

## 2 Strategic framework

### 2.1 Vision

2.1.1 Our vision for transport in Shropshire is:

An economically vibrant, healthy, inclusive and sustainable society where people meet many of their needs locally, served by an integrated transport system which allows people to have good and reliable access to jobs, services, learning and leisure opportunities, and which protects and enhances environmental quality and human health.

2.1.2 We have considered in more detail what this vision means for Shropshire:

- **An economically vibrant society.** A diverse range of businesses will be able to grow and thrive in Shropshire, benefiting from good links to the rest of the UK and Europe. Businesses will also benefit from the high quality of the local environment and the use of technology to reduce the need to travel.
- **A healthy society.** People will have more opportunities and incentives to follow a healthy lifestyle, as there will be attractive conditions for walking and cycling. They will be able to breathe clean air and suffer less from traffic noise.
- **An inclusive society.** There will be more equitable access to the key services and opportunities such as jobs, education and healthcare. People who do not have access to a car will not be disadvantaged, and will be able to lead more fulfilling and independent lives, realising their aspirations and potential.
- **A sustainable society.** People will be able to access more opportunities locally. When they need to travel they will be able to do so in ways which have a less adverse impact on the environment, on other people's quality of life, on climate change and on non-renewable energy sources.
- **Meeting many needs locally.** New technology will enable more people to work and access services from home. There will be more delivery services, local facilities and mobile services, reducing the distance people need to travel to fulfil many of their needs.
- **Integrated transport.** People will be able to use a full range of transport modes. Information and payment systems, facilities and services will be in place to encourage use of the most appropriate mode, and to ease interchange between modes.
- **Good and reliable access.** People will be able to reach services and opportunities within a reasonable time and at a reasonable cost. Discrepancies between the cost and time of different modes will be reduced. Congestion will be reduced, enabling people to plan their journeys based on reliable journey times.
- **Protect and enhance environmental quality.** The transport choices people make will have less impact on the local and global environment. Well designed and maintained transport infrastructure will respect and enhance the natural and historic environment.
- **Protect and enhance human health.** People will be safer, and will feel safer, with reduced risk of death and injury from road accidents. People will be encouraged to use healthier modes of transport.

### 2.2 Strategic aims

2.2.1 To achieve this vision we have developed four overarching aims for local transport in Shropshire:



- **Accessibility.**  
To improve access to jobs and facilities in ways which are sustainable, particularly for people from disadvantaged groups or areas;
- **Environment.**  
To protect and improve the built and natural environment and reduce the impact of traffic on local communities;
- **Economy.**  
To support sustainable economic activity and rural regeneration;
- **Safety and health.**  
To create safer roads and healthier, more secure communities.

- Improve accessibility in sustainable ways for disadvantaged communities to:
  - jobs and training
  - healthcare and essential services
  - leisure and tourism
- Improve air quality, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas
- Improve local environmental quality and reduce the impact of traffic
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport
- Reduce and prevent congestion
- Support rural regeneration
- Reduce road accident casualties
- Reduce fear of crime and accidents when travelling
- Increase levels of active travel

2.2.2 These aims broadly coincide with the government’s shared priorities for transport.

2.2.3 For each of the strategic aims, we have developed a detailed strategy. These are set out in the later sections of this document.

**2.3 Objectives and outcomes**

2.3.1 The detailed strategies for accessibility, environment, economy and safety and health include more detailed objectives for each theme. These are summarised below:

2.3.2 To demonstrate what the achievement of our aims and objectives will mean for people in Shropshire, we have established a set of outcomes. These are the results which will be meaningful for local people, and which will help to improve their quality of life. These outcomes, and their relationship to our transport vision, aims and objectives, are set out in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Relationship between vision, aims, objectives and outcomes

Local Transport Vision	Strategic aim	Objectives	Outcomes for Shropshire People
<b>Improving Accessibility</b>			
There will be more equitable access to the key services and opportunities such as jobs, education and healthcare. People who do not have access to a car will not be disadvantaged, and will be able to lead more fulfilling and independent lives, realising their aspirations and potential.  Increased availability of technology will enable more people to work and access services from home. The availability of more delivery services, local facilities and	Improve access to jobs and facilities, in ways which are sustainable; particularly for people from disadvantaged groups or areas	Improve accessibility in sustainable ways for disadvantaged communities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Jobs and training</li> <li>● Healthcare and essential services</li> <li>● Leisure and tourism</li> </ul>	People, especially those most in need and those without access to a car, will be able to access a range of key services and opportunities more easily and quickly-enabling them to live their daily lives.

Local Transport Vision	Strategic aim	Objectives	Outcomes for Shropshire People
mobile services will reduce the distance people need to travel to fulfil many of their needs.			
<b>Protecting and Enhancing the Environment</b>			
<p>People will be able to access more opportunities locally. When they need to travel they will be able to do so in ways which have a less adverse impact on the environment, on other people's quality of life, on climate change and on non-renewable energy sources.</p> <p>People will be able to breathe clean air and suffer less from traffic noise.</p> <p>The transport choices people make will have less impact on the local and global environment. Well designed and maintained transport infrastructure will respect and enhance the natural and historic environment.</p> <p>People will be able to use a full range of transport modes. Information and payment systems, facilities and services will be in place to encourage use of the most appropriate mode, and to ease interchange between modes.</p>	<p>Protect and improve the built and natural environment and reduce the impact of traffic on local communities</p>	<p>Improve air quality particularly in AQMA's</p> <p>Improve local environmental quality and reduce the impact of traffic</p> <p>Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport</p>	<p>People will be able to breath clean air, and there will be no areas in Shropshire where air quality does not meet minimum standards.</p> <p>More people will use public transport, helping to reduce traffic levels</p> <p>More people will use Park and Ride services to access town centres</p> <p>People will enjoy a better quality environment</p> <p>People in many towns and villages will experience less negative impact from: traffic and heavy good vehicles using inappropriate routes; illegally parked vehicles and speeding traffic.</p> <p>The rate of traffic growth in the County as a whole will be reduced. Combined with greater use of more energy efficient vehicles and renewable fuels this will contributing to reduced greenhouse gas emissions</p>
<b>Supporting a sustainable economy</b>			
<p>A diverse range of businesses will be able to grow and thrive in Shropshire, benefiting from good links to the rest of the UK and Europe. Businesses will also benefit from the high quality of the local environment and the use of technology to reduce the need to travel.</p> <p>People will be able to reach services and opportunities within a reasonable time and at a reasonable cost. Discrepancies between the cost and time of different modes will be reduced. Congestion will be reduced, enabling people to plan their journeys based on reliable journey times.</p>	<p>To support sustainable economic activity and rural regeneration</p>	<p>Reduce and prevent congestion</p> <p>Support rural regeneration</p>	<p>People will make fewer car journeys in main urban areas, preventing further traffic growth and congestion</p> <p>Bus passengers will enjoy more reliable services</p> <p>People and businesses will be able to access high quality market towns more easily, helping to support local economies</p> <p>People will be able to use roads maintained in structurally sound condition</p>
<b>Safety and Health</b>			
<p>People will be safer, and will feel safer, with reduced risk of death and injury from road accidents. People will be encouraged to use healthier modes of transport.</p>	<p>To create safer roads and healthier, more secure communities</p>	<p>Reduce road accident casualties</p>	<p>Fewer people will be killed or injured in road traffic accidents</p>



Local Transport Vision	Strategic aim	Objectives	Outcomes for Shropshire People
People will have more opportunities and incentives to follow a healthy lifestyle, as there will be attractive conditions for walking and cycling.		<p>Reduce fear of crime and accidents when travelling</p> <p>Increase levels of active travel</p>	<p>Fewer people in high risk groups will be involved in road traffic accidents</p> <p>People will feel safer when they and their families are moving about in their local area</p> <p>Conditions for cycling and walking will be more attractive and more people will make more trips by foot and cycle.</p> <p>More children will walk or cycle to school, and less will travel alone by car.</p>

## 2.4 Policy context

2.4.1 Transport is not an end in itself, but an integral part of the way we live. For this reason, our Local Transport Plan has been developed within the wider context of other plans and policies, at a local, regional and national level.

