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Liverpool City Region



City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Annual Report May 2025



Content Page:

Introduction	Page 1
Strategic Alignment	Page 3
Programme Update	
Programme Governance	Page 4
Gateway Assurance Process	Page 4
Monitoring and Evaluation	Page 4
Performance Summary	Page 4
Financial Performance	Page 6
Scheme Progress Updates	
LCR Wide	Page 8
Cross River Corridor	Page 10
Mersey Gateway	Page 11
Eastern Gateway	Page 12
Coastal Corridor	Page 13



Introduction

In April 2022, the Liverpool City Region was awarded a City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) of £710m. The funding was awarded to deliver the City Region's five-year capital investment programme, through to financial year 2026/27. Additionally, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) made a commitment to provide £119m of local match funding. As is the LCRCA policy, and in recognition that not all schemes are likely to be developed and delivered within the CRSTS funding window, the pipeline was overprogrammed by £82m.

As of December 2024, all of the LCRCA's CRSTS funding has been allocated to schemes, with £23.6 of overprogramming also approved by the Combined Authority. LCRCA remain committed to developing and funding all schemes within this programme, however the schemes will be prioritised on deliverability within the funding window.

Figure 1: CRSTS Investment Packages

LCR Wide	Cross River Corridor	Mersey Gateway	Eastern Gateway	Coastal Corridor
LCWIP Phase 3 IPEMU - Network Expansion KRN Levelling Up Highways Maintenance Non-Highways Maintenance TCF – Headbolt Lane Station TCF – Active Travel TCF – Hydrogen Buses Smart Ticketing Inaccessible Stations Total Cost: £469.2m	Liverpool Baltic Rail Station Birkenhead Central Gateway St Georges Gateway Cross River Connectivity Reinstatement of Bus Lanes Total Cost: £174.1m	LCWIP Phase 2 Runcorn - Daresbury Runcorn Station Quarter Phase 2 Runcorn Busway Active Travel Corridor East Runcorn Connectivity Green Bus Corridor (86) Total Cost: £81.5m	St Helens Town Centre Multimodal Interchange M57 J4 Active Travel Improvements St Helens Routes to Regeneration Huyton Active Travel Corridor Green Bus Corridor (10a) Total Cost: £92.5m	Southport Eastern Access Stanley Dock Rail Access (Sandhills) Maritime Corridor Green Bus Corridor (53) Total Cost: £70.2m



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As figure 1 (above) shows, our Programme is grouped into five spatially focused investment packages across our city region. These are designed to support the LCRCA's fundamental commitment to building a stronger, fairer, cleaner city region, where no-one is left behind. Our schemes support and reflect the CRSTS objectives of promoting economic growth and productivity, levelling up and decarbonisation.

To enhance the original programme, our November 2023 revised CRSTS programme added the next phase of our Smart Ticketing programme, aimed at supporting an integrated transport network across the region, the next phase of our Accessible Station programme aimed at providing lifts and additional access at Rail stations across the local rail network, and the Reinstatement of Bus Lanes in the city, giving priority to Buses and supporting our Net Zero carbon aspirations. The LCRCA remains committed to improving Bus provision in the city region.

Our schemes prioritise sustainable modes and are being developed using a multi-modal approach. This approach will seek to maximise the benefits for all sustainable modes, not just the mode which is the focus of the intervention. Of our retained schemes, Baltic Rail Station will also deliver highways improvements that prioritise accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and buses on the nearby road network. Our commitment to sustainable modes of travel is further emphasized with the innovative and well used bicycle storage system on the new 777 trains recently rolled out across the Merseyrail network. Our Green Bus Routes will not only consider road reallocation and junction/signal improvements that give priority to Buses over Private cars, but they will also incorporate benefits for pedestrians and cyclists.

With schemes that have an active travel element, we are working closely with Active Travel England to ensure that our infrastructure is Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 compliant, adhering to quality and safety design standards set out in DfT guidance.

The LCRCA and the Metro Mayor are committed to reducing carbon emissions through the promotion of a more efficient, effective and integrated transport network. To this end, our six stage Gateway Assurance process incorporates the need for schemes to demonstrate that from feasibility and concept stage through delivery, the projects clearly demonstrate how they contribute to the net zero aspirations, and that PAS 2080 systems are in place to support this. PAS 2080 is a global standard for managing carbon within the built environment and promotes a commitment carbon reduction throughout the entire project lifecycle.

