

Part D:
The Strategy



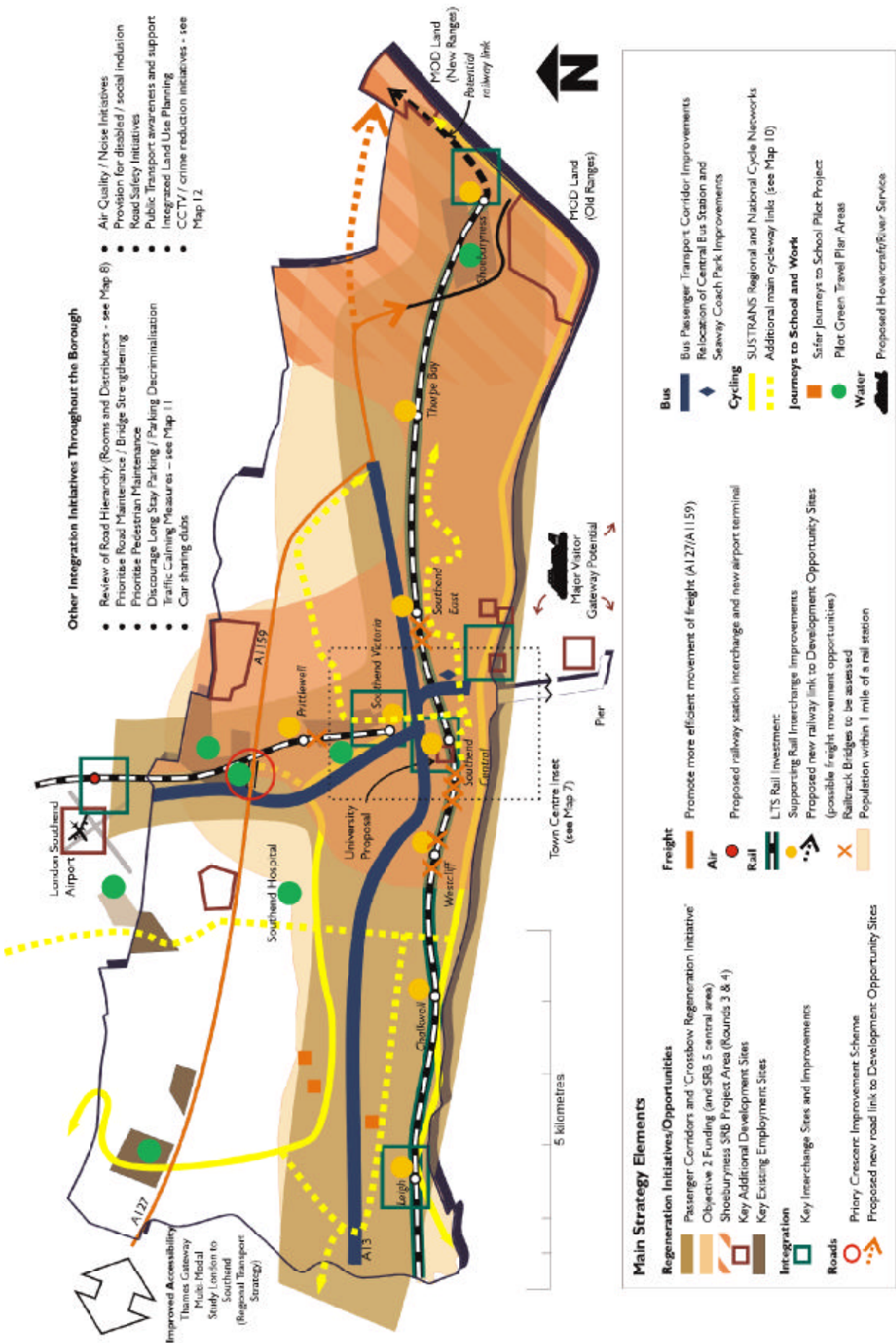
PART D : The Strategy

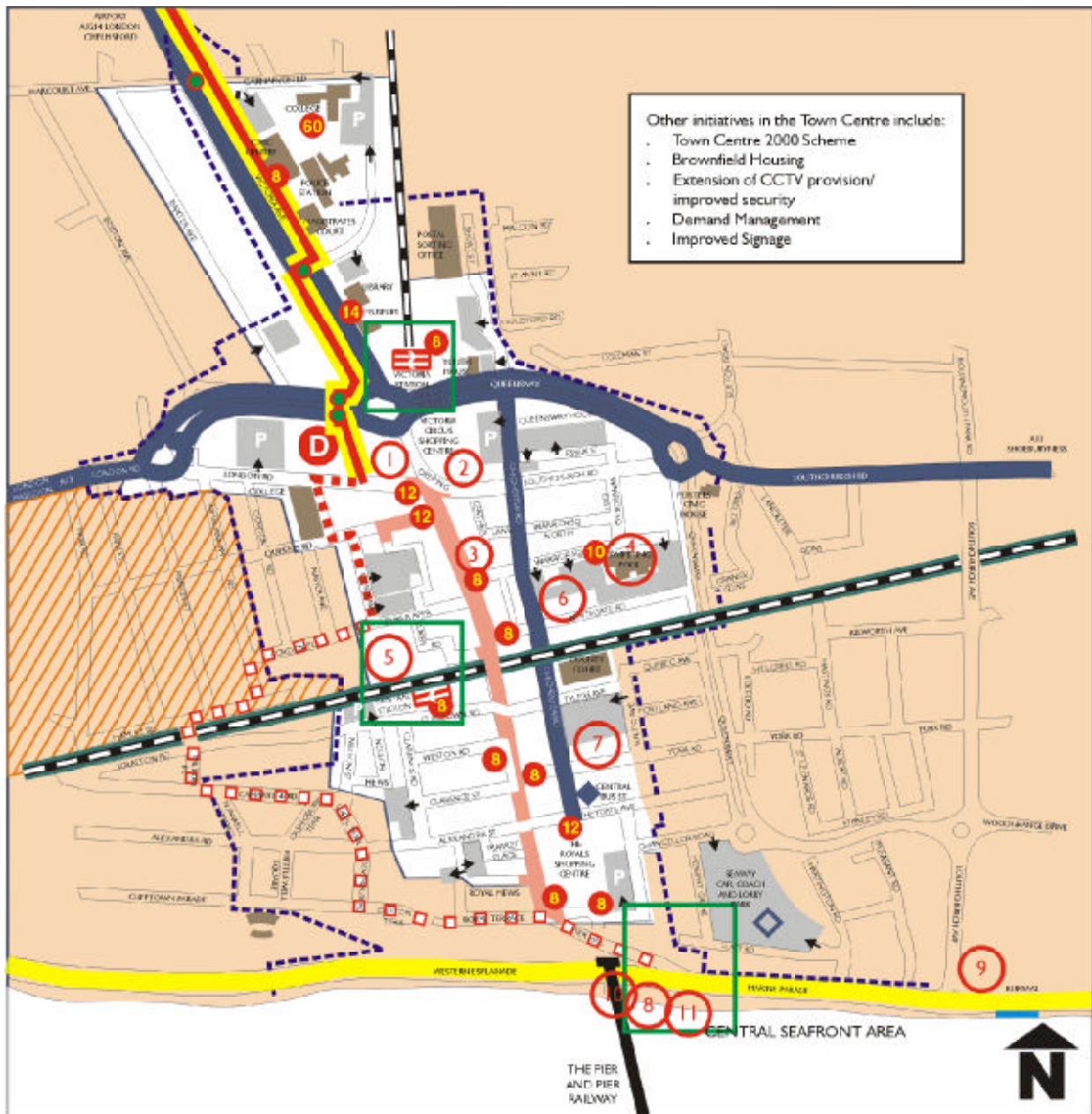
D1 The Way Forward

- D1.1 Part C sets out the significant opportunities for dealing with the traffic and transportation problems facing Southend. It will be essential that these opportunities are strengthened to;
- **improve accessibility through better use of the network,**
 - *secure a more sustainable pattern of movement,*
 - *ensure the successful regeneration and renaissance of Southend in accordance with regional policy and needs of the area.*
- D1.2 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 develop an integrated multi-modal rail, road and river policy and the potential of the regional London Southend Airport to improve accessibility within the town and along the London-Southend corridor to deliver significant transport improvements.
- D1.3 By improving inadequate parts of the existing highway network and reducing the growth in congestion, better use can be made of the available capacity that 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. The strategy, therefore, includes positive measures to improve public transport journey time, reliability and vehicle operating costs.
- D1.4 Southend is identified as forming part of the Thames Gateway regeneration area, a regional and national priority, in Regional Planning Guidance for South East England (see Paragraph B1.10). Within the Borough there are major development and opportunity sites constrained by problems associated with poor access and congestion. There are also areas requiring particular attention in order to stimulate urban regeneration and halt decline. The strategy, therefore, includes positive measures to improve accessibility to the town's employment, commercial, retail, tourist and leisure sites which will be essential for the sustained development and economic regeneration of the town.
- D1.5 If these measures are to be successful it will be essential that they are integrated and reinforced by targeted effective **traffic management and demand restraint** measures. Complementary initiatives, such as travel awareness campaigns, measures to promote social inclusion, improve road safety and enhance the environment, will also underpin the overall approach of this Local Transport Plan. To realise a number of these opportunities and the objectives of the Partnership, it will be very important that effective measures for **planning and managing the highway network** and for **data collection** are put into place.
- D1.6 In addition, it will be vital to the successful regeneration of Southend that **the Strategy is complemented by proposals 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 commitment from the Government to the early commencement of the multi-modal study within this corridor, including the consideration of an alternative access route to the east of the town. It will also be important to ensure that the main communication links in the Thames Gateway extension are included in the review of the Trans European Transport Network Maps (TENS). The Borough Council and Partnership will continue to lobby Government and related agencies to achieve these objectives.

