

7. Delivering Accessibility

Joint Planning

East of England Authorities

The strategic local transport authorities within the East of England Region have developed a co-ordinated approach to accessibility planning through the establishment of a Regional Accessibility Planning Forum. The forum meets every two months and provides the opportunity to exchange feedback on progress to date and share experiences, ideas and problems. This assists local authorities across the region to take a consistent approach whilst recognising different local issues and priorities. Wherever appropriate the partnerships will develop into joint working on the facilitation of cross border partnerships in the development of accessibility planning solutions.

Thames Gateway South Essex Joint Working

The three authorities in the Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) area (Essex County, together with Southend and Thurrock Unitary Councils) are working closely together to develop joint approaches to tackle accessibility issues. Many of the key service areas, such as education, health and employment have catchments which do not adhere to administrative and/or transportation boundaries. This means that cross-boundary interaction is essential at all levels. The new TGSE Transportation Board will play a key role in focussing resources and delivering essential infrastructure to support development growth. Planning for better accessibility to ensure that the transport provision meets the needs of all users, particularly those in disadvantaged groups and areas is seen as a priority.

The Thames Gateway area will be subject to significant development pressures and growth opportunities. Together, the three local highway authorities are jointly tackling these challenges to ensure that the accessibility needs of residents and visitors are fully addressed. The impacts of the East of England Plan and growth of the Thames Gateway on changing travel behaviour are being taken forward as part of the development of accessibility solutions.

The successful and productive joint working relationship between the three authorities clearly illustrates the way in which the authorities have engaged appropriately, demonstrating a consistent approach, as well as the facilitation of best practice.

Improving Accessibility in Southend

Accessibility Vision and Objectives

The vision for accessibility draws on the need to contribute to the Council's wider vision and objectives set by The Community Plan (2003). It is complimentary to the LTP2 vision and ensures that the views of the partners in accessibility planning are taken fully into consideration:-

"To maximise accessibility to employment, healthcare, education, leisure and shopping for all walks of life and in particular to the most socially-excluded sections of the population, through transport and non-transport solutions".

In order to bring about this vision, three key objectives were set to guide the development of the Accessibility Strategy:

- To work with partners to ensure accessibility problems are properly identified and prioritised in an evidence based and systematic way

- to ensure that barriers to the use of the transport system by groups identified and prioritised are minimised where possible
- to identify non-transport barriers to accessibility and work with partner organisations to ensure that their issues are addressed.

The LTP2 Accessibility Strategy

The Southend-on-Sea Accessibility Strategy is included as a supporting document to the LTP2. This builds upon and replaces the Framework Accessibility Strategy submitted with the provisional LTP2 in July 2005. This Strategy sets the vision and priorities for accessibility planning, defining the actions and programme integrated within the LTP2 necessary for its delivery.

An assessment of the accessibility needs and problems of Southend-on-Sea, undertaken through partnership working and the use of the ACCESSION mapping tool, lies at the heart of the Accessibility Strategy. Partner working determined that the Accessibility Strategy should focus on improving:

- access to education;
- access to jobs;
- access to health;

The main emphasis of the Strategy is on education due to the importance of Southend's role in the Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE) area as a regional hub for culture and further education.

