

Braintree Town Future Transport Strategy



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Foreword



Cllr Tom Cunningham

Essex County Council Cabinet
Member for Planning a Growing
Economy

This strategy provides a unique opportunity to shape the future of transport planning within the town and wider strategic area to support residents to live active, better connected lives and allow our businesses to thrive.

The strategy will assist in guiding and shaping decision-making for future transport infrastructure requirements and subsequent implementation, enabling schemes to be delivered in the right place, at the right time, and in the most sustainable manner. The strategy will also provide a strong and robust framework upon which funding bids for infrastructure can be prioritised, based on their alignment to the strategy.

In recent years, a number of factors – including climate change, decarbonisation of transport and covid-19 have led to many changes in our everyday lives. For example: how we work, how we shop, the journeys we make and modes of transport we use. This has accelerated the need for us to think differently about how we travel now and in the future. To capitalise on, and adapt to this shifting landscape, we need a blueprint for how we plan for transport in the future: a blueprint that puts health and well-being at the heart of our thinking, and is aligned to wider objectives such as decarbonisation, supporting public transport, active travel and levelling up.



Cllr Gabrielle Spray

Braintree District Council Cabinet
Member for Planning
and Infrastructure

I am pleased to introduce the Braintree Future Transport Strategy proposal, which we have worked closely with Essex County Council to produce. This long-term strategy outlines our commitment to improving transport options for every member of our community and to reducing the negative impacts of travel within Braintree town. Transport is fundamental and impacts all aspects of our lives from where we choose to live, work and study to our health and the air we breathe.

The transport strategy aims to ensure our transport system is safe, accessible to all, allowing us to make choices and to lead healthier lives. To help us to tackle climate change, we need to make significant changes to the transport network, and the way we live our lives.

Our aim is for everyone to have the genuine choice of how to move around the town and to reduce reliance on cars. We will seek to secure the funding that is necessary to make change happen. This strategy offers a clear commitment to reduce air pollution and improve road safety and seeks to create a sustainable and inclusive transport network that can be accessed by everyone, with no group excluded or suffering reduced accessibility.



Transport Vision for Braintree:

“For Braintree to be an attractive and safe place for people to live, work, study and enjoy, with a high-quality and innovative transport system that responds to the challenges of climate change and offers enhanced connectivity, accessibility and sustainable growth.”

Creating a long-term transport plan for Braintree

There is a high reliance on car use in Braintree due to its large rural area and fragmented bus and cycle networks. A high proportion of car trips are made within Braintree town. However, there is the potential to encourage a shift towards using different types of transport, for shorter journeys.

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic traffic levels reduced in Braintree, whilst more residents took up walking and cycling. However, traffic is now returning to pre-pandemic levels contributing to increased levels of delay and congestion on local roads.

Walking, cycling or using public transport for a short journey just twice a week could see a reduction of 50,000 car journeys from within the town.

The latest figures show that there are 53,200 'economically active' people in Braintree. As the town grows and its economy builds, we want to support people to consider different forms of transport.

This will create a more sustainable network, improving air quality, increasing our health and wellbeing and helping is work towards the district commitment of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

Future Transport Strategies have been positively established in other areas of Essex and are a good way of planning, setting out a blueprint against which future projects will be identified and prioritised for funding.

Created jointly with Braintree District Council, the strategy will also provide a platform to work with other partners such as National Highways and Network Rail / Greater Anglia.

This document outlines the existing transport issues and opportunities for Braintree town, with a long-term vision and strategy.

The focus of this strategy is on Braintree town as other settlements in the district have their own unique issues and opportunities to be considered separately.

This document will nevertheless present both Braintree town and Braintree district transport statistics as a representative measure of the issues and opportunities impacting the town.

Your views have been important in helping to refine the strategy. Now finalised it will help to identify potential schemes to take forward. These will range from short term interventions through to longer-term major works.



What you told us

Car ownership is higher in Braintree than the regional or national average. 71% said they use their car as their main mode of travel. Helping reducing car commuting and increasing active and sustainable travel will relieve congestion and provide environmental and health benefits.

Objectives

To achieve our vision we have set seven objectives to measure all potential future transport schemes against.

- Active travel**
 Promote, deliver and improve alternative and sustainable modes of transport to reduce the number of car journeys made, alleviate traffic congestion and provide health benefits.
- Innovative and sustainable solutions**
 Encourage new technologies to support sustainable solutions, including an upgraded network to accommodate electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, alongside the promotion of sustainable fuels.
- Attractive environment**
 Protect Braintree's culture and heritage, whilst improving the quality of natural, built, and historic environments. Tackle air and noise pollution to enhance quality of life and to align with wider government objectives for decarbonisation.
- Safer travel environment**
 Promote and deliver a safer and more secure traveling environment in Braintree to reduce accidents and encourage a good perception of safety. Ensure existing and new infrastructure is well maintained.
- Economic and housing growth - improving connections**
 Maximise the potential of Braintree's strategic location and work to ensure new development and provision of transport within the town are aligned. Improve connectivity all of all transport networks to increase access to key sites and services.
- Managing demand**
 Encourage alternative modes of transport and improve the frequency, capacity and quality of public transport to reduce congestion, maximise the efficiency and resilience of the road network and improve journey time reliability.
- Inclusivity**
 Provide a transport environment that enhances accessibility and is inclusive for all.



What you told us

You asked us how the objectives will be used in the future. The seven objectives will be used to guide transport investment in the town and as a means to assess and prioritise potential schemes in the future

Delivering the vision

The purpose of this strategy is to provide a framework to guide future decision making around transport investment in Braintree, prioritising schemes and initiatives that encourage sustainable growth in the town.

While technology and travel behaviours will change over the next 10 to 20 years, the strategy will ensure that schemes adhere to the identified vision for Braintree whilst the town continues to evolve.

Delivering the vision will require a package of small-scale initiatives to be implemented over the next few years, with larger scale improvements identified and delivered over the longer-term.



Short Term (0-3 years)

- Capacity improvement at Marks Farm Roundabout
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) routes
- [Active Travel Fund \(ATF\) Schemes](#)
- [Healthy 'School Streets'](#) implemented
- [E-scooter trials](#) and infrastructure
- Public realm improvements linked to Braintree Town Centre pedestrianisation
- Introduction of 20mph zones
- Springwood Drive Roundabout capacity improvements



Medium Term (3-10 years)

- [Millennium Way Slips](#)
- [A131 and A120 route Improvements](#)
- Greater Eastern mainline improvements
- Panfield Lane Link – segregated cycleway and footways and highways improvement
- [Thrive and Reach Bus Back Better](#) schemes
- Extension of [Digi-go Services](#)



Long Term (10+ years)

- North Essex Rapid Transit (NERT) route from Marks Tey to Braintree
- National ban on sales of new petrol and diesel cars and supporting electric vehicles and new technologies
- Identified schemes implemented as part of the strategy

To reduce car use, improve sustainable transport connections and make it easier to access the town centre and wider town, schemes and initiatives will focus on:



Improving active travel (walking and cycling):

E.g. including flagship routes, bike loan schemes, improved cycle parking, maintenance of walking/cycling network.

Public transport enhancements:

E.g. rapid transit services, bus network improvement plans, improvements to rail services, smart ticketing.

Technology driven solutions:

E.g. e-scooter provision, e-cargo bikes, electric vehicle provision and charging hubs, autonomous vehicles, synthetic fuels, travel apps.