2.4.2 This Local Transport Plan is a corporate document, supporting and supported by the County Council's wider strategies and long term vision. It has involved input related to all aspects of the Council's work, including spatial planning, economic development, community services and children's services.

2.4.3 It also reflects the longer term vision for the West Midlands Region and helps to contribute towards delivering regional objectives.

2.4.4 Importantly, it also reflects the government's own priorities for transport. At the heart of the Local Transport Plan is a focus on the shared priorities agreed between central and local government: improving access to jobs and services, improving public transport and reducing congestion, pollution and accidents.

2.4.5 These national, regional and local level policies and plans form a wider framework of objectives which underpin this Local Transport Plan. A summary of these key cross-cutting policies is provided in Table 2.2. This highlights the key policy drivers which have informed this Local Transport Plan.

2.4.6 A more detailed review of the policy context in specific areas such as economic development, health, environment, safety and social exclusion has been included in our detailed thematic strategies, set out later on in this document.

Table 2.2 Strategic policy context

Policy	Key vision/ aim	Relevant key objectives	Key policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
<b>National</b>			
Central and Local Government Shared Priorities For Transport	Improving access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need, in ways which are sustainable: improved	Further defined as : Delivering Accessibility	To reflect national shared priorities

Policy	Key vision/ aim	Relevant key objectives	Key policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
This agreement between Central Government and the Local Government Association sets out a clear overall goal for transport improvements.	public transport; reduced problems of congestion, pollution and safety.	Tackling Congestion Better Air Quality Safer Roads	
Transport White Paper: The Future of Transport (2004)	Set out intention to focus on three central themes:  Sustained investment over the longer term  Improvements to transport management - including easing congestion  Planning ahead - including leading the debate on road pricing	Key strategies for Local Government to focus on:  Freer flowing local roads  More, and more reliable, buses  More demand-responsive transport services - using buses, car sharing, minibuses, taxis and private hire vehicles to improve accessibility  Make services more accessible, so that people have a real choice about when and how they travel  Exploiting the potential of existing and new technology - for example in managing demand for transport services, improving the capacity of existing networks and improving safety  Better, more reliable transport information  Joined-up transport and land use planning so that new developments do not cause congestion  Promoting the use of school travel plans, workplace travel plans and personalised travel planning to encourage people to consider and use alternatives to their cars  Creating a culture, and an improved local environment, so that cycling and walking are seen as attractive alternatives to car travel in both urban and rural areas	To take into account the key strategies identified for local government to focus upon  To plan ahead to ensure we prevent future transport related problems
Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future (2003)  A national Sustainable Communities Plan - covering issues crucial to creating places where people want to live and where they will continue to want to live, incorporating issues such as housing, neighbourhood renewal, planning, transport, economy, employment and skills.	The West Midlands regional plan aims to address four key issues:  Improving the quality of urban areas;  Addressing rural issues more effectively;  Diversifying and modernising the local economy; and  Modernising the transport infrastructure of the region.	The plan identifies that rural regeneration will focus on:  Supporting existing businesses and encouraging diversification;  Developing the role of market towns;  Improving public transport access to jobs and services; and  Providing affordable housing to meet local needs.  The report highlights the key regional challenges for transport as:	To contribute towards improving the quality of urban areas  To support and improve access to market towns  To improve mobility for more disadvantaged communities  To improve access to jobs and services



Policy	Key vision/ aim	Relevant key objectives	Key policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
		<p>The poor personal mobility of disadvantaged communities</p> <p>The ability of communities to access jobs and services</p>	
<p>Rural Development White Paper - Our Countryside: the Future: A Fair Deal for Rural England. (2000)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Rural Strategy DEFRA (2004)</p>	<p>Sustain and enhance the distinctive environment, economy and social fabric of the English countryside for the benefit of all</p>	<p>Support the rural economy and encourage enterprise</p> <p>Tackle social exclusion</p> <p>Protect the natural environment</p> <p>Bring about fair access to services</p>	<p>To improve access to services and support the rural economy whilst protecting the natural environment</p>
<b>Regional</b>			
<p>Regional Transport Strategy- encompassed within the Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands RPG11 (2004)</p> <p>Further detail is provided in the Region's Transport Delivery Plan, West Midlands Regional Assembly, March 2005</p>	<p>A region with an efficient network of integrated transport facilities and services which meet the needs of both individuals and the business community in the most sustainable way</p>	<p>Improve access in the regions in a way which:</p> <p>Reduces the need for travel</p> <p>Expands travel choice</p> <p>Tackles congestion</p> <p>Improves safety and protects the environment.</p> <p>This is to be achieved through:</p> <p>Measures to improve significantly accessibility and mobility within the Major Urban Areas (MUA's)</p> <p>Measures to improve accessibility and mobility in other urban areas, market towns and rural areas so that more sustainable means of travel are encouraged and local regeneration initiatives are supported</p> <p>Measures to improve national road and rail networks to ensure that strategic links to external markets are maintained</p> <p>Measures to encourage behavioural change across the entire Region</p> <p>Measures to improve the safety and security of the transport system.</p>	<p>To improve accessibility in sustainable ways and support local regeneration</p> <p>To encourage travel behavioural change with a shift to more sustainable transport modes</p> <p>To improve the safety and security of the transport system</p>

