

Hillingdon Cycling Strategy 2024-34



HILLINGDON
LONDON

www.hillingdon.gov.uk/cycling

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→ Foreword

For Hillingdon Council, our environment and the health and wellbeing of our residents are each of paramount importance; we want to help improve our quality of life by opening up the magnificent outdoors we are lucky enough to have so that people of all ages can enjoy it to its full potential, in the process moving around safely and healthily.

We know that there will always be practical limits for some of us, but wherever it is possible for people to cycle, there are consequential benefits; for individuals, it can improve physical and mental health, whilst for the borough at large, every journey made by bike can mean one fewer less essential car journey, which helps reduce local congestion and pollution.

We're keen to see more people cycling wherever possible, and there's certainly room to encourage many more to make their journeys by bike in Hillingdon. The council has already overseen the installation of many kilometres of dedicated cycle network, and helped thousands of young people get cycle training, but there remain obstacles to getting more residents out pedalling.

Central London is largely flat and compact, with many key destinations in close proximity. 'A to B' journeys by bicycle in those boroughs are typically fairly short in distance and occur on wide, well-lit roads.

Hillingdon is the second largest borough in London, with a total length from north to south of approximately 20km. There are substantial areas of semi-rural countryside where roads may be unlit, winding, very hilly and narrow. Whilst we value our open spaces, at the same time this can be a major barrier to people taking up journeys by bicycle and furthermore makes the physical implementation of dedicated cycling provision more problematic.

Our borough is not like central London, so our work to develop and deliver new opportunities for cycling is dedicated to what is genuinely



deliverable, would be well-used by residents and represents a good investment of tax-payers' money.

Our new Cycling Strategy sets out not only what we've accomplished to date, but also how, over the next decade, we'll work ambitiously with partner organisations to deliver better cycling connections across the borough, including the potential delivery of six entirely new dedicated cycle routes, altogether offering enormous active travel opportunities for many people who we realise may never even have ridden a bike before.

The strategy also outlines the innovative ideas we're exploring – such as creating dedicated cycling routes using our green spaces or alongside our many waterways. Busy roads can be hostile to new riders and are a major stigma preventing people from riding. Ultimately our aim is to avoid unnecessary disruption to the road network but will still encourage and enable more residents to get cycling in Hillingdon. It's another facet of our perennial mission to put our residents first.

**Cllr Jonathan Bianco,
Deputy Leader of the
Council and Cabinet
Member for Property,
Highways and Transport**



→ Ambition statement

As demand for cycling continues to grow, our strategy for 2024-34 aims to build on and enhance cycling infrastructure and training across Hillingdon to encourage more people to take up this important and healthy mode of transport.



→ Background

The London Borough of Hillingdon covers 115.7 square kilometres and is the second largest borough in London.

It covers a wide range of neighbourhoods, from rural to intense residential and commercial, and of course is home to Heathrow Airport in the south.

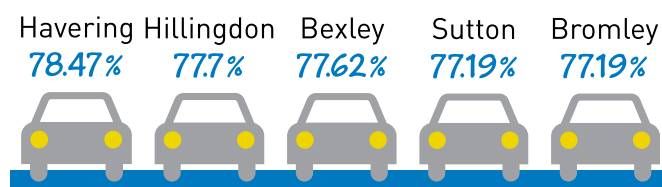
Neighbouring authorities include the London boroughs of Harrow, Ealing, and Hounslow, and the shire counties of Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Surrey (with Berkshire nearby).

Hillingdon has experienced the largest population growth of any London borough since 1939, and under current projections the population of Hillingdon is likely to continue growing rapidly, with the current population recorded as 305,900 in the 2021 census.

The borough has the second-highest level of car ownership in London (after Havering) and ranks fourth in terms of the overall length of highway (after Bromley, Croydon and Barnet).

Unlike central London where public transport options are plentiful and the network

