



North East Active Travel Strategy

Consultation Draft – January 2023

Foreword



**Cllr Martin Gannon, Chair,
North East Joint Transport Committee**

We all need to be more active.

Active Travel - walking, wheeling and cycling – is good for our health, good for the environment, and good for the economy.

People in our region are the least physically active in England, contributing to poor health outcomes (both physical and mental), unnecessary premature deaths, and an additional cost burden to our NHS services.

And yet we live in the most beautiful part of the country with amazing natural, cultural and historical sites, an abundance of parks, coastline and river banks, open countryside, and attractive town and city centres.

Active travel is not only healthy and often fun, but it also reduces unnecessary car trips that create carbon emissions, road injuries and deaths, air pollution, and traffic congestion.

Better still, economists estimate that each active trip generates £1.50 for the local economy, and Sustrans say that the benefits could be up to 26p per mile benefit for walking and wheeling and a 1.15p per mile benefit for cycling.

So why don't we travel actively more often?

This strategy sets out the opportunities and benefits of active travel, asks people what it would take to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling, and sets out an ambitious programme of investment that would help us to achieve a major increase in active travel rates of 45% by 2035.

This draft outlines our initial proposals but we want to hear what you think. Please have your say on this important regional strategy and join in the public consultation – what would help you to walk, wheel or cycle more?

Please get involved and let's make this strategy impactful for local people.

Thank you.

Contents

Foreword	2
Executive summary	4
1. Introduction and context	6
2. Benefits of active travel	14
3. How do people travel now?	23
4. What are the challenges?	27
5. Where do we want to be?	35
6. Measures of success	42
7. How do we get there?	46
Conclusion	59

Executive summary

This strategy aims to encourage more active travel – walking, wheeling and cycling – across the North East and sets out proposals to help people travel actively more often.

Our aim is for active travel to become the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combine it with public transport for longer journeys.

We want to increase short active travel journeys by **45%** by 2035.



This would mean that **over half of journeys in the North East would be made by active travel** – good news for the environment, public health and our economy.

To make this a reality, we will work with the seven North East local authorities and other key stakeholders to bring in significant funding to transform and improve active travel.

The strategy will allow us to make a strategic case for investment in our active travel network. It contains an initial list of active travel schemes up to the year 2035, worth a total of approximately **£500 million**. The list is a 'live pipeline' of schemes which is expected to develop over time.

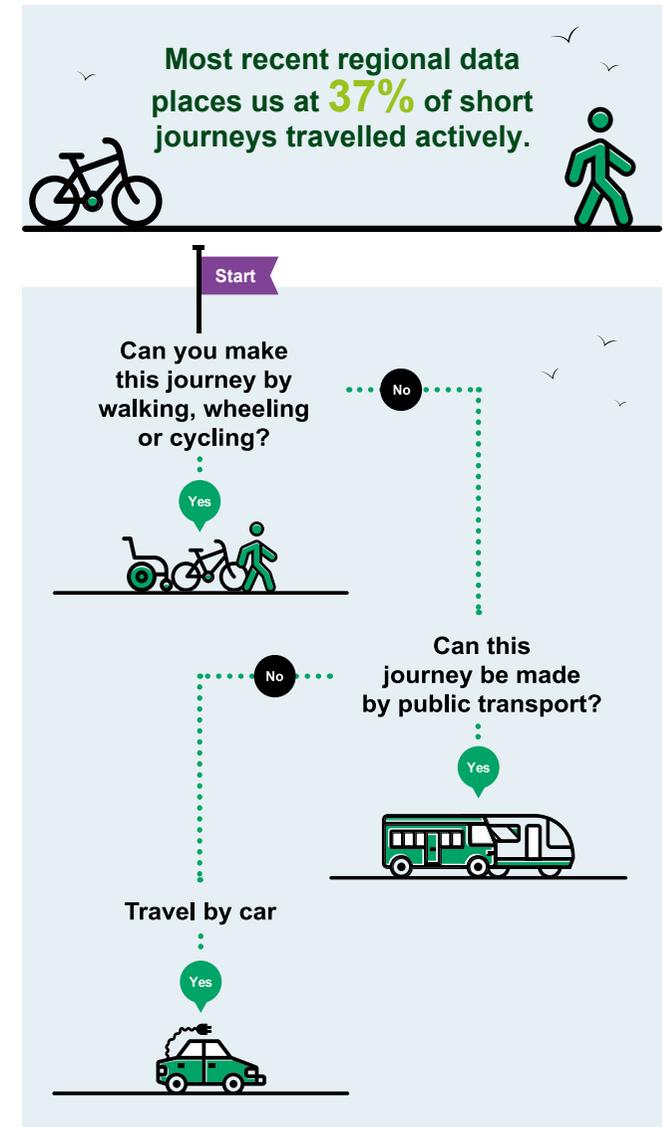
As we work to deliver this strategy, we will also make active travel more inclusive, by removing some of the barriers that make it harder for some to walk, wheel or cycle to their destination.

Increasing walking, wheeling and cycling

The *Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy* (2022) set a target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don't have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably. The below 'decision tree' was produced to help people to consider their travel options.

The North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve this switch to sustainable travel by enabling more active journeys – making them easier, safer and more enjoyable.

Shorter journeys currently made by car have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel. Walking is a good way to increase levels of activity and has the greatest potential to improve public health.



Making the right travel choice – decision tree

The benefits

Achieving a **45%** increase in active travel journeys by 2035 could result in the following:

- Grow the region’s economy by around **£350 million a year**.
- **Reduce carbon emissions**, potentially saving around **80,000 tonnes of CO2** emissions per year.
- Prevent in the region of **1,000** premature deaths, primarily due to increased physical activity levels in the population.
- Help more people become active, improving public health outcomes including life expectancy.
- Improve connectedness and cohesion of communities and decreased social isolation.
- Better air quality by reducing pollution from traffic emissions.
- Lower noise levels as congestion is eased on our road network.
- Save petrol and diesel car drivers on average approximately **£70** per year (based on September 2022 fuel prices).



Barriers

There are some barriers – both real and perceived – that we will need to overcome to boost active travel. These are:

- Safety and security (including perceptions of this).
- Accessibility and maintenance – for example of walking and cycling routes and infrastructure.
- Affordability – such as the cost of cycling and/or safety equipment.
- Coordination and integration – including integration with transport hubs or local bus and Metro services.
- Journey times and perceptions of convenience – including the feeling that cycling or walking ‘takes too long’ or aren’t good options in poor weather.

Delivery

Building on the interventions set out in the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy, we have included an initial pipeline of schemes to be taken forward which are subject to funding (see 52-58).

These include new and upgraded infrastructure such as improving the National Cycle Network and links to the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels, increasing access to equipment by launching new cycle hire schemes, maintaining the network through regular maintenance and cleaning, and targeted behaviour change initiatives to upskill local people.

Some of the key outcomes we hope to achieve include:

- **The creation of a brand-new regional cycle network – with consistent signage and strong recognisable branding to make it easy to use for all.**
- **The pedestrianisation and ‘walkability’ of local towns and cities, encouraging more active travel and increased footfall to amenities and businesses.**
- **The introduction of a new cycle hire scheme (including e-bike hire) which will integrate with the transport network.**
- **Social Prescribing – working with NHS providers to prescribe more active travel to boost public health.**

1. Introduction and context

What is active travel?

Active travel means making journeys in physically active ways that burn energy such as cycling, walking and wheeling. Widely accepted as an inexpensive and accessible form of transport, encouraging and enabling more active travel is a key way of improving the health and wellbeing of local people.

To ensure that this strategy takes an inclusive approach we have followed Sustrans' lead in grouping 'walking and wheeling' together throughout this strategy.

Why is this strategy needed?

Making journeys is good: most physical trips, no matter what the form of travel, stimulate the economy, get people to employment, education, healthcare, retail, or social opportunities. However making journeys leaves an impact on our environment and plays a big role in our health and wellbeing, so **how we choose to travel is very important.**

Active travel and public transport are the best ways to travel for public health and the environment. On the other hand trips taken by diesel or petrol cars create carbon emissions, road injuries and deaths, air pollution, and traffic congestion.

The North East's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is being powered by increased car and internet use.

The way many people work and socialise has changed forever, with far more activity taking place online. Whilst this has many benefits including allowing people to work flexibly, it has had a detrimental impact on levels of physical activity.

The lockdowns introduced during the pandemic, gave us a glimpse of quieter and less polluted streets, and people walked and cycled more. However the recovery period has seen road traffic volumes grow to up to **20%** higher than pre-pandemic levels, whilst public transport usage lags behind.

Switching existing shorter journeys that are currently made by petrol or diesel cars to active travel is one of the most cost effective ways of reducing transport emissions, as outlined in the Government's 2021 Transport Decarbonisation Plan. We believe that there is an opportunity in the North East for people to convert some of their journeys to cycling, walking and wheeling, especially shorter journeys that are made unnecessarily by car.

We want to make it easier for people to make more active travel journeys, regardless of their age or ability. This includes combining active travel with public transport where required.

This strategy describes an ambition for growing active travel in the North East. In it we set out the opportunities and benefits of active travel, consider what it would take to encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling, and set out an ambitious programme of investment that would help us to achieve a major increase in active travel rates of 45% by 2035.

Types of active travel

Walking and wheeling

Walking and wheeling are some of the cheapest ways to travel. They have the greatest potential to boost levels of active travel in the region.

Walking and wheeling represent people moving at a pedestrian's pace, whether someone is standing or sitting, walking or wheeling unaided or using any kind of mobility aid, including walking aids, wheeled aids, personal assistants or guide dogs. By adopting the term wheeling we can take a more inclusive approach, ensuring that active travel is for people of all ages, location, and mobility.



Cycling

Cycling is widely acknowledged as an effective and efficient way of travelling, especially for shorter to medium-length distances. There are millions of short car journeys made every day which could easily be travelled by bike, if people were willing to make the switch.

Cycling can enhance individual independence and wellbeing. As well as conventional two-wheel bikes, there are a wide range of non-standard and adapted bikes available such as hand cycles, low-step bicycles, wheelchair cycles, child-carrying cycles, and cargo and e-cargo bikes (for personal or business use).

Electrically-assisted pedal cycles (e-bikes) are also within scope of this strategy. E-bikes are cycles which have a small electric motor fitted and could help introduce cycling to even more people. Research in 2019 found that physical activity gains from active travel are similar in e-bikers and cyclists.

Cargo bikes (and e-cargo bikes) allow for goods to be delivered over short distances in place of small vans.

Other micromobility

Micromobility refers to a range of small, lightweight vehicles, typically with a speed of around 15mph or less, including for example e-bikes and e-scooters.

At the time of writing (November 2022) regulated e-scooters are being trialled in Newcastle and Sunderland using geofencing technology to define the riding area. Trial guidance from the Department for Transport enabled regulated e-scooters to use the same road space as cycles except motorways and in cycle lanes and tracks.

Outside of the regulated e-scooter trials, it is illegal to use an e-scooter on public roads, cycleways and pavements. It is however perfectly legal to buy and sell e-scooters. As a consequence of this rather muddled position, it is increasingly common to see them being used illegally across the North East. We await further guidance and potential new legislation from the Government before we are able to develop a meaningful policy on this issue.

Strategy scope

What is covered in this strategy?

- Walking for all journey purposes.
- Cycling for all journey purposes (including use of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes).
- Wheeling for all journey purposes (including wheelchair and mobility scooters, as well as other mobility aids).
- Encouraging active travel for part of a journey such as those combined with public transport.
- E-scooters and other forms of 'micro-mobility' that interact and have links with active travel.
- A series of key commitment statements setting out how we will work with partners to move forward.

What is not covered?

- Non-active travel transport interventions (The North East Transport Plan and other regional transport strategies cover this).
- Detailed scheme design guidance (National LTN 1/20 guidance in place).
- Planning reform (this strategy gives high level guidance from a transport policy perspective).
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plans which are local authority owned documents.



Area covered

The geographical area addressed by this strategy comprises the seven local authorities in the North East, covering two Combined Authorities, which are brought together by the North East Joint Transport Committee (NEJTC):

The North East Combined Authority (NECA)

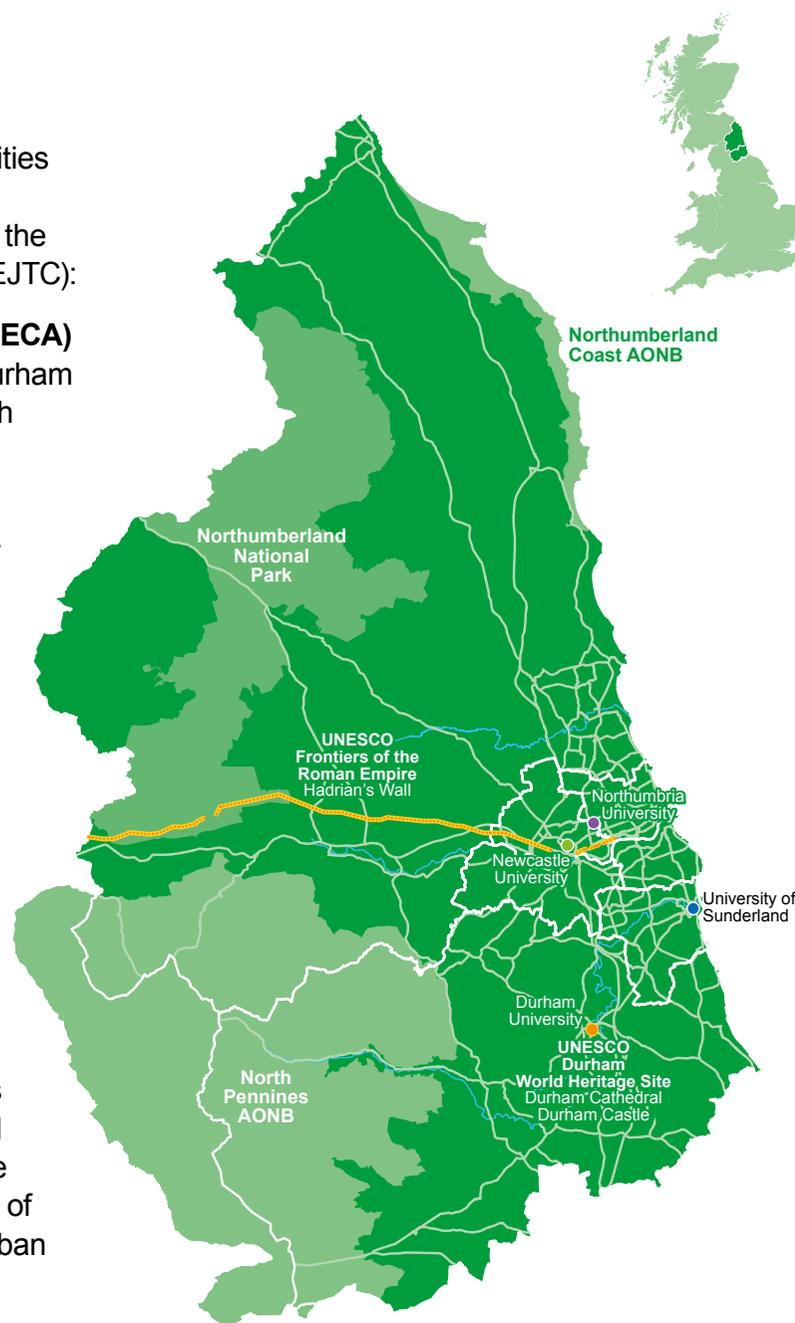
(comprising the local authority areas of Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, South Tyneside Council and Sunderland City Council).

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA)

(comprising the local authority areas of Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council and Northumberland County Council).

Our region

North East England is a unique and very diverse geographical region encompassing large and densely-populated urban conurbations, a surrounding landscape of sub-urban towns and semi-urban villages and a much larger area of former mining villages and beyond them sparsely populated rural and coastal communities. According to the 2021 Census, our region has a population of 1.97 million with **79%** of people living in urban locations and **21%** living in rural locations.



The region's current active travel network connecting our communities is as equally diverse, from national trails and long distance walking routes, bridleways and permissive paths, with a variety of former railway routes currently serving as active travel trails.

The North East is fortunate to have an abundance of long distance active travel routes, many stretching from the west coast to the east coast, as well as providing important connections between rural communities. For example, Northumberland National Park has over 600 miles of marked footpaths and bridleways for residents and visitors to explore. The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in County Durham and Northumberland contains large sections of the Pennine Way national trail. Visit Britain data for 2019 indicates the total value of tourism day visits to the North East (including Tees Valley) was £3.32 billion with the value by foot being £85.1 million and by bike £0.5 million.

For cycling specifically, the region has a mixture of traffic-free and on-road cycle routes. Detailed and [interactive active travel maps](#) of the region have been produced showing the walking and cycling network. Our growing network also includes 16 routes that are part of the National Cycling Network (NCN) a UK-wide network of active travel routes for everyone, connecting cities, towns and countryside, which the Shields Ferry crossing forms part of.

The Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnels which first opened to the public back in 1951 are also still widely used today linking North and South Tyneside. **Our unique geography also means that the challenges and barriers are different based on location with distinct active travel challenges in rural, suburban, and urban areas.**

In recent years, the North East has successfully bid for and been awarded funding to unlock investment in active travel which has been used to improve the network and get more people walking, cycling and wheeling. But we know so much more needs to be done. That is why this strategy aims to build on this track record of delivery and drive further improvements and take up.

Local policy context

Local authorities in the region have two vital documents relating to active travel:

- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)
- Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs)

An LCWIP complements the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) and outlines long-term approaches to developing local cycling and walking. In the North East, most councils have completed, or are currently in the process of developing LCWIPs, with some areas working on version

two of their plans.