Policy	Key vision/ aim	Relevant key objectives	Key policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (2004)	A key regional aim is the pursuit of urban and rural renaissance by arresting the unsustainable trend of population shift from the conurbations to more rural areas, such as Shropshire.	<p>Majority of new development to occur in the existing large urban areas of the West Midlands.</p> <p>Major shire towns (including Shrewsbury and Telford) to be sub-regional foci for new investment to support local regeneration and help meet the economic, social and cultural needs of surrounding rural areas.</p> <p>Market towns to play a key role in the regeneration of rural areas, acting as a focus for sustainable economic and housing development and providing services and other facilities to their rural hinterlands.</p> <p>Priorities for market towns are identified as enhancements to employment, social, health and basic shopping facilities as well as improved accessibility.</p>	<p>To respond to plans for Shrewsbury and Telford to act as major sub-regional foci for growth</p> <p>To develop the role of Shropshire's market towns as viable communities and improve connections between towns and their hinterlands</p>
<b>Local</b>			
Shropshire Community Strategy 2006-2010, Local Strategic Partnership	To improve significantly the quality of life for Shropshire people by working together	<p>Every child and young person matters -ensure young people are well-educated and fulfilled to give them a great start in life, enable them to have a say in their future.</p> <p>Create active and healthier communities and reduce health inequality.</p> <p>Improve services and opportunities for older people.</p> <p>Make the best of culture and leisure opportunities and support the voluntary sector.</p> <p>Reduce crime and the perception of crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse.</p> <p>Promote equal opportunities for everyone</p> <p>Build strong and diverse economy with jobs for a skilled and competitive workforce</p> <p>Preserve and enhance Shropshire's natural environment and heritage</p> <p>Improving access to services, support, places, transport and facilities across the county</p> <p>Meet housing need through help, advice and affordable housing.</p>	<p>To improve access to opportunities, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of rural communities, younger and older people</p> <p>To improve road safety</p> <p>To support active and healthy communities</p> <p>To help to reduce crime and fear of crime,</p> <p>To support the development of a strong and diverse economy</p> <p>To contribute to the protection of the environment and development of low carbon communities</p>
Shropshire Corporate Plan 2006-2011	To improve significantly the quality of life for Shropshire people	<p>Key outcomes for Shropshire People: ( <b>top priorities in bold</b>)</p> <p><b>Giving every child and young person the best opportunities today and for the future/ Meeting the needs of children and young people</b></p>	



Policy	Key vision/ aim	Relevant key objectives	Key policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
		<p><b>Improving the quality of life for rural communities by facilitating access to services locally</b></p> <p><b>Improving access to services and work for local people - enabling people to live their daily lives</b></p> <p>Improving the quality of the environment in which people live</p> <p>Improving the quality of life and independence of older people</p> <p>Reducing fear of crime and anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Improving workforce skills to enhance employment prospects in growth sectors</p> <p>Increasing growth and sustainability of enterprise and businesses</p> <p>Building a successful economy whilst protecting the environment.</p> <p>Sustainable low carbon communities with strengthened economic capability</p> <p>Safe and well maintained roads</p>	

## 2.5 Priorities and strategic approach

2.5.1 In the context of our strategic framework, it is important to identify which are our highest priorities. This will help us to target our resources to greatest effect, and to manage potential conflicts between different aims and objectives.

2.5.2 It has become clear from our assessment of key policy drivers, our analysis of local problems and the views of our stakeholders (see Chapter 3) that the objectives with the greatest resonance across the whole of Shropshire are:

- Improving accessibility
- Reducing road accident casualties

2.5.3 These are therefore our highest priorities, to which significant resources will be directed.

2.5.4 We have also agreed corporate stretched targets for improving accessibility and reducing road accident casualties as part of our Local Area Agreement and Local Public Service Agreement with central government.

2.5.5 Identifying these as the highest priorities does not, of course, mean that we have to focus on them to the exclusion of everything else. As part of our Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) we examined three strategic options:

- **Option 1**  
Focus on accessibility and safety – by improving access and safety of travel by car, with limited emphasis on other modes
- **Option 2**  
Focus on safety and accessibility as above, but also traffic management measures to tackle congestion in town centres and measures to improve air quality in existing

Air Quality Management Areas, reflecting the four shared priorities agreed with government.

- **Option 3**  
Focus on accessibility, safety, congestion and air quality, with the addition of quality of life issues such as environmental quality, healthy lifestyles and addressing climate change.

2.5.6 These three options were subjected to a rigorous assessment of their likely impacts on all aspects of the environment and human health. Full details are given in the Environmental Report.

2.5.7 Option 3 had the most positive impacts, and was also found to be the best able to achieve the range of outcomes identified for the Local Transport Plan, thus providing value for money. Through the iterative Strategic Environmental Assessment process, we have been able to identify strategic mitigation measures to further reduce the adverse impacts of Option 3, and these have been integrated into our Environmental Strategy.

2.5.8 Our overall strategic approach will therefore be to take a two pronged approach:

#### **Improve road safety and accessibility in ways which enhance sustainable travel options**

2.5.9 Our highest priorities will be to improve accessibility and road safety. We will seek to improve accessibility by working with partners to improve services and facilities available locally without the need to travel, and by focusing on improving more sustainable transport modes, such as public transport, cycling and walking. This will improve accessibility for people without access to a car, and will help reduce their dependence on car travel and limit traffic growth.

2.5.10 In improving road safety we will particularly aim to improve the safety of more sustainable modes of travel, and encourage

driver behaviour which is compatible with the needs of these users and which enhances local environmental quality.

2.5.11 By approaching our highest priorities in this way we will help reduce the need to travel and encourage more sustainable modes. This will contribute to our other aims and objectives for protecting and enhancing the environment, reducing congestion and encouraging healthy lifestyles.

#### **To manage traffic and enhance the sustainability of car use**

2.5.12 Whilst our main aim is to improve road safety and accessibility in sustainable ways by reducing car dependence we see this as a long term strategy. In a mainly rural county, the car is likely to be the dominant mode of transport for the foreseeable future. We will therefore manage car use in a way that contributes to our core outcomes, by working to improve the sustainability of car use and reduce its impact on the environment.

2.5.13 We will encourage the use of more sustainable fuels and vehicles, ensure traffic uses the most appropriate routes, and manage space on the road network as efficiently as we can. We will improve the management of car parking.

2.5.14 We will improve interchange between car and more sustainable modes for those parts of the journey where environmental and safety impacts are greatest. This includes park and ride to town centres, interchange to rail for longer distance travel and “park and stride” to reduce congestion around schools.

2.5.15 In Shrewsbury, where congestion and poor air quality are more severe we are undertaking a very detailed study as part of the government’s Transport Innovation Fund initiative. This will include consideration of road user charging as part of a very ambitious plan



to improve public transport and invest in the town's transport infrastructure, in line with Local Transport Plan objectives.

2.5.16 More information about the way we will work to achieve our strategic aims, objectives and outcomes is given in the four thematic strategies and in the area strategies for Shrewsbury, the market towns and the rural area, later in this document.

## 2.6 Guiding principles

2.6.1 This Local Transport Plan has been developed in the light of a number of guiding principles which derive from the Council's core values. It is important that these principles continue to influence the way we implement the Plan.

Table 2.3 Links between SCC core values and LTP guiding principles

SCC Core Value	LTP Guiding Principles
Put our customer first	Community Involvement
Promote diversity	Working with "harder to reach" groups
Always improve	Working in Partnership Working with other local authorities
Care for staff	
Demonstrate value for money	Value For Money
Communicate openly and honestly	Providing Information

2.6.2 In the following sections we describe how these guiding principles have been applied to the development of the Local Transport Plan and how they will influence its delivery.

## 2.7 Community involvement

2.7.1 To ensure that the transport needs of Shropshire people are fully reflected in our Local Transport Plan we undertook an extensive programme of community consultation during

preparation of the Plan. Community involvement will continue to be a key part of the process of developing our detailed programmes and delivering individual schemes. Only by involving local people and potential users of transport schemes can we ensure that they fully meet local needs. Throughout the Local Transport Plan we provide examples of the way we have used stakeholder aspirations to develop our strategies and proposals, and the way in which we will continue to involve local communities in decision making.

