

Report subject	Our Place and Environment: Active Travel Funding 2026/27
Meeting date	4 March 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	Active Travel England, the government's executive agency responsible for walking, wheeling and cycling in England, published its Active Travel Capability Ratings in December 2025. BCP Council was uprated from a Level 2 authority to a Level 3 authority. The council is one of only 11 local authorities in the country to achieve level 3, and one of only 5 that isn't part of a large, combined authority or city region. The increased grading has resulted in the council being allocated a larger Active Travel settlement. The council has been allocated £2,249,725 of capital funding for walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, per year up to and including 2029/30. Alongside this, a revenue allocation of £705,869 per year up to and including 2028/29. This represents a significant increase from the 2025/26 allocations of £1,128,857 (capital) and £330,685 (revenue). This report recommends how the grant award should be invested and seeks delegated authority to facilitate the delivery. The recommended proposals are aligned with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) approved by Council in May 2022. This report should be read in conjunction with the Local Transport Consolidated Funding Programme 2026/27 Cabinet report.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet: (a) Recommends to Council delegation of the investment of the £2.96m of 2026/27 active travel funding to the Service Director for Planning & Transport in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy.
Reason for recommendations	To expediate investment of the 2026/27 active travel funding award in line with the constitution and financial regulations delegations. The investment of the ATF funding is aligned with the LCWIP; Council's Corporate Strategy; and the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley - Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Richard Pincroft – Head of Transport and Sustainable Travel Beth Barker-Stock – Sustainable Travel Team Leader
Wards	All
Classification	For Recommendation

Background

1. On 5 December 2026 a letter was received from Active Travel England confirming BCP Council's increase from Level 2 to Level 3 Capability Rating.
2. Level 3 is defined as "Very strong local leadership and organisational capability, comprehensive plans, and a significant network in place with a growing number of people choosing to walk, wheel and cycle."
3. The letter also advised that, for the first time, multi-year funding allocations have been agreed which means that the Council has surety about its capital active travel funding for the next 4 years, and its dedicated revenue funding for the next 3 years.
4. Allocations are calculated based on Local Authorities' Active Travel Capability Ratings and population size.
5. BCP Council has been awarded a total of £2,249,725 capital funding per year over the 4 years to 2029/30, and £705,869 revenue funding per year for the 3 years to 2028/29. In total this equates to £11,116,505 over 4 years.
6. The funding is intended to support local authorities with developing and constructing walking, wheeling and cycling facilities, along with network planning, community engagement and training activities.
7. The proposed expenditure set out within this report includes projects which are all aligned with the BCP Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) approved at Council in May 2022 and the following motion approved at Council in November 2022:

'In order to meet our climate emergency declaration, we will work to decarbonise the transport network in the BCP area. In order to do this we will aim to get to 50% of journeys within the BCP area to be done by walking, scooting, cycling or public transport by 2030, in the spirit of the government's 'Decarbonising Transport. A Better, Greener Britain 2021 report'.
8. The proposals also align closely with the Corporate Strategy vision and ambitions, for example:
 - a. "People and places are connected by sustainable and modern infrastructure"
 - b. "Climate change is tackled through sustainable policies and practice"

- c. "High quality of life for all, where people can be active, healthy and independent"
9. An assessment of the existing council active travel related programmes including the delivery of high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, behaviour change activities and capability building measures has been undertaken by the council Sustainable Travel Team in consultation with the Active Travel England Regional Lead, Portfolio Holder for Climate Response, Environment and Energy, and Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure & Commercial Operations.
10. The output of the assessment is a recommendation that the following items are funded using the active travel allocation 2026/27:

Capital Allocation	
Description (refer to Appendix A for more details)	Estimated Cost [£]
Delivery – new crossings including localised safety and accessibility improvements leading to them: Turbary Park Avenue, Kinson Road, Canford Cliffs Road, Bournemouth Road, A35 Iford Road/Barrack Road	1,230,000
Design work for delivery in a future year – pedestrian and cycle route improvements: Wallisdown Road between University Roundabout and Boundary Roundabout, Turbary Park Avenue, Poole Park to Broadstone Way Phase 2 of 3 (Birds Hill to Sterte Road), Talbot Roundabout to Lansdowne.	260,000
Delivery – Poole Park to Broadstone Way Route Phase 1 of 3 (Poole Park Causeway). Landscaping and improvements to existing walking and cycling route.	250,000
Access to Urban Greenspace programme – package of works to improve accessibility to and through BCP's parks and green spaces.	149,725
Design work for delivery in a future year – new crossing facilities at: Charminster Road, Queens Park Avenue, Columbia Road	110,000
Secure cycle parking in town and district centres and key destinations	90,000
Delivery – pedestrian crossing facilities at Riverside Avenue traffic signal junction	75,000
Data collection equipment to support network development	60,000
Wayfinding on existing walking and cycling routes	25,000
Total	2,249,725

