

# **Middlesbrough Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy**

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# 1 Background to the Strategy

## What is Sustainable Travel?

Sustainable travel refers to any means of transport that is 'green' and has low impact on the environment. Examples include walking, cycling, public transport, and car-sharing.

The value of sustainable travel has long been recognised and supported in Middlesbrough, but now receives broader political support from the Government. Sustainable travel provides solutions to a number of key problems by reducing traffic congestion and pollution to actively promoting health and wellbeing.



In order to promote and assist informed travel choices, the Council has adopted a hierarchy of highway users (shown in the diagram on the left).

This hierarchy will be at the heart of everything the Council does as the Highway Authority and will help to identify the different themes, which will be addressed through the implementation of this Strategy.

The Middlesbrough Local Implementation Plan (LIP) identifies opportunities for overlap between different modes of transport to ensure seamless accessibility. For example, walking and cycling routes will connect to public transport infrastructure at key interchanges, at which higher quality interchange facilities will be introduced. The following Action Plan sets out how this strategy will contribute towards the objectives of the LIP as well as toward the priorities in the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) and the Council's Strategic Plan.

Middlesbrough Council has a duty under section 508A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to produce on an annual basis a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS). This strategy is part of a wider package of duties in relation to home to school travel and transport.

The intention of the SMoTS is to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to children and young people of compulsory school age who travel to receive education or training in the Borough of Middlesbrough. The key journeys to be considered are those to and from institutions where education or training is delivered.

## 2 Policy Context

### National Context

#### ***Education and Inspections Act 2006***

Section 508A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a general duty on local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport. There are five main elements to the duty which local authorities must undertake:

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's area 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 best catered for.

The promotion of sustainable travel and transport modes on the journey to, from, and between schools and other institutions.

The publication of Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS).

The Act defines sustainable modes of travel as those that the local authority considers may improve the physical well-being of those who use them, the environmental well-being of all or part of the local authority's area, or a combination of the two.

#### ***Department of Transport Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2017***

The 2015 Infrastructure Act has placed a duty of the Secretary of State to produce a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) on a regular basis to indicate objectives and resources for cycling and walking. The first of these, produced in 2017, was the result of extensive consultation.

The ambition for CWIS is:

*“To make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey.”*

Key objectives include doubling cycling, reversing the decline in walking activity, reducing the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured and increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school.

The Strategy will guide future Government investment through funding programmes including the Bikeability Fund, Cycle Ambition Cities, Highways England funding streams and the Access Fund.

Linked to the Strategy the Government has been working with local bodies on developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP's). It is intended that these plans will reflect a strategic approach to increasing cycling and walking.

### ***Door to Door Strategy 2013***

Produced by the Department of Transport this strategy recommends that accurate, accessible and reliable information is made available for sustainable transport options. It also recommends affordable tickets, regular connections and safe, comfortable transport facilities.

### ***Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon 2011***

This Department for Transport White Paper aims to encourage sustainable local travel and economic growth by making public transport, cycling and walking more attractive and effective, promoting lower carbon transport and tackling local road congestion. School travel is a key aspect in achieving this.

### ***The National Infrastructure Plan 2010***

The National Infrastructure Plan aims to support sustainable economic growth and tackle climate change. The promotion and development of sustainable travel to schools and educational establishments is a major priority in achieving this aim.

## **Regional Context**

### ***Tees Valley Cycling Strategy***

The Tees Valley Cycling Strategy highlights the need for both 'hard' and 'soft' measures to improve accessibility to cycling, allowing individual members of the public to make informed travel and lifestyle choices. The Strategy also highlights the importance of cycling in meeting national, regional and local objectives for the environment, social improvement, health care and the economy, as well as providing the Sub-Regional context within which this Strategy has been developed.

