



Local Transport Plan 4 (2020-36)

Reading Transport Strategy 2036

ANNEX A - Summary of Visioning Consultation Responses

January 2020

ANNEX A - Summary of Visioning Consultation Responses

1. Introduction & Summary

- 1.1. We're planning for the future of transport in Reading and this consultation has informed us of your views.
- 1.2. Transport matters to all of us. It connects us with our workplaces, schools, friends and families. It affects our health, the air we breathe, and the streets where we live. It helps our economy to grow and our town to thrive, and it can make the environment around us clean and friendly or dirty and dangerous.
- 1.3. Future travel in Reading is about more than moving people from A to B. It must be affordable and accessible, improve people's health and wellbeing, support a growing and inclusive economy, enable a carbon neutral future for Reading and harness the latest technology.

We Asked

- 1.4. We asked for your feedback into the early stages of designing a new transport strategy for Reading to last the next 15 years.

You Said

- 1.5. You gave a wide range of feedback about how we can make transport in Reading faster, simpler, safer, less congested, more connected, more accessible and better for the environment.

We Did

- 1.6. This consultation was the first step in designing a new transport strategy for Reading.
- 1.7. We have used your feedback to inform development of the draft strategy document, which is subject to statutory consultation.

Headline Results

- 1.8. We asked people what would be effective measures in terms of introducing more and improved sustainable transport choices in Reading.

- 93% said making public transport journeys faster and more reliable
- 83% said a comprehensive park and ride network to reduce cars on the road
- 90% said dedicated car free spaces, to increase active travel
- 92% said better connected walking and cycling routes
- 75% said the reallocation of road space for sustainable modes of transport.

1.9. We also asked what would work in terms of managing future traffic levels and demand in Reading.

- 78% said limiting cars from sensitive areas (around schools and the town centre) would improve safety, alongside air quality and health benefits for residents
- 76% said initiatives where roads are free of cars for a limited time would improve safety, air quality and public health
- 86% said better facilities would increase the uptake of zero emission vehicles (e.g. electric vehicle charging points)
- Around 60% said a charging scheme would be effective in reducing the number of private vehicles on the road

2. About the consultation

2.1. Over the summer of 2019 we ran a consultation on the future of transport in Reading. We launched this at the start of developing our next transport strategy for Reading and was designed to get early input into the priorities and direction of the new strategy.

2.2. Our objectives were:

- To get early feedback to inform the development of the new strategy.
- To hear from as many people as possible and to hear from a cross section of people – including those who live in the Borough, people travelling in from outside, a range of ages and a geographical spread.

2.3. The consultation ran from Monday 29th July 2019 to 13th October 2019.

2.4. We publicised the consultation with:

- A media launch.
- Promotion on the Council's website, social media channels, through our hubs and libraries and on the big screen at Reading Station.

- A leaflet delivered to 70,000 households and 3,800 businesses in the Borough.
- A series of consultation events, including workshops with key partners and stakeholders including neighbouring local authorities, local businesses and transport operators.
- A workshop with the Reading Climate Change Transport Theme group.
- Public drop-in sessions across the Borough and pop-up stalls at Reading Station and Green Park business park.
- Engagement sessions with local schools throughout the area.

2.5. We received **more than 3,000 responses**: almost 2,900 from the online survey and further feedback from the 750 people engaged through consultation events and workshops.

3. Who responded?

- 3.1. There was an equal split between males (51%) and females (49%).
- 3.2. The age group with the highest level of respondents was 36-45, however there was a good spread of responses across all age ranges.
- 3.3. 78% of the respondents live in Reading Borough, 12% live in the wider urban area and 10% live outside of the urban area.
- 3.4. 54% of respondents reported that their current main mode of travel is by sustainable modes, 43% drive and 3% travel by other means.
- 3.5. Of the 43% of respondents who said they drive as their main mode of travel in and around Reading:
 - 65% drive to work,
 - 16% take children to school,
 - 70% drive to the shops,
 - 68% drive for leisure, recreation or to socialise
 - 21% drive for other purposes.

