

# The Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy



Greater  
Manchester  
Passenger  
Transport  
Authority

Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2006/07-2010/11

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# 1 Introduction

**1.1** This Local Transport Plan (LTP) Cycling Strategy covers cycling's role in providing a mode of transport in Greater Manchester. It shares links with other strategies covering cycling's contribution to leisure, recreation and sport.

**1.2** The first LTP Cycling Strategy, covering the period 2000/01 to 2005/06, set out a coherent countywide approach towards realising the important role cycling can play in a fully integrated and sustainable transport system. This supported the National Cycling Strategy, and allowed for Local Authority level interpretation through individual Authority cycling strategies and action plans.

**1.3** This first strategy was important in delivering a number of key achievements over the lifetime of LTP1, including:

- The adoption of specific local cycle strategies or policies by each authority,
- Formal liaison between officers dealing with cycle issues within Greater Manchester,
- Creation of important new facilities, such as the Trans-Pennine Trail, Fallowfield Loop and cycle lockers at stations,
- Better Countywide and local level monitoring of cycle use,
- Establishment of Council cycle forums to aid consultation,
- Adoption of recommended minimum cycle parking standards for new developments,
- Creation and use of a cycling and pedestrian audit system for new highway schemes (COPECAT),
- Countywide cycling publicity,
- Countywide network mapping.

**1.4** These efforts were essential in laying solid foundations for further work. However, cycling levels have only very recently begun to recover, and were far from the LTP1 target. There are many reasons for this, including:

- The LTP1 target reflected the Government's National Cycling Strategy, which was subsequently demonstrated to be very over-optimistic,
- Resources were spread too thinly across too many projects, diluting the effect,

- The length of time it takes to develop a positive societal change in attitude towards a cycle culture, addressing both fear / apprehension and acceptance. This applied to both decision makers and the public at large,
- Continuing increases in car ownership and use, and trends encouraging longer journeys,
- The time taken in planning our approach and establishing the necessary delivery conditions, although essential in ensuring the effectiveness and value of future projects, did not result in sufficient actual schemes on the ground,
- It takes a longer time to create a useable network of high quality facilities,
- Insufficient attention was paid to encouraging cycling through marketing in a coherent and targeted way,
- Differing conditions and priorities across Greater Manchester,
- Limited resources for non-capital projects, such as some marketing, enforcement and training.

**1.5** The emphasis in transport policy has shifted over the last few years, to focus more on outcomes, the four priority areas identified by Department for Transport (DfT) and Local Government Association (LGA) (which are congestion, road safety, air quality and accessibility), and also the link between transport and health. From our analysis of the current situation in Greater Manchester, we recognise that cycling can play a significant role in tackling each of these four priority areas, and in meeting the transport needs of the conurbation in a cost-effective manner.

**1.6** LTP2 Cycling Strategy must therefore build on the previous good work in order to move on to the next stage and realise the potential that cycling has within our desired integrated transport system. With this in mind, we have reviewed the strategy in order to identify weak areas and their solutions, and to learn from past experience. The LTP2 strategy presented here is more focussed, and geared more to effective actions than the previous strategy.

## 2 Objectives

### Cycling in a Wider Context

The Local Transport Plan programme is aimed at ensuring transport investment supports the wider objectives in the Greater Manchester Strategy. Cycling can play a particular role in helping the Local Transport Plan achieve these objectives, described in the following table:

Greater Manchester Strategy Themes		Key roles for cycling
1:	Promoting a dynamic economy	Ensuring site locations, including the universities and Manchester Airport, are accessible by a range of modes, Improving access to enable all parts of the community to contribute and benefit from strong economic performance.
2:	Enhancing the Regional Centre	Improving links to the Regional Centre, including those as part of Corridor Partnerships.
3:	Promoting culture, sport and tourism	Improving access to the countryside, and as part of Rights of Way Improvement Plans. Improving access to local leisure, tourism and community facilities.
4:	Improving connectivity	Addressing local problems of accessibility to education, employment, healthcare and other key services.
5:	Raising levels of education and skills	Improving access to jobs and training. Reducing the impact of travel to school and further education. Helping young people become independent.
6:	Creating sustainable communities	Creating better living and working environments through enhancing opportunities for non-car travel. This includes the role of cycling in reducing motorised travel, and thereby greenhouse gas emissions and improving local air quality.
7:	Reducing crime	Increasing the numbers of people using the streets and off-road tracks.
8:	Improving health and healthcare services	Reducing injury accidents involving cyclists. Reducing health problems associated with lack of physical activity, including obesity, heart, respiratory, joint and mental health problems. Improving access to health services.

