

Hillingdon Cycling Strategy 2023-28



HILLINGDON
LONDON

www.hillingdon.gov.uk

→ Contents

Executive summary	3
Ambition statement	4
Background	4
What we've been doing so far	6
Challenges and opportunities	12
Delivering more	16
New cycle routes	18



→ Executive summary

The benefits of cycling are manifold; not only to individuals – by improving physical and mental health and leading to a healthier, more active lifestyle. But to our borough as a whole; by also helping reduce polluting car journeys on our roads, air pollution, traffic congestion and pressure on our public transport and local health services.

However, uptake of cycling in the borough needs both improvement and encouragement. While the council has overseen the installation of many kilometres of dedicated cycle network, and helped thousands of young people get cycle training there remain obstacles to getting residents out pedalling.

Hillingdon is the second largest borough in London, with a total length from north to south of approximately 20km and some areas of semi-rural countryside where roads may be unlit, winding, hilly and narrower, than those in more central London boroughs. In such boroughs commuting by bike between town centres will often be on wider, well-lit, flatter roads and most likely to be over shorter distances. The complexity and higher congestion levels on those road networks often



mean cycling is also a faster, more efficient mode of transport and so a more appealing, and viable alternative for short journeys.

In January 2020, we declared a climate emergency with the ambition for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030. Shifting reliance of residents away from private car journeys – most of which in London are short journeys in vehicles with single occupants – is integral to us achieving this goal.

Our new Cycling Strategy sets out not only what we've accomplished to date, but also how we'll work with partner organisations to deliver better cycling connections across the borough, including the potential delivery of six entirely new dedicated cycle routes.

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 – which will help us overcome the stigmas preventing people from riding and will ultimately encourage and enable more and more residents to get cycling in Hillingdon.

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



→ Ambition statement

As demand for cycling continues to grow, our strategy for 2023-28 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.

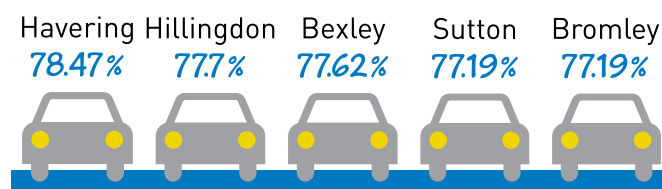
Neighbouring authorities include the London boroughs of Harrow, Ealing, and Hounslow, and the shire counties of Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Surrey (with Berkshire nearby).

Hillingdon has experienced the largest population growth of any London borough since 1939, and under current projections this is set to continue to increase rapidly, more than doubling the 1939 total population of 159,000 by 2041.

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.

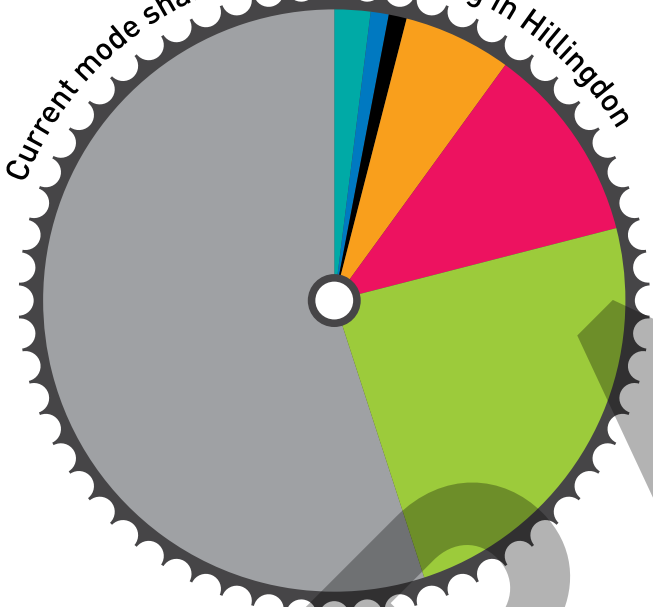
As result, for many residents and visitors to Hillingdon private cars are likely to remain the preferred form of transport for the majority of journeys.