- 3.6. Of the 43% of respondents who said their main mode of transport is to drive, **37% have or are considering changing their main mode of travel.**

4. Results summary

- 4.1. We proposed five themes to underpin the new transport strategy, and 90% of respondents supported these proposed themes:

Creating a Clean and Green Reading



Provide transport options to enhance quality of life, reduce emissions and improve air quality to create a carbon neutral town

Supporting Healthy Lifestyles



Create healthy streets to encourage active travel and lifestyles, improve accessibility to key destinations and increase personal safety

Enabling Sustainable and Inclusive Growth



Enable sustainable growth and connect communities so that everyone can benefit from Reading's success

Connecting People and Places



Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport by providing attractive alternatives to the private car, helping to provide a transport network that is fast, affordable, connected and resilient

Embracing Smart Solutions



Use technology to manage the network efficiently and allow informed travel choices, whilst enabling Reading to become a smart, connected town of the future

4.2. A number of key themes emerged including:

4.3. Theme 1 - Support for sustainable transport such as measures to improve public transport, walking and cycling:

- Accessible - Cheaper bus fares, more capacity on vehicles, integrated timetabling between buses and trains, smart ticketing, wider catchment of bus routes, air conditioning on buses.
- Convenient – More frequent, faster and more reliable, round town routes complementing town centre routes.
- Park and Ride – All sides of the town and accessible to users
- Safety – safer routes, away from traffic, lit, crossings.
- Quality – surface of the route, smooth for cycling and walking.
- Connected – Joined up network of cycle routes, better connected to destinations and transport hubs.
- Facilitated – Changing facilities, secure cycle parking, e-bike/scooter charging.

4.4. Theme 2 - Support for measures to manage congestion and the growing demand for transport including using technology, dedicating space for sustainable transport and 'management' measures such as limiting when and where cars can go, and vehicle charging schemes.

5. Detailed results

5.1. Question 1 - We asked people to rank how effective the possible strategies to improve transport in Reading would be. The highest ranking option was increasing journeys on foot, bike and public transport. The next highest were reducing cars on the network and tackling congestion on major roads, bridges and junctions.

5.2. Question 2 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies to reduce the number of cars on the road according to how effective they thought they would be. All of the options received support from more than half of all respondents, with an improved Park and Ride network ranking the highest.

- 83% thought a better Park and Ride network would be effective.
- 75% thought reallocating road space for sustainable modes of transport would be effective.

- 66% thought a smart parking system would be effective.
- 65% thought initiatives such as car clubs and lift sharing would be effective.
- 60% thought a charging scheme for private vehicles would be effective.

5.3. Question 3 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies to increase journeys on foot and bike according to how effective they thought they would be. All of the options received support from more than half of all respondents, with three options ranking above 90%.

- 92% thought improving the quality and safety of routes would be effective.
- 92% thought improving the connectedness of the walking and cycling network would be effective.
- 90% thought dedicated spaces for walking and cycling free of cars would be effective.
- 89% thought having secure cycle parking and changing facilities at destinations would be effective.
- 59% thought a charging scheme for private vehicles would be effective.

5.4. Question 4 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies to increase journeys on public transport according to how effective they thought they would be. All of the options received support from 89% or more of all respondents.

- 94% thought extending the network with more frequent services to workplaces, schools and isolated areas would be effective.
- 93% thought making public transport easier to use with transferable tickets and joined up timetables would be effective.
- 93% thought making journeys faster and more reliable would be effective.
- 89% thought making public transport more accessible to everyone would be effective.

5.5. Question 5 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies to tackle congestion on our roads according to how effective they thought they would be. All the options received support from more than half the respondents, with more capacity (bus and cycle lanes, river crossing) and dedicated space for space for public transport ranking the highest:

- 88% thought increasing capacity with

schemes such as a new river crossing, more bus and cycle lanes or new forms of transport like river taxis would be effective.

