

# CONGESTION & AIR POLLUTION - 6





## 6 CONGESTION & AIR POLLUTION

### 6 CONGESTION & AIR POLLUTION

This chapter sets out the evidence base and strategy for dealing with congestion and air pollution. Congestion occurs mainly in the larger urban centres of Taunton and Yeovil where Air Quality Management Areas have been declared, and to a lesser extent in Bridgwater. Congestion is forecast to get worse in these settlements due to their regional significance as growth centres. The congestion strategy sets out a toolkit of measures to tackle congestion and pollution in these areas and identifies the appropriate measures for each settlement based upon traffic modelling.

The Congestion and Pollution Strategy aims to deliver the following LTP2 objectives:

#### LTP Objective

*Reduce the growth of congestion and pollution and improve health:*

- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the transport network;
- Ensuring traffic is controlled & managed effectively;
- Influencing travel behaviour; and
- Widening travel choice.

#### LTP Objective

*Protect and enhance the built and natural environment:*

- Seeking opportunities to increase species and habitat diversity through transport scheme implementation;
- Preserving and enhancing the character of the countryside; and
- Preserving and enhancing heritage centres and areas of historic interest.

#### LTP Objective

*Support sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations:*

- Delivering transport improvements to support the land use strategy, with an emphasis on enabling Taunton and Yeovil to achieve significant growth;
- Ensure recovery of the highway network to a steady state; and
- Deliver transport improvements to support the County's economic development strategy.

### 6.1 CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Somerset does not contain urban areas in excess of 250,000 populations that are required by Government to be the subject of a mandatory congestion target. However the impact of congestion on our transport systems and its impact upon business and people in Somerset mean that tackling congestion will be a key aim for our second LTP and locally based targets and trajectories have been included to reflect this.



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Detailed transport studies have been undertaken to provide an evidence base for the main urban areas of Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater. Key information from the transport study reports is set out below to provide an overview of the challenges and opportunities in each town.

### 6.1.1 The Current Situation

#### Modes of Travel

The situation is broadly similar in each of the three towns as shown in the following table. Car travel is dominant, but the high proportion of cycling in Bridgwater and significant levels of walking in all three towns should also be noted. It will be important to maintain these relatively high levels of walking and cycling as the towns grow and develop to minimise the impact of congestion. The table also shows that public transport use is very low in these towns and we must increase this if we are to be successful in tackling congestion as the towns grow.

Table 6.1 Mode of Travel to Work

	Taunton %	Yeovil %	Bridgwater %
Car (Driver)	54.6	56.5	55.5
Car (Passenger)	6.5	7.4	7.5
Train	0.7	0.3	0.3
Bus / Coach	2.7	2.7	2.6
Motorcycle	1.9	1.8	1.5
Cycle	8.6	6.2	10.5
On Foot	15.8	17.6	14.0
Work from Home	8.3	6.6	7.2
Other	0.9	0.8	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

NB: Values have been rounded-up throughout

#### School Travel

- In Taunton the proportion of people travelling to school by car ranges from 30% to 80%, and on foot ranges from 10% to 70% across the different schools.
- In Bridgwater, around 62% of children currently walk to school which is one of the main reasons why congestion levels are not higher in this town.
- In Yeovil, the proportion of trips made on foot range from 43% to 92% across the different schools.

A key element of our strategies for these towns is to maintain these high levels of walking to school and work with schools where there are fewer children walking and cycling to develop travel plans which encourage more sustainable travel.

#### Parking

In all three main urban areas average charges for both short and long-stay parking are comparable to or lower than many smaller centres in the country. We are working with our District Council partners to achieve a much greater role for parking charges as a tool to manage car use over the LTP2 period, particularly in Taunton and

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Yeovil. It should be noted however that a significant proportion of town centre car parking is privately owned, particularly in Bridgwater, limiting our control over parking supply and charges. Our new parking policies reflect the different circumstances in each of our settlements, for instance ensuring that the tourism needs of our smaller towns and villages are addressed.

Table 6.2 Comparison of Parking Provision in Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater

Town	Short Stay	Medium Stay	Long Stay	Other Retail	Total Provision
Taunton	298	2032	1003	889	4222
Yeovil	134	1114	674	1134	3056
Bridgwater	134	297	350	2261	3042

Although Bridgwater has fewer parking spaces than the other two centres, the very number of parking spaces in retail parks and supermarkets near to the town centre results in much greater shopper parking per unit area of floorspace. Overall shopper parking provision, per unit area of floorspace in Taunton and Yeovil is broadly similar:

- Taunton: 39 sqm of retail floorspace per shopper parking space;
- Yeovil: 36 sqm of retail floorspace per shopper parking space; and
- Bridgwater: 16 sqm of retail floorspace per shopper parking space.

Peak usage of public car parks in each of the centres is between 81% and 85% of capacity, but usage of private retail parking in Yeovil and Bridgwater is less than 50%. This results in significant spare capacity in shopper parking, particularly in Bridgwater. There is less spare parking capacity in Yeovil (around 800 spaces) reflecting the lower parking provision in relation to floorspace.

Peak demand in shopper parking in Bridgwater is similar to that of Yeovil even though retail floorspace in Yeovil is almost double that of Bridgwater, so there are a much higher relative number of shopper car trips 'generated' in Bridgwater than in Yeovil.

The following graph shows the variation in average parking charges in our settlements. The main urban areas levy similar parking charges to many of the smaller market towns although this is changing. Parking charges in the smaller towns tend to reflect their role and function, for example Wells, Street and Dunster are major tourist destinations with strong demand for parking and higher charges therefore apply.

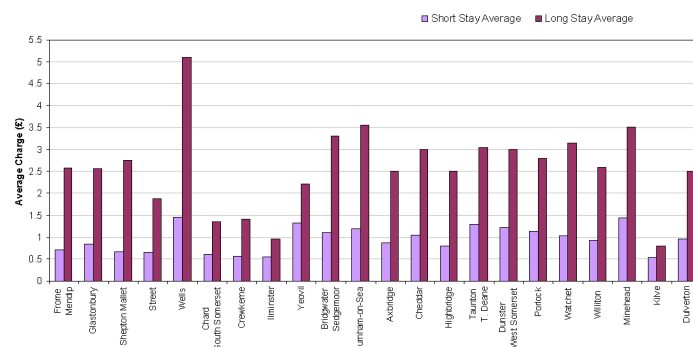


Figure 6.1 Parking Charges Throughout Somerset

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### Traffic Trends

All three towns have a very significant proportion of people driving short distances (less than 3km) across town by car, distances which many more people could walk or cycle if the right environment was provided to do this and crucially if walking and cycling were effectively marketed as new facilities were put in place.

Table 6.3 Percent of Car Trips Travelling Less than 3km in the AM Peak

Main Urban Area	Car Trips Less than 3km
Taunton	30%
Bridgwater	22%
Yeovil	21%

Traffic flows entering Taunton during the morning peak exceed those leaving the area by nearly 60%, and our strategy for Taunton must therefore seek to provide alternative forms of travel for people to get to the town to access a range of services if we are to tackle congestion.

Traffic trends in each of the towns over the period of LTP1 are shown in the following graphs, and these show a mixed picture. Traffic in Bridgwater initially fell slightly and is now steadily growing, in Yeovil there is a generally upward trend with a slight drop in 2003, and in Taunton traffic levels have levelled off following an initial increase.

Rates of traffic growth (annual average daily traffic) in all three towns are currently lower than predictions set out in the transport strategy reviews but this is primarily due to the fact that large-scale planned new developments in each town have not yet come to fruition and these will have a significant effect as they are implemented over the LTP2 period.

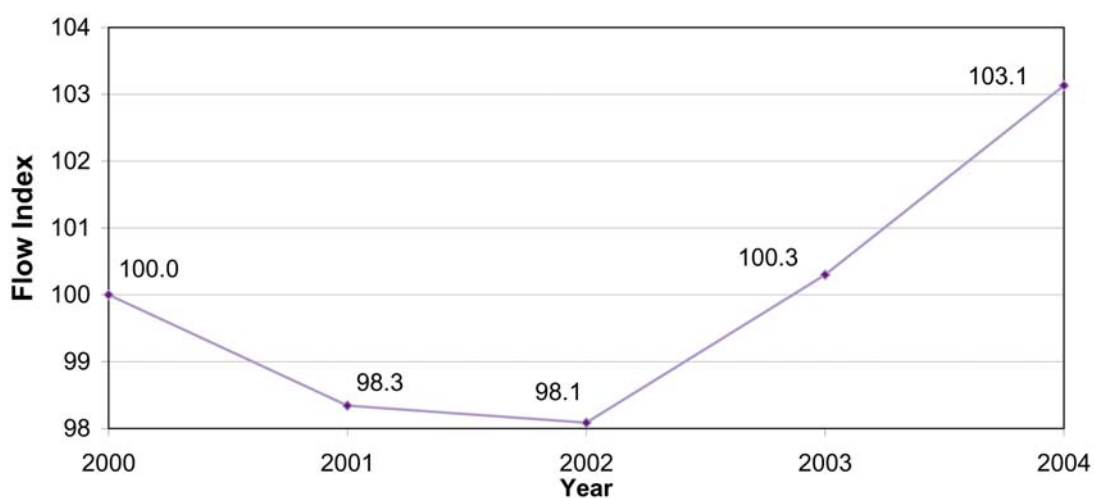


Figure 6.2 Traffic Growth in Bridgwater (2000-2004)

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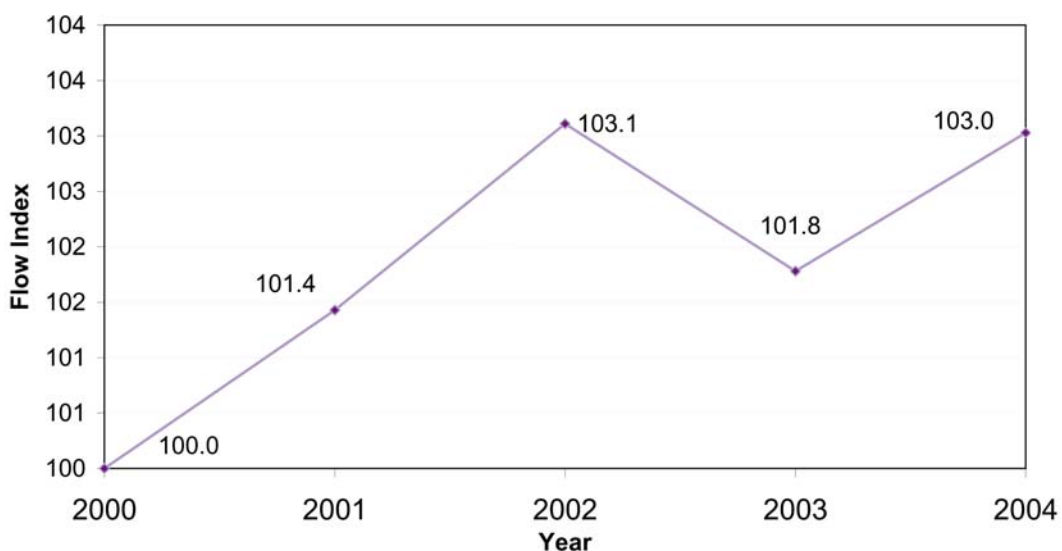


Figure 6.3 Traffic Growth in Yeovil (2000-2004)

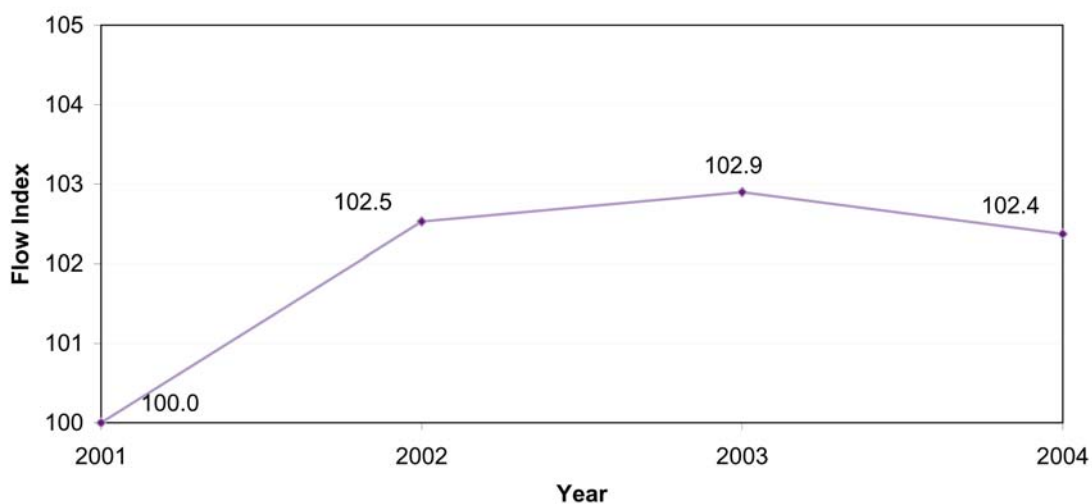


Figure 6.4 Traffic Growth in (2001-2004)

### Park & Ride Feasibility

Implementation of our first Park and Ride facility in Taunton as part of the North-West Taunton Package has been a great success, representing considerable progress towards tackling Taunton's congestion problems as well as improving access to important regional facilities such as Musgrove Park Hospital and Somerset College of Arts and Technology.