ROWIPs set out how improvements made by Councils to their public rights of way network will provide a better experience for walkers, cyclists, people with mobility barriers, horse riders, horse and carriage drivers.

Local authorities have statutory highways powers for building new or maintaining any infrastructure. This means that this strategy is heavily influenced by local authorities and their LCWIPs and ROWIPs.

This regional strategy will help enable the success of the local LCWIPs and ROWIPs by making the case for funding.

Regional policy context

The North East Transport Plan, published in 2021, sets out our regional transport ambitions up to 2035. It brings to life our transport aspirations and includes a live programme of local transport improvements which will make a big difference to our environment, our health and our economy.

A North East Active Travel Strategy is required to meet a commitment set out in the region's Transport Plan and its vision and objectives.

The vision

'Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East'

The objectives

- Carbon neutral North East.
- Overcome inequality and grow our economy.
- Healthier North East.
- Appealing sustainable transport choices.
- Safe, secure network.

(See page 11 for further information on these objectives.)

The lead policy of the Transport Plan is 'helping people to make the right travel choice'. The region has a 'decision tree' (see figure 1 on page 12) which helps people to consider their travel options when they need to make a journey. At the start of the decision tree, people are asked to consider whether the journey they are planning to make can be made by walking, wheeling or cycling, and then consider whether their journey can be made by public transport or a combination of both.

The region's subsequent **Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy** (2022) sets a target to encourage car users to switch one journey a week to public transport, walking or cycling and for people who don't have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably. The North East Active Travel Strategy will help to achieve this aim by 'enabling more active travel journeys'.

North East Transport Plan 2021-2035

The Vision

‘Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East’

The objectives



Carbon neutral North East

We will take action to make travel in the North East net carbon zero.

We will address our air quality challenges and aim to tackle the climate emergency.



Overcome inequality and grow our economy

We will return the region to pre Covid-19 levels of employment and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), then move towards the ambitions set out in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership’s [Strategic Economic Plan \(SEP\)](#).



Healthier North East

We will encourage active travel (such as cycling, walking and wheeling) to help our region reach public health levels that are at least equal to other parts of the UK.



Appealing sustainable transport choices

We will introduce measures that make sustainable transport a more attractive, and an easy way to get around the North East.



Safe, secure network

We will improve transport safety and security, ensuring that people are confident that they feel safe and secure when travelling.

These five objectives are also the guiding objectives of this strategy. Proposals we have made in this strategy are aligned to and will support progress towards achieving these five objectives.

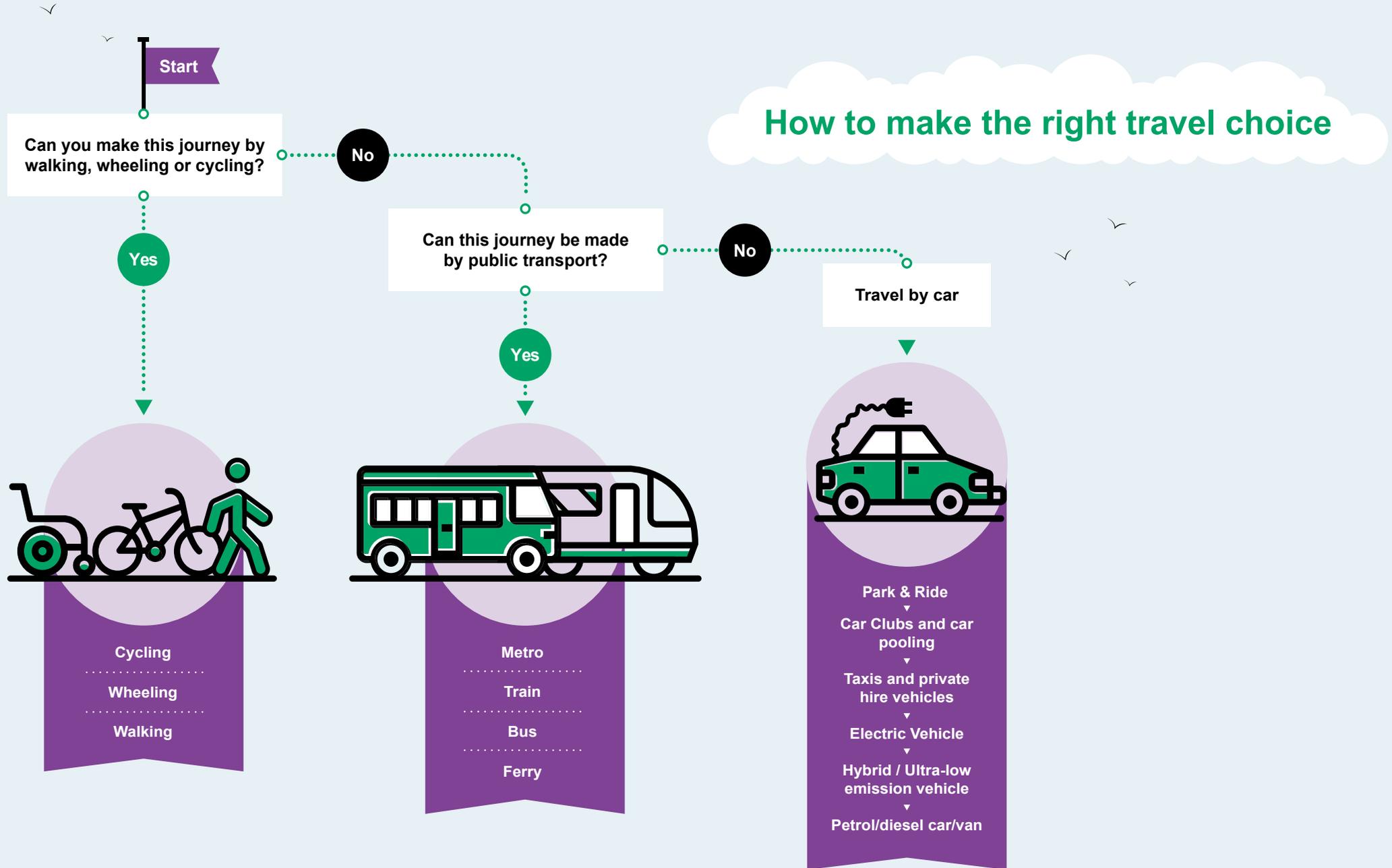


Figure 1: Making the right travel choice – decision tree

National policy context

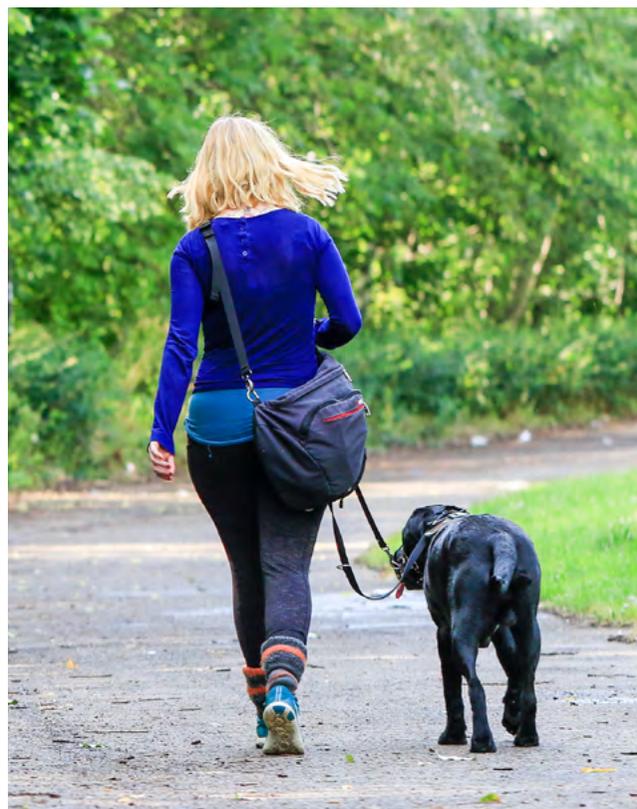
This strategy will ensure that the region is well placed to meet the goals and objectives of funding opportunities to develop our active travel infrastructure. Our targets match the medium to long-term targets set out in the Department for Transport's (DfT) Walking and Cycling Plan for England and the second national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2).

It will also assist the region and its partners in meeting (where physically and financially possible) expected standards set out in national design guidance (LTN 1/20) and help with scheme design engagement with Active Travel England. Active Travel England is the UK government's new executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England.

It is expected that there will be refreshed 'Manual for Streets' guidance published by the DfT, providing design advice for transport planning authorities to take advantage of the rise in active travel opportunities, particularly walking.

The DfT walking and cycling plan for England 'Gear Change' (2020) has the goal that cycling and walking will be the natural choice for many journeys, with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled and walked by 2030.

The second national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) published in July 2022, has key objectives to ensure that **50%** of trips in our towns and cities are walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030 and to **55%** by 2035.



Introduction and context – chapter summary

As we decarbonise transport, making cars and vans zero emission is part of the solution, but relying solely on zero emission road vehicles isn't enough.

To help avoid a car-led recovery from the pandemic, we want active travel to become the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combine it with public transport for longer journeys. This strategy highlights the significant potential to grow the number of active trips taken.

Recent local, regional and national policy decisions and guidance mean that the time is now to bring forward a North East Active Travel Strategy which sets out how we will work with partners to provide and promote safe, attractive, and high-quality active travel infrastructure to enable and encourage more active travel.

2. Benefits of active travel

Why is active travel important?

Active travel is the cheapest and most sustainable travel option and can provide environmental, health, social, and economic benefits for people living in the North East.

This chapter describes these benefits in more detail and outlines the potential impact we could see in the North East if people make more journeys by active travel.

Health benefits

Journeys taken by walking, cycling or wheeling involve periods of physical activity which improve health and wellbeing for most people.

People who are physically active tend to live longer, spend more of their lives in good health and have reduced risk of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, type 2 diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions, disability, and mental health conditions (outlined in figure 2).

“If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and treat.”

UK Chief Medical Officer guidelines 2019

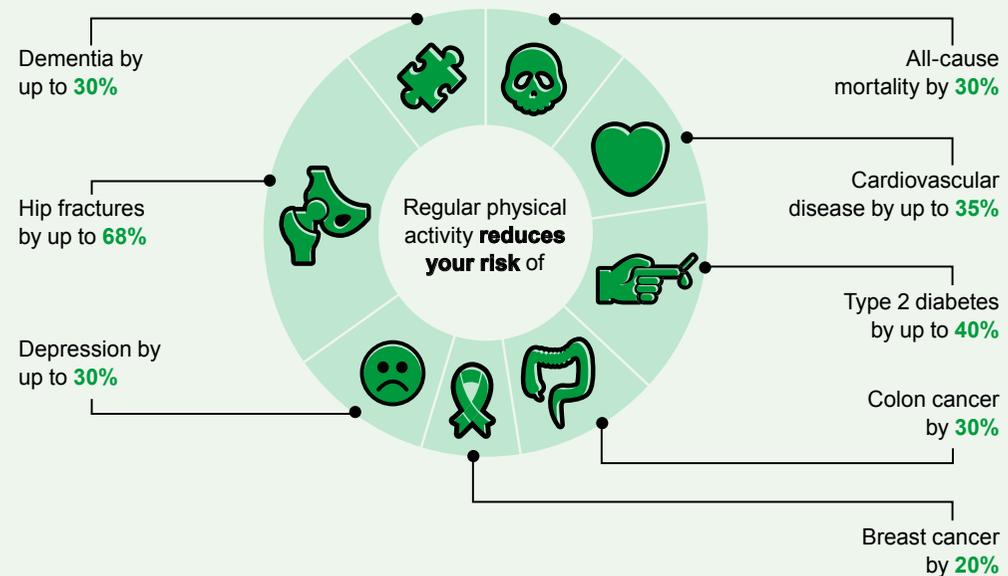


Figure 2: What are the health benefits of physical activity? (Public Health England, Health Matters)

While the UK Chief Medical Officer recommends that each week adults do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity, in the North East **1 in 4 adults are physically inactive**, meaning they do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week. Active travel is one of the most accessible and practical ways for many people to move more and work towards and achieve recommended activity levels.

Mental health and wellbeing

Physical activity has a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing and has been found to reduce depression by up to **30%**. Analysis of the British Household Panel Survey found that people switching from car journeys to active travel experience improved mental wellbeing, and that active journeys tend to be more enjoyable, less stressful and more relaxing than car journeys.

“Walking to work sets you up for the day, if you’ve something on your mind, it gives you 5 minutes to yourself.”

North East commuter

“I do find walking is quite good for mental wellbeing and just getting out – and especially with the little one in the pushchair.”

North East resident

Being physically active is important in managing a wide range of long-term health conditions, disability and promoting healthy ageing. For some people, active travel can provide an opportunity for this, particularly when walking and cycling infrastructure is inclusive and the needs of people with limited mobility are considered from the outset in their design.

Most people would benefit from doing more physical activity such as walking, cycling and wheeling, however the greatest benefits are gained by those moving from lower levels of activity to increased levels (see figure 3).

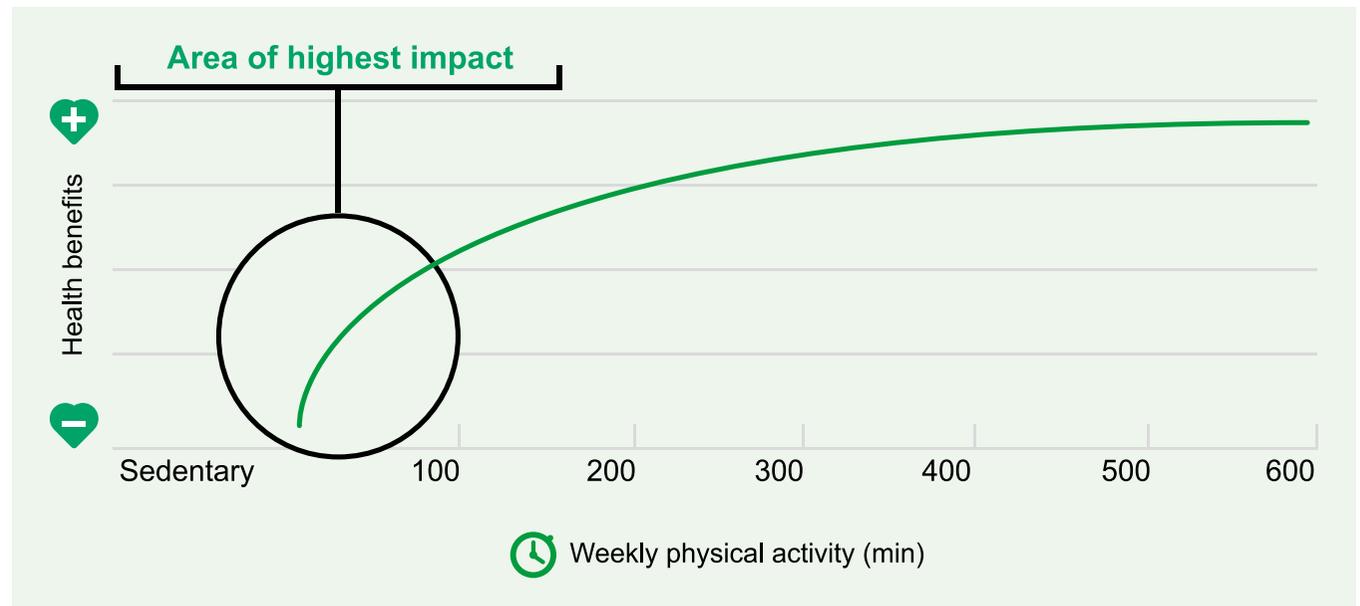


Figure 3: Dose response curve of physical activity (UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines)

Public health metrics

Our region is in poorer general health compared to other regions in England, having the lowest average life expectancies (see figure 4) and the highest rates of adult obesity (32% of adults), physical inactivity (26% of adults), and long-term musculoskeletal conditions (21% of people).

Within the North East there are also significant health inequalities. Compared to the least deprived areas, men living in the most deprived areas could expect to live on average 12 fewer years, and women could expect to live on average 9.5 fewer years.

