

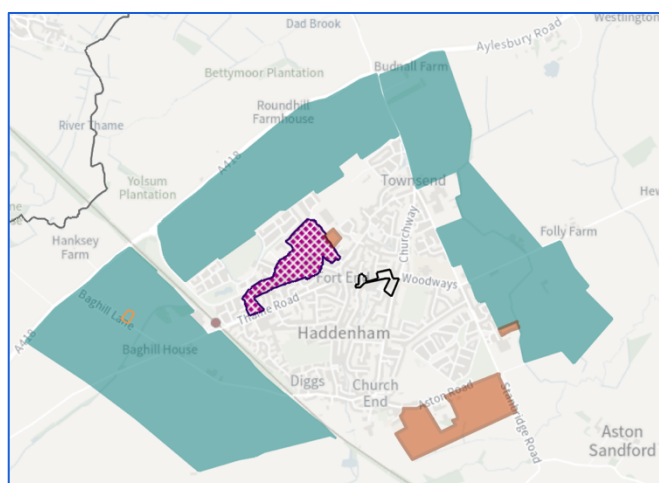


Summer 2026

SIGNPOSTS

News and views from Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group
Issue 21

MASTERS OF OUR DESTINY?



Haddenham area, from Buckinghamshire Council's draft Local Plan "Policies Map"; the green area shows Haddenham "New and Expanded Settlement Study" (NESS, 3,545 houses) and the brown areas show two additional separate allocations (560 + 20 houses).

Bucks Council is currently running the final consultation on its [draft local plan](#). Whilst it includes a whole raft of policies intended to shape the future of the county, most attention will inevitably focus on their proposals to allocate around 91,000 homes across the county, to help meet national requirements.

During the plan period (to 2045), the proposal is to allocate roughly 4,000 new homes to Haddenham (see map above). Ultimately, the village is expected to deliver over 7,000 new houses. (In case you're wondering, Haddenham currently comprises around 3,000 houses.)

Many will react with horror, especially given the growth of over 1,000 homes that the village has already experienced in recent years, apparently with

little thought to infrastructure and connectivity. The proposed Bucks plan does suggest the next wave may be managed more sensibly, however, as "development will only be permitted where it is supported by a comprehensive site-wide masterplan" [Draft Plan, page 124] demonstrating "coordinated and comprehensive delivery of off-site necessary infrastructure" and including "mechanisms to avoid piecemeal development".

Our readers may be interested in the requirement for "a comprehensive walking, cycling and Public Rights of Way network which: a) connects the site with the village, station and surrounding countryside [*but no mention of the Haddenham-Thame Greenway*]; b) integrates and enhances existing public rights of way; and c) provides new active travel routes across the site". As well as the need to "enhance public transport provision".

We all need to push for a genuinely well-thought-out plan, developed in consultation with the local community, rather than the results of a one-size-fits-all process for all sites in the county that pays only lip-service to specific needs.

Haddenham Parish Council is looking at how it can best support its residents, which is likely to be through a revision of its [Neighbourhood Plan](#).

If you'd like to assist with the PC's work, please get in touch!

Alan Thawley, chair

Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling group

MISBOURNE GREENWAY



On a glorious day at the end of May, the Walk, Wheel, Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) joined forces with Bucks Council for the official launch of the Misbourne Greenway. The new 4 km traffic-free route is excellent, running through open countryside and shady tree-lined sections.

With a handily placed pub at each end – the Firecrest about a mile south of Wendover and the Black Horse on the outskirts of Great Missenden – it is a lovely leisure route. Ultimately it will take you all the way into Wendover, providing a genuinely useful transport link between two settlements. However, the timescale for this is uncertain as it intersects with major ongoing HS2 construction work. Details can be found on the Bucks Council [website](#).

Even the current section took some time to build – construction officially began in 2022, based on plans dating from 2020. It was originally due to open to the public in 2023, but in fact has only been in use since late 2025.

Yet another illustration of how long these things can take to progress: whilst congratulating all involved in a wonderful new piece of infrastructure, we hope such delays can be avoided when we finally get to the point of building the Haddenham-Thame Greenway. ... AT

Haddenham-Thame Greenway: Consultation imminent

We have been assured by Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Councils that they remain on track to run a public consultation on the greenway project, although the timescale varies slightly: “in the second half of the year”, according to Bucks, whereas Oxfordshire say more specifically say “in the autumn”. Time will tell!

