

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Draft Local Transport Plan 2027-2043

Integrated Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment

DRY



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1. Introduction

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) is in the process of updating their Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP sets out the long-term strategic transport vision for the county. This will help shape the future of transport across Gloucestershire, prioritise investment and support wider objectives across the county, over the next 15 years and beyond.

As part of this process, GCC must ensure that any changes made to the LTP which may affect communities and stakeholders, particularly those with protected characteristics, are considered. This Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) considers the potential effects of emerging key transport policies within the LTP on groups with protected characteristics, as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

The purpose of an EqIA is to improve the work of Councils, specifically by removing any unlawful discrimination that may be brought about by a policy and ensuring that equality is promoted. An EqIA is a requirement under the legal duties for Race Equality, Gender Equality and Disability Equality, and every Council is required to undertake such an assessment on any activity that requires a decision.

It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic. The nine protected characteristics¹ that are considered within an EqIA include:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

This EqIA is a live document and will be subject to review and change, as development of the LTP and any monitoring and evaluation progresses.

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics#age>

Vision, objectives and outcomes

The LTP includes a vision statement for the county:

‘A better-connected Gloucestershire where transport supports everyone’s needs, our environment flourishes and growth is sustainable’.

The vision is supported by three outcomes and several objectives which underpin the policies and interventions set out in the LTP:

- 1. A well-connected and prosperous Gloucestershire.**
- 2. A green and healthy Gloucestershire.**
- 3. A Gloucestershire which supports local communities.**

Delivery Priority 1: A well connected and prosperous Gloucestershire

- Objective 1: Improving regional transport connections for a wider functional area
- Objective 2: A transport system which supports sustainable housing and employment growth
- Objective 3: Making our transport system more reliable and resilient all day, every day
- Objective 4: Making our transport system fit for the future

Delivery Priority 2: A green and healthy Gloucestershire

- Objective 5: High quality natural and built environment
- Objective 6: Reducing carbon emissions and shifting to sustainable transport modes
- Objective 7: Making travel safer and more secure
- Objective 8: Enabling people to lead active and healthy lives

Delivery Priority 3: A Gloucestershire which supports local communities

- Objective 9: Integrating different types of transport to make it work better for the community
- Objective 10: Ensuring travel is affordable for all and supports reduced social exclusion
- Objective 11: Ensuring transport is accessible and inclusive for everyone
- Objective 12: Local transport that reflects community needs

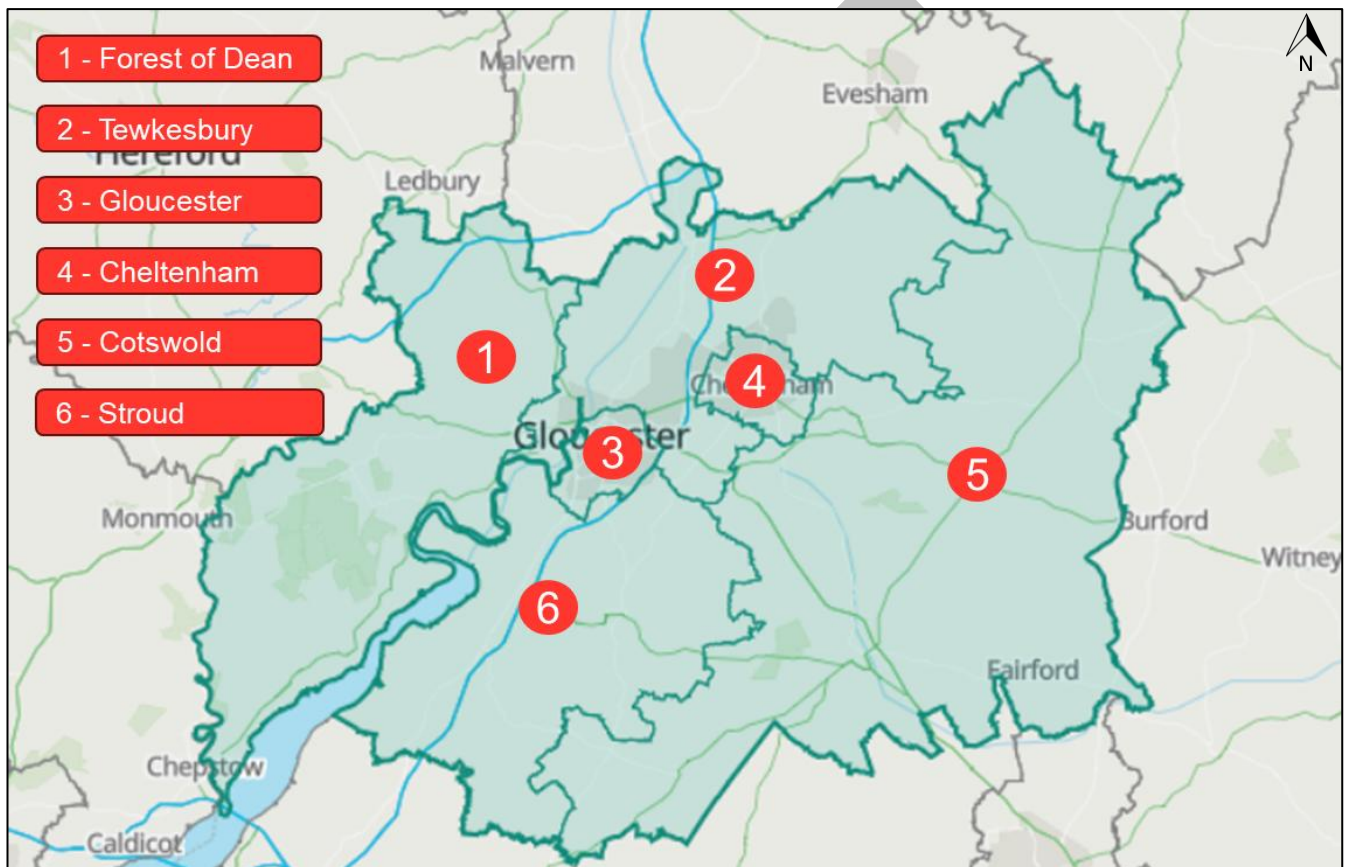
The delivery of the vision, outcomes and objectives are supported by a set of local transport policies that aim to guide the development of interventions in Gloucestershire.

