



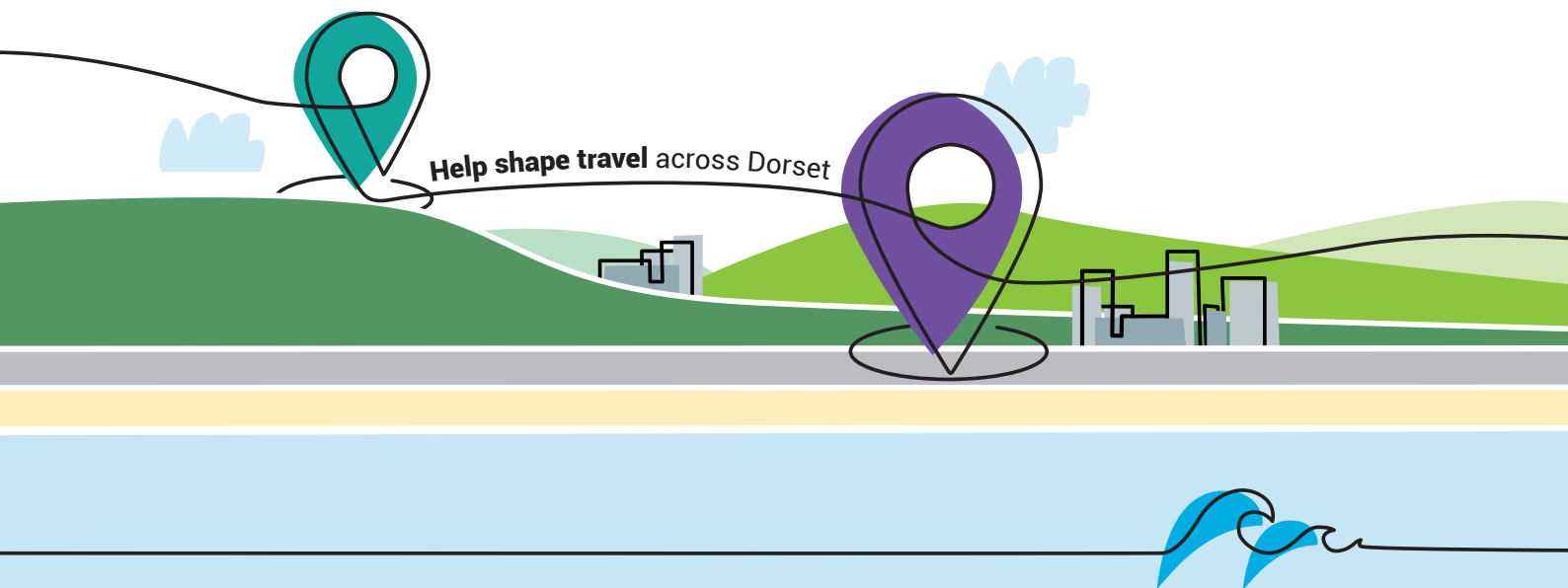
Dorset  
Council



# Local Transport Plan 4

## Opportunities and Issues

### Engagement Summary Report



# Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Background</b> .....                   | 2  |
| <b>Work completed so far</b> .....        | 2  |
| <b>The Engagement</b> .....               | 3  |
| Headlines .....                           | 4  |
| <b>Analysis</b> .....                     | 5  |
| Key Opportunities .....                   | 5  |
| Key Issues .....                          | 7  |
| <b>What the engagement revealed</b> ..... | 9  |
| Key messages .....                        | 9  |
| People .....                              | 9  |
| Place .....                               | 10 |
| Activity .....                            | 10 |
| <b>Next Steps</b> .....                   | 12 |
| <b>Summary</b> .....                      | 12 |



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## Background

Dorset Council (DC) and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP) are working on a new joint Local Transport Plan to set out a strategic vision for the management, maintenance and development of the areas transport system to ensure that people can travel easily around the county whilst meeting the demanding challenges facing us over the next 10 to 15 years.

The previous Local Transport Plan (LTP3) was published in 2011 and is due to run out in 2026. This, along with shifting government priorities, new environmental focus and the emergence of new technologies, means the new joint Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) will be an important document for both authorities.