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.



Current mode share of trips originating in Hillingdon



- 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 500 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.



Santander 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.

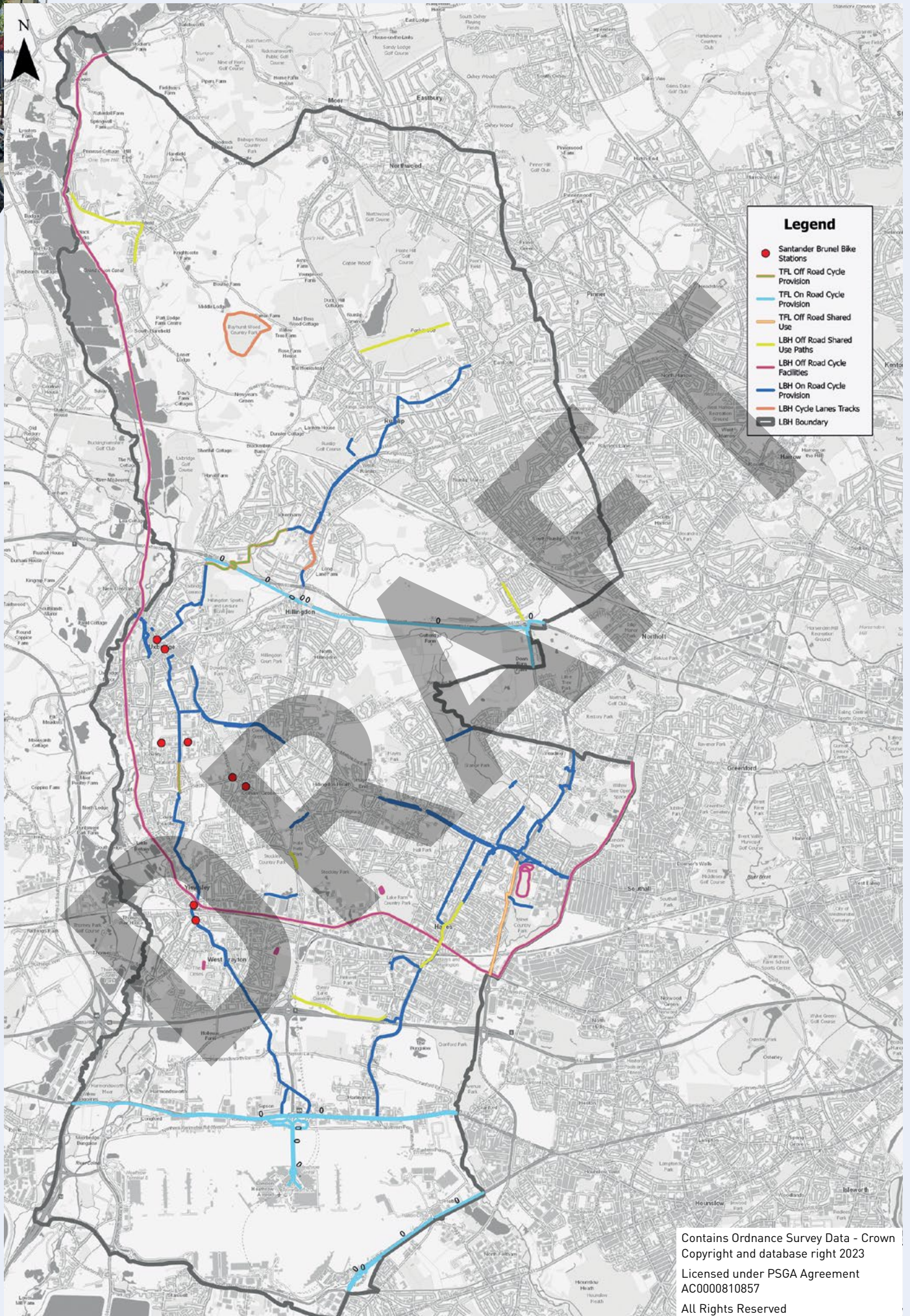


Before



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."