Park & Ride (P&R) studies have been undertaken for each of our town transport strategy reviews to explore further opportunities for these services, and the conclusions are set out below:



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- We established through this work that extending park and ride to the east of Taunton was operationally and financially viable. Revenue costs for this service are already covered by the Silk Mills service operating from the west of Taunton;
- Even a free park and ride in Bridgwater (which is unlikely to be deliverable) coupled with large increases in town centre parking charges, would result in few people using the service due to the short travel distances involved, the number of local journeys that start within the town itself, and the lack of control over town centre parking;
- Although there is forecast demand for a service in Yeovil, this can only be achieved by significant increases in car parking charges and the financial evaluation showed in all cases that a subsidy of greater than £250k per annum would be required to operate the service. We recommended that a service should not be introduced at present but may be a longer-term solution.

Table 6.4 Outcome of Park and Ride Studies

Town	Assumptions	Forecast daily usage (Vehicles)
Taunton	Town centre parking charges remain the same, with £1 Park and Ride fare	West Taunton: 340 East Taunton: 230
	Town centre parking charges double, with £1 Park and Ride fare	West Taunton: 750 East Taunton: 570
Bridgwater	Parking charges increased to £2.50, reduced town centre parking availability and <b>free</b> Park and Ride	South Bridgwater: 35 North Bridgwater: 200
Yeovil	Town centre parking charges remain the same, with £1.50 Park and Ride fare	West Yeovil: 11 East Yeovil: 18
	Town centre parking charges triple, with £1.50 Park and Ride fare	West Yeovil: 165 East Yeovil: 150

Congestion in all three towns is significant during the peak hours but currently clears quickly and is noticeably reduced during school holidays. Detailed studies have also shown that there is further scope to improve the efficiency of the network, for instance by modernising and optimising the traffic signals equipment. It is therefore important that our strategy proposals are proportional to the scale of the problem, and whilst there is clearly scope for further demand management, particularly in Taunton and Yeovil through increased parking charges, policies such as workplace charging or road pricing are not considered appropriate or necessary within this LTP.

### Air Quality

In Taunton, Air Quality Management areas have been declared on the A358 at Henlade and in East Reach due to Nitrogen Dioxide levels exceeding Government thresholds, due almost entirely to transport emissions. A recently completed Stage 4 Air Quality Review and Assessment for Taunton Deane identifies further locations in the town where air quality thresholds are likely to be exceeded in the near future, as well as sites where there is a longer term possibility of problems. These are shown on the following map. Taunton Deane Borough Council is considering declaring a wider Air Quality Management Area in Taunton to reflect this.

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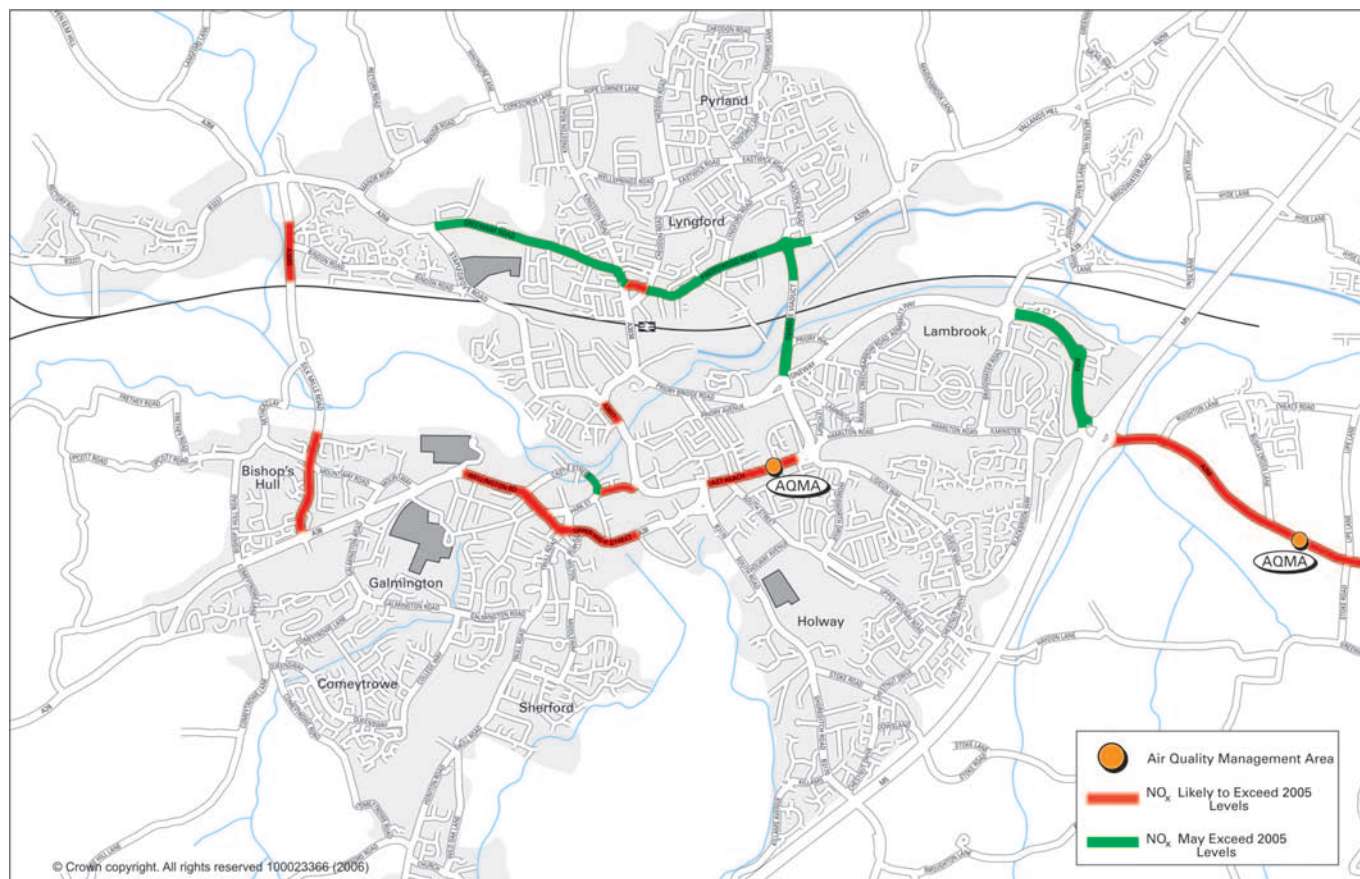


Figure 6.5 Air Quality Management Areas in Taunton

Key locations likely to exceed thresholds in the near future are:

- Sections of Silk Mills Road;
- Upper High Street near County Hall and Wellington Road near Tesco;
- Corporation Street and North Street in the Town Centre; and
- The Gyratory approaching Cheddon Road near the Rail Station.

In Yeovil, an Air Quality Management Area has been declared to cover the whole town due to Nitrogen Dioxide levels exceeding Government thresholds at Fiveways roundabout.

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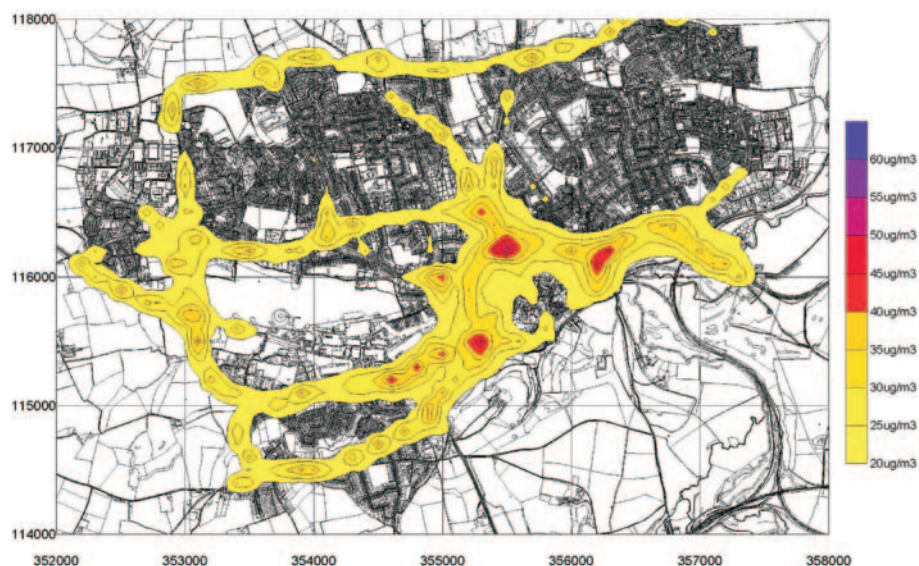


Figure 6.6 NOx Concentrations in Yeovil

Other sites such as Sherborne Road, Ilchester Road and Queensway roundabout are close to the threshold due almost entirely to transport emissions as shown below. The red areas exceed Government thresholds.

### 6.1.2 Future Pressures

#### Taunton

Taunton is one of the region's priority areas for growth and new investment. The preferred development strategy prepared by the County and District Councils in partnership with the Regional Development Agency and other partners to inform the Regional Spatial Strategy can be summarised as:

- Maximise the opportunities for high quality development in under utilised town centre sites at Tangier and Firepool, making the most of the River Tone as a setting for new activity;
- Promote a large and well planned extension to the existing urban area using land at Monkton Heathfield, managing the phasing and form of the development to provide choice and opportunity to complement the town centre regeneration;
- Use other opportunities around the edge of the town to provide more development opportunities through smaller extension to the urban area;
- Bring on stream new commercial, residential, retail and cultural opportunities, and new education and health facilities consistent with an enhanced regional role for Taunton acting in a close and complementary functional relationship with Bridgwater and Wellington;
- In the longer term, (around 2020 on current indications), to get under way with a further substantial extension; and
- To integrate high quality public transport services and cycling and walking improvements with land use changes in order to achieve and maintain high accessibility.



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From the examination of economic potential, about 12,000 additional jobs are likely to come forward in the period up to 2026. With changes in the structure of the population too, this means a requirement for an additional 13,870 dwellings in and around Taunton.

Because of strong functional inter-relationships between Taunton, Wellington and Bridgwater recent sub-regional work undertaken to inform the Regional Spatial Strategy proposes to treat them as a network of towns. It is therefore a long term objective to improve sustainable transport connections between them.

We have forecast that if nothing is done to improve the situation, traffic will increase by 30% in central Taunton between 2001 and 2011, meaning delays would be more than double (160% increase) on most routes resulting in a 73% increase in overall travel time.

### **Bridgwater**

The economy in Bridgwater is more delicate than that of Taunton and Yeovil and the town has a number of regeneration needs. The development strategy focuses on new housing development in South Bridgwater and continued extension of employment sites to the South east of the town and to the north at Express Park and Little Sydenham Farm.

We have forecast that, if nothing is done to improve the situation, traffic will increase by 30% in Bridgwater between 2002 and 2011, with overall delay increasing by 221% in the AM peak.

