

Active Preston: Transforming our Community Infrastructure - Theory of Change

Context

Rationale for Investment:

1) The Preston bid will deliver a more healthy, inclusive, liveable, and sustainably connected city. This will be achieved through (i) the regeneration of key parks and sporting and community infrastructure supporting greater use and sporting participation, and (ii) through the delivery of new and enhanced active travel infrastructure better serving and connecting communities to jobs, transport, education and cultural/leisure assets.

Project context

- 1) Preston continues to suffer from higher-thanaverage levels of deprivation and poor health outcomes. Around 20% of LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived nationally, with higher than average levels of inactivity, obesity and lower life expectancy
- 2) Preston requires significant investment in its parks and sporting/community infrastructure. There is an under-supply in pitches, a high proportion of pitches are assessed as poor quality, alongside low overall satisfaction ratings with the city's parks.
- 3) Preston suffers from high levels of congestion and poor-quality active travel options and networks, blighting by severance and missing links. Investing in active travel infrastructure is critical to changing behaviours/use, providing residents with an alternative to the car.

Input

Funding

LUF ask: £20.0m

- Project 1: Parks Regeneration: £11.4m
- Project 2: Active Travel: £8.6m

Match funding: £4.1m:

- Project 1: £2.86m. Sources include LCC, PCC S.106, PCC,
- Project 2: £1.24m. Sources include PCC, Football Foundation, PCC S.106, land sales.

Activities

Project 1: A cross-city project regenerating Ashton, Moor, Waverley and Grange parks. providing high quality and accessible sport and community facilities, enhanced public realm, safeguarded heritage and improved safety infrastructure

Project 2: Delivering new and enhanced active travel routes and infrastructure for cycling and walking across central Preston and beyond, including a replacement River Ribble bridge and a Mobility Hub at Preston Bus Station.

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Output

Regeneration – Cross Cutting

- Green or blue space created or improved
- Public realm created or improved
- Sports Centre space created or improved
- Community centre space created or improved
- Public amenities/facilities created, improved, or relocated
- New Trees Planted

Culture

- Cultural space created or improved
- Heritage buildings and sites renovated/restored
- Volunteering opportunities supported

Transport

- New or improved cycle ways
- New or improved pedestrian paths
- Roads converted to pedestrian or cycleways
- New or improved car parking spaces

Outcome

- Change in footfall general park users and walking in Preston
- Change in the number of sport participants
- Change in the health of residents (physical and/or mental)
- Change in the number of cultural events and participation
- Change in the number of visitors to cultural venues
- Change in number of volunteers
- Change in number of employees
- Change in cycle, pedestrian and vehicle flow
- Change in perceptions of place (business, residents and visitors)

Impact

- Improvements in physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Strategic placemaking and infrastructure investment leading to improved perceptions of Preston by residents, visitors and businesses
- Reduction in ASB/Crime in and around parks
- Increased walking and cycling participation and confidence by active travel modes
- Reductions in car journeys and an improved local environment and air quality
- Supporting direct employment and increasing levels of volunteering/community engagement
- Strengthened economy & access to jobs in Preston city centre and in the wider area



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Activities Parks Regeneration

Outputs

- 4 parks created / improved
- 8 football pitches,
- 2 new sport pavilions, including community spaces
- 1 MUGA, Skate Park, Bicycle pump track
- 1 restored park lake and heritage
- Improved play areas
- Improved events spaces
- Improved accessibility & lighting
- New trees planted

Short term outcomes

- Improved visitor and user experience
- Increasing footfall to Preston's parks and increasing sports participation
- Improved local environment / access to green space
- Increased community uses and cultural/events participation
- Increasing levels of volunteering and employment

Longer term outcomes

- Increased levels of park user satisfaction
- Increased footfall and sports participation post investment +193,000 uplift in park visitors, including sports users
- Increases in social value, health & wellbeing outcomes for Preston residents
- Supporting sustained direct employment
- Supporting sustained volunteering
- Parks playing a key role in Preston's cultural and events activities
- Lower social cost of crime
- Changes in perception of place

Clear evidence locally of poor quality park infrastructure, capacity constraints and low levels of satisfaction, and poor health metrics/outcomes. Investment in facilities for organised sport, play or other activities is evidenced to contribute to physical and mental wellbeing improvements for users. It also contributes towards higher quality green and cultural infrastructure, enhancing the local environmental and creating a more liveable city for residents and visitors.

