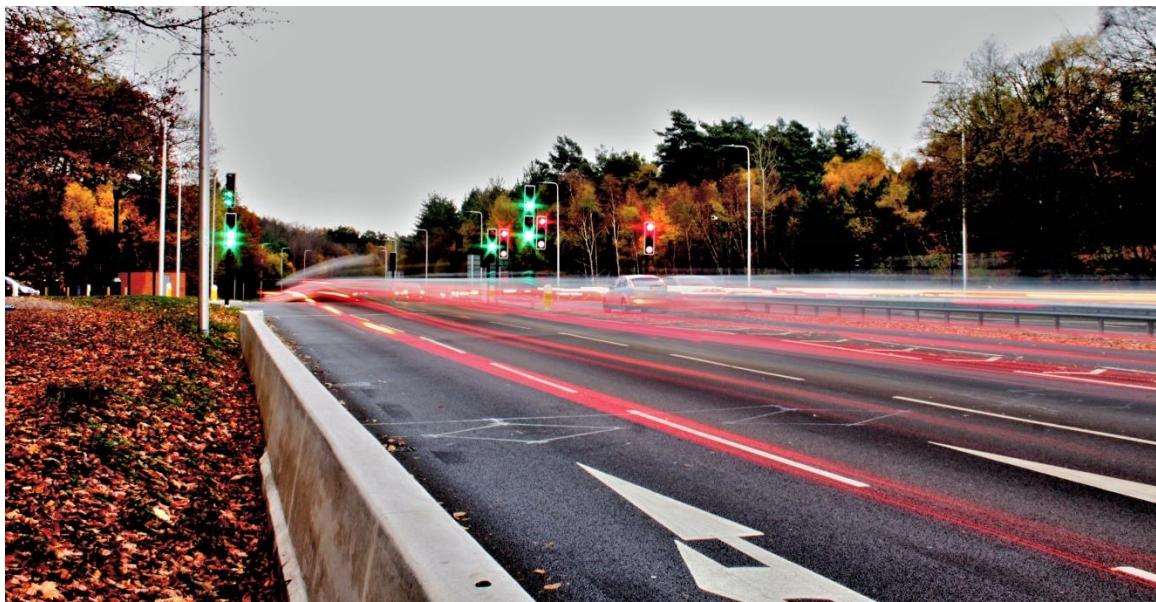


Traffic Management Strategy



2011 - 2026

Contents

1. Purpose of the Strategy and the Local Transport Plan	Page 3
2. Introduction and Background	Page 5
3. Managing Highway Capacity	Page 7
4. Freight Management	Page 9
5. Parking	Page 10
6. Road safety	Page 12
7. Network Management	Page 13
8. Delivery	Page 14

1. The purpose of the Strategy and the Local Transport Plan

This Strategy supports Bracknell Forest Council's third **Local Transport Plan (LTP3)**, which sets out a 15 year transport strategy from 2011 – 2026. The LTP provides the framework by which the Borough's transport system can be secured through investment; and appropriate management, maintenance, and monitoring so that the Council can keep pace of, and respond to, changing circumstances in the Borough.

The environment and economy, alongside equality, safety and quality of life all depend on a robust and effective transport system. The Council therefore remains committed to continually improving the transport network to ensure our quality of life is built on and sustained. This ethos provides the backbone to the Local Transport Plan, by setting out how we can maximise the potential in our transport system in support of this much bigger picture.

The Local Transport Plan can be read in full [here](#)

The Traffic Management Strategy sets out the Council's priorities and how we are working with our partners to deliver a safe, efficient and reliable highway network for Bracknell Forest and contribute towards the vision of the Local Transport Plan:

"To develop a sustainable transport system that supports the local economy, provides choice and improves quality of life in a safe and healthy environment"

The individual policies of the third Bracknell Forest Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) are core to delivering on the Borough's Traffic Management obligations, and there are six specific policies which set out the Council's approach:

