

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
Moving forward together



Local Transport Plan 2001/2 to 2005/6



**Southend on Sea
Borough Council**

TRAVELWISE ®



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Moving forward together



Local Transport Plan

2001/2 to 2005/6

A Partnership Approach

This Plan has been produced by the Borough Council with the help of over 200 resident, business, transport and other organisations moving forward together with the aim of reducing congestion in Southend in order to stimulate economic, environmental and community well being in a sustainable manner.

July 2000

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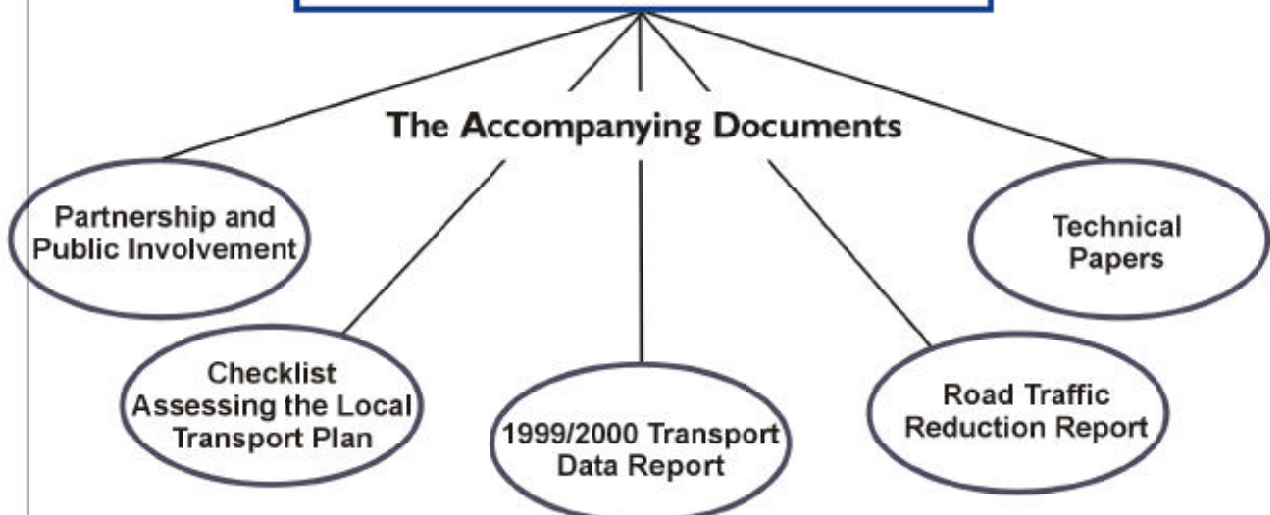
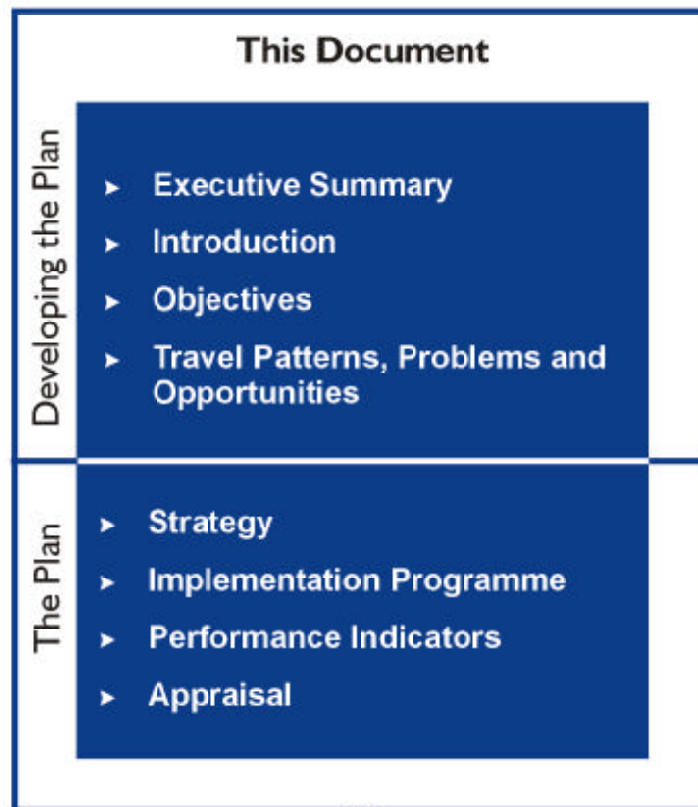
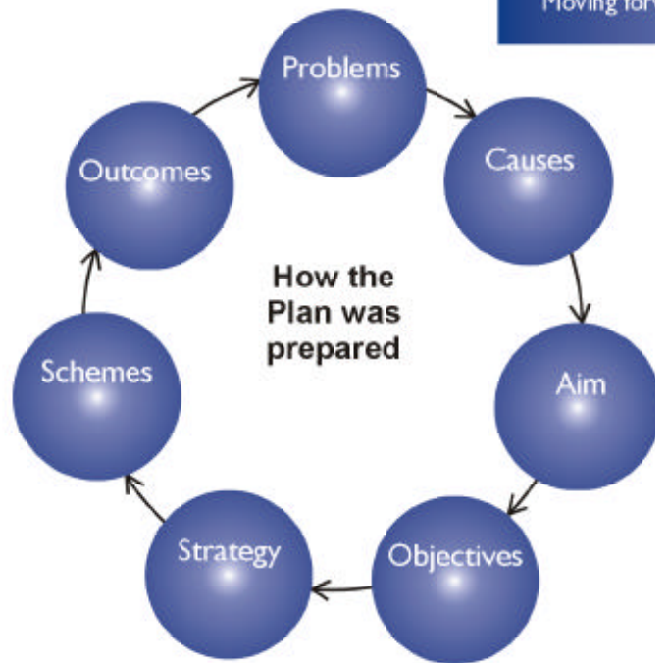