### ***Tees Valley Combined Authority***

The Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) was created in April 2016 and chaired by an elected Mayor in 2017. It is a partnership of five authorities; Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-On-Tees, working closely with the Local Enterprise Partnership, wider business community and other partners to make local decisions to support the growth of the Tees Valley economy. Under the devolution deal with Government, TVCA are taking on responsibilities previously held by Westminster and Whitehall; for transport, infrastructure, skills, business investment, housing and culture and tourism.

TVCA have played a role in co-ordinating sustainable transport work throughout the Tees Valley including co-ordinating bids for funding from such as the Access Fund (AF) and Local Growth Fund (LGF).

## ***Tees Valley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)***

As part of the National Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy the Department for Transport (DfT) initiated a programme of LCWIP's with the overall intention of providing a long term approach to developing walking and cycling networks. In 2018 a number of areas were selected to pilot the development of these new documents, Tees Valley being one.

As a result TVCA and the 5 Tees Valley Local Authorities have been working with a DfT advisory group to produce the first LCWIP for the Tees Valley. The resulting LCWIP will highlight 'cycling corridors' and 'walking zones' and will help serve to guide future investment. The draft Tees Valley LCWIP was completed in summer 2019, and works continue to develop this work stream.

### Local Context

Middlesbrough is at the heart of the 'city centre' region, surrounded by the neighbouring local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton Borough Councils.

Middlesbrough Council's Strategic Plan sets out a number of priorities designed to promote the future prosperity of the town and its people.

These priorities are grouped into three overarching themes:

- People / Social Regeneration
- Place / Physical Regeneration
- Business

The Middlesbrough Council impending Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sets out how the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) will be delivered, and sets out the integral role that transport will play in delivering these priorities. It sets out how the partner organisations and stakeholders will improve and invest in the transport network to make the vision a reality.

The STP is aimed at people living and working in Tees Valley, as well as business owners, developers, Government, partner organisations and investors. The plan can be found in section 5.

This plan has six specific objectives:

- Reduce the number and severity of casualties on the Borough's highway network.
- Minimise congestion and manage traffic flow on the highway network, and improve highway network reliability and resilience.
- Improve local air quality.
- Remove transport as a barrier to accessing jobs, education and training, leisure and retail opportunities.

- Provide targeted interventions and measures to assist mode shift and allow.
- Highway users to make informed travel choices.

### **3 Middlesbrough Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy Vision and Aims**

Our vision for sustainable travel to schools in Middlesbrough is to increase the number of children and young people walking, cycling or using public transport. We want to see a reduction in car journeys and everyone to enjoy the resulting benefits of better health, reduced congestion and an improved environment. We want all journeys to be safe in particular reducing fatal and serious casualties.

#### ***Aims***

The Middlesbrough SMOtS has been developed in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and using current Government guidance. It updates previous work and aims to link to wider strategies and visions that consider travel and transport.

The key project areas of relevance are;

- Assessing travel and transport needs of children and young people
- Auditing the infrastructure to support sustainable school travel
- Identifying an action plan to develop infrastructure to support the travel needs of pupils
- Implementing the action plan in order to increase sustainable travel options to and from schools and educational establishments

### **4 Key Project Areas with Summary of Objectives, Progress and Future Actions**

The four key Project Areas indicated above have been broken down into individual objectives with a summary of progress and actions for 2019/20 for each objective.

In summarising progress and defining future actions it must be stressed that Middlesbrough Council has had to undergo a significant amount of restructuring and budget cuts since 2010. This situation is unlikely to change in the near future. The effect of these cuts has been to seriously limit the capacity of the Council to address some of the objectives detailed below.

In addition, the Council has had to bring in external funding to support a lot of its work through such as Government grant schemes. Whilst this funding is vital, it is also time limited and cannot be guaranteed in the future. Therefore for the purposes of this plan, objectives being addressed through externally funded programmes are highlighted thus:

## **Assessing Travel and Transport Needs of Children and Young People**

### *Summary of Objectives*

- To support schools in the production of School Travel Plans for every school and educational establishment in Middlesbrough.
- To undertake surveys and research to help assess travel and transport needs
- To maintain and extend partnerships with relevant local and regional stakeholders in order to promote sustainable travel
- To integrate sustainable travel within the planning process.

