

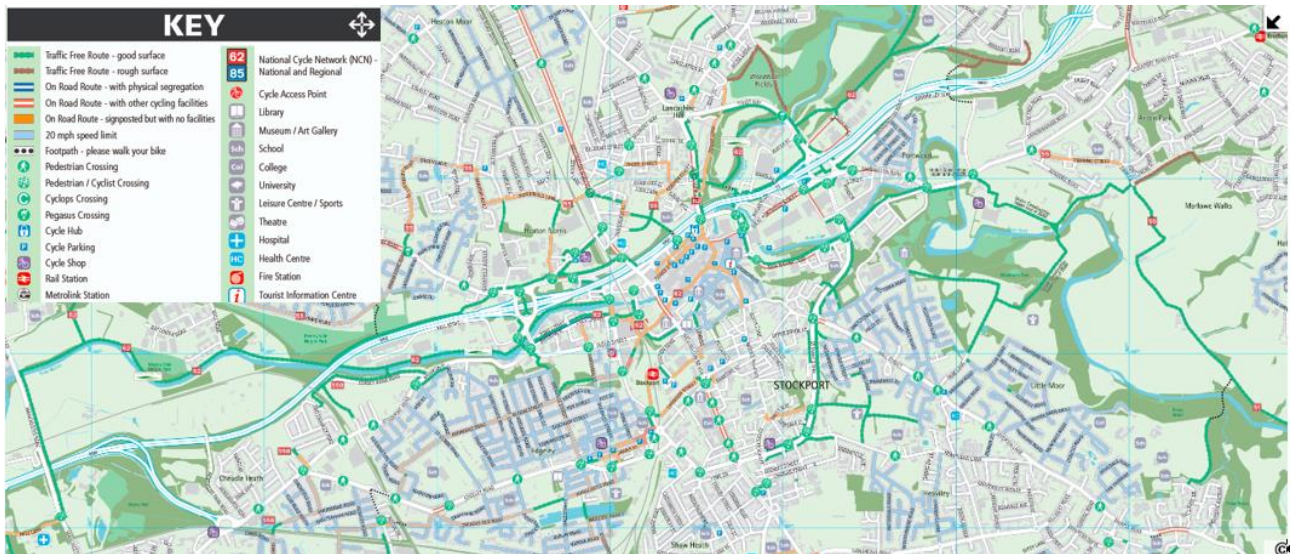
**WALKING AND CYCLING UPDATE REPORT****Report of the Director of Place Management****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To advise Councillors as to the progress with the delivery of the Walking and Cycling Strategy and the wider commitment to active travel.

**2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1. Greater Manchester continues to deliver the vision to deliver a joined-up transport system, through the Bee Network, initially focused on active travel with sustainable transport being added starting with buses reform in 2023, with expectations to add trams from 2024 and commuter trains by 2030 - transforming how people travel in and around Greater Manchester.
- 2.2. The aspiration is that the network will be simple and accessible, supporting seamless end-to-end journeys whether you are walking, wheeling, travelling by bike or on public transport. Easy to understand and offer great value too with capped daily fares and tickets - no matter how many times you travel or how the journey is made.
- 2.3. The original vision for the Bee Network was unveiled in 2018 and is developing under Active Travel Commissioner, Dame Sarah Storey, with a refreshed active travel mission for Greater Manchester focusing on accessibility, behaviour change and clear communications. TfGM have released the [Active Travel in Greater Manchester Annual Report – 2023](#) which captures progress so far. This report was submitted to the Bee Network Committee on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2023.
- 2.4. The Greater Manchester vision is supported by the Stockport's Active Community Strategy 2022-2030 which builds on our whole system approach to support Stockport residents become more active and enjoy the health, social and environmental benefits of being more active.
- 2.5. Within the Active Community Strategy is the Stockport Walking and Cycling Plan. Through the plan "By 2029 our ambition is to deliver a high quality and fully connected walking and cycling network across the borough. We want to promote walking and cycling as regular and easy to access forms of transport for all age groups and ability levels."
- 2.6. Stockport council also has a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) in which we have identified 7 focus areas to further support the ability to travel actively in the borough.

- 2.7. Most recently Stockport has adopted a policy statement on access controls to guide officers in how to provide the necessary access to different path users supporting the needs of residents and vulnerable users.
- 2.8. It should be noted that the creation of a network of this size and complexity will take time and the changes in movement on a critical scale will only be realised once the user can see that their journeys, both utility and leisure, can be made utilising it. A snapshot of the current delivered network from the TfGM cycle map is shown below. Detailed access to this map can be found at <https://tfgm.com/cycling-district-maps>. The council is working to develop a high quality and detailed QGIS layer of the councils cycling facilities which will be ready to share in the coming year.