2. Local Context and Evidence Base

Local Context

Gloucestershire is located in the South West of England, at the head of the River Severn Estuary, and shares boundaries with seven other counties. The county comprises six districts: Forest of Dean, Tewkesbury, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Cotswolds, and Stroud. The locations of the districts are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Districts within Gloucestershire²



© OpenStreetMap

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Gloucestershire is characterised by a predominately rural landscape, with approximately 88% of the county classified as rural. However, only around 30% of the county's population

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/explore-local-statistics/areas/E10000013-gloucestershire>

reside within these areas³, with the majority of residents concentrated in urban centres, particularly within Gloucester and Cheltenham. This spatial imbalance between where people live, work and access services underpins many of the county's transport challenges and inequalities.

The county's travel to work pattern is strongly influenced by its dispersed geography and the distribution of employment opportunities. This results in a higher level of car dependency, which is reflected by higher than the national average car ownership levels - particularly in rural areas where public transport opportunity is limited. The proportion of households who do not own a car or van in Gloucestershire (15%) is significantly lower than England (24%), whilst the proportion of households who own two cars (73%) is higher than the national average of 65%⁴.

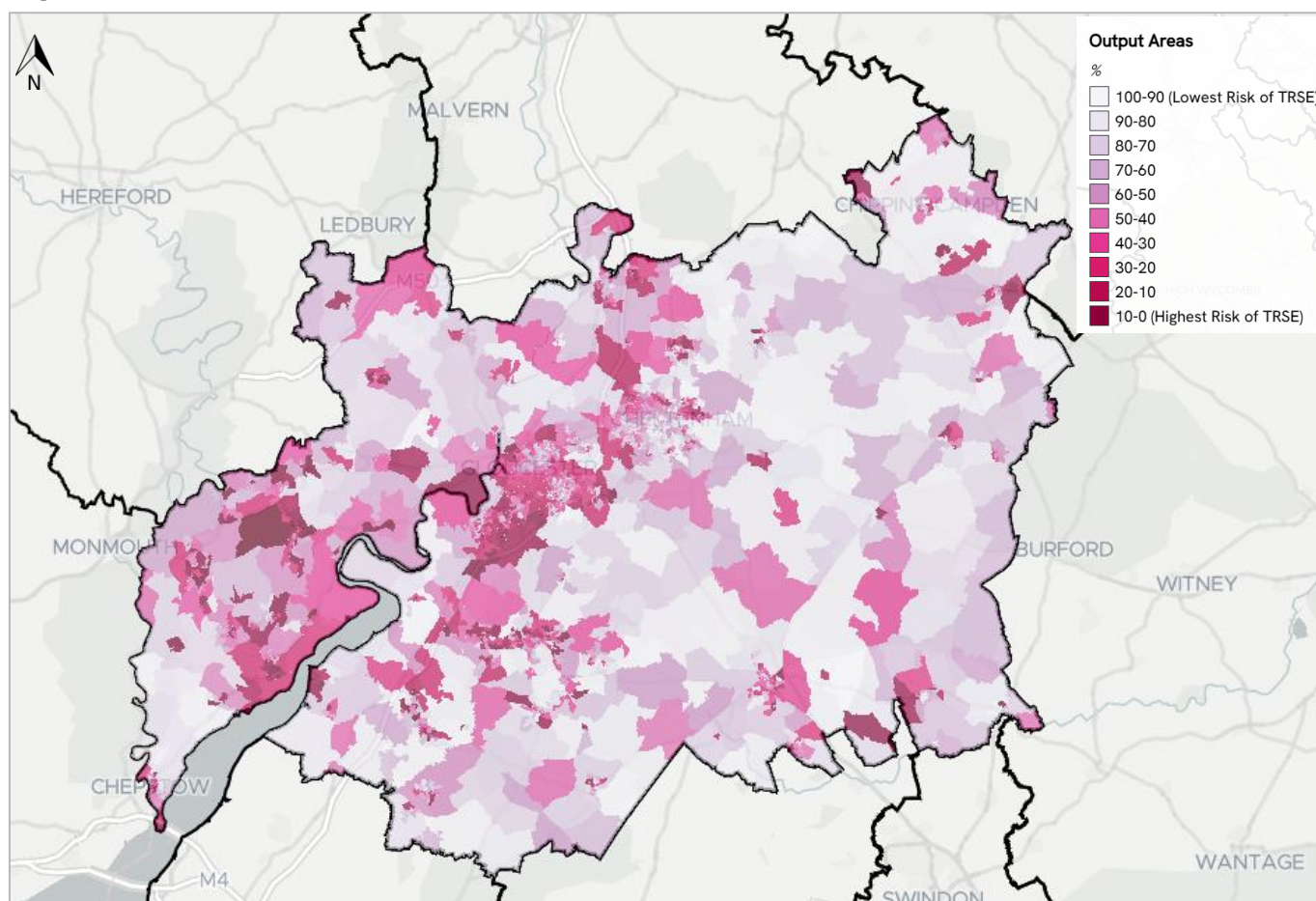
Whilst Gloucester and Cheltenham benefit from good public transport, accessibility to key services and employment opportunities becomes more constrained beyond these areas. Overall, Gloucestershire exhibits a transport profile where rurality and service distribution collectively drive reliance on the private car. This highlights the need for improved connectivity and more inclusive transport options, particularly for rural communities and those without access to a car.

A review of the county's Transport Related Social Exclusions (TRSE) has confirmed that 22.2% of the population live in neighbourhoods with a high risk of transport related social exclusion as shown in Figure 2. The Forest of Dean has the highest risk of TRSE at 38.9% compared to 5.4% in Cheltenham⁵. The high risk of TRSE means that transport is limiting life chances and participation. It highlights the need for enhanced and improved services to be provided, to enable better access to key services and opportunities by sustainable modes.

³ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/cgajavao/rural-urban-classification.pdf>