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Executive Summary

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
Moving forward together



Executive Summary

Introduction

This is the *first Local Transport Plan (LTP)* to be produced by the Unitary Authority for Southend on Sea following the introduction of a new funding process by Central Government. It provides for a five year implementation programme of schemes until 2006 set within the context of a longer term strategy.

It builds upon a strategy **developed in partnership** with local businesses, resident groups and transport operators over a two year period. It forms an integral part of many actions being taken at the national, regional and local level to regenerate Southend in the interest of the much wider area that Southend serves as well as the local community.

In order to pay full regard to cross boundary issues it has been prepared in *collaboration* with Essex County Council as the adjoining highway authority. It is accompanied by;

- *a checklist of criteria for assessing the quality of Local Transport Plans;*
- *the Southend on Sea 1999/2000 Transport Data Report;*
- *the Road Traffic Reduction Report;*
- *Partnership and Public Involvement details; and*
- *a compendium of Technical Papers providing additional information and data in support of the proposed Local Transport Plan Strategy and schemes.*

Present Circumstances and Policy Framework

Southend forms part of the largest urban conurbation in the East of England Region and fifth largest in South East England outside London. It is an important sub-regional centre for employment, shopping, leisure and cultural facilities serving the needs of the 350,000 people who live in South East Essex. It is the second most popular seaside resort in Britain with over three million day visitors a year, most of these visitors travelling by car.

Located within 40 miles of Central London and adjacent to the Thames estuary, Southend's transportation network is dictated by the geography of the area and influences of the Capital. Transportation is, therefore, focussed on an east-west corridor of movement by two main railways, two major roads, the River Thames, and London Southend regional airport providing important links with the rest of the UK and Europe.

The town suffers from a number of acute economic and accessibility problems. It has the highest unemployment and worst road traffic congestion of anywhere in the former County of Essex.

Economic development studies locally have all identified transportation and accessibility as a major barrier to new investment in Southend. Good accessibility is also a vital component of the local tourism economy.

These problems are recognised in Government *Regional Planning Guidance for South East England* published in March 2000 (RPG 9). This identifies a Core Strategy for the Region within which **Southend is designated as forming part of the Thames Gateway extension** where;

- *the Thames Gateway is a national and regional priority for regeneration and growth;*
- *the Thames Gateway is the focus for public and private investment in regeneration and growth of which transport is a vital component.*

The Regional Planning Guidance also contains a *Regional Transport Strategy* setting the framework for the development of Local Transport Plans. This identifies **the need for a transportation study in the Thames Gateway** to examine the role and benefits of additional multi-modal transport links including movement issues **between London and Southend**. With the railways, roads and river all running in parallel, the London to Southend corridor provides one of the greatest opportunities to deliver significant improvements within the town and sub-region.

The *Replacement Essex and Southend on Sea Structure Plan* (April 2000) also provides that the **highest priority** for transportation investment will be afforded to the Thames Gateway extension. These provisions are reinforced in the *Regional Economic Development Strategy for the East of England* (October 1999). The need for action to tackle some of Southend's acute economic problems has also been recognised within the European context with the central and eastern parts of the town now granted 'Objective 2' funding status.