Access improvements:

E.g. improved access to the town centre and key sites as well as improved access at bus stops, stations and transport interchanges.

Creating quality partnerships:

E.g. Bus Enhanced Partnerships, inter-urban coach partnerships and freight partnerships. Working with taxi providers and updating the district taxi policy to help drive accessibility.

Travel change initiatives:

E.g. travel planning with local businesses and sustainable travel teams, car share clubs, business travel plans.

Current Priorities

Station approach improvements:

Improving the access and safety of the station area for all users.

North Essex Rapid Transit System:

Developing the first stages of a new rapid transit system linking up key destinations across the town.

Cycling network:

Improving the connectivity, quality and safety of the cycle network to ensure there is good provision of direct cycle routes to key sites.

Public realm improvements;

Continuing to improve and enhance the public realm following the recent pedestrianisation of the town centre. Ongoing efforts will ensure the town centre remains an attractive and accessible, pedestrian friendly location.

20mph zones:

Introducing 20mph zones to support the proposed new walking and cycling upgrades in the area and improve the safety of active travel as a mode.

Working With Schools:

Instil awareness of current issues and promote a more sustainable future in schools.

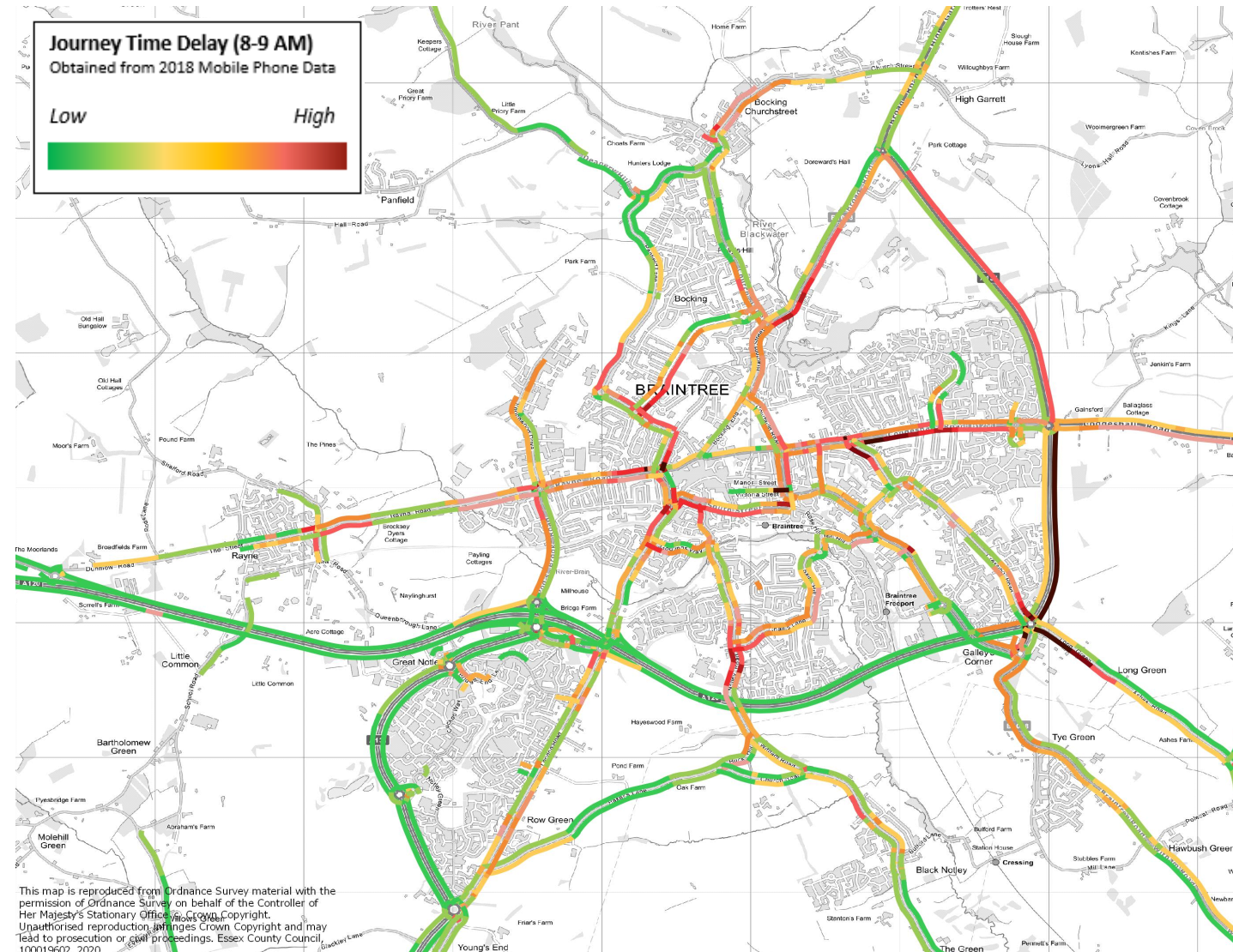
Braintree's Transport Network

Braintree's strategic road network is subject to regular and significant delays, often resulting in poor journey time reliability. Traffic flows are high on the A12, A131 and the A120.

This causes congestion issues, particularly on the approach towards Galley's Corner Roundabout, as indicated in red on the map.

Braintree's town centre also experiences high traffic levels, particularly during the afternoon peak. High levels of congestion have a negative impact on air quality, people's health and the economy.

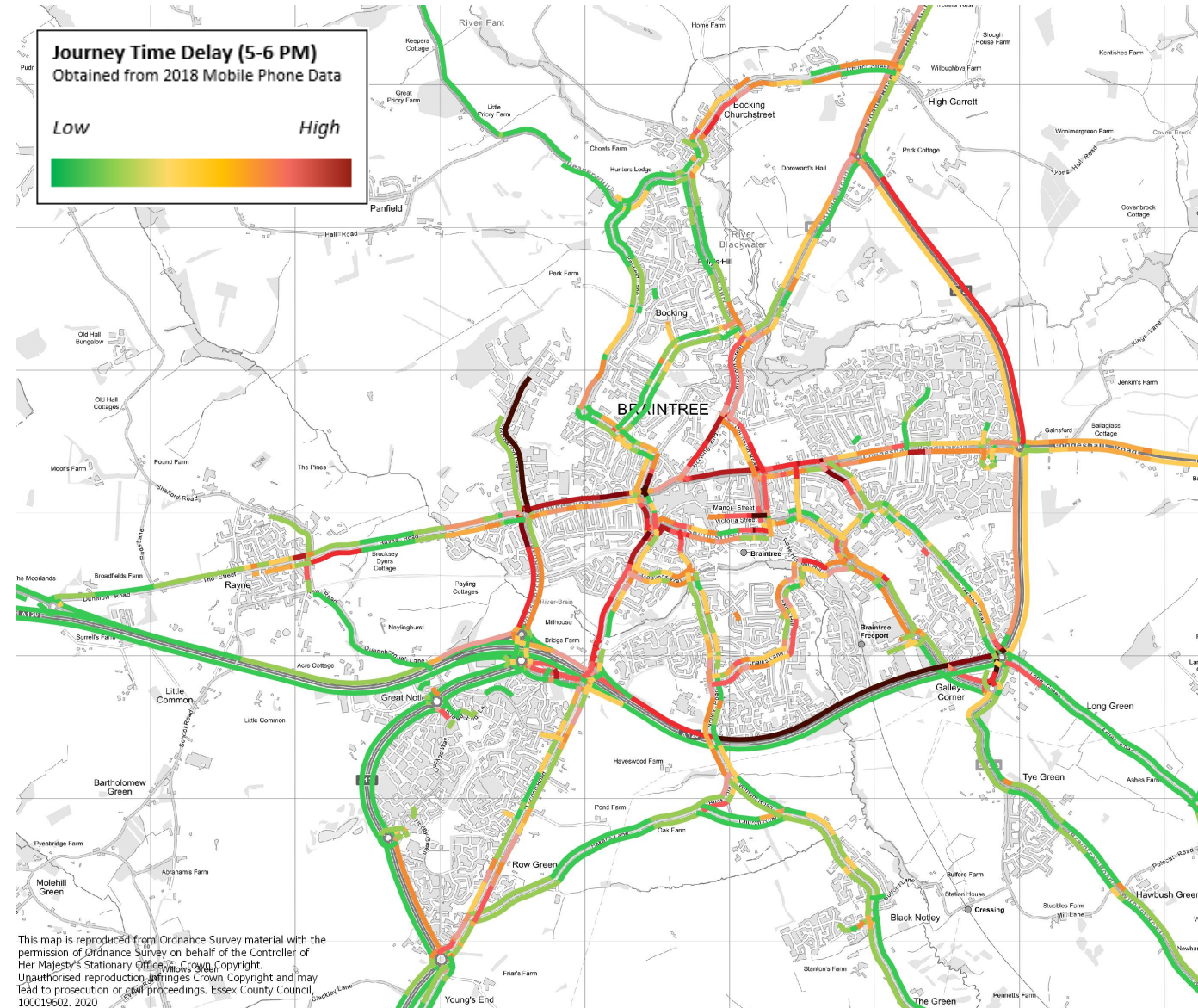
It is therefore important that we improve sustainable transport alternatives to relieve pressure on the road network.



