January 2024

Medway Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Consultation Report

Medway Council
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SYSTRA

Medway Climate Change

Contents

Foreword

Medway Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and pledged to achieve Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2030. We are also committed to adopting our new Local Plan by 2025, which will provide the details on how development and regeneration for our economy, our communities and our environment in Medway will go forward to 2040.

The development of the new Medway Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) will contribute to our efforts in relation to the climate emergency and the future regeneration of Medway. It provides a strategy to develop a much-improved cycling and walking network for our communities now and over the long term.

An LCWIP details the work needed in the short, medium and long term to provide a safer, more attractive network for people to walk and cycle on their shorter journeys. Whilst there have been extensive improvements to the network across Medway in recent years, we know there is lots more that we can do. Levels of cycling and walking are lower in Medway than at regional and national levels. We know that more people would choose to walk and cycle if it was safer and if routes were attractive and convenient. This is key to increasing these levels and unlocking the myriad benefits of active travel.

Giving us the choice to walk or cycle rather than drive will have huge of benefits for air quality, congestion, and our physical and mental health. Having the LCWIP in place will provide a strategic direction for development of the active travel network for our communities in Medway and help us unlock more funding from central government and other funding streams.

The plan is ambitious and will help support the new Local Plan, Medway Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) and our Climate Action Plan. As part of this consultation we are seeking your views on the work that has been undertaken so far and the designs for the priority routes identified. These early stage concept designs are subject to further work but will give you steer on the level of ambition and our plans to build a safe, attractive and convenient network for walking and cycling. Please do take this opportunity to get involved and shape the future of active travel in Medway.

Councillor Simon Curry

Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration

1 What is an LCWIP?

The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) will provide a ten-year plan for the delivery of cycling and walking interventions in Medway that will maximise the uptake of active travel, building upon the recent increases.

The LCWIP will be complementary to the Council's existing and emerging policies and programmes, focused upon an ambitious commitment to active travel and the range of benefits this is expected to deliver, including, but not limited to, responding to the climate change emergency, improving air quality, enhancing public health, reducing inequality, and cutting congestion.

In 2017 the government published its first Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy which sets out the ambition to make cycling and walking 'the natural choices for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey'. This was followed in 2023 by the second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2).

LCWIP's are noted in the investment strategy as the preferred approach to identify cycling and walking improvements at the local level.

Realising the ambition to make cycling and walking the natural choices will require sustained investment in infrastructure for both modes, partnership with local bodies and the wider public and private sector to build a local commitment. The LCWIP is designed to facilitate a long term approach to developing networks, but also designed so that the document can be updated and revisited throughout the 10 year period.

As detailed above LCWIP's are Active Travel England and the Department for Transport's (DfT) preferred approach for identifying and in turn delivering walking and cycling improvements. LCWIP's take a holistic approach to network planning and provide a clear, long term framework for local authorities to deliver on their ambitions around active travel.

The LCWIP process includes six stages, as set out below:

1 **Determining Scope**
Establish the geographical extent of the LCWIP, and arrangements for governing and preparing the plan.

2 **Gathering Information**
Identify existing patterns of walking and cycling and potential new journeys. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to cycling and walking. Review related transport and land use policies and programmes.

3 **Network Planning for Cycling**
Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required.

4 **Network Planning for Walking**
Identify key trip generators, core walking zones and routes, audit existing provision and determine the type of improvements required.

5 **Prioritising Improvements**
Prioritise improvements to develop a phased programme for future investment.

6 **Integration & Application**
Integrate outputs into local planning and transport policies, strategies, and delivery plans.