Objectives - A Partnership Approach

In order to resolve effectively the transportation problems facing the town the Borough Council in the Summer of 1998 took the innovative step of establishing a **Partnership** of local businesses, resident groups and transport operators to prepare an Integrated Transportation Plan for Southend.

Since its inception, the Partnership has doubled in size and consists of just over 200 organisations. Despite the different ranges of interests involved, a number of common themes have emerged as to what action should be taken to resolve Southend's transportation problems. Such a consensus view has provided a sound basis for developing the Plan and for taking forward its provisions.

To tackle the underlying causes of congestion in a coherent and coordinated way, the Partnership recognised that it was essential to develop a vision and specific objectives which described where it wanted Southend to be in terms of transportation provision and benefits to be gained in 10 to 15 years time. These would then provide a **steer** for the key areas for action and a clear focus for all partners as the Plan is developed and reviewed.

Vision:	<i>Reduce congestion in Southend and its hinterland to stimulate regeneration, economic improvement, environmental enhancement and community well being in a sustainable manner</i>
Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Improve the economy of Southend and support sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations.</i> 2. <i>Protect and enhance the environment and quality of life.</i> 3. <i>Improve safety for all travellers.</i> 4. <i>Promote the integration of all forms of transport and land use planning, leading to a better more efficient transport system</i> 5. <i>Promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all, especially those without a car</i> 6. <i>Raise community awareness of the effects of continuing traffic growth.</i>

The Partnership recognises that 'reduction in congestion' in practice means a reduction in forecast growth in traffic and the adverse impact of increasing congestion. This is reflected in the Performance Indicators to monitor the Plan.

The Partnership completed an agreed three stage process leading to the development of the Integrated Transportation Plan the findings and detailed proposals of which have been incorporated into the Local Transport Plan. This process included publication of the Partnership's 'Position Statement' in March 1999, which marked the completion of the first stage of plan development, and a period of wider public involvement in February and March 2000. Full details of the consultation process and work of the Partnership are detailed in a separate '*Partnership and Public Involvement*' document.

As the next step the Partnership wishes to direct its attention and energies towards implementation of the Plan's proposals and to its effective monitoring to ensure delivery of the agreed objectives.

Problems and Opportunities

As part of its initial work, the Partnership identified a series of transportation problems that needed to be faced in order to meet the objectives, the main cause identified being **congestion** resulting principally from the following key factors:

- *imbalance between supply and demand,*
- *a principal network with inadequate parts,*
- *poor traffic management and enforcement,*
- *poor quality of transport options, and*
- *lack of awareness.*

Parallel research undertaken by consultants on behalf of the Borough Council has indicated that, if no action is taken, traffic levels in Southend are set to increase by another 22% by 2016 compared to 1998 traffic levels with a consequent significant increase in local congestion.

The Partnership has sought to address several key problems and opportunities in the town;

- *a significant number of cross boundary two way commuter journeys and short journeys made within the town by car;*
- *two main railway lines and nine passenger stations within one mile of a majority of the population;*
- *a potential to widen travel choice and make more use of more sustainable modes of transport;*
- *two major bus operators and other transport providers serving the area, who wish to develop quality partnerships;*
- *a Borough household survey conducted by MORI in 1999 which revealed that over 40% of residents never use public transport, and the same applies to 20% of residents without a car;*
- *wide support for the introduction of parking decriminalisation to make better use of the existing highway network, as a means of assisting improved access by public transport, and parking demand management;*
- *constraints at key points to freight movement and accessibility hindering business investment;*
- *significant development site opportunities, crucial to the local economy and regeneration of the town:-*
 - *a major new educational campus adjacent to the Central Railway Station and main High Street retail area in need of revitalisation;*
 - *reuse of large scale Ministry of Defence land holdings in the east of the Borough at Shoeburyness*
 - *an airport with significant potential for further growth serving the UK and rest of Europe*
- *limited and outdated transportation data, with only one traffic site regularly monitored within Southend by Essex County Council prior to the Borough Council becoming the unitary highway authority in 1998;*
- *few bridges that have passed their structural assessment to accommodate 40 tonne capability to meet national and international standards.*

The Strategy

The high density of population; linear urban form; present modal pattern of movement; and economic needs; all determine that the strategy of the Local Transport Plan should be to develop an integrated multi-modal rail, road and river policy and the potential of the regional London Southend Airport. This will help to deliver a more efficient use of the existing network and significant modal choice in public transport and other more sustainable forms of travel to improve accessibility within the town and along the London-Southend corridor.