### **Yeovil**

Yeovil is recognised in the Regional Spatial Strategy as a sub-regional employment and retail centre with significant potential to further develop its employment base to serve a wide hinterland of smaller settlements.

We have forecast that, if nothing is done to improve the situation, traffic will increase by 20% in central Yeovil between 2002 and 2011, with overall delay increasing by 126% in the AM peak.

There will be increased travel time of about 34% overall in the AM peak, but journey times on the Yeovil circular will almost double (92% increase); The majority of forecast delays are at roundabouts, many of which are located on the dual carriageway sections of the A30 and A37.

A summary of the present delay experienced in each town and how this is forecast to increase if no action is taken is shown in the following graph which uses data on forecast delay from our traffic models. This shows that Taunton and Yeovil experience significantly greater existing delay than Bridgwater, but are forecast to increase at a lesser rate in the period to 2011. The higher base congestion levels are symptomatic of the economic development taking place in these towns in comparison with Bridgwater's lower level of new economic activity. The level of change forecast for these two centres provides an indication that they are closer to saturation point than Bridgwater.

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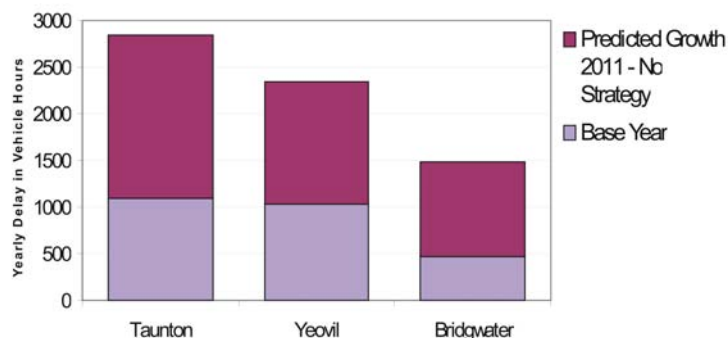


Figure 6.7 Comparative Congestion Levels (Delay in Vehicle Hours)

### 6.1.3 Summary

Key issues for the three main urban centres are summarised below together with an analysis of the implications for the strategy in each town.

Table 6.5 Taunton - Key issues and Implications

Key Issues	Implications for the Strategy
Significant planned urban extensions and town centre re-development as a regionally significant settlement	New developments should be accessible by a range of transport modes, major opportunities for town-centre re-development to open up new walking and cycling routes. Longer-term redevelopment of car-parks will enable parking to be re-located to improve traffic flow.
Many people driving across the town are making short trips	A clear emphasis on walking and cycling, backed up by high-profile marketing to take advantage of this opportunity.
Large demand for travel to Taunton from outside the town as it is a key service centre. Public transport connections are currently poor.	Park and ride already open to the west of Taunton, proposed new site to the east. Passenger transport strategy to provide services such as 'Yeovil fast bus' linking Yeovil to Taunton as well as improving core bus routes from other settlements.
Strong functional links with Bridgwater and Wellington	Improve public transport connections in conjunction with new developments in North Taunton and South Bridgwater.
Parking charges are low compared to similar towns nationally	Work with District Council to increase 'Demand Management' through increasing long-stay parking charges. Workplace charging and road pricing not considered to be proportional response to the problem.
Further scope to increase the efficiency of the network through better traffic management	Continuing our LTP1 programme of modernising and optimising traffic signals and developing new proposals in line with the traffic management act.
More people walk and cycle to work than the national average.	Promotion of walking and cycling in Taunton given specific emphasis as further scope to increase levels.
There is a variable picture for walking to school	School travel plans to identify opportunities to increase walking and cycling to school.
Air Quality Management Areas have been declared and are likely to be extended	Schemes targeted at specific air quality problems to be prioritised within the implementation programme.



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Table 6.6 Bridgwater - Key issues and Implications

Key Issues	Implications for the Strategy
Planned development in South Bridgwater	Clear strategy focus on reducing traffic impact from this development through a package of development funded measures.
Many people driving across the town are making short trips	A clear emphasis on walking and cycling, backed up by high-profile marketing to take advantage of this opportunity.
Parking charges are low compared to similar towns nationally. There is spare capacity in retail car parks, but low proportion of parking is within Local Authority control	Studies show there is little impact on traffic by increasing parking charges due to low proportion of car parks affected. District Council advised to explore gaining greater control over retail parking and not plan to increase supply of parking in the short term.
Further scope to increase the efficiency of the network through better traffic management	Identified opportunities to modernise and better co-ordinate traffic signals, provide junction improvements to include signals.
Very high walking and cycling to work compared to national average	Despite the high cycling levels, the cycle network is poor and disjointed. There is scope to further increase walking and cycling levels.
Large proportion of children walking to school	Future school organisation plans should protect this and school travel plans to identify further opportunities to promote more walking and cycling.
Park and Ride feasibility	Studies forecast very low usage for park and ride, therefore not included in the strategy.

Table 6.7 Yeovil - Key issues and Implications

Key Issues	Implications for the Strategy
Planned development to the north east and north west of the town, as a sub-regional growth centre.	Clear strategy focus on reducing traffic impact from these developments through detailed corridor studies.
Many people driving across the town are making short trips	A clear emphasis on walking and cycling, backed up by high-profile marketing to take advantage of this opportunity.
Parking charges are low compared to similar towns nationally. Some spare parking capacity but less than Bridgwater.	Work with District Council to increase 'Demand Management' through increasing long-stay parking charges. Workplace charging and road pricing not considered to be proportional response to the problem. District is undertaking a fundamental review of car parks strategy.
Further scope to increase the efficiency of the network through better traffic management. The majority of forecast delays are at roundabouts.	Identified opportunities to modernise and better co-ordinate traffic signals. A clear strand of the strategy is to provide traffic signals at existing roundabouts to reduce queues and delays at the junctions.
Very high walking to work compared Nationally and with other towns in Somerset. Cycling to work higher than national average and has grown in the last 10 years.	Despite the high levels, the cycle network is still developing. There is scope to further increase walking and cycling levels.
There is a variable picture for walking to school.	School travel plans to identify opportunities to increase walking and cycling to school.
Park and Ride feasibility.	Studies forecast that park and ride is not currently financially viable but may have a role in the longer-term. Not included in the LTP2 strategy.
Air Quality Management Area has been declared .	Schemes targeted at specific air quality problems to be prioritised within the implementation programme.



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### 6.2 CONGESTION STRATEGY

It is always important to celebrate success and learn vital lessons about what has worked well, and what has not, so that success can be replicated in the future. Our achievements in tackling congestion and pollution during LTP1 are set out below:

#### Achievements during LTP1:

- Agreed and implemented a 'congestion protocol' with Taunton Deane Borough Council;
- Long-stay parking charges increased in Taunton in line with our strategy, tied into development of Park and Ride;
- Reviewed traffic signal operations in Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater, and implemented programme of efficiency improvements;
- Delivered comprehensive 'drive down pollution' campaign providing driving tips on how to reduce emissions through leaflets & website advertised on the backs of buses;
- Annual cycling roadshows in Taunton, Bridgwater and Yeovil to encourage people to try cycling;
- Delivery, on-time, of the first two complete major transport schemes in the region: Bridgwater Northern Distributor Road and North-West Taunton Package (including a new bridge and park & ride services) to tackle congestion in those towns;
- Integrating Taunton park and ride with Musgrove Park Hospital and Somerset College of Arts and Technology, two major health and learning destinations for Somerset;
- Increased patronage on our wheelchair accessible Quality Bus Partnership Routes, (Taunton-Burnham 2% increase, Taunton-Wellington 9.5% increase and Yeovil-Bath 17.3% increase, all from 2003/04 base);
- Implementing bus priority via bus gates in Taunton and Bridgwater;
- Freight management resulting in more HGVs using the A303 as a more suitable route into Yeovil through our Freight Quality Partnership;
- Annual Bike2work and Ride 'n' stride days with major employers in the County to encourage cycling and walking;
- Walking and cycling to work targets exceeded at 24% in 2004/05;
- Delivery of workplace travel plans exceeded targets in 2004/05;
- 'Repair and ride' scheme with employers which has serviced over 2000 bikes to date;
- Our Taunton cycle route leaflet has been picked up by over 21000 Taunton residents and interactive cycle route mapping is available on our travel2work website;
- An additional 211,000 leaflets promoting sustainable transport have been picked up by residents throughout Somerset;
- Internet based Somerset Carshare Scheme with interactive trip-matching available to all, now has over 500 registered members;
- 81 privately funded developments (about 44% of the total new developments) in 2004/05 delivered new of improved highway infrastructure that meets LTP objectives;
- Delivery of Wells city centre traffic management scheme following significant investment prior to LTP1 in the Wells Relief Road. This was short-listed for the Local Government New Street Design Awards (pedestrian environment category) in May 2005.



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Having assessed our congestion and pollution evidence base, the next few sections describe the measures we will use to tackle the problems and issues we have identified. The proposals are based on the identification of detailed congestion problems through extensive traffic modelling.

We have selected the most appropriate strategy for each town by following a 'sequential approach' which considered a number of possible solutions starting with lower cost measures through to major transport infrastructure improvements until we identified a complete package. This 'value for money' approach has ensured that we make best use of our existing infrastructure before major new schemes are proposed. Our traffic manager will play a key role in co-ordinating activity to tackle congestion in Somerset and this role is discussed in detail in the ANNEX which contains our detailed response to the Traffic Management Act.

The broad policy measures considered are as follows:

1. Improvements to public transport services and information;
2. 'Smarter choices' measures such as travel planning, car share schemes backed up by hard-hitting marketing and publicity campaigns;
3. Management and regulation of the highway network through on-street parking controls, management of highway and utility works, asset management and road space re-allocation to public transport, walking and cycling;
4. Demand management through parking controls and charges;
5. Low cost highway infrastructure measures based on improvements to capacity of junctions and/or priority for non-car modes;
6. New infrastructure for public transport, walking and cycling including widening the highway for new bus lanes, off-road walking/cycling routes and park & ride sites; and finally
7. New highway infrastructure that can be used by all vehicle types.

The rest of the chapter will now explore these policy measures further, before setting out the specific mix of proposals that have been identified for Taunton, Bridgwater and Yeovil, however it should be noted that many of the measures listed here, particularly the first three, are applied throughout the County and are not solely confined to implementation in the three main towns.

### 6.2.1 Improvements to Public Transport Services and Information

The adopted Passenger Transport Strategy (2005) recommended a 'Passenger Transport Network Hierarchy' (Bus Strategy), a 'tiered' approach to service classification and provision. The Council is committed to concentrating financial support on the operation of a fixed core bus network, enabling operators to also increase investment in these quality corridors (QBP's), in turn leading to increased patronage and commercially viable routes.

We have identified the following three tiers:

- **County:** 'Fastlink' Quality Bus Partnerships serving main town centres – Taunton and Yeovil;
- **Sub-County:** Quality Bus Partnerships serving routes between town centres such as Frome, Wells and Wincanton; and
- **Rural:** SLINKY/taxi bus/community/voluntary services linking deep rural areas and villages with the sub-county bus network.



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The sub-county and county services have a major role in tackling congestion in the main urban areas, through mode shift as the main town centres are typical destinations for the target users of these services. Whilst these services will also help improve accessibility it is the rural tier being served by our demand responsive transport services and voluntary/ community transport which will improve accessibility and thus this tier is outlined in Chapter 6 'Improving Accessibility'.

### 6.2.2 County: 'Limited Stop' Quality Bus Corridors/Partnerships

This level of provision within the County identifies 'Limited Stop' Quality Bus Partnerships. These will have high quality bus stop infrastructure, the latest technology such as real time information and high quality low-floor vehicles that are accessible for wheelchair users and operate at no less than hourly frequencies for the majority of the day, six days per week.

### 6.2.3 Sub-County: Quality Bus Partnerships

At a sub county level Quality Bus Partnerships will be implemented in phases according to the previous figure, along key corridors between main town centres based around the backbone of the commercial network. This will provide a network of Quality Bus Corridors connecting areas including Chard, Wincanton, Frome and Wells.

The QBP's will include new wheelchair accessible low floor vehicles and new infrastructure along the route. At the focal points, important interchanges will need to be established. Logically these focal points will be 'hubs' with the strategic network forming 'spokes'. Each 'hub' will provide good quality waiting facilities such as a waiting room, toilets and some kind of refreshment kiosk.

