

GREEN CITY CHARTER UPDATE

Case Studies of existing commitments

1. Southampton Cycling Network

Southampton City Council has announced the launch of SCN1 (Southampton Cycle Network Route 1) – a safe, high quality cycle route from Totton to Southampton City Centre.

SCN1 is the first route to open on the Southampton Cycle Network, the cornerstone of a ten year strategy to transform the cycling experience in the city. Launched in 2017, the strategy outlines ambitious plans which respond to calls for more cycleways, safer roads, less traffic and better awareness to address common barriers to cycling. Two years later, Southampton City Council has made significant progress across the network, accelerated by a series of successful funding bids to central Government. This has seen an investment of £2.4m in new cycleways with plans for a further £8.3m for projects completing during 2019 alone.

There has been a range of improvements to the SCN1 route, including new and extended segregated cycleways on Second Avenue as well as resurfacing to the shared use path along Millbrook Road West. A segregated off road cycleway is now in place on First Avenue, providing access to the western docks. Millbrook Road East has also received a number of traffic calming measures as part of a 'quietways' scheme to make cycling a safer and more attractive option. The latest section of the route – a new segregated cycleway on Third Avenue – was completed in June this year. The route will continue to see other localised improvements, including the addition of a new footbridge and upgrade of the shared use path at Redbridge Roundabout as well as updates to the crossing at Old Redbridge Road.

2. Electric Vehicles

There has been a significant increase in the number of people buying and using electric vehicles in Southampton. We are working with partners to develop a network of charging points throughout the city to help residents and visitors to change their electric vehicles quickly and efficiently.

Southampton now has 46 charging points across five city centre car parks and eight car parks in Woolston and Bitterne. The network will continue expanding in 2019, and will see the introduction of rapid charging dedicated for taxi and private hire vehicles.

Together with this growing number of charging points, drivers of electric vehicles also have access to a 90% discount for selected city centre car parks, free passage on the Itchen Toll with a SmartCities Card and have benefitted from free electricity at all Southampton owned charging points. This package of incentives is testament to Southampton City Council's commitment – outlined in its Clean Air Strategy - to encourage the uptake of low emission technologies and vehicles.

3. Taxi Licence Conditions

As part of the Green City Charter introduced in 2019, Southampton City Council set an ambitious goal to improving air quality. Road transport has been identified as being one of the major contributors to poor air quality in the city. The council highlighted that a reduction in vehicle emissions across the city is essential to improving air quality and achieving our ambition of creating a cleaner, green, healthier and more sustainable city. There is growing evidence that poor air quality can be responsible for a range of health issues including cancer, respiratory and heart illnesses.

To reduce further emissions produced by the local taxi trade, Southampton City Council are adding new licencing conditions ensure we have a clean air compliant fleet in Southampton by 2023. The aim of the additional conditions is to prevent older, more polluting vehicles being provided with a taxi or private hire licence. Changes will be introduced in two stages, with the first coming into effect on 1 January 2020.

The council introduced several incentives to support taxi and private hire vehicle owners with changing to low emission vehicles. The Low Emission Taxi Incentive Scheme (LETIS), provides a grant to eligible taxi owners, providing up to £3,000 cashback in license cost. Since the launch in December 2017, 77 upgrades have completed.

Southampton will also be introducing a free consultancy service for taxi and private hire drivers to assess their driving styles and recommend how they can achieve savings by upgrading to cleaner vehicles. The taxi and private hire trade will also be supported with dedicated rapid charging points. Southampton has also increased the age policy for electric vehicles from 9 years to 12, making the business case for ownership more attractive.

Councillor Steve Leggett, Cabinet Member for Green City and Environment, added: "The need to take urgent, strong action against air pollution is essential. We know people living, working and visiting Southampton share our commitment to improving air quality and reducing pollution across the city.

"Southampton is leading the way by introducing schemes that go beyond the government's targets. The new licensing conditions are part of a larger, ongoing plan linked to our Green City Charter.

"Working with our partners, we have already seen local bus companies introduce measures to become eco-friendly and Associated British Ports is publishing its own air quality strategy. We are seeing more local businesses and individuals supporting our vision for a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable city."