D2 The Strategy - An Overview

- D2.1 A strategy has therefore been developed which builds on these opportunities and inter-relates and contributes to the Partnership's objectives.





Main Strategy Elements

Integration

- Key Interchange Sites and Improvements

Rail

- LTS Rail Investment

Bus

- Bus Passenger Transport Corridor Improvements
- ◆ Relocation of Central Bus Station
- ◇ Improvements to Seaway Coach and Car Park

Cycling

- Sustrans Regional and National Cycle Networks
- Cycle Route
- P Cycle Parking for 'n' cycles
- Toucan Crossings
- Proposed Cycle Route Extension to University
- Potential link to High St and seafront

Walking

- Pedestrian Precinct (High Street) - improvements to walking facilities/ security linking passenger transport nodes

Traffic Management/Car Parks

- Car Parks – 'P' denotes Private
- Car Parking Ticket / Meter Zone
- D Proposed disabled parking areas
- Milton Area Traffic Calming Scheme

Regeneration Initiatives/Opportunities

- Major Developments and opportunity sites:
 1. Multiplex Cinema and Town Square
 2. Victoria Plaza refurbishment
 3. Major Retail Re-development
 4. Warriors Swim Centre
 5. Proposed University development
 6. Warrior Square Development Opportunity
 7. Tyers Avenue Development Opportunity
 8. Adventure Island Leisure Scheme
 9. Kursaal Leisure Scheme
 10. Pier Leisure Opportunity
 11. Proposed Hovercraft Landing Pad and new beach



The Principles
 Provides 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.

Key

- Distributors
- Environmental Rooms
- Core Area
- Central Seafront Corridor
- Main Public Transport Corridor
- Freight / E employment Access Corridor
- Proposed new road link to development Opportunity Sites



Distributors - where accessibility is the priority and obstruction kept to a minimum
 Environmental Rooms - where the quality of the local environment has priority

The **strategy** is to:

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

D2.2 The main elements of the strategy are shown in **Maps 6 and 7** and include;

- *accessibility improvements on the town's main transportation corridors, the A13 and A127/A1159, including bus improvements on the A13 and critical network improvements on the A127/A1159 at Priory Crescent to improve the movement of freight and business traffic accessing key employment areas;*
- *relocation of the Central Bus Station;*
- *traffic demand management and parking decriminalisation;*
- *bridge strengthening and principal road carriageway maintenance proposals;*
- *road safety and improvements;*
- *development of a comprehensive transport interchange network;*
- *key rail station interchange improvements;*
- *development of "Environmental Rooms and Distributors";*
- *integration of London Southend Airport into the transport network*
- *an integrated cycleway network and pedestrian improvements;*
- *improved accessibility for all sectors in a more sustainable way, including encouragement of car clubs;*
- *green travel plans and safer routes to school;*
- *promotion of river transport; and*
- *accessing new development opportunities in an environmentally acceptable way.*

D2.3 The first two elements of the Strategy relating to accessibility improvements and relocation of the Central Bus Station are identified in this Local Transport Plan as a '**Major Scheme**'. *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 problem of accessibility and congestion on the major corridors of traffic movement in the town. **The need to secure immediate improvements is considered essential to the regeneration of Southend and the success of this Plan.***

D2.4 **Key ingredients to the successful development of the Major Scheme will be the decriminalisation of parking and the provision of a Freight, Rail and Bus Forum, incorporating Quality Bus, Rail and Freight Partnerships, which the Borough Council and Partnership are committed to establishing.** *The former will be essential in preparing the way for the Major Scheme and in maximising use of the existing network and introducing demand management. Decriminalisation will be implemented as a **priority** by the Borough Council.*

D2.5 **An integral part of the Strategy is the concept of 'Environmental Rooms and Distributors' (see Map 8).** 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 scheme overcomes the major problems of the past when decisions on such matters were taken on an ad-hoc basis and in an unco-ordinated way.

