



### **Background Sustainable Travel**

Travel and connectivity are of paramount significance within the context of tourism and the visitor economy. The movement of visitors transcends mere necessity and convenience; it holds the potential to significantly enhance the overall experience and reduce environmental impact of both visitors and residents. Cotswolds Plus' commitment to sustainable travel reflects our collective ambition for the visitor economy to play a pivotal role in regional, national, and indeed global NetZero commitments.

According to the United Nations World Tourism report [Transport Related CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions of the Tourism Sector](#) transport-related emissions from tourism are projected to represent 5.3% of all anthropogenic emissions by 2030, up from 5% in 2016. In Gloucestershire, transport accounts for a substantial 43% of all carbon emissions, making it a crucial focus for carbon reduction agendas. Gloucestershire County Council has made a firm commitment to achieve net-zero carbon emissions across all sources in the county by 2045 and to reduce emissions by 80% by 2030. Further supporting the agenda and our focus area Oxfordshire Council Council's 2011 – 2030 Transport Plan's core objective is for carbon dioxide reduction is principally focused on encouraging trips to either not be made, or to be made by less carbon intensive transport mode with commitments and activity outlined in [the 2020 Climate Action Framework](#). Furthermore, Cotswolds National Landscape's 2021 report "Creating a Pathway to a Climate-Friendly Cotswolds" revealed that visitors' emissions, primarily associated with travelling to and from the Cotswolds, amount to roughly half of total residents' emissions. Their emissions are predominantly linked to travel to and from the Cotswolds rather than their activities, purchases, or dining choices during their stay. To address this, they have proposed a yearly 10% reduction, with the ultimate goal of reaching just 7.5% of current emissions. Given the Cotswolds' pivotal role as a magnet for our destination, we believe that this plan will contribute significantly to achieving this reduction.

Visit Gloucestershire has taken proactive steps to champion sustainable transport and address net-zero objectives with a dedicated net-zero and transport workstream. They have partnered with the Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership (GCRP) currently expanding into Oxfordshire, a specialised delivery

partner actively engaged in county wide initiatives that deliver local travel solutions, influence transport planning, advocate for sustainable travel options, and protect the region's assets for the benefit of visitors and local communities through sustainable travel choices.

Commented [SG1]: Add in about Oxfordshire CRP too

The Cotswolds Plus Sustainable Travel work plan outlines the activities of all contributors and partners aligned with our overarching goal of reducing carbon emissions associated with visitor transport. Simultaneously, it aims to enhance the visitor experience by promoting sustainable travel choices, preserving the destination's environmental assets, and safeguarding the well-being of our residents. This initiative is integral to not only environmental sustainability but also to elevating the overall visitor experience.

### Industry insights & trends

[Tourism's Carbon Emissions Measured in Landmark Report Launched At COP25 \(unwto.org\)](#)

<https://globalnews.booking.com/climate-community-and-choice-bookingcom-reveals-the-trends-shaping-sustainable-travel-in-2022/>

<https://www.statista.com/topics/1916/green-tourism/#topicOverview>

### Values of the LVEP

A **COLLECTIVE** that works for each other for shared benefit

**SUSTAINABILITY** is at the heart of our approach to solutions

We **ADVOCATE** for all of our partners and for the visitor economy

We **ALIGN** our practices to achieve exceptional standards across all areas of our work

We bring **OPPORTUNITY** to businesses across our region

### Objectives

1.Promote Sustainable Travel Choices: Encourage visitors to choose sustainable travel options, including low-carbon and active travel, by providing accessible information and showcasing businesses with sustainable practices.

2. Manage Visitor Impact: Achieve a balanced geographical and seasonal distribution of visitors to minimise the negative impact on the environment and local communities.
3. Advocate for Sustainable Tourism: Engage in advocacy efforts to ensure that the visitor economy is considered in both transport and community planning processes.
4. Enhance Rail Accessibility: Promote Gateway rail stations and collaborate with local communities and businesses to improve visitor access from stations to accommodation options.
5. Support Sustainable Businesses: Encourage visitor economy businesses to provide car-free recommendations to visitors, showcase sustainable practices
6. Collaborative Awareness & Involvement: Encourage and support collaboration across the LVEP to raise awareness, monitor and increase participation in transport and active travel projects benefiting visitors and seek funding for collaborative initiatives promoting sustainable travel.

