

**Meeting:** Green Sub Committee

**Date:** 5 September 2023

**Title:** Active Travel in North Tyneside

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– Integrated Transport

**Service:** Highways and Transportation

**Directorate:** Regeneration and Economic  
Development

**Wards affected:** All wards

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## 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present what policies and measures North Tyneside implement with regards to active travel; and understand how we can improve our promotion of and the public's engagement within active travel within the borough.

## 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Green Sub Committee considers and notes the information presented in this report regarding the ongoing promotion of, monitoring of and barriers to active travel in North Tyneside.

## 3. Information

### 3.1 – Policy

Active travel is generally defined as travel which involves physical activity, and encompasses walking (and child's scooters), wheeling (e.g. wheelchairs or mobility scooters) and cycling (including adapted cycles for people with disabilities).

Transport policy at regional level is set out in the [North East Transport Plan](#), approved by the North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) in March 2021. Its overall vision is *“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”* and its objectives include to introduce measures to make sustainable travel an easier and more attractive way to get around. Within the context of the Transport Plan are a number of specific regional strategies, including the [North East Active Travel Strategy](#) and the [North East Making the Right Choice Strategy](#).

The Authority’s overall approach to transport, including active travel, is set out in the [North Tyneside Transport Strategy](#), which was refreshed and approved by Cabinet in October 2021. The strategy has an overall vision of *“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North Tyneside”* and outlines how the Authority will reduce carbon emissions from transport; improve health outcomes; support inclusive economic growth; improve connectivity; and manage demand and enable smart choices for all. This also fits with the objective of the [North Tyneside Local Plan](#) to ensure sustainable access, including making walking and cycling an attractive and safe choice for all.

Active travel is covered in more detail in the [North Tyneside Cycling Strategy](#) and its appendix, the North Tyneside Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which were approved by Cabinet in June 2023.

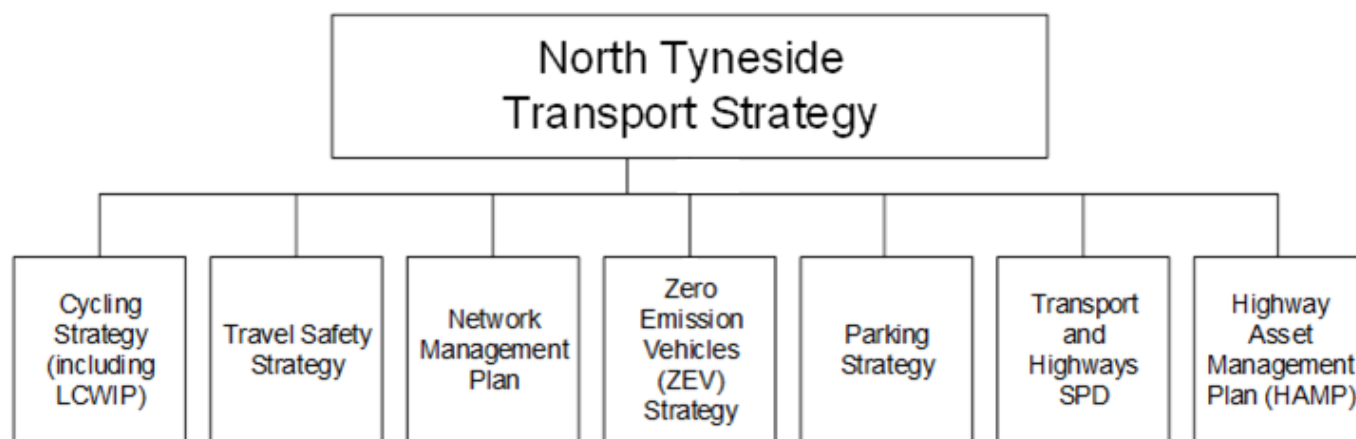
The North Tyneside Cycling Strategy, under the overall heading of ‘everyday cycling’, describes the Authority’s approach to cycling infrastructure and promotion. It sets out five desired outcomes of helping more people to cycle; helping to improve cycling safety; designing cycling into our highways, infrastructure and regeneration investment; delivering a continuous network of strategic and local cycle routes; and helping more residents to be physically active and businesses to adopt sustainable modes of transport such as cargo bikes. It also defines a ‘tube map’ of Strategic Cycling Routes, to be complemented by a grid of local routes.