⁴ Census 2021 Car and Van Availability (TS045)

Figure 2: TRSE within Gloucestershire⁵



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Evidence Base

To provide greater context to the county's population and characteristics, data has been collated for the county using the latest Census Data (2011), where available. This will provide an evidence base for relevant protected characteristics groups, to undertake any assessment on the proposed LTP policies, as part of this EqIA.

Table 1: EqIA Evidence Base

Protected characteristic / relevant group	Overview
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⁵ <https://www.transportforthenorth.com/social-inclusion/>

Age	Gloucestershire has a population of 669,380 people⁶. The median age is 43 years old. In Gloucestershire, the breakdown of population by age group is as follows: <table border="1" data-bbox="359 392 1364 660"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Range</th><th>% of Gloucestershire population</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-15</td><td>17.5</td></tr> <tr> <td>16-64</td><td>60.4</td></tr> <tr> <td>65+</td><td>22.1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Range	% of Gloucestershire population	0-15	17.5	16-64	60.4	65+	22.1		
Age Range	% of Gloucestershire population										
0-15	17.5										
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Disability	A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities⁷. According to Census 2021 data, 16.8% of Gloucestershire's population reported a disability under the Equality Act. 6.4% reported that their activities were limited 'a lot' and 10.4% reported their activities were limited 'a little'. In Gloucestershire, the breakdown in disability by age group is as follows: <table border="1" data-bbox="359 1086 1364 1489"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Range</th><th>% of Gloucestershire population who identify as having a disability</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-15</td><td>5.2</td></tr> <tr> <td>16-49</td><td>13.1</td></tr> <tr> <td>50-64</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr> <td>65+</td><td>31.7</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Range	% of Gloucestershire population who identify as having a disability	0-15	5.2	16-49	13.1	50-64	18	65+	31.7
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0-15	5.2										
16-49	13.1										
50-64	18										
65+	31.7										
Gender Reassignment	Gender Reassignment is defined as the process where a person undergoes, or proposes to undergo, a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex⁸. According to Census 2021 data, in response to the question '<i>is your gender the same as the sex you were registered at birth?</i>', 94.8% of residents in Gloucestershire answered the question. Of these, 0.4% regarded their gender										

