



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PLAN

Providing sustainable
travel choices for
our community



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OUR VISION

We want to help our residents, businesses and visitors make much greater use of sustainable transport for everyday journeys.

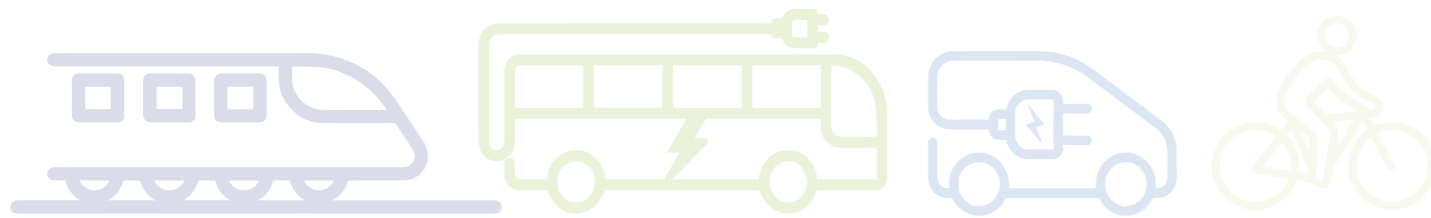
Making more everyday journeys by sustainable modes of transport will reduce carbon emissions. It will also reduce air pollution on our streets and support healthier lifestyles. It will also reduce traffic congestion and reduce casualties resulting from road traffic collisions.

We also want our transport system to be as safe, accessible and inclusive as possible so that our residents, businesses and visitors have good travel choices available to them.

As both the Local Highway Authority and the Local Planning Authority,

Denbighshire County Council has an important role in helping our residents, businesses and visitors to make more of their everyday journeys by sustainable modes of transport. This role can range from us providing new infrastructure such as more Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points and active travel routes, through to us working with schools to promote active travel.

As a Council, we declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency in 2019. As part of our response to this, we're taking steps to reduce transport-related carbon emissions that result from the delivery of Council services.



OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS





WELCOME TO OUR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PLAN

WHY WE HAVE DEVELOPED A SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PLAN

We all have a responsibility to make more sustainable travel choices.

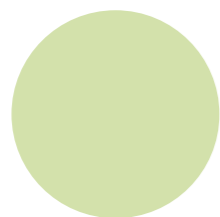
Transport is vital to how we function as a society. Whether that's for employment-related travel or travelling to a place of education; travelling to access healthcare, shopping, leisure and for social purposes. Even on-line shopping is dependent upon transport networks for the movement of goods. Transport will continue to be vital for the health of our economy and we must ensure that our transport network supports the economic growth of the area.

However, we must also recognise the enormous challenge that the world faces to cut greenhouse gas emissions and ensure that we take actions to reduce emissions by encouraging greater use of sustainable modes of transport. Transport was responsible for about 34% of the UK's carbon emissions in 2019, making it the largest source of carbon dioxide emissions in the UK.

From 2030 onwards, it will no longer be possible to purchase a new petrol or diesel-fuelled vehicle in the UK.

Research commissioned by the North Wales Public Service Board identified that transport difficulties in trying to access employment was a particular issue for people living in rural communities without access to a car. The same research also identified that a lack of integration between public transport services and between different transport modes was also an issue of concern.

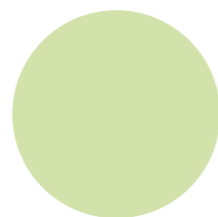
In developing this Sustainable Transport Plan, we have identified a series of actions which we believe will increase sustainable transport choices for our residents, business and visitors. This will not only help to reduce carbon emissions relating to transport, but will also help to ensure that our transport system is as accessible, inclusive and safe as possible.



Leader of Denbighshire County Council
Cllr Jason McLellan



Lead Member for Environment and
Transport
Cllr Barry Mellor



Chief Executive
Graham Boase

EXISTING STATISTICS



THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

In March 2021, the Welsh Government adopted “Llwybr Newydd - the new transport strategy for Wales”. The name “Llwybr Newydd”, literally means “New Path”, and was chosen to reflect the need to change the way we travel as a society. Llwybr Newydd is intended to shape the transport system in Wales for the next 20 years, whilst also setting clear priorities for the next 5 years.

