Reimagining transport in the West Midlands:

Local Transport Plan Core Strategy - Summary

Transport for West Midlands

Contents

Introduction

'Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands' is the fifth Local Transport Plan for the West Midlands' seven metropolitan districts/boroughs.

This is the summary of the draft Core Strategy of the Local Transport Plan - the overarching document that sets out our aims, vision, approach, and a framework for action.

After the publication of our Green Paper for 'Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands' we asked for the views of stakeholders through a *conversation about change*. The engagement used a variety of channels including surveys, market research and online and in-person workshops.

Those we spoke to when we engaged on the Green Paper agreed that we need an emission free transport system that's fairer, safer and healthier. It also needs to be a transport network that gets people to places without clogging up our streets or causing climate change and making pollution worse.

The issues raised around our 5 Motives for Change resonated with those who responded. Climate change and addressing inequality were the areas of most concern.

There was a clear sense from responses that the current approach to transport was not delivering sufficient improvements, or that things were getting worse.

The new draft plan shows how the transport system will be developed and managed in the region and we've already started talking to people and businesses about it and about how it can meet our future needs.

There are difficult decisions to be made; people know we can't build our way out of all our problems or rely on new technology, like electric cars, to solve them.

92% of respondents were concerned by **climate change**

83% agreed that a key policy aim should be to tackle **inequalities in transport access**

2/3 of people felt that levels of **traffic on local roads** were now a problem.

The majority thought increasing **active travel** is important, but that **dangerous and busy roads** were holding people back.

Whilst the car is still going to be important in future, the majority agreed that **car use needed to reduce.**

People felt that we can't build our way out of all of our problems – we need to focus on **using existing infrastructure better**

The shift to electric vehicles was supported but there was concern that **electric vehicles wouldn't solve the wider issues**

68% of polled respondents to our green paper consultation said **'sticks' are needed** to achieve significant change in travel behaviour.

Feedback from engagement on our Green Paper

Walsall

Wolverhampton

Sandwell

Dudley

Birmingham

Solihull

Coventry

Our aims

Whatever happens it's clear that there needs to be a change in our travel habits and behaviours.

To address the big social, economic and environmental issues we face, the objectives in the new plan are framed around 5 'Motives for Change' where we think that changing transport could help us better support inclusive growth by providing a transport system that's fair to everyone and the environment.

There are three key changes needed in our transport system to make this happen - we need to improve accessibility, reduce traffic and electrify transport. That means using our cars less and accessing what we need in a different way.

Why change?

- Sustaining economic success
- Creating a fairer society
- Supporting local communities and places
- Becoming more active
- Tackling the climate emergency

To achieve this we need to...

- Improve accessibility
- Reduce traffic
- Electrify transport

Meeting commitments to decarbonise

Tackling the climate emergency is just one of our Motives for Change. It is unique because it requires a definitive pace and scale of change.

There are national legal targets to reach "net-zero" carbon emissions by 2050, and local ambitions within our WM2041 agenda to reach net-zero by 2041. But whilst those end dates are important, national targets and local ambitions also require us to hit carbon reduction milestones along the way.

Shifting to zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) like electric and hydrogen powered vehicles is important but not enough to meet these decarbonisation goals. We also need to reduce the amount we are using our vehicles.

By 2031, we would need to deliver the following scale of change to meet national obligations or to go above and beyond to deliver local ambitions.

National targets (net-zero by 2050)	Local ambition (net-zero by 2041)
10% reduction in car mileage	**35%** reduction in car mileage
Accelerate ZEV uptake by **1 year**	Accelerate ZEV uptake by **5 years**

