

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3

Island Transport Plan

Background Paper

Last Updated : April 2011

This paper has been prepared to support the Island Transport Plan. It gives details of how the plan has been developed, background to relevant local and national policy and a brief overview of the Isle of Wight and local issues.

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A. Plan Background

A.1 Introduction

This section explains the process by which this Island Transport Plan (ITP) has been developed. It explains the approach taken during our first two LTPs and how we have used our experience and the lessons learned to develop the ITP.

A.2 Taking a coordinated approach

The ITP is based upon our local priorities and ties in with both our Sustainable Community Strategy (Eco Island), Corporate Plan and our emerging Local Development Framework - the Island Plan.

The plan takes into account the consultation undertaken during the preparation of these and other key plans and policies, including the two previous transport plans, emerging Island Plan and consultation carried out as part of the development of the plan itself.

We know from the consultation undertaken over a number of years that there remains a consistent set of concerns and issues regarding transport on the Island. These issues include the poor condition of our highway network, the need to maintain and improve accessibility and improve travel by public transport, walking and cycling.

A.2.1 Building on previous plans

This ITP builds on the success and lessons learned from the two previous LTPs, which although slightly different in their approach, both sought to improve our transport infrastructure and by working in partnership with our planning policies, looked to help reduce travel needs and tackle broader issues such as social exclusion, air quality, climate change and noise pollution.

The plans targeted funds to help tackle the backlog of highway repairs and improve road and pavement condition. They also sought to improve accessibility by sustainable transport modes including walking, cycling, passenger transport, taxis, private hire vehicles and powered two wheelers.

Although we have seen some good improvements in accessibility, highway condition is still considered a major local issue by Island residents and businesses. The council recognised the difficulty in addressing this issue using existing and proposed funding and it was these concerns that prompted and supported the development and submission of our roads maintenance PFI bid.

In summary our previous local transport plans have sought to:

- Enhancing and maintaining our highway assets – making improvements where money allows and ensuring best possible value for money.

- Tackle congestion – facilitating the expedient flow of traffic through highway improvements and network management.
- Improving access for all – ensuring transport is easily accessible for all including those with mobility issues. Extra thought in areas such as the provision and design of infrastructure, information, signing and other areas can all make travelling easier.
- Reducing the impact on the environment – transport can be a major source of carbon emissions and the switch to walking and cycling for shorter journeys and using more environmentally friendly power can all help.
- Improve the safety of travellers – ensuring the safety of travellers has been of paramount importance for successive governments.
- Reducing the need to travel – through land use and improved internet and other communication links.
- Increasing travel choice – walking, cycling and travel by public transport can often be quicker and more convenient, help to reduce carbon emissions and keep you fit.

A.3 Lessons learnt from previous LTPs

Our first LTP covering 2001-2006 and the second 2006-2011. As part of the plan process Local Authorities were required to establish targets to monitor the success of the plan and produce monitoring reports detailing spend, implementation and delivery against targets. This process has enabled the council to review our progress, make local/regional/national comparisons and to report to our partners and stakeholders – central government, local transport operators, elected members, Town and Parish Councils, environmental groups and individuals.

Although we have not been required to produce a report every year, the council has recognised the value of monitoring its progress, not only in terms of assessing what needs to be done to ensure the required improvement, but also as a method of maintaining the profile of the plan and retaining dialogue with our partners. We therefore elected to produce monitoring reports during interim years¹.

A.3.1 Monitoring programme

One of the key lessons learnt during the LTP1 period was the necessity to establish a robust monitoring programme. Before the introduction of the LTP process, the council had very limited annual settlements with no certainty of year-on-year funding making future planning difficult with little opportunity to measure success. With the introduction of a five year indicative LTP settlement, we were able to establish a programme of improvements and to introduce an ongoing, robust monitoring regime. This regime has been further developed to take account of new and evolving requirements with elements of the programme rolled forward to the ITP.

¹ Copies of reports are available on our website at : www.iwight.com/transport

A.3.2 Priority ranking

As part of our review process, it was decided to introduce a priority ranking system for our integrated transport (IT) schemes. Previously only our highway maintenance schemes had been subject to a ranking system but, with the availability of more funding and establishment of targets, came the need to prioritise IT schemes. Similar to our monitoring regime, this system has evolved to reflect ongoing circumstances.

The council has further developed and improved this process and the most recent approach is set out in the ITP Implementation Plan and will be used to assess and rank our future schemes.

A.3.3 Target review

With the establishment of targets, new monitoring programme and priority ranking, we were able to monitor and measure our success. As part of this process we were able to review targets annually and assess the likelihood of achieving targets and, where appropriate, consider necessary actions.

In a few circumstances, we achieved targets early in the plan (eg bus patronage and accessibility) and were able to establish more challenging targets. In another circumstance (modal share of journeys to school) we fell below target but, with the ongoing investment in school travel plans, we still felt able to deliver the target by the end of the plan period. However, in one key target area – highway and footway condition - it was apparent that, even with our additional LTP funding, we would not be in a position to address the backlog of repairs and therefore decided to investigate other funding opportunities.

A.3.4 Developing our Highway Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

In 2004 the council decided to explore the possibility of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) for highway maintenance. After extensive discussions, a PFI Expression of Interest was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) in September 2006 and a refresh in February 2008. The DfT announced the approval of the bid in March 2008 with the Isle of Wight the only rural authority to have been awarded PFI Highway funding, making this a unique project.

The 25 year Island's PFI will encompass all aspects of the highway that occur 'fence to fence' including the road surface, drainage, street lighting, kerbs, footways, grass verges, signs, bus shelters and street furniture.

The project is due to commence in April 2013 and will be the principle delivery vehicle for the ITP. The council recognises the broader benefits afforded by the PFI and will be looking to maximise the benefits of the project to increase local employment, training and regeneration opportunities.

A.4 Drawing upon consultation

The council has undertaken various formal and informal consultation exercises over a number of years. This important process has been used to help shape, test and inform the development of a range plans and policies

including the community strategy – Eco-Island, previous LTPs, and the Local Development Framework – Island Plan.

This consultation has taken a number of forms including, questionnaires and dialogue with town and parish councils, the general public and Quality Transport Partnership – a local group including transport operators, transport users, the local business community, government office and others.

We have drawn upon this previous consultation and the consultation specifically undertaken as part of the development of this plan including environmental and other assessments to help form and guide the content of the Island Transport Plan.