The following figure illustrates the location and timescales for implementing the county and sub-county tier services across the county. This will continue the investment, started in LTP1, on core bus routes linking settlements across the county, making bus services a more viable alternative to help tackle congestion in the destination settlements.

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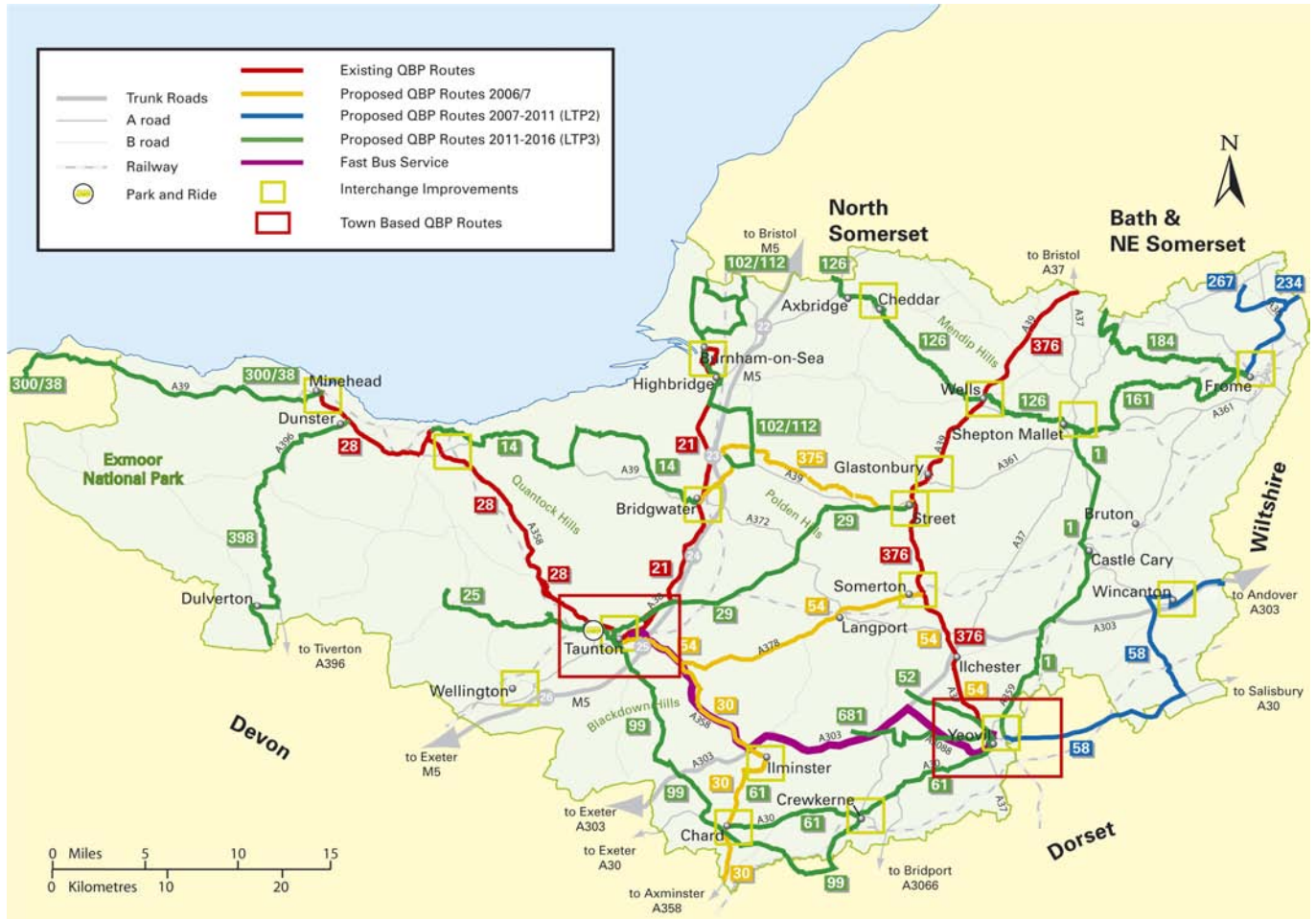


Figure 6.8 Quality Bus Partnership Network

The 'Passenger Transport Network Hierarchy' (Bus Strategy) will be delivered through a partnership including bus operators, IPTU, community/voluntary transport providers and taxi operators.

### 6.2.4 Town Centre Proposals

In addition to the illustrated QBP's in Figure 6.8 we will also invest in a town-wide quality bus partnership for Taunton and undertake other town centre specific passenger transport improvements as outlined in the three town strategies and summarised below. Not all of these proposals will be deliverable during LTP2 and we will prioritise delivery of the schemes that best deliver our targets and value for money within our overall funding approval.

#### Taunton Strategy

- Cambria Farm Park & Ride;
- Improved bus interchange;
- Improved passenger information;
- Bus priority measures as part of the North West Taunton Transport Package - Silk Mills, Wellington Rd, Mountway Rd, East Reach, Station Rd/Priory Rd;
- New bus services for Firepool development and the potential for north-south cross town services;



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- Implementation of real-time Information; and
- Improved bus/rail integration.

### Yeovil Strategy

- Bus station improvements;
- Bus priority measures A30 Sherbourne Rd;
- Improved public transport provision - infrastructure (bus stops and interchanges) and vehicles (low floor and higher quality);
- Improved passenger information;
- Implementation of real-time information on key corridors; and
- Improved bus/rail integration at both Yeovil Junction and Pen Mill stations.

### Bridgwater Strategy

- Bus station upgrade;
- Improved passenger information;
- Bus priority measures (To be reviewed for LTP3 programme) ;
- Improved public transport provision - infrastructure (bus stops and interchanges) and vehicles (low floor and higher quality);
- Improved service frequencies on route 21 related to new development at South Bridgwater;
- Implementation of real-time Information; and
- Improved bus/rail integration.

### 6.2.5 'Smarter Choices' Measures

In developing our plans for LTP2 we have identified the increasing importance of 'smarter choices' initiatives such as travel plans and travel awareness campaigns in encouraging people to use alternative means of transport than the car where possible. 'Smarter Choices - Changing the Way we Travel', (DfT 2004), concludes that these 'soft' measures offer good value for money, and our own traffic modelling has shown that we will not be able to make a real difference to congestion in our towns without significantly increased investment in these type of initiatives.

#### Travel Planning

Travel Planning in the Somerset area is still in the early stages of development, with 52 employers currently at different stages of implementing their respective travel plans. Progress to date includes:

- Launching the Somerset Carshare Scheme which is now available to over 50,000 employees and growing;
- Producing a number of information leaflets on bus travel, car sharing, cycling and walking;
- Developing an extensive website providing advice and guidance including templates that can be downloaded;
- Producing an employers guide to developing travel plans which has been sent out to over 350 employers; and
- Reviewing public transport provision with local operators to ensure its compatibility with travel plan initiatives is optimised.

Over the LTP2 period an extended travel planning team is proposed to take forward and implement the following as part of the overall congestion strategy:



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- Leading by example with the County's own travel plan;
- Encouraging the County's District Councils to lead by example to facilitate the development control process;
- Review, monitor and enforce the expanding number of development control related travel plans;
- Take forward and optimise schemes such as the Somerset Car Share Scheme and Travel Plan Networks; and
- Increase and promote the take up of voluntary Travel Plans.

**Travel to School Initiative:** Our School Travel Plan Team is funded through the joint DfT / DfES Traveling To School Initiative (TTSI). The principal aim of the TTSI is to achieve modal shift away from car use for the journey to and from school. This is to be achieved through the production of School Travel Plans and subsequent implementation of the measures identified within the Plans. The TTSI has set a target of all schools having a Travel Plan in place by 2010. This accords with the Healthy Schools Initiative requirement that schools have a Travel Plan.

Somerset has a large number of schools (Approx 320 schools in total, 284 LEA schools, of which 30 are secondary schools - over 70,000 LEA pupils). As with any large rural County we see a range of school types, location and travel patterns. Looking from the perspective of achieving governments' desire to achieve modal shift attention has to be placed on location, availability and parents' method of selection of schools and travel mode opportunities. Shifting demographics and the rise of an aspirational/choice based society means that many of the schools are now drawing their pupils not just from their immediate locality but also from significant distances. We currently stand at a position where 45% of our Primary school pupils are not attending their nearest school - children are literally being driven past their nearest school (generally within walking distance) to one more distant. This phenomenon is shown in starkest relief at our rural primary schools surrounding our main settlements the historic nature of the school and highway infrastructure mean that in many cases those pupils living close enough to their schools to be able to walk are placed in danger from having to share carriageways with motorised traffic including the vehicles of parents driving their children from further away.

We recognise that a balance has to be struck with other policy drivers, community needs and public ability or willingness to change. If people and their government do wish to achieve significant modal shift for the journey to school they need to consider the issue of ensuring that schools are centred within appropriate residential or settlement areas.

Somerset, recognising the potential pitfalls in some early assumptions made regarding the journey to and from school, has taken an evidence led approach to the delivery of Travel Plans and associated work to achieve modal shift. Through the collection of a mappable annual Mode of Travel dataset for the majority of pupils in LEA education we have been able to accurately identify and measure actual travel patterns, for example the threshold distances where walking gives way to car trips. This work gives us a realistic forward view both for purposes of accurate target setting but also to assess the implications of changes in demography and policy (local and national, transport and education).

As this work passes in to the second LTP cycle the project is moving to a phase of consolidation to ensure the long-term success of this programme.

In addition to working to deliver the headline target of Travel Plans we are:

- Actively exploring new linkages and ways of working and then embedding these within Schools & Council structure and processes to ensure longevity e.g when a school site improvement is identified it is entered onto the school's asset management plan; when highway improvements are required these will be assessed



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through the LTP capital programme implementation process and maintained through the transport asset management plan;

- Working to achieve closer Integration with core business of Children's Services;
- Capitalising on beneficial links to parallel promotions - for example for schools to achieve Healthy Schools they must now have an approved Travel Plan in place;
- Another key area of work for this LTP round will be consolidation of the work done so far on the use of school and public transport for the journey to and from school. In particular we need to address:
  - Rising transport costs;
  - The implications of the forthcoming Schools White paper and other policy changes;
  - New ideas such as Yellow Buses; and
  - The persistent lack of popularity of the 'school bus' amongst young people and parents.

Through working with the Integrated Passenger Transport Unit (IPTU) and Children's Services and school communities we hope to inform a positive culture and establish a realistic route forward to this important mode of travel to school. We aim to strengthen and establish robust processes to deliver physical regeneration where required through the relevant school sites and highway asset management plans in support of soft measures and changing habits to achieve safe, sustainable modal shift for journeys to schools.

The Travel to School Initiative also plays a key role in delivering improved access to schools and is therefore also referred to in our accessibility strategy.

### **Car Share**

The internet based 'Somerset Car Share Scheme' was launched in June 2002 for businesses and in 2004 open to all members of the public. It now has 420 registered members. Marketing, promotion and encouragement of car sharing has been crucial to the success of the scheme with the development of a comprehensive marketing campaign both internally to existing members and externally to the public as a whole. This will be continued and developed throughout the LTP2 period.

### **Travel Awareness and Marketing**

Currently, a marketing campaign exists across Somerset using both leaflets and posters to promote alternative modes of transport to the car including public transport, cycling and walking. This marketing campaign will be strengthened in LTP2 with the development of a strategic Travel Awareness brand. Implementation of travel awareness initiatives will include:

- Advertising through local media including press releases;
- Website development including up to date campaigns and promotional events;
- Joint campaigns with business communities encouraging Travel Plans;
- Review of publicity and information literature;
- Road signs on strategic routes into Taunton, Yeovil and Bridgwater promoting car sharing;
- Publication and distribution of cycle maps in key towns across the County;
- Promotional events such as road shows;
- Quarterly newsletters, which draw together and promotes all the local activities at both County and District level; and
- Increased co-ordination with NHS health improvement programmes to promote walking and cycling which the health service have identified as the primary source of physical activity for many people.