The vision

Although private vehicles will still be important in the future, we want the West Midlands to be a place where people can thrive without having to drive or own a car.
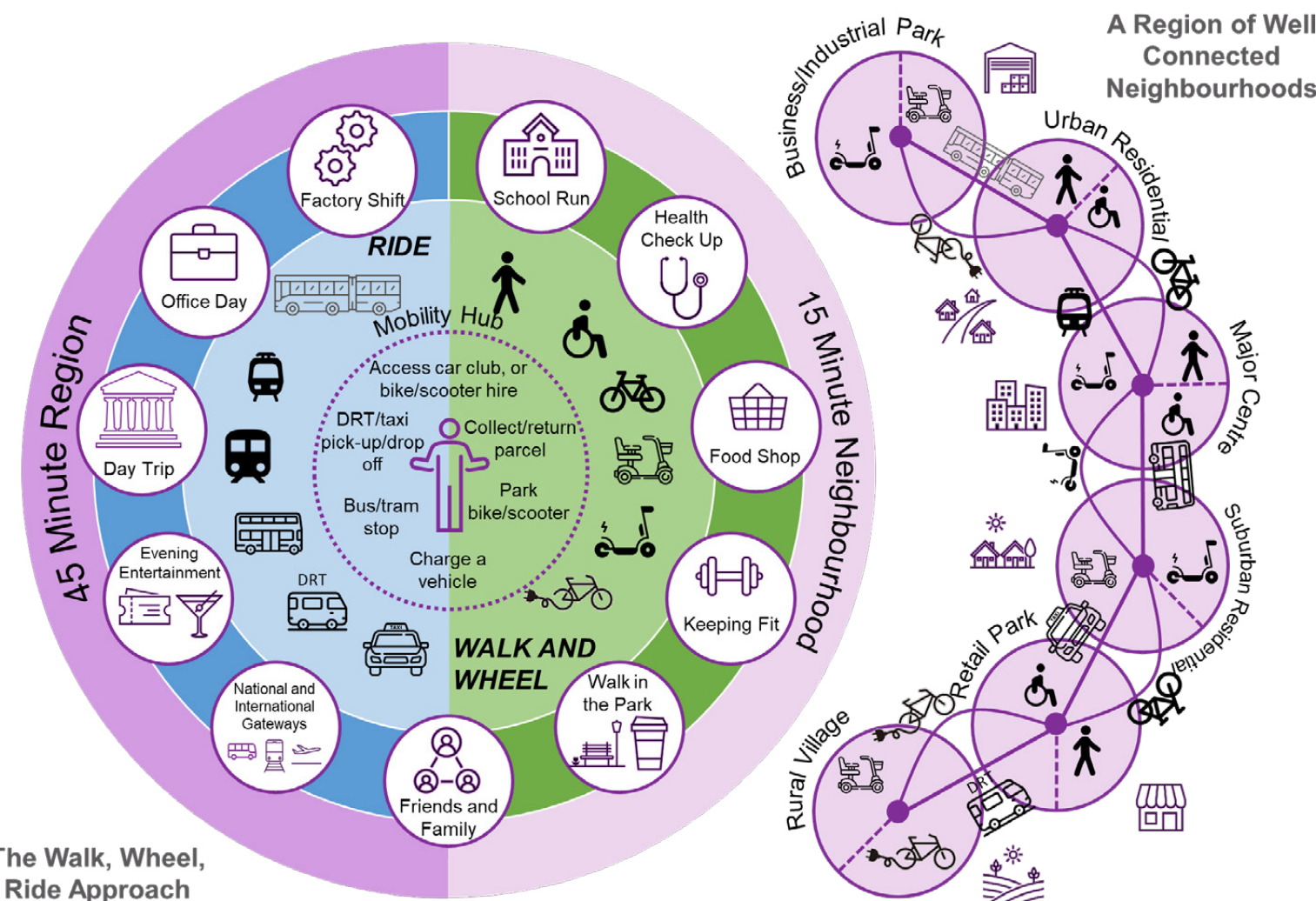
We have developed a vision for a well-connected 45 minute region and 15 minute neighbourhoods, where people can travel to access what they need through a mix of walk and wheel, and ride modes.

It means that a good range of services in our neighbourhoods can be accessed by "walking or wheeling" in a round trip of no more than 15 minutes, and a good range of places across our region to undertake work, leisure and socialising can be accessed by "ride" modes within a 45 minute trip.

This system will be supported by shared mobility services. These are services like car and van clubs so you don't have to own an expensive vehicle, or bike and scooter hire schemes to use in places where perhaps you couldn't bring your own bike or scooter – for example when you've caught the bus or train into your town/city centre and need a quicker way to get around once there.

All of this will be connected by mobility hubs. These are places where you can conveniently access a range of transport services. So as well as catching a bus, you might be able to access car and van clubs, hire an e-scooter, charge your electric vehicle or perhaps make use of a parcel drop off and pick up point.

This vision is not meant to be prescriptive. We recognise that everyone travels for different reasons, to different places and using different modes, and places themselves are different. So what works in one neighbourhood might not work in another. But it does give us something to aim for where everyone will have good options and choices to access what they need.