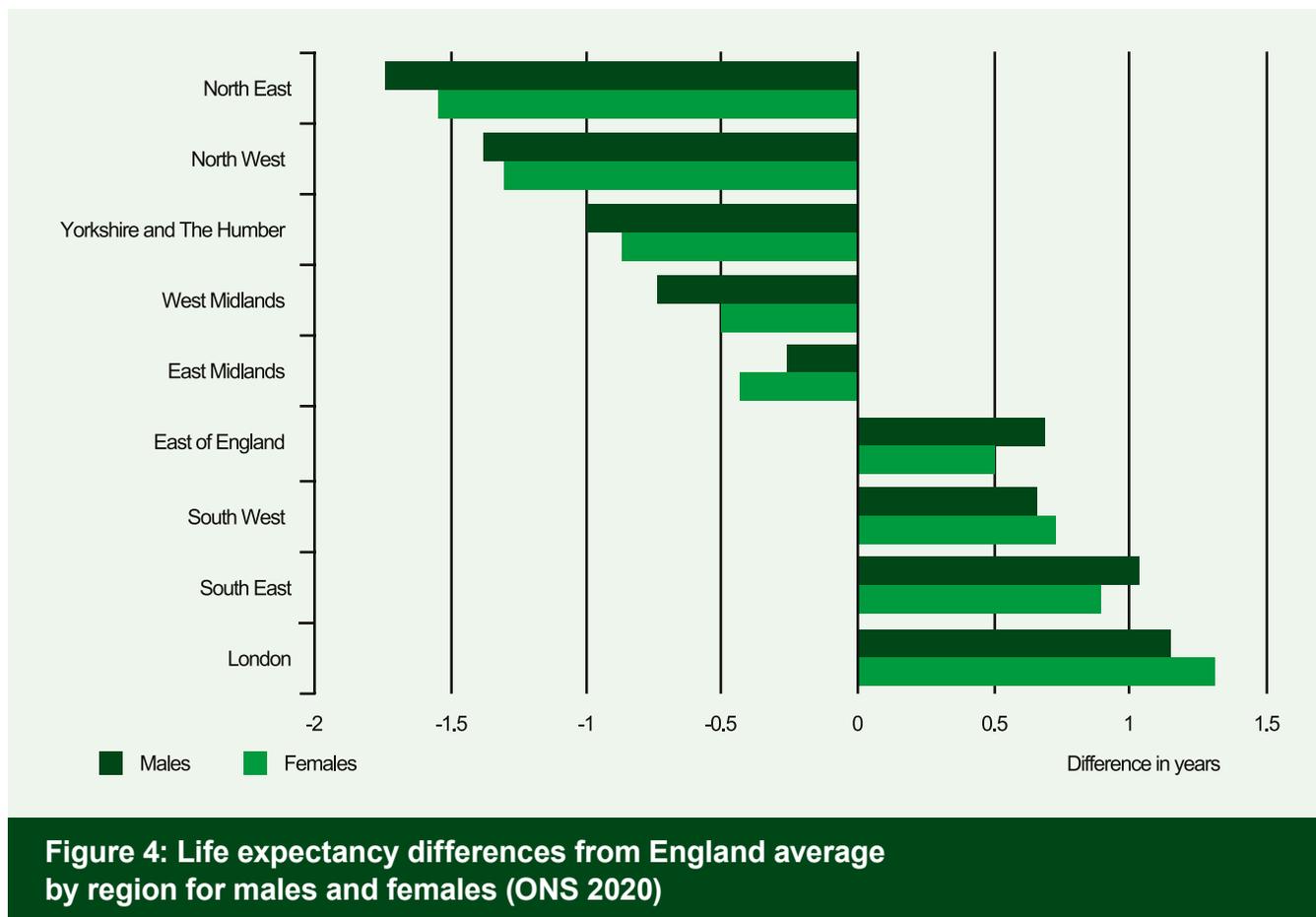


Figure 4: Life expectancy differences from England average by region for males and females (ONS 2020)

Being the least expensive and most accessible form of transport, active travel (particularly walking) can play a part of reducing health inequalities across our region. More active travel may also help reduce pressures on health and social care systems.

It has been estimated that physical inactivity is costing the NHS in the North East in excess of £19 million per year.

Social benefits

Enabling more people to walk, cycle and wheel, and combining active travel with public transport for longer journeys can help better connect people to opportunities such as employment, education, health and care, and leisure services (see figure 5 which discusses transport related social exclusion). Active journeys also provide greater opportunity for social interaction with others in public spaces and a reduction in vehicle traffic can create safer, quieter and more attractive places for people to spend time in.

Active travel can play an important part in helping connect people, reduce separation between groups, and improve cohesion and integration of communities. Research has shown that social isolation has been associated with a **30%** higher likelihood of mortality compared to the general population and also increases the risk of developing depression.

For children, walking, cycling or wheeling from an early age can help them build confidence in their environment, their role in their community and road safety. It can also help establish healthy physical activity behaviours for life, and address childhood obesity. **In the North East almost 1 in 4 children are classified as obese when starting secondary school.**

Furthermore, there is growing evidence that being active improves educational attainment, concentration in school and improves social cohesion.

Supporting the implementation of more and better active travel initiatives in the region's towns, cities and neighbourhoods could improve the quality of life for people in the North East.

Transport related social exclusion

Transport for the North recently published a report investigating Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE) in the north of England. This is where people are unable to access opportunities, key services, and community life due to poor transport links.

In the North East, **31.5%** of people are at high risk of TRSE, which is significantly higher than other regions. The report also highlighted that people with disabilities, caring responsibilities, and those on low incomes are disproportionately affected by transport related social exclusion.

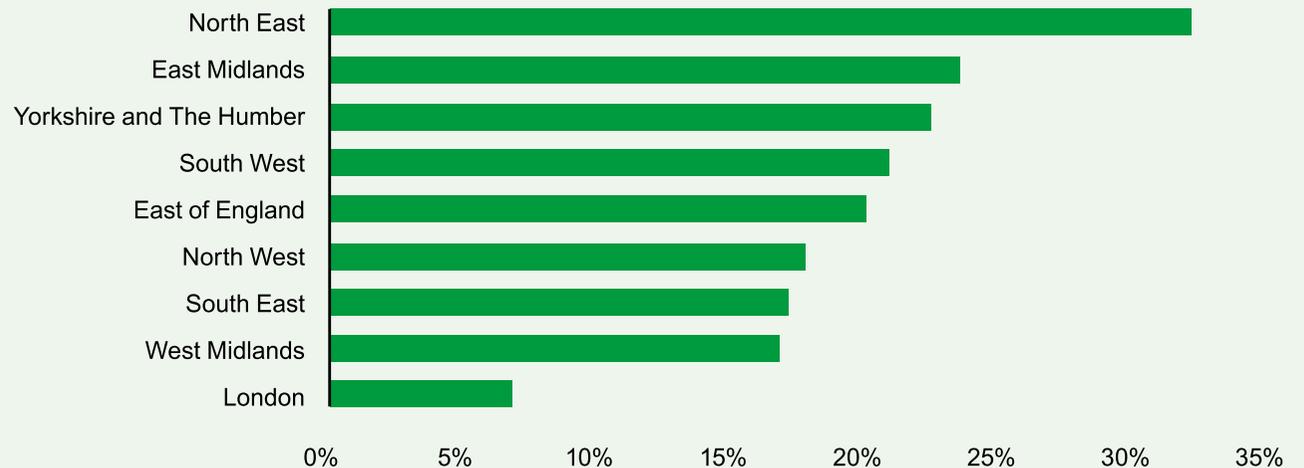


Figure 5: Population at high risk of transport related social exclusion in regions of England (Lower super output areas). Source Transport for the North 2022

School Streets

School Streets is a temporary restriction on motorised traffic on roads outside schools at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic and through traffic. The initiative aims to reduce traffic congestion, help tackle air pollution, improve road safety and encourage more active travel within journeys to school.

The School Streets initiatives have been adopted by many local authorities across the country and is being trialled across areas of the North East including in Northumberland, North Tyneside, Newcastle and Sunderland.

In Newcastle, two School Streets have been implemented on a signage-only basis, enabled by intensive behaviour change and engagement activity carried out by Sustrans. Activities included the Sustrans Big Street Survey; events; assemblies and Q&A sessions for children; regular on-street information pop ups; bike servicing and Learn to Ride and Cycle Skills holiday club.

Sustrans' Walking and Cycling Index showed that **49%** of residents in Tyneside supported School Streets, and this is borne out in the response to Newcastle's first School Street. Public response to the scheme at Hotspur Primary School in the east of the city showed that **86%** of respondents supported the scheme being made permanent, with more than half of text responses citing improved safety.

According to bike and scooter counts, levels of active travel at the school have significantly increased. Motor traffic has visibly decreased, and children report feeling happier, safer, calmer, and more connected to nature and community around their school.

The success of the scheme has led to a commitment from Newcastle City Council to roll out School Streets to more primary schools in the city and requests for School Streets from schools and families across the city.



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All children in the photo have signed parental photo consents.

Environmental benefits

Active travel is the greenest way to travel around our region, helping reduce carbon emissions and harmful air pollutants. In 2021, transport was the largest contributor to CO2 emissions of any sector, contributing 107.5 million tonnes in 2021 (see figure 6). The North East's two Combined Authorities and seven Local Authorities have all declared climate emergencies.

Motor vehicles emit air pollutants that are harmful to health and can lead to serious short-term and long-term effects on respiratory and cardiovascular systems.

Poor air quality disproportionately affects people living in the most deprived areas, often located closer to main roads or industrial sites, which can exacerbate health inequalities.

Air quality is linked to around **40,000** early deaths every year in the UK, including an **estimated 360 deaths** each year in central Tyneside.

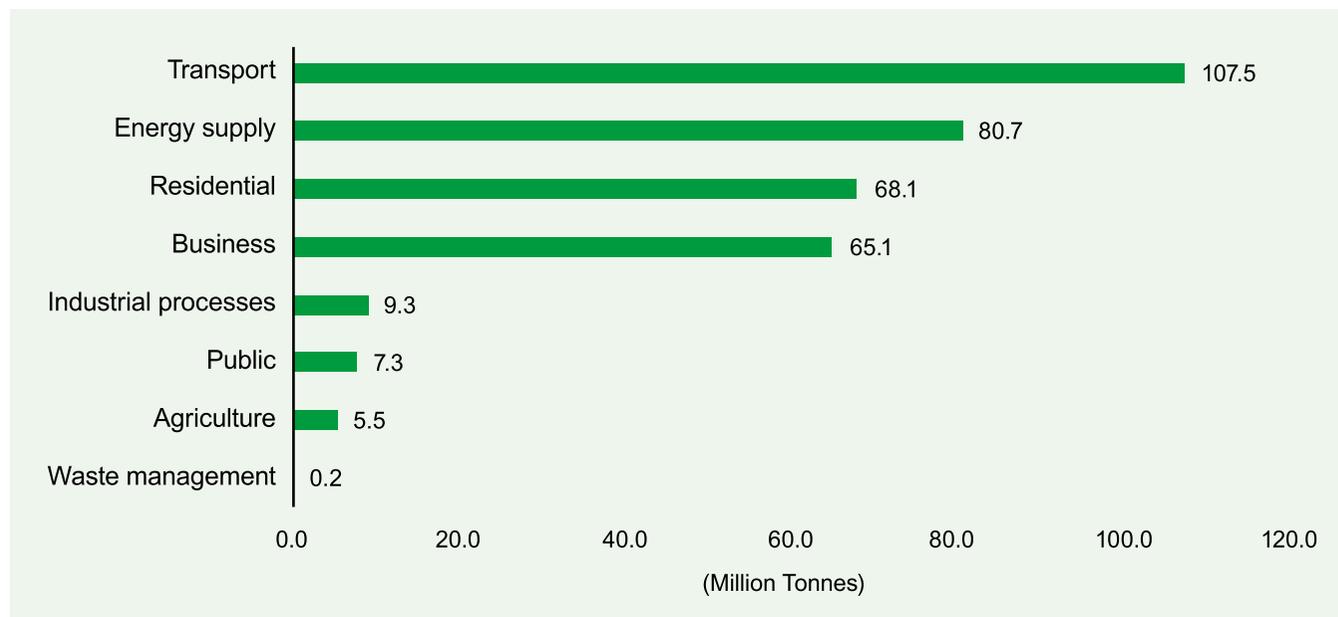


Figure 6: CO2 emission by industry 2021



If everyone in the North East were exposed to levels of NO₂ no higher than 20.5µg/m³ (typical urban background level away from roads), it would reduce rates of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and is estimated to save the health and social care system in excess of £100 million over a 20 year period.

(Public Health England – estimation of air pollution impact tool)

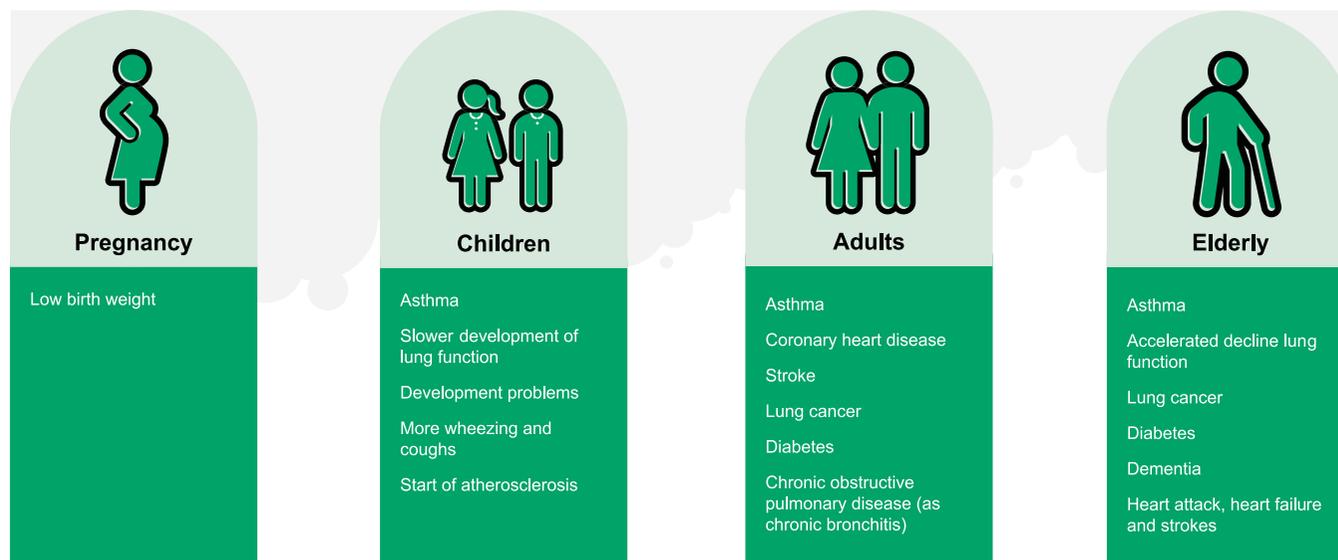


Figure 7: Poor air quality is a public health crisis and air pollution affects people throughout their lifetime (Public Health England – Health Matters)

From March 2020, during the Covid-19 pandemic, people walked and cycled more. Active travel increased from 25% of journeys to 32% of journeys. Air quality improved in many of our cities, towns, and neighbourhoods and this change provided a glimpse of the environmental benefits we could expect from more active travel (see figure 8, nitrogen dioxide in central Newcastle between 2019 and 2022). Building on this trend is important and we can do this by supporting people to switch more journeys from motor vehicles to active travel which will lead us to a cleaner and greener future.



Figure 8: Background nitrogen dioxide in Newcastle centre 2019-2022

A further benefit of active travel is a reduction in noise pollution from road traffic. In the North East, **6%** of the population live close to major routes and are exposed to more than 55dB noise (similar level of noise to an average dishwasher) from road traffic during the night. This is a level of noise that can result in disturbed sleep and increased stress.

Economic benefits

There are significant economic benefits of active travel, both for individuals and the wider local economy.

Trips taken by active travel are much cheaper (and often free) compared to other types of transport such as the private car. In 2022, the average cost of a 3-mile daily round trip in a petrol vehicle cost over £150 per year in fuel alone, whereas the cost of these trips made by walking or cycling would be negligible.

The average North East household spent £77 per week on transport between 2019-2021. This is **14%** of household expenditure, up from **12%** between 2013-2015.

The cost of living crisis and associated inflation have also affected transport, with an increase of **15%** in June 2022 compared to a year earlier, with much of this increase (**42%**) driven by rising fuel costs (see figure 9). Active travel may provide an opportunity to reduce outgoings for those able to switch modes.

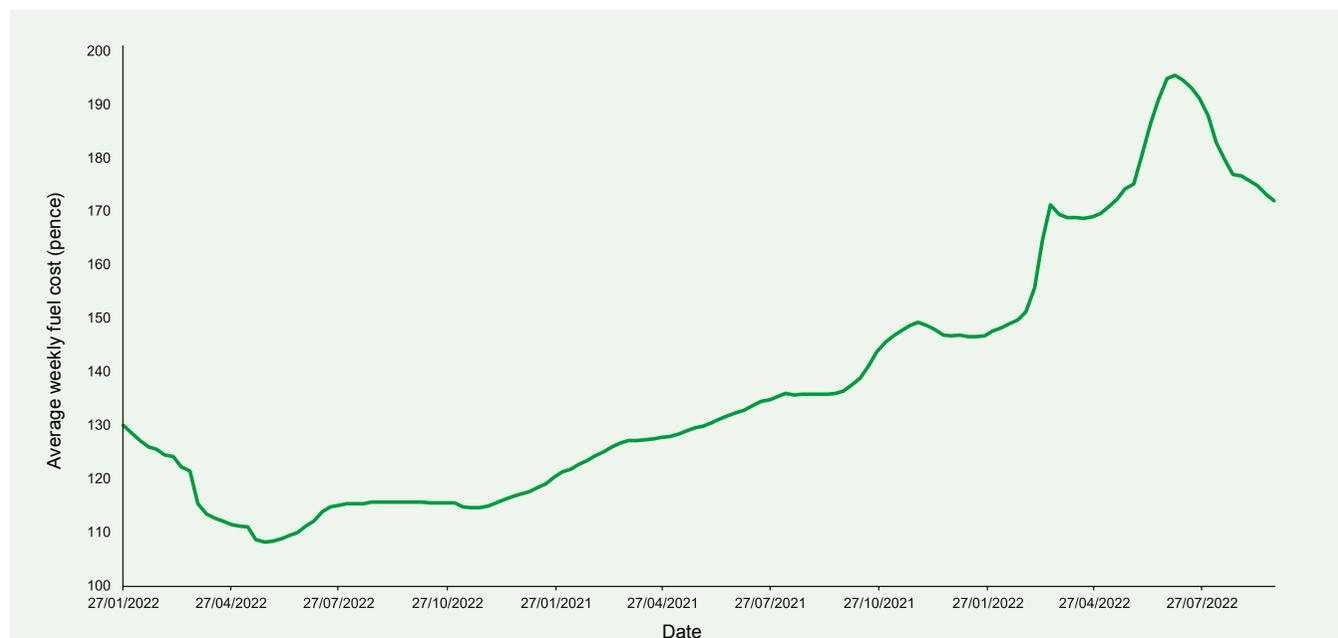


Figure 9: Average weekly cost of fuel (pence) in the UK 2020-2022

Increased levels of active travel could also improve productivity. The North East economy benefits by £436.5 million annually, **with a 26p net benefit for each mile walked or wheeled** instead of driven and **£1.15 for each mile cycled** instead of driven according to Sustrans. It is also estimated that traffic congestion cost the UK economy £6.9 billion in 2019, and physically active workers take **27%** fewer sick days.