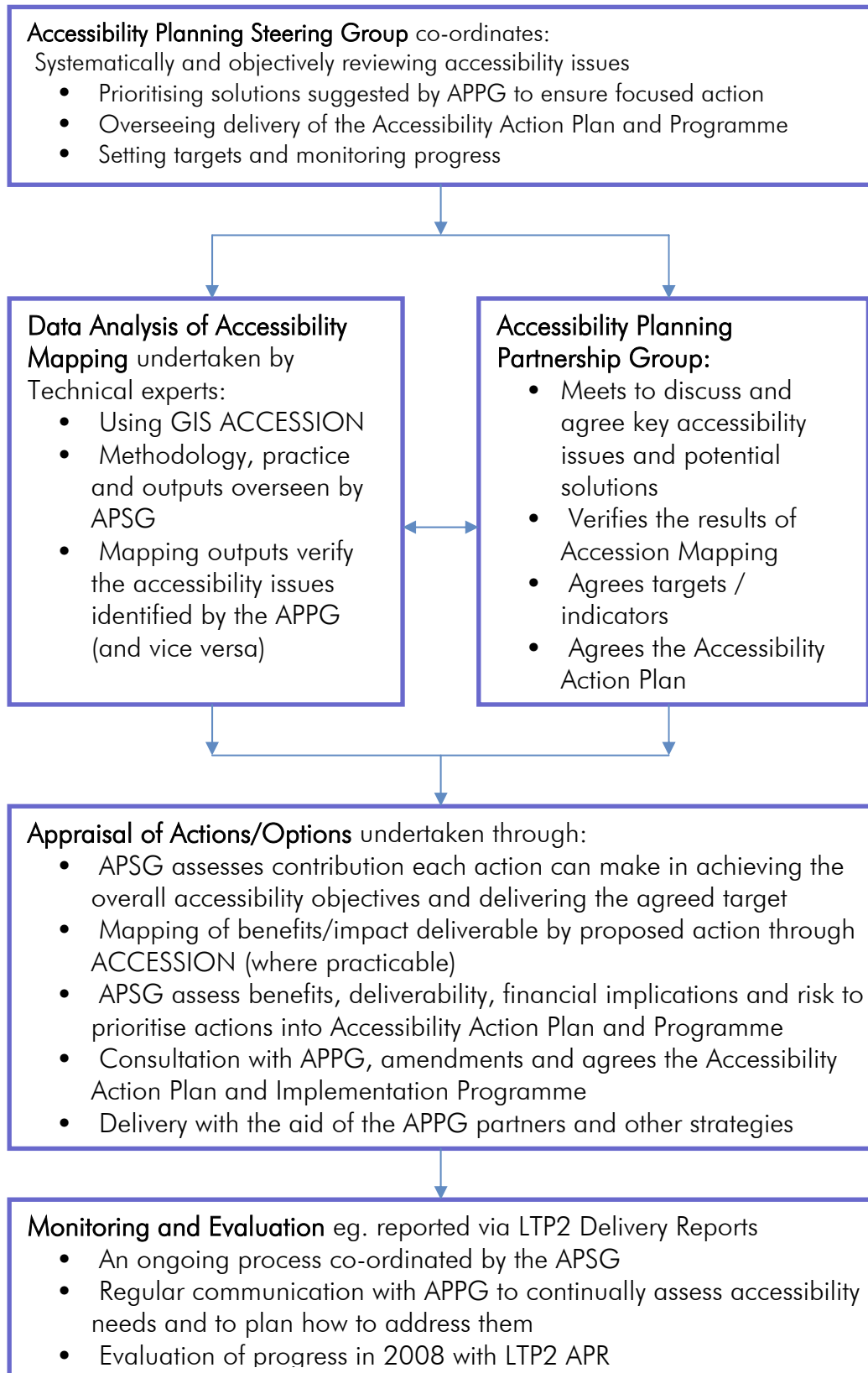
Access to Education will have a specific focus on the 16-19 group, which is shared by the neighbouring Authority of Essex County Council, creating synergistic opportunities for joint working. Access to Employment and Health are important needs but due to resource constraints are phased for delivery in the latter part of the LTP2 period. Access to food and leisure was not identified to be a local priority during the period 2006-2011.

Developing the Accessibility Strategy

Understanding the accessibility needs of the Borough has been integral to the development of the Accessibility Strategy. To achieve this a multi-agency partnership, the Accessibility Planning Partnership Group (APPG) was set up by the Council. The APPG consisted of local transport and planning authorities and service providers in the field of employment, education, health and leisure, including the key partner Local Authorities of Essex County Council and Thurrock Council.

Figure 7.1 summarises the Accessibility Planning Process in Southend, which was overseen by the Accessibility Planning Steering Group (APSG), a body consisting of key Officers and consultants responsible for co-ordinating and delivering the Accessibility Strategy.

Figure 7.1: The Southend Accessibility Planning Process



The process combined meetings of the APPG with technical mapping and data analysis of the key accessibility issues using the GIS software tool ACCESSION to verify the findings from the APPG and test the different actions proposed where practicable. This process has allowed the actions to be developed further and prioritised.

The APPG was engaged to develop the Accessibility Strategy in three stages of workshops from April 2005 to February 2006. These enabled the professional partner organisations to impart their local knowledge of issues facing existing and potential users of the services they provide.

The Stage 1 APPG Workshops in April and May 2005 identified the key accessibility issues in Southend in terms of priority geographical areas and sectors of society which the Accessibility Strategy needed to prioritise and address. Potential accessibility improvements which could be made were discussed.

