

West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 3
Progress Report 2015/16

travelwest 

1. Introduction

In the Joint Local Transport Plan 3 (JLTP3) we said that we would produce an annual report on progress made in delivering transport improvements. This report outlines what was delivered in 2015/16 and how we performed against our targets and indicators.

2. Major Schemes

In late 2011 the Department for Transport (DfT) agreed to make available £135m towards the cost of five major schemes in the West of England and during 2015/16 we continued to focus our efforts on progressing delivery of these substantial infrastructure projects:

Bath Transportation Package

The great news is this scheme was substantially complete by the end of March 2016 with the final 17 bus shelters and 12 stops, junction upgrades including Charles Street/Monmouth Street and the Lower Borough Walls and Stall Street pedestrian improvements installed.



MetroBus

Ashton Vale to Temple Meads

Key achievements in 2015/16 include:

- Permanent guideway works next to the Create Centre and on-highway works on Smeaton Road/Cumberland Road and the busway on Ashton Fields started.
- Completion of the Redcliffe Hill inbound works and commencement of outbound works.
- Flood defence wall construction on Cumberland Road.
- Ashton Avenue Swing Bridge shot-blasting.
- Qualifying tenders returned for Bathurst Basin Bridge work, and
- Network Rail over-bridge agreement completed.



MetroBus refurbishment works on Ashton Avenue Swing Bridge

North Fringe to Hengrove Package

Diggers went on site in early August 2015 and works are now well progressed with over a year left to run in the construction programme.

Work to replace the bridges at Church Lane and Curtis Lane (Network Rail) is now complete and the new M32 bridge is in place following the weekend closure of the M32 in June. The photograph below shows the new bridge and works for the bus-only junction that will allow MetroBus to avoid the heavily congested Junction 1 on the M32.

Work continues at Stoke Gifford Transport Link, Ham Brook bridge, Bradley Stoke Way, East Fringe and Coldharbour Lane as well as in the City Centre.



New bus-only junction for MetroBus on the M32 motorway

South Bristol Link

The main highway works continue apace across the route most notably within the A370 to Brook Gate area and the new A370/South Bristol Link roundabout and within the Bristol area.

Drainage, earthworks, utility diversions, surfacing, kerbing and more 'final' works are all underway as well as moving Highbridge Common grassland onto replacement exchange land.

The Network Rail underbridge underneath the Bristol to Weston-super-Mare railway line is now in place following work over Christmas/New Year 2015 and additional measures were taken to try to minimise noise impact upon lineside neighbours.

Work has commenced on the highway bridge at Longmore Brook and the majority of box culverts are installed.

Expected completion is still on target for Winter 2016.



Construction works for the South Bristol Link underbridge

Weston Package

As reported last year this scheme was not only completed ahead of programme and but also under budget in February 2014.

MetroWest

MetroWest is the West of England's £100m project to bring half hourly services to local rail stations and the reopening of the Portishead (Phase 1) and Henbury (Phase 2) lines to passenger services.

Major work undertaken for MetroWest during 2015/16 included:

Phase 1

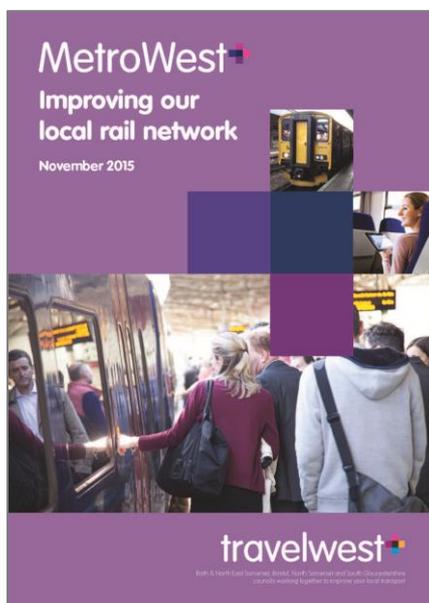
- **Stage 1 Development Consent Order consultation** on the re-opening the Portishead branch line undertaken June to August 2015. Over 800 responses received and overwhelmingly positive.
- **Detailed design work for GRIP Stage 3** raising issues around junction designs, line speeds, upgrading the freight line to Portbury to passenger standards, Ashton Vale level crossing and the need for a new access road to the Ashton Vale industrial estate.
- Two topic specific **public consultations** held February to March 2016 on Pill Station and Ashton Vale Road Level Crossing.
- North Somerset Council **buying land** in Pill and Portishead (£0.9m) including a property in Pill which will remove the need for new footbridge over the railway and provide a better station frontage.

Phase 2

- **Phase 2 Preliminary Business Case** endorsed.
- **Outline Business Case** and **GRIP Stage 3** to include Henbury Spur with new stations at Henbury and North Filton and designed to permit conversion for a loop service, half hourly services to Yate with a turn-back and a new station at Ashley Down.
- Opportunities to **extend Yate services** to Gloucester are being explored with Gloucestershire County Council.
- **Consultation on the location of Henbury station** (east and west sites) was carried out in late 2015 and early 2016. Results showed no clear preference so both sites will be taken forward into GRIP 3.
- The project is proceeding according to plan for **opening in 2021**.