Morning peak - Mobile phone data with the red areas showing the worst congestion

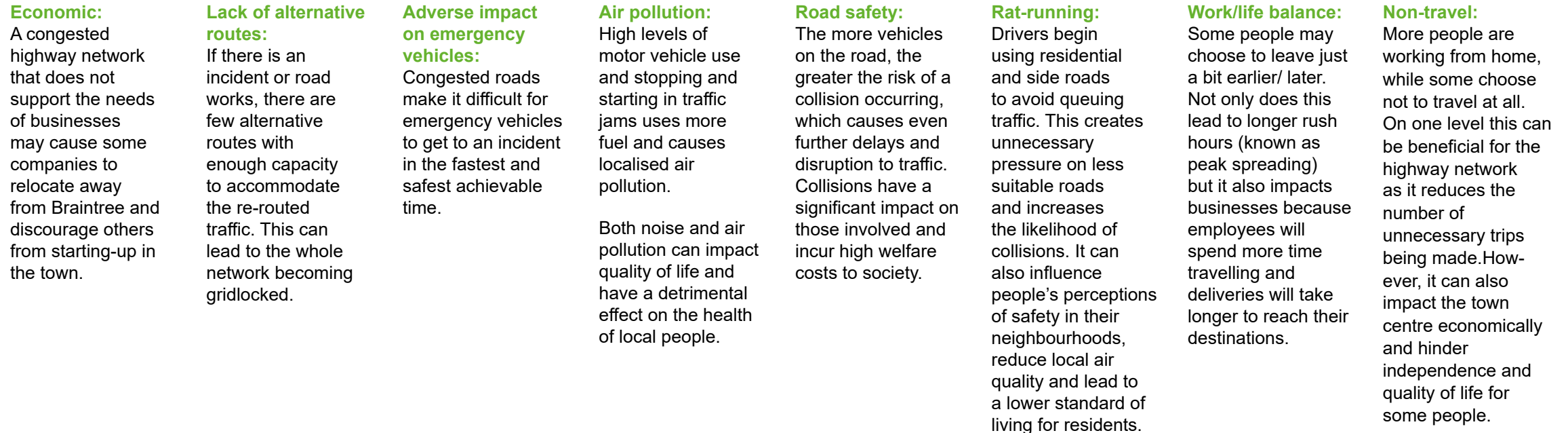
The areas in Braintree with the largest delays are:

- A131 Southbound towards Marks Farm
- A120 Southbound towards Galley's Corner
- Coggeshall Road
- A120 Eastbound towards Galley's Corner
- London Road
- Springwood Drive



Afternoon peak - Mobile phone data with the red areas showing the worst congestion

Congestion impacts us economically, as well as our health and wellbeing



How we travel

Commuting to work by car has a significant impact on the road network. However, school travel and leisure trips can also contribute to increased traffic during peak periods. Congestion in the town centre is putting local roads under pressure and is increasing journey times and delays,

Census 'journey to work' data shows that 72% of residents travel to work within Braintree by car or van. Some of these are short car journeys with 22% of these under 5km (3 miles) and 11% under 2km (just over a mile).

Taking leisure and education trips into account, around 90% of journeys made by car have an origin or destination within the town, according to a recent survey. This indicates that the strategy should target improved sustainable access to and from Braintree Town and the surrounding area.

Sustainable travel options including trains, buses, cycling and walking currently only make up 22% of all journey to work trips made by residents.

Whilst 11% of journeys to work in Braintree are made on foot – which is higher than the Essex average - only 2% of journey to work trips are made by bike. However, the number of cyclists was seen to increase during the pandemic - showing there to be the potential for a sustained increase in cycling trips in Braintree with the right infrastructure and facilities in place.



What you told us

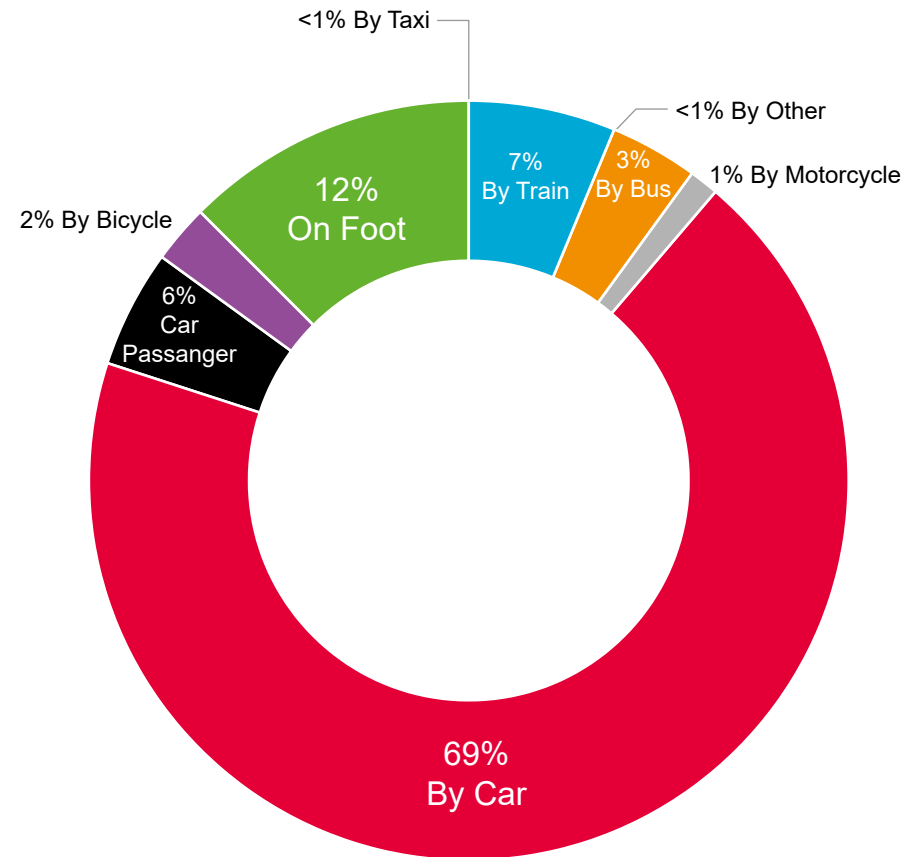
When choosing how to travel, convenience and journey time reliability was seen as being either 'important' or 'very important' for at least 93% of respondents.