### Community involvement in developing the LTP

2.7.2 Consultation has been key to the development of the LTP. We have sought the views and recommendations of a wide range of people and organisations, ranging from the general public to specific organisations and interest groups.

2.7.3 The first stage of our consultation process was an audit of existing information. This included a review of:

- Community aspirations identified through consultation on other strategic plans. Particular attention was paid to the data gathered during preparation of the County and District Community Strategies. However a raft of other strategic plans were reviewed, including the Older People's Strategy, Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Economic Development Strategy.
- Individual Parish Plans to identify local communities' transport concerns and aspirations
- Data obtained through representative public opinion surveys, including the Shropshire People's Panel and the Shropshire Crime and Disorder survey.

2.7.4 Having obtained this information we then undertook a number of specific consultation events at each stage of the LTP preparation process.

2.7.5 Early in the process (Spring/ Summer 2004) we undertook consultation to identify key transport issues:

- Specific transport related questions were included in the Shropshire People's Panel survey (a representative sample of 2000 Shropshire residents) to gain an understanding of people's opinions on transport and access.
- A simple and attractive Local Transport Plan Summary Document, providing an overview of current progress and including a questionnaire to gauge public opinion on performance and future priorities was widely circulated. 5,000 copies were sent to parish councils and special interest groups, and copies were circulated via public buildings, public meetings, schools and supermarkets.
- We attended a series of 17 local public discussion forums across the County (Let's Talk Shropshire). These events allowed people to communicate their views on a range of public service issues. We were able to hear from local people about their local transport concerns and aspirations, helping us to understand the links between transport problems and other quality of life issues.
- We identified harder to reach groups including disabled people and young people who were generally under-represented in responses through the main consultation process. We undertook targeted consultation to elicit the specific needs and concerns of these 'harder to reach' groups.

2.7.6 From this information we developed draft aims and objectives for the Local Transport Plan. We undertook specific consultation on these during winter 2004/5 including:

- Specific questionnaires targeted at key stakeholder organisations and interest groups to obtain their feedback on draft aims and objectives.
- A series of meetings and workshops with representative organisations, businesses and interest groups to discuss the draft aims and objectives and the best way of prioritising our actions to achieve them. This included discussions with:
  - Local Strategic Partnerships and their subgroups
  - Shropshire Economic Forum and Shrewsbury Chamber of Commerce.
  - Rural Transport Partnerships in north and south Shropshire.
  - Shropshire Older People's Forum
  - Shropshire Cycle Forum
  - Shropshire Access forum and Shropshire Bridleway Group
  - Motorcycle user representatives.
  - Shropshire Bus Forum and Rail Forum
  - Shrewsbury Disabled Access Forum
- We also undertook specific transport studies which themselves involved extensive public consultation. These included a review of the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road and the North West Shropshire Public Transport Study.
- At this stage a Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report was prepared, this was subject to consultation with statutory environmental bodies and local groups interested in environmental issues.

2.7.7 In spring 2005 a draft version of the Provisional LTP was prepared and circulated for consultation to a wide range of organisations, special interest and residents groups, as well as members of the public who at an earlier stage had shown an interest in being further involved. The document was also made available via the County Council's web site with an online



comments form to gain feedback. Comments received at this stage were incorporated into the preparation of the Provisional Plan.

2.7.8 The Provisional Local Transport Plan was widely circulated in paper format and via the Internet. Formal comments were invited and have been incorporated into the final Plan. In addition more specific consultation has been undertaken with partner organisations and the public as part of the development of our accessibility strategy and action plans. Consultation has also taken place with environmental organisations on the final Environmental Report.



### Continuing community involvement

2.7.9 We will continue to involve local people in the delivery of our Local Transport Plan. Wherever possible we will involve people as early as possible in the delivery process. Examples of the type of involvement that will take place at different stages in scheme development and design are:

- Through standing forums and groups which have a ongoing practical involvement in prioritisation, design and co-ordination of schemes. Examples are the Shropshire cycle forum, rail forum and district bus

forums. Interested members of the public and groups can attend and participate in these forums.

- Through specific consultative groups developed for particular studies and projects. For example, a consultative wider reference group is being set up for the Transport Innovation Fund study for Shrewsbury, including representatives of key local organisations, business and interest groups.
- Where the Local Transport Plan identifies specific problems or needs which are to be addressed, we will consult with local communities and target groups to make sure we develop effective action plans. For example, we will continue to consult with disability access forums and people experiencing access problems as we develop accessibility action plans, and as we prepare programmes for the dedicated mobility improvement fund. Similarly, we will always consult bus users and stakeholders over improvements to public transport, including the development of new demand-responsive bus services.
- We work very closely with local communities, individuals and interest groups on proposed improvement schemes. The nature of this consultation depends upon the scale of the scheme and may range from simple, but early, discussions with local residents through to full scale exercises in public enjoyment for larger schemes. We use a range of appropriate tools for this, including questionnaires, leaflets and public exhibitions. Community audits may be used to elicit key issues and aspirations and in some cases a local steering group may be established to advise on the proposals. This process has been used to very good effect in the development of 'Safer Routes to School' schemes which,

as a result, have a high degree of community support. It is also appropriate for town centre enhancement schemes, major traffic management proposals and many other types of scheme. In our experience, effective consultation and community involvement is the key to gaining public acceptability for complicated schemes, such as recent proposals to introduce on-street parking charges and residents' parking in Ludlow.

### Community involvement in delivering transport solutions

2.7.10 There are many opportunities for people to become actively involved in delivering transport solutions. For example, we have a strong tradition of voluntary involvement in the community transport sector, with many people giving up their time to drive community buses,

or offer their services to the community car scheme as drivers or co-ordinators. Similarly, we encourage people to volunteer as cycle training instructors or child pedestrian training instructors, making a valuable contribution to road safety. Many of the organisations such as Civic Societies, environmental groups and local partnerships whom we routinely consult on transport issues are entirely staffed by volunteers whose interest and expertise makes a valuable contribution to the development of our transport policies.

2.7.11 We will continue to ensure that the Local Transport Plan itself is widely available to inform people and stimulate active engagement with transport issues. The summary document, which accompanies this plan, is designed to give a clear and concise explanation of our transport policies and plans.





## 2.8 Working with "harder to reach" groups

2.8.1 In developing the Local Transport Plan we were careful to ensure that groups with specific transport needs that were under-represented in the main consultation feedback were targeted for their views. This included a detailed youth project, a questionnaire for disabled people and a special meeting with Shropshire Older People's Forum.

### 2.8.2 Youth Transport Project

2.8.3 A specific consultation exercise was undertaken with around 200 young people. This included a range of pupils aged 11-18 from 3 schools, one in Shrewsbury and two rural schools in Much Wenlock and Pontesbury; young people attending youth groups in North Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth, and a "young mums" group based in north Shrewsbury.

2.8.4 Participants completed questionnaires about their travel habits, attitudes and opinions. They also completed a travel diary to record the journey they made, how they travelled and who with, and to record any problems they experienced. The young people were also encouraged to take photos to illustrate this diary to highlight the travel issues of concern to them. The project culminated in the pupils of the three schools giving a presentations of their findings to elected members and transport professionals.