15 Minute Neighbourhoods

a good range of services in our neighbourhoods can be accessed by "walking or wheeling" in a round trip of no more than 15 minutes

45 Minute Region

a good range of places across our region to undertake work, leisure and socialising can be accessed by "ride" modes within a 45 minute trip.

The Walk, Wheel, Ride Approach

A Region of Well Connected Neighbourhoods

Ride modes

- Sprint (bus rapid transit)
- Light rail, inc. very light rail and trams
- Local heavy rail services
- Conventional bus services
- Demand responsive bus services – mini-buses that can be hailed on-demand.(inc. Ring & Ride)
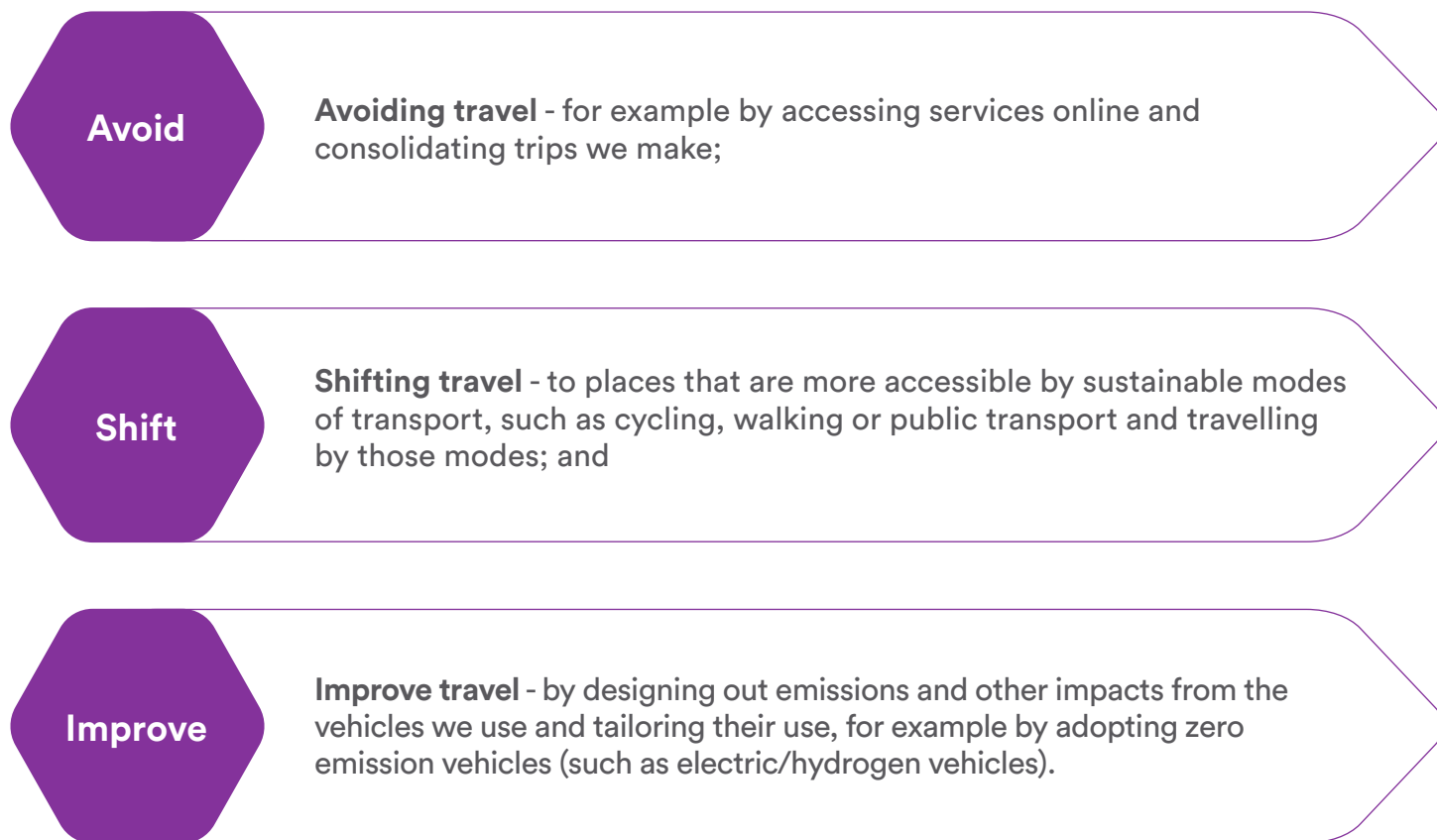- Taxis and private hire vehicle (inc. ride hailing)