A.4.1 Local Development Framework – Island Plan

As part of the development of the Island Plan, the council held a series of ‘issue and options’ workshops, discussion groups and published an online questionnaire. This consultation garnered a broad range of transport related views from operators, providers, environmental groups and the wider public. The results of this work can be summarised as follows:

- Support land use allocations that reduce the need to travel.
- Increase opportunities to walk, cycle and travel by public transport.
- Reduce the negative environmental and safety impacts of travel.
- Cross Solent improvements.
- Tackle and consider future congestion.
- Adopt a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to parking.

A.4.2 Local consultation

Newport Parish Council has undertaken extensive local consultation as part of the development of their parish plan. The initial consultation highlighted transport as resident’s main concern and therefore the Parish Council held two specific transport consultation days in June 2009.

More than 400 people visited the exhibition and the feedback received highlighted the importance to local people of maintaining and improving Newport as the Island’s premier shopping centre and the need to manage car use and parking as part of any future plans.

From the responses received:

- All respondents used the town centre for shopping.
- A large majority also came into the town for leisure / entertainment and other necessary trips such as dentist or doctor.
- 64% visited the town centre more than five times a week.
- Nearly 50% walked whenever possible or practical.
- 98% felt that the present road traffic network was unsatisfactory with almost 80% identifying traffic congestion as being a significant issue.

These comments were reported to the council and presented to the Islands Quality Transport Partnership (QTP) in detail. They were helpful in informing the council of the views of Newport residents. The comments regarding

congestion were particularly useful and support works identified in the ITP which will improve traffic conditions and accessibility in the town.

A.4.3 Quality Transport Partnership

The Island's Quality Transport Partnership (QTP) was established in January 1998 and includes representatives from the business community (including Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses), transport operators (bus, rail, taxi, ferry and freight), user groups (including bus and cycle) and environmental groups.

The group has been closely involved in the development of a number of local policy documents, including both previous LTPs and the Island Plan - Core Strategy. The draft ITP was considered by the QTP at their meeting on 28 January and the comments made were considered as part of our consultation process.

A.4.4 Government feedback

The council has been given formal feedback from the Government on the quality and delivery of our previous LTPs. Their mid term progress review letter to the council dated 10 February 2009 was very positive stating:

“You have demonstrated good progress in all of the four Shared Priority Areas as well as in maintenance and in meeting 4 of your 7 local targets. The area of greatest challenges is in delivering your LAA (Local Area Agreement) target for CO2 reductions and the latest Eco-Island objective of having the smallest carbon footprint in England. Associated with that is the challenge of maintaining progress on improving accessibility and reducing congestion with a small budget.”

They also noted that:

“You are on track to meet 11 of the 14 mandatory targets and have also made good progress towards achieving the LTP objectives and programmes”.

And judged this to be:

“encouraging progress, which has been achieved by the very effective deployment of limited resources across an impressively wide range of activities.”

The ITP has been produced taking into consideration the relevant government guidance and copies of the draft ITP have also been shared with them.

A.5 Statutory assessments

The council has tested and assessed the ITP against a number of criteria including those required under European and national legislation and guidance. We have used the following assessments to consider what extent the plan's overall approach, measures and initiatives will affect the Island, its environment, residents and visitors:

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was carried out in accordance with EU Directive 2001/42/EC.
- The Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) was carried out in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/42/EEC).
- The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was carried out in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was carried out as part of the SEA process.

Further details of these assessments, the process and outcomes are included alongside this plan on our website at www.iwight.com/transport

A.5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

The draft ITP was subject to scrutiny through a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) as required by European legislation and our own government's regulations.

This process, which was the same as that undertaken for the emerging Island Plan Core Strategy, has allowed us to assess whether any part of the plan or its delivery is liable to have an adverse impact on the environment and important nature conservation sites and if so what mitigating measures will be necessary to address any potential impacts.

Consultation

The draft ITP and associated SEA and HRA screening report were made available for a 12 week consultation period. During this time the documents, background paper and other information were posted on the council's website at www.iwight.com/transport with copies available for inspection at the councils offices at County Hall, Newport and Highways and Transport offices at Enterprise House, Newport. We also notified statutory consultees – Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage, as well as a wide range of local partners including transport operators, transport users, local elected members, members of the Quality Transport Partnership, Town and Parish Councils, local environment groups, south eastern authorities – through the South East Authorities Service Improvement Group (SEASIG) and others. The release of the draft plan was covered in the local press and radio.

The plan was considered by the council's Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel at their meeting of 15 December 2010 and Island Quality Transport Partnership (QTP) at their meeting on Friday 28th January 2011. The minutes of the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Panel can be found at www.iwight.com

The consultation period ended on Friday 4th February 2011 and the representations recorded, and considered in detail. A summary of the comments and suggested actions is included in a matrix which was included as an Appendix to the Cabinet Report, further details can be found at www.iwight.com

Responses made

Thirty-five formal responses were received during the consultation period, many of which were of a similar nature. The responses could be summarised as follows:

- The 27 year plan is not suitably far sighted
- The ITP concentrates too much on car use and road maintenance.
- The ITP fails to recognise importance of alternative forms of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.
- The ITP fails to acknowledge existence and importance of local railway and value of Community Rail Partnership.
- The ITP does not identify how council will embrace “big society” and work with operators and others.
- The ITP fails to recognise importance of Solent Local Economic Partnership (SLEP).

A number of similar concerns were raised by Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIOWWT) and Natural England (NE) who are statutory consultees. These concerns were in relation to the extent of works to be undertaken by the PFI project and in particular how this work may adversely impact on designated sites of national and European significance.

Similar concerns have been raised during the consultation on the Island Plan and the text of both plans has been revised to clarify the extent of the proposed works.

NE were of the opinion that the PFI project should be the subject of a HRA in accordance with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 without which NE and HIOWWT both concluded that the Draft Island Transport Plan (and Island Plan Core Strategy) do not provide “the necessary level of certainty of avoiding adverse effects on the integrity of European and international sites required by the Habitats Regulations and so does not meet the test of soundness” as set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 (PPS12).

Taking account of the comments made

The ITP recognises that the PFI project is the key delivery vehicle for our much need road maintenance improvements. The council acknowledges that the project should be carried out so as to minimise the impacts on the environment and where necessary the works will be the subject of a HRA screening assessment.

The council has as a result of the SEA and HRA process and consultation responses received, amended the plan to explain more clearly the extent of the works planned through the PFI project and has specified the safeguards that will be afforded to designated environmental sites.

As a result of these changes the council now considers that the ITP forms a sound and robust transport strategy for the Island.

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B. Policy Background

B.1 Introduction

This section outlines the policy background behind the ITP and shows how the plan fits in with other existing and emerging local plans and policies and accords with national legislation.

