by MCC on a membership basis. This is a flexible bus service that makes trips on request.

Poor public transport connectivity and a lack of alternatives can lead to social isolation for residents without access to private vehicles. The rural nature of the county and dispersed settlement pattern makes sustainable travel provision a challenge. Public transport services are typically not commercially viable and require significant ongoing revenue support. The lack of integration between public transport services and the cost of fares further limits the attractiveness of multi-modal journeys and limits the potential reach of the sustainable transport network.

Highway Network and Key Challenges

Located within the Cardiff Capital Region, Monmouthshire occupies a strategic location between major centres in South Wales, the south-west of England, and the Midlands. Monmouthshire experiences a net out-commute of around 2,800 residents per day, or 39% of the working population commuting to Newport, Cardiff, Bristol, and surrounding areas. Motorway and localised highway congestion (such as at High Beech, Chepstow) contribute to poor air quality, with Air Quality Management Areas in Chepstow and Usk. Much of the air quality issues in Chepstow can be attributed to settlement growth and an increase in commuting flow through Chepstow from England. More generally, commuting has increased particularly to/from the West of England, following the removal of the Severn Tolls in 2018.

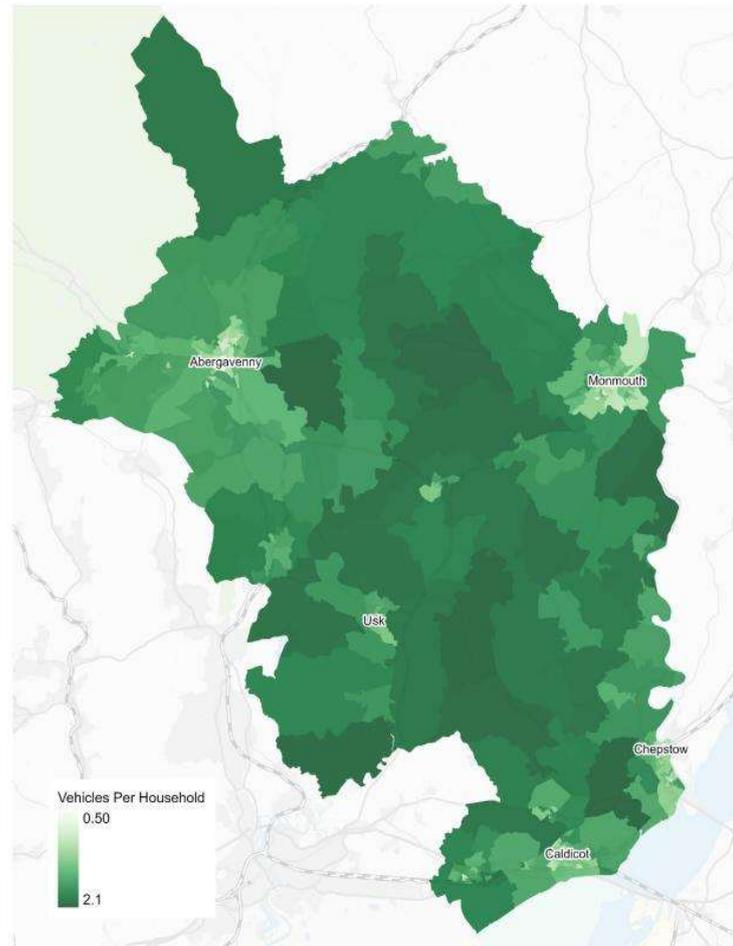
There is currently a lack of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Monmouthshire. Whilst aligning with Welsh Government's transport policy focuses on the need for modal shift away from private car use, it is important to acknowledge the importance of the rural and strategic road network for a rural

authority such as Monmouthshire, and the need to transition to EVs as quickly as possible.

3.2 Current Travel Patterns and Future Baseline

Maintaining the rural and strategic road network for all vehicles, including freight will remain a key priority for local transport in Monmouthshire, alongside efforts to encourage modal shift and sustainable transport. According to available data, shown in Table 3.1, driving is by far the most used mode of transport in Monmouthshire. Without interventions to improve the availability of alternative modes of travel, and given the rural nature of the county, dispersed settlement pattern, car use is forecast to remain high as illustrated in table 3.1 below.

According to Census 2021, Monmouthshire has the highest level of car ownership of any local authority in Wales at 1.51 vehicles per household, versus a national average of 1.32. Car ownership has grown in Monmouthshire by 4% since the 2011 Census. As shown in Figure 3.2, car ownership is lowest in key towns, highlighting the potential for walking and cycling for shorter distance journeys in the key towns of Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow and Caldicot.



Source: Census 2021

	Vehicle Driver	Vehicle Passenger	Walk	Cycle	Bus	Rail	Other
2011 Census Commuting	75.6%	7.3%	11.9%	1.3%	1.8%	0.6%	1.5%
2015 SEWTM Base Year	96.4%	-	-	-	2.1%	1.5%	-
2019 Mobile Network	97.5%	-	1.6%	-	0.9%	-	-
2021 Census Commuting*	79.8%	4.8%	10.5%	1.2%	0.7%	1.0%	2.0%
2031 SEWTM Forecast**	97.4%	-	-	-	1.2%	1.3%	-
2036 SEWTM Forecast**	97.8%	-	-	-	1.2%	1.4%	-

Table 3.1 Observed and Forecast Mode Share in Monmouthshire without any interventions.

Figure 3.1 Monmouthshire Car Ownership per Household

3.3 Transport Problems and Challenges

The following key issues were identified as transport problems in Monmouthshire.



Although improving, lack of infrastructure limits the viability of walking and cycling.

- Gaps in the network hinder uptake.
- High traffic volumes particularly on A roads and in town centres generate road safety concerns.
- Topography and distance between key towns limits uptake.



Lack of public transport connectivity leads to social isolation for residents without access to private cars.

- Unreliable bus services, low frequency, and poor network coverage. Slow journey times and non-direct routes mean bus is not a viable alternative to private car.
- Rail is expensive and has performance issues – services to Bristol, Newport and Cardiff are often overcrowded.
- Lack of public transport access to centralised healthcare services (e.g. the Grange University Hospital)
- No direct connectivity between Chepstow and Bristol, and lack of integration between SWML and services to Gloucester
- Low number of rail stations limits number of journeys that can be made by rail, particularly the SWML e.g., Magor.



Lack of transport integration limits joined up journeys and public transport opportunities.

- Lack of first and last mile connections to transport hubs, including secure cycle parking and car parking capacity.

- Lack of intermodal connectivity, particularly at bus and rail stations as well as information and multi modal ticketing.



Previous land use and development patterns contribute to reliance on private car trips.

- High car reliance and long commuting distances: 40% of residents commute significant distances, such as to Bristol, Newport, and Cardiff.
- High car ownership: only 4% of commuters use public transport and 1% walking and cycling.
- New housing developments have not been served by viable public transport services.
- Centralisation of services and the rural nature of the County means that travel times to services are higher than the Wales average.



Localised and motorway traffic congestion contributes to poor air quality and GHG emissions.

- Significant commuting flows, particularly to the West of England, which has intensified following the removal of the Severn Bridge tolls in 2018.
- Limited motorway junctions contribute to increased traffic on local roads, limited use of the M48 and congestion at key pinch points, such as High Beech roundabout, Chepstow.
- Lack of electric vehicle infrastructure.
- Air quality impacts due to transport related emissions with AQMAs in Chepstow and Usk
- Transport to tourism destinations, such as the Wye Valley is heavily car based, leading to traffic and parking challenges, especially peak seasons.

