

Bolton Transport Strategy



Executive Summary

July 2024

Bolton
Council

What is the Bolton Transport Strategy?

The Bolton Transport Strategy is our policy for the development of transport schemes and maintenance priorities within the borough.

It outlines the transport priorities that will contribute to our aspirations for growth, enabling access to skills and access to the opportunities in our borough.

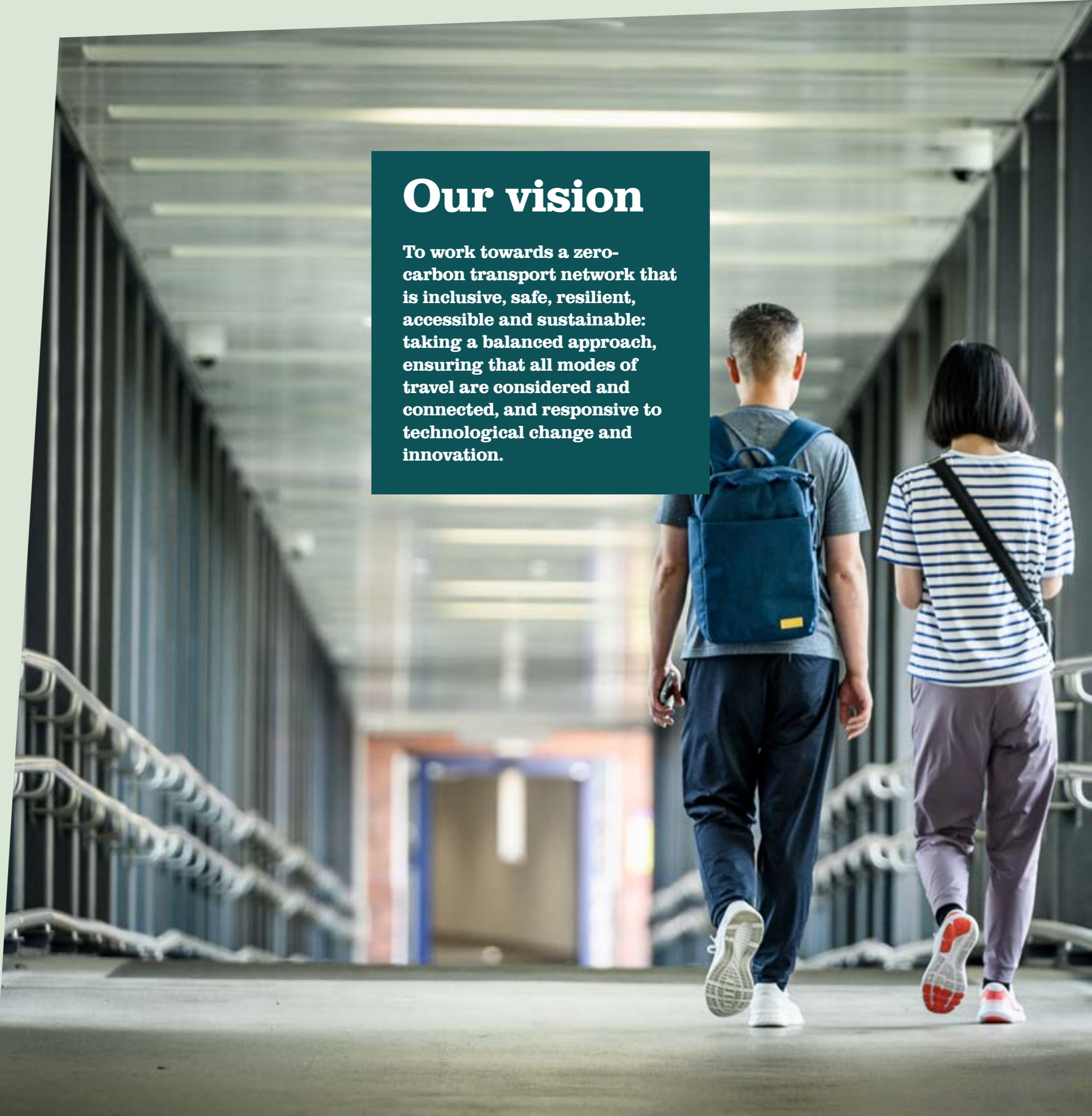
The strategy considers rail and bus services, road users and business needs such as freight services as well as walking and cycling by people of all abilities. Maintenance of our roads, footways and footpaths across the borough are key priorities too.