B.2 Local policy

B.2.1 Sustainable Community Strategy – ‘Eco Island’

The Island has a sound set of local policies and strategies on which to build. Sitting above these, as an overarching document, is the Island’s Sustainable Community Strategy (Eco-Island)², launched in 2008.

The Eco-Island vision, which was established with our partners is for:

“The Isle of Wight to become a world renowned Eco-Island, with a thriving economy, a real sense of pride and where residents and visitors enjoy healthy lives, feel safe and are treated with respect.”

The strategy is based around four themes and 15 key priorities.

Eco Island Themes and Priorities

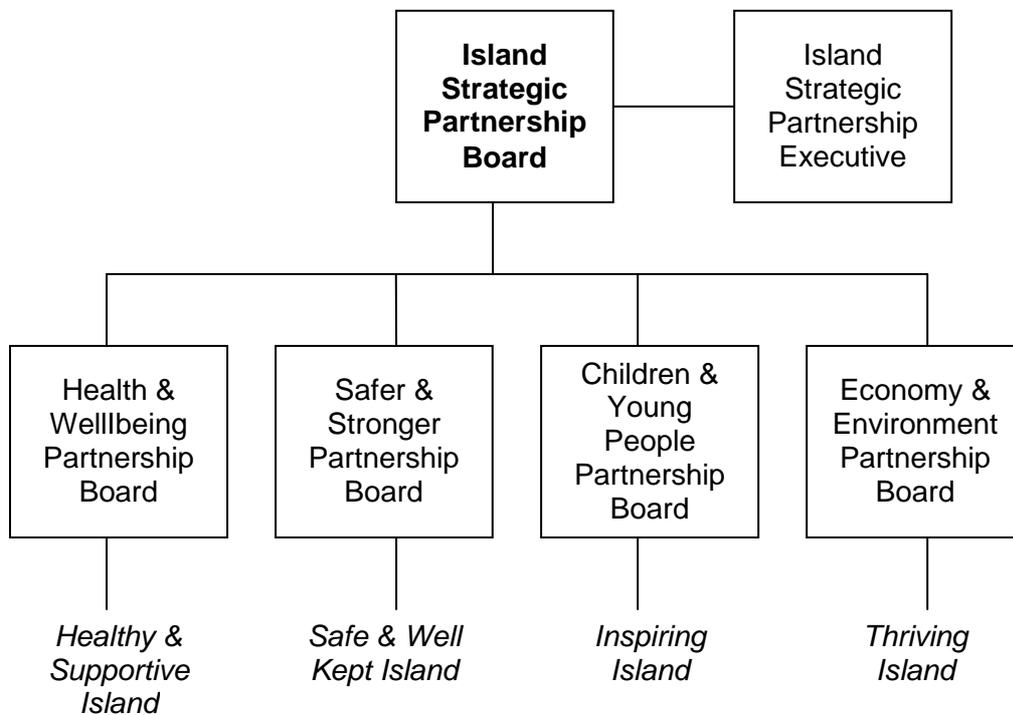
Theme	Priorities
Thriving Island	Protect and enhance our Island’s natural beauty.
	Create wealth and reduce our carbon footprint at the same time.
	Produce as much of our energy as possible from renewable source
	Support economic development and regeneration, enabling all to be able to share in the Island’s economic success, through increasing the skills of the whole community.
Healthy and Supportive Island	Reduce levels of obesity in all ages.
	Improve health, emotional wellbeing and life expectancy across the Island.
	Support vulnerable people to live independent lives.
	Ensure people of all ages have places to live and things to do in their local area.
Safe and well-kept Island	Reduce crime and substance misuse.
	Reduce anti-social behaviour and disorder.
	Reduce the fear of crime and increase public confidence.
	Enhance how our local areas look and feel, now and in the future.
Inspiring Island	Make sure our children achieve better than the national

² See - www.eco-island.org.uk/default.htm

Theme	Priorities
	average at school and college.
	Reduce childhood inequalities, by tackling poverty, neglect and domestic violence.
	Support families and carers to provide a safe and positive environment for our young people.

B.2.2 Local Strategic Partnership

The delivery of the Community Strategy is overseen by the Island's Local Strategic Partnership (ISP). The ISP is a representative group of leading Island organisations reflecting the needs and views of residents, visitors and businesses. The ISP comprises of the ISP Board, Executive and 4 Partnership Boards - each responsible for one of the four themes.



B.2.3 Local Area Agreement

The ISP are also responsible for overseeing the compilation and delivery of the Island's Local Area Agreement (LAA)³. The LAA is an agreement between the ISP and the Government and sets out the Island's key priorities and includes targets and actions needed to deliver these priorities. Based around the Eco Island themes, the LAA includes 35 'designated' indicators supplemented by 24 'local' indicators. Included within these indicators are five transport targets taken from the Government's National Indicator (NI) set.

³ See - www.eco-island.org.uk/our_place/themes_and_actions/laaintro.aspx

LAA Transport Targets

NI Ref	Description	Indicator Type
NI 177	Number of local bus passenger journeys	Designated
NI 169	Non-principal roads where maintenance should be considered	Designated
NI 175	Access to Newport by public transport, walking and cycling	Local
NI 47	People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	Local
NI 48	Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	Local

Following an announcement from the coalition government on their plans to withdraw from LAAs, the ISP Executive are currently considering the future of the Island's LAA.

B.2.4 Isle of Wight Council's Corporate Plan

The Isle of Wight Council's Corporate Plan⁴ is the Council's main strategic planning document which provides the framework for service delivery. The 2009 - 2013 identifies seven key council priorities as well as endorsing the council's ongoing commitment to Eco Island and LAA delivery.

The 2009 – 2013 Council priorities are:

- **Highway PFI scheme** - development and delivery of a Highway Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to improve highway condition and associated issues.
- **Schools reorganisation** – a change of the current three tier system (which includes middle schools) to a two tier, primary/secondary model to raise standards of educational attainment and opportunity.
- **Transforming social care** – a new approach to social care for adults, supporting people to make their own support and welfare decisions.
- **Regeneration and the economy** – a refresh of the 2008 Isle of Wight Economic Strategy based around economic commitments to:
 1. Support renewable energy;
 2. Promote the Island as an accessible and affordable tourist destination;
 3. Promote locally produced goods;
 4. Encourage Island firms to bid for public sector work and support the creation and retention of local jobs;
 5. Support automatic business relief for firms.