### Activities to be carried in 2023 - 2025 LVEP led & delivered

For Led and Delivered activities plans should highlight the value(s) that are linked to them. They should also describe a method of success measurement/KPI, and describe the proposed visitor economy impact.

**Commented [HM2]:** Can we commit to this as this needs to be resourced.

Activity	Align to values	Expected Outcome	Responsible	Priority (1 Key to 5 low)	Cost of Activity	Provider(s)	Start date	KPI	Activation Date
<b>Raising the profile</b> Engage businesses and local authority partners in this plan and activity associated with it based on	<b>Advocacy</b>	By engaging stakeholders we ensure buy in of this work and avoid duplication	<b>Business support group</b>	<b>2</b>	Staff Time, Do we want to get	<b>ALL</b>	<b>Early 24</b>	<b>Numbers of</b>	<b>Continuous</b>

**Commented [HM3]:** All to consider their priority rating and to comment here

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<p>expertise, best practice and relevance.</p> <p>Consider developing a simple internal communications plan associated with these actions</p>	<p><b>Sustainability Opportunity</b></p>				<p>all the plans designed up if we are sending them out?</p>			<p><b>businesses engaged</b></p>	
<p><b>Activity</b></p> <p>To work together to submit a collaborative bids to community and DMO fund including train operators and seek potential funding streams supporting sustainable and active travel</p>	<p><b>Align to values</b></p> <p><b>Collective</b></p>	<p><b>Expected Outcome</b></p> <p><b>Successful fundraising would support a new transport workstream delivered in partnership</b></p> <p>Bid's submitted that reference and complement each other's project and ensure coordinated approach across LVEP region.</p>	<p><b>Responsible</b></p> <p>ALL</p>	<p><b>Priority (1 Key to 5 low)</b></p> <p>2</p>	<p><b>Cost of Activity</b></p> <p>Staff time plus match funding</p>	<p><b>Provider(s)</b></p> <p>Various Funders including Train Operators</p>	<p><b>Start date</b></p> <p>Cont.</p>	<p><b>KPI's</b></p> <p>Bids submitted</p>	<p><b>Completion Date</b></p> <p>2023 bids worked up in collaboration. 2024 to be discussed</p>
<p><b>Activity</b></p> <p><b>Signposting information</b></p> <p>To integrate ticketing/trainripper into consumer DMO websites wherever possible with iframe in construction and accessibility feature</p>	<p><b>Align to values</b></p> <p><b>SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITY</b></p>	<p><b>Expected Outcome</b></p> <p>3 DMOs have trainripper on their website to drive visitor use &amp; awareness of train routes &amp; stations in region.</p>	<p><b>Responsible</b></p> <p>GCRP / Simpleview</p>	<p><b>Priority (1 Key to 5 low)</b></p> <p>2</p>	<p><b>Cost of Activity</b></p> <p>SimpleView fees – approx. £2K per DMO</p>	<p><b>Provider(s)</b></p> <p>GCRP</p>	<p><b>Start date</b></p> <p>Winter 23</p>	<p><b>KPI's</b></p> <p>Number of iframes</p>	<p><b>Completion Date</b></p> <p>March 24</p>

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								Engagement level	
Activity	Align to values	Expected Outcome	Responsible	Priority (1 Key to 5 low)	Cost of Activity Staff time	Provider(s) DMOs	Start date	KPI's Number of businesses engaged  Number of businesses adapting their information	Completion Date Summer 24
<b>Audit &amp; business support</b> Identify how best to support businesses and visitors on providing transport information (including taxi, coach parking etc) connections to the destination to help sell the area	<b>ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITY</b>	Share best practice in communicating getting here and around the destination in a sustainable way (eg leave car behind for a day). All DMOs update their information.	<b>ALL DMOs</b>	4					