The Stage 2 APPG Workshop in June 2005 refined the potential solutions to accessibility issues identified at Stage 1 and presented the draft Framework Accessibility Strategy (FAS), seeking endorsement of the FAS vision, objectives and the 6 provisional 'early interventions' prioritised for development in the LTP2. Provisional Local Indicators to monitor the Accessibility Strategy were also discussed.

The Stage 3 APPG Workshop in February 2006 updated progress and presented the final draft Accessibility Action Plan and Implementation Programme for discussion with the increased emphasis on education. Agreement that the actions were correct, feasible and appropriately prioritised and the roles and contributions of the partners was sought.

Accessibility Action Areas

The Accessibility Strategy has an Action Plan which sets 7 key Accessibility Action Areas (AAA) which the Council will take forward through the LTP2. These were developed from the provisional 'early interventions' in the FAS with access to post 16 education set as the core priority:

AAA1 Education: improving access to the proposed 16-19 vocational and skills training centre and potential relocation of Prospects College at Thorpe Bay High School

AAA2 Education: Improving the efficiency of education transport service provision

AAA3 Employment: improving access to the Northern Fringe Industrial Estates and Shoeburyness

AAA4 Health: Centralisation of GPs and Primary Health Care Centres

AAA5 Health: Cross Boundary Patient Movements to the Hospital

AAA6: Better Provision of Information on Transport Services and Access Opportunities for All Sectors of Society Including Ethnic Minorities, the disabled, the Young and the Old

AAA7: LDF – Ensuring Accessibility Planning lies at the heart of the Local Development Framework

A programme has been developed for delivering each of Accessibility Action Area, containing a number of detailed actions, funding implications, responsibility and timescale. The full programme can be seen in the Accessibility Strategy, with actions relating to improving access to the combined Thorpe Bay School/Prospects College vocational and skills site

Ensuring accessibility is taken into account in new development planning and supports existing communities thus contributing to the creation of safe, sustainable and liveable communities with good access to jobs and key services.

Measuring Success- Core Outcome Target and Local Indicators

The core target adopted to measure the overall success of the Southend-on-Sea Accessibility Strategy is:

"To increase from 85% to 95% the proportion of Southend's population aged 16-19 living within 30 minutes by public transport of the 4 main post 16 education centres by 2008."

The target has been set as a shared target with Essex County Council, although it has been adapted to be specific to Southend's needs. The shared target has been set with Essex to focus on Post 16 education as this is a core issue in the TGSE and reflects the importance of Southend as the regional hub for education and the strong cross border movements as students travel into Southend from Essex.

Local Indicators for Accessibility Planning have been developed through the APPG and are shown in Table 7.1. These support the core target with one Local Accessibility Indicator set for each of the accessibility areas of Education, Employment and Health. Additional Local Accessibility Indicators have been set for safety and mobility.

Table 7.1 Accessibility Strategy Local Indicators

Type	Measurement	Local Performance Indicator ¹⁵
Education: Demographic based indicator	Improving access for 16-19 population	DA1: % of Southend's population aged 16-19 living within 30 minutes of the Thorpe Bay & Prospects College Vocational and Skills Training Centre
Education: Demographic based indicator (cross border)	Improving access for 16-19 population	DA2: % of Southend's population aged 16-19 living within 30 minutes of the SEEVIC site at Benfleet
Employment: Geographically Based Indicator	Access to Northern Fringes Industrial Areas & Shoeburyness Industrial Estates	DA3: % of employable population living within 30 minutes of the Northern Fringe & Shoeburyness Industrial Estates.
Health: Key Sector Based Indicator	Access to Southend Hospital	DA4: % of patients living within 30 minutes of Southend Hospital.
Safety Based	Fear of crime on or around public transport	DA5: No of crime incidents recorded on public transport (i) buses (ii) at rail stations
Safety Based	Fear of crime in the public realm	DA6: Proportion of people who feel unsafe walking
Mobility Based	Disabled access to bus fleet	DA6: % of bus fleet complying with DiPTAC levels of accessibility

The next major opportunity for review of the Core Outcome target and Local Accessibility Indicators will be in the 2008 Delivery Report. This will include an assessment of whether the Accessibility Strategy is on target to meet the objectives and if the Accessibility Action Plan, the Core Target and the Local Indicators are on track.