2 Why is it important and what will it deliver?

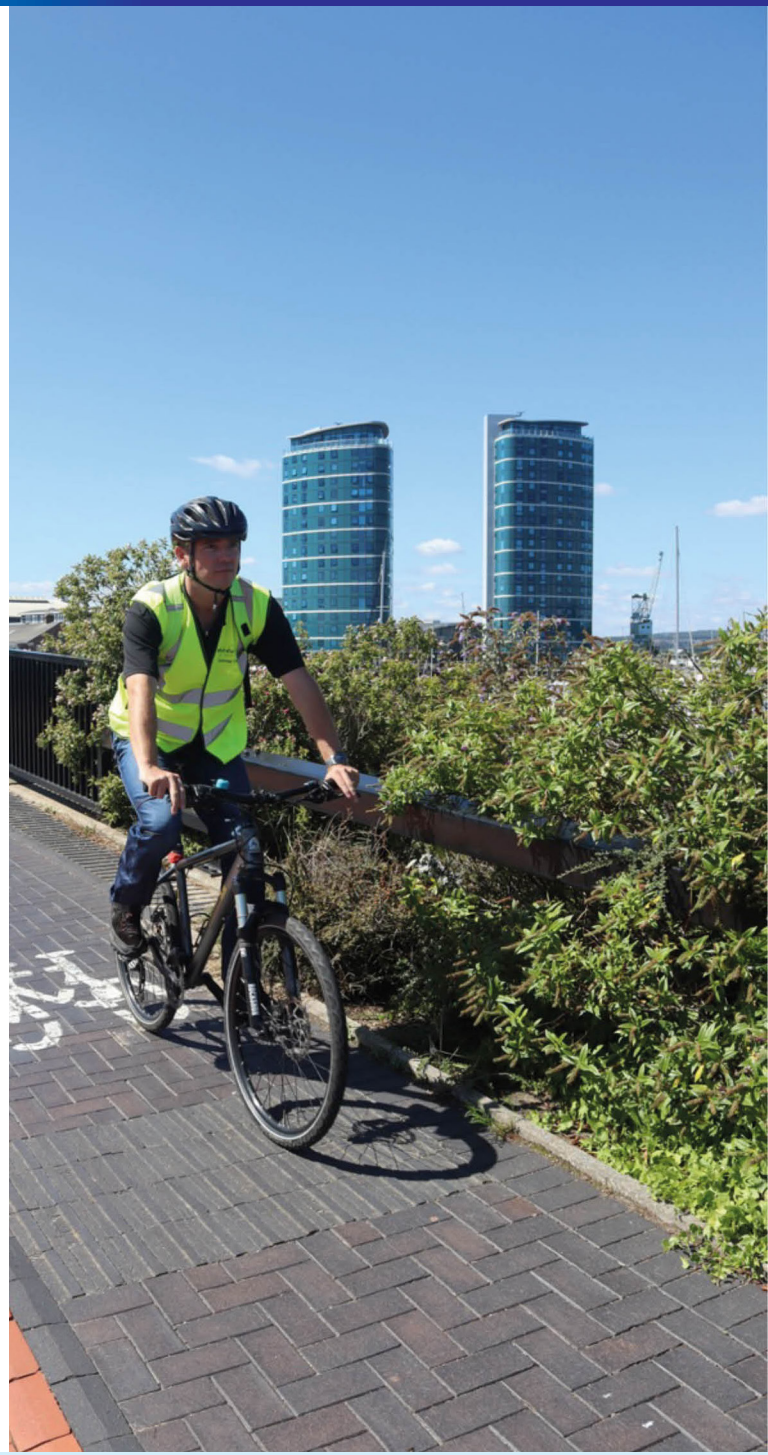
An LCWIP is the recommended approach developed by the DfT to help local authorities plan networks of walking and cycling routes. LCWIP's form a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks and form a vital part of the DfT strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle.

The key outputs of LCWIP's are:

A network plan for walking and cycling which acknowledges the existing network and identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development

A prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment

A report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network



3 Benefits of walking and cycling

Levels of cycling and walking in Medway are lower than the regional and national average. Increasing the levels of walking and cycling locally by providing an extensive, attractive, and safe network will have several benefits for a variety of groups across the region. Increasing walking and cycling will provide benefits across a number of areas including economic, social, health and environmental.

Physical activity:
Research has shown that keeping physically active can reduce heart and circulatory disease by up to 35% and risk of early death by up to 30%. Replacing short car journeys with walking and cycling directly contributes to a more sustainable and healthier lifestyle.

Mental health:
Several studies indicate physical activity is a vital tool in overcoming and even preventing depression and anxiety.

Reduction of air pollution:
A shift to active travel away from private motor vehicles can have a positive impact on air pollution.

Reduction of noise pollution:
Increased active travel and modal shift away from vehicles will reduce noise pollution which is proven to have a range of negative impacts on personal health and wellbeing.

Economic impact:
Increased walking and cycling has been proven to have a range of economic benefits for both the region and individuals. Walking and cycling is a relatively cheap form of transport so can provide financial savings for the individual whilst any reduction in congestion via modal shift away from private vehicles will have a positive impact on the economy.

Increases accessibility

By making it easier for residents and visitors to both walk and cycle in Medway, we can make the region far more inclusive and accessible for all.

Improves health

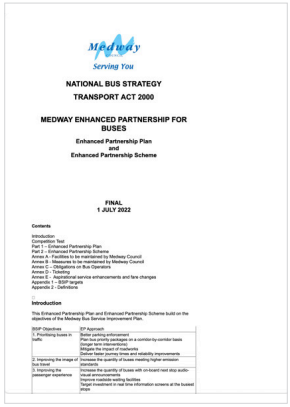
Walking and cycling directly contribute towards a range of physical, mental and neurological health benefits, such as reducing the risk of all-cause mortality, fewer symptoms of depression and improved quality of life.