Regular updates on all the major transport schemes including MetroWest is reported to the quarterly meetings of the West of England's Joint Transport Board.

<http://www.westofenglandlep.co.uk/meetings/joint-transport-board>



MetroWest
Improving our
local rail network
November 2015

travelwest

Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire councils working together to improve your local transport



Consultation on the
location of a new
Henbury rail station
MetroWest

Dear resident

We would like to hear your views on the two options for a new railway station at Henbury. The consultation runs from **Monday 30 November 2015** until **Monday 25 January 2016**.

Come along to one of our exhibitions on:

- **Thursday 3 December 2015**
- **Wednesday 9 December 2015**

At **Henbury Library, Crow Lane, Henbury, Bristol BS10 7DR**
from 2pm until 7pm

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Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire councils working together to improve your local transport

Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

The programme for 2015/16 (£9.51m) was completed.
Schemes included:

- **Cycle infrastructure works** at Queensway in North Somerset and the Ring Road cycle path in South Gloucestershire.
- **Employer grants** totalling £67,965 distributed to 20 businesses.
- 3,590 people from 175 businesses took part in the **workplace commuter challenge**.
- **TravelWest bus checker app** upgraded to include journey planning, audio announcements for visually impaired users and dynamic stop-centric messages. 125,000 people have downloaded the app with over 30,000 active users.
- New service from Twerton to Oldfield Park and Sion Hill, crossing the Bath Enterprise Area.

Sadly LSTF is now at an end. All is not lost, however, with £2.2m of Sustainable Travel Transition Year funding granted to the West of England for 2016/17. This grant will be used to deliver a package of behaviour change schemes. The funding builds on the legacy of the LSTF.

Smartcards

Smartcard versions of the existing multi operator day tickets (the WEBOA Rider tickets) went live on all buses in the West of England area on 15 November 2015.

Tickets can now be purchased on bus and loaded onto either a Travelwest smartcard or a First 'Touch' smartcard and then be accepted on any participating operator's buses.



Additional funding received

Better Bus Area Fund

The Better Bus Area Fund 1 (£6.8m) project was completed in 2015 with the upgrade of the A4 Greater Bristol Bus Network corridor and with the exception of Victoria Street in Bristol which will now be completed with local funds.

Meanwhile Better Bus Area 2 (£1.3m) has:

- Upgraded a bus stop at Thornbury Health Centre.
- Installed raised kerbs for boarding buses at various locations on the A38 in South Gloucestershire.
- Funded two officers to work in the traffic control centre in Bristol to improve the way the highway network for buses is managed.
- Built a short stretch of new bus lane at Lawrence Hill roundabout to enable buses to exit the roundabout and more easily access a busy bus stop.
- Mounted a bus lane enforcement camera on London Road in Bath.
- Introduced an experimental bus lane on London Road in Bath.

Cycling Ambition Fund

This fund (£14m) is now complete with the construction of the Cribbs Causeway to Emerson's Green and Seven Dials schemes in July 2015.

This included two cycle and pedestrian crossings on the A4174 – at Hambrook and the M32 Junction 1 promoting sustainable travel in the North Fringe area and public realm improvements at Seven Dials in Bath.

The final grant in Bristol was previously assigned to the delivery of the proposed Camden Road Bridge. Unfortunately with costs and risks escalating a review concluded the scheme was no longer good value for money. Happily the Department for Transport has agreed the funding can now be used for other cycling schemes originally submitted as match funding in the bid.

More good news in the shape of Cycling Ambition Fund 2 (£30.65m) with street lighting on the Bristol Bath Railway Path between Mangotsfield Station and the Ring Road Cycle Path and on Filton Road in South Gloucestershire.

In Bath works are starting on the Kennet and Avon Canal to resurface the towpath.

Preliminary designs have been completed for work on East West City Centre Link (Baldwin Street and Castle Park) and contractors have been commissioned to improve the surface of National Cycle Network (NCN) 4 through Castle Park in Bristol.



3. Other schemes

A great range of other schemes were delivered in 2015/16 across the West of England and some examples are provided below.

Pedestrian and cycling schemes

North Somerset Cycle Pumps

Flat tyres in North Somerset are a thing of the past following a successful bid to the Department for Transport to install air pumps at seven locations.

The pumps costing £14,567 are bolted to the ground and are free and easy for cyclists to use.

Pumps can be found at Nailsea and Backwell, Weston-super-Mare, Worle and Yatton railway stations, the new development at Haywood Village, Big Lamp Corner in Weston town centre and Locking Parklands.



Cycle pump at Haywood Village

A371 Locking shared use cycle/pedestrian path

Another successful bid to the Department for Transport led to a previous footpath on the north side of the A371 at Locking being replaced with a new three metre wide shared-use path. This is set three metres away from the road where possible.

A new section of path means the route continues beyond the junction with Elm Tree Road and past the layby to the Laney's Drove roundabout creating a safer crossing point and linking Locking village with the Weston Villages and Locking Parklands.

The existing island crossing point opposite Locking Garage has been replaced with a new pedestrian refuge, and another island refuge has been installed opposite the footpath on the south side of the road which emerges onto the A371. A section of footway has been provided at the entrance to this footpath and the surface of the footpath improved.

The cost of the scheme was £263,000.