The plan will cover all types of transport and will be focused on big topics, in line with national and local priorities, such as achieving decarbonisation, tackling congestion, and improving public transport, walking, and cycling. This must be done whilst maintaining economic growth and making transport more accessible. A key challenge will be meeting the expectations of residents, visitors, and businesses while ensuring the diverse landscapes that make Dorset and BCP special are protected and enhanced.

This plan will be informed by extensive public engagement and will align with the strategic case for transport investment. The transport policies contained within LTP4 will support safe, efficient, and sustainable movement around Dorset and BCP (the LTP4 area).

## Work completed so far

We have collected information and evidence to develop a well-informed evidence base that provides a good understanding of the transport opportunities, issues and challenges experienced across the area. This will enable the setting of priorities for the plan and the formation of the vision.

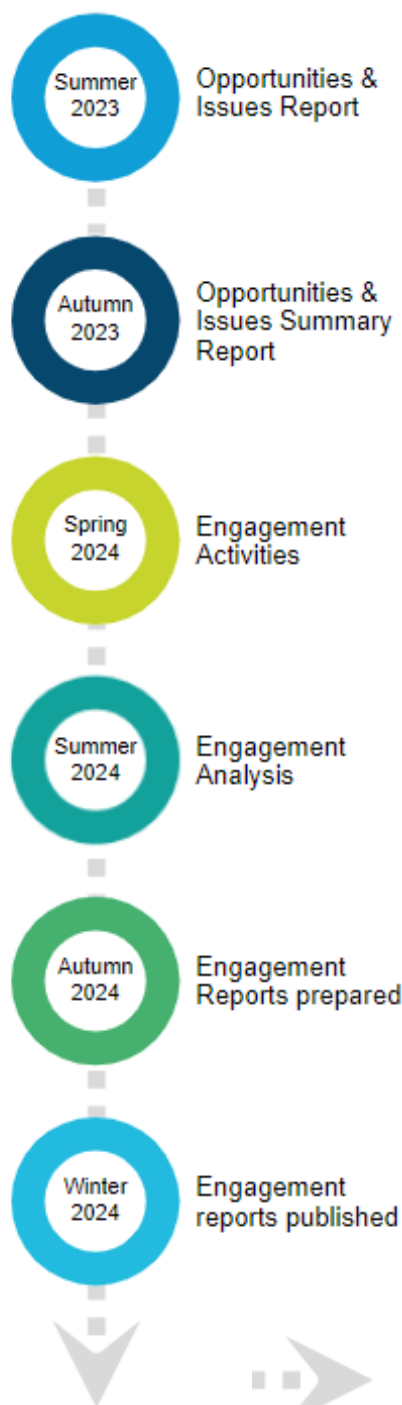
Evidence gathering work completed so far:



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## Work completed so far



The Opportunities and Issues Report includes a retrospective look back at LTP3. It identifies the transport opportunities and issues that exist, and establishes a data driven baseline for the area.

The Opportunities and Issues Summary Report provides a summary of the main findings and context set out in the main report.

The Engagement activities took place over a 6-week period. Feedback was sought from the public and stakeholders on opportunities, issues and ideas to improve transport.

The analysis of feedback formed some key messages which will feed into the strategy development.

Reports containing the findings and conclusions from the analysis were prepared.

**The engagement activities reported on in this report provide the evidence to develop the vision and objectives for our strategy.**

The **next step** is to form the vision, set objectives and develop our new LTP4 strategy.

## The Engagement

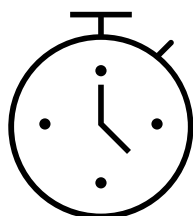
An initial public engagement consultation enabled us to listen and collect feedback from the public and stakeholders.



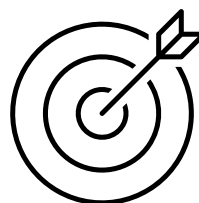
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The aim of this engagement was to understand the wider transport related issues and opportunities and recognise the diverse needs of communities that live, work and travel within the LTP4 area. The feedback collected will help to form the vision and objectives of the new plan.

