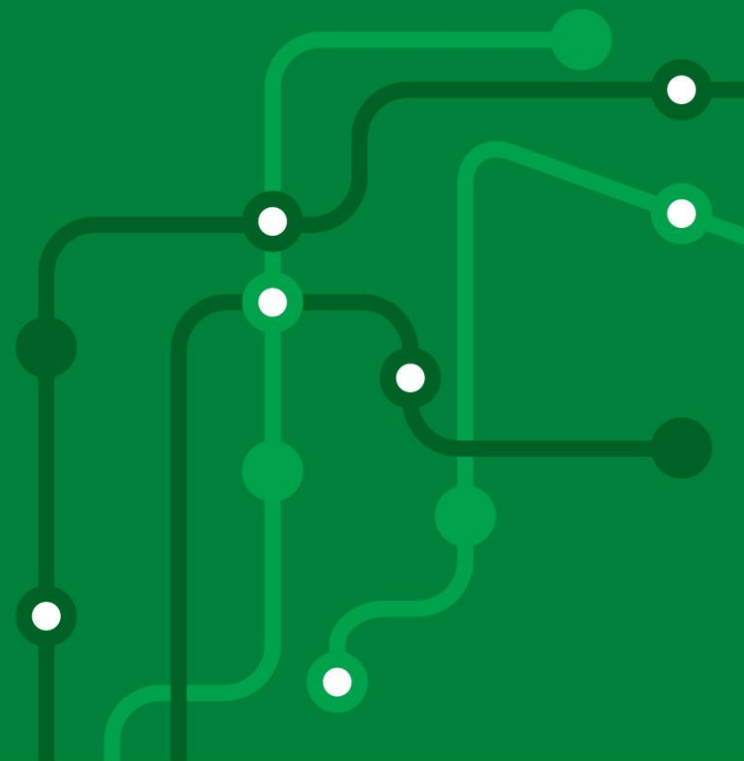


Transport **North East**

Making the Right Travel Choice Strategy
'You Said, We Did' – consultation summary report
November 2022



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

Background

Making the Right Travel Choice is the lead policy of the 2021-2035 North East Transport Plan. The strategy encourages 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 document also outlines some of the actions needed to make it easier for people to travel sustainably.

Developed on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee, the strategy focuses on switching journeys that people already make to be more sustainable, where possible. The strategy highlights impactful travel behavioural change schemes and campaigns that can be brought forward, subject to funding, to encourage everyone in the region to switch one car journey a week to a sustainable form of transport.

How we told you about the consultation

The Making the Right Travel Choice consultation and engagement campaign ran from July 20th to 14th September 2022.

The campaign consisted of two elements of engagement:

1. Public engagement – a public facing engagement campaign – asking how we can help people to make more sustainable transport choices.
2. Strategy consultation with stakeholders, including; business organisations, youth organisations, community groups and local operators, on the strategy's target and the proposed schemes and policies.

In order to reach out to as many people as possible, a multi-channel approach was used, including:

- Posts on Transport North East social media channels – Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Print advertising in regional publications
- Digital advertising through Facebook;
- Media activity;
- Information and an online survey available via www.transportnortheast.gov.uk;
- a dedicated consultation telephone hotline and email address in operation throughout the consultation;
- Online stakeholder consultation events
- Public engagement events in each of our local authority areas
- E-mail communication with key stakeholders
- Stakeholder survey

An audio version of the strategy was produced and published on the Transport North East (TNE) website. The strategy was available in alternative formation upon request.

Your Response

As part of the consultation, we asked the public:

- What could be done to encourage them to swap one journey a week to a journey made via walking, cycling or public transport
- What they think would encourage other members of the public to walk, cycle, wheel, or use public transport more frequently.

Additionally, we asked stakeholders:

- Whether the strategy's target was ambitious enough
- Whether we had included all relevant considerations in the barriers to sustainable travel
- Whether our schemes were inclusive and broad enough to be impactful
- Any other strategy feedback

A total of 1,063 responses were received as part of the consultation. The majority responded by completing the online surveys, but feedback was also received via email, on social media and by comment card submissions at our in-person engagement events.

To summarise, we received:

Public engagement response:

- 617 completed surveys questionnaires
- 310 comment cards
- 51 social media responses

Stakeholder engagement response:

- 57 responses to the stakeholder survey
- 24 registrations for stakeholder engagement events
- 4 emails

The majority of respondents expressed support for the strategy's headline target of encouraging 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.

During the public engagement campaign, some people commented that they were already thinking about making more sustainable travel choices. Stakeholders also commented on the strategy's timeliness and importance given the climate emergency, decarbonisation agenda and ongoing cost of living crisis.

Inclusivity was built into the strategy from the planning phase, and the consultation helped to reinforce messaging in the strategy around accessibility, ensuring this remained at the forefront of sustainable travel schemes and interventions that were evolving as part of the strategy.