The legacy impact of the projects which constitute our investment package will be reduced congestion, increased economic output, cleaner air and people living healthier, more active lives.



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Strategic Alignment

Our current pipeline of schemes continues to strongly align with the objectives of CRSTS:

- Delivering growth and productivity.
- Levelling up towards the standards of the best.
- Decarbonising transport and encouraging mode shift.

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Local Authorities are maximising opportunities for active travel and are committed to integrating active travel provision into projects across the transport pipeline. Extensive engagement has taken place with Active Travel England to ensure that cycling infrastructure complies with, and if possible, exceeds the requirements of LTN 1/20.

Gear Change recognised the need for railways to “work better with cyclists”. The “Missing Links” which has been prioritised for delivery within the LCWIP Ph3 project identified a number of gaps in cycling provision between railway stations and high-quality cycle infrastructure. For instance, the high-quality Liverpool Loop Line is just 250m from Broad Green Station but no cycle infrastructure links the two. The delivery of the Missing Links scheme will facilitate multi-modal, sustainable travel.

In addition to enabling sustainable residential and commercial development, increasing productivity through reduced congestion and enabling people to live healthier, active lives, our CRSTS package will also contribute to the success of the City Region’s Freeport. Our package of schemes on the Maritime Corridor will support the movement of people and freight in the vicinity of the Port of Liverpool and we are actively exploring options for other interventions within CRSTS to support the Freeport.

As part of ongoing work to develop a place-based infrastructure pipeline for the city region, LCRCA has developed an innovative collaboration with the University of Liverpool (UoL) as the basis for the development of our CRSTS 2 programme. The work with UoL is helping LCRCA to target interventions to where they are most needed for CRSTS 2, based on a range of socio-economic factors and existing conditions for the residents and businesses of the city region. As part of this LCRCA is also looking at how CRSTS 2 can complement other funding streams coordinated by the organisation and support proposed future developments across the city region. LCRCA continues to work closely with our stakeholders on the development of the CRSTS 2 programme.



Programme Update

Improvements to Programme Governance To alleviate challenges around revenue development funding a number of our larger interventions have been able to draw down up to 10% of the allocated project capital budget when the project has passed Gateway 3 (OBC+) stage. This has allowed the schemes to progress to approval and delivery.

Gateway Assurance process Has been implemented, with all approved projects having passed through the strategic Gateway 3 stage, allowing the CA to prioritise our currently overprogrammed pipeline. The Gateway process assesses projects at key stages across the project lifecycle, and provides assurance to the SIF Governance Framework, reduces risk and increases the likelihood that projects are delivered to time, cost and quality.

Monitoring and Evaluation An overarching CRSTS programme level evaluation will be carried out in line with the M&E plan submitted with the Business Case. Within the Combined Authority, a dedicated Transport Monitoring and Evaluation Officer supports M&E across the CRSTS programme. This Officer was involved in the Gateway process to ensure that as schemes were developed all M&E considerations and requirements were fundamental to the scheme programme and delivery plans. Work is now underway to commence commissioning and delivery of M&E activity to support both the programme level evaluation and the national evaluation. This includes development of baseline monitoring data for all schemes, and delivery of interim programme evaluation.

Performance Summary The third year of the CRSTS programme has seen a significant number of our schemes enter the delivery phase, and progress has continued on the development of others. At a programme level, the vast majority of schemes approved by the Combined Authority have now moved into delivery with a funding agreement in place.

At the end of 2022/23 we began delivery of the Queensway Tunnel Decarbonisation project, as part of our KRN package of works. This involves the retrofit of LED lighting in the Queensway Tunnel which runs between Birkenhead and Liverpool. This project is now complete and the upgraded lighting will contribute to a significant reduction in carbon emissions from the tunnel. This aligns with the Combined Authority's wider net zero ambitions.



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Our Rail Network is a key strategic asset to the City Region, and we are investing heavily in expanding access to our railway stations. Headbolt Lane Rail Station was opened to the public in October 2023. This station was outside the current Merseyrail Network and would have required an extension to the existing 3rd Rail infrastructure. LCRCA took the innovative decision to use the first battery powered trains on the network. We are now operating 4 trains per hour on this route, and the use of battery power here, has allowed LCRCA to consider the possibilities for extending the reach of our rail network outside of the City Region. The scheme will be completed following the completion of landscaping works and installation of EV charging points which are expected to be delivered in 25/26.