It is therefore important that this strategy focuses on making sustainable and active travel opportunities as convenient and as reliable as possible.

How people who live and work in Braintree town travel on a typical day

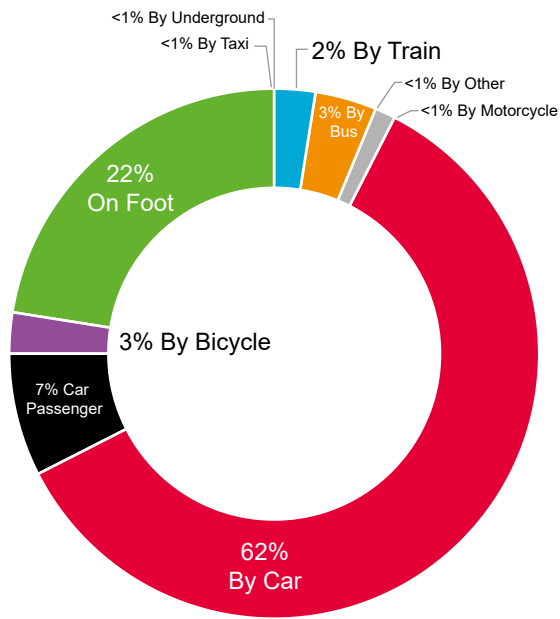
Journey to work statistics for Braintree Town (2011 - currently the most reliable data)

TRAIN	1,589
BUS, MINIBUS, COACH	780
TAXI	108
MOTORCYCLE	154
DRIVING A CAR OR VAN	16,495
CAR OR VAN PASSENGER	1,384
BICYCLE	503
ON FOOT	2,847
OTHER	119



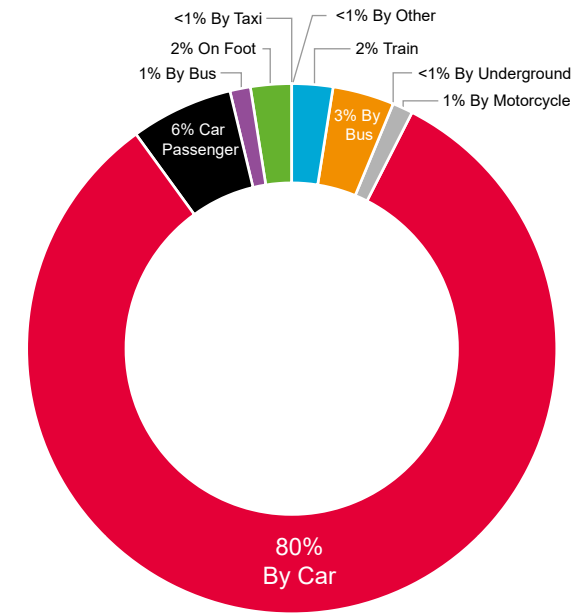
**23,979 working
commuters in Braintree Town**

How people who work in the Braintree district travel on a typical day



Braintree working commuters living inside the district
26,950

Mode of travel to work for Braintree workers living inside the district (census data)		Mode of travel to work for Braintree workers living outside the district (census data)	
406	TRAIN	311	
813	BUS, MINIBUS OR COACH	460	
120	TAXI	28	
210	MOTORCYCLE, SCOOTER OR MOPED	111	
16,835	DRIVING A CAR OR VAN	11,453	
1,840	PASSENGER IN CAR OR VAN	783	
847	BICYCLE	138	
5,812	ON FOOT	253	
67	OTHER	31	



Braintree working commuters living outside the district
13,568

Braintree's buses

Braintree's bus network supports the local economy, providing access to key sites such as the town, health centres, residential areas, retail and work locations. Many rely on bus services for travelling locally within the town but also for longer distance trips to wider destinations such as Stansted Airport, Chelmsford and Colchester.

However, the bus network is fragmented with no single operator serving the district and services limited in the evenings and on weekends. Poor network connectivity also means some areas remain disconnected from key sites. This makes buses a less viable travel option for commuters, with only 3% of trips to work made by bus.

During Covid-19 social distancing requirements made the private car a safer and more convenient mode of travel, further deterring people from using the bus. Higher upfront costs and longer journey times also make bus travel a less attractive option.

However, buses are a sustainable mode of travel that would help to reduce the high levels of car usage within Braintree and the wider district. Buses have capacity to carry up to 60 passengers which could remove a similar number of cars from the road network (based on single occupancy).

Buses also make the town centre more accessible to vulnerable and elderly users with limited mobility. Unfortunately, bus shelters in Braintree vary in condition and are not always suitable, especially for those with mobility issues. It is therefore important that future bus improvements cater for these users, such as the recent improvements to the bus park.

Looking ahead, the [Essex Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) includes two transformation projects that could help to improve the quality of bus services in the district. These include 'Thrive' which aims to rejuvenate market town services and 'Reach' which will see the expansion of on-demand transport (such as [DigiGo](#)) in locations with limited access to key services.



Initiatives such as the £2 cost cap are designed to encourage bus use

What you told us

You told us about issues of frequency, reliability, coverage and cost. In particular the lack of early/late services connecting with areas of employment was a concern.

Over a third of respondents said they would use buses more following the implementation of the Government's £2 cap.

Braintree town railway stations

Some residents make their commute via rail. Braintree town has two stations, Braintree and Braintree Freeport which connect the town to London Liverpool Street, Chelmsford, and Colchester all via Witham.

Braintree station provides good access to the town centre and services, whilst Braintree Freeport is used to access Braintree Village Designer Shopping Outlet.

Between the two stations around 840,000 visits were made in 2019, with the majority of those via the town station (730,000).

At both stations, services are infrequent and unreliable due to the Braintree branch line operating with a single track and regular disruptions and cancellations.

Access to Braintree station is also limited and there is a pressing need to improve interchange facilities. A passing loop on the line would improve capacity and service delivery.

Rail users often choose to travel from Witham station instead, where services to London are more direct, frequent, and reliable. This has caused an increase in short, unnecessary car journeys to Witham station, impacting congestion levels and air quality.

Improving the provision and efficiency of rail services at Braintree's stations would encourage more people to use sustainable transport and help to relieve pressure at Witham station and on the wider strategic road network.



Braintree's cycle network

National Cycle Route 16 runs through Braintree, connecting the area to Bishop's Stortford in the West and to Great Notley and Witham in the Southwest.

There are opportunities to encourage cycling for shorter distance trips within the town, whilst the rural nature of Braintree also encourages people to ride for leisure. Despite this, cycling levels have historically been low with the proportion of cycling trips made in Braintree falling.

Cycling is a healthy and sustainable travel option that provides a great alternative to the private car, especially for shorter journeys. Cycling became more popular during the Covid-19 pandemic with a 36% increase in cycle trips within the town in 2020.