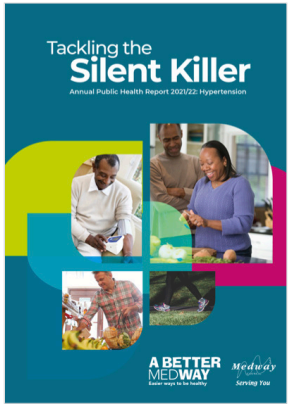
Creates cleaner air and reduces congestion

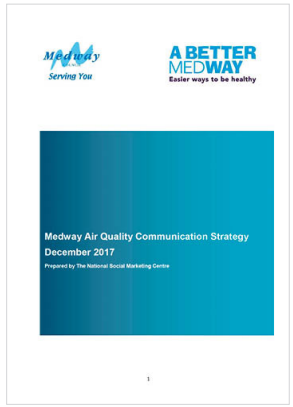
By improving walking and cyling routes we are encouraging a modal shift away from single car occupancy vehicle, thus reducing car travel which in turn leads to a reduction in air pollution, carbon dioxide emissions and congestion.

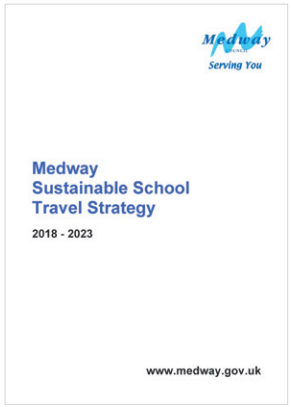
4 Policy

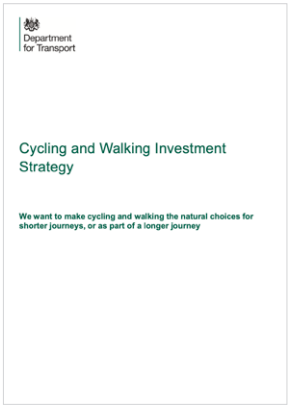
In 2020, National Government set out its 'Gear Change' vision for walking and cycling, which included a target that half of all journeys in towns and cities will be made using active modes of travel by 2030. Medway's LCWIP will support this target, and our local transport and climate change strategies, by providing a long-term plan for delivering a safe and attractive network for walking and cycling. It will also help us when we seek to secure the funding we need to improve our active travel infrastructure.

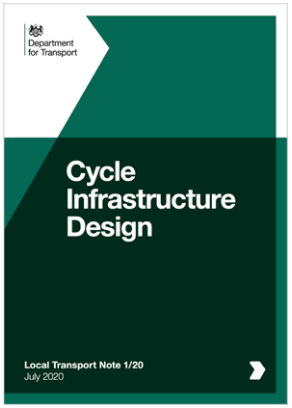












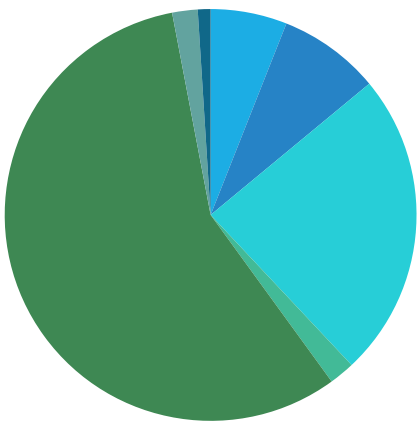
5 Current mode share

Current walking and cycling

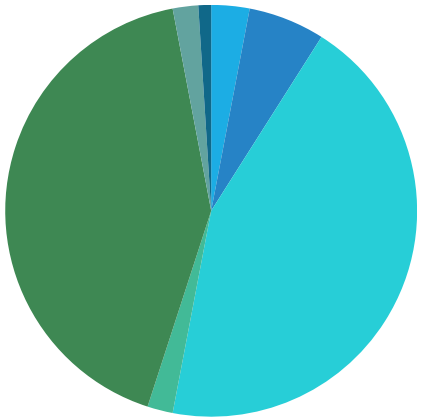
The DfT has set a goal of half of journeys in cities and towns to be made by walking and cycling by 2030, but according to 2011 Census data, cycling makes up only a small percentage of trips to work in Medway, (0.7%). Amongst short journeys under 5km, cycling makes up 2.3% of the total mode share while walking makes up 23.9%. Even amongst journeys under 5km, driving is still the most common mode of travel with 57% (not including passengers of a car or van) of the total mode share. Amongst all journeys under 10km, driving makes up 63% of the total mode share, walking makes up 18% and cycling only 2%. These distances could be easily completed by walking or cycling, given relatively short journey times, with a 5km journey equating to a 15min cycle, and a 10km journey equating to around a 30 minute cycle.