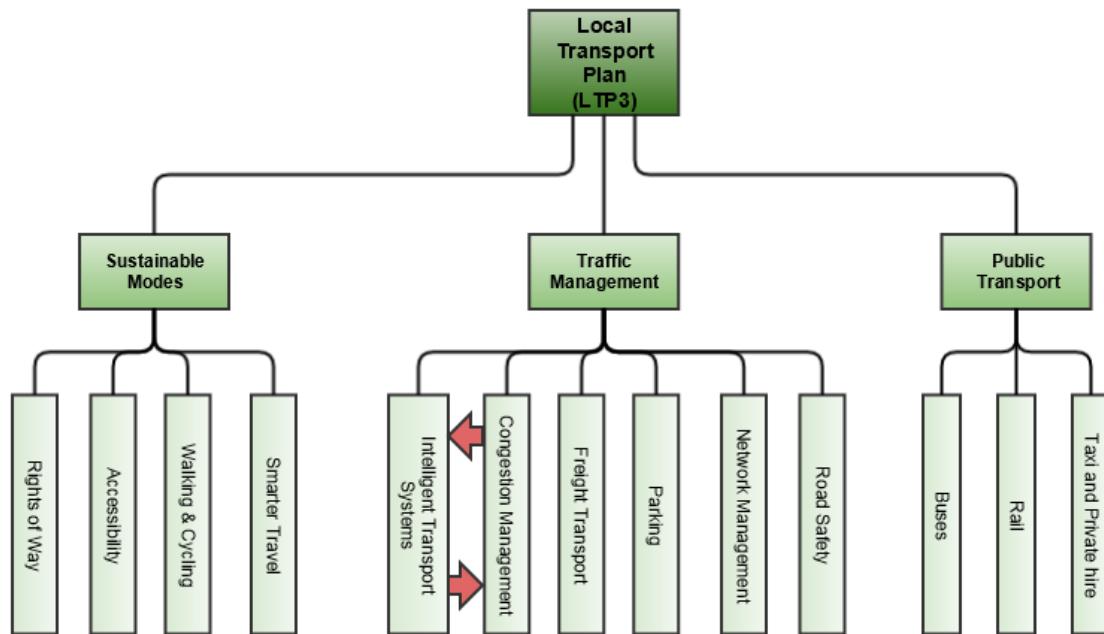
- **Congestion Management** (Policy TP13)
- **Intelligent Transport Systems** (Policy TP14)
- **Freight Transport** (Policy TP15 – Movement of Freight)
- **Parking** (Policy TP16)
- **Road Safety** (Policy TP17)
- **Network Management** (Policy TP18)

'Traffic Management' is a stand alone policy within LTP3 – Policy TP12, however it forms the over-arching focus for the six themes considered above, as shown in **Figure 1**. This shows the strategic fit of the Council's transport strategies, which together will address and deliver the elements of LTP3. The Traffic Management Strategy complements the two other overarching strategies, namely Sustainable Modes and Public Transport.

LTP3 Policy TP12 – Traffic Management states that the Council will regulate traffic, where necessary, through:

- Facilitating the movement of traffic
- Improving the reliability of journey times
- Reducing the use of unsuitable routes
- Reducing conflicts between road users
- Encouraging appropriate speeds
- Mitigating the effects of the division of communities by the growth in road traffic

FIGURE 1: Strategies of the Bracknell Forest Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026



Within the Traffic Management Strategy the six policy themes are closely linked. In the case of Intelligent Transport Systems and Congestion Management, it is considered that their correlation requires a formal merge to create the Managing Highway Capacity Strategy. The individual Strategies will have specific delivery measures and through analysis of the challenges and opportunities these will set out a range of short, medium and long term 'key actions' that the council will pursue.

In summary, the Traffic Management Strategy considers the management of the road network and what this means for Bracknell Forest in terms of tackling congestion and providing reliable journey times, particularly on strategic and classified roads. It will also explore the role and impact of freight transport, the often emotive issue of parking, along with road safety and how to reduce the number of injuries and accidents on the Borough's roads. Furthermore, it considers resource requirements, current use of technology and looks to the future for ways of improving service delivery in line with the Council's priorities.

The following chapters will cover the five Strategy themes within the over-arching Traffic Management Strategy. These are structured in such a way to enable reference as stand-alone documents.

2. Introduction and Background

Whether you are a resident, visitor, or someone simply passing through on our road network, you will in some way be affected by the way traffic is managed in Bracknell Forest

It is well recognised that a reliable, safe and well maintained road network and its associated transport systems are key factors to the wellbeing of communities and businesses in terms of economic growth and regeneration. These in turn enable better social inclusion, employment opportunities, prosperity, and quality of life.