**Commented [HM4]:** Is this realistic - should we internally be considering this. Please comment in your thoughts

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Activity	Align to values	Expected Outcome	Responsible	Priority (1 Key to 5 low)	Cost of Activity	Provider(s)	Start date	KPI's	Completion Date
<b>Signposting information</b> Work with our rail and bus companies to communicate changes in timetables, services and strike action days. Highlighting the most accessible and least affected routes as a solution to disruption and the best way to get here if there is a disruption or change	<b>ADVOCACY</b>  <b>OPPORTUNITY</b>	LVEP partners are quick to receive the information regarding disruptions changes and additions to public transport services and can cascade that information out	Cascade to all from designated representative – HM Rail Bus Road	1	Staff time	Transport providers	Active	Information level received	Ongoing activity
<b>Signposting information</b> To promote the co-benefits of active travel (walking and cycling) on health and wellbeing - as well as reducing carbon emissions through information provided by specialist partners eg Visit England Sustrans Active Gloucestershire and Sports England	<b>ADVOCACY</b>	Businesses are inspired to develop car free itineraries to give to visitors Increased opportunities and promotion of walking and cycling in the Cotswolds Plus region. Increase the number of accommodation providers offering bikes for visitors/cycle related information/walking related information  Ensure region seen as walking & cycling friendly	ALL	3	Requires funding	Technical experts	Ongoing	Engagement level of businesses and visitors	Ongoing
<b>Targeted Inbound tourism</b>	<b>Sustainability</b>	Increased awareness regarding sustainable and active modes of transport in the destination	Travel Trade Leads	1	Staff time	Travel Trade providers	Ongoing	No Trade	Completion Date

Commented [HM5]: Concern around capacity to monitor

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Travel trade action plan highlights that we will be targeting operators committed to sustainable travel	Align			3		and businesses		meetings	Ongoing
<b>Activity</b> <b>Signposting information</b> Signpost businesses towards funding for installation of EV points to encourage further EV points / to offer information about nearest charging points for visitors as well as where to hire electric cars locally.	Align to values  Opportunity	<b>Expected Outcome</b>  LVEP partners are better informed regarding EV developments  Businesses are better equipped with information and opportunity regarding ev chargers and can share this with their visitors	ALL	Priority (1 Key to 5 low)  2/3	Cost of Activity  Staff time	Provider(s)  County Council	Start date  Ongoing	KPI's	Completion Date  Ongoing
<b>Activity</b>  To support and participate in the Cotswolds Innovation workshops to identify how to stimulate cross sector collaboration on sustainable travel solutions eg Westonbirt, Cotswolds Water Park and Blenheim and build action plans and funding applications around recommendations	Align to values  Opportunity	<b>Expected Outcome</b>  Cross sector solutions to carbon reduction are identified collectively with funding requirements mapped and activated	Responsible  GCRP / VG	Priority (1 Key to 5 low)  2	Cost of Activity  Funding dependent but engagement high with staff from partner orgs	Provider(s)  Multi stakeholder – CNL, Transport providers, destination attractions, Cotswolds Tourism	Start date  Jan 23	KPI's	Completion Date  Ongoing
<b>Signposting information</b> To support the development and promotion of active and sustainable travel resources and maps in collaboration with GCRP using the	Collective Advocate	Resources demonstrating car free access to the destination support visitors to come and stay longer without	GCRP / LVEP	3	2 maps funded for 23/24	GCRP	Sept 23	Maps	March 24

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LVEP partners as a receptacle for coms		the car are relevant and accessible to visitors through joint promotion						Outreach	
<b>Strategic improvements</b> Collectively Represent Cotswold Plus transport& active travel agenda at events nationally and reflected within collective comms plans	<b>Advocacy Collective</b>	Cotswolds Plus profile is raised in representing the car free agenda	LVEP partners	2	Staff time	ALL	Sept 23	Events and representations	
<b>Raising the profile &amp; business support.</b> Support and champion businesses committed to the sustainable travel agenda through a business Sustainable Travel toolkit being developed by VG / GCRP	<b>Opportunity Sustainability</b>	Businesses have access to tools and improved information regarding accessing the destination through sustainable transport	GCRP / VG	2	Funded 14K	GCRP	Sept 23	Business Engagement levels	March 24 for toolkit with 24/25 for engagement
<b>Strategic improvements</b> Contribute strategically to the development of the <a href="#">Cotswolds Calm Corner</a> at a key station through advice on hyper local	<b>Advocacy</b>	Improved access to the natures health and wellbeing benefits for disabled, neurodivergent and multi faith people	GCRP	2/3	Funding sought Dec 23 with infrastructure funded by	GCRP Network Rail / CNL	April 23	Calm Corner Stakeholder	March 25 and beyond