The important thing, however, is that this will not be a repeat of the 2019 survey that asked “would you use an offroad walking and cycling route” (94% of nearly 2,000 respondents said yes!). It should actually give detail of a potential route or routes, based on the extensive “optioneering” and feasibility work we’re assured has been going on in the background.

The results will inform a decision as to whether to move to the next stage (design), so a strong, positive response to the consultation will be absolutely crucial. If you haven’t already, please sign up to the greenway mailing list so we can keep you informed – just email haddswac@gmail.com with the subject line “subscribe greenway”.

PERSONAL VIEW

BUCKS BY BUS: MAKING LOCAL TRAVEL GREAT AGAIN



Buckinghamshire Council is putting together a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and has invited councillor input, so I took the opportunity of the May Vale Harvest to hold a “community conversation” alongside the market.

The message of residents was clear: in Buckinghamshire, the bus is an option for leisure or when you can afford to be late. Getting to work, school or a hospital appointment by bus is too risky, with the possibility of delays and uncertain connections. The X20 gets thumbs up for improved frequency and reliability, but beyond Aylesbury, Thame and Oxford, there are important gaps, especially to Princes Risborough. Walking distance to the bus and safety getting on and off were also important issues.

Residents mapped their weekly journeys, revealing a strong east-west corridor between Oxford, Thame, Haddenham and London. This is unsurprising – many of us moved here for those links – but it also highlights Buckinghamshire’s long, thin geography, which makes out-of-county travel common. But for local authorities, planning within their own administrative boundaries, inter-county travel can be a problem.

Buckinghamshire’s network follows a “hub and spoke” model, with spokes radiating from hubs such as Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Milton Keynes. This is



SIGNPOSTS invited Maru Mormina, one of Haddenham and Stone’s two County Councillors, to share what’s on her mind currently in connection with active travel. She chose the subject of buses ...

cost-effective in theory, allowing predictable scheduling and higher frequencies. But in practice, the model only works when the spokes have enough demand (many Bucks villages do not); when hubs are safe and convenient (residents say they aren’t); and when the several operators coordinate (in Bucks they mostly don’t).

So, what can improve our bus system? I have three main suggestions:

1. Collaborate more with neighbouring authorities.
2. Strengthen the “Enhanced Partnership” Bucks Council has with its bus operators, which at present is light-touch and limited. A stronger EP could deliver a single network map, multi-operator ticketing, shared data standards and coordinated timetables, all of which would make bus travel much more attractive.
3. Encourage multimodal travel: buses work best when satisfactorily fed by other modes — walking, cycling, rail and possibly community transport. The enlarged Haddenham is well placed for the last, either a shuttle or demand-responsive transport (DRT), which could provide better links to bus stops and take in surrounding villages.

All this is achievable with political will and leadership. Whether Buckinghamshire seizes that opportunity is the real question.

MM

LEARNING FROM OTHERS: TYWI VALLEY PATH – A NEW GREENWAY, SETTLING IN



As momentum builds up regarding the Haddenham-Thame Greenway with a public consultation expected shortly, we turn towards what to expect when the greenway is opened. We cannot travel to the future, but we can observe what has happened with other openings. The challenge is to find a similar case.

One feature that marks out our greenway from others is the likely intensity of shared use, with significant destinations at both ends, including a railway station. Traffic will include: commuters to the station and local workplaces – mainly cycling; and leisure users – if the Phoenix Trail is a guide, a majority walking, often with young families.

[In May 2026, a much longer greenway was completed](#) joining Carmarthen, Wales (Caerfyrddin, Cymru) to its hinterland for active travel. To what extent can we learn from this recent opening?

The Tywi Valley Path had been awaited as keenly and for as long as our greenway. Complexity included

“

... the reality of shared use ...

floodplain and landholding, the latter finally resolved through compulsory purchase. Achievement was greeted with the highest expectations.

What followed might be interpreted in the light of what psychologists tell us often accompanies long-awaited change. A peak of excitement and celebration reduces as some realise they must compromise their individual initial visions. Only then does enthusiasm rebuild, of a more grounded, robust and long-lasting nature.

A review of the Welsh greenway social media shows the ecstasy, followed by outbursts as some users' visions have been challenged. This Welsh greenway carries a wide range of users, crossing a region well known for its serious cyclists as well as tourism and ramblers. Perhaps families had imagined toddlers exploring without supervision. Dog walkers had fantasised about their dogs running free. Cyclists had imagined traffic-free uninterrupted progress.