### Consultation with Disabled People

2.8.5 A questionnaire was designed specifically to obtain the view of disabled people in conjunction with the Shrewsbury Access forum. This was distributed to members of this forum and to users of the dial a ride and community transport schemes across the county. Responses were received from a cross section of people with different disabilities including mobility and sensory impairments.

Would you like to ...  
Cross this Every Day!!!



We have to  
cross this  
road to get to  
School!



## Ongoing Involvement with hard to reach groups

2.8.6 In delivery of our local transport plan we will continue to ensure that we seek the views of such harder to reach groups. Examples of the way we will do this will be to specifically seek the participation of young people in public consultation events, this can often be achieved through engaging local schools or youth groups. We will also ensure we consult members of the Youth Parliament (MYP's) on relevant schemes. We will undertake ongoing consultation with disability access forums and seek the views of local disabled people on specific schemes.

## 2.9 Working in partnership

### Working with internal and other public service providers

2.9.1 Transport is a key cross cutting issue, impacting on service areas across the County Council, and the work of other public service providers. We have worked closely with other service areas across the County Council, and with wider public service providers in developing the Local Transport Plan, and will continue to work together at both a strategic and project level as we implement the plan.

- From the outset of plan development we have been closely involved with the countywide Local Strategic Partnership who have been preparing the Community Plan over the same timescale. As a result, improving transport and access have been identified as key priorities within both the community and corporate plans, and stretch targets for accessibility and road safety are included in our Local Area Agreement.
- Shropshire has been selected as a DEFRA Rural Pathfinder authority, with the work directed by the Local Strategic Partnership focusing on improving access for rural areas. We have taken an active role on the project working group, helping to facilitate and co-ordinate multi-agency working to address accessibility issues. This work has fed into the development of our accessibility strategy and will continue to influence the delivery of this strategy.
- During preparation of the LTP internal discussions have taken place with all relevant departments of the County Council including those dealing with all aspects of transport, economic development and tourism, environment and sustainability, education, young people's services, older people's services, sports development, countryside, libraries and corporate planning.
- The Local Transport Plan has been informed by existing plans and strategies covering those areas and will inform emerging and revised plans such as the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- We will continue to work in partnership with colleagues to ensure our transport schemes contribute to meeting other service objectives (e.g. improving tourism information through transport schemes), and that other service areas address the transport needs of their users (e.g provision of transport information for new community centres)
- We will continue to work closely with Community Safety Partnerships at a county and district level, on the development and delivery of our safety and health strategy.
- We work closely with the health sector, both on access to health facility issues and the promotion of healthier lifestyles, undertaking joint projects in areas such as school travel and cycling promotion.
- In developing our accessibility strategy we have worked closely with a range of wider public service providers, including the Learning and Skills Council, Job Centre Plus, Business Link and health sector agencies through a Joint Transport group.



We have built on the previous work by the established Rural Transport Partnerships, and will continue this joint working through a new multi- agency Accessibility Partnership that will oversee the delivery of the strategy.

- Emergency services, such as the police, ambulance and fire services have been involved at a strategic level in developing this strategy, and are also closely involved in the development and design of transport and highway schemes.

### Working with all tiers of local government

2.9.2 Shropshire's Local Transport Plan has been developed in conjunction with, and will be delivered through, all tiers of Local Government in the county; district and borough, and town and parish councils.

- At the outset of the LTP development process all district, borough, town and parish councils were consulted using questionnaires for their ideas and aspirations from the Local Transport Plan. A review of Local and Parish Plans was undertaken to identify key local issues
- All tiers of local government were later consulted on the draft vision, aims and objectives for the Plan, and they also subsequently commented on both draft and provisional versions of the Plan .
- We have worked particularly closely with appropriate officers and members of District and Borough Councils through joint working groups on issues such as spatial planning, economic development and regeneration, parking, community transport and air quality. District and Borough Councils have been particularly involved in the development of the local area plans,

ensuing links were made with existing Local Plans and the emerging Local Development Frameworks.

- In market towns, joint working groups, involving officers and members of County, District and Town councils are an established and effective way of progressing transport schemes, and will continue to be used as we deliver this LTP.
- These close working arrangements at both district and town and parish level will continue as we work to deliver many aspects of the plan in partnership e.g. air quality action plans, decriminalised parking enforcement, town parking strategies, town centre enhancement schemes, new demand responsive rural transport services.
- We have also worked very positively with representatives of the Government Office for the West Midlands in developing the Local Transport Plan, as well as in the development of our Local Areas Agreement targets.

### Working with other transport agencies and operators

2.9.3 In preparing our Local Transport Plan we have been careful to ensure that proposals with impacts on other strategic transport networks have been worked up in consultation with responsible agencies, and that operators of transport services have been fully consulted, to ensure that their needs are being addressed:

- Shropshire County Council has regular meetings with our partners involved in managing the strategic transport networks and have utilised these meetings to discuss LTP issues.

- We meet the Highways Agency and their network contractors on a regular basis, these meetings are vital as key routes such as the A49 and M54/A5 pass through Shropshire and link with local roads. The liaison meetings have been utilised to discuss overall policy direction, as well as specific potential projects, such as the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road, signing strategies and cycle network aspirations.
- Through our dedicated rail officer we liaise closely with the rail industry bodies. Local transport plan proposals likely to impact on the rail network were discussed at an early stage with the Strategic Rail Authority, and were fed into the West Midlands Rail Utilisation Strategy. Consultation was undertaken at a local level via the a regular Shropshire Rail Forum which brings all sectors of the rail industry and community rail partnership representatives together.
- Consultation on the LTP was undertaken with all local bus, coach and taxi operators via the Shropshire Bus Forum; and specific discussions were held, as part of regular meetings, with Arriva, the largest commercial bus operator in the County. Arriva's key aspiration is for improvements at key junctions in Shrewsbury where bus services are regularly delayed. This is addressed by proposals within the plan. SCC already has a Bus Quality Partnership agreement with Arriva covering selected routes within the County and there is agreement in principal to expand this agreement to encompass further routes, and develop punctuality partnerships. This will be a key area of work over the LTP period.
- A range of community and voluntary organisations operate transport services within the county. Detailed discussion have

been undertaken with these groups, via the newly created Community Transport Consortium, to maximise use of their local knowledge and ensure that their needs and aspirations are reflected in the Plan. Continued close partnership working with these groups will be key to the delivery of our rural transport improvements and achievement of accessibility goals.

- A Shropshire freight transport partnership has been established, and has helped to steer our strategy proposals for addressing the needs of freight. Freight operators and associations have been fully consulted on the LTP proposals.

### **Cross boundary working and sharing best practice**

**2.9.4** Shropshire lies within the West Midlands Region, but also has boundaries with Wales and the North West Region. There are borders with Telford & Wrekin, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire within the West Midlands; Wrexham and Powys in Wales and Cheshire in the North West. There is also close proximity to Flintshire and Denbighshire in North Wales; and the major urban areas of the Potteries and the West Midland conurbation, particularly Wolverhampton and Dudley boroughs. Figure 2.1 shows Shropshire in a regional context.

**2.9.5** People's transport needs do not change at administrative boundaries, and development proposals, transport policies and schemes of neighbouring authorities will have implications for travel and traffic in Shropshire.