Car ownership data: Proportion of households with at least one car



Source: Centre for London | Understanding car ownership in London

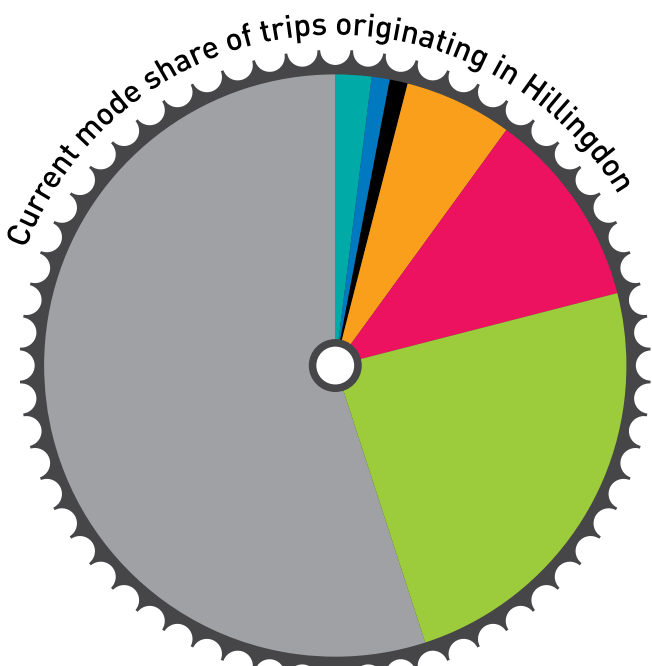


comprehensive, in outer London boroughs the quantity and frequency of bus, train and tube services is much reduced, with larger gaps in services and larger distances covered.

As result, for many residents and visitors to Hillingdon private cars are likely to remain the preferred form of transport for the majority of journeys.

In recognition of this, the council has developed this strategy to increase and enhance the borough's cycling opportunities and encourage more people to take up this mode of travel.

In recent years, the council has made a range of improvements to its cycling provision via development-related opportunities and grants and its ambition now is to invest further in delivery of an even more comprehensive cycling offer.



- Car and motorcycles
- Walking
- Bus
- Tube
- Taxi and other
- Cycling
- Rail



→ What we've been doing so far

Existing cycle routes in Hillingdon

The council has undertaken an exercise to map all existing cycling infrastructure currently in the borough.

The map opposite shows both on and off-road routes owned by the council and by Transport for London.

It also shows cycle tracks in open spaces where less confident or younger cyclists can go to practice. The map also shows the location of our Santander cycle docking stations.

Canal towpath improvements

The Grand Union Canal's branches in Hillingdon have the greatest lengths of towpath in the whole of London.

Since 2018, three kilometres of towpath have been upgraded, mainly between Yiewsley and Hayes.

Works are continuing to provide a further 850 metres between Rockingham Road and Oxford Road, Uxbridge.

The aim is to create a full link of 21km through the borough for cycling and walking.



Cycle hire scheme

A cycle hire scheme was introduced in 2019, which connects Brunel University with Uxbridge town centre and West Drayton station and enables students, who may not have their own transport, to travel quickly and cheaply between the campus and town centre.

Since it started there have been 139,031 individual rentals using the scheme.

Cycle parking

Cycle parking has been introduced at a number of key locations across the borough, including increased parking in Uxbridge town centre to reflect the increasing demand.