### 3. SCHEMES AND INITIATIVES DELIVERED IN STOCKPORT

3.1. There have been a number of areas of work that have fed into the delivery of these Walking and Cycling aims.

#### 3.2. Schemes Delivered / In Construction

3.2.1. The most recently delivered walking and cycling schemes include:

- 3.2.1.1. **Active Travel Fund (ATF) Marketplace and Underbanks:** a new pedestrianisation scheme for the Market Place and Underbanks that will improve the visitor experience for residents and businesses as part of the regeneration of the town centre. Including automated bollards and related Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 3.2.1.2. **ATF Mauldeth Road:** crossing facilities for active travel users on Mauldeth Road at its junction with Kingsleigh Road.
- 3.2.1.3. **ATF Edgeley – Stockport:** a cycle route from the Town Hall to the Market Place including crossings on Wellington St and Duke St due on site early 2024.
- 3.2.1.4. **Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Bosden Fold, Hazel Grove –** zebra crossing to improve pedestrian access to St Simons Primary School.
- 3.2.1.5. **Mayoral Challenge Fund (MCF) Urban Traffic Control (UTC) Scheme Manchester Road:** improving a crossing at Manchester Road / Bourne St from a Pelican Crossing to a Toucan Crossing.

- 3.2.1.6. **MCF UTC Scheme Broadstone Road:** to signal Broadstone Road / Broadstone Hall Rd North / South, Heaton Chapel, including Toucan crossings on all arms of the junction.
- 3.2.1.7. **ITB Bramhall:** Path improvement from Bramhall Lane South to Dawlish Close (with upgrade to Bramhall Lane South/Holland Road Toucan crossing to happen in 23/24).
- 3.2.1.8. **ITB Turves Road:** New Puffin crossing on Turves Road, Cheadle improving access to a well-used PROW
- 3.2.1.9. **ITB Compstall Road:** New Puffin crossing on Compstall Road, Romiley, to improve access to Romiley Station.
- 3.2.1.10. **Cheadle Town Fund:** New Sparrow crossing on Stockport Road and links between Oak Road and Newland Road, Cheadle.
- 3.2.1.11. **Cheadle Town Fund:** New Sparrow crossing on Cheadle Road and links between Bruntwood Lane and Brookfield Park, Cheadle.
- 3.2.1.12. **Cheadle Town Fund:** Improved path connection through Brookfield Park from Shiers Drive to Brookfield Road.

### **3.3. Schemes Activated**

- 3.3.1. The schemes already delivered have been or are in the process of being activated to encourage use by the public in 2023 include:

#### **3.3.2. Bramhall Park to A6**

- 3.3.2.1. The Bramhall to A6 Active Travel Scheme comprises a segregated two-way cycle route and associated links and upgraded pedestrian facilities from Bramhall Park to the Fiveways Junction and onto the A6 Buxton Road. It was completed in late 2022 and provides a continuous off-carriageway two-way cycle route from the Bramhall roundabout to the Fiveways junction.
- 3.3.2.2. A range of activation events to promote the route took place in Summer 2023, and Stockport's Comms team, in association with TfGM publicised the route. Events included an activity day based at Bramhall Park and Hazel Grove Life Leisure with led walks and rides, bike maintenance and information about active travel. There was also a scavenger hunt to encourage families to use the route.
- 3.3.2.3. Monitoring and evaluation has been ongoing on the route by Vivacity using Automated Traffic Count cameras at five separate points on the route. A more detailed update is in Appendix 1 of this report. The appendix identifies that the provision of the route has had a positive impact as well as acknowledging outstanding issues that are to be addressed.

#### **3.3.3. Cheadle Crossings Package**

- 3.3.3.1. The Cheadle Crossings Package comprises three new walking and cycling crossings. Two are located on Councillor Lane; one at Tarvin Avenue and one at Calderbrook Drive. Another crossing is located on Bird Hall Lane, connecting Grosvenor Road to Carnforth Road and Adswood Park. All three crossing points are built to 'sparrow' standard.

3.3.3.2. A range of activation events to promote the route took place in Summer 2023, and Stockport's Comms team, in association with TfGM publicised the route. Events included an activity day based at Cheadle Makers Market and Adswold Park with led walks and rides, bike maintenance and information about active travel.

3.3.4. **A555 and Links Scheme:** The A555 included a walking and cycling path alongside the dual carriage way which has been connected into nearby rights of way to improve its usefulness to active travel for nearby communities. The number of connections continues to be increased. For example the council has completed a walking and cycling link between the existing shared use walking and cycling path along the A555 and Cheadle Hulme. This has been created via paths alongside the A34, over newly installed and improved crossings at Stanley Road and the Sparrow crossing on Gillbent Road, and a new 20mph section in the St James' High School estate. Will have activation before the end of the financial year.

