

Sustainable Travel

Survey Results

May 2018



Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The funding and policy landscape in which councils are able to promote modal shift has changed significantly in recent years. In order to explore these issues, the Local Government Association (LGA) invited all in councils England with responsibilities for transport planning and passenger transport (152 local authorities) to complete a short survey. The survey focused on:

- The facilitators driving authorities to invest in sustainable travel.
- Methods of promoting sustainable travel within local areas.
- The estimated level of spending dedicated to sustainable travel within councils.
- The main sources of funding for councils' spending on sustainable travel.
- Partnership working in relation to sustainable travel.
- Any barriers stopping councils from doing more to invest in sustainable travel.

Key findings

- **Main drivers for investment:** 'Reducing traffic congestion' was the main driver for most authorities to invest in sustainable travel (24 out of 38 councils replied 'to a great extent'). The second biggest driver was 'improving public health and fitness' (21 out of 38 councils replied 'to a great extent') and the third driver was 'enhancing travel choices for residents' (20 out of 38 councils replied 'to a great extent').
- **Promoting sustainable travel:** Of the 38 councils that responded, 36 had introduced 20 mph zones to promote sustainable travel, 35 had provided secure cycle parking and/or changing facilities and 35 had promoted cycling and/or walking through schools.
- **Estimated spend:** The estimated level of spending dedicated to sustainable travel in the financial year 2018/19 was expected to remain broadly the same as 2017/18 for cycling/walking and public transport, according to 21 of the 38 councils.
- **Main sources of funding:** The main sources of funding for councils' spending on sustainable travel for 2018/19 were: S106 agreements/Community Infrastructure Levy (30 out of 38 councils); central government grants (22 out of 38 councils); council core funding (21 out of 38 councils); and funding via Local Enterprise Partnerships (21 out of 38 councils).
- **Local Enterprise Partnership:** The largest proportion of responding councils (15 out of 38) said they had been able to influence their Local Enterprise Partnership's strategic economic plan 'to a moderate extent' with reference to sustainable travel.

- **Local health bodies:** Thirty six of the 38 responding councils said they had worked with local health bodies to promote sustainable travel.
- **Health and Wellbeing Strategy:** Thirty of the 38 responding councils said sustainable travel featured within their authority's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- **Barriers to investment:** The main barriers stopping councils from doing more to invest in sustainable travel were: lack of revenue funding (33 out of 38 for cycling/walking and 31 out of 38 for public transport); uncertainty over continued levels of funding (28 out of 38 for cycling/walking and 30 out of 38 for public transport); and lack of capital funding (26 out of 38 for cycling/walking and 26 out of 38 for public transport).
- **Ways to overcome barriers:** Councils described various ways in which they were overcoming, or seeking to overcome, the barriers to investing in sustainable travel. These included: integrating sustainable travel within a wider agenda; navigating different forms of investment; negotiating funding from developers; working across authorities or regionally; carrying out robust and active partnership working; using business case planning; effective land use planning; involving schools; using digital tools; finding cost-effective methods; building a good staffing structure; and organising meetings and events.
- **Future aspirations:** Thirty six of the 38 responding councils said they would like to do more to promote sustainable travel now or in the future – and two were unsure.
- **Ways to assist investment:** Councils reported a range of different issues that would make it easier for their authority to invest more in sustainable travel. These centred on legislation, policy, national leadership, resources and incentives, planning and development, support and guidance and education and training.

Methodology

An online survey was sent to all in councils England with responsibilities for transport planning and passenger transport (152 local authorities). This included directors or heads of environment, transport, infrastructure and/or highways. It was in the field between 29 May and 29 June 2018, and one reminder and one extension were provided during this period. A total of 38 councils responded (25 per cent response rate). Twenty seven said they would be happy for the LGA to contact them again about the themes covered in the survey.

As shown in Table 1, between 18 per cent and 41 per cent of authority types responded to the survey (London boroughs represented the lowest proportion of responses, and shire counties the highest). There were at least two responses from each of the nine government regions of England (see Table 2).

The information collected has been aggregated, and no authorities are identified in this report. Due to the size of the response, the results should be taken as a snapshot of the views of all local authorities in England, rather than as representative picture overall.

Sample size figures are shown in tables to allow readers to see the basis on which the figures have been calculated. Owing to the sample size totalling less than 50, only absolute numbers are reported rather than percentage values.