From moderated personal ideals, etiquette is now beginning to emerge: walkers keeping to the left as cyclists pass, cyclists giving warning and adjusting their speed as they approach walkers. A minority resisting compromise – often first to post on social media – are being encouraged to moderate their emotional language and educated by their fellow travellers, generally gently.

After three months a consensus is establishing itself, of recalibrated, realistic appreciation.

We learn for our greenway launch that we might experience a similar initial period, requiring both design that anticipates the reality of shared use, and our own willingness to adapt with consideration for all users.

DS

¹ Image: © Carmarthenshire County Council.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DRIVING



2



Counter-intuitively, our heart rate increases when we drive slowly – well, are constrained to drive slowly. Stress mounts. But on the open road driving fast our heart rate decreases.

From seventies' comedy: giving his car a "damn good thrashing"!

Road rage was first reported in – you probably guessed – the US. St Petersburg, Florida in fact in 1988. Where a driver jumped out of his car and shot a woman who was a passenger in a car that had cut him up. Yes, a passenger. The police chief dubbed it "road rage". In the UK, pedestrians witnessed a respected elder of the Hendon United Synagogue punch a Buddhist monk sitting in a Nissan Micra. They'd been together in a jam, jockeying for last-minute advantage. You couldn't make it up. Or perhaps someone did. But The Sunday Times reported on it in 1994, as an example of "road rage sweeping the country".

Something can get into our heads when behind the wheel. (Or maybe in the saddle; Lord Byron was mightily pleased when he dismounted to slap "a fellow in a carriage who was impudent to [his] horse".)

Jack Katz, an American psychologist, talks of the self-righteous "sense of incredulity" engendered by driving. What WAS that other car DOING?! We're too often "right" when driving. In effect we have blind spots. 'Twas ever thus. In 1904 Louis Sinclair, MP for Romford, claimed Parliamentary privilege when driving down the wrong side of Oxford Street! It didn't wash, but we recognise the tendency.

Maybe we all have a Mr Toad within us. Whether we're an MP or a Buddhist monk. In normal social situations he's quiescent enough. In a car – where we have resort to gestures because, well, we're in our hermetic, pampered box, aren't we? – up pops Mr Toad. Yes, through our minds – following our comforting grooming courtesy of pampering upholstery, lulling music systems and general momentum-correction – races the idea we've some sort of right to protest.

Is it stress? Our bodies collude. Counter-intuitively, our heart rate increases when we drive slowly – well, are constrained to drive slowly. Stress mounts. But on the open road driving fast our heart rate *decreases*. Anyone would think speed is good. We can all agree that In Haddenham too many drive too fast.

Okay, driving can wind us up. What's the cure? Put Mr Toad in the back seat. Thinking of road rage conjures up John Cleese blindly attacking his car with a branch. What's the opposite to that? Eye contact with others. Drivers, other road users, cyclists – everyone. Let the eyes have it! Keep the hands (and fingers) friendly. In Haddenham, let's think outa the metal box.

BA

² Image: reenactment by Edmond Wells of original Basil Fawlty / John Cleese sketch. CC licence by [ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/).

ARE WE WALKING FASTER THESE DAYS?



People were avoiding distractions and getting to their destinations sooner...

Could the same be happening in Haddenham?

Observations over three decades at four locations in US cities have registered that pedestrians have been walking steadily faster. The surprising result appears due not so much to faster walking as to less lingering. People were avoiding distractions and getting to their destinations sooner. The study was carried out by MIT's 'Senseable City Lab' (their spelling)⁴.

Could the same be happening in Haddenham?

If lingering is mainly to stop and chat, either with friends or new encounters, then there does appear to have been a decline in lingering in our village. There are people who walk by without greeting or even eye contact, a phenomenon which 10 years ago would have been rare and cause for comment but is now quite common. The explanation could lie partly in the enlargement of the village (people are less likely to know each other) and partly in the spread of the ear pod (which insulates the wearer from their aural surroundings).

Village streets should be social spaces, where people can walk or cycle at ease as they go about shopping, visiting, distributing pamphlets or simply taking exercise. It should be easy to stop and chat without undue disturbance from passing traffic. Chance encounters, on neutral ground, are an important

feature of village life. They are part of the social glue which gives the village cohesion and character.

