

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRAVEL STRATEGY

Part A – What is a Sustainable School Travel Strategy?



2007-2011

What is Sustainable Travel?

Sustainable Travel is the use of those modes of transport that are less damaging to the environment and that contribute the least to increased road congestion.

It includes walking, cycling, and the use of public transport. Car sharing is also considered to be a sustainable mode of travel; for instance, where public transport options are not available.

Why encourage Sustainable Travel?

It is estimated that up to 20% of peak hour traffic is engaged in a "School Run". Increased use of Sustainable Transport by school children would cut peak hour congestion and help reduce CO2 emissions.

Increasingly, school children are being driven to and from school; rather than walking, cycling or taking a bus. Increased use of Sustainable Transport would increase the amount of exercise our young people receive, giving health benefits. The Chief Medical Officers' report 'At least five a week' demonstrated the health benefits of walking and cycling to school. More recently the Centre for Transport Studies and UCL published 'Making children's lives more active' which showed that walking to school accounts for more physical activity for children than two hours a week of physical education (PE).

What does a Sustainable School Travel Strategy contain?

The Sustainable School Travel Plan Strategy is a document that draws together these duties, illustrates the progress made to date with regards the promotion of sustainable travel, and summarises the main initiatives being undertaken to reduce traffic associated with school activities. It is a resource of information of use to parents, schools, and the wider Derbyshire public.

This Strategy applies to all children of statutory school age and young people of 6th form age. It includes those residents in Derbyshire and those travelling into the county from outside to receive education or training. It relates to journeys to and from institutions at the start and end of the day (including pre and after school activities), and journeys between institutions during the day.

A Sustainable School Travel Strategy is made up of four main elements;

- an **Assessment** of the travel and transport **needs** of children, and young people within the authority's area,
- an **Audit of** the sustainable travel and transport **infrastructure** within the authority that may be used when travelling to and from, or between schools/institutions,
- a **Strategy** to develop the sustainable travel and transport **infrastructure** within the authority so that the travel and transport needs of children and young people are better catered for, and,
- the **Promotion** of sustainable travel and transport modes on the journey to, from, and between schools and other institutions.

The **Assessment** and **Audit** of travel and transport needs and infrastructure are given in the Section; *What is the situation in Derbyshire?*

The **Strategy** to develop sustainable travel and transport infrastructure is given in the Section; *What will happen in Derbyshire in the Future?*

Details of the **Promotion** of sustainable travel and transport modes are given in the Section; *What do parents need to know?*

The four elements of the Strategy are not independent of each other. They interrelate, and these linkages are clearly highlighted within the document. In particular, the Assessment and Audit components inform the overall Strategy, and the Promotion options resulting from that Strategy.

The Strategy is not a static document. It is designed to be updated regularly as new data becomes available and new initiatives are developed. At a minimum, a revised version of the Strategy will be published annually, at the end of August each year.

Why produce a Strategy?

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 extends local authority duties and powers relating to home to school transport. As part of these duties, local authorities are required to assess the travel and transport needs of all pupils, and promote sustainable travel to school.

In addition, the Education (School Information) (England) Regulations 2002, amended with effect from 1st June 2007, require local authorities to publish their Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy on their web-site by 31 August each year.

It is recognised in the above Acts that the provision and responsibility for school services can be spread across many departments within an Authority. The Sustainable School Travel Strategy aims to integrate information from across a range of departments, as is illustrated by Figure A1, below.

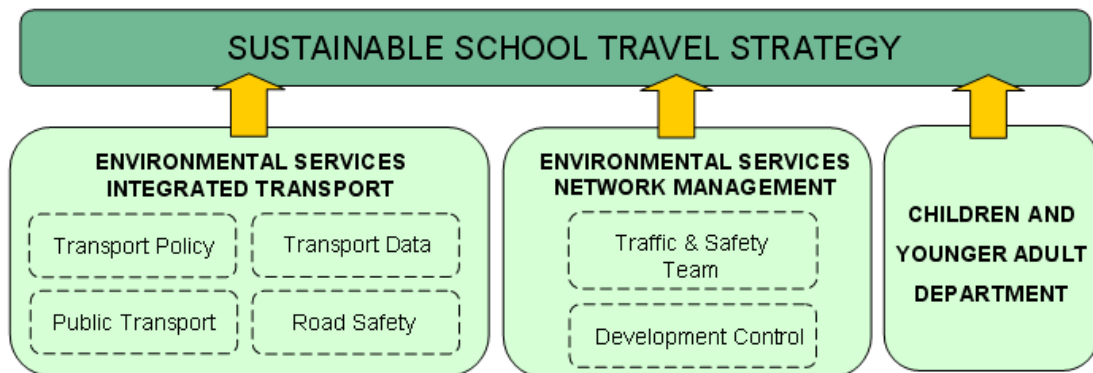


Figure A1: Derbyshire County Council Departments involved in the Strategy

What is the relationship between School Travel Plans and the Sustainable School Travel Strategy?

