

# Sharpness Vale

## Transport Approach

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How we developed the transport philosophy for the new settlement

Sharpness Development LLP





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## How did we develop the transport approach for Sharpness Vale?

We wanted to make Sharpness Vale different—not for the sake of it, but in readiness for the changes that are coming to the way that we will need to live.

This means planning for a place that is ready for climate change effects, environmental change, social responsibility and new models of home ownership.

We know that expectations are changing—younger people, at the start of their careers have very different aspirations to those of previous generations. Emerging trends suggest that they will want to work much more closely to where they live, that they will tune their lives to make day-to-day travel easier, whilst still wanting to expand their experiences with travel further afield.

We have researched these trends and changes, and have also looked at what Government, at all levels, is saying about how they will plan for the future.

We want to redress the balance between public transport and the car, emphasising and prioritising investment in the former, and minimising expenditure on the latter.

This reverses the trends of the last forty years.

In simple terms, we want to plan a place on the basis of discernible future trends, to be a place that we want to see. We don't want to plan fearfully for the worst case scenario, stifling aspiration by looking over our shoulder and presuming that the worst outcomes have to be accommodated.

### What do we think people who move to Sharpness Vale will do?

We anticipate that the people who move to Sharpness Vale will adopt a different lifestyle approach, because the environment and facilities will be conducive to them doing so. There will be a wide range of employment across the area—both newly provided, and existing. This will allow a cross-section of people to live and work in the area.

Ultimately there will be local education facilities, leisure provision and a mature, attractive settlement that will provide for many day-to-day needs and reduce the need to travel. We are expecting people to want to buy into this lifestyle change—as it will follow on the trends that we are already seeing.

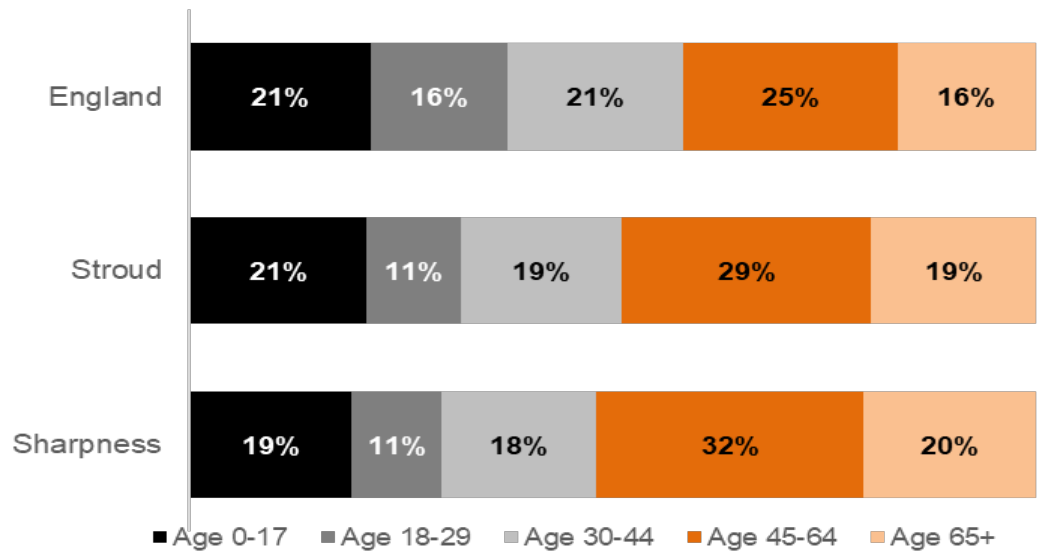
But some will need to travel out—and when they do, our plan is that there will always be sufficient provision for people to do this without relying on the private car.

We expect people to be attracted to Sharpness Vale because of its key transport links—and that this is likely to shift some existing travel patterns. Current patterns of movement out of Sharpness are orientated towards the south, and the Bristol conurbation. Whilst we would expect this to continue to be a significant attractor, the new rail connection planned to Gloucester is likely to mean different patterns of attraction in the future.