⁴ See - www.iwight.com/council/documents/corporate_objectives/

- **Fire service modernisation** – modernisation of the fire and rescue service by securing additional investment and better use of existing resources.
- **Local housing** - provision of a balanced local housing market including increasing availability of affordable housing with additional benefits of local job opportunities.
- **Delivering better services** – transformation programme to ensure council services meet the needs of the Island in the most efficient and cost effective manner.

B.2.5 Local Development Framework – ‘The Island Plan’

The Island’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2001 and is the framework for development on the Island until 2011. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Authorities are now required to replace UDPs with Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The Isle of Wight Council are currently in the process of compiling an LDF for the Island which will be known as the ‘Island Plan’⁵.

Island Plan Core Strategy

The main document of the Island Plan is the Core Strategy which sets out the spatial vision and strategic policies for the Island until 2027. Two previous core strategies have been withdrawn following concerns that they may be deemed ‘unsound’ at the examination stage and the council are now in the process of producing a revised strategy - with anticipated adoption December 2011.

Proposed Core Strategy Timetable

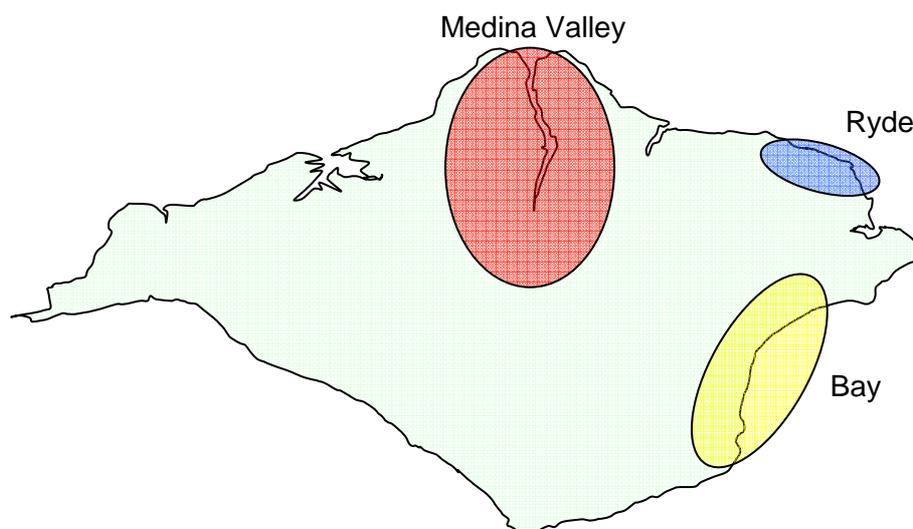
Task	Date
Stakeholder consultation	April – June 2010
Public consultation	September - October 2010
Revised plan	January – February 2011
Examination	August – September 2011
Inspector’s report	November 2011
Adoption	December 2011

Area Action Plans

The Core Strategy will be supplemented by a series of Area Action Plans (AAPs), each focussing on a specific geographic, regeneration area. Figure overleaf shows locations of proposed AAPs.

⁵ See - www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/Planning_Policy/Island_Plan/

Proposed AAP Locations



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Proposed AAP Timetable

Area	Compilation	Consultation	Hearing	Adoption
Medina Valley	Sept 2011 – Apr 2012	Apr – May 2012	Feb 2013	Jun 2013
Ryde	Sept 2011 - Jun 2012	Sept – Oct 2012	Jul 2013	Nov 2013
Bay	Sept 2011 – Apr 2013	Apr – May 2013	Feb 2014	Jun 2014

Supplementary Planning Documents

In addition to the AAPs, the council are proposing to produce a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which will further elaborate on key policies and proposals. One key SPD will deal with Planning Obligations and will set out the contributions required for new and upgraded infrastructure as part of new developments.

Island Transport Plan and the Island Plan

Synergy and integration between the emerging Island Plan and the Island Transport Plan is fundamental to ensuring a joined up approach. Future locations of key developments such as housing, employment, education, health and leisure facilities can help to reduce the need to travel and ensure locations have good transport links including walking, cycling and public transport access.

Although the revised Core Strategy has yet to be adopted, Transport Planners have been involved in the development of key policies including those relating to location of new development, infrastructure improvements, sustainable travel, cross-Solent travel and developer contributions. The final Island Transport Plan will include full details of these policies.

B.3 Our other plans and policies

This plan does not sit in isolation but instead fits with and accords with a set of other existing and emerging local plans and initiatives. These include:

- Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan – policies, actions and objectives for the management of the Island's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - www.wightaonb.org.uk/
- Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) – policies outlining how the Island's shoreline should be managed in the future - www.coastalwight.gov.uk/smp/
- Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) – framework for action to conserve and enhance the Island's biodiversity - www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/Countryside/Ecology/Habitats/
- Historic Environment Action Plan (HEAP) – strategy for the local management of areas of importance for archaeology, the historic landscape and historic build environment - www.iwight.com/living_here/archaeology/heap.asp
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) – strategy for management and improvement of Island's rights of way network - www.iwight.com/living_here/environment/rights_of_way/The_Rights_of_Way_Improvement_Plan/
- Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) – register of transport assets being compiled in conjunction with PFI - www.iwight.com/highways-pfi/default.asp
- Air Quality Progress Report – annual review of local air quality and pollutants - www.iwight.com/living_here/environment/environmental_health/Environmental_Protection/Air_Quality/
- Children, Young People and their Families plan – vision, aspiration and targets for the well being of the Island's children and young people - www.iwight.com/childrenstrust/3children.asp
- Sustainable travel to school strategy – promotion of sustainable travel to school in accordance with statutory duty under Section 508a of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 - www.iwight.com/living_here/environment/Transport_Strategies/images/2SustainableTraveltoSchoolStrategy.pdf
- Town Centres Health Check Study – assessment of 'health' of Island towns - www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/images/TownCentreHealthCheckStudyFinalReport151209.pdf

B.4 National Policy

B.4.1 Transport Acts

The Transport Act 2000 introduced the statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan every five years and keep it under review.

The role of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is to set out how the Local Authority (LA) proposes to deal with transport issues in its area. The plan must set out the Council's long-term transport vision and five-year strategy. It must explain what measures it proposes to put in place, how much measures will cost and how success in delivering these measures will be monitored over the period of the Plan. The Island's first two plans covered the periods 2001-06 and 2006-2011.

The DfT consulted stakeholders in 2007 on amending the statutory framework for the production of LTPs and the comments received were used to frame the latest guidance established through the Local Transport Act 2008.

