Department for
**Regional
Development**
www.drdni.gov.uk

Building An Active Travel Future for Northern Ireland Report of the Active Travel Forum

Travel**wise**
Northern Ireland

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

- **DRD** — **Department for Regional Development**

- **PfG** — **Programme for Government**

- **RDS** — **Regional Development Strategy**

- **RTS** — **Regional Transportation Strategy**

- **EQIA** — **Equality Impact Assessment**

- **BMTP** — **Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan**

- **BMA** — **Belfast Metropolitan Area**

- **NCN** — **National Cycle Network**

- **DARD** — **Department for Agriculture and Rural Development**

- **DE** — **Department for Education**

- **PHA** — **Public Health Agency**

- **DHSSPS** — **Department for Health and Social Services and Public Safety**

- **DSD** — **Department for Social Development**

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

Transport is an integral part of modern life. It is central to almost everything we do. It enables us to access employment, training, education and services; to meet together and exchange ideas; or to engage in recreation or leisure actives. Over recent decades, technological advances and investment in our infrastructure has greatly increased our ability to travel. But increasingly, the way in which we travel and in particular our high rates of car use are having an adverse impact on the environment and on our quality of life.

We have among the lowest levels of walking and cycling anywhere in Europe. Yet experience from elsewhere demonstrates that there are significant benefits in adopting a more sustainable approach to transport and that real improvements to personal health and wellbeing, community spirit and the wider environment can be achieved when active travel is integrated into transport and planning policy from the very start. But to secure these benefits actions need to be co-ordinated, focused and sustained over time. Change does not happen overnight.

Walking and cycling are good for people's health, good for communities, help create safer and more pleasant streets and when replacing journeys made by car are good for the environment. For most of us walking forms a part of almost every journey we make and is an essential part of journeys by public transport. Indeed, walking or cycling can be a quicker, less stressful, invigorating and lower cost alternative to the car or public transport for many shorter trips. However, despite the very clear benefits of walking and cycling their importance as a form of transport and their contribution to health and recreation has been overlooked for many years.

This Strategy represents a significant commitment to active travel by Government, Local Councils and statutory and voluntary sector organisations. But it also requires a commitment by us all as individuals, personally, to do what we can to make the change to a more active lifestyle. I am keen to raise the status of active travel in Northern Ireland and I believe that this Strategy is an important first step in the right direction.

1. BACKGROUND & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

> *Our vision for active travel*
>
> " To put walking and cycling at the heart of local transport, public health and well-being and wider government strategies for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy as a whole."

Background

1.1   As part of a wider programme of work to develop more sustainable transport arrangements, the Department for Regional Development established a cross-sectoral Active Travel Forum in March 2010. Drawing representation from across government departments, local government the voluntary and community sector and the private sector, the Forum was tasked with developing a high level strategy for Active Travel. The Terms of Reference and membership of the Forum is set out at Annex 1.

1.2   This report is the outcome of the Forum's work. It aims to provide a high level framework to provide for a more integrated approach across government and in partnership with key stakeholders to deliver our vision for walking and cycling.

1.3   This Strategy sets out a framework to help people choose more sustainable and active transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport and in so doing to improve health and well-being, the environment and the economy.

Executive Summary

1.4   Transport is an integral part of modern life. It is central to almost everything we do. It enables us to access employment, training, education, services, even to meet and exchange ideas or engage in leisure actives. Over recent decades, technological advances and investment in our infrastructure has greatly increased our ability to travel. But increasingly, the way in which we

travel and in particular our high rates of car use is having an adverse impact on the environment and our quality of life.

1.5   There is an increasing recognition that our current travel behaviours are not sustainable. Increasing congestion and emissions from transport are contributing not only to climate change, but local air pollution, unacceptable noise levels and a weakened sense of neighbourhood as roads and the traffic on them create physical barriers to interaction between neighbours and communities. This also reduces mental and social wellbeing. These impacts are most likely to be experienced by those living alongside main roads in urban areas, the predominance of which is in lower income areas. Yet it is also such communities which experience the lowest levels of car ownership.

1.6   Our dependency on the car, also directly contributes to our increasingly sedentary lifestyles, with major physical health impacts. Walking and cycling are good for our health, good for getting us around, improve our public spaces and benefit our society and the economy. More active travel can bring business benefits. A healthier, more active workforce means reduced absenteeism and increased productivity. When replacing journeys currently made by the car then walking and cycling, or walking and cycling used in conjunction with public transport, can also contribute to reduced congestion and emissions.

1.7   We want to see more people walking and cycling more often and more safely. One sixth (17%) of all our trips are less than one mile long – a generally walkable distance and 63% of journeys are less than five miles, a reasonable cycling distance for most adults.   When co- joined with public transport an even greater percentage of total journeys become viable, not least given the increased catchment area associated with the public transport network. Cycling can increase the catchment area served by a public transport service around 9 fold[1] (based on the rationale that cycling speed is approximately three times that of walking speed[2]).

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[1] Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework, Department of Transport
http://www.transport.ie/upload/general/11387-0.pdf
[2] McClintock, H (2002). Planning for Cycling - Principles, practice and solutions for urban planners.
[3] www.adph.org.uk/downloads/policies/Take-an-action-on-active-travelpdf
[2] McClintock, H (2002). Planning for Cycling - Principles, practice and solutions for urban planners.
[4] Northern Ireland Executive, *Programme for Government 2011-2015*, OFMDFM, Belfast, September

1.8   While we have among the lowest levels of walking and cycling anywhere in
       Europe, experience from elsewhere demonstrates what can be achieved
       when active travel is integrated into transport and planning policy. In that
       regard actions need to be focused and sustained over time. Change does not
       happen overnight.

1.9   As with the benefits of active travel, the barriers to increased walking and
       cycling are not confined to the provision of transport infrastructure. This
       reflects the view of the Association of Directors of Public Health that:
       **"Policy in relation to active travel is evolving rapidly; important work is
       in development relating to land use and planning, children and play and
       sustainability, as well as the more traditional areas of transport and
       public health."[3]**

1.10   The Strategy therefore sets out our ambitions and provides a framework
       across government to ensure a more integrated approach to the promotion
       and facilitation of active travel. Following consultation on this strategy we will
       develop an action plan to coordinate delivery over the period 2012-2014. We
       will also initiate a series of active travel demonstration projects.

1.11   Our initial targets aim to increase the number of trips and the average
       distances travelled by walking and cycling in Northern Ireland to levels more in
       line with other regions of the UK. This will provide the foundations upon which
       to build a culture where walking and cycling are seen as the first choices for
       many of our travel needs.

1.12   We will seek to do this by demonstrating that walking and cycling are safe,
       healthy, flexible, inexpensive and sociable means of travel and by setting out
       ways in which opportunities for active travel can be significantly improved.
       We would like to build upon the programmes/initiatives that have already been
       successful. Our targets for improving active travel in Northern Ireland are long
       term, over a 10 year period, and are aspirational. Our key objectives are:
       • Increase walking distance
       • Increase cycling distance
       • Increase percentage of cycling journeys.

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[3] www.adph.org.uk/downloads/policies/Take-an-action-on-active-travelpdf

2. POLICY CONTEXT

2.1   This Strategy follows on from and supports the revised Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) 2011. The revised RTS sets a new direction for transport policy in Northern Ireland with a move towards greater sustainability and a focus on active travel to meet local transport needs.

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICY CONTEXT

2.2   As set out below, the focus on sustainability at the core of the RTS and our ambitions for active travel reflects and are designed to support the direction of policy at Executive level. In particular it takes account of the Executive's strategic objectives and the need to rebalance transport policy to maximise the benefits of transport to the individual, society and the economy, while minimising adverse environmental impacts.

Programme for Government (PfG)

2.3   The Programme for Government, a statutory requirement, provides the overarching framework for government policy in Northern Ireland. As set out in the Programme for Government (PfG) 2011-2015, the Executive's overall aim, is ***to build a safe, peaceful, fair and prosperous society where everyone can enjoy a better quality of life now and in years to come***.[4] In support of that aim, the PfG sets out five priorities and three cross-cutting themes which will underpin the work of the Executive, as summarised below.

Priorities	Themes
i. Growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future	i. Equality & Good Relations
	ii. Promoting Sustainability
ii. Creating opportunities and tackling disadvantage	iii. Joined-up Government
iii. Delivering high quality and efficient public services	

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[4]Northern Ireland Executive, *Programme for Government 2011-2015*, OFMDFM, Belfast, September 2011

iv. Protecting our people, environment
and creating safer communities

v. Building a united and shared
community

2.4   In response to the key challenges facing Northern Ireland and in the context
of the current economic downturn, the Executive's focus is on promoting
economic growth and prosperity, alongside a determination to address
poverty, disadvantage and division. That focus, however, is underpinned by a
clear commitment to the principles of sustainability and a recognition that
policies across all departments must be focused on issues and outcomes
rather than administrative boundaries if we are to deliver improved outcomes
and utilise limited public finances as effectively as possible.

2.5   That focus on prosperity, inclusion and sustainability as set out in the PfG is
further reflected and developed in the body of supporting strategies across
government.

Everyone's Involved – Sustainable Development Strategy

2.6   The Executive's Sustainable Development Strategy, *Everyone's Involved*,[5]
highlights the requirement for a proper balance between the needs of the
economy, people and the environment in the delivery of the Executive's
priorities. The Strategy aims to support a more integrated and joined up focus
in the delivery of Executive priorities in order to improve the quality of life for
present and future generations. In that regard, it not only sets a high- level
framework for government, but also aims "*to encourage habits that inspire and
support individual and organisational decisions that promote the concepts of
living within environmental limits, while ensuring a strong, healthy and just
society*".

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[5] Northern Ireland Executive, *Everyone's Involved – Sustainable Development Strategy*, Belfast, OFMDFM, May 2011

2.7   Behavioural change towards more sustainable choices is therefore a key element of the strategy and its associated implementation plan,[6] including in relation to transport and travel. In part, this reflects the need for action to reduce environmental impacts and in particular, emissions from key sectors, such as transport, to achieve climate change targets. It also, however, reflects concerns that failure to address non-sustainable programmes and behaviours will significantly limit our capacity to address some of the key barriers to inclusion and sustainable prosperity. This is discussed further in section 3.

Regional Development Strategy (RDS)

2.8   *Shaping Our Future: The Regional Development Strategy 2025* provides the Executive's spatial strategy. In broad terms, the Strategy aims to take account of the ambitions and needs of the Region up to 2025, and put in place spatial planning, transport and housing priorities that will support and enable the aspirations of the Region to be met.

2.9   The RDS is a supporting document of the PfG and complements the Sustainable Development Strategy. It therefore, reflects the direction set out in both, with a clear focus on economic growth, inclusion and sustainability. Originally published in 2001, a 10 year review of the RTS was published in 2011.[7] In considering transport trends, the review concluded that current travel patterns, in particular our high levels of car dependency are no longer sustainable and that a fundamental reorientation of transport policy is required to realise more sustainable outcomes

Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS)

2.10   Developing the direction for transport set out in the RDS, the revised Regional Transportation Strategy 2011 sets out a new direction for transport policy in Northern Ireland.[8] As with the PfG and other key strategies, sustainability is at the core of the revised RTS in order to ensure that transport contributes positively to growing the economy and improving the quality of life for all while reducing impacts on the environment.