⁶ Mid Year Population Estimates, England and Wales, 2024

⁷ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics#disability>

⁸ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics#genderreassignment>

	identity to be different from the sex registered at birth. 5.2% of the Gloucestershire population chose not to answer this question.														
Marriage and civil partnership	Marriage is a union between a man and a woman, or between a same-sex couple. A same-sex couple can also have their relationship recognised as a civil partnership⁹. In Gloucestershire, this is as follows: <table> <tr> <th>Marriage/Civil Partnership Status</th><th>% of Gloucestershire population</th></tr> <tr> <td>Single and have never married or registered a civil partnership</td><td>33.6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Married</td><td>47.8</td></tr> <tr> <td>Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which has now legally dissolved</td><td>9.9</td></tr> <tr> <td>Widowed or a surviving partner from a civil partnership</td><td>6.5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Separated but still legally married/in a civil partnership</td><td>2.0</td></tr> <tr> <td>Registered civil partnership</td><td>0.2</td></tr> </table>	Marriage/Civil Partnership Status	% of Gloucestershire population	Single and have never married or registered a civil partnership	33.6	Married	47.8	Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which has now legally dissolved	9.9	Widowed or a surviving partner from a civil partnership	6.5	Separated but still legally married/in a civil partnership	2.0	Registered civil partnership	0.2
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Pregnancy and maternity	Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the time after birth, including treating women unfavourably because they are breastfeeding¹. There were 5,839 live births in Gloucestershire in 2023 with a general fertility rate of 49.0 births per 1,000 women¹⁰. This broadly aligns with the General Fertility Rate (GFR) for England which was reported as 49.4 births per 1,000 women¹¹.														

⁹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics#marriageandcivilpartnership>

¹⁰ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/dmkdegrn/birth-trends-report-2024.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/birthsummarytablesenglandandwales>

Race	A race is a group of people defined by their colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origins¹. The 2021 Census found that 10% of Gloucestershire residents were born outside of the UK and is as follows: <table border="1" data-bbox="359 436 1356 1254"> <thead> <tr> <th>Race</th><th>% of Gloucestershire population</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White people from an English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background</td><td>87.7</td></tr> <tr> <td>'Other white' group</td><td>4.5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh background</td><td>2.9</td></tr> <tr> <td>A mixed or multiple ethnic background</td><td>2.2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Black people from a British, Welsh, Caribbean or African background</td><td>1.2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Another ethnic group</td><td>0.7</td></tr> <tr> <td>White people from an Irish background</td><td>0.6</td></tr> <tr> <td>White Gypsy and Irish traveller people</td><td>0.1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Roma people</td><td>0.1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Race	% of Gloucestershire population	White people from an English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British background	87.7	'Other white' group	4.5	Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh background	2.9	A mixed or multiple ethnic background	2.2	Black people from a British, Welsh, Caribbean or African background	1.2	Another ethnic group	0.7	White people from an Irish background	0.6	White Gypsy and Irish traveller people	0.1	Roma people	0.1
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Religion or belief	Religion refers to any religion or lack thereof. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief¹. 49.2% of residents identified as Christian, making it the most common religion. A breakdown for Gloucestershire is as follows: <table border="1" data-bbox="359 1444 1356 1982"> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion or belief</th><th>% of Gloucestershire population</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Christianity</td><td>49.2</td></tr> <tr> <td>No Religion</td><td>41.4</td></tr> <tr> <td>Religion not stated</td><td>6.2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Islam</td><td>1.4</td></tr> <tr> <td>Hinduism</td><td>0.6</td></tr> <tr> <td>Other Religion</td><td>0.5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Buddhism</td><td>0.4</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Religion or belief	% of Gloucestershire population	Christianity	49.2	No Religion	41.4	Religion not stated	6.2	Islam	1.4	Hinduism	0.6	Other Religion	0.5	Buddhism	0.4				
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Other Religion	0.5																				
Buddhism	0.4																				

	Judaism	0.1
	Sikhism	0.1
Sex	In 2021, 51.1% of Gloucestershire population identified as a woman and 48.9% identified as males.	
Sexual orientation	Defined as whether a person's sexual attraction is to their own sex, the opposite sex or both sexes ¹ . Voluntary questions were posed to people 16 years of age and above. 93.2% of Gloucestershire residents responded.	
	Sexual Orientation	% of Gloucestershire population
	Straight/Heterosexual	90.4
	Not answered	6.8
	Gay or lesbian	1.3
	Bisexual	1.2
	All other sexual orientations	0.3

3. Engagement and Consultation

A Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation Strategy has been developed to set out the methodology for involving stakeholders in the LTP development. The strategy aims to foster collaboration, cooperation, and constructive dialogue among stakeholders, thereby building trust and encouraging meaningful feedback. This process supports the creation of an LTP that addresses the diverse needs of everyone living and working in Gloucestershire. The LTP Engagement and Consultation Strategy will be drawn upon in later iterations of this assessment.