# What is happening in Stroud today?

Stroud district, and the existing communities around Sharpness, have their own distinctive demographic character, with both showing an older population than the national average:

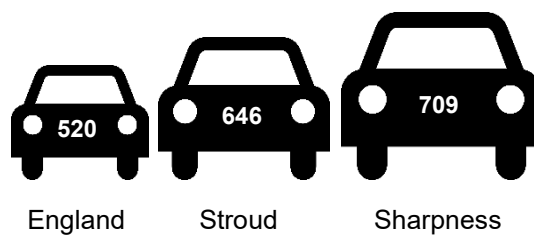
**Sharpness and Stroud have an older population than the national average**



This means many people in the district have grown up with the expectation of travel being easiest by car, and so there is more of a reliance on “traditional” approaches to travel—higher car ownership, lower reliance on public transport, lower levels of cycling and so on. It also means that changes to attitudes to travel seen in younger people are much harder to spot.

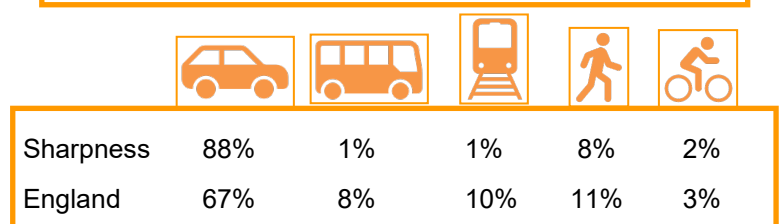
Car ownership levels are higher in Stroud than in England, and in Sharpness are higher still...

**Cars per 1,000 households**



As a result, travel patterns in the district today heavily dependent on the car...

**Car is the dominant mode for journeys to work**



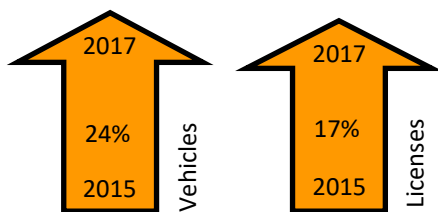
**In the face of climate change and environmental factors, there is a clear mandate from government that this pattern has to change.**

The challenge for the Local Plan, for the Council, for developers and for individuals and businesses is how we achieve this.

# What makes us think people want to change?

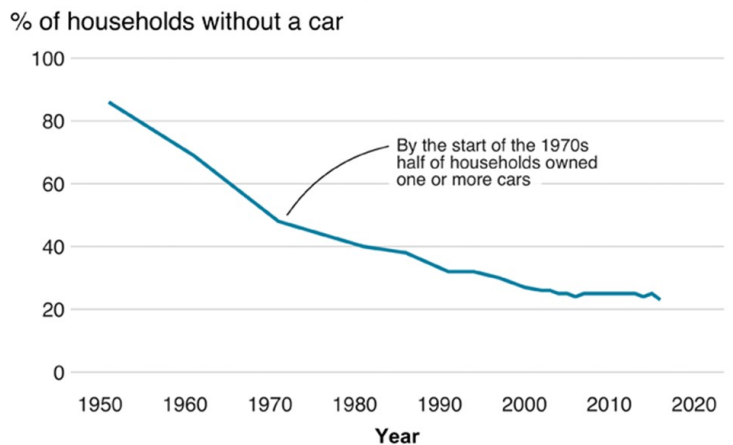
There is evidence that younger people are changing their attitudes and expectations around travel. They are much less wedded to reliance on the car—which they increasingly consider to be an unaffordable liability. They are also more likely to use their mobile phones to plan, book and access journey planning and real-time travel—using services like Uber; a ride-hailing technology that allows the user to book the nearest Uber taxi for their journey.

This follows a trend in greater numbers of taxis and drivers:



Although car ownership levels have consistently increased since the Fifties, this trend has flattened, and may be declining as people search for a response to climate change and rising costs.