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[6] Northern Ireland Executive, *Focus on the Future – Sustainable Development Implementation Plan 2011-14,* Belfast, OFMDFM, 2011
[7] DRD, *Shaping Our Future: Regional Development Strategy 2025 – 10 Year Review*, DRD, Belfast, January 2011
[8] DRD, Regional Transportation Strategy 2011 – A Sustainable Transport Future, DRD, Belfast, 2011

2.11   In line with that, the revised RTS sets out a clear focus on reducing car dependency by making public transport and active travel the first choice for people rather than the last resort. Critically, this focus is not about reducing mobility. Indeed, increased connectivity, accessibility and network capacity are key objectives of the revised strategy. Rather it is about using our transport infrastructure in a smarter way and influencing individual and organisational travel behaviours to begin to address key transport related barriers to social inclusion and economic growth, while reducing the significant environmental impacts of transport.

Other Strategies

2.12   Beyond transport and spatial planning policy, a commitment to the principles of sustainability and an underlying recognition of the inter-relationship between efforts to increase prosperity and address poverty, disadvantage and division are evidenced across the wider range of key Executive strategies. While not transport centric, the underlying aims of those strategies fully align with the objective to promote higher levels of active travel.

2.13   Given the positive impact of active travel on health and well-being and overall quality of life, this is particularly the case in relation to the Executive's strategic frameworks to promote public health, inclusion and prosperity. This includes the following draft and existing strategies and action plans:

- Planning Policy (DOE)
  http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/policy_publications/planning_statements.htm
- Play and Leisure Policy (OFMDFM)
  http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality/children-young-people/play-and-leisure-policy.htm
- Investing for Health (DHSSPS)
  http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/php/ifh.htm
- Fit Futures (DHSSPS)
  http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/ifh-fitfutures.pdf
- The Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People (OFMDFM)
  http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality/children-young-people/children-and-young-people-strategy.htm

- Child Poverty Strategy (OFMDFM)
  http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/final_child_poverty_strategy_-_agreed_by_executive_-_22_march_2011.pdf

- Cardiovascular Framework (DHSSPS)
  http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/service_framework_for_cardiovascular_health_and_wellbeing.pdf

- Sport Matters (DCAL) http://www.dcalni.gov.uk/sport_matters.pdf

- Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing (DHSSPS)

- Neighbourhood Renewal (DSD)
  http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/imp_plan_neighbourren_for_townsandcities.doc

- Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020 (DOE)
  http://www.doeni.gov.uk/roadsafety/northern_ireland_s_road_safety_strategy_to_2020_final_version.pdf

- (Draft) Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland (2011-2021) (DHSSPS)
  http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/obesity-prevention-framework-2011-2021.pdf

- Rural White Paper (DARD) http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/rural-development/rural-white-paper.htm

- NI Tourism Strategy (DETI) http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern-ireland-tourism-strategy-2

- Independent Review of Economic Development Policy (DETI)

GB AND ROI POLICY CONTEXT

2.14   The direction of policy has been influenced by Active Travel Strategies in England[9], Scotland[10], Wales[11] and ROI[12]. These strategies set out their visions and programmes for promoting and delivering active travel.

2.15   The Climate Change Act 2008 set a legally binding greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for the United Kingdom against a 1990 baseline of 34% for 2020 and of at least 80% for 2050 and introduced five-yearly carbon budgets to ensure these are met. The UK Coalition Government has

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[9] Active Travel Strategy, Change 4 Life, Department for Transport, Department for Health, February 2010
http://www2.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/cycling/activetravelstrategy/pdf/activetravelstrategy.pdf

[10] Transport 2030 Vision, Edinburgh
[11] Welsh Assembly Government's National Transport Plan (March 2010)

[12] Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Travel Future A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020

confirmed its commitment to meeting the targets and carbon budgets set out in the Climate Change Act.

2.16   In Northern Ireland the Executive has shown leadership in this area by setting a Programme for Government target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2025. This is set out in Public Sector Agreement (PSA) 22. A **Cross-Departmental Working Group on Greenhouse Gas Emissions** was established to develop an Action Plan[13] giving us a pathway to 2025.

2.17   The Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly have consented to the extension of the Climate Change Act 2008, and are contributing to UK carbon budgets and targets. This reflects the Executive's PfG commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% on 1990 levels by 2025.

EU POLICY CONTEXT

2.18   A focus on sustainability, particularly in relation to Transport and mobility is not unique to Northern Ireland, but lies at the very heart of EU economic and transport policy. This reflects the increasing impact of climate change and the common challenges and constraints in relation to social and economic policy, which cut across national borders.

2.19   The Europe 2020 Strategy is a plan for economic renewal, which aims to create jobs, encourage 'green' economic growth and create an inclusive society, with the identification of sustainable transport as a key element of Europe's future competitive advantage. In support of that, the European Commission's Communication on transport sets the proposed policy objectives with a clear focus on integration of transport, increased sustainability, improved road safety and the use of advanced technological solutions.

2.20   The European Union has also set an agreed target for a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (rising to 30% when there is a successful outcome to international climate negotiations) and a 50% reduction by 2050 compared to 1990 levels.

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[13] Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Action Plan, February 2011
http://www.doeni.gov.uk/northern_ireland_action_plan_on_greenhouse_gas_emissions_reductions.pdf

2.21   This Active Travel Strategy aligns with and supports the Executive's strategic priorities and wider commitments to the principles of sustainability and equity. By providing a framework to promote more sustainable travel choices it will enhance action across government to:

- Improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities through more active lifestyles;

- Increase access to jobs, training and key services, particularly for those in without access to a car;

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport and support our climate change targets;

- Reduce harmful emissions and improve local air quality;

- Realise more attractive, inclusive, safer streets and communities and ensure greater access to local services and opportunities;

- Promote enhanced mobility and independence for vulnerable groups such as older people and those with disabilities or limiting long-term conditions.

3. RATIONALE AND VISION FOR ACTIVE TRAVEL

INTRODUCTION AND VISION

3.1　Today we enjoy unprecedented levels of mobility. We travel greater distances and more frequently than at any time in the past. This increased mobility has been enabled by technological developments and improvements to our transport infrastructure, which have increased the choices available to us and delivered very real benefits for individuals, businesses and communities.

3.2　Although we have greater choice in how we travel, we have become highly dependent upon the car for the majority of journeys we make, to the detriment of other modes. As a consequence, whilst our increased mobility has delivered real benefits, there is increasing evidence that the way in which we chose to realise that mobility, has many hidden costs and impacts, economic, social, environmental, health and well-being.

3.3　It is important to acknowledge that access to a car can greatly increase the range of opportunities and activities open to individuals. For longer journeys, particularly where public transport is not available, the car plays a very important role in meeting transport needs. As with all forms of transport, however, it is not always the most appropriate choice. For some of our shorter journeys, walking and cycling can offer a real and more appropriate alternative.

3.4　Reflecting on our high levels of car dependency, the revised RTS identified a need to rebalance our transport infrastructure, and to promote more sustainable travel behaviours and choices, in order to maximise the benefits of transport while minimising the adverse impacts. In that context, it identified a key role for walking and cycling in meeting local journey needs, particularly within urban areas.

3.5　In line with that our vision for active travel and the aim of this document is

To put walking and cycling at the heart of local transport, public health and well-being and wider government strategies for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy as a whole.

3.6   This vision recognises that the way we live, work and interact would be impossible without the high levels of mobility we enjoy. The aim of the strategy is not to diminish that mobility but rather to enhance it while improving accessibility to local goods and services. To enable all of us to make more informed travel choices in order to fully realise the benefits that transport and active travel in particular can deliver, while reducing the negative impacts.

3.7   The development of this Active Travel Strategy builds upon the earlier Walking Northern Ireland: An Action Plan (2003) and the Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy (2000). Both strategies set out a framework of actions to assist in the delivery of improved conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and also identified regional targets as follows:

- To increase the number of short walking journeys (less than 2 miles) by 20% by 2012;
- To increase the average distance walked per person per year by 10% by 2012;
- To double the number of trips by cycle (on 2000 figures) by the end of 2005; and
- To quadruple the number of trips by cycle (on 2000 figures) by the end of 2015.

These targets were identified in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan[14] (BMTP) which is a local non-statutory transport plan for the Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA). The Plan's proposals represent a balanced and multi-modal approach to transport that takes into account the latest guidance and experience on sustainable local transport provision. It provides comprehensive proposals for all modes of transport throughout the BMA.

3.8   Under the strategies a range of measures were implemented which sought to promote a cycling and pedestrian friendly travel culture. These were further augmented by the work of the Travelwise NI team in engaging directly with schools, businesses and commuters to promote smarter choices and more sustainable modes of transport.

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[14] Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, DRD http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/bmtp.htm

HOW WE TRAVEL & HOW WE COMPARE

3.9   The work undertaken to promote active travel has had mixed success. Since 2002, the number of vehicles on our roads[15] has increased by almost a third (32.2%) to over 1 million vehicles and the proportion of families with access to two or more cars has increased by 6 percentage points to 34%, with no evidence of modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport. In Northern Ireland as a whole, the average distance walked and cycled per person per year has remained the same since the inception of the Travel Survey in 1999 - 2001; however there has been an increase in the number of people walking and cycling to work in Belfast[16].

3.10   To some degree, this is not unexpected, as it reflects both the nature of our transport infrastructure and the unprecedented growth of the local economy up to 2008. Increased prosperity is very closely associated with increased levels of car dependency, as greater importance is attached to speed, comfort, reliability and perceived safety in our transport choices. If we are to promote active travel as a viable and attractive alternative, to make it the first choice for local journeys rather than the last resort, we will need to ensure it takes account of these factors.

3.11   It is clear that our levels of active travel remain very low, particularly when compared with other regions, even those with historically low levels of walking and cycling. For example, as set out in figure 1, currently seven out of every ten journeys (70%) in Northern Ireland are made by car; almost one out of five (18%) journeys is walked whilst a very small proportion of journeys (1%) are cycled[17]. The comparative figures for GB in 2009 are 63% of all trips made by car, almost a quarter (23%) of trips walked and a further 2% of journeys cycled. [18]
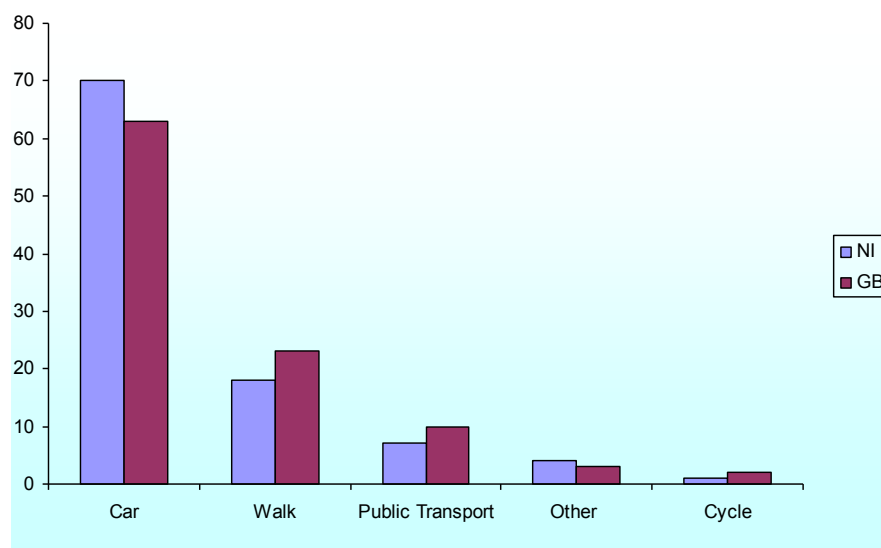
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[15] Northern Ireland Transport Statistics 2010-11
http://www.drdni.gov.uk/drd_transport_statistics_annual_2010-11.pdf
[16] Northern Ireland Travel Survey
[17] Travel Survey Northern Ireland 2007-09
[18] Great Britain Travel Survey 2009

**Figure 1:   Percentage of Journeys per Person by Main Mode NI & GB 2007 – 2009**

3.12   Our low levels of walking and cycling become ever more stark when we consider the average distances that people travel. As illustrated in figure 2 below, the majority of journeys undertaken (63%) are less than 5 miles, while just over a third of journeys (35%) are less than 2 miles. For most people, these are journeys which could reasonably be undertaken by walking or cycling.