- 82% thought dedicated space and priority for sustainable transport would be effective.
- 59% thought a charging scheme for private cars would be effective.

5.6. Question 6 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies that make use of the current and emerging smart technology to improve transport in Reading according to how effective they thought they would be. All the options received support from more than 70% of respondents, with using real time information to manage junctions and signals ranking highest:

- 91% thought using real time traffic information to better manage junctions and traffic signals would be effective.
- 84% thought using real time data about traffic conditions to help people make decisions about how to travel would be effective.
- 73% thought using technology to replacing need to travel, eg work at home, online shopping would be

effective.

- 71% thought using apps to integrating services like car clubs and cycle hire would be effective.

5.7. Question 7 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies to improve air quality in the town according to how effective they thought they would be. All the options received support from more than 70% of respondents, with zero emission vehicles and road space for sustainable transport the most popular.

- 86% thought facilities to encourage uptake of zero emission vehicles such as electric vehicle charging points would be effective.
- 83% thought prioritising road space for sustainable transport would be effective.
- 73% though limiting cars outside schools and in the Town Centre would be effective.
- 72% thought a clean air charging scheme for high emission vehicles would be effective.

5.8. Question 8 - We asked people to rank the possible strategies to improve safety on the

road network according to how effective they thought they would be. All the options received support from more than half of respondents, with safety measures like crossings and speed restrictions the most popular:

- 88% thought better crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists would be effective.
- 82% thought managing traffic with reduced speed limits or joined up traffic signals would be effective.
- 78% thought limiting cars in sensitive areas, e.g. schools and town centre would be effective.
- 76% thought initiatives where roads are free of traffic for a period of time would be effective.
- 53% thought a charging scheme for private cars would be effective.

5.9. Question 9 - Drivers were asked what they thought could be done to encourage people to make more journeys on foot, by bike or on public transport. The majority of drivers who answered said better public transport would encourage them to change how they travel. Many also said they wanted better cycling facilities.

6. Other feedback

6.1. The consultation also asked for any other feedback. The main points raised include:

- Support for extension of public transport services throughout Reading (particularly Caversham and direct services to Royal Berkshire Hospital).
- A number of responses supported new park and ride facilities as well as the extension of services into and around Reading.
- Support for subsidised bus fares for vulnerable people, including the elderly, people on low incomes and families.
- A range of comments about public transport – some in agreement and some proposing alternative points of view – such as the need for additional and more reliable services (inc. school bus services), and bus lanes being used by other modes of transport (e.g. motorcycles, electric vehicles, multiple occupancy vehicles).
- Some comments suggesting the re-introduction of tram services between the town centre and outer suburbs.
- A number of responses specifically referenced the introduction of a third

bridge over the River Thames to help manage traffic levels in Reading.

- A number of responses referenced the need to provide an outer ring road around Reading to help alleviate congestion in Reading and reduce through traffic.
- Comments supporting road infrastructure improvements along the IDR and key corridors.
- Comments highlighting the need to provide segregated and connected cycle facilities that are safe and secure.