Baltic Station is the next major rail scheme in our ambitious programme. Work on Baltic Station is progressing well. This is a retained scheme which obtained approval from the Combined Authority in September 2024, and the FBC has been submitted to DfT. The scheme obtained planning permission from Liverpool City Council in April 2025 and is now rapidly moving towards the construction phase of the project.

Our commitment to making the region's rail network fully accessible is entering the next phase, following on from the four stations delivered with Transforming Cities funding. After securing match funding as part of DfT's CP7, two schemes have now had their detailed designs completed, with funding agreements in place with the schemes' sponsor. Our drive to improve the accessibility of our rail network is complemented by our industry leading initiative of providing universal level boarding across the devolved Merseyrail network, which strengthens the rationale for the provision of step free access between the street and platforms at all stations.

Detailed design is progressing for our 10A Green Bus Route and the scheme has passed Gateway 3. Work on Green Bus Routes 53 and 86 have been paused whilst we focus on the main approach to Liverpool city centre between Lime Street and Low Hill (10A route). Our new Hydrogen Buses have experienced significant challenges in terms of sourcing an affordable supply of hydrogen. This is a nationwide challenge due to the immaturity of the UK's hydrogen supply industry, with the current price of hydrogen approximately four times the anticipated price. We continue to liaise with the bus manufacturer regarding the operational effectiveness of our fleet.

Our ambitious LCR Cycle Network plan aims to create a 600km high quality active travel network. Our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is now entering the 3rd Phase, with Phase 2 expected to be completed by autumn 2025. Phase 1 saw a number of interventions across our region, including 18.35km of new/improved cycle paths and 18.15ha of improved habitat. Phase 2 is due to complete by September 2025 and connects Runcorn with Sci-Tech Park Daresbury, adding another 6.2km of new cycleway and 3.1km of improvements to existing routes. LCWIP Phase 3 is currently in development and has prioritised the Liverpool - Childwall, St Helens to Widnes and Missing Links projects.

Our maintenance and Key Route Network (KRN) programmes are underway in each of our boroughs. The City Region's KRN is a number of main arterial roads across the six boroughs and works on Wirral's KRN package are now completed, with good progress being made across our other five Local Authority areas. Some individual projects with the KRN packages have been completed in the past year.

Our priority over the next 12 months is to finalise funding agreements for the few remaining schemes that have been approved but not yet contracted, as well as bringing about the practical completion of a number of schemes that are currently in delivery. Those schemes that have not made the £710m allocation will continue to be developed with a view to receiving future funding. We are committed to continuing the development of all schemes in our current pipeline.

Financial Performance

The LCRCA's CRSTS five-year allocation of £710m has now been fully allocated. In addition to the £710m LCRCA has approved a further £23.6m of overprogramming.

For years 2022/23, 2023/24 & 2024/25 of the programme, the total grant received from DfT was £424m. The LCRCA has incurred expenditure of £266m in this period. With the vast majority of schemes now contracted we are expecting expenditure to ramp up over the next twelve months as more schemes move into delivery. The LCRCA remains confident that the full allocation of £710m will be spent by the end of 2026/27, particularly as a large number of approved schemes will be moving into the construction phase in 2025/26.

Figure 2 below shows the LCR Total programme by Strategic Investment Packages, and the expenditure incurred for financial years 2022/23, 2023/24 & 2024/25, and the progressive, projected expenditure for the next two financial years.

Figure 2: LCRCA Summary Financial Position at March 2025

Summary	Total Programme	Budget to Date	Spend to Date	Forecast 25/26	Forecast 26/27	Forecast 27/28
	£m's	£m's	£m's	£m's	£m's	£m's
LCR Wide	469.20	274.05	235.20	190.81	43.19	-
Cross River Corridor	174.11	17.55	11.22	29.82	90.71	42.36
Mersey Gateway	81.52	12.96	10.19	8.17	63.16	-
Eastern Gateway	92.47	23.84	4.86	6.54	81.07	-
Coastal Corridor	70.20	9.15	4.36	15.70	50.14	-
Total	887.50	337.55	265.83	251.04	328.27	42.36



Figure 3 below, shows the expenditure incurred to date against the overall programme.