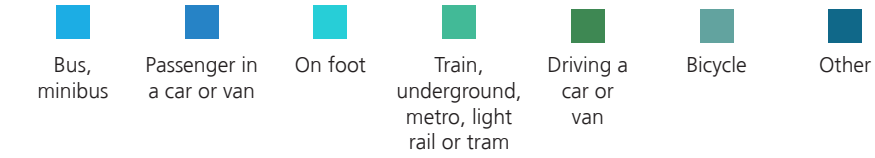
More recent data from 2019-2020 from the DfT[1] shows that the proportion of adults that cycle for travel at least once per month in Medway is 3.2%, compared to 7.2% in South East England. Similarly, the proportion of adults that walk for travel at least once per month is also below the average of the South East Region, 32.5% compared to 36.4%[2]. Medway also has a lower proportion of adults who do any walking or cycling, for any purpose than the average for the South East Region.

Method of Travel to Work for Trips Under 5km (3.1mi)



Method of Travel to Work for Trips Under 2km (1.2mi)





1 Cycling Factsheet, England 2020 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/walking-and-cycling-statistics-factsheets
2 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw

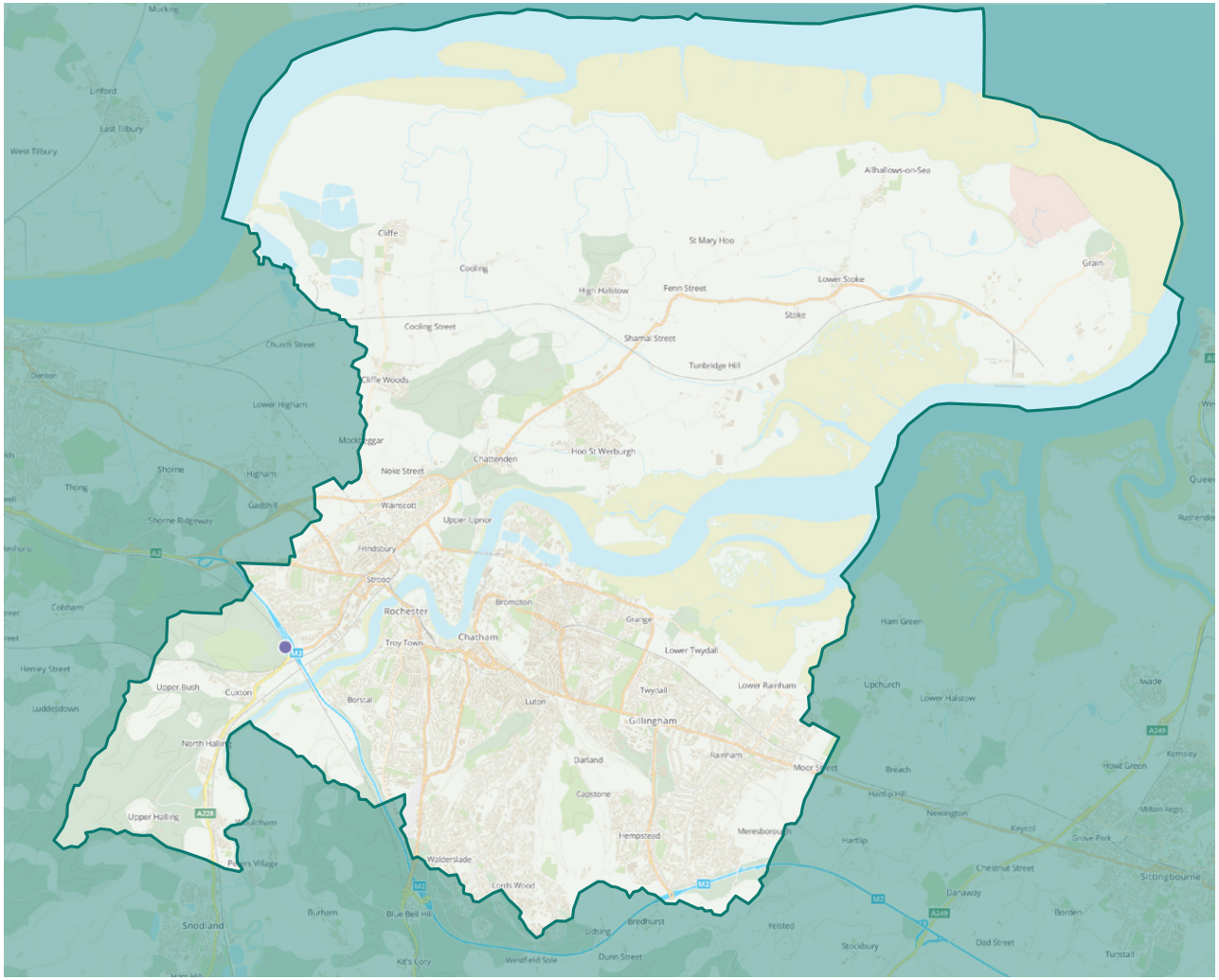
6 Baseline conditions for walking and cycling in Medway