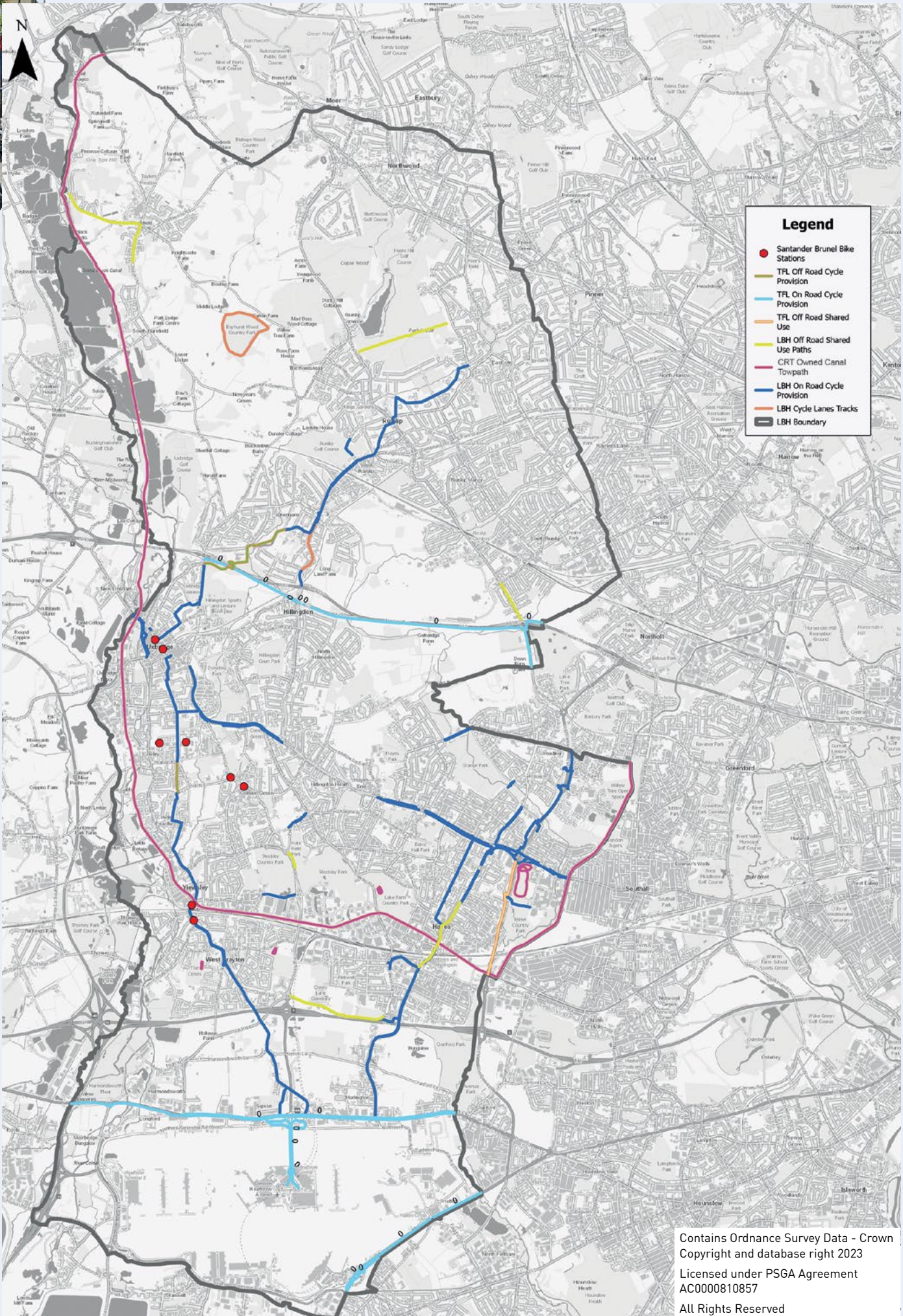


Before



After





Training

The council offers free cycling training annually to residents of all ages to help them develop their skills and confidence.

This includes:

- training for children aged 10+ through the Bikeability scheme
- skills training for beginners, people who want to refresh and brush up on their skills, and those wanting to cycle to commute.

In 2022/23, **1,133** children in Hillingdon were trained to



Annually, on average 130 adults take part in the skills training

Cycle training success stories

Thank you to your instructors and the organisers for such a worthy scheme. I had never really ridden a bike my whole life as I was petrified I would fall off. However, my instructor was absolutely superb and would you believe I was 'riding' within the hour? I'm still buzzing from it. Initiatives like this give people independence, it maintains health and wellbeing, and even increases social interactions as people are more likely to be outdoors more.

I had my cycle training and the trainer worked really hard with me, endlessly trying different techniques to see why I was falling off my bike.

He nailed down several issues including too much arm pressure on the handles and bad back posture. I never thought I'd be able to learn how to ride a bike so late in life but thanks to your wonderful programme I am getting there. Thank you so very much, you are really changing lives out there.

"This is an awesome opportunity. I can now go out and about around Hillingdon on my bike and feel not only confident about being on the road but also that I can do so much more than I thought. It's been more than 20 years since I did my cycling proficiency and I've never cycled in such busy traffic before. The instructor showed me how to do it safely and helped me to build my confidence to a point where I love to go out cycling for fun and have been enjoying finding out what my local area has to offer."

"I was very impressed with both of my instructors. I felt very safe and reassured that they knew what they were doing. They helped me gain confidence to be cycling on the road within an hour of our lesson. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to have lessons for free and will recommend them to anyone who is interested. I have since been out on my bike with my children – which was my ultimate goal."



For more information about cycle training, visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/cycle-skills-training



Guided cycle rides

Since 2014, the borough has had a programme of guided cycle rides for beginners, families and those more advanced. Fifty-four rides have been held in total with 270 participants, taking in a variety of routes through the borough and beyond.

Cycling awareness events

In 2013, the council held its first 'Bikespiration' event on the forecourt of the Civic Centre in Uxbridge as a borough celebration of cycling.

The annual event allows people to try out bikes, enjoy cycling-related games, have their bikes checked and repaired using the Dr Bike service, get their bike securely marked and to chat with council officers about cycling in the borough.

Due to the continued success of the event, in 2019 the 'Bikespiration on Tour' initiative was launched where residents could find out more about cycling at The Closes, Dowding Park, Barra Hall Park and Kings College Playing Fields.

Bikespiration feedback

Very interesting, exciting event, enjoyed it a lot

“It's great fun for all the family.”

It was bigger and better than last year



Bikespiration in numbers:

More than 1,000
people have enjoyed
Bikespiration
since it started

65 bikes securely
marked in 2019

117 bikes
checked through the
Dr Bike service in 2019

More than 200 people
went to

Bikespiration
on Tour

Dr Bike sessions

The council has offered free Dr Bike sessions across the borough annually since 2017. The scheme offers maintenance tips and repairs and has visited a range of locations, including Botwell Green Leisure Centre; The Closes Park; Hillingdon Sports and Leisure Complex; Highgrove Pool and South Ruislip Library.