	Number of responding councils	Total number of councils	Response rate %
Shire County	11	27	41
English Unitary	13	56	23
Metropolitan District	8	36	22
London Borough	6	33	18
Total	38	152	25

Table 2: Response rate by region

	Number of responding councils	Total number of councils	Response rate %
East Midlands	3	9	33
East of England	5	11	45
London	6	33	18
North East	2	12	17
North West	11	23	48
South East	2	19	11
South West	5	16	31
West Midlands	2	14	14
Yorkshire and the Humber	2	15	13
Total	38	152	25

Full Survey Results

This section outlines the full set of results for the survey.

Main drivers for investment

'Reducing traffic congestion' was the main driver for most authorities to invest in sustainable travel (24 out of 38 councils replied 'to a great extent'). The second biggest driver was 'improving public health and fitness' (21 out of 38 councils replied 'to a great extent') and the third driver was 'enhancing travel choices for residents' (20 out of 38 councils replied 'to a great extent'). See Table 3.

'Other' drivers that councils noted were 'reduction in CO2 emissions', 'connected individuals and communities', 'providing access to essential services' and 'safety'.

Table 3: To what extent do you consider the following to be drivers for your authority to invest in sustainable travel?

	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	Don't know
	N	N	N	N	N
Improving public health and fitness	21	14	3	0	0
Reducing traffic congestion	24	12	2	0	0
Improving air quality	19	15	4	0	0
Regenerating or growing the local economy	19	13	4	2	0
Enhancing travel choices for residents	20	13	3	2	0
Supporting a larger regional agenda	10	18	6	3	1
Other, please state	1	3	0	0	0

Base all councils (38)

Promoting sustainable travel

Councils were asked what they were doing, or planning to, do to promote sustainable travel within the local area. Of the 38 councils that responded, 36 had introduced 20 mph zones, 35 had provided secure cycle parking and/or changing facilities and 35 had promoted cycling and/or walking through schools. Thirty one of the 38 councils had also contributed to bus stop/station refurbishment. See Table 4.

Table 4: What has your authority doing or planning to do to promote sustainable travel within your local area?

	In place	In planning	No plans	Don't know
	N	N	N	N
Corporate solutions				
Appointed a high-level council champion and/or council-backed active travel champion	14	4	19	1
Integrated sustainable travel into planning policy	27	11	0	0
Cycling/walking				
Launched a cycling and/or walking investment programme	22	13	2	1
Promoted cycling and/or walking through schools	35	1	2	0
Cycle-proofed new transport infrastructure (e.g. the design of new roads and junctions)	29	8	1	0
Cycle-proofed existing main carriageways	9	20	9	0
Provided secure cycle parking and/or changing facilities	35	3	0	0
Bus journeys				
Launched a bus prioritisation scheme	17	8	9	4
Contributed to bus stop/station refurbishment	31	1	4	2
Set-up bus partnership with local operators	19	7	9	3
Funded subsidised routes	23	1	11	3
Funded community transport operators	22	2	8	6
Train journeys				
Participated in the building of a new rail station	8	13	13	4
Contributed towards rail station improvements	20	8	8	2
Contributed to light rail/tram expansion or improvement	2	8	25	3
Car journeys				
Introduced car pools/sharing	25	1	11	1
Introduced 20 mph zones	36	0	2	0
Other solutions				
Introduced Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS)	2	8	21	7
Other: please state	5	1	0	0

Base all councils (38)

Six councils provided details of other ways in which sustainable travel was being promoted within the local area. These included:

- “Organise a Sustainable Travel Competition for Schools.”
- “Park and share/cycle.”
- “Promoting cycling with local business.”
- “We have an Active Travel programme, part funded by public health, that provides an extensive led walks and led cycle rides programme as well as supporting community based cycle groups and a wide range of leaflets and other literature to inform people about walking and cycling opportunities in the [area].”

- “Developing a total transport web portal to allow easier access to unconventional transport options.”
- “Cycle hire scheme.”

Funding and spend

The estimated level of spending dedicated to sustainable travel in the financial year 2018/19 was expected to remain broadly the same as 2017/18 for cycling/walking and public transport, according to 21 of the 38 councils (not necessarily the same 21 councils for cycling/walking as for public transport). See Table 5.