The Welsh Government has set a target for Wales be carbon net zero by 2050. It has also set ambitions for the public sector in Wales to be net carbon zero by 2030. The Welsh Government’s Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs declared an ambition for the public sector in Wales to be carbon neutral by 2030. In 2019, the Welsh Government published Wales’ Low Carbon Delivery Plan, “Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales”, which contained a requirement for the public sector to baseline, monitor and report progress towards becoming carbon neutral

The Welsh Government has also made it a statutory responsibility that four Regional Transport Plans are produced for Wales, one of which will cover the North Wales region which Denbighshire is part of. To undertake certain regional functions, the Welsh Government has established Corporate Joint Committees, one of which has responsibility for delivering the North Wales Regional Transport Plan. Over and above

statutory responsibilities, it is important that Denbighshire County Council plays an active role in developing the Regional Transport Plan.

By its very nature, transport cuts across county and regional boundaries, making it vital that we continue to work closely with our partners across the region. As well as the developing Regional Transport Plan, another important example of regional working is the North Wales Metro project which we are an active member of.

The North Wales Economic Ambition Board (known as “Ambition North Wales”) is a regional partnership comprising of the six North Wales local authorities, along with leading educational establishments across the region. The remit for the Board is to develop sustainable economic growth for the region. Providing efficient, accessible transport access will be a key element for achieving such growth.



OUR DUTIES AS DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

As the County Council, we are the Highway Authority for all of the highway network within Denbighshire. The exceptions to this are the trunk road network and also private or unadopted roads. The highway network includes not just roads but also the footways and verges alongside, plus cycle paths, bridleways and public footpaths.

The Highways Act 1980 places duties upon us to maintain the highway network. Legislation such as the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 also places further duties on us to manage and coordinate the use of the Highway efficiently.

Whilst the above legislation has been in place for some time, we also have important responsibilities with regard to sustainable transport.

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 places a duty on all highway authorities across Wales to regularly map their existing and proposed active travel network. The Act also requires highway authorities to expand their active travel network and enhance existing routes annually; and to consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in all highway maintenance and construction projects. As well as these provisions, we are also required by the Act to actively promote the use of active travel

As a County Council, we declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency in 2019. We have committed to become a Carbon Net Zero Council by 2030 in line with the Welsh Government targets for the public sector. This includes actions to reduce emissions resulting from transport in the delivery of Council services, such as the replacement of fleet vehicles with zero emission alternatives.

The Equality Act 2010 also places a duty upon the public sector in terms of equalities. This includes the right to travel, the right to information in an accessible form, and the requirement that disabled people should not be treated less favourably, plus the need to make reasonable adjustments.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL HIERARCHY

The graphic below shows the hierarchy of transport modes that has been adopted within Llwybr Newydd. We propose to adopt this same hierarchy within this Sustainable Transport Plan.



The private car will still play an important role especially for certain longer journeys that cannot be made by other means such as by public transport.

We also recognise that dependence on the car will be greater in rural areas in comparison with more urban locations. However, the statistics tell us that currently there are far too many shorter journeys being made by car

PRIORITY - INCREASE THE USE OF ACTIVE TRAVEL FOR EVERYDAY JOURNEYS

Existing situation

The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 aims to make active travel the most attractive option for most shorter journeys. Its purpose is to encourage more people to undertake everyday travel by active means (such as walking and cycling) thereby leaving their cars at home.

The Act requires local authorities to produce active travel maps and to deliver improvements to their network every year both through expanding their network and improving the existing network. The Act also requires local authorities to promote active travel and to consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in all highway maintenance and construction schemes.