It is important that we recognise the barriers to cycling (including age, mobility, cost and location), and harness the opportunities that have arisen during the pandemic to further invest in new infrastructure and improvements to existing routes and facilities. This will make cycling safer and connect key parts of the town and surrounding areas where gaps currently exist. This should help make cycling a more attractive option for getting around and encourage new cyclists.



What you told us

41% of respondents suggested they could cycle more often. The provision of additional segregated cycle routes was identified as a key measure to encourage them to do so, as safety was noted as one of the main barriers to encouraging cycle uptake.

Cycling in Braintree

Gaps in the existing cycle network reduce access between strategic sites such as work places, new developments, interchange hubs and residential areas.

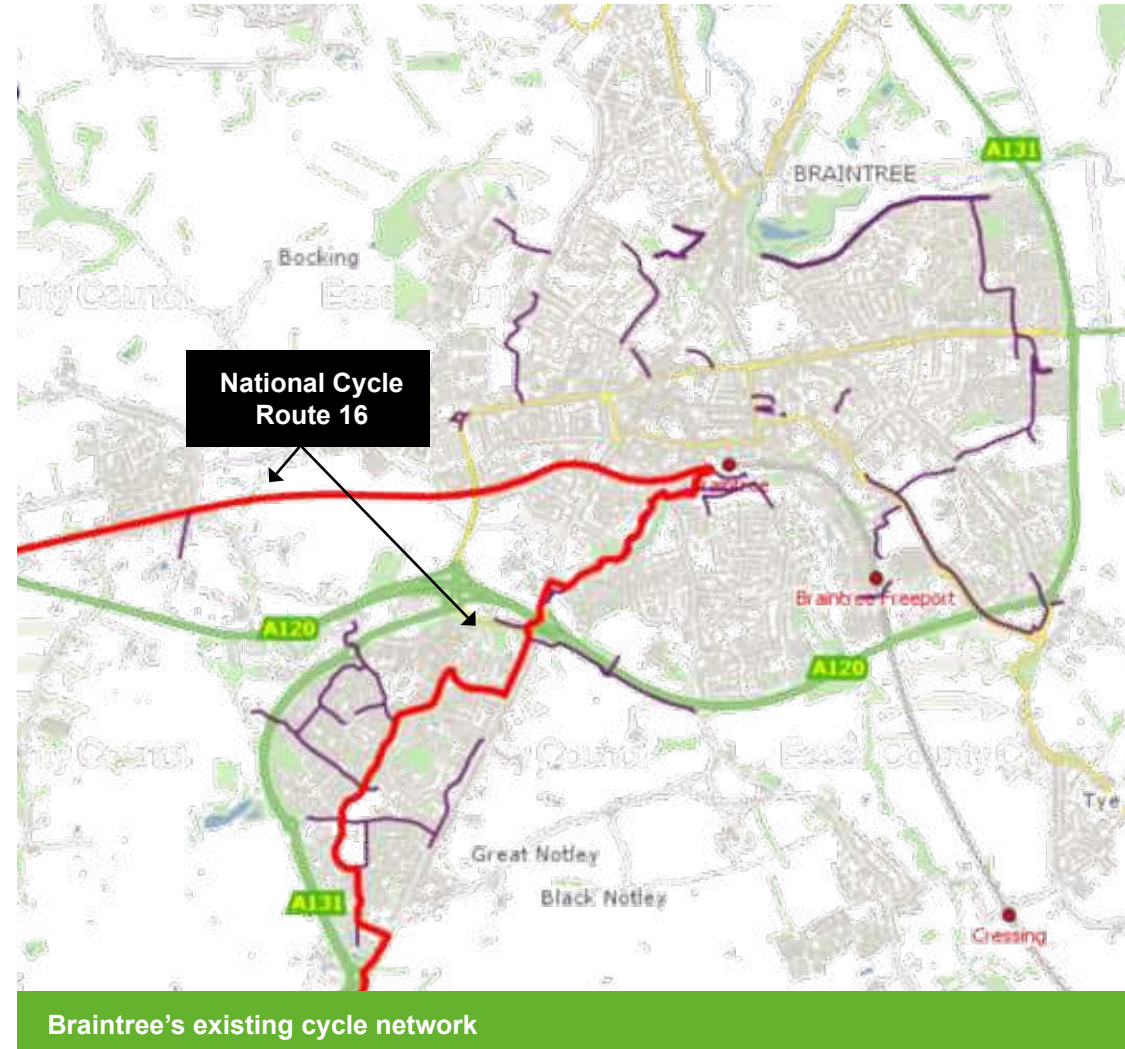
Furthermore, there are a number of barriers to cycling such as a lack of signage, safe and secure cycle parking facilities and inadequate lighting.

Investing in existing and new cycling infrastructure with a focus on improving safety, security and better connecting the network is essential and we recognise the different needs of those travelling in the town and those in more rural areas.

Through the consultation respondents highlighted issues of accessing the current network and being able to travel safely on segregated routes.

Along with a focus on cycling initiatives, engagement with cycling groups, will help to promote active travel in the town and across Braintree more widely.

It will also help support Braintree District Council's goal of doubling the number of cycling trips in Braintree District by 2031, as set out in the Braintree Cycle Strategy.



Future investment in cycling

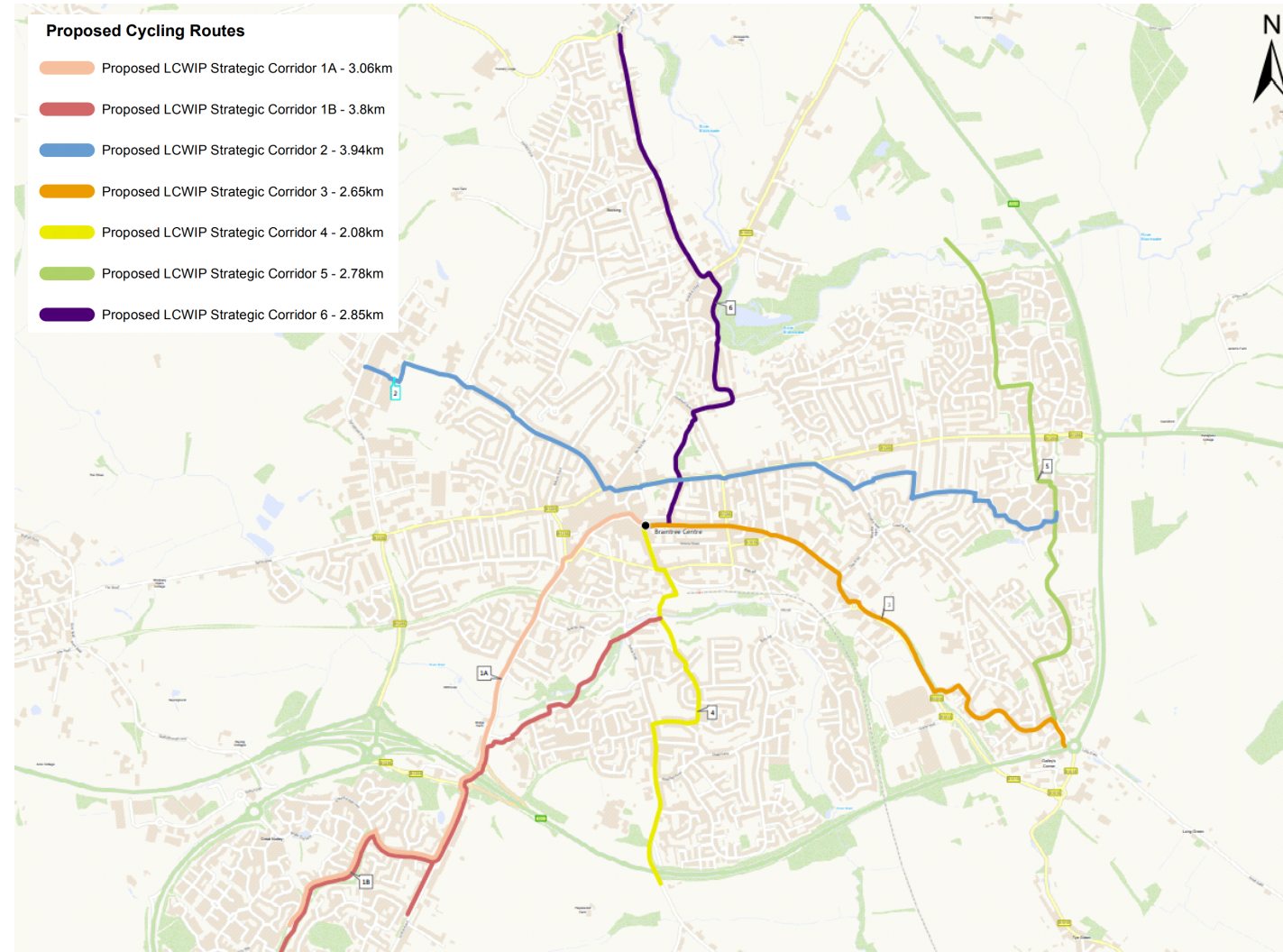
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are a strategic approach to making active travel more attractive and accessible.