North Tyneside’s LCWIP is specific to infrastructure for cycling, walking and wheeling, in line with Government [guidance](#) which specifies that authorities which adopt an LCWIP are best placed to make the case for investment, including external funding, in their active travel network. The LCWIP identifies and prioritises routes which improve connectivity for cycling, walking and wheeling.

It is intended in 2023/24 to commence work to refresh the [North Tyneside Travel Safety Strategy](#), adopted in 2018, which includes aims such as increasing awareness and education of road safety matters and working in partnership to address travel safety concerns on the borough’s transport network.

In October 2022, Cabinet approved the refreshed [Transport and Highways Supplementary Planning Document](#) (SPD), which sets out in detail the procedures adopted by North Tyneside Council regarding the transport impact of new developments, including active travel infrastructure and means of promoting active travel to users of the development.

The diagram below shows how these more detailed strategies fit within the overall context of the North Tyneside Transport Strategy:



### 3.2 – Current position

#### 3.2.1 – Infrastructure

Infrastructure for active travel in North Tyneside includes a range of routes which encompasses the borough's streets, footways and cycle tracks; the Waggonways network of traffic-free paths and routes; and routes crossing the borough's parks, country parks and green spaces.

The Authority continues to invest in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure in the borough. In 2018 the Authority adopted a Cycling Strategy which set out a 'tube map' of Strategic Cycling Routes for the borough, to be accompanied by a grid of local routes which are welcoming for cycling. Active travel provision is now included within all schemes, where appropriate, regardless of their size.

Since 2018, the Authority has been successful in securing funding and delivering schemes that have resulted with improvements for walking, wheeling and cycling on sections of the 'tube map'.

To date the Authority has delivered the following major schemes:

- The regeneration of Northumberland Square and Howard Street, as part of North Shields masterplan. This involved high quality public realm improvements including the use of traditional paving and street

trees to make the street an attractive environment for walking, wheeling and cycling in and around North Shields Town Centre

- Protected cycle tracks alongside A189 Salters Lane in Longbenton, providing a fast and direct cycling link to Killingworth and to business parks in the A188/A189 corridor
- A £1.6m scheme with Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 2 funding scheme to provide protected cycling provision on A191 New York Bypass–Rake Lane in North Shields, and on Middle Engine Lane: this has helped to improve cycling access to destinations in the corridor such as Cobalt Business Park and North Tyneside General Hospital. The scheme also delivered the North East’s first roundabout with protected space for cycling, in line with the national design guidance document Local Transport Note LTNI/20 [Cycle Infrastructure Design](#); this included crossing improvements on all arms of the junction, making it easier to cross the road for people walking or wheeling
- New cycling, walking and wheeling provision around Four Lane Ends Interchange, as part of a project funded through the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) which also improved bus access to the interchange
- A new segregated cycling route on South Parade in Whitley Bay, with TCF funding, which helps to improve the route between the sea front and town centre, linking to the Metro station. The scheme also makes it easier to cross the road at junctions for people walking or wheeling

In addition to the works delivered to date, the Authority has also secured external funding for a major project to deliver a permanent, segregated, two-way safe space along North Tyneside’s coast. The scheme, known as the Sea Front Sustainable Route, will make the sea front a safer and more pleasant place to walk, wheel and cycle. Information on the scheme is provided on the Authority’s [website](#).

The Authority also committed as part of the [Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025](#) to bring forward masterplans for Wallsend and Whitley Bay town centre areas, to bring investment and improvements to the North West area of the borough and to ensure that regeneration delivers ambition, opportunity and benefits for all residents.