### Objectives of the Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy

Stemming from the above, this strategy has two simple objectives:

- A To increase the opportunities for cycling, with priority given to
- Key centres, employment, education, healthcare and community facilities,
  - Routes from deprived areas,
  - New or less confident cyclists, especially by increasing safety.
- B To increase the number and proportion of trips wholly or partially made by cycle, especially where this involves a modal shift from car use.

## 3 Strategy

**3.1.1** The objectives will be addressed by the application of the following policies to both provide the right conditions for cycling, and to encourage people to do so, in a cost-effective manner:

### Policy 1 Target journeys and groups

*To target cycling measures at the following most appropriate types of journey:*

- *Cycling to education, to both schools and colleges / universities,*
- *Cycling to work,*
- *Cycling to shops / amenities,*
- *Those involving a rail or Metrolink stage.*

*To involve the following groups, which are considered to be the most likely to yield increases in cycling:*

- *School pupils and students,*
- *Commuters,*
- *Leisure cyclists,*
- *Those who are health or environmentally conscious.*

**3.1.2** A large untapped demand for cycling to schools has been identified, which peaks between the ages of nine and thirteen. This can be tapped through the school travel plan programme. The vast majority of these journeys to school are within easy cycling distance. Cycling to school would also help address the decline in children's health and increase in obesity. In addition, the main further or higher educational establishments have large numbers of young people with low levels of car ownership who live close to their place of study. Cycling is expected to be able to play a significant role in addressing their transport needs. It is anticipated that cycling skills and enthusiasm developed early in life will influence people's choice of mode in the future.

**3.1.3** Approximately half of trips to work in Greater Manchester are below 5 miles, again a distance easily cycled. Both school and work trips are along regular routes, which helps when people first start to cycle. These shorter, regular journeys offer the greatest potential for increasing cycling.

**3.1.4** Cycling can also help address problems with accessibility to services, shops and amenities, as it is cheap, flexible and available to many people.

**3.1.5** Leisure cycling is often how people, especially families, get introduced to cycling; providing them with a good experience and encouraging them to use their cycles for other utility purposes will be an important part of our strategy to increase cycle use. The priority for LTP resources is on creating facilities primarily for utility trips, but it will be of benefit if some of these are also suitable for leisure purposes or novice cyclists.

**3.1.6** Within these groups, we recognise also that female cyclists are under-represented, and offer good potential to increase the overall numbers of cyclists. Design standards and marketing materials in particular should reflect their needs.

**3.1.7** The focus on certain journey types in Policy 1 will help identify specific locations, where these types of trips are prevalent, on which Councils should focus resources; these are referred to as Cycle Investment Sites. These locations will be prioritised for action, to ensure best value for money. Work will focus in particular on:

- Town, local and neighbourhood centres
- Schools, especially where cycling is a strong element of their travel plans
- Higher education sites
- Large employment areas and employers with travel plans
- The National Cycle Network

## Policy 2 Integration between strategies

***To consider schemes to promote and encourage cycling and cyclists' safety as part of all transport and other key policies and resource bids***

**3.2.1** All Authorities will incorporate provision for cyclists within their Local Transport Plan work programmes. Local strategies should cross-reference cycling with other policy areas including tackling congestion, improving road safety, improving public transport, highway maintenance, Rights of Way, travel plans and land use, climate change and health. Opportunities to improve conditions for cyclists should be explored in the context of other resources and programmes, for example regeneration, housing renewal and education.