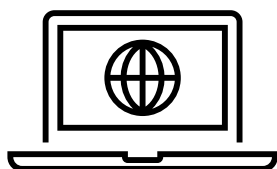
## Headlines



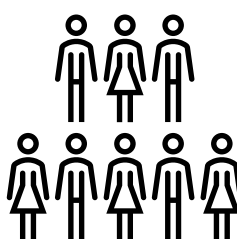
The engagement activity ran from 22 Jan 2024 to 3 March 2024



The aim was to understand the diverse transport issues and needs of people who live, work, and visit BCP and DC

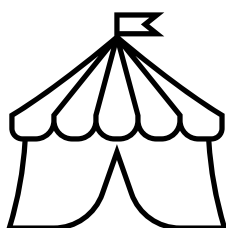


A digital survey was launched on the council's web pages and paper copies were available on request from libraries

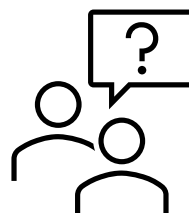


3,434 responses were received:

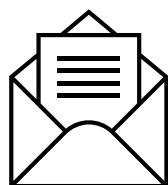
- 36% BCP
- 60.2% Dorset
- 50.5% female
- 41.4% male
- 14.4% disabled



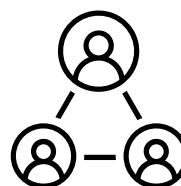
Roadshow events took place at 16 public locations across Dorset and BCP



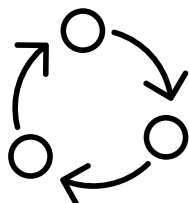
Approximately 295 people attended the roadshows to share their views on transport



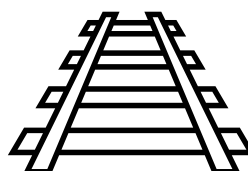
Additional feedback was received from stakeholders through letters and emails



Over 90 stakeholder responses were received, including local interest groups and transport operators



Feedback results will be published on the council's website for Dorset Council [here](#) and BCP Council [here](#)



Results from this engagement consultation will be used to inform the priorities and vision setting for the new transport plan.

The results were analysed using the People, Place and Activity themes that have been used within the Opportunities and Issues evidence gathering work.



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| Theme           | Description   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>People</b>   | People that live or work in or visit the LTP4 area have diverse transport needs. Meeting these needs for all communities and demographics is a challenge due to social, economic, and environmental factors that influence the way people travel. The engagement provided valuable understating of these factors which will inform the strategy development moving forwards.  |
| <b>Place</b>    | The varied landscapes characterising the LTP4 area mean there are challenges around accessibility across and between rural, urban, and coastal locations. Towns, villages, and larger urban centres experience diverse transport challenges. Understanding how the landscape affects and impacts transport is vital when finding ways to improve transport and travel for everyone, while seeking to enhance and protect our natural environment. |
| <b>Activity</b> | Dorset and BCP are popular tourist destinations and contain economic assets including Portland Port, Port of Poole and Bournemouth Airport. Seasonal variations in visitor numbers and fluctuating congestion from commuting and the school run are just some of the activity-focused transport challenges the area faces. Opportunities to address such challenges have been listened to during this engagement.                                 |

Full analysis from each strand of the engagement can be found in the documents listed below. This report contains a summary of the results. For any in depth analysis please consult the full reports.

| Type of engagement data | Analysis report name                            |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Roadshow data</b>    | LTP4 Roadshow Analysis Report – May 2024        |
| <b>Survey data</b>      | LTP4 Survey Analysis Report – May 2024          |
| <b>Additional data</b>  | LTP4 Additional Data Analysis Report – May 2024 |

## Analysis

Analysis of the feedback provided by respondents has revealed a set of key opportunities and issues for the new transport plan to address.

### Key Opportunities

#### Improved public transport

The need for improved public transport that tackles the current issues around frequency, availability, affordability, and accessibility was the key opportunity identified from the engagement. There is a willingness to change travel habits especially for short distance trips, but there needs to be alternative, accessible and safe options in place for people to use.

#### Review concessionary fares and £2 bus travel incentive

A large proportion of older residents expressed their views about the concessionary fare system, noting several problems that could be alleviated by either introducing affordable flat fares for all users or extend the hours in which bus passes can be used (e.g. before 9am so that passes can be used to attend hospital appointments).



