

# Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy

**Audit of Sustainable Travel Infrastructure**  
**Final Version 1**  
October 2010

# Audit of Sustainable Travel Infrastructure

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to produce a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS) for journeys to school and to update this strategy each year. Local Transport Projects Ltd has been commissioned by Oldham Council to produce a strategy for inclusion on the Council's website.
- 1.1.2 The 'Audit of Sustainable School Travel Infrastructure' is a crucial element of the SMoTS. The key objectives of the Audit are:
- To identify the potential for promotion of sustainable modes based on existing infrastructure; and
  - To identify gaps in provision (which will form the basis of the SMoTS 'Infrastructure Improvement Plan').

## 1.2 SMoTS Objectives

- 1.2.1 Section 508A of the Education and Inspections Act (2006) came into force on 1 April 2007 and places a general duty on local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport. There are four main elements to this duty:
- An **assessment of pupil travel and transport needs**, based largely around data collected as part of School Travel Plans;
  - An **audit of the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure** to, from and between schools, colleges and other educational placements;
  - A **strategy to develop sustainable travel and transport infrastructure** within the authority to ensure that the needs of children are being catered for; and
  - The **promotion of sustainable travel and transport modes** for school journeys.
- 1.2.2 A key objective of the SMoTS is to reduce the proportion of school journeys made by private car/taxi in line with the national LTP4 sustainable travel indicator (Modal Share of Journeys to School, DfT, 2007) and to contribute to National Indicator NI 198 (Children Travelling to School – Mode of Transport Usually Used).



## 1.3 Development of the Audit of Sustainable Travel Infrastructure


- 1.3.1 Key guidance on developing the Audit is provided by 'Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy. A Practitioner's Guide (Non-London Edition)' supported by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Department for Transport (DfT) Project Board and published in October 2009.
- 1.3.2 This guidance recommends that each local authority's 'Audit of Sustainable Travel Infrastructure' includes the key elements shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Key elements that contribute to the Audit of Infrastructure**

Source: Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy. A Practitioner's Guide (Non-London Edition)

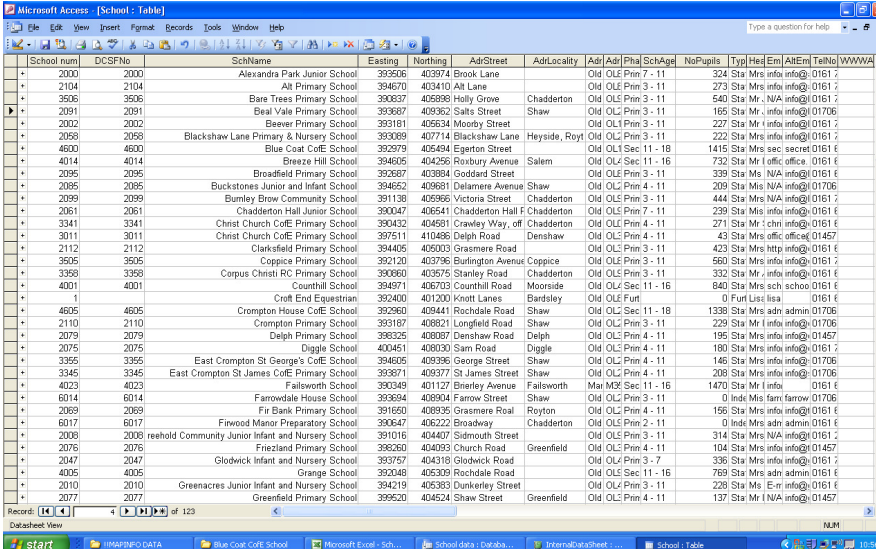
- 1.3.3 Those elements shown as  are described as 'soft' measures and include policy and promotion and marketing of sustainable travel.

- 1.3.4 Those elements shown as  are described as 'hard' measures and include the physical infrastructure which supports sustainable travel choices such as pedestrian crossings and cycle routes.

## 2 Borough-wide Audit

### 2.1 Methodology

- 2.1.1 Information on the infrastructure supporting sustainable travel in Oldham was brought together from a wide range of sources and in consultation with stakeholder organisations and schools. This included both the 'hard' and 'soft' measures described in Chapters 3 and 4 of this report.
- 2.1.2 All 120 eligible educational establishments were asked to respond to a simple online questionnaire seeking information on their concerns, activities and facilities supporting sustainable travel. 77 responses were received.
- 2.1.3 Specific site audits in the area surrounding each educational establishment provided details of infrastructure near to each site and helped to identify gaps in provision. Each audit followed a pre-determined checklist and included a detailed photographic record of the site.
- 2.1.4 The information gathered in the Audit of Infrastructure has been recorded in an ACCESS database, providing a comprehensive record of measures for each school capable of regular updating to reflect improvements. A screenshot of the ACCESS table is shown in Figure 2.
- 2.1.5 Together with the 'Assessment of Pupil's Travel and Transport Needs' report, this information has provided the necessary background to the 'Infrastructure Improvement Strategy'.



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Access database table with the following columns: School num, DCSFNo, SchName, Easting, Northing, AdrStreet, AdrLocality, Adr, Adr Phn, SchAge, NoPupils, Typ, Hqd Em, ALEm, TelNo, WWWA. The table contains 120 rows of data, including schools like Alexandra Park Junior School, Aln Primary School, Bare Trees Primary School, Beaver Primary School, Blackshaw Lane Primary & Nursery School, Blue Coat C of E School, Breeze Hill School, Broadfield Primary School, Buckstones Junior and Infant School, Burnley Brow Community School, Chadderton Hall Junior School, Christ Church C of E Primary School, Clarksfield Primary School, Coppice Primary School, Corpus Christi RC Primary School, Couthill School, Croft End Equestrian, Crompton House C of E School, Crompton Primary School, Delph Primary School, Diggle School, East Crompton St George's C of E School, East Crompton St James C of E Primary School, Fallowfield School, Farnworth House School, Fri Bank Primary School, Finwood Manor Preparatory School, Greenfield Community Junior and Nursery School, Greenfield Infant and Nursery School, Glodwick Infant and Nursery School, Grange School, Greenacres Junior Infant and Nursery School, and Greenfield Primary School.

Figure 2: ACCESS Database Table

## **2.2 Accessing Information**

- 2.2.1 Catchment and school-gate maps and individual summary reports for each school showing infrastructure supporting sustainable travel are discussed in detail in Chapter 5 and will be available on the Council's website from January 2011.

