

Medway Council - Active Travel Updates [December 2024]

Living Streets WOW campaign

Sixteen schools in Medway have registered to take part in the Living Streets WOW [Walk Once a Week] campaign this academic year.

The campaign serves as an all-year initiative, promoting active travel to school, in exchange for rewards. The initiative has been fully funded through our active travel revenue [Capability Fund] allocation from Active Travel England.

Last year saw 245,400 active travel journeys recorded by the participating schools in Medway, with 53% of the journeys having been walked. This was a 12% improvement when compared with the average baseline at the start of the campaign, demonstrating the positive impact on modal shift.

The baseline survey also indicated that 41% of the journeys recorded were made by car at the start of the campaign, whereas this had reduced to an average of 16% by the end of the academic year. Other travel options, including 'Park & Stride' and scooting also supported a reduction in car dependency.

Overall, the schools taking part in the survey saw an uplift in active travel journeys from 57% at the start of the campaign to 83%. It is anticipated that the Living Streets WOW campaign will continue to positively influence the way in which our young people travel to and from school in Medway.



International Walk to School Month

To celebrate the Walk to School Month, the Sustainable Transport Team ran the 'Little Trekkers' and 'Striders' challenges over two-weeks in October. The campaign saw 17 schools across Medway compete for the highest percentage of active travel journeys over the duration. Results will be announced shortly, with prizes awarded to the top 3 performing schools, as well as a 'most improved' category when compared to last year's competition.



Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Officers are in the final stages of developing Medway's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This provides a ten-year investment plan for the delivery of cycling and walking interventions and infrastructure improvements, that will maximise the uptake of active travel, building upon the 80+ miles of cycle network and encouraging further increases in active modes of travel.

Officers have worked closely with Systra to produce a detailed technical report and a public-facing version. Following discussions with our Active Travel Group, which meets quarterly, the LCWIP will be presented to RCE Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2025. Pending the outcome of this discussion, it is intended that the LCWIP will then be taken to Cabinet for approval on 11 March 2025. The documentation will then be formally adopted and published onto the Council website and promoted accordingly.

A selection of Illustrations from the public-facing LCWIP have been included below and has been designed and structured to align with our One Medway Council Plan, which includes a sub-priority to:

Provide improved opportunities to walk, cycle, use public transport and electric vehicles, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.



Example screenshots – Medway Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)



Get Cycling in School (GCiS) update

Two cycling sessions were delivered by Outspoken Training at the end of September, which saw 13 schools in Medway attend.

Attendees were taught how to deliver off-road cycling skills as part of the national curriculum, including practical lesson plan ideas.

Resource booklets were issued and in exchange of completing the online modules. Six balance bikes and helmets were also delivered to the participating schools.

The Sustainable Transport Team will assess the level of training completed over the coming year, in partnership with the Bikeability Trust.

Medway Active School Travel Guide

Our new Active School Travel Guide is now online and sets out the suite of active travel initiatives that we offer schools in Medway throughout the year. The guide also includes relevant calendar events and campaigns that schools can incorporate into their schedule, as well as information on our all-year-round events. The resource can be accessed [here](#), including a printable version for download.

Active school travel guide

Calendar events



22 September 2024
World Car Free Day
A worldwide event that allows people to experience traffic free streets. Families are encouraged to ditch the car during this event and explore other means of travel like walking and cycling.



23 - 27 September 2024
Cycle to School Week
Cycle to School Week is a great opportunity to show case some of the benefits that an active school run can bring, including the positive impact on children's health and wellbeing, local air quality and carbon emissions. Free teaching resources are available to help make the most of this week-long campaign and can be found here; bikeability.org.uk/cycletoschoolweek



7 - 18 October 2024
October walk to school month challenge
In celebration of international walk to school month, Medway Council encourages all schools to compete in their local competition, Little Trekkers (primary) and Striders (secondary). Schools will compete against each other to see who can record the highest percentage of active travel journeys over the 2-week event, with prizes rewarded to the top performing schools. More information will be made available at medway.gov.uk/WalkToSchool leading up to this event.



24 March to 4 April 2025
Big Walk and Wheel Campaign
This is the UK's largest inter-school walking, wheeling, scooting and cycling competition where schools can compete against each other to see who can achieve the greatest proportion of human powered journeys. A Medway Schools leaderboard will be created by the Sustainable Transport Team to help generate some friendly competition between neighbouring schools. Schools will also have access to the national leader board as well as free resources to support this event on the Big Walk and Wheel webpage; www.bigwalkandwheel.org.uk



19 - 23 May 2025
Walk to school Week Challenge
In association with Living Streets' Walk to School week, Medway Council will run a local competition called the Walkin' n' Wheelin' Challenge. All Medway schools are encouraged to sign-up and compete in this free 5-day event, which helps embed the benefits of active school travel. More information will be made available at medway.gov.uk/WalkToSchool leading up to this event.



19 June 2025
Clean Air Day
This is the UK's largest air pollution campaign, which helps to improve public understanding and reduce levels of air polluting behaviours. Free resources are available to help promote this campaign in your school and can be found here; www.transform-our-world.org/campaigns/clean-air-for-schools-resources





Active school travel guide

All year initiatives



Think Smart, Park Safe campaign
Medway, like many other areas, has ongoing issues with inconsiderate and dangerous parking outside schools. Medway Council offers various resources, including a Think Smart, Park Safe banner that is available through our loan scheme to help tackle these issues. Visit our dedicated web page to find out more; www.medway.gov.uk/ThinkSmartParkSafe



Bikeability
Bikeability is a Nationally accredited training programme that builds confidence and teaches skills to navigate roads safely by bike. All primary school children are offered level 1 & 2 training by Medway Council. Visit www.medway.gov.uk/bikeability_cycling_training for more information.