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There was considerable positivity around the current national £2 bus fare and how it has encouraged bus use. There is a desire for low fares initiatives to continue or bus fares to be capped so that bus travel is more affordable for all. Increased promotion of fare initiatives was a suggestion to improve transport and encourage bus use.

### **Mobility hubs and integrated ticketing**

Transforming existing bus stations or stops into hubs to make connected journeys seamless and integrate information points, sustainable transport hire/parking, electric vehicle charging and community transport is a key opportunity to improve accessibility and encourage use of sustainable transport. Feedback showed that communities would like to see existing assets like bus stations better used as transport hubs.

Many respondents fed back the difficulties experienced conducting trips involving multiple operators or types of transport. Combining consolidated transport with integrated ticketing would make sustainable journeys easier to plan, access, and undertake.

### **Improved infrastructure for active travel**

Conflict between cyclists and other road users is a key issue emerging from the engagement. People do not feel safe sharing roadspace with traffic, especially around BCP where congestion is common. Respondents would like to see more joined up, safe dedicated cycle routes that are appropriate for all users.

There is a general desire for better infrastructure to prioritise walking and wheeling in urban centres and around industrial/business parks or tourist hotspots. Comments received identified the benefits of active travel (such as walking and wheeling) for short distance trips including to school and work and creating improved public spaces where pedestrians/active travel users are the priority. People want to be more active and sustainable in the way they travel but say that currently the infrastructure is not there for it to be a genuine option.

### **Fair allocation of transport investment**

Feedback demonstrated the need for fair allocation of funding across the whole area of LTP4 influence. The importance of ensuring no community feels left out when it comes to the distribution of investment was highlighted as a key opportunity.

It was suggested that funding go primarily towards improving the frequency of bus services across Dorset where services are currently limited or non-existent. Ensuring funding is spent in the north of the county as well as on the coast or in the east (BCP).

Investment also needs to be focused on improving the accessibility of public transport to make travelling inclusive for all. This surrounds the findings that those who are disabled, older or mobility impaired currently struggle to access tickets and travel information. Infrastructure at bus stops and stations should be suitable for all abilities. To achieve this, the policies within the plan should be developed with input from people who find travel most difficult, to ensure transport meets their needs.



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## Developing a safer road system

There was a general agreement that developing a safer road system would reduce road deaths and injuries. The use of speed cameras and better enforcement on speeding were noted as frequent comments around this topic. Respondents fed back their concerns for cyclists using roads, and the issues around pedestrians and cyclists sharing the same spaces.

Smaller communities have strong desires to reduce the road speeds through villages to improve safety of other road users. There was positive feedback around the locations that have already had a 20mph limit implemented. On the other hand, some respondents expressed a view that 20mph limits were not appropriate everywhere and are often ignored by drivers.

## Improved connections between towns and villages

Residents living in outlying villages would like to see better connections between their villages and nearby towns. Many people remember times when buses went frequently between their village and the town which meant easy travel to access services. Now many bus routes have been taken away leaving people feeling isolated with no easy way to travel. Community transport or 'dial-a-ride' schemes were suggested as potential solutions, where bus services are no longer viable. They were also described as being more accessible to older people and those with mobility difficulties.

## Key Issues

### Public transport

The most frequently occurring issue amongst feedback received was around the lack of public transport. This affects people living in both rural and urban areas. People said that transport does not meet their needs largely because:

- Bus and train frequencies are limited
- Lack of appropriate bus stop infrastructure
- Accessibility issues, especially for disabled and elderly users
- Lack of evening and weekend services
- Public transport is costly to use
- Lack of public transport provision is causing isolation and affecting quality of life
- Public transport information is incorrect or difficult to find
- Shift workers cannot commute as operating hours don't fit shift patterns
- Bus and train interchange is poor limiting connectivity between transport modes
- Digital/online technology such as ticketing is not appropriate for all users

Positive feedback tended to be location specific, for example where a junction improvement has eased congestion. Some respondents praised the bus services they have in their local area. This type of feedback occurred most often in locations with good existing bus provision.



