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## 4. Travel Better

### Defining a Vision for 2030



Transport is responsible for around **1.2 million tonnes of carbon emissions** in Dorset every year, around 40% of the total, making it our biggest challenge in becoming a zero-carbon county. However, the notion that we can simply change every vehicle to an electric one ignores the wider impact our car-centric culture is having on environmental breakdown. Even if we can power the grid with 100% renewables, the damage caused through the extraction of materials and production processes for new electric ones is a major concern, not to mention the negative impact congestion has on human health, wellbeing and the local economy<sup>i</sup>.

Tackling our transport issues also opens up exciting opportunities, as Paul Chatterton sets out in ‘**Unlocking Sustainable Cities**’<sup>ii</sup>, “*Debating how city dwellers undertake the mundane and taken for granted task of getting around opens up further conversations about how we see ourselves and our fellow citizens, where and how we work, shop and play, the health of our children, how safe we feel, what we can afford and our impact on air, climate and water systems*”.

#### ***In 2030...***

***Within our town centres moving around is cheap and easy using a combination of walking, cycling and free public transport. The nature of work and access to core services have reduced the need to travel, with high-quality broadband supplied to every home and most daily needs available within 15 minutes active travel. Good-quality shops and public services are available locally to all, reducing the need to get in the car for life’s essentials.***

***Through effective public transport provision, town centres are better connected to suburbs and each other. Specific provision has been made to ensure rural communities are well served. Rail services have been extended, joined up and enjoy clear, timely connections with other transport networks. Cycle lanes are fully separated and form a comprehensive network within and between towns and 90% of children walk to school. Cars are needed much less frequently and journeys for work and leisure, along with the transportation of goods and services, are made by vehicles powered by renewables. Streets are shared by all users and are safer and cleaner. Many enjoy completely car-free lives. Dorset has been freed from the domination of the car.***

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## Assessment Framework

### How are we performing currently?

The framework below sets out the criteria against which the current status can be assessed. Aspirational objectives are then set to encourage progress towards the vision.

Category	Assessment Criteria
1	Little evidence of plans or actions to reduce travel by car or improve walking and cycling provision. Public transport remains fragmented and relatively expensive.
2	Some evidence of small initiatives to reduce travel by car, either through walking and cycling provision or addressing public transport issues.
3	Strategic plans are in place that will reduce overall miles travelled and provide the infrastructure to make the switch. Changes are already clear across the county. Actions in place to dramatically increase the number of children walking to school.
4	Average transport mileage per person has fallen by at least 5% from 2020. Car journeys make up less than 75% of total miles. Public transport provision is on plan to double, to be accessible to all, and to be affordable. More than 75% of children walk to school.
5	Average transport mileage per person has fallen by around 13% from 2020. Car journeys make up less than 65% of total miles. Public transport provision is on plan to double, to be accessible to all, and to be affordable or free. 90% of children walk to school.

## 2021 Assessment

2	<p><i>Some evidence of small initiatives to reduce travel by car, either through walking and cycling provision or addressing public transport issues.</i></p> <p>While many of the current initiatives around active travel and improving cycle lanes are to be welcomed and encouraged (and in many respects are ahead of other areas in this report), there remains a lack of a comprehensive, integrated plan to address our transport issues, while significant funds are still being allocated for road improvements that may not even be required in 5 - 10 years.</p>
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## 2022 Assessment

2	<p>Transport carbon emissions have reduced during the pandemic, as more people work from home. It remains to be seen if this change to working patterns persists. Public transport (bus and rail) has seen a loss of passengers and there has been economic consequences with the failure of Yellow Buses. Investment continues in the cycle network.</p>
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## 2022 Observations

Most of the analysis in our original report remains valid at the end of 2022. However, we have noted the following developments during the year.

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## **Strategic town planning.**

In July 2022, ZCD hosted Dorset 2030: Solving the County's Transport Problems webinar covering the following areas. The Town and Country Planning 20-minute neighbourhood<sup>iii</sup> concept describes a complete, compact and connected neighbourhood, where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk or cycle. This presents multiple benefits including boosting local economies, improving people's health and wellbeing, increasing social connections in communities, and tackling climate change. Dorchester Transport Action Group (DTAG) set out a long-term vision for the transport system in Dorchester and the surrounding area<sup>iv</sup>. The group aims to work with both Dorchester Town Council and Dorset Council and neighbouring TAGs to improve sustainable transport provision for the people of Dorchester and the surrounding area, particularly to help those without access to a car and to make low carbon alternatives to car use more attractive.

## **Broadband upgrade.**

In the Dorset Council area Gigabyte broadband coverage increased in Dorset by nearly 7.2% last year to 19.5% in 2021/22<sup>v</sup> supporting economic activity, innovation, collaboration and reducing the need to travel. Dorset Council has been awarded nearly £900,000 to oversee the project and Blandford-based Wessex Internet has secured the contract to deliver the work. Altogether 35 sites across Dorset are set to benefit and they are all in areas where there are no commercial plans to roll-out full fibre broadband. However, in BCP there is frustration with ongoing delays in CityFibre's local deployment of a new gigabit-capable Fibre-to-the-Premises (FTTP) broadband ISP network, which was due to go live in some areas several months ago. At present the operator is investing a total of £65m to deploy across BCP<sup>vi</sup>. The work to upgrade and extend their legacy FTTH network in Bournemouth began in 2019, while the £30m build across Poole and Christchurch – supported by civil engineering firm CCN Communications – officially began in March 2021. A significant amount of this build has already been completed.

