



The road user hierarchy

Transport policy recognises that there is a “road user hierarchy”. Walking and cycling make much more efficient use of space than cars, providing roads and car parking is hugely expensive and walking, cycling and bus use much less so. Walking and cycling and bus use make a positive contribution to reducing air pollution and reducing CO2 emissions that cause climate change. We are now in a “climate emergency” and Shropshire Council is one of 209 councils nationally that have declared a climate emergency.

The list of 209 councils is here:

<https://www.climateemergency.uk/blog/list-of-councils/>

Adopting the full force of the road user hierarchy and giving absolute priority to walking, cycling and bus use will result in significant reductions in transport’s carbon emissions that have contributed to the emergency. Building new roads and offering free car parking whilst cutting bus funds will make the climate emergency worse.

Shropshire Council recognises the importance of the road user hierarchy which it refers to as the “transport mode hierarchy”. The hierarchy is very clear and walk, cycle, bus use are more important than cars and trains.

The policy of Shropshire Council reverses this hierarchy. Council decisions on spending and projects e.g. the North West Relief Road which will cost the council £17 million which is additional to central government funding. The council has cut bus funds and spends trivial amounts on walking and cycling and the council has decide to make car parking free of charge for selected days over the summer period. There is no equivalent support for those who use buses.

If we could align the spending and project priorities of Shropshire Council with its own “transport mode hierarchy” we would prioritise the following:

- A completely new, upgraded, segregated cycle path network
- Much improved walking facilities and a complete re-vamp of the very poor quality junctions that make life difficult for pedestrians and increase the risk of death and injury e.g. the junction between the Welsh Bridge, Victoria Quay, Smithfield Road and Barker St which from a pedestrian point of view is seriously sub-standard
- A complete re-vamp of bus provision including 100% electric buses, a new bus station, bus priority at all signalised junctions and a car-free area within the river loop with bus/bike only access

The Shropshire bus upgrade project recognises the interdependence of projects to improve walk, cycle and bus provision and calls for a major transformation of Shrewsbury so that it can match the best in Europe.

The Transport Mode Hierarchy in Shropshire

Table 3: Transport Mode Hierarchy



Source: Shropshire Council cabinet agenda papers, 3rd July 2019

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/b13336/6%20Scrutiny%20Items%20-%20Parking%20Strategy%20Implementation%206%20Month%20Review%2003rd-Jul-2019%2011.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=9>