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The engagement also revealed that the £2 bus fare cap has had a very positive reaction from bus users across Dorset and BCP. There is much enthusiasm for lower fares to remain in place indefinitely, as it makes bus travel more affordable.

### **Health and wellbeing**

Feedback showed that health and wellbeing is being impacted by the lack of transport options. This is causing isolation, inactivity, and declining physical and mental health. Groups suffering most from this are older people, disabled people, and those living in rural locations - particularly without a car or the ability to drive. These groups typically rely on public transport to get around. Respondents said that living in locations not served by public transport significantly contributes to a poor quality of life.

A lack of safe, accessible walking and cycling routes was also recognised as an issue causing inactivity. People avoid walking or cycling due to feeling unsafe using the current infrastructure. The effect of this is that many journeys are made by private car, often with single occupancy, which has its own set of health and environmental impacts.

### **Older and disabled transport users**

Older, disabled and mobility impaired residents say they struggle to access public transport because stops are too far away or information can be difficult to access. Greater support is needed to manage the mobility challenges faced when travelling. These issues appear more prevalent in rural locations due to the lack of transport links.

### **Non-drivers**

Non-drivers are experiencing transport related social isolation because they cannot access transport to socialise. The unreliability of public transport does not make it a viable choice for non-drivers.

Feedback suggests that non-drivers who live in villages or smaller towns where public transport is limited or non-existent suffer the most because they have no other way to travel, and often miss appointments due to buses being late. Taxis were described as being expensive and difficult to book. Community transport was portrayed as being limited in availability, and not fitting in with people's travel needs.

### **Price of travel and access to services**

Respondents from Dorset Council and BCP areas noted that price can limit transport and travel options. Comments suggested reducing parking charges and subsidising/reducing the cost of public transport so that it offers a genuine alternative to the private car. Currently, public transport often does not offer any benefits such as improvements in journey time or convenience. The effect of this is many journeys are being made using private cars, regardless of the length of journey.

There is a willingness to use public transport (although important to note that car ownership is a necessity to many people, for many reasons), but the current inadequacy of public transport is acting as a barrier, particularly to access work, education, and training. The engagement suggested widespread concern about public transport availability, and the negative impact this has on communities. This is a particularly serious issue for those who do not own a car or cannot drive.



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## Congestion

BCP respondents consider congestion to be one of the key transport challenges facing the area that affects the way they travel. Congestion across the conurbation impacts air quality and creates delays during peak hours and summer months. The unpredictability of journey times during peak hours was also a concern. Causes were reported as tourism and commuting.

Respondents in Dorset also noted seasonal congestion issues at specific locations which impact journey times are generally attributed to lack of appropriate parking, roadworks, or diversions.

## Connectivity

The engagement has demonstrated the need for better connectivity across Dorset and BCP (and between the two areas). The LTP4 will need to investigate how this can be achieved in line with decarbonisation pathways and other transport challenges affecting the two authority areas.

In BCP increased sustainable links are needed between the hospitals, airport, and residential areas so that travel to these places by public transport is possible. Older people frequently rely on public transport to be able to undertake daily activities. Those who do not drive or do not currently have easy access to public transport suffer from isolation, contributing to poorer health and wellbeing in local communities.

In Dorset, concerns surround rural connectivity, and the need for sustainable connections between towns and villages that make short-distance journeys possible using public transport or active modes (walking, cycling, and wheeling). Respondents said the lack of appropriate infrastructure and availability of bus services to facilitate this type of travel are the main limitations that are experienced.

# What the engagement revealed

## Key messages

After analysing the stakeholder and public feedback to the Issues and Opportunities engagement the following key messages have been formed. They are set out under the People, Place and Activity headings and will aid the formation of the vision and the setting of objectives for the emerging LTP4.

## People

1. Public transport should be accessible, efficient and connect people from their homes to services and other forms of transport. Buses will be key to unlocking economic, social, and environmental benefits across the LTP4 area of influence.
2. Older, young, and disabled people have specific needs that must be understood and met to ensure they can use public transport safely and easily. This includes digital



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information, signage and infrastructure that should be designed in a way that makes sustainable travel accessible and inclusive for all levels of mobility.