Revenue Allocation	
Description (refer to Appendix A for more details)	Estimated Cost [£]
Active Schools Programme – extension of existing education and engagement programme working with multiple schools	200,000
Programme delivery resource, monitoring, promotion, activation and communications relating to active travel fund activities	195,869
Safer Active School Journeys at three schools/school clusters – East Way schools, Poole High, Twynham	120,000
Wheels for All - accessible cycling hub pilot	100,000
Development for future year delivery: Feasibility for resident led area-wide traffic management and public realm interventions across neighbourhoods	75,000
Secure cycle parking in town/district centres – operating costs	10,000
Training for officers and members	5,000
Total	705,869

Note: All schemes will be subject to appropriate consultation and engagement. The extent and exact location of schemes (crossings for example) are subject to change as proposals develop. Appendix A includes additional detail and the reason for recommending some of the schemes scheduled above.

Options appraisal

11. Options:

- a) Do nothing – not recommended. Reason: this would require the council to return the coming year's £2,955,594 funding to the Department for Transport and forfeit the opportunity to provide infrastructure and activities to encourage and enable active travel in our communities.
- b) Support recommendation to invest the grant as scheduled above under item 6 – recommended. Reason: acceptance of the grant and investment would be directly aligned with high priorities in the council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Local Transport Plan (LTP). Delivery of the priority items scheduled would help to maximise the impact of infrastructure built to date by providing key links to connect them. Revenue activities have been carefully considered to support the development of a pipeline of future years' schemes, as well as to continue the Council's valuable engagement and training work with schools.
- c) Adjust recommendation – not recommended. Reason: the proposed schedule has been developed in consideration of LCWIP, Local Transport Plan priorities

and capacity to deliver the schemes within the time period. Therefore, adjusting the recommendation would likely result in lower priority items being delivered and/or the Council being unable to deliver the schemes on time, which would jeopardise the future Capability Rating thus leading to funding being reduced.

Summary of financial implications

12. All resources and costs to deliver the schemes in accordance with the grant criteria are included within the funding.
13. Failing to accept the funding will mean that these prioritised and strategically important projects would not be funded.
14. Officer time spent delivering the schemes shall be recharged to the programme.

Summary of legal implications

15. The proposed schemes are all at varying levels of development and where appropriate public engagement and consultation would be undertaken to ensure that residents and stakeholders are able to inform proposals.
16. Delivery of some schemes funded by the grant scheme would require alterations to Traffic Regulation Orders and these would be progressed in accordance with the detailed procedures set out in legislation, including public consultation as required.

Summary of human resources implications

17. The cost estimates set out in this report allow for programme management (including financial support) and associated communications and consultation costs to be recharged to the programme.

Summary of sustainability impact

18. A DIA has been completed (ID 754) and the impact summary is appended to this report. The overall impact is positive, with few minor impacts, and the carbon footprint score is moderate.

Summary of public health implications

19. The delivery of schemes to support walking, wheeling and cycling would enable and encourage more people to travel by active modes, thus incorporating physical movement into their daily lives. This in turn would result in improved health and well-being for residents and visitors, with evidence showing that more daily activity leads to fewer sickness days and positive long-term health outcomes. Active travel undertaken in the place of motorised journeys has a positive impact on air quality with consequential health benefits.

Summary of equality implications

20. The funded programme of projects will have an overall **positive** impact on people from protected characteristic groups, particularly those living in the relevant areas and travelling on foot, by cycle, wheeling, or using a mobility aid.

Crossing busy main roads can be a real barrier and safety concern for anyone who is permanently or temporarily visually, mentally or physically disabled or

impaired. Provision of formal crossing points can help people make safer, more comfortable active journeys.