### *Progress and Actions for 2020/21*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions for 2020/21</b>
To support the production of School Travel Plans for every school and educational establishment in Middlesbrough.	The Council's Road Safety Team previously worked with every school to develop a School Travel Plan to identify barriers of sustainable modes of transport and put in place a package of measures to address them.	The Road Safety Team will continue to provide advice and support to schools who wish to update their School Travel plan.
To maintain and extend partnerships with relevant local and regional stakeholders in order to promote sustainable travel.	The Council's Integrated Transport Unit ensures that the Council meets its statutory obligations for eligible school transport, in particular - transport arrangements which support social mobility and independence.	The internal co-ordination work will continue.
	Sustainable Travel is represented on all key transport forums across Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley.	Continue to provide a representation for sustainable travel on all key transport forums across Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley.
To integrate sustainable travel within the planning process.	Sustainable Travel is represented within the planning process in Middlesbrough, which includes commenting on individual planning applications and inputting into strategic planning developments.	Continue to input comments and observations relating to sustainable travel into the planning process including on strategic schemes affecting Middlesbrough.

## **Audit of Infrastructure to Support Sustainable School Travel**

### *Summary of Objectives*

- To provide or signpost activities that support sustainable travel, for example cycle training, car sharing and cycle parking.
- To promote personal safety when travelling to schools and educational establishments including safe streets and measures to tackle poor behaviour on school buses.

- To provide transport arrangements for children with special educational needs.

*Progress and Actions for 2020/21*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions for 2020/21</b>
To provide or signpost activities that support sustainable travel, for example walking, cycle training, car sharing and cycle parking.	The Road Safety team offer a Bikeability level 1 and 2 cycle training package for schools.	Continue the programme of Bikeability training for schools in 2020/21. Secure funding for further Bikeability training after April 2021.
	The Council has supported the development of 'walking buses' at local schools.	Continue to support walking bus projects, both ones already established and provide assistance with creating new.
	The Road Safety Team provide safe travel and sustainable travel advice for all year groups in Primary and Secondary schools.	Continue to provide this advice.
	The Road Safety Team provides the educational resource Move On Up magazine for students in their year 6 transition year.	Subject to securing funding, the Road Safety team will continue to provide this resource.
To promote personal safety when travelling to schools and educational establishments including safe streets and measures to tackle poor behaviour on school buses.	The Council's Passenger Transport Service provide home to school transport. The team have robust operational procedures that can identify and attend to issues of poor behaviour.	Continue the current system overseen by the Council's Passenger Transport Service
	The Road Safety Team work closely with wider Council teams on issues of safety, including illegal parking enforcement.	Continue the current arrangement.
	The Council operates a School Crossing Patrol (SCP) service across 28 SCP sites. The management and operation of the SCP service enables the Road Safety team to have a good understanding and awareness of transport issues at individual schools.	Continue to operate a School Crossing Patrol service, including carrying out regular reviews to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.
	The Road Safety Team has managed a Safer Routes to Schools initiative leading to projects that addressed specific concerns, such as installing new light controlled road crossings.	Subject to resource availability continue to develop projects that contribute to Safer Routes to Schools.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions for 2020/21</b>
To promote personal safety when travelling to schools and educational establishments including safe streets and measures to tackle poor behaviour on school buses (cont'd).	The Road Safety team has undertaken an extensive programme of Road Safety Education to pupils in schools across Middlesbrough. Projects were designed to help improve safety, encourage physical activity and bring environmental benefits	Subject to resource availability continue to provide Road Safety advice
	The Road Safety team was able to increase Child Pedestrian Training (CPT) to three sessions in 2018 via external funding. This was targeted to Year 3 and also provides advice to other year groups. The training is delivered in partnership with Middlesbrough Environment City.	Complete Year 3 of the Access Fund supported CPT project for Middlesbrough and secure funding for future years.
	Middlesbrough Council Road Safety Team offer Junior Road Safety Officer (JRSO) scheme to all primary schools.	Schools will be offered the opportunity to join again in coming years.
To provide transport arrangements for children with special educational needs.	The Council's Passenger Transport Service provide transport services for children with special educational needs including buses that can carry wheelchairs.	Continue the current arrangement
	The Council's Passenger Transport Service provide an Independent Travel Training (ITT) service to assist those in need of travel support	Continue the current ITT provision