3.4 Decarbonising Monmouthshire’s Transport System

The Council is committed to reducing its own carbon emissions and supporting its community to do the same. In 2021, transport emissions amounted to 36% of the County’s total emissions¹. We recognise that a reliable public transport system is a pre cursor to modal shift and the transition away from multiple car households. Welsh Government have set out key ambitions in their National Transport Delivery including a target that 39% of all journeys by 2030 should be made using public transport or walking and cycling. To support the delivery of National and Local policies we will undertake the following:

- Aligning land use and transport planning to the sustainable transport hierarchy and working collaboratively with stakeholders to address barriers and improve uptake.
- Support the Welsh Governments ambition for 30% of the workforce to be working in or near their home.
- Support the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure throughout Monmouthshire.

Future infrastructure investment decisions must provide opportunities to improve sustainable transport options, improve air quality, embed technological innovation, or reduce carbon emissions.

Ultimately a regional long-term approach will be necessary to decarbonise transport and meet the Wales Transport Strategy targets.

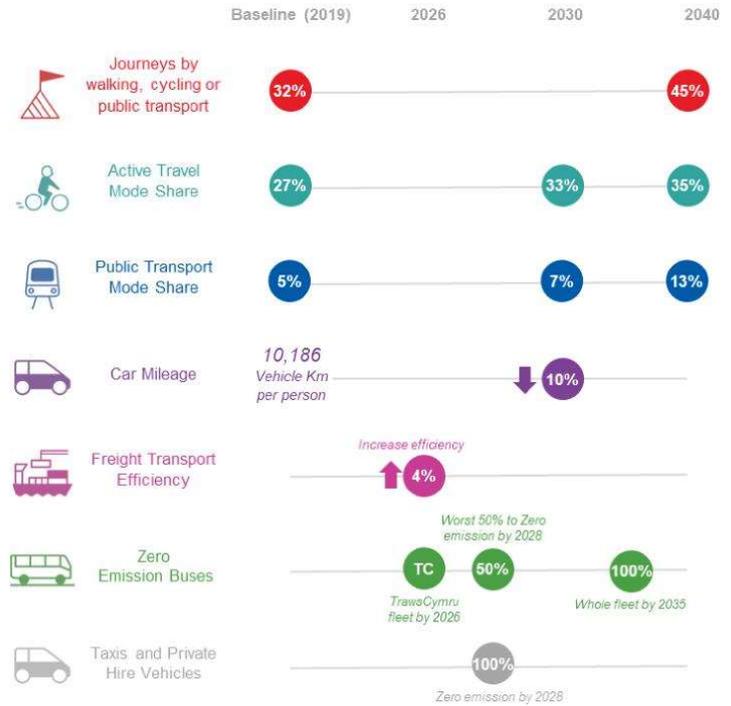


Figure 3.2 Transport Targets in Wales (Source Llwybr Newydd / Net Zero Wales). Note Baseline figures are averages for Wales and not Monmouthshire specific.

¹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64a67b3a4dd8b3000f7fa546/2005-21->

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Overarching Aim

An integrated transport and land use system that prioritises sustainable travel, enables transition to a zero-carbon county, and supports well-being, health, and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

This aim reflects the vision and priorities of the WTS, and Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate plan. It is also consistent with the local and national policy context, the sustainable transport hierarchy, and the emerging Replacement Local Development Plan.

Our ambition for transport seeks to make the most of our unique context, allowing Monmouthshire residents to access the services they need within their local community, to socialise and shop locally, and have the opportunity to work locally, avoiding the need for long commuting journeys. We acknowledge however, that the trends in the closure of services in rural areas and the centralisation of healthcare services increase rural isolation, deprivation, and transport costs.

We recognise that to support social inclusion and a healthier way of life for our residents, car dependence must be reduced, and we need more mobility choices to enable behaviour change. We commit to creating a transportation system that is accessible to all members of our community, regardless of age, ability, or income. This includes safe pedestrian footways, cycling routes, bus, and demand responsive transport options as well as an enhanced rail network that is easier to access by a range of first and last mile options to make the most of investment in the Metro network.

Whilst recognising the need for modal shift away from private car use, we also acknowledge the importance of the rural and strategic road network for the movement of people and goods in a rural authority such as Monmouthshire, and the need to transition to EVs as quickly as possible. We will address the current lack of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and support car clubs and lift sharing to enhance the accessibility and affordability of zero emission vehicles.

Our replacement Local Development Plan strategic allocations reflect the need to shape development at locations where sustainable travel is a realistic choice, and the need to provide sustainable travel options from first occupation.

The development of these sustainable transport options will need to be an inclusive process. We commit to engaging residents, businesses, and local organisations to seek their views, insights, and ideas to help shape the future of our transportation system and evolving the way we get around in Monmouthshire.

4.2 LTS Objectives and Policy Alignment

The interventions and policies identified in this document will be put forward for further assessment and potential inclusion in the RTP, and so there is a need to align this LTS with the Wales Transport Strategy, as summarised in Table 4.1. This will help ensure national, regional, and local policy alignment and a consistent approach to the assessment and prioritisation of interventions.

To achieve our vision, this LTS is framed by a comprehensive set of objectives that encapsulate the desired ambitions for Monmouthshire, aligned with the WTS well-being ambitions.

Local Transport Strategy 2024-2029

A set of twelve focus areas, illustrated in Table 4.2 have been developed to inform the development of interventions, reflecting the three WTS priorities. None of these are ranked or weighted in any way as part of the LTS. This has resulted in the Framework shown in Table 4.1, which provides the appropriate criteria against which to consider any existing or emerging transport interventions.

Monitoring of the LTS will be aligned with the WTS framework, ensuring that interventions achieve the vision and aspirations of both.

The vision, aims and objectives of this LTS have been informed by discussion with key stakeholders and agreed during stakeholder workshops

Table 4.1 MCC LTS Objectives and Policy Alignment Framework

MCC LTS Vision	An integrated transport and land use system that prioritise sustainable travel, enables transition to zero carbon county and supports well-being, health, and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.			
WTS Well-being Ambitions	Good for people and communities	Good for the environment	Good for culture and the Welsh language	Good for the economy and places in Wales
MCC LTS Objectives	To reduce inequalities and support safe, healthy, fair, and accessible communities for both people and places through the provision of transport in Monmouthshire	A transport system that delivers a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improves awareness of the consequences of travel choices on climate change, biodiversity, air quality and health	A transport system that supports the Welsh language, enables people to use sustainable transport to access arts, sports, and cultural activities	A transport system that contributes to Monmouthshire's economic ambitions, supports local communities, and improves sustainable transport options to key market towns and external destinations.
WTS Priorities	Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel	Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable, and efficient transport services and infrastructure		Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport
MCC LTS Focus Areas	Land Use Planning	Active Travel		Behaviour Change
	Digital Connectivity	Bus		electric vehicle charging infrastructure
	Freight and Logistics	Rail		Roads, Street & Parking
	Mobility Hubs & Interchanges	On demand community services		Home to School Transport
WTS Monitoring Framework	Distance travelled per person	% active travel & public transport		Vehicle kilometres travelled
	% workforce working remotely	Greenhouse gas emissions		% zero emission vehicles