If better use can be made of the available limited capacity, this will enable Southend to take advantage of significant development opportunities and achieve economic regeneration in an environmentally sustainable way. By tackling poor access and congestion in this manner the resources available can be used to stimulate urban regeneration, halt decline and secure improved well being for the community and physical environment.

To realise these potential opportunities and contribute to the Partnership's objectives, the strategy seeks to introduce an appropriate package of measures to;

- *widen travel choice;*
- *implement traffic management and demand restraint measures;*
- *implement measures to integrate transport;*
- *plan and manage the highway network;*
- *develop sustainable distribution practices;*
- *integrate with wider policies; and*
- *develop effective data collection and monitoring systems.*

The Local Transport Plan is therefore directed towards these initiatives and taking advantage of a number of significant development opportunities in the town to;

- *ensure the successful regeneration and renaissance of Southend;*
- *improve accessibility by better use of the existing network;*
- *encourage and promote modal shift;*
- *initiate demand management, and*
- *ensure a more integrated and sustainable approach to the development of transportation, land use and other opportunities.*

These complement the regional strategy to improve accessibility in the London to Southend corridor as part of the Thames Gateway initiatives. An essential first step to achieving this will be a firm timetable from the Government to early commencement of a multi-modal study within this corridor.

Realising such opportunities to improve accessibility to Southend, although outside the scope of this Local Transport Plan, will be crucial to the regeneration of the town and the extended Thames Gateway. This will provide for greater economic prosperity and job creation, factors crucial to both national and regional objectives. In addition, improvements to accessibility, including the consideration of an alternative access route to the east of the town; access to key development sites; and the development of additional multi-modal links; will be a major complimentary factor to the successful development of the Local Transport Plan Strategy.

Lifting the access constraints is seen as one of the single most beneficial actions that could be taken to promote economic regeneration and growth in Southend.

An integral part of the Local Transport Plan is the concept of '***Environmental Rooms and Distributors***'. This has been developed by the Partnership to establish a rationale across the Borough for the movement of traffic and for the implementation of environmental enhancements, road safety measures, bridge improvements and priorities for highway and footway maintenance. The approach overcomes major problems of the past when decisions on such matters were taken on an ad-hoc basis and in an uncoordinated way.

The Projects

The key project relates to accessibility improvements on the town's main transportation corridors (A13 and A127/A1159) and is identified as a '***Major Scheme***'. This includes proposals for bus and freight improvements, the relocation and upgrading of the current poor Central Bus Station facilities and highway improvements at Priory Crescent, a major pinchpoint in the existing network.

The Major Scheme lays the foundation for the Strategy and has been developed by the Partnership in response to the overriding need to address head on the problems of poor accessibility and congestion on these major corridors of traffic movement which serve the town's main employment areas. The need to secure immediate improvements is considered essential to the regeneration of Southend and the success of this Plan. A key ingredient to the successful development of the Major Scheme is the provision of Quality Freight, Rail and Bus Partnerships which the Borough Council and Partnership are committed to establishing.

In order to make maximum use of the existing network, introduce demand management, and prepare the way for the Major Scheme, the decriminalisation of parking is being implemented as a priority by the Borough Council to replace the present police responsibility for parking enforcement.

To complement these measures and progress the strategy, a number of related measures are proposed in the Local Transport Plan. These can be summarised as follows;

- *highway improvements at east Shoebury to realise the full commercial potential of significant development opportunities on former Ministry of Defence land holdings;*
- *development of several key interchange sites at Leigh, the town centre and Shoeburyness. These will link major development sites including the proposed new University, and tourist attractions in the town centre and central seafront area;*
- *rail and bus station interchange improvements at other sites on the passenger corridors;*
- *the development of integrated ticketing facilities;*
- *improved accessibility for all, including the introduction of commercial car sharing initiatives;*
- *management of the town centre car parks to deter unnecessary use of the car and encourage shopper and visitor trips;*
- *introduction of traffic management measures, to support parking decriminalisation;*
- *provision for Green business Travel Plans including the development of the Borough Council's own travel plan;*
- *safer routes to school including extension of the successful 'Walking Bus' pilot scheme to other schools in the Borough;*
- *road safety and traffic calming measures;*

- road maintenance and bridge strengthening measures;
- expansion of the integrated cycleway network through the provision of safe routes;
- pedestrian improvements to minimise conflict with other highway users;
- raising public awareness of the effects of continuing traffic growth;
- promotion of river transport facilities to Kent and London, particularly by hovercraft;
- air quality measures; and
- improved data collection and monitoring.