- **We want people to have the confidence to travel safely.**
- **We want to enable our communities to become more Active, Connected and Prosperous.**
- **We want Bolton to be a great place to live, work, visit, study and invest.**
- **We want an inclusive transport network to achieve this, so all people have the confidence to make their journeys within and beyond our borough.**

The strategy identifies our local transport priorities that we want to bring forward with our partners in Greater Manchester in the short and long-term. Our priorities will inform the regional Local Transport Plan for Greater Manchester.

Our vision

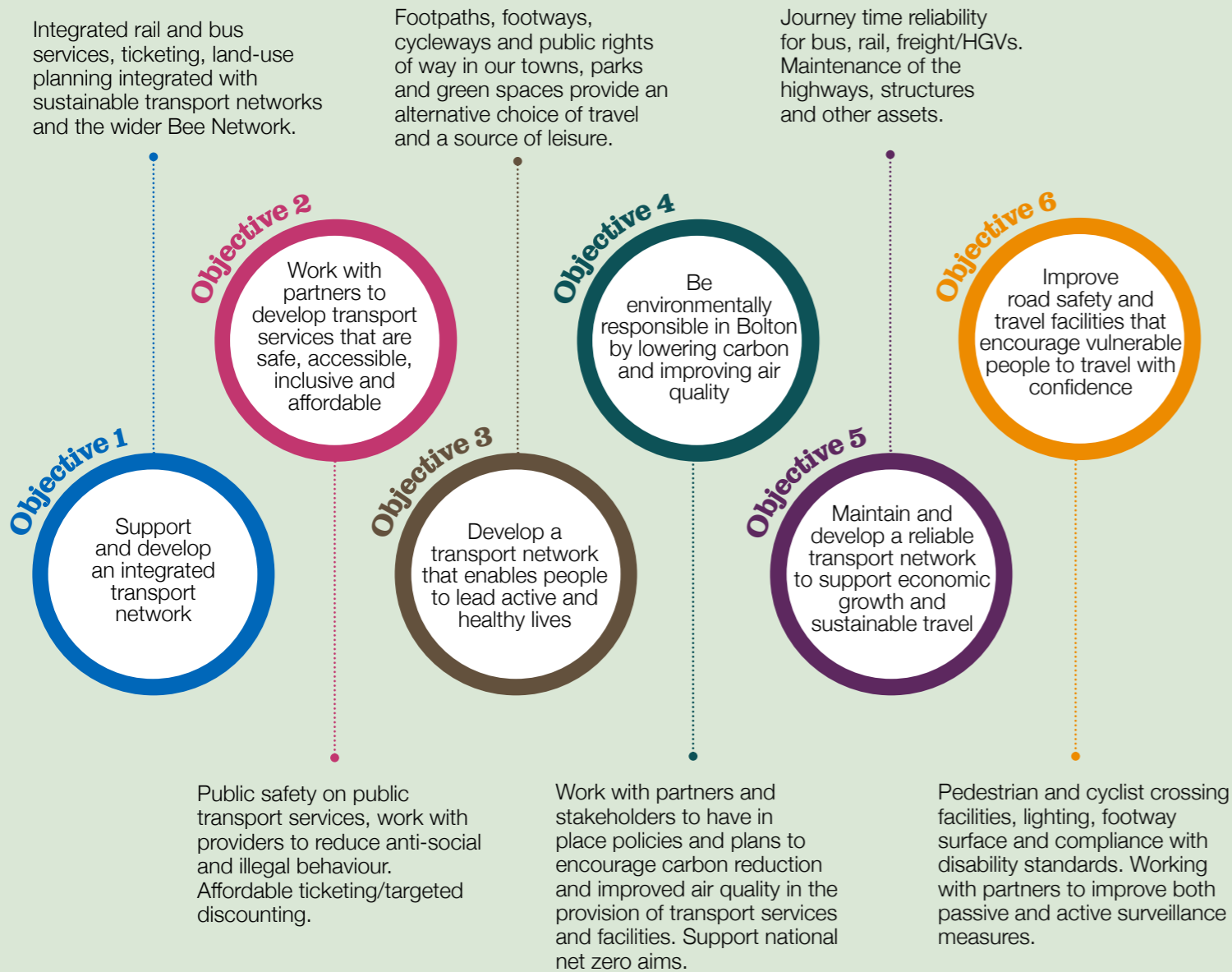
To work towards a zero-carbon transport network that is inclusive, safe, resilient, accessible and sustainable: taking a balanced approach, ensuring that all modes of travel are considered and connected, and responsive to technological change and innovation.