**Figure 2:   Proportion of trips by distance travelled in Northern Ireland 2007
- 2009**
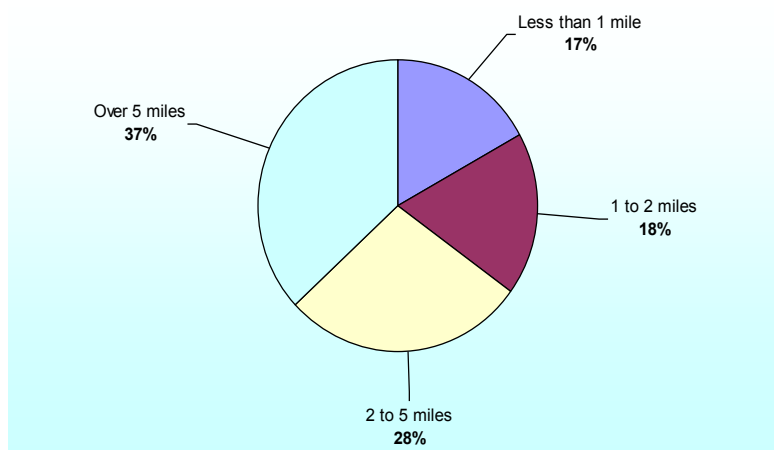
3.13   Yet the car remains the predominant mode of transport for such journeys.
Almost two thirds (63%) of all journeys under 5 miles are made by car (and
almost a third (30%) trips of less than one mile (about 20 minutes walk) are
made by car[19].

Figure 3:   Modal Split of Journeys of less than 5 miles 2006 - 2008



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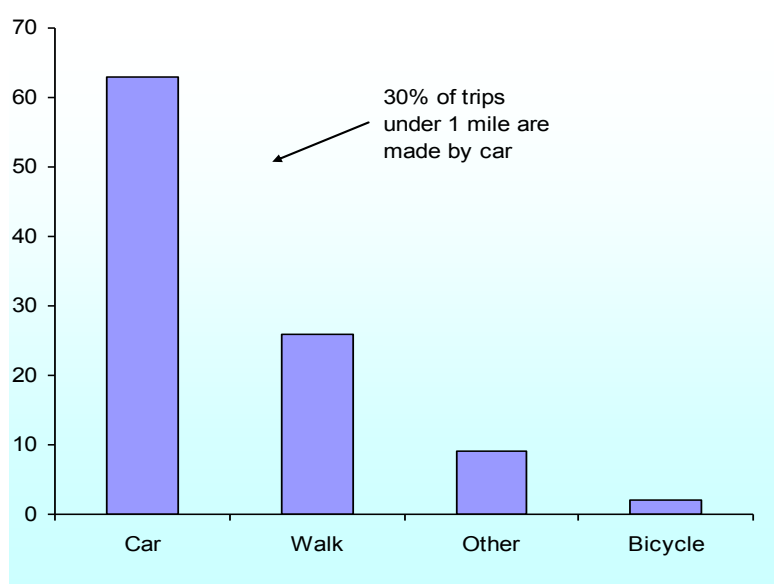
[19] 2007 – 2009 Travel Survey

3.14   In addition to the number of journeys we make, the distances we travel by walking and cycling are also very low. On average, people from Northern Ireland walk 232 km per year. This compares with 315 km per year in England and Scotland and 286 km per year in Wales.

**Figure 4:   Average Distance Walked per Year by UK Region**
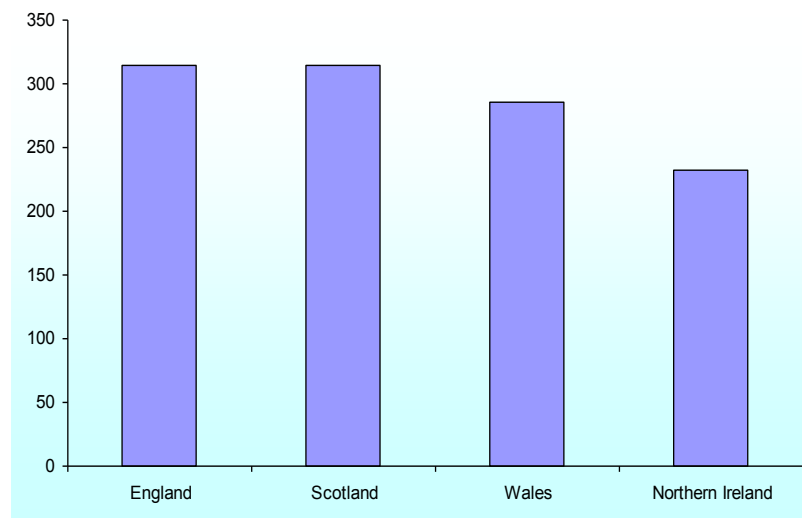
3.15   Despite the activities undertaken to promote walking and the targets set out in the 2002 RTS the average distance walked per person per year has shown no real change. (figure 5).

Figure 5:   Walking Trends in Northern Ireland (km/year)
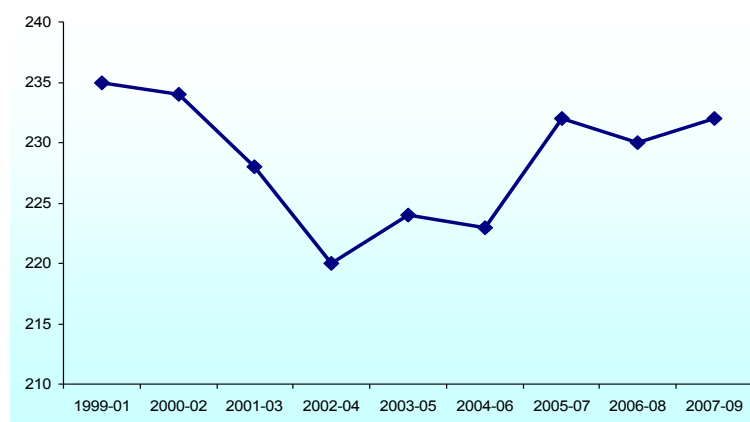
3.16   The 2007-2009 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) shows that we cycle an average of 32km per person per year, which has shown no real change since the inception of the survey in 1999-2001 (31km). This is less than half of the distance cycled in GB in 2009 (74km), which itself has very low levels of cycling. In contrast, the average Dutch person cycles around 850km per year[20].

3.17   In Northern Ireland, just 1% of our journeys are by bicycle. In contrast, other European countries have a much higher proportion of journeys made by bicycle (figure 6). Over one quarter of journeys (26%) in the Netherlands are made by bicycle and in some Dutch cities and towns, journeys made by bicycle can account for up to 40% of all journeys.[21]

Figure 6:   Estimated Share of Journeys (trips) Made by Bicycle in EU Countries
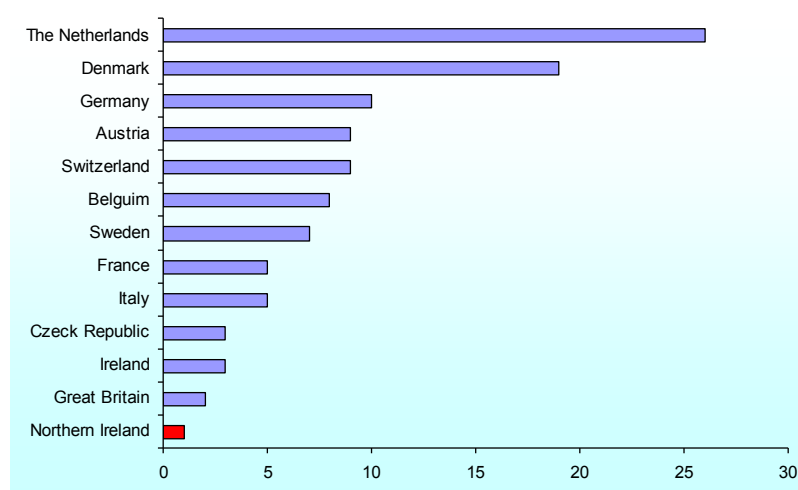
3.18   Another source of cycling statistics is the Annual Cycle Usage[22] report; this uses data recorded by automatic cycle counters at 34 locations throughout Northern Ireland to calculate the average daily flow of cycles for each of the locations. The overall percentage change in cycle usage between each survey year has been calculated by comparing the average daily cycle flows to a base year of 2003. Information from the Annual Cycling Usage Report is not

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[20] SWOV – Institute for Roads Safety Research Fact Sheet -
http://www.swov.nl/rapport/Factsheets/UK/FS_Cyclists.pdf
[21] Source: NI data from NI Travel Survey 2006 - 2008
All other figures from Cycling in the Netherlands - Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat (2009)
23 Annual Cycle Usage Report 200-2010, Roads Service
[22] Annual Cycle Usage Report for Northern Ireland 2000-2010; DRD,t in May, June & September

comparable with the Travel Survey as due to the nature and location of the cycle counters, individual cycling trips cannot be identified. While recognising that the cycle counters can be useful in providing an indication of cycling volumes in specific areas it is important to acknowledge that the location of the cycle counters are not representative of roads in Northern Ireland as a whole and have a high percentage located where dedicated cycle provision has been implemented.

3.19   Since 2003, the annual average daily flow of cycles at all locations has increased by almost a half (47.5%). If only counters that are located on National Cycle Networks[23] are considered, the average daily flow has increased by 55.1% since 2003. Cycling Counters located in Belfast sites have seen a 92.3% increase in the average daily flow since 2003 (see Table 1) which is an encouraging trend.

Table 1: Percentage Change in Average Daily Cycle Flows by type of Site (base year 2003)

Year	All sites Percentage change from 2003	NCN Sites Percentage change from 2003	Belfast Sites Percentage change from 2003
2004	-2.9%	-8.0%	7.3%
2005	16.0%	6.1%	24.9%
2006	22.1%	18.5%	38.0%
2007	21.9%	15.3%	44.0%
2008	34.1%	26.5%	59.0%
2009	36.4%	42.6%	81.5%
2010	47.5%	55.1%	92.3%

Source: Annual Cycle Usage Report for Northern Ireland 2000-2010

ROLE OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

3.20   The revised RTS has set a new direction for transport with sustainability very much at its core. There are significant challenges in delivering that objective

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[23] In Northern Ireland, the Network extends to more than 800 miles, mostly on quiet country roads and includes 106 miles of traffic free paths.

and it can only be realised where we enable and facilitate more appropriate transport choices. We must acknowledge there is no single solution to address all travel needs, rather a more integrated and accessible transport infrastructure is required.

3.21   Active travel has a very important role in meeting the wider objective of more sustainable transport arrangements. For short to medium journeys walking and cycling is likely to be the most sustainable form of transport and should be a viable alternative for many of us. The majority of the journeys we undertake in Northern Ireland are less than 5 miles. While our very high levels of dependence on the car to make these journeys and our current levels of walking and cycling give some cause for concern, it is also clear that active travel has the potential to meet the majority of our travel needs.

BENEFITS OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

3.22   As highlighted earlier in this paper, transport is central to almost every aspect of our daily lives. As individuals, it enables us to access employment, training, education, various services, even to meet and exchange ideas. In addition to the very real benefits, however, transport, particularly in the context of high levels of traffic and car dependency can also have significant negative impacts on our environment, economy and society, including public health and wellbeing.