4. Clean Bus Technology Fund and Traffic Regulation Condition

Southampton City Council been awarded £2.7m from the Clean Bus Technology Fund to work with bus service providers in the city to tackle the 145 older (non-euro 6) buses so they meet the same standard as a Euro 6 vehicle. This scheme is currently being implemented and alongside a fleet upgrade programme and ensure all operational buses in the city meet this same standard by the start of 2020. Source apportionment studies have shown this could deliver reductions in NOx concentrations by as much as 25% at some key locations. A traffic regulation condition requiring a minimum Euro 6

standard for operational buses is to be introduced before 2020 to ensure full participation in the CBTF scheme; delivery of the operators upgrade programme and to prevent older, more polluting buses re-entering the Southampton fleet in the future.

5. My Journey

My Journey is a county wide behaviour change programme which aims to 'Create a culture of walking and cycling'. The programme covers a range of activities and initiatives to change people's travel behaviour through engagement, journey planning, promotion and marketing.



The My Journey programme is split into three work streams:

- **Using cycling as a means of access employment and training**, with a focus on reducing transport barriers for long term unemployed people and working with employers to enable more staff to cycle and walk to work.
- **Engaging with pupils and parents** to build the awareness, skills and confidence to travel to school sustainably.
- **Events, behaviour change campaigns, community support and changes to the built environment** that help to create a culture of walking and cycling in the city.

Cycling as a means of employment and training

In the last 2 years, the 'My Journey to work' programme has reached 6000 people. 150 unemployed people have received 1:1 training, bike loans and personalised journey planning to help.

The My Journey programme has delivered a number of campaigns with workplaces to raise awareness of cycling and create a culture of cycling in organisations. 52 organisations have received direct support to review staff travel and deliver interventions including cycle training, Bike Doctor events, lunchtime walks and rides – all of which help staff to overcome the barriers they have to commuting actively. We have also supported workplace leaders and champions to adopt and promote policies and practices which encourage sustainable travel. For example, The Travel Planners' forum has now grown to include representatives from over 90 organisations who meet quarterly to share ideas or receive training and guidance on how they can promote sustainable travel to their staff.

Engaging with pupils and parents

From 2017-2018, there was a 4% increase in sustainable travel to Southampton Access Fund schools (walking, cycling/scooting or public transport) from 75.9% to 79.8%. This success is thanks to a number of activities which have helped people to understand the challenge, remove barriers to walking and cycling and trigger and motivate people to take action. For example:

- Our air quality exhibit helps students and parents increase their understanding of air quality and the actions they can take to improve air quality in their local community.

- The Bike It programme provides practical support and advice to students at 32 schools to give them the confidence to walk and cycle to school.
- The School Streets programme provides a series of temporary one day road closures outside schools which pave the way for longer term ones in the city.
- The number of pupils using the Living Streets Travel Tracker has over doubled across our Access Fund. There are currently 10,995 pupils using Travel Tracker with 405,726 active trips recorded.
- Our annual Scooter Challenge invites schools from across Southampton and wider Hampshire to see who can encourage the most pupils to scoot to school during the week long challenge. In 2018, 3000 pupils from nine schools took part, while this year's challenge achieved record numbers, with 7000 pupils from 16 schools participating.

Events, behaviour change campaigns, community support and changes to the built environment

In the last 18 months, over 400 separate events have been delivered to help residents explore more sustainable options for travelling across the city.

Annual Big Bike Revival has provided grant funding to organisations in the city to put on local events which remove the barriers to cycling. 11 Community Clubs deliver led rides and training for new or returning cyclists.

A five year partnership with British Cycling has seen regular led rides alongside an annual mass participation closed road ride - HSBC UK Let's Ride Southampton - has successfully attracted new and returning cyclists. The event is also combined with a music and arts festival to appeal to non-cyclists. In 2018, the event saw 9,000 people cycle on a large, closed road circuit from the city centre to Southampton Common. This year's event engaged 10,000 participants who enjoyed a new route starting from St Mary's stadium. [View our video of the 2018 event here.](#)

6. Our Parks and Green Spaces

Enhancing and protecting our natural environment is one of the goals in our Green City Charter. Parks and open spaces are essential to creating a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable city. In 2019, two of our parks (St James' Park in Shirley and Riverside Park in Bitterne Park) were recognised by the Green Flag Award Scheme as being amongst the very best in the world. St James' Park and Riverside Park join other green spaces in Southampton awarded recognition in recent years.