Table 4.2 LTS Focus Areas and Policy Ambitions

MCC LTS Focus Area	Policy Ambition
Land Use Planning	Development proposals must promote sustainable, low carbon, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel by car, increase provision for walking and cycling and improve public transport provision
Digital Connectivity	Enhance digital connectivity and support more local facilities and services, so people can work from or near home and access services locally on a regular basis instead of travelling long distances.
Freight and Logistics	Support the development of a competitive, responsive, and resilient network of freight and logistics distribution service, that reduce the need to travel and contribute to our wider well-being ambitions.
Mobility Hubs and Interchanges	Mobility hub and station facilities that support interchange between bus and rail services and facilitate first and last mile journeys by a range of sustainable transport modes.
Active Travel	Develop a network of local routes to connect people with the places they travel to for everyday journeys to support walking, cycling, and wheeling becoming the preferred choice for shorter journeys.
Bus	Ensure that there is a stable and coherent network of frequent, reliable, and affordable bus services that are fully integrated with other modes of public transport enabling residents to access key destinations including town centres, healthcare, schools, and workplaces.
Rail	An integrated, accessible rail network with increased frequency of trains to key destinations
OnDemand and Community Services	Ensure a thriving set of on-demand and community transport services that meet the needs of local communities and delivers wider social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits.
Behaviour Change and Information	Ensure a thriving set of on-demand and community transport services that meet the needs of local communities and delivers wider social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits.
EV Charging Infrastructure	Ensure that MCC continues to lead the transition to electric vehicles in Wales by ensuring that fair and equitable charging infrastructure is available for residents and visitors.
Roads, Streets and Parking	Ensure that roads and streets are safe, well-maintained, and managed for all road users, and support sustainable transport options including active travel and public transport.
Home to School Transport	Prioritise sustainable travel for home to school transport, ensuring that most secondary school and college trips, and nearly all primary school trips are made by walking, cycling or public transport.

4.3 Modal Shift

We recognise that due to the rural nature of the county there will continue to be a requirement to use cars where sustainable transport options are not yet available. We do however need to implement measures to support modal shift as far as possible, to address inequalities, improve health and decarbonise the transport system. Key to achieving this is to integrate public transport services with walking, cycling, and wheeling to

make it easier for people to travel seamlessly. In producing this strategy, we understand that travel time, predictability, ease of planning and access to quality information, as well as cost, comfort and safety are some of the things that will shape behaviours and the choices people make about using particular modes of transport.

To persuade users to make more sustainable travel choices, public transport systems must offer a similar level of freedom to car

ownership. Public transport itself might not be able to offer door-to-door journeys, but when combined with walking and cycling it can rival the car, providing multi-modal transport in a seamless journey.

Improving reliability and frequency is crucial to the operation and attractiveness of public transport services and increasing patronage. High-quality roadside infrastructure at bus stops and mobility hubs to better integrate rail stations with other modes, as well as a public realm that supports and encourages walking and cycling, is also required to build consumer trust in public transport as a viable and attractive alternative to car use.

4.4 Walking and Cycling

We need to make it easier, safer, and more pleasant for people to get around by walking and cycling. Our Active Travel Strategy focuses on journeys three miles or less, connecting people to key destinations within communities. As part of this vision, we hope to encourage more children to walk to school, with health and social benefits, and reducing the road safety and car parking problems at the school gates, as well as easing congestion in some towns.

We want to make our towns and communities more walkable by measures such as making shopping streets more pedestrian-friendly, with trees to provide shade, more benches and easy access to public toilets. We also want to embed walking and cycling routes in new developments so that residents have the opportunity to walk and cycle as soon as they move in.

4.5 Integrated Public Transport Network

The Welsh Government is proposing changes to bus services in Wales through its 'one network, one timetable, one ticket' approach, which includes franchising as a key element. The franchising model proposes that local

authorities, regional Corporate Joint Committees, Transport for Wales, and the Welsh Government collaborate to design networks within available funding. The Welsh Government, rather than local authorities, would be the 'franchising authority' responsible for tendering services, receiving fare income, and paying operators.

Taking this emerging change into account, we want our bus services to be arranged as a single, unified network of services as part of a wider public transport network, connecting into existing and planned new rail stations as well as walking and cycling routes. The following principles will be used to inform the design of core networks:

- Easy to understand – A network of core routes forming a coherent network which reflects current and future demand. We will provide a map illustrating available routes and adopt consistent numbering and common branding to improve passenger understanding.
- Turn-up-and-go frequencies – For core routes, with consistent operating hours and evening/weekend services to improve the convenience and flexibility of the network without knowledge of timetables.
- Transfers – Improved infrastructure at bus stations and hubs to create a good interchange experience for passengers.

The core network should provide a long-term 'backbone' of reliable and resilient services around which passengers can make plans. Frequencies will be monitored, and changes implemented where necessary to respond to demand changes and short-term disruption, as opposed to services being fundamentally changed leading to confusion for passengers.

4.6 Land Use and Transport Planning

As set out in the National Transport Delivery Plan, the Welsh Government is committed to reducing the need for travel by bringing jobs, services, and facilities closer to where people live and to encourage everyone to make sustainable transport choices.

As part of that approach, it is seeking to bring about change through a new approach to the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the strategic road network; a more joined up approach to land-use and transport planning; improving and speeding up implementation of active travel schemes and programmes; and changing the way we plan and fund transport programmes and projects.

Where appropriate Monmouthshire will embrace a healthy streets approach, which provides a framework to bring about positive changes to the character and use of our places by increasing space, greening, and reducing air pollution. It has ten main indicators which can be used as a measure of how 'healthy' a street is.



Figure 4.1 A framework to achieve healthy streets.

4.7 Mobility Hubs

Mobility hubs are places where people can switch from one mode of transport to another. Mobility hubs can be introduced to increase the reach of the public transport network and encourage walking and cycling for first/last mile trips. Transforming our places around changes in travel behaviour will support local jobs and community renewal and make them

better places to live and visit. Concentrating mobility throughout urban, suburban, and rural areas also unlocks other opportunities, whether they are localised public realm enhancements, commercial uses, or community provision.

The world of transport is being disrupted by technology, changing working habits and how people choose to spend their leisure time, meaning that we can no longer take growth in demand for granted. Projects that 'lock in' demand by building homes and office space on mobility hubs and interchanges is one way to tackle this challenge. Strategies to tactically make best use of existing infrastructure, such as the installation of parklets to create resilient green spaces and deliver electric charging infrastructure will become increasingly important, as will designing flexibility and adaptability into new infrastructure, given the increasing rate of technological change.

To help achieve successful mobility hubs, we will:

- Improve consumer trust in public transport and walking and cycling by re-allocating space where appropriate and practical to deliver priority for public transport and active mobility that enables faster, more attractive journeys and improves reliability.
- Improve the ability to transfer between services by improving interchange infrastructure.

Support urban realm transformation projects around mobility hubs to embed walking and cycling for first and last mile trips, and place multi-modal connectivity at the heart of local communities.

5. APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

5.1 Appraisal Framework

An appraisal process has been adopted that helps prioritise interventions that align with the Wales Transport Strategy and the Well-Being of Future Generations Act. It broadly follows the processes in the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG), which has recently been updated to reflect the WTS priorities. This will help provide a consistent approach with the appraisal process that will be considered as part of the emerging RTP.

The appraisal uses an agreed set of criteria to assess the likely performance of the long-list interventions against the strategic objectives and provides mapping of the short-listed options for inclusion within the LTS. The full appraisal process is outlined in Table 5.1.

The long list of interventions was sourced from key policy documents and optioneering studies, including:

- Previous MCC Local Transport Plan (2015-2020)
- National Transport Delivery Plan (NTDP)
- Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP)
- Chepstow-Newport MEF Stage 1 Report
- Schemes identified by stakeholders in LTS workshops.

