

# **Active Travel England Level 1 Bid: West Sussex County Council Summer 2023**

## **Gap Analysis**

- In their assessment, ATE identified WSCC as lacking in ambition and leadership and the capability to install active travel.
- The various LCWIPs in West Sussex are focussed on cycling corridor improvements. Although walking improvement are featured, we would like to rebalance the LCWIPs to ensure there is an appropriate focus on strategic walking and wheeling routes. In this way our delivery plan will better reflect the feedback we have received from ATE and the schemes we deliver will better reflect ATE's objectives and targets.
- WSCC officers and members require greater technical knowledge and understanding of active travel (LTN 1/20 & healthy streets). We outsource much of our design work to our term consultants and, whilst they have a good understanding of technical guidance, in-house also need this level of understanding.
- There is a gap in collaboration between us as the highway authority and our Local Planning Authorities. We need to include them in our culture shift.
- The connectivity of our network is poor and requires vast improvement and collaboration in network planning.

## **Our Action Plan**

In order to address the issues above, and to achieve level 1 status we will implement the following actions.

### **1. Develop a documentary evidence portfolio of Active Travel improvements**

Since January 2023 we have begun to collate a portfolio of active travel schemes recently implemented. This will help to serve as justification that we should be a level 1 authority and will also evidence our delivery record to support future funding bids.

### **2. Establish an Active Travel Ambition Group**

We have recently convened an officer group to bring about an internal culture shift and oversee our progress towards level one. The group, which has representation from across the organisation, will also influence future delivery programmes.

### **3. Publish the West Sussex Active Travel Strategy 2023-2036 and the West Sussex LCWIP 2023-2036**

Following the adoption of our updated Local Transport Plan in 2022 we will publish the West Sussex Active Travel Strategy 2023-2036 and the West Sussex LCWIP 2023-2036. These documents will replace our existing Walking and Cycling Strategy, which was published prior to the publication of Gear Change. The West Sussex LCWIP will complement the LCWIPs

already adopted by the district and borough councils. We will also publish our new Road Safety Strategy, which will have close links with our Active Travel Strategy. Ahead of this, in January 2023 we amended our speed limit policy to make it easier to lower speed limits in support of active travel improvements. The Active Travel Strategy and the Road Safety Strategy will support the objectives of Our Council Plan and the delivery of Active Travel England’s objectives and targets.

**4. Bespoke training to be offered to Members and officers to be provided by ATE as part of our level 1 support package**

We think that Healthy Streets and LTN 1/20 training for officers and Members to support our culture shift would be beneficial. We would also like to extend the training offer to district and borough councils and the South Downs National Park Authority.

**5. Build on work undertaken using our Capability Fund 1 allocation**

During 2022 we developed concept designs for three LCWIP priority schemes. We undertook engagement on two of the proposals (Crawley and Horsham) and will be undertaking engagement on the third concept (Chichester) this year. Ultimately, we would like to include all three schemes in future bids to ATE for funding to enable progression to detailed design and construction.

**6. Utilising ATE design workshops to be provided as part of our level 1 support package**

ATE Inspection Team to review local authority network plans and pipeline schemes up to feasibility stage. Ad hoc reviews of existing schemes in development to deal with particular problem areas, e.g. pinch points, complex junctions.

**7. Build on our track record of delivering active travel improvements that support journeys to school**

We have a long history of delivering active travel and road safety improvements in school communities including: School Safety Zones, Safer Route to School schemes, School Travel Plans, School Keep Clear enforcement programme, 'BikeIt' and 'Walk To'. We will continue to develop a programme of interventions that support walking, wheeling, and cycling to school through our Local Transport Improvements Programme (BAU).

**8. Implement Capability Fund 2 Programme**

In March 2023 we were awarded £237,667 as part of our level 1 support package. The table below sets out how we will use the funding to help us achieve level 1 status.

Action	Description	Cost
1.	Recast LCWIP prioritisation based on the fact we are a level 0 authority (seeking level 1 status) and as such ATE is less likely to fund complex/high-cost schemes. New LCWIP prioritisation framework to focus on pedestrian improvements (particularly around schools), school streets,	£50,000

Action	Description	Cost
	and localised cycling improvements (e.g. junction improvements, one-way cycle contraflows, crossing points, cycle quick-release system at signalised junctions etc), rather than corridor improvements, which are more expensive and challenging to implement. Apply new DfT LCWIP tools (e.g. route check tool) to priority schemes.	
2.	Check the acceptability of Mid Sussex LCWIP proposals (recently adopted) and that these fit with reprioritisation outlined above. Undertake AMATs on priority schemes.	£30,000
3.	Further development of Comptons Lane/Bennetts Road (Horsham LCWIP) concept design to address issues highlighted during public consultation. Review current scheme cost and explore scope to deliver in phases (under £500,000). Reappraise scheme to consider potential walking benefit (currently considered to be nil).	£50,000
4.	Chichester LCWIP route K – public engagement to focus on Westgate section.	£10,667
5.	Shoreham area active travel improvements - prioritise the 4 x proposed crossings points on Upper Shoreham Road but reduce scope and scale to fit ATF bid and reflect level 0/1 status. Prioritise pedestrian elements of Middle Road proposals that support the journey to and from school for inclusion in future ATF bid. Consider other elements that could form future phases for additional ATF bids and develop a high-level indicative programme. Also investigate small scale improvements that could be delivered near schools (e.g. tactile paving, bollards, footway widening etc).	£50,000
6.	School Streets trial at locations in Shoreham, Worthing, Littlehampton, and Arundel.	£30,000
7.	0.4 FTE post to undertake geospatial analysis and identify potential area-wide improvements.	£17,000
	Total	£237,000

## Conclusion

West Sussex County Council has a long history of delivering active travel improvements. Implementing active travel improvements supporting the journey to school has formed an important part of our approach and delivery programmes for the past two decades. This work has been closely linked with Road Safety ETP and Travelwise behavioural change initiatives. We were

founding members of the National Travelwise Association and continue to be members of Modeshift.

Whilst active travel levels are higher in West Sussex than the national average and our neighbouring authority areas, we acknowledge that we have not been able to present evidence of delivering complex high quality active travel scheme. However, we do have multiple examples of smaller scale or less complex interventions.

At our meeting on 29 March ATE made it clear that, as a level 0/level 1 authority we should be focussing on more affordable and deliverable schemes to help achieve local and national objectives. We acknowledge this and also the need to ensure that schemes we progress in future should reflect our ATE status – particularly where we are expecting to bid for ATF capital funding. We believe this action plan will ensure this is the case, and that we will achieve level 1 status later this year.