D2.6 Further details of the Strategy are set out in D3 to D13.



Achievements

(Private and Public (TPP25/LTP) Investment)

Car

- Environmental Rooms and Distributor network established

Buses

- Arriva has invested £1.9m on a new garage facility on the edge of the Town Centre
- Operators are converting most of their bus fleets to 'Low Floor' buses for better disabled access
- Traffic signal controllers, associated civil works and installation of telematics equipment on buses for Canvey Clipper route

Rail

- c2c investing £500m in the London to Shoeburyness line including new rolling stock
- Great Eastern rail invested in modern rolling stock for the London Liverpool Street to Southend line in the early 1990s
- Railtrack investment on c2c line includes studies into journey time improvements and additional crossovers, signalling and route clearance

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

- 197 Licensed Hackney Carriage vehicles, 34 stands providing for 149 spaces across the Borough

Voluntary and Community Transport

- Pilot scheme integrating journey plans and timings of Dial a Ride and Social Services vehicles

Cycling and Walking

- National Cycle network Thameside Route 13 within Southend has been extended significantly
- Bishops Stortford to Southend Town Centre Regional Route has been extended significantly
- Cycling and Walking Strategy developed
- cycle parking facilities at a number of schools, sports and leisure facilities
- CCTV, improved footways, lighting and signage and increased police patrols in Town Centre and Seaford
- Many traffic signal junctions and zebra crossings have been improved with tactile and / or audible facilities
- development of the 'millennium walk' in partnership with neighbouring authorities, Health Authority and the Ramblers
- 3 'Walking Buses' established

Powered Two Wheelers

- Parking of PTW free of charge in all off-street car parks and designated areas provided at 3 car parks

Ambitions

Car

- Establish a City Car Club (pay-as-you-go motoring scheme)
- Use of the defined Distributor network to maintain clear unobstructed flow of traffic around the town

Buses

- Establish Quality Bus Partnership
- Relocation of Central Bus Station
- Bus Priority measures from Town Centre to Leigh

Rail

- Establish Quality Rail partnership
- Maintain/improve times to London
- Provide a new station at London Southend Airport
- Integrate Southend Central Station with South Essex College
- Safeguard existing line to MOD land for future use by freight and/or commuters

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

- Use SMART Card technology and electronic time tabling to provide for timed links and integrated ticketing

Voluntary and Community Transport

- 'Brokerage Scheme' to increase service provision
- Borough Council to take complimentary measures to integrate community transport provision including (Dial a Ride, Social Services and Educational Transport)

Cycling and Walking

- Use traffic calming measures in Environmental Rooms to provide for safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians
- Prioritise routes identified in the Safer Journeys to School initiative (i.e. Walking Bus) and Green Travel Plans for Southend Hospital and Civic Offices
- Work with passenger transport operators to improve facilities at interchanges, stations and car parks
- Prittle Brook Cycle Route (part of NCN)
- Routes in local parks and woodland with Cory ET
- Minimum cycle parking standards for new development
- Imaginative pedestrian link between Southend Central and Victoria Rail Stations; the Central Bus Station; Seaway Car park and the Central Seaford area
- Quality pedestrianised areas adjacent the High Street as part of the College proposals

Powered Two Wheelers

- At interchanges provide designated parking areas

D3 Widening Travel Choice

D3.1 Measures to widen travel choice are essential if the transportation problems of the Borough are to be addressed effectively and sustainable travel habits achieved. It is also very important to the third of households within Southend that do not have access to a car and the socially excluded. A more balanced approach to transportation will also bring real benefits to these sectors of the community.

Car Clubs

D3.2 Widening travel choice, and raising awareness of its availability, will provide people with more transport options. This will help to reduce the growth of congestion on the roads. However, it has to be recognised that the car will continue to be the preferred choice of transport for a variety of journeys for a whole range of reasons, such as convenience, comfort, flexibility etc. The car is also an indispensable form of transport for some members of the community such as the disabled.

D3.3 The choice to travel by car is, however, mainly dependant on outright purchase of the vehicle. Once this initial expense of putting the car on the road has been made it is then difficult to persuade people to use alternative means of transport for certain journeys. It is therefore important that a solution which provides an alternative to buying a car and opens up opportunities for widening travel choice is available.

D3.4 One way of achieving this is the provision of **Car Clubs**. This is a personal transport scheme operated by car rental companies which operates on a pay-as-you-use basis. Such a scheme has been introduced in Edinburgh. Members are able to rent a car for an agreed time period at short notice and are billed at a later date, usually on a monthly basis, and are covered by fully comprehensive insurance. The system uses the latest satellite navigation technology to control a fleet of new vehicles. Members therefore have the convenience of using a new car without any of the expense or possible problems of parking it near to their home.