The friendliness of Haddenham is much appreciated by newcomers, not a few of whom give it as their reason for moving here. Greeting the passing stranger is still the norm and people do linger and sometimes start new relationships, even if the frequency has been reduced by the spread of the personalised sound world. But modern technology has its place and people should enjoy their silent music, but let's have a smile or a nod as you go by.

All the same, pity the pod-bound walker you meet on a country footpath, immersed in personal music and oblivious to the lark singing its heart out overhead.

AG

³ Image: photo by Anna Dziubinska on Unsplash.

⁴ See <https://news.mit.edu/2025/pedestrians-now-walk-faster-and-linger-less-researchers-find-0724>.

AWAKE YOUR INNER FORAGER!



This article comes with a health warning, on Nature's behalf: foraging isn't a sport; nature isn't a supermarket. Nevertheless, sustainable harvesting can be fun and even gastronomically rewarding. And here's a warning for the walker too: "Be careful! If you can't identify before you pick, don't."

It's not our purpose to tell you precisely where to harvest in Haddenham parish; half the joy is in discovery. Bullace [1], anyone? Blewits [2]? Jack-by-the-hedge [3]? Check them out before disturbing them.

This article is really just a prompt to the bounty of the countryside around us. At the very least the camera on your smartphone will give more precise help than what is written here.



Bullace [1]



Field Blewit [2]

Autumn is of course an abundant season. "Mists and mellow fruitfulness", it is. Let's see what you might put in your bag, basket or – if you must – your plastic box:

Nuts: beechnuts, hazelnuts (aka cobnuts), sweet chestnuts, walnuts, acorns... They're best collected off the ground. That's Nature's way of telling you they're ready. ('Though she's also telling mice, squirrels and badgers, of course.) Holes in shells may tell you bugs have got there first. Acorns require processing to remove tannins before consumption; leach them in changes of hot water until the bitterness has gone, then try roasting them. Those other nuts can be eaten straight away but beware the outer green casing of walnuts which can stain, so make sure it's ready to come off. Also, all nuts have tannin so go easy to avoid stomach aches.

Berries, etc.: hawthorn (aka 'bread and cheese' – you can eat the leaves too), rosehips, juniper, blackberries, elderberries. Probably best cooked – in jellies, say – but that's to taste. Uncooked hips can be pretty pippy (remember itching powder, anyone?). While junipers take 18 months to ripen so make sure they're good and purple.



Jack-by-the-hedge [3]



Marjoram [4]

Plums: bullace (bit like damsons, but yellow, greenish, purple and black), sloe (for gin, or try whisky) – good picked after a first frost.

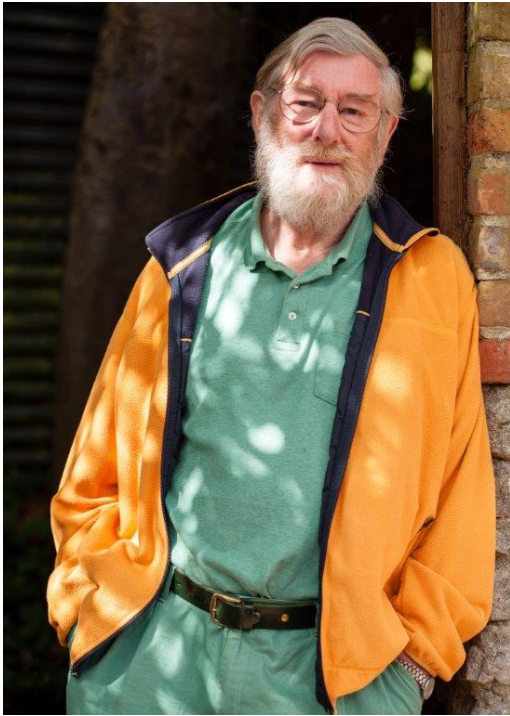
Mushrooms: you've got to know what you're doing here. Giant puffballs, chanterelles, ceps, field mushrooms, blewits. Delicious, if you like that sort of thing and are fungi-conversant.

Wild greens: nettles (cook first!), Jack-by-the-hedge (aka garlic mustard), dandelion leaves for salads, herbs like thyme, sorrel, yarrow, marjoram [4]. A pinch of a leaf and a sniff of your fingers will help...

Roots: wild carrots, parsnips, burdock roots, horseradish. ... HAPPY FORAGING! BA

⁵ Images under Creative Commons licence: [1] cropped photo by Eirian Evans under [SA 2.0](#); [2] cropped photo by Paffka under [SA 3.0](#); [3] cropped photo by Didier Descouens / Muséum de Toulouse under [SA 4.0](#); [4] photo by H "Liez" Zell under [SA 3.0](#).