**2.9.6** Our closest neighbouring authority is Telford and Wrekin Council. The preparation of a joint LTP was considered but not deemed the most appropriate course of action due to the very different key challenges facing the two areas. Shropshire's transport system must focus on our



sparse rural areas with established but lagging economies, whilst Telford must address urban regeneration issues and rapid population growth and economic development.

Figure 2.1 Shropshire in a regional setting

**Shropshire Regional Setting**



0 10 Miles  
0 10 Kilometers

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Shropshire County Council, 100019801, 2004.

2.9.7 However, we recognise the large volume of cross boundary movement and we will continue work very closely with Telford and Wrekin on a whole range of transport issues including our accessibility planning and public transport development, in order to achieve best value for Shropshire as a whole. Examples of recent projects which have demonstrated cross boundary collaboration are the joint Kickstart funding bid submitted for improvements to the Shrewsbury to Telford bus service, and joint research with Jobcentre Plus into accessibility to work issues. We hold an annual Passenger

Transport Conference jointly with Telford and Wrekin Council as well as an annual rail conference.

2.9.8 We have been careful in developing our plan to fully engage with all our neighbouring authorities, both in the West Midlands and beyond, to address cross boundary issues.

2.9.9 At a strategic level Shropshire is an active member of the West Midland Regional Transport Group which addresses transport issues of concern across the region, shares information and best practice and facilitates joint working on schemes of regional and sub regional importance. We are also actively involved in a West Midland Shires Liaison group to discuss and address transport issues of greatest concern to the more rural parts of the West Midland Region.

2.9.10 Shropshire has positively engaged with the regional prioritisation process to decide the regions properties for major scheme transport funding

2.9.11 At a programme level Shropshire is actively involved in a range of joint working groups, ensuring we particulate in sharing information and best practice across the region and undertaking joint projects where this provides the most effective or best value approach. Shropshire officers have often taken a key role in the running of these forums. Examples of how we obtain value from cross boundary working include our joint regional approach to developing Transport Asset Management Plans; and our participation in regional approaches to travel awareness and road safety campaigns. Such partnership working reduces overall costs and increases effectiveness.

2.9.12 In developing the LTP specific discussions were undertaken with all our neighbouring authorities. These discussions

helped reach joint agreement and commitment to cross border initiatives and projects. Some examples of such projects are:

- Sharing of data with all neighbouring authorities required for accessibility planning, and commitments to work in partnership to further develop our accessibility action plans and address accessibility issues across authority borders
- Agreements with a number of neighbouring authorities over funding and operational arrangements for a number of community and demand responsive bus services covering border area e.g Staffordshire Border Cars
- Working with Staffordshire, Stoke, Cheshire and Telford on a strategy to improve cross boundary bus/coach services for middle distance journeys not served by rail e.g. Shrewsbury to Stoke.
- Agreement with Cheshire, Wrexham and Flintshire authorities on the need for upgrading of the A5.
- Agreement to undertake a joint study with Cheshire and Wrexham on the Chester to Shrewsbury Rail, to include assessment of sites for new stations, which may include a station near Chester to cater for the continued growth of the Chester business park.
- Continuing to work in partnership with Cheshire and Wrexham to complete bus improvements on the Chester-Wrexham-Oswestry-Shrewsbury corridor
- Considering the extension to Whitchurch of the A41 Smart Card presently in use in Cheshire.
- Working with neighbouring local authorities to co-ordinate the completion and marketing the network of national and regional cycle networks e.g. NCN route 81 (Lon Cambria) with the Welsh Authorities of Powys and Ceredigion, NCN route 45 (Mercian Way)

with Worcestershire and Cheshire County Councils.

- Working with Telford and Wrekin Council on a number of schemes, with a particular focus on addressing cross boundary travel to work and accessibility issues. We have agreed to seek improvements to cross boundary bus services to better service work and education journeys in light of new employment and college developments, including aims to upgrade the X5 bus route.
- Working in partnership with Telford and Wrekin Council and Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council to encourage restoration of a direct London Rail service to serve the sub region.
- Agreement to work closely with Worcestershire and Herefordshire Councils to address accessibility issues in the Tenbury Wells area where problems arise due to its proximity to the border of the three authorities
- Working with Worcestershire, Hereford, Telford and Wrekin, the Highways Agency and West Mercia Police as an active member of the West Mercia Safety Camera Partnership.

**2.9.13** Shropshire has an excellent track record of working with other local authorities to share and learn from best practice, We will continue this through the new LTP period. Some recent examples are:

- Liaison with other West Midland authorities on a regular basis on a wide range of issues through regional working groups e.g. travel plans, cycling, asset management, monitoring, traffic management
- We are an active member of the English Historic Towns Forum, sharing practice with other local authorities seeking to manage the impact of traffic in historic town centres, more recently through the historic core zone project , involving DFT and TRL



- We have recently been awarded Beacon Status for Accessibility to Rural Services. This builds on our Beacon Status for Sustainable Energy, and we look forward to sharing best practice through our beacon dissemination activities
- In researching our rural bus strategy we undertook detailed investigations into the best practice demonstrated in other rural local authority areas, including a visit to Lincolnshire to understand their successful demand responsive transport system.
- Prior to our recent expansion of our real time information system we undertook research into the methods being employed by other local authorities, and observed a number of systems in use in neighbouring authorities.
- Shropshire has seconded a member of staff to act as regional school travel plan co-ordinator on a part time basis. Through this pots we are helping to share best practice in school travel planning across the region and nationally.
- Setting out a strategic approach which focuses on managing demand, encouraging modal shift and enhancing the capacity and safety of existing infrastructure before investing in new roads or significant improvement schemes.
- Setting ourselves challenging targets to order to stretch ourselves to achieve more from each pound invested
- Seeking out efficient and innovative ways of delivering our strategies, programmes and schemes, learning from our own experience in delivering the first local transport plan and seeking out best practice from elsewhere. We are also prepared to share our best practice with other local authorities, as demonstrated in our corporate involvement in Beacon Status schemes.
- Basing our LTP strategies on a clear set of aims, objectives and outcome goals; and a detailed evidence led understanding of the key challenges must address and the opportunities which will arise over the LTP period.

## 2.10 Value for money

2.10.1 Demonstrating value for money is one of our key corporate values and is central to how we plan and deliver all our services including transport. We have taken a number of steps at both strategic and detailed levels to ensure that we are using the funding available in the most effective way to achieve the best outcomes for Shropshire:

- Establishing clear outcomes and priorities in order to focus our investment and effort on achieving the things that will have the greatest impact on achieving our transport vision
- Undertaking a strategic environmental assessment of strategic options for the local transport plan, to ensure the approach we are following has the greatest combination of environmental, social and safety impacts.
- Establishing a clear link between our goals and strategies, the way we have allocated funding to different programme areas, and the way in which individual schemes will be identified and prioritised for funding.
- Establishing management practices which will enhance our effectiveness at co-ordinating schemes, so that a number of schemes planned for a particular geographic location can be implemented at the same time, reducing overall cost and disruption for local communities.
- Maximising the overall benefits of schemes by encouraging designers to look at ways in which schemes can be designed and constructed so as to maximise their contribution to the full range of LTP priorities and targets. This will be encouraged through internal staff training, design guidance and audit processes.