Investment will deliver a step change in provision and support a range of short and longer-term outcomes. These include economic and wider social value benefits, including health and wellbeing benefits for park users (increased general and sport participation). Increased community events and cultural activities will strengthen social engagement and participation, as well as environmental benefits (improved access, tree C02 absorption)

Active Travel Infrastructure

- 1 new bridge
- 1 new mobility hub (20 cycles)
- 4,375 sqm of new public realm
- 700m of segregated cycle lane
- c.1km of new or improved pedestrian paths
- c.1km of new or improved cycle ways
- Road converted to cycle and pedestrian ways
- 27 New trees planed

- Change in cycle flow
- Changes in pedestrian flow
- Changes in vehicle flow at Friargate
- Changes in footfall
- Reduced severance for all users and risks of collisions.
- Increased levels of physical activity, health and wellbeing
- Improved accessibility to education, employment, transport and cultural assets, including parks

- Safe, direct and well connected active travel network
- Increased levels of physical activity through walking and cycling
- Reduced congestion
- Improvement of local environment and air quality
- Increases in social value, health & wellbeing outcomes for Preston residents
- Changes in perception of place by residents and visitors
- Improved urban realm and placemaking

Clear evidence locally on issues of congestion, gaps in provision and quality of active travel routes, with low levels of cycling and walking. Evidence shows that providing alternative options to the car can support increased participation and healthier and more active lives for residents. Investment can play a key role in connecting people to services and employment, as well as improving the local environment through fewer motor vehicle journeys.

Investment will deliver a step change in active travel provision within Preston supporting a range of short and longer-term outcomes. Improved health outcomes for residents through more active lives is a key outcome, alongside improvements in air quality (C02 and particulates), noise, safety and accidents, while improving accessibility.

Levelling Up Round 2

Active Preston: Transforming our Community Infrastructure - Theory of Change Summary



Need for Change

- Preston has higher than average levels of physical inactivity, obesity and lower life expectancy. Around 20% of LSOAs in 10% most deprived nationally, with 27% of LSOAs in 10% most deprived in health domain.
- Low satisfaction ratings with Preston's parks including heritage assets, and under-supply in pitches, a high proportion of sports pitches assessed as poor quality. 2019 assessment found 36% of adult playing pitches, 58% of youth pitches and 30% of junior pitches of poor quality
- Preston had 2nd highest increase 2021/2 in recorded crimes of all NW local authorities, and LSOAs in which Parks are located contributed substantially to Anti-social behaviour incidences
- Despite 37% of journeys less than 2km, continued dependence on car for work and leisure journeys, with high levels of congestion, poor-quality active travel options and networks, and city centre affected by severance and missing links.
- City's road network has limited capacity and congestion periods have extended, with arterial and city centre road network causing high levels of severance and creating unsafe and unattractive environment for walking and cycling. River Ribble pedestrian and cycle crossings either closed (Old Tram Bridge) or nearing end of lifespan with significant structure problems.
- Preston lagging Lancashire on reducing CO2
 emissions and air quality worsening in several
 AQMA. Preston ranks amongst 10 English cities
 with highest per capita CO2 emissions in the UK.

Our LUF Interventions

- Investment in safe and accessible new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure across city centre and linking Preston to South Ribble by new bridge crossing the River Ribble
- Related public realm improvements including lighting, paving and other streetscape measures on key city centre streets including Friargate North and South linking the city centre to the University
- Mobility hub in central location at Preston Bus Station providing secure cycle storage at key modal interchange
- facilities and infrastructure in four of Preston's key parks, including new football pitches and pavilions, new play areas, restored heritage features, events space and lighting, signage, wayfinding, paths and access points

How Projects Lead to Change

- 1. Increase options and quality of active travel infrastructure leads to:
 - More residents and visitors choosing healthier modes of travel with promotion
 - Reduced CO2 and particular emissions from travel into and around city centre resulting from increase in zero emission travel
 - Improved safety and reduced accidents through better segregation of pedestrians and cyclists
 - Removes severance by pedestrianizing key city centre streets and improve flow of pedestrians and cyclists
 - Improves accessibility to employment, education, visitor and cultural assets and community facilities for those without car or public transport options

2. Investing in parks will lead to:

- Improvements in physical and mental wellbeing through more options to undertake sport and play and participation in organised sports
- More positive perceptions of Preston as a place to live and visit by offering higher quality facilities and more activities to participate in
- More social and community engagement and participation in cultural activities and community events through facilities that enable more organised activity to take place
- Contributions to tackling climate change through tree planting and other CO2 absorbing measures, and reduced need to travel outside city for leisure

3. In combination our projects will:

- Raise the quality of Preston's public realm, associated in evidence with more attractive residential and commercial investment environment and higher land values [although we do not quantify these in our bid];
- Increase footfall by creating a more attractive city centre environment and approaches, and Parks which encourage people to spend more time in the city centre, and in turn to spend more income in the city.