Table 1 – insights from members of the public during the public engagement part of the consultation

Response Theme	Insights	Our response
There needs to be greater emphasis on making public transport more attractive as an alternative to car use.	<p>Responses included suggestions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved integrated ticketing across different types of public transport • Increased reliability and speed of public transport • Greater accessibility • Safer journeys • Provision of Real Time Information to allow for better journey planning • Operator bus cuts made in summer 2022 were of significant concern to many respondents. 	The strategy document has been strengthened to highlight the work being undertaken by the North East's local authorities, Nexus, transport operators and other key stakeholders to improve the regions' public transport offer.
The ongoing cost of living crisis and fuel costs are key issues	<p>Many responses highlighted that the cost of fuel has been a growing consideration this year when considering how to travel and this something which is compounded by the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>The perceived cost of public transport ticketing was also referenced.</p>	<p>The revised draft of the strategy includes the latest insight from members of the public about how people are travelling now and what their views are.</p> <p>The strategy provides case study examples of successful public transport fares trials.</p>
Increase public messaging on the benefits of travelling actively for more journeys	<p>Responses suggested that people would be more likely to cycle, walk and wheel if the benefits were more widely publicised. Respondents thought the following benefits were worth publicising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Environmental • Financial 	The strategy proposes an integrated communications and information campaign which could be important to raise awareness and to begin the process of travel behaviour change.
Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) are growing in popularity	A growing number of people that had made the switch to ZEVs from petrol/diesel cars or vans. However, a significant barrier is the current cost of ZEVs.	<p>A North East Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy is in development and aims to complement work of local authorities and private sector to increase the provision of charging infrastructure in the region.</p> <p>The strategy will recognise that the cost of ZEVs are a</p>

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		barrier to greater usage, but the cost of vehicles will be outside of the strategy's scope.
The region's active travel network needs to be improved.	<p>Respondents told us that they would be more likely to walk if paths were well maintained, safer, suitable for wheelchair users and buggies, and there was more separation between walkers and cyclists and road traffic, parked vehicles and bikes. This was echoed by others saying they'd be more likely to cycle if paths were made safer, with more separation between cyclists and road traffic.</p> <p>Suggestions also included encouraging walking buses and walking related activities as well as outdoors facilities such as benches, shelters and toilets.</p>	Whilst infrastructure improvements aren't within scope of this strategy, the forthcoming North East Active Travel Strategy will set out proposed regional walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure improvements to encourage active travel.
Some people are already making green journey choices.	<p>At our in-person events a number of respondents told us that they are already prioritising green travel wherever possible and that they already think through their travel choices for the majority of their journeys. The current cost of living crisis could be driving this.</p> <p>Some respondents told us that they were aware of the need to look after the environment and are making an effort to combat their carbon footprint by using sustainable transport where possible.</p>	Through the strategy's headline target and schemes coming from the strategy, we will continue to support people to travel sustainably.

Table 2 – Stakeholder insights from the stakeholder engagement part of the consultation

Response Theme	Insights	Our response
General support for the overall strategy	<p>Respondents were generally supportive of the strategy and the aim to encourage sustainable travel.</p> <p>Stakeholders also commented on the strategy's timeliness and importance given the declaration of climate emergencies, the decarbonisation agenda and cost of living crisis.</p>	<p>We are pleased with the stakeholder feedback received and are confident that we are in a good position to secure funding to bring the ambitious schemes within the strategy to life to boost green journeys.</p> <p>We look forward to continuing to work with stakeholders to achieve this.</p>
The target isn't ambitious or specific enough	<p>There was broad support for the target, however some responses indicated that the target could be higher or more specific.</p>	<p>The strategy 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.</p> <p>The strategy has been amended to make it clear that this target is a starting point and small changes can add up to make a big difference. We will also review progress against this target on a regular basis, making amends to it as necessary.</p>
Widespread support for the strategy's central target	<p>86% of the stakeholders either strongly agreed or agreed with our aim of 'encouraging car users to switch one journey per week to walking, cycling or public transport and for people who do not have access to a car to continue to travel sustainably'.</p>	<p>The headline strategy target sets a challenge for everyone to consider travelling sustainably by switching just one journey a week as a starting point- due to support the target remains unchanged.</p> <p>Small changes can add up to make a big difference and together we can achieve our environmental and health goals.</p>
Support for recognising a 'one size fits all' approach	<p>Support was expressed for the fact that the strategy recognises there is no 'one size fits all' approach, and that travel solutions will differ depending on journey purpose, socio-economic groupings and/ or geographical areas.</p>	<p>The strategy promotes all types of sustainable travel. Stronger reference has been made to community transport operators and the crucial role such as bus services in rural areas and getting vulnerable residents to and from hospital, for example.</p>

<p>Support for recognising a 'one size fits all' approach – continued</p>	<p>Stakeholders suggested greater recognition of all types of sustainable transport, including the role of community transport.</p> <p>Some suggestions were made for additions to the strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledging additional alternatives to private cars such as community transport and local moped-loan and bicycle schemes like Wheels 2 Work in County Durham; • Adding context about the role that Active Travel England will play in encouraging sustainable travel nationally. 	<p>Stakeholders provided examples of best practice of sustainable travel initiatives within the region and elsewhere. Example case studies have been added.</p> <p>The final document emphasises that the reasons why people travel the way they do are complex and depend on a number of circumstances, which are subject to change.</p> <p>Reference to wanting to work closely with Active Travel England has been added.</p>
<p>Support for the introduction of Personas but some changes are required.</p>	<p>The use of Personas in the document was supported and can improve understanding of the subject matter.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that personas could not cover all situations. Some suggestions were made to strengthen the personas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing consideration of public transport • Focusing more on the challenges of increasing sustainable transport usage in rural locations • More consideration for those with visible and hidden disabilities and conditions 	<p>The strategy uses a series of data-driven personas to help people make the right travel choice for their specific journey circumstances, which we hope people can relate to and consider using as a guide.</p> <p>The personas have been updated and tweaked based on feedback received. Changes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of travelling during the working day and making more complex everyday journeys • Inclusion of invisible disabilities • Greater emphasis on the added complexities of rural travel.