

Briefing note

Liskeard Towns Vitality Fund – Walking and Cycling Network Feasibility Study

This bid is for the development of a comprehensive feasibility study of walking and cycling improvements linking key locations and green space in Liskeard. The project will build on concepts developed at a local level by Liskeard's walking and cycling stakeholder group. The routes will look to facilitate sustainable access to key residential, retail, employment and educational services, improve air quality in the town and tackle climate change.

The feasibility will focus on a number of key routes including the Cattle Market to Liskeard Railway Station, along Station Road, Charter Way, Dean Street/New Road and Plymouth Road and the development of a Town centre cycle hub. The study will also look to identify key improvements to signage and supporting infrastructure such as cycle parking.

The project builds on the £3.5m investment in the Liskeard – Looe loop of the Looe Valley Trails, the redevelopment of Liskeard Cattle Market and will look to identify the preferred option for a town centre cycle hub. The projects also aligns with wider Cornwall Council programmes such as the Making Space for Nature programme which is focussed on Castle Park.

Cornwall Council's Local Transport Plan has earmarked £100K capital funding for the deliver of walking and cycling infrastructure within the town. The completion of this study will put Liskeard in an excellent position to bid for future funding opportunities.

Background

Liskeard is a large town located in South East Cornwall. The town is well positioned on the A38 and well served by frequent rail and bus links. Despite good public transport links to nearby settlements, provision within the town for pedestrians and cyclists is relatively poor and has lacked recent development.

Delivery of a comprehensive network of walking and cycling links linking key services has the opportunity to not only improve the environment, health and wellbeing of Liskeard's residents but support economic growth.

The delivery of the network supports national and local policy including the delivery of Cornwall's Local Plan, Cornwall's Local Transport Plan, Cornwall's Physical Activity Strategy and the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy for the area and Cornwall Council's commitment to addressing Climate Change through the 2019 Climate Change Declaration. The improvement of walking and cycling links within the town are a key focus of the Liskeard Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Covid-19 crisis has radically changed travel behaviour over a very short time period. Traffic levels in Cornwall have dipped as low as 40% of normal daily levels and there are indications nationally that when lockdown measures are removed that there may be as much as a 30% reduction on normal traffic levels as a result of changes to work patterns and travel behaviour. The impacts on the Transport sector are difficult to determine but are likely to be long lasting, the use of public transport for example will face significant challenges in terms of user confidence. Uncertainty remains with regard to how people choose to travel in the future and what a new 'normal' may look like. There is evidence to suggest more

people are walking and cycling as road space is freed up by a lack of vehicles and we are undertaking ongoing monitoring to understand the impacts of the current period on traffic levels, walking and cycling levels and air quality across Cornwall. The lack of vehicles on the road allows an opportunity to imagine a transport network focussed on walking and cycling and build towards this.

Key Stats

- Population of 9,417
- Approximately 20% of households have no access to a car.
- Significant number of short distance Travel to work trips - approximately 35% of Travel to Work trips are 5km or under compared to 32% for Cornwall.

Benefits of Walking and Cycling

The positive benefits of increased walking and cycling to personal health and wellbeing, the environment and economy are well documented. Key benefits include;

- 12.7 jobs are supported or sustained for every £1 million of investment in sustainable transport infrastructure, more than for road building
- long distance cycle routes generate as much as £30m a year to the economies they pass through, sustaining over 600 full time equivalent jobs
- High street walking, cycling and public realm improvements have been shown to increase retail sales by up to 30%.

Funding Ask

Based on previous experience you would be looking at around £30,000 to undertake a feasibility study to further develop the walking and cycling aspirations for Liskeard. The scope of the works is to be agreed but with potentially include;

- A set of schemes developed to an outline design level, these would be built on the concept work already undertaken but be developed to ensure they meet Highway Standards and latest best practice.
- A set of cost estimates to deliver the potential schemes.
- Clarity regarding the potential location of a cycle hub and what form this may take.
- Community consultation – this could be pre or post scheme design depending on when you want to undertake wider engagement.