Economic modelling commissioned by Transport North East estimates that each active trip generates £1.50 for the local economy.

It also estimated that achieving a **45%** rise in the number of shorter active travel journeys made in the North East by 2035 could benefit the region's economy by around £350 million a year.

Research has shown that improved active travel infrastructure can also enhance local business performance and that walking and cycling projects can increase retail sales by at least **30%**. Investment in better streets and spaces for walking can potentially increase footfall and attract customers to local businesses.



The benefits of active travel - chapter summary

Enabling people to travel actively for all or part of more journeys will deliver significant health, social, environmental and economic benefits.

A healthier population is more productive, with less sickness absence and allows people to spend their working lives more productively. This will help us work towards our vision of 'moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East', and ultimately achieve our five regional transport objectives.



Case study

South Tyneside

Case study: New Cycle Route alongside the A19, South Tyneside

A new cycle route alongside the A19 now provides a dedicated and direct north-south link seamlessly connects the Tyne Pedestrian and Cyclist Tunnel to the boundary with Sunderland Council.

This has been a longstanding ambition of the Council and local volunteers. This entirely off road 5km route cost approximately £1.2 million to build and was completed during 2019/2020. This was funded through the Transforming Cities Fund and local investment. This new route allows residents and visitors to access centres of employment, such as Nissan, IAMP or the nearby Port of Tyne via the adjoining cycle routes.

3. How do people travel now

In recent decades, the North East has seen rising levels of car use and ownership. This reliance on the private car needs to be addressed, and the use of sustainable types of travel (such as walking, wheeling and cycling) promoted. This chapter provides an insight into the way that people are travelling in the North East as of late 2022, including information on recent levels of active travel.

There were an estimated 408 million trips under one mile and 750 million trips under five miles made by car in the North East in 2018/19, meaning that at least 33% of trips in the region under 5 miles were made by car. In line with government aims, we want to prevent a car-led recovery from Covid-19. Active travel can play a key part of this, with government seeking active travel and public transport to be the natural first choice for journeys going forward.

Active travel is crucial to how we get around. From walking or wheeling to a local shop to cycling on one of our National Cycle Network routes, active travel is already a popular way to move around the North East, consistently being the second most frequent choice of transport for all trips.

It is also estimated that for journeys to Metro stations only walking and cycling have rebounded above the overall level of recovery. According to the 2021 National Travel Survey (see figure 10), regionally 31% of trips in 2021 were made by walking. This gives us a solid base to build on to achieve government targets for active travel, but we want this to be even higher.

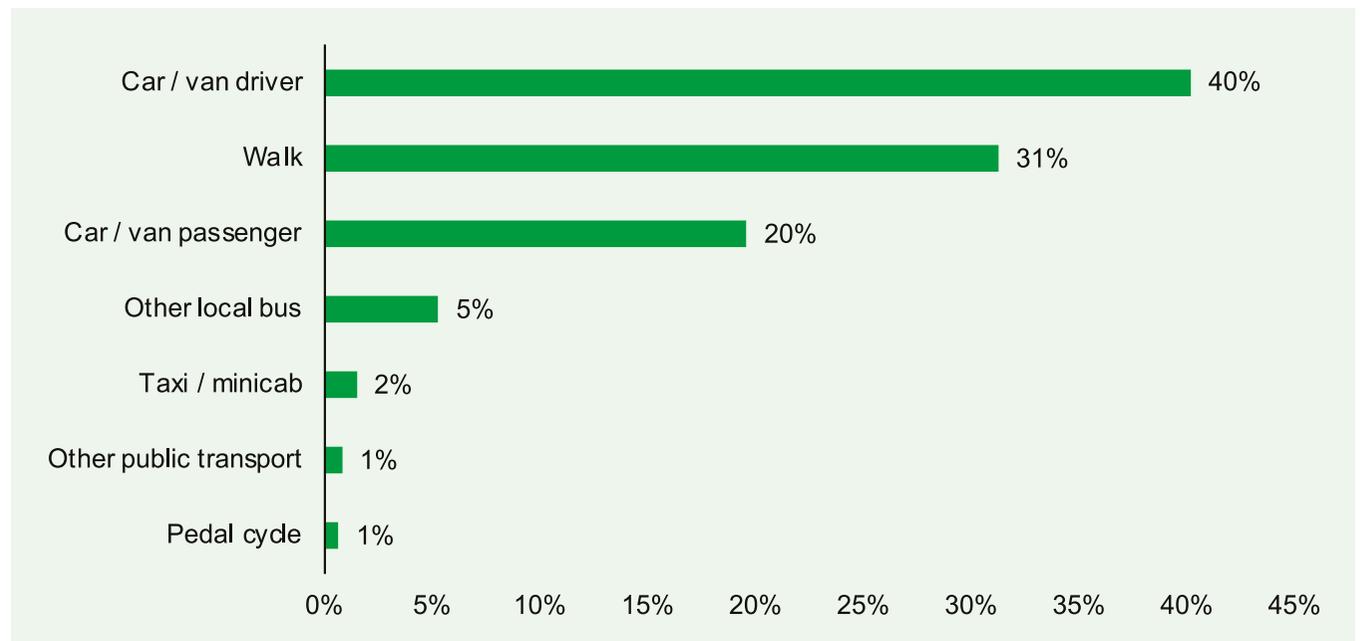


Figure 10: National Travel Survey 2021

Walking and wheeling

In the North East we are close to national average rates for walking once a month, once a week, or five times per week. This is good and shows that we can also reach the national targets set out in the government’s second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2.

Department for Transport figures (see figure 11) show that **71%** of people in the North East walk or cycle as part (or all) of a journey at least once a week, while **88%** of respondents to a 2022 survey on walking and wheeling in Tyne and Wear either would, or do, walk 5 minutes to get public transport as part of the same trip.

In the North East Travel Survey (2022), the most frequent types of journey that people walked were attending education, for leisure and shopping. For cycling, it was commuting, attending education and leisure.

Walking has also proven resilient to the increase in road traffic volumes, with walking still the principal mode of travel to school at **45%** of 5 to 16 year olds, however this gap has been decreasing, particularly at primary school age. Regionally, according to the National Travel Survey (see figure 12) **we have the second lowest level of scholastic active travel of any region in England at 36%, below the national average of 47%**. One of the key aims of this strategy will be to address this.

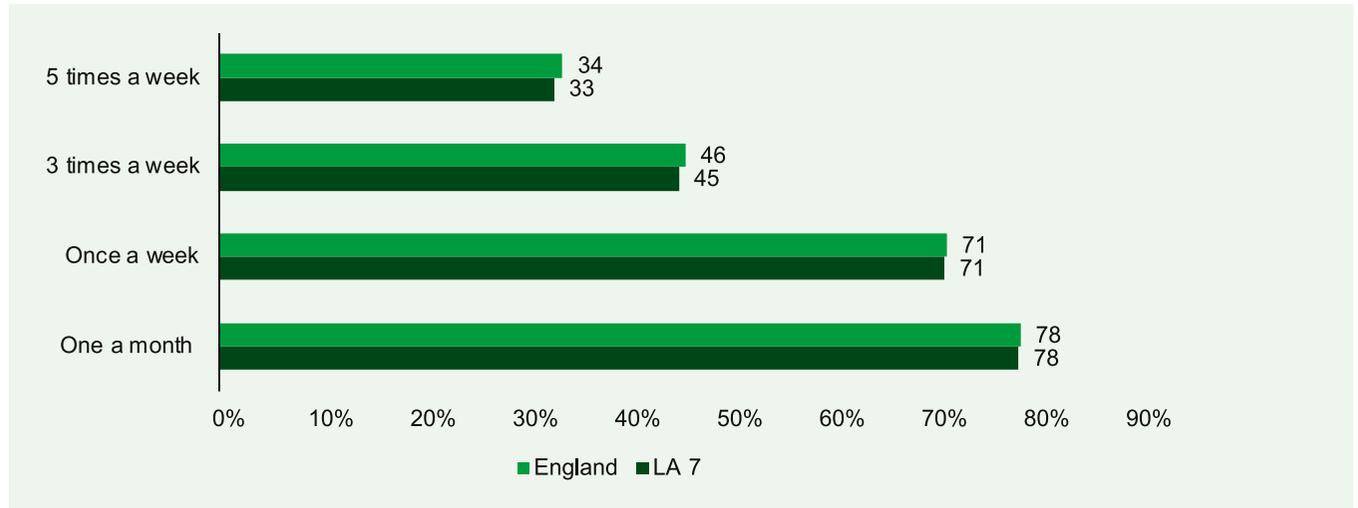


Figure 11: How often do people in the region walk, wheel or cycle. Department for Transport (published 2022)



Figure 12: Active travel to school (5-16 year olds) by region 2021

Cycling

In the first six months of 2022, we have seen an increase in cycling of around **6%** compared to pre-pandemic levels, with some routes seeing larger rises. A recent survey in Tyne and Wear found **60%** of respondents who cycled did so at least once a week, with the majority cycling 3-5 days a week. Our research also found that while **51%** of people who cycle had not changed their amount of cycling over the last 12 months, **20%** were cycling slightly more or much more than 12 months ago. This is positive and we need to continue to encourage this growth moving forward.

Our research shows that in Tyne and Wear, access to bicycles had not shown much change between 2019 and 2022, with around half of respondents owning a bike, and a further **6%** able to borrow a bike when required. This was **10%** higher than the national average of **47%**. Figure 13 also shows that bicycle ownership and access changes over time. The highest uptake is between the ages of 5-10 and 11-16, when many begin learning how to ride a bike.

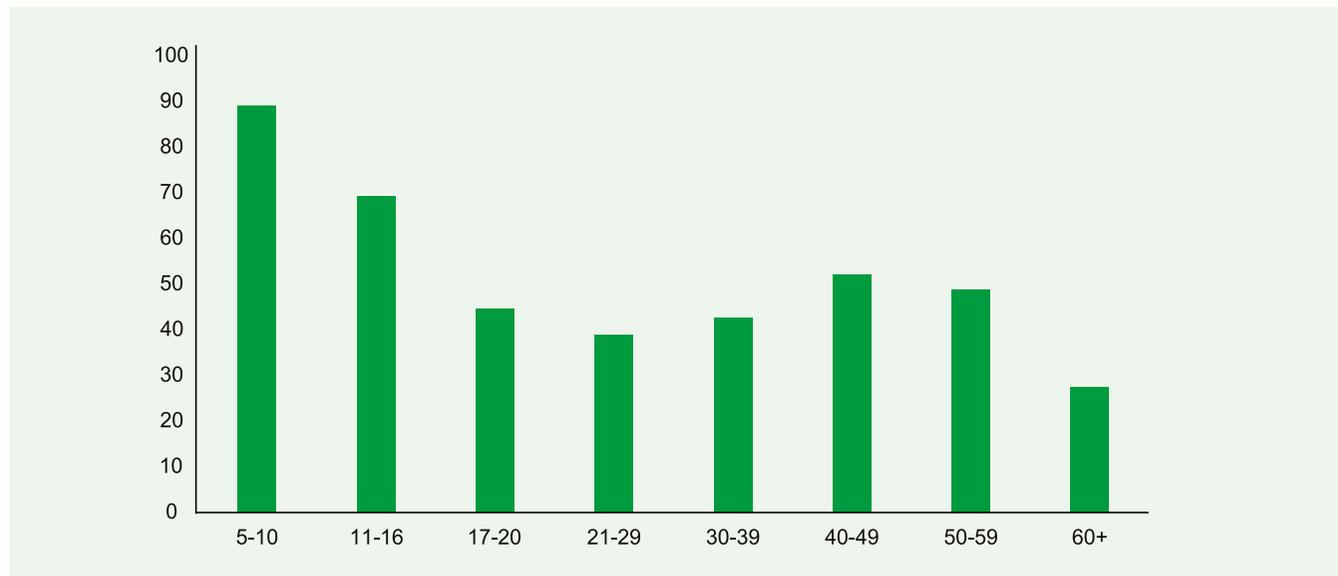


Figure 13: Owns or has access to a pedal cycle in England by age band (%) (National Travel Survey 2021)

Impact of Covid-19 and Cost of Living

Active travel became an even more important part of our lives during the period of Covid-19 restrictions, when social movement was limited and active travel provided a way to get some exercise. Active travel was also a way of getting around when people were advised to only travel if necessary and where possible, to avoid public transport.

Transport is an important area of regional average household spending. The average North East household spent £73.90 per week on transport prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, which was **15%** of total household expenditure before the cost of living crisis.

Before the cost of living crisis, approximately **39%** of Tyne and Wear respondents signalled an expectation towards walking more and **26%** towards cycling more in the next six months based on cost of living concerns (Nexus insight Panel – cost of living April 2022).

In a national level survey, **39%** of respondents suggested they were beginning to make fewer non-essential journeys. Our research as part of the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy (2022) has shown that households are already reconsidering some of their journeys due to cost.

Changes to some working habits may also create long term shifts in active travel patterns. According to the Office for National Statistics (2022), around **22%** of employees in the North East work mainly from home, with shifts towards hybrid working in many industries meaning that people are spending less time in the traditional workplace, and more time at home, as can be seen from the graph on the right, which is based on Google Mobility data (see figure 14).

The North East however does have a lower percentage of homeworking than London, the South East, North West and South West, and is around **2%** below the national average for England. These working patterns may well change in the medium to long term.

For those who may now walk, wheel or cycle less as a result of changing working patterns, the possibility of active travel for leisure becomes even more important to ensure they remain healthy and mobile and maintain active travel rates. Uptake is above the national average for walking for leisure in the region (as outlined in figure 15) which offers positive indications that walking and wheeling for exercise and leisure will continue. For example, in a 2022 Walking and Wheeling Nexus Insight Panel survey in Tyne and Wear, exercise and convenience were the two main motivators for journeys that respondents walked or wheeled.

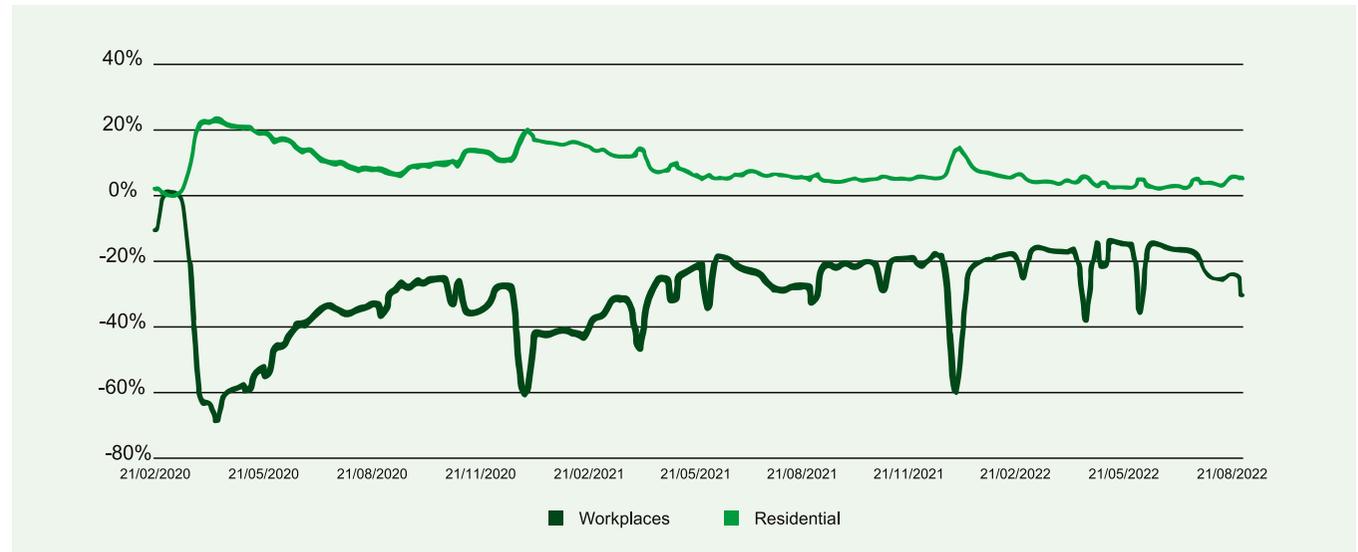


Figure 14: Change in time spend in Workplaces and Residential (Google Mobility 2022)

Walking for Leisure	Once a Month	Once a Week	Three Times a Week	Five Times a Week
North East	71%	61%	32%	25%
England	70%	60%	31%	23%

Figure 15: Levels of walking in North East compared to England. Department for Transport 2022

How do people travel now - chapter summary

It is clear that while we start from a strong base in our work to develop active travel in the region, there are areas that we can improve on.

For many metrics, we are around the national average and are well positioned to enable more people to walk, wheel, and cycle for more journeys. The next chapter will look at the challenges of active travel.

4. What are the challenges?

We have identified key challenges which need to be addressed for us to break down barriers to active travel, both actual and perceived.

Several studies and engagement campaigns have been carried out in the region, the findings of which have helped us to better understand perceptions and barriers to active travel for residents and businesses.

They are:

- Public Attitudes Survey for North East Active Travel Fund (2021)
- Making the Right Travel Choice – Market Research with North East residents and employers (2022)
- Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy – Public Consultation (2022)
- Nexus Insight Panel –
 - Walking and wheeling (2022)
 - Cycling (2019 and 2022)
- North East Underrepresented Groups in Cycling Market Research (2022)
- Active Travel Strategy Stakeholder Forum (2022)

The samples of these surveys are not representative of the North East as a region, but can be read as useful indicators.