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### Walking and Cycling Surveys and Mobility Audits

A key area for development in LTP2 is to identify and deliver smaller scale changes to our town centre networks to improve the environment for people walking and cycling or using wheelchairs. Evidence from other areas shows that a number of minor barriers can combine to create an environment that discourages people from trying to walk or cycle, and can prevent wheelchair users from travelling freely around our towns.

During LTP1 a successful part of our programme was to provide networks of dropped kerbs across all our towns in consultation with wheelchair users, however we have identified the need to widen the scope of this type of activity taking into account the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

The first phase of this work was in February 2006 with a series of cyclist surveys in Taunton asking people to identify minor changes such as signing, lining or amendments to one-way streets that could be implemented early in the LTP2 programme. A town centre mobility audit was also carried out at the same time to identify potential barriers for pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties.

We will implement a phased programme of cycle and pedestrian improvements in our main urban areas over the LTP2 period, starting in Taunton, including:

- High priority larger schemes to expand the town cycle network;
- Lower-cost 'on-street' improvements identified through user surveys and audits;
- Marketing and awareness activity to promote use of the new cycling opportunities as they are provided; and
- Improvements required as part of new development proposals.

This approach will be rolled out to our other major towns during the course of LTP2, as well as the priority market towns discussed in the Accessibility chapter.

Our cycling strategy sets out our detailed hierarchical approach to identifying the most appropriate cycle facility to implement according to the nature of the location as well as undertaking simplified cycle audit procedures as schemes progress.

### Facilities for Two-wheeled Motor-Vehicles

In rural areas a key opportunity for encouraging a shift from travel by car lies with two-wheeled motor-vehicles (2WMMVs) such as motorcycles, which can travel longer journey distances that may deter people from walking or cycling. Two-wheeled motor-vehicles are more fuel efficient than cars and take up less roadspace therefore causing less congestion, they take up less parking space and are often cheaper to buy than cars which is an asset for younger people.

We therefore encourage use of 2WMMVs and are working in conjunction with the British Motorcycle Federation to establish better parking facilities in our towns for this form of transport. Chapter 4 examines the safety issues related to use of 2WMMVs.

### 6.2.6 Management and Regulation of the Highway Network

Our transport studies have shown that effective traffic management will be essential if we are to tackle congestion as our towns develop and grow. The maps below show areas of forecast congestion in each town in 2011 assuming that new housing and other developments have been built and our planned road improvements are in place over the course of LTP2. These maps only show areas where there will be stationary traffic and do not include congested areas of very slow moving traffic which will be more widespread on the network.

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It is clear that there will still be significant areas of congestion in each town and effective traffic management will therefore be a vital tool to tackle these problems, along with walking, cycling and public transport improvements and promotional activity. Our strategy is to tackle these problems through more effective traffic management.

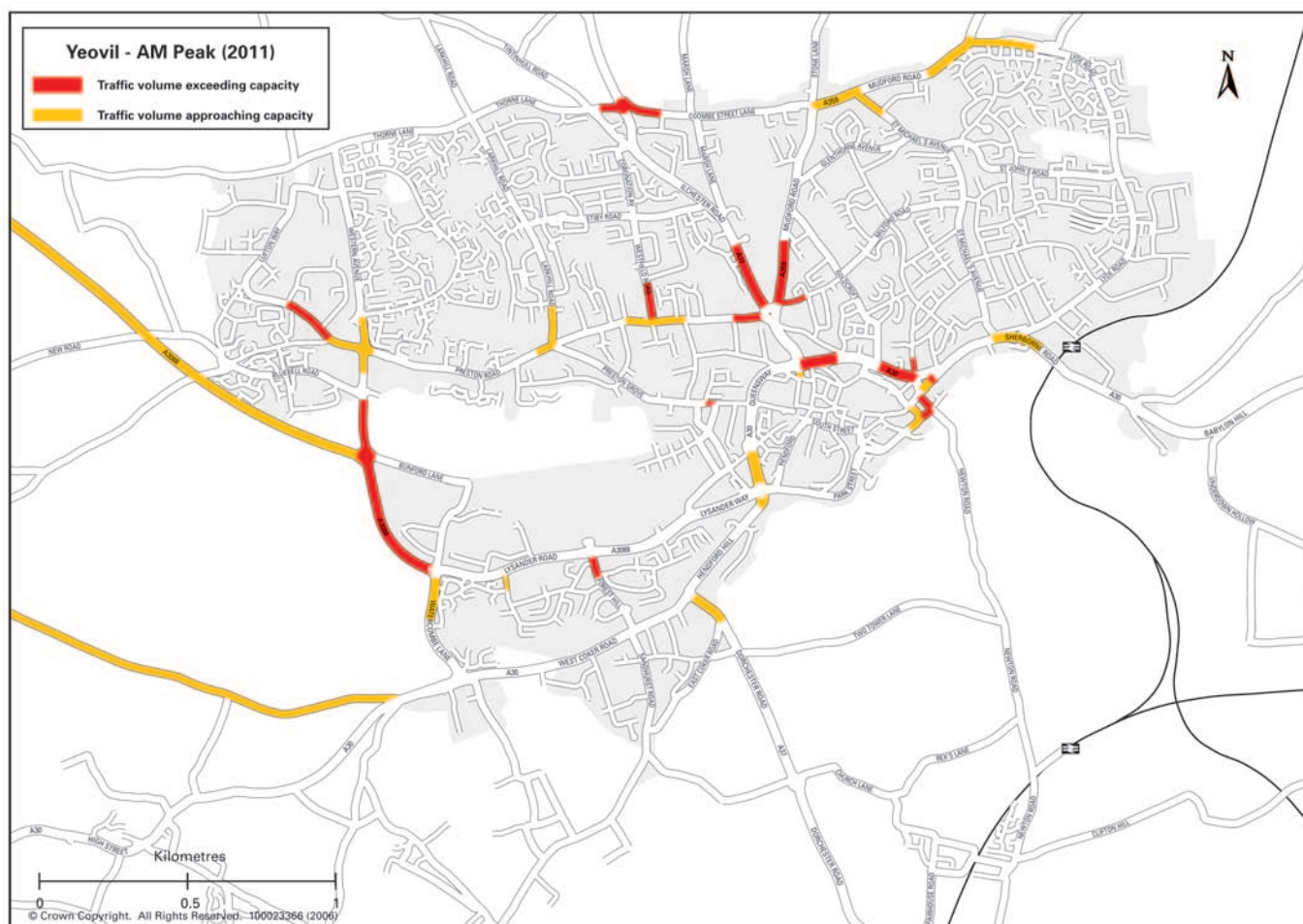


Figure 6.9 Forecast Congestion Hot-spots, AM Peak 2011, in Yeovil

The preceding map shows that key areas of forecast congestion remaining in Yeovil, following implementation of required infrastructure improvements, are likely to be:

- A3088 western approach to Yeovil and junction with Watercombe lane;
- Approaches to Fiveways roundabout and the Hospital roundabout;
- Approaches to Reckleford Gyrotory particularly from the west and south;
- Junctions on Preston Road the western artery into Yeovil;
- Junction of Thorne Lane and Combe Street Lane on the northern fringe of the town.

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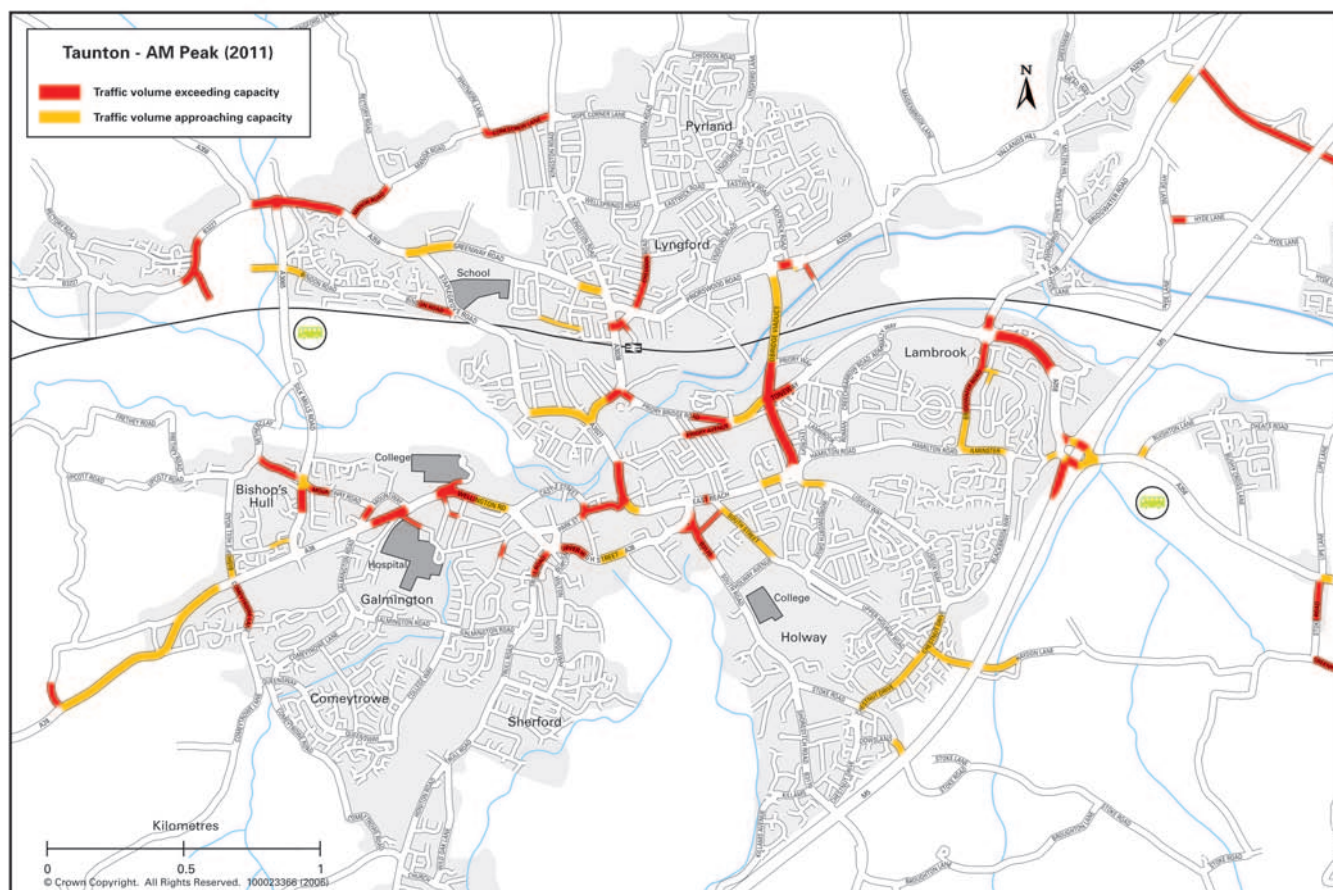


Figure 6.10 Forecast Congestion Hot-spots, AM Peak 2011, in Taunton

The preceding map shows that key areas of forecast congestion remaining in Taunton, following implementation of required infrastructure improvements, are likely to be:

- Approaches to junctions on Toneway and Priory Bridge Road corridor, the main artery into Taunton from the M5 and A358;
- Approaches to the town centre, North Street, from the north and south of town;
- Junctions on the A38 which links the east and west of Taunton via the southern edge of the town centre, particularly the junction with South Road, Upper High Street, and Wellington Road outside Somerset College of Arts and Technology and the Hospital;
- Approaches to junctions on Silk Mills Road; and
- Approaches to the gyratory to the north of the Rail Station.