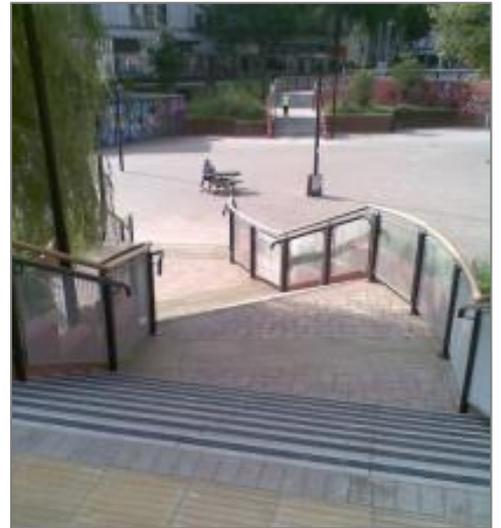


St James Barton roundabout

This £1.2m scheme took a neglected area of Bristol with poor connectivity, unwelcoming subways, a roundabout often listed as one of the worst for cycling in local and national polls and transformed it into a new gateway to the city from Stokes Croft, the Bus and Coach Station and the Bearpit 'Community Action Zone.'

The scheme was achieved by altering the footways and traffic islands and installing new traffic signals to accommodate new surface-level pedestrian/cycle crossings, refurbishing and re-modelling the interior 'Bearpit' area of the roundabout and constructing a new footway that runs around the inside edge of the roundabout with connecting stairs into the Bearpit.

Scheme budget was £1.2 million.



St James Barton roundabout (before)



St James Barton roundabout (after)

Avonmouth to Aust shared used path

Cycling or walking between Avonmouth and Aust is now a whole new experience thanks to a new £2.8m 4.5km shared use path (3.5m to 4m wide) extending from Avonmouth Village to Seabank Power Station.

The path made possible by reallocating carriageway and verge includes new lighting, drainage, planting, pedestrian refuges and new bus stops.

The path was delivered as part of the successful £14m bid to the A403 Challenge Maintenance fund plus a £600,000 Coastal Community Grant to provide a walking and cycling route from Avonmouth to Cabot Park.



Avonmouth to Aust path under construction

Hambrook Junction

Thanks to an innovative Cycling City scheme it is now possible to cycle straight through the crossing of the A4174 Ring Road on a 'Parallel signalled cycle crossing.'

The crossing, completed in June 2015, is separate from the adjacent provision for pedestrians, allowing cycle traffic to cross the Ring Road in a single phase. This reduces delays for cyclists utilising innovative above ground detection of cyclists to control the signals.

The new layout significantly improves a difficult crossing often highlighted by users as a constraint to using this route. It now provides an important link to the employment areas and educational establishments around the Ring Road for local communities.

Excitingly the scheme has been recognised as an 'exemplar case study' in good practice guidance published by the Department for Transport.

School Cycle Parking

Providing sufficient high quality cycle parking facilities is a crucial factor in encouraging more

people to cycle more often. In 2015/16, through a combination of the LSTF project and the Cycle Ambition Fund, South Gloucestershire Council provided 270 new Cycle parking spaces and 130 new scooter parking spaces in schools and public spaces across the authority.

Cycle route gritting

We believe cycling should be a year round travel option, so we have invested in new gritting machinery to help us salt treat key cycle commuter routes creating a safer environment by protecting cyclists from minor slips and falls.

The new gritter has increased route coverage by over 100 per cent, with a total of 14.4km of key off road cycle route in South Gloucestershire now being gritted, compared to 5.9km in 2014/15, enabling more people to continue to ride safely through the winter months.



Cycle Route Lighting Schemes

Providing new street lighting to illuminate unlit sections of existing cycle routes can significantly improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly during winter months, by encouraging greater use of the path during hours of darkness.

As mentioned above funding from the LSTF and Cycle Ambition Fund has provided new street lighting on 3.3km of South Gloucestershire's strategic cycle routes during 2015/16.

Using energy efficient lighting and part-night operation (switched off between 1am and 5am) has helped to minimise the environmental impact of the new lights.

Recent data from the network of cycle counters show increases in cycle usage of 13.5% and 16% at two sites following the installation of lighting.

Public transport

Victoria Street bus lane



Implemented as part of the Better Bus Area Fund Programme to improve bus punctuality and reliability, the bus lane extends for some 230 metres in an outbound direction, and operates during the peak periods (7am to 10am and 4.30pm to 6.30pm) from Monday to Friday.

The bus lane benefits all bus services using Victoria Street as well as cyclists, motorcyclists and taxis who can use the bus lane.

Together with associated improvements to upgrade the four bus stops along Victoria Street, the scheme cost around £250,000.

First interactive iPoint in Weston

Weston-super-Mare finds itself at the cutting edge of technology with a £55,000 interactive information point, the first of its kind in the UK.

Located in Regent Street the iPoint features a range of functions allowing users to buy paper and smart tickets, top-up a smart card, plan a journey by public transport or browse news and events pages on the touch-screen system.

Two screens provide passengers with live information about bus and rail departures, along with a Twitter feed for live transport updates across the West of England.

The scheme was a partnership project with 21st Century Passenger Systems, ACT, Crosville Motor Services, First West of England, Systra, Squid and SWSAL.