## **Changing work patterns reducing the need to travel.**

Transport carbon emissions fell by a fifth between 2019 and 2020 due to employees choosing a hybrid model of working from home and in the office during the pandemic. This trend looks to be continuing, as a survey in February 2022, found that 84% of workers who had to work from home because of the coronavirus pandemic said they planned to carry out a mix of working at home and in their place of work in the future<sup>vii</sup>. Also, a 4-day working week is being piloted in more than 70 firms across a number of countries including the UK, where employees get 100% pay for 80% of their normal hours worked<sup>viii</sup>. At the halfway point in a six-month trial, data shows that productivity has been maintained or improved at the majority of firms.

## **Cycle infrastructure upgrade.**

Improvements have been made to the Castleman Trailway which follows much of the old Southampton to Dorchester railway line. Dorset Council Countryside staff, volunteers and contractors began work on the trail in October 2021, aiming to provide a wider, better-quality surface, making it more accessible to a wider range of users. This included drainage works, new surfacing and regrading over 5.5km of the trailway from Verwood Road to West Moors<sup>ix</sup>. In 2022, the first major section of the Transforming Cities Fund programmes sustainable travel route was completed<sup>x</sup>. Wimborne Road West and Leigh Road has been completed and the 2.3km stretch of new walking and cycle paths and crossings are open and ready for use.

## **Bike share scheme extended.**

Micromobility provider, Beryl, and Dorset Council has launched a new South East Dorset initiative covering Wimborne, Colehill, West Parley, West Moors and Ferndown<sup>xi</sup>. All five areas are now linked up with the existing Beryl bike share scheme in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. It is being funded through South East Dorset's Transforming Cities Fund programme.

## **All change on the buses.**

Bournemouth-based Yellow Buses ceased operations on August 4th<sup>xii</sup>. The operator went into administration citing challenges surrounding the fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic and cost inflation. The closure of Yellow Buses saw local rival and long-time competitor More Bus plug the gaps in Bournemouth's bus network. In October,

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BU/AUB introduced a new fleet of Unibus buses to provide a sustainable travel service for staff and students, and the whole local community and entice people out of their cars<sup>xiii</sup>.

## Expansion of Dorset's E-car charging infrastructure.

BCP announced plans for over 130 new publicly accessible Electric Vehicle chargers to be installed at multiple locations across the area starting this summer<sup>xiv</sup>. Dorset Council has teamed up with Joju Charging to install 23 new charging points across the county<sup>xv</sup>. In the last three years, there has been a doubling in the number of publicly (250) available charging points across the county<sup>xvi</sup>.

## Innovation & E-boats.

Pixii Ltd, based at Mudeford, Dorset was formed in 2020 with the aim of becoming the world's first 100% carbon neutral marine company<sup>xvii</sup>. With financial support from Low Carbon Dorset and a crowd sourcing effort, the company showcased their 100% electric Pixii SP800 boat at Southampton International Boat Show this summer.

## What do we need to focus on in 2023?

- Local authorities, businesses and the public sector continue to support employees choosing hybrid working patterns.
- Continued investment in transport infrastructure: broadband, EV charging points, public transport and cycle/walk routes.
- For strategic town planning, adopt the 15-minute neighborhood model to reduce the need to drive, whilst boosting local economies and improving people's health and wellbeing.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/media/5501/final-reducing-car-use-report.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Unlocking Sustainable Cities. Paul Chatterton. Pluto Press 2019. ISBN 978 0 7453 3701 2.

<sup>iii</sup> <https://tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.dorsetcan.org/dtag.html>

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/281288/Climate+and+Ecological+Emergency+Strategy+progress+report+Nov+2021.pdf/14abed9d-9167-c65c-bbb7-df8c26ecbba5>

<sup>v</sup> <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2022/09/05/thousands-of-dorset-premises-to-get-future-proof-broadband/>

<sup>vi</sup> <https://www.ispreview.co.uk/index.php/2022/09/frustration-in-bournemouth-and-poole-over-cityfibres-delays.html>

<sup>vii</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electric-vehicle-charging-device-statistics-january-2023>

<sup>viii</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/ishybridworkingheretostay/2022-05-23>

<sup>viii</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/ishybridworkingheretostay/2022-05-23>

<sup>ix</sup> <https://www.dorsetview.co.uk/castleman-trailway-improvements-celebrated/#.YuKVIHZKi3A>

<sup>x</sup> <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2022/03/04/first-major-section-of-transforming-cities-fund-programmes-sustainable-travel-route-completes/>

<sup>xi</sup> <https://www.dorsetbiznews.co.uk/beryl-bikes-come-to-wimborne-colehill-west-parley-west-moors-and-ferndown-from-today/>

<sup>xii</sup> <https://www.passengertransport.co.uk/2022/08/more-bus-benefits-as-yellow-buses-collapses/>

<sup>xiii</sup> <https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/news/2022-10-05/new-buses-bournemouth-s-roads>

<sup>xiv</sup> <https://www.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/news-article.aspx?title=network-of-over-130-new-electric-vehicle-chargers-to-be-rolled-out-across-bournemouth-christchurch-and-poole>

<sup>xv</sup> <https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/2022/09/21/dorset-council-starts-work-to-expand-electric-vehicle-charging-network-in-dorset/>

<sup>xvi</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electric-vehicle-charging-device-statistics-january-2023>

<sup>xvii</sup> <https://pixii.co.uk/>