Set out in the [Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy](#), LCWIPs aim to increase the number of people walking and cycling by looking at where long-term improvements to the network can be made.

Recent consultation on LCWIPs have shown support for increased emphasis on walking and cycling in urban areas, and in Braintree this provides a good opportunity to improve what is currently a fragmented network.

Within Braintree Town seven priority cycling and walk corridors have been identified through the LCWIP process, as shown on the map to the right. These routes are recognised as priority corridors for investment.

A consultation on updating the LCWIP Routes was [launched in summer 2023](#)



Braintree's future planned priority cycling corridors

Walking in Braintree

Walking is a cheap alternative to the car, with proven health benefits for both physical and mental health. Encouraging more people in Braintree to walk short distance journeys, wherever possible, will play an important role in reducing traffic volumes in the town and promoting a healthier and more sustainable environment.

Braintree has a network of footpaths and bridleways that connect surrounding areas to the town, as well as nature trails that enable access to public parks, nature reserves and the rural areas of Braintree. However, some of the infrastructure is fragmented and tired, making it a less attractive option to users. Barriers to walking include poorly maintained footpaths with uneven surfaces, overgrown foliage, inadequate street lighting, shared space with cyclists and limited crossing facilities.

Making improvements to the quality, connectivity and safety of existing routes as well as ensuring new developments have adequate pedestrian facilities will help to increase walking levels in the area. Providing good quality footpaths, especially in the rural parts of Braintree will also help to prevent people from diverting from recommended routes and negatively impacting wildlife.



What you told us

Around 43% of respondents stated that they could make more short-distance journeys by foot. Improved maintenance of footpaths and better segregation from other modes was seen as the best way to encourage people to walk more.

Air quality

Local authorities in the UK have a responsibility to review and assess the air quality in their area.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared if a local authority finds areas where national objectives for airborne substances are not likely to be met. Currently, there are no AQMAs declared within Braintree. However, it is still important to improve air quality within the town as there are several areas sensitive to changes in air quality including wildlife sites, residential areas, a hospital, and education centres.

Exposure to air pollutants is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease, cancer and also asthma symptoms.

Children, the elderly, and those who have underlying health conditions are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of poor air quality.

The 2020 Air Pollution Report for Braintree found that the main source of air pollution in the area was road traffic.

The provision, promotion and use of sustainable transport infrastructure, low-emission vehicles and alternative fuels will help to improve air quality by reducing emissions decreasing, reliance on the private car and alleviating traffic congestion.

As commercial and residential development in the area is expected to grow, it is important that sustainable measures are implemented to ensure air quality doesn't worsen over time and that Braintree is on track to achieve its goal of being carbon neutral, as far as practical by 2030.

You can read more on air quality in the area via the [Air Pollution Report for Braintree](#).



What you told us

55% of people in Braintree told us that they were concerned about the effects of air quality on their health. It is therefore important that this strategy focuses on reducing vehicle emissions and improving local air quality.

Planning for future growth

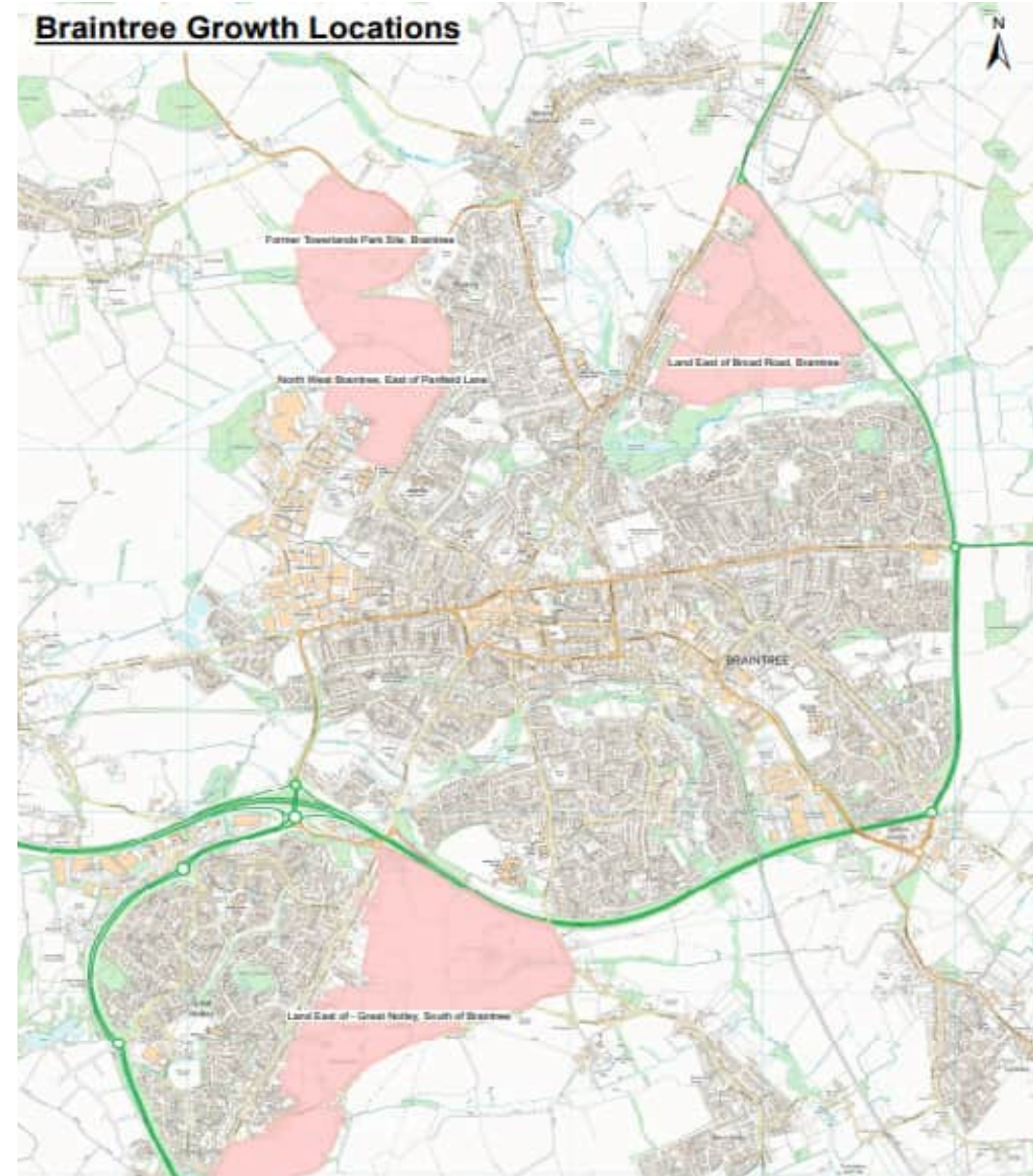
The Braintree Local Plan, adopted in July 2022, outlines ambitious plans for growth in Braintree up to 2033, with 14,000 homes to be built within the district over the plan period.

