

Policy paper

The second statutory Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2)

Applies to England

Foreword

In the midst of the pandemic, we saw quieter roads, buses and trains. This was largely to be expected given the necessary public health restrictions in place.

However, during this time of disruption for much of the transport network, previously unsung forms of travel thrived. Cycling rates increased by 46% and a million more people started walking for leisure.

This active travel renaissance uncovered a pent-up demand for a different way of travelling, particularly for shorter journeys. Quieter roads and less congestion gave many of us the space, confidence and opportunity to get behind the handlebars or put on our walking shoes.

Now that the economy has reopened and road usage is back to pre-pandemic levels, we cannot afford to lose those active travellers. This second cycling and walking investment strategy (CWIS2) reaffirms our commitment to making walking, wheeling and cycling the natural choices for millions more journeys.

Active travel is good for the environment, our economy and public health. It's emission-free, which reduces toxins in our air and makes our towns and cities nicer places to live. It eases congestion, which is a drag on our economy. And it makes us healthier, helping to keep us fit and preventing thousands of premature deaths from physical inactivity and poor air quality while saving our NHS billions of pounds each year.

It's one of the best return on investment decisions governments can make, which is why this government has committed an unprecedented £2 billion of funding for active travel over 5 years. Our aim is similarly ambitious – 50% of all journeys in towns and cities should be walked or cycled by 2030.

The [Gear change](#) plan, which the Prime Minister launched in summer 2020, sets out how we hope to achieve this aim.

Enabling more walking, wheeling and cycling starts with making our streets more people-friendly and we're already making progress on this front. Working with local and combined authorities, we are delivering hundreds of miles of high-quality cycling routes, improving crossings, widening pavements and creating quieter streets.

These changes will make it safer for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle, and will help us achieve our objective for 55% of primary school-aged children to walk to school by 2025. Walking, wheeling or cycling to school has so many benefits and can also give parents and children the chance to share some quality time together.

This May, we announced £200 million for new active travel schemes across England, including £35 million for the National Cycle Network and a new £8 million e-cycle programme. We've issued 400,000 bike repair vouchers as well as delivering programmes to give everyone the confidence and skills they need to walk, wheel and cycle. Many of our early achievements have been showcased in the 2021 report, [Gear change: one year on](#).

But we now need to step it up a gear. CWIS2 outlines the total investment into active travel across government through to 2025.

That means, where possible, redesigning towns, cities and neighbourhoods to enable more active short journeys. It means making active travel more inclusive, by removing barriers that make it harder for some to walk, wheel or cycle to their destinations. And it means using the newly created body, Active Travel England (ATE), to set high standards for active travel infrastructure, new development design, engagement, training and behaviour change.

Faced with the rising cost of living and a warming planet, there is a renewed sense of urgency to act, and act fast, in choosing lower cost greener forms of travel. The past 2 years have shown that active travel is a practical and popular way of getting around for many people, provided the conditions are right. We've already made significant progress, but now we must push on.

Trudy Harrison MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State with responsibility for active travel

1. The strategy

It is our ambition that walking, wheeling^{[footnote 1](#)} and cycling are the natural choices for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey. Together with our partners, government has been working towards the delivery of this ambition, which was initially set out in the first [Cycling and walking investment strategy \(CWIS1\)](#) in 2017. As required by the Infrastructure Act 2015, this second strategy (CWIS2) sets out objectives and financial resources for the period April 2021 to March 2025.

Since the first strategy, walking, wheeling and cycling have continued to rise up the government agenda. Increasing active travel will have significant environmental benefits, helping to reduce carbon emissions from transport and improving air quality while reducing congestion and noise pollution on our roads.

This raised profile is reflected in the publication of various plans and strategies. On active travel specifically, the Prime Minister's ambitious [Gear change](#) plan to boost walking and cycling in England was launched in 2020 and followed up by [Gear change: one year on](#) in 2021, which celebrated achievements and set new and continuing commitments.

