

Solihull MBC Home to School Sustainable Travel and Transport Strategy

August 2007

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

There is a General duty under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 for Local Authorities to promote sustainable modes of travel to school. The Local Authority also has additional powers and obligations under The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and this means that the needs of **all** pupils' school travel must be considered.

There are 4 main requirements:

- 1 An **assessment** of the travel and transport **needs** of children and young people within the authority's area
- 2 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
- 3 A **strategy to develop** the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure within the authority, so that the needs of children and young people are better catered for; and
- 4 The **promotion of sustainable travel** and transport to, from and between schools and other institutions.

Solihull MBC has already undertaken significant work, both to promote sustainable travel planning and road safety in and around schools. The new strategy will build on the existing achievements and ensure that future activity is aligned to support the 4 requirements listed above.

1.2 The Vision

“A culture where school communities work in partnership with the Local Authority and other organisations to produce and maintain a school travel policy and sustainable travel strategy. It aims to improve child safety on the school journey, reduce local traffic congestion and pollution, increase opportunities to build physical exercise into everyday life, where children and young people develop skills, hearts and minds to become adults, who travel safely, healthily, independently, and in ways that protect the environment.”

1.3 The Benefits

Significant health and environmental benefits are planned to be realised:-

- Improved health via beneficial exercise and reduced localised pollution for both children and adults.
- Reduced road congestion.
- Improved air quality.
- Reduced carbon footprint.
- Safer school journeys and reduced child accident casualties.
- Greater independence, confidence when travelling and access to opportunities for young people.
- Opportunities to socialise.
- Better integration between Governors, staff, pupils and parents.
- Improved survival skills for children.
- Enhanced understanding of travel choice on the environment.

1.4 Objectives

- 1 To encourage and assist all schools and educational establishments to develop STPs (School Travel Plans)
- 2 To support schools through the implementation of approved STPs
- 3 To ensure that new schools undertaking building development develop STPs as required by Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) and take opportunities to improve facilities for safe and sustainable travel as part of rebuilding or redevelopment projects.
- 4 To promote and encourage sustainable travel options for pupils, parents and staff.
- 5 To improve facilities around schools for safe and sustainable travel
- 6 To develop and promote education opportunities to include safe and sustainable travel and STPs into school curriculum and school life
- 7 To foster Inclusiveness

2.0 School Travel - Local Context

2.1 Links to Key National Policies

- *Travelling to School: An Action Plan* and *A Good Practice Guide*, both produced in 2003 are the key policy documents setting the agenda for school travel.

In *Travelling to School: An Action Plan* the government states that it wants every Local Education and Transport Authority to:

Support walking, cycling and car sharing

Promote bus use

- *DfES Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners 2004*

This strategy includes key reforms, which represent significant opportunities and challenges for school travel and STPs:

- *DfES Healthy Blueprint for Schools 2004*

This has the aspiration that every school will become a healthy school by 2009. It states that “children should be encouraged to walk or cycle part or all of the way to school wherever it is safe and practical.”

- *The National Healthy School Standard*

The National Healthy School Standard is jointly funded by the Department for Education and Skills and the Department of Health. It is part of the government's drive to reduce health inequalities, promote social inclusion and raise educational standards.

- *National Cycling Strategy*

The original national cycling strategy had a target to quadruple the numbers of trips made by bicycle by 2012 on 1996 levels. An interim target had also been set by the government of tripling cycle use by 2010 from a 2000 base. In 2004, the DfT changed its approach in favour of setting local targets. The West Midlands LTP reflects this and a review of local targets in Solihull is being developed.

2.2 Links to Regional and Local Policies

- *The West Midlands Local Transport Plan*

Local Transport Plans set out highway authority's policies, strategies, objectives and targets for improving transport in their communities. The overarching objectives are to improve safety, to promote accessibility, to contribute to an efficient economy, to promote integration and to protect the environment. The seven Metropolitan Authorities (including Solihull MBC) within the West Midlands and Centro, produce a joint Local Transport Plan.