## 3 ‘Hard’ Measures

### 3.1 Pedestrian Facilities

- 3.1.1 The individual ‘school catchment’ and ‘school gate’ maps provide details of the pedestrian facilities that are located around each school to aid journey planning for those wishing to walk to and from school.
- 3.1.2 A national website is also available to support pedestrian journey planning and this can be viewed at [www.walkit.com](http://www.walkit.com).
- 3.1.3 The 2010 school census data on ‘usual mode of travel to school’ indicated that overall 53.8% of pupils walk to school in Oldham. For primary age pupils the proportion is 60% and for secondary school students it is 43.2%. An analysis of School Travel Plans revealed that 37.6% of secondary pupils and 40.5% of primary pupils reported walking as their *preferred* mode of travel to school, indicating a potential for children and young people to opt for other means of travel.
- 3.1.4 In the online survey of Oldham schools completed in May 2010:
- 42% of replies indicated that additional or improved pedestrian crossing facilities were required on routes to school; and
  - 38% of respondents felt that a lack of School Crossing Patrols was a barrier to walking to school.
- 3.1.5 The use of pavement scooters as an alternative to walking is popular with primary school pupils. The provision of appropriate secure on-site storage is important to promoting this mode; however in the May 2010 school survey only 2 primary schools out of 61 replying reported having scooter storage.
- 3.1.6 The proportion of schools with pedestrian facilities within 200m of the site, as recorded by the survey and site audits, is shown in Table 1. Under national guidelines, School Crossing patrols are only provided for pupils age 11 and under but the law allows them to cross all pedestrians.

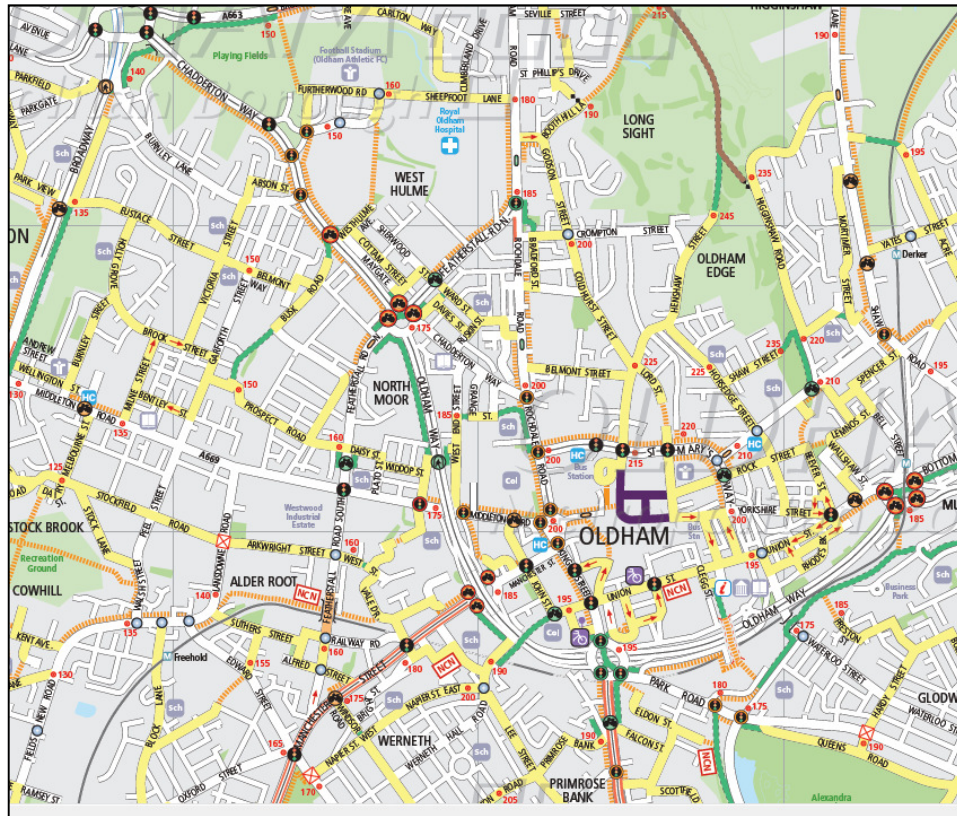
**Table 1: Pedestrian Facilities within 200m of Oldham Educational Establishments**

	Primary	Secondary	College/Further
Controlled Pedestrian Crossing	35%	65%	50%
School Crossing Patrol	61%	65%	0%
Pedestrian Waiting Shelters	22%	0%	0%

## 3.2 Cycling Facilities

3.2.1 Oldham Council produces a regularly updated map showing the network of cycling facilities in the Borough. It can be found on the Council website at [www.oldham.gov.uk/oldham-cycling-map.pdf](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/oldham-cycling-map.pdf). An extract of the Oldham cycle network map is shown in Figure 3. An online map of cycling facilities in GM is available at

<http://www.cyclegm.org/cyclemaps/cyclemap.aspx?width=1920&height=1080>.



**Figure 3: Extract of Oldham Cycle Network Map**

3.2.2 Individual 'school catchment' and 'school gate' maps and accompanying summaries giving details of nearby cycle facilities and on-site cycle parking will be available on the Council's website from January 2011.

3.2.3 Oldham's policy on 'Transport for Students age 16-19 in Continuing Education' includes an analysis of the current stage of development of the Borough's cycle network:



*“An investment of over £30 million is required to complete the Oldham Cycle Network and provide cycle routes that are accessible to everyone in the community. The completion of this network will ensure that every education establishment in the Borough will be linked to a high quality cycle network. Current estimates suggest that the completion of the Oldham Cycle Network will not be achieved before 2032 and therefore there will be issues in the short to medium term concerning the ability of students to be able to access education establishments safely on a bicycle. However, priorities are being given to creating the strategic traffic free cycle routes that link in to Oldham Town Centre providing high quality routes from Ashton, Lees and Chadderton.” (OMBC, 2009)*

- 3.2.4 Photo 1 shows an example of cycling facilities installed outside of Radclyffe School on Hunt Lane in Oldham.