It is a requirement of Central Government that, by 2010, all schools within England and Wales will have produced a School Travel Plan.

School Travel Plans (STP) are the main method of facilitating and promoting sustainable school travel in Derbyshire. The County Council is responsible for developing School Travel Plans within the county boundary, but excluding the City of Derby.

School Travel Plans contain an examination of the school’s transport setting (i.e. identifying barriers to sustainable transport options etc.), and set out options for improvements based on a Travel Survey of both staff and students at an individual school. As such, they deal with issues and opportunities specific to a particular school setting, and are written in by an individual school, supported by Derbyshire County Council.

Information from the individual School Travel Plans has been collated and analysed to inform the County-wide Sustainable School Travel Strategy. As such, the Strategy has been built from the ground-up – it is built on a foundation of local issues and opportunities; as is illustrated in Figure A2.

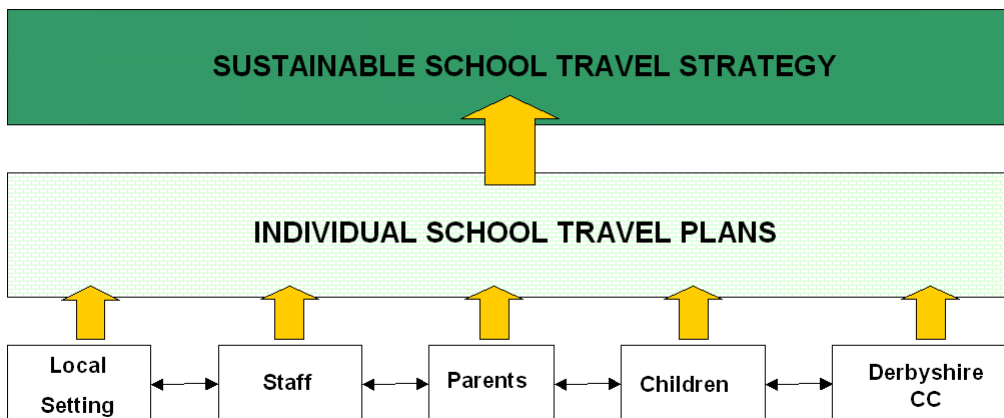


Figure A2: Relationship between School Travel Plans and the Strategy

However, notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that many of the School Travel Plans that have already been completed within Derbyshire were written prior to the requirement for a Sustainable School Travel Strategy. As such, some of the data required for the Strategy was not collected in a form suitable for ready manipulation into an overall Derbyshire dataset. This is being addressed as part of the planned updating cycle for each Travel Plan.

What is the relationship between School Travel Plans and the Local Transport Plan (LTP)?

Derbyshire County Council produces a Local Transport Plan (LTP), the latest of which covers the 5 year period to 2011. A separate plan, known as the Derby Joint LTP covers Derby City and the immediately adjacent areas of the County.

The County Council’s Transport Objectives, as set out in these plans, are in line with those in the Government’s Transport White Paper, ‘Tomorrows Roads Safer for Everyone’ and seek to promote an integrated transport policy that tackles congestion and pollution, promotes more sustainable travel and reduces the number of road casualties.

The County Council’s aims also follow those set out in the National DfES/DfT Travelling to School Initiative and ‘Travelling to School – An Action Plan’.

The Derbyshire LTP has five Transport priorities, as is shown in Figure A3, below.



Figure A3: The Five Priorities in the Derbyshire Local Transport Plan (LTP2)

School Travel Plans are seen as an important tool to achieve the above Priorities; particularly in reducing congestion outside schools, improving safety and encouraging healthier travel choices. As such, initiatives identified within School Travel Plans are put forward for potential LTP funding.

Summary

The development of a Sustainable School Travel Strategy is a requirement of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

It had been developed from School Travel Plans, which are themselves important tools of the Derbyshire Local Transport Plan.

The Strategy is a resource to encourage more sustainable travel to school within Derbyshire.