

Medway Council - Active Travel Updates [June 2025]

National Walk to School Week, 19-23 May 2025



The Council's Sustainable Transport Team hosted their own Walkin 'N' Wheelin Challenge in celebration of National Walk to School Week in May. Eighteen Medway schools signed up to take part in the campaign this year, which aims to inspire schools, families, and young adults to travel to school using active travel over the course of the five-day event. The team will be rewarding the top 3 performing schools with Halfords vouchers, as well as celebrating the most improved school from last year's competition with a prize. A press release went out to coincide with the campaign launch and is available to view [here](#).



Modeshift STARS engagement

The Sustainable Transport team continue their promotion of the Modeshift STARS accreditation scheme to schools across Medway, with 12 schools having registered to develop their School Travel Plan through the platform, which can be accessed [here](#).

Officers have delivered four Modeshift STARS 'getting started' workshops to newly registered schools in

Medway and will continue to offer this service to schools wishing to learn more about using the system, and initiatives available to help gain accreditation.

Partnership collaboration continues with Public Health to help promote the Modeshift STARS, as there is a combined goal to increase the level of active travel on journeys to and from school. Further to this, a new Medway Physical Activity Alliance for Schools working group has been established, whereby teams can come together to support each other on common goals, such as the benefits that a School Travel Plan can bring.

Living Streets WOW campaign – future funding

Fifteen primary schools in Medway continue to take part in the Walk Once a Week 'WOW' initiative, successfully logging 216,626 active travel journeys so far this year, equating to 86% of total journeys logged.

Our officers will continue working in partnership with Living Streets to deliver this important initiative during the next academic year, hoping to extend the number of schools taking part. Resources are funded through the Council's external Capability revenue grant from Active Travel England and used to support the participating schools.





Big Walk and Wheel 2025

Twenty-two Medway schools engaged and submitted their journeys for this year's 'Big Walk and Wheel' competition, where schools competed nationally for the highest percentage of active travel journeys to school over the two-week event. This was an improvement on last year, which saw 17 Medway schools take part.

The number of active travel journeys recorded by our schools in Medway was 48,588, which was 84% higher than the previous year. This contributed to the 2.8 million journeys recorded nationally over the campaign duration.

Highlights included The Victory Academy in Chatham being positioned in the Top 10 nationally for the Secondary School category. We also saw some great achievements within the Very Small and Large Primary School categories, with St Peters Infant School in Rochester positioned 11th out of 125 competing schools, and Twydall Primary School achieving 12th place nationally out of 1.299 competing schools.

CHALLENGE	SCHOOL	SCORE	NATIONAL POSITION
Very Small Primary School	St Peter's Infant School	83.03%	11 of 125
Small Primary School	Greenvale Primary School	83.12%	75 of 1196
Large Primary School	Twydall Primary School	93.84%	12 of 1299
Secondary School	The Victory Academy	62.86%	8 of 109

Climate Business Event

The Climate Response Team delivered Medway's first climate event for businesses in May 2025. Over 60 delegates attended, hearing from speakers from Green and Black's chocolate and Syntech Biofuel. Delegates also had access to information from a range of stallholders including Arriva and Public Health's Healthy Workplaces Programme who provided information about workplace active travel. Further details are available [here](#).



Community Climate Working Group

The Sustainable Transport team presented at Medway's Community Climate working group at Mid Kent College in April, providing an update on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan [LCWIP] and other active travel initiatives. This provided an opportunity for the group to ask the team questions and build on their knowledge of the LCWIP so that they can promote it across the networks in Medway.



Climate Response School Offer

The Climate Response Team is available to visit and talk to any Medway School. The talk can be tailored to complement the curriculum and support young people's learning about climate change and sustainability. The team has a range of engaging tools, stories and games that can help pupils better understand climate change and the steps they can take to help tackle it.

Schools can email climatechange@medway.gov.uk if they would like to request a visit.

Climate Change Action Plan

The Climate Change Action Plan has been refreshed, with a renewed focus on 5 priority areas – Knowledge and Empowerment; Clean, Efficient and Equitable Energy; Sustainable Travel and Transport; Resource Efficiency and Green and Resilient Medway. The plan includes actions which aim to improve public transport and enable active travel, through infrastructure and engagement, with a specific focus on delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan and LCWIP. A public facing document is currently being produced by the Design Team with the intention of taking the plan to Cabinet in August for endorsement.