Commitments on walking and cycling also formed a significant part of the [Transport decarbonisation plan](#) (2021) and [Net zero strategy](#) (2021), which both recognised the crucial role of walking and cycling in delivering a net zero transport system and meeting our climate ambitions.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has undertaken significant public consultation on walking and cycling in recent years, including for:

- [CWIS1](#)
- [CWIS safety review call for evidence \(2018\)](#)
- [Review of The Highway Code](#) to improve road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders (2020)
- [Pavement Parking](#) (2020)

Responses to these consultations, alongside engagement with relevant stakeholders, as required by the legislation, have all informed the development of CWIS2.

This second strategy is set out over 2 sections, the first detailing our ambition for walking, wheeling and cycling and the objectives to move us closer to this ambition. Section 2 sets out the financial resources available to support these objectives, as well as performance monitoring arrangements and governance.

In addition to publishing the second strategy, we have also published the latest CWIS report to Parliament, which details progress towards meeting the objectives of the CWIS.

The government's ambition for walking and cycling in England

Our ambition for England

We want to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey by 2040.

This ambition was set out in [CWIS1](#) in 2017 and remains the overarching ambition for this second CWIS. To complement this, the Prime Minister's [Gear change](#) plan (2020) set out a vision for walking and cycling:

England will be a great walking and cycling nation

Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit.

Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030.

Our objectives for walking and cycling

This strategy aligns with the Spending Reviews 2020 and 2021, covering the period from April 2021 to March 2025. We have set a number of objectives over that period to measure progress towards our longer-term ambition for 2040. The financial resources to support these objectives are set out in Section 2.

The objectives, aims and target in [CWIS1](#), alongside the vision set out in [Gear change](#) (2020), have informed our revised set of 4 objectives to 2025^[footnote 2] to:

- increase the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities^[footnote 3] that are walked or cycled from 41% in 2018 to 2019 to 46% in 2025
- increase walking^[footnote 4] activity, where walking activity is measured as the total number of walking stages^[footnote 5] per person per year, to 365 stages per person per year in 2025
- double cycling, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of cycling stages made each year, from 0.8 billion stages in 2013 to 1.6 billion stages in 2025
- increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 who usually walk to school from 49% in 2014 to 55% in 2025

These objectives reflect our ambitions to boost overall levels of walking, wheeling and cycling across England while undertaking targeted investment to enable more walking, wheeling and cycling in our towns and cities.

The objective for walking is more ambitious than the 300 stages per person per year set in [CWIS1](#) and reflects the generally higher overall levels of walking that we have seen in recent years other than during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

We have also retained an objective to increase the percentage of primary school children walking to school, as converting these often short-distance journeys will have multiple benefits for children's health and safety.

Beyond 2025, the following further objectives reflect commitments originally set out in [Gear change](#), the [Transport decarbonisation plan](#) and the [Net zero strategy](#) to:

- increase the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled to 50% in 2030 and to 55% in 2035
- deliver a world-class cycling and walking network in England by 2040

Investment principles

The Prime Minister's [Gear change](#) plan has led to a radical transformation of the walking and cycling sector in England, with £2 billion of dedicated investment and the creation of ATE, an organisation resourced to ensure future investment in active travel infrastructure is delivered to a high standard and supported by evidence led behaviour change programmes.

The strategic investment principles below will guide how ATE, DfT and government more widely invests dedicated and ring-fenced funds over the course of the CWIS2 period.

Investment will enable everyone to walk, wheel and cycle

Equality and inclusion are golden threads that run through:

- [Gear change](#)
- [Cycle infrastructure design guidance \(LTN 1/20\)](#)
- CWIS2

Enabling adults and children to walk, wheel and cycle, including those with a protected characteristic, is an important focus in both the strategic plans of ATE and DfT.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out as part of the development of CWIS2 in tandem with an EqIA for the creation of ATE. These EqIAs consider equality and inclusion at the national scale, while ATE will oversee the development and application of

EqlAs at the local level as part of its remit to examine applications for funding and inspect finished schemes.

Not only must we fulfil our public sector equality duty obligations under the Equality Act 2010, but a proactive and inclusive approach to engagement and support is vital if we are to achieve an equitable, accessible world-class cycling and walking network where everyone feels confident and safe to walk, wheel and cycle their everyday journeys.

This includes consideration not only of people with protected characteristics but also the different needs of urban and rural communities, health and economic disparities.