- Schemes proposed based on a gap analysis of existing schemes, review of LTS best practice, and ongoing transport and wellbeing challenges within Monmouthshire.

The appraisal classifies schemes into 5 categories:

- Deliver; Plan; Continue; Support; and Review.

This approach will help MCC make decisions considering status of funding or planning, governance arrangements, collaboration needs and risks.

5.2 LTS Scheme Classification

It is recognised that MCC will not be responsible for achieving the vision of this LTS in isolation. We will work with Welsh Government, Transport for Wales, South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee, Network Rail and other key stakeholders in the development and delivery of the 131 interventions identified within this LTS. Equally, some schemes will need more work than others to establish the case for investment, and requirements and responsibilities for delivery. As such, each intervention has been grouped according to the five categories identified in Table 5.1

LTS Classification	Description
 Deliver	Specific interventions that align with WTS and LTS objectives, that have undergone an integrated well-being appraisal. These are the key focus of the LTS period and MCC will be responsible for delivery (in full for smaller schemes, or initial stages for larger programmes such as ATNM development) within the five-year LTS plan period.
 Plan	Longer term interventions that align with the LTS objectives and WTS priorities, that could be developed further but are unlikely to be deliverable within the plan period. These schemes have not been fully appraised (Step 3) due to a lack of detail at this stage.
 Continue	Interventions that are already funded, have gone through <u>WelTAG</u> appraisal elsewhere or that are Welsh Government requirements or ongoing commitments undertaken by MCC.
 Support	Interventions that MCC will not ultimately be responsible for delivering, but have an interest in promoting, supporting and/or collaborating on with other entities (e.g., Welsh Government, TfW, neighbouring Local Authorities etc. These schemes have not been fully appraised (Step 3) as they will be taken forward/led by others.
 Review	These schemes do not meet one or more of the appraisal criteria, however, they may hold significance for the transport network and the people in Monmouthshire. Hence, these interventions will be reviewed or adjusted to align with wider objectives and funding requirements. Further detail provided overleaf.

below.

5.3 Schemes subject to review or not under consideration

A number of schemes have been flagged for 'review' in section 6 (focus areas and interventions) as they may not directly align with latest Welsh Government policy in their current form. However, in some instances we continue to see value in these schemes in addressing key transport issues local to Monmouthshire.

Whilst the need for modal shift is clear, the rural nature of Monmouthshire makes it difficult to achieve modal shift on a large scale without significant and continued investment in alternatives, as well as changes in the way we make choices about where we live and work, and whether or how we travel.

We acknowledge the importance of the rural and strategic road network to our residents. Small-scale infrastructure improvements and making better use of existing road space to support modal shift is a key part of the equation.

For example, we strongly support the proposition that the M48 should be reclassified and that a link road should be constructed from the reclassified M48 to the B4245, as expressed in our response to the Burns Delivery Unit. We consider this would improve access to the rail network at Severn Tunnel Junction and support active travel improvements.

Some measures do not feature in this strategy but were consulted upon to help inform our plans. For example, partial or full

pedestrianisation of Chepstow High Street has previously been suggested through transport studies, but a survey showed strong opposition to closing it to traffic, and Councillors subsequently voted to reopen it in response. We are not intending to revisit that decision in the short term.

Similarly, solutions to congestion problems on the A48 in and around Chepstow have been considered as part of previous studies and we continue to engage with Gloucestershire County Council about improving cross border connections between the two areas.

During public consultation, all options were presented for feedback and there was interest in the Severn Bridge Tolls that were removed in 2018. The remit to reintroduce tolls on the Severn Bridges sits with the UK Government, not Monmouthshire County Council. We are not lobbying the UK Government for reintroduction and have no plans to do so.

Monmouthshire County Council also has no intention to progress with a workplace parking levy or congestion / low emissions zones, but we have a commitment to improve the air quality for those residents who live in congested areas, and we will seek to reduce transport emissions through our work on the Regional Transport Plan.

We have no plans to progress the proposal to introduce variable parking charges based on the emissions of the vehicle. However, a separate parking review will be undertaken which will consider provision across the county and include consideration of parking charges.

6. FOCUS AREAS AND SHORTLISTED INTERVENTIONS

6.1 Introduction

This section outlines the shortlisted interventions for the twelve focus areas. Each intervention proposed is categorised for the level of action required: deliver, plan, continue, support or review.

The number and nature of the interventions vary across the LTS focus areas, depending on the current baseline, policy ambitions and level of control we have over delivery. For Active Travel, for example, we are confident in delivering interventions in a relatively short period, as long as we are able to access continued grant support.

Other focus areas will require further work to develop plans and programmes within the plan period, with support from stakeholders at the national and regional level. For example, in terms of Land Use Planning, we have control over implementation at a local level, but are largely driven by national policy. Change will take a long time and to an extent relies on us working closely with stakeholders.

A detailed description of schemes can be found in Appendices D and E.

6.2 Land Use Planning

Development proposals must promote sustainable, low carbon, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel by car, increase provision for walking and cycling and improve public transport provision, delivering mode share targets from the outset.

Improved interaction between land use planning and transport is critical for our county progressing towards a more sustainable and equitable future. Our RLDP Preferred Strategy sets out how we plan to support delivery of the Council's core purpose of becoming a zero-carbon county

and deliver new development within the Future Wales national policy context.

The RLDP is based on the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods supporting local living and will be accompanied by an infrastructure plan setting out the infrastructure needed to support site allocations. Eighty percent of the new homes will be on four new strategic sites that are subject to an ongoing master planning exercise aligned with our active travel proposals maps.

We will continue to approve planning applications in line with best practice principles for promoting sustainable transport. These include:

- Development that accords with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy.
- Promoting Active Travel (walking and cycling) connectivity through safeguarding, enhancing, and expanding on the ATNMs.
- Locating development close to public transport facilities and designing developments to facilitate and improve public transport infrastructure, its connections and geographical reach to rural areas.
- Ensuring developments incorporate and/or enable the use of ULEVs by providing charging infrastructure.
- Ensuring developments are served by an appropriate level of parking provision depending on the nature and location of the proposal.
- Developing the role of Monmouthshire's Primary Settlements in accordance with the Local Transport Strategy and Regional Transport Plan around which low carbon sustainable transport opportunities can be developed and linked to the South East Wales Metro.

- Placemaking principles underpinning all new developments ensuring we deliver attractive and accessible places to live and work; and
- Demonstrating how proposed development in rural areas enables solutions to rural transport problems, such as improvement of links to public transport, digital infrastructure, and innovative solutions, such as car sharing schemes.

We also commit to:

- Over time reducing the parking space requirements for new developments (as required by the Welsh Government), particularly in areas where we will be improving car alternatives.
- Promoting high-quality, covered, and secure cycle storage solutions for new developments, as well as retrofitting existing developments.
- Encouraging developments to integrate shared mobility solutions, including car-sharing bays, shared e-bikes and shared (e-)cargo bikes.
- Encouraging density in suburban and urban areas to reduce the negative environmental impacts of sprawl, as well as around rail stations, bus stations and other notable transport hubs (transit-oriented development).
- Using s106 and other developer contributions to ensure high quality public transport connections, both in terms of proximity (400m walk to bus stop) and service quality.

6.3 Digital Connectivity

We will enhance digital connectivity and support more local facilities and services, so people can work from or near home and access services locally on a regular basis instead of travelling long distances.

In terms of air pollutant and carbon emissions, the most sustainable journey is the one we do not make. Whilst we acknowledge that this will not be possible for everyone and is highly dependent of personal circumstances, promoting digital and innovative infrastructure in both urban and rural areas to enable remote working and reduction in a need to travel to the workplace is a key focus area.