The research has shown us that there are five key themes that are important to people when considering walking, wheeling and cycling:

- **Safety and security (including perceptions).**
- **Access for all and maintenance.**
- **Affordability.**
- **Coordination and integration.**
- **Journey times and perceptions of convenience.**

If we address these barriers then more people in our region will be able to travel actively for more of their short journeys, achieving our vision of ‘moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East.’

Safety and security

Infrastructure safety concerns

Perhaps the main challenge that needs to be addressed, is the perception that active travel is unsafe because of concerns over infrastructure and/or personal safety and security.

When asked about the main barriers to cycling in the region, cyclists and non-cyclists agreed that the main concern was traffic.

Nexus Insight Panel on cycling (July 2022)

Concerns include perceptions that roads are dangerous places for cyclists. Safety concerns include the impact of heavy traffic on roads, and a lack of segregated active travel routes in these locations, and historic residential street infrastructure in many areas with cars parked on both sides of the road including encroachment onto footpaths and cycle paths.

What are the challenges?

Safety concerns also included perceptions that in rural areas, there is a lack of pavement space, with narrow roads and high speed limits along some non-residential roads often shared between motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

“I’m someone who signed up to my cycle to work scheme. I got the bike, but I don’t really feel that safe, where I live, cycling to work. There’s a lot of cars parked on the pavements so there isn’t the space to cycle on. I wouldn’t dare cycle on the roads, where I live, there’s just a lot of drivers that wouldn’t expect to see somebody cycling to work in the estate where I live.”

Participant, Underrepresented Groups in Cycling, 2022

Personal safety and security concerns

A lack of lighting and CCTV, poor maintenance and blind spots contribute to perceptions of poor safety and security when walking, wheeling or cycling.

Perceptions that cycling is generally unsafe impacts the willingness of parents to let their children to travel actively. As a result, young people may not get into a habit of cycling.

Cycle training provided to children declines rapidly when they start secondary school impacting on their confidence. This is an important age group to target given the opportunity to get them to cycle for all of their adult life.

“More dedicated cycleways, reduced priorities for motorists, more cycle paths out in the open not secluded (I’m a woman and these are just too secluded. Really need some focus groups on why women are scared of cycling).”

Female, 50-60 Tyne and Wear

“The only problem about walking is the safety aspect being a senior citizen.”

Female, 60+, Tyne and Wear

47% of respondents to the North East Travel Survey (2022) reported feeling either unsafe or very unsafe due to a fear of crime or disorder while walking at night compared to 6% during the day.



Figure 16: Total casualties in the North East 2011 - 2021

Access for all and maintenance

Lack of consistency in the quality of active travel routes

Lack of information on active travel options can reduce access. Direct and pleasant routes may be available, however, if the public aren't aware of them they will not be used including public rights of way and the National Cycle Network.

Perceived lack of consistency in the quality of active travel routes can act as a deterrent, including poorly maintained surfaces, and segregated routes stopping and starting, resulting in people having to share road space with motor vehicles for parts of the journey.

Enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure could make trips shorter, safer and more pleasant. Uncertainty over continued sources of maintenance funding was highlighted by stakeholders as a barrier.

Providing quality active travel infrastructure in rural places is often difficult because of the anticipated expense of adapting roads to meet and exceed the latest design standards, which apply to the entire local highway network. Design standards often conflict with the characteristics of some of the region's rurally based towns and villages, although national policy recognises that the level of provision required depends on the location.

Many towns have a high volume of road traffic, but little space to accommodate a segregated pathways, and constrained widths with insufficient space between building lines.

The scope of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) is perceived to focus on urban areas, potentially impacting on the ranking and prioritisation of rural improvements linking communities.

Direct routes linking rural communities are often on roads with national speed limits. As a result, some active travel routes have recently been reclassified by Sustrans.

A rural challenge is the difficulty of identifying potential high-use corridors, as there is less demand for active travel routes compared to urban environments.

The images to the right, show improvements on a 2 mile route linking Newton Hall to Durham City Centre from Brasside (Frankland Prison) to The Sands (Durham City) which had previously been unusable to anyone other than walkers and mountain bikers. It has opened up the bridleway to a wider audience, including everyday cyclists and mobility scooter users.



Frankland Lane, County Durham
Surface before improvement



Frankland Lane, County Durham
After the surface was improved

“It’s not a continual network [in Durham], so there’s a lot of stopping and starting and again, cyclists are not prioritised. You have to stop at various different points and have to wait for the traffic to move. So yes, it’s not as joined up as it could be.”

Female, County Durham

What are the challenges?

Poor physical environment for walking, wheeling, and cycling

A perceived poor environment, such as traffic road congestion, noise, severance, air pollution, street clutter, a perception that some streets and housing estates are 'car-centric' and dominated by vehicles and car parking, were referenced as reasons why people wouldn't consider travelling more actively.

People with restricted mobility (such as wheelchair users, people with pushchairs, and vulnerable groups) have highlighted issues which impact on their ability to travel actively. Common barriers include 'street clutter', a lack of dropped kerbs, turning spaces, and ramps, and where narrow paths result in the potential for conflict with other users of the space.

Some rural walkers told us that a narrow paths and limited amount of pavements can act as barriers to active travel.

Addressing these can ensure active travel routes are accessible to all, regardless of age, sex, race or disability and does not create risks for vulnerable pedestrians.

Street clutter, narrow cycle lanes and footpaths were given as examples of issues facing pedestrians and cyclists. Removing unnecessary obstructions such as street clutter could improve accessibility for everyone, including visually impaired people.

53% of respondents in Tyne and Wear were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the condition of cycle routes in the region.

Nexus Customer Insight Panel, 2022



Source: A Guide to Inclusive Cycling, Wheels for Wellbeing, 2nd Edition, 2019

Access to bikes

Lack of cycle access was raised as a key barrier to cycling. The table (see figure 17 on the next page) shows data from Nexus Insight Panel surveys on cycling taken in 2019 and 2022. Regional access to bikes (to own and to hire) has remained static between 2019 and 2022. The amount of people who have no access to a bike has remained at **43%**. This shows that bike accessibility is a challenge.

Perception of fitness and perseverance required

Perceptions that active travel requires too much effort and that people feel they are not fit enough to do it are common challenges. It goes beyond physical mobility restrictions that some may have which can restrict their ability to travel actively extending to perceptions of the fitness and perseverance required when walking, wheeling, and cycling.

The weather has been highlighted as a perceived barrier, with unpleasant conditions during the winter and dark mornings and evenings being highlighted. There were also perceptions that hilly parts of the region require high fitness levels in order to travel actively.

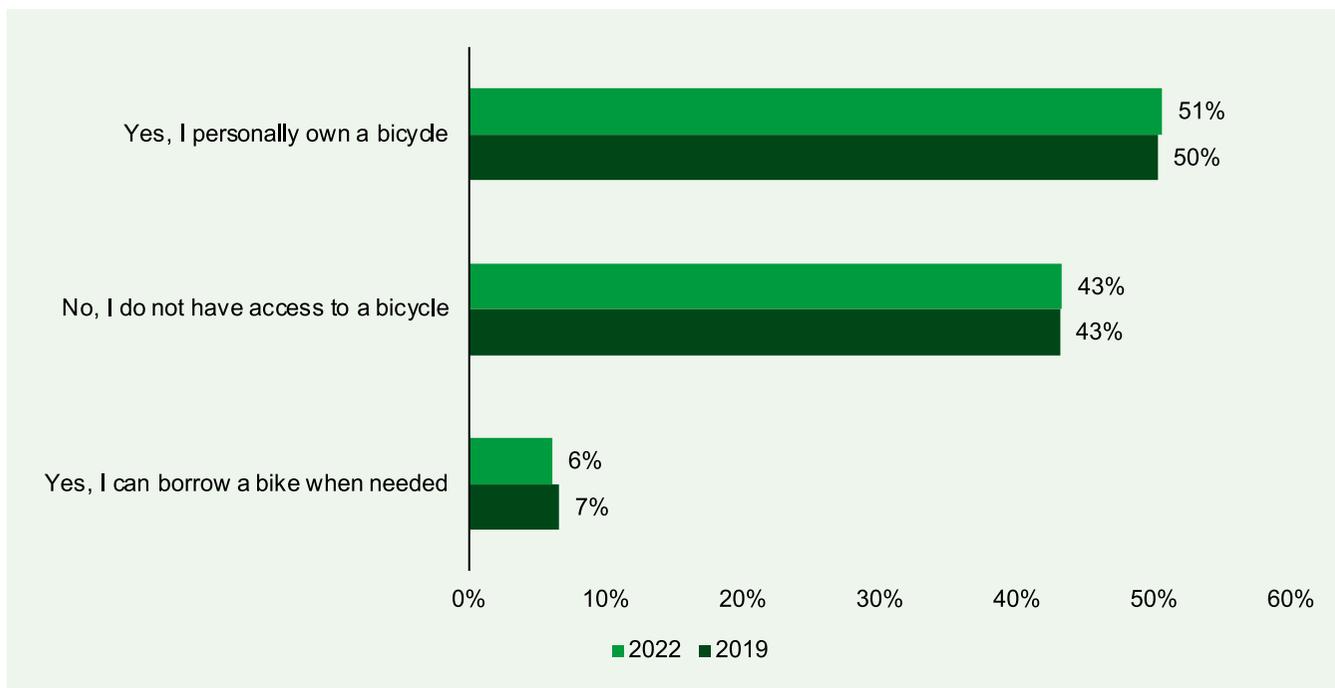


Figure 17: Tyne and Wear bicycle access 2019-2022 (Nexus Insight Panel, 2019 & 2022)



Source: A Guide to Inclusive Cycling, Wheels for Wellbeing, 2nd Edition, 2019

Affordability

Active travel is often the cheapest way to get around, especially walking. For cycling there are cost barriers such as purchasing a bicycle or e-bike and associated equipment.

Some people with restricted mobility highlighted the high cost of adaptive bikes as a key barrier.

For those that told us they could afford a bike, some saw bikes as not being value for money as they would get limited use out of it. This was particularly felt amongst some women in the region, who took part in the underrepresented groups in cycling research.

Cost reduction is a significant motivator for some considering switching the way they travel, prompted by the cost of living crisis.

“The price of petrol at the minute is just crazy. So that’s another reason why we’ll just go local down to the coast [on bikes].”

Female, 35-59, Underrepresented Groups in Cycling, 2022

Coordination and integration

Perceived lack of integration between active travel and public transport is a barrier to longer sustainable journeys including integration between different public transport types and services.

A lack of real-time passenger information, inadequate information and signage was also a common barrier mentioned preventing more people from travelling actively to a public transport station or interchange.

Our research found that a perceived lack of secure storage and an understanding of whether bikes can be taken on to trains, buses and Metro acted as a barrier to combining cycling with public transport.

Improved cycle routes, segregated from road vehicle traffic, linking to public transport stations and interchanges was seen as important to people when considering if they could combine travelling actively with public transport for longer journeys.

Integration of active travel and public transport is especially important in rural areas because of the distance needed to be travelled.

“It’s good to encourage increased cycling in city centres like Newcastle through bike lanes, but the other transport options need to be joined up, so that bikes can be carried on the Metro and bus, for example.”

Micro business, North Tyneside

Journey times and perceptions of convenience

Our research highlighted that some people believe many regular journeys they need to make cannot be walked, wheeled, or cycled because of the distance, and felt they didn’t have the time.

“Everyone’s in a hurry all the time. Like life’s just moving too fast. Everyone’s going to work, then they’re going somewhere straight after work and they’ve got to be here and there, and they’re squeezing things in around family life.”

Female, under 40, urban

The practicability of getting people to consider switching short car journeys to active travel was questioned by some, mainly due to the perceived ease of car use. Although being stuck in traffic can be inconvenient, it did not outweigh the perceived convenience of travelling by car for some.

The perception around the ease of driving, supported by the low cost and availability of car parking at workplaces and in town and city centres around the region was also highlighted.

Those with childcare responsibilities viewed the private car as the quickest, most convenient choice for their needs because of the multi-purpose journeys and commitments they have.

Some people with restricted mobility were clear that convenience was crucial in determining how to make a journey and that the issue of sustainable travel was secondary.

People also highlighted negative perceptions of walking or cycling to work. Some felt that travelling actively was mainly a leisure activity and not for journeys to work where journey time and convenience take priority.

Spatial planning and new development were also mentioned as a barrier to the convenience of cycling, walking and wheeling.

What are the challenges?

Another issue highlighted was a perception of new developments being located away from city and town centres with irregular or no bus services and poor and indirect walking and cycling routes.

People in the 60+ age group, and those living in rural and semi-rural locations, mentioned a reluctance to consider changing travel behaviour to more active and sustainable journeys.

“Stopped [cycling] in my teens, never picked it up again.”

Female, 50-60, Tyne and Wear

Storage and facilities

A common barrier is the lack of secure cycle storage at both workplaces and transport interchanges. Whilst many employers and business parks in the region have good cycle storage, shower and changing facilities available, employees aren't always aware of these.

The need to change and shower when arriving at work, as well as making multiple journeys for business, and perceived issues with having to carry a change of clothes and other equipment was also highlighted.

14% of all responses on barriers to cycling in Tyne and Wear related to end point facilities such as cycle parking and showers.

Nexus Customer Insight Panel, 2022

Regional cycle storage exists at public transport interchange and business parks but we have identified a lack of awareness as a barrier to greater use.



Summary – what are the challenges?

As can be seen in figure 18, exercise and convenience were the two most important considerations stated for those who decided to walk as part of the whole of a journey. While environmental concerns were not a major factor, it still accounted for **13%** of responses, showing that they are still taken into account.

Respondents were asked to rank their key barriers to cycling in the region (see figure 19), with levels of road traffic, the overall safety of cycling and lack of specific segregated infrastructure proving the three most important factors.

This chapter has highlighted the challenges which many people in our region face when attempting to travel actively.

Furthermore, the chapter has also outlined the additional challenges which people who live in our rural areas face.

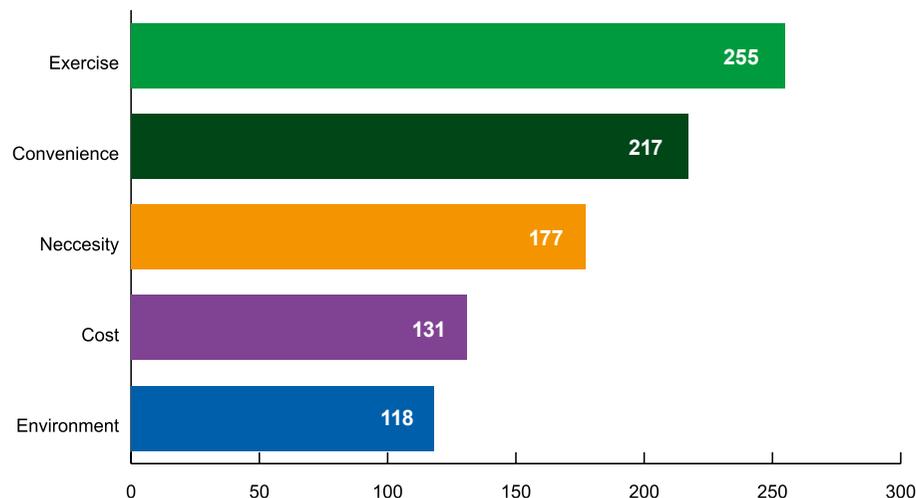


Figure 18: Motivations when deciding to walk or wheel – 2022 Nexus insight panel

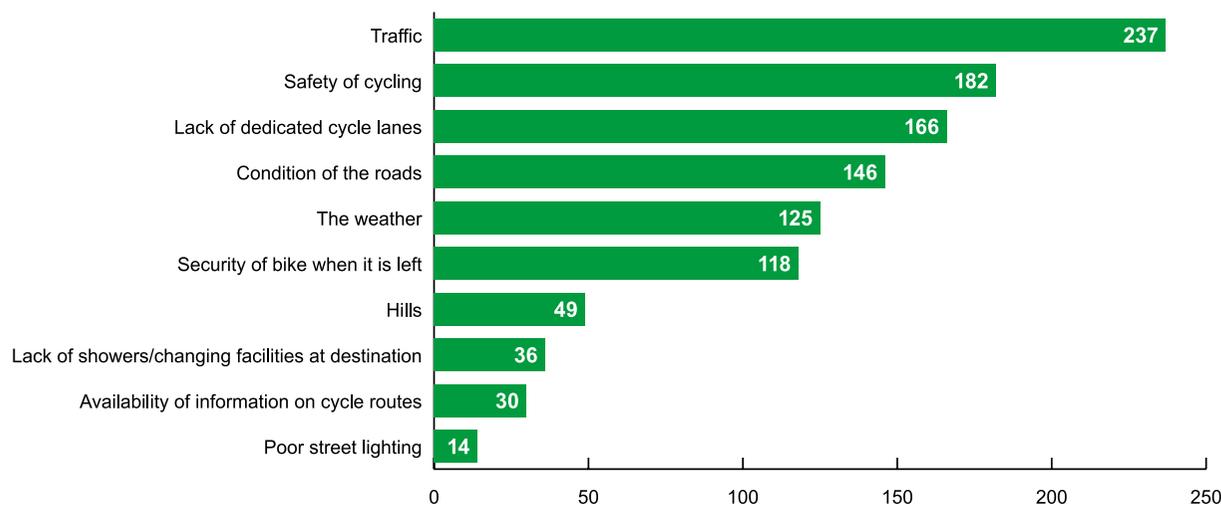


Figure 19: Key barriers to cycling in the region – 2022 Nexus insight panel

5. Where do we want to be?

Background

By 2035 we would like our region to be at the forefront of having made the transition to decarbonise transport, having cleaner air for our people to breathe, having a more physically active population, and having a stronger economy.