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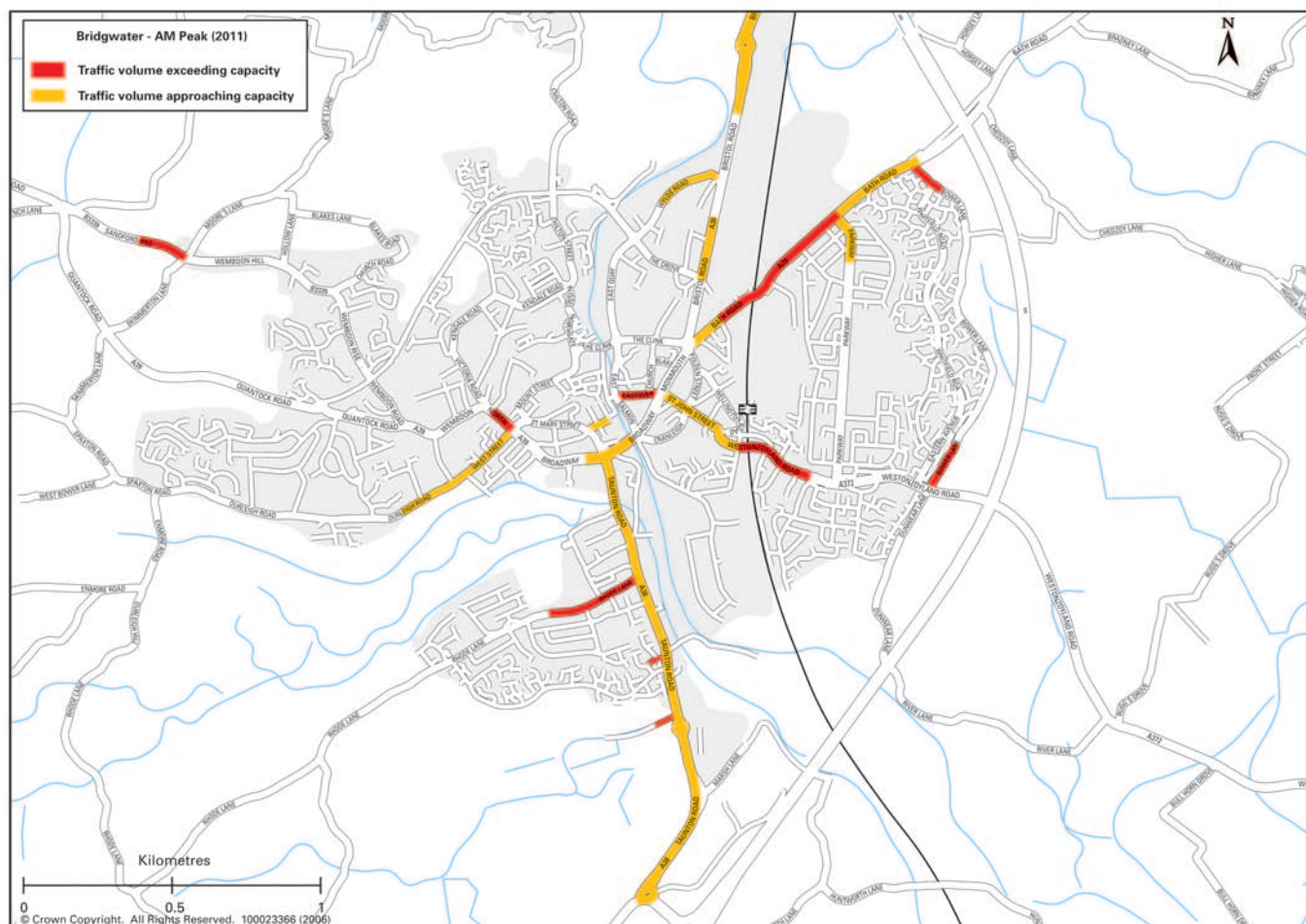


Figure 6.11 Forecast Congestion Hot-spots, AM Peak 2011, in Bridgwater

The preceding map shows that key areas of forecast congestion remaining in Bridgwater, following implementation of required infrastructure improvements, are likely to be:

- Approaches to junctions on Taunton Road the main artery into Bridgwater from the south;
- Approaches to the Cross Rifles roundabout which is where the A38 Bristol Road and A39 Bath Road meet;
- Approaches to junctions with Broadway which is the main east/west route across Bridgwater to the south of the town centre.

### The Traffic Management Act

The Traffic Management Act gives us new powers and duties to tackle these problems, and we are preparing a Network Management Plan that sets out the way in which we will discharge these. The overall aim is to keep traffic moving, which covers all highway users along the highway network including that of our neighbours.

Our detailed response to the Traffic Management Act is set out in an Annex at the end of the LTP, but in summary, we have several threads of work to ensure we meet the requirements of the Act:



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- We have reviewed the recommendations in the Government's Network Management Duty Guidance (November 2004), and recent guidance from Halcrow about how this issue should be presented in LTP's, and identified what we are currently doing, what gaps there are and have made proposals for action;
- We have identified several locations within Somerset where road traffic flows are not running as efficiently as we would like and have referred to these as congestion. Although we do not have congestion to the scale of some urban authorities we are not being complacent. We aim to reduce forecast delays to the public;
- Our Transport Asset Management Plan is currently being drafted, and it will take account of how to manage the physical assets delivered through our LTP. We have also developed internal processes to ensure we actively consider maintenance during design of new assets such as carriageways, drainage systems and signs. As an example, this means that on main roads, we are trying to firstly 'design-out' maintenance where this would delay traffic, or secondly, create hard standings off the highway so that maintenance will not delay traffic. This is being written into the Asset Management Plan so that whenever an asset is created, these 'rules' are followed; and
- We also recognise that the Traffic Manager must be able to discharge their duty autonomously and impartially. Our traffic manager is has an influential position in our staffing structure at the 3rd tier position of Group Manager for Traffic Management.

Our initial Network Management Plan will be based upon the strategy elements set out below. These are predominately aimed at vehicular traffic, but set within the wider context of this LTP to promote use of travel alternatives.

- **Consolidation:** Record current level of work and knowledge that is available and use this data to inform the development of the other strategies;
- **Changing Behaviour:** Initiatives, for example, to encourage people to use alternative forms of transport where possible, or to drive in a way which reduces the impact on local air quality;
- **Communication:** Set out the information the Traffic Manager will require, how this information will be collated, analysed and managed and how it will disseminated to users;
- **Service Levels:** Discuss and specify the levels of service and work types that the public can expect. It will include 'availability' standards, urban traffic control and information systems and decriminalised parking;
- **Making the best use of technology:** Fundamental review of our traffic control systems and the way they operate, including modernisation to make use of technology. This work will clearly link with our existing urban strategies and some of the initial work is included within the Taunton, Bridgwater and Yeovil LTP programmes;
- **Decriminalised Parking Enforcement:** Develop a Decriminalised Parking Enforcement regime. We see this as an important part of managing traffic in urban areas and this work will be aligned to our urban strategies;

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- **Understanding Traffic Flows:** Detail the surveys and analysis required to provide comprehensive traffic management information so that we can be prepared for changes in traffic flows in the future through analysis of planning and modelling; and
- **Traffic Management Implementation:** Co-ordinate works programmes and other initiatives including that of statutory undertakers.

As the Plan is designed to have long term value, we fully expect it to evolve and become a live document and as such, it will contain an 'improvement action plan'.

We already have an urban traffic control system for Taunton, Bridgwater, Wells and Yeovil, based in Taunton. Some signal controlled junctions are covered by SCOOT optimisation technology and there are some traffic cameras in place. The system does not link to other systems, and part of it is old and of limited functionality.

A key outcome of our transport strategy reviews for our three main towns was to identify opportunities to optimise our existing traffic control systems and we have already implemented schemes arising from this review in Taunton during LTP1. The graph below shows an example where improvements in junction capacity were achieved.

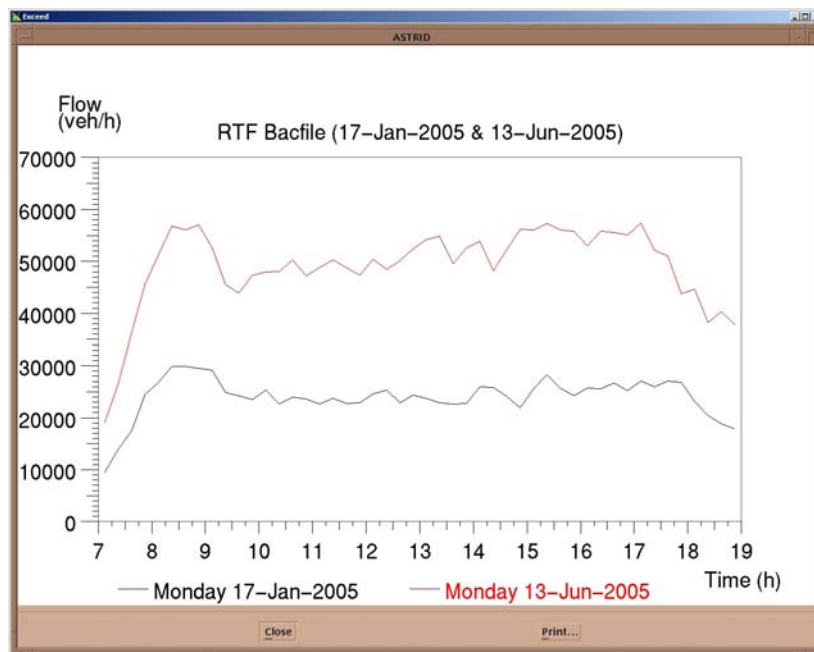


Figure 6.12 Improved Traffic Flow in East Reach Scoot Region, Taunton

Further improvements will be put in place as part of our LTP2 programme for all three towns shown in the next section. We also intend to develop a Traffic Control Centre. This will build on our existing systems using advanced information technology to improve our ability to manage existing and future traffic, and enhance functionality to the benefit of all traffic.



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### Bus Punctuality Partnerships

Delay to bus services and the resulting damage to punctuality leading to a loss of confidence in bus operation is often quoted as one of the key reasons bus services are not more attractive to potential users. We recognise that Bus Punctuality Partnerships (BPPs) are vital in developing a means of measuring success of traffic management changes on the bus network. We propose to develop BPPs with all of our major commercial and significant bus operators with the aim of developing a joint approach to measuring delay and punctuality. This will aid the development of schemes to counter delays to services and/or make suitable changes to service running times.

### 6.2.7 Demand Management

A major tool in managing traffic demand is the location, availability and control of car parking. Parking availability in our larger town centres and other settlements such as tourist locations have an important influence on travel behaviour.

We have prepared a detailed countywide parking strategy ([www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk) under 'Transport and Streets') which recommends different levels of 'demand management' according to the nature of the settlement. We recommend more severe demand management in Taunton for instance, as there is significant congestion but good scope for people to walk, cycle and use public transport. A less severe approach is proposed for Bridgwater which has less congestion and a more fragile economy. The tourism needs of many of our smaller towns and villages are taken into account in the strategy.

We have considered the scope for workplace charging and road pricing initiatives. At present, in view of the lack of alternative means of transport available, and a highly car-dependent population, it is considered that the introduction of road pricing is not an appropriate or proportional response to our problems. The County Council as a large employer, particularly in Taunton recognises the need to set an example in reducing the number of people travelling to work by car and we are reviewing our workplace travel plan and parking strategy, considering introducing workplace charging mechanisms long with improved facilities for encouraging more sustainable means of travel.

Key parking recommendations:

#### Taunton

- An increase in long-stay parking charges;
- Re-allocation of long-stay spaces to short-stay; and
- Provision of long-stay at Park & Ride sites.

#### Yeovil

- An increase in long-stay parking charges; and
- Town centre parking is rationalised.

#### Bridgwater

- Resist the introduction of new town centre parking; and
- District Council work with other car park operators to introduce parking charges where appropriate.



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### Other Centres

For other centres flexibility will be required in the setting of parking charges, to reflect local needs. However, charges should be designed to avoid unhealthy competition and it is recommended that parking charges are co-ordinated between adjacent authorities on an annual basis. Local authorities should also consider the 'ring-fencing' of revenues received through off-street parking charges to support local transport improvements.

### Interchange with Public Transport and Park & Ride

There is a role for high quality parking at public transport interchanges, particularly at rail stations, to support the integration of the transport network. We also propose extending Park & Ride provision for Taunton, although feasibility studies have indicated that Park & Ride is not currently viable in Yeovil or Bridgwater. There may be scope for successful operation of a scheme in Yeovil in the future and this will need to be reviewed. There could be scope for some local Park & Ride schemes in the Exmoor National Park by developing interchanges in particular centres to reduce traffic flows in sensitive areas.