Along with the wider roll out of Travelwest smart initiatives in Weston including smart cards on Crosville buses and innovative branding, the iPoint has been shortlisted for a National Transport Award.



Public realm

Widcombe Parade, Bath

Widcombe Parade has been transformed into a pleasant village high street following the re-routing of all A36 through traffic onto Rossiter Road.

A 20 mph zone now operates on the Parade and there are new pedestrian crossings, two way cycle facilities, a new bus stop, free short stay shopper parking and loading bays.

The use of high quality heritage paving and improved street furniture completes the transformation. One alder tree had to be removed but in a great example of upcycling, wood from the tree is now being used by children at Bathford Primary School as an outdoor classroom.

Following the works the levels of nitrogen dioxide on Widcombe Parade have fallen considerably from 36 to 27 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.



4. Targets and Monitoring

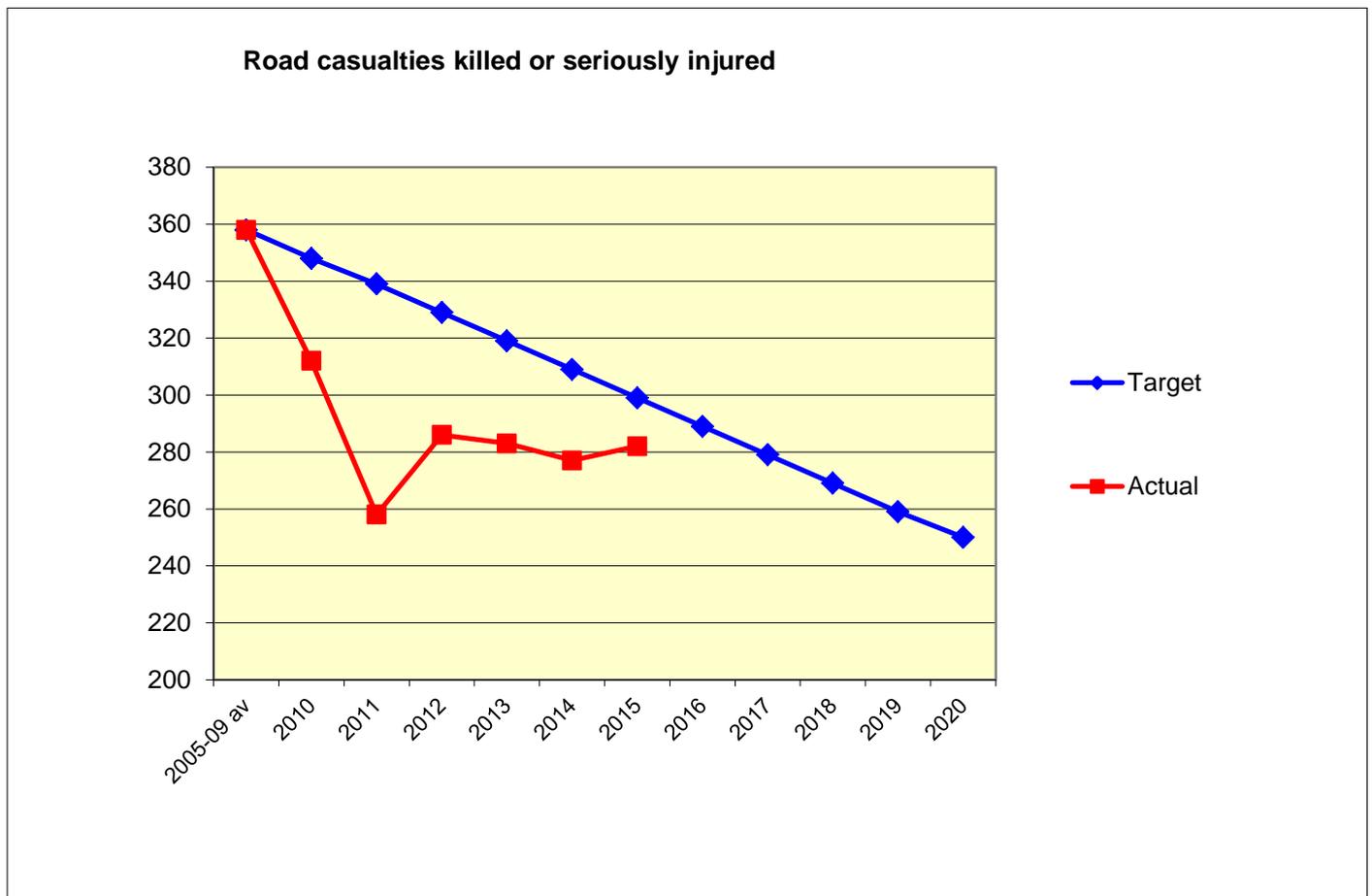
We have five 'Top Targets' and five Supporting Indicators. The targets take account of our successful major scheme bids and funding for the WEST LSTF bid.

Road Safety

Our local target is to achieve a 30% reduction in the number of people Killed and Seriously Injured across the West of England by 2020, based on the average between 2005 and 2009. This will mean a reduction from 358 to 250 by 2020.