B.4.2 Local Transport Act 2008

The Local Transport 2008 Act retains the statutory requirement to produce and review LTPs and policies, but other aspects of the statutory framework have changed.

The Act requires that LTPs contain two distinct elements – a **strategy** (or policies) and an **implementation plan** (or plans) - setting out the proposals for delivering the policies contained within the strategy.

The Act also allows more flexibility in timescales. Prior to 2008, local transport authorities were required to renew plans at least every five years, the new legislation allows authorities to replace their plans as they see fit and to renew the different parts of the plan on different timescales.

B.4.3 National Transport Goals

In 2007 the Department for Transport published 'Towards a Sustainable Transport System' (TaSTS) which outlined the Government's long-term transport planning approach, taking into account the outcomes of both the Eddington study and Stern review.

The Eddington study looked at the impact of transport decisions on the economy and the environment of the United Kingdom, with recommendations on how the transport network should be modernised. The Stern review examined the effect of global warming on the world economy. Although not the first economic report on climate change, it is significant as the largest and most widely known and discussed report of its kind.

This government responded to the content of these two independent reviews and in 2008 outlined the actions needed to deliver a fresh approach to

transport setting out five broad transport goals to replace the previous shared Local Government Association (LGA) transport priorities⁶.

The national transport goals were identified as:

- **Support** national **economic** competitiveness and **growth**, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks.
- Reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of **tackling climate change**.
- **Contribute to better safety, security and health** and longer life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health.
- **Promote** greater **equality of opportunity** for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society.
- **Improve quality of life** for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a **healthy natural environment**.

It is considered that these new transport goals are still relevant and accord with the priorities contained in our existing plans and policies including those set down in our first two LTPs.

B.4.4 National Planning Policy Statements

Produced by government over a number of years, the Planning Policy Statements and Guidance notes (PPSs and PPGs)⁷ explain statutory planning requirements and provide guidance to Local Authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system.

PPG13 (Transport) was published in April 2001 and sets out the objectives to integrate planning and transport at all levels and promotes sustainable transport choices for both people and freight.

B.4.5 Coalition Government

After the May 2010 election, the new coalition government released a series of statements outlining their plans and objectives for key services areas. For transport they stated:

“The Government believes that a modern transport infrastructure is essential for a dynamic and entrepreneurial economy, as well as to improve well-being and quality of life. We need to make the transport sector greener and more sustainable, with tougher emission standards and support for new transport technologies..... We will support sustainable travel initiatives, including the promotion of cycling and walking, and will encourage joint working between bus operators and local authorities”.

⁶ LGA shared priorities - accessibility, congestion, road safety and air quality.

⁷ PPSs and PPGs are available on the Communities & Local Government website at : www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planning/planningpolicyguidance/planningpolicystatements/

In relation to the future of Local Transport Plans, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Norman Baker said on 20th July 2010:

“We think development of local transport plans is crucial and of course you will be aware you have a statutory duty to produce your LTPs by next April 2011. We happen to think that local transport plans remain the best way for authorities to plan transport strategy and delivery and will ensure from our point of view that funding allocations are available in good time for completion of those plans by next April. We also think local transport plans are the best way to make sure that funding is spent efficiently and effectively and enables you to focus on the priorities not just the economy and carbon reductions referred to but also road safety are affordability and accessibility people's health and well being for example”.

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C. Isle of Wight Background

C.1 Introduction

This section gives a brief overview of the Island, its people, where they live and what they do. It explains how the geology and topography of the Island have influenced where we live, what we do and the pattern of transport routes roads, railway and rights of way on which we travel.

C.2 Location

The Isle of Wight is located south of the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton and separated from the mainland by the stretch of water known as the Solent which, at its narrowest, is in the region of 5km (3 miles) wide. The Island is roughly diamond shape and measures approximately 21km (13 miles) north to south and 37km (23 miles) west to east with a total land area of 38,014 ha (approximately 146 square miles).

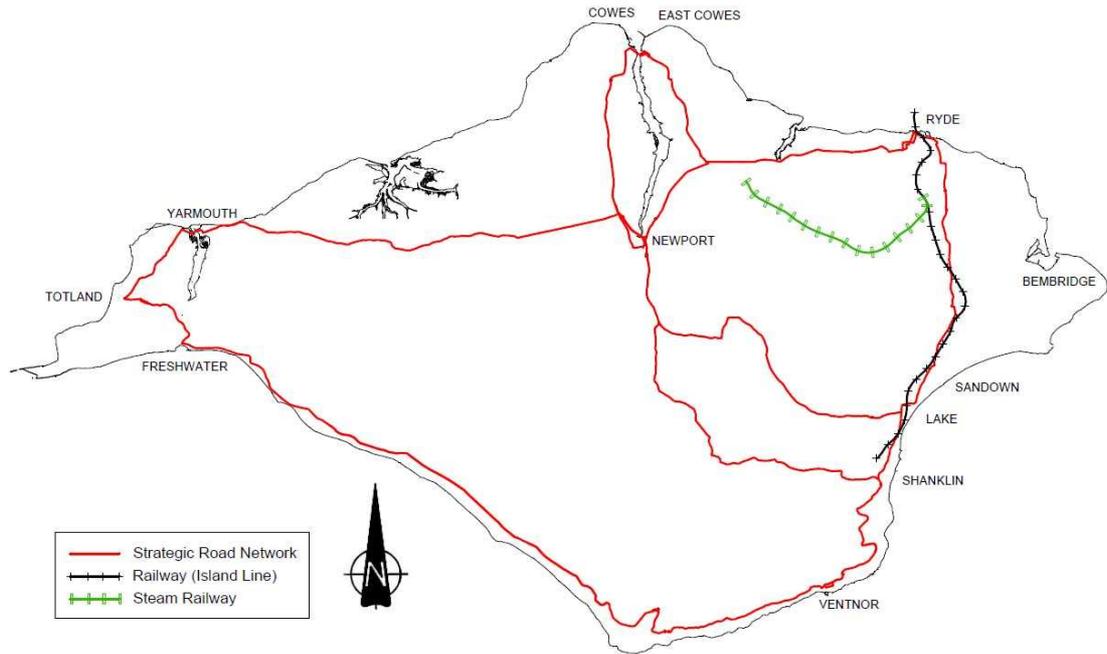
The Island is unique in that unlike every other English local authority area, we do not share land boundaries with other authorities and therefore the Island is not driven through as part of a longer, onward journey. This means that we are not influenced or burdened by through traffic. In policy terms, as the most clearly defined local authority area, we have a greater choice over our future plans and our transport policy should therefore have a direct and positive influence on the lives of people who both live and work on the Island, and those who visit here.