Public Engagement

As part of a formal adoption process, the county is undertaking a two staged approach to engagement and consultation. The current engagement period is focused on identifying the key challenges and opportunities facing Gloucestershire's residents. In order to do this, the following activities have been undertaken:

- A launch event at GCC Full Council;
- An online survey to understand existing travel habits and patterns;
- District Officer briefings;
- Workshops with strategic stakeholders including Network Rail, coach and bus operators, National Highways, Active Travel England, Homes England and the Western Gateway South West Freight Forum.
- Workshops with Neighbouring Authorities including Gloucestershire Districts, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Wiltshire and Monmouthshire.
- Social media posts on Facebook and LinkedIn;
- Online focus groups with protected characteristic groups; and
- A number of online and in person drop-in events from 1 June 2026 to 23 June 2026, across the county.

All feedback received will be reviewed alongside technical evidence and stakeholder input to help develop the LTP.

Public Consultation

There will also be a statutory formal public consultation on the draft LTP which is expected in late 2026 before the Plan is finalised and adopted in 2027¹². This consultation period will provide residents with an opportunity to review the proposed policies and priorities before the plan is finalised and adopted.

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¹² <https://haveyoursaygloucestershire.uk.engagementhq.com/help-shape-the-future-of-transport-in-gloucestershire?preview=true>

4. Impact Assessment

Whilst the LTP is currently in draft form, all key policies proposed have been subjected to an initial screening for impact on equalities.

The draft transport policies have been assessed in full, to ensure that the equalities impact of these policies on different groups has been considered. Each of these policies has been subject to screening using the information ascertained as part of the local context and supporting evidence base.

The table in Appendix A assesses each policy based on its likely impact on the nine protected characteristic groups¹³. Where a draft policy has the potential to make a positive contribution, this has been highlighted in green. Where a draft policy may cause adverse impact or discriminate against groups with protected characteristics, this has been highlighted as black. Policies with neutral or no impacts have been highlighted grey. The results of this screening process can be seen in Appendix A.

A detailed commentary on specific policy themes which may result in positive or adverse impacts is provided further below.

Bus Rapid Transit

Bus Rapid Transit specifically seeks to improve connections between the urban districts of Gloucester and Cheltenham. This policy could increase the reliability of buses and encourage those who use them to rely on them more frequently, as well potentially encouraging those who use private car to shift modes. It is likely to have a positive impact on older members of the population, particularly those age 66 and over who are entitled to free off-peak bus usage. Likewise, younger members of the population who rely on public transport for education trips could also be positively impacted.

BRT also has the potential to improve journeys for ethnically diverse groups. According to the National Travel Survey¹⁴, in England, white people made the highest percentage of trips by car or van out of all ethnic groups (63%) whilst Black people made the lowest percentage of trips by car or van (40%). Comparatively, journeys by local bus made up 19% of trips by Black people - the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups for this type of transport. White children had the longest trip to school (2.5 miles on average), and Asian children had the shortest (2.0 miles on average). Additionally, White and Asian children were more likely to travel to school by car, whilst Black

¹³ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics>

¹⁴ UK Government, National Travel Survey. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics>

children were more likely to travel by bus¹⁵. This suggests that improvements to bus reliability and connectivity, as proposed under this policy, may particularly benefit some ethnic minority groups who are more likely to rely on bus services.

Network Resilience

Improved network resilience could benefit the protected characteristic groups who rely on public transport. This includes elderly people, young people who do not have access to a car, those experiencing pregnancy or maternity, carers or those with young children (and who are likely to take part in the school run and drop children off at school), those who consider themselves to have a disability, some ethnic minority groups who are more likely to rely on bus services and women. A more reliable network could reduce negative impacts, such as long wait times or infrequent services on the protected groups that heavily rely on public transport.

Integrated ticketing and payments

Integrated ticketing and payments would support journey continuity across different modes of travel, across the county. This could specifically benefit protected characteristic groups who predominately use public transport.

