

## **Hope Valley Climate Action**

### **Travel & Transport**

#### **Travelling Light strategy 2023-2030**

This document sets out strategy for the Travelling Light project for the period up to 2030. It is accompanied by a Project Plan.

#### **Mission**

By 2030 every resident, visitor and business makes zero carbon transport their first choice for travel in the Hope Valley.

#### **Vision**

The beautiful Hope Valley will be a great place to live, work and visit due to the integrated systems of high quality public transport, linked to excellent walking and cycling routes and shared electric cars and bikes. Our roads will be safer and quieter; residents and visitors will be healthier and nature will flourish as low-emission and active travel options have become the norm.

#### **Travelling Light project**

We will achieve our mission and vision through our national beacon Travelling Light project, created in 2022 by Hope Valley Climate Action in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA). We received support from the Foundation for Integrated Transport (FIT) to initiate the project and £120,000 from the Department for Transport (DfT) to fund its first year.

#### **The Hope Valley**

The Hope Valley, at the heart of the Peak District National Park, is home to around 9000 people and on the doorstep of several million people who live in the Manchester and Sheffield conurbations.

## **Travelling Light's Objectives**

We want a future where:

### **1. Inclusive Active Travel - Walking Wheeling & Cycling**

Short distance journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling are part of everyday life. Safe and attractive walking and cycling routes provide a viable alternative to car use.

### **2. Integrated Public Transport**

Efficient, affordable and comfortable buses and trains provide easy access for local people and visitors. They connect at mobility hubs where timetables and ticketing integrate public transport services. There are readily available and inclusive cycle hire, shuttles and taxis.

### **3. Reduced Fossil Fuel Dependency**

People use private vehicles less because there are attractive alternatives, including excellent public transport and active travel options. Business vehicle journeys across the Valley have been reduced through greater sharing, electric commercial vehicles and rail haulage. Car use has been further reduced through car sharing and electric car clubs.

### **4. Innovation and Spreading Change**

The Hope Valley is recognised as an exemplar of sustainable rural travel and ecotourism. Innovative sustainable travel pilot projects have been run in the HV and shared with and replicated by, other rural areas including National Parks. Travelling Light has collected and disseminated best practice. This includes learning from other parts of the UK and elsewhere in Europe. HVCA is a trusted, credible organisation with residents and statutory bodies.

## Challenges

There are significant challenges to achieving our vision. Learning from the first year of the project, we see:

The size and urgency of the problem:

- Transport is the largest emitting sector in the UK, responsible for 24% of the country's CO2 emissions.
- The Hope Valley receives 3-5 million visitors a year and 90% of journeys are made by car.

Lack of viable alternatives:

- In rural areas like the Peak District, private car travel is often seen as essential by residents and visitors to access services, travel to work and education and for leisure.
- Significant improvements to public transport and active travel infrastructure and services are needed.
- Solutions are often focussed on incremental improvements to existing services, but to achieve our vision we need comprehensive, innovative ways to redesign travel and transport.
- Introducing changes or restrictions to private car use is emotive and there is likely to be opposition. An inclusive approach and a compelling vision are required.
- Transition to electric vehicles is important, but not a stand-alone solution. Making and driving electric vehicles contributes to carbon emissions and energy consumption. We need to reduce overall car use.
- People travelling by active or public transport currently face longer journeys, higher costs, greater inconvenience and discomfort and fewer choices in where they can go and what they can do. They need to see attractive alternatives before transitioning away from private cars.

Lack of data:

- Local travel and transport needs, wants and behaviours are not fully understood; data and insights are limited.

Lack of resources, co-ordination and collaboration:

- Organisations, in particular local authorities, have limited resources (budget, staff, time). Most organisations have climate targets in their plans, but climate action needs higher priority.
- Improving rural transport policies, particularly public transport networks across multiple local authority areas can create practical

difficulties. Neighbouring authorities need to collaborate and align plans and action.

Approach to behaviour change:

- Awareness of the climate crisis is high, but change is slow. The scale of behaviour change needed can only be achieved with the engagement, support and action of residents, visitors and businesses. This needs time and resources.
- The transition away from fossil-fuel vehicles needs to be equitable and inclusive, meeting people's needs regardless of financial circumstances, mobility or other constraints.