Please click on this link to view our active travel maps: [Active Travel Network Map](#)

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE SHALL

- Improve connections between the coastal National Cycle Route 5 (NCN5) and Rhyl Town Centre
- Connect NCN5 with Rhyl Railway and Bus Stations
- Construct an active travel link over the H-Bridge in Rhyl
- Provide active travel links between Llangollen town centre and residential areas
- Provide links from Denbigh town centre to the former North Wales Hospital development
- Link South West Rhyl to Kinmel Bay using the redundant span of the River Clwyd Railway Bridge
- Improve secure cycle parking facilities at key destinations including bus and railway stations
- Revisit the scope for “Walking Buses” to encourage more learners to walk to school
- Explore the role of electric bikes and recumbent bikes to encourage more people to cycle
- Work with our schools to promote active travel as part of the school curriculum
- Promote active travel generally amongst our residents, businesses and visitors

PRIORITY - INCREASE THE USE OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT FOR EVERYDAY JOURNEYS

Existing situation

Whilst active travel is suitable for many shorter journeys. Making longer journeys by sustainable modes of transport will rely on making greater use of passenger transport such as bus or rail. Also, for some members of the population, they may be physically unable to make journeys by active travel and may rely on passenger transport.

Most bus services in Denbighshire are commercially-operated which means they are outside of the Council's control.

Transport for Wales and regional partnerships are concentrating particularly on regional rather than local delivery of bus services, mindful of increasing the scope for longer journeys to be made by sustainable modes of transport.

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE SHALL

- Work with Transport for Wales, our regional partners and our bus operators to develop suitable and sustainable bus networks for our communities
- We shall work with Transport for Wales to introduce and incrementally improve bus services under the "Metro" brand
- The partnership will set appropriate, and where possible, aspirational levels of service depending upon the markets served. This will include suitable "through-services" and enhanced interchange points with appropriate infrastructure
- The partnership will investigate and develop more flexible and suitable services for market towns and for deeper rural areas
- The partnership will enhance, and where necessary, introduce a uniform community transport system across the county for those less able to use flexible or conventional bus services
- The partnership will improve multi-operator ticketing on a "one network" principle
- We will introduce more traffic management measures that give priority to bus transport such as removing bus lay-bys in towns and villages, and introducing bus priority measures at traffic signals (traffic lights)
- Improve integration with active modes of travel at bus stops, bus stations and railway stations

PRIORITY - INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS ACROSS DENBIGHSHIRE

Existing situation

Whilst active travel is suitable for many At the end of March 2022 there were 495 ultra-low emission vehicles registered to addresses in Denbighshire. This was 234 more than for the same quarter in 2021.

As of 2030, it will no longer be possible to buy a new petrol or diesel vehicle

The Welsh Government estimates that 30,000-50,000 fast chargers (rated at 7-22kW) will be needed across Wales by 2030.

As of July 2022 there were 16 public charging locations within Denbighshire

The capacity of the local electricity network is likely to be an issue in certain locations. This will require the use of some innovative solutions such as smart-charging which limits the amount of charge depending upon the overall demand on the local network.

The UK government is clear that merely switching from fossil-fuelled vehicles to electric vehicles will not be enough to reduce carbon emissions. There will also need to be a reduction in the amount we travel and greater use of more sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE SHALL

- Implement the next phase of public fast EV charging points in 8 public car parks
- Implement an electric vehicle charging hub in West Kinmel Street Car Park
- Actively seek out grant funding opportunities to facilitate the expansion of the EV charging point network in Denbighshire
- Work with private EV charging point providers, where applicable, to facilitate further charging point provision in Denbighshire.
- Develop a policy for those residents who don't have an off-street parking space available for charging a vehicle

PRIORITY - INCREASE TRAVEL CHOICES FOR OUR RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND VISITORS

Existing situation

Having good travel choices is vital. It helps people to access employment and education. It helps them to access the services they need and to keep in touch with friends, family and other social groups. It enables businesses to reach their market places and to access the goods and services they need to in order to operate efficiently as a business. Travel choices should be as inclusive as possible and not exclude some members of society.

The previous priorities listed serve to increase available options and quality of provision in terms of active travel, access to passenger transport and electric vehicle charging points. These options will not be suit everyone at all times, however. For example, some rural locations will not have specific active travel infrastructure and conventional bus services may be infrequent. The cost of electric vehicle ownership may also be prohibitive for some people.