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.



→ 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

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

New routes

Transport for London has produced a map (see right) which looks at the potential cycling trips in an area.

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).



Journeys to work

Data from the 2011 Census shows where people travel from and by what method to get to their place of work.

The data for Hillingdon (see overleaf) shows significant commuting both within London and to neighbouring counties.

There are opportunities to work with neighbouring organisations to help encourage journeys to work by cycling.

Public Rights of Way

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

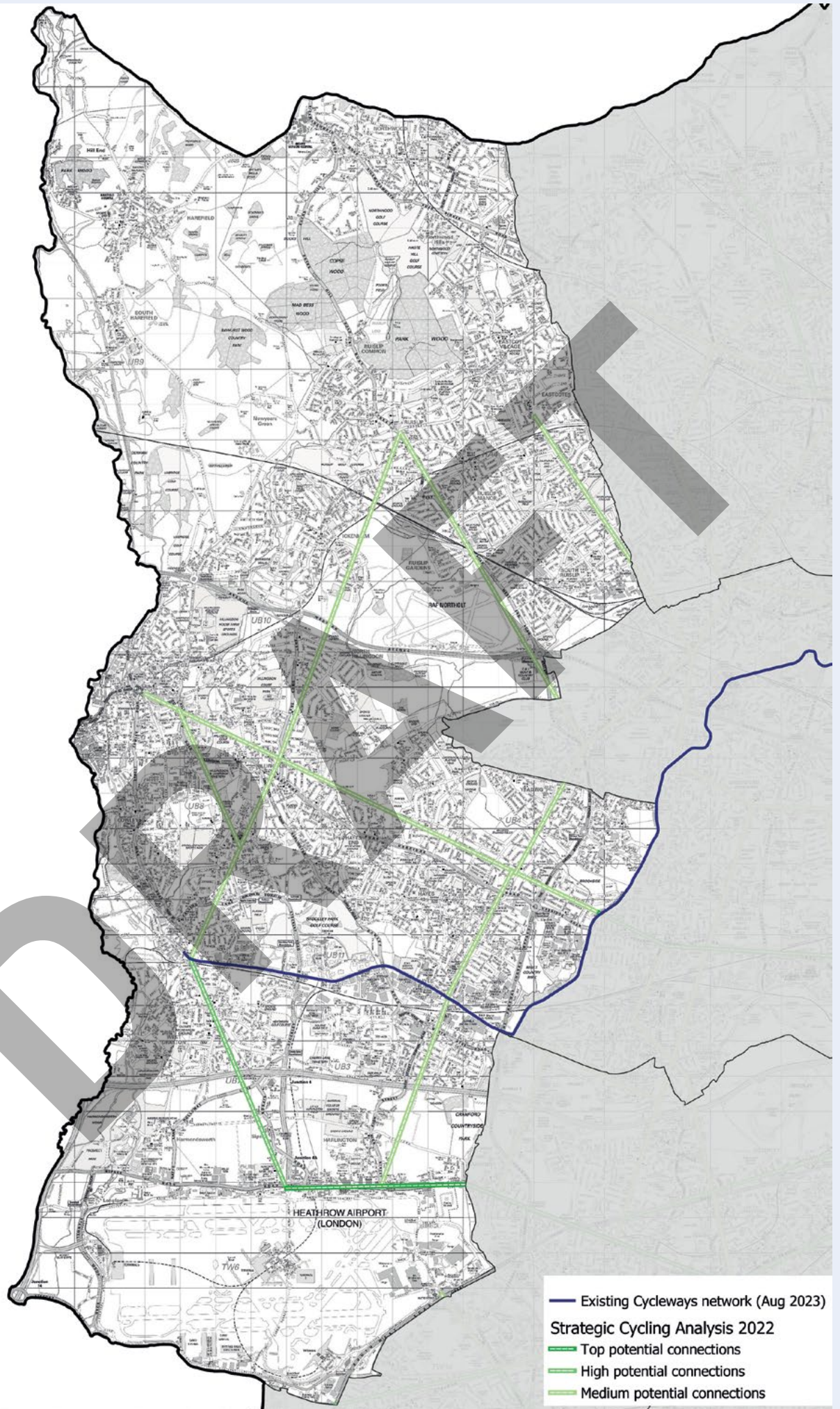
There are opportunities to consider whether some of these can be converted to shared use paths or cycleways.