The parks are among a record-breaking 1,970 UK parks and green spaces that received a prestigious Green Flag Award— the mark of a quality park or green space. This international award, now into its third decade, is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible environmental standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent visitor facilities.

Both parks are unique in character, but are similar in having fantastic community lead friends groups at the heart of their management. They work tirelessly alongside Southampton City Council staff to ensure that the parks are some of the best in the world.

The council also recently completed work on the regeneration of Blechynden Gardens, an important route for people walking between Southampton Central Station and the City Centre. The newly created park is on the site of the remains of the Emperia Buildings, a warehouse built in 1905 which was bombed in 1940 during the Blitz of Southampton in World War II.

The council led on the design and delivery of the project which has transformed the area for future generations to enjoy. The park balances protecting what is left of the Emperia Buildings, blending the remains of the walls with two set piece sculptures, whilst allowing natural plants and wildlife to flourish.



7. Living Walls

Southampton City Council, with its Highways Partner Balfour Beatty, has recently begun work to transform the newly reconstructed Millbrook Roundabout into a greener, cleaner environment with a new Living Wall made up of green planting. Work on what will be the first Living Wall of its kind on the UK's major road network is already underway and is scheduled to complete by October 2019.

The new Living Walls are supplied by Biotecture, a specialist in the design, supply, installation and maintenance of sustainable living walls and green infrastructure. The walls will take the form of ten green columns which will appear to support the flyover. The plants will sit on free-standing frames away from the columns, meaning the structure is not affected.

The plants will be nurtured through their early growth stage in greenhouses which means they will be fully developed and green at the point of installation. They will be robust enough to thrive in the UK climate with 95% coverage all year round. The species have also been selected for their beneficial effect in providing habitats for wildlife and maintaining biodiversity.

The Living Wall is designed to be sustainable, easy to access and easy to maintain. The frames have an integrated irrigation system which uses sensors that maximise efficiency and minimise water waste.



Artist's impression

It is widely accepted that placing vegetation within urban areas has a significant effect on air quality. During photosynthesis plants absorb CO₂ and other gases such as SO₂ (Sulfur Dioxide) and NO₂ (nitrogen dioxide), ozone and airborne ammonia through their leaves. They also act as sinks to reduce the concentration of particulate matter in the local atmosphere. Southampton's new living wall will bring a pollution eating plant approach to the city, and will also be an attractive addition to improve the look and feel of this major route into Southampton.

The Living Wall installation is being funded from efficiency savings made as part of the main £8.3m Millbrook Roundabout

reconstruction scheme which completed earlier this year.

8. Green Space Factor

Southampton is a densely developed city with little opportunity to create new green space. The City Council therefore needed to adopt a broader approach to green infrastructure by trying to green up built development through the use of landscape planting, street trees, green roofs and green walls.

To ensure that new developments contribute to this approach, the Green Space Factor tool was incorporated into the **City Centre Action Plan, Adopted Version 2015** via **Policy AP 12 Green Infrastructure and Open Space**. This policy requires all developments, and especially the key sites, to assess the potential of the site for appropriate green infrastructure and provide suitable qualitative improvements.

The Green Space Factor (GSF) enables an objective assessment of the quality and functionality of GI to produce a score for any site or area in the city centre. The Council provides advice on the green infrastructure required in a particular area or plot and provide examples of interventions that can deliver such benefits.

The GSF is based upon modified versions of the Berlin Biotope Area Factor, Malmö Green Space Factor and work undertaken by the Northwest Development Agency. It is now being adopted more widely, most notably in London (Greater London Authority – Urban Greening Factor).

The Southampton Green Space Factor tool and guidance can be found here: <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/planning/planning-permission/sustainability-checklist.aspx>