Following the introduction of the Traffic Management Act in 2004, the Council has adopted a greater responsibility for managing the road network for the benefit of all road users. The Department for Transport has published advice and guidance on how we should tackle the causes of congestion and disruption on our roads, but it also stresses the need to be flexible in meeting local priorities.

Bracknell Forest is in a prime location at the heart of the Thames Valley. It is situated at the end of the A329(M), 11 miles east of Reading, 9 miles south west of Windsor and 32 miles west of London. Junction 10 of the M4 is approximately 4.5 miles to the west and junction 3 of the M3 approximately 5 miles to the south east. There are good links to the regional airports via the M3, M4 and M25, especially Heathrow which is only 15 miles away. The M3 and M4 are linked together by the A322/A329/A3095 corridors that run through Bracknell and intersect at the Twin Bridges junction, also providing links between Reading and Guildford.

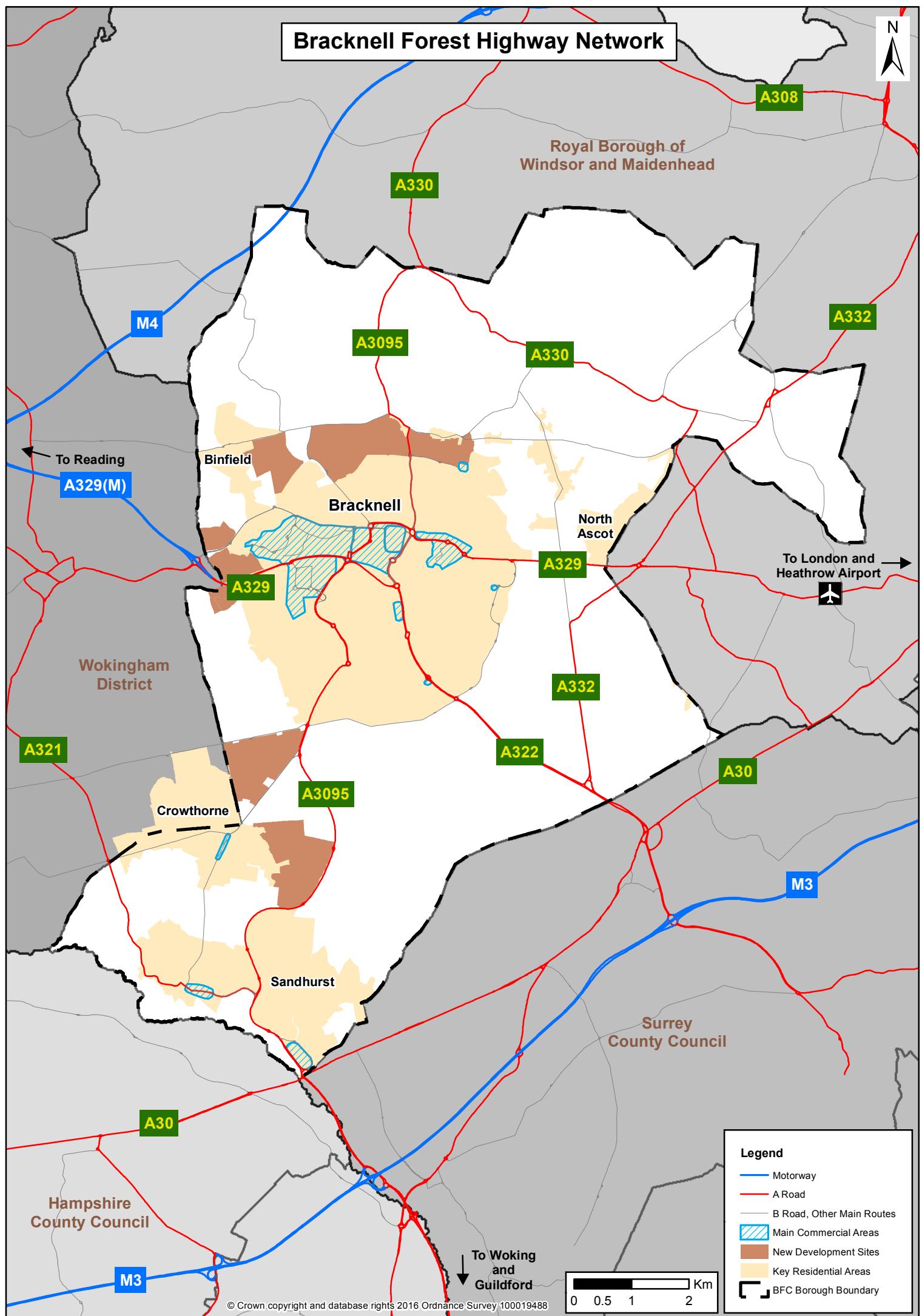
The pressures on Bracknell Forest's strategic and local road network are far ranging, with dominant flows focused on the M3-M4 corridor link, daily activity around our local schools, journeys to and from our town and retail centres and shifting patterns emerging from major development sites across the Borough.

