

Active travel takes a step forward in West Sussex

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Active Travel England is the government agency that works with local authorities to make it easier and more attractive for people to walk, wheel and cycle on local journeys such as to school, work, the shops and leisure facilities.

The upgrade to Level 1 status is in recognition of the council's progress which has involved officers and council leadership working with ATE on an action plan to improve how it plans and implements schemes. As a result of securing this upgrade, the council will now be able to bid for future funding to deliver on its ambition.

This follows ATE funding of just over £1 million secured by the council in March 2024, which is being used to provide a segregated cycle track on Lancing Beach Green, a signalised crossing outside West Worthing Station, and to upgrade a signalised crossing in Felpham to accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians. A pedestrian crossing on the A286 at Lavant to make it safer to access local bus stops and walk to Lavant Primary School and has already been completed.

Alongside this work, the council has been developing the new Active Travel Strategy and the West Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Both documents have recently been approved for adoption and will help the council to develop a pipeline of active travel improvements, help shape future capital programmes and support bids for external funding.

The council's West Sussex Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan includes proposals for six long distance walking and cycling routes across the county that are designed to complement similar plans produced by district and borough councils and the South Downs National Park Authority.

When making its decision to reward West Sussex County Council with Level 1 status, Active Travel England was impressed by the commitment shown by the council's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Councillor Joy Dennis.

Councillor Dennis said: "Being awarded Level 1 Capability status by Active Travel England is much more than just an investment in new pavements, crossings, and cycle paths. It's a boost for all the people who will get to enjoy more accessible and safer walking and cycling routes in our beautiful county, along with the health benefits this brings.

"This good news comes as new data from the Department for Transport shows that the proportion of West Sussex residents who cycle at least once a month increased by over and above both the national and regional average between 2022 and 2023.

"The extra support and funding from Active Travel England that Level 1 status brings will help us to improve on the progress we made in the last year to make it easier to travel sustainably across West Sussex, in line with the goals set out in the [West Sussex Transport Plan](#)."