**Photo 1: Cycling Facilities Outside Radclyffe School**

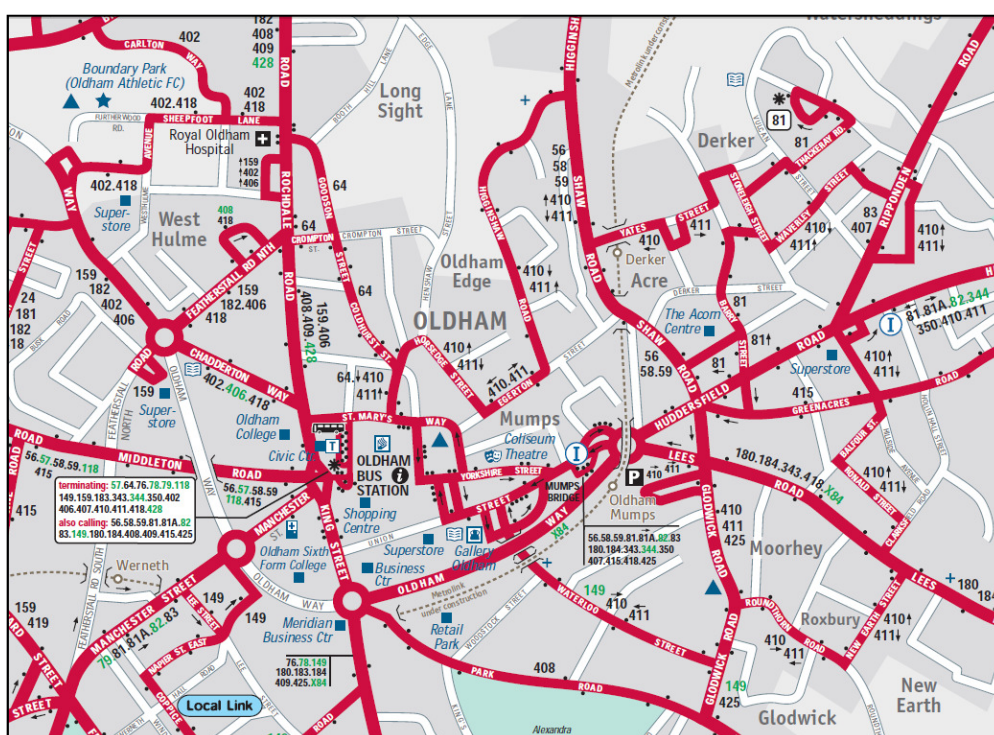
- 3.2.5 The 2010 school census data on ‘usual mode of travel to school’ indicated that only 0.5% of secondary school pupils make the school journey by cycle and for primary age pupils the proportion is just 0.1%. An analysis of School Travel Plans revealed that 15% of secondary pupils and over 26% of primary pupils would prefer to cycle to school, indicating significant potential for growth in this mode.
- 3.2.6 In response to an online survey undertaken in May 2010, 60% of schools highlighted lack of dedicated cycle routes in their catchment area as a significant barrier to choosing this mode. Lack of cycle parking was perceived as an issue by 38% of schools. Approximately 71% of secondary schools and 31% of primary schools reported having on-site cycle storage, although overall 22% of schools felt that security of the storage facility was an issue. The proportion of schools with cycle parking, as recorded by the survey, is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Cycle Parking at Oldham Educational Establishments**

	Primary	Secondary	College/Further
On-site Cycle Parking	31%	71%	67%

### 3.3 Public Transport

3.3.1 Greater Manchester Public Transport Executive (GMPTE) manages a network of commercial and supported bus routes, provided by a number of operators, including those covering the Oldham area. On their website GMPTE provides a map showing the routes and stops for services in Oldham and this can be found at [www.gmpete.com/pdfmaps/network/9\\_oldham.pdf](http://www.gmpete.com/pdfmaps/network/9_oldham.pdf). An extract from the map is shown in Figure 4.



**Figure 4: Extract of Oldham Bus Route Map**

- 3.3.2 Individual 'School Catchment' and 'School Gate' maps showing bus stops and tram/rail stops will be available on Oldham Council's website from January 2011. Examples are shown in Appendices 1 and 2.
- 3.3.3 Greater Manchester has a comprehensive public transport network which appears to provide suitable services to the majority of schools and colleges. The site audits showed that virtually all (99%) of the 120 educational establishments in Oldham (Section 5) are within 400m of a bus stop.





**Photo 2: School Bus Stops at North Chadderton School**

3.3.4 In an online survey of Oldham schools completed in May 2010:

- Only 8% felt that there was a lack of suitable bus services;
- Just 3% believed bus services to be unreliable; and
- 7% felt that pupil behaviour on buses was a barrier to choosing this mode.

3.3.5 Oldham is currently served by 2 rail routes, from which colleges and schools in Oldham and the adjacent areas can be reached:

- Manchester Victoria to Rochdale, via Moston, Mills Hill and Castleton;
- Manchester to Huddersfield / Wakefield, via Ashton under Lyne and calling at Greenfield.

3.3.6 Oldham town centre is not currently served by rail. However the Greater Manchester Metrolink system is currently being extended to Oldham. This involves converting the existing rail line between Manchester, Oldham and Rochdale to Metrolink operation. The Oldham Loop train line (Manchester Victoria to Rochdale) closed in October 2009. Existing rail stations (excluding Werneth) will be upgraded to Metrolink stops and additional Metrolink facilities will be built, including stops at South Chadderton and Freehold. Trams will be running from Manchester to Oldham Mumps by autumn 2011 and to Rochdale by spring 2012. Replacement bus services are being provided whilst the line is closed.

3.3.7 A map showing the extension is available on GMPTE's website;  
[www.gmppte.com/pdfmaps/metrolink/10-0157-100777\\_Met\\_3B\\_GEO.pdf](http://www.gmppte.com/pdfmaps/metrolink/10-0157-100777_Met_3B_GEO.pdf).

3.3.8 GMPTE provide a '**Scholar's Concessionary Permit**' which allows a flat rate of 80p for journeys by bus between home and school/college, and approximately half-fare on trains and trams. Further information is available from GMPTE's website: [www.goto.org.uk/fares.php](http://www.goto.org.uk/fares.php).

### 3.4 Traffic Calming/School Safety Zones

3.4.1 Traffic calming schemes have been found to reduce the number and severity of collision injuries, especially amongst vulnerable users, by cutting the speed of vehicles passing through an area. In addition to safety improvements, this can create a more attractive road environment for walking and cycling and act as a catalyst to encouraging these modes.



3.4.2 A School Safety Zone is an area around a school that has been specially designed to highlight the presence of a school and its pupils and provide a safer environment, through road improvements and traffic calming measures.



3.4.3 The Safer Routes to School Programme involves improvements to the public highway, such as traffic calming measures, signing and road marking schemes, pathway resurfacing and improved bus stop facilities. These measures are aimed at encouraging parents, children and young people who want to walk, cycle or use public transport on the journey to and from school.

3.4.4 The proportion of schools/colleges with 20 mph zones and/or School Safety Zones around the school gate is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: 20mph/School Safety Zones Around School/College Entrances**

	Primary	Secondary	College/Further
20mph Zone	33%	25%	0%
School Safety Zone	14%	20%	0%

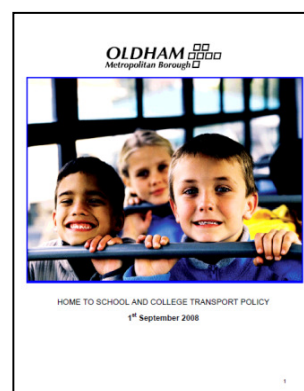
### 3.5 Home to School/College Transport

3.5.1 Oldham Council's Home to School and College Transport Policy 2008 can be found on their website, [www.oldham.gov.uk/college\\_transport\\_policy.pdf](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/college_transport_policy.pdf).

3.5.2 The policy is described in detail in Chapter 8 of the 'Assessment of Pupil Travel and Transport Needs'. In brief, the Council provides free home to school or college transport for eligible pupils under the provisions of Section 509 of the Education Act 1996.

3.5.3 Details of the school bus services currently provided (2009-10) can be found on GMPTE's website; [www.gmppte.com/upload/library/Oldham\\_Schools\\_051006.pdf](http://www.gmppte.com/upload/library/Oldham_Schools_051006.pdf).

3.5.4 The Council provides transport for eligible pupils attending Special Schools and those with the appropriate statements in mainstream education. Approximately 160 routes by minibus, taxi and specially adapted vehicle are currently supported.