Much of Bracknell Forest, including its road infrastructure, has been constructed during the past 50 years. Bracknell town itself was designated as a 'new town' in 1949, and built in response to post-war housing shortages. The layout of the central road network is generally typical of the time. Smaller villages and satellite towns such as Crowthorne and Sandhurst have more historic centres and road connections, yet also have a significant volume of 'newer' residential and commercial development. Many older roads have been upgraded as the Borough has grown, particularly since the 1980's.

Residential and commercial growth in the Borough has continued through to the present day with further growth linked to the new Town Centre regeneration and adopted site allocations local plan that will bring 11,000 additional homes. Major corridors such as the A322, A329 and A3095 are being upgraded to accommodate future traffic growth, and a complete regeneration of Bracknell town centre has required further changes to the central road network.

The map on the following page shows the highway network in Bracknell Forest, and its links to surrounding areas.

Bracknell Forest Highway Network



3. Managing Highway Capacity

With the expected growth of Bracknell Forest borough over the next ten years, linked to housing, business, and the regenerated town centre, the council requires a clear approach to managing its highway network. Pressure will not only come from local sources, but also from increased development in the wider Berkshire and South-Eastern area, as authorities remain under pressure to build more houses in order to cope with demand outside London.

Whilst the Council will continue its focus on Sustainable Modes, it would be unrealistic to assume that these can cater for the overall increase in demand on transport and travel within Bracknell Forest and the wider region. Road transport remains a dominant form of travel.

Advances in information technology are now such that Intelligent Transport Systems offer real possibilities for authorities to meet the challenge of a busier road network: by monitoring existing network performance, predicting what might happen in the future and providing the means to manage demand proactively and on an area-wide basis.

To capitalise on our position in the region, we will:

- Improve the capacity and functionality of junctions and route corridors such as the A322, A3095 and other strategic corridors as further capacity constraints emerge, along with continuing to address smaller individual junctions where capacity, efficiency or safety concerns are identified
- Work in partnership with major businesses to promote sustainable travel through information, support, the Travel Plan process, and by seeking LEP or DfT funding for projects aimed at increasing uptake in Bracknell Forest's workforce
- Expand Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and Urban Traffic Management Control across Bracknell Forest and with neighbouring authorities along key cross-boundary corridors, particularly at busy junctions where pressures are expected to increase as a result of traffic and population growth
- Share resources, infrastructure and contracts with neighbouring authorities to provide efficiency benefits