3.3.5. **Heatons Cycle Link:** The Heatons Cycle Link is a scheme to connect the Trans Pennine Trail at the River Mersey to the Fallowfield Loop in Reddish via off-road routes and quiet streets. The following sections of the route are now complete: in Heaton Mersey from the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) to Heaton Mersey Common, in Heaton Chapel from Heaton Moor Road to the Fallowfield Loop via Nelstrop Road North. The Heaton Mersey section includes a new sparrow crossing on Didsbury Road at Station Road, whilst the Heaton Chapel section includes a new toucan crossing on the A6 at Alford Road, and the flexi-paving, lighting and upgrading of Nelstrop Road North from near its junction with Marbury Road, to the Fallowfield Loop. Will have activation before the end of the financial year.

3.3.6. **Cheadle Towns Fund Walking and Cycling Schemes:** A package of walking and cycling measures was developed to provide access to the new railway station and High Street and to connect to wider cycle routes on Manchester Road and in Abney Hall Park. The finished work within this scheme was activated in combination with the Cheadle Crossing Package.

3.3.7. **Hazel Grove Access Upgrades:** Improved cycling and walking access to Hazel Grove local centre and railway station, including an improved paths through Torkington Park and new crossing of Chester Road. Activated September 2023 as part of the Tour of Britain passing through the borough. Activation included bike maintenance and information about sustainable travel options.

#### 3.4. **Behavioural Change Initiatives**

3.4.1. In order to provide targeted promotion of walking and cycling and safety training the council continue to support a number of local, walking and cycling initiatives and national and regional walking events by the following groups: AGE UK; Walkaday; Ramblers well-being walks (formally Health Walks); TfGM; Living streets Modeshift (schools), and Love to Ride.

- 3.4.2. The South East Manchester and Crew Manchester Community Rail Partnerships are supporting Walkaday to promote their walks by publishing the leaflet of walking opportunities through the scheme and putting the leaflet in the stations on the line. This also supports the rail partnership to promote rail as an opportunity to access places to walk for leisure.
- 3.4.3. The communications team use social media to promote Road Safety. Examples of this have been TfGM's 'See the rider not the bike' campaign and Think's (DfT) messaging about changes to the Highway Code.
- 3.4.4. There are also Council led initiatives and public events:
- 3.4.4.1. **Stockport Moves:** This has been held for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time, previously branded as StockSport, and although it is focused around a number of activities it has involved raising awareness of cycling and walking for all and distributing information about routes and opportunities in the borough.
- 3.4.4.2. **Road Safety Team Initiatives:** A range of activities are provided in our schools these are: **Step Outside** – a pedestrian training scheme; **Headsmart** – Children learn about the importance of wearing a Bicycle helmet; **Child Speedwatch** – Children consider what may affect driver behaviour and how this relates to stopping distances. The children look at what they can do as pedestrians, passengers, and cyclists in order to keep safe; and **Bikeability** – Bike training is offered to Children in Years 5 & 6. In addition, the team contracts a company to deliver training to Years 5 & 6 as well and to Year 7. The company also delivers **Learn to ride, Balance and Family training sessions**. In addition to its own activities the Road Safety team help to promote events such as Living Streets **Wow scheme; Walk to School Week; Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel and Cycle to School week**.
- 3.4.4.3. **School Street Trials:** Currently four schools have school streets in the borough three of which are due to be made into permanent Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) before the end of the calendar year and one to be made permanent in the new year, subject to confirmation it will continue.
- 3.4.4.4. **Brinnington Active Communities Developments:** Over the last two years walking, wheeling, and cycling has been developed on a granular level in Brinnington, as part of the wider Stockport Moving Together work. The focus on active travel began organically through an informally led Forum made up of residents and partner organisations where walking and cycling ideas were raised in various conversations. This gave valuable insight to understand that there is appetite to further access and coordinate walking and cycling across the ward.
- 3.4.4.5. This led to the formation of a Walking Forum and a Cycling Forum, specifically for Brinnington and a wide range of initiatives that have been promoting the use of walking and cycling by residents.

- 3.4.5. The Council also work with external groups which are seeking to promote the improvement of walking and cycling in the local area and wider. This includes: working with our nine local walk ride groups regarding proposals in their areas and suggestions they have when funding is available; our participation in the Greater Manchester Trans Pennine Trail board meetings and wider work with the Trans Pennine Trail and Sustrans to improve local Sustrans routes.

### **3.5. Maintenance Through Capital Funding**

- 3.5.1. **Park Path Maintenance/ improvement:** Paths in parks have received maintenance funding to improve the walking facilities in these locations. East Avenue, Gately Recreation Ground and Torkington Park which will be completed this financial year.

- 3.5.2. **Highway Improvement Plan (HIP):** Pavements across the borough have received funding for reconstruction or preventive maintenance to increase the percentage of the overall network that is in a good state of repair. This funding ended in November 2023.