It is, therefore, important that alternative travel options such as flexible bus services, community car schemes and car share schemes are considered to help fill some of these "gaps" in existing transport provision. Much good work has already been taking place in regard to flexible bus services in particular with three existing services already in place. A community car scheme is currently being piloted in the Edeyrnion area of South Denbighshire.

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE SHALL

- Evaluate the three existing flexible bus services and if the evaluation shows the services to have been successful, we will seek to extend flexible services to other market towns.
- We will invest in flexible services for deeper rural areas, extending both reach and journey opportunities
- Replace appropriate conventional Sunday and public holiday services with flexible services where demand is lower
- Seek options to support and expand further community car schemes subject to funding
- Develop our own, or support existing car share schemes as appropriate and subject to funding

PRIORITY - REDUCE TRANSPORT- RELATED CARBON EMISSIONS THAT RESULT FROM THE DELIVERY OF COUNCIL SERVICES

IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WE SHALL

Existing situation

The previous five priorities relate to actions that we intend to take as a County Council chiefly in our roles as both the local highway authority and the local planning authority for the county of Denbighshire. These actions are focused on what we can do to help our residents, business and visitors to make more sustainable travel choices for every day journeys, with resulting benefits around reduced carbon emissions and health, in particular.

As the County Council, we are a major employer in our local area. As well as the many commuting journeys this generates, the delivery of many of the services we provide is dependent upon transport. In 2019, we took the step of declaring a Climate and Ecological Change Emergency to underline our commitment to becoming a net carbon zero and ecologically positive council by 2030.

As such, we are undertaking a number of projects and actions to reduce carbon emissions across the council and this includes some which relate to reducing transport emissions. This has already seen the replacement of a large number of fossil-fuelled council vehicles with electric vehicle equivalents, along with the provision of charging points in council offices and depots.

- Continue to replace our existing stock of fleet vehicles with zero emission alternatives
- Seek ways to reduce the need for business travel relating to the delivery of council services. As well as home-working options, this could include staff working at their nearest suitable council building, for some of the time.
- Make more use of electric pool vehicles instead of staff using their own vehicles to undertake work-related travel



FUNDING

Providing new infrastructure is expensive and often requires significant amounts of capital investment.

The Welsh Government and UK Government make various grants available for funding projects that help to meet particular policy objectives. This can include grants for specific types of project, such as the Welsh Government's Active Travel Fund, for example. There is also a Welsh Government grant that makes funding available for measures to improve bus infrastructure or for traffic management measures that give priority to buses. The UK Government also has grants that local authorities across the whole of the UK can apply for, such as the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) grant which can be used to contribute towards the cost of electric vehicle charging points in locations that can be used by residents charging their vehicles outside, or near, their homes.

Denbighshire County Council have successfully applied for Welsh Government grants relating to transport over for over two decades, and will continue to need to do so to fund some of the projects and initiatives referred to in this Sustainable Transport Plan. It should also be noted that the Council itself has contributed millions of pounds towards previous projects as match-funding towards the various grants applied for. It is envisaged that this will continue.

All projects that we apply for are assessed by the Council's Strategic Investment Group to ensure that they offer value for money and are affordable in terms of the initial capital costs, and in terms of any future revenue implications that the project may have.

FUTURE PROJECT MONITORING

To help with the delivery of this Plan, the Council will be appointing a Sustainable Transport Officer. This Officer will help to deliver active travel projects, and will also assist in the delivery of some other projects, particularly where extra staff resource is required.

We already monitor things such as road traffic collision data, traffic flows and traffic speeds. We also count numbers of pedestrians and cyclists using new facilities such as new active travel routes, often as a requirement of grant funding.

We need to consider what else we will need to monitor to assess the effectiveness of this Sustainable Transport Plan. We would be interested to hear your views on how we should do this. An example, of this would be how best to monitor things like modal share (i.e. numbers of people using different modes of transport) to monitor trends and changes over time.