It will also be important for new transport technologies – such as electric vehicles and their charging infrastructure, autonomous vehicles and e-scooters – to be considered carefully in relation to their impact on people's ability to walk, wheel and cycle.

Investment in infrastructure will meet minimum quality requirements

Continuation of a long-term investment approach to deliver high-quality infrastructure will be supported through:

- the development and delivery of [Local cycling and walking infrastructure plans](#) (LCWIPs)
- adherence to [Cycle infrastructure design guidance \(LTN 1/20\)](#)
- the revised Manual for Streets (due to be published later in 2022)

[CWIS1](#) supported a transformation from a short- to long-term approach to planning active travel infrastructure by, for the first time, outlining the financial resources available to local authorities for active travel over a 5-year period.

This has enabled local authorities to take a long-term approach to developing and delivering active travel infrastructure, using a range of funding streams to deliver schemes.

This long-term approach will be supported through ATE as part of a strategic objective to increase local authority capacity and capability around the delivery of active travel infrastructure and behaviour change programmes.

Investment will be fully integrated into wider transport and growth plans

ATE will play an important role in the spatial planning system, ensuring that developers, local planning authorities and others involved in, or undertaking, development embed active travel infrastructure in their policies and design from the outset.

DfT is also supporting local authorities to take a more strategic approach to local transport through renewed emphasis on local transport planning and funding reform.

This is essential to amplify active travel outcomes by giving places the opportunity to join up planning and delivery across modes (as referenced in [Bus back better](#) and [Great British Railways: Williams-Shapps plan for rail](#) plans) and infrastructure.

Updated guidance on the development and delivery of local transport plans will be published later in 2022 and will align with [Local cycling and walking infrastructure plans](#) (LCWIPs).

An example of funding reform is the consolidation of long-term funding through programmes like the new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) for 8 mayoral combined authorities.

Investment will maximise impact on wider government objectives

Walking, wheeling and cycling play a crucial role in achieving a wide range of priority government objectives.

Following the publication of [Gear change](#), accelerating mode shift to walking and cycling (as well as to public transport) was identified in the [Transport decarbonisation plan](#) and the [Net zero strategy](#) as a vital strategic priority in setting the transport sector on the path to net zero by 2050.

At a time of rising costs for households and government, walking, wheeling and cycling can provide a cost-effective way to reduce transport emissions and both the [Transport decarbonisation plan](#) and [Net zero strategy](#) set out commitments to support their increased uptake.

Enabling more journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling will play a significant part in meeting the government's air quality targets, including our proposed targets on reducing population exposure to particulate matter 2.5 (PM2.5), the air pollutant with the greatest harm to human health.

Road transport remains a major source of PM2.5, particularly in urban areas where significant numbers of people are exposed. Walking, wheeling and cycling can play a part in reducing the need for road journeys, enabling people and goods to move around in an emission-free way.

Walking, wheeling and cycling can combat physical inactivity, which costs the NHS up to £1 billion per annum, with further indirect costs calculated at £8.2 billion.^{[\[footnote 6\]](#)}

There is also growing evidence of their positive impact on mental health and wellbeing.^{[\[footnote 7\]](#)} The government's [25-year environment plan](#) has an ambition for more people to improve their health and wellbeing through access to green spaces, including developing green infrastructure in towns and cities.

The benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling were particularly strongly felt during the lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 when many experienced the mental and physical health benefits of this daily activity, as well as rediscovering local shops and services in a largely motor traffic-free environment.

Investment in walking, wheeling and cycling now will enable us to build back better, creating safe and sustainable towns, cities and

communities for the future. This investment will support ‘levelling up’, tackling inequality and supporting people and places that have particular barriers to overcome to enable everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

Investment will focus on increasing safety

Infrastructure investment and policy development must tackle road safety and personal safety concerns, which may influence levels of walking, wheeling and cycling, in particular for those with certain protected characteristics, such as women, children, disabled people and older people.

As outlined in [Gear change](#), alongside improving safety for people walking and cycling through changes to [The Highway Code](#), the delivery of better cycle infrastructure is the most important thing government can do to enable more people to cycle.

Equally, investment in footway maintenance reduces the incidence of trips and falls, improving lighting gives people more confidence to walk at night and improving crossings can enable people to cross busy streets safely.