This includes elderly people who may use public transport to get to appointments and young people who use it for education opportunities. Having a consistent and integrated ticketing and pricing method across modes (and across districts within the county) could allow for an easier experience for passengers; reducing barriers to taking public transport and reducing severance.

Transport Interchange Hubs

This policy specifically refers to 'customer experience' which is important when considering the protected characteristic groups that could be impacted. Generally, improved transport interchange facilities at mobility hubs could improve journey continuity across different modes of travel and provide a simpler experience for passengers. Improvements to transport interchange could positively affect protected characteristic groups that predominately use public transport including elderly people, young people, those experiencing pregnancy or maternity who may also be carers or those with young children (and who are likely to take part in the school run and drop children off at school), those who consider themselves to have a disability, some ethnic minority groups who are more likely to rely on bus services and women.

Depending on the design and facilities proposed at interchange hubs, there is the potential to positively impact people with better passenger and customer experience. This could be through

¹⁵ UK Government (2023) Travel. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/culture-and-community/transport/travel/latest/>

offering appropriate facilities such as changing tables for babies to provide improvements for those within the 'pregnancy and maternity' protected characteristic group, for example.

Transport Interchange Hubs and any associated facilities could also positively impact those who are likely to be victims of hate crime (those whose gender identity is different to that assigned at birth, those from minority ethnic groups, those who identified as gay or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer or 'all other sexual orientations', those of a different race or religion) if improved facilities such as lighting, seating or surveillance are provided. Likewise, improved interchange hub facilities could improve safety and the perception of safety for women and girls (especially as night). This policy may help improve the feeling of safety.

In Gloucestershire, during 2024/25 there were 1,288 hate crimes reported¹⁶. Race-related hate crimes were the most reported, amounting to 67.3% of all reported hate crimes in the county. Disability-related hate crimes have also increased since 2013/14, rising from 6 reported cases to 101 cases in 2024/25. Whilst these statistics are not necessarily occurring on transport, exposure to potential hate crimes may be increased when using public transport.

Railway Station Improvements

Railway Station Improvements could positively impact a number of protected characteristic groups, including those whose travel is impacted by a disability if station improvements include better provision of lifts and escalators, for example.

Provision of resurfaced footways could also minimise trip hazards for the elderly and disabled. The addition of tactiles and ramps could also have a positive impact on disabled users. Improved accessibility at railway stations (such as provision of ramps, lifts and step-free access) could also improve access for those within the 'pregnancy and maternity' protected characteristic group who may be travelling with pushchairs.

Improvements at railway stations may also positively impact women and those who are likely to be victims of hate crime (those whose gender identity is different to that assigned at birth, those from minority ethnic groups, those who identified as gay or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer or 'all other sexual orientations', those of a different race or religion) if improved facilities such as lighting, seating, surveillance or increased staff presence are provided. This may help improve the feeling of safety and encourage public transport use. All these positive impacts for protected characteristic groups could simultaneously increase opportunity to travel to amenities and work.

Digital connectivity

¹⁶ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/yiznrmv0/equality-profile-2025.pdf>

This policy could positively impact younger people by making transport information easily accessible and digitised. In the long term this could foster increased mode shift away from travel including private car for younger people.

However, this policy also has the potential to negatively impact older people. Age UK reported that 4.3 million people aged 65+ in the UK do not use a smartphone. With a further 4.9 million people aged 65+ not having the basic skills needed to use the internet successfully in the UK¹⁷, the increased focus on digital connectivity for transport services could alienate elderly people who rely on public transport. There is also the potential for increased digital connectivity to negatively impact disability groups (e.g., those with visual impairments, cognitive impairments, neurodiversity). It is noted that there are further policies proposed (including Policy P50: Providing Accessible and Inclusive Travel Information) which actively addresses this.

Accessibility and inclusion

This policy is expected to have a positive impact on most protected characteristics, particularly through its emphasis on enabling people of all abilities, ages and backgrounds to travel independently and with confidence. No specific impacts have been identified in relation to marriage and civil partnership.

Bus accessibility

The 2023 Your Bus Journey survey by Transport Focus confirmed that younger demographics (under the age of 24) and older age groups (over the age of 65) are core users of bus networks and are the most likely to have used a bus in the last seven days¹⁸. Despite this, one of the reasons people may not use the bus is due to lack of frequency and accessibility.

Generally, improved bus accessibility could positively affect protected characteristic groups that predominately use public transport including elderly people, young people, those experiencing pregnancy or maternity who may also be carers or those with young children (and who are likely to take part in the school run and drop children off at school), those who consider themselves to have a disability, some ethnic minority groups who are more likely to rely on bus services and women.