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recommendations and business engagement.					Network Rail			engagement	
<b>Raising the profile &amp; business support.</b> Encourage collaborative approaches to the youth diversity and inclusion agenda through the Access to Nature programmes such as Getaway to stimulate local and car free visits through collective engagement with the agenda considering inclusive and welcoming imagery and messaging on partner websites and comms.	<b>Collective Advocacy</b>	More young people from diverse communities felt welcome and able to access our local landscapes	LVEP		19K for youth programmes requires staff time to adjust comms on websites	DMO's	April 23		N Commented [HM7R6]: And removed from here once developed Commented [HM6]: To be added to the accessibility plan

**NOTE: Add a line on cross over to and from business support, accessible and travel trade on net zero and transport agendas**

Separate table for longer term / aspirational projects that require further scoping and fundraising

Activity	LVEP Value	Outcome ambition	WHO
<b>Coordination of bids</b> Station Stories – celebrating heritage and local stories centres around local stations and journeys Gloucester – Lydney	ASPIRATION	Local places are celebrated and showcased through rail stories, spoken word and vlogs to engage new audiences	HM / RC scope funding potential

Commented [HM8]: This was not in the original format of plan but a suggestion to separate off aspirational and influencing activity

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<p><b>Business support</b> Consider training on the inclusion agenda for partners and availability of sustainable options for businesses and partners</p>	<p><b>ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>Ensure business knowledge is increased &amp; businesses signpost transport options to visitors</p>	
<p><b>Business support</b> To work with local tour operators to get wider visitor dispersal all year round &amp; extend season as part of responsible tourism approach</p>	<p><b>ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>Engage with local tour operators including walking, cycling, Ehire to encourage new experiences / attractions to be visited on tours &amp; relationships with accommodation providers to encourage visitors to book a day tour Link to Local connections project</p>	<p>SG/LP/RC</p>

**Commented [HM9]:** Potentially move to accessibility and inclusion work plan

**Commented [HM10]:** Should this go into the business support plan?

**Commented [HM11R10]:** And be removed from here

**Activities being undertaken where LVEP has an influencing role** - Note these activities are not delivered directly by Cotswolds Plus LVEP but delivered by strategic partners

Activity	LVEP VALUES	Expected Outcome	Responsible
<p><b>Strategic improvements</b> Surface, signage and furniture improvements to the Cotswold Way National Trail to improve user experience and enjoyment of the Trail Funding sources Natural England, Gloucestershire County Rights of Way, Cotswold Way Association, BANES Rights of Way, National Highways. In kind volunteering from the CNL Cotswold Voluntary Wardens to carry out practical improvements</p>	<p><b>Advocate</b></p>	<p>Improved surfacing at Stanton and Weston Furniture Improvements at Cam Long Down, Lineover Woods and Buckland with work at Leckhampton, Coaley and Lansdown to improve access for off-road mobility scooters and pushchairs</p>	<p>Cotswolds National Landscape / Highways / Council / CTAP</p>

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<p><b>Strategic improvements</b>                  DEFRA Removing Barriers                  A series of projects across the Cotswolds National Landscape to improve access to the area for those who face physical, digital and psychological barriers to enjoying the Cotswolds countryside.                  Funding sources                  DEFRA, Partner organisations and in-kind practical support from CNL Voluntary Wardens</p>	<p><b>Advocate</b>   <b>Opportunity</b></p>	<p>Improved access to the Cotswolds National Landscape for a wider audience.</p>	<p>CNL / funding partners</p>
<p><b>Signposting information</b>                  Utilise Gloucestershire Community Rail Partnership's resources to promote sustainable travel to the visitor through funded projects such as TrainTripper, access and leisure maps and Access to Nature by Rail programmes</p>	<p><b>Opportunity</b>   <b>Collective</b>   <b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p>DMOs harness the opportunity to utilise and influence development of resources funded by GCRP to promote sustainable transport to visitors</p>	<p>GCRP / DMOs</p>
<p>EV locations and data capture                  Influence strategic partners to consider appropriate locations for EV charging points in relation to destination attractions &amp; transport connectivity                  Encourage GCC and rail operators and parking administrators to consider data capture at these locations – where have people come from etc so we can evaluate carbon savings from visitors through EV</p>	<p><b>Opportunity</b>   <b>Collective</b></p>	<p>Encourage further development of electric car charging points and use of low carbon transportation within the context of the visitor economy and demonstrate the potential for them to contribute to carbon reduction</p>	<p>ALL / GCC</p>