What are our transport objectives?

The Bolton Transport Strategy has six objectives which are designed to enable the Bolton Council vision to be achieved whilst also closely aligning with the transport priorities set out by Transport for Greater Manchester in the city-region Local Transport Plan.

This is important because many transport initiatives are cross-boundary into neighbouring authorities and can relate to regional funding arrangements.



A sustainable travel hierarchy

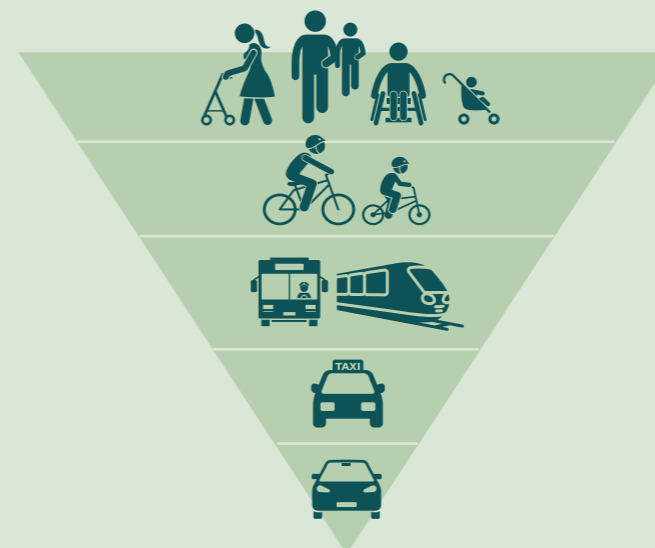
We want a balance of travel modes within our town centres to enable sustainable travel.

We want travel in the town centre to be informed by a travel hierarchy that prioritises walking and public transport. This is important to safely utilise the limited space whilst enabling a cultural and leisure offer, such as outdoor seating and events. This can drive footfall to our high streets and support the local economy.

Responding to our commitments on Climate Change, we encourage zero-emission delivery fleets, which means delivery methods for businesses that use electric vehicles and suitable loading areas that support our businesses.

We will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists by maintaining and developing highway safety measures. This is important for people with protected characteristics such as the elderly and disabled because safer roads improve access to the services our communities need.

A hierarchy of sustainable travel in the town centre



The Bolton Blueprint



The Bolton Blueprint provides Bolton town centre with a development vision looking towards 2040 centred on homes, employment, green spaces and transport. However, traffic congestion in the town centre impacts our time and health.

Congestion can inhibit access to important attractors such as Bolton University and Bolton Interchange.

We will prioritise pedestrians and bus journey time improvements to the town centre as part of the response to the problem of traffic congestion.

What you told us...

The Bolton Transport Strategy has been informed by engagement across Bolton with stakeholders to identify the transport issues that many people have and the potential solutions that should be prioritised.

Stakeholders included councillors from Blackrod, Horwich and Westhoughton, the Active Travel Forum, Transport for Greater Manchester and departmental officers within Bolton Council.

The feedback from the engagement has informed the priorities within this Transport Strategy, some of which are specific to locations within the borough whilst others are borough-wide.

These include:

- **Unreliable and infrequent bus services.**
- **Highway environments that impact local public transport reliability.**
- **Limited pedestrian and cyclist access into and around town centres.**
- **Safety concerns regarding current pedestrian/cycle routes.**
- **Congestion hotspots.**

Commonalities were found between the issues raised during engagement and the consultation feedback. This included the topic of improving rail connectivity with stations across Bolton, safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists, and improving transport accessibility for all.

Further detail regarding the engagement with the three Town Councils is included in the Appendix.



Our transport priorities



Our priorities for walking, cycling and wheeling

- A1** Develop a robust network of walking, cycling and wheeling routes across the borough.
- A2** Create and maintain safe and coherent walking and cycle routes to all our town and district centres.
- A3** Require new development to incorporate direct and coherent active travel facilities to local town and village centres.
- A4** More safe and secure cycle parking.
- A5** Maintain and improve the public rights of way network.
- A6** Support the roll-out of community bike libraries and shared bike services.
- A7** Improve the connections with educational facilities and develop School Streets.
- A8** Develop safe and attractive cycling routes to our growth areas at Logistics North and Westhoughton.