Helping schools fund cycle and scooter parking

In 2022/23, the council awarded six grants to schools within the borough to enable them to purchase and install cycle and scooter parking to help make it easier to choose more sustainable ways to commute to school.

Securing funds through developer contributions

As part of the planning process, council officers regularly secure funds from local developments to create or improve cycle infrastructure around a new site, as well as to and from key locations. This ensures the impact of new cars from a development can be partly offset by an enhanced cycling offer.



For more information about Dr Bike sessions,
visit discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/drbike

→ Challenges and opportunities

National supporting policies

- Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling
- Local Transport Note 1/20: cycle infrastructure design

Regional supporting policies

- The London Plan
- The Mayor of London's Transport Strategy 2018
- TfL Cycling Action Plan 2
- London Cycle Campaign: Climate Safe Streets, May 2023

Local supporting policies

- Council Strategy 2022-26
- Hillingdon's Local Implementation Plan 2019-2041, which sets out how the council proposes to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy

Opportunities

TfL Strategic Cycle Route Analysis

The Transport for London (TfL) Strategic Cycle Route Analysis has been created to inform where the provision of cycle routes would be beneficial and encourage more people to cycle. More information on this can be found at www.tfl.gov.uk.

The analysis highlights an opportunity to encourage cycling along a variety of routes



around our town centres and along key commuter corridors that are close to town centres and Underground stations. These may not already be regularly undertaken by bicycle but could be as they are a reasonable cycling distance for more riders (considered to be five to 10 km).

Public Rights of Way

Hillingdon has a comprehensive network of public footpaths and walking routes.

There are opportunities to consider whether some of these can be converted to shared use paths or cycleways.

Providing more off-road cycle routes may encourage more people who may not be confident riding on roads to consider cycling.

These will be balanced with the need to check:

- it's not to the detriment of other users and appropriate to the setting
- residents and wider stakeholders are consulted with
- conservation areas and Sites of Special Scientific Interest are protected
- appropriate materials/construction methods are used.

Local Implementation Plan 3

The cycle strategy should be considered alongside the council's Local Implementation Plan which is available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/local-implementation-plan.

Some key relevant cycle ambitions in the Local Implementation Plan 3, include:

- 80 per cent active travel on the school run by 2041
- 70 per cent of Hillingdon residents reporting two periods of ten minutes spent walking/cycling a day by 2041, up from 31 per cent in 2021.
- 46 per cent of Hillingdon residents to live within 400m of strategic cycle provision by 2041.
- by 2041, there will be no deaths or serious injuries from road collisions within the Hillingdon road network.

Working in partnership

The council's transport team will look to work more collaboratively with other council services, including the green spaces, sports and physical activity, air quality and climate change teams to deliver opportunities.

And externally with Transport for London, Canal & Rivers Trust, Sustrans, Stockley Park, Brunel University London and Hillingdon Hospital.

Key challenges

- Prominent car use and low levels of cycling.
- Many borough roads perceived to be hostile to vulnerable road users.
- Crossing the A40 to allow north/south connections needs careful consideration to ensure maximum safety for users.
- Large size of the borough leads to longer average journeys.
- Public perception of cycling is often negative due to media reporting.
- Successful modal shift requires safe infrastructure to be in place beforehand.



- Limited public transport opportunities for many parts of the borough, making it beneficial to enhance walking and cycling opportunities.
- Hillingdon's varied road network means that some types of cycling provision are not feasible in some locations due to space.
- Additional financial contributions may be required.
- Collaboration with other authorities and organisations, including drawing upon expert advice and resource.
- Statutory consultations will be required.
- Off road routes often address concerns over road safety as conflicts with vehicles are reduced, but personal safety issues, especially for women, are a challenge on these types of route.



→ Overall vision for cycling in Hillingdon – ten year action plan

Below, Hillingdon Council sets out a high level ten year action plan for the proposed large scale upgrades of cycle infrastructure across the borough. These larger works will be accompanied by smaller scale improvements and ‘soft’ measures to support cycling.

Years 1 to 2

In years one and two of the cycle strategy, the council proposes the following measures to be taken forward as a minimum:

- delivery of a cycle route between West Drayton and Brunel University
- upgrade of the canal towpath between Rockingham Road and Oxford Road, Uxbridge
- improvement to some of the canal access points in Yiewsley and Cowley
- road safety improvements at the Stockley Road roundabout
- improvements to the existing cycleway alongside the A312 Parkway.

Years 3 to 5

During years three to five of the cycle strategy, the council proposes to investigate and potentially deliver the following measures as a minimum:

- completion of the upgrade of the Grand Union Canal towpath between Uxbridge and Hayes
- consolidation of the cycle provision along the Uxbridge Road between Coldharbour Road and Uxbridge
- implementation of a cycle route between Heathrow Airport and Hayes Town Centre via Harlington High Street
- Celandine Route upgrades between Eastcote and Ickenham



- improvements to further access points along the Grand Union Canal between Uxbridge and Hayes
- implementation of a segregated cycle route on Pump Lane, Hayes.