Numbers were steadily dropping until a slight increase to 286 between 2011 and 2012 but the figures now look to have stabilised with 283 in 2013, 277 in 2014 and a slight increase to 282 in 2015. This figure is still well below the trajectory (Figure 4.1). This shows very positive progress although the total of 31 fatalities in 2015 is still too high.

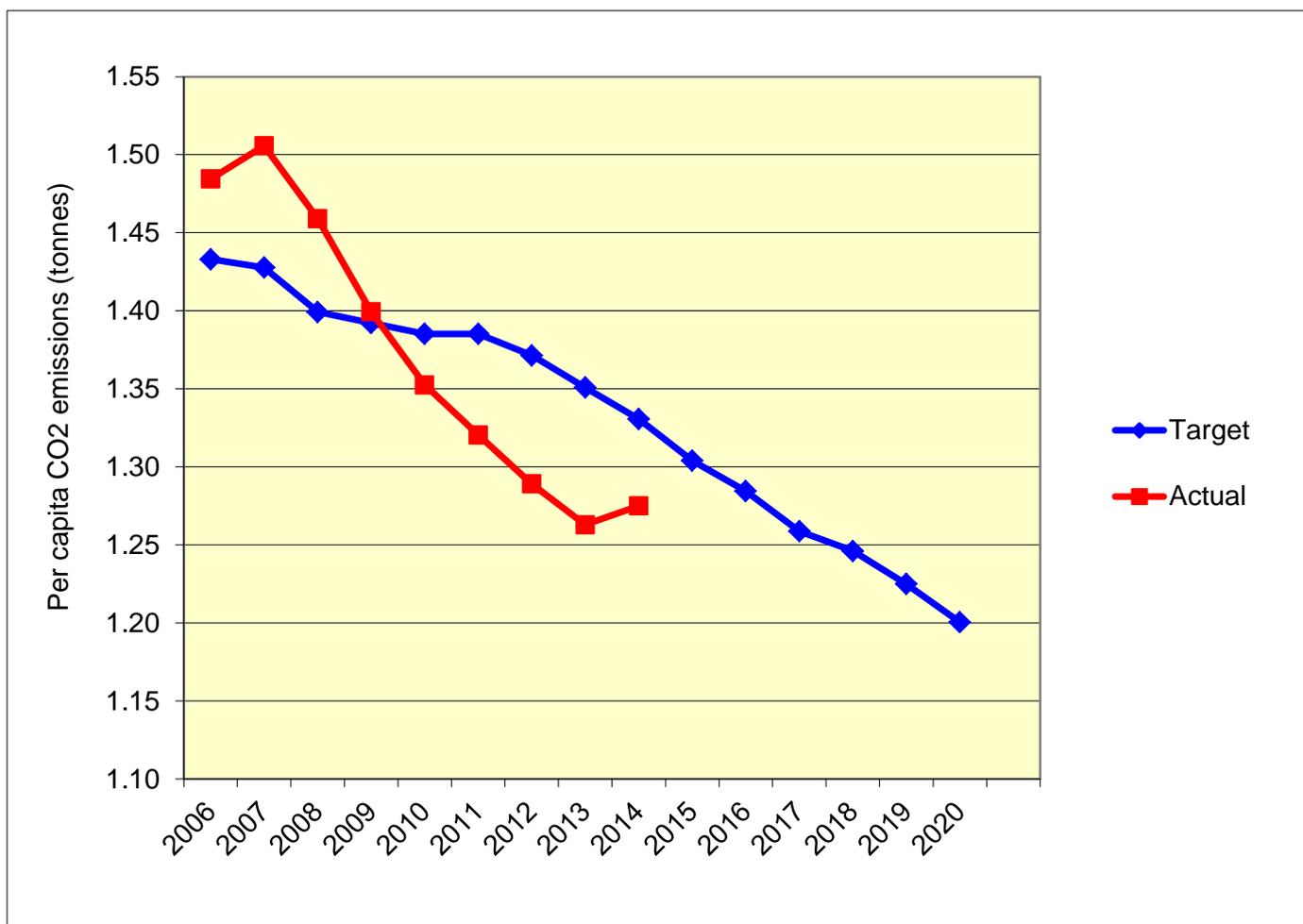
Figure 4.1: Road safety target



CO₂ emissions

This target relates to CO₂ emissions from road transport and is measured using data supplied by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). This data is a year in arrears so figures are for 2014. Our target is for a 16% reduction in per capita emissions from road transport by 2020 from a 2006 baseline. For the first time since 2007 there has been a slight rise in CO₂ (see Figure 4.2). This is not unique to the West of England. DECC statistics show that 336 out of 406 local authorities have seen an increase in emissions with an average increase of 1.2%. No explanation is provided although an upturn in the economy leading to increased travel is the most likely reason. Overall we are still well on track to meet the 2020 target.