Table 5: For your council, how is the estimated level of spending dedicated to sustainable travel in the financial year 2018/19 expected to compare with 2017/18?		
	Cycling/walking	Public transport
	N	N
Decrease by more than 20%	1	1
Decrease by between 11-20%	1	2
Decrease by between 5-10%	4	4
Remain broadly the same	21	21
Increase by between 5-10%	5	1
Increase by between 11-20%	3	0
Increase by more than 20%	2	3
Not applicable	0	1
Don't know	1	5

Base all councils (38)

Councils reporting a decrease in the level of spending dedicated to sustainable travel in the financial year 2018/19 compared to 2017/18 were asked to indicate the main reasons for this – responses are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: If you expect a decrease in spending in cycling/walking and/or public transport, please indicate the main reasons for this:		
	Cycling/walking	Public transport
	N	N
Reductions in core (revenue) funding	4	6
Reductions in capital funding	5	2
Changes to council priorities	1	1
Local Growth Fund	3	1
Use of more efficient methods to provide sustainable travel	1	1
Other (please state)	0	0
Don't know	0	1

Base all councils who expected a decrease in cycling/walking (6) and/or public transport (7). More than one reply could be selected.

The main sources of funding for councils' spending on sustainable travel for 2018/19 were: S106 agreements/Community Infrastructure Levy (30 out of 38 councils); central government grants (22 out of 38 councils); council core funding (21 out of 38

councils); and funding via a Local Enterprise Partnership (21 out of 38 councils)
See Table 7.

Table 7: Please indicate the main sources of funding for your council's spending on sustainable travel for 2018/19:	
	Number
Council core funding	21
Funding via the their Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	21
Public Health funding	14
Highways Maintenance funding	14
City Deals	5
Regional funding	7
S106 agreements/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	30
Central government grants: please state	22
Other government grants: please state	7
Other sources: please state	9
Not applicable	0
Don't know	0

Base all councils (38). More than one reply could be selected.

Councils specifying central/other government grants or other sources of funding gave the following details:

- **Central government grants:** Access Fund; Bikeability; Bus Services Operators Grant; Integrated Transport Block; Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans; National Productivity Investment Fund; New Stations Fund; Total Transport Fund; Transforming Cities Fund.
- **Other government grants:** Combined Authority grants; Go Ultra Low City Scheme; Local Growth Fund City Region Sustainable Transport programme; Mayor's Air Quality Fund.
- **Other funding:** Business Rates Retention Scheme; European funding; Local Sustainable Transport Fund/Sustrans; Local Transport Plans; Transport for London.

Local partnerships

Fifteen of the 38 responding councils said they had been able to influence their Local Enterprise Partnership's strategic economic plan 'to a moderate extent' with reference to sustainable travel – five said this had occurred 'to a great extent' and ten said it was the case 'to a small extent). See Table 8.

Table 8: To what extent has your council been able to influence the LEP's strategic economic plan with reference to sustainable travel?	
	Number
To a great extent	5
To a moderate extent	15
To a small extent	10
Not at all	1
Don't know	7

Base all councils (38)

Thirty six of the 38 responding councils said they had worked with local health bodies to promote sustainable travel – one said this had not occurred and another was unsure. See Table 9.

Table 9: Has your authority worked with local health bodies to promote sustainable travel?	
	Number
Yes	36
No	1
Don't know	1

Base all councils (38)

Thirty of the 38 responding councils said sustainable travel featured within their authority's Health and Wellbeing Strategy – three said this was not the case and five were unsure. See Table 10.

Table 10: Does sustainable travel feature within your authority's Health and Wellbeing Strategy?	
	Number
Yes	30
No	3
Don't know	5

Base all councils (38)

Barriers to investment

Thirty six of the 38 responding councils said they would like to do more to promote sustainable travel now or in the future – and two were unsure. See Table 11.

Table 11: Would your authority like to do more to promote sustainable travel now or in the future?	
	Number
Yes	36
No	0
Don't know	2

Base all councils (38)

Councils were asked to consider a range of potential barriers that might be stopping them from doing more to invest in sustainable travel – for both cycling/walking and public transport. Similar responses were given for all three modes of transport (see Table 12). The main three barriers were:

- Lack of revenue funding – cycling/walking (33 out of 38) and public transport (31 out of 38)
- Uncertainty over continued levels of funding – cycling/walking (28 out of 38) and public transport (30 out of 38)
- Lack of capital funding – cycling/walking (26 out of 38) and public transport (26 out of 38)

Four councils provided feedback on ‘other’ barriers stopping them from doing more to invest in sustainable travel. These were: ‘topography’; ‘transfer of some powers and responsibilities to combined authority’; ‘cultural’ and ‘no responsibility for public transport investment’ due to being a metropolitan borough.

