

“You Said, We Did”

How your views helped shape our Active Travel Strategy

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Why do we need an Active Travel Strategy?

Active travel means walking or cycling as a means of transport, where the journey has a purpose other than recreation or exercise. This is usually in order to get to a particular destination such as work, the shops or to visit friends. It does not cover walking and cycling done purely for pleasure, for health reasons, or simply walking the dog. Active travel is influenced by public infrastructure for walking and cycling, road conditions, road safety and individual transport preferences. This is Kent County Council’s first Active Travel Strategy, even though the factors influencing active travel are covered through KCC policy documents.

KCC’s Active Travel Strategy aims to make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for short journeys in Kent. By developing and promoting accessible, safer and well-planned active travel opportunities, this Strategy will help to establish Kent as a pioneering county for active travel.

Active travel can be for complete journeys or parts of a journey, and more people in the community making more active travel journeys can lead to a range of positive individual and shared outcomes. These include improved health, reduced traffic congestion, reduced pollution and financial savings to the individual.

In the current climate of reduced budgets, this Strategy will provide a basis on which KCC will be able to prioritise internal resources, influence how new communities are developed and to support bids for external funding for a range of active travel measures. It will also support local initiatives to promote active travel within the county.

The Active Travel Strategy is based on 3 supporting propositions:

Action 1: Integrate active travel into planning

This Strategy will influence commissioning decisions and ensure walking and cycling are prioritised in future planning processes. In addition, the Strategy will encourage integration of all types of transport as part of the strategic road network. This will be led by current commissioning guidance and best practice, existing KCC policies and strategies, and key partners' policies and strategies with a commitment to encouraging active travel.

Action 2: Provide and maintain appropriate routes for active travel

Kent needs fit-for-purpose active travel routes that people want to use. Kent's existing cycling and walking routes have developed over time as resources have allowed. They are not always continuous or direct, and may not serve important community services, which means that some people who would like to walk or cycle are unable to do so. There is a need to provide facilities such as pedestrian crossings along routes and secure cycle storage at destinations. It is also important that these routes are well maintained.

Action 3: Support active travel in the community

There is a need to encourage and promote active travel in our community. People need the skills, confidence, information and, most importantly, the motivation to make active travel their preferred choice. Initiatives needed to support this change include pedestrian and cycle training, road safety campaigns, projects to encourage walking and cycling to schools and work, and promotion of available routes.

Consultation

The draft Active Travel Strategy was open to public consultation from 18 May 2016 to 13 July 2016. The draft Strategy was accompanied by a questionnaire to capture feedback on the draft Strategy. In addition, as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment Process, key groups were identified that could be impacted by the Active Travel Strategy and were involved in interactive workshops to ensure that more qualitative discussions and issues were explored and that their views are reflected.

How have you made a difference?

We asked for your views on our draft Active Travel Strategy, in particular the Strategy's ambition and the three actions supporting the Active Travel Strategy. Your suggestions have helped us to make changes so our Strategy is simpler and demonstrates clearer links to other KCC policies.

The feedback we received both online and "face to face" was invaluable and we were pleased that much of the comments were positive about the creation of the Active Travel Strategy.

The feedback was clear; that it must be shown how the Strategy relates to other KCC policies and we have taken these comments on board. We are now adding a section to the Strategy explaining its policy context within KCC.

Another consistent message was that there was a lack of specific plans and targets in the Strategy. The Strategy published for consultation was always intended to gauge feedback on the ambitions and actions of the Strategy; deliverable and measurable targets will be set out in the Strategy's implementation plan which will be published with the final Strategy document.

Your feedback also told us that infrastructure and initiatives for walking and cycling need to be improved in order to achieve the ambition of the Strategy. This has helped prioritise areas for action and will help to shape our implementation plan.

These are just some of the changes we have made, an overview of all the comments and subsequent changes are set out in the table below in more detail. You have had a direct influence, helping us to identify priorities for action that we will put into our implementation plan.

You Said	We Did
There should be more detail to ensure that the Strategy is easy to understand.	We have extended the Strategy so that it now includes further sections which will make the purpose and ambition of the Strategy clearer. Specific actions to help us deliver our targets are listed in the Action Plan separately.
There should be measurable targets to ensure progress is being made and the Strategy is being achieved.	We will write measurable targets for the Strategy, which will be incorporated into the Strategy's implementation plan. The targets will allow progress to be compared and highlight areas for improvement at key milestones.
Need to show what the current state of active travel is in Kent.	We have included figures on the number of people currently walking and cycle in Kent. We have broken this data down by district to show differences across the county.
We need to demonstrate how the Strategy links to other related KCC policies.	We have included a policy map, showing the different KCC policies which relate to active travel. We have included a section on KCC Policy, providing a brief description of several related policies. These changes will help highlight what KCC is doing already and how the Active Travel Strategy will add to this.
We need to ensure that the Active Travel Strategy does not exclude those with mobility impairments.	We will reflect the needs of all of Kent's residents. Through an Equality Impact Assessment we will reflect the needs in the delivery of the Active Travel Strategy so that everyone benefits from the improvements and to ensure that walking and cycling infrastructure is accessible to all.

We need to improve walking and cycling infrastructure and maintain existing infrastructure in order for the Strategy to be successful.	We will write a number of actions into the Active Travel Strategy Action Plan demonstrating how we hope to achieve improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure.
We need to provide an explanation on how the Strategy relates to issues such as 20 mph zones and air quality.	We have included a section in the Strategy which provides evidence of successful initiatives in Kent and how active travel relates to such schemes.
We need to make it clear how improvements will be made with increasingly limited financial resources.	We will include actions in the Active Travel Action Plan that are low cost or use existing resources as much as possible. For more costly improvements, such as new infrastructure, we will focus on bidding for external funding.
We need to make use of the Propensity to Cycle Tool to help support future investment.	We have included reference to the Propensity to Cycle Tool so that planners can support their funding bids with quantitative data on cycling and focus their work where it will have the biggest impact.

For more information

- To see the full consultation analysis report please visit www.kent.gov.uk/activetravel
- The final Active Travel Strategy and Action Plan are planned to go to the Transport and Environment Cabinet Committee for approval in Spring 2017.
- If you would like to share your views in the future, you can register with our Consultation Directory. Tell us the issues you are interested in, and we will send you an e-mail notifying you when relevant consultations are launched.