Walk and wheel modes

- Walking
- Using a wheelchair
- Conventional pedal cycle
- Mobility scooter
- Micromobility - fully electric or electrically assisted light vehicles such as e-scooters and e-bikes (noting that these are not currently generally permitted on public highways)

Our actions

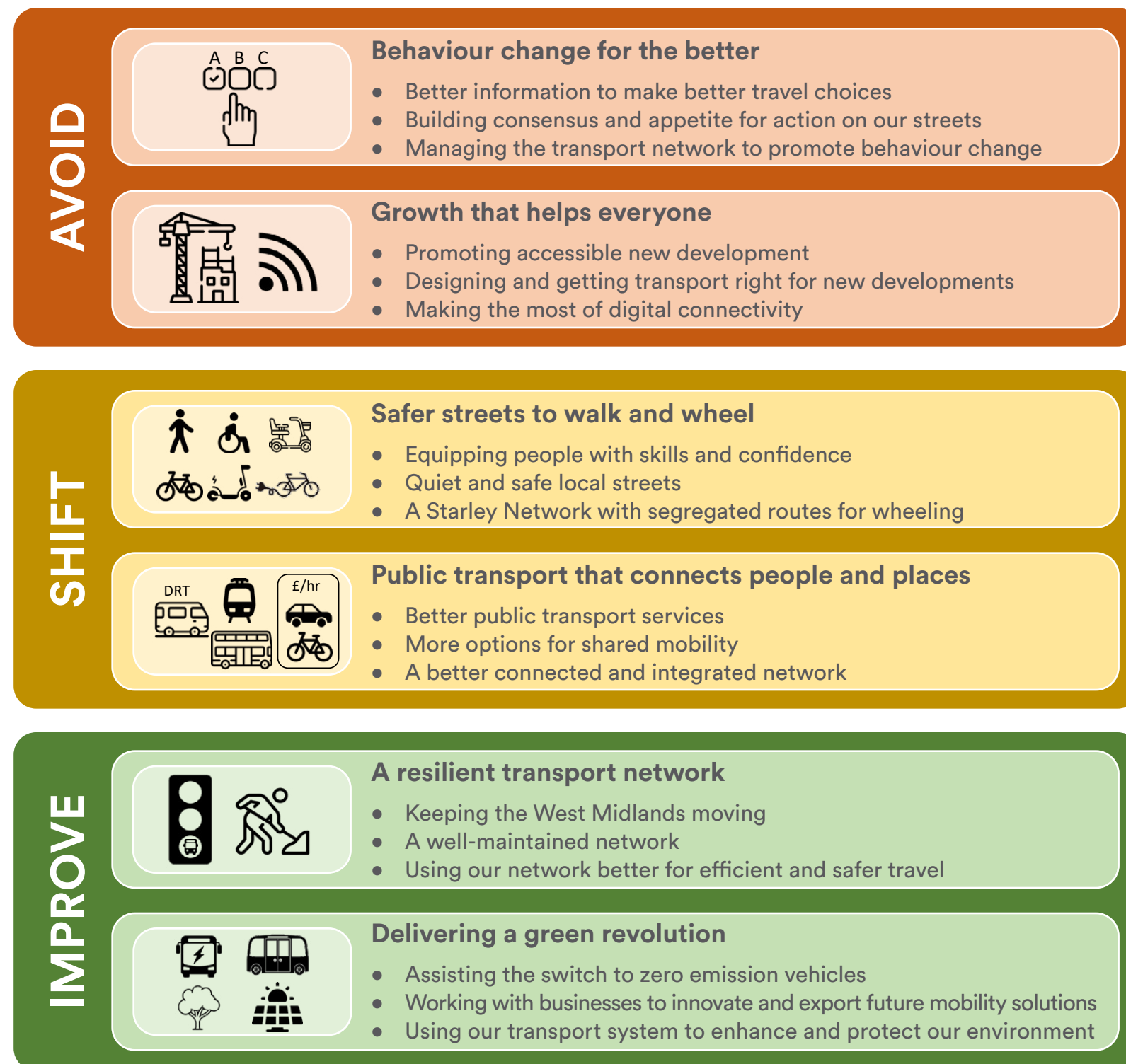To help deliver the changes needed we will focus on action across 6 'Big Moves'.