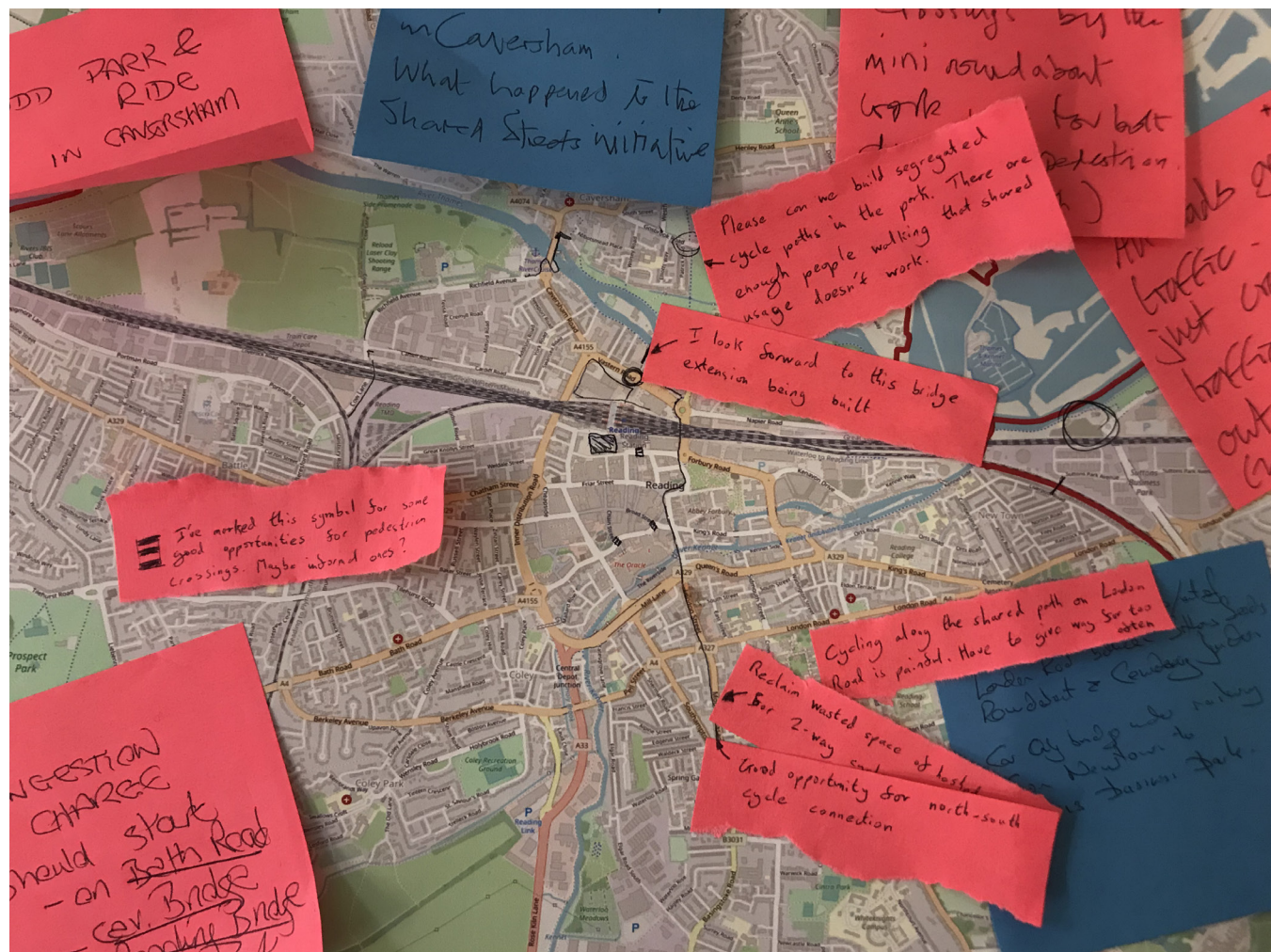
6.2. A number of comments related to upgrading footways to ensure they are accessible for use by people with particular mobility requirements, for instance through improved surfacing, dropped kerbs etc.

6.3. A range of comments about vehicle charging schemes – some in agreement and some proposing alternative points of view – including support for the introduction of charging schemes, and concerns about the impact of charging schemes on residents on low incomes and those with mobility issues.

6.4. Comments supporting smart solutions, including cleaner transport options, such as electric vehicles, and initiatives for smoothing traffic flow.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1. We thank everyone who has taken the time to engage with this consultation. The feedback we have received will be used to prepare the draft strategy document which will shape our town's transport network to 2036 and beyond. The draft strategy will be subject to a further statutory consultation, after which feedback will be incorporated into the final strategy which is intended to be adopted by the Council in late 2020.



Transport Strategy Visioning Consultation, Public Exhibition

Strategic Transport
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices, Bridge Street
Reading
RG1 2LU

Email: transport@reading.gov.uk

Website: <https://www.reading.gov.uk/transport2036>