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.

London Borough of Hillingdon – Strategic Cycling Analysis



Journey to work origins/destinations and mode share

Top 10 origins of commuters to Hillingdon

Rank	Local Authority	Percentage of commuters	Tube, light rail or tram	Train	Bus, minibus or coach	Powered two-wheeler	Car or van driving or passenger	Bicycle	On foot
1	Hillingdon	32.3%	3.0%	1.3%	17.8%	0.6%	58.8%	2.6%	15.5%
2	Hounslow	8.4%	11.5%	2.4%	26.1%	0.8%	55.8%	1.6%	1.5%
3	Ealing	8.2%	8.9%	5.4%	23.2%	0.7%	58.1%	1.4%	1.8%
4	Harrow	4.4%	13.8%	4.2%	12.0%	0.4%	65.5%	0.9%	3.1%
5	Slough	3.8%	0.3%	3.2%	11.1%	0.9%	81.5%	1.0%	1.6%
6	Spelthorne	3.0%	0.2%	0.9%	8.8%	1.6%	83.8%	3.1%	1.3%
7	South Bucks	2.4%	0.2%	1.0%	3.5%	1.0%	90.1%	1.6%	2.0%
8	Windsor & Maidenhead	2.0%	0.1%	2.9%	1.4%	1.2%	92.8%	1.0%	0.4%
9	Wycombe	1.8%	0.1%	1.2%	2.3%	1.2%	94.0%	0.3%	0.6%
10	Brent	1.7%	26.7%	10.0%	8.3%	0.8%	52.8%	0.5%	0.9%

Top 10 destinations of commuters from Hillingdon

Rank	Local Authority	Percentage of commuters	Tube, light rail or tram	Train	Bus, minibus or coach	Powered two-wheeler	Car or van driving or passenger	Bicycle	On foot
1	Hillingdon	43.0%	3.0%	1.3%	17.8%	0.6%	58.8%	2.6%	15.5%
2	Ealing	8.9%	6.7%	4.6%	16.7%	1.0%	67.5%	1.6%	1.4%
3	Westminster	7.3%	66.1%	15.9%	3.3%	1.2%	12.0%	0.5%	0.8%
4	Hounslow	5.8%	3.9%	1.9%	20.8%	1.3%	69.3%	1.3%	1.2%
5	Harrow	4.1%	12.7%	3.5%	10.4%	0.6%	68.4%	1.6%	2.6%
6	Brent	2.9%	17.2%	5.8%	8.1%	0.8%	66.2%	1.0%	0.7%
7	Slough	2.8%	1.2%	4.8%	8.7%	0.7%	81.9%	1.4%	1.1%
8	Hammersmith & Fulham	2.3%	45.2%	9.8%	8.5%	1.4%	33.5%	0.8%	0.6%
9	Camden	2.1%	66.2%	13.0%	3.4%	0.9%	15.1%	0.4%	0.5%
10	South Bucks	1.9%	2.1%	2.2%	9.7%	1.1%	80.2%	1.3%	2.9%



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.
- 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.