The new West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 focuses on congestion, accessibility (to jobs, learning, health facilities and fresh food), safer roads, and air quality and on improving quality of life. The plan continues to place emphasis on promoting use of STPs as a key strategy to help the government deliver better transport particularly as a key way of enabling people to make 'Smarter Choices' about how they travel.

3.0 Current Travel Patterns

3.1 Baseline data

Currently 49 schools have approved school travel plans in place, 23 of these were approved at the March 2007 deadline. All schools, not including independents, were asked to complete mode of travel to school as part of the January 2007 school census. This was compulsory for schools with travel plans in place as of March 2006. All Travel Plan Schools provided the data and 85% of schools without travel plans also provided the data. The results are tabulated below.

3.2 Summary of 2007 School Census.

ALL SCHOOLS WHO RESPONDED (76 out of 84) (Does not include CTC, 5 Independent and 3 PRU's)

MODE	SURVEYED NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Bus (type not known)	154	0.7
Car/Van	7736	34.3
Car share (with child from a different household)	581	2.6
Cycle	370	1.6
Dedicated School Bus	732	3.2
Other	220	1.0
Public Service Bus	1460	6.5
Train	6	0.03
Taxi	353	1.56
Walk	10971	48.58
TOTAL	22,583	100

TRAVEL PLAN SCHOOLS ONLY – all responded (26 at March 2006) (Does not include CTC, 5 Independent and 3 PRU's)

MODE	SURVEYED NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Bus (type not known)	8	0.09
Car/Van	3392	37.42
Car share (with child from a different household)	332	3.66
Cycle	184	2.03
Dedicated School Bus	316	3.49
Other	7	0.08
Public Service Bus	660	7.28
Train	5	0.05
Taxi	19	0.21
Walk	4141	45.69
TOTAL	9,064	100

NON TRAVEL PLAN SCHOOLS (50 out of 58 responded) 86% of all schools responded (Does not include CTC, 5 Independent and 3 PRU's)

MODE	SURVEYED NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Bus (type not known)	146	1.08
Car/Van	4344	32.13
Car share (with child from a different household)	249	1.84
Cycle	186	1.38
Dedicated School Bus	416	3.08
Other	213	1.58
Public Service Bus	800	5.91
Train	1	0.01
Taxi	334	2.47
Walk	6830	50.52
TOTAL	13,519	100

4.0 Consultation

Consultation with key stakeholders from the fields of Education and Transport will be undertaken as the Strategy develops. The details have yet to be finalised.

5.0 Assessment of the travel and transport needs of young people

Further Analysis of the 49 approved STPs will be undertaken. In addition Follow-up workshops will be held, where appropriate, to gain a greater understanding of the travel needs of all young people. A survey of users of non-sustainable modes of travel will be undertaken.

6.0 Audit of the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure

Generally, this will be carried out in conjunction with the next review of the Solihull component of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan schemes. A minor school centred audit will take place with the creation of every new, and every refresh of each STP.

7.0 Strategy to Develop and Promote sustainable travel

As further information from the activities at 4, 5 and 6 above becomes available, the strategies to develop and promote sustainable travel and transport infrastructure for children and young people to, from and between schools and other institutions will be reviewed and updated. The current Key Objectives of the strategy and associated targets are tabulated below.

Key Objectives

Objective 1 To encourage and assist schools and pupil referral units to develop STPs	
Key Actions	Partners
Promote the success of local schools in STP development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - via local media - add information to SMBC website and Solihull Grid for Learning - provide information about local good practice to other local schools 	SMBC Community Services (Physical Activity Marketing) SMBC Communications Schools TravelWise West Midlands
Continue to promote benefits of school travel plans to schools through healthy schools programme, school management groups, Solihull Green Scheme Education Officer and other colleagues and organisations with links to schools.	Solihull Primary Care Trust (PCT), SMBC Education and Children's Services (ECS) , Solihull Green Scheme etc.
Consider developing a network of School Travel Co-ordinators to share expertise and experiences between schools	Schools ECS
Require all schools benefiting from highway improvements as part of Safer Routes to School Projects to complete a STP within one year of start of the project (this may be reviewed due to expectation for Safer	Schools, SMBC Road Safety, Highway Engineers