These Big Moves are a framework for the actions we will take to improve accessibility and encourage **avoid, shift and improve** behavioural changes.

Avoid

Avoiding travel - for example by accessing services online and consolidating trips we make;

Shift

Shifting travel - to places that are more accessible by sustainable modes of transport, such as cycling, walking or public transport and travelling by those modes; and

Improve

Improve travel - by designing out emissions and other impacts from the vehicles we use and tailoring their use, for example by adopting zero emission vehicles (such as electric/hydrogen vehicles).

For our new Local Transport Plan to be effective in reducing car use and improving access by other modes of travel it must include actions to:

- **Invest in better provision** for alternatives to our cars; and

- **Manage demand** by discouraging the behaviours we want to do less of, such as using our cars.

An overview of each of the Big Moves is presented on the following pages. The LTP will include six detailed strategies for the 6 Big Moves setting out challenges, opportunities and principles to consider across the region. Four Area Strategies will then set out how actions across the Big Moves are applied in specific places as appropriate to local views and context.

AVOID

Behaviour change for the better
- Better information to make better travel choices
- Building consensus and appetite for action on our streets
- Managing the transport network to promote behaviour change

Growth that helps everyone
- Promoting accessible new development
- Designing and getting transport right for new developments
- Making the most of digital connectivity

SHIFT

Safer streets to walk and wheel
- Equipping people with skills and confidence
- Quiet and safe local streets
- A Starley Network with segregated routes for wheeling

Public transport that connects people and places
- Better public transport services
- More options for shared mobility
- A better connected and integrated network

IMPROVE

A resilient transport network
- Keeping the West Midlands moving
- A well-maintained network
- Using our network better for efficient and safer travel

Delivering a green revolution
- Assisting the switch to zero emission vehicles
- Working with businesses to innovate and export future mobility solutions
- Using our transport system to enhance and protect our environment

Behaviour change for the better

Many measures being set out in this strategy are designed to improve sustainable travel options to support behaviour change. But these in isolation won't be enough to achieve impacts at the scale or at the pace that is needed! To deliver behaviour change, the travel choices that we will need to move away from - like driving - would need to become less appealing. We are all part of the problem and we can all play our part in the solution by choosing to travel differently. However, we will need to look carefully at the measures which drive behaviour change and build consensus on the need for "sticks" as well as "carrots".

Growth that helps everyone

Good, sustainable access to opportunities is critical to help us deliver inclusive growth and to be successful. But to do this we need to be building the right things in the right places. New developments must be planned in line with the objectives of this LTP. We must minimise transport's harmful impacts and maximise the attractiveness and success of sustainable modes.

Safer Streets to walk and wheel

We want more trips to be made by walking and wheeling. These 'active' modes provide significant benefits to people and their local streets and communities. They're also very sustainable and affordable. They can also have a positive impact on people's physical health and mental wellbeing and provide a good alternative to the car.

Avoid

Information

- Critical in helping people make the right decisions.
- Even better promotion of public transport
- Visible brands across our different modes, including the SWIFT smart card.

Avoid

Sustainable and accessible development

- Continue to support a brown field first policy
- Innovative and sustainable travel in all developments.
- Minimise the impacts of single occupancy car usage

Shift

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN's)

- Limit traffic in a street or collection of streets
- Safer, easier and more appealing for cycling and walking.
- LTN's have resulted in a number of benefits.

Demand Management

- Reallocating road space and higher parking charges at key destinations and workplaces.
- Charges can also be used to encourage cleaner vehicles.
- Engagement is an essential part of the design and delivery

Digital connectivity

- Improve access to high speed broadband and 5G connectivity to all
- Reduces digital poverty and create a series of connected communities.

Micromobility

- A broad range of transport options that can be used for short distances
- E-scooters are also being trialed in the West Midlands.
- Starley Network for cycling and walking

Public transport that connects people and places

Safe, convenient, affordable and accessible public transport is essential. This includes bus services and Ring and Ride across our area which are already vital for those who can't drive, as well as our expanding West Midlands Metro, Sprint and rail networks. Shared mobility services (like bike hire and car clubs) could also play a greater role in future. One in four West Midlands households don't have access to a car. Within a more inclusive transport system, public transport will need to play an even greater role.

A resilient transport network

Roads are important because they are used for most trips, whatever the mode. They play a different role in the lives of people and businesses. We need to make our streets work for everyone by developing the network so that balances the competing needs for space and supports the travel behaviours, which will help to deliver our outcomes.