### **HVCA's role:**

HVCA's strengths are in our local knowledge, agility, objectivity, freedom to speak the truth, in understanding stakeholder needs, and in bringing people together to engage and collaborate. We have the ability to create pilots and try new solutions. We will remain agile, evolve as we learn and horizon-scan for new developments so we can adapt the strategy to meet changing needs and context. We do not have the resources or remit to design and deliver everything that is needed but we do have the ability to readily identify opportunities and convene stakeholders to fill gaps between services and collaboratively identify solutions.

We will achieve our aims through:

### **Awareness**

Engage and communicate with residents, visitors, businesses and partner organisations to raise awareness and create a shared understanding of:

- A compelling vision of how things could be different by 2030.
- The need to act urgently in the face of the climate crisis.
- The challenges we face in achieving our vision.
- Opportunities to get involved and create the change together.
- How to contribute ideas, share views and learn from experience.
- Availability of existing low/zero carbon alternatives, plus tools and guidance to increase uptake.
- Progress against the strategy. Demonstrate change is possible using effective communication, case studies and storytelling to provide inspiration and encourage action.
- Successes to celebrate and learnings to share.

### **Action**

Collaborate with local communities, interest groups and partner organisations to take action:

- Co-create alternative low/no carbon travel and transport solutions.

- Expand the network of volunteers to accelerate progress
- Work with partners and use Travelling Light funding to trial local pilots and gather feedback through community engagement.
- Create and share case studies, toolkits, inspiration and best practice to support individuals and groups adopting the changes
- Explore opportunities to embed solutions into local communities, policies and decision making. This may include setting up social or co-operative enterprises to help deliver and continue the work after Travelling Light ends.

### **Advocacy**

- Highlight barriers to change identified by the project, including funding, infrastructure, planning and policy co-ordination, and lobby with others to reduce/remove them
- Demonstrate public support for change, to help influence decision making
- Collaborate with interest groups and statutory authorities to share learning, accelerate progress and avoid duplication; act as critical friend to those with responsibility to deliver
- Lobby for improvements to walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, based on current and future needs identified with stakeholders.
- Seek investment to run feasibility studies and pilots; create 'shovel ready' projects for when funds are available
- Lobby for the introduction of a formal regional framework for integrated travel and transport, with responsibility to deliver high quality bus, rail and demand responsive transport options. 'Integration' covers timetabling, with easy connections at mobility hubs and a single ticketing system for all public transport services.
- Engage with local authorities including those in the surrounding cities, and our two MPs, to create a strong political backing for Travelling Light and action at local and national levels.
- Develop partnerships with other organisations, including National Parks, to advocate for national policy change and roll-out of successful pilots.

Our 'People and Place' approach is described in Appendix A.

### **Achievements so far**

In the 18 months since Travelling Light was launched in its pilot stage, the project has:

- Run 'Try an e-bike' events in each village, and organised a Valley-wide 'cycling for all' rally to highlight the importance of cycling for everyday journeys.

- Run a 'Use the Bus' campaign in 2022 and 2023 to encourage local people and visitors to use existing bus services, and provide user feedback on bus service quality, working in partnership with bus operators and the County Council.
- Developed plans for a transport hub at Hope station, in partnership with the County Council.
- Campaigned for 20 mph speed limits in Hope Valley villages and on back lanes, in partnership with Parish Councils.
- Campaigned successfully, with other organisations, for the local train service to stop at every station, every hour.
- Developed constructive partnerships with local authorities and transport providers.
- Gathered information about relevant experience elsewhere, including Cornwall, Devon, Scotland, the Lake District, and other European countries including Germany and Switzerland.

### **The Travelling Light project**

The project team comprises around 20 volunteers who are part of HVCA's Travel and Transport Action Group, currently supported by a full time Project Leader and part time Community Projects Officer and Communications Officer. Travelling Light is a project of Hope Valley Climate Action, which has a supporter base of 850 people.

Travelling Light is currently funded by the Department for Transport for the first year of what is planned as a five-year project. Discussions are in hand about future support from DfT and Active Travel England.

Travelling Light is working with local residents, visitors, businesses, the Peak District National Park Authority, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, High Peak Borough Council, Parish Councils, Visit Peak District and Derbyshire, public transport operators and local MPs.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Our Approach**

#### **People & Place: Key to a Just Transition**

We aim to inspire and mobilise Hope Valley's residents, businesses and visitors and other stakeholders. The rapid shift to a low carbon future will see different communities and groups within communities impacted in very different ways.