- Linking the use of capital and revenue funding to ensure activities are co-ordinated and complimentary
- Co-ordinating the use of resources with other authorities and public service providers to tackle joint issues, such as accessibility improvements
- We have established term contracts for both engineering design and small value contract work. Contracts negotiations have ensured the County Council is paying competitive rates for this work; and considerable efficiencies are achieved by negating the need to tender for contractors for each individual scheme.

## 2.11 Providing information

2.11.1 Our LTP sets out a clear and transparent account of our strategic plans for transport delivery. The LTP will be made more accessible to Shropshire people through the production of a concise summary version, that will be distributed widely across the County.

2.11.2 In delivering our LTP we will continue to be open and honest with the public, making relevant information available to local people. Examples of the ways we will do this are:

- Making more detailed strategies, plans and study findings available as they are developed e.g. bus information strategy, findings of Transport Innovation Fund studies
- Publishing an annual document providing a review of performance and setting out our detailed programme for the coming year
- Providing local communities with timely information on schemes and initiatives affecting their area; this will often be part of local consultation processes

2.11.3 We will make full use of the County Councils Internet site ([www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk)), to communicate with the general population. All

published documents will also be available on request in a range of printed, electronic and accessible formats.

2.11.4 Locally important information will be communicated via local media, and households and businesses will be individually notified of works affecting their properties.

## 2.12 Links with other transport plans

2.12.1 Shropshire County Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of adopted highways in the County, and for ensuring socially necessary public transport services are provided. There are however a number of other agencies who are responsible for other key parts of the overall transport network.

2.12.2 We set out below the key issues in relation to these other networks and our approach to working with other strategic transport authorities to achieve improvements for Shropshire people.

### Strategic road (trunk road) network

2.12.3 Most public roads within Shropshire are considered to be of local significance and are managed by Shropshire County Council. However, there are some trunk roads of more strategic importance that are managed by the Government's Highways Agency. These are:

- **M54/ A5:-** This provides a local link between Oswestry, Shrewsbury and Telford. For longer journeys it links to Wolverhampton and the M5 to the east, facilitating journeys to the West Midland conurbation and beyond to the south and east; and to the west serves journeys through to Wrexham, North Wales and Holyhead. This route has been identified to be part of the Trans European Network.



- **A49:-** From the A5 at Shrewsbury this trunk road provides a local link for journeys to Church Stretton, Craven Arms and Ludlow. It also forms part of a strategic north-south route through the Marches linking South Wales to North Wales and Merseyside
- **A483:-** A section of this route which links from the A5 at Oswestry through to Welshpool and mid-Wales is within the county
- **A458:-** This provides a link between Shrewsbury and Welshpool, and onwards to mid-Wales coastal resorts

2.12.4 The aim of the Highways Agency is to manage, maintain and improve the trunk road network in England. The Highways Agency's overall strategy for managing traffic is to:

- Improve road safety and hence reduce delays due to incidents
- Improve network efficiency and journey-time reliability
- Reduce the environmental effects of road traffic
- Provide relevant and reliable traffic information to drivers.

2.12.5 There can sometimes be a conflict between the need to maintain journey times and free flowing traffic on trunk roads, and the needs of local communities, particularly in terms of traffic impacts and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. However, the Highways Agency is committed to working in partnership with key stakeholders<sup>(1)</sup> to ensure that the Government's priorities are implemented and that the trunk road network also meets the needs of local communities.

### Route management strategies

2.12.6 In 2005 the Highways Agency published Route Management Strategies covering each of the trunk road corridors in Shropshire. These

identify route issues and set out a framework for managing individual trunk roads in the context of wider transport networks.

2.12.7 Issues identified in these strategies are:

- improving safety, including addressing alignments on the A49(T)
- enhancing accessibility for non-motorised users
- reducing environmental impacts
- improving journey-time reliability e.g. on the A5
- changing travel behaviour e.g. in the context of the M54 corridor

2.12.8 Although we understand there are no specific schemes for the A49(T) under consideration at this stage we would welcome a scheme that addressed safety concerns on this road. However, we would want to see solutions which do not negatively impact upon the Shropshire Hills AONB, through which this trunk road runs.

2.12.9 In the context of our accessibility strategy we would also welcome improved provision for walkers, cyclists and equestrians needing to use and cross trunk roads. Particular concerns are:

- Crossing facilities at A5 Emstrey Island;
- Crossing facilities at A5 'Bailey's' Island;
- Crossing facilities at A5 Whittington Island;
- Extension of footway/ cycleway at A5 Nesscliffe bypass;
- Provision of footway/ cycleway at the Bayston Hill to Conover turn;
- Safety of A49 side road crossings, including at Dorrington;
- Improved pedestrian crossing facilities on the A49.

1 Working in Partnership, HA

2.12.10 We would also welcome consideration of schemes to address capacity and journey time reliability concerns on the A5, particularly at junctions on the Shrewsbury bypass including the A5/ A49 'Bailey's' Island, as well as at the A5 'Preston Boats' and 'Emstrey' islands.

### Trunk road improvement schemes

2.12.11 There are a number of committed and potential trunk road improvement scheme of significance to Shropshire, including:

2.12.12 **A5 Dualling** - A detailed study in 2002<sup>(2)</sup> made a long term recommendation for the dualling of the whole A5/A483, however this recommendation was not considered to be a priority at the time and not approved by the Secretary of State. The Highways Agency are currently undertaking a study into the viability of a scheme to dual the A5 throughout Shropshire and are carrying out a cost-benefit analysis. The County Council would support a scheme to upgrade this important route and would be particularly keen to see evidence of the economic, safety, congestion and air quality benefits.

2.12.13 **A483 Pant and Llanymynech Bypass** - This potential scheme is being developed by the Highways Agency and Welsh Office. The County Council is promoting the scheme at a Regional level, since funding for the West Midlands element would need to be allocated in the Regional Prioritisation process.

2.12.14 **A458 Buttington Cross - Wollaston Cross Bypass** - This potential scheme is being promoted by the Welsh Office

2.12.15 **M6 widening/Toll Expressway Junction 11-19** - The Highways Agency are currently undertaking work to see how capacity issues on this section of the M6 are best addressed. Current aims are to have a scheme

in place by 2016. Shropshire would welcome an improvement scheme which would relieve traffic from less appropriate routes within Shropshire which are currently being used as alternatives to the congested M6.

2.12.16 **M54 link to M6 north/ M6 toll** - This scheme is currently being studied in the context of an evolving Black County Study. The development of improvements in this area would be of benefit to Shropshire people

### Joint working

2.12.17 We will continue to work closely on an ongoing basis with the Highways Agency to develop and deliver schemes of common benefit. The Highways Agency have been consulted upon the draft local transport plan and considered it to be broadly consistent with their strategy and policies. Comments made on the Provisional Plan have been incorporated in the final document

2.12.18 We will continue to work with Highways Agency on:

- Addressing air quality issues at the A5 near Oswestry and the A49 at Bayston Hill. The HA has a responsibility to lead on tackling air quality issues at these locations
- The possible development of a strategic level highway model for the sub-region to help improve the ability to assess the transport impacts of major development proposals.
- The development of enforceable travel plans for major developments to help reduce demand for travel and encourage use of more sustainable travel modes
- The Shrewsbury Transport Innovation Fund study and any developments and decisions in relation to a Shrewsbury North West relief road.