Delivering a green revolution

Places need to be cleaner and greener. Private and public vehicles need to be zero emission, helping to improve local air quality and reduce noise. In addition, providing green infrastructure will help habitats and biodiversity. This encourages people to spend more time outside improving physical health and mental wellbeing benefits.

Shift

Public transport

- Invest and improve the infrastructure to enable operators to provide better services

- Greater priority on highways for buses

- Improvements to rail capacity, along with new stations

Shared mobility

- Allows people to move around without the need to own a car

- Services include car clubs and e-scooters and infrastructure to support their operation

- Mobility hubs in key locations where consumer demand can sustain them

Improve

Regional Transport Coordination Centre (RTCC)

- Oversees all transport modes in partnership with operator and local authorities.

- Helps to coordinate the delivery of the transport investment programme and minimise impact through collaboration with our partners.

Highway maintenance

- Work with local authority partners on a focused plan

- Prevent the deterioration of streets and structures

- This is essential in the improvement of all modes of transport, including emerging mobility solutions
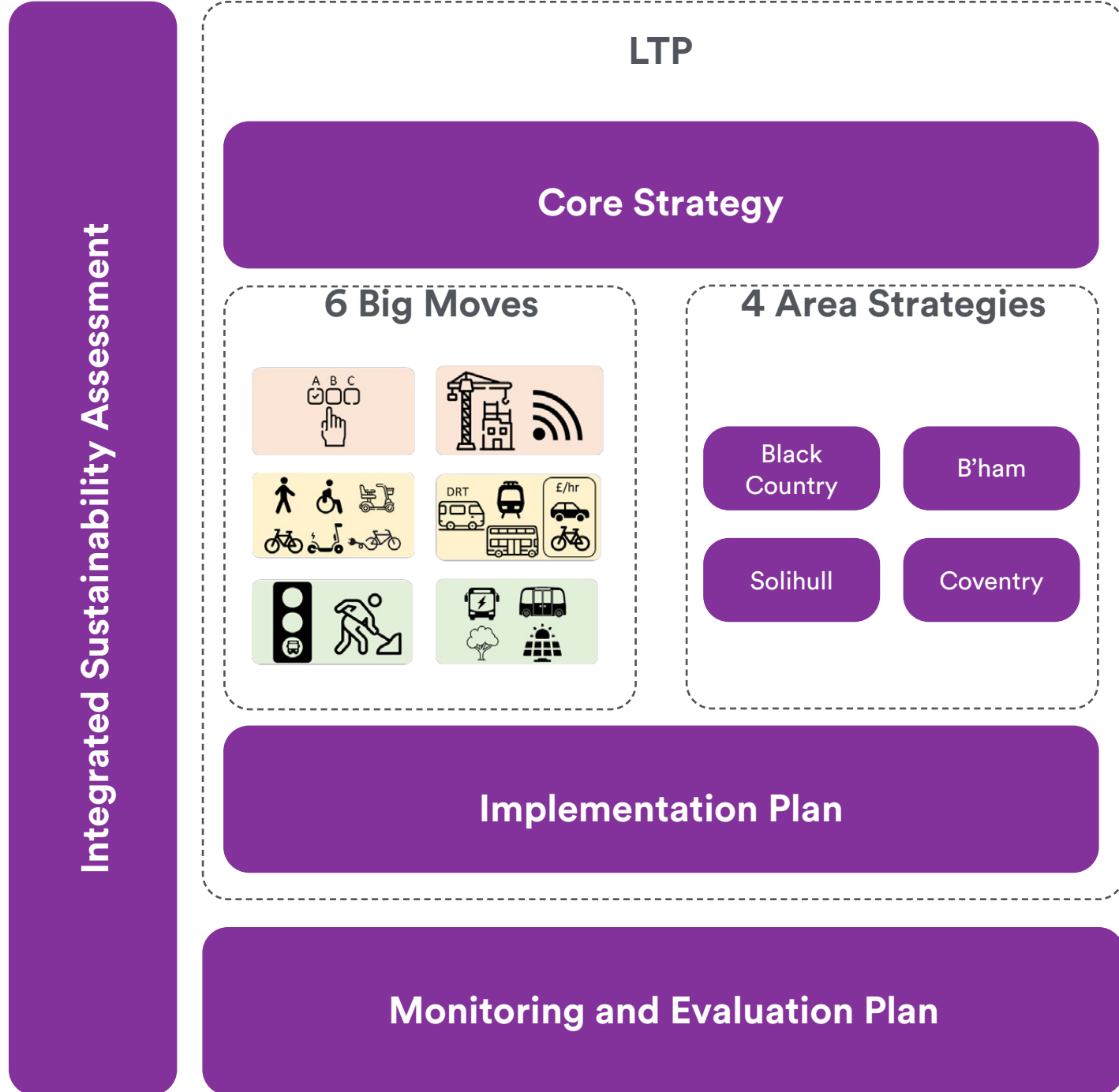