We want active travel to become the natural choice for short everyday journeys and to combine with public transport for longer travel.

To achieve this, there will need to be a 45% rise in the number of shorter active travel journeys by 2035.

This will get us to the point where over half of short journeys are made by active travel. It is ambitious but can be achieved with the right level of investment and policy change. The region must also work to tackle the barriers people face and the everyday needs of people making journeys, which includes everyone living in, working in and visiting the North East.

There is significant potential to grow the number of active trips taken, and we need to work with partners to help provide safe, attractive, and high-quality active travel infrastructure which helps people move around the region and make more everyday journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling. This means working with businesses to help them support their employees to travel actively.

We want to be in a position where the vision and objectives of the North East Transport Plan and Active Travel Strategy are realised. We also want to ensure the region can help to meet the national targets set out in the Government's second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) published in July 2022, and the 2020 'Gear Change' cycling and walking plan for England which sets out a vision for a travel revolution in England's streets, towns and communities.

For this to be achieved, our transport network and offer will look different to how it does today.

Active travel will take a more prominent role in how people travel alongside a sustainable, affordable public transport system and zero emission vehicles.

This chapter sets out how we envisage walking, cycling and wheeling will look in the North East by 2035 if this strategy has been implemented.

We have identified the need for better active travel infrastructure, including the proposed development of a North East active travel network, with affordable cycle hire, docking and storage at key transport interchanges, education and employment sites.

This chapter also sets out where we want to be in the coming years for each of our challenges:

- **Safety and security (including perceptions).**
- **Accessibility and maintenance.**
- **Affordability.**
- **Coordination and integration.**
- **Journey times and perceptions of convenience.**

Safety and security

Perceptions of safety and security are perhaps the most significant barrier which the region needs to tackle.

Safety will be a key consideration in the design of all new transport schemes and programmes to support people to use active travel for more journeys.

Improving existing and building new infrastructure will encourage people to travel actively for more journeys. This includes segregating active travel routes from vehicle traffic where possible and, where feasible, to have segregation between pedestrians and cyclists, directly addressing safety concerns and reducing the likelihood of collisions.

On our road network, the needs of all road users will be considered, ensuring that conflicts are reduced and suitable speed limits are in place to improve road safety for all road users, especially vulnerable road users.

Pedestrians and pedal cyclists will be physically separated from cars, where possible, to improve road safety for vulnerable road users.

Given the challenges of accommodating segregated active travel pathways, particularly in rural areas, highway authorities will have considered measures to improve the safety of pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists when sharing the carriageway as well as motor traffic.

We want everyone to feel safe walking, wheeling and cycling around the North East. Active travel routes will be more direct where feasible, with fewer blind corners and good lighting, improving safety.

Our footpaths and cycleways will be attractive and pleasant, and people will enjoy using them. Perceptions of safety and security will be further improved by more people choosing to walk, wheel or cycle around our cities, towns, suburbs and villages. A greater presence of people moving around our region actively, will encourage others to do the same, helping to support economic development.

Streets will be for all, with greater priority given to pedestrians. Areas, particularly town and city centres will be more 'walkable' and well-lit with improvements to the built environment and better lighting and greater CCTV coverage, providing reassurance and boosting confidence.

Pedestrians and cyclists alike will be met by modern, well-lit and safe waiting and storage facilities to complete their onward journeys by public transport such as bus, Metro, rail, and ferry. A range of cycle storage solutions will be available across the region, and these will be covered by CCTV where possible, combatting bike theft.

People of all ages will have improved confidence and cycling skills through equal access cycle training initiatives across the North East.

People will have awareness of the updated Highway Code which places pedestrians at the top of a road user hierarchy. Understanding of key changes, including other traffic having to give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross at a junction, and the position in the road for cyclists, will be enhanced. The updated hierarchy and raising awareness of it will help improve the safety of people walking, wheeling and cycling.

Many journeys between rural communities will be perceived as more cyclable distances, through allowing space for paths within or outside of the highway boundary, improving safety for pedestrians as well as cyclists.

Accessibility and maintenance

New infrastructure solutions will be high-quality and will meet (and where possible exceed) minimum design standards.

The region will have a defined **North East strategic Active Travel network**, connecting our towns, cities and neighbourhoods with key destinations such as public transport interchanges, education, employment, healthcare, and leisure locations.

This will be created initially by working with local authority partners to identify and address known gaps in the active travel network to create more direct and desirable routes.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) and Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIPs) will feed in directly to the development of the strategic regional network.

Towns, cities and neighbourhoods across the region in rural and urban areas will have been upgraded and redesigned, where feasible, to enable more active short journeys.

Active travel will be more inclusive, by removing barriers that make it harder for some to walk, wheel or cycle to their destinations. This will ensure that travelling actively in the North East is accessible to all regardless of age, sex, race or disability.

The active travel network will link both urban, suburban, and rural communities where possible, and will be designed to a consistent regional standard with a strong, identifiable brand. We want to be in a position where the North East Strategic Active Travel Network has targeted investment, so that maintenance and cleaning is guaranteed and the network remains reliable and pleasant for users.

It will be easier for people with restricted mobility to be able to use active travel as a form of transport, including as a means of accessing public transport.

There will be wide, segregated (where possible) and well-maintained routes, dropped kerbs, ramp access provision where necessary, and other inclusive infrastructure such as well-designed crossing points.

Footpaths and cycle ways will also be well-maintained, free of uneven surfaces, potholes, trip hazards and overhanging vegetation through strengthened maintenance and cleaning regimes. Greater provision of shelters and rest areas will ensure people have the opportunity to take a break during their journey.

In addition to providing new active travel routes, **the existing network will have continued to be upgraded to the highest standard**, enabling onward connections away from main routes including off carriageway routes in rural areas.

The region will have successfully made the case for partners and get financial resource for **targeted investment in maintenance activities to complete maintenance at pace, to improve resilience and drive up the safety of the region's network.**

Our active travel network will be used by different non-traditional bikes by removing barriers and improving surfaces.

There will be reduced street clutter on footpaths and cycle lanes due to badly parked cars and vans, as a result of greater enforcement which will help all users – especially visually impaired people – and people using wheelchairs and pushchairs.

Mobility hubs in urban, suburban and rural areas will provide services related to cycling, walking and wheeling, such as hire bikes and bike repair.

E-bikes will be hire-able and used more in rural locations because of the longer distances people may need to travel, and also enable people to tackle hills easier. E-bikes will have unlocked a huge opportunity for improving transport between and beyond suburban areas where distances to key destinations are too long for many to consider walking or cycling using a conventional bike and where public transport options are limited.

Working with local authorities and developers, new housing and business developments will be built around making active travel the first choice for journeys, aligned to the region's Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy.

The National Cycle Network (NCN) and long-distance walking routes will have been improved by working closely with local authorities, Sustrans and other key delivery partners.

Given the limitations that are often in place for creating new active travel infrastructure in rural locations, creative solutions which make better use of existing infrastructure will be introduced.

15-minute neighbourhood concepts will have been introduced in urban, suburban and rural areas where work, key amenities, shops and services are within a 15-minute walk, wheel or cycle from home, enabling people to make more active journeys rather than travelling by car.

The potential for active travel to grow the region's visitor economy and for tourists to travel actively and combine walking, wheeling and cycling with public transport will have been unlocked through working in partnership work with tourism organisations.



Source: Cycling UK

Cycling for Health

Cycling UK run a Cycling for Health scheme that aims to help people get started with cycling and improve their health and wellbeing. People are referred to the scheme by community organisations and health and social care professionals and enrolled on a 12-week instructor led course to provide a route into regular activity, through cycling.

Designed for adults identified as having poor mental health, the course involves working together with others to develop a new skill and grow in confidence. The courses are delivered in small groups of up to 12 people, bikes are provided, and participants progress to deliver a steady and achievable increase in activity.

Once people complete the programme, they can join established community cycle clubs and be part of groups who regularly cycle together.

Evaluation of the Cycling for Health scheme in West Yorkshire, found that at the end of the programme **63%** of attendees increased cycling levels and **49%** reporting they now cycled more than once a week.

Those meeting the Chief Medical Officer physical activity guidelines (150min per week moderate activity) rose from **22%** to **69%** immediately after completing the programme, and mental health and wellbeing indicators have consistently improved over past five years.

Improving active travel infrastructure in Blyth, Northumberland

Improvements are being made to active travel infrastructure using the Active Travel Fund. Segregated cycling and crossing facilities have been built on Waterloo Road to improve access to the town centre, aligned to wider 'Energising Blyth' town centre redevelopment proposals. The scheme was completed and opened to traffic on 31st August 2022.



Smart and Healthy Metro Stations, South Tyneside

As part of the Transforming Cities Fund, South Tyneside Council is developing two Smart and Healthy Metro Stations. Focussing initially on two sites, Tyne Dock and Chichester due to their elevated levels of commercial and industrial activity within the immediate area of each. The scheme will improve active travel connectivity from each Metro Station to nearby businesses and areas of commercial activity, including the Port of Tyne. These schemes are expected to be complete by Spring 2023.

Affordability

The region will champion active travel, particularly walking for more journeys as an affordable and attractive way of travelling.

People will be able to easily hire cycles across the North East, including e-bikes in order to travel around cheaply. This will address issues around transport poverty and social exclusion. The region will have also explored further opportunities of regulated e-scooter hire.

Businesses and employers will be able to support and enable their staff to introduce more active journeys to and from work, building on current initiatives such as the Cycle to Work scheme. More employers will have electric bikes available for staff to use during work hours for business travel.

Coordination and integration

Combining active travel with public transport, such as walking, wheeling or cycling to a station or interchange will be an effective way for people to incorporate physical activity into daily life and raise activity levels. There will have been significant growth in the numbers of people travelling actively for the first and last mile of journeys, using bus, Metro, rail and the Shields Ferry as part of a journey.

Active travel routes will link to public transport stations and interchanges, allowing for safe and seamless travel with other forms of transport.

The region's public transport network and services will work better for cyclists than it already does today in 2022. It will be easier to store bikes at interchanges and bring them on more public transport services where appropriate and feasible.

The region will also have **suitable active travel storage facilities at leisure spots and key employment sites to ensure that people are able to safely store their cycle.** This will be achieved by working with local authorities, transport operators and other active travel stakeholders.

Greater active travel journeys in the region will not replace or compete with journeys currently made by public transport, but rather complement and feed into the region's public transport system as part of a one, total sustainable network.

There will be seamless active travel integration with public transport for onward journeys. Real-time public transport passenger information will show how long it takes and the most convenient route to travel when walking, wheeling or cycling to a public transport station or interchange. People will be able to see where there is available cycle parking and be able to book it.

Incentives as part of an integrated transport app could also reward people for making more active journeys.

People will be able to easily hire cycles, including e-cycles and, where appropriate, e-scooters throughout the region at public transport stations and interchanges. Cycle hire will be integrated with the rest of the region's sustainable transport network.

Given the importance of integration with public transport for active travel in rural locations, creative solutions combining active travel with public transport such as Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), including bus services and Mobility as a Service (MaaS), will have been introduced where appropriate in rural communities.

Journey times and perceptions of convenience

Active travel will be viewed as a regular activity that everyone can enjoy for a range of journey purposes. Routes will be more direct, improving journey times in some cases.

There will have been a significant rise in e-bike and e-cargo bikes across the region, especially from people who currently don't cycle. Organisations will be able to deliver some goods over short distances using cargo bikes, instead of doing so by using petrol or diesel vans.

As well as e-cargo bikes being used for home deliveries, there will be greater use of e-cargo bikes, such as ones which can carry children will support more suburban families to switch more journeys from car to active travel.

More people will walk, wheel or cycle to work, education sites, healthcare appointments and to leisure locations and facilities. More school children will travel actively to school, in line with the government's target of **55%** of primary school journeys made this way. Support from stakeholders such as local schools, councils and charities such as Living Streets and Sustrans to drive forward cycling initiatives in schools will achieve this.

Negative perceptions of active travel will have been addressed through various initiatives such as promotional campaigns which will have successfully helped more people to walk, wheel and cycle for all types of journeys in the North East.

Walking, wheeling and cycling will be seen as a form of pleasure, entertainment and exercise. More people will visit the region and travel actively when getting around. More people will visit the region to use long distance walking routes, cycle routes, rambling, mountain biking for example.

This will be achieved by working in partnership with tourism organisations to promote the region's active travel assets.

There will be more 'School Streets' across the region which will have helped lower congestion, improved air quality and boosted the number of children walking, cycling and scooting to school each day. Teenagers and school leavers will also receive cycling education to take forward active travel in their adult life.

We will remain realistic in our recognition that active travel won't be suitable for all journeys. The reasons why people travel the way they do are complex and depend on a number of circumstances, which can change per journey, so a flexible approach is needed. There will not be a 'one size fits all' approach in the region, recognising that the car or van may be the only option for certain journeys and personal circumstances.



Where do we want to be – chapter summary

This chapter has set out how we envisage walking, cycling and wheeling will look in the North East in 2035 if this strategy has been successfully implemented.

It sets out a vision for the region where people make more everyday journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling. Active travel will take a more prominent role in how people travel, with over half of short journeys made by active travel by 2035. More active travel will compliment a sustainable, affordable public transport system, along with zero emission vehicles.

This will be achieved by securing funding for providing and promoting safe, attractive, and high-quality active travel infrastructure, which this strategy makes the case for.



Where do we want to be – desired outcomes

Active travel friendly places

We will invest in and support development which improve public spaces to enable more walking, wheeling and cycling. Active travel will be deeper integrated with public transport by improving access to equipment such as cycle hire and storage at public transport stations and interchanges.

World-class active travel network

We will promote more safe, continuous, direct routes for cycling in towns and cities, physically separated from pedestrians and volume motor traffic, serving the places that people want to go.

NOTE – these images are for illustrative purposes only. They are intended to give a flavour of what delivery of this strategy might look like in urban and rural areas of the North East. They are not designed schemes and not intended to be final design proposals.



Suburban coastal active travel 'superhighway' route with consistent signage and lighting



Rural active travel route, linking rural communities together



Urban pedestrian improvements with cycle hubs outside public transport interchanges

6. Measures of success

The core of this strategy is to grow the number of trips made by active travel, to the point where active travel is the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combines with public transport for longer journeys.

This will be achieved by breaking down the barriers, securing funding and addressing the key challenges.

We hope to ensure that, if we are successful, over half of all shorter journeys in the North East will be made by active travel by 2035. This is aligned to Active Travel England's national target of increasing the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled from **41%** in 2018/19 to **46%** in 2025, then to **50%** in 2030, then **55%** by 2035.

Headline target

We want to oversee a 45% rise in the number of shorter active travel journeys made in the North East by 2035.

The opportunity

Shorter journeys currently made by car have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel.

According to the latest (2018/19) regional breakdown of the National Travel Survey (NTS) **80%** of journeys under 1 mile in the North East were made by active travel. **17%** were made by a car or van.

However, for shorter journeys above 1 mile and under 2 miles, only **34%** of these were made by active travel, with cars and vans making up **58%** of journeys this distance.

For shorter journeys above 2 miles and under 5 miles, only **6%** of trips were made by active travel. **77%** were made by car or van.

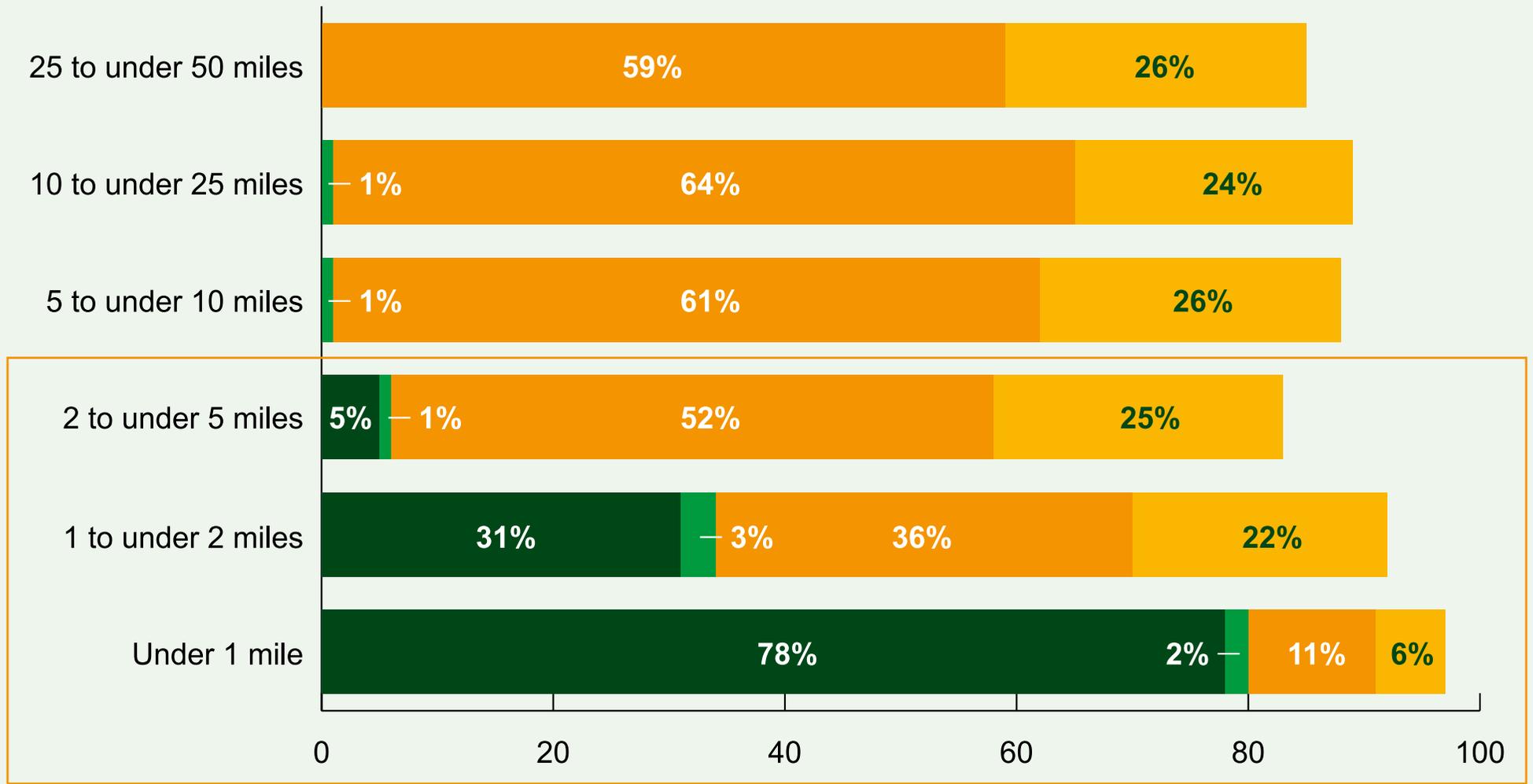
It is these shorter journeys that are currently made by car that have the greatest potential to be converted to active travel. Many of these trips could be walked, wheeled or cycled, which would help to reduce carbon dioxide emitted from cars, benefit local economies, as well as improve people's physical health.