Similarly, implementing measures in and around schools to help children travel safely and independently to school on foot, or by scooting, wheeling or cycling, improves safety and perceptions of safety. It can also help reduce the number of children being driven to school, which helps increase activity rates, improves air quality and reduces road danger, and is in line with national and local policy.

21. Where applicable further EIA screenings and potentially full assessments shall be undertaken as proposals are progressed.

Summary of risk assessment

22. Not accepting the funding would result in the delay or non-delivery of active travel schemes in the BCP council area. This would impact on the propensity to shift to sustainable travel modes and make it more difficult to achieve reductions in traffic congestion, which in turn impact on air quality, the local economy, health and wellbeing and climate change targets.

Background papers

[BCP Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#)

Appendices

Appendix A – List of proposed projects with details

Appendix B – DIA Impact Summary table

Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment screening

Appendix A – List of proposed projects with details

Description	Further details	Rationale
New crossings: Turbary Park Avenue, Kinson Road, Canford Cliffs Road, Bournemouth Road, A35 Iford Road/Barrack Road	• Turbary Park Avenue near Mandale Road • Kinson Road near Kinson Academy and Medical Centre • Canford Cliffs Road on NCN25, near Links Road • Bournemouth Road near Alexandra Road and North Lodge Road • A35 Iford Road/Barrack Road, linking Iford Old Bridge with Oak Avenue	High priority in the LCWIP due to the roads they cross being a barrier to walking, wheeling and/or cycling.
Design work for delivery in a future year – pedestrian and cycle route improvements at: • Wallisdown Road between University Roundabout and Boundary Roundabout • Turbary Park Avenue • Poole Park to Broadstone Way Phase 2 of 3 (Birds Hill to Sterte Road) • Talbot Roundabout to Lansdowne	• Provision of cycle track, footway improvements, and new crossings at University Roundabout. • Cycle lane between Poole Lane and new crossing near Mandale Road. • “Quiet route” active travel improvements from Birds Hill Road to Sterte Road via Garland Road and Tatnam Rd. • Active travel improvements along Talbot Avenue, Wimborne Road and Lansdowne Road	High priority in LCWIP due to being missing links in the existing network. Form parts of routes to places of education.

Poole Park to Broadstone Way Route Phase 1 of 3 (Poole Park Causeway).	Landscaping and improvements to existing walking and cycling route through Poole Park between Whitecliff Road and Parkstone Road. Replace the temporary barriers at the gate with a permanent solution; create planted areas to reclaim some of the asphalt; provide benches, shade, "play on the way"; resurface including smoothing the speed humps.	This is a key walking, wheeling and cycling route both for leisure and for journeys to schools and to the hospital. It links to Baiter/Whitecliff and beyond, and to the new crossing over Parkstone Rd (bottom of Birds Hill Rd) which is being delivered in 2026 using a previous round of funding.
Access to Urban Greenspace programme	A programme of interventions to improve residents' access to and through green spaces and parks. For example, improved gateways, signage and paths, and access to doorstep greenery as per the BCP Urban Greening strategy.	Paths through parks and open spaces may form parts of longer journeys, as well as those spaces being destinations in themselves.
Design work for delivery in a future year – new crossing facilities at: Charminster Road, Queens Park Avenue, Columbia Road	Design work for delivery in a future year – new crossing facilities at: • Charminster Road near junction with West Way • Queens Park Avenue at junction with Howard Road • Columbia Road near junctions with Ensbury Avenue and Draycott Road	Identified in LCWIP, in close proximity to schools and link into wider existing routes
Secure cycle parking in town and district centres and key destinations	Locations to be determined – across BCP. To form a network of reliable and secure cycle parking.	A lack of secure cycle parking is a key barrier to people cycling for their everyday journeys.
Contribution to adding pedestrian crossing facilities to Riverside Avenue traffic signal junction	Junction of Riverside Ave and Castle Lane East, Riverside Avenue arm.	There are currently no pedestrian crossing facilities to enable people to safely cross over to the Stour Valley park.