- 3.5.3. Public Rights of Way have also benefited in the 2023-24 capital programme from funding for resurfacing where they are already bitmap or hard surfaced. This is on top of repairs and maintains to other unsurfaced routes including working with landowners to maintain their stiles and gates and addressing overgrowth of vegetation.

## **4. FUNDING**

- 4.1. While much of the transport funding has come through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Programme funding, the majority of funding for walking and cycling schemes has been accessed by funding bids. Recently this has been through the Mayoral Transport Plan, Active Travel Funding and Town Deal Funding. Currently the council is waiting on the outcome of the Leveling Up Fund, and the Capability Funding to progress some schemes.

## **5. FUTURE PLANS AND IMPROVEMENTS**

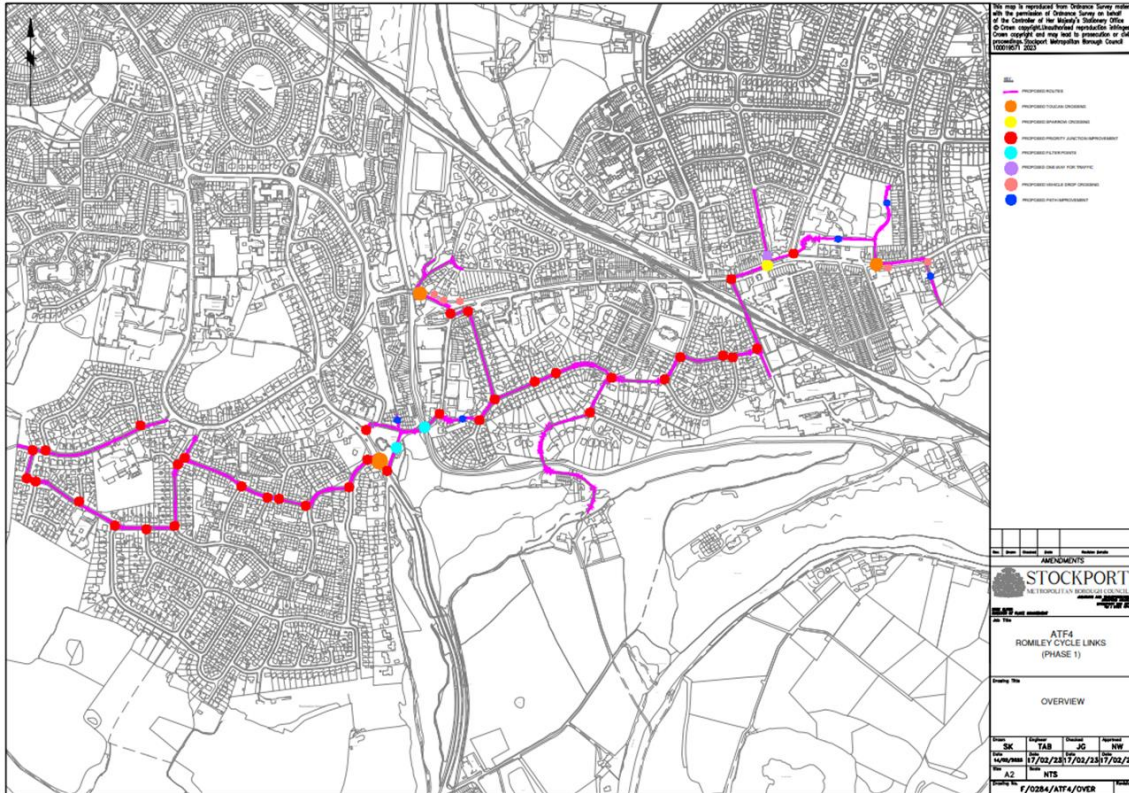
### **5.1. Proposals in Delivery**

- 5.1.1. There are a number of projects in delivery this financial year including:

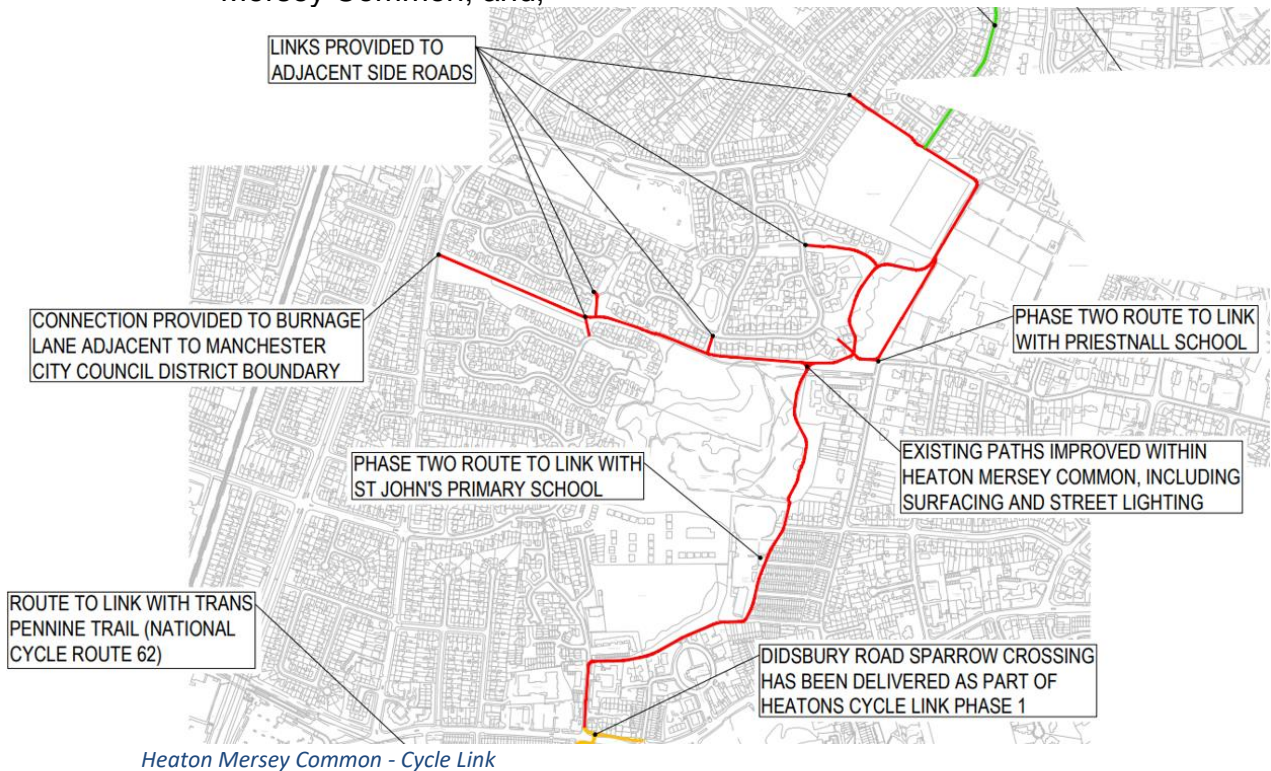
- 5.1.2. Active Travel Fund 4 (ATF4) Schemes:** The-bid for the GM application to the ATF4 fund was successful. Stockport have the following schemes approved and they will be on site by the end of the financial year:

- 5.1.2.1. **Romiley to Stockport scheme elements,** A package of improvements including crossings, cycling and walking routes;

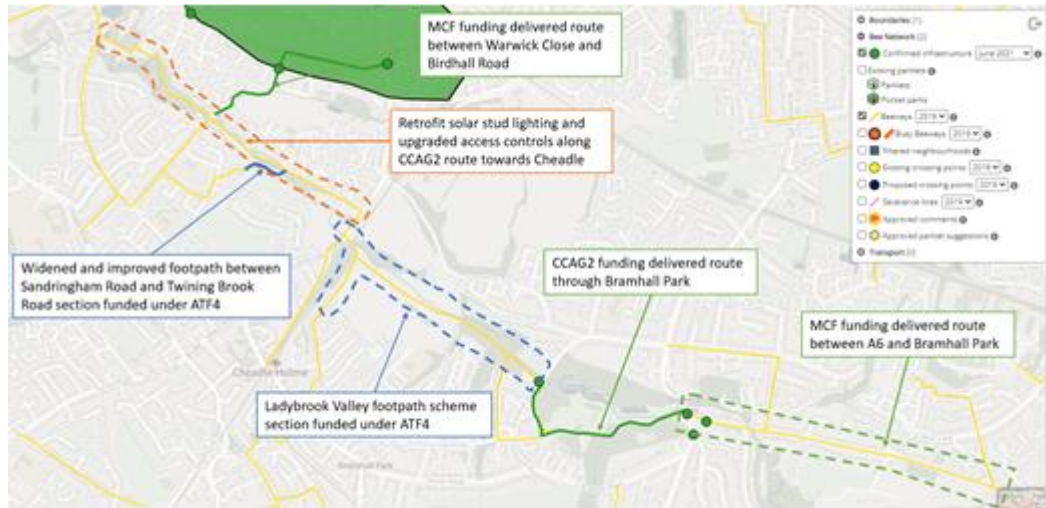




5.1.2.2. **Heatons Cycle link elements** ,section of the route through Heaton Mersey Common; and,



5.1.2.3. **Bridleway on the Ladybrook Valley**, upgrading the footpath to be suitable for horses and cyclists.



*Ladybrook Valley Bridleway improvement*

5.1.3. **Mayoral Challenge Fund (MCF):** Funding is agreed for Urban Traffic Control Crossing Improvements at Edgeley Rd / Dale St, which are expected to be on site in 2023/24.