Our Making the Right Travel Choice strategy sets out ways in which unnecessary car journeys can be reduced and asks people to consider switching at least one journey a week to active travel or public transport and for people without access to a car, to continue to travel sustainably.

If we all switch one journey a week to active travel, there would be a significant increase in active travel region-wide.

As we decarbonise transport, making all cars, public transport and heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) zero emission is part of the solution, but relying solely on zero emission road vehicles isn't enough. That is why we need to promote and grow active travel.

A lot of the increase in the number of active journeys will likely need to come from reducing the number of unnecessary car journeys. However, realistically, the increase will also be achieved if our region secures the £500 million worth of investment required for better pavements, paths, and cycle routes.



The opportunity

■ Walk
 ■ Bicycle
 ■ Car / van driver
 ■ Car / van passenger

Please note that these figures do not include public transport trips.

Figure 20: 2018 - 2019 National Travel Survey – North East (LA7 area) breakdown

The benefits

Achieving a **45%** increase in the number of journeys made by active travel by 2035 could result in the following benefits:

- **Prevent in the region of 1,000 premature deaths**, primarily due to increased physical activity levels in the population.
- **Reduce carbon emissions**, potentially saving around 80,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year.
- Benefit the region's economy by around **£350 million a year**.
- Result in more people becoming active, improving public health outcomes such as improved life expectancy and people living more of their lives in good health.
- Improve connectedness and cohesion of communities in our region and reduce social isolation.
- Improve air quality by reducing pollution from traffic emissions.
- Reduce noise levels as congestion is eased on our road network.
- Save petrol and diesel car drivers on average approximately £70 per year (based on September 2022 fuel prices).

Example journeys

We understand that for everyone, 'short journey' may mean different things.

Greater active travel journeys will not replace or compete with journeys currently made by public transport, but rather complement and feed into the region's public transport system as part of a one, total sustainable network.

Examples of introducing active travel into regular everyday journeys could be choosing to walk to a Metro station or bus interchange instead of driving. Another example could be choosing to walk or cycle to work or school instead of driving or getting dropped off by car.

Monitoring

We propose to monitor success against our vision by looking at different journey lengths, journeys under one mile, from one to two miles, and from two to five miles, in line with Governmental distance classifications.

We will be reliant on available National Travel Survey (NTS) data to monitor our progress and understand relevant travel patterns in our region.

With greater levels of funding and continued development of regional capacity, we could use methods such as regional travel diaries and increased use of counter or sensor technology to give us a greater understanding of active travel in our region and more accurately assess our position against our goals.

When monitoring the Key Performance Indicators, we will also, where possible, seek to analyse and monitor inequalities in transport and health. Again, we will seek funding to better understand which groups benefit most from any improvements in our active travel network.

Rationale

The target was selected after modelling both the change in journeys to the region if we achieve our goal of 1 journey a week using National Travel Survey data and applying an overall increase that we would expect to see in active travel rates by 2035 based on available third party modelling.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Successful delivery of this strategy will help achieve the following KPIs as set out in the North East Transport Plan:



Sustainable travel

Increase the % of journeys made by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

(33% in 2019)

Intended direction of travel: **Increase**



Climate action

Reducing transport CO2 emissions per person.

(1.7 tonnes emitted per person annually using transport, 2019)

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Improving road safety

Reducing numbers killed and seriously injured.

Numbers killed and seriously injured (KSI) three year rolling average (2016-17 to 2018-19) 778.

In the three-year rolling average from 2018 to 2021 there were 683 KSI.*

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Improving air quality

Encouraging a switch from car to active travel to improve air quality.

The highest, median, hourly nitrogen dioxide reading was 26.9ug/m3 occurring in the morning traffic peak (2019).

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Motor vehicle traffic

Reduce motor vehicle traffic miles per head.

Estimated vehicle miles per head in our region in 2019 5,077. Without successful interventions and alternatives, motor vehicle mileage per head will grow in our region in the years ahead.

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**



Improving road safety

Reducing number of slight injuries.

Number of slight injuries three year rolling average (2016-17 to 2018-19) 3,275.

The three-year rolling average from 2018 to 2021 was 2,519 slight injuries.*

*It is important to note that lower traffic volumes in 2020 and 2021 are likely to have contributed to the observed reduction in KSIs.

Intended direction of travel: **Decrease**

7. How do we get there

To realise the ambitions of this Active Travel Strategy, the North East Joint Transport Committee will work in collaboration with central government, Active Travel England, and local people.

Our schemes are ambitious, and we estimate would cost in the region of £500 million to fully deliver the strategy. This amount will grow as further schemes are developed over the period to 2035.

Identified Programme – North East Active Travel Strategy

Our programme of proposed investment stems from the North East Transport Plan. The plan sets out a live programme of interventions. All interventions within the programme were initially tested to ensure that they are consistent with Transport Plan objectives and that they are deliverable.

But that is not the end of the process. All schemes will be subject to more rigorous testing and appraisal and will only be delivered where they have demonstrated, through detailed business case development, that they can appropriately contribute towards the delivery of the objectives.

If schemes cannot contribute towards objectives and don't support the Transport Plan, they will not be taken forward.

This strategy has utilised the Transport Plan pipeline and Nexus' (The Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive) capital pipeline schemes. We have identified schemes that will support North East Active Travel Strategy objectives from the below work packages. The different work packages are schemes that can be delivered within the following time periods:

- **Schemes for delivery in the next five years (requiring funding to be accelerated)** – these are either smaller scale schemes that can be quickly developed and delivered or larger schemes at an advanced stage of development. Accelerating development funding will move them to 'Shovel Ready' status; and
- **Schemes for development and delivery by 2035** – A programme of smaller schemes coupled with ambitious schemes requiring development funding to bring them to an advanced stage and move to delivery.

What are we proposing?

We want active travel, particularly walking, to become the natural choice for short everyday journeys and combine with public transport for longer travel.

The proposed investments set out in this strategy broadly consist of:

- **New and upgraded forms of active travel infrastructure:** Enhanced infrastructure for walking and cycling delivering quality, safe, connected, and accessible infrastructure for walking, cycling and wheeling;
- **Access to equipment schemes** that allow people to affordably access the active travel network;
- **Maintenance of the active travel network** to ensure it remains safe and accessible to all users; and
- **Targeted behaviour change initiatives** that encourage uptake of the network and sustain these levels of usage, building on the proposals set out in the region's 'Making The Right Travel Choice' strategy. Key examples include social prescribing and clearer accountabilities to drive the vision for active travel.

Our proposed programme has been further tested to demonstrate how it meets the objectives and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of this strategy and importantly how they meet central government objectives set by Active Travel England (ATE) including from the Cycle and Walking Investment Strategy 2 (CWIS 2).

Delivery

This programme will be delivered by the constituent authorities and Nexus within the North East, together with regional schemes being delivered by the JTC on behalf of the region's Combined Authorities.

The Transport North East programme team will manage this programme and will be responsible for sponsoring the development of various schemes and projects that support this plan, as well as a series of region-wide initiatives.

Implementation of the interventions that are regional initiatives are within the region's control and will be delivered in accordance with the region's programme management and assurance frameworks.

The role of Transport North East acting on behalf of the JTC is varied. In some cases, we will act as the promoter of schemes and will be responsible for delivery but in most circumstances, delivery may be undertaken by another organisation, for example our constituent Local Authorities with Transport North East securing funding at a regional-scale and providing technical assistance as required.

Programme management and assurance

The funding required to realise the ambitions of this strategy is substantial, however the region is fortunate to have a well-established and ratified Transport Assurance Framework in place which is proportionate to the nature, scale, and value of schemes.

The Transport Assurance Framework is a scalable series of gateways that provide our governance structure with the confidence that each component investment is delivering on the requirements of the programme and delivering the Active Travel Strategy and Transport Plan outcomes that have been ascribed to that investment. For more information on our Transport Assurance Framework, please visit: transportnortheast.gov.uk.

Funding and development options

The main source of funding for transport is from central government. Previous rounds of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and Transforming Cities Fund show how the region can deliver significant packages of investment.

Transport North East will continue to work with government to secure funding through competition based funding and longer-term devolved settlements to unlock schemes. Engagement continues with Active Travel England to secure funding through the Capability and Ambition Fund rounds and the Active Travel Fund to take projects from concept to delivery.

For certain investments, developer contributions will form a viable part of the financial model. We will work with the individual authorities to secure appropriate levels of contributions or works in kind where the investment is directly related to the development and is needed to mitigate the impact of the scheme in question.

Realising the ambition of this strategy will be partially reliant on the ability to secure the necessary powers and consents for delivery in terms of traffic regulation orders (TRO) and in some cases planning consent.

Alternative funding may be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly where shared integrated priorities can be realised. This may include borrowing, local government financing, third party support, alternative central government funding and the UK Infrastructure Bank.

The North East has a track record in selecting and prioritising projects which balance objectives around the economy, environment, health, and society. It is important that the plan is flexible to respond to funding opportunities and as such a prioritisation process has been designed incorporating the assessment against the vision and objectives that can be deployed based on the fund that is available.



How do we get there – summary

The region has set out a range of initiatives within this strategy document, worth approximately £500 million that will meet the objectives of this strategy and our Transport Plan and get us to our vision of ‘moving to a green, healthy, dynamic, and thriving North East by 2035’.

We will keep this pipeline updated and have plans in place to develop schemes, so they are ready for delivery over this time period.

We will actively investigate all options for the future financing of these projects including much needed maintenance and revenue support that offer the best combination of security, flexibility, and value for public money in order to successfully deliver where we want to be.

North East Active Travel Strategy – key commitment statements

In order to drive forward this strategy, we have created a list of clear key commitment statements aimed at supporting its delivery and how active travel will achieve the North East Transport Plan vision and objectives:

Active travel friendly places

- We will support improvements to public spaces to encourage and enable more walking, wheeling and cycling.
- We will support and work with local partners to increase the number of 'school streets' and low traffic neighbourhoods to protect children and improve air quality.
- We will support accessibility improvement to make streets more inclusive.
- We will support local authorities to improve pedestrian infrastructure and minimise street clutter.
- We will promote signage and wayfinding to facilitate walking and cycling.

World-class active travel network

- We will promote more safe, continuous, direct routes for cycling in towns and cities, physically separated from pedestrians and volume motor traffic, serving the places that people want to go.
- We will adopt LTN 1/20 design standards across the region.
- We will work with and support Sustrans to improve the National Cycle Network (NCN).
- We will support highway authorities to ensure there is robust maintenance of the network.
- We will work to increase cycle parking and ensure that it goes where it is needed.

Greater integration

- We will work to integrate walking, wheeling and cycling with public transport.
- We will work with Nexus and the region's transport operators to make sure public transport works better with active travel.
- We will work with Nexus and the region's transport operators to make it easier to carry bikes on public transport services.
- We will work with Nexus and the region's transport operators to improve real-time passenger information and to support active travel route finding.

Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle

- We will promote and support initiatives to ensure that adults and children can be trained how to ride a cycle safely.
- We will work with schools and other education providers to encourage active travel patterns from early age (primary and secondary, and further education).
- We will encourage use of the streets for leisure and recreational activities.

Improving access to equipment

- We will work in partnership with our local authorities to introduce and then expand an affordable cycle hire scheme in the North East, including the hire of e-cycles.
- We will support and promote cycling for the carriage of freight, to reduce unnecessary motorised freight and servicing traffic.

Partnership working

Communities

- We will work with and listen to people who live and work in our region who want to travel actively for more journeys to ensure that local requirements are a key consideration of any new schemes.
- We will also work with accessibility groups to ensure that people who have mobility barriers (visible and hidden), are considered when schemes are being developed.
- We will work with our local authority partners to bid for funding opportunities, enabling the delivery of their Local Cycle and Walking Investment Plans.
- We will facilitate and support the region's three Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

Planning

- We will work with our local authority planning partners to consider active travel infrastructure within new developments, reduce car dependency, and improve the quality of existing environments for walking, cycling and wheeling.
- We will support pedestrianisation and walkability of town and city centres, to encourage more active travel and increase footfall for local amenities and businesses.
- We will support the region's local authorities to implement 20-minute neighbourhoods, 15-minute cities to enable more active travel to, from, and within areas where people live.

Public health

- We will work with our partners in local authority public health and environmental health teams and at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities to encourage and support schemes that enable more walking, cycling and wheeling to improve health and reduce inequalities across the North East.

Business and employers

- We will work and support businesses and employers to enable their employees to commute and make more trips by active travel.
- We will work with employers and business parks to strengthen the promotion of active travel and public transport.

Third sector stakeholders

- We will continue to work with partners including Cycling UK, Sustrans and Living Streets to ensure that there is alignment between the work and activities which they lead on and our delivery projects.

Delivery Plan 2022-2028

Key			
	Active travel friendly places		World-class active travel network
	Greater integration		Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle
	Improving access to equipment		Partnership working

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
DU16	Improvements to the national Cycle Network Route 1 in County Durham	Durham County Council	NCN1 Improvements in Durham – a series of works to improve the quality of the route including upgrading to take into account biodiversity and appearance of a section of National Cycle Network Route 1 which runs between Seaham and Stockton. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seaham to A19 – improvements to this section to include resurfacing and widening. The Moonscape – implement a preferred route to include resurfacing and widening. Pesspool Woods – replace the current boardwalk with a suitable, safe and to standard alternative. Improving the lead into and exit from the woods. Making habitat improvements along the route where appropriate. Removing any barriers along the route which prevent access for all non-motorised users. 	Capital
DU23	A689 Sedgefield to Wynyard active mode route improvements	Durham County Council	Upgraded/new off carriageway track connecting Sedgefield and Wynyard growth area.	Capital
DU24	Bishop Auckland to Barnard Castle active mode route improvements	Durham County Council	Upgraded/new off carriageway track connecting Bishop Auckland and Barnard Castle.	Capital
DU26	A177 cycling improvements, linking Coxhoe with Net Park	Durham County Council	A177 cycling improvements, linking Coxhoe with Net Park employment site and Sedgefield.	Capital
DU27	Belmont to Newton Hall active mode route improvements	Durham County Council	Cycling route improvements via Belmont Viaduct, linking North and east Durham employment sites.	Capital
DU36	Newton Aycliffe active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Delivering the priority phases of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Newton Aycliffe.	Capital
DU37	Three towns active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Targeted Improvements in Willington, Tow Law and Crook and the surrounding area.	Capital
DU38	Horden active mode improvements	Durham County Council	Targeted Improvements in Horden and the surrounding area.	Capital
DU44	Bishop Auckland walking and cycling improvements	Durham County Council	Targeted Improvements in Bishop Auckland and the surrounding area.	Capital
GA03	Small scale cycling improvements (Gateshead)	Gateshead Council	Package of small scale improvements and additions to the cycle network across Gateshead assisting to deliver the Council's Cycling Strategy.	Capital
GA23	Gateshead local cycling and walking investment proposals	Gateshead Council	Under developed cycle route network acting as a deterrent to increased cycle use.	Capital
GA29	Portobello to Washington footbridge access improvements	Gateshead Council	Improve approaches to the bridge on both sides of the A1 to make the route more open and inviting to users, whilst also providing a ramped access for cyclists and street lighting.	Capital