D3.5 The scheme will have the potential to achieve a number of benefits, for example to;

- *reduce the number of cars parked on street;*
- *take a number of older pollution-generating vehicles out of circulation;*
- *contribute to a reduction in unnecessary car journeys;*
- *contribute to a reduction in traffic congestion; and*
- *provide for cheaper car travel opening opportunities for people on low incomes or with no access to a car to be able to take advantage of the scheme.*

D3.6 In order to truly widen travel choice the Local Transport Plan seeks to introduce such schemes into the Borough.

Buses

D3.7 The current bus network in the Borough is detailed in **Map 9**. As part of the development of a Bus Strategy (see accompanying Technical Paper) this will be critically assessed against minimum standards and cross-boundary requirements to ascertain where there are deficiencies in the network in terms of route, frequency, and accessibility to services. This will include a review of facilities at the intersection of major bus corridors and at individual bus stops. Improvements to the service will be developed in liaison with Partners and as part of a **Quality Bus Partnership** to which the Borough Council and bus operators are committed to establishing.

D3.8 The main artery of the bus network is the A13 which is identified as a "Bus Passenger Transport Corridor". One of the main objectives of this Local Transport Plan is to **improve the reliability and quality of bus services** on this route from the Borough boundary at Leigh to the town centre, and effectively integrate the bus services with the railways, taxis, cycle network, and walking facilities. This element of the bus strategy forms part of the 'Major Scheme' and will be based on bus priority measures, wherever feasible and appropriate, and the upgrading of the bus infrastructure including the relocation of the Central Bus Station (see paragraph C3.16). The scheme would also include improvements to the footways, local environment, road safety, traffic calming in side streets and signage, and the provision of real time and other travel information. Integral to this scheme will be

effective traffic enforcement (decriminalisation) and provisions for freight/customer facilities for the numerous businesses that align the route.

- D3.9 In order to achieve this a sub group of the Partnership has already been established to take the scheme forward. This consists of representatives from interested parties including businesses, residents associations, bus companies, and the Freight Transport Association.
- D3.10 Such measures will complement action taken by the Borough Council and bus operators to improve bus facilities in the Borough, namely:
- *the widening of part of Chichester Road which links with the central bus station, to provide for bus lanes (private funding as a contribution towards the cost of this provision was obtained);*
 - *the introduction of a bus telematic system giving buses priority at road signal junctions;*
 - *a Passenger Transport Information System (PIMS) to provide up to date travel information for the general public;*
 - *modification of bus stops to provide for low floor buses to assist the disabled, elderly and parents with young children;*
 - *the conversion of most of the bus fleet by the bus operators to 'low floor' buses to provide for improved access for the disabled, young parents with children and the elderly. Arriva will be investing a further £2m in May 2000 to provide for 15 new double deck low floor buses; and*
 - *investment of £1.9m by Arriva in the development of a new bus garage on the edge of the town centre. This initiative permitted the redevelopment of the original bus garage, located on a key site within the town centre, for a major retail scheme to the benefit of the local economy and vitality of the town centre.*
- D3.11 The A13 corridor proposals provide the basis for developing the new design and technology for telematics and real time travel information. It will also provide a working model to apply to other sections of the identified bus passenger transport corridor, namely from the town centre to Southchurch, to serve the eastern part of the town, and along the north-south corridor between London Southend Airport and the town centre which will form an essential element in the development of a Surface Access Strategy for the Airport and its effective integration into the local transport network.
- D3.12 Through de minimis subsidy and tendered local bus contracts the Borough Council supports eleven local bus services, either wholly or partly, that are not considered commercially viable by the operators involved. The budget allocated for this support (2000/2001) is £164,400. Expansion of the local bus network is being explored through an option offered to mainstream school bus operators to provide the services as routes registered with the Traffic Commissioner so that the public may also use the services. The Borough Council would welcome a Government policy change in regard of tendered school bus regulations to allow for expansion of scholar concessionary seat availability, as some routes are not suitable for becoming registered routes. Such a measure has good potential for reducing school journeys by private car. Currently (2000/2001) the home to school arrangements provided by the Borough Council account for a revenue spend annually of £1.3m.

