

Travelling Light



Hope Valley Climate Action Active Travel Masterplan HVCA submission 24th August 2025

HVCA warmly welcomes DCC producing an Active Travel Masterplan for the Hope Valley. HVCA's objective is to make it possible for more people, and a wider range of people, to use active travel for everyday journeys. This will reduce the need for car travel, and so tackle climate change and improve health and well-being. Excellent active travel routes will make the Hope Valley a better place to live, work and visit. 'Everyday journeys' means short trips to the school, shop, public transport stop, health facilities, campsites and visitor attractions.

Provision for outdoor recreation in the Hope Valley [characteristically walking on the hills and sports cycling] is excellent, although many starting points rely on car travel. Provision for everyday active travel is very poor. Roads are busy and dangerous. Many stretches of road have no separate pavement. Public paths are fragmented, muddy in winter, and often inaccessible to people with wheels or with limited mobility. The Hope Valley, in spite of being an 'outdoors destination', has less active travel provision than many towns and cities.

In HVCA's experience, people will use active travel if it is safe and convenient. An HVCA survey of children in Hope Valley primary and secondary schools (over 150 responses) indicated while the majority wanted to cycle, they did not because of safety concerns.

We have previously seen good plans developed, including the Derbyshire Cycling Plan prepared by Derbyshire County Council and other public bodies. But there has been limited follow-through. It is important that the Masterplan builds on previous plans and is developed in a way that leads to strong investment and implementation by the East Midlands Mayor, Active Travel England and DCC.

HVCA has held discussions with Parish Councils and other local organisations and individuals. We have encouraged them to make their own responses to the consultation. We have listened to local views, and reviewed a number of submissions from local residents and groups. The key measures which HVCA believes should be included in the Masterplan are as follows.

1. Make villages safer, with low [20 mph] speed limits, more and better road crossings, and new signage and road surfacing to indicate priority for people on foot. The safety benefits of slower speeds have been well documented over at least two decades and reaffirmed by the recent 20mph default speed limit in Wales. There is strong local support for all

of these measures.

2. Prioritise improvements where people want to go, including shops, schools, pubs, campsites and bus/train stops. Consider the needs of different users, starting with more vulnerable groups such as children, and older people with limited mobility. Also bear in mind people going to work, and visitors to the Hope Valley. In each case, think about how they might be motivated to use active travel.
3. Think both small-scale and large-scale: village-scale solutions for very local journeys; Valley-wide solutions for longer journeys. Include external links [particularly cycling routes] towards Sheffield, Manchester and Bakewell.
4. Make the links between the ATM and public transport explicit. Every bus or train journey begins with a walk, wheel or cycle, and bus stops and routes should be integrated effectively with active travel, including bikes on trains and buses. Make sure there are good quality active travel routes to each of the five Hope Valley rail stations. The ATM should make recommendations for general improvements at bus stops including shelters, seating and cycle parking.
5. Create a sustainable travel hub in each village, at the rail station where possible, with cycle stands and links to e-bike hire.
6. Create a safe, attractive multi-user 'spine route' linking the villages along the length of the Valley, from Castleton to Grindleford and beyond, with separate lanes for walkers and cyclists, and with spurs to villages not on the route. A spine route would make a big improvement to existing infrastructure. It would raise interest in active travel and generate activity on other, more local, solutions.
7. Where possible, develop low-cost solutions for shared space between cars, bikes and pedestrians on less busy roads; for example the Edale road.
8. Designate a network of back roads to become 'quiet lanes' with priority for active travel, low speed limits and, in some cases, locals-only vehicle access.
9. Upgrade existing public rights of way for all-ability, all-weather use, in addition to active travel on public roads.
10. Deal with 'pinch points' which currently impede active travel, such as the narrow section of main road at Brough.
11. Consider the whole range of solutions, including softer measures, in order to address user needs and resolve any conflict between them. Clearly link softer measures to infrastructure provision for different user groups.
12. Address on-street parking and pavement parking. On-street parking can be a useful traffic calming measure. On-pavement parking creates serious issues for pedestrians (obstruction) and cyclists (hazard).
13. Build on the knowledge and goodwill of local residents and organisations in designing and implementing any action.

Next Steps

- Present issues and solutions clearly on high quality maps so people can understand quickly what's being proposed. Text descriptions are much more difficult to engage with.
- Look for 'quick wins': projects which can be operational within one year of completion of the Plan and can demonstrate progress, as well as projects requiring longer term investment, such as the spine route.
- Share the final draft with HVCA and Parish Councils. Involve the local community in designing the draft Action Plan. This will help to build support for active travel and secure resources for implementation.