5.1.4. **Stockport Interchange:** and related access including the bridge to the rail station and the ramp to and from the roof top park. The work on this project is expected to be complete in 2024. The plan of the walking and cycling facility can be seen in Appendix 2.

## 5.2. Proposals in Development

5.2.1. There is a range of projects that are proposed for the continued development for delivery of walking and cycling improvements in the borough. Some of these are funded for delivery including:

5.2.2. **A34 Major Roads Network (MRN) Corridor Improvement Plan:** The improvements are designed to support sustainable travel with a 5.6km pedestrian and cycle route along the A34 corridor. This includes a segregated cycle track and controlled crossings with connections to the wider Greater Manchester Cycle Bee Network and local public rights of way; businesses with works to improve access to the Cheadle Royal Business Park and the Stanley Green business area by improving key junctions and providing better walking and cycling access; and education with replacement of an existing subway beneath the A34 at Kingsway School to provide a better link for the split school site and allow for a key east-west cycle route. Full Business Case (FBC) for the A34 MRN was submitted for DfT approval in early spring of this year, and the Government has recently announced it will fund this scheme.

5.2.3. **Greek Street Bridge:** replacement is within the CRSTS and the National Rail Programme but there is a proposal that the bridge replacement will also lead to the improvement of the walking and cycling facilities at this junction. The bridge replacement will start in 2024. Consultation is expected to start in spring 2024.



- 5.2.4. Along with a range of other smaller schemes which will continue to deliver the walking and Cycling improvements of the Borough.
- 5.2.5. Some of these schemes only have the funding for development or are otherwise subject to the identification of further funding for delivery including:
- 5.2.6. **Active Neighbourhoods:** The Council undertook a trial/ consult on active neighbourhoods.
- 5.2.6.1. **Active Neighbourhood in Heaton Chapel:** The Council conducted an for a three-month period from September to November 2021, delivered under the Mayoral Challenge Fund for Walking and Cycling. A pre-trial consultation informed the design of the trial scheme, and a post-trial consultation and traffic monitoring informed the scheme's results. At area committee, ward members supported the design of and consultation on a permanent Active Neighbourhood scheme in the trial area. This scheme received further development funding which will enable a consultation on the final scheme. Final delivery will depend on future funds. A consultation is expected to take place in early 2024.
- 5.2.6.2. The development of other Active Neighbourhood schemes including those in Romiley and Cheadle are still part of the ambition of the Council but will need successful funding bids to proceed further.
- **Romiley Active Neighbourhood:** Following public consultation and Councillor and officer discussions, the proposed trial area encompassed the primarily residential area to the east and the area to the west of Sandy Lane and the area north of Compstall Road.
  - **Cheadle Active Neighbourhood:** An Active Neighbourhood Trial was proposed for the Cheadle area of Stockport. A consultation and design process took place in Spring/Summer of 2021. However, it was agreed that there is a need for further public engagement on a scheme to deliver a scheme appropriate for the needs of the area.
- 5.2.7. **Town Centre West Accessibility Package:** is a necessary part of the delivery of the accessible housing developments on the site.
- 5.2.8. **Marple Area Walking and Cycling:** consultation has taken place with analysis to lead the development of delivery options, which will be subject to future delivery.
- 5.2.9. **Hazel Grove to High Lane:** funding for scheme development was secured. Feasibility design underway with various routes being considered and associated data captured, to develop a package of proposals. Delivery will be subject to further funding.
- 5.2.10. **Access to Non-Inclusive Paths:** funding for scheme development was secured to review paths and identify opportunities for improving access for all including cycling. Initial focus is on the Hazel Grove and Woodsmoor area. A site visit has been undertaken to 13 paths. A scoring matrix is being developed to allow prioritisation of the schemes. Any delivery of developed schemes will be subject to future funding.

- 5.2.11. Stockport is also continually working to improve last mile walking and cycling to not only public transport opportunities but also to other sites. Working with developers during the planning process to provide connectivity to their sites is an important element of this. This can include not only developers for businesses and housing but also school developments, medical facilities and new public transport locations. The physical infrastructure is supported by the requirement for a Travel Plan including behavioural change elements to support the use of the facilities.
- 5.2.12. The council as part of the Community Rail Partnership has also been supporting walking and cycling at stations. Recent improvements include cycle facilities at Stockport rail station; Romiley rail station crossing facilities; and improving access to bus stops as part of planning gain. Future schemes that we are working on delivering with our delivery partners include Reddish North rail station, Cheadle rail station and Stockport rail station and Interchange.