In addition to the delivery of high-quality infrastructure, training and behaviour change programmes will help people develop the confidence and skills to walk, wheel and cycle safely.

More broadly, DfT has announced plans to develop a new integrated road safety strategic framework. It will draw on the Safe System approach, referenced in the [Road Safety Statement 2019](#), and will consider how to improve road safety, and the perception of road safety, for vulnerable road users.

Concerns about personal safety can range from not feeling safe to walk, wheel or cycle at all to being restricted to walking, wheeling and cycling in certain locations and at certain times of day. DfT will also soon publish the findings and actions resulting from its [call for evidence regarding reviewing personal safety measures on streets in England](#).

2. Financial resources, performance monitoring and governance

Section 21 (3a) of the [Infrastructure Act 2015](#) requires the government to set out the financial resources available to deliver the objectives of a CWIS. These are aligned to each Spending Review period, the first being from April 2016 to March 2021.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CWIS2 investment period includes both the Spending Review 2020 and Spending Review 2021 settlements.

[CWIS1](#) originally projected £1.2 billion of investment in walking and cycling (outside of London) over the 5 years to March 2021. This projection was updated in the first [report to Parliament](#), published in February 2020, to £2.4 billion, taking average spend to over £10 per head per year over the Spending Review period.

Alongside the publication of this strategy, we have published a second report to Parliament, which provides a further revised estimate of investment in walking and cycling (outside of London) during the [CWIS1](#) period. This revised projection is £3.245 billion.

The main sources of funding for walking, wheeling and cycling include:

- dedicated DfT funding for active travel
- wider DfT programmes
- other central government funding, which delivers active travel infrastructure or behaviour change

Dedicated DfT funding for active travel

DfT delivers a range of capital and revenue funded programmes as part of the £2 billion for active travel announced by the Prime Minister in [Gear change](#) in 2020. This includes funding for:

- active travel infrastructure
- cycle training
- the National Cycle Network
- local authority capability
- behaviour change outreach
- Active Travel England (ATE)
- e-cycle support
- the Mini-Holland active travel prescription pilots

The £2 billion of funding for active travel also includes a proportion of the [CRSTS](#).

Wider DfT programmes

The DfT funds a range of capital programmes which deliver walking and cycling infrastructure beyond dedicated funding for active travel infrastructure, beyond dedicated funding for active travel, including the [CRSTS](#), National Highways dedicated fund, Integrated Transport Block and Highways Maintenance Block funding.

Other central government funding

There are a range of other government funding programmes that will deliver active travel infrastructure schemes and some behaviour change programmes. They include the:

- [Levelling Up Fund](#)
- [Future High Streets Fund](#)

- [Towns Fund](#)

Total government funding for active travel

Table 1 provides an estimate of the total financial resources across government that may be invested in active travel over the 4-year CWIS2 period between April 2021 and March 2025. Many of the decisions on the allocation of these funds will be made by the relevant local body in line with local priorities, while ATE will ensure that relevant quality standards are met.

The projected investment has been calculated using a range of evidence and data sources. This includes funding allocations previously announced, successful funding proposals from local bodies, previous research, historical trends and an assessment of the proportion of investment into active travel projects and programmes from wider government funds.

This follows previous approaches to estimating the financial resources available in [CWIS1](#) and the CWIS [report to Parliament](#) published in February 2020.

These figures will be updated in future statutory reports to Parliament to reflect further investment from a range of emerging funding streams from policy areas including public transport, housing and sport.

Table 1: total government funding

Funding source	Projected investment from April 2021 to March 2025
Active travel revenue and capital funds	£1,298 million
Wider DfT programmes ^[footnote 8]	£1,328 million
Other central government funding ^[footnote 9]	£1,158 million
Total	£3,784 million

Performance monitoring

Progress towards CWIS2 objectives will be measured using annual National Travel Survey (NTS) data, complemented by other significant data including the annual [Active Lives Survey](#).

The core objectives covering increases in walking, wheeling and cycling and walk to school will continue to be monitored as set out in [CWIS1](#).

The government will also use supporting metrics to monitor the impact of objectives on those with protected characteristics as well as geographic breakdowns where data allows.^[footnote 10]

Further detail on progress against objectives and how they are being monitored can be found in the latest CWIS report to Parliament, which is published alongside this strategy.