HADDENHAM'S FAME



Haddenham is not just famous for its wychert. Among architects and landscape designers across continents, it's known for a very special house and garden, built in the 1960s.

Recently deceased architect and garden designer, Peter Aldington, OBE, chose to build his home – and arguably best example of his work – in Haddenham.

Why famous? His home is said to pioneer and inspire by combining modernism – unhidden use of modern materials and techniques – with the spirit of cottage construction – for example, incorporation of local materials like wychert, exposed beams, light and shade from small windows, focus on the fireplace as heart of the home, a dwelling designed in response to a specific space.

Perhaps more than anything else, he combined the “making” of house and garden as one, cultivating a sense of wellbeing and closeness to nature.

The success of his creations is recognised by Peter having more listed buildings on the UK National Register than any other post-war architect (nine), according to the Twentieth Century Society.

Our good fortune is that his home, Turn End, is right here on Townside, in a cluster with two other homes that he also designed.

It was Peter's choice to build and live in Haddenham, which he described as a village “of strong and individual character”. In line with his approach of designing for a specific space, he advised that “Turn End is Haddenham specific”. Though Haddenham's distinctiveness might be diluted now, Turn End remains in some ways a testimony to Haddenham's individuality. Peter lived here for over 60 years, until his death in April this year.

The Aldington family continue to own and manage Turn End. The Turn End Trust was established by Peter and Margaret Aldington in 1998 to promote the integration of building and garden design and enable public access to Turn End and other examples. Both the family and the Turn End Trust organise events and open days. You can find details of Turn End openings on the Trust's website:

<https://www.turnend.org.uk/new-events>. Visit and you may consider how lucky we are to have a gem like this on our doorstep.



Turn End Open Day

DS, with the support of the Turn End Trust.

Images by kind permission of Turn End Trust (portrait by Paul Wilkinson Photography).

HIDDEN GEM: PONNIE



Ponnie. Ponny. Ponney. Well, there was a Middle English word *ponne* or *panne* which meant... (drum roll) ... 'a pond'! A pan-shaped depression that held water. Our very own weirdly shaped Ponny on the grounds of Manor Farm takes that to an extreme – why, you can even see the pan's handle.

It certainly has the appearance of being man-made so much so that rumours used to abound that it was the result of quarrying for stone for nearby St Mary's Church, but in fact the geology doesn't bear that out.

Ponnie is attested to in documents from the sixteenth century as a fishpond. Sometime earlier than that written record, a dam was created to hold back the stream running through the village when this was its course (it's been diverted since). Fish were always a rich resource for the locals so what better than to give them their very own splashy home where they could be bred and caught without *too* much trouble?

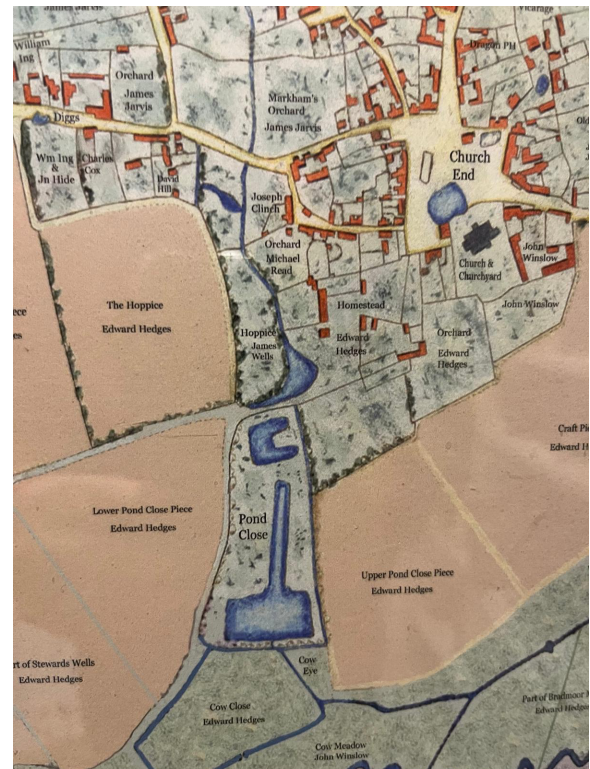
Ponnie at an acre and a half of water is smaller than it was. It was cut in two early in the twentieth century by the arrival of the railway. The water is still used for

fishing, now under the auspices of Tring Anglers. You have to be a member or guest and can't fish at night at all. The pond is beset with weed and anglers are advised to take a rake with them to increase the chances of catching bream, chub, mirror carp, rudd, common carp, perch, pike, roach, tench ... For the rest of us "You can look but you'd better not touch". BUT it is a wonderful place to do just that: amble round and *look*. The wildlife is abundant: swans nest there, as do moorhens, coots, grey herons and – if you're lucky – you'll see the flash of a kingfisher. The list of wildlife in this quiet spot is endless.