3.23   Increased rates of active travel can reduce the costs to the economy incurred by factors such as poor physical health and heavy congestion. It can improve accessibility for local retailers and businesses and has the potential to increase the attractiveness of an area as a location in which to live and work. That latter point is very important, because in high value and creative business sectors the most valuable resource of a business is its employees. Increasingly businesses are looking at the quality of life that a potential investment location offers and that includes for example access to services, leisure and cultural opportunities, safe clean residential environments and the opportunities for walking and cycling.[24]

3.24   The social and environmental benefits are equally important and reflect the potential for active travel to enable us to meet local transport needs and

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[24] Salvesen and Renski, *The Importance of Quality of Life in the Location Decisions of New Economy Firms*, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of North Carolina, January 2003

facilitate equitable access while removing the adverse impact of traffic on local communities and addressing some of the wider challenges facing the Executive in pursuing its vision for Northern Ireland.

Greenhouse Gases

3.25　Climate change is widely regarded as the most serious environmental threat facing the world. The Climate Change Act 2008 has set a target to reduce overall UK greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by at least 80% by 2050. The Greenhouse Gas Inventories[25] for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland show that in Northern Ireland, road transport is the second largest source of GHG emissions, accounting for a fifth (20%) of total carbon emissions.

Physical activity and health

3.26　Our high levels of car use and low levels of active travel reflect an increasingly sedentary lifestyle which is contributing to higher levels of obesity. Over half of the adult population in Northern Ireland is overweight, and almost a quarter is obese[26]. Among children, about 20% of Primary 1 pupils are overweight or obese[27].

3.27　Obesity is also an equity issue; statistically, people in the lowest socioeconomic groups are more likely to be overweight and least likely to be physically active. The risks associated with obesity may be particularly serious for people in disadvantaged groups, as living with disadvantage in itself means facing a higher risk of ill health. For example, people in the lowest socioeconomic groups are most likely to live in the poorest quality environment, with higher levels of traffic, poorer air quality and limited safe active travel facilities. People in these groups may also feel less able to change their circumstances.

3.28　These factors and outcomes are not unconnected and if current trends continue, it has been estimated that over half of the UK population could be obese by 2050[28]. Economically, this is a concern since it significantly

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[25]Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: 1990-2009, AEA September 2011

[26] Health and Social Wellbeing Survey 2005-06, NISRA.

[27] Child Health System, published by NISRA through NINIS.
http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/mapxtreme/DataCatalogue.asp?button=Health

[28] Sharpe, B., Parry, V., Dubhthaigh, R. and Barter, T. 2007. *'Tackling Obesities:*

increases demand for health care, while productivity in workplaces is affected as sickness absence and incapacity to work increases.

3.29   Increasing our rates of walking and cycling can play a key role in contributing to more active lifestyles and improving the health and wellbeing of individuals. Recognising this, the then Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Liam Donaldson, in 2009 concluded that with regard to climate change and low levels of physical activity "the two crises share a solution: a fundamental change to transport, especially urban transport, is needed".[29] Reflecting that, the Foresight Tackling Obesities Report[30] concluded that "the top five policy responses assessed as having the greatest average impact on levels of obesity (include) increasing walkability/cyclability of the built environment."

3.30   A new set of UK-wide physical activity guidelines were launched earlier this year, to help policy makers, health professions and individual themselves to understand how to reduce the risk of ill-health associated with inactivity and sedentary behaviour. [31]

3.31   A recent article in The Lancet [32] illustrated the wider health risks associated with high levels of car dependency and highlighted that these go beyond obesity, with the potential for significant impacts on mental health and wellbeing, Figure 7. This not only limits individuals' life opportunities, but also affects families, communities and the economy.

Future Choices - Visualising the Future: Scenarios to 2050
http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/bispartners/foresight/docs/obesity/09.pdf
[29] Professor Liam Donaldson, CMO's Report, DoH, London, 2009
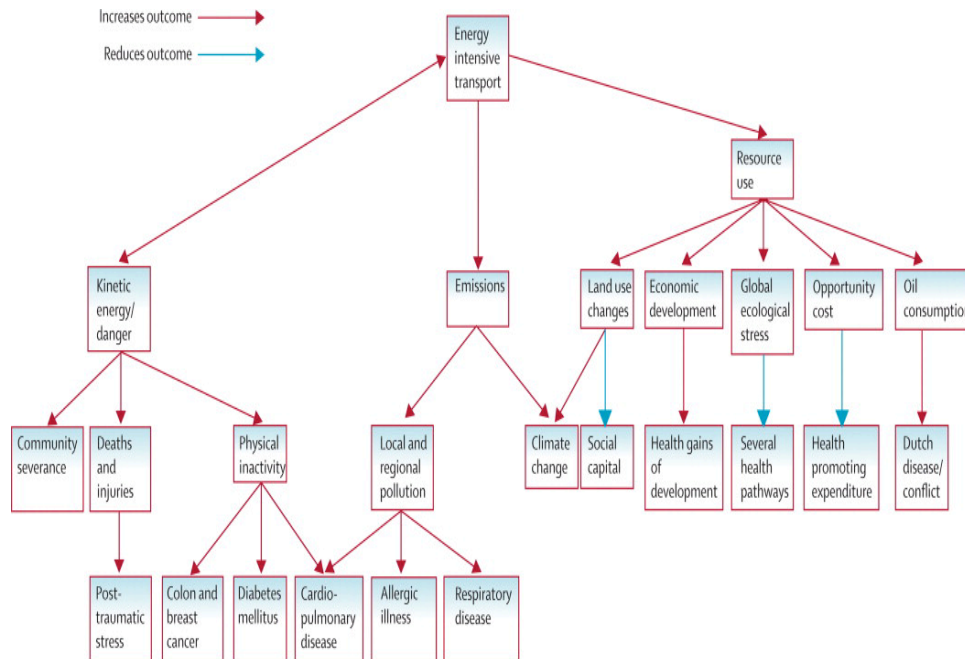[30] http://www.foresight.gov.uk/
[31]
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_1 27931
[32] Woodcock J, Banister D, Edwards P, Prentice AM, Roberts I. Energy and Transport. The Lancet 2007, 370: 1078-88

Figure 7:   Health Risks associated with car dependency

- *Accessibility & Inclusion*

3.32   Whilst the number of vehicles in Northern Ireland has increased in recent
        years with over a million registered vehicles on our roads by 2009,[33] less than
        a quarter (23%) of households[34] do not have access to a car. This can
        significantly impact on their ability to access basic services, employment and
        wider opportunities where alternative modes of transport are not readily
        available. Reflecting this, a number of studies in recent years have suggested
        a decline in the accessibility to key services and opportunities, including
        employment, shopping, education and health for those in marginalised
        communities with limited access to a vehicle.[35]

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[33] Northern Ireland Transport Statistics 2009/10
 http://www.drdni.gov.uk/ni_transport_statistics_2009-10.pdf
[34] Continuous Household Survey 2009/2010
[35] Stafford, B., Heaver, C., Ashworth, K., Bates, C., Walker, R., McKay, S., and Trickey, H., 1999.
Work and Young Men. Yorks: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
   Ken Zimmerman and Nancy Fishman *Roadblock on the Way to Work: Driver's Licence Suspension
in New Jersey,* New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, October 2001
   KMPG et al, *New Deal for 18-24 Year Olds: Survey of Participants*, Stage One Report, DEL,
Belfast, October 2001. The report concluded that possession of a current driving licence was very
strongly correlated with the CV employability index of participants
   Solomon, J, *Monitoring the impacts of LTP measures on social exclusion*, paper presented at
'Monitoring local transport plans, local transport today' conference, 26 October 1999, Royal
Aeronautical Society, 4 Hamilton Place, London.
   British Medical Association, *Road Transport and Health*, BMA Professional Division Publications,
London, 1997

3.33 There is a clear relationship between the level of household income and access to a car with households with higher incomes more likely to have high levels of car access. In Northern Ireland this is reflected in the fact that just over one half (51%) of those living in the 20% most deprived areas had access to a car in 2009/10 compared with over three-quarters (77%) in NI overall.[36].

3.34 Reducing disadvantage and exclusion requires action to promote accessibility for those without access to a vehicle. Given the nature of travel patterns, active travel can play a central role in this regard, enhancing local accessibility and the linkages to public transport for longer journeys.

Local Environment, Community Cohesion and Safety

3.35 There is a strong correlation between socio-economic disadvantage, health and well-being and the quality of local environments. The most vulnerable in society often live within communities, which experience high levels of poverty, disadvantage, exclusion and higher levels of morbidity and mortality.

3.36 It is precisely such communities, which appear to suffer most from the adverse impacts of transport, particularly air pollution, traffic related accidents and community/neighbourhood severance. Reflecting this, research commissioned by DOE established a clear link between deprivation and child pedestrian road casualty rates, with casualty rates increasing in line with deprivation. [37] Children living in the most deprived areas are almost five times more likely to be injured as a pedestrian in a collision compared to children residing in the least deprived areas.

3.37 Similarly, those areas of Belfast which exceeded air quality limits as a result of commuting traffic were all identified as deprived communities.[38] There is a strong link between poor air quality and poor health and premature mortality –

Paul Kavanagh, Cathal Doyle and Owen Metcalfe, *Health Impacts of Transport, A Review*, Institute of Public Health in Ireland, Belfast, March 2005

Kern Lucas and Roona Simpson, Transport Studies Group University of Westminster, *Transport and accessibility; the perspectives of disadvantaged groups and communities*, European Transport Conference Proceedings, 2000.

[36] Continuous Household Survey 2009/2010 and Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM) 2010

[37] Colin Buchanan and Partners, *Deprivation and Child Pedestrian Road Casualties*, DOE, Belfast, January 2010 - http://www.roadsafetyni.gov.uk/child_deprivation_final_report_120110__2_.pdf

[38] Erica Ison, *Health Impact Assessment of the Draft Air Quality Action Plan for Belfast*, Belfast City Council and Belfast Healthy Cities, March 2006

it is estimated that it reduces life expectancy in the UK by an average of 9 months. As far back as 2004, 12 of the 26 district councils in Northern Ireland declared a total of 21 Air Quality Management Areas where concentrations of harmful ambient pollutants exceed European legal limits and UK objectives, the majority of which are associated with road transport. [39]

3.38   High density car use, particularly in residential areas can also create physical barriers and lead to a weakened sense of neighbourhood and local community. It can also increase concerns as to road safety. In addition to the higher risk of death and injury associated with high volumes of traffic, the perception of safety also reduces the opportunities for active play and early social interaction for children. [40]

3.39   In addition to traffic volumes, speed is a crucial factor in this regard. In 2010, "Excessive speed having regard to conditions" was the most common cause of "Killed and seriously injured (KSI)" road traffic collisions and the third most common cause of injury road traffic collisions. Most walking and cycling, particularly in our urban areas, takes place on the kinds of local streets and residential areas where high speeds for motor vehicles are inappropriate. Reflecting concerns as to the impact on safety, we know people value low vehicle speeds in the streets where they live.

3.40   Increasing walking and cycling and reductions in vehicle traffic can improve our public spaces and the social interactions within communities. Both modes allow us to stop and chat or just say "hello" in a way that it is difficult to do when closeted in the car. As such, they can improve our sense of community and by increasing interactions and socialising streets, they can play a key role in improving perceptions of personal and community safety. Increased social connections can also support mental wellbeing, in particular for older people. However, realising those benefits is likely to require action to address concerns and perceptions of safety.

3.41   Road safety is of paramount importance in this regard. The implementation of Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020 will be a key enabler in

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[39] http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/protect_the_environment/local_environmental_issues/air_and_enviro nmental_quality/air_quality_management_areas_declared_in_northern_ireland.htm
[40] Strategy Unit analysis of ONS data, from Strategy Unit, *An Analysis of Urban Transport*, Cabinet Office, London, November 2009

developing a culture, which facilitates safe active travel. The vision for the Road Safety Strategy is *'to make a journey on Northern Ireland's roads as safe for all road users as anywhere in the world* and the very challenging casualty reduction targets will, if achieved, help make this vision a reality.