Figure 3: LCRCRA Project Expenditure to March 2025

LCRCA Programme	Total Programme £m's	Capital Expenditure to Date £m's	Development Expenditure to Date £m's
LCWIP Phase 3	32.31		0.18
IPEMU	61.00		0.07
Key Route Network Levelling Up	49.20	24.19	
TCF Final Year Headbolt	57.20	54.64	
TCF Final Year Active Travel	3.80	3.59	
TCF Final Year Hydrogen Buses	13.50	12.53	
Smart Ticketing	9.78	2.91	
Inaccessible Stations	9.45	0.58	0.14
Highways Maintenance	221.69	128.26	
Non Highways Maintenance	11.27	8.48	
Liverpool Baltic Rail Station	100.00	6.1	
Birkenhead Central Gateway	33.38		3.01
St Georges Gateway	18.32		0.44
Reinstatement of LCC Bus Lanes	7.35		
Cross River Connectivity	15.06	5.11	
Green Bus Corridor Route 86	15.31		
LCWIP phase 2 (Runcorn - Daresbury)	5.90	2.04	
Runcorn Station Quarter Phase 2 - Station Rebuild	14.87	0.14	
Runcorn Busway Active Travel Corridor	15.27	0.76	
East Runcorn Connectivity	30.17	7.26	2.87
Green Bus Corridor Route 10A	28.51	2.5	
St Helens Town Centre Multimodal Interchange	28.31	1.15	
M57 J4 Active Travel Improvements	12.27	0.61	
St Helens Routes to Regeneration	10.13	0.37	0.59
Huyton Active Travel Corridor	13.25	0.23	
Green Bus Corridor Route 53	25.31		
Southport Eastern Access	17.11	2.82	
Stanley Dock Rail Access (Sandhills)	6.27	0.34	
Maritime Corridor	21.51	1.19	
Total Programme	887.50	265.83	7.31

LCR Wide		
Project Title	Description	Progress Update
LCWIP Phase 3	Delivery of the third phase of high-quality walking and cycling network in line with the LCWIP, LTN 1/20 compliant active travel connectivity, Access for All and Green Bus Routes across the City Region.	Three key packages have been prioritised. The Liverpool - Childwall route has completed our Gateway 3 process, it has undergone public consultation and has local support for the planned phasing of the route. St Helens - Widnes is a cross authority boundary scheme that is undergoing development with the St Helens element having passed Gateway 3. The Missing Links package has identified 11 routes across the City Region to be further developed.
IPEMU	Expansion of the IPEMU project to fit Merseyrail trains with battery technology to enable services to run beyond the end of the existing network, enabling the new 777 Class Rolling stock to be deployed on a range of routes.	Options appraisal for route selection complete. Local approvals under way for preferred options, with SOC development the next stage. Work shared from partners around work that's already been done. Network Rail are carrying out a strategic study on routes.
Key Route Network Levelling Up	These packages seek to raise infrastructure standards for sustainable travel modes. They include improvements to various roads/routes and structures across our network	Each of the delivery Partners have made real progress in the third year of CRSTS. The Queensway Tunnel decarbonisation project has been completed. The Wirral decarbonisation and maintenance works on their KRN are also complete. Knowsley's KRN programme has seen their Roby Road and M62 flood prevention works completed, with significant progress made on the Higher Road Active Travel Phase 1 & 2 works, both expected to be finished off in Q1 25/26. Sefton have delivered the carriageway resurfacing element of their KRN package in full. Liverpool's KRN works are progressing through design phases currently with a number of their projects expected to commence construction in this financial year. Halton's Delph Lane works are expected to be completed by the end of 2025.
Highways Maintenance	A series of maintenance packages will deliver key improvements to the city region's highway network and transport systems.	The first year of delivery was hampered by delays in mobilisation of resources, since then each of our Authorities have established programmes and are working to schedule. We are working flexibly within these programmes to maximise delivery.
Non Highways Maintenance	This is a supporting maintenance programme that will improve the MCAs ferry, bus and rail assets.	