## Policy 3 Integration between modes

***To improve the safe integration of cycling with other modes of transport.***

**3.3.1** By improving the safe integration with other modes, we can ensure that cycling plays a key part in minimising car dependency, widens the catchment of public transport, and takes full advantage of any synergy with other projects. In particular, cycling can help increase the catchment area of rail, Metrolink and bus services significantly.

## Policy 4 Land use and development

***To ensure that Development Control Planning allows and encourages people to cycle.***

**3.4.1** Local planning policies should:

- Reduce the need to travel by private car, and encourage cycling,
- Include and integrate provision for cyclists, including through the application of local guidelines, standards, hierarchies or potential Supplementary Planning Documents covering Accessibility, Road Users, Sustainable Access, Site Design and Travel Plans; and the Greater Manchester Cycle Parking Standards and COPECAT, when assessing development proposals,
- Support developments in locations which are easily accessible by bike, and
- Require the development of a travel plan which includes cycling where appropriate, either through planning conditions or Section 106 agreements.

## Policy 5 Cycle infrastructure

***To provide coherent, safe, high quality local cycle networks and facilities***

**3.5.1** High quality route networks, area-wide cycle friendly zones, and storage facilities are necessary in order to encourage people to cycle, and to maintain their safety and security whilst doing so. A countywide strategic route network has been drafted to cater for the main demands, from which routes should be prioritised for implementation according to the criteria of:

- Value for money, which will be assessed using a mix of transport, environmental and health measures,
- Ability to meet the needs of target groups, i.e. trips to educational establishments, workplaces, local centres,
- Synergy with other programmes, such as safer routes to school or town centre regeneration projects.
- Consultation with local users

**3.5.2** Network and highway design criteria should, as far as possible, take account of the guidance and best practice from the DfT, Institute of Highways and Transportation, CTC, Sustrans and other organisations successful in catering for cyclists' needs.

Local cycle networks should complement other works carried out as part of School Travel initiatives, traffic management schemes and Quality Bus Corridors. In this way, over time, the road network as a whole will become safer for cyclists. Some routes will cater for mainly local movements including links to schools, whilst other routes will satisfy more strategic movements, some which some will form part of the National Cycle Network. In addition to 'linear' routes defined within the network, opportunities will be taken to create 'cycle permeable neighbourhoods'

either as schemes in their own right, or incrementally via other traffic management or maintenance schemes.

**3.5.3** It should be borne in mind that there are a wide variety of cyclists, whose ability, perception and confidence may require different design standards. An obvious example is that design standards for safer routes to school will need to take account of their use by younger more inexperienced cyclists. In some cases, twin routes or networks may be required to cater for these different users.

## **Policy 6 Maintenance**

### ***To maintain cycle facilities, as outlined in the LTP Maintenance Strategy and Transport Asset Management Plans (TAMPS)***

**3.6.1** Good maintenance is particularly important to cyclists; potholes and punctures affect cyclists more severely and more frequently than motorists. Maintaining signing, to ensure the continuity of routes, is also essential to avoid dangerous situations and to give confidence to new cyclists. The Maintenance Strategy describes a prioritisation process for maintenance spend, which includes consideration of the potential degree of use of routes by cyclists. TAMPS should set out an appropriate level of maintenance, including road markings, surfacing, lighting and sweeping, for cycle facilities under local authorities' control. Opportunities may also arise for the delivery of cycling infrastructure, for example cycle lanes, as part of maintenance schemes

## **Policy 7 Promotion and Education**

### ***To promote, along with partners, cycling, cycle facilities and safe highway behaviour***

**3.7.1** In order to get the best out of new and existing schemes, they must be suitably promoted. Physical measures alone have been shown to have limited effect in encouraging cycling, whilst promotion, has been shown to maintain cycle use amongst existing cyclists and to encourage new ones. This is particularly relevant for our target groups. It is also considered that promotional activities need to be better spread across the year, rather than concentrated into short periods such as Bike Week.