Rail Investment Schemes

- D3.13 Southend is unusual in having two railway lines and nine stations serving the town. A further railway station is proposed at London Southend Airport as part of the Airport's future development plans.
- D3.14 Both lines are heavily used by commuters during the peak hours. The passenger loading at peak times is 92% and 80% respectively on the London Liverpool Street and London Fenchurch Street lines. The London Liverpool Street line is near capacity beyond Wickford during this time due to capacity constraints at Shenfield.
- D3.15 However, only 3% of the catchment population use rail services and off peak usage is low. Both Rail Companies therefore recognise that with a combination of rail infrastructure improvements, improvements to services and effective marketing, there is considerable potential for encouraging greater use of rail for a range of different trips.

- D3.16 This Local Transport Plan seeks to build on this potential and in particular the significant investment programmes of the two rail companies, to **encourage greater use of rail both for peak and off peak travel**. It also seeks to take advantage of the potential for linking a major development opportunity site at Shoeburyness to the regional and national rail network and for the possible introduction of rail freight facilities (see paragraph D7.4).
- D3.17 In seeking improvements to services it will be important to take advantage of opportunities to redirect freight movements in the region to free up line capacity on the Southend to London lines as part of the Governments London Orbital and London to Ipswich multi-modal studies, which start in 2000. The former includes a study of cross river capacity east of Dartford. This, with other infrastructure improvements, would offer the potential to speed up some key services between Southend and the capital to the benefit of commuters, business visitors and local tourism, and improve links to Europe via the Channel Tunnel Rail Interchange at Stratford. It would also offer the opportunity for increasing the frequency of some key services to provide for 'the walk on train' concept where the frequency is such that the need for a passenger to consult a timetable is negated.
- D3.18 Recent investment and commitments in the local railway by the Rail Companies, Railtrack and the Borough Council utilising LTP and TPP monies, can be summarised as follows:

London Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness Line (seven stations at Leigh, Westcliff, Chalkwell, Southend Central, Southend East, Thorpe Bay and Shoeburyness)

- *Following little investment in the route by British Rail for over 30 years, c2c Rail is investing £500m in the railway as part of its franchise agreement. Resignalling of the route was completed in May 1996 and the first assignment of new rolling stock is coming on stream in summer 2000 with 46 new vehicles. All the old slam door trains will be replaced by the summer of 2002 providing for a quality 74 Electrostar train fleet with sliding doors, air conditioning, double glazing and CCTV coverage. The new trains will also have purpose built facilities for the disabled and cyclists.*
- *The Company is investing some £40m in station improvements on the line which includes all the stations within the Southend Borough. A number of improvements have already been undertaken including; redecoration; the provision of CCTV to prosecutable standard at all the stations gatelines, which will be enhanced to quality colour coverage; improved passenger information; disabled toilet and baby changing facilities; secure and covered cycling facilities; improved lighting, entrances, ticketing facilities, parking areas, signage and facilities for the disabled, including the provision of station to train ramps, tactile maps and lift facilities at Leigh Station.*
- *The gating of entrances to all the stations has been completed, with the exception of Southend East, as part of a £12m commitment and offers the potential for the introduction of SMART Cards to provide for seamless travel. Trials on its use are programmed to be undertaken in the near future at Chafford Hundred and Basildon. Improvements to Southend East to include gating are proposed as part of a redevelopment scheme for the station which has the benefit of planning permission.*
- *Improved security has been a key commitment of the Company and it has placed considerable investment in high profile uniformed guards. This together with CCTV provision has resulted in a more secure environment and a considerable fall in car crime within station car parks.*
- *To launch these improvements the Company is rebranding itself as part of a £0.5m package to provide for a complete culture change. This has included a name change (previously LTS Rail), staff training, and the introduction of new technology to improve passenger transport information. The name change reflects the Company's 'commitment 2 change' and a 'commitment 2 customers'.*

As a result of this investment all the stations have been awarded secure station accreditation. This will be enhanced by CCTV coverage of the external entrances of the Central Railway Station following a successful bid to the Home Office for £1.076m CCTV monies to provide additional cameras as part of the town centre network (see paragraph D5.61).

London Liverpool Street to Southend Victoria Line (two stations at Prittlewell and Southend Victoria – potential new station at London Southend Airport)

- *To supplement the modern rolling stock of sliding door trains and resignalling of the route which was undertaken in the early 1990's, Great Eastern Railways are committed to a £9.25m investment programme focussed on improving facilities at stations, redecoration, facilities for the disabled, passenger transport information and security. The latter includes the provision of CCTV coverage, although this has yet to be undertaken at the Southend stations and will now be dependant on franchise extension. The successful bid to the Home Office to install*

additional CCTV coverage in the town centre will enable coverage of the external entrances of the Southend Victoria Station to be installed.