Figure 4.2: CO₂ emissions target



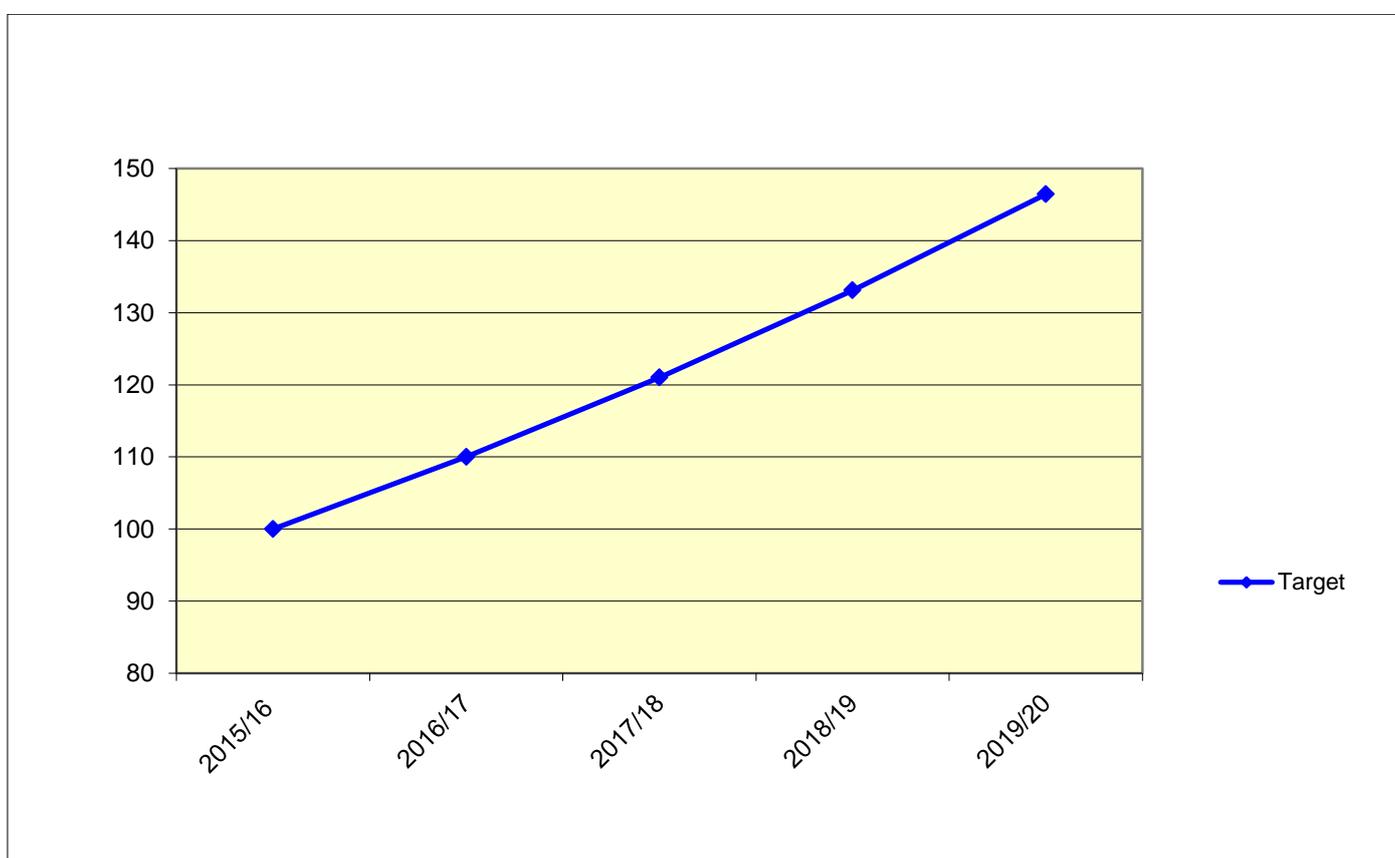
Cycling

The JLTP3 West of England cycling target has now been rebased to 2015/16 and a new provisional trajectory set (Figure 4.3). This was necessary due to technical problems with counters in the Bristol City area. New ones are now installed and the opportunity has been taken to both rebase and review the range of survey locations across the West of England.

The target uses an annualised Index of Cycling Trips with a base year of 2015/16. Cycling data is recorded as an Annual Average Weekday Total (AAWT), collected through a network of cycle count sites acting as a proxy for cycling trips across the area as a whole.

Based on past trends, where data was available, the new target is to increase cycling by 46% by 2019/20. This is equivalent to 10% per annum. It is important to note that this is a West of England wide target and it will contain wide variations between urban and rural areas. The first results won't be reported until the 2016/17 Annual Progress Report. The target will be reviewed in the light of the Joint Transport Strategy and Joint Spatial Plan.