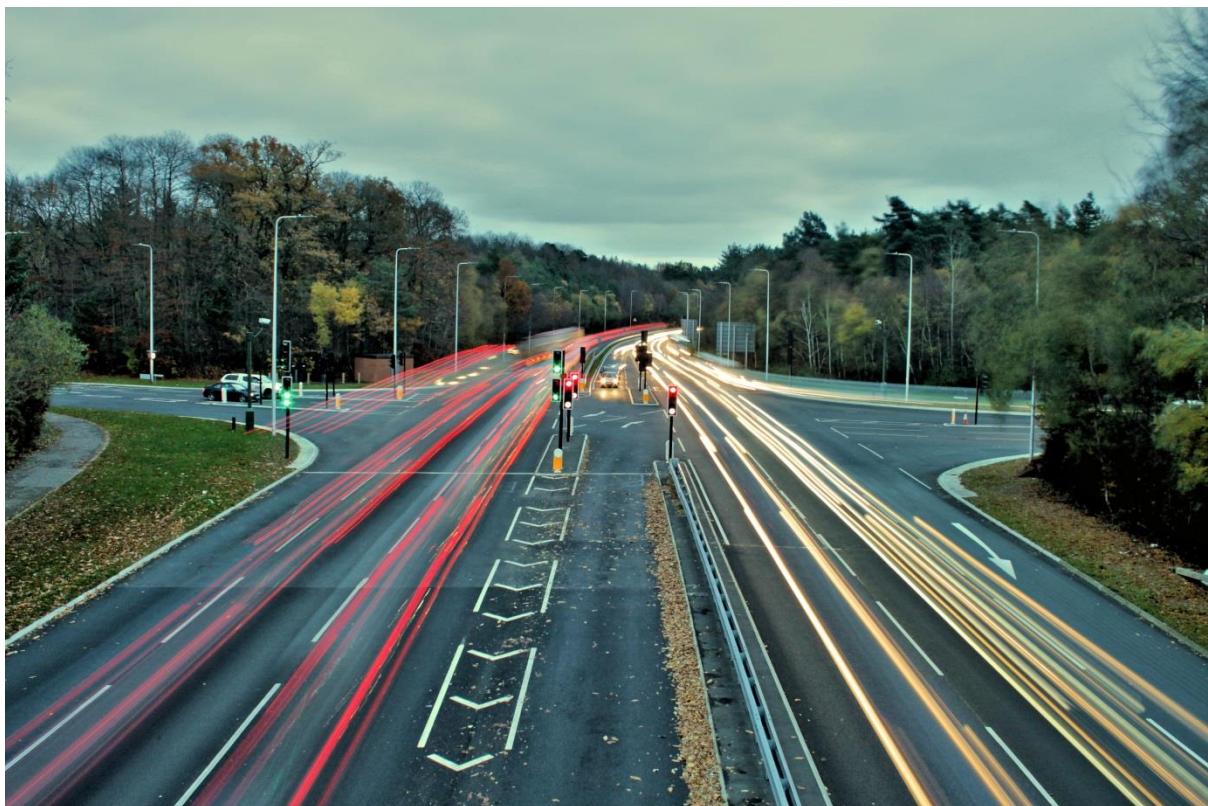
To support local growth and development, we will:

- Reduce the need to travel by supporting new development that is closer to public transport, shops and services, or is of a scale to provide such elements on site; and by working with developers to ensure that provision for sustainable travel is included in new developments through Section 106 / Section 278 agreements, and using the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Increase the choice to travel by more sustainable modes by identifying gaps in the cycle and footpath network, and investing in new infrastructure when opportunities arise.

- Encourage the uptake of low emission vehicles by seeking charging provision in a percentage of new houses, and in major council car parks
- Promote sustainable modes through council media, events and personal travel planning initiatives

To facilitate better use of the existing network, we will:

- Improve monitoring and management of the road network using modern open source applications, and ensure a flexible and effective system for monitoring and managing the highway network outside of core business hours
- Consider new technology measures to give priority to particular types of vehicles or road user as they emerge to the market, and consider successes or failures of new measures in other authority areas
- Provide reliable travel information to road users through web, smartphone apps, and variable message signs, so that they can make informed decisions before and during their journeys
- Explore opportunities for Intelligent Transport Systems and new vehicle technology to improve road safety.



4. Freight Management

Freight distribution is the physical carriage of goods and services by any mode of transport (by road, rail, air, water, and pipeline). This includes the provision of services and utilities and the movement of waste.

Whilst rail freight has grown almost 50% over the past decade, road transport continues to dominate, and this is particularly the case in Bracknell Forest. However, the mix of traffic has changed – the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles has reduced, while the number of Light Goods Vehicles and vans has increased substantially, driven in part by online commerce.

Alongside its core strategic routes, Bracknell Forest has an extensive network of secondary and tertiary routes which generally act as distributor roads from the main highways to locations within the Borough. However, movement by road, particularly where existing road networks are already well used and trafficked, can create and add to problems like congestion, have road safety implications, and harm the environment and quality of life of an area or community, particularly where HGV through-traffic uses unsuitable roads

In this context, balancing the needs of businesses and consumers alongside our aims to protect the environment in which we live clearly presents a number of challenges. Freight policies and strategic plans together with their implementation and delivery are needed to help protect our environment and communities whilst ensuring freight can move efficiently with limited adverse effect and disruption to all users.