CONCLUSION

3.42   Our vision is : **to put walking and cycling at the heart of local transport, public health, well-being and wider government strategies for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy**. We want to encourage those for whom it is an option, to see walking and cycling as the first choice for shorter journeys and to enjoy the benefits that active travel offers.

3.43   Walking and cycling will not meet all our transport needs, but for the majority of short journeys we make they offer a practical and sustainable alternative to current travel patterns. They therefore can play a key role in addressing the environmental impacts of transport while facilitating the high levels of mobility and accessibility that our economy and society require. Moreover, they also offer the opportunity to provide the vital links to public transport systems that provide for a more efficient, integrated transport infrastructure increasing our transport options and enabling each of us to make more informed travel choices.

3.44   Active travel is also good for heath and well-being. Walking and cycling offer the opportunity to build moderate, pleasant exercise into people's lives, bringing immediate and longer- term benefits to physical as well as mental health and improving quality of life.[41] It offers a practical and affordable means to address the dramatic increase in obesity evident over recent years.

3.45   Increasing our rates of walking and cycling also provides the opportunity to improve our public spaces, to build more cohesive and integrated communities and to contribute to more positive perceptions of public safety.

[41] Hendriksen Ingrid (1996) "The Effect of Commuter Cycling on Physical Performance and on Coronary Heart Disease Factors", Amsterdam 1996
Oja, P., Vuori, I. and Paronen, O. (1998) "Daily walking and cycling to work: their utility as health-enhancing physical activity", Patient Education and Counselling, 33, S87-94

Lars Bo Andersen et al (2000), "All-Cause Mortality Associated With Physical Activity During Leisure Time, Work, Sports and Cycling to Work," Archives of Internal Medicine, Vol. 160, No. 11, June 12, 2000, pp. 1621-1628

3.46   At an individual and societal level, active travel offers significant benefits. As part of an integrated transport network, it provides a viable means of meeting the transport needs of our society and economy, while reducing the adverse impacts on our environment.

4. IDENTIFYING the Barriers to Active Travel & Understanding What Success Looks Like

4.1   Given the benefits of active travel, the question arises as to why our rates of walking and cycling in Northern Ireland are so low. A useful starting point is to consider our own experience and that of others and to look at examples of success or best practice both locally and further afield. In addition to seeking to learn lessons, however, it is particularly important to focus on understanding the barriers to active travel and looking at how we make it a more attractive option.

4.2   In that context, we also need to be aware that individual decisions on travel choice are influenced by a number of factors. These include for example features such as age, gender and income. However, they are also impacted by availability of alternatives and our perception of the benefits offered by a particular mode including for example time, cost, comfort, reliability and even image.

Barriers to Active Travel

4.3   Considerable work has been undertaken to identify the key barriers to increased walking and cycling and a number of such barriers have been identified. By way of illustration, table 2 sets out the 10 key barriers to active travel identified by the ASTUTE project.[42]

Table 2:   **Top Ten Barriers to Active Travel (ASTUTE Project)**

Barriers	Sub-Barriers
1. Safety and Security Concerns	• Unsafe routes for cycling/walking • Lack of definite regulations on cycling • Fear of theft or criminal damage to bicycles
2. Inadequate Information	• Lack of information on how to reach destination safely • Lack of information about

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[42] Part of the Intelligent Energy for Europe's (IEE) STEER Programme, ASTUTE was a three year project, which aimed to increase the number of walking and cycling journeys in Urban Areas. Further details are available at: http://astute-eu.org/index.php?id_lang=1

Barriers	Sub-Barriers
	• walking/cycling routes • Lack of convenient signage on walking/cycling routes • Ineffectiveness of promotional campaigns • Lack of information about walking and cycling facilities • Lack of skills to promote walking and cycling amongst businesses and citizens • Insufficient communication between city departments and citizens [DN: What are City Departments?]
3. Inadequate Urban Environment and Design	• Lack of penetrability of city areas to walking and cycling • Low level of importance of pedestrian use in the city centres • Unattractiveness and low level of quality of urban environment for walking and cycling • Climatical and topographical barriers
4. Lack of Infrastructure and Support	• Lack of integrating existing networks • Ineligible or lack of parking facilities in the city reduces the modal share • Inadequate public transportation accessibility • Lack of cycle tracks • Lack of facilities of bike using (loaning, storage and repair facilities • Lack of maintenance of the infrastructure
5. Poor Public Perception and Lack of Awareness	• Lack of public interest • Public approach of walking/cycling • Low attractiveness of bicycle for longer journeys (e.g. commuters) • Cultural barriers against cycling
6. Accessibility and Health Issues	• Low level of environmental and health awareness among citizens • Lack of competence of citizens /

Barriers	Sub-Barriers
	organizations and lack of power to enforce their interests
	• Exclusion of people reduced mobility / minority / elderly / residents living areas difficult to access
	• Low fitness levels among citizens
7. LACK OF PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT	• Transport policy prioritising private car/public transport
	• Lack of co-ordination between city departments and NGOs responsible for walking and cycling
	• Lack of appreciation of the value of marketing campaigns
	• Lack of integrated planning of cycling and walking/pedestrian traffic
	• Purchasing and keeping political support behind project
8. LACK OF PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT	• Lack of financial incentives to develop a travel plan for employees / school
	• Lack of skills to implement actions for sustainable transport
	• Insensitivity of companies towards employee transport preferences
	• Inadequate resources and knowledge by employers to implement travel plan
	• Inadequate facilities of walking/cycling in the workplaces (cycle park, changing room, shower)
	• Inadequate incentives by employers to encourage walking/cycling to the workplace
9. CONGESTION AND AIR POLLUTION	• Unbalanced level of utilization on public transport vehicles
	• Level of car traffic and air pollution
	• Reduced accessibility for businesses due to congestion
10. LACK OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING	• Lack of cycling and bicycle maintenance skills

BARRIERS	SUB-BARRIERS
	• Children inadequate road safety skills

4.4 While relatively diverse, the factors identified are a combination of physical, informational and personal barriers. For example the perception as to the speed and volume of traffic has a direct impact on the willingness of individuals to walk and cycle on specific routes. There is also the question as to whether there is actually adequate provision to enable active travel, for example, are routes available, are they sign posted, are there parking facilities, are destinations themselves even accessible for cyclists and pedestrians and are there links with public transport. The impact of a number of those barriers relating to the built environment may be particularly acute in rural areas, where recreational facilities and the provision of dedicated infrastructure are more limited.

4.5 A more recent study on Understanding walking and Cycling, funded by EPSRC, [43] carried out an in-depth analysis of household decision making with respect to short journeys in urban areas. The key findings of the research stated that many people would like to engage in more active travel but fail to do so due to a combination of factors. These can be summarised as:-

- Concerns about the physical environment, especially with regard to personal safety when walking in areas of low footfall and perceived danger from motorised transport for cycling;
- The difficulty of fitting walking and cycling into complex household routines (especially with young children);
- The perception that walking and cycling are abnormal things to do, ie image problems such as arriving hot and sweaty for a meeting, squashed cycle helmet hair, feeling like a second class citizen.

4.6 The report concluded that to improve walking and cycling we need to listen to the majority who don't already choose greener modes of transport rather than the minority who do.

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[43] Understanding Walking and Cycling, Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations, EPSRC, 2011 http://www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/research/society_and_environment/walking_and_cycling.php

4.7   As with the benefits of active travel, the barriers to walking and cycling are not limited to the provision of transport infrastructure. Spatial policy, urban planning, service delivery and communication are at least as equally important as how we prioritise and integrate our transport infrastructure and modes. What that points to is that a simple focus on transport will not address those barriers, it needs a much wider focus and highlights the need for a cross-departmental and cross-sectoral approach if we are to realise our ambitions for increased rates of walking and cycling.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

4.8   The barriers to active travel are not insurmountable. The experience of other regions and a number of local projects highlights what can be achieved with the right mix of measures and a long-term consistent strategy.

4.9   Many areas in Europe enjoy high levels of walking and cycling. In the Netherlands 26% of all trips are by bicycle and many areas enjoy even higher rates. It is estimated, for example that over 40% of all trips in the city of Groningen are by bike. While the Netherlands has enjoyed considerable success, it is by no means unique. Most European countries have cycling rates significantly above our own, with dramatic increases in cycling experienced in many European cities, increases which have not come at the expense of walking rates. In Freiburg (Germany) the total number of bike trips rose from 69,500 in 1976 to 211,000 in 2007. In Copenhagen, 36 % of people going to work or school on an average day are on a bicycle, and by 2015 the city aims to increase this to 50%. In New York, a three year programme of cycling measures has realised a 45% increase in commuting by bike, while the 'Plaza Programme' has enabled not-for-profit organisations to apply to re-claim streets that are underused by vehicles to turn them into vibrant pedestrian plazas.

4.10   These higher rates of walking and cycling have not been achieved by accident and nor do they reflect different cultural values or environmental contexts. Up to the 1970s, cycling levels in the Netherlands for example were declining as people increasingly turned to the car. In response to a number of factors, the Netherlands took the decision to develop planning and transport policies that prioritised cycling over the car, a policy direction that continues to this day. Similarly, between the 1950s and 1970s, car use in Freiburg

increased at a rapid rate.[44] At that time, the city took a conscious decision to prioritise public transport and active travel.

4.11   In each of these cases, dramatic and sustained changes were not achieved overnight, but were the outcome of a change in policy direction and a sustained focus over time, one which for decades consistently integrated and prioritised walking and cycling into transport and planning decisions. The result in each case is that over time an environment and culture where cycling is seen as the natural choice for many journeys has been created.

4.12   The UK sustainable travel towns, Darlington, Peterborough and Worcester, also demonstrate what can be achieved when starting from relatively low levels of walking and cycling. At the end of a five year active travel project car use across the three had fallen by up to 9 %. This equates to nearly 53 million miles of car travel taken off the roads across the three towns, resulting in annual savings of more than 17,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide. Also, a report[45] carried out on behalf of the Department for Transport gave an approximate value for the congestion benefit: cost ratio of 4.5:1 which gives a high value for money. This was based on a mean expenditure of 4p per car km removed with a congestion cost saving of 18p per vehicle kilometre.

4.13   As car travel fell, levels of walking increased by more than 10 % in each location, while bus use grew by more than a third in Peterborough and by a fifth in Worcester. There was also a 12 % increase in cycling in Peterborough and a 19 % increase in Worcester. Darlington, which received further additional funding to improve facilities for cyclists, saw levels of cycling more than double over the same period. These details are summarised in Figure 8 below.

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[44] Ralph Buehler1 and John Pucher, *Sustainable Transport in Freiburg: Lessons from Germany's Environmental Capital*, International Journal of Sustainable Transportation Vol. 5, No. 1, 2011
[45] The Effects of Smarter Choice Programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns, Summary Report, February 2010.