**3.7.2** Education, for both cyclists and other highway users, will improve the safety of cyclists, this being one of the main deterrents, and also aid the establishment of a cycling culture. The amount and quality of formal cycle training undertaken with schools should be increased, and preferably be offered to adults also. Skills can also be developed through the use of traffic-free leisure routes and through play in safe neighbourhood facilities. Each authority should also work with the health sector to promote the health benefits of cycling, and also capitalise on the increasing profile of sport-related cycling.

## **Policy 8 Partnerships and consultation**

### ***To strengthen partnerships with other public bodies, commercial organisations and voluntary bodies in order to promote and cater for cycling.***

**3.8.1** Dialogue with local cyclists and other interested parties through Cycle Forums, which have been established in all councils, should be maintained and improved where necessary. Authorities should also work with local cycling groups, representatives from health authorities, schools, local businesses, the police and the passenger transport providers.

**3.8.2** Cycling should form a key part of travel plans; authorities should incorporate measures in their own travel plans, and assist other employers to develop theirs. Cycling is expected to play a significant role in the travel plans of many schools and Higher Education Colleges in particular.

**3.8.3** In order to build a local cycling culture, links should be made, and encouragement given, to interested local groups. These groups may be able to get access to additional sources of funds to undertake work which local authorities traditionally find difficult to deliver, such as publicity and promotional activities.

**3.8.4** Existing partnerships between authorities and the Police should be informed of cyclists' needs, in order to help address cycle theft and road traffic law enforcement problems relating to both cyclists' and motorists' behaviour.

## Policy 9 Resources

***To identify and target resources strategically in line with their local cycling strategies to address problems in a cost-effective manner.***

**3.9.1** Authorities should identify sufficient funding to complete the LTP2 Action Plan. This may involve LTP funds, together with further resources which may be available from other sources, such as Cycling England / Sustrans, regeneration funds, developer contributions or joint initiatives with the health service.

**3.9.2** Authorities should ensure that resources for cycling are spent in the most cost-effective manner, in line with the LTP, Greater Manchester Cycling Strategy and local cycling strategies.

## 4 Performance Management

**4.1.1** We need to develop effective monitoring of cycling and cycle schemes, and ensure that this information is effectively used to influence future programmes. Monitoring results are essential for measuring progress on the Greater Manchester and local targets as well as to guide the programme of infrastructure development. A countywide cycle monitoring strategy has been established, and is being continuously expanded and reviewed to ensure it remains effective. The programme includes regular traffic counts as well as increasing the number of permanent automatic cycle counters. We also need to understand the effect of our measures at an individual council level, to ensure that all councils are fulfilling their potential, and we will work towards establishing a monitoring regime which will inform this.

**4.1.2** The impact of new cycling schemes on cycle usage is an area we will also improve on, including the use of new automatic counters as part of new routes.

**4.1.3** We will ensure that a system for reviewing progress and making timely interventions is in place, to maximise our chances of reaching the LTP targets.

### 4.2 Headline target

**4.2.1** This indicator will be reported in LTP2 Progress Reports, which are submitted to DfT and Government Office North West (GONW) for assessment purposes.

- **To increase recorded cycle flows by 6% by 2010/11, from a 2003/04 baseline. Index of cycle use based on traffic counts on a variety of routes including A & B roads, unclassified roads and off-road routes.**  
This reflects a planned 10% increase in the number of trips; however, the limitations of the current monitoring system mean that at present not all of this increase can be measured; more counters may have to be installed, especially near Cycle Investment Sites, to address this weakness.

### 4.3 Subsidiary indicators

**4.3.1** These indicators will only be used for internal monitoring purposes, and will not be reported in LTP2 Progress Reports. Targets may be developed for some of these indicators, if appropriate.

#### 4.3.2 Indicators measuring cycle use directly

- **Individual cycle trips / year**  
Based on a 3 year rolling annual total from a Greater Manchester subset of National Travel Survey data.
- **On-road cycle flow index**  
Index of on-road cycle use based on annual manual traffic counts on A&B roads.
- **Cycle use / council area**  
Index of cycle use based on each Council's automatic cycle counters (where there are a minimum of 6 counters / Council).
- **Number of cycle trips into key centres**  
Number of cyclists reported crossing key centre cordons. The cordons are surveyed as part of headline indicators LTP 13A & B, on at least a biennial basis.
- **Use of cycle parking at key locations**  
Number of parked cycles at defined key locations in local centres, educational establishments and workplaces, and at public transport interchanges
- **Cycle carriage on trains**  
This information is collected as part of annual rail boarding and alighting counts at stations.