3.5.5 School Sixth Forms, Oldham Sixth Form College and The Oldham College can provide support for travel by students in financial difficulties through the Learner Support Fund. Applications are made through the educational establishment and are subject to a means test.

## 3.6 Parking

3.6.1 In the online survey completed in May 2010 almost 82% of schools thought that parking problems near to the school gate were a significant barrier to choosing sustainable modes.

3.6.2 The issue of parking around schools is clearly regarded as the most significant barrier to sustainable travel by those schools responding to the survey and is indicated from the analysis of School Travel Plans. Providing appropriate restrictions around the school gate would appear to be a priority. The proportion of schools with School Keep Clear markings at their entrance as recorded by the online survey and site audits is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Keep Clear Markings at School/College Entrances**

	Primary	Secondary	College/Further
Keep Clear Markings	74%	40%	0%

3.6.3 In the online survey, 4 schools reported that they actively promoted car-sharing for parents/staff. Only Holy Rosary School reported having car-share parking bays in the school car park.

3.6.4 Individual catchment and 'school gate' maps showing parking restrictions around schools and highway infrastructure supporting sustainable travel will be available on the Council's website from January 2011.

## 4 'Soft' Measures

### 4.1 Sources of Funding

- 4.1.1 The promotion of sustainable modes of transport is supported by a range of organisations from government, commercial and charity sectors.
- 4.1.2 The DfT provided funding for local authorities to employ School Travel Plan Advisors and Oldham Council has ensured that all eligible schools in the Borough have been supported to develop their Travel Plans. This funding is due to cease in March 2011 as all schools are expected to have an approved Travel Plan in place. Schools will continue to receive support to develop their School Travel Plans with particular emphasis on the following aspects:
- Refreshing existing School Travel Plans;
  - Promoting and supplying resources for the WoW ('Walk on Wednesday's, 'Walk once a Week') initiative at schools with the lowest walking rates;
  - Continuing to work with the existing schools on the Engagement Activities programme, and;
  - Expanding the Engagement Activities programme to include a second tranche of schools."
- 4.1.3 The DfT also supports the promotion of cycling nationally through Cycling England ([www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland/)). Funding is provided to local authorities for 'Bikeability' training through Cycling England. DfT also supports wider sustainable travel promotion through their 'Smarter Choices' webpages [www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/smarterchoices/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/smarterchoices/).
- 4.1.4 In March 2007 the DfT set up a fund to provide grants for schools wishing to start a Walking Bus or to promote walking to school. This fund has now ceased.
- 4.1.5 Local Transport Plan funding has been made available on a Greater Manchester (GM) and Borough basis to support a range of promotional activities both in schools and the wider community.
- 4.1.6 GMPTE promotes public transport use through its website [www.goto.org.uk/school\\_oldham.php](http://www.goto.org.uk/school_oldham.php).
- 4.1.7 There are a number of organisations providing support for sustainable travel promotions including Sustrans ([www.sustrans.org.uk/](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/)).

## 4.2 Road Safety Training

- 4.2.1 Oldham Council has a well developed road safety education and training strategy and provides a comprehensive service to schools through the Unity Partnership's Road Safety Unit. Practical road safety training is integral to promoting safe and sustainable travel and both cyclist and pedestrian training is offered.



- 4.2.2 **'Bikeability'** cyclist training (Level 1 and 2) is provided in Oldham and this is predominantly intended for primary school pupils. Figures for 2009/10 show that 83 from a potential 90 primary schools (92%) participated in Bikeability, with 2 secondary schools also participating. Bikeability training includes both off and on-road elements and teaches basic cycling skills. Information on Bikeability in Oldham is available from the Council website:

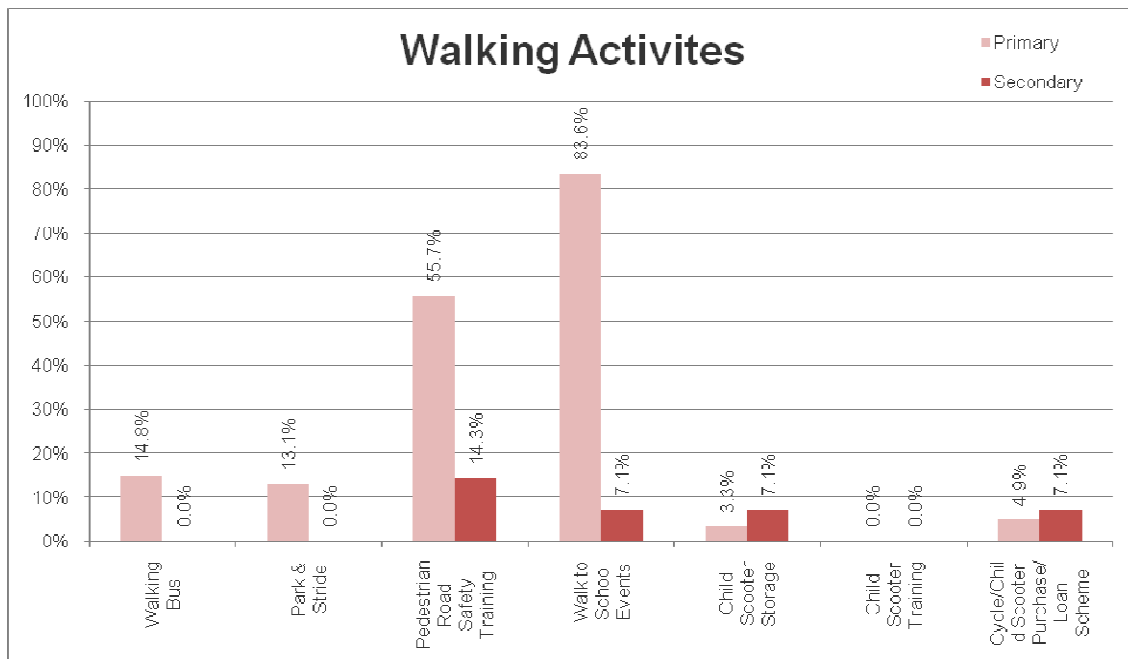
[www.oldham.gov.uk/community/sport\\_and\\_leisure/cycling-in-oldham/cycle\\_training.htm](http://www.oldham.gov.uk/community/sport_and_leisure/cycling-in-oldham/cycle_training.htm).

- 4.2.3 **Practical Pedestrian Training** is provided for primary school pupils and in the May 2010 online survey almost **59%** of primary schools reported participation. This training combines classroom work with practical sessions where pupils are taught to select safe places to cross and to develop crossing decision making skills.

## 4.3 Walking Promotion

- 4.3.1 In addition to road safety training for young pedestrians, schools are involved in a range of activities to support walking and the level of participation reported in the May 2010 survey is shown in Figure 5.