Medway Council Staff Travel Plan

The Sustainable Transport Team have recently linked up with some members of the Gun Wharf Improvement Board to discuss the formation of a Gun Wharf Travel Plan. Officers have drafted travel survey questions, and they are currently being reviewed by members of the Travel Plan Working Group. Communications are also being held with the Data and Design Team to find out when the all-staff survey take place, possibly during the Medway Live events in mid-June.



The results collected from the survey will form the baseline figures for our travel plan and thus allow us to set SMART targets and supporting initiatives. Officers are working closely with the Capital Projects Team to ensure that the results of the survey are useful for them, in relation to ideas for improvements to Gun Wharf. The Travel Plan will eventually be created and updated regularly through the Modeshift STARS platform, thus making it more effective and consistent with other travel plans.

School Streets monitoring report

The Year 1 School Streets Monitoring Report draft for the participating Tranche 1 schools is near completion. This has drawn upon data from a range of sources, such as the number of PCNs issued, number and type of exemptions issued, traffic count data, parent/carers feedback, air quality data, road traffic collision data and observations made by officers during site visits. Based on this analysis, recommendations have been created ahead of the Tranche 2 School Streets, in order to improve on the project delivery and project outcomes.

Officers are also preparing a parent/carers School Streets survey to be sent out to all proposed schools to establish pupil mode of travel prior to the schemes being implemented. It is likely that the surveys will be issued to the respective schools in Term 6, prior to the end of the academic year.

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)



Following Cabinet approval of our LCWIP in March 2025, progress has been made in advancing Medway's active travel agenda. The LCWIP, which outlines a ten-year investment strategy to enhance walking and cycling infrastructure, can be publicly accessed [here](#) and will be actively promoted through the Council's communications channels.

Officers have also requested that the LCWIP be featured more prominently on the Council's website, with updates planned for the Active Travel page to improve visibility and public engagement.

Active Travel Fund 5

In alignment with the LCWIP and with support from Active Travel England [ATE], Medway Council is progressing the development of six higher-priority walking and cycling route concepts into detailed designs during 2025/26. This work is being funded through the Active Travel Fund Tranche 5 [ATF5] allocation of £167k, with regular dialogue and progress updates reported to ATE.

The six priority routes currently being developed this year include:

- Cycle Route 5: Church Street to Sturdee Avenue, Gillingham
- Cycle Route 6: Sturdee Avenue to Woodlands Road, Gillingham
- Walking Route 5A: Canterbury Street to High Street, Gillingham
- Walking Route 5B: Richmond Road to A289 Pier Road, Gillingham
- Walking Route 8A: Maidstone Road, Chatham
- Walking Route 8B: A231 Dock Road, Chatham



These schemes will undergo further consultation and community engagement as part of the detailed design process, ensuring our local communities help shape the final proposals.

Additionally, Medway has received a £568k Consolidated Active Travel Fund [CATF] grant for 2025/26, which will further support the development of LCWIP routes and potentially fund a dedicated client lead officer post. Revenue acceptance for £173k has already been submitted to ATE, with capital acceptance documents expected shortly.



Vision-led planning

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2024 and introduced the requirement for vision-led transport planning. Positive vision-led planning means prioritising active and sustainable travel in the design of new developments, the formation of new local plans and in the transport assessments that underpin these. ATE is working with local authorities and developers to support vision-led planning and design. An informative guide on vision-led planning was recently published [here](#) and has been endorsed by the CIHT and Transport Planning Society.

Public Health Update

Looking back on our results for 2024/25, our Public Health Active Travel programmes produced record attendance numbers for residents attending Health walks, Nordic Walking Groups and Cycling Activities achieving a total footfall of 14,864 residents. This important programme continues to encourage people to be more active and additionally reduces isolation and loneliness in our communities. Many of our walks take place in Medway's beautiful green spaces, as highlighted by our Explore Medway webpages. These continue to provide a rich and varied selection of Activities, Places To visit, Experiences and Events. This includes a "Clover" Walk, a new inclusive, accessible walk that has been launched on the peninsula and linked to our successful "Let's Beat It" walk in collaboration with Macmillan Cancer Support. The walk uses the "Clover" model which offers 4 separate routes starting and returning to one location. Each route has a different pace and degree of challenge for the terrain and designed to be suitable for wheelchairs and mobility scooters.