Figure 4.3: Provisional cycling target 2015/16 to 2019/20



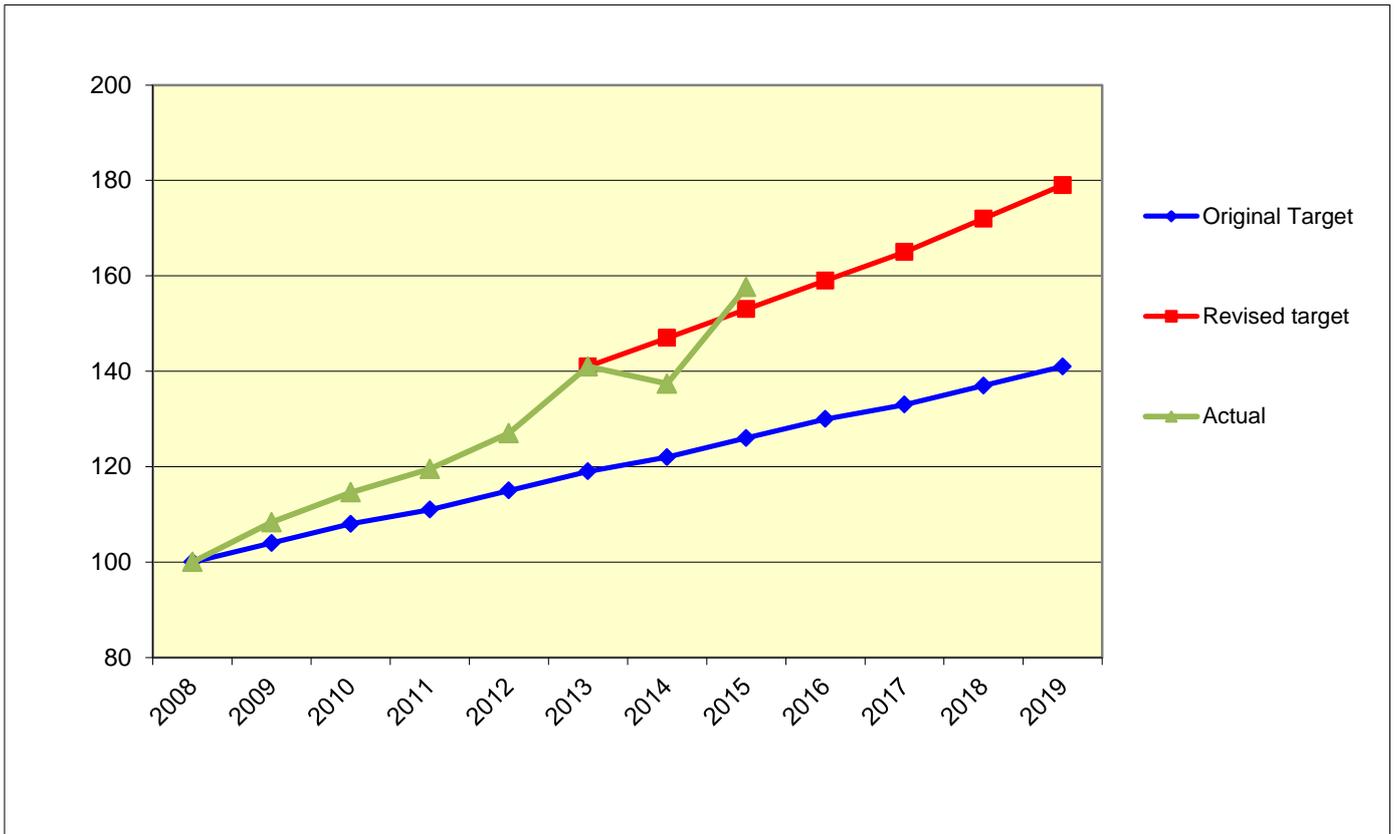
Rail

Following the original rail target for 2019 being met in 2013 a revised target of 27% growth by 2019 was set in 2015.

For the first time rail growth in 2014 showed signs of levelling off with a 2.4% fall in passenger numbers. Bad weather on the survey day and some issues around surveyors may have had an impact. Happily this trend has now been reversed with 14.7% growth in 2015 (see Figure 4.4) and the target is now back on trajectory.

Figures from the Office of Rail and Road show a similar upward trend with 5.5% growth in 2014/15.