**Figure 5: Walking Promotions in Oldham Schools**

- 4.3.2 Walking Bus:** A Walking Bus provides a supervised facility for pupils to walk to school. Each Bus has a structured route and timetable and is usually operated by volunteer 'drivers' and 'conductors'. In Oldham, 9 primary schools (14.8%) reported operating a Walking Bus.
- 4.3.3 Park and Stride:** The identification of a safe parking area away from the school gate can relieve pressure on limited, safe, on-street parking near to schools. In the survey 8 (13.1%) primary schools indicated that they operated a Park and Stride site. Where available, these are shown on individual school catchment maps. No secondary schools operate Park and Stride sites.
- 4.3.4 Walk to School Events:** Almost 85% of primary schools and 7% of secondary schools reported participation in walk to school promotions and events such as Walk on Wednesdays or 'Jofli the Bear' activities. Currently 13 schools are engaged in WOW activities. A website is available to support personal pedestrian journey planning in Oldham: [www.walkit.com/cities/oldham/](http://www.walkit.com/cities/oldham/).
- 4.3.5** The relatively low level of participation in Walking Bus and Park and Stride activities suggests the potential for a wider involvement in encouraging this mode.
- 4.3.6 Scooter Promotions:** Child scooters are often viewed by younger children as an attractive travel mode. 2 primary schools reported the availability of scooter storage although none are involved in awareness or safety training.
- 4.3.7 Scooter Purchase or Loan schemes:** Where financial considerations restrict cycle or scooter use, supported purchase or loan schemes can help to increase use, especially in areas of deprivation. 4 Oldham schools reported involvement in such schemes.

- 4.3.8 From the reported participation in scooter promotional activity there would appear to be significant potential for increasing activity in support of this mode, which may provide an alternative to the car for some journeys.

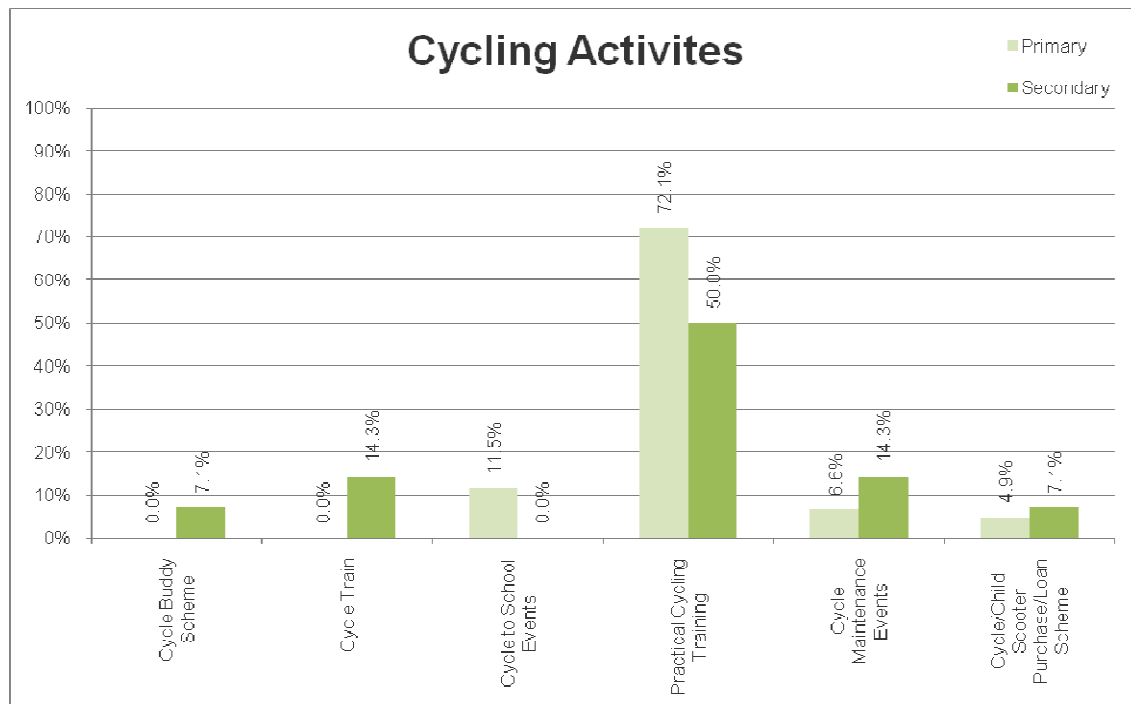
## 4.4 Cycling Promotion

- 4.4.1 In addition to Bikeability, a number of schools are seeking to develop cycling to school initiatives, either through the Engagement Activities programme or through the schools own volition. In both cases the Cycling to School Officer will provide support to the schools in taking forward these initiatives.

- 4.4.2 Information about cycling to school in Oldham, and cycling in general, is available on the Council website:

[www.cyclegm.org/local\\_areas/area.aspx?area=oldham](http://www.cyclegm.org/local_areas/area.aspx?area=oldham).

- 4.4.3 In addition to road safety cyclist training Oldham schools are involved in a range of activities to support cycling to school and the level of participation reported in the May 2010 survey is shown in Figure 6.



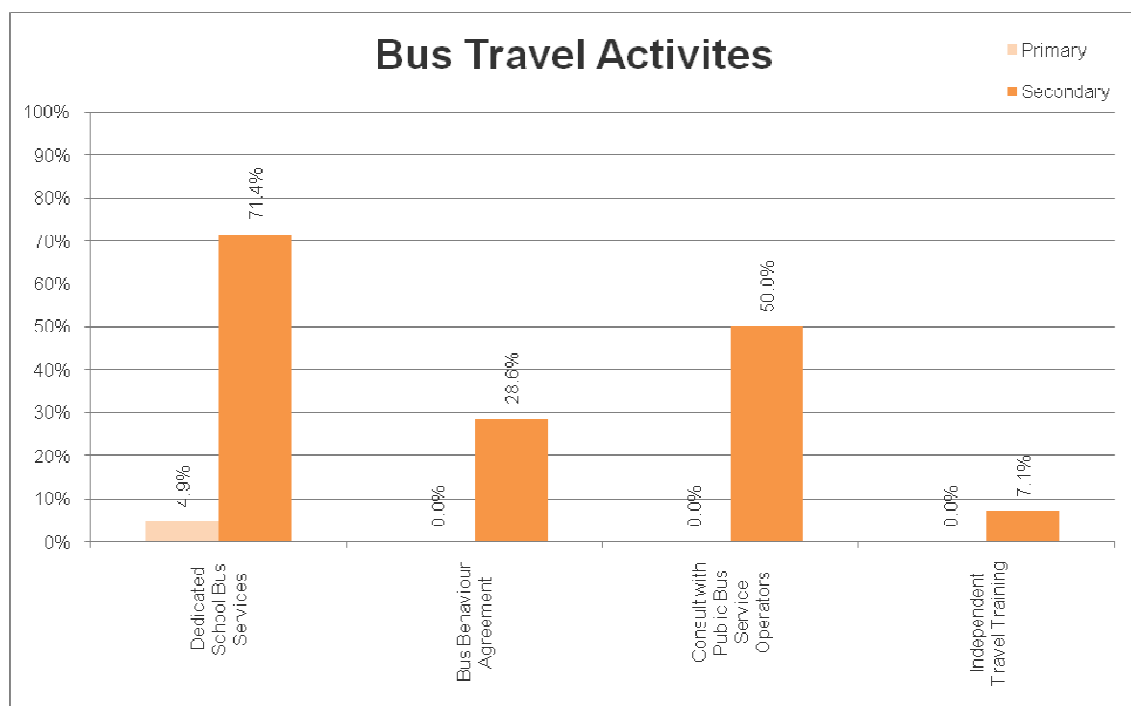
**Figure 6: Cycling Promotions in Oldham Schools**

- 4.4.4 **Cycle Buddy Scheme:** 1 secondary school reported operating a Cycle Buddy scheme, where pupils with similar routes to school are encouraged to cycle together.
- 4.4.5 **Cycle Train:** Similar in concept to a Walking Bus, with a supervised and structured route ride into school for cyclists, 2 secondary schools reported operating a Cycle Train.
- 4.4.6 **Cycle to School Events:** 7 primary schools reported participation in events such as 'Bike to School Week'. No secondary schools reported similar activities.