### **5.3. Future Behavioural Change**

- 5.3.1. The Council is planning on launching individual schemes in local communities highlighting improvements to connectivity. There will be social media, school and community-based events and other supportive activities.
- 5.3.2. The Council will continue to work with schools to encourage sustainable travel to school, improve road safety and address the issues of air quality and congestion in relation to the school run. Including, as relevant, the delivery of: signage, social media promotion, mapping, training, and relevant activities and events, including national and regional events, to improve understanding of issues.
- 5.3.3. The Council will continue to work with businesses and communities to encourage sustainable travel, improve road safety and address air quality and other environmental issues. Including encouraging the development of travel plans, participation in events such as Bike to Work Week.
- 5.3.4. The Council will also continue to support groups which want to encourage walking and cycling in other ways such as support groups which do lead walks and hosting events like Stockport Moves where they can showcase their offer to the public.
- 5.3.5. The Council will continue to work with our own GIS team and other mapping providers to maintain the information on mapping available to the public. This includes maintaining our own and TfGM's maps, as seen on the websites we and they maintain, and understanding how best to share this information with other map providers to improve their information.
- 5.3.6. There is a future planning and ambition to create "Active Travel Hubs" within Life Leisure facilities to positively promote and share information around reducing car use and walking, wheeling, and cycling more.
- 5.3.7. **Route Planning:** The Council is aware that many users of our network will plan their routes through the use of planners like "Google Maps". These use a combination of information to develop their routes. The council and TfGM's latest opensource mapping data is maintained so that those companies seek to

utilise it get the best data. We also report changes in the network to the ordinance survey to assist in their accuracy.

#### **5.4. Maintenance**

5.4.1. The Council is also aware that there is a need to continuously maintain the infrastructure that is provided. Surfaced routes are routinely inspected. Any actionable defects are repaired in line with Council policy. There are two key elements to surfaced route maintenance:

5.4.1.1. The construction, surfacing & street furniture which is reviewed periodically and renewed if found to be in poor condition; and

5.4.1.2. The cleanliness of the routes such as sweeping of debris, litter, and leaf clearance which on highway routes.

5.4.2. Repair of physical assets and clearance of debris or vegetation is done where need is identified and not on a maintenance schedule.

### **6. ACHIEVEMENTS**

6.1. In 2022/2023 school year we delivered the following road safety training:

#### **6.1.1. Road Safety Sessions:**

- 1998 Year 2 children received Step outside;
- 2140 Year 4 children received Headsmart;
- 1036 Year 5 children received the Crashed Vehicle Project; and
- 2099 Year 6 children received Child Speedwatch.