To minimise the negative impacts of freight on the Borough whilst providing a competitive and efficient place to do business, we will:

- Seek to ensure that deliveries are timed and co-ordinated so as not to impact on the quality of the town centre through a partnership with businesses and their associated haulage firms
- Continue to promote preferred routes for freight movement with particular focus on network management for major construction projects, ensuring sat-nav organisations and the DfT have up-to-date information, and reviewing signage throughout the Borough (particularly at boundaries)
- Ensure that the design and layout of new development is appropriate and practical for the expected access needs of HGVs, and ensure that travel plans are in place on major development projects with freight considerations and mitigations to manage noise, times, routes, access and size of vehicles (during and after construction)
- Encourage more environmentally friendly freight, including the use of alternative fuels and low-emission vehicles by working with businesses and freight operators, and encourage installation of charge points for electric LGVs, making businesses aware of any Government OLEV funding opportunities as soon as they become available
- Provide a sustainable travel pack to businesses, and require / encourage travel plans for businesses.

5. Parking

Vehicle Parking is an integral aspect of most trips, and an important, often emotive issue in the lives of residents. Availability and cost of parking is a major factor in determining the mode of travel, and sometimes the trip destination. Whilst traffic volumes have fluctuated over the past 10 years, the private car remains the dominant form of travel for the majority of Bracknell Forest's residents, for both work and leisure.

Although many houses are larger and more contemporary than some of the surrounding and more historic Boroughs, many streets, properties, communities and businesses were not designed to cater for the number of vehicles that modern households own. Whilst in some circumstances, it is possible for property owners to add off-street parking, vehicles are increasingly being parked on street, causing concerns about access, and other wider social issues. Add to this a relatively modern and efficient highway network between the M3 and M4 motorways, and it is perhaps not surprising that car ownership and car commuting levels are high, with resulting demand for parking.

It is essential that parking is controlled, both in terms of numbers and price, to ensure the vitality of Bracknell's towns and villages, and a continued sustainable modal split with public transport, walking and cycling.

Bracknell Forest is expected to grow over the next ten years, with 11,000 homes being constructed along with new schools, shops, facilities and services. It is vital that as the borough grows, so does the transport infrastructure and choice available to residents, workers and visitors alike.

In order to facilitate sustainable, innovative and attractive new local development in the Borough, we will:

- Ensure there is appropriate parking provision in all forms of new development and redevelopment, through application of the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document
- Require new development to provide at least 20% of homes with provision for electric charging
- Ensure infrastructure is included in new developments to support travel by alternative means, i.e. footways, cycle paths, bus stops
- Improve the quality, convenience and security of public car parks, and of cycle parking facilities at high density residential developments (flats), town and village centres, rail and bus stations, schools, workplaces and leisure facilities
- Encourage residential and business uptake of electric vehicles by providing dedicated bays in Council multi-storey car parks, and promoting installation of home and work-place charge points through government funded initiatives

To address parking problems for residents and businesses, we will:

- Support local facilities (shops, services, facilities) by providing adequate parking provision for cars, taxis and delivery vehicles that is not at the detriment of local residents
- Support off-street parking schemes where practical without an adverse impact on their surroundings, including the provision of dropped kerbs for driveway accesses and disabled bays
- Implement on-street parking restrictions to address evidence-based road safety, highway obstruction or verge parking issues



6. Road Safety

Injuries from road traffic collisions, especially fatal or serious injuries, result in a substantial measure of grief and suffering for casualties and their relatives and friends. Collisions not only impact on those immediately involved, there is a significant financial cost to the wider community.

Improving road safety, which is defined as reducing the number of people killed and injured on Bracknell's roads, is a key element in meeting corporate and local objectives to protect the community and make Bracknell Forest a safer place to live.

Bracknell Forest Council delivers road safety campaigns and initiatives in partnership with Berkshire Safer Roads, the Police, and to a lesser extent the fire and ambulance services.

Where evidence of safety issues or concerns emerge, the Council will explore the opportunities available to address these, through engineering measures, marketing and promotion, and educational campaigns.