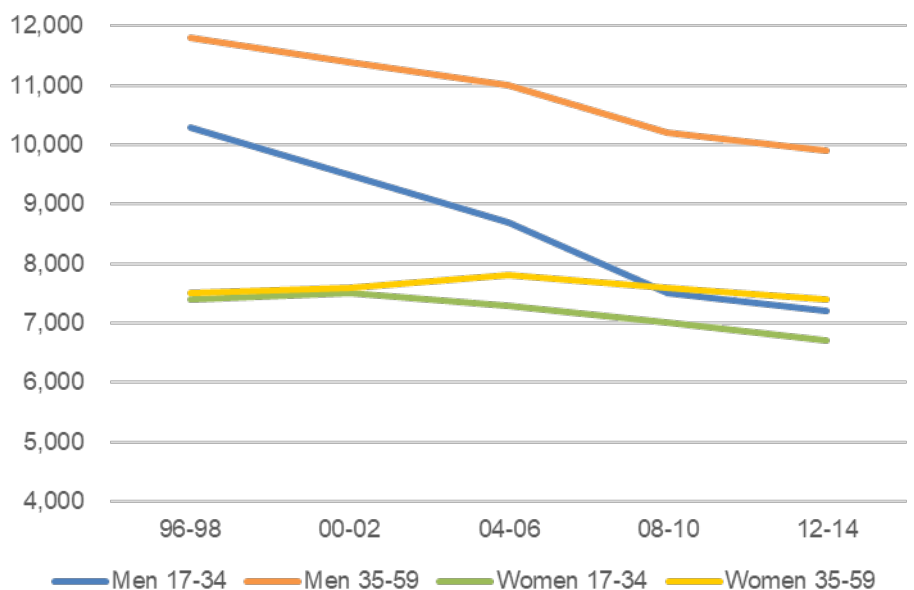
## Most households in England own a car



Source: Department for Transport



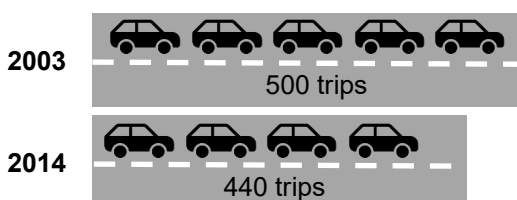
We can see this trend even more clearly when we look at car mileage trends. The annual mileage being driven by all age groups is dropping—but is most dramatic in the case of young men from 17-35.



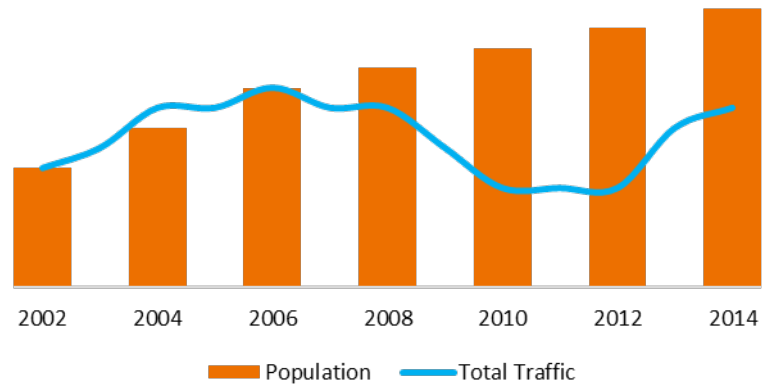
Of course, this is showing a National trend, and so care must be taken in applying this across specific areas. Major cities like London or Manchester have different characteristics to regions like the South West.

But there is evidence that these trends are emerging around Stroud and its wider region too:

## People across the South West are making fewer trips per year by car



**Despite a 9% increase in population, total personal car traffic has remained broadly constant between 2002 and 2014**



Car usage has always fluctuated year on year, but more recent trends suggest that it is not growing to match population change. Population growth hasn't resulted in growth in traffic—and, indeed, the general trend in traffic is quite flat.