C.3 Settlements and infrastructure

The location of our towns and settlements has been determined by a number of factors including the shape of the Island, the fact that we are surrounded by water, the geology and the quality of the land.

The location and success of many of our coastal settlements was as a result of industries such as fishing, sailing, boat building and tourism, whilst access to the main river and its central location has played an important part in the growth of Newport, the County Town.

As our settlements have developed, so has the need for supporting infrastructure. Many of our Island roads were originally established as cart tracks linking hamlets and villages. As settlements grew, so did the use of these tracks with increases in both volume and vehicle type. Although tracks have been upgraded, many of our roads are still built on these original routes with foundations which are not necessarily ideal for their current usage.



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Major settlements and transport links

C.3.1 Roads

The Island has a 791.8km (492 miles) road network, set in a landscape of which half is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Of these:

- 122.3 km (76 miles) are principal roads
- 269.6 km (167.5 miles) are other classified.
- 399.9 km (248.5 miles) are unclassified.

The location of our major settlements - with Cowes to the north, Ryde to the north-east, Sandown/Shanklin/Ventnor to the south-east and Freshwater to the west – means that our road network resembles the spokes on a wheel, with Newport at its “hub” joined by spokes to each settlement and each settlement in turn linked to one another by the rim – which in our case is often a coastal road.

The layout and location of our road network brings a range of challenges, particularly at Newport – where all roads meet - and on the coast where some sections of road are under threat from land instability and increasingly from climate change and resulting rise in sea level.

C.3.2 Public transport

The Island has a unique railway running ex London Underground rolling stock originally built in 1938. Operated by Island Line the railway operates on an 8.5 mile (13.7 km) line linking Ryde Pier Head through Ryde Esplanade and Ryde St Johns stations, to Brading and the coastal resorts of Sandown, Lake and Shanklin. In 2009/10 the service carried 1.4 m passengers and is regularly cited as the national rail network’s most punctual operator.

A junction at Smallbrook south of Ryde allows passengers to transfer to the Isle of Wight Steam Railway which runs heritage rolling stock as a tourist attraction on the 5.5 mile line (8.8km) between Smallbrook Junction and Wootton.

With the exception of a small number of council buses, local buses are run by one operator Southern Vectis – part of the Go Ahead group. Acquired by the parent group in July 2005, April 2006 saw the creation of a new bus network based on core routes with Newport, the Islands capital as the hub.

These changes, plus increased frequency, the comprehensive introduction of new buses and the council's support for an extended concessionary fares scheme for Island residents (which included travel by Island Line train), has seen a marked increase in the number of bus passengers, well in excess of the original LTP bus patronage target. Southern Vectis buses carried in the region of 8.3million passengers in 2009/10. This was a slight drop from the previous year's figure of 8.23m.

C.3.3 Walking and cycling

The Island has 517miles (827 km) of public rights of way linking towns and settlements and giving easy access to the countryside and coast.

There are over 200 miles of cycle routes with dedicated off road cycle routes linking some of our major towns. Recognised as part of the National Cycle Network (NCN), popular routes link Cowes to Newport, and Newport to Sandown (NCN 23). Some parts of NCN22 are also in place linking Ryde to Newport and Yarmouth to Freshwater.

C.3.4 Cross Solent links

The Island is unusual in that surrounded by water, entry to the local Authority area is by a limited number of routes and access points. These cross Solent routes and their operations are as a result a very important element of living on, working on and visiting the Island. (Further details are included in Section B4 of this document)

C.3.5 Improving the condition of our roads

The condition of our roads is considered to be generally very poor and despite investment in recent years is still not of an acceptable standard.

Whilst recent work has helped improve the ride quality of some of our strategic routes which link the main towns, the condition of our roads is now adversely affecting community safety, access to services and confidence to invest in the future.

A detailed analysis confirmed that Highways Maintenance Private Finance Initiative (PFI) was the only solution that could address a problem of this scale and the council has spent the last few years developing a bid for funding through this process.

Approved in March 2010, the £364.6m scheme will see the bulk of the Island's public road network rebuilt or resurfaced, as will every pavement,

kerb and cycleway. The majority of this work will be done in the first seven years to raise the network to the required standard and the entire network will then be maintained at that standard for the remaining 25 years of the project.

This project will have a dramatic impact not only on the condition of our roads, but brings with it far reaching implications in terms of the Island's economy, education and employment. As we will see later in this document it also has implications in terms of the delivery of improvements to our roads and the duration and delivery of this plan.

The process of preparing our PFI bid has been supported by the development of a detailed Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and as part of this the reassessment of our road hierarchy, based upon use and traffic flows.

The combination of this information has not only given us the necessary information regarding the condition of transport infrastructure but also the ways in which it is used.

This information will be used as part of the PFI to help target those roads that are in most need of improvement and more precisely exactly what needs to be done.

C.3.6 Making the best use of the entire transport network

The council was the first local authority to achieve the National Target for Rights of Way, which requires that all of our rights of way network is "legally defined, properly maintained and well publicised."

Developed alongside LTP2 our Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) recognises the importance of maintaining and improving our public rights of way ROW network for transport as well as recreational and tourist use.

The coverage of our network provides not only urban links but also allows easy foot and cycle access from residential areas into the countryside. This has been recognised by government who, in agreeing that our cycle network is included within the PFI project, will ensure that their condition is improved and maintained over the period of this plan helping to ensure their use for commuter and leisure journeys.

C.4 Links to the mainland

The Island has links to the mainland by six cross Solent connections; these include vehicle/passenger ferries connecting Yarmouth and Lymington, East Cowes and Southampton, Fishbourne and Portsmouth. In addition there are three fast passenger carrying craft – catamarans offering services between Cowes and Southampton and Ryde (pier head) and Portsmouth and a hovercraft linking Ryde to Southsea (Portsmouth).

The crossing times offered by these routes vary from just under 10 minutes to 55 minutes. Each route offers its own particular advantages and attractions and are popular with both regular commuters, for travel to Portsmouth, Southampton, Lymington and beyond and visitors who see the journey as part of the holiday package.

These links are vital to the Island's economy and, with the exception of a comparatively small number of trips to the Island by plane and private boat and pleasure craft, everything that arrives on and leaves the Island does so via these routes.

The transport links through the region are also very important to us and changes to transport connections, routes, timetables and terminals can have an impact on all those who travel to and from the Island – especially regular travellers, freight and deliveries.



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C.5 Island population

The 2001 census indicated that the majority of people are located in the towns of Newport, Ryde, Cowes and East Cowes and the southeast coastal areas of Sandown, Shanklin and Ventnor.