This policy could also positively impact those with a disability and the elderly (for example, those with walking impairments), if proposals include sufficient space for wheelchair users on buses or retractable ramps or lifts. Likewise, there is also the potential to positively affect those within the pregnancy and maternity group by ensuring enough space for pushchairs on buses.

Providing accessible and inclusive travel information

¹⁷ <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-press/articles/age-uk-warns-22.4-million-digitally-excluded-older-people-are-at-risk-of-being-left-behind-in-an-increasingly-digital-world/>

¹⁸ <https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/publication/your-bus-journey-2023-results/>

This could positively impact all groups, particularly elderly people who may otherwise be negatively impacted by digitised travel information. Similarly, this policy could positively benefit those who identify as having a disability or require travel information in different formats (e.g., different font sizes or Braille). Likewise, there could be positive impacts for those who do not speak English as their first language and who may require travel information in different languages.

Supporting education related travel

This could directly improve access for disability groups, children and young people as this policy is specifically dedicated to education-aged people who are classed with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and support travel to and from education opportunities. Therefore, this policy is positive for the protected characteristic groups mentioned.

Personal safety when travelling

This could positively impact women, and those who are likely to be victims of hate crime (those whose gender identity is different to that assigned at birth, those from minority ethnic groups, those who identified as gay or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer or 'all other sexual orientations', those of a different race or religion) if improved facilities such as lighting, seating, surveillance or increased staff presence are provided. This may help improve the feeling of safety and encourage public transport use.

Public Rights of Way

Improved Public Rights of Way could positively impact disabled users and the elderly by providing improved access to walking routes and contributing to healthier lifestyles. Improved access to walking routes could also positively impact protected characteristic groups within rural areas who currently do not have accessible or safe routes for walking.

This policy could also positively impact groups who are likely to be victims of hate crime (those whose gender identity is different to that assigned at birth, those from minority ethnic groups, those who identified as gay or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer or 'all other sexual orientations', those of a different race or religion) if improved facilities such as lighting, seating, and signage etc. are provided.

Shared micromobility

Shared micromobility could improve access to education for school children who live far from catchment zones and elderly people who rely on public transport to access medical appointments, for example. This policy could also positively contribute to closing the gap between rural and urban public transportation access.

Street design

Street design improvements could include implementing infrastructure such as tactile paving which would benefit people with visual impairments (including disabled users and the elderly) or increasing footway widths which could have a positive impact on those with mobility impairments and those travelling with children. Street design could also include improvements to crossings (i.e., provision of tactiles, shorter crossing distances, simplified crossing layouts and auditory signals) to help guide visually impaired users which would have the potential to improve access for disabled users.

This could further positively impact people with disabilities by ensuring that streets are wide enough to comfortably accommodate wheelchair users. Similarly, this could positively impact the elderly and young people, for example, through the implementation of pedestrian-priority streets or School Streets which could promote safer and healthier modes of travel.

Digital Demand Responsive Transport

Digital Demand Responsive Transport could help improve access for disability groups (e.g., those with visual impairments, cognitive impairments, neurodiversity etc.), school children who live far from catchment zones, and elderly people who rely on public transport for patient transfer services to appointments. This policy specifically focuses on those groups who also live in rural areas of the county, hypothetically contributing to closing the gap between rural and urban public transportation access.

As this is intended to be an online bookable service, there is a potential for elderly people to be excluded from using the service if the digitalisation of public transport hinders accessibility. Age UK reported that 4.3 million people aged 65+ in the UK do not use a smartphone¹⁹. It is noted that there are further policies proposed (including Policy P50: Providing Accessible and Inclusive Travel Information) which actively addresses this challenge.

Gloucestershire's Local Bus Services

Gloucestershire's Local Bus Services are connected to the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for the county to improve the quality of public transport and promote bus travel as an attractive alternative to the private car.

This policy would benefit those that already rely on public transport but would also benefit those who have the potential to shift from private car. It could benefit protected characteristic groups who rely on public transport more including those age 66 and over who are entitled to free off-peak bus, young people who do not have access to a car, those who consider themselves to have a disability,

¹⁹ <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-press/articles/age-uk-warns-22.4-million-digitally-excluded-older-people-are-at-risk-of-being-left-behind-in-an-increasingly-digital-world/>

some ethnic minority groups who are more likely to rely on bus services and women. It could also benefit those who are pregnant or have recently given birth and/or those with young children who are more likely to trip chain and/or undertake the school run.

Gloucestershire's Local Highway Network Management

Protected characteristic groups who rely on public transport are usually elderly people, young people who do not have access to a car, those who consider themselves to have a disability, some ethnic minority groups who are more likely to rely on bus services and women. According to the National Travel Survey results, travel by public transport is highly gendered. In 2023, females of all ages made more bus trips and also travelled a longer distance by bus than males. Females made more bus trips than males for all age groups and travelled a longer distance than males for all age groups apart from the age groups of 0 to 16 and 30 to 39²⁰.