- 4.4.7 **Cycle Maintenance Events:** Correct maintenance of a cycle is an important safety factor but also has wider potential for encouraging cycling to school. In total 6 schools reported participation in cycle maintenance events such as 'Dr. Bike'.
- 4.4.8 **Cycle Purchase or Loan schemes:** Where financial considerations restrict cycle or scooter use, supported purchase or loan schemes can help to increase use, especially in areas of deprivation. 4 Oldham schools reported involvement in such schemes.
- 4.4.9 From the reported level of participation in cycle promotional activity there would appear to be significant potential for increasing activity in support of this mode, which may provide an alternative to the car for some journeys.

## 4.5 Public Transport

- 4.5.1 There is a comprehensive public transport network in Oldham, due to be supplemented in the near future with the extension of tram services from Manchester through the Borough to Rochdale. Current services are described in Section 3.3.
- 4.5.2 A summary of participation in activities supporting public transport for the journey to school is shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: Public Transport Promotions in Oldham Schools**

- 4.5.3 In the 2010 school census, 3.6% of journeys to primary schools were recorded as being made by bus. These were largely provided by home to school transport. For secondary schools the situation is different with over 28% of pupils recorded as travelling by bus. Involvement in promotional activity reflects this difference in bus use between primary and secondary schools.



- 4.5.4 **Bus Behaviour Agreements:** Pupil behaviour on buses is occasionally reported as a barrier to choosing public transport in parents' responses to School Travel Plan consultations. Approximately 29% of Oldham's secondary schools reported operating a Bus Behaviour Agreement.
- 4.5.5 **Consultation with Public Bus Operators:** To facilitate bus use by pupils it is advantageous for schools to co-ordinate session times with local bus operators. The maintenance of effective consultation can ensure that services 'fit' the school day and encourage bus use.
- 4.5.6 There appears to be potential for increasing the use of buses for the school journey, perhaps by promoting the concessionary fares available through GMPTE and local operators, although care needs to be taken to ensure this is aimed at those currently using the car, rather than those who are walking or cycling. The introduction of tram services in the next few years may provide an additional opportunity to further promote public transport for the school journey for establishments close to the new Metrolink stops.

## 4.6 Car Share Promotion

- 4.6.1 In the May 2010 survey of schools, only 2 schools indicated that they actively promote car share by staff and parents by providing a car-share database and 1 school reported providing dedicated parking spaces for car-sharing staff.

## 4.7 Independent Travel Training

- 4.7.1 Support is available to offer Independent Travel Training to pupils with additional educational needs in order to assist them to use sustainable travel modes, particularly public transport.
- 4.7.2 Trainers are currently supporting 26 pupils of New Bridge School and New Bridge Learning Centre.

## 4.8 Healthy Schools

- 4.8.1 The National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP) is a joint initiative between the former DCSF and Department of Health (DH) which promotes a whole school / whole child approach to health. The Programme has existed since 1999.
- 4.8.2 To achieve the National Healthy School Standard (NHSS) a school has to address four core themes. The third theme is 'Physical Activity' and section 3.7 of this theme "*encourages children, young people, staff and parents/carers to walk or cycle to school under safer conditions, utilising the School Travel Plan.*"
- 4.8.3 As of July 2010 only 6 schools in Oldham have not yet achieved the minimum criteria required for the NHSS. Potentially 67 schools are moving towards the Enhancement Model of the NHSS during the next academic year.

## 4.9 Eco Schools

- 4.9.1 'Eco-Schools' is an international award programme that guides schools on their sustainable journey, providing a framework to help embed these principles into the heart of school life. The Eco-Schools Programme is focused around nine key environmental topics, including Transport.
- 4.9.2 Schools achieve different levels within the programme; *Bronze, Silver or Green Flag*. Once schools have achieved Green Flag status they are required to be reassessed every two years.
- 4.9.3 Currently (July 2010), approximately 100 schools in Oldham are registered, including 27 at Bronze, 30 at Silver and 17 at Green Flag level.  
(<http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/schools-search/>)

## 4.10 Personal Safety Issues

- 4.10.1 Fear of abduction or assault of children on school journeys is occasionally reported by parents in School Travel Plan consultations. Whilst actual recorded incidents are very rare, this is a real concern, especially for parents of younger children.
- 4.10.2 The majority of primary age pupils are accompanied to school and this is often by car. Supervised journeys, as provided by Walking Buses or Cycle Trains, can reduce this concern and encourage journeys by sustainable modes.
- 4.10.3 The fear of bullying is an important barrier to allowing independent travel by sustainable modes for older pupils. The former Department for Children, Schools and Families has produced guidance addressing issues related to bullying on journeys, including those to/from school (DCSF 2009).



## 4.11 Links with the Engagement Activities Programme

- 4.11.1 In November 2009 an Engagement Activities programme was set up to provide support to schools to encourage more sustainable travel. Ten schools were selected in tranche 1 of the programme and these schools were chosen on the basis that they have a perceived safer environment on the school frontage due to the existence of a School Safety Zone or traffic calming measures.
- 4.11.2 Of these schools, two schools have been withdrawn due to the lack of support from the school. A further two schools have indicated that they do not wish to be supported but are nevertheless undertaking sustainable travel initiatives such as Scooter promotions. Of the remaining six schools a programme of activities have been developed including the Miles Further scheme, walking, cycling, car sharing, scooter and Park & Stride projects, road safety talks and Jofli Bear. In addition two schools have submitted bids to Sustrans for cycle parking.

## 5 Audit of Individual Schools

### 5.1 Methodology

- 5.1.1 Individual site audits were undertaken at each school (Photo 3). These audits recorded on-site facilities and highway infrastructure supporting sustainable travel including information on bus stops and routes, pedestrian crossing facilities, cycling facilities, parking restrictions, traffic calming and/or School Safety Zones and access arrangements.



**Photo 3: Survey of North Chadderton Site**

- 5.1.2 In addition every school was asked to respond to a survey which recorded details of their concerns, on-site infrastructure and sustainable travel promotional activity.