Whilst the lowest population densities are within, what are predominately the most rural areas of the Island - Shalfleet, Yarmouth, Brighthstone, and Calbourne.

Town	Population
Newport	23,600
Ryde	24,000
Cowes	13,600
East Cowes	7,000
Sandown	6,500
Shanklin	8,700
Ventnor	6,300
Lake	5,000
West Wight	10,700
Bembridge	3,800

Source: Census of Population 2001

How old people are, can have an influence on how often and by what means they travel. The age profile of those living on the Island has changed considerably over the last 100 years. In 1901 the largest number of people living on the Island was in the age range 15 – 25 years. From 25 years and older the numbers decreased annually with very few people living to 85 years and above. One hundred years later the picture is very different. The numbers being born has dropped noticeably and the largest age group is now those aged 50–54, with over 4000 people living beyond 85 years.

The Island has become a popular retirement area and in 2001, 28.4% of the Island's population were aged 60 years or over compared to 20.9% in England and Wales. At the same time we have less young people living on the Island – 18.2% aged under 16 years compared to 20.2% in England and Wales.

C.6 Our local environment

Natural environment and landscape

The Island is unusually rich in species and habitats, compared to other similar areas on the mainland. The chalk grasslands, maritime cliffs and slopes and estuaries are particularly important, not only in regional context, but also on a national and international scale.

- The Island has five SACs (Special Areas of Conservation). Only parts of some SACs i.e. Solent Maritime and Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SACs are within the IOW.
- A SPA (Special Protection Area), which covers part of the Island.
- A Ramsar site which covers part of the Island.

Taken collectively the above cover 6.2% of the land mass and much of the intertidal and inshore waters. Some 97.3% of the inshore waters are covered by SPA, SAC and Ramsar designations.

- Over half of the Island is designated as an Area of outstanding Natural beauty (AONB) (191km²) recognition of the national importance of the quality of its landscape.
- 11% of the Island is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

- 10% has been designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- Half of the Island's coastline has been defined as Heritage Coast, with the Tennyson Heritage Coast running for 34km and the Hamstead Heritage Coast for 11km.
- The Island has more than 10% of the South East region's chalk grassland.
- The Island has some of the best examples of undeveloped estuaries in the South East region.
- The Island has some of the best examples of intertidal and offshore reefs in the South East region.

The Isle of Wight's historic environment consists of a much greater range of archaeological remains, sites and structures than many places on the mainland. Human activity on the Island dates back to 450,000 years ago and the landscapes of ceremonial monuments such as Bronze Age barrows and humps and bumps of Saxon and Medieval villages survive within the fabric of the existing landscapes.

The built environment

The Island contains over 2,000 buildings, which are listed of architectural or historic interest, most of which are designated grade II – “buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them”. The Island has 27 Conservation Areas – an “area of special architectural or historic interest of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.

The geology of the island is also immensely important to the pattern of our transport network and the way we travel. The chalk ridge which runs primarily east / west across the island together with the Downs and ridges and quality of the soils – primarily heavy clays to the north and lighter soils to the south has influenced agricultural practices and helped define the location of our rural settlements.

The geology of the coast is also important particularly along the southern coast where soft clays offer little resistance to the affects of the sea, coastal erosion and excess groundwater levels. Climate change – extremes of temperature and rainfall with wetter spells has had a dramatic impact on sections of our coastline. This has in turn had an impact on some sections of our coastal roads, to such an extent that some sections of the A3055 Military Road and A3054 Bouldnor, east of Yarmouth are now under very real threat of collapse.

Air quality

Transport can be a significant cause of air and noise pollution. The Environment Act 1995 required local authorities to assess air quality problems in accordance with a clearly defined set of government standards and to produce Air Quality Action Plans where problems are identified. Transport is closely linked to the environment and the Island Transport Plan must take account of any identified problems areas and where appropriate include measures to address any problems raised.

As perhaps expected for a predominantly rural area, the Island has relatively good air quality. Our ongoing monitoring has generally recorded low levels of pollutants and as a result we have not had to designate any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).

Although pollutant levels associated with transport are currently acceptable on the Island, monitoring at key points has indicated a rise in some particular areas linked to traffic figures and location.

Cross Solent ferries are a significant source of sulphur dioxide. There are currently more than 5000 annual ferry movements - with this figure liable to grow during the plan period. The recent and ongoing introduction of new cleaner fuelled craft has helped to reduce worries in this area but it will no doubt remain an issue where older craft remain in service.

Environmental assessments

We have taken into consideration the potential impact of transport and the measures and initiatives contained in this plan, through the process of carrying out a Strategic Environmental; Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). These are seen as essential part of the plan process and will help to ensure that effective environmental protection is given when considering proposals in the Plan and in any future development proposals.

We will use the outcome of the development of these assessments to guide the implementation and monitoring of this Plan and where possible will do this in partnership with the monitoring required for the emerging "Island Plan."

C.7 Improving our local economy

In many ways, the industrial structure of the Island's economy mirrors that of the South East Region and that of the UK as a whole. Heavy industry has declined over recent years and the service sector now dominates our economy by a considerable margin, with manufacturing now accounting for just 17% of our local economy.

However despite having similarities with the economy of the South East, the Island is different in many important ways. These are:

- The relatively high concentration of retail, hotels & catering and health providers on the Island. These sectors combine to account for 27% of total output on the Island, compared with just 16% in the South East and 17% in the UK.
- In contrast, business services and transport & communications account for just 12% of output on the Island, compared with almost 25% in the South East Region.
- The construction sector and engineering account for a greater proportion of output on the Island than they do in either the southeast or the UK.

Put quite simply, the Island does not share in the economic prosperity more generally enjoyed by our mainland neighbours. Above average unemployment, lower wages and a dependence on the seasonally variable

tourist industry and skills shortages all serve to hamper business growth and competitiveness.

Our Highway Private Finance Initiative (PFI) will have major benefits for our local economy. Not only will the initiative re-surface the highway network and increase accessibility, it will also offer major employment and training opportunities for the Island. As part of the contract, the council will seek to ensure that we maximise the wider economic and investment benefits.

C.7.1 Transport and the economy

How many people are employed and where they live and work is an important factor when considering transport and its implications. The 2001 census has identified that there is a link between where people live and the type of employment they undertake. This could be attributable to a number of factors including the choice or availability of jobs, desire to reduce travel distances and availability of accommodation.

We know from the Census that those employed in manufacturing appear to be more likely to live in the Cowes/Newport/Ryde triangle where these types of industry are more common.