Weediness, overhanging trees and the stillness enhance the feeling of something eternal about the place. And ominous. Is that Excalibur I see flashing out of the mere-y depths? Historically the place saw its drownings of village unfortunates whose "balance of mind" was disturbed and who sought its deep embrace. All in all, it's a place that is a tribute to generations of bittersweet village life.

It's less than 500 metres to walk around but every step's a treasure.

BA, acknowledging help from Alan Rose's article in The Haddenham Museum's *Chronicles* 19.



Extract from Biddle's 1820 map, reconstructed by Alan Rose in 2001, on display in Haddenham Museum.



NEWS IN BRIEF

LETTER FROM CUDDINGTON

Feedback on SIGNPOSTS Issue 20:

As Haddenham spreads further over the countryside and distances increase, the village is struggling with how people are going to get around it without further expanding car use. Whenever I come to Haddenham I am struck by the number of cars parked which not only spoils the appearance of the streets, but means that one has to weave around them and often wait for oncoming cars to pass. The parking makes the streets dangerous for children, which adds to the problem of children being trapped at home unless at school or in the car, and Haddenham was, until not long ago, a rural village where children should have a measure of freedom.

Bucks Council never sees the value of cycle routes within settlements, let alone between settlements, as Haddenham and my village of Cuddington know all too well. I have tackled councillors repeatedly about this as I believe it to be very short-sighted, and to contribute significantly to our pot-holes problems owing to the increased traffic that results from people not cycling. We desperately need safe cycle routes from Haddenham to Thame and to Cuddington, but these need to link through cycle routes within the village. Of course, it's much more difficult to implement this now that new housing developments have been installed without any allowance for cycling, but we have to start somewhere, and the impending large housing proposed for Haddenham could present an opportunity. The benefits could be multiple and significant through quiet, safer streets, fewer potholes and healthier more active residents, including children.

Name and address supplied.

HaddSWAC is very grateful for financial support from Haddenham Village Fête (next 12th June 2027) and Haddenham Beer Festivals Trust (Winterfest on 12th December 2026), and Haddenham Garden Centre.

Used to provide printed copies for curious readers and those unable to access SIGNPOSTS on-line.

NOT E-BIKES

We're happy to broadcast that, despite BBC coverage in July 2026, reported injuries "caused by e-bikes" resulting in insurance claims, never happened!

It is true that illegal electric motorbikes contributed to claims. E-bikes are required to be pedal-assisted, with electric power cutting out at over 15.5mph. If you witness offending electric motorbikes, please report these [on-line](#) or by phoning 101: ensure offenders don't undermine the considerate use of authentic e-bikes, which open new horizons to many riders!

NOT JUST WALES

You've heard about significant reductions in deaths and serious injuries (KSI) on Welsh roads since the introduction of additional 20mph restrictions, [here](#).

Oxfordshire County Council which has supported 275 towns and villages to bring in 20mph speed limits, [recently claimed](#) that provisional Government data indicates the number of KSIs on its roads in 2025 fell by about 18 per cent compared with the previous year.

Bucks experienced an increase over the same period, although its five-year-average trend is an annual improvement of over three per cent.

PLAN FOR ENGLAND: WAR OVER

The Government announced its latest five-year [Cycling and Walking Strategy for England](#), in June 2026, which included the non-news that there is "no war on motorists" and that most cyclists and walkers also drive cars.

The target that 55% of short urban journeys should be travelled actively by 2030, outlined by the Conservative government in 2021, remains intact; and it is added to by a target that 60 per cent of children should walk, wheel or cycle to school by 2035.

How to achieve this? The Government says it is planning to build 5,000 new cycling, walking, and wheeling routes in England by 2030, as well as 10,000 safer crossings, connecting homes to schools, town centres, and other services. Roll on the Haddenham-Thame Greenway!