Our LCWIP will cover the whole of Medway. The river and local topography provide challenges for walking and cycling, but despite this Medway already has approximately 81 miles of cycle paths, many of which form part of the National Cycle Network.

Medway has a population of approximately 280,000, which is expected to grow by 40,500 (15%) by 2035. This means we need to promote sustainable travel for short local journeys to reduce the pressure on our road network, improve air quality and support the health and well-being of our residents. The LCWIP will support this, by planning infrastructure improvements across Medway and identifying a long-term plan for investment.

Medway Council has invested £2.5m over the last 5 years in cycling to create on and off road cycle paths

Scope of LCWIP area



7 Cycling network development

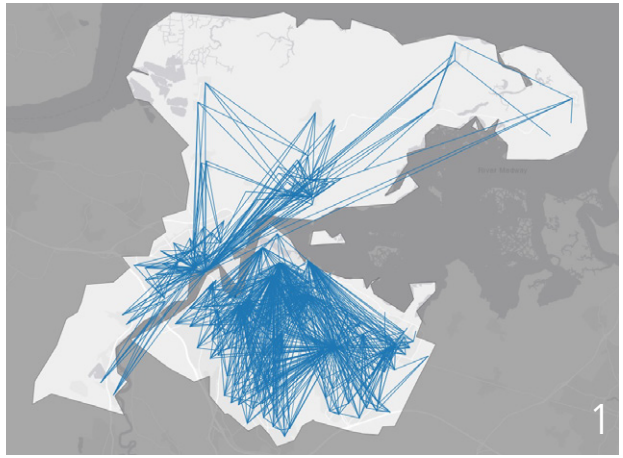
Stage 3 of the LCWIP process sets out the recommended steps for mapping a future cycling network and identifying infrastructure improvements. The Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) has been used to forecasts of the levels of cycling in an area compared to the current under various scenarios of change. The PCT tool is a strategic planning tool that provides forecasts of the levels of cycling in an area compared to the current under various scenarios of change. The PCT is cited as the preferred method of mapping origins and destinations (trip generation), identify desire lines for cycle trips (trip distribution) and allocate trips to specific routes (trip assignment).

The tool enables us to map desire lanes based on origin and destination mapping as shown in map 1 below.

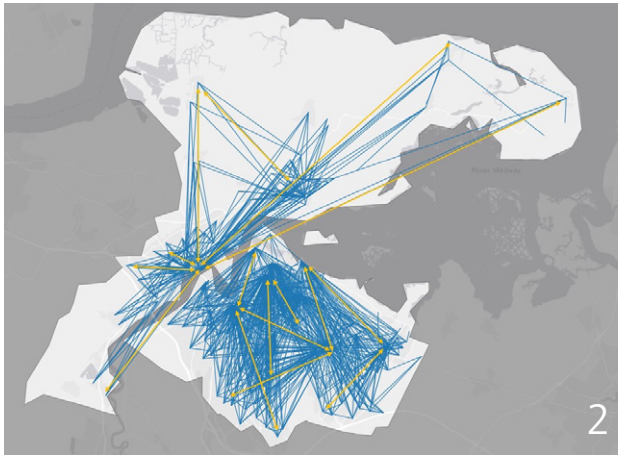
The corridors identified by the PCT analysis and the origin-destination analysis have been mapped onto the road and path network using the shortest possible route to illustrate what the straight-line network would look like when mapped across Medway. This is shown in Map 2.

The desire line network from the origin-destination analysis (24), can be combined with the existing network, and the most popular routes as suggested by the PCT analysis. This provides the network shown in Map 3.