### 5.2 School Catchment Maps

- 5.2.1 Individual maps have been produced for a section of each school's catchment area corresponding to approximately 15 minutes walk from the main school access. It should be noted that each map does not necessarily show the full extent of the catchment area, focusing only on a reasonable walking distance from the school gate.
- 5.2.2 The school catchment maps show the locations of bus stops and routes, pedestrian and cycling facilities, Walking Bus routes and Park and Stride sites (where available). A catchment area map for each educational establishment will be available on the Council's website from January 2011 and an extract of an example map is shown in Figure 8, with a complete example in Appendix 1.



**Figure 8: Extract of Catchment Area Map**

## 5.3 School Gate Maps

5.3.1 Individual maps have been produced for each school showing details of infrastructure within approximately 200m of the main school access. 'School Gate' maps for each educational establishment will be available on the Council's website from January 2011 and an extract of an example map is shown in Figure 9 with a complete example in Appendix 2.




**Figure 9: Extract of School Gate Map and Key**

## 5.4 School Site Reports

- 5.4.1 Information from the school survey and site audits has been recorded for each school and a summary report for each school will be available on the Council's website from January 2011.
- 5.4.2 Together with the 'Catchment Area' and 'School Gate' maps, each report provides a comprehensive audit of the infrastructure supporting sustainable travel choices at each educational establishment. An example of the report form is shown in Figure 10.

### Sustainable modes of travel to school



#### Fir Bank Primary School

Date published: 20/07/10

**Address** Grasmere Road  
Royton  
OLDHAM

**Postcode** OL2 6SJ

**E-mail address** info@firbank.oldham.sch.uk

**Website**


**Telephone** 0161 6249577

**Head teacher** Mrs Hazel Mackay

**Ages** 4 - 11      **Pupils** 156

**Travel to school by car**

Year	% by car
2010	41%
2009	45%
2008	54%



**Oldham average:** 34%  
Primary 2010

#### On-site facilities

**Cycle storage**  
Covered 0    Uncovered 8

**Pedestrian shelter(s)**

#### Activities

**Road safety training**

**Bikeability training**

#### Safety measures on the road

#### Public transport

**Bus stop nearby**

Figure 10: Example School SMoTS Report Form

## 6 Summary

### 6.1 Infrastructure Supporting Sustainable Travel

- 6.1.1 This report audits the provision of infrastructure which supports sustainable travel choices and presents much of the information through specific educational establishment centred maps and reports.
- 6.1.2 Overall Oldham schools appear well served by highway safety measures such as 20 mph zones, traffic calming and School Safety Zones.
- 6.1.3 'Hard' measures necessary to support sustainable travel include facilities on the public highway such as traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, cycle routes, bus stops and public transport routes. Also included are on-site measures such as cycle storage, waiting shelters, lockers and showers.
- 6.1.4 'Soft' measures are predominantly those activities which encourage and promote travel by sustainable modes such as Bikeability, Practical Pedestrian Training and Walk to School activities.

### 6.2 Promoting Sustainable Travel

- 6.2.1 The online survey of educational establishments undertaken as part of this Audit identified a range of activities aimed at encouraging sustainable travel choices.
- 6.2.2 'Walk to School' events and practical road safety training for pedestrians and cyclists were amongst the most popular activities with a much greater proportion of primary schools involved than secondary schools or colleges.
- 6.2.3 For promoting travel by public transport, 'Bus Behaviour Agreements' were popular with secondary schools in order to improve the perception of the attractiveness of bus travel for pupils.
- 6.2.4 There was limited evidence of promoting car-sharing for parents or staff.

### 6.3 Gaps in Provision

- 6.3.1 The Infrastructure Improvement Plan provides details of where further facilities or activities may be required to support sustainable travel choices. Brief examples are given here:
  - **Hard Measures:** Parking around school entrances appears to be a principle issue and the provision of appropriate restrictions could be standardised. There is a perception that additional cycle facilities on the highway and cycle storage on school sites would encourage cycling. Improved availability of School Crossing Patrols at authorised sites and additional crossing facilities at specific locations are perceived as necessary to support walked journeys.



- **Soft Measures:** There appears to be limited encouragement by schools of cycling for the journey to school and an absence of structured support for car-sharing initiatives. Promotion of the use of pavement scooters for primary school pupils also appears to be limited. The issue of providing structured support to schools to help develop these soft measures is being addressed through the Engagement Activities programme.

## 6.4 Gaps in the Base Data

6.4.1 Whilst this Audit of Sustainable Travel Infrastructure provides an extensive picture of current provision within Oldham, there remain a number of areas where gaps exist in the base data. The key areas include:

- It was not possible to obtain responses to the online survey from all educational establishments, with 77 from a possible 120 participating, but wherever possible the site audits provided the information required. Much of the information requested in the survey should be obtained when schools review their Travel Plans;
- It was not possible to readily gain access to school sites to provide a photographic record of on-site infrastructure. This might be achieved by Oldham Council officers during the Engagement Activities process;
- Information on infrastructure supporting cross boundary travel was not readily available from neighbouring authorities; and
- Oldham Council is assessing the implications of the Government's new education spending review on the Building Schools for the Future programme.