Years 5 to 10

During years five to ten of the cycle strategy, the council proposes to investigate and potentially deliver the following measures as a minimum:

- upgrade of the Grand Union Canal towpath between Uxbridge and Harefield
- remove barriers to crossing the A40 making it easier for people to cycle between the north and south of the borough
- Celandine Route upgrades between Ickenham and Uxbridge
- improvements to some of the canal access points between Uxbridge and Harefield
- implementation of a segregated cycle route on Ickenham Road, Ickenham
- implementation of a segregated cycle route on Long Lane, Hillingdon.

→ Delivering the strategy

As part of the council's commitment to encouraging further uptake of cycling, several key improvements and major new schemes will be delivered along with the continuation of existing workstreams that have proved to deliver positive results.

Continued work

- Bikeability
- Adult cycle skills training
- Dr Bike services
- Guided cycle rides
- Secure bike marking
- Promotional events
- Learn to ride
- Cycling for people with dementia
- Family cycle sessions

Local improvements

Grand Union Canal towpaths

Continuing our work with the Canal & Rivers Trust to upgrade the canal towpath to a wider, safer surface and improving its access points.

The continued work on the Grand Union Canal will be undertaken with due consideration of its multi-functional use, with walkers, cyclists and boaters all wishing to safely use the towpath.

The council will look to work with the Canal & River Trust to promote safe and considerate use of the towpath through targeted promotion and campaigns such as the Canal & River Trust's 'Share the Space' campaign.



More cycle hire sites

We will continue to expand the cycle hire scheme across the borough, initially with new docking stations across the Stockley Park estate and then further sites around Hayes & Harlington Station.

Access to town centres

Cycling connections are particularly important in town centres as they can provide easy access to local services such as local shops and GP surgeries. The importance of these connections are noted by the council which will look to develop a programme of improvements centred around providing better cycle connections to and around our town centres.

Work has already begun looking at access around Northwood Town Centre. The Northwood area has a large population, two large secondary schools as well as Mount Vernon Hospital and access to London Underground Metropolitan train services. Therefore, there is potential to consider a local



cycle network for short local trips between these local destinations to discourage short trips by car.

Improving the Uxbridge, West Drayton, Hayes connections

The Uxbridge, Hayes and West Drayton triangle (right) has been identified as a key opportunity to improve and expand upon existing cycle infrastructure, such as the Grand Union Canal, which would benefit a large number of people and key destinations in the south of the borough.

Links to Heathrow Airport

Heathrow Airport is located in the very south of the borough and is one of the biggest local employers. The council has recently started working closely with the airport on surface access and encouraging, in particular, airport workers to travel sustainably. Therefore, improving cycle corridors into the airport could benefit a number of local workers.

Developer-funded cycle measures

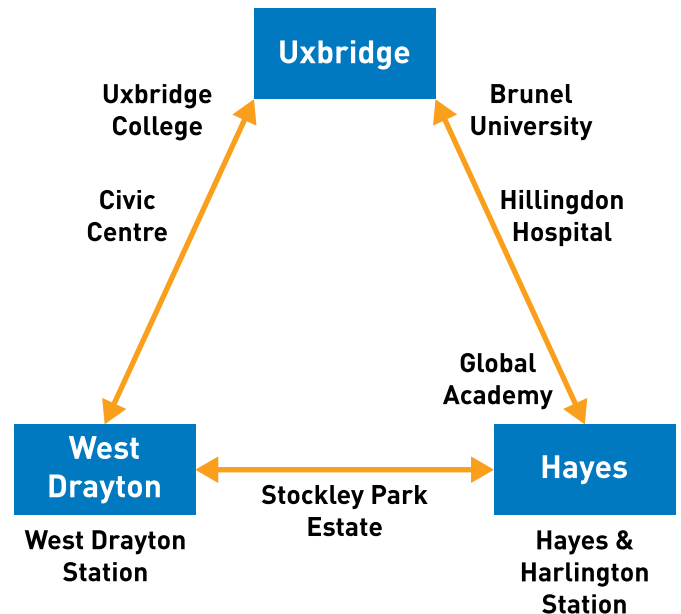
We will continue to work with developers to ensure cycling facilities, such as parking, are integral to any proposed developments. We will also secure more developer funding to help continue delivering new or improved cycling provision in the vicinity of any development sites, to help offset the local traffic impact.

Improved route signage


New signs will help wayfinding for cyclists travelling across the borough. This will start with wayfinding to promote and encourage use of the Grand Union Canal towpath.