- **Percentage of school children cycling to school**  
Measured through the annual School Census. These figures may need to be treated with caution if there are only small numbers of cyclists involved.
- **Percentage of people cycling to work**  
Measured every three years using the Greater Manchester subset of the Labour Force Survey. These figures will also need to be treated with caution due to the small numbers of cyclists involved.
- **Level of cycling at identified LTP2 Cycle Investment Sites**  
Depending on the nature of the site, this will be in the form of link counts (e.g. for sections of National Cycle Network), or numbers of people cycling to a destination (e.g. for schools and employment sites).

### 4.3.3 Indicators measuring conditions affecting cycle use

- **Number of reported cycle road accident casualties**  
Reported annually, collected by Greater Manchester Police. If possible this will be presented as a rate per distance cycled in Greater Manchester.
- **Number of reported cycle thefts and recovery rate.**  
Provided annually by Greater Manchester Police.
- **Percentage of primary school leavers in receipt of safer cycle training**  
Based on annually collected Local Authority figures.
- **Overall length of route network completed**  
To be measured annually, although no target is to be developed as the indicator does not measure the usefulness of the network provided. A separate figure will be provided for the length of National Cycle Network completed. This figure will be unable to properly measure the creation of cycle-friendly area wide zones, however.
- **Length of routes identified as Cycle Investment Sites completed**  
To be measured annually.

## 4.4 Managing Performance

**4.4.1** A rolling annual Greater Manchester Action Plan has been found to be useful in the LTP1 period in driving progress. This will be continued in the LTP2 period and will set out actions planned for each financial year. This will include actions from the Action Plan in this strategy, together with other actions deemed necessary or appropriate depending on performance, circumstances, opportunities or resource availability. Key local cycle groups will be consulted on the plan.

**4.4.2** The LTP Cycle Sub-group will compile an annual report in August each year, which will describe both the results from the above indicators and scheme implementation by Authority for the preceding financial year. This annual report will be made available on the [www.cyclegm.org](http://www.cyclegm.org) website.

**4.4.3** Performance will be raised with those groups charged with driving progress on LTP2. The Action Plan will then be updated with remedial actions.

**4.4.4** Individual Authorities will be encouraged to adopt local cycling action plans in conjunction with their cycle forums.

## 5 Action Plan

### 5.1 We will carry out route improvements and install secure parking facilities at those locations benefiting target groups and existing cyclists.

- As part of our more targeted programme, a number of specific locations or routes, termed Cycle Investment Sites, will be prioritised. These locations are where we expect our investment will see significant increases in cycle use, and cater for the target groups identified in policy 1. Where routes are specified, feeder links will be developed to serve nearby target destinations. We are planning to invest over £7.5 million in Cycle Investment Sites alone over the LTP2 period. Some of this is expected to come from other, non-LTP sources, and will be dependent on the outcome of various bids (notably the Sustrans Connect2 Big Lottery Fund bid).

Council	Cycle Investment Site
Bolton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Route 80 (Horwich-Bolton-Bradley Fold)</li> <li>Schools</li> </ul>
Bury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bury Town Centre</li> <li>Schools</li> </ul>
Manchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCN routes 6 (Fallowfield Loop), 62 (Trans-Pennine Trail ), 85 (Chorlton-Airport), and 66 (Gorton-Miles Platting)</li> <li>Higher Educational Precinct, Oxford Rd</li> <li>Airport / Wythenshawe routes</li> </ul>
Oldham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCN route 66 spur (Fitton Hill-Oldham-Chadderton)),</li> <li>Oldham town centre</li> <li>Schools</li> </ul>
Rochdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCN 66 (Littleborough-Rochdale-Middleton)and Regional 92 (Wallbank-Newbold) routes</li> <li>North Rochdale BikEDlinx/ R80</li> <li>Schools</li> </ul>
Salford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Salford University</li> </ul>
Stockport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Middlewood Way (NCN55) / A6 routes</li> <li>Bredbury industrial estate</li> <li>Schools</li> </ul>
Tameside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ashton town centre &amp; NCN route 66 spur (Ashton-Denton)</li> </ul>
Trafford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bridgewater Way NCN route</li> </ul>
Wigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCN routes</li> <li>Wigan smarter choices (John Rigby College +)</li> </ul>