Routes to be linked to School Travel Plans	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – introduce an agreement for schools taking part to clarify expectations and roles of the school and local authority – provide priority support in developing travel plans for schools affected by Safer Routes to School Projects 	

Objective 2 To support schools through the implementation of approved STPs	
Key Actions	Partners
Provide advice about installation of new facilities such as cycle storage.	SMBC Cycling Officer, SMBC Education Facilities Dept.
Provide awareness raising and training activities for pupils and staff	
Develop partnerships with local organisations e.g. cycle clubs that may be able to help schools implement their plans.	

Objective 3 To ensure that new schools and schools undertaking building development develop STPs as required by Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) and take opportunities to improve facilities for safe and sustainable travel as part of rebuilding or redevelopment projects.	
Key Actions	Partners
To provide further written briefing to all schools about requirements under PPG13	SMBC Planning Development Control (Planning DC), Transport Policy Team
To provide training for planning and education colleagues on the role of school travel plans in the planning system to ensure that schools are notified in the early stages of a development that they will need a STP.	Planning DC ECS

To build School Travel Planning into the North Solihull Regeneration Programme. – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - STA attendance at planning meetings - direct liaison and assistance for schools involved 	SMBC Building Design Group ECS
To revise and update local Supplementary Planning Guidance regarding PPG13	Planning DC

Objective 4 To promote and encourage sustainable travel options for pupils, parents and staff.	
Key Actions	Partners
<p>Walking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to promote Walk to School Weeks (in Spring and Autumn) and provide resources for all schools wishing to take part. - Continue to provide advice, training and insurance to schools setting up walking buses. - Review information provided to schools about walking buses including parent information leaflet and detailed guidance for organisers - Encourage schools developing STPs to participate in Kerbcraft Pedestrian Training to improve road safety skills - Promote pedometer activities to schools to help raise awareness of walking benefits (loan of step counters already available). - Promote Walking Buses - Provide Theatre in Education (TIE) weeks to promote safe walking. 	<p>Road Safety PCT ECS Kerbcraft Co-ordinator SMBC Community Services</p>
<p>Cycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote Solihull Cycle map in Schools. - Bike Week promotions 	<p>SMBC Cycling Officer Road Safety Team</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain cycle training - Review cycle training and investigate becoming a training centre accredited for the new Cycle training standard. - Provide TIE weeks to promote safe cycling 	<p>Solihull Cycling www.cyclesolihull.org</p>
<p>Buses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend bus users code of conduct introduced in 2005 to more schools. - Continued to work with Centro and Schools to address issues of behaviour on buses - Continue to liaise with schools about adjustments to start and finish times to maintain or improve the efficiency of bus services. - Provide leaflets for pupils about bus use and promote leaflet in schools. - Include additional safety checks within the new contract for primary school bus services including police check for staff, vehicle safety checks and seat belts. 	<p>ECS Centro Schools</p>
<p>Car-sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide advice to schools interested in school based car sharing schemes 	
<p>Assist and encourage schools to set up “park and stride” schemes – produce guidance note for schools, sample letter to send to car park owners, assess routes for safety.</p>	<p>Road Safety Team.</p>
<p>Promote benefits of the Council’s Travel Plan (e.g. discounted travels cards) to school employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange alternative travel card registration days or a different system for school staff 	<p>Road safety team Schools, Centro, Travelwise</p>

<p>Objective 5 Improve facilities around schools for safe and sustainable travel</p>	
<p>Key Actions</p>	<p>Partners</p>
<p>Implement STP issues identified as responsibility of local authority as quickly as funds allow.</p>	<p>SMBC Community Services</p>

