Active & Healthy Travel: SHIFT

Sustainable Healthy Integrated Functional Travel: What is SHIFT?

Moving towards delivery of a zero-carbon transport system in Oxfordshire will require a transfer of journeys from private cars to public transport. The main bus and rail services in Oxfordshire are focused on a number of strategic corridors, and it is not practical or feasible for services to stop close to all locations from where people wish to travel. There will therefore be a need for people to easily access these services at key locations close-by, usually stations or bus stops. Walking and cycling are often an ideal way to travel to and from access points to bus and rail services, and can have significant health benefits. However, walk and cycle routes from housing and commercial areas can vary in quality, as can facilities where connections to public transport need to be made.

The Sustainable Healthy Integrated Functional Travel (SHIFT) project aims to improve journeys combining public transport with walking and cycling, effectively breaking down any physical barriers to providing a seamless travel experience. It also aims to improve physical and mental health, by building in physical activity into longer distance journeys. By providing a better alternative to private car use, the project will also contribute to wider objectives on reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality, healthy place-shaping, and improving safety for road users.

Components of SHIFT?

In summary, the SHIFT project aims to identify improvements that make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to access the public transport network. This includes:

- Better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at points of access to the public transport network. Suitable improvements will depend on the exact locations, but could, for example include cycle parking close to bus stops and stations, and improved waiting areas at bus stops with shelters, lighting, seating and information.
- Better pedestrian and cyclist routes from housing, businesses and other key locations within proximity to points of access to the public transport network. This could, for example, include better pedestrian crossing points to access bus stops, or improving cycle routes between stations and areas of business.

Best practice examples of SHIFT

There are already many examples in Oxfordshire of measures that have been implemented that fit with the SHIFT aims. In Didcot, improvements at Didcot Parkway
station have included provision of high-quality cycle parking. This has been complemented with improvements to the cycle route between the station to the Milton Park business park, and measures to promote cycling on the business park including a bike hire scheme and cycle maintenance stations. Elsewhere in the County, cycle parking has been provided close to several bus stops on high-frequency routes.

SHIFT next steps

Our proposed approach to next steps is to undertake assessments of the facilities for pedestrian and cycles on our core public transport corridors, so that we can identify opportunities for improvements in more detail. This will ensure that any proposed improvements will be based on evidence of need, and where relevant prioritised to fit funding opportunities. We propose to use an intra-urban bus route as a pilot for this work, and believe that the A420 bus route between Oxford and Swindon would be a good case study to start.

Question 5

SHIFT - What do you think?

Do you agree with our approach to progressing the SHIFT proposal? What types of measures do you think would help you to combine walking, cycling and public transport to make your daily journeys? Which locations should be a priority for any SHIFT network investment?

To respond please use the online consultation form.