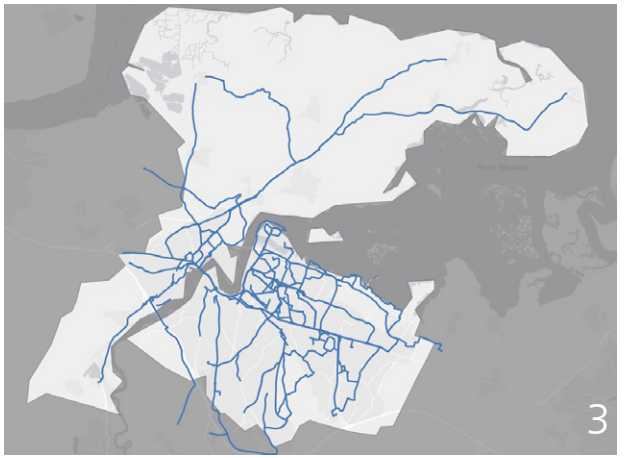
Desire lines from origin and destination mapping



Desire lines with additional key corridors



Desire lines mapped on to the existing network



8 Walking network development

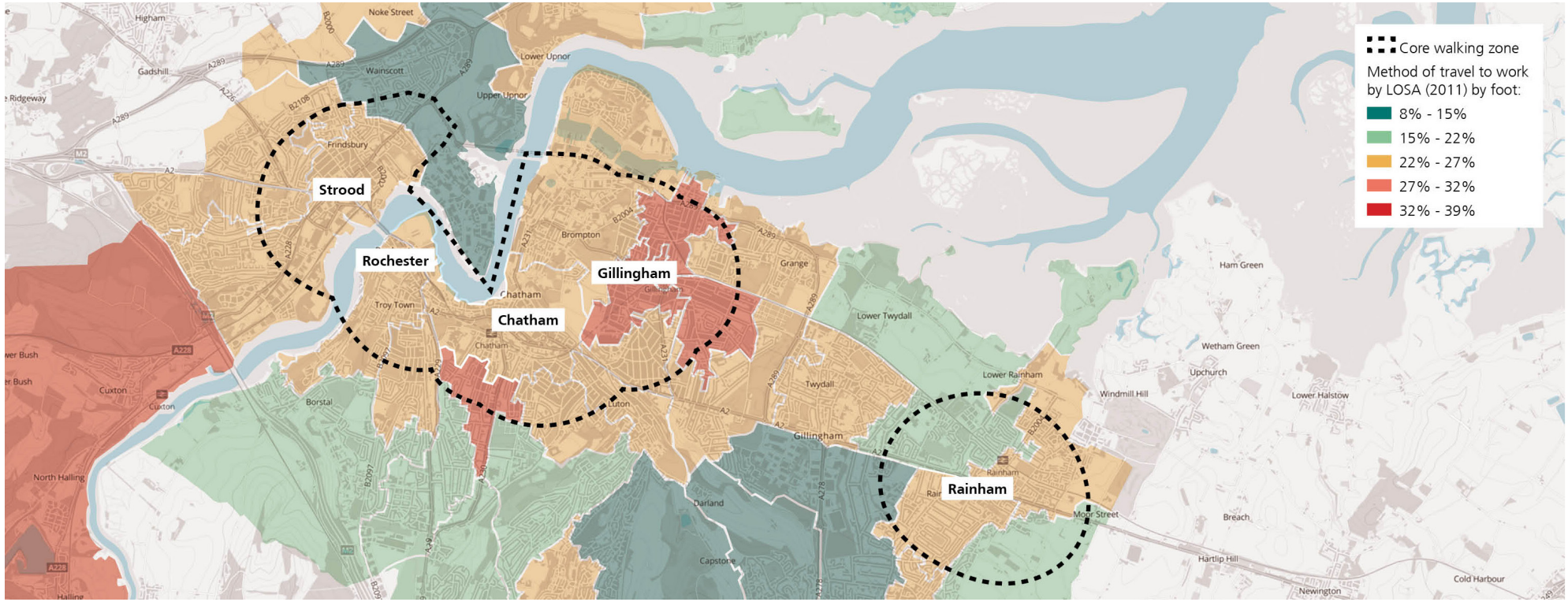
The first stage of the development of a walking network is to identify the Core Walking Zones (CWZ). The LCWIP guidance recommends that:

- CWZs should consist of a number of walking trip generators that are located close together - such as a town centre or business parks.
- An approximate five minute walking distance of 400m should be used as a guide to the minimum extents of CWZs.
- All pedestrian infrastructure should be deemed as important within the CWZs.
- Once the CWZs have been identified, the important pedestrian routes (key walking routes) that serve them should then be located and mapped.

The origin-destination mapping in Stage 2 has been used to inform the development of the walking network maps through identifying walking trip generators in Medway.

Using this information and local knowledge of the area, the CWZs identified are Chatham, Gillingham, Rainham, Rochester and Strood with a 1km radium around each town centre as shown in the map.