Measures to Deliver Improved Accessibility

The Council has good knowledge and evidence relating to accessibility issues across the Borough, which has been collected from the views of partners, transport operators and other key service

¹⁵ Note: all targets refer to 'living within' measured by time to access the location by public transport, walking and cycling during the morning peak hour.

providers such as health and social services through the APPG and verification by ACCESSION mapping. This has guided the development of the strategies and initiatives in the Final LTP2 which includes measures to:

- improve bus services in terms of location, reliability and frequency;
- support and provide community and demand responsive transport to better cater for travel to school, college, health care, and the needs for the elderly and mobility impaired;
- review effectiveness, scope and role of current transportation services provided by the Council for education, healthcare and social care.
- provide intelligent transport systems to ensure access to travel information and increased awareness of wider travel choices, and also provide seamless travel through better integration of public transport modes and interchanges;
- improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists through environmental rooms initiatives to combat fear of crime, improve safety and reduce severance for these modes of travel;
- provide similar improvements for all non-motorised modes through rights of way improvement plans (ROWIPs) to include extending the public rights of way network (including footpaths, bridleways and traffic free greenways) wherever possible, particularly adjacent to or near new development.
- effective use of Travel Plans in existing and future centres of education, employment and health to improve accessibility for those that do not have access to a car
- individualised Travel Marketing, Travel Training and promotion of alternatives to the car through the Smarter Choices Programme
- partnership working with Essex and Thurrock Unitary Authorities to exploit opportunities for sharing resources
- effective deployment of land use planning policies and powers to secure adequate developer contributions to safeguard and ensure accessibility to service centres of education, employment and health

Improving Bus Operations

The Council has developed a bus network map showing core and secondary bus routes as part of the bus strategy which seeks to remodel the bus service network to ensure greater accessibility across the Borough. This involves the definition of a core network of regular (at least ten minute headways) services along key routes during peak travel times. In addition, the level of service beyond peak travel times including evening and Sundays will also be reviewed. This is being carried out in parallel with developing the Accessibility Strategy, which has highlighted certain parts of the town as being remote from the bus network at certain times of the day and weekends.

It will also be important to improve passenger interchange between bus and rail services and between different bus services, particularly at major intersection along key bus corridors. This is demonstrated on the strategy map where key urban interchanges are identified, e.g. at Leigh station, Shoeburyness station, and of course the town centre. The recent improvements at Westcliff station demonstrate how important it is to relocate bus stops as close to the station as possible. Working alongside the train operating companies, the Council will develop an agreed "masterplan" for each station identifying a range of improvements, costs and timescales to achieve the above and act as a development tool.

A third of households in Southend do not have access to a car, and hence may feel socially excluded. However, the levels of car ownership vary considerably across different wards within the borough.

The wards of Victoria, Kursaal and Milton not only show the highest levels of unemployment but also the highest proportions of household with no access to a car, that is 40%, 45% and 41% respectively. On the other hand, the wards of Eastwood Park, Thorpe, West Leigh and West Shoebury; which are amongst those wards with the lowest levels of unemployment show the lowest levels of no-car owning household (17% to 22%) and the highest level of households with 3 or more cars (7%-8%).

As part of the public transport strategy the Council is also seeking to widen travel choices for all. This would be achieved through a combination of enhancing conventional bus services and the role of flexible and demand responsive transport to address certain areas of social exclusion. This may involve blurring the edges between community and conventional public transport services and help fill the gaps within the existing public transport network. In this respect, the use of LTP capital funding combined with the removal of artificial barriers between service delivery areas and the joining up of policies may provide new incentives and savings to deliver better transport services. The current review of the Council's own transport procurement and desire to link service provision between departments, as prompted by the best value review, is an example of ongoing work in this area.

This Plan will place particular emphasis on targeting journey to work and journey to school trips, an area where the implementation of effective travel planning will be key. In this respect the Council will work with both the bus and rail operators as well as the university to introduce on-site bus and rail RTPI systems to encourage sensible travel choices.

Overall, from the results of the partnership meetings and feedback from bus users and within the scope of LTP1, there is an appreciation of the improvements introduced to the bus infrastructure along the main corridors and at the travel centre that has led to an increase in passenger numbers and a commercial return for the bus operators. However, there are clearly significant accessibility problems to the western part of the Borough which has a deeper hinterland unlike the geography to the east. With the removal of the Council funded bus subsidy there is clear disappointment that the operators cannot re-instate services and run them on a commercial basis. The projects identified will require a review of the bus routes and scope for creating additional revenue to support a commercial service by adding passenger numbers and a review of the most appropriate mechanism to achieve this, including potential quality bus contract and subsidies with other partners, for example Leigh Town Council.