Figure 4.4: Rail target

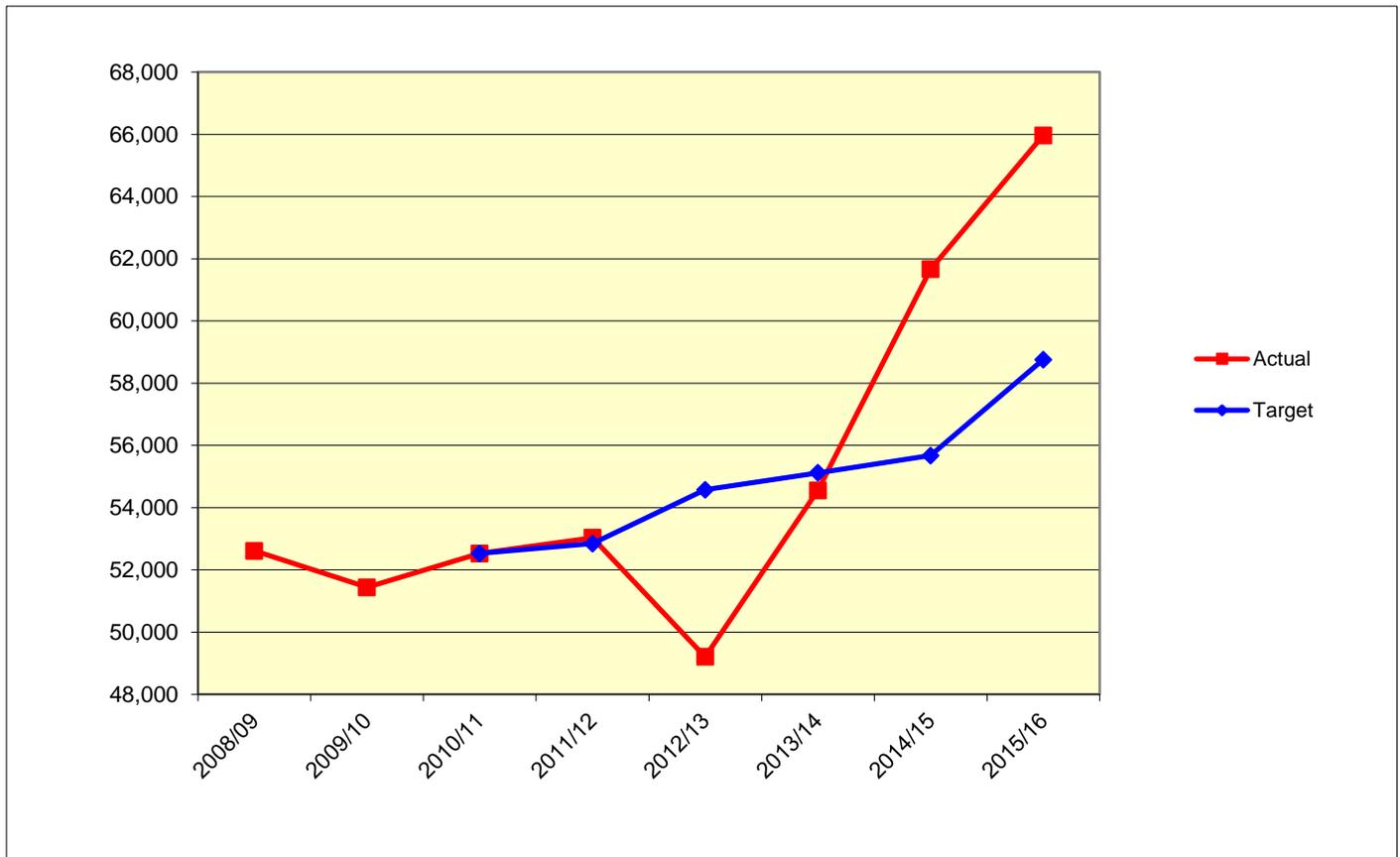


Bus passengers

The bus patronage target was based on predicted growth arising from Greater Bristol Bus Network scheme, the Bath Transportation Package, the Weston Package and the Ashton Vale to Bristol City Centre MetroBus scheme. This represents an overall target of over 11% growth between 2008/09 and 2015/16.

2015/16 shows a very healthy 7% growth in passengers up from 61.7m passengers to 66m (Figure 4.5). The extension of First Bus' lower fares policy will be the main factor behind this along with LSTF pump primed bus services for example the X1 and X3. It is worth putting this achievement into perspective. Nationally bus passengers fell by 0.6% in 2015/16 whilst in the Metropolitan areas they fell by 1.5%.

Figure 4.5: Bus passenger targets



Note: 2012/13 data distorted by new ticket machines not recording all journeys.

5. Supporting Indicators

We monitor our four Supporting Indicators using a 'traffic light' system. Green means performance is improving, amber no significant change whilst red means performance is slipping.

Progress in 2014/15 is shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Supporting indicators

Supporting indicator	Performance in 2015/16 and indicator
Maintenance	Principal roads
	Non principal roads
Congestion (2014/15 data)	
Air Quality	Bath
	Bristol
	Other areas
Bus punctuality	Starting on time
	On time at intermediate stops

The % of the principal road network requiring maintenance has remained stable at 3.4%.

For non-principal roads the encouraging trend from 2014/15 continues with the % of the network requiring maintenance falling from 7.20% to 6.3%.

For congestion we rely on information from the Department for Transport and figures for 2014/5, the latest available, show that average traffic speeds were slightly down at 22.4 mph from 22.7mph in 2014/15. Across England speeds have fallen 2.5% to 23.7 mph. There are variations across the four authorities.

Air quality presents a generally mixed picture. In the Bristol Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) there was a slight increase in nitrogen dioxide rising from 40.06 µg/m³ to 40.90 µg/m³ which is just above the 'objective' of 40 µg/m³ set in the National Air Quality Strategy. In the Bath AQMA there was a slight improvement with nitrogen dioxide falling from 52 to 49 µg/m³ (41 when using the national bias adjustment factor as Bath & North East Somerset Council are now doing). This value is an average from a number of sites within the Bath AQMA and the actual levels vary significantly with location. It should also be stressed a change in the bias adjustment factor used to a more representative 'national bias adjustment' accounts in part for some of the reductions in values in Bath, Saltford and Keynsham.

In the West of England's smaller AQMAs Keynsham and Saltford was slightly better, Kingswood was slightly worse, Staple Hill slightly better. It should be noted that the Kingswood AQMA was extended along the A420 to Warmley in December 2015, which largely explains why the air quality slightly worsened as the AQMA covers a larger area to take in the new exceedances.

Bus punctuality figures come from the real-time information system that now covers approximately 90% of buses running in the West of England area. Overall bus punctuality has improved on 2014/15. The Traffic Commissioner's expectation is that bus operators should schedule their services to achieve 95% punctuality. Operators say this is very difficult to achieve, given the unpredictable impacts of traffic conditions and road works.