### *3.2.2 – Training*

The Authority’s Go Smarter in North Tyneside programme (“Go Smarter”) aims to promote healthy and active travel and reduce motorised traffic around schools. As well as encouraging pupils, parents and staff to walk, wheel, scoot, cycle, use public transport or ‘park and stride’ (park safely at a distance from school and walk the rest

of the way) in place of car travel, Go Smarter can involve delivering physical changes to streets near schools to encourage more sustainable travel.

The team delivers travel behaviour change activity in schools, including assembly presentations, work with school councils, car-free days, site audits with pupils, travel maps, and other in-class sessions. The team also continues to deliver road safety training to a substantial number of school pupils. Maintaining safety outside and around schools is a key focus in encouraging parents and children to travel actively.

The Road Safety Education programme in North Tyneside is run in conjunction with regional colleagues. Over a six-week period, through both classroom delivery and practical experiences, Year 3 pupils learn about the Green Cross Code, how to approach crossing roads independently, how to navigate junctions safely and how to look out for parked cars. The team also teaches accident prevention for Year 6 North Tyneside pupils at SafetyWorks! in Newcastle.

The Authority continues to deliver national standard 'Bikeability' cycling training to school children with specific Department for Transport (DfT) funding. This includes a range of types of training from pedal-free 'balance bikes' for younger children, to standard Level 2 and advanced Level 3 training.

In addition, the Authority works with the voluntary sector organisation Living Streets to deliver their Walk to School project at schools in the borough, using separate DfT funding. The project encourages active travel to school by recording children's journeys and enabling them to earn monthly badges for going to school by walking, wheeling, scooting, cycling or park and stride.

### *3.2.3 – Events*

The Authority is involved in organising a range of events which promote health and wellbeing as well as active travel: this can include, for example, family fun days and organised walks and exercise programmes. Several events are delivered under the banner of the Authority's Summer of Cycling programme, which aims to get people of all ages and abilities to get active on bikes or adapted cycles.

Activities delivered during the Summer of Cycling can include 'Dr Bike' sessions, family guided rides, Bikeability training for young people, and adapted cycle sessions for adults who may have difficulty riding a standard two-wheeled bike.

'Fix your bike' sessions for residents, delivered by local business Bike4Health, have taken place as part of the Summer of Cycling programme. The Authority has also piloted a cycle programme for children with mobility and balance issues, which was well received by attendees.

Information on the promotion of physical activity promotion in North Tyneside, including active travel programmes such as Summer of Cycling, can be found on the [Active North Tyneside](#) website.

### 3.3 – Monitoring

The North Tyneside Transport Strategy Annual Report is provided to Cabinet each year. The report analyses data across a range of aspects of transport in the borough and provides a summary of how the Authority is performing against the principles set out in its Transport Strategy. Topics covered within the report include:

- Infrastructure for zero-emission vehicles
- Collision data analysis
- Cycling growth in the borough
- Updates on regeneration schemes – including walking and cycling improvements within town centres
- Updates on cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure improvements

Information prepared as part of the next report, to be presented to Cabinet in September, indicates that levels of cycling, as measured by electronic counters located on cycling routes in the borough, have increased by 48% since the Transport Strategy was first adopted in 2018. As at 2022, cycling levels in the borough are 18.6% ahead of the Authority's targets. The refreshed Cycling Strategy, approved by Cabinet in June 2023, increased the target cycling growth from 7% to 10% per year to reflect the Authority's ambition for wider participation in everyday cycling.

Information on the Authority's highway maintenance programmes is presented to Cabinet separately as part of the Highway Asset Management Plan (HAMP) Annual Information Report. The last such report noted that 13 footway improvement schemes were delivered as part of the Authority's 2022/23 highway maintenance programme.