→ Delivering more

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 and others

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

More Santander bike sites

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

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

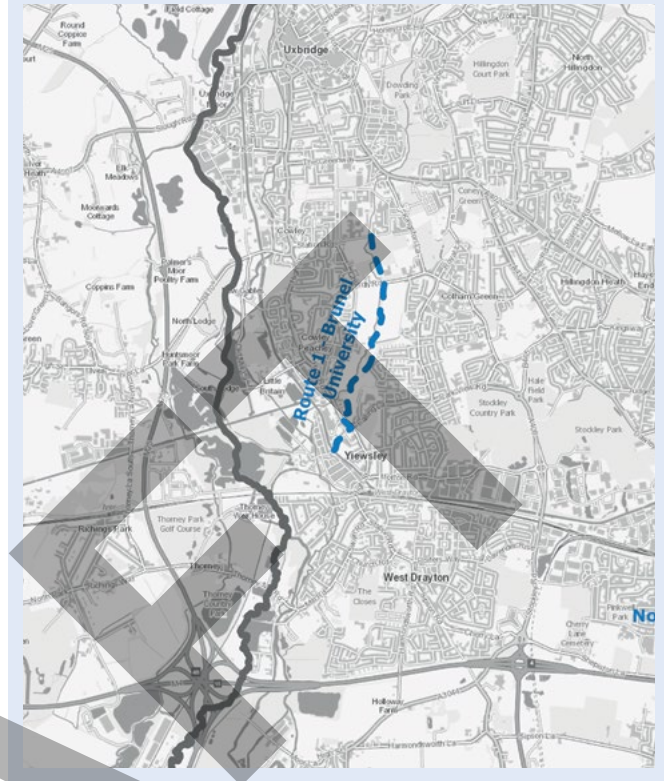
Not all of the existing cycling routes join together in an efficient manner, leaving cyclists often 'stranded' when a route ends. For riders to move across the borough in a more fluid manner, we will identify any key missing links in our existing routes and look at ways to bridge the gaps.

→ New cycle routes

Six new cycle routes have been identified that provide great opportunities to build significant new cycling infrastructure that reflect current needs and will facilitate sustainable travel through the borough. The council aims to work towards substantial delivery of these six routes by 2028.