Core walking zones in Medway



9 Priority cycling routes

The LCWIP guidance document indicates that these routes should first be prioritised and then audited to identify where improvements are required. A prioritisation process was therefore undertaken to identify which routes should be taken forward for auditing.

Key criteria for prioritisation of routes were as follows:

- Existing and potential future cycling demand (as identified in the previous section)
- Proximity to large scale developments
- Proximity to education establishments
- Access to major employment hubs

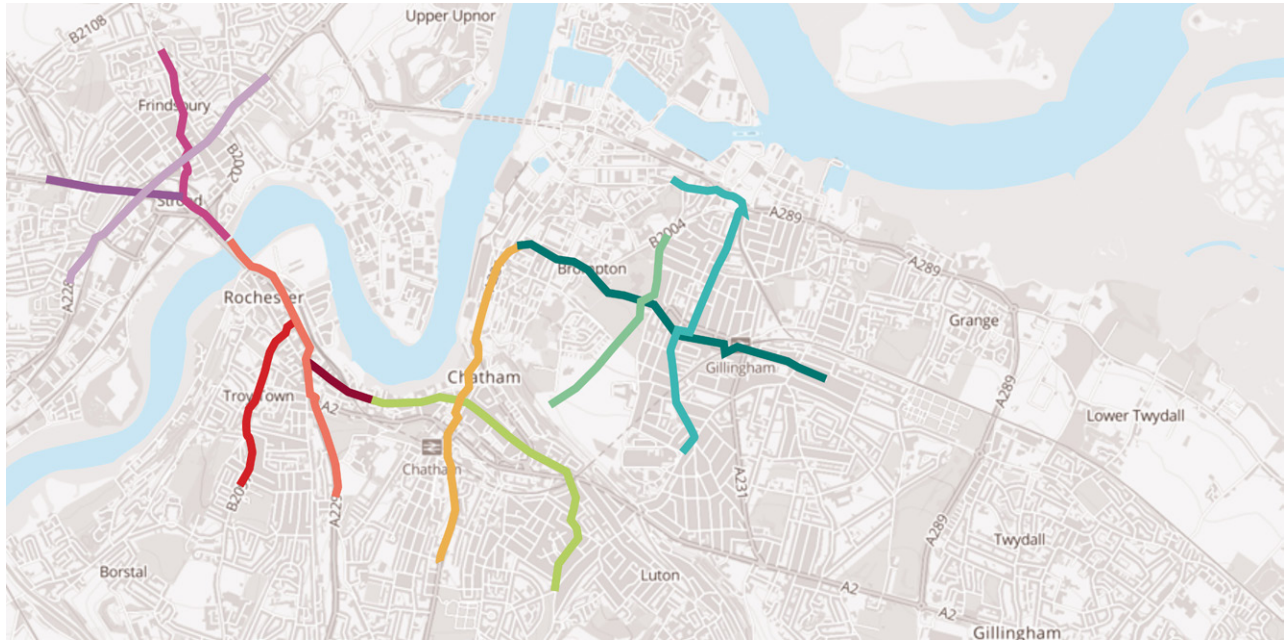
Following the prioritisation process 10 priority cycling routes have been identified as shown in the table below. These are the routes we are seeking your views on as part of this consultation.

ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH
1	Curlew Crescent to Green Lane, **Gillingham**	7.6km
2	Maidstone Road, **Rainham**	1.7km
3	Walderslade Road to Chatham Hill Gyratory, **Chatham**	5.3km
4	Upper Luton Road to Kitchener Avenue, **Chatham**	3.3km
5	Church Street to Sturdee Avenue, **Gillingham**	6.85km
6	Sturdee Avenue to Woodlands Road, **Gillingham**	2.48km
7	Dock Road, **Chatham**	1.88km
8	Corporation Street, **Rochester** to Waterfront Way, **Chatham**	2.55km
9	Sections 1 & 2 (Peninsula Way, **Chattenden** to Sans Pareil roundabout, **Wainscott)**	4km
10	Brompton Farm Road to Watling Street, **Strood**	1.8km