3. Isolation and declining mental health resulting from inadequate public transport affects both rural and urban communities. Providing greater travel choice will improve connectivity and encourage behaviour change towards healthier, more sustainable travel choices using transport links that connect people to places.
4. Affordability is a key concern for those using public transport. People want to see the benefits to travelling on public transport for it to become a genuine option. Short-distance trips have the most potential to be made by sustainable modes and are where the most benefits may be seen. Lower fares are a desire for many (current and potential) users.
5. Understanding the specific requirements of different demographics will help considerably to meet the needs of the whole community when it comes to low carbon transport provision. Community transport, car sharing and EVs should be considered and promoted as sustainable travel solutions.

## Place

1. Key rural transport challenges are lack of public transport provision (or access to bus and rail), car dependency, and limited access to services by ways other than private car. Providing accessible infrastructure to facilitate sustainable travel will tackle these issues.
2. Urban challenges centre around congestion during peak times and limited sustainable connections to key services. Improving connectivity and accessibility to public transport/active travel networks has potential to reduce congestion from commuting/tourism and contribute to decarbonisation. These significant rural/urban differences must be understood when implementing solutions to transport issues.
3. Accessibility is directly related to the level of transport provision serving a place or community. The fewer transport choices there are that connect people to places, the less accessible those places are.
4. Connections between settlements, services (particularly hospitals), and transport must be strong and sustainable to be able to combat isolation, deprivation, and inequality. This includes ensuring new developments are planned with well-connected and accessible transport is recognised as important by residents.
5. People are concerned about environmental impacts on transport such as flooding, and do not want these threats to worsen. Interventions must aim to reduce these threats or increase resilience of local transport systems.
6. The movement of people and goods needs to be more efficient to benefit not only residents and visitors but the environment too. There is clear support for alternative ways to transport freight to free up the local road network and reduce related emissions. Addressing these issues by improving existing transport links has been a key suggestion arising from the engagement feedback.

## Activity

1. Tourism, commuting and the school run are the main contributors to congestion on the local road networks which could be alleviated if joined up, safe, accessible active travel links and frequent public transport existed as alternatives to car travel.



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2. Encouraging sustainable travel habits is strongly linked to public transport provision. One cannot exist without the other.
3. Mobility hubs have a major role to play in making transport more integrated. Adapting existing infrastructure will be integral to achieving this aim in the short to medium term.
4. Walking, cycling, and wheeling are activities that have the potential to reduce Dorset and BCP's transport related carbon emissions by converting short distance car trips to sustainable journeys. But the right infrastructure must be in place to allow equitable access and encourage this shift, with wide promotion of the benefits.
5. Inconsiderate parking, speeding and road safety are issues that affect people's daily lives. Continued work must go towards tackling these issues and making transport systems across the area safe to use for everyone.

## Lessons Learnt

There were no surprises when it came to the nature of comments being fed back by the public and stakeholders. Transport issues were repeatedly heard across this engagement and previous work, reinforcing the importance of certain issues that matter to people. Insights and knowledge obtained will be carried forwards to improve the next round of engagement consultation. The following paragraphs outline the key lessons learnt throughout the 2024 engagement activities.

- The under 35 age bracket were under represented despite targeted social media posts across multiple platforms that did receive hits from this demographic. However, this activity did not translate from views to responses. It would have been beneficial to have conducted a roadshow at a university campus to fill the 18-35 demographic gap seen in the results. In future, increased levels of targeting will boost engagement with younger demographics. Holding roadshows at schools, colleges, universities, and involving the youth parliament will help to encourage participation in future consultations.
- To widen member, stakeholder and public participation with the project, we plan to hold some pre-engagement events in Spring 2024. This will complement the feedback we have already received and present further opportunities for more targeted responses to be collected from groups identified as underrepresented in the initial round of engagement held in Spring 2024. A Public consultation on a draft Strategy and Implementation plan will take place in late summer to early Autumn 2025.
- Face to face events were greatly valued by respondents. Having the opportunity to talk to an officer about transport was fed back by attendants of the roadshows as being important to the project. Face to face events will be included in future LTP consultation activities.
- In BCP a proportion of respondents expressed an anti active travel opinion, and other respondents fed back that they perceived the authorities to hold an anti-car agenda. These two perceptions are concerning. A learning point is to ensure people understand that motorists are being supported through LTP4 and many different interventions are being considered to tackle the diverse set of challenges facing us over the next decade.
- There were no dramatic differences in the authority areas regarding the ranking of key issues. This suggests that issues are widespread over the whole area, and equally, there is no strong urban/rural split either. Variations occur where other factors influence the