Those experiencing pregnancy or maternity who may also be carers or those with young children (and who are likely to take part in the school run and drop children off at school) also tend to rely more on public transport. A more resilient network could reduce the negative impacts, such as long wait times or infrequent services, on the protected groups that heavily rely on public transport.

Community Led Transport

Community led transport improvements could help improve access for disability groups, school children who live far from catchment zones, and elderly people who for example rely on patient transfer services to appointments. Considering the county's existing challenges relating to rural versus urban public transport opportunity, a community-led transport approach could improve access to the 'right' transport by prioritising the needs of the local community instead of assuming a one-size-fits-all policy approach.

Transport poverty

This policy aims to target areas of the county which suffer from transport poverty by improving 'affordable, accessible and reliable travel options' to increase people's connections to opportunities (specifically districts like the Forest of Dean where risk of TRSE is high). Protected characteristic groups in areas of transport poverty, who generally rely on public transport, could be positively impacted.

This includes the elderly; young people; those with a disability; and women. Considering that Gloucestershire has an ageing population, increasing the demand for consistent and accessible public transport within rural areas could reduce isolation.

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2023/nts-2023-trends-in-public-transport-use-and-multi-modal-public-transport-trips>

Making transport financially sustainable

This policy could positively impact those who rely on discounted or free tickets to travel such as those who are eligible for age-related concessionary bus passes and/or those with a disability, as well as young people who use concessionary fares to travel to and from education.

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5. Action Planning

The screening of draft LTP indicate that these policies are unlikely to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups of the community. This is because the Plan largely seeks to improve the quality of life for Gloucestershire's residents by delivering a transport system that supports economic growth and provides opportunities for people to access the services that they need.

However, this initial assessment has identified several areas where transport could possibly have an adverse impact or have the potential to discriminate against different groups.

Many of the concerns around some of the policies within the LTP pertain to the potentially unfair impact to the elderly population and those that identify as having a disability. This is mostly because these protected characteristic groups predominately rely on public transport as well as live in the more rural areas of Gloucestershire. Whilst the mitigation for the negative impacts of some of these policies can be rectified through greater engagement with local stakeholders and communities, this EqlA recognises that the engagement and consultation strategy is still ongoing, and that the LTP is yet to be finalised. Therefore, further engagement and communication with communities and key stakeholders should be planned and any projects or schemes relating to these policies designed to mitigate any negative impacts.

An initial action plan with recommendations is provided below.

Action	Owner	By When?	Outcome
Provide high-quality information on transport services that is readily available and in easy-to-understand formats, including digitally accessible formats.	Transport services Transport operators	Ongoing	Provision of transport information and timetables in appropriate formats.
Undertake inclusive engagement with existing and proposed users to ensure design / features provide facilities that enable safer personal travel for all users.	Highways Transport operators	Ongoing	Transport networks that are safer to use by all users.

The action planning strategy for the proposed LTP will be ongoing as the programme of engagement and consultation continues.

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6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring will be undertaken through relevant indicators (e.g. usage, accessibility and feedback), with findings used to review and refine mitigation measures over time. These will include a set of transport related indicators which will monitor the delivery of the LTP.

The performance against each LTP indicator will be reported annually. It is anticipated that performance will also be benchmarked against that of other comparable local authorities to determine the effectiveness of the Plan's delivery. In addition to the transport indicators that will be developed, its key indicators used by partner organisations to monitor trends will also be reviewed, to consider how the Plan can continue to contribute.

7. Conclusion and Next Steps

The LTP policies have been tested for their impacts on equality. The results demonstrate that none of the policies have a significant negative impact on equality, and in several instances have a positive impact towards promoting equality.

Instances where the key policies have a positive impact relate to increasing travel choice, improving accessibility, improving physical and personal safety, and delivering improvements for transport users with a disability, for the elderly, for those more likely to be living in deprivation and those more likely to experience hate crimes.

Next Steps

This is an initial EqIA which will be reviewed once the draft LTP has been developed. Once the LTP is adopted, regular monitoring and implementation plans will be produced. This will provide a framework by which monitoring of the Plan's delivery will be reported. The LTP will also be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it remains relevant and up to date. It is anticipated that the review of this Equalities Impact Assessment will coincide with the reviews of the LTP.

Following the publication of the main Local Transport Plan document, work will begin on developing the plan's supporting strategies, which will provide further detail as to how the key LTP policies will be delivered. It is anticipated that each of these supporting strategies will be subject to its own Equalities Impact Assessment.