Use of green spaces

There are a large number of open spaces across the borough that could be used to help connect journeys where roads are not suitable for cycle provision, or they don't link the preferred routes. Travel through these green spaces can often better reflect local desire lines, so we will review the potential to create 'quietways' that link key amenities and destinations in a safer, traffic-free environment that is more welcoming to cyclists of all abilities.



Ideas from residents

Residents and local community groups or cycling clubs can continue to make suggestions for how we can improve cycling in the borough. We'll encourage feedback via  www.hillingdon.gov.uk/cycle-programme-suggestion and assess those suggestions, with the ambition to take forward those which are viable.



Audit of existing infrastructure

Some of the council's existing cycling infrastructure is quite old. We will continue to review the quality and efficacy of existing infrastructure and identify a programme of upgrades to the network to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Missing link analysis

Not all of the existing cycling routes join together in an efficient manner, leaving cyclists often





'stranded' when a route ends. For riders to move across the borough in a more fluid manner, we will identify any key missing links in our existing routes and look at ways to bridge the gaps.

Lobbying

Not all roads and tracks within Hillingdon are under the ownership of the council. Therefore, the council will look to use its position to lobby and encourage other organisations to consider cycle upgrades. This will include encouraging TfL to consider upgrading provision of the A4 Bath Road and improvements to the A40 cycle tracks and working with neighbouring authorities to ensure continuation of cycle provision across boundaries, where possible.

Engagement with schools and young people

Work will continue through the School Travel and Road Safety Team to encourage those travelling to and from schools to consider doing so by bike. Working with schools will allow early understanding and encourage choices to use active modes that are likely to carry forward into adulthood.

Adapted bikes

The council will continue to offer the disability cycle hub at Field Heath School, where

adapted bikes can be used in a safe location. The work will expand to encourage SEND schools within the borough to use the facility, allowing people to try out the adapted bikes.

The council will look to review ease of access for adapted bikes across the borough to ensure all those wishing to cycle can do so and do so in an unrestricted manner.

Cycle routes to schools

To encourage more people to 'cycle the school run', the council will look to review the safety and viability of routes close to schools. The initial focus will be towards secondary schools where a large numbers of students travel independently. Further works will review residential streets around primary schools and how these could be better or easily adapted to create better environments for cycling.

Business engagement

Hillingdon contains a large number of businesses with varying numbers of employees who will be required to travel to and from work daily. The council will engage with businesses to encourage the creation of travel plans and the introduction of measures to help increase cycle mode share. The council may consider the introduction of a 'Hillingdon

Cycle' business award, to showcase the efforts of local businesses across the borough.

A4020 cycle provision

The A4020, better known as Hillingdon Hill/ Uxbridge Road, runs between Uxbridge Town Centre and Ealing. This is a busy road for all types of users and provides access to a large number of shops and local services. Along its length, there are various sections of cycle lane provision of varying design. The council proposes to review the provision along the A4020 and create full-length provision on both sides of the road, where possible.

Cycle parking

To encourage cycling, provision must be made to allow for cycles to be securely parked at end destinations. The council proposes to ensure that a better coverage of cycle parking is provided across the borough. Initially, reviews will be undertaken on the quality and levels of cycle parking at key transport hubs and health centres. At larger cycle parking hubs, consideration will be given to the feasibility of installing vandal-proof bike pumps and tools.

Rise of e-bikes

The use of electric bikes (e-bikes) continues to grow in popularity, both for privately-owned bikes, as well as part of cycle hire networks. However, these aren't without problems. The council will ensure that the increased use of e-bikes is factored into cycle provision, as well as ensuring that they are used safely and legally within the borough – particularly ensuring they are not used on footways to the detriment of pedestrians.



Communication

The council will ensure that a robust communication plan is in place, to promote improvements to the cycle network and ensure regular campaigns and messages are published about topics such as training availability, cycle safety and new initiatives by the council or other organisations.

Use of road space

The council will look to review the use of road space across the borough to ensure that it better accommodates all modes, where possible. Initial considerations will be to work with TfL to understand the scope of providing advanced cycle stoplines at junctions and looking at whether space on wider roads could be reallocated, such as providing cycle lanes by reducing central reservations.



→ Key cycle routes

The 10 year delivery plan identifies a number of large infrastructure routes across the borough which the council proposes to deliver. These are considered in more detail in this section.

A312 Parkway Route

Upgrade and improve safety of the existing segregated cycle route along the A312 between Bulls Bridge and Yeading.

Pump Lane, Hayes

Proposed segregated cycle route along Pump Lane, Hayes to connect Hayes Town Centre and new developments.