In order to achieve a 'just transition' to a zero carbon future, we have centred '**People and Place**' as the core foundation of our approach carried out via Community Conversations.

For example, at the household level, while some may capitalise on new technologies, such as solar panels or electric vehicles, others may miss out for lack of financial means or because of a lack of adequate infrastructure nearby.

In respect of low carbon transport, options such as e-scooters or bicycles may not be appropriate for some elderly and disabled people, while smart technologies are not used by the less digitally literate or those without access to technology.

Community engagement therefore, will be based on principles of a 'Just Transition' which prioritises fair representation and transparency. Incorporating local knowledge will be key. We will take proactive steps to engage marginalised groups who traditionally face barriers to participation and to provide space for people to shape the vision for transition in their local context, rather than have it imposed on them.

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all our activities. We will ensure processes, policies, events and campaigns are inclusive and promote accessible travel.

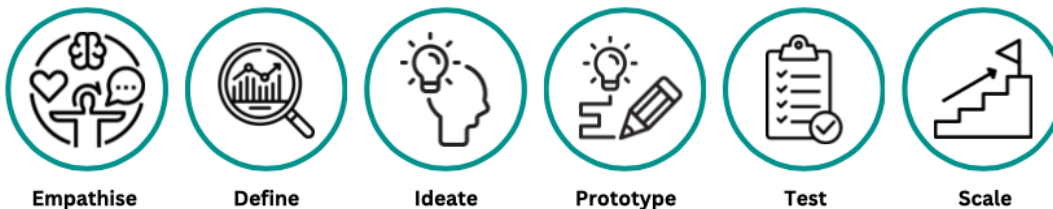
Inspiring and mobilising is not just about behaviour change - it is also about capturing and piloting the best solutions to fit the needs of the communities within which we are based and then campaigning and advocating for them at statutory level. Policy changes, projects and technologies are likely to have far greater social acceptance when they form part of a shared vision for the transition and where local knowledge

is valued and taken into account.

## Solution Focused

We will engage with stakeholders using a human-centred design thinking approach, which will allow us to understand their needs and create and test solutions quickly, to understand which we can scale to achieve the biggest impact.

Good quality data both quantitative and qualitative on current travel patterns and on local and visitor attitudes will be used to inform project planning and understand the movement of people and vehicles into and within the Hope Valley. This will help inform the design of viable alternatives to meet these needs, understand potential demand for services and provide insights into barriers to change.



**Empathise:** develop a shared understanding of the travel and transport needs and wishes of stakeholders. This will help build a picture of the journeys being made, why people are travelling and barriers that are preventing them from switching to lower-emission alternatives. As well as practical needs, we will also consider the time, mobility, financial and other constraints of different groups. This will take place through community conversations, Commonplace online platform, round-table and steering group discussions and other research methods.

**Define:** analyse observations and data to sharpen key questions, define the current journey types and identify problems to be solved. We'll share findings back to stakeholders before moving to the next step. Exploring the challenges and designing solutions with those who will be impacted is an essential part of the project and will require ongoing relationship building and engagement work.

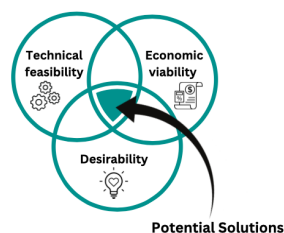
**Ideate:** brainstorm ideas for low/no carbon alternatives for every journey. Help people imagine an aspirational alternative vision for the future which is less dependent on private fossil-fuel vehicle use. Encourage innovation.



**Pilot / prototype:** work with stakeholders to prioritise ideas and develop prototypes which address the problems we're trying to solve, using Travelling Light resources where appropriate, or share information, lobby and support partner organisations.

**Test and learn:** gather feedback on small-scale pilots to improve and share learnings.

**Scale:** use data to underpin recommendations to roll out and successful pilots, directly through Travelling Light or advocating for others to deliver. Solutions should be technically feasible, economically viable and desirable:



## Iterative

The Travelling Light project is designed to be naturally iterative; evolving, learning and adapting as it develops over time and in response to emerging social, technological and policy changes in the move towards net-zero. The project will build-in capacity to respond to emerging developments, funding streams and infrastructure planning.

The project will set annual work packages between now and 2030 to progress each of the core objectives.