Figure 8: UK Sustainable Travel Towns - Changes in the number of trips by residents between 2004 and 2008
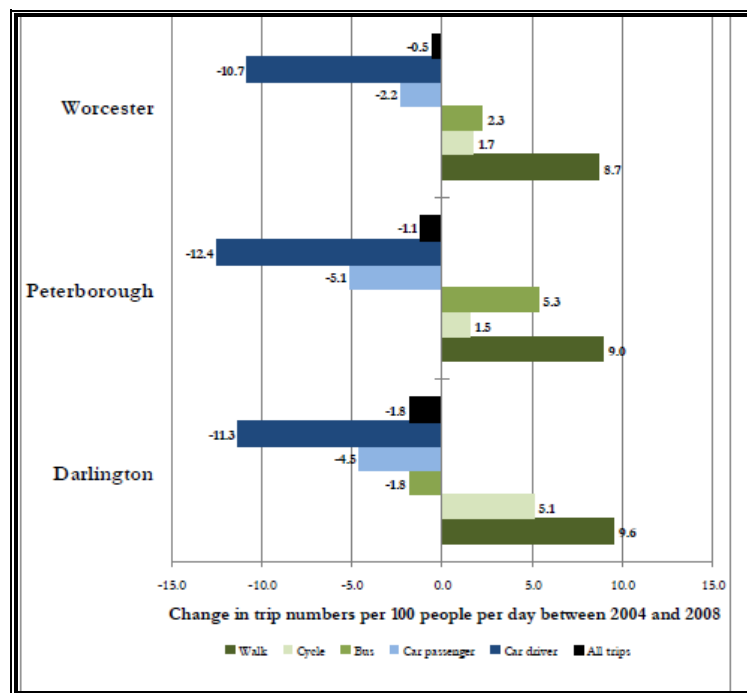
Source: The Effects of Smarter Choice Programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns: Summary Report

LOCAL CASE STUDIES

4.14   Closer to home, in Northern Ireland a rural safer routes to schools project[46] led by Sustrans and funded by DARD, DRD and DE realised reductions in travel to school by car and increased rates of walking and cycling. After the project 49% of children were driven to school compared to 64% before the project; 7% of pupils cycled to school compared to 5% before the project and 33% of pupils walked to school compared with 20% before the project.

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[46] http://tinyurl.com/RuralSchoolsReview

CASE STUDY 1:
RURAL SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROJECT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Roughly one in five cars on the roads at 8.50am is taking young people to school[47], yet we know the majority of young people would prefer to walk and cycle. In 2008/09 Sustrans coordinated an innovative project working with 18 rural schools to empower young people, with support from their parents, to change the way they travel. This was the first of its kind in Northern Ireland.

The aim of the project was for Sustrans and its partners in Government to work directly with schools that were keen to increase levels of walking and cycling, to help them to create an active travel culture.

Schools in rural areas were invited to apply to take part in the project which had received EU funding of £1.3million. Once the schools produced a Travel Plan they benefited from highway safety improvements, the provision of facilities such as cycle parking and support with motivational initiatives such as cycle training, walking buses, promotional activities and fun events.

The results are very impressive with:
- 49% of children driven to school compared to 64% before the project
- 33% of pupils now walking to school compared to 20% before the project
- 7% of pupils now cycling to school compared to 5% before

Another spin off has been the benefits to the wider community. The highway improvements are being used for other journeys to shops and other services. The project also had an impact on the travel behaviour of parents, with 66% saying they were walking and cycling more after the project that than they were before.

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[47] House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee The Draft School Transport Bill 3rd Report of Seminar 2003 – 04 a statistic for UK as opposed to NI alone
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmeduski/509/50902.htm

4.15   Demonstrating the potential for employers in the public and private sector to take action to support increased walking and cycling, in 2005 Allstate NI introduced a cycle to work scheme and secure parking facilities for employees.

CASE STUDY 2:

ALLSTATE CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME AND SECURE BIKE PARKING

Allstate NI is an IT company based in Northern Ireland employing over 1700 IT professionals across three locations. The company gives a high priority to the health of its employees, work/life balance and environmental impact.

Staff retention has always been a problem in IT and Allstate NI has always looked for innovative ways to improve its employer brand. Allstate NI is about to run its 6th cycle to work scheme and over 400 bikes have been purchased through the scheme over the years.

The scheme has ticked multiple boxes for the organization from an environmental, health and wellbeing perspective and has enhanced the overall benefits package for our employees.

In addition to running the scheme the company has invested significantly in cycling facilities to encourage take up of the scheme and to encourage employees to cycle to work. In 2008 the company installed a bespoke 'cycle cage' in an adjoining multi-story car park with secure parking for over 40 bikes. This bespoke designed secure cage is password protected with a security code and has 24/7 CCTV trained on the bikes. The average usage in the middle of winter is 35 – 40 bikes and in the spring and summer overflow measures often have to be instigated.

The cost of the bespoke cage was approximately £7000 and the company rents 3 car park spaces each year at a cost of £3600. This service is free to cyclists whereas employees who drive to work receive no subsidies from the company. Having the scheme in place and the additional facilities has helped Allstate NI achieve Platinum level in the BITCNI Arena Survey in 2011 but perhaps more importantly it is reducing the number of cars on roads and is highly valued by cyclists.

 "The scheme is easy to implement and I would recommend it to all

4.16   Developed by the charity Sustrans, the National Cycle Network is a comprehensive network of safe and attractive cycling routes throughout the UK.

CASE STUDY 3
NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK

There are nearly 1200 km of NCN in Northern Ireland with over 185 km of traffic free greenways such as the Newry Canal, the Foyle Valley and Comber Greenways.

Studies have pointed out that, particularly for occasional or non cyclists, perceived danger from motorised traffic is a significant barrier against them cycling. The National Cycle Network (NCN) has started to address this by seeing the construction of dedicated facilities for cyclists often sharing space with pedestrians.

Benefits from the NCN include increases in physical activity. The Greenways helped three quarters (74%) of all users to increase their levels of regular physical activity, 40% by a large amount.

One very successful route is the riverside route that runs through Belfast – the Lagan and Lough. This continuous route runs traffic free from Lisburn to Whiteabbey. The route has different features such as coastal paths, riverside route and on road cycle lanes and segregated cycle tracks. The route is continuous and has several new toucan crossings and underpasses. Good design guidance says cycle routes should be coherent, direct, attractive, safe and comfortable and this route has successfully achieved all of these.

Usage increases has been impressive both in numbers and profile. Over 30%

of cyclists are female which is significantly higher than the road network, and nearly half of all journeys for walking and cycling are for commuting and 40% for leisure. Cycle trips have risen by 225% since 2000 and there are high levels of satisfaction.

Other than the route, factors that have contributed to increases in active travel include the development of businesses along the Lagan, the tax-free employers bike scheme has resulted in a lot of bike sales. Increased congestion and the rise in fuel costs may have played a role, but the quality of infrastructure is constantly named as a contributing factor to whether people will cycle and walk. The popular riverside route in Belfast is an excellent example of what can be achieved if adequate funding is provided alongside a willingness of statutory bodies to provide the highest quality provision for walkers and cyclists.

4.17   The Public Health Agency (PHA) was established in April 2009 to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities. They have supported and promoted a number of successful initiatives to encourage Active Travel in partnership with a range of statutory, voluntary and private organisations. These are explained in detail in Annex 2 but include:

- It all adds up – Physical activity campaign
- Walking for health Programme
- Active Travel Plans – Health and Social Care Trusts
- Primary Care Referral Schemes
- The PARC Study – Physical Activity and Rejuvenation of Connswater Belfast)
- Other Local Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Team Initiatives

CONCLUSION

4.18 While Northern Ireland has low levels of walking and cycling, experience from elsewhere and local examples of best practice, demonstrate what can be achieved. Lasting change, however, requires a consistent and sustained focus over time. Ultimately, it requires transport and planning policies which build a culture and environment that enables walking and cycling to become the preferred choice.

4.19 It also requires a focus on addressing the physical, informational and personal barriers to active travel. Just as these barriers cut across administrative and sectoral boundaries, so too must the solution.

5. OUR PROGRAMME FOR PROMOTING ACTIVE TRAVEL

5.1   The promotion of active travel cannot be taken forward in a stand alone fashion by a single organisation. This is the reason why this strategy is linked with and is being developed in the context of the Regional Transportation Strategy. In places where there has been a high level of active travel for many years it has been the case that active travel has been placed at the forefront of the development of traffic and transportation policy (alongside public transport). In other words, whatever transportation solution is being developed it will always consider active travel as an essential, if not the core, element. The key aspect of this strategy is that we believe that active travel must become an integral part of transportation policy – with transportation policy shaped around active travel rather than active travel shaped around transportation policy.

5.2   Although there is a need for the Department for Regional Development to take a visible lead in promoting active travel there are very many other bodies both within and outside of Government who have important roles to play and which have both a depth of knowledge and considerable experience in promoting walking and cycling. These partners in both central and local government, the health and education sectors, voluntary bodies, employers' representative bodies and public transport operators have played a vital role in the development of this strategy and are essential to its implementation and successful local delivery of the programmes outlined in Appendix A.

OBJECTIVES AND AMBITIONS

5.3   We would like to build upon the programmes/initiatives that have already been successful. Our targets for improving active travel in Northern Ireland are long term, over a 10 year period, and are aspirational. Our key objectives and associated indicators, as set out in Table 3, aim to provide the foundations over the longer term to build a travel culture in which walking and cycling are seen as the natural choice for most of the journeys we make.

Table 3:   Objectives and Indicators for Active Travel

OBJECTIVE	INDICATORS	TARGETS
1. **Increase annual walking distance**	Currently people walk on average 234km per year. This compares with 315km per year in England and Scotland and 286km per year in Wales	Target is to increase the average distance walked to be in line with our UK counterparts by 2020?
2. **Increase annual cycling distance**	Currently people cycle an average of 32km per year. This is less than half the distance cycled in GB per year (74km)	Target is to increase the average distance cycled to be in line with our UK counterparts by 2020?
3. **Increase percentage of cycling journeys**	Currently people cycle an estimated 1% of all travel journeys	Target is to increase the percentage of trips taken by cycling to be in line with our UK counterparts by 2020?

5.4   There are particular challenges to active travel by people from disadvantaged communities and rural areas. We recognise the fact that these communities experience difficulty in accessibility to jobs and services and lower rates of walking and cycling and we want to work closely with them to overcome the barriers to active travel. However, we recognise that this cannot be taken forward in isolation from wider efforts to promote and incentivise active travel across all groups.

5.5   Following consultation and informed by your views, we will agree a detailed action plan to coordinate and monitor delivery and the impact of our actions through 2012 - 2014.   We aim to focus the action plan to addressing the key barriers locally to active travel and will build on best practice demonstrated elsewhere.

5.6   In addition, we have identified a series of immediate actions which we will take forward as priority, these are set out below. These actions set out the work across Government Departments which collectively begins to address the barriers against active travel, in particular :-

- Promotion and Information;
- Developing Infrastructure
- Enhancing the Built Environment
- Engaging and working with others
- Policy Development

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO PROMOTE ACTIVE TRAVEL

5.7   Effective promotion and adequate information are critical to overcoming the barriers to increased active travel. Recognising that and building on our success to date, DRD's Travelwise team will continue to invest in the promotion of more sustainable travel - aimed at securing behavioural change and modal shift from the private car to walking, cycling, use of public transport and car sharing. The Department will invest an additional £500,000 in the financial year to a number of active travel projects including:-

- Connect 2 Waterside Greenway, Phase 1 - funding for the strategically important greenway link between the Ebrington Parade Ground/Peace Bridge and St Columb's Park.
- Funding for the erection of a cycle and pedestrian bridge at Ballyrainey on the Comber Greenway.

5.8   DRD's Travelwise team will continue with the Personalised Travel Planning project known as Travelsmart which is underway in Greater Shantallow, Derry City. The project is supported by DRD, DSD, Translink, Derry City Council, the Greater Shantallow Area Partnership and Outer North Neighbourhood Partnership. Managed by Sustrans in partnership with Socialdata, Travelsmart aims to reduce car dependency by offering people the tailored information and support they need to travel on foot, by bike or by public transport. Early indications suggest a very comprehensive participation across the local community. Field work on the project will be completed by autumn 2011 with a final report due in February 2012.