Improve

Electric Bus City

- Coventry to become the UK's first electric bus city

- Every bus will be electrical powered by 2025

- Improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and lower running cost.

Green bus shelters

- Improves air quality and generates power. Being trialled in Halesowen.

- Transport for West Midlands worked with the Halesowen BID

- Roof top plants improve the town centre environment and attracts bees.

Implementing our new Local Transport Plan

Integrated Sustainability Assessment

LTP

Core Strategy

6 Big Moves

4 Area Strategies

Black Country

B'ham

Solihull

Coventry

Implementation Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

This LTP proposes a wide programme of improvements to provide better alternatives to the private car.

We have recently approved a £1.2bn funding programme to improve the transport system. This City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement will allow us to continue to invest in better public transport, opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling and help to make our roads safer and places greener and cleaner.
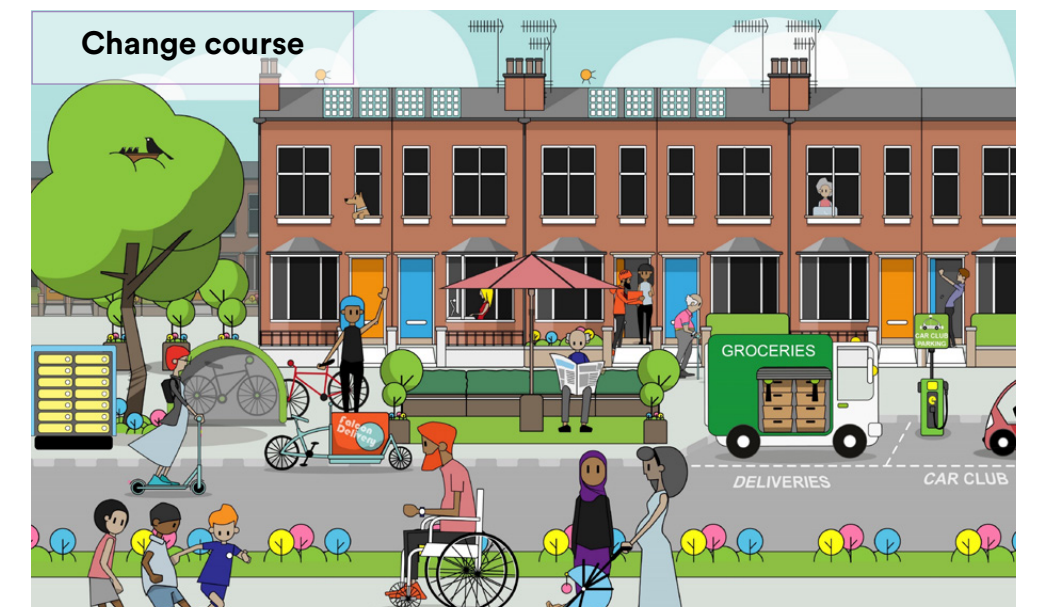
It does this by investing in measures that support better access to what people need via these alternatives. But alongside this investment there will also be a need to manage demand by discouraging the behaviours we want people to do less with the possible use of physical measures like bus lanes, which remove the amount of road space available to cars and other vehicles.

As we develop and implement our plan we will foster and encourage collaboration to solve the problems in places that face similar challenges. We will use new ways of engaging and communicating to help people understand the changes required and how they can benefit them.

We will develop these strategies in partnership with local authorities, ensuring that the identification of the measures needed will be problem-led rather than solution-led to help us create a more prosperous and better-connected West Midlands which is fairer, greener and healthier.

Choices matter

As we develop detailed plans in different places we will need to think about how the decisions over how we govern transport locally will affect the future of transport in different places. It's important to think about what places will look like if we carry-on as we are or what they might look like if they change course. What kind of future do you want for you and your family?

Carry-on as we are

Change course

Transport for
West Midlands