Implementation Programme

The five year programme of capital investment to pursue the above strategy is set out below. This includes the major scheme of just over £14m for improving accessibility on the A13 and A127/A1159 and the relocation and improvement of the Central Bus Station.

The Borough Council has resolved that the implementation programme for the major scheme is based on the premise that the Council's Annual Capital Guidelines (ACG) will be set at a sufficient level to provide the Council's element of funding without detracting from the capital funding needs for Education, Social Services, and other service needs in line with Government expectations and economic regeneration of the Borough in accordance with the defined regional priority.

The Strategy	2001/2 £000's	2002/3 £000's	2003/4 £000's	2004/5 £000's	2005/6 £000's	Total £000's
Widening Travel Choice	500	780	680	500	500	2960
Traffic Management & Demand Restraint	1096	1046	1046	1046	1046	5280
Integrated Transport	670	670	670	670	670	3350
Planning and Managing the Highway Network	2200	2100	2100	1950	1750	10,100
Sustainable Distribution	25	25	25	25	25	125
Integration with Wider Policies	40	40	40	40	40	200
Strategic Monitoring (other data collection and monitoring included in the above)	70	70	70	70	70	350
Total (excluding major improvement Scheme)	4,601	4,731	4,631	4,301	4,101	22,365
<i>Major Improvement Scheme</i>	500	2,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	14,500
Total (including the major improvement Scheme)	5,101	6,731	8,631	8,301	8,101	36,865

Having regard to the preliminary observations received from Government on the Major Scheme in relation to the Provisional Local Transport Plan submitted in July 1999, consideration has also been given to the funding profile that would be required if the major scheme were to be implemented as part of an enhanced overall package. Because of the importance of the scheme to the overall strategy and the regeneration of Southend, and the need to implement the major scheme in as comprehensive manner and in as short a time span as possible, it is considered that the funding profile would need to be the same as set out in the above table. This would represent an increase of 120% on the expenditure profile bid (200% increase on the 2000/2001 allocation) for integrated transport (excluding expenditure on planning and managing the highway network).

Performance Indicators

A set of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for measuring the performance of the whole plan have been identified which have a direct relationship with the main causes of congestion in Southend,

Imbalance between supply and demand

KPI 1: *vehicle kilometres per average weekday*

A principal network with inadequate parts

KPI 2: *number of inadequate links in the principal network within the Borough and the regional, national and international network,*

Poor traffic management

KPI 3: *number of journeys undertaken by sustainable modes (cycling, walking and public transport)*

Poor quality of transport options

KPI 4: *number of non-compliance with parking restrictions*

Lack of awareness

KPI 5: *total number of Green Travel Plans and School Travel Plans*

Targets have been developed alongside the performance indicators and focus on Local Transport Plan priorities. The headline targets of the Plan are:

- *traffic growth less than forecast growth of 11% by 2006;*
- *reduce number of inadequate links identified within the LTP area and those tackling movement issues within the Thames Gateway,*
- *increase in the number of journeys undertaken by sustainable modes (cycling, walking and public transport),*
- *reduction in breach of parking restrictions (target to be determined once baselines established),*
- *Green Travel Plans in place for the seven major employment sites in the Borough and 50% of schools in the Borough covered by School Transport Plans.*

Forty-three Monitoring Indicators have been developed to illuminate the KPI's and contribute to the understanding of the performance of the Plan.

People's perceptions will be monitored principally by regular MORI household surveys. The first of these in the Borough having identified baseline positions and initial perceptions in respect of public services. Three commissioned transportation studies, which form part of the Local Transport Plan, also provide additional data and monitoring processes. These relate to:

- *the Road Traffic Reduction Act;*
- *the formation of a local walking and cycling strategy, and*
- *a travel diary and attitude survey.*

These data sources will be supplemented by additional indicators and other information sources regularly monitored by the Borough Council such as the performance of the local economy and the viability and vitality of the town centre and seafront.

Targets and performance will be monitored in liaison with the community in such a way as to allow for transparent auditing through the Borough's Best Value Local Performance Plan to ensure that the stated objectives are being delivered in an efficient and effective way.