To use opportunities presented by regeneration of North Solihull - Directly approach schools in each neighbourhood plan area to encourage them to develop STPs to complement the neighbourhood planning process.	Schools SMBC Regeneration
Liase with SMBC Rights of Way Officer regarding potential rights of way closures on routes to schools.	Rights of Way Officer
Implement improved cycle facilities as set out in Solihull Cycle Strategy	SMBC Community Services including Cycling Officer and Highway Construction Team
Investigate feasibility and funding sources for additional off road shared use cycling/walking routes identified in STPs	SMBC Cycling Officer Schools
Ensure LTP Review links to the revised School Travel Objectives.	SMBC Transport Policy Team
Use STP capital grant and additional assistance of STA as an incentive to encourage schools to fully participate in consultation as part of Safer Routes to Schools Projects to ensure most appropriate improvements are implemented.	All stakeholders

Objective 6 To develop and promote education opportunities to include safe and sustainable travel and school travel plans into school curriculum and school life.	
Key Actions	Partners
Provide up to date resources to all schools (including road safety resources, sustainable travel resources and relevant health resources).	Healthy Schools Co-ordinators
Continue to provide Road Safety Education materials, educational visits and theatre productions	Road Safety Team
Provide checklist of curriculum links for all schools developing STPs to use in developing their travel plans	ECS – School Improvement Performance and Partnership (SIPP)

<p>Establish school travel as a key theme for education for sustainable development locally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Aim to recruit schools through teachers interested in ESD in addition to targeting Head Teachers and Governors. – work with Green Scheme and ESD Advisory Teachers to develop/source appropriate resources. 	<p>Green Scheme ECS - SIPP</p>
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Objective 7 Foster Inclusiveness	
Encourage schools that are developing travel plans to consider the needs of all pupils and adopt an inclusive approach.	Healthy Schools Co-ordinators
Develop ways of involving pupils with special needs in School Travel Plans e.g. alternative methods of consultation	Schools
Continue training for escorts on transport for children with special educational needs to maintain and improve the quality of this service.	ECS
Investigate ways of using school travel plans to improve social inclusion e.g. access to before/after school activities, access to learning opportunities.	
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Continue to review transport for pupils with special needs as part of regular statement review.	ECS Schools
Research further examples of STPs for special schools and pupil referral units from other local authorities and share good practice with schools and education colleagues.	

8.0 Headline Targets

As at June 2007, the following high level Key Targets will be progressed.

Key Target 1 - For 100% of schools to have a STP in place by 2011

Year	No of STPs in place by March (cumulative)	% of schools
2005	11	12%
2006	29	31%
2007	47	50%
2008	65	69%
2009	84	90%
2010	89	95%
2011	94	100%

Key Target 2 – For there to be no increase in the percentage of pupils travelling by car to school between 2006/07 and 2010/11.

	2006/07 Percentage of Pupils Travelling by Car
Secondary Schools	16.4%
Primary Schools	47.6%

Notes:1) The LTP Target is to do no worse than maintain the existing percentage against the current rising trend in the region, this requires the upward momentum to be capped off. 2) Provisional percentage figures are based on Jan 2007 School Census, not including CTC, Special Schools, PRUs and Independent Schools and excluding schools with zero return

Key Target 3 – To achieve Road Safety Strategy Targets agreed as part of the 2006 West Midlands LTP.

- a 40% reduction in all KSIs from 1994-98 average to 2010, and a 30% reduction from 2004 to 2010
- a 50% reduction in child KSIs from 1994-98 average to 2010, and a 305% reduction between the 2002-2004 average and the 2008-2010 average.
- a 10% reduction in slight casualties from 2004 to 2010.

Key Target 4 - To achieve Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) targets for Solihull

A 55% reduction by 2010 and 39% reduction by 2006 in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents excluding motorways.

Key Target 5 - To achieve Solihull Cycling Strategy Targets.

The 2006 West Midlands LTP target is a 1% increase in the cycling index between 2003/4 and 2010/11. The Solihull Cycling Strategy will be reviewed during 2007 and local targets may be produced.

Key Target 6 - Safer Routes to School Programme.