People employed in the tourist industry (hotels and restaurants) live closest to the coastal holiday resorts of Sandown, Shanklin, and Ventnor and, to a lesser extent, Ryde. Those employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing tend to live in the predominately rural wards to the south of Newport and south and west of the Island.

C.7.2 Transport and tourism

Hotels and catering is considerably more important to the local economy than nationally. Tourism remains a significant factor on the Island and the value of tourism to the local economy should not be overlooked.

Over 2.5 million visitors come to the Island each year and visitors spend over £300 million in the local economy. It is thought that the multiple, indirect effect of this spend adds a further £100 million to the Island's economy.

The number of full time staff employed in tourism varies from 12,000 in the winter to 18,000 in the summer and tourism supports one in four local jobs. Proportionally this figure is double the regional and national levels and indirectly the tourist trade supports many thousand more jobs.

The majority of our tourist accommodation is located in the traditional coastal towns and spread of holiday destinations and attractions spread across the whole of the Island. The Island remains a popular holiday location and many visitors come to enjoy its attractive and varied scenery, as well as specific attractions such as Osborne House, Carisbrooke Castle, theme parks and events such as Cowes Week, Isle of Wight Festival, Bestival, Walking and Cycling festivals.

The influx of visitors brings an enormous range of benefits and many of the facilities, attractions and transport opportunities that we have here all year round would not exist or would be smaller if it not were for tourism.

C.8 Education and skills

Improving education and lifelong learning is a priority for the Island. The council believes that access to continuing education is a basic right for everyone. This is all the more so given the rapid pace of economic and technological change. Harnessing and realising the talents of all, especially our young people, will be essential to the future of the Island.

Whilst we have many excellent centres of education on the Island there is a common agreement that there is room to improve our education performance and the council has chosen to tackle this issue as a high priority.

Streamlining our local education system

The Island has until recently operated a three-tier education system with primary schools (catering for ages 5-9 years), middle schools (10-13 years) and high schools (14-16 years). All high schools currently cover 6th form education and the Isle of Wight College offers a range of further education courses.

There is a recognition that the complexity of the three tier system has not helped us achieve the highest standard of education our children and young adults deserve. The movement through the system and transition through the middle school phase has proved to be unsettling and the move to a two tier system (Primary and High) is now underway. This change will have an impact on travel patterns and transport and accessibility is an important factor when considering schools reorganisation.

School travel plans

The development of school travel plans can play a major role in reducing travel demands and encourage modal shift. By working with pupils, teachers, parents and governors to understand their travel needs, help remove barriers and encourage and facilitate change, it is possible to reduce a major part of our peak time traffic, reduce congestion, pollution and accidents. Increasing travel by foot and cycle can also contribute to healthy schools initiatives and help reduce childhood obesity and health problems in later life.

Private Finance Initiative

The council recognises the massive benefits that the PFI will have, not only in terms of improving and maintaining the condition of our road and cycleway network, but also the broader positive implications in terms of the education and training required to skill the local workforce to help carry out the work over the 25 year period.

C.9 Health and fitness

Transport has strong links to health, not only in terms of exercise – walking and cycling, but also in terms of accessibility and access to healthcare.

Improving physical fitness

Clinical research has shown that our changing lifestyles are having a detrimental impact on our health. The availability and use of the private car for sometimes even the shortest journey, is a contributing factor when considering the reduction of physical fitness levels and the increase of obesity and circulatory diseases.

The use of the family car for those journeys where perhaps children might have once walked or cycled to school, is impacting on health, adding to peak time road traffic, causing traffic congestion, adding to pollution levels and the perception of safety near schools.

Improving access to healthcare

The increasing number of older people living on the Island means there is a growing demand for care, support and health services. How easy it is to access these services can be a real issue, particularly for those without the use of a car. Our accessibility surveys show that currently we have very good accessibility to St Mary's Hospital in Newport and we have already had discussions with the NHS Trust and transport operators to see if we can improve this still further.

It is necessary to travel to the mainland for some specialist healthcare services making, what for some, may already be a worrying, or uncomfortable journey all the more difficult. The additional cost and inconvenience of crossing the Solent adds to the burden of accessing mainland healthcare and the Council has worked with the NHS Trust, transport operators, neighbouring authorities and others to see how the situation can be improved.

D. Access to Information

D.1 Report circulation

In order to minimise costs, impact on the environment and to enable continual review, the Council will not be providing printed copies of this full plan but will instead make copies available on CD-ROM and via the Council's website (see below).

The Council has also produced a leaflet summarising key points and detailing how to view the full report. Copies of this leaflet will be sent to:

- Council Members.
- All Council departments.
- Town and Parish Councils.
- Rural Community Council.
- Quality Transport Partnership members.
- Transport operators.
- Interest groups / organisations.
- Major employers.
- Health service providers.
- All Island schools.
- Isle of Wight College.

D.2 Available on the internet

This full transport plan together with the Council's first and second Local Transport Plans and previous Annual Progress Reports can be downloaded from the Council's website.

Other documents are also available online, including the Sustainable Community Strategy – "Eco Island", the Council's Corporate Plan, Best Value Reports, Unitary Development Plan, details of the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and Local Agenda 21 strategy.

The Councils website can be found at www.iwight.com or www.iwight.com/transport for the LTP, APRs and other related transport documents.

D.3 Inspection copies

The Council has made CD copies of this document available for inspection at the following locations:

- Island libraries: Newport, Ryde, Sandown, Shanklin, Ventnor, Cowes, East Cowes, Freshwater, Brighstone, Bembridge, Niton, and on the Mobile Library.
- Isle of Wight Council - Customer Reception Area, County Hall, High Street, Newport.
- Highways and Transport, Enterprise House, St Cross Business Park, Monks Brook, Newport, Isle of Wight.

- Planning Offices, Seaclose Offices, Seaclose Park, Fairlee Road Newport, Isle of Wight.
- Customer Information Points.

D.4 Other versions

For details on how to obtain a copy of the plan in large print, Braille, on tape, disc or in other languages, please contact Chris Wells on (01983) 821000 (type calls welcome) fax (01983) 823545 or email: chris.wells@iow.gov.uk

D.5 Explanatory leaflets

A set of information leaflets have been produced, explaining all aspects of the Council's Highways and Transport Service, including leaflets on Local Transport Plans, Annual Progress Reports and School Travel Plans. Copies of these leaflets are available free of charge from the Highways and Transport Services department or can be downloaded from the Council's website at www.iwight.com.