TCF Final Year Headbolt Lane	A new Rail Station at Headbolt Lane in North Liverpool, this station extends the Merseyrail network and introduces the use of Battery powered trains	The station was opened to the public in October 2023, with the introduction of the 1st battery powered trains on our network. The service has now increased to 4 trains per hour, and has allowed the extension of our current network without the need to install 3rd rail infrastructure. Scheme expected to be complete by summer 2026 once train reliability issues have been resolved and landscaping and EV charging point works have been wrapped up.
TCF Final Year Active Travel	Delivery of high-quality walking and cycling network in line with our LCWIP, LTN 1/20 compliant active travel connectivity across the City Region.	Works completed.
TCF Final Year Hydrogen Buses	Provision of 20 hydrogen buses on the Liverpool – St Helens 10A corridor, which will provide a high-quality passenger journey with significantly reduced carbon emissions.	All vehicles have been delivered to the LCRCA. No long-term viable fuel source has been identified to date. The price of hydrogen is a national challenge faced by all operators presently. The LCRCA continues to liaise with the bus manufacturer over the operational effectiveness of the fleet of buses.
Smart Ticketing	Proposal to fund a tap and go ticketing solution for use across the Merseyrail rail network, acting as a single operator, single mode ticketing solution. Aims to achieve the wider vision for a multi modal, multi operator tap and go ticketing solution, which is being considered at a national level.	Project was approved in December '23. Delay to commencement as previous phase of works (funded by TCF) will not be complete until near the end of 2025. Progress has been made on the TCF works to enable this CRSTS funded work to begin, there should be no delay in moving immediately to the CRSTS phase when the TCF phase is completed.
Inaccessible Stations	To install new fully accessible lifts at several LCRCA Rail Stations.	Obtained CA approval in November 2024 for Aigburth and Rock Ferry stations. Gateway 4 has been passed. Grant Funding Agreement expected to be signed in April 2025.

Cross River Corridor		
Project Title	Description	Progress Update
Liverpool Baltic Rail Station	Delivery of a new rail station in the Baltic Triangle area of Liverpool with a 15-minute peak time frequency which provides direct rail access to the city centre's growing creative and digital cluster. Additional Active Travel improvements to the main roads connecting the station	GRIP 4 is complete, and work has commenced on GRIP 5. CA approval now obtained. DfT is to review the submitted full business case for the scheme as it is >£50m in value. Planning permission was granted in April 2025, which was a major milestone.
Birkenhead Central Gateway	LTN 1/20 compliant new and upgraded walking and cycling links. Supports sustainable access to key regeneration sites in central Birkenhead.	Development work is progressing. RIBA Stage 3 is underway. Traffic Modelling for the area is complete, and the project is expected to come to the CA for approval in the next few months. The transport element of the works was approved at CA in September with planning application including infrastructure works approved in January 2025. Development has continued on the Dock branch Park South element which has passed Gateway 3. This is now expected to continue in CRSTS 2.
St Georges Gateway	LTN 1/20 compliant new and upgraded walking and cycling links which will link the city centre with Childwall	Gateway 3 has been approved, with Capital development funding released. The project has moved into detailed design stage. The route is split onto 3 phases to aid with the delivery programme
Reinstatement of LCC Bus Lanes	To reintroduce Bus Lanes on key strategic routes in the city to support the Green Bus programme of works	This is being considered and incorporated into the development proposals for Bus Reform and Green Bus Routes, and where appropriate other multi modal projects
Cross River Connectivity	Introduction of new tolling system at Kingsway Tunnel. Removal and reconfiguration of supporting infrastructure.	Early contractor involvement underway to inform strategy for works. Expected to take place across CRSTS 1 and CRSTS 2 due to scale and complexity (as per rebaselining) however the Mersey Tunnels Tolls Technology Refresh scheme was approved by the CA in December 2024 so this will be delivered within the CRSTS 1 window. Works expected to begin in April 2025, funding agreement close to completion.