'This growth will put additional strain on the transport network and will create additional demand for transport services and infrastructure.

As the largest town in the district, a number of strategic sites are located around Braintree, as shown on the map to the right. Together with other small sites these will deliver around 4,500 new homes.

In order to accommodate this growth around the town, focus will be placed on ensuring developments are strategically located to make best use of existing passenger transport and active travel services and infrastructure. In addition, the strategy will emphasize the need for developments to provide enhanced sustainable connectivity, through improved cycling and walking routes, bus services and wider travel planning.

By seeking to reduce the impact of planned development on the transport network, the strategy will help to ensure that the rural and historic nature of Braintree is not compromised.



A new sustainable approach to transport in Braintree is required to facilitate the town's future potential growth

What you told us

Respondents told us that they were concerned about the impact of development and the importance of ensuring that new development is infrastructure led and connects into the town centre.

This links closely with one of the key objectives supporting our strategy.



Our Solution: Braintree Town Future Transport Strategy

To initiate change and achieve Braintree’s vision for a sustainable, accessible transport system that responds to the challenges of climate change, a new approach is needed.

The following pages outline the transport strategy for Braintree town. It aims to address the different challenges on the transport network and reasons why people travel.

The strategy takes a zonal approach, each with different transport priorities to support sustainable travel choices from short journeys through the town, as well as longer distance journeys for those living and working in surrounding areas.

The strategy will provide a framework that will enable potential schemes to be identified and proposals to be assessed against.

Creating zones

The future transport strategy recognises that there are different issues exist across Braintree's transport network. To address this three strategic zones have been identified, each of which have their own focus areas.

The Strategy recognises that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to tackling the transport challenges across Braintree. Three strategic zones have been identified to provide a more targeted approach to investment and to ensure that the transport needs of Braintree residents are best met.

In the town centre (Zone 1), where the environment and the public realm is important to attract business and visitors, there will be increased focus on sustainable and active travel options, enabling a more pedestrian-friendly centre, improving air quality, encouraging people to spend time in the town centre and supporting health and wellbeing.

In the wider urban area (Zone 2) the priority should be to minimise the high levels of car usage and increase sustainable transport provision. Journeys from the residential areas to the town centre should be made by sustainable means wherever possible, so investment should focus on providing residents with a quicker and cheaper alternative to the private car.

The strategic corridors (Zone 3) should facilitate reliable and sustainable connections between the town centre and the wider suburban and rural areas of Braintree – given Braintree's strategic locations as a crossroads within Essex. There should be a greater shift towards public transport.

Investment should be made for sustainable transport packages which could be implemented alongside road capacity improvements schemes to improve journey times on the roads and alleviate congestion and routing through the town centre.

What you told us

Within Zone 1, improving pedestrian routes was considered the most important priority by almost a quarter of respondents to the consultation. In Zone 2 and Zone 3 improving the public transport network and frequency of bus services was considered the highest priority by over half of respondents

ZONE 1 (BRAINTREE TOWN CENTRE)

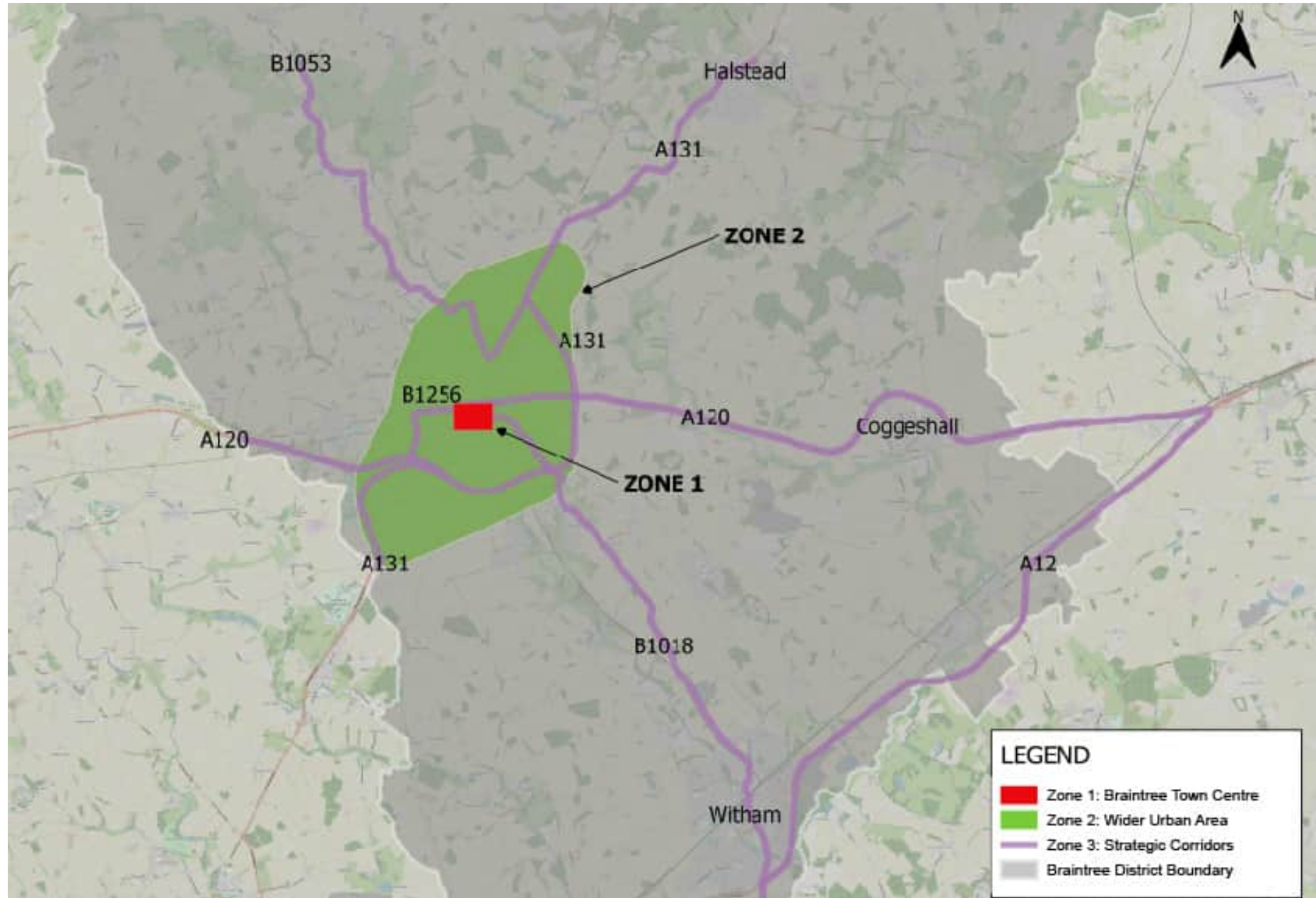
Primary focus on walking, accessibility to shops/key services, and public realm improvements to promote Braintree as a high-quality place and stimulate economic growth.