### 3.4 – Promotion

Active travel projects and programmes are promoted through means such as news releases and the Authority's website and social media feeds. The web pages typically provide an explanation and benefits of the proposals, anticipated timelines and plans of the schemes for members of the public to view and comment.

Examples of information pages or items include:

- [Sea Front Sustainable Route](#) – information page
- [School Streets – Information Page](#)

- [School Streets – news release](#) (when first introduced in 2021)
- [Health Links to Metro scheme at South Parade](#)

The Authority also works closely with Transport North East on the promotion of schemes and initiatives delivered at regional level. Information on the latest news for the region can be found on the Transport North East [website](#).

The Authority's Cycling Development Group meeting, which is chaired by the Authority's Cycling Champion and meets approximately quarterly, acts as an internal forum for sharing knowledge and details of cycling and wider active travel initiatives being delivered. In addition to officers from different service areas within the Authority, some representatives of local businesses involved in active travel promotion may attend meetings of the group.

### 3.5 – Barriers in active travel

While substantial numbers of residents already participate in active travel, there are many more who would like to do so.

The Walking and Cycling Index report for Tyneside area, which covers Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside and was published by Sustrans in May 2021, includes the following points (see also Figure 1):

- Tyneside residents walk or wheel the equivalent of 34 times around the world every day
- Walking in Tyneside prevents 1,428 serious long-term health conditions each year, which saves the NHS in Tyneside £9.3m per year
- 36% of all residents cycle, which indicates there is a much larger potential to increase the number of people who cycle regularly from the current 16%
- 7,500 tonnes of greenhouse gases are saved each year by people in Tyneside cycling instead of driving, equivalent to saving the carbon footprint of 16,000 flights to Tenerife
- 23% of residents do not cycle but would like to; this includes 27% of women
- 59% of residents said that it would help them cycle more if more cycle tracks were built along roads, physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

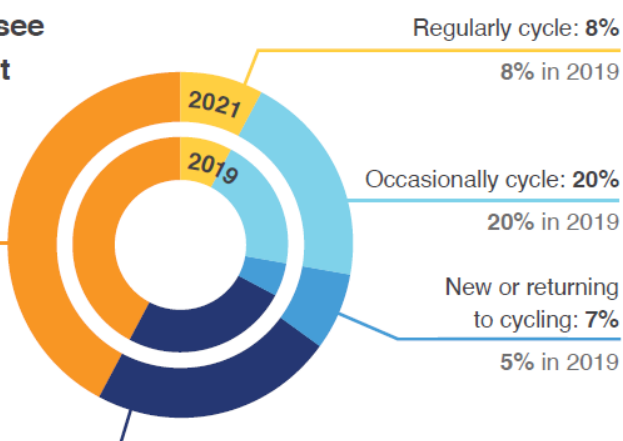
Figure 1: Residents who already cycle or would like to ([Walking & Cycling Index Tyneside 2021](#))

## Many Tyneside residents want to cycle

### How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

Do not cycle and do not want to: 42%  
42% in 2019

Do not cycle but would like to: 23%  
25% in 2019



### What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?

27% of women

33% of people from ethnic minority groups

25% of disabled people

The Authority carries out an annual Residents' Survey to understand residents' perception of and satisfaction with their local area, Council services and wellbeing issues. A recent edition of the survey enquired whether residents (who were in work) were willing to seek to make a number of lifestyle changes in the next five years which could make a difference to their carbon footprint.

The results indicated that, while 72% of residents already walk or cycle either to work or for some short journeys, a further 17% were willing to do so over the next five years.

Figure 2: Resident behaviour and propensity to change ([NTC residents' survey 2021](#))

Q40. Do you currently do or are you willing to do any of the following to reduce your carbon footprint?





### 3.6 – Summary and discussion

This report has provided background information which seeks to aid discussion by the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 5 September 2023.

As part of its discussion, Members of the Sub-Committee are invited to consider the question:

- How can we improve our promotion of, and public engagement with, active travel in North Tyneside?