Mersey Gateway		
Project Title	Description	Progress Update
Green Bus Corridor Route 86	A Green Bus Corridor in Liverpool with faster and more reliable journey times, enhanced journey quality and ticketing.	Tender brief for preliminary design is being prepared. Work underway to agree scope with local authorities. Project will likely be funded in CRSTS 2
LCWIP phase 2 (Runcorn - Daresbury)	LTN 1/20 compliant active travel route connecting Runcorn with Sci-Tech Daresbury.	Majority of works are now completed including cycleway and crossings however outstanding metroactive signage output requires signage to be manufactured, programme developed and implementation. Scheme will be completed summer 2025.
Runcorn Station Quarter Phase 2 - Station Rebuild	A rebuild of Runcorn Station building with enhanced active travel links connecting to Runcorn.	Gateway 3 approval was achieved and the project has received a further £1.4M to take development works to GRIP 4, this is expected to take approximately 12 months to complete
Runcorn Busway Active Travel Corridor	Repurposing a bus-only corridor to include active travel, linking Runcorn to major housing developments and employment zones.	Scheme has passed gateway 3 with Riverside Housing works obtaining approval from the Combined Authority in November 2024. A funding agreement has been shared with the sponsor for review and signature for these elements of the works. Business case for Halton Council elements will still be developed in the meantime with a view to securing future funding should it become available, a further £1.2m of development funding has been allocated for this element. This element of the programme is likely to be delivered in CRSTS 2.
East Runcorn Connectivity	An integrated cycle network of LTN 1/20 compliant routes connecting communities, businesses and major multimodal interchanges.	In delivery, works commenced in September 2024. Works on one side of carriageway have been completed, traffic management switchover has taken place. Phase 2 Active Travel routes in development.

Eastern Gateway		
Project Title	Description	Progress Update
Green Bus Corridor Route 10A	Delivery of a new Green Bus Corridor between Liverpool and St Helens offering faster and more reliable journey times, enhanced journey quality and ticketing.	Detailed design progressing, gateway 3 passed. Delays have occurred due to resourcing challenges. This project is progressing, with a GFA currently being drafted and reviewed. The project has a better defined scope with a greater emphasis on incorporating active travel and is going to be 10a Lime Street – Low Hill.
St Helens Town Centre Multimodal Interchange	Multimodal intervention in St Helens town centre. Enhancements to the bus station area.	Project was approved at July CA. With a funding agreement signed in March 25. Works are currently underway on the Temporary Bust Station which is expected to open to the public in May 25 allowing construction works to start on the new Interchange.
M57 J4 Active Travel Improvements	Delivery of high-quality walking and cycling network in line with our LCWIP, LTN 1/20 compliant. Connecting Knowsley and Liverpool across M57 J4.	Phase 1 works started on site in late February 2025, Phase 2 due to go to Gateway 4 soon with a view to this being funded through CRSTS 1 if funding becomes available, phase 2 works would begin as soon as phase 1 is completed.
St Helens Routes to Regeneration	Improved LTN 1/20 compliant active travel connectivity between St Helens town centre and Cowley Hill development site.	Project was given CA approval in September and a full grant funding agreement signed in March. SHMBC have entered into contract with site developer and site investigations have commenced. Remediation works are expected to start in the next quarter, followed by highways construction.
Huyton Active Travel Corridor	Improved LTN 1/20 compliant active travel connectivity between Huyton and local employment sites, including Active travel provision at Tarbock Island	Scheme has passed Gateway 4 and received approval from the CA in November. Grant Funding Agreement has been shared with sponsor for signature, final costings for Wilson Road element of scheme to be determined.

Coastal Corridor		
Project Title	Description	Progress Update
Green Bus Corridor Route 53	Delivery of a new Green Bus Corridor between Liverpool and Sefton providing faster and more reliable journey times, enhanced journey quality and ticketing.	Tender brief for preliminary design is being prepared. Work underway to agree scope with local authorities. Project will likely be funded in CRSTS 2
Southport Eastern Access	Interconnected series of active travel measures and highway network improvements to prioritise walking and cycling modes	The project was approved at September CA and a grant funding agreement was signed in January 2025. Works have started on site in March 2025.
Stanley Dock Rail Access (Sandhills)	Expansion of station capacity at Sandhills to support the development of Liverpool Waters.	The project was approved at CA in November, we are currently awaiting the formal sign off of GRIP 4 and 5 from Network Rail. A grant funding agreement has been drawn up and is awaiting signature. Some enabling works have started on site with full construction expected to start in May. The project is still expected to be completed prior to the opening of the new Bramley Moor stadium for the 25/26 Premier League season.
Maritime Corridor	Series of active travel measures on the KRN designed to improve access to and through South Sefton	Phase 1 of the project was approved at CA in June and has been on site since November 2024. Works are progressing well with approval gained and funding agreement in place for phase 2 of the project to be delivered following the completion of phase 1.