Remote Working

The Welsh Government has an ambition for 30% of the workforce to work from or near home. In order to achieve this ambition, we need to ensure people have access to high quality broadband connections and suitable speeds to adequately replace in-person working or appointments. We will promote the development of agile working hubs in towns and villages across Monmouthshire, so people can travel shorter distances to these hubs to work, rather than longer distances to employment (a key challenge identified in this LTS.)

Digital Connectivity

Currently, the average internet speed in Monmouthshire is 84 megabytes per second (Mbps). This is 39% lower than the UK average (117 Mbps). We will work with partners to improve speeds across the county and ensure that areas of particularly poor broadband connectivity are prioritised for improvements so that there is greater consistency in connectivity across the county to enable equal opportunity for home working, tele-appointments, and local working hubs. We believe that it is essential that all community members are able to access on-line services so that they do not become socially or digitally excluded. This will also help reduce or avoid unnecessary travel.

Healthcare

The National Health Service (NHS) have been increasing telephone and virtual appointments, which can be effective in

reducing carbon emissions. A [recent systematic review](#) on telemedicine has found that it reduces the carbon footprint of healthcare by up to 372kgCO₂e per consultation. Where appropriate, we will support accessing services remotely through improved broadband connectivity and speeds.

Real time information

We are working with Transport for Wales on the roll out of real time digital displays at rail and bus stations and beyond, and we will make it easier for people to find the information they need to make travel choices and plan their journeys. Transport for Wales is in the process of procuring a real-time information back office for all Welsh bus services.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	DC1	Promote agile working hubs
Support	DC2	Improving broadband connectivity and speeds

Table 6.1 Shortlisted Digital Connectivity Interventions

6.4 Freight and Logistics

We will support the development of a competitive, responsive, and resilient network of freight and logistics distribution services, which reduce the need to travel and contribute to our wider well-being ambitions.

Freight transport is responsible for one third of the overall emissions from transport in the UK (and road freight accounts for 77% of this amount). At a national and industry-wide level, efforts are being made to

decarbonise freight through technological and fuel improvements, but there is also work we can do at a local level to reduce the impact of local distribution.

The final stage of parcel delivery between the local depots and homes (the ‘last mile’), represents one of the most polluting and carbon intensive components of the retail supply chain, and we would look to reduce emissions at this stage of the supply chain through delivering and facilitating:

- Parcel lockers in towns and villages across the county.
- Promoting e-cargo bikes for small businesses to make local deliveries; and
- Creating a strategy for distribution centres to further consolidate parcels into fewer vehicle trips.

Delivering the proposed active travel network will facilitate shorter walking and cycling journeys to local parcel lockers in local centres. We will look at available data and consult with local communities around possible locations for parcel lockers. Reducing the number of van deliveries will also have benefits related to air quality, particularly as delivery vehicles idle, and regularly accelerate and brake when completing deliveries.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	FL1	E-cargo bike scheme for small business in main towns
	FL2	Distribution centres review and strategy
	FL3	Parcel Lockers

Table 6.2 Shortlisted Freight and Logistics Interventions

6.5 Mobility Hubs

Mobility hubs and station facilities that support interchange between bus and rail services and facilitate first and last mile journeys by a range of sustainable transport modes.

Journeys often involve more than one mode of transport, particularly in a rural authority such as Monmouthshire due to the distance to key hubs such as rail stations. By delivering a public transport network that offers users multiple options, users can choose the solution that best meets the specific needs of their journey. Improving provision for first and last mile journeys that extend the reach of the core public transport network is a key aim of this LTS. Creating an interchange experience that is efficient, safe, and reliable is key in achieving modal shift away from private cars. We will further develop and deliver schemes that aim to provide a more integrated and user-friendly transportation network for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. These include:

- Transport interchange improvements at the Severn Tunnel Junction rail station, creating a bus interchange alongside new facilities and walking and cycling routes from Magor and Undy and Caldicot.
- Development of an integrated transport hub at Chepstow rail station, improving local bus infrastructure and implementing linked active travel routes (subject to further consultation on routes).
- Abergavenny rail station accessibility and interchange improvements, following a WelTAG Stage 2 that identified a preferred bus option.

There are also wider integration opportunities such as the Magor and Undy walkway

station, which we are promoting alongside TfW and the Burns Steering Board.

Working with operators, we want to coordinate rail and bus timetables and routes, roll out real-time information, and improve connectivity. We will support coach travel, and rail-bus link services with improved routes and frequencies. We also want to develop safe cycle parking schemes to provide people with the confidence that their bikes will still be there upon their return. In the longer term, more secure cycle parking is also needed in town centres and other key destinations.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	MHI1	Bus & active travel integration with the Marches Railway Line ²
	MHI2	Sustainable travel improvements at Abergavenny rail station
	MHI3	Transport interchange improvements at Severn Tunnel Junction including park and ride
	MHI4	Chepstow Transport Hub
	MHI5	Interchange hubs between on-demand and timetabled bus services.
Plan	MHI6	Timetable coordination at key interchange points
	MHI7	Rail-bus link services (routes and frequencies)
Support	MHI8	Active Station Network Plan for all stations
	MHI9	Cycle storage at interchanges

6.6 Active Travel

We will build further on our development of a network of local routes to connect people with the places they travel to for everyday journeys to support walking,

² The Marches railway line runs between Newport and Shrewsbury and travels through Abergavenny.

cycling, and wheeling becoming the preferred choice for shorter journeys.

Active Travel is the term used for getting around via walking, cycling, and wheeling (which includes wheelchairs and mobility scooters), instead of by car for short everyday journeys, such as going to school, work, or shopping. We envision a future in Monmouthshire where active travel is at the heart of the community, offering safe, accessible, and convenient options for both residents and visitors. Active travel routes are designed to be accessible to all regardless of age or disability. The shortlisted interventions are shown in Table 6.4 overleaf.

Our main objectives for the Active Travel focus area are to:

- Expand and refine the network of local routes for walking and cycling, seamlessly connecting people to their everyday destinations, and where possible provide separation of cyclists from road users.
- Engage with Children, Young People and Adults to reduce the barriers of Active Travel and promote modal shift for current and future generations.
- Focus on journeys shorter than three miles that can reduce everyday car journeys, and make walking, cycling, and wheeling the easiest option.
- Develop schemes in partnership with local people and prioritise safe and accessible pathways that cater to individuals of all abilities and backgrounds.
- Support and collaborate with the Welsh Government, TfW and neighbouring local authorities in Wales and England to deliver Active Travel across borders.
- Make it as easy as possible for people to connect with public transport services, for example taking a bike on trains, provision of bike/pram ramps.

More about walking and cycling can be found here:

<https://www.monlife.co.uk/outdoor/active-travel/> whilst routes can be found:

<https://maps.monmouthshire.gov.uk/custom/activetravelATNM.html>

MCC are currently delivering on key strategic active travel projects across the county. These include but are not limited to initial Active Travel Network Schemes within Usk, Gilwern, Chepstow, Monmouth, Magor and Undy and Abergavenny and Llanfoist; and an active travel route from Caldicot to Severn Tunnel Junction and into Magor and Undy, in partnership with the Burns Delivery Unit. A Severnside spinal route will provide Caldicot links, a conversion of a disused MOD railway to an Active Travel path and links through Caldicot town to the railway station.

The Council has undertaken extensive consultation when developing proposals for the active travel network and the response was overwhelmingly positive. In addition, we are working to improve the quality and accessibility of the current network of Active Travel routes, through interventions such as installing dropped kerbs and redesigned crossings.