Living Streets WOW – The walk to school challenge
WOW (Walk Once a Week) is an initiative that runs throughout the year, where children report how they travel to school using an interactive WOW travel tracker. Rewards will be provided for those who walk, wheel, cycle, or scooter at least once a week. To find out more and register, visit: www.livingstreets.org.uk/walk-to-school



Active travel for all
Explore getting active in your local area, from health walks to cycle groups and much more. Visit: www.medway.gov.uk/getactive www.everydayactivekent.org.uk/communities/medway/



Modeshift STARS – School travel plans
Modeshift Stars is an online platform that allows schools to submit, maintain and update their school travel plans. It offers National accreditation from green through to platinum for schools who complete a series of targets for increasing active travel to school. Details of the scheme and registration can be found here; www.modeshiftstars.org/education/



Walking Bus
A Walking bus is a fun, healthy, safe and sustainable way of travelling to school. Children and volunteers walk in a group along a set route, picking up or dropping off 'passengers' at specific bus stops to and from school. To find out more about the benefits of setting up a Walking Bus and the resources available, visit our dedicated webpage; www.medway.gov.uk/WalkingBus



Road safety
Delivered by our road safety officers, we offer a variety of road safety lessons designed to cover a range of age-related topics and skills. Visit our designated webpage to discover more; www.medway.gov.uk/roadsafety





Modeshift STARS – Travel Planning

Our new Transport Initiatives Officer has started to make some progress regarding travel plans, with many exciting ideas and opportunities to promote active travel further within Medway.

These include making major updates to the Medway Council website to develop a page dedicated to Travel Plan advice and information; focusing on communication with schools to promote and the use of Modeshift STARS for their travel plans and looking into the possibility of developing a Medway-wide Travel Plan for all other travel plans to feed into, including residential, business and suchlike.

Officers have also made some progress in relation to the Section 106 funding for travel plan contributions, including contact with Medway City Estate, who are on board to start the process of an Estate-Wide travel plan. Contact has also been made with Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre regarding their Travel Plan. The Transport Initiatives Team will be working closely with Public Health to achieve some positive outcomes to promote active travel to major workplaces including Medway City Estate, Hempstead Valley, Gillingham Business Park and the London Medway Commercial Park.



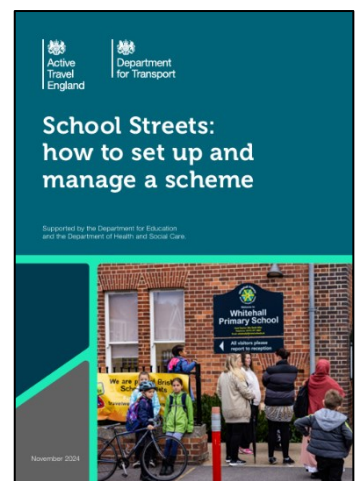
Cycling increase in Medway



Cycle counters located across 17 sites in Medway are reviewed on a quarterly basis to monitor the number of cycling journeys made. A total of 132,265 cycle journeys were registered on Medway's cycle counters between July to September 2024 [NOTE: Two of the counters were down for maintenance and subsequently, did not register trip data]. This equates to a 4.4% increase when compared to the previous quarter, when all 17 counters were available. Data continues to be monitored.

School Streets – Tranche 2

The School Streets intervention continues to form a part of Medway's Safer Healthier Streets programme. It involves a timed restriction and temporary closures of roads outside schools, effectively creating a pedestrian and cycle zone, whilst encouraging active modes of travel to and from school. Seven sites were introduced in Medway in March 2024, with a further nine locations having been out to public consultation, which concluded on 27 October 2024, as part of a second tranche. A follow-up report was presented to Cabinet on 19 November and the associated recommendations agreed. This also coincided with the publication of national School Streets guidance from Active Travel England available [here](#). Officers continue to liaise with the participating schools, including the development of a School Streets road safety education lesson plan.



Medway Free Bus Travel Weekends



Following the ongoing success of Medway's Free Bus Travel Weekend in September, which saw a 23% uplift in bus patronage when compared to a normal weekend, two further initiatives have been proposed on 14-15 and 21-22 December to coincide with the festive period. All bus operators will be participating, where free bus travel applies to any journey starting in Medway until 8pm each day. The promotion will support our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) outputs and Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators, whilst encouraging residents and visitors to Medway to travel by bus, perhaps for the first time. Further details are available [here](#), with further promotional banners and graphics being displayed across Medway, including our social media newsfeeds.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding - 2025/26

The Department for Transport (DfT) announced funding allocations for local transport authorities to provide bus service improvements throughout England in 2025/26.

Medway's BSIP capital allocation for 2025/26 totals £2.6 million, including £1.1 million in revenue funding and £94k in capacity and capability funding. A further £172k has been allocated for 2025/26 in line with a Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), to protect existing services and support service delivery.

The DfT will continue the National Bus Fare Cap at £3, beginning in January 2025 through to 31 December 2025



Wellbeing Walks

Led by the Public Health Team, wellbeing walks are posting record numbers of Medway residents attending. Despite colder temperatures, it has shown an appetite for communities to come together, get active and enjoy the changing seasons.



A new initiative at Riverside Country Park has also provided a further sense of purpose to our groups with access to litter pickers to help keep the space clean and green for all to enjoy. Officers have also developed a sensory walk booklet to promote the mindful aspects of walking to be used in a variety of settings.