The effects of electrification of the vehicle fleet—now planned as the next step in environmental transport policy, are as yet unclear. But it is the case that the practical range of electric vehicles is more restricted than petrol and diesel cars. Charging infrastructure is less universally available, and charging times are longer than for petrol and diesel vehicles.

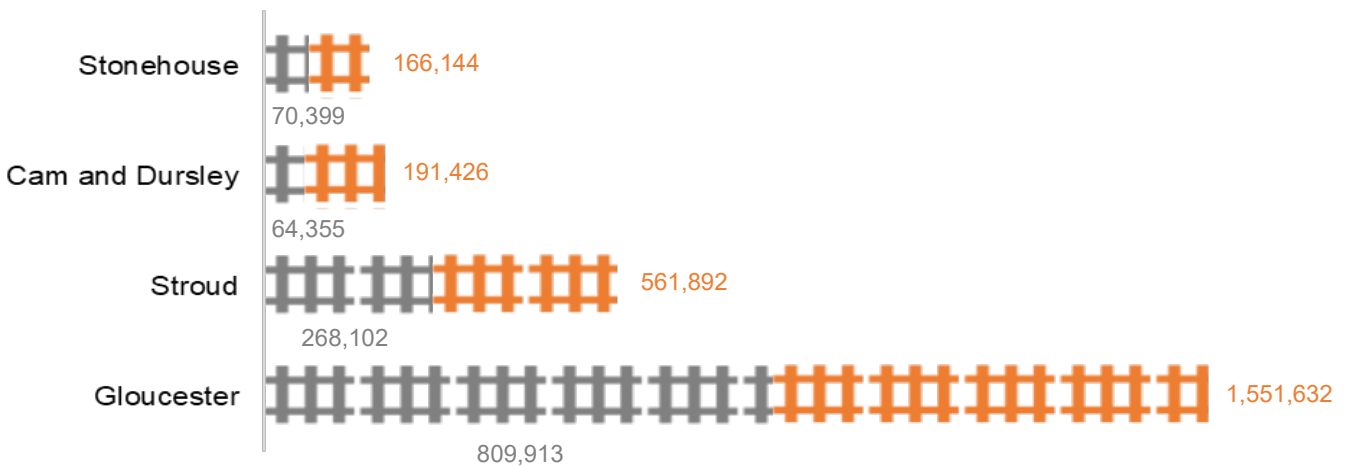
It seems possible that, whilst the car will remain a core element of personal transport, it may be less ubiquitous than has been the case since the second world war.

**This means a greater reliance on public transport, local living and a different approach to planning...**

The challenge for the Local Plan, for the Council, for developers and for individuals and businesses is how we achieve this.

The trends are already appearing, even in the area around Sharpness, where rail patronage has grown substantially in the last ten years or so:

**Rail use has doubled across South Gloucestershire since 2005**





## Is Government policy promoting this change?

Government is responding to this change, with commitment to significant investment in public transport—rail in particular. Despite a detailed and comprehensive review of HS2, the scheme remains an investment priority.

The Government has also recognised the potential of re-opening new branch lines, with its “Restoring Your Railway” fund launched by the Transport Secretary on 28th January 2020 and providing £500m to investigate re-opening lines.

Government has also taken a significant position on investment in bus services, with £1 billion pledged per annum over 5 years to modernise buses in the country. The statement made clear that this was about meeting public demand for travel.

In February 2020, Government earmarked £1bn for safe cycling and walking routes in the next five years, highlighting the need for proper and consistent design standards. This was a comprehensive package with ‘Bikeability’ training for every child, piloting of low-traffic “healthy neighbourhoods” to reduce rat running on residential streets and increased provision “for separated bike lanes on main roads”, and trials incentivising GPs to prescribe bicycles or bicycle hire to patients.

A fresh approach to tackling carbon emissions in the UK was presented by the Government in the March 2020 publication ‘Decarbonising Transport’, which is the first step to developing the policy proposals required and a coordinated plan.