MCC has been successful in bidding for national Active Travel funding, with the latest award for the financial year 23/24 reaching £7m. We will continue to maximise grant funding opportunities where available, supported by match funding to maximise the growth of the network. We also aim to develop plans and programmes that further encourage active travel, such as implementing clear wayfinding systems, removing clutter, and making accessibility improvements, improving crossings, making routes within communities safer, introducing e-bike charging infrastructure, providing cycle storage, and supporting cycle hire services countywide.

As part of our ongoing commitments and requirements, we will continue to regularly

update and refresh our ATNMs every three years, following thorough engagement with those who do not currently walk or cycle for local trips.

Table 6.4 Shortlisted Active Travel Interventions

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions
 Deliver	AT1 Initial Usk Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT2 Initial Gilwern Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT3 Initial Chepstow Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT4 Initial Caldicot Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT5 Initial Monmouth Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT6 Initial Magor and Undy Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT7 Initial Abergavenny and Llanfoist Active Travel Network Schemes
	AT8 Undy to Rogiet Active Travel improvements alongside B4245 (Severnside spinal Active Travel route)
 Plan	AT9 Cross-border links with Newport
	AT10 Develop further Active Travel routes (as per ATNM)
	AT11 Safe routes in Community Schemes (SRIC) beyond those currently funded
	AT12 Crossing improvements for Active Travel
	AT13 Removal of barriers to active travel
	AT14 Wayfinding for key Active Travel routes
	AT15 Active Travel links to RLDP sites with links to new development at the earliest opportunity
	AT16 Active Travel friendly towns centres
	AT17 Support cycle hire initiatives and look for wider rollout
	AT18 E-bike charging scheme
 Continue	AT19 ATNM Planning and Mapping
	AT20 School Streets feasibility study (SRIC)
	AT21 Abergavenny phase 1 River Usk Active Travel bridge construction and furthering scheme development
	AT22 Active Travel link up Pen Y Fould (SRIC)
	AT23 Old Hereford Rd junction improvements and Active Travel links to new King Henry School site (SRIC) in Abergavenny
	AT24 Monmouth link from Williamsfield Lane route to Monnow Bridge (part of Monmouth spinal Active Travel route)
	AT25 Caldicot Links (disused MOD railway) phase 1 construction (part of Severnside spinal route)
	AT26 Cross border links to neighbouring authorities and key towns / communities
 Support	AT27 Upgrades to Active Travel links on SWTRA network incl. A48, A486 and A4042
	AT28 National pilot schemes from Government organisations e.g. TfW cycle hangars
 Review	AT29 Walking friendly Chepstow High Street

6.7 Bus

Ensure that there is a stable and coherent network of regular, reliable, and affordable bus services that are fully integrated with other modes of public transport enabling residents to access key destinations including town centres, healthcare, schools, and workplaces.

As previously outlined The Welsh Government has set out an ambitious vision for the future of bus services in Wales, with the following aims, for a bus network:

- that is purposely designed to maximise the public good.
- that efficiently uses public investment to strategically address public priorities for bus improvements, thereby justifying greater public investment; and
- which forms part of an integrated transport network that provides an excellent travel option, wherever people need it, whenever people need it.

The proposed change to a franchised system offers us the opportunity to re-think how services are planned and delivered in Monmouthshire. We will simplify bus fares

and monitor patronage data to make evidence-based decisions to propose changes. We are improving bus stop infrastructure as funding becomes available, with the aim of providing core bus services that run at least hourly between 08:00 and 18:00, and at least two hourly during evenings and Sundays. For the more urban parts of the county (e.g., Severnside), a higher frequency will be more appropriate (e.g., half-hourly and hourly on evenings/Sundays). In general, these core services will be reliable and direct with improved journey times to get people where they need to be. Lower frequency secondary, on-demand and community services will be formed around this core network, and we will explore strategic longer distance and cross-border services as part of our work on the Regional Transport Strategy to help make public transport a viable option for all types of journeys. We will also engage with coach operators to explore how we can attract improved strategic and long-distance services.

Plan	BUS11	Bus Stop Upgrades
	BUS12	An improved (T7) Express bus service (TfW)
	BUS13	BRT A4042 (trunk road- SWTRA)
	BUS14	One Network, One Timetable, One Ticket Bus Network review
S Support	BUS15	Extend Bristol Metrobus service to Chepstow/ Severnside
	BUS16	Mass transit from Forest of Dean and Chepstow to Bristol
	BUS17	Work with WECA on mass transit extension

6.8 Rail

An integrated and accessible rail network with high frequency, highly connected services to key destinations within Monmouthshire and beyond.

Rail has the potential to become a key driver of decarbonisation and modal shift within Wales. However, to achieve this, routes and service frequencies will have to increase, the quality and reliability of journeys must improve, stations must become more accessible for all, and fares must become more affordable. We are working with the Burns Delivery Unit to improve rail frequency and stopping on the South Wales Mainline and Marches line. We are also lobbying for the proposed Magor walkway station and working on proposals to improve bus access to Abergavenny, Chepstow, and Severn Tunnel Junction stations. Recognising that MCC does not have direct responsibility for the rail network infrastructure or services, we will:

- Lobby Network Rail to make stations physically accessible for all, addressing issues faced by disabled passengers and passengers facing mobility restraints (such as heavy luggage or pushchairs) when using railway stations.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	BUS1	Improved bus links to and from the Grange Hospital
	BUS2	Chepstow/Caldicot – Newport bus corridor improvement
	BUS3	Improved bus frequencies between Monmouth and Chepstow
	BUS4	Bus interchange at Severn Tunnel Junction
	BUS5	Monmouth bus/coach stop
	BUS6	Abergavenny bus station improvement
	BUS7	Improved PT links between Monmouthshire & Avonmouth
	BUS8	Bus Information (inc RTI)
	BUS9	Bus Infrastructure measures along key corridors
	BUS10	Local Bus Service Upgrades

- Support the South Wales Metro proposals that aim to provide faster, more frequent, and joined-up services across the region.
- Continue to campaign for enhanced services frequencies (2 trains per hour minimum) linking Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Severn Tunnel Junction with each other and connecting onwards to Cardiff, Newport, Lydney, Gloucester, Bristol, and Bath to make rail a competitive option for commuting and leisure trips.

We endorse the Western Gateway 2050 vision, which sets out a long-term vision for rail services in South Wales and Western England, articulating the importance of rail investment where and when this should be targeted to provide best value for money.

Expansion of the Metro, improvements to the South Wales Main Line, and the development of enhanced interchange hubs form part of the plan and would directly impact Monmouthshire. In particular, we endorse proposals for a new station at Magor and service frequency to two trains per hour to Chepstow.

6.9 On Demand and Community Services

Ensure a thriving set of on-demand and community transport services that meet the needs of local communities and delivers wider social, economic, environmental, and cultural benefits.

Monmouthshire is a rural county, which makes it difficult to achieve comprehensive public transport coverage and thereby reduce the reliance on private car ownership. On-demand, community bus services and taxis provide flexible travel options, linking rural settlements to key services and the wider public transport network.