How do we get there – delivery plan: 2022-2028

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
GA32	High Spen to Greenside cycle route	Gateshead Council	Provision of 3m wide off road shared use path between High Spen and Greenside alongside Spen Lane to provide sustainable transport routes in the outer west.	Capital
GA33	Upgrading the National Cycle Network (NCN) routes in Gateshead	Gateshead Council	Upgrading of NCN cycle routes to meet current standards.	Capital
GA47	Derwent cycle route improvements	Gateshead Council	Various cycle improvements linked to housing development in west Gateshead.	Capital
NE06	Cycle City Ambition 3 programme to invest in corridor improvements	Newcastle City Council	Further programme of investment in strategic cycling infrastructure, including the urban core and routes into North Tyneside, Gateshead and Northumberland.	Capital
NE08	Newcastle Urban Core pedestrian and cycling improvements	Newcastle City Council	Investment in pedestrian and cycle upgrades identified in Core Strategy and linked to urban development – Northumberland Street; Camden Street Bridge; Forth Yards.	Capital
NE15	Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (Citywide)	Newcastle City Council	Delivery of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods/Healthy Metro & bus areas designed to provide filtered permeability.	Capital
NE18	Central Newcastle - walking, cycling and public transport improvements	Newcastle City Council	Investment in public transport, walking and cycling to enable traffic-free and zero carbon central Newcastle.	Capital
NE22	Delivery of local walking and cycling improvements across Newcastle	Newcastle City Council	Investment in top priority LCWIP routes and junctions.	Capital
NX17	Cycle parking and hubs	Nexus	Provide a network of secure cycle lockers that are smart enabled across Metro stations, bus interchanges and rail stations. Also develop a series of secure cycle hubs at public transport interchanges/Metro stations based on development at other areas including West Midlands and Transport for Greater Manchester.	Capital
NT01	Improvements to cycling and walking routes in North Tyneside	North Tyneside Council	Build new and improved infrastructure to cater for and facilitate increased demand for cycling and encourage modal shift, for travel to work and other journey purposes. This covers routes across the borough: for example purposes these may include e.g. the west-east A191/A186 corridor; north-south A188/A189 corridor; the A193 corridor linking the borough's historic town centres.	Capital
NT13	A191 all user improvements	North Tyneside Council	Improve capacity and cycling and walking provision in the A191 corridor west of the A19.	Capital
NT18	Improving Wallsend town centre public realm delivery and improve accessibility for all users	North Tyneside Council	Public realm, public transport corridor and cycling and walking improvements, e.g. enhanced links to Metro, employment, town centre destinations and Unesco world heritage site.	Capital
NT19	Improving Whitley Bay town centre public realm delivery and improve accessibility for all users	North Tyneside Council	Upgrade of traffic signals equipment throughout town centre; improvements to public transport movements, management of traffic flows, improve cycling and pedestrian facilities and public realm. Improve scope for seasonal road space reallocation schemes. Improve connectivity by sustainable modes to the wider network, including links to the Sea Front Sustainable Route (considered for ATF3). Links to A191 corridor.	Capital

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
NT20	Local cycle and walking improvements across North Tyneside	North Tyneside Council	Improvements within town and district centres with reference to the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to deliver a package of improvements for walking and 'last mile' cycling in town centres.	Capital
NT27	Killingworth Moor underpass	North Tyneside Council	Provision of route crossing the A19 to better link strategic housing development into the local transport network.	Capital
NT30	Sustainable access improvements - North West of North Tyneside	North Tyneside Council	Improvements to public realm and infrastructure for cycling, walking and horse riding to support accessibility as part of the regeneration of the North West of North Tyneside, which currently experiences more limited accessibility.	Capital
NO12a	Walking and cycling upgrades in Alnwick	Northumberland County Council	Improvements to existing and new pedestrian and cycle connections within Alnwick.	Capital
NO12b	Walking and cycling upgrades in Amble	Northumberland County Council	North / South and East / West corridor upgrades for pedestrians and cyclists.	Capital
NO12c	Walking and cycling upgrades in Ashington	Northumberland County Council	Town Centre and suburban improvements to existing active travel routes.	Capital
NO12d	Walking and cycling upgrades in Bedlington	Northumberland County Council	Identified improvements to existing active travel routes including connecting to Bedlington Station.	Capital
NO12e	Walking and cycling upgrades in Berwick Upon Tweed	Northumberland County Council	Targeted improvements from the station to Town Centre and from Tweedmouth to the Town Centre.	Capital
NO12f	Walking and cycling upgrades in Blyth	Northumberland County Council	Continuation of existing investment including improved North / South links and to the Northumberland line stations.	Capital
NO12g	Walking and cycling upgrades in Cramlington	Northumberland County Council	Improvements for all users around the train station, town centre and industrial areas of the town.	Capital
NO12h	Improved links in Haltwhistle	Northumberland County Council	North, South and East-West routes including improved links to schools and the leisure centre.	
NO12i	Better walking and cycling links in Hexham	Northumberland County Council	Focused investment within the town centre including the rail and bus station and on longer distance links including to Acomb and along the A695.	Capital
NO12j	Walking and cycling upgrades in Morpeth	Northumberland County Council	Investment on radial corridors into Morpeth town centre for all users.	Capital
NO12k	Walking and cycling upgrades in Ponteland	Northumberland County Council	Suburban and rural route improvements connecting Ponteland to neighbouring villages and suburbs with upgraded infrastructure.	Capital
NO12l	Focused upgrades on walking and cycling routes in Prudhoe	Northumberland County Council	Improvements on routes south of the Town Centre and East / West along the A695 alignment.	Capital
ST12	Improved cycling links to Tyne Pedestrian Tunnel	South Tyneside Council	Improved connections on both the South and North side of the Tyne Pedestrian Tunnel.	Capital
TBA	Social prescribing	Northumberland County Council	Working in partnership with North East GPs, nurses and other healthcare providers to create a behaviour change programme in which patients may be referred to improve their health and wellbeing through a range of activities.	Revenue

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
ST07	Strategic Transport Corridors: All user improvements along strategic corridors in South Tyneside	South Tyneside Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Transport and Cycle Corridor Upgrades as part of a LCWIP upgrade. Upgrades to Traffic Signals / ITS. Upgrades to junctions to improve flow and conditions for pedestrians. A184 Strategic Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements on the A184 from Testo's to White Mare Pool. NCN 14 Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements to NCN14 within South Tyneside. A185 Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements along the A185 corridor. NCN 1 Route Upgrade Realignment of NCN 1 within South Tyneside along the A183 corridor. A194 Cycling Corridor Cycling improvements along Western approach connecting the Arches/A194 schemes to South Shields. A1300 Cycling Corridor Cycling Improvements along the A1300 Corridor (John Reid Road to the Coast). A184 Cycling Improvements Cycling Improvements along the A184 from East Boldon to the A1018 junction. South Shields Cycling Improvements South Shields Town Centre Cycling Improvements. 	Capital
SU14	Vaux-Stadium Village footbridge	Sunderland City Council	New high level pedestrian footbridge linking the Vaux development site and the City Centre with Stadium Village. Estimates for a bridge at this location will vary widely depending on the required width and quality.	Capital
SU29	Improving strategic links between University of Sunderland and Sunderland city centre	Sunderland City Council	Environmental / public realm improvements providing strategic links between Sunderland University and City Centre.	Capital
EX40	Upgrades to Active travel routes to NE rail stations	Transport North East	Improve walking /cycling routes to rail stations.	Capital
TNE19	Delivering the residual Transforming Cities Fund ask	Transport North East	The region made a compelling case for investment in public and sustainable transport demonstrated through our Transforming Cities Fund submission with a very positive BCR from the Business case. We gratefully received a settlement of £198 million. Residual overprogramming of approx £10 million is delivered, therefore TCF Tranche 2 programme is delivered in full.	Capital
TNE27b	Access to active travel equipment scheme	Transport North East	Identifying and supporting the development of access to equipment schemes such as cycle grants or loans / cycle to work or education schemes for those not in full time employment. This includes exploring a Cycle to Work Alliance	Revenue / capital
TBA	Creation of a regional ambassador role	Transport North East	The appointment of an Active Travel Ambassador for the region, who will champion and promote cycling and walking and lobby for funding for the region.	Revenue
TNE27c	Active travel ambassadorial programme	Transport North East	Walking and cycling ambassadorial programme implemented and a region wide behavioural change initiative delivered to cement best practice. Through Behaviour Change programmes encourage an active last mile to improve awareness of health benefits. Investing in Wow Walk to School, Modeshift STARS for schools and STARS for workplaces, schools, colleges, communities and neighbourhoods, leisure and tourism.	Revenue
TNE27d	Sponsoring cycle training in schools	Transport North East	Sponsoring Cycle training programmes in schools and available in the community with group rides.	Revenue
TNE27e	Improved mapping and promotion of the Active Travel network	Transport North East	Sponsoring the development of outward facing promotional material, including an interactive map perhaps integrated with an app development and highlighting a network of servicing locations for equipment.	Revenue

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
TNE27f	Active Travel Evaluation	Transport North East	A common approach to monitoring and evaluating use on the active travel network, linked to a placed based management approach.	Revenue
TNE31	Social prescribing	Transport North East	Working in partnership with North East GPs, nurses and other healthcare providers to create a behaviour change programme in which patients may be referred to improve their health and wellbeing through a range of activities.	Revenue
TNE30	Accessibility Audits Fund	Transport North East	Accessibility Audits Fund – through the Behaviour Change initiative established an active travel forum with capabilities to undertake accessibility audits working with stakeholders to address any issues on the network.	Capital
TBA	North East active travel partnership board	Transport North East	The creation of this Board will provide a strategic steer on the direction of Active Travel in the region.	Revenue
TBA	Regional bike hire scheme	Transport North East	Integrated as part of the region's sustainable transport network, affordable to help people cycle who aren't able to own/afford a bike. Hubs will be located at strategic points around the region (transport interchanges, employment sites, town and city centres, residential areas).	Capital/ Revenue
TBA	Cycle to work scheme	Transport North East	Support Cycle to Work initiatives across the region.	Capital/ Revenue

Delivery Plan: 2029 – 2035

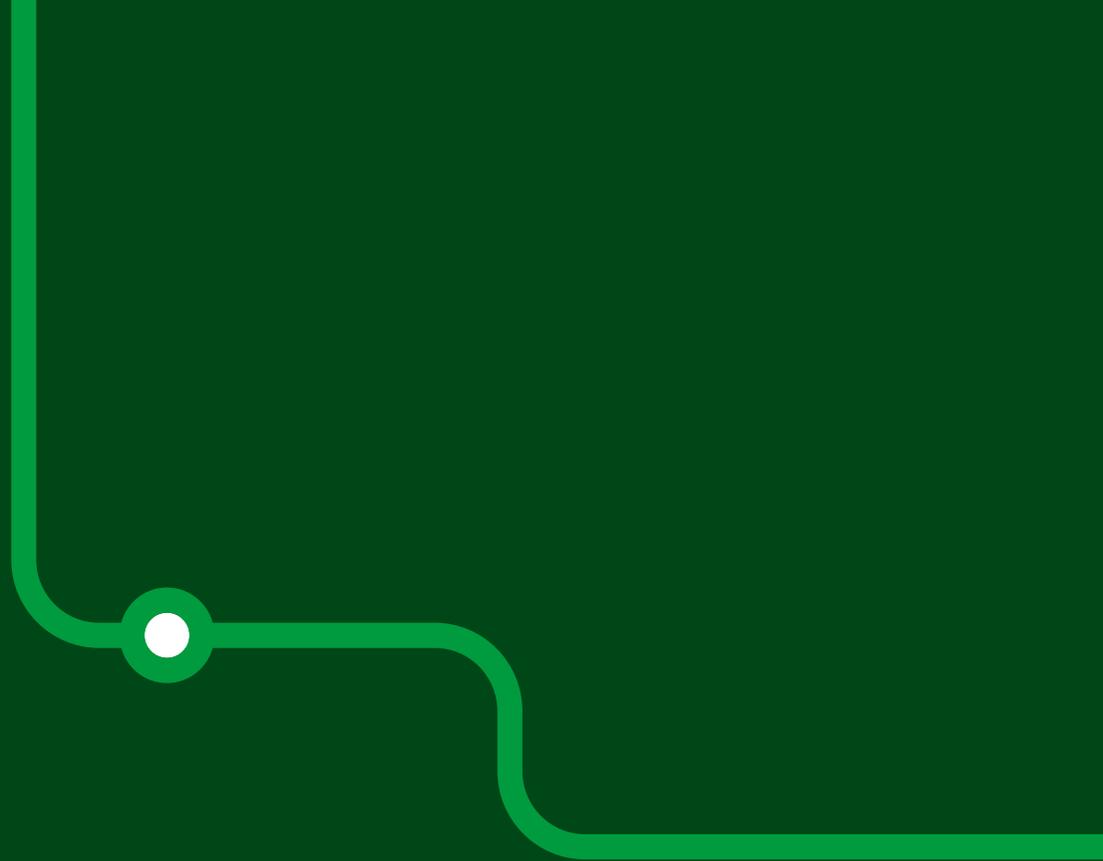
Key			
	Active travel friendly places		World-class active travel network
	Greater integration		Supporting people to walk, wheel and cycle
	Improving access to equipment		Partnership working

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
DU03	Walking and cycling improvements in Durham City Centre	Durham County Council	Package of proposals that seeks to enhance walking, cycling, public transport and driver information on Durham City.	Capital
DU42	LCWIPs (Chester-Le-Street, Barnard Castle, Consett, Peterlee, Seaham, Spennymoor and Shildon)	Durham County Council	Because of the rural nature of the county, upgrading or providing new active mode links to the network enables more people to walk and cycle more often everyday giving better transport options to residents enabling them to travel actively and sustainably for both work and leisure purposes.	Capital
GA04	Gateshead central integrated transport improvements	Gateshead Council	Reconfiguration of road network in and around Gateshead town centre to reduce severance and dominance of road traffic. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfiguration of Bensham Road roundabout. • Removal of flyover and construction of tree lined boulevard. • Upgrading of pedestrian, cycle and public transport environment on key link to Tyne Bridge. • Urban Core pedestrian improvements. • Exemplar neighbourhood footbridge, link between town centre and freight depot site. 	Capital
GA05	Blaydon station to town active travel link	Gateshead Council	Potential improvements at Blaydon rail station. The pedestrian bridge is being replaced connecting the town with the railway station and phase 2 will be onwards over the river.	Capital
GA10	West Tyneside cycle route (bridge over East Coast Mainline)	Gateshead Council	New bridge over East Coast Main Line between Chowdene and Team Valley.	Capital
GA30	Bill Quay pedestrian link to a future Metro Station	Gateshead Council	Pedestrian link from Gullane Close in Bill Quay to proposed Metro Station at Westburn.	Capital
GA46	New Derwent walking and cycle crossing at Metrogreen	Gateshead Council	New crossing of River Derwent at Metro Green.	Capital
W19	New bridges to remove severance e.g. Blaydon / Newburn, A194M/Follingsby, A1 Coalhouse	Gateshead Council	New bridges over key motorway / A road infrastructure.	Capital
GA53	Coatsworth road improvements	Gateshead Council	Need to improve environment of Coatsworth Road to make it a more attractive centre, particularly for pedestrians and active modes.	Capital
NO16	Recreational cycle network development	Northumberland County Council	Capital investment targeted at improving the walking and cycling networks in Northumberland to support greater opportunities for recreational cycling and accessing the visitor attractions across the county by active modes. We will support families and individuals who want to start to cycle by providing traffic free short circular routes and links to where people want to go including visitor attractions, county parks and other recreational areas. We will support visitors and residents who want to explore our longer distance recreational cycling routes by ensuring where possible they can access them by public transport, the network is safe and trouble-spots or gaps in the network are addressed and we will support those looking for a specialist cycle offer through developing our specialist trails and network of off-road trails.	Capital

Scheme number	Scheme name	Promoter	Scheme description	Capital / Revenue
NO17	Tyne Valley Active Travel corridor	Northumberland County Council	Proposed Superhighway between Newcastle and Carlisle, likely to be delivered in phases.	Capital
SU10	Improving strategic cycle networks in Sunderland	Sunderland City Council	<p>Sunderland has a strong transport policy (LTP, DfT) imperative and political support for the continued development of a strategic cycle network across the city. The five Regeneration Area Committees/Place Boards have formally supported and endorsed the initiative. The project will be embedded in and strongly support the integrated development of transport for Sunderland, and will be linked to a regional cycle network in accordance with LTP3 policy. Strategic Transport Corridors with frustrated expressed and latent demand and opportunity for modal shift and equitable active access from residential to work service and education trip generators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A19 Corridor • A1018 Corridor • Coalfields • West/East City Centre • North • Washington 	Capital
SU16	Stadium Village – St Peter's Subway	Sunderland City Council	5.5m wide subway below Wearmouth Bridge North Approach linking St Peter's area and Bonnersfield development site with St Peter's Metro Station and Stadium Village.	Capital
TBA	North East active travel network (2035)	Transport North East	A cross boundary regional network with consistent signage and strong identifiable branding. This will reflect potential differing requirements of rural and urban communities. The network will be grade-separated where possible.	Revenue

8. Conclusion

2022 – Barriers to active travel that need to be overcome	Our investments proposed are:	2035
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and security (including perceptions). • Accessibility and maintenance. • Affordability. • Coordination and integration. • Journey times and perceptions of convenience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and upgraded forms of active travel infrastructure. • Access to equipment (cycle and e-cycle hire). • Maintenance of the active travel network. • Targeted behaviour change initiatives (building on the Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy). 	<p>45% increase achieved. Active travel is now the natural first choice for short everyday travel and combines with public transport for longer journeys.</p> <p>Our vision</p> <p>“Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East”. ✓</p>
North East health challenges	Desired outcomes	Our objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 in 4 adults are physically inactive – the highest proportion in England, costing the region’s NHS upwards of £19 million per year. • Life expectancy at birth is the lowest of all regions in England for both males (77) and females (81). • 70% of adults “18+” are classified as overweight or obese – highest proportion in England. • 44% of children are overweight or obese at year 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrianisation and walkability of town and city centre improvements to encourage more active travel and increase footfall for local amenities and businesses. • The need to create a regional cycle network with consistent signage and strong recognisable branding. • Introduce a regional cycle hire scheme, integrated with the region’s wider transport network, including e-bike hire. • Social Prescribing – working in partnership with the region’s NHS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon-neutral transport;  • Overcome inequality and grow our economy;  • Healthier North East;  • Appealing sustainable transport choices;  • Safe, secure network. 



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