Meeting: EWR/Bedford Borough Council – Active Travel Workshop

Held on: Monday 2nd March 2026 (15:30 – 17:00)

Location: Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

- Andrew Prigmore (AP)
- Joanne Branson-Budd (JBB)
- Jemma Denton (JD)
- Verity Quinn (VQ)
- Peter Simons (PS)

Representatives also from EWR Co

Meeting objectives: To present Bedford Borough Council (BBC) with the latest active travel proposals.

Meeting summary:

1. **Introductions and agenda**: EWR Co welcomed attendees, outlined the agenda, and confirmed the session would focus on Bucket 1 and 2 schemes first, followed by the Active Travel Partnership Programme (ATPP).
2. **Background to Door-to-Door Connectivity and active travel**: EWR Co set out the strategic case for active travel, highlighting its role in maximising station access and mitigating scheme impacts. The discussion referenced national policy, including the Department for Transport's *Gear Change* ambition for walking and cycling, and regional policy via England's Economic Heartland. EWR Co confirmed that its Door-to-Door Connectivity Strategy was endorsed by DfT in February 2024.
3. **Approach to identifying active travel routes**: EWR Co explained how routes were identified through mapping, consultation feedback, stakeholder engagement and WCHARs. Around 200 suggestions were reviewed, resulting in around 75 routes in bucket 1 (station access) and bucket 2 (severance mitigation), around 50 routes in bucket 3a with confirmed delivery partners and around 40 routes in bucket 3b which currently do not have delivery partners. BBC requested the selection criteria to be published.

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4. **Bucket 1 and 2 routes in the Bedford area**: EWR Co presented emerging proposals around Bedford Station, Bedford St Johns Station and connections towards and around Tempsford. BBC raised the need to maintain both east-west and north-south connectivity as well as the importance of receiving GIS data to support review and feedback. It was agreed that EWR Co would share a spreadsheet of proposed routes to facilitate feedback as well as updated maps with labelled PROW routes.
5. **Active Travel Partnership Programme (ATPP)**: EWR Co introduced the ATPP, noting that BBC is included in the first tranche. The programme is intended to provide flexible support for developing active travel schemes, with collaboration between EWR Co, local authorities, Active Travel England and England's Economic Heartland. BBC highlighted capacity and resourcing constraints, particularly for Bucket 3b schemes, and sought clarity on expectations around leadership and delivery. EWR Co confirmed the programme is flexible, focused on identifying and supporting priority schemes rather than immediate delivery of all routes.
6. **Programme and next steps**: EWR Co confirmed that a follow-up session will be arranged. BBC will consider internal resourcing and confirm appropriate attendees.

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