In isolation, public transport and walking and cycling are unlikely to replace all car trips in a rural county like Monmouthshire. Access to on-demand services such as car clubs and lift sharing apps/websites have their place in facilitating multi-modal lifestyles for when public or active travel is not an option. In combination with public transport, they can facilitate door-to-door connectivity and first or last mile journeys. Whilst we recognise options such as car sharing may not be suitable for all community members, we want to provide an opportunity for households who are considering reducing reliance on the car, or for those who cannot drive, or travel infrequently. We will:

- Identify gaps in conventional public transport provision and assess what type of flexible or shared mobility services could fill these.
- Involve the community, users and third sector organisations in the design, planning and delivery of community and on-demand services.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Support	R1	Access for all at rail stations
	R2	Chepstow railway station overbridge
	R3	Implementation of the Magor & Undy walkway station
	R4	Green Routes – Abergavenny Rail Station
	R5	Fairer fares for train journeys
	R6	South Wales Metro
	R7	Service frequency improvements from Monmouthshire stations to key urban areas
	R8	Introduction of new trains on Marches and Chepstow lines
	R9	Local service on Marches line

Table 6.6 Shortlisted Rail Interventions

- Make information about community and on-demand services more widely accessible.

For more information about existing services, see:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/buses-trains/grass-routes-community-transport/>

and

<https://www.fflecsi.wales/>

Table 6.7 Shortlisted on Demand and

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	ODS1	Expand accessible flexible bus services
	ODS2	Promote community car clubs and lift share schemes
Plan	ODS3	Explore flexible rural transport options to stations
Support	ODS4	Regional fund for local community transport groups for the purchase and maintenance of electric bikes and cargo bikes.

Community Service Interventions

6.10 Behaviour Change and Information

Ensure that residents and visitors to Monmouthshire are fully informed about sustainable travel options, allowing them to plan, pay for and undertake journeys using information available in their preferred medium.

We want to encourage people to change their travel behaviour to use low-carbon, sustainable transport where this is a viable option for their journey. Not only do we need to make sustainable transport more attractive and more affordable, but we also need to increase awareness of available travel options. We aim to grow a sustainable travel culture by providing comprehensive, accessible, and engaging information. We are committed to facilitating positive

behaviour change and enhancing awareness of greener travel alternatives.

We will deliver a range of behaviour-change schemes that encourage people to make smarter travel choices and increase use of sustainable modes of transport. Our approach to sustainable tourism includes the creation of informative walking maps for routes that combine buses for the outbound journey and walking for the return, with multiple routes for each settlement to promote active travel. We will explore opportunities to help people make more sustainable choices, for example an annual 'No Car Day' event, aligned with World Car Free Day, will showcase what a more sustainable Monmouthshire could look like.

We will have a focus on road safety education, training, and publicity and support initiatives such as the TfW Mobility as a Service (MaaS) app, ³ enabling enhanced travel options. Additionally, Monmouthshire will champion air quality awareness through impactful publicity campaigns.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	BCI1	Wye Valley tourism walking and bus route maps
	BCI2	Promote a 'No Car Day' event
	BCI3	Road safety education, training, and publicity
Plan	BCI4	Workplace travel planning
	BCI5	Travel planning for tourism
Support	BCI6	TfW Mobility as a service app
	BCI7	Active Travel behaviour change campaign
	BCI8	Air quality awareness publicity campaigns

6.11 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

³ TfW are developing an app that will enable door to door journey planning.

Ensure that MCC continues to lead the transition to electric vehicles in Monmouthshire by ensuring that fair and equitable charging infrastructure is available for residents and visitors.

The existing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Monmouthshire remains limited. Whilst this strategy seeks to align with the Welsh Government's transport policy and the move away from private car usage, we recognise the significance of the road network for a rural county like Monmouthshire. Balancing this potential conflict necessitates an urgent need to transition to electric vehicles to align with sustainable practices. This acknowledges the dual importance of promoting modal shift and adopting electric vehicles.

In line with the Welsh Government’s vision for charging in Wales, we will develop and implement our Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy, and work with the Corporate Joint Committee and Welsh Government on the wider strategy for rollout across the South East Wales region and beyond.

We are committed to working with operators to decarbonise public transport services and we have commenced the transition of Monmouthshire’s passenger transport vehicles to ULEV alternatives.

The shortlisted interventions encompass the establishment of EV charging points at public sites to facilitate tourism and destination charging. The strategy also involves progressing options for residential

charging and implementing charging within shortlisted car parks to encourage EV adoption and provide greater accessibility to electric cars.

We are also committed to ensuring that any new EV infrastructure provision does not conflict with pedestrian movements, for example by interfering with active travel routes or pavements.

Table 6.9 Shortlisted Electric vehicle charging infrastructure interventions.

6.12 Roads, Streets and Parking

Ensure that roads and streets are safe, well-maintained, and managed for all road users, and support sustainable transport options including walking and cycling and public transport.

Our LTS reflects our commitment to creating a network that ensures the safety and efficient movement of all road users and prioritises and promotes sustainable choices. We recognise there will continue to be a requirement to use cars where sustainable transport options are not yet available, and the need to enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors by contributing to a greener, healthier, and fairer future.

We strive to keep the roads in good condition, and accessible for all road users, but are facing similar resource challenges to local authorities across the UK in maintaining the necessary condition of our roads in the face of climate change and the pressure of vehicle traffic.

A separate parking review will be undertaken which will consider provision across the county and include consideration of parking charges.

In line with WTS, we will maintain our road network, working with partners to address

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	EV1	Installing publicly available charging infrastructure at MCC owned sites
	EV2	Residential charging in the 13 priority areas
	EV3	EV charging in the 10 shortlisted car parks
	EV4	Electric vehicle charging strategy
Support	EV5	Public sector workplace EV charging
	EV6	Rail station EV charging

congestion pinch points and investing in schemes that support road safety, network resilience, and modal shift. Such schemes will be subject to review and further consideration in the context of the Welsh Roads Review. We aim to deliver schemes that will:

- Utilise road space and kerbsides where safe and appropriate, particularly within our four key market towns, to help create more accessible environments for walking and cycling and connecting public transport services.
- Tackle pavement parking and street clutter, so that streets are safer for all.
- Improve road safety and improve air quality.

We will continue to lobby the Welsh Government regarding improvements to the High Beech roundabout, as well as creating a link from the M48 to the B4525.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	RSP1	Implementation of WG pavement parking recommendations
	RSP2	Magor walkway station parking strategy
Plan	RSP3	Road safety capital schemes
	RSP4	Park and ride at Abergavenny rail station
	RSP5	Car parking review
	RSP6	Access road to Severn Tunnel Junction station
Continue	RSP7	Road maintenance programme
	RSP8	High Beech Roundabout review
Review	RSP9	Chepstow and Gloucestershire traffic flow
	RSP10	Declassification of M48 and link road to the B4245

Table 6.10 Shortlisted Roads, Streets & Parking Interventions

We will not be introducing emission charging; however, we are committed to reducing the impact of emissions on the health of our residents and will work with the Corporate Joint Committee to identify opportunities to reduce transport emissions across South East Wales

6.13 Travel from Home to School

Prioritise sustainable travel for home to school journeys, maximizing the use of public transport for secondary school learners and promoting walking and cycling.

Home to school transport provision is a mix of public bus services and dedicated transport provision. The Council’s Home to School Transport Policy promotes the use of public transport and we support measures that make school transport safer and more sustainable. For more information please see:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/school-transport/>

We consider it important to facilitate improved awareness and habits around healthy and sustainable travel to school. By encouraging active travel and reducing vehicle traffic around schools, we can create a safer, healthier, and cleaner environment for the generations of tomorrow. This will also have the benefit of reducing congestion for other transport users in Monmouthshire as schools start and finish times currently align with peak commute times.