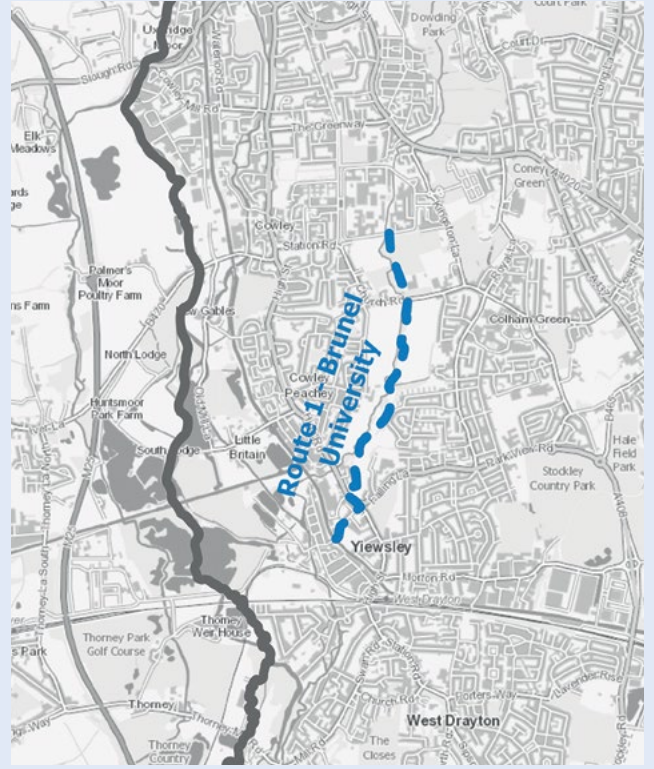
Harlington High Street

Proposed segregated cycle route between Heathrow and Hayes Town Centre, connecting into existing provision.



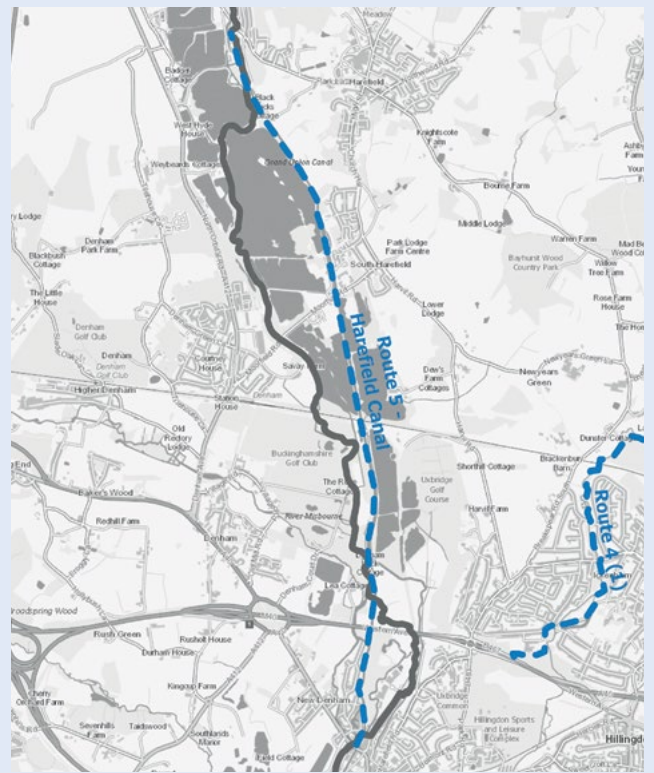
Brunel Cycle Route

Connecting West Drayton Station and Brunel University via a mostly off-road route.



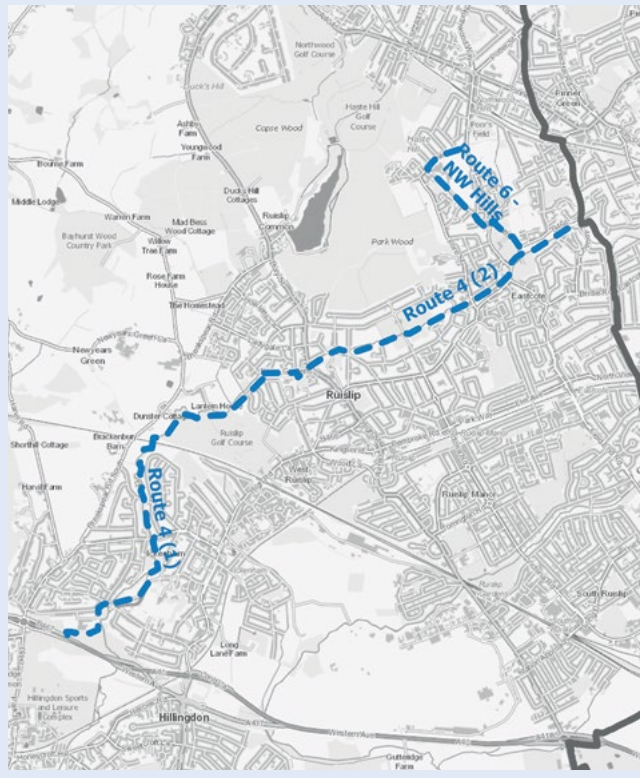
Harefield Grand Union Canal

Full upgrade of the canal towpath between Harefield and Uxbridge.