Flexible & Community Transport

The Council considers access to services by the whole community as being vital to ensuring social inclusion across the Borough, and aims to deliver a base level of service available to as much of the population as possible, making use of conventional services, demand responsive transport (DRT), taxis and shared taxis, and voluntary/community transport. In particular the Council is committed to satisfying the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act to widen transport provision, and hence travel choices for the mobility impaired.

Taxis

The Council places great emphasis on the role of taxis to address some of the issues relating to social exclusion, with work undertaken by the licensing officers focussing on driver training, vehicle standards and other infrastructure to cater the needs of taxis users.

In adherence with the Disability Discrimination Act, which affects drivers of both Hackney carriage vehicles and private hire vehicles, a basic wheelchair and disabled persons handling course is planned. This will be designed to improve the accessibility of disabled persons to all licensed vehicles, and will be complemented by the Council's commitment to continue increasing the fleet of wheelchair accessible vehicles. The course will be conducted in-house by officers from Dial-A-Ride.

The Council also recommends that taxi drivers undertake a more formal course in disability awareness and wheelchair access, which is offered locally by the Ambulance Service and Safety First Travel in Canvey Island (South Essex) at their own expense.

With regards to the new travel centre proposed for the town centre the Council is working to ensure sufficient provision for taxi waiting. This would clearly widen the travel choices for passenger transport users with the added accessibility and flexibility offered by taxis. Additional sheltered and well lit taxi stands are also being pursued for key destinations throughout the town centre and in particular Lucy Way and Seaway. These would ensure safe and convenient locations for taxi pick-up especially after dark and during periods of inclement weather.

Community Transport & Demand Responsive Transport

Based upon the current provision of direct transport services, concerns have been raised at both national and local level relating to the changes in demographics of service users. Meeting the transport needs of the under 16s and individuals accessing post-16 education together with an increase in the percentage of the population who are over 65 years old, coupled with recent legislative changes, such as "Access for All", the Disability Discrimination Act and a drive towards ensuring social inclusion, all indicate that there will be an increased need for more flexible transport provision in the future. The contribution that the Council's "Direct Transport" service can make to the provision of accessible transport services in Southend, which best meets the varying needs of older and disabled people as well as the younger generations is extremely important. This has been identified by the Borough Council previously and in the Framework Accessibility Strategy.

To respond better to these changing needs, the "Direct Transport" strategy is currently being drafted to develop better integration, management of the services and value for money that the Council provides in the following areas:-

- haulage and logistical services;
- legislation information and advice;
- contracted transport management - home to school transport and social care transport;
- direct transport provision - Demand Responsive for those unable to use public transport (4 vehicles) in partnership with Castle Point;
- driver support and cover;
- training and assessment services;
- fleet management - Council owned fleet vehicles including school minibuses, welfare buses.

A vision has been developed to take this forward to ensure that the Council provides:-

"The most effective direct transport provision in South Essex, delivering high quality, cost effective, efficient, tailored transport services to a multitude of clients with differing needs in and around the borough of Southend-on-Sea."

This will be managed by a comprehensive review to ensure that the strategy:-

- includes centralisation of the vehicle fleet as part of “best value” review;
- reviews fleet numbers and drivers to ensure best value for money ;
- delivers passenger assistant and driver training schemes;
- reviews education and social care transport provision;
- develops partnerships around the external community transport operations;
- takes forward and contributes to the actions identified in the Framework Accessibility Strategy (FAS).

Currently the first draft of the Direct Transport Strategy is being prepared for consultation with key stakeholders including members of the Accessibility Planning Partnership Group set up to develop the Accessibility Strategy. As identified in the FAS, the provision and role of community transport and flexible travel arrangements will be developed further and form part of the accessibility strategy action plan in March 2006.

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) are valuable tools in making public transport more accessible to all, especially those in deprived areas and socially excluded.

In terms of real time passenger transport information the extent and provision of the existing TRIPS based RTPTI is restricted to the central urban areas of the borough, consequently limiting its effectiveness in raising the overall perception and effectiveness of public transport. The system is also not fully utilised in providing added value transport related information to travellers as a result of the limited collation of available transport data. The Quality Bus Partnership will play a major part to ensure full commitment from all involved in extending and maintaining an effective RTPTI system. This includes, for example, the efficient exchange of updated timetable data between organisations and systems as well as the continued maintenance of in-vehicle and on-street equipment. The route coverage and information display locations for the RTPTI system requires expansion, with a key focus on information at the major transport interchange locations, namely:

- The Southend Travel Centre;
- Southend Victoria railway station; and
- Southend Central railway station.