10 Priority walking routes

Priority walking routes 1 to 3

Priority walking routes 4 to 14



	ROUTE	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH
	1	A2 London Road, **Rainham**	2.1km
	2	B2004 Station Road, **Rainham**	1km
	3	Maidstone Road, **Rainham**	0.9km
	4	PriestField Road/Balmoral Road/ High Street/Brompton Road/ Wood Street, **Gillingham**	2.4km
	5	Windmill Road/ Canterbury Street/ High Street/ James Street/ Richmond Road/ Medway Road/ B2004 Pier/ Road/ Purser/ Johnson Avenue, **Gillingham**	2.2km
	6	Great Lines Heritage Park/ Mill Road, **Gillingham**	1.4km
	7	Magpie Hall Road/ High Street, **Chatham**	2.5km
	8	Maidstone Road, **Chatham**	2.3km
	9	City Way/ Star Hill/ Corporation Street/ High Street, **Rochester**	2km
	10	Maidstone Road/ Crow Lane/ High Street/ Blue Boar Lane, **Rochester**	1.2km
	11	St Margaret's Bank, **Rochester**	0.5km
	12	High Street/ North Street/ Frindsbury Road/ Cliffe Road, **Strood**	1.4km
	13	A2 High Street/ London Road/ Watling Street, **Strood**	1km
	14	Cuxton Road/ Gun Lane/ Frindsbury Road, **Strood**	2km

11 Route audits

The identified priority walking and cycling routes have been audited to identify where improvements are required to bring the route up to the expected standard. All the routes have been audited using a DfT tool which scores the routes against 5 assessment criteria:

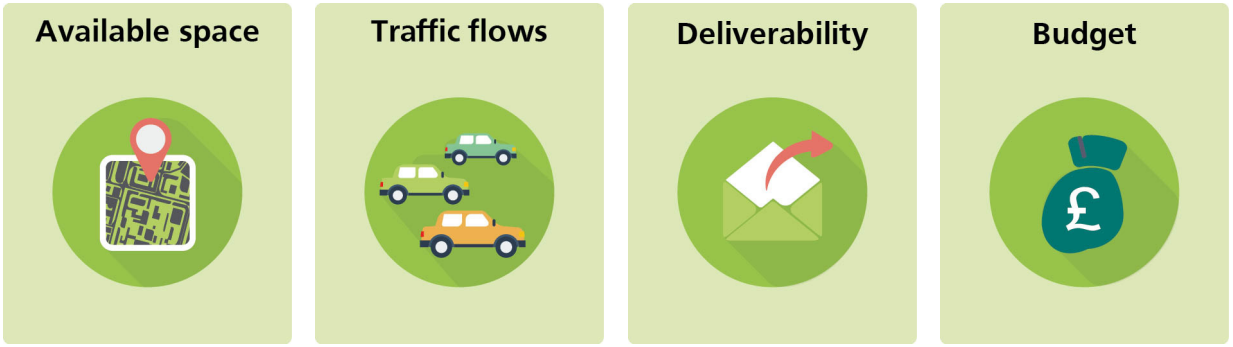
Common issues that were identified as part of the audit include:

12 Types of improvement and level of design

When improving the cycling and walking network in Medway we will be seeking to follow guidance as set out in the Local Transport Note 1/20. The core design principles of LTN 1/20 seek to improve accessibility for all and are summarised below:

Core design principles to improve accessibility for all

Type of intervention influenced by numerous factors:



Concept designs

As part of the LCWIP process concept designs have been created for the priority walking and cycling routes. These are early-stage designs intended to give an indication of the type of improvement that could be considered to bring the route up to standard and attract more people to walking and cycling. These are not detailed designs and would be subject to further work and consultation at a later stage. The concept designs can be found on the consultation webpage alongside this document.

The concept designs we are seeking your views on are:

- High level concept designs for all the identified priority routes
- Identifying pinch points and constraints
- Combination of cross sections and images from the audit
- Can aid with future funding bids and more detailed design

13 Have your say

We want to hear your views on the LCWIP for Medway as part of our consultation running from

Monday 22nd January to Sunday 3rd March

There are lots of ways to get involved:

Online survey

Fill out our online survey on www.medway.gov.uk/activetravel to give us your views on the designs we have developed for the priority walking and cycling routes. We want to gather your feedback on the routes and the types of interventions suggested within the designs.

Attend a face to face consultation event

We are running two face to face events so that members of the public can come and speak to the team working on the LCWIP, look at the designs and maps and feedback any suggestions on the work completed so far.

EVENT 1:

30th January 2024

Medway Park, Mill Road, Gillingham, ME7 1HF

3pm to 7pm

EVENT 2:

31st January 2024

The Pentagon shopping centre, Chatham

9am to 1pm

14 What happens next

On completion of the consultation period we will incorporate the feedback received in relation to the designs and those will be considered.

Following that, the LCWIP report will be finalised, adopted by Medway Council and integrated with other key local policy. The LCWIP is a 'live' and evolving document that will be updated and monitored. It will be used by Medway Council to support funding applications to central government and provide a clear framework for delivery of an improved network for walking and cycling locally.

For more information on walking and cycling in Medway please visit:

www.medway.gov.uk/walking

www.medway.gov.uk/cycling

www.medway.gov.uk/activetravel

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