Living Roof Bus Shelters

An order has gone in for 5 new shelters for the Gillingham area, and another 5 for Chatham to modernise some outdated stock. The new shelters will be more anti vandal proof and include solar panels and LED lighting. Selected sites will also have living roofs.

We are also liaising with Clearchannel to further update their shelters at selected locations.

Medway's Local Bus Infrastructure Plan

Following analysis of bus routes and punctuality data, our consultants have produced a Local Bus Infrastructure Plan for Medway, which identifies a series of evidence-based interventions for the priority corridors identified in the Bus Service Improvement Plan [BSIP]. In developing the plan, all high frequency bus routes and corridors were reviewed, with short-, medium- and long-term schemes to improve the operational performance of bus services having been considered and appraised. This work will develop, where appropriate, the high-level interventions referenced in the BSIP.

Officers are now looking to progress work on the 132 route, with the following work streams to follow:

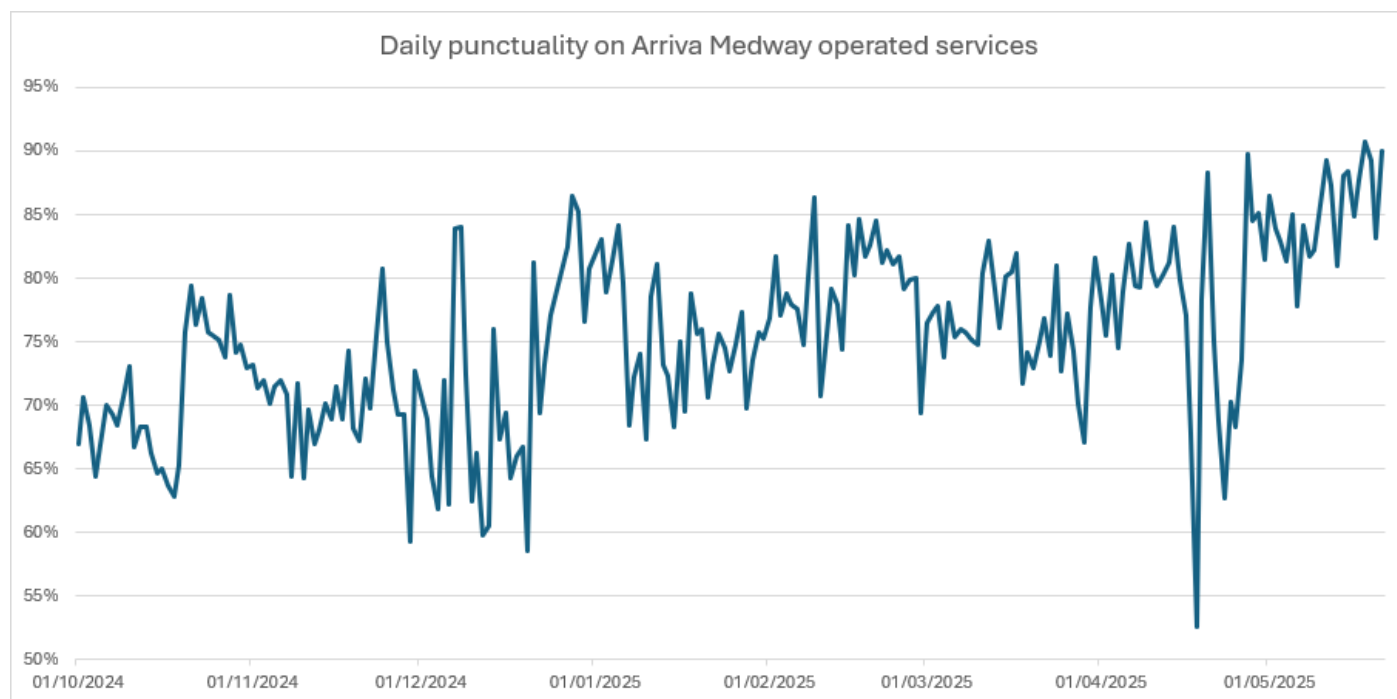
- Modifications to the A2/ Mierscourt Road junction to improve capacity and turning movements.
- Closure of some bus stop laybys to avoid buses being marooned in stops and unable to rejoin traffic.
- Lane marking changes at Wigmore Road to reduce queue lengths.
- Design work to update traffic signal sites to Puffin crossings to reduce red light time.