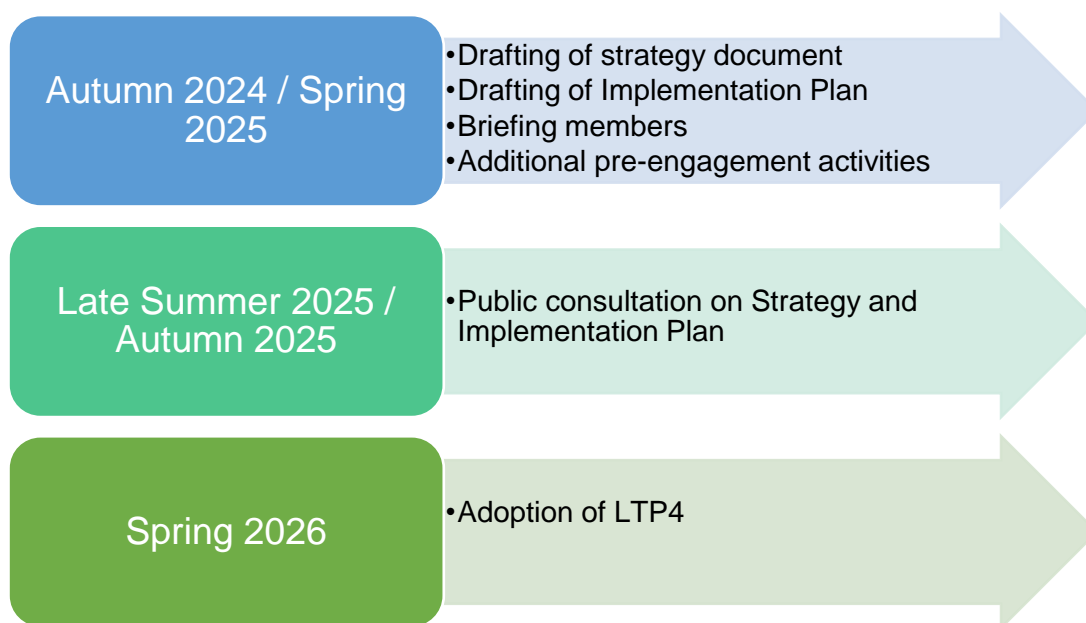
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way people travel. This must be understood alongside detailed knowledge of transport users' needs when implementing solutions throughout Dorset and BCP.

It is important the above lessons are reflected in the vision setting process with councillors and considered throughout the project until the adoption stage. The evidence shows a robust, extensive, and successful engagement consultation was undertaken that achieved its aims. The evidence will contribute to developing a strong strategy document which will outline the main objectives and policies for the LTP4.

## Next Steps

The timeline below outlines the next steps of LTP4 development.



The Strategy document will be concise and accessible. It will outline:

- The vision for LTP4
- The strategic objectives
- The relationship with national, regional, and local priorities
- The policies and area strategies that will achieve the objectives over the lifespan of the plan
- Key challenges the LTP4 will face
- Steps to delivery

The Implementation Plan will contain the main measures and actions Dorset Council and BCP Council will take, with our partners, to implement the policies in the LTP4 strategy over the short, medium and long-term lifespan of the plan.

## Summary

The Issues and Opportunities engagement has conveyed the breadth of challenges faced by the new LTP4. It is imperative that the plan works for everyone, and that its objectives strive to tackle the real and genuine transport related problems that occur every day across BCP and Dorset.



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The LTP4 strategy will need to consider the variations that occur across the unique and diverse landscapes of BCP and Dorset and acknowledge that different solutions will be required in different places. The key messages will be valuable in informing the priorities and formation of the vision for the plan moving forwards.



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