- Substantially complete routes forming part of the National Cycle Network within Greater Manchester by 2011,
- Make selective improvements or extensions to the leisure route network, especially where these routes can also be used for utility trips. This includes sections of the National Cycle Network. We will ensure that local publicity raises awareness of these routes and encourages users to cycle more often and for other purposes; the aim is that by 2010/11, 125,000 more people will be making an average extra 10 leisure trips per year by bike,

- In addition to the Cycle Investment Sites, we will identify and prioritise gaps in the cycle network which can be filled cost-effectively to meet the needs of target groups. Gaps may be filled by linear routes or area-wide cycle-friendly zones,
- Improve routes to, and parking facilities at, rail and Metrolink stations,
- Provide further secure cycle parking facilities at key locations, including town, local and neighbourhood centres,
- Complete a network-wide review of speed limits, and use this to inform the Speed Management Strategy.

## **5.2 We will encourage school and workplace travel plans, and a strong cycle element within these:**

- Facilitate the adoption of school travel plans with a strong cycle element, including at least 70 effective plans at secondary schools; the aim is that by 2010/11 on average about 5,000 children more pupils will cycle to school for 3 days a week in summer,
- All schools will have developed a travel plan by 2010/11,
- Encourage workplace travel plans within their areas to include measures to promote cycling; the aim is that by 2010/11 on average over 2,500 employees will have started to cycle to work for 3 days a week in summer,
- Back these travel plans with infrastructure improvements and marketing where required.

## **5.3 We will carry out education and marketing activities addressed primarily at the target groups:**

- Continue the development and implementation of the Cycle Marketing Plan, with LTP topslice funding of £50,000 / year, involving local groups where possible,
- Regularly update the [www.cyclegm.org](http://www.cyclegm.org) and local authority websites to include more information, especially on recent developments and route information,
- Work towards offering National Standard cycle training to all primary schools, by resolving some remaining accreditation issues with the CTC, to ensure that training reflects modern road conditions,
- Investigate the potential to increase of the uptake of safer cycle training in primary schools, and implement approved recommendations,
- Investigate the potential to provide further adult cycle training, and implement approved recommendations arising from this study,
- Continue to run road safety campaigns addressing road user attitudes and behaviour, in line with the Greater Manchester Road Safety Strategy,
- Work with Greater Manchester Police and Authorities' parking enforcement sections in order to improve enforcement of road traffic law to increase cyclists' safety,
- Publish a Greater Manchester-wide cycle facilities map on the website and on paper, by the end of 2006 [N.B. this action had been completed by time of publishing].

## 5.4 We will look to improve our delivery by:

- Operating regular consultative forums to which cyclists are invited,
- Coordinating our actions through the operation of the Greater Manchester LTP Officers' Cycle Group,
- Increasing the number of automatic cycle counting sites, and monitoring the effects of new cycle schemes as appropriate,
- Investigating and exploiting complementary sources of funding for cycle initiatives,
- Reporting on Action Plan progress annually,
- Updating COPECAT, provide more training on its use, and develop Supplementary Planning Guidance to encourage its use, by the end of 2007,
- Ensuring that an appropriate maintenance regime is established for cycle facilities, through Authorities' Transport Asset Management Plans,
- Referring to the Greater Manchester Cycle Parking standards when considering new developments,
- Undertaking research on the actual and perceived road traffic dangers to cyclists, in order to create a robust evidence base to inform future campaigns and design standards.