Table 12: Please indicate if you consider any of the following items to be barriers stopping your authority from doing more to invest in sustainable travel?

	Cycling/ walking	Public transport
	N	N
Lack of capital funding	26	26
Lack of revenue funding	33	31
Uncertainty over continued levels of funding	28	30
Complexity of accessing funding streams	19	15
Inadequate powers and responsibilities within the council	3	8
Competing council priorities	23	22
Lack of technical expertise within the council	3	1
Administrative boundaries	5	9
Physical characteristics of the area	9	5
Lack of political buy in	8	8
Lack of support from partner organisations	3	4
Other: please state	2	3
We don't face any barriers	0	0

Base all councils (38)

Councils reporting barriers to investing in sustainable travel (all 38 councils), were asked to describe some of the ways in which they were overcoming, or seeking to overcome, these barriers. Twenty seven councils gave a reply. The main themes were:

- **Integrating sustainable travel within a wider agenda:** This included healthy living and social isolation, air quality and congestion (healthy streets and liveable neighbourhoods) and regeneration and growth. It also involved managing public transport support alongside other passenger transport e.g. patient transport for the NHS. The aim was to pool resources to avoid duplication.
- **Navigating different forms of investment:** This involved applying to an increasingly diverse range of funds (national and European) such as those linked to health outcomes or air quality improvements. It also involved negotiating with the private sector, for example, to fund a sustainable travel advisory service.
- **Negotiating funding from developers:** This involved seeking contributions towards sustainable transport measures from developers, wherever appropriate, such as funding the delivery of residential travel plans.
- **Working across authorities or regionally:** This involved increased working with other councils, for example, on a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) or to carry out route analysis to overcome some of the physical environment challenges of improving walking and cycling infrastructure. It also included working with regional transport authorities.

- **Carrying out robust and active partnership working:** This involved, for example, working with the Road Safety Partnership, Sustran and Sport England to achieve common goals and objectives.
- **Strategizing and business case planning:** This involved establishing clear strategies to help overcome barriers (e.g. parking policy) and secure investment in delivery. It also involved business case planning to identify key cycle network and prioritisation of routes that present best value for money. Ongoing strategic reviews of transport was also important to make more efficient use of all transport resources.
- **Effective land use planning:** This involved taking a proactive stance to ensure that appropriate infrastructure was considered at the outset of the planning process, and to ensure new development maximised the opportunities for promoting sustainable travel.
- **Involving schools:** This involved working to embed sustainable travel within schools, for example, by involving children in competitions to improve air quality, healthy living and congestion.
- **Using digital tools:** This involved developing and using appropriate tools to enhance the transport experience, and improve the quality of data captured to inform decision-making around sustainable travel in the future.
- **Finding cost-effective methods:** This involved using interventions that could be more cost-effective than trying to engineer wider change, for instance, developing skills for novice cyclists. It also involved use volunteers in the running of promotional events and acting as advocates within the community.
- **Building a good staffing structure:** This involved organising a Transport Policy team with the necessary expertise to prioritise and bid for future funding.
- **Organising meetings and events:** This involved holding regular meetings with Department for Transport to highlight where future funding was required, and also running events to respond to local challenges and prepare for new technology.

Facilitators to investment

Councils were asked to specify, other than increased funding, what changes, if any, to national policy on local transport would make it easier for them to invest more in sustainable travel. Twenty nine councils gave a reply, which have been themed and displayed in Table 13.

Table 13: Other than increased funding, what changes, if any, to national policy on local transport would make it easier for your authority to invest more in sustainable travel?