The Council will also be pursuing other additional methods of disseminating travel information to the travelling public. These will include the development of a Southend travel information website as a central tenant of the Councils corporate site. This will make travel information collated through the COMET and TRIPS systems (see Section 6) more accessible to the public, displaying for example; areas of congestion, incidents, parking availability, public transport operations as well as features to assist in planning journey routes. Additional development will also be made to provide personalised travel related information through mobile technologies, for example multimedia messaging to mobile phones or Personal Digital Advisors (PDAs). The network of travel kiosks will be expanded to provide greater public access to transport network information and journey planning information. The Council will be looking for ways to incorporate the development of these technologies with links to real time journey planning and travel information. The key aspect of making this information available to all and in particular ethnic minorities will form part of this process.

Additional approaches to dissemination of travel information will be taken forward, including; travel information panels in shopping centres, hospitals and education establishments.

In conjunction with the development of RTPTI, the provision of bus priority measures continues to be a high priority with the Council. The UTC-SCOOT system, in conjunction with the RTPTI-TRIPS,

currently provides 'hurry' calls at a number of locations for late running buses to help them regain some time. The extent of this provision will be expanded as the TRIPS system expands. In addition, a number of complementary junction improvements for better access to the town centre to facilitate the movement of buses through the network as commenced at the Travel Centre and the modification of traffic signals in Chichester Road to provide bus priority.

The Council recognise that the introduction of a broad based electronic payment system will be a key element of its' ITS strategy throughout the LTP2 plan period. It will look to support the provision of seamless payment mechanisms for a range of transport related activities including combined costs of public transport travel and car parking.

ITS may also form part of plans for any development of park & ride facility to the west of Southend town centre. Together with a well aligned parking policy, the facility would be introduced with a range of travel information systems and bus priority measures to encourage modal shift from car to bus.

The extension of demand responsive public transport (DRT) services would build upon the strategic public transport network and supplement associated services with an integrated and flexible support services. The automatic vehicle location (AVL) network and systems already implemented as part of the RTPI services would enable the smooth transition of movement between the two complimentary transport networks. This may deliver benefits in terms of education planning and health as set out above.

Environmental Rooms & Distributors

The priority within environmental rooms is to improve the quality of life by creating a better environment that encourages greater levels of walking and cycling. The provision of traffic calming measures, better street lighting and improved crossing points for pedestrians are some of the measures introduced so far. Careful choice of street furniture and good townscape design all encourage a greater feeling of safety so that the fear of crime is minimised and social inclusion promoted. This in turn reduces some of the key barriers to accessibility by non-car modes to local services such as health, education, employment, retail and leisure facilities. This has been identified as an accessibility issue by the stakeholders involved in developing the Accessibility Strategy.

It is essential that wherever possible schemes for environmental rooms and distributors should links with the cycle network and public transport facilities across the Borough to make non-car modes safe and more attractive alternatives. This is particularly relevant where new development provides for highway infrastructure and should form an integral part of the planning process.

Cycling and Walking

The permeability of the urban area and the town centre by cycle will be improved to ensure greater accessibility. A number of measures have been identified in the transport strategy to address accessibility issues, particularly the completion of the cycle network, though many of these overlap with those identified in Section 5 to encourage greater shift from car to cycle and hence reduce congestion.

In addition to those initiatives set out under Tackling Congestion, the transport strategy will also ensure a good provide a greater number of high quality cycle parking at key destinations across the borough, for example at places of employment, schools, railway stations, and the travel centre. This can be achieved through direct implementation by the Council itself, through working with local organisations and school to introduce facilities as part of their travel plans, and through the Section 106 planning process.

Rights of Way Improvement Plan

As a Local Authority, the Council has a duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to prepare, publish, assess and review a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) for the borough of Southend-on-Sea. The full plans need to be prepared by 2007 and will form an integral part of the LTP2 from 2010 onwards superseding the current policy document "Milestone Statement 2001/2 to 2005/6".