The Plan will set out in detail what everyone will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed from transport to hit carbon budgets and net zero emissions across all modes mode of transport by 2050.

It builds on ‘The Future of Mobility’ which reflects on where we have come from, examines current trends, and considers different scenarios to help policy-makers to identify the choices and opportunities to come.

**The proposals for Sharpness Vale already include all of these types of provision and opportunities—the re-opening of the Sharpness branch line, bespoke, demand responsive coach and bus services and routes through the site that allow cycling, walking, and a range of other emerging modes of personal transport too!**



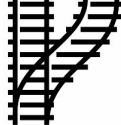









# How do we plan for positive change—what we want to happen?

The Sharpness Vale team has considered the range of changes and likely future sustainable models. We're planning for what we want to happen, not what we fear may happen.

We've developed a holistic approach to access and movement for everyone who will live and work there, with easy options to move in sustainable ways.

This is the world that we are planning for:

 <p>Phasing out petrol and diesel vehicles by 2035 leads to change in usage patterns of electric and hydrogen fuelled vehicles</p>	 <p>Social change emphasises benefits of active travel modes like walking and cycling for personal wellness and reduced air pollution and congestion</p>
<p>Substantial investment in new rail services, especially local rail services through the re-opening of old branch lines and the like</p> 	<p>Additional government funding allocated to public transport will include improving bus frequency, ticketing systems and priority schemes as well as more sustainably fuelled vehicles</p> 
 <p>Social change around the growth in micro mobility (scooters/bikes) supported by future legislation to make them legal on cycle ways</p>	 <p>Demand Responsive Transport with app-based user interfaces likely to predominate for road based public transport services—especially outside big cities. Flexibility and improved access for those who may not have been previously well served</p>
<p>Connected and autonomous vehicles will shift ownership models and attitudes to the car, and allowing real-time management of the highway network</p> 	<p>Online shopping is expected to contribute more than half of total retail sales in the next ten years with companies including Amazon and Doodle offering cheap and convenient package delivery services</p> 
 <p>As technology improves, especially broadband speeds that allow video and VR meetings, home working and co-working will increase, offering greater flexibility in where and when people work</p>	 <p>Car manufacturers will change business models to reflect much lower levels of outright ownership and an increase in leases, hires, lending and time charge rental</p>

There are some simple principles that inform what we have done:

1. To utilise the assets that exist to the maximum—so we concentrate our efforts during the times when these assets are under the most stress. We need to target interventions to the weekday morning and evening peak periods especially, and school pick-up times
2. To provide for every peak hour trip out of Sharpness to be accommodated by sustainable transport—a seat on a train, a coach or a bus
3. To provide routes across and through the site that are available, are safe and convenient for every conceivable mode of personal transport—including the emerging micro-mobility machines like e-scooters
4. To allow people to continue to drive if they wish, but not to make additional provision for them to do this, as viable alternatives will be available

# Sharpness Vale local transport plan



Green Ways through and across the site for safe travel by walking, jogging, bikes and scooters, Segway's, motorised skateboards



Sharpness Station—regular, dependable services. Gloucester and Cam & Dursley for services to Bristol



Dedicated hubs to serve both traditional and demand responsive bus and coach services



Core facilities on site- schools, surgeries, shops, leisure and community, all helping to reduce the need to travel



A hub in the centre providing cycle parking, maintenance, changing and shower facilities and a cafe



New flexible business space with provision for start-up companies and co-working spaces