Data collection equipment to support network development	Apparatus purchase and installation	Provides evidence for business case development and design development for future years' schemes.
Wayfinding on existing walking and cycling routes	Adding suitable signage to make existing walking and cycling routes more coherent and recognisable.	Supports people who may be new to walking or cycling in the area to find the most suitable, safe and convenient routes.
Active Schools Programme – extension of existing education and engagement programme working with multiple schools	Programme of activities and engagement with schools across BCP delivered by the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (previously known as Sustrans)	This popular and successful programme has been running in BCP for several years now and is supporting us to deliver modal shift and better engagement with school communities, as well as new School Streets.
Programme management, monitoring, promotion, activation and communications relating to active travel	To include staffing, resourcing, business support, corporate comms and other project overheads	Necessary in order to properly manage delivery of this substantial programme of work.
Safer Active School Journeys – street audits and intensive engagement to identify barriers and determine required improvements on routes to three schools/school clusters – East Way schools, Poole High, Twynham.	Intensive study and engagement to identify the barriers and safety concerns in the area around, and key routes leading to, large schools or clusters of schools. A holistic design approach will follow in a future year to ensure that more children are empowered to walk or cycle to school through making their journeys safer.	Studies show that many more children that currently do, would like to walk or cycle to school. However the roads around schools tend to be very busy and therefore parents can be reluctant to allow children to travel independently. Improving safety around schools on key routes will address this and lead to modal shift. The largest schools (or clusters) have been chosen in the first instance to positively impact the greatest number of children.
Wheels for All - accessible cycling hub pilot	A project to deliver a pilot scheme which gives disabled people the opportunity to try out a range of specially adapted cycles in a safe and supportive environment. If successful, this could lead to a permanent hub in BCP which would benefit many residents.	Many disabled people already use cycling to get around, but many more disabled people do not have access to the type of cycle, or the training or support, that they need. In addition, the hub will allow us to deliver cycle training to children with SEND who are not currently able to do Bikeability due to a lack of suitable cycle.
Development for future year delivery: Feasibility for resident led area-wide traffic	Measures within scope to include:	Identified as a LCWIP deliverable to create quiet routes connecting communities

management and public realm interventions across neighbourhoods	Pedestrian crossings and footway improvements Trees and planting Speed reduction measures Accessibility improvements (including to public transport) Creation of quiet routes School Streets	
Secure cycle parking in town/district centres – operating costs	Operating costs including maintenance, back office administration, cleansing and servicing.	Essential cost associated with capital delivery of secure cycle parking facilities.
Training for officers and members	Appropriate training courses, continuous professional development and attendance at relevant industry conferences and forums.	Important for officers and members to be equipped with up to date knowledge in order to aid decision-making and design development.

Appendix B – DIA Impact Summary table

Impact Summary

Climate Change & Energy	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Communities & Culture	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Waste & Resource Use	Amber - Minor negative impacts identified / unknown impacts	
Economy	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Health & Wellbeing	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Learning & Skills	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Natural Environment	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Sustainable Procurement	Green - Only positive impacts identified	
Transport & Accessibility	Green - Only positive impacts identified	

Answers provided indicate that the score for the carbon footprint of the proposal is: **5**

Answers provided indicate that the carbon footprint of the proposal is:	Moderate	
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Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment Screening

Equality Impact Assessment: Conversation Screening Tool

What is being reviewed?	Expenditure of the Active Travel Funding (ATF) '26-'27 on an agreed programme of projects.
What changes are being made?	£2.92m of funding (capital and revenue) is being accepted by the Council from Active Travel England in order to deliver a range of measures and initiatives to enable more people to walk, wheel or cycle. The programme of projects on which the funding is to be spent has been agreed with the Portfolio Holders and derived from the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which was approved by Council in 2022 following extensive public consultation. The proposed Capital projects include: • Delivery of a number of new crossings over busy roads • Design development for future years' active travel schemes (not yet funded for construction) • Upgrade of junctions to provide better crossing facilities • Provision of secure cycle parking at a number of town/district centres and destinations • Data collection and wayfinding The proposed Revenue projects include: • Continuation of our Active School Journeys project (formally called Bike It Plus) in schools along with School Streets – including intensive engagement with schools and families around modal shift. • Street audits and school/community engagement in a number of areas around schools across BCP to establish what safety improvements are needed to improve accessibility and facilitate more walking, wheeling and cycling. • A pilot project to create a hub for accessible cycling – enabling disabled people to try out specialist cycles in a safe and inclusive environment
Service Unit:	Planning and Transport
Participants in the conversation:	Beth-Barker-Stock – Sustainable Travel Team Leader Emily Cooper – Senior Cycling and Walking Officer