The LTP2 vision to develop a "sustainable Southend" forms the underlying principle in taking forward the Project Plan, which sets out eight key stages for the development of the Draft ROWIP. These have been identified and linked to the five LTP2 Strategies; road safety, accessibility, congestion, air quality and improved quality of life issues.

The ROWIP Project Plan

Key Stage	Action
1	Policy Review
2	Network Assessment
3	Desk Top Study
4	Aims
5	Outcomes
6	Method
7	Priority
8	Statement of Action

The Policy Review stage is currently in progress and the work elements of this are explained in further detail below:-

- review previous policy and targets outlined in the Milestones Statement 2001/02 to 2005/06 as well as current and proposed policies adopted by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council (SBC). The results of previous BVPI Surveys have highlighted areas for improvement within the Public Rights Of Way (PROW) network and a Network Improvement Scheme for PROW signage is currently taking place. Future BVPI Survey results will assist in monitoring the standard of the PROW network;
- review outstanding claims and Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO) as a prelude to the consolidation of the Definitive Map, also referred to in Key Stage 5;
- refer to the Local Development Framework (LDF) "Core Strategy Development Plan Document" – Stage 2, and note the recommendation that the main principles of development should have regard to Greengrid and Green Links. The Greenway programme is embedded within The Greengrid Strategy and is promoted through The Local Development Framework document (LDF). Adoption of these strategies will assist in the development of the ROWIP and the creation of a wider, accessible for all, network. Supplementary Planning Documents SPD2 – Sustainable Transport, and SPD3 - Green Spaces and Green Grid Strategy, are particularly relevant. Planning Policy Guidance - Open Spaces, Sports and Recreation (PPG17), will also be considered;
- consider policies incorporated within Health Strategies and Travel Plans linked to local schools, hospitals and the work place, as it is anticipated that modal shifts will have an impact on the PROW network. This is also recognised in the "Smarter Choices" strategy adopted by SBC to encourage more use of sustainable modes of transport;
- contributions towards achieving improvements on the PROW network through the cycling and walking strategy will be identified and co-ordinated;

- improvement to the bridleway network will also be considered;
- further stages of development of the ROWIP will be designed to reflect the results of the Key Stage 1 review;
- Southend-on-Sea Borough Council will work closely with other Local Authorities, particularly Essex County Council and Thurrock, and with wider groups such as the Countryside Agency. Particular interest will be taken in areas of funding and participating in joint projects.

A Local Access Forum (LAF) has been established. Consultation with LAF members, user groups and neighbouring authorities will be undertaken to assess the present and future needs of the public and, where necessary, improve and/or create additional public rights of way within the borough, including cross boundary links.

Routes linking to the wider transport network, thus contributing towards tackling congestion and improving air quality, will be prioritised and enhanced. A hierarchy of PROW will be established to guide the capital investment and maintenance programme and aid in the identification of routes such as strategic paths, recreational paths and other access rights. This will be linked to the footway hierarchy, which includes PROW that have been metalled.

Provision of information regarding the accessibility of local PROWs to all members of the community, including those with visual impairment or mobility problems, will be improved.

Delivering Other Local Priorities

The measures identified for Delivering Accessibility will also contribute to Southend's local objectives relating to quality of life and regeneration.

Achieving a Better Quality of Life

The Accessibility Strategy will play a significant role in promoting healthy communities, in terms of improving access to health facilities and reducing the number of missed hospital appointments. Other health benefits associated with walking and cycling improvements are discussed in Section 6 Tackling Congestion.

Community safety, personal security and crime will be addressed through the creation of wide pavements, improvements to lighting and CCTV coverage across the urban area and in the town centre, and measures to improve security on board public transport and at bus stops and stations. In addition, the Crime & Disorder Strategy Board, tasked with delivering the Community Plan objectives, works with local communities to identify initiatives to reduce crime and fear of crime across the Borough.

Regeneration for Southend

Through the Framework Accessibility Strategy, the potential for improving accessibility to the northern fringe and Shoeburyness industrial estates is being examined. Measures to improve access to education for the 16+ age group, is currently being developed, and will help deliver the Thames Gateway South Essex vision of developing Southend/Rochford as a cultural and intellectual hub and a high education centre of excellence.

Delivering Accessibility Indicators and Targets

Indicators and targets for monitoring delivery of the Delivering Accessibility shared priority are discussed in Section 11.

Figure 7.2 Delivering Accessibility: Cause Effect Diagram (Addressing the Barriers to Accessibility)