The objectives relating to increasing the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled will be monitored using annual NTS data. The NTS will monitor the proportion of all trips under 5 miles that are walked and cycled within towns and cities. More than half of trips by cars are currently under 5 miles^[footnote 11] and it is these trips that have the greatest potential to be converted to walking, wheeling and cycling.

Increasing the quality, quantity and coverage of infrastructure and behavioural data will ensure programmes deliver increased value for money and focus on overcoming barriers for those who are less likely to walk or cycle. This includes data relating to the location of active travel infrastructure and the enablers and barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling for those with protected characteristics.

This data will be developed by ATE as part of its functions and by DfT as part of its ongoing work to improve the quality and consistency of data within DfT.

Governance

CWIS2 has been developed by the DfT, setting out objectives for England and the cross-government investment taking place to achieve these objectives. With the formation of ATE, DfT's active travel policy team will continue to be responsible for monitoring the delivery of CWIS2 and developing future strategies including the development of CWIS3 and any future Gear change plan.

ATE will work closely with government to ensure future investment in active travel infrastructure is delivered to a high standard and supported by evidence-led behaviour change programmes.

It will develop a business strategy setting out how it will contribute to DfT's priorities and objectives and annual business plan, which will include objectives, performance indicators and delivery plans.

This strategy will touch on each of the 3 main functions of ATE – highways design reviews, spatial planning and investment management – in addition to capacity building and engagement with local authorities.

CWIS3 will be developed by DfT in close consultation with ATE, to ensure that the CWIS objectives and financial resources inform and are informed by ATE's business strategy, performance and delivery.

DfT actively engages with other government departments and partner organisations to invite challenge and scrutiny of its active travel policy, projects and programmes. This includes a:

- cross-government cycling and walking delivery board
- multi-agency CWIS strategic advisory group
- cycling and walking infrastructure group

These groups will be reviewed and revised as ATE develops its approach.

Footnotes

1. Wheeling includes people who use wheelchairs and mobility scooters who may not identify with walking.
2. Although CWIS2 covers the investment period to March 2025, objectives will be measured using National Travel Survey (NTS) data, which is collected on a calendar year basis and published the following year.
3. For the purposes of this metric, 'short journeys in towns and cities' refers to trips of less than 5 miles, which start and end within a town or city. (A one-way course of travel with a single main purpose. A 'cycling trip' is one where the greatest part was cycled.) This

definition is used to focus the measure on short trips within towns and cities, that could potentially be walked or cycled. 'Towns and cities' are defined using the official census rural-urban classification of residence and include Urban Conurbations, Urban Towns and Cities and Rural Town and Fringe.

4. In line with the NTS, walking includes all travel on foot. It is also used when people use non-motorised wheelchairs, prams or pushchairs, as well as when they ride on toy bicycles, rollerskates, skateboards, non-motorised scooters, or when they jog. For example, children who accompany their parents on a visit to the shops on toy bicycles or tricycles (where the parents are walking) are coded as having walked there. Walks of less than 50 yards are always excluded.
5. Walking and cycling objectives are measured in stages, as in the NTS. The basic unit of travel in the NTS is a trip, which consists of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the form of transport. Counting walking or cycling stages rather than trips allows us to include journeys that involve walking or cycling but where this is not the main form of transport (for example, cycling to a railway station to catch the train to work).
6. DfT (2014) [Claiming the Health Dividend](#)
7. Public Health England (2018) [Cycling and walking for individual and population health benefits](#)
8. Includes National Highways Designated Funds and estimates of the proportion of spend on active travel from the [CRSTS fund](#), Integrated Transport Block (11%) and Highways Maintenance Fund (9%).
9. Includes estimates of the proportion of spend on walking and cycling from other central government funding sources including the [Levelling Up Fund](#), [Future High Streets Fund](#) and [Towns Fund](#). Estimates are based on a review of successful funding proposals.
10. Supporting metrics include frequency of activity, urban/rural split, geographical breakdown, trip purpose breakdown and breakdown by age, sex, ethnicity and disability.
11. DfT (2021) NTS0308: [Average number of trips by trip length and main mode: England](#).