	Katie Rice – Walking and Cycling Officer
Conversation date/s:	7 th January 2026 29 th January 2026
Do you know your current or potential client base? Who are the key stakeholders?	People who walk (with or without mobility aids), wheel, scoot or cycle as a mode of transport within the BCP Council area – including people who may do so in the future. This will include residents as well as people visiting the area for work, education, leisure or any other purpose, using any of the above modes of travel for or during their visit.
Do different groups have different needs or experiences?	Generally: • Age – children and young people are less likely/unable to drive, and therefore improving other options such as walking and cycling will benefit them. Older people are less likely to cycle or drive, but likely to walk and catch buses, and therefore proposals to improve conditions for pedestrians will be of benefit. A low percentage of both old and young people meet the government's recommendations for physical activity, which can adversely affect physical and mental wellbeing. Improving opportunities for people to walk, wheel and cycle as part of their daily routine could help address this. • Disability – Disabled people are less likely to have access to a car than non-disabled people. Improving transport options for people that can't drive will be a benefit to those people whose disability does not preclude them from walking (including with a mobility aid), wheeling or cycling (including with a non-standard cycle). A lack of safe crossings over busy roads is likely to be a barrier to disabled (and/or elderly, or very young, people) being able to walk, wheel or cycle for everyday journeys that would otherwise be possible for them. • Race – Ethnicity is a factor in car use, with all people from all ethnicities far less likely to have access to a car than white people. People from black and minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to live in areas which suffer from a lack of public transport options, and therefore walking, wheeling and cycling can be a good option for these communities, if safe and direct infrastructure is

	provided. Better access to free/cheap transport is likely to improve access to employment, education, leisure and social opportunities. • Sexual Orientation – people who identify as one of ‘All other sexual orientations’ are less likely to drive compared to heterosexuals. LGBT+ people are more likely to suffer with mental ill health, loneliness and inactivity than the general population. Therefore improving opportunities for people to walk, wheel and cycle as part of their daily routine could help address this. • Deprivation – People living in the most deprived areas are significantly less likely to drive than less-deprived areas. However they are more likely to suffer the effects of car use – for example through air pollution, noise pollution and road danger. By improving conditions for walking, wheeling and cycling, residents living in more deprived areas will benefit from more choice over how they travel, and more equalised access to education, employment, leisure and social opportunities.
Will this change affect any service users?	Introducing new or improved infrastructure such as road crossings may impact any service users who travel actively in that area, or who may wish to in the future.
What are the benefits or positive impacts of the change on current or potential users?	There will be a positive benefit of implementing the projects proposed, in particular to many of the groups as listed above. New crossings over busy main roads, and other safety improvements will remove existing barriers to active travel for many people, helping to improve access to essential services and facilities; education; employment; social contact and leisure.
What are the negative impacts of the change on current or potential users?	There are no foreseen negative impacts to people with protected characteristics of implementing the proposed projects. Where appropriate, an individual EIA screening will be carried out on the respective individual schemes as they progress in order to assess and mitigate any concerns with the designs.
Will the change affect employees?	The proposed infrastructure schemes may positively affect employees who use them.
Will the change affect the wider community?	The proposed infrastructure schemes may positively affect anyone within the community who use them.

What mitigating actions are planned or already in place for those negatively affected by this change?	It is not believed that the progression of the proposed programme of projects will have any effects that require mitigation. As schemes are developed, they will be further assessed and consulted upon as appropriate. Any negative impacts which are highlighted as a result will be examined and mitigated appropriately.
Summary of Equality Implications:	The ATF programme of projects will have an overall positive impact on people from protected characteristic groups, particularly those living in the relevant areas and travelling on foot, by cycle, wheeling, or using a mobility aid. Crossing busy main roads can be a real barrier and safety concern for anyone who is permanently or temporarily visually, mentally or physically disabled or impaired – and for children and elderly people. Provision of formal crossing points and junction improvements can help people make safer, more comfortable active journeys. Similarly, implementing measures in and around schools to help children travel safely and independently to school on foot, or by scooting, wheeling or cycling, improves safety and perceptions of safety. It can also help reduce the number of children being driven to school, which helps increase activity rates, improves air quality and reduces road danger, and is in line with national and local policy.