2 A5/A483 Shrewsbury to Chester Road Based Study, Babbie Group 2002, commissioned by GOWM & HA



## National rail network

**2.12.19** In 2005 the Strategic Rail Authority was wound up and the Department for Transport took over responsibility for setting the strategic framework for Britain's railways. It allocates funding for rail infrastructure and sets franchise agreements with the private sector train operating companies. The key aims for Britain's railways were set out in the DfT's 10-year plan. This is to increase rail passenger numbers by delivering a high quality, reliable and efficient railway network. Objectives were also identified to develop a stronger customer focus, improve punctuality, increase capacity, reduce overcrowding, grow freight use and enhance safety.

**2.12.20** The draft West Midlands Rail Utilisation Strategy (RUS) published in March 2005, outlined the proposed medium term strategy for cost effective improvements to the rail services in the West Midlands, including Shropshire. The RUS identified the need to address overcrowding on corridors to the West Midlands conurbation, but said that solutions must make the best use of the existing infrastructure, and be managed within existing budget levels.

**2.12.21** RUS proposals include increasing the line speed between Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton, increasing train lengths and introducing a daily Shrewsbury to London service. The report highlights concerns regarding the proposal for a new Parkway station at Brinsford on the Stafford to Wolverhampton line north of Wolverhampton (near M54 junction 2) in relation to the abstraction of revenue from other stations and encouraging "railheading".

**2.12.22** Shropshire County Council supports improvements to the Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton line and the introduction of direct London services, but seeks a more comprehensive service than that outlined in the

RUS. Shropshire shares the concerns of the SRA in respect to the proposed new Parkway station at Brinsford. We have concerns over the effect this may have on the viability of existing rail stations in Shropshire, and possible future local rail station and service developments; and are concerned that it would encourage longer journeys to be made by car.

**2.12.23** We work closely with agencies and organisations responsible for the rail network and services, both through the County Rail Forum and discussions with individual groups and operators. The SRA, rail operators, rail passenger committees and local rail user groups have been consulted upon the draft local transport plan.

**2.12.24** We will continue to deliver improvements in collaboration with Network Rail and train operators and through the Community Rail Partnerships.

**2.12.25** The key aims which we will work in partnership with relevant organisations and agencies to deliver over the LTP period include:

- Enhancing the accessibility of stations in Shropshire - we will pursue in partnership, although we were disappointed that no stations in Shropshire were identified within the recent "Railways for All" document, or identified to receive the connected 'Modern Facilities at Stations' funding
- Gay Meadow Footpath - Shrewsbury Station access enhancements
- Improved security at stations, including provision of CCTV
- Shrewsbury Station access solution - further development of a potential solution to the limitations to car based access to Shrewsbury railway station, including the

option of a new Shrewsbury Parkway Station

- Enhancements of car parking facilities at other, particularly rural, stations in the County

2.12.26 We will also maximise the value of planned service improvements by:

- Enhancing integration of subsidised bus services with the new Arriva Trains standard pattern timetable

2.12.27 We believe that we can maximise the value from Shropshire Local Transport Plan activities, and make additional progress towards achieving our objectives and priorities through the following changes to the rail network and services:

- Regular through services from Shrewsbury to Birmingham International and London and vice versa. (We welcome the commitment to a daily service and option for further services set out in the West Midlands Route Utilisation Strategy)
- Increased capacity of trains on Shrewsbury to Birmingham services
- Improvements at Birmingham New Street to enhance reliability of services serving Shropshire

## Air travel

2.12.28 The latest UK White Paper on air transport<sup>3</sup>, set out a strategic framework for the development of airport capacity in the United Kingdom over the next 30 years. It took a strategic view of where airport development “may be needed”, but stated that actual development will be a matter for airport owners and operators and subject to control through the planning process.

2.12.29 Air travel in the UK has increased five-fold over the last 30 years and air freight traffic has doubled since 1990. This brings with it significant environmental implications and some economic benefits. The Government’s Transport White Paper sets out the need to do more to reduce the environmental impacts of air travel and highlights emissions trading as the best way of tackling the aviation industry’s rapidly growing levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

2.12.30 The main airports that serve Shropshire are Manchester and Birmingham International. The Government’s White Paper supports the principle of developing terminal capacity at Manchester Airport and a second runway at Birmingham International Airport. Other airports close to Shropshire include Liverpool John Lennon Airport and East Midlands Airport which both gained support for smaller scale expansion. The Government does not support the option of a new airport between Coventry and Rugby. The White Paper stated that the development of Coventry Airport, Wolverhampton Business Airport and any civil use of RAF Cosford were matters for local determination.

2.12.31 From a transport point of view, Shropshire County Council is concerned at the forecast growth in air travel because of the environmental implications of the air travel itself and the surface traffic generation that it is likely to cause. Surface access strategies would need to ensure that rail and bus are realistic options by improving services while managing demand for car travel through measures such as parking charges. The White Paper specifically identified the need for improvement to surface access arrangements for Manchester Airport.

2.12.32 There are currently no direct rail services from Shropshire to either Manchester or Birmingham International Airports. We would

3 The Future of Air Transport, DfT, Dec 2003



support improved surface transport provision, including rail, bus and coach links, between Shropshire and these main regional airports.

## Waterways network

2.12.33 The Government has set an objective<sup>4</sup> to encourage a modern, integrated and sustainable approach to the use of the UK's waterways. The British Waterways Board which is tasked with delivering this objective has identified transport functions as an important opportunity; including transport of freight by water and development of local walking and cycling initiatives along towpaths.<sup>5</sup>

2.12.34 Although use of the waterway network in Shropshire for transport purposes is limited, Shropshire County Council will look for opportunities to utilise sections of waterway, particularly as part of its cycling and walking networks, where this would contribute to meeting transport objectives.

## Rights of Way network

2.12.35 Shropshire has 3,500 miles of Rights of Way, incorporating Footpaths, Bridleways, Roads Used as a Public Path (RUPP) and By-Ways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) (see Figure 3.9). These Rights of Way constitute an important part of Shropshire's highway network. They provide an important resource not only for recreation and exercise; but also for access, by foot and cycle, to local facilities such as shops and schools. The high quality of the Shropshire countryside means that the rights of way network is also a key tourism asset.

2.12.36 In line with the requirements of the CROW Act<sup>6</sup> Shropshire County Council is currently preparing a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) called the Shropshire Countryside

Access Strategy. The plan, due to be completed in 2007, will look at access opportunities using the rights of way network as well as other land, such as urban green space, woodland, canal towpaths, common land and open access land. Key policy objectives of the Plan will be to:

- Better meet the public's current and future needs
- Improve the opportunities for exercise and recreation
- Increase accessibility for people with disabilities

2.12.37 A short progress report on the development of the Shropshire ROWIP is provided in Appendix Appendix E. This highlights the clear links between the rights of way improvement issues and our wider transport objectives and priorities.



4 Waterways for Tomorrow, DEFRA, June 2000

5 Water Ways – Inland Waterways and Sustainable Rural Transport, BWB, 2004

6 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000