ZONE 2 (WIDER URBAN AREA)

Promote active travel and support passenger transport into the town centre for short trips. Reduce car usage and improve air quality.

ZONE 3 (STRATEGIC CORRIDORS)

Focus on capacity improvements to support strategic growth within Braintree's wider area. Promote sustainable travel alternatives for medium/long-distance trips.



Braintree town's zonal strategy

Delivering the Strategy

Following a similar approach to other transport strategies across Essex, current and future transport schemes will be assessed against the strategy objectives and zonal priorities to guide the prioritisation of future investment. Examples of focus schemes for each zone could include:

Active Travel investment

Following investment through the Government's Active Travel Fund, new infrastructure will be implemented in the town to increase and make walking and cycling easier.

Travelling from the town train station into the town via Coggeshall Road the new walking and cycling facilities will further enable active travel supporting the recent pedestrianisation works in the town centre.

For more information visit the [Active Travel Braintree website](#).

Introduction of 20mph zones

This is an ongoing scheme to support the proposed walking and cycling upgrades in Braintree.

Several 20mph zones have been proposed to reduce speed limits in residential/built-up areas. This scheme should improve the safety of these roads and encourage more active travel.

LCWIPs

The LCWIP proposals set out [here](#) will enable safer walking and cycling infrastructure between the town centre and the wider town.

Strategic network improvements

Improvements to the strategic corridors will facilitate reliable and sustainable connections between the town centre and the wider urban and rural areas of Braintree.

For example, schemes such as the proposed Millennium Way Slips, A120 to A12 upgrade, A131 Braintree to Sudbury improvements and the A12 widening from Boreham to Marks Tey will increase capacity.

This will support future growth and reduce congestion, allowing for more sustainable transport in the town itself.

Sustainable travel will be key to facilitating future development in and around Braintree town, alongside necessary strategic network improvements.

Several travel strategies have recently been, or are in the process of being, implemented to support Braintree and wider Essex in achieving a more sustainable future:

[Safer, Greener, Healthier](#)

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, a series of 'Safer, Greener, Healthier' interim traffic measures have been introduced in Braintree to create more shared space for walking and cycling. As part of this approach Essex are aiming to improve walking and cycling infrastructure and trial new modes such as e-scooters to encourage active travel, reduce traffic and improve air quality.

[Essex Electric Vehicle Strategy](#)

Supporting the increase in Electric Vehicles, Essex County Council are developing a strategy (Phase 1: 2023-25) to look at how the council can work with the private sector to ensure the delivery of the right infrastructure in the right places across the county.

[Braintree Climate Strategy](#)

In 2019 Braintree District Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and developed a climate strategy (2021-30) with a goal of becoming carbon neutral as a Council, as far as practical by 2030. An initial investment of £500k has been dedicated towards supporting this strategy which aims to prioritise walking and cycling, improve digital connectivity and expand the electric vehicle charging and infrastructure network.

[Braintree Cycling Strategy](#)

With a goal to double the number of cycling trips in Braintree District by 2031 this strategy (2021-30) is set to help tackle climate change, reduce congestion and improve people's health and fitness. The strategy aims to encourage people to cycle their local, short commutes by improving the safety and access of cycling and encouraging a mindset that sees cycling as fun and enjoyable.

[Essex Cycling Strategy](#)

The Essex Cycling Strategy aims to encourage Essex residents, workers and visitors to enjoy the health benefits of cycling, offering an affordable travel choice for journeys around our towns, as well as encouraging more leisure and family bike rides to enjoy the Essex countryside. A refreshed version of the strategy is to be released in Autumn 2023.

[Essex Walking Strategy](#)

The Essex Walking Strategy (2021-25) aims to provide a fully accessible and inclusive pedestrian environment in Essex to encourage residents, workers and visitors to adopt a more active lifestyle and improve the county's air quality and environment.

[Essex County Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan](#)

This strategy (2021-26) is Essex's response to the new national strategy '[Bus Back Better](#)'. Essex's Improvement Plan aims to encourage more bus travel and reduce trips taken by car and create a bus environment that caters for the diverse and complex geographies and communities in Essex.



It is important to keep traffic, wherever possible, to the strategic routes and away from local roads. Wider strategic improvements are required to support these longer distance cross-boundary trips.

A120 Braintree to A12 new route

Following public consultation, a favoured route option was determined running from Galleys Corner in Braintree to a new junction with the A12, south of Kelvedon. The route is expected to reduce journey times by up to 15 minutes. The favoured route has been recommended to National Highways and the Department for Transport and was designated as a 'pipeline project' in the National Highways 'Road Investment Strategy 2'. Visit the [scheme website](#).

The Chelmsford North East Bypass and Beaulieu Rail Station

This scheme will link the southern areas of Braintree district with Chelmsford and provide direct and reliable access to a proposed new rail station at Beaulieu Park. The transformational road and rail upgrade is being delivered with more than £218m in funding from the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund, plus £34m of other funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and developer Countryside Zest. Visit the [scheme website](#).

A131 Braintree to Sudbury route improvements

Aiming to improve safety and journey time reliability on the A131, the proposed scheme is located between Marks Farm Roundabout, at the junction with the A120 and the A131, and the Suffolk County boundary, just Southwest of Sudbury. The 13.5 mile route includes two roundabouts, three mini roundabouts, a signalised junction, two zebra crossings and a signalised pedestrian crossing. Areas of investigation are: Broad Road Roundabout, High Garrett Junction, Marks Farm Roundabout, Plaistow Green and Bulmer Tye. Visit the [scheme website](#).

A12 widening scheme

Through its [A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme](#), National Highways is currently progressing plans to widen and upgrade the A12 between Junction 19 (Boreham) and Junction 25 (Marks Tey) to ease congestion, improve road safety and support planned growth.



Next Steps

To support the strategy, a scheme appraisal framework has been developed for use as a planning tool to ensure the right solutions for transport are being prioritised within the town, in order that the ambitions within the strategy can be realised on the ground. The scheme appraisal framework will be reviewed jointly by Essex County Council and Braintree District Council on an annual basis to ensure new schemes are appraised and existing schemes are progressed appropriately for delivery in line with the vision and objectives of the strategy.

Finalised strategy published following feedback



Identification of schemes and initiatives and creation of monitoring framework



Confirmation of priority schemes for further investment



Development, implementation and monitoring of schemes



SUMMER 2023

AUTUMN / WINTER 2023

SPRING 2024

2024 ONWARDS

Thank you to everyone who participated in our survey and gave views on the Braintree Future Transport Strategy. The feedback provided has helped to further shape this strategy which will now form the basis against which future transport schemes will be assessed.

For more information on the background to the Transport Strategy, please visit

www.essexhighways.org/braintree-future-transport.

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