5.9   DRD's Roads Service will invest a further £5.6m in 2011/12 financial year to encourage active travel in a safer environment. This will include the provision of cycle and pedestrian measures, safer routes to school, traffic calming, bus measures and controlled crossings.

5.10   In May 2009 the Minister for Sport launched '*Sport Matters*' – the Northern Ireland Executive's strategy for sport and physical recreation 2009-2019. Sport Northern Ireland is committed, through its corporate and business plans, to delivering against the targets set out in 'Sport Matters'.

5.11   In this respect, Sport Northern Ireland recognises that cycling has a key role to play in enabling more people to make active and sustainable lifestyle choices. Sport Northern Ireland is working with schools and organisations like Sustrans, to introduce children to cycling as an accessible and safe mode of active travel, through interventions such as the Activ8 and Bike It! programmes.

5.12   As people become more physically active and more confident in their cycling ability through programmes such as 'Active Communities', Sport Northern Ireland is working with Cycling Ulster and Northern Ireland's district councils to ensure that they have the opportunity to sustain their interest and activity in local cycling clubs. In addition, by making sure more people are satisfied with their experiences in those clubs, Sport Northern Ireland is also ensuring that the most talented cyclists are identified, encouraged and supported to move into elite competition.

5.13   By 2013, Sport Northern Ireland expects to have invested over £600,000 in the promotion and development of cycling as an enjoyable, accessible and safe activity.

5.14   As part of its Road Safety Strategy [48] the Department of the Environment (DOE) has set out its commitment to give consideration to measures that improve the safety of cyclists including what cyclists can do to keep themselves safe and what other road users can do. It will also consider new public information campaigns addressing pedestrian safety and the

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[48] Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020
http://www.doeni.gov.uk/roadsafety/northern_ireland_s_road_safety_strategy_to_2020_final_version.pdf

responsibilities of and risks associated with being a pedestrian and what they and other road users can do to improve pedestrian safety.

5.15   As part of this DRD has recently designed a leaflet to encourage safe behaviour among road users. The leaflet entitled 'Sharing Space on the Road',[49] sets out tips for motorists and cyclists on sharing the roads with others. The leaflet was distributed to 120,000 motorists with motor tax renewal forms in March of this year and has been made available at various government and local government locations as well as cycling oulets.

5.16   As part of its contribution to the Road Safety Strategy, DRD has committed to research the outcome of urban speed reduction initiatives in GB and elsewhere and assess their applicability to Northern Ireland. This will consider the wider introduction of enforceable 20mph speed limits in residential areas and other urban areas where there is a significant presence of vulnerable road users. Alongside this, we will also identify opportunities to pilot enforceable 20mph speed limits without traffic calming engineering measures.

5.17   Following the successful installation of pilot schemes at two local primary schools and, subject to available funding, DRD will also seek to develop a programme of part time 20mph speed limits at rural schools on roads where the national speed limit applies. As part of this programme they will investigate options for more cost effective signing systems as an alternative to those used in the pilots.

Promoting Active Travel for Better Health

5.18   As one of almost 100 World Health Organization (WHO) European Healthy Cities, Belfast is committed to working on healthy urban environment, which explores how the physical environment can support people's lives and wellbeing, and also emphasises the links and synergies between healthy people, healthy environments and a stable economy. Belfast Healthy Cities is a partnership organisation working to improve health and wellbeing and tackle inequalities, through developing locally tailored programmes aimed at meeting WHO targets. As part of the healthy urban environment programme, which includes recognising and promoting the health and social well-being

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[49]Sharing Space on the Road http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/sharing_space_on_the_road.pdf

impacts of active travel, Belfast Healthy Cities worked with three primary schools and an afterschool club in the Lenadoon and Suffolk areas of west Belfast to give children an opportunity to identify what they think of their environments, using photography and art. Key issues that arose included concerns about traffic, road safety and noise, and participants across the groups expressed a wish for cleaner, greener and more walking and cycle friendly environments near their schools and homes. The project will act as a basis for further work, on developing child friendly environments, and can provide a model for exploring ways of creating travel environments suitable for all ages.

5.19   Sustainable development is a cross cutting theme in Belfast Healthy Cities' work, and a focus of the work of the Regional Climate Change and Health Group, facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities and chaired by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The group has developed a travel plan framework for health care organisations. This is intended to provide a model that can be used to assist in the development and monitoring of inequalities, and to ensure that vulnerable groups are not further disadvantaged by travel interventions aimed at the general public.

5.20   Walking is the lowest cost option for travel and this brings it within the reach of the vast majority of people. In this area the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has consolidated earlier strategies promoting physical activity and healthier eating and developed a draft Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2011-2021: A Fitter Future for All, which contains outcomes, designed to encourage population-wide participation in increasing levels of physical activity and includes references to the benefits of active travel.   The PHA has been asked to take the lead in driving forward the non-Departmental recommendations within this framework document.

5.21   In addition DHSSPS has worked with the other Devolved Administrations to produce a new set of UK-wide physical activity guidelines. This includes guidance for early years (under 5s) and the older population as well as recommendations relevant to sedentary behaviour. This guidance will raise awareness with the public over the need to take more physical activity which can include walking and cycling. The guidance is contained within 'Start

Active, Stay Active: A report of physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers'[50]

5.22   'Get a life, get active' campaigns have been organised by the Public Health Agency to encourage the public to be active. These campaigns have promoted a wide range of activities with a particular focus on walking and cycling including active travel. The campaigns included mass media advertising, supporting activities and literature. The website www.getalifegetactive.com was promoted in all of the campaigns.

The Built Environment

5.23   The built environment can both constrain and help facilitate walking and cycling and other forms of physical activity. Understanding and developing innovative ways to encourage greater use of local environments for physical activity will help contribute to a reduction in the prevalence of obesity.

5.24   Planning Policy Statement 13 (PPS 13) Transportation and Land Use developed 12 general principles that should be applied to the planning and delivery of transportation and development. These include :

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[50] 'Start Active, Stay Active:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_128209

- The integration of transportation policy and land use planning should be taken forward through the preparation of development plans and transport plans informed by transport studies;

- Accessibility by modes of transport other than the private car should be a key consideration in the location and design of development;

- The process of Transport Assessment (TA) should be employed to review the potential transport impacts of a development proposal;

- Travel Plans should be developed for all significant travel generating uses;

- Controls on parking should be employed to encourage more responsible use of the private car and to bring about a change in travel behaviour;

- Reliance on the private car should be reduced through a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport.

- The integration of transport and land use planning should seek to create a more accessible environment for all;

5.25 Local, Area and subject plans will be subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (the "SEA Directive") and it is key that effects on health are actively considered as part of the assessment. SEA is a European Directive 2001/42/EC and its objective is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development.

5.26 Cycle and pedestrian facilities are a cost effective way of meeting sustainable travel and accessibility objectives of new developments, and should be a priority for local planning authorities when considering agreements with developers. Engagement between planners and developers at an early stage will make it easier and more cost effective to integrate walking and cycling into the design of new developments.

5.27 Enhancing and encouraging the use of public transport can also be an effective way to increase active travel, since the journey typically includes walking or cycling at each end. In particular, using public transport for work journeys can increase active travel among those for whom walking or cycling the full journey is not an option, and potentially encourages more active leisure journeys. Indeed, some studies have found this more effective than

any other intervention[51]. It is therefore important to link active travel and public transport, and explore ways of making public transport a more realistic and attractive option, for short as well as longer journeys, and on orbital as well as arterial routes.

5.28   Many of the barriers to active travel are likely to be particularly acute in rural areas, where recreational facilities and the provision of dedicated infrastructure are more limited. Journey lengths might seem prohibitively long, or higher traffic speeds on rural roads might make pedestrians and cyclists feel more vulnerable. In light of this, we will look to engage with rural communities and stakeholders to identify opportunities to promote higher levels of walking and cycling.

Working with the Education Sector and Young People to Promote Active Travel

5.29   If we want to make active travel a mainstream transport choice over the long-term, there is no better place to start than with young people. Travelling to school by car is a significant contributor to local congestion and carbon emissions, as well as a missed opportunity for healthy activity for pupils and staff.

5.30   Promoting and increasing active and sustainable travel to schools and other educational establishments is a core part of our Active Travel Strategy. DRD through its Travelwise NI branch promotes sustainable travel to school under its Safer Routes to School initiative that was launched in 2005.

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[51] Krizek, Forsyth & Baum, *Walking and cycling: an international literature review*, Department of Transport, Victoria, 2009. Available at
http://www.transport.vic.gov.au/DOI/DOIElect.nsf/$UNIDS+for+Web+Display/70D43560D1141DDF
CA2575E8000BA1EE/$FILE/WalkingCyclingLiteratureReview.pdf)

5.31　Through the initiative, school travel co-ordinators work with schools and provide them with education and awareness materials on sustainable modes of travel such as Best Foot Forward and Making the Links.

5.32　The Department of Education (DE) also provides infrastructure such as cycle shelters to encourage cycling. Travel habits are formed early in life, so by encouraging more active travel by children we believe that over the long-term there would be less need to encourage adults out of their cars and into walking and cycling.

5.33　DRD and DE will continue to support this initiative and will work with, approximately, 25 schools per year.

5.34　DE will continue to contribute, through its schools, to learning about the environment, which is already included in the revised curriculum and is being taught to all pupils of compulsory school age in grant-aided schools. This is taught through the World Around Us area of learning in primary schools. At post primary level Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a thread running through the post primary curriculum. For example, through science and technology pupils should develop as contributors to the environment through investigation of the effects of pollution and specific measures to improve and protect the environment. In geography, they should explore how to exercise environmental stewardship and help promote a better quality of life for present and future generations.

5.35　Health and well being is also already included in the curriculum through Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) (in primary school) and the Personal Development element of Learning for Life and Work (LLW) (in post-primary school) and will continue to be so.

5.36　The Department Of the Environment (DOE) Road Safety Branch will continue to provide Cycling Proficiency training, as part of its statutory duty to road safety, to give children the basic skills and confidence to cycle safely. This is active in approximately 580 schools with an average of 8,800 children trained every year.

5.37　Sustrans will continue to provide National Standard on road cycle training to schools, dependent on funding.

Active Travel Demonstration Projects

5.38   In addition to the measures set out above we will provide an additional £3m in capital funding to support the development of innovative demonstration projects. The Department intends to invite applications from Local councils to put in place these projects. It is our intention that these will become flag ship projects which will demonstrate how active travel can be successfully promoted more widely and higher levels of participation achieved. We recognise that Local Councils have no statutory responsibility for active travel but they are well placed to co-ordinate other organisations working together. It is hoped these will encourage, support and underpin local delivery, which is important in order to take account of localised issues and also expertise.

5.39   The aim of these demonstration projects is to show how active travel can benefit people and communities, the environment and the economy, and in so doing generate enthusiasm to develop active travel more widely as well as create models that can be implemented elsewhere.

5.40   It is recognised that packages of measures, rather than individual measures in isolation, are best able to deliver greater benefits. It will be for the local councils, working in partnership with their communities and local stakeholders, to identify the right solutions to increase active travel and meet the social, economic and environmental challenges to active travel which are faced in their areas.

ENSURING A CROSS-SECTORAL APPROACH

5.41   Throughout this Strategy we have sought to highlight the need for a cross-Departmental, cross-sectoral, integrated approach to Active Travel. It is clear that a number of sectors and Government departments impact on active travel through their own policies and strategies.

5.42   It is essential that those with an influence on these wider sectors are part of the process, and actively support and drive the delivery of this agenda. In developing our Action Plan, we will, therefore, identify lead and delivery partners for each outcome, ensuring that everyone acknowledges, and plays, their part.