In an effort to reduce accidents and casualties on the transport network to a level which is as low as practicably possible, we will:

- Identify locations in the Borough that have a pattern of recorded accidents and investigate the causes to inform decision making and prioritise engineering measures
- Develop an annual programme of local safety schemes targeted towards casualty reduction
- Use road safety audit for all highway improvement schemes and monitor contractors who are working on the Borough's roads to ensure compliance with safety regulations

By engaging with our residents and businesses, we will:

- Promote sustainable, healthier alternative modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport, and consider the safety benefits that smarter vehicle technology may offer in future
- Work in partnership with Berkshire Safer Roads to deliver road safety campaigns and initiatives targeted at all age groups and transport users

7. Network Management Strategy

Under the Traffic Management Act (2004), the Council has a duty to secure the efficient movement of all traffic on its highway network without unnecessary delays to any users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, as well as motorists; and to facilitate the same on the highway network for which another authority is the traffic authority.

Bracknell Forest's road network often experiences congestion, particularly at peak times on key strategic routes. As road traffic continues to grow nationally and new residential and commercial developments increase the demand for road space, congestion could potentially worsen. This is exacerbated by increasing volumes of work and other activities on our roads and so it is essential that effective measures are put in place to control and manage the degree of congestion to reduce the inconvenience and disruption that inevitably results. This will benefit residents, the travelling public, communities and businesses in the Borough.

In order to ensure the effective and efficient movement of traffic around the Borough, we will:

- Co-ordinate street and road works as far in advance and as cost effectively as possible, and challenge any unreasonable work durations to minimise disruption to residents and road users
- Licence all activities on the highway network through the BFC Permit Scheme, and monitor the number of street works licence and permit applications alongside the Council's fees and charges to ensure that costs are adequately recovered
- Monitor the safety and quality of street works and issue Fixed Penalty Notices where conditions are breached reinvesting any income generated in the highway network management function
- Monitor congestion and traffic flow through dedicated CCTV systems and proactively respond to major incidents, whilst also investigating the causes of regular congestion or disruption and exploring any measures available to address them
- Co-ordinate the development of Intelligent Transport systems by working with neighbouring Boroughs to ensure any opportunities for cross-boundary working are explored
- Communicate live travel and roadworks information through council media channels and ensure VMS signage is accurate and provides up-to-date information to maximise network efficiency

8. Delivery

Implementation

The implementation of this strategy will require a partnership approach bringing together colleagues from both inside and outside the authority, public and private sector, who have responsibility for planning, data collection, modelling, design and engineering.

In addition, there are a range of stakeholders to be consulted with throughout who have an important role to play if the strategy is to be successful including residents, local Members, Parish Councils and neighbourhood groups.

Partnership working is key in effective implementation given the cross-boundary effects and implications of traffic management, and the growth that not only Bracknell Forest, but the whole Thames Valley region is experiencing now and in coming years.

Funding

Historically the overall Integrated Transport Capital Programme has been funded from the Integrated Transport Direct Grant, Borough Capital and S106/CIL developer contributions for transport related improvements.

To further support this the Council has, in recent years, secured additional funds from central government towards more strategic schemes aimed at unlocking growth. To date this has contributed to the implementation of over £20m worth of transport improvements aimed at achieving economic growth and bringing forward stalled developments such as Warfield and the Town Centre regeneration programme.

Much of this funding has been secured through Government Initiatives such as the Local Growth Fund and the National Productivity Investment Fund with the Authority providing a local contribution towards the scheme through a combination of Borough capital and developer S106 contributions. The Council will continue to work proactively to help meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.

Monitoring

Monitoring progress will be an important part of ensuring that the objectives of the strategy are being met. There are a range of publicly available data sources and data routinely collected by the Council which will be used to provide a measure of our progress. This data is used to inform Key indicators, annual progress reports, DfT returns, evidence in reports etc.

The Annual Travel in Bracknell (TiB) report is an annual analysis of the changes in travel in and around the borough. Data is captured from a range of sources to inform on rail and bus use, cyclist and pedestrian movements, and traffic flow. By reporting on changes in rail, bus, cyclist, pedestrian and vehicle travel, the Council can assess the progress being made towards delivering on the vision outlined in the LTP.