### Parking Standards

We have set out maximum parking standards for new development within the parking strategy and have included a framework to enable the standards to be reduced according to the location and accessibility of the proposed development. This is discussed further in Chapter 8 on sustainable communities, which sets out our transport requirements of new development, and is included in detail in our countywide parking strategy document which can be downloaded from [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk) under 'Transport and Streets'.

## 6.3 TAUNTON INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS

### Involvement in developing the Taunton Transport Strategy:

- Project board including key stakeholders such as the Highways Agency;
- February 2004: Six workshops with stakeholders and interest groups;
- March 2004: Public consultation including exhibitions, leaflet, questionnaire and website;
- Over 1600 responses from our citizens panel and the public;
- Congestion and pollution raised as a key issue by most stakeholders;
- Dissatisfaction with bus services raised as a key issue;
- Broad support for the proposed measures;
- Park and Ride and bus links with new development supported;
- Northern Inner Distributor Road and variety of junction improvements supported;
- East Reach clearway;
- Pedestrian and cycle and awareness raising improvements supported;
- Increases in long-stay parking charges not supported;
- Half of all respondents would be willing to try travelling into Taunton by an alternative means of transport to their car.

There was a clear difference of opinion on town centre redevelopment proposals in the Taunton Vision and the proposed Inner Relief Road so we commissioned further work with the District Council and the RDA to develop a 'Third Way' proposal to accommodate both aspirations. A further consultation on the 'Third Way' was held in October 2004:



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- 119 questionnaires returned;
- 69% in favour of the third way concept and 23% against;
- 67% wanted off-peak pedestrianisation of the town centre along North-Street.

The proposals to tackle congestion in Taunton form part of an integrated strategy for the town that provides some immediate improvements within the context of the longer-term Taunton Vision redevelopment proposals.

We have entered into a **congestion protocol** with Taunton Deane Borough Council to address a number of congestion and traffic related issues. The proposals set out in this LTP form part of this wider protocol agreement.

We have already made significant progress in delivering an action plan which was agreed in 2003. The key elements of the protocol comprise:

- A partnership agreement with Taunton Deane Borough Council dedicated to tackling traffic congestion;
- To optimise the capacity of the local transport system;
- To fully assess and manage the impact of future development proposals through the planning process;
- To manage and deliver operational services to minimise congestion;
- To provide genuine alternatives to the private car, particularly for short distance trips and promote sensible travel choices;
- A joint commitment to infrastructure development and parking policy (i.e. parking charges and balance between short and long-stay provision); and
- The long-term management and development of a transport system capable of supporting the future aspirations for the town.

The following plan shows our infrastructure proposals for tackling congestion in Taunton. This forms our medium-term strategy related to the extent of new development shown on the plan. Our indicative LTP funding approvals for 2006-2011 are not sufficient to provide all of the schemes shown, so we have prioritised each scheme in terms of its contribution to delivering our LTP2 targets, as discussed in Chapter 12.

This strategy will therefore extend beyond the LTP2 period. We will bring more schemes forward if we are successful in securing additional LTP performance funding, and through developer funding contributions.

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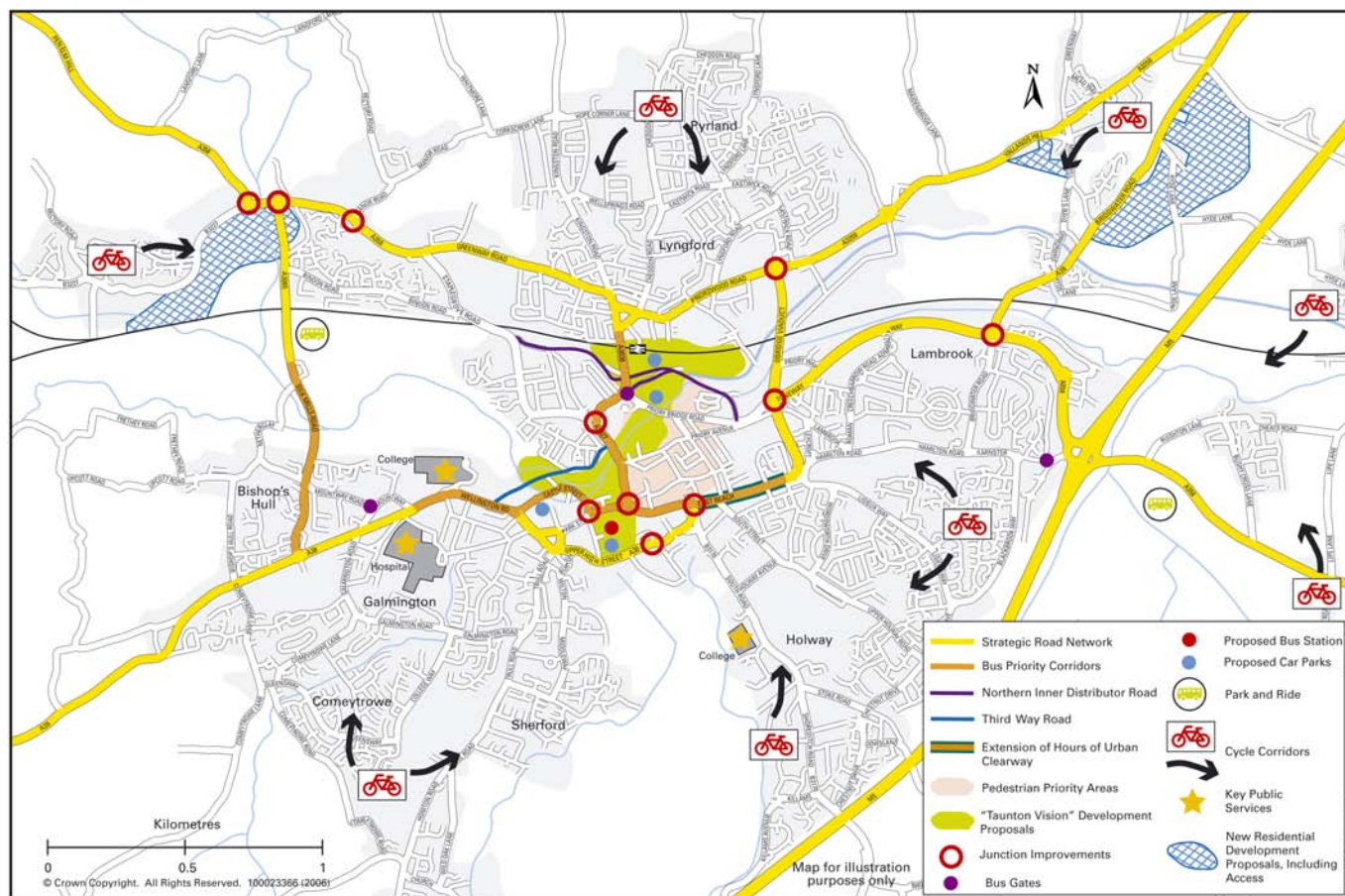


Figure 6.13 Taunton Infrastructure Proposals

### 6.3.1 Major Transport Schemes

We have bid for two major transport schemes in Taunton, discussed in detail in Chapter 9. These are required to realise the full economic potential of Taunton as a strategically significant centre in the region and would enable us to make a significant contribution towards our goal of tackling congestion, particularly in the retail heart of the town:

- The Third Way Road which aims to complement the town centre proposals by removing traffic and congestion from the existing retail core and providing good access into the proposed economic development area of Tangier;
- The Northern Inner Distributor Road which aims to alleviate traffic along A358 Greenway Road and to provide an alternative east-west route into the proposed economic development area of Firepool;



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### 6.3.2 Air Quality in Taunton

Following the designation of Henlade and East Reach as Air Quality Management Areas, Taunton Deane Borough Council and stakeholders have developed an Air Quality Action Plan included as Appendix 2 to this LTP, containing a list of prioritised options to tackle the pollution problems.

It is clear that no one specific option or measure will provide the solution to improving air quality in either of the two AQMAs. In Henlade the long-term solution lies mainly in the dualling of the A358 as a strategic link between the M5 motorway and the A303 strategic freight route, which would bypass the Air Quality Management Area. Progress with this scheme is discussed in Chapter 8 on strategic routes.

For East Reach various proposals are proposed including an increase in bus and cycle use, Park and Ride and improvements to the overall road network will all make a difference, but crucially improving the efficiency of the traffic signal coordination in that area is likely to have the biggest impact.

These priorities will be reflected in the LTP implementation programme.

## 6.4 BRIDGWATER INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS

### Involvement in developing the Bridgwater Transport Strategy:

- Project Board including key stakeholders;
- October 2004: Public consultation including exhibition, website, leaflets and questionnaires;
- Media campaign publishing transport facts and figures running over several weeks in the local paper;
- Broad support for the strategy;
- Road improvements such as Colley Lane Southern Access Road and the Legger Link were most popular;
- Parking options for reducing parking availability and increasing charges were not supported;
- Parking options for residents parking and changing balance of long and short stay parking to favour shoppers were supported;
- Quality Bus Partnership and Cycle and pedestrian improvements were supported;
- Signalisation of key congested junctions and better co-ordination of traffic lights were supported;
- Proposal for a bus lane on Taunton Road had minimal support with the Town and District Council views reflecting public concerns.

The following plan shows our infrastructure proposals for tackling congestion in Bridgwater. This forms our medium-term strategy related to the extent of new development shown on the plan. Our indicative LTP funding approvals for 2006-2011 are not sufficient to provide all of the schemes shown, so we have prioritised each scheme in terms of its contribution to delivering our LTP2 targets, as discussed in Chapter 12.

This strategy will therefore extend beyond the LTP2 period. We will bring more schemes forward if we are successful in securing additional LTP performance funding, and through developer funding contributions.

## CONGESTION &amp; AIR POLLUTION 6

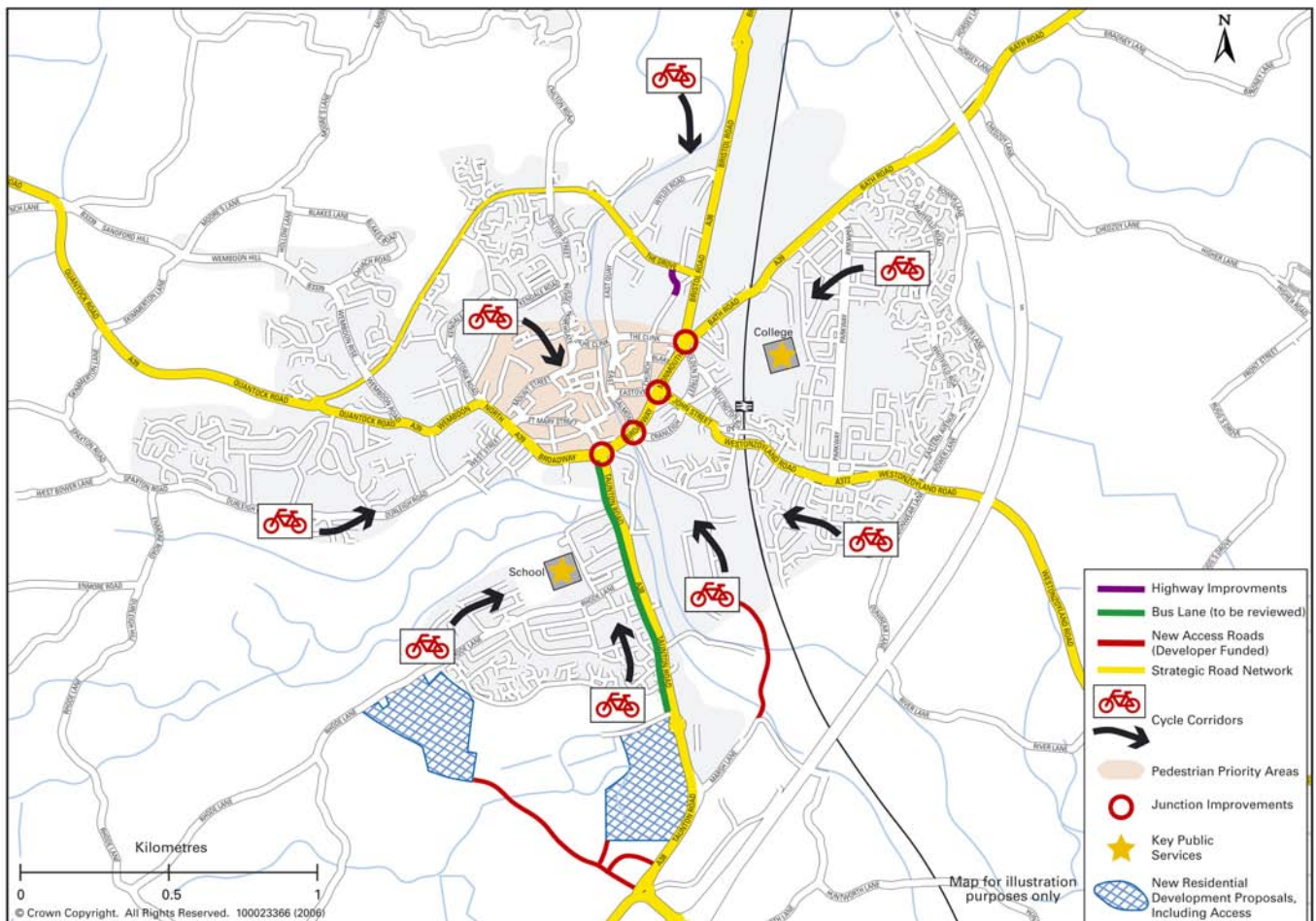


Figure 6.14 Bridgewater Infrastructure Proposals

## 6.5 YEOVIL INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSALS

### Involvement in developing the Yeovil Transport Strategy:

March 2002: Yeovil Community Review of Transport (YCRT) provided the consultation base for the Yeovil Transport Strategy;