5.43   Local Councils will have a particularly important role to play in working in partnership with others to take forward Active Travel at a local city,   town or village level. Given there are likely to be specific barriers and opportunities in different areas, locally based plans and delivery partnerships will be essential. We will work with local partnerships to encourage the production of Local Action Plans.

5.44   It is particularly important that relationships and inter-dependencies are recognised and acknowledged, and that a synergistic relationship between this document and other policies and strategies is developed and nurtured. For example, the development of the new updated strategic framework for Public Health (which replaces Investing for Health) will provide an overarching Framework for meaningful cross-departmental and cross-sectoral collaboration and actions. Success in this area will clearly require concerted action to help address the determinants of health and the Active Travel Strategy will contribute to this achievement.'   It should be noted that effective implementation of this Active Travel Strategy will also help other sectors deliver on their aims, objectives, and strategies.

5.45   We are fortunate that in developing this Active Travel Strategy, we have had the resources of a large, committed and skilled third sector. Organisations such as Sustrans , Sport NI, NI Cycling Forum, Belfast Healthy Cities alongside many other local groups, have been working in partnership with government for many years to deliver the National Cycle Network, cycle training and walk to school programmes to name but a few. These groups, alongside many more local organisations, continue to provide a valuable source of support, advice and expertise, both for government and for local communities, businesses and individuals.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1   Our vision is "To put walking and cycling at the heart of local transport and public health and well-being and wider government strategies for the benefit of society, the environment and the economy as a whole."

6.2   We will only realise this vision through targeted actions to increase levels of cycling and walking, by enabling and encouraging people to incorporate active travel into their everyday lives. That would mean:

- more people accessing key services and destinations by active travel means;
- more people accessing public transport through active travel means;
- active travel contributing to more people meeting recommended physical activity levels; and
- where people are making active travel choices, they are doing so in greater safety.

6.3   We will ensure a focus on delivery of our commitments through monitoring of the Action Plan to be developed in support of this document. Our focus, however, will be more broadly on the degree to which we are realising progress towards our targeted outcomes and ambitions. We will, therefore also be monitoring key indicators, as detailed in 5.3, which have been selected and defined to measure progress towards our objectives and to provide evidence that our strategy is succeeding.

6.4   These will be monitored primarily using the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) and we will use the results of our monitoring to review and evaluate our performance on an ongoing basis and to tailor future delivery.

7. EQUALITY AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EQIA)

7.1   Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age,
- marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

7.2   In addition, without prejudice to our obligations above, we are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious beliefs, political opinion or racial group.

7.3   We have carried out a of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening exercise on the Active Travel Strategy. While this has indicated that a full EQIA on this Strategy is not required, it has demonstrated the potential for the implementation of this strategy and the delivery of the desired outcomes to have a positive impact on Section 75 groups. There is also the potential for the delivery of the Strategy to have a positive impact on the promotion of good relations. Recognising that, we will seek to ensure that the delivery of the Strategy takes full account of the needs of Section 75 groups, including multiple identify groups, and the potential to promote good relations.

7.4   A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) screening exercise on this Strategy is available on our website (www.drdni.gov.uk). As part of this consultation we welcome views on the issues identified in that document.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS

7.5   We have carried out other assessments on the Strategy using the Integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit developed by OFMDFM. A copy of the Integrated

Impact Assessment, which includes a statement on Rural Proofing, is available on our website, www.drdni.gov.uk.

ACTIVE TRAVEL FORUM TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

1) Active Travel Forum – Terms of Reference

The Forum will advise the Minister for Regional Development on means to promote and encourage active travel and will specifically:

a)   research the economic, environmental, health and wider social benefits of active travel;

b)   identify key barriers, to walking and cycling;

c)   consider opportunities for synergy and alignment with existing policies and programmes across all Government Departments;

d)   identify current best practice examples of active travel cities and towns nationally and internationally, which would offer models for development of demonstrator projects;

e)   bring forward proposals for demonstrator projects in the North, aimed at increasing the percentage of those walking and cycling; and

f)   prepare recommendations for an Active Travel Strategy for consideration by the Minister and for Executive approval.

2) Active Travel Forum – Membership

The Forum will be chaired by the Department's Director of Transportation Policy Division. Members will be drawn from:

a)   central Government Departments representing Environment, Health, Education, Social Development and the NIO.

b)   statutory agencies – Public Health Agency, Sport NI;

c)   local Government – NILGA and Belfast City Council;

d)   business organisations; and

e)   umbrella groups representing walking and cycling interests and community groups.

MEMBERS

Member	Representatives from:
Aileen Gault / Andrew Grieve	DRD – Chair
Karen Smyth	NILGA
Ann Doherty	BCC
Colette Brolly	PHA
Robert Kidd	DSD
Jonna Monaghan	Belfast Healthy Cities
Roger Morgan	DRD Roads Service
John News	Sports NI
Steven Patterson	Sustrans
Rob Phipps	DHSSPS
Ian McClure	DHSSPS
Andrew McMurray	FOE
Tom McClelland	CTC
Mal McGreevy	Translink
Ann McGregor	NI Chamber of Commerce
John Brogan	DOE
Roy White	NI Cycling initiative
Jenny Pyper	DRD
Nigel Smyth	CBI
Naomi McLaughlin	DRD Statistics
Alan McMullan	DENI
Linda Brown	IOD
Jim Thompson	DOE
Jennifer Douglas	DOJNI
Alistair Curran	BCC
Tracey Arlow	DRD – Secretariat

PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE IRELAND – WHAT HAS WORKED

a. *"It all adds up" – Physical Activity Campaign*

'It all adds up' a campaign to promote and encourage uptake of physical activity among primary school children was launched by the PHA in June 2009 and ran throughout June and July 2009. The campaign evaluation indicates that it had a positive impact on awareness and knowledge regarding the physical activity guidelines for children. [1]

In September/October 2010 the campaign was updated taking into account the feedback from the 2009 campaign evaluation. The 2010 campaign aimed to further raise awareness and knowledge of the guidelines and in particular to challenge the perceptions of parents and carers, who believe that their child is achieving the recommended level when they are not. The majority of parents (82%) believe their child is getting the recommended daily amount or more of physical activity yet only 24% of 9 -11 years olds take part in the recommended 60 minutes physical activity, 7 days a week.

b. *Walking for Health Programme*

The 'Walking for Health' programme established in 2001 aims to encourage people, particularly those who take little exercise, to undertake short regular 'health' walks primarily in their communities. Approximately 1000 walk leaders are currently active across Northern Ireland.

A review of health related walking provision in Northern including scoping the development of needs and recommendations for future action was undertaken in 2010/11.

c. *Active Travel Plans – Health and Social Care Trusts*

The PHA has supported the development of Active Travel Plans within a number of Health   and Social Care Trust sites.

d *Primary Care Referral Schemes*

The PHA fund a number of Primary Care Referral Schemes, in the main referring patients onto local council leisure centres however some also make referrals onto Walking Programmes.

e. *The PARC Study - Physical Activity and the Rejuvenation of Connswater (Belfast*

There are two key elements to this study the Research Project and the Building Project. The vision for the Connswater Community Greenway is to develop a safe, accessible, sustainable greenway which is an inspirational landmark that improves the quality of life for the people of East Belfast, now and for future generations. The physical changes to the living environment will include: 9km linear park, wildlife corridor, connecting open space, new bridges, 5km of clean rivers, 6 tourism and heritage trails and a civic square. The research element will look at the effects of the built environment on the physical activity levels of people in east Belfast. The PHA is a key partner in this Study.

f. ***Other Local Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Team Initiatives***
The PHA's health improvement work is taken forward locally by 5 health and social wellbeing improvement teams (Belfast, South Eastern, Southern, Western and Northern). Each of these teams work closely with the local Trust, Councils, other statutory partners and a range of community and voluntary organisations to improve health and reduce inequalities in their local area. Examples of some of the work taken forward in the past to support active travel include:

- The ***draft Health Impact Assessment of the West Tyrone Area Plan*** made recommendations at policy level for provision of walking and cycling routes in proposed bypasses and route realignment throughout the West Tyrone Area.
- Support for bike week.
- Support to Sustrans such as for Cycle Bid to BIG, cycle initiatives in schools etc
- Development of Healthy Walking Bus Toolkit
- Cycling initiatives such as fathers and sons cycling initiative, purchase of bikes for looked after children, Bike –It projects etc
- Support for Highway to health initiatives
- Development of healthy towns/joint working arrangements with local councils to ensure supportive environments for people in their own communities to access physical activity opportunities to promote healthy living.

WORKPLACE TRAVEL PLAN SCHEMES WHICH HAVE BENEFITED FROM TRAVELWISE SCHEME OR PROMOTIONAL SUPPORT SINCE 2006 (AS AT DECEMBER 2010)

ORGANISATION/SITE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
Stormont Estate	3000
Public Record Office	89
Dept of Culture, Arts and Leisure	188
N I Environment Agency	670
S E Health and Social Care Trust	4294
Altnagelvin Hospital	2700
Belfast City Hospital	5790
Newry and Mourne D C	369
Ards Borough Council	300
University of Ulster	3550
Queen's University Belfast	3500
The Quays Shopping Centre	1900
Seagate Technology	1338

FURTHER READING AND INFORMATION

Cycling

Definitive guide to cycling in Northern Ireland

http://www.cycleni.com/

Walking

Definitive guide to walking in Northern Ireland

http://www.walkni.com/

Infrastructure

Roads Service Policy and Procedure Guide (RSPPG) E037 "Advice on good practice for the provision of walking infrastructure" at:

http://rdsclarweb1/dmrb/RoadsManualDocuments2008/RSPPGs_Engineering/RSPPG%20E037.pdf

Roads Service Policy & Procedure Guide: RSPPG_S012 - ROAD HUMPS AND TRAFFIC CALMING at:

http://devclarwebl/rsmanualssearch/search/viewDoc.aspx?id=2263

Traffic Advisory Leaflets summarise research findings and give detailed guidance on specific elements of walking and cycling infrastructure:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/tal/

Sustrans Technical Guidelines, including "Sustrans (1997) Guidelines and Practical Details – Issue 2:

http://www.sustrans.org.uk/resources/technical-guidelines

The principle guidance on walking is available in book format:

Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot–IHT–2000.

Sustrans publish a lot of useful documents and guidance at:

http://www.sustrans.org.uk/resources/publications/information-sheets

Road safety

Roads Service Policy & Procedure Guide: RSPPG_E027 - Road Safety Engineering Procedures at:

http://devclarwebl/rsmanualssearch/search/viewDoc.aspx?id=2714

Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020 at:

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/roadsafety/index/road_safety_strategy.htm

Benefits of active travel

A number of sites collect evidence of the benefits of cycling and walking:

http://www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/active-travel/139/the-evidence

http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Transport-Streets/Walking-Cycling/cycling-in-bristol/essential-evidence/essential-evidence.en

Health

CTC – the National Cyclists organisation collects health data at:

http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4629

European national strategies

This 2005 document reviews policies in other European countries:

http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/europe/ecmt/pubpdf/04Cycling.pdf

National Cycling and walking organisations

British Cycling Federation is at http://new.britishcycling.org.uk/

CTC – the National Cyclists organisation is at http://www.ctc.org.uk/

Sustrans is at http://www.sustrans.org.uk/

Bibliography

2005 cycling bibliography at

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/tal/cyclefacilities/cyclingbibliographya.pdf

2005 walking bibliography at

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roads/tpm/tal/walking/walkingbibliography3.pdf

A very comprehensive research bibliography on cycling (with links to other bibliographies on sustainable travel and walking) is maintained at
http://planning.rudi.net/BIBS/SUSTRAV/REFS/04/04_UK__A_Z_.HTM