The recommended safer routes to school programme for future years is listed below. It is focussed in areas with the highest numbers of child pedestrian and child cyclist casualties as detailed in Solihull's first Child Road Safety Audit carried out in late 2004.

This programme will be reviewed as part of annual evaluation of the Safer Routes Projects. Where Safer Routes projects are introduced or where schools have previously been involved in projects schools are being encouraged to develop proactive STPs to maximise on improvements in the local environment.

Schools	Year
Monkspath	2004/05
Alcott Hall, Coleshill Heath, St Patrick's RC	2005/06
Lyndon area schools	2006/07
Light Hall area schools	2008/09
St Alphege area schools	2009/10
Lode Heath area schools	2010/011

9.0 Barriers to the delivery of the strategy

Barriers	Solutions
Fear of accidents	Develop road safety, walking and cycling skills of pupils and parents.
Busy lifestyles	Develop flexible initiatives that allow people to "start small" and take part when they can. Provide information for people to make informed choices i.e. not make wrong assumptions about travel time. Highlight additional benefits of time spent on active travel e.g. health benefits.
Fear of crime	

Resources	<p>Maintenance of lights etc identified in school journey surveys</p> <p>Include personal safety skills development in STPs</p> <p>Reduce the risk of cycle theft.</p> <p>Identify and programme resources to implement the strategy and STP actions.</p> <p>Seek and act upon opportunities to incorporate safe routes to schools Currently in process of strengthening the link with STP's and Safer Routes to School Projects in current and future programmes e.g. Regeneration of North Solihull.</p>
Reluctance to develop STPs	<p>Support school communities, promote successes of and benefits gained by STP schools,</p> <p>Enforce planning conditions.</p>
Lack of parent volunteers for activities.	<p>Promote positive aspects of volunteering, provide schools with promotional information, offer flexibility for volunteers.</p>

10.0 Delivery of the strategy

The strategy will be delivered in the following way:

- Building on existing programmes of work, including the LTP, North Solihull Regeneration Programme and STP activity.
- Developing activities, which include the whole school community.
- Assisting and encouraging school communities to develop school travel plans and supporting them through the implementation of their travel plans.
- Engineering measures to create safe routes to school and more general safe and pleasant walking and cycling facilities.
- Through education and building school travel into the school culture.
- Planning system - ensuring that new and extending schools develop useful STPs as required by Planning Policy Guidance 13 and incorporate travel planning into the Building Schools for the Future Programme.
- Working in partnership with other organisations working with young people, transport providers, police, community organisations, primary care trust and other organisations.
- The £17,042 grant will be used to support the work of the existing School Travel Plan Officer

Further work is required to develop the above work streams into a comprehensive Schedule of Work and a realistic timeline – the Action Plan. This will be informed by the assessment of need, the audit of sustainable transport infrastructure and a review of available resources.

11.0 Area wide initiatives supporting the promotion of sustainable travel and transport

The Strategy will incorporate the ongoing area wide sustainable travel initiatives including:

- STPs
- Road Safety Education, including Walk to School Campaigns, Starting School, Bike Week, Move On Up, Be Safe Be Seen Campaign
- Publicity
- Safer Routes to School
- School Buses
- Discounted Travel passes for staff
- Transport for pupils with special needs
- Staggered school opening times
- Breakfast clubs and after school care/activities
- Cycle training
- Secure cycle storage
- Pedestrian training - Kerbcraft
- Walking buses
- National healthy schools programme
- Travelwise
- Sustainable Development Education

12.0 Financial implications

Resources are a key issue. The strategy will build on LTP funds, DfES funds, North Solihull Regeneration funds and external funding opportunities.

Further development work is required in this key area.

13.0 Monitoring and evaluation of targets

Monitoring will include tracking the following:

Quality of School Travel Plans including travel surveys, performance against targets, consultation and review processes.

Modal split on the home to school journey

Implementation of School Travel Plans

Customer Satisfaction

14.0 Strategy review

The Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed each year by the relevant Cabinet Members

Draft @ 4 July 2007