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<p><b>Lobby for key projects</b> Engage with projects including Kingham to Bourton route &amp; Cheltenham to Bourton</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>Potential projects to develop new cycling and walking routes e.g. on old railway routes, linking attractions together, Kingham to Bourton &amp; Cheltenham to Bourton cycle route feasibility studies Explore the possibilities of multi-modal itineraries e.g. bus or train to link to walk/cycle route back to original start point</p>	<p>SG/ Cotswolds Tourism</p>
<p><b>Lobby for connectivity</b> Robin and WWT Slimbridge trial – learnings and findings next steps</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>The LVEP is involved in any updates on large scale development projects in the region that can benefit the wider visitor economy</p>	<p>AH/HM</p>
<p><b>Lobby for key projects</b> Engage with Cirencester Light rail project to ensure tourism opportunities are maximised</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY</b></p>	<p>The LVEP is involved in any updates on large scale development projects in the region that can benefit the wider visitor economy</p>	<p>SG Cotswolds Tourism</p>
<p><b>Lobby for key projects</b> Engage with the Bristol Road / Stroudwater Station and Charfield reopening possibility to ensure we are at the table to influence and inform the collective</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>The LVEP is involved in any updates on large scale development projects in the region that can benefit the wider visitor economy</p>	<p>AH/HM</p>

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<p><b>Lobby for key projects</b> Identify key strategic rail bus and active travel routes linking to destination attractions suitable for developing active and sustainable travel routes and assets to be developed for the visitor</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY</b></p>	<p>Car free routes to key locations are identified strategically so they can be showcased, and influence visitors travel behaviours</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p><b>Lobby for connectivity</b> To lobby for more integrated ticketing and value for-money train &amp; public transport services – group to map the potential</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY</b> <b>ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>The LVEP is involved in any updates on large scale development projects in the region that can benefit the wider visitor economy</p>	
<p><b>Lobby for connectivity</b> Influence local plan / transport provider policies e.g. number of bikes on trains, potential cycle routes/footpaths included in Local Plans, development of bike/ebike hire locations/A417 project/Cotswold canals restoration</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY</b> <b>ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>The LVEP is involved in any updates on large scale development projects in the region that can benefit the wider visitor economy</p>	
<p><b>Lobby for key projects</b> Long term projects - Garden Village - aspiration of WODC to deliver a garden village with ample access to the countryside inc walks, cycleways linking to Sustrans network</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY</b> <b>ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>The LVEP is involved in any updates on large scale development projects in the region that can benefit the wider visitor economy</p>	

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<p><b>Strategic improvements</b> Be adaptable to changing priorities as the new economic strategies, DMP's and climate plans emerge.</p>	<p><b>ADVOCACY ASPIRATION</b></p>	<p>The LVEP needs to ensure visitor economy businesses are considered and the needs of residents and visitors balanced.</p>	
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**LVEP Related activity to monitor** LVEP Monitored activity should be a simple list describing who is delivering it and where.

Activity	Delivered by
A417 missing link project – Cycle & walking provision / ease of traffic	Kier / County

<p><b>Cotswold Water Park active travel improvements – cycle routes, cycle racks, walking routes</b></p>	<p><b>CWP/Cotswold DC</b></p>
<p><b>Cotswold Canal restoration project</b></p>	<p><b>Cotswold Canals Trust / Stroud DC / Cotswold DC</b></p>
<p><b>County councils cycle highways</b></p>	
<p>EXAMPLE Local authority UKSPF business support projects</p>	<p>Each local authority</p>