The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide free home to school transport for primary aged learners who live more than two miles from their nearest suitable school and for secondary aged learners who live more than three miles from their nearest suitable school. The Council currently provides free home to school transport for primary aged pupils who live more than 1.5

miles from their nearest suitable or catchment schools and two miles for secondary aged learners.

Where it is assessed that the walking and cycling route to school is not safe for learners, free home to school transport is provided. There is no statutory requirement to provide post-16 transport, but we do offer subsidised transport where vacant seats are available.

As part of our strategy, we will:

- Deliver school streets across the county to create safe active travel spaces in the vicinity of schools.
- Identify safe walking and cycling routes to schools.

LTS Classification	Shortlisted Interventions	
Deliver	HtS1	School Streets
Plan	HtS2	Walking and cycling campaigns
Continue	HtS3	School Active Travel plans
	HtS4	Safe routes to school mapping
Support	HtS5	Work with operators to improve public transport options for learners

- Work with schools to develop travel plans and
- Liaise with operators to improve public transport options for learners.



7. DELIVERY PLAN

7.1 Making our Vision a Reality

Delivery of the interventions set out in Section 6 will make our vision a reality.

This LTS will help inform the emerging RTP and has been prepared at a suitably and proportionately high level, considering the further work that will need to be undertaken by the Corporate Joint Committee when preparing its RTP.

A delivery plan will be developed in consultation with partners and stakeholders. We will consult on proposals as may be appropriate subject to further work as we seek to progress this strategy at the local and regional level.

7.2 Funding and Delivery

Transport is a means of delivering economic growth, jobs, homes, and a better quality of life for our citizens. Funding and financing transport improvements are essential to secure sustainable development, and the route to net zero will change the types of transport projects being brought forward.

Increasing land use and environmental pressures mean that demand for sustainable urban mobility projects is increasing. At the same time, the need for other forms of public infrastructure in energy, water and communications are also rising. This means schemes may end up chasing the same sources of capital to secure finance. Transport projects therefore need to be as attractive as possible to secure the resources they need and to be attractive to private financing as well as public sector backing.

By aligning new transport routes with land use development, we can help to secure long-term sustainable demand for public transport and help to pay for projects by capturing some of the wider development values that is created. Not only does this approach generate resources for capital investment, including from the private sector, but it also helps to

'lock in' demand. For instance, developing sites close to existing rail stations.

Public funding is being used to provide EV charging, upgrade the rail network, trial DRT services and to introduce electric bikes into the transport mix. Each of these modes is designed by separate teams, and each often has a different customer-facing app and payment system.

We will be advocating and working with our partners to create a system which brings various modes of transport together, with a seamless customer experience, and working towards a single payment channel instead of multiple ticketing and payment operations. This will help make sustainable transport choices more attractive to users and investors.

Improving transportation requires investment in the short-term to unlock further innovation and a focus on passenger outcomes, leading to further additional patronage and revenue. This will mean that investments made in the short term will more than pay off in the long run, especially when the negative externalities of car dominance (carbon, inequality, air pollution, noise, congestion, fatalities, and sedentary lifestyles) are included in the equation.

The case for long-term investment in our transport system has never been better, with the associated opportunities to improve the economic productivity of our city-region, reduce reliance on cars in favour of healthier alternatives and better places, and help address the climate crisis in turn.

7.3 Monitoring & Evaluation

An important aspect of this LTS will be the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of interventions. This section outlines the process for tracking and assessing the progress of the plan, as well as the strategies and actions that will be taken to achieve the vision. and associated well-being objectives.

A M&E plan will be used to:

- Ensure that the LTS is implemented effectively and efficiently.
- Identify any areas where the LTS is not meeting its objectives; and
- Make recommendations for improvements to the LTS.

As highlighted in Table 4.1 and given that the LTS has been prepared to inform the development of the RTP, it will be important to align with the Wales Transport Strategy monitoring framework.

This will help ensure alignment between plans at the national, regional, and local level, and avoid the need for duplication of efforts in recording how policies and plans are being implemented and their effectiveness, including the county’s contribution to national decarbonisation and modal shift targets.

Notwithstanding the above, there may be aspects of this plan that require additional or supplementary data collection and analysis to build a better picture of the local impact on Monmouthshire.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be developed drawing on the Wales Transport Strategy monitoring framework, aligning with the objectives of this LTS. We will review progress against these KPIs and aim to report on progress annually.

As work begins on the RTP, our M&E responsibilities may transfer to the functions of the South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee, and we will consider how best to continue to review our performance and progress accordingly.

8. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Summary

This LTS will inform the preparation of an up to date, robust transport evidence base that will ensure MCC is well placed in securing improvements to sustainable transport infrastructure through the development of the South East Wales RTP.

The LTS will also inform the Replacement LDP, ensuring that new homes and jobs are in places that people can travel to and from sustainably, and that transport infrastructure requirements are properly considered and funded as development sites are brought forward.

An analysis of existing travel patterns identifies that the car is by far the most used mode of transport in Monmouthshire, linked to the rural nature of the county and its dispersed settlement pattern. While car use here is likely to remain high relative to urban areas, the Welsh Government has set out an ambitious policy direction for transport, which aims to reduce the need to travel, and encourage modal shift to more walking, cycling and public transport. This LTS seeks ways to help people make fewer trips by car and improve the availability of alternative modes of travel.

This LTS sets out an appropriately ambitious set of policy ambitions and interventions across twelve areas that we will focus on to achieve our aim of achieving an integrated transport and land use system that prioritises sustainable travel, enables transition to a zero-carbon county, and supports well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

Monmouthshire cannot achieve this vision alone. Availability of funding was a key barrier impeding the development of schemes identified in the previous LTP. There will be a need for a multi-agency approach to many of the interventions identified, whilst some will need to be developed further or reviewed to achieve the support needed from the public and politicians to take them forward. The opportunity to work as part of the South East Wales CJC should help pool resources and shape sustainable decision making.

8.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions have been reached whilst developing the LTS which will help inform the development of the South East Wales RTP:

- MCC and other authorities in South East Wales have not established a definitive carbon baseline, without which it is difficult to develop a clear plan to achieve what is necessary to decarbonise transport. This should be a priority for the CJC.

- Equally, existing, and future mode share targets at a national level have not been translated to the context of a rural authority such as Monmouthshire, and the CJC should work to better understand what needs to be achieved in the region and respond with a tailored plan accordingly.

- The cost of meeting national mode share targets in a rural authority will be higher than in an urban equivalent, where mode shift to active travel and public transport are more achievable. Achieving these targets uniformly across Wales is unlikely to be practical to deliver and will not be the most cost-effective way to decarbonise our transport system. Notwithstanding this, we have a key part to play and will work as part of the CJC to agree a pathway to decarbonisation building on our initial work as part of this LTS.

- A holistic combination of policies will be required to address car dependency. Aligning with the Welsh Government's transport policies requires a focus on modal shift away from private car use. It is important to acknowledge the importance of the rural and strategic road network for a rural authority such as Monmouthshire, and the need to transition to EVs as quickly as possible. However, extending the reach of the public transport network by improving active travel connections, on-demand transport and better integration of all modes are key interventions to achieve our shared ambitions for a sustainable Monmouthshire fit for future generations.

- Given the extent of the road network in Monmouthshire, significant capital investment is needed to maintain existing highways infrastructure. The road network will continue to underpin all our ambitions around modal shift as they need to be safe for all users including buses and cyclists. Increased funding

support from National Governments will be essential if we are to achieve performance targets and deliver reliable sustainable transport alternatives.

Appendices

Appendix A

Legislation and Policy Context

Appendix B

Participation Report