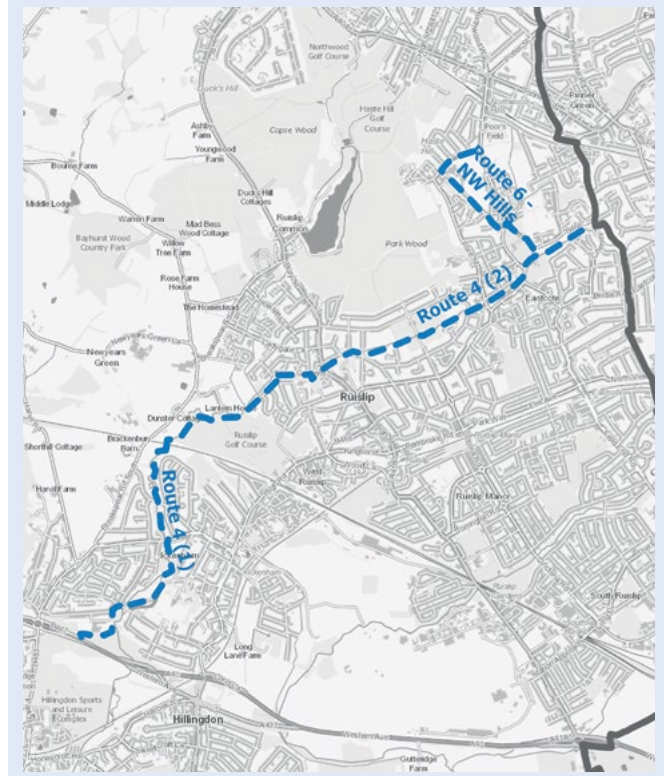
Route one: Brunel Cycleway

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



Route four: Celandine Route

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

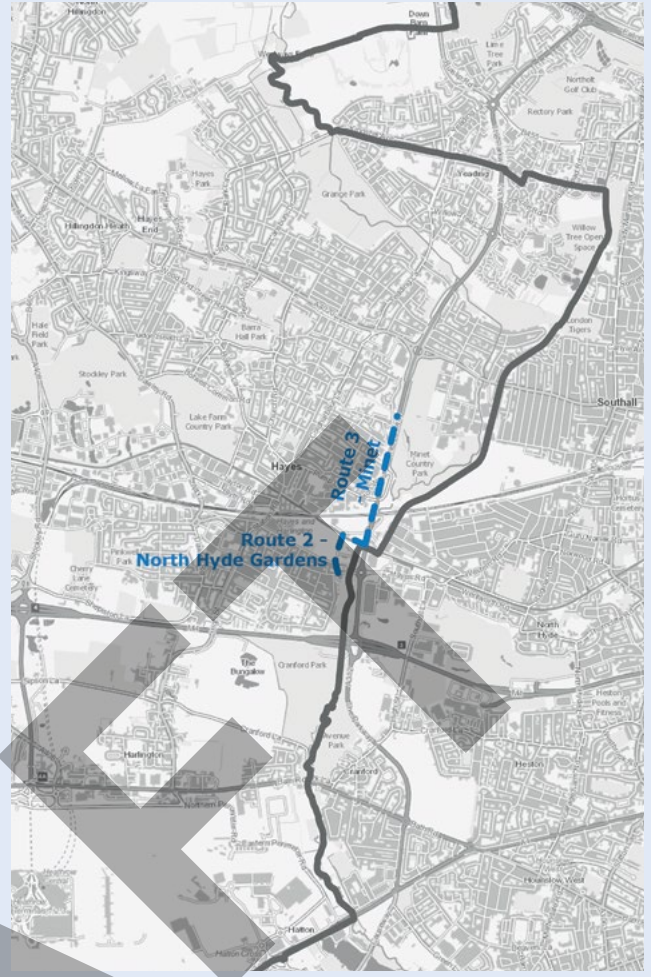


Route two: North Hyde Gardens

Allows cyclists from around the Nestles Avenue development to access the Grand Union Canal.

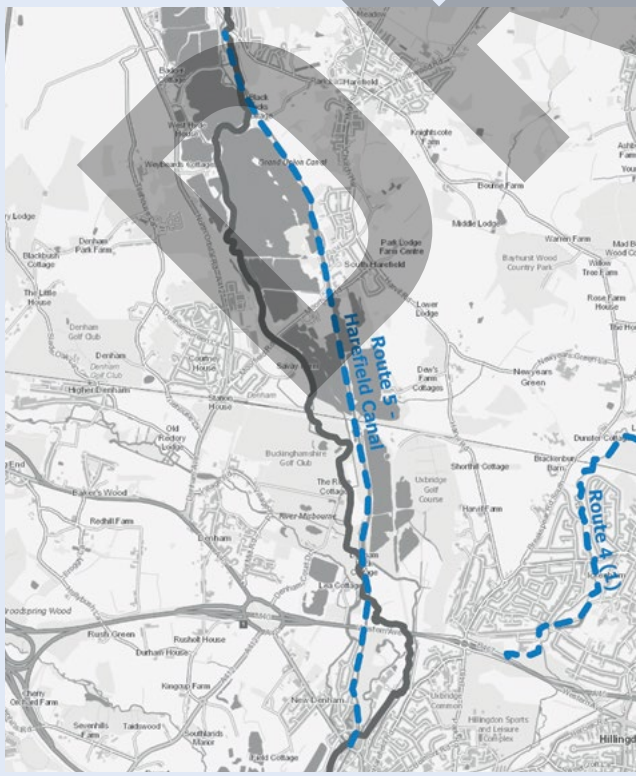
Route three: Minet Cycle Circuit Link

Residents from the redevelopment of the former Nestles factory will be able to access the park via an off-road route.



Route five: Harefield Grand Union Canal

Full upgrade of the canal towpath between Harefield and Uxbridge.



Route six: Eastcote to Northwood Hills

A new route off the Celandine Route that connects Eastcote with Northwood Hills using quieter, largely residential roads.