<p>Legislation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tougher road laws • Re-balance liability between drivers and cyclists • More use of enforcement cameras • Active transport as statutory duty within planning policy • Minimum standards for walking/cycling within technical specification for roads • Children permitted to cycle on footways • 20mph limits in residential streets • More powers to city regions
<p>Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion charging national policy • Sustainable travel targets • Key Route Network national policy to include cycle facilities • Traffic assessments of road use to focus on people not vehicles • Connected and autonomous vehicles to be introduced on a sharing platform rather than single-use basis • Policy to insist sustainable travel is a 'must have' across planning, economic development, health and education
<p>National leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable travel integrated across government departments – and promoted within related agendas (e.g. health and clean growth) • More certainty on funding streams (to avoid continual bidding – and to allow maximum preparation time) • Update sustainable transport White Paper to provide more council-specific clarity • Rural/coastal and urban areas to receive same opportunities to invest in sustainable transport – and greater recognition of their specific challenges • Recognise bus-based transport as the most used form of public transport and its potential for the future • Clarify future of diesel and electric vehicles
<p>Resources and incentives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop road-user pricing with the 'stick' effect to deter use of private vehicles • Maintain Bus Service Operators Grant with no further reductions • Simplify processes for third party investment in rail infrastructure assets • Move pricing of private transport in favour of sustainable travel • Introduce workplace parking levy ring-fenced for sustainable transport capital works • Incentivise councils to link funding to bus use • Better integration of transport systems (e.g. bus fares and using smart technology to cap daily fares) • Create a better balance between commerciality and public service function within public transport system • Encourage councils to use demand management measures (e.g. workplace parking levy or congestion charging) to generate locally sustainable funding streams for sustainable travel • Introduce maintenance funding for cycling infrastructure
<p>Planning and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport needs to be considered as part of decision-making process when planning and reviewing services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working between transport and land use planning (rather than transport reacting to planning) • National Planning Policy Framework to include sustainable transport provision and travel planning as a key element • Ensure land value capture is more effective to support public transport infrastructure
Support and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice guidance on new infrastructure projects (including how challenges were dealt with) • More guidance on dealing with air quality challenges • Structured/comprehensive support on building the economic case for sustainable travel • Assistance on Clean Air Zones charging
Education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training support for council staff • Reinstate requirement for schools to undertake annual travel survey and incentivise schools to review and maintain school travel plans Education/training to promote cycling among parents and children • Rolling out cycle training programme

An open-ended question – 29 councils gave feedback

Further comments

Councils were invited to provide further information that would be helpful to the LGA in relation to the promotion of sustainable travel. Fifteen councils gave feedback. A range of responses are shown below.

“Specific campaigns around behaviour change, led nationally, but which local authorities could tap into and utilise generic resources tailor made to the area, promoting sustainable travel and the benefits of it etc.”

Shire County, East of England

“We chair a District Employers Business Travel Plan Forum. We promote and support all employers in the region to take part in the annual Travel Plan Award scheme (for accreditation and celebration of achievement).”

English Unitary, South West

“Use best practice from abroad, need to reflect that transport is cross boundary which conflicts with local government as that is very boundary focused by its nature. Simplifying and removing the ticketing barrier to public transport is key to development and reflect that some costs might be borne elsewhere (local/national taxation etc.).”

Metropolitan District, North West

“Given costs of concessionary fares, local authorities are incentivised to discourage bus use.”

English Unitary, South West

“...[F]urther information on the future of electric vehicles and the different types of infrastructure that will be required and the challenges of this and how they can be overcome e.g. residential on-street charging, any challenges with the national grid.”

English Unitary, East of England

Funding is key. We received so much positive feedback when we were able to deliver a range of sustainable transport schemes and initiatives through the LSTF but we need that continued level of investment going forward to make sustainable transport a ‘real choice’ for the local area. We also need to ensure we have engineers with the right skills sets to develop sustainable transport schemes. Often, engineers (both internal and external) are very good at highway design but less so on cycle/walking schemes. A set of national cycle design standards would be helpful for instance.

English Unitary, South West

“CPD opportunities, many local authorities have slashed training budgets and skills shortages are becoming apparent.”

Shire County, East of England

“Government needs to regulate dockless bike share schemes to ensure that those providers are required under law to engage with local authorities. Enhanced local authority powers to enforce parking in cycle lanes, on pavements.”

English Unitary, South East

“If fuel duty continues to be frozen while public transport costs escalate away, you can forget about modal shift to bus. Rail ridership/growth is falling already and recent reputational damage following messed up timetable changes is likely to be permanent. Once people have cars they need a very good reason to shift away from them, despite the costs and disadvantages they bring. Despite everything that has been said over so many years, policy has rendered us even more car dependent and committed than ever.”

English Unitary, North West

“Changing behaviour takes a long time, and requires sustained support and consistent messages, as can be seen from the campaigns relating to seat belts, smoking, drink driving etc. and they are still ignored by many. Any policy on sustainable travel needs to be long-term, backed by a long-term funding commitment, both revenue and capital, with consistent messages maintained over a prolonged period – repeated series of 3 year initiatives have short term benefits but don’t effect long term behaviour change and each time a new campaign starts, there are a whole series of new messages.”

Metropolitan District, North West



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