Our towns and district centres

Our town centre is the cultural, educational and commercial heart of the borough. Our university and college are important for skills and empowerment for our people wanting to equip themselves with skills. They are central to long-term place-making for the town centre that will support the whole borough and wider region.

The Bolton Transport Strategy will enable the transport network to support growth in a sustainable and active way. Alignment with the Greater Manchester 'Right Mix' sustainable transport ambitions will enable sustainable travel and support our commitments to net zero and climate change.

The strategy will support our Visitor Economy Strategy by providing a balance of travel modes to and within the town centre. This will enable sustainable travel whilst also supporting businesses with accessible car parking and logistic services.



Our priorities for bus services and facilities

- B1** Engage TfGM in Bus Franchise Network Reviews to ensure local priorities and aspirations are considered and accommodated in developing an accessible and sustainable transport network.
- B2** Improved bus waiting facilities and information, which are safer and accessible to disabled users.
- B3** Integrate bus services with Travel Hub proposals.
- B4** Localised bus services and circulars to support access to hospitals and health facilities in Bolton.
- B5** Bus services that support the evening economy and shift workers across Bolton.
- B6** Quality Bus Transit: Wigan-Bolton & Bolton-Bury-Rochdale.
- B7** Improve bus routes to housing and employment developments.
- B8** Bus alternatives to the car to access out-of-town retail parks.



Our priorities for rail services

- R1** Work with partners to improve rail service frequency and reliability.
- R2** Overcoming local and regional capacity issues that limit rail services in Bolton.
- R3** Safer access to rail stations by walking and cycling.
- R4** Introduce early morning and late evening direct rail service to London.



Our priorities for highways, parking and electric vehicles

Highways

- H1** Raise the priority of highway maintenance in an updated Highway Asset Management Strategy.
- H2** Manage traffic congestion with smarter use of our highway assets and technology.
- H3** Road safety improvements.
- H4** Improvements to support new development and growth.
- H5** Green infrastructure in the design and maintenance of our highways and footways.

Parking

- P1** Update our parking strategy.
- P2** Car parks are important for our local district centres and town council areas.

Electric vehicles

- EV1** Increase the number of electric vehicle charging points and charging hubs.
- EV2** Make charging points accessible to areas of Bolton with higher proportions of dwellings with no off-street parking.
- EV4** Provided dedicated electric vehicle charging infrastructure for taxis and private hire vehicles.



Preparing for autonomous vehicles

- AV1** Autonomous Vehicles: Future Proofing the Network Study.
- AV2** Work with partners to develop an autonomous vehicle route between Royal Bolton Hospital and Bolton town centre.

In May 2024 the Automated Vehicles Act became law which will enable the technology to gradually be rolled out on British roads.

Bolton Council want to better understand the implications of increasing vehicle automation for the road network.

The role out of autonomous vehicles is occurring over the long-term and as such, the Bolton Transport Strategy is considering the implications of the changes for the maintenance of the highway network over the next 15 years.

Bolton Council will undertake a review of the highways asset management plan to understand how our highway maintenance priorities, procurement and scheduling of our works should adapt to the way autonomous vehicles use and interact with the highway.



Delivery plan timescales

The priorities in the Bolton Transport Strategy are aligned with three delivery timescales.

The current measures are included as priorities in the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) for Bolton, which are included with the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040.

The funding framework for local transport in Greater Manchester uses the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) to 2027, and fundings beyond, as the key long-term funding source.

CRSTS includes components for the Integrated Transport Block (ITB) and Highways Maintenance funding. In addition, current and future rounds of CRSTS beyond the current period to 2027 will likely require local authority contributions for capital enhancements.



Review timescales

- **One-year:** We will review our transport strategy in 2025 to consider the funding and policy changes of the newly appointed government in 2024. This could mean changes to the delivery timescales, particular priorities and alignment with any new funding frameworks.
- **Three-year:** The review will focus on our priorities and outcomes in addition to a review of the funding and policy environment at the time.

Delivery timescales

- **2024 to 2027 for 'committed' priorities.** These include schemes that are either existing and ongoing, in progress on site or have funding committed and are in an advance state of preparation.
- **2028 to 2033 for 'in development' priorities.** These are priorities that will require a business case to progress or are long-term to be taken-forward with partners including Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), transport agencies and development suppliers when funding is available.
- **2034 to 2040 for 'aspirational' priorities.** These are major network developments or masterplans that will develop over a long-term timescale.





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