- Independent panel meetings (open to the public) with representatives from education, health, retail, business, transport operators, Town Council and District Council;
- Theatre workshop on safety and sustainable travel ( Car Story) with local schools;
- Newsletter and questionnaire (328 responses), with questionnaire responses showing changes that people would be prepared to make to their travel behaviour;
- Interactive exhibition with over 2000 visitors and over 1400 participating in a priorities exercise;
- Community video and video 'vox pops';
- Travel diaries undertaken by people volunteering to try alternative forms of travel to their cars;
- Ongoing media campaign in the local paper.



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The Community review panel made 46 recommendations to inform the development of the Yeovil Transport Strategy covering:

- Walking & cycling;
- Safety & health;
- Parking;
- Public and Community transport;
- Travel plans and travel information;
- Road crossings and junction improvements; and
- The future development of Yeovil and major road schemes.

This community view was considered alongside the technical evidence to prepare the Yeovil Transport Strategy and there was a follow up consultation on the strategy in October 2004:

- Project board with key stakeholders;
- Exhibition attended by 500 people;
- Support for Public Transport, Walking and Cycling proposals;
- Support for highway network and junction improvements and traffic signals;
- No clear view on proposals for signalling major roundabouts; and
- Less support for traffic management proposals and increases to parking charges.

The following plan shows our infrastructure proposals for tackling congestion in Yeovil. This forms our medium-term strategy related to the extent of new development shown on the plan. Our indicative LTP funding approvals for 2006-2011 are not sufficient to provide all of the schemes shown, so we have prioritised each scheme in terms of its contribution to delivering our LTP2 targets, as discussed in Chapter 12.

This strategy will therefore extend beyond the LTP2 period. We will bring more schemes forward if we are successful in securing additional LTP performance funding, and through developer funding contributions.

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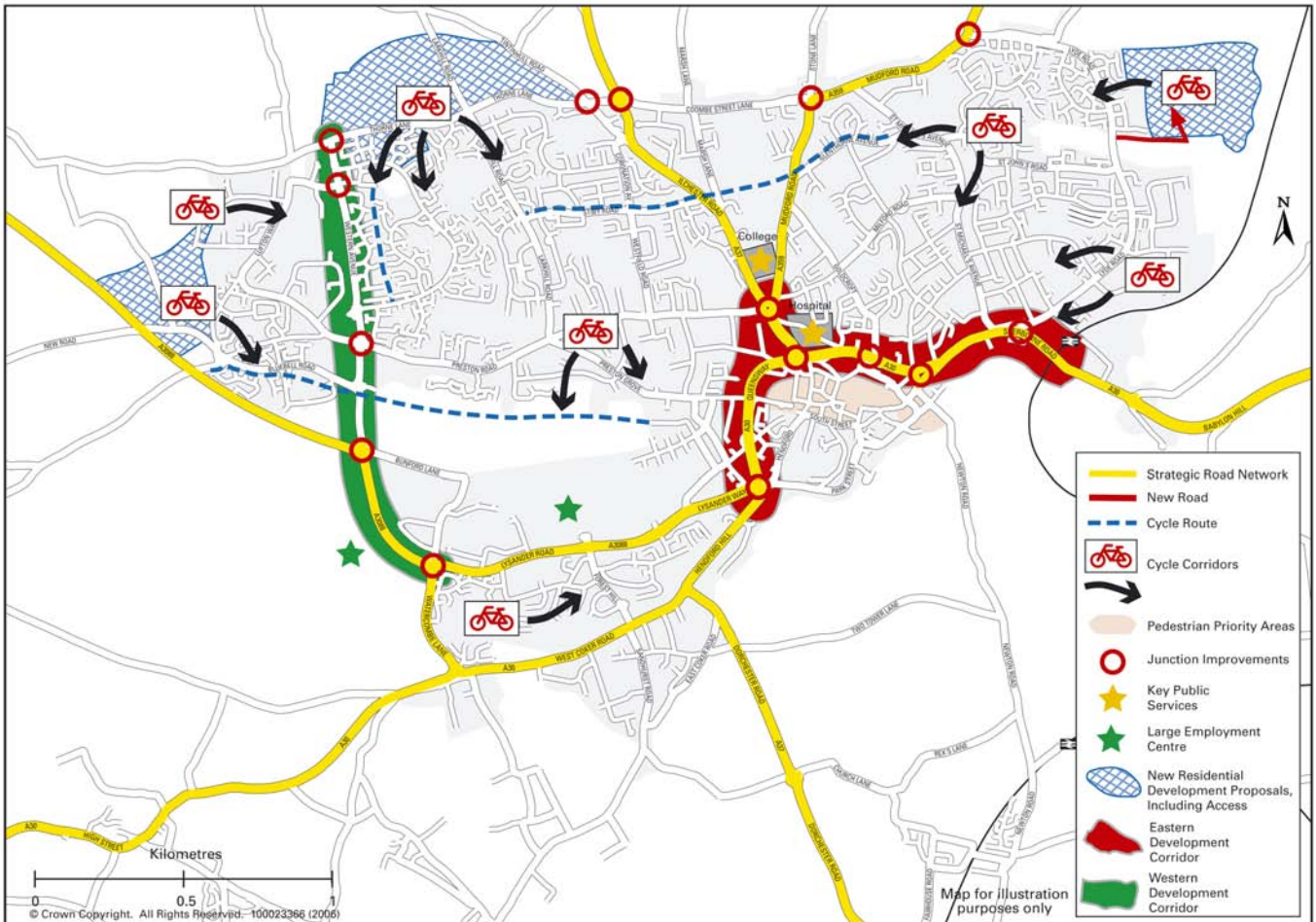


Figure 6.15 Yeovil Infrastructure Proposals



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### 6.5.1 Air Quality in Yeovil

Following designation of Yeovil as an Air Quality Management Area, South Somerset District Council and stakeholders have developed an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the town included as Appendix 2 to this LTP. The action plan builds on measures already identified within the Yeovil Transport Strategy which are designed to tackle congestion and therefore pollution in the town.

Modelling the air quality impacts of the Yeovil Transport Strategy proposals has demonstrated that the strategy proposals are likely to resolve the problem area, which is focused around Fiveways roundabout. Proposals to implement traffic signal control at the roundabout and the wider area will play a key role in this and have been included in the LTP2 programme.

Local planning decisions have the potential to affect local air quality significantly through the location and design of emission sources, traffic generation and receptor locations. South Somerset District Council, as the local planning authority, is tasked with determining local planning applications against a whole range of social, economic and environmental criterion. Air quality considerations are one such criteria. Through the planning system the District Council will seek to:

- Minimise the need to travel;
- Promote modal shift away from the private car;
- Provide infrastructure for alternative modes of transport;
- Minimise the exposure of receptors to poor air quality; and
- Ensure that the proposed development does not compromise any other part of the AQAP.

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## 6.6 PROGRAMME &amp; TARGETS

Table 6.8 LTP2 Programme Related to Congestion &amp; Pollution

	Total Capital Estimates 2006-2011 (£000's)	Number of new Schemes 2006-2011	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2006/07 Revenue Budgets £000's	Forecast Revenue Funding 2006-2011 <sup>(i)</sup> (£000's)	
<b>Urban Strategies</b>								601	3,005	
Demand management	21	1	1							
Urban cycling & walking	1,012	10	3	4	3					
Urban network management	1,126	10	3	3	2		2	660	3300	
Urban 'Smarter Choices' <sup>(ii)</sup>	486	Ongoing activity not scheme based.							16	78
<b>Urban passenger transport:</b>								17,994	89,970	
Park & Ride	4,427	1				1				
Quality Bus Partnership	574	2					2			
Interchange improvements	230	3			1	1	1			
Real-time passenger information	223	Comprehensive implementation programme not broken down into individual schemes.								
Yeovil - Taunton fastbus	1,071	1		1						
SW TRIP database	157	Funding contribution to regional database, not scheme based.								
<b>Rural Passenger Transport</b>										
Quality Bus Partnership routes	459	4	1	1	1	1				
SW TRIP database	316	Funding contribution to regional database, not scheme based.								
Real-time passenger information	895	Comprehensive implementation programme not broken down into individual schemes.								
'One-network' marketing concept	162	Comprehensive marketing programme not broken down into individual schemes.								
<b>Cross-cutting Revenue Activity</b> <sup>(iii)</sup>		Ongoing activity not scheme based							824	4,120

i Subject to annual budget setting process

ii measures include travel plans, information, marketing & awareness activities

iii Includes LTP implementation, planning liaison/ development, integrated transport policy management, scheme & policy monitoring.

## 6 CONGESTION & AIR POLLUTION

Table 6.9 Key Targets Related to Congestion and Pollution

Indicator	Description	Baseline Data	Target or Outcome
BVPI 102	Bus patronage	2003/04: 6,356,664	7.5% increase including Demand Responsive Transport by 2010/11
BVPI 104	Satisfaction with local bus services	2003/04: 51%	58% by 2009/10
LTP2	Change in area wide traffic mileage	2004: 4,132 Million vehicle kilometres	Total growth to not exceed 7.2% by 2010/11
LTP3	Cycling trips	2004/05: 889,074	10% increase by 2010/11
LTP4: Mode share journey to school	Share of journey to school by car (primary & secondary)	2003/04: 33%	Not more than 28% by 2010/11
LTP5: Bus punctuality.	% of buses starting route on time	2005/06: 95%	Maintain at 95%
	% of buses on time at intermediate timing points	2005/06: TBI <sup>(iv)</sup>	TBI
	% of buses on time at non-timing points	2005/06: TBI	TBI
	Average excess waiting time on frequent service routes	2005/06: TBI	TBI
LTP8: Air quality	NO <sub>x</sub> concentration at Air Quality Management Areas	2004/05: 42.5ug/m <sup>3</sup>	40ug/m <sup>3</sup> by 2010/11
LPI2: Mode share journey to work	Single occupancy vehicle use	2001: 54.2%	50% by 2010
LPI6	Pedestrian activity in Taunton town centre	TBI Baseline to be set in June 2006 and target set on benchmarking of final LTPs	TBI
LPI5: Congestion	Average vehicle delay in Taunton	2001/02: 1093 pcu/hrs	2414 pcu/hrs by 2010/11 (15% reduction in 'do-nothing' delay forecast) <sup>(v)</sup>
	Average vehicle delay in Yeovil	2001/02: 1036 pcu/hrs	1844 pcu/hrs by 2010/11 (21% reduction in 'do-nothing' delay forecast)

iv TBI = Data to be included following surveys undertaken in summer 2006

v The target is to reduce the overall vehicle delay that our traffic models have forecast would occur if no action was taken to resolve the problem