Bus timetable updates

Arriva modified their bus timetables in late April to help improve reliability and are focusing on an in-depth punctuality project to further improve times. Early indication is that it is progressing well, with Arriva's commercial manager commenting that "it feels as if we're really making some good steps forward in Medway."

Period	Punctuality
2024	73.5%
1 Jan- 26 April 2025 (pre timetable change)	76.6%
27 April - 21 May 2025	85.1%
Last 7 days	87.5%
22 May 2025	90% (most punctual depot in UK)

The punctuality graph below illustrates that day-to-day punctuality can still be affected by issues on the network at times. For example, bus punctuality fell below 60% around the festive period and again at 50% in mid-April, which coincided with emergency roadworks in Strood and the need to divert bus services as a result of temporary road closures, etc.



In April 2025, the following additions were introduced on Medway's bus network, supported by BSIP funding from the Department for Transport:

- 190 Service (Chatham - Gravesend) increased to every 30 minutes on Sundays
- 164 Service (Chatham - Chatham Grove) increased to every 30 minutes on Sundays
- 1 Service (Chatham - Dockside- The Strand) extended to Grange Road on Sundays
- 191 Service (Chatham - Hoo) increased to every 30 minutes Monday to Saturdays
- 191 Service (Chatham - Grain) increased to hourly from 2 hourly in Sunday
- 133 Service (Chatham - Cliffe) increased to half hourly between Strood and Cliffe Monday to Saturday-S106 funded

- 133 Service (Chatham - Cliffe) increased to hourly on Sunday (was previously 2 hourly 193)
- Services 102, 121, 131, 183 replaced with new 3A and 3C service (similar route to summer holiday service that was trialled last year)
- Service 120/124 serving Chatham, Darland, Barnsole Road, and Rainham Tescos
- 113 (Wigmore- Capstone – Chatham) retimed to enable better punctuality. Consistent timetable Monday to Saturday
- 185 (Chatham – Davis Estate) retimed to enable better punctuality. Consistent timetable Monday to Saturday
- 170 (Chatham - Medway City Estate- Medway Valley Park) – service to be increased to every 30 minutes, plus hourly until 10pm (BSIP funded)

Arriva are also providing some additional journeys on the 191 service from June and will be launching an Allhallows to Chatham service in the summer.

Free Bus promotions

June 21/22 will see all operators participate in our free bus weekend which will last all day on all services starting in Medway. We are also currently finalising the free children's bus travel in the summer holidays again.



Scheme improvements

Changes to the flow of Chatham Waterfront Bus Station on the Paddock side, including amendments to the crossings are being scheduled, including additional layover space, and resurfacing of all carriageways.

The team are currently upgrading bus stops with raised kerbs and clearways in Pattens Lane, and engineers are starting to design improvements to stops in North Dane Way.



Other schemes awaiting design are as follows:

- Berengrave Lane/Childscroft Road bus stop boarder kerbs
- Goudhurst Road/Twydall Green amendments to kerbs
- Heron Way- raised kerbs and clearways
- Purser Way- road alignment to assist buses
- Weeds Wood bus stop upgrades
- Woodlands Road- Rail fencing around island near school.

School Crossing Patrols - recruitment update

The Sustainable Transport Team have appointed additional School Crossing Patrols to serve a number of schools across Medway, including: Chattenden Primary School, Lordswood School, Cedar Children's Academy and most recently at All Saints CE Primary School in Chatham and Rainham Mark Grammar School. The team are currently advertising a new site on Wainscott Road to serve Wainscott Primary School and have readvertised a site vacancy in Halling.