- *Gating of the Southend Victoria entrances has now been completed and again offers opportunities for the introduction of SMART Card technology.*
- *Great Eastern Railways and Railtrack are committed to the introduction of a new railway station at London Southend Airport.*

D3.19 The Rail Companies are also committed to improving accessibility to rail use and have introduced a number of low fare incentives such as discounts for the unemployed, family cards and job start aimed at first time employees.

D3.20 In addition, initiatives are being pursued to increase visitor use of rail services to increase off peak use. A number of 'add on' ticket schemes have been introduced to include the cost of leisure attractions at Southend and c2c's sponsorship of several special events in the Borough, notably the Airshow which includes the provision of extra train services for the show, promotes access to Southend by rail and boosts the local economy. Free car parking provision at Leigh railway station is provided on Saturdays to encourage shoppers to travel to the town centre by rail.

D3.21 Despite the above considerable investments and commitments, an audit of interchange sites reveals that there is still a lot to achieve having regard to the provision of quality interchange sites, and their effective integration with other transport services, particularly *buses* (see paragraph D5.4 and accompanying Technical Paper). Both the Rail and Bus Companies are committed to achieving this in Partnership.

D3.22 The accompanying Technical Paper – Passenger Transport, includes details of the rail strategy. In terms of rail travel this Local Transport Plan focuses on securing further improvements to passenger facilities at stations, particularly at identified key interchange sites, to provide for their effective integration with the local bus network and other passenger facilities and to the upgrading of pedestrian links between passenger termini as part of the implementation programme. Through the Partnership process it will also seek to achieve;

- *high speed links between Southend and London on both railway lines;*
- *the introduction of the 'walk on train' concept;*
- *effective integration with the high speed Channel Tunnel link/possible new rail crossing of the Thames east of Dartford;*
- *increased off peak usage, particularly for leisure trips to Southend;*
- *increased usage for short trips within the Borough and its catchment area; and*
- *protection of the railway spur at Shoeburyness to realise its potential to serve this important development site.*

A key element in pursuing these initiatives will be the development of the **Quality Rail Partnership** (see paragraph D2.4)

Light Rail

D3.23 Having regard to the densely developed nature of Southend, number of short trips made, close proximity of community facilities and the terrain of the area, there is the potential for introducing a light rail system to make a significant contribution to rapid travel movement in a sustainable way subject to appropriate environmental safeguards relating to the visual and other potential impact of such a system.

D3.24 Preliminary discussions with potential operators indicate that there could be potential for introducing a north-south route between London Southend Airport and the seafront with links to the town's main business areas, retail core, seafront leisure and tourism areas and transport interchanges – Southend Victoria and Southend Central Railway Stations, the Central Bus Station, Seaway Coach Park and potential Hovercraft Site.

D3.25 Such opportunities will be investigated further in partnership having regard to the Strategy set out in this Local Transport Plan.

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

- D3.26 Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles have a **key role to play** in effective transportation, particularly in providing quality services for the disabled and disadvantaged. There are currently 197 Hackney Carriage Vehicles licensed in Southend with 34 stands provided across the Borough providing 149 spaces. In addition there is a horse drawn Hackney Carriage stand on the seafront and private property arrangements for stands include Thorpe Bay, Southend Victoria and Shoeburyness railway stations, London Southend Airport and Southend Hospital.
- D3.27 It will be particularly important to ensure that provision for taxis and private hire vehicles is made within identified integrated passenger locations (see paragraph D5.3) and as part of this process the Borough Council is proposing to review its existing taxi rank provision. In the longer term, the objective will be to provide timed links and integrated ticketing for rail, bus and taxi for a door to door service. Much of this will depend upon the development of new SMART Card technology and electronic timetabling. Other improvements in taxi and private hire vehicle provision, particularly improvements in services for the disabled and other vulnerable groups, will be pursued through the partnership process.