- — — Bus Routes
- - - Walking, Cycling and Personal Transport Routes

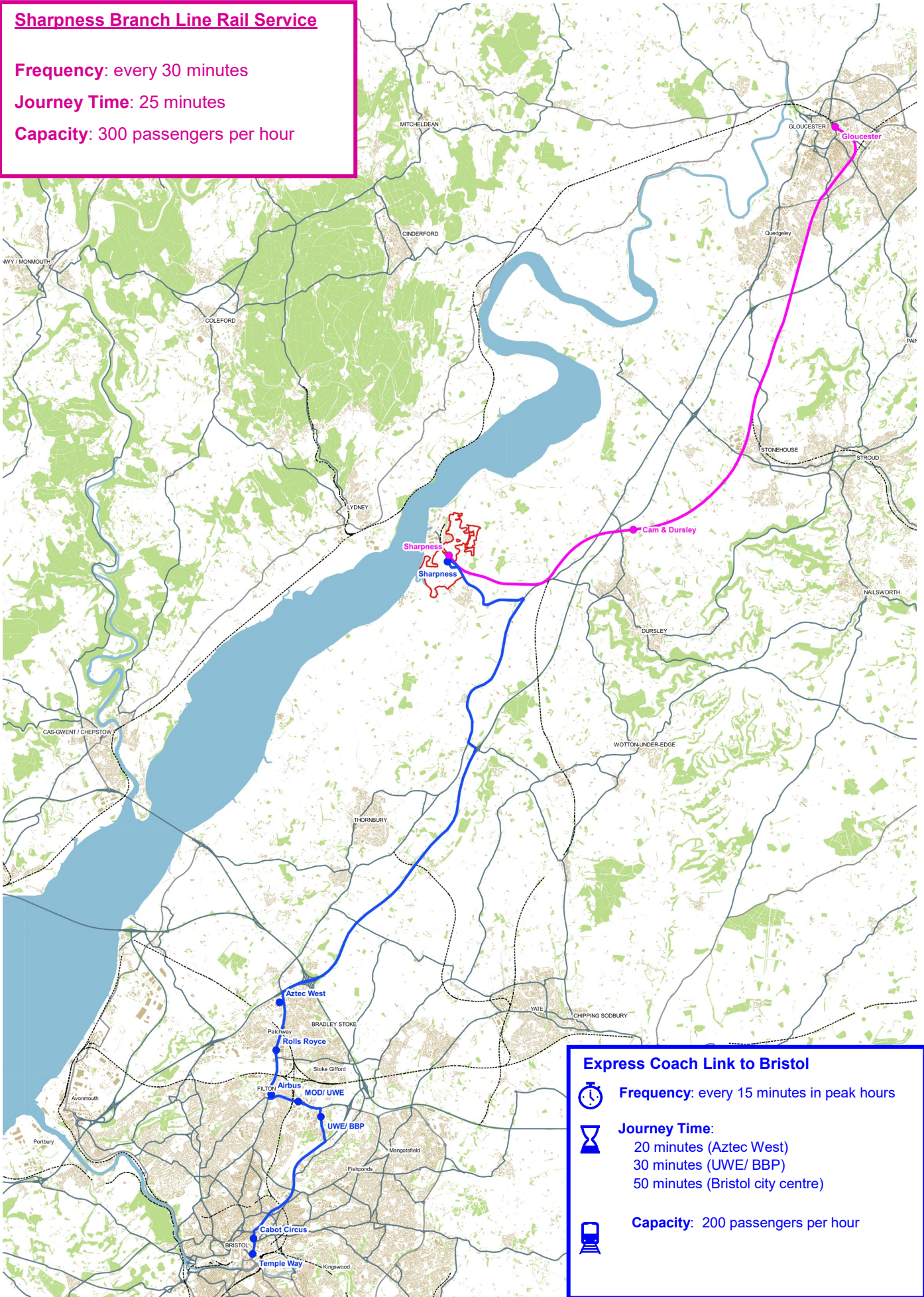
# Sharpness Vale commuting transport plan

## Sharpness Branch Line Rail Service

**Frequency:** every 30 minutes

**Journey Time:** 25 minutes

**Capacity:** 300 passengers per hour



## Express Coach Link to Bristol

 **Frequency:** every 15 minutes in peak hours

 **Journey Time:**  
 20 minutes (Aztec West)  
 30 minutes (UWE/ BBP)  
 50 minutes (Bristol city centre)

 **Capacity:** 200 passengers per hour





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