### ***Strategies to Develop Infrastructure to Support the Travel Needs of Pupils***

#### *Summary of Objectives*

- To write and update action plans that aim to improve the sustainable travel infrastructure in Middlesbrough.
- To secure and manage funding for programmes that invest in the public transport, cycling and walking network

#### *Progress and Actions for 2020/21*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions for 2020/21</b>
To update action plans that aim to improve the sustainable travel infrastructure in Middlesbrough.	The Middlesbrough Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy was updated in 2020, taking on previous work in this area.	Review and update the Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions for 2020/21</b>
To update action plans that aim to improve the sustainable travel infrastructure in Middlesbrough (cont'd).	Middlesbrough Council local cycling plan provides an overview of all aspects of cycling; infrastructure, associated facilities and training. It includes proposals for future investment and is a continually developing document and is available on the Council's website, please see section 5.	Continue to update and implement the Middlesbrough Cycling Development Plan including receiving new ideas and linking it to the developing LCWIP initiative (see below).
	The Council has contributed to the pilot Tees Valley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This is highlighting key 'cycling corridors' and 'walking zones'. It is a new initiative linked to the Government's Walking and Cycling Investment Strategy.	Continue to secure funding to support works to make improvements. This work will be carried out in conjunction with TVCA and include exploring funding from the Tees Valley Transforming Cities Fund (TCF)
To secure and manage funding for programmes that invest in the public transport, cycling and walking network.	The Transport Planning team has overseen Middlesbrough's contribution to the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Project (TVBNI). The scheme aimed to improve bus priority and infrastructure.	Work with TVCA to secure funding for Public Transport improvements, notably through the TCF. Key areas will be bus corridor and rail station improvements.

## ***Promoting Sustainable Travel to and from School***

### *Summary of Objectives*

- To promote sustainable and active travel, to all schools and educational establishments in Middlesbrough.

### *Progress and Actions for 2020/21*

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions for 2020/21</b>
To promote sustainable and active travel, to all schools and educational establishments in Middlesbrough.	The Road Safety Team provide support and a range of resources to all educational establishments.	Continue to support educational establishments, subject to funding.
	As part of the Access Fund programme the Council is able to benefit from Tees Valley wide support to encourage sustainable travel. The central part of this is the recently established 'Let's Go' team. Details can be found at <a href="http://www.letsgotoeesvalley.co.uk">www.letsgotoeesvalley.co.uk</a>	Continue to work alongside the Let's Go team including support from the Personalised Travel Planning (PTP) travel adviser team.

## **5 Associated Middlesbrough Council Plans and Strategies**

### **Local Implementation Plan**

*Link not live at present*

### **Integrated Transport Strategy**

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-footpaths/transport-strategies-and-standards/integrated-transport-strategy-2018-2028>

### **Rights Of Way**

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-footpaths/travel-and-getting-around/walking-and-public-rights-way>

### **Local Cycling Plan**

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Cycling%20Strategy.pdf>

### **Home to School Transport Policy**

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Home-to-School-Transport-policy-2019-20.pdf>

### **Post-16 Transport Policy**

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Post%2016%20transport%20statement%202019-20.pdf>