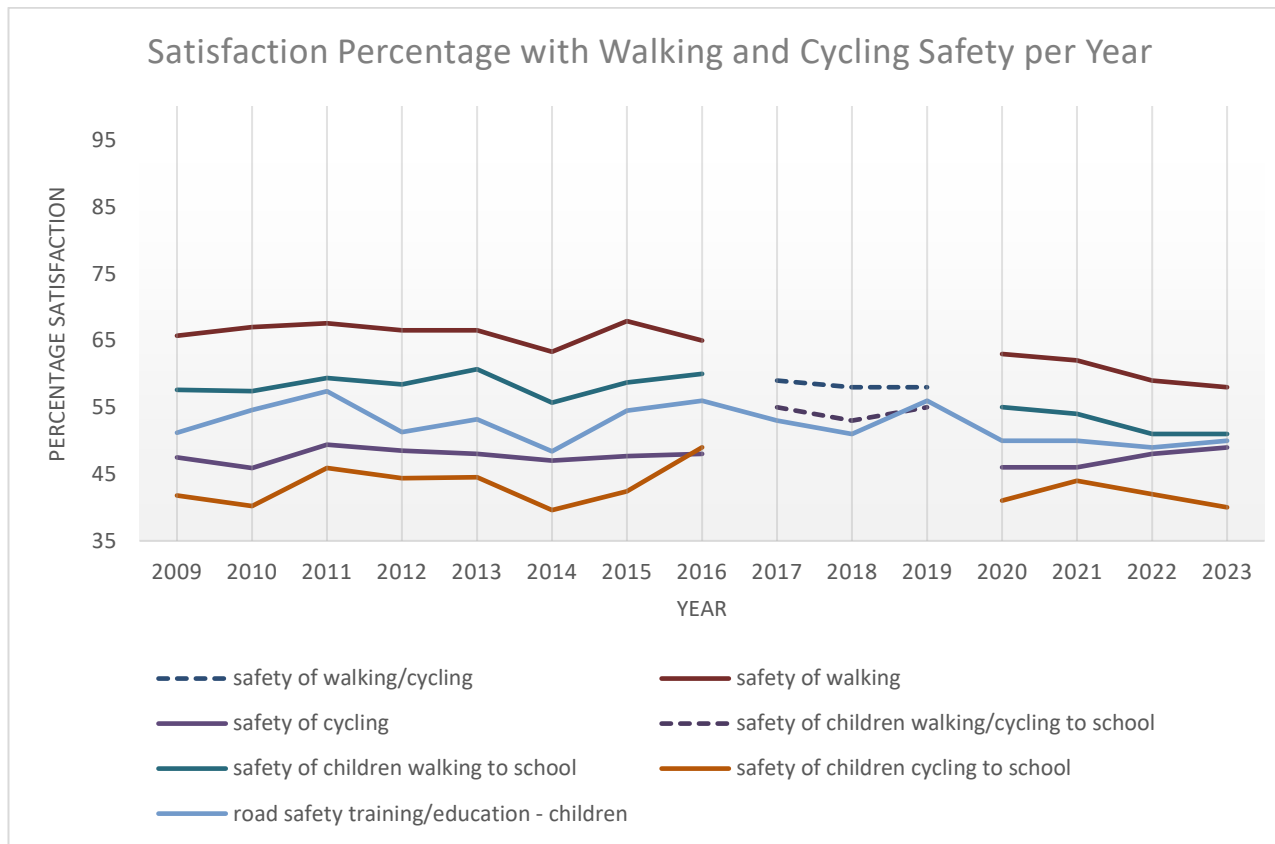
#### **6.1.2. Bikeability:**

- 447 children in Reception and Year 1 received Balance Bike training;
- 133 children in Years 3 and 4 received Learn to Ride training; and
- 1877 children in Years 5 and 6 received Bikeability Level 1 & 2 training.

6.2. For the 2023/2024 School year so far a total of 423 children have attended road safety session. We currently have 13 schools booked in to receive road safety sessions later on in the academic year.

6.3. The Council participate in the National Highways and Transportation satisfaction survey 728 residents responded to survey this year. A decrease of 54 from the previous year.

6.4. The below chart shows the change in satisfaction in perceptions of safety over time. The breaks in the years 2017 to 2019 are due to a change in questions asked. Cycling tends to have a lower satisfaction than walking and school travel tends to have a lower satisfaction than general walking and cycling. It should be noted that both road safety training and safety of cycling have improved over the last 2 years.



6.5. Between 2020 and 2022 the satisfaction with different aspects of cycling infrastructure improved. We related this to the current roll out of cycle schemes in the borough. The most recent satisfaction of 2023 drop back to 2021 levels. Potentially due to the level of infrastructure delivery not keeping pace with expectation. The satisfaction with the provision of paths for walking and running has decreased in the same period. Potentially this is due to the perception that cycling is being favored in the current work being undertaken.

**7. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1. This update report does not lead to any increased funding or risk considerations for the council.

**8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1. None at this stage.

**9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**



- 9.1. The continued delivery of walking and cycling improvements in the borough has human resource requirements especially where behavioural change work is needed. These programmes are acknowledged to have a need to provide continuing communication and contact with those involved to provide an ongoing changing behaviour. However, this update report does not increase the human resource requirements for the council.

## 10. **EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 10.1. The policies and programmes covered within this update report were all subject to any required equality impacts assessments.

## 11. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 11.1. The Council has declared a climate emergency and agreed a target to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. Approximately a third of all the boroughs carbon emissions comes from transport so the delivery of walking and cycling initiatives is part of the delivery of the climate action now strategy which is a response to the council's climate emergency. 43% of all trips that start in Stockport are less than 2km in length, with 44% of these trips made by private car (driver and passenger) these are trips that could be reasonably walked or cycled, and the work undertaken in this report increases the opportunities for people to make this change. Also 92% of residents live within 400m of a bus stop, and 38% of residents live within 800m of a rail station making walking and cycling to public transport possible for longer journeys.

## 12. **NEXT STEPS**

- 12.1. TfGM is currently undertaking an audit of the original elements of the Bee Network to understand what elements of the walking and cycling network might already meet the standard of the bee network, with no or minimal infrastructure interventions needed.
- 12.2. Earlier this year, TfGM appointed a team led by Mott MacDonald to undertake the audit, and following extensive work gathering existing data, a trial audit of c50km of routes, and the completion of a number of key 'maintenance' tasks on the GIS data which sits behind the network, TfGM are now ready to undertake the main part of the audit: a series of desktop and site audits of around 650km of Bee Network streets, roads and traffic free routes. The 650km of network for which we currently have budget to audit equates approximately to a 2km catchment of each of the 13 key centres of active travel trip generation which includes Stockport. The network should always be viewed as a live document and will evolve as we build it and this audit will help guide future work.
- 12.3. Officers will continue to work to improve active travel opportunities within the borough as far as resources and funding allow. The continued national and regional focus upon walking and cycling as a subject will hopefully assist in ensuring that such funding continues to be made available.

## 13. **RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET**

- 13.1. The Cabinet is requested to note the report and comment on the contents.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Mark Glynn on Tel: 0161-474-3700 or by email on [mark.glynn@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:mark.glynn@stockport.gov.uk)