Voluntary and Community Transport

- D3.28 The South East Essex Dial a Ride Service (SEEDAR) is managed by the Borough Council on behalf of a long standing partnership with Essex County Council, Rochford District Council, Castle Point Borough Council and the Area Health Authority. The Service, which operates six specially adapted mini-buses for the frail and disabled in the Southend, Rochford and Castle Point areas, has been operating for over ten years, giving essential social transport to those who would otherwise be housebound. The funding partnership between the Council's allows mobility impaired people six day a week (and on three evenings) transport anywhere in the three areas at a subsidised fare. Journeys are co-ordinated via a computerised booking system within the Civic Centre at Southend. Currently service demand is such that 15 to 20% of journey requests are refused. Additional vehicles/drivers would offset this demand.
- D3.29 The partners meet on a regular basis and have agreed an action plan to ensure best use of resources to make the service more available to their customers. The plan includes a 'brokerage' scheme in partnership with the voluntary sector as well as other voluntary and private business initiatives. It is proposed that this scheme will not only **be available to mobility impaired groups but also other excluded groups who do not have easy access to transport provision.**
- D3.30 As part of this approach, the Borough Council are developing plans to integrate its own community transport provision comprising the Dial a Ride Service, Social Services Transport, Educational Transport and Vehicle Fleet, both passenger and haulage vehicles, to provide for a comprehensive and integrated community transport facility. This follows an internal audit report which recommended that these transport functions should be combined and managed by one Transport Team. A pilot scheme involving Dial a Ride and Social Services vehicles is currently underway which aims to co-ordinate journey plans and timings of the two service operations. In addition, contracts for external transport provision for Social Services and Educational Special Needs clients are being reviewed to effect harmonisation. The development of appropriate computer packages to enable the system to be effectively operated and monitored will be an essential ingredient in the development of the plans.
- D3.31 However, development of the community transport facility to cater for current and projected demands as well as the needs of those members of the community who are not impaired by reason of disability, but are excluded from the transport network because of other factors such as isolation, fear of crime, lack of resources, employment status etc., is dependant on further resources to provide for additional vehicles and drivers.
- D3.32 This Local Transport Plan identifies the need for new vehicles and computer software/ hardware which will be essential to meeting the objective of the Partnership to promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all. This will provide for an improved integrated service and the efficient use of resources to the benefit of the local community. The purchase of new vehicles will also provide the

opportunity for a more fuel efficient and 'greener' vehicle fleet moving away from diesel to gas usage.

- D3.33 To affect integration of the scheme with other passenger services, proposals are also being developed with rail operators as part of the Partnership approach to provide for transfer facilities for the mobility impaired from voluntary vehicles to rail services. This approach will be integral to the development of quality interchange sites in the Borough (see paragraph D5.3).

Cycling and Walking

- D3.34 Given the relatively flat terrain, the concentration of local facilities, the number of short trips under two miles, and the fact that some 28% of residents live within 2km of their workplace, and extensive seafront and leisure areas, Southend offers ***considerable potential for encouraging cycling and walking*** either as a means of travelling to work, school and community facilities or as a leisure/tourist activity or a combination of both. This could be in the form of complete journeys or as a component part of a trip utilising other passenger services such as rail and bus.
- D3.35 This potential is recognised by the Partnership and a specific ***strategy for cycling and walking*** has been produced jointly by the Borough Council and consultants TPi Limited. This has been drawn up in close liaison with the Partnership by means of a Walking and Cycling Sub Group. This will be developed in due course into a ***Cycling and Walking Forum*** to advise and review progress in implementing the proposals. The detailed strategy is set out in the accompanying Technical Paper. The potential of walking and cycling is also recognised in the Replacement Essex and Southend on Sea Joint Structure Plan (Policy T6).
- D3.36 The strategies of walking and cycling have been combined to take advantage of the many common themes that relate to each mode of transport. With consultants TPi having prepared a similar strategy for the rest of Essex it is consistent with issues and objectives common to the neighbouring authorities. The strategy takes into account good practice advice, notably the Government's Road Safety Strategy, the National Cycling Strategy, Encouraging Walking and School Travel.
- D3.37 The Strategy has at its heart the vision;

'to make Southend a place where everyone can walk and cycle conveniently and in safety'.

This is translated into five specific objectives, namely to;

- *improve conditions for cyclists and pedestrians, particularly maintenance, accessibility and safety,*
- *reduce the number and severity of pedestrian and cyclist road traffic casualties and footfall accidents,*
- *increase the amount of walking and cycling, particularly for journeys to school, work, to local shops and for leisure,*
- *link to health improvement programmes to emphasise the benefits of walking and cycling,*
- *improve the feeling of personal security through community safety programmes.*

- D3.38 The Strategy seeks to build upon the significant progress that has already been made in improving the cycling and walking facilities in the Borough and to take advantage of the '*Environmental Rooms and Distributors*' concept developed as part of this Local Transport Plan (see paragraph D4.2) to encourage pedestrian and cycling within a safe environment. It aims to promote walking and cycling as integral parts of wider initiatives; concentrate on journeys to school, to work, to rail stations, to local shopping centres and leisure trips; and to support 'beacon' schemes such as West Leigh School's Walking Bus and a travel plan for Southend Hospital. Both revenue and capital funding in cycle/footway maintenance will be reviewed as part of the strategy to identify priorities for investment to support the above objectives.

