



Council urged to “aim higher” in its drive for healthy travel choices

Devon has missed out on about £8.8M in funding for safer walking, cycling and wheeling, according to Exeter Cycling Campaign, as the latest national gradings and funding deals for local authorities [were released by Active Travel England](#).

The campaign says that if the council showed more ambition, Devon could win more money for healthy travel choices and help make life better for all.

On a scale of 1-4, Devon was awarded a capability rating of Level 2 and a four year funding deal of £13.4M. This is the funding that pays for new safe routes to school, work and the shops for people on foot, wheels and bike. With a population of over 840,000, this amounts to a per-person allocation of just £4 per head per year.

Councils with higher capability ratings were awarded much more funding. Exeter Cycling Campaign Chair James Diamond said he'd like to see Devon set its ambitions higher.

“Similar County Councils like Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire have successfully moved from a Level 2 to a Level 3 this year. As a result they have won much better funding deals. If Devon had achieved the same funding level they would have won an additional £8.8M to spend on cycle paths and safe crossings.

“That extra funding could have paid for the now cancelled Mallison Bridge replacement and made the Stoke Arms roundabout safe for all, with money to spare to spend elsewhere. It is time for the new administration at County Hall and city and county councillors on the Highways Committee to set the bar higher, deliver new schemes at pace and announce their ambition to become a capability Level 3 authority and aim for more funding in the future.

“The report is quite clear: a higher ranking brings more funding, and that's what Devon needs to implement its ambitious local cycling and walking infrastructure plans. Some progress has been made at places like Rifford Road and Magdalen Road. But there are children going to school now who need safer routes and parents who need the confidence to let their kids walk, wheel or cycle to school, to cut congestion, air pollution and deliver healthier, more active travel choices for everyone.”

As Chris Boardman, National Active Travel Commissioner of Active Travel England said in this year's report: “together, we can create the happier, healthier and greener communities we desperately need. Places where people have the freedom to get around in the way that works for them – to genuinely build health back into our streets.”

Ends

18 December 2025



Notes for editors

Devon County Council was awarded a four year funding deal of £13,375,751 with a population of 842,313: a per-person allocation of £4 per year.

The six Level 3 authorities received an average per person allocation of £6.60 per year.

If Devon County Council had achieved an allocation of £6.60 per person per year then it would have received an extra £8.8M.