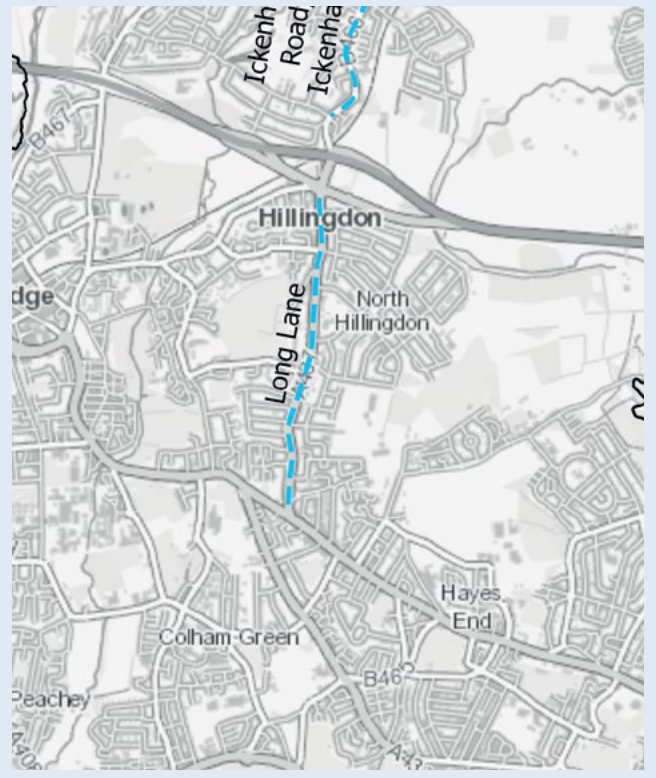
Celandine Route

A longer route linking Eastcote to Uxbridge with potential for further expansion to other key destinations along the route.



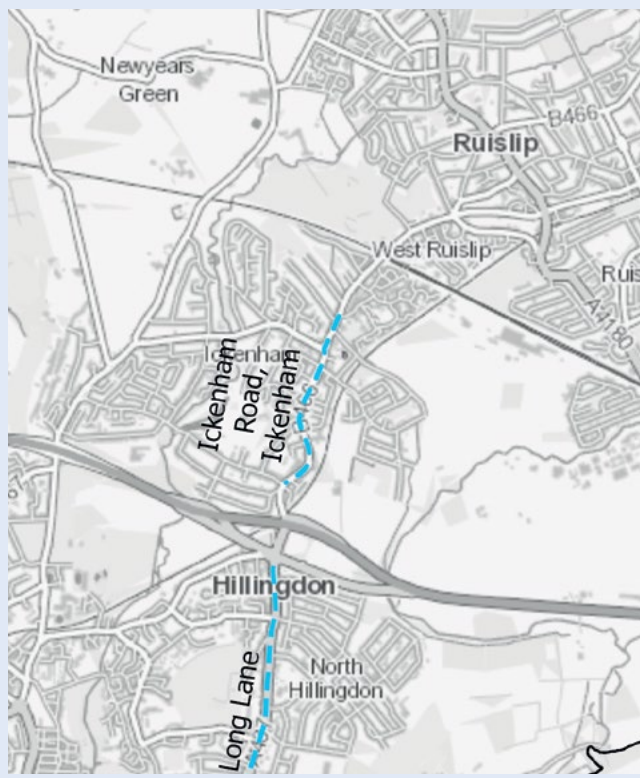
Long Lane, Hillingdon

Proposed segregated cycle route along Long Lane Hillingdon between the Uxbridge Road and A40.



Ickenham Road, Ickenham

Proposed segregated cycle route along Ickenham Road to allow better connectivity to local tube stations.



Other routes to be considered:

- Field End Road, Ruislip
- Victoria Road, Ruislip
- Park Road, Uxbridge
- Stanwell Moor Road, Heathrow
- Ducks Hill Road, Northwood
- Cowley Road, Cowley

→ Commitments

Hillingdon Council commits to using 'Department of Transport LTN 1/20' and 'Transport for London Cycle Design Guidance', to inform design of all cycle schemes. Where possible, schemes will look to meet 'Transport for London Cycle Quality Criteria'.

Hillingdon Council commits to investigating the benefits of creating a Hillingdon Cycle Forum to support the delivery of the Hillingdon Cycle Strategy.

Hillingdon Council commits to reviewing the Hillingdon Cycle Strategy on an annual basis and publishing a short summary document detailing continuing works and any changes/additions to the proposals within the strategy.