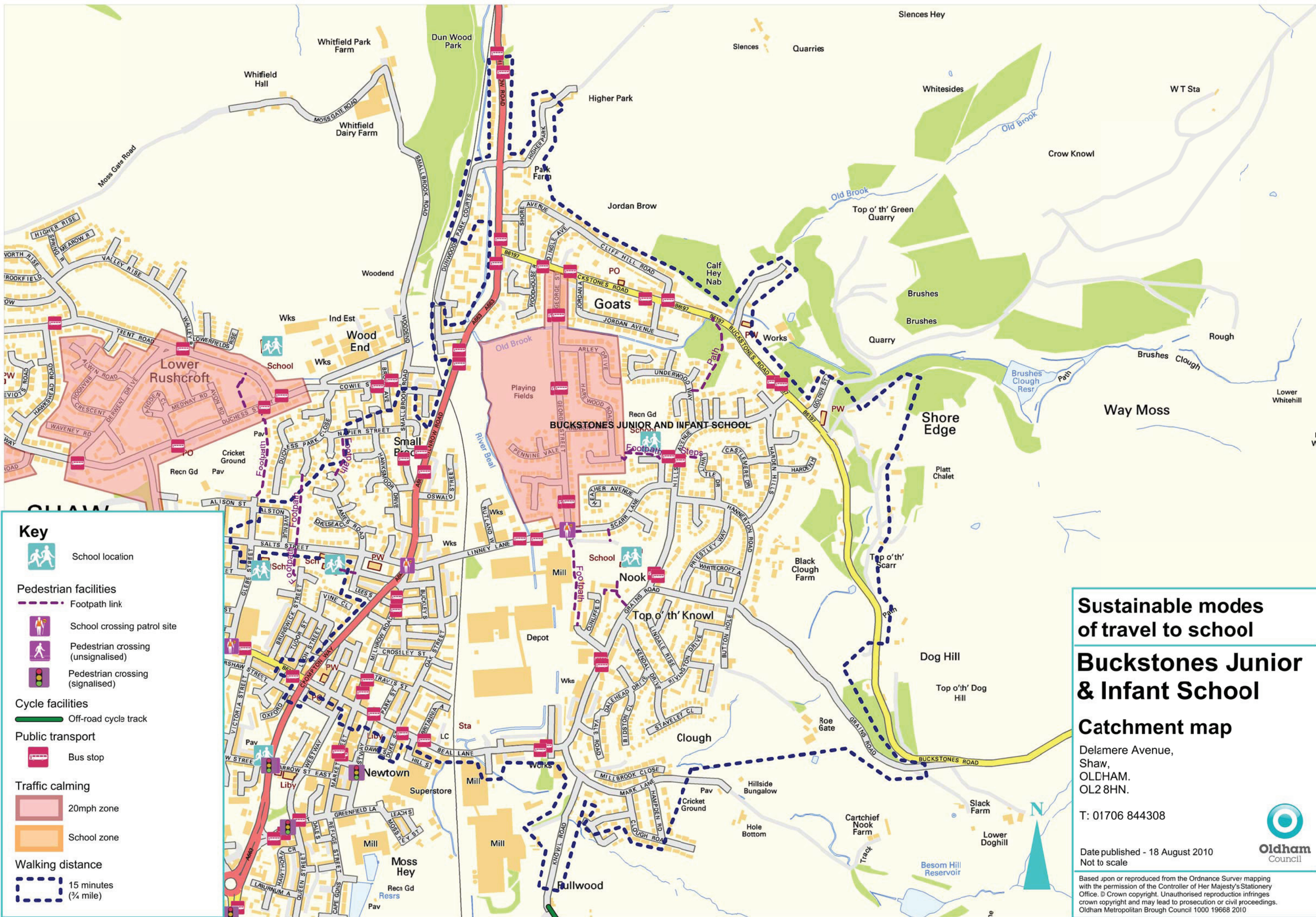
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## **Appendix 1 – Example School Catchment Map**





**Key**

School location

**Pedestrian facilities**

Footpath link

School crossing patrol site

Pedestrian crossing (unsignalised)

Pedestrian crossing (signalised)

**Cycle facilities**

Off-road cycle track

**Public transport**

Bus stop

**Traffic calming**

20mph zone

School zone

**Walking distance**

15 minutes (3/4 mile)

**Sustainable modes of travel to school**

**Buckstones Junior & Infant School**

**Catchment map**

Delamere Avenue,  
Shaw,  
OLDHAM.  
OL2 8HN.

T: 01706 844308

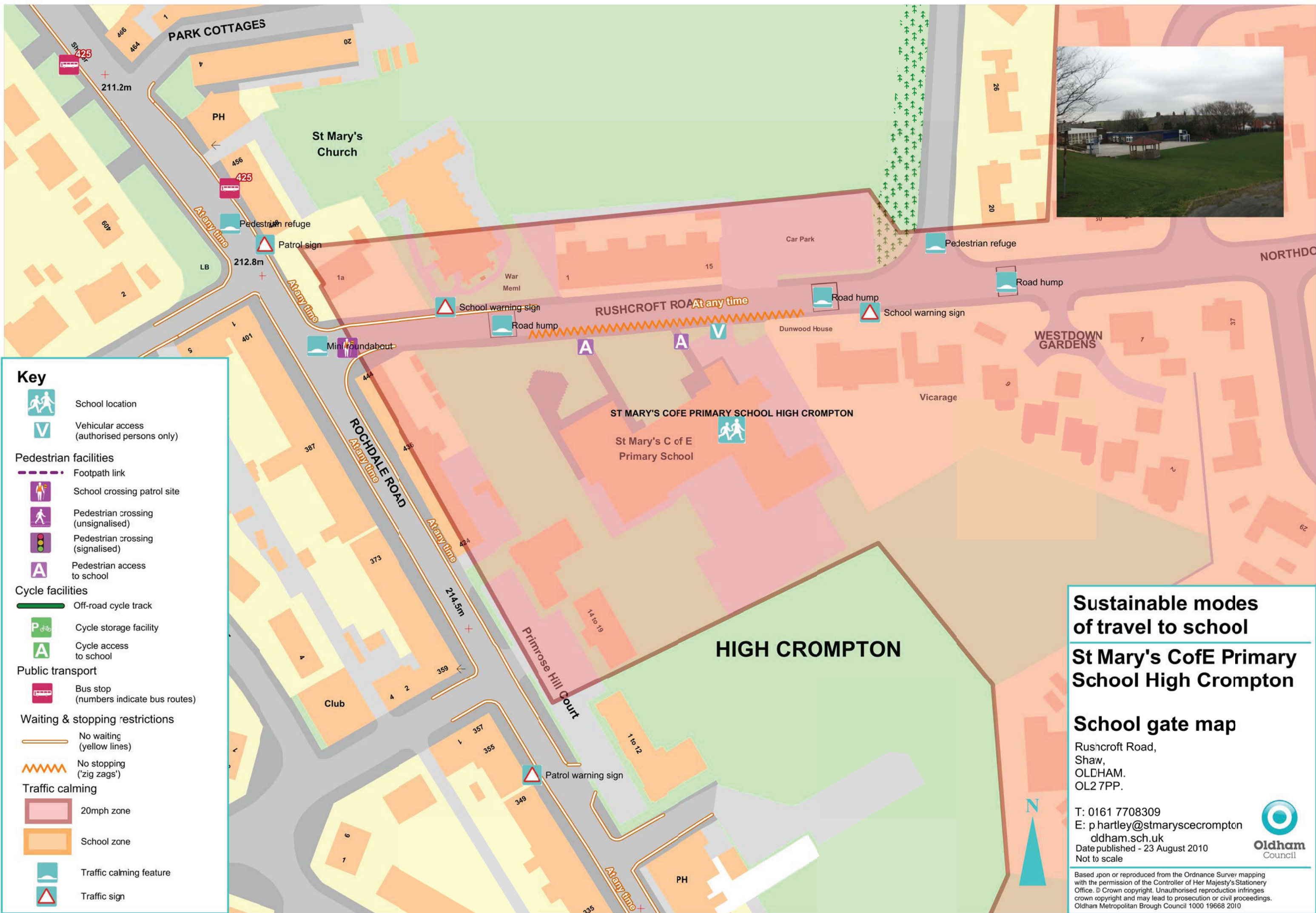
Date published - 18 August 2010  
Not to scale

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Oldham Council



## **Appendix 2 – Example School Gate Map**



## **Appendix 3 – Summary of Sustainable Travel Activities in Oldham Schools**



<b>APPENDIX 3: Summary of Sustainable Travel Activities</b>						
<b>Walking Activities</b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>
<b>Walking Bus</b>	9	0	0	14.8%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Park &amp; Stride</b>	8	0	0	13.1%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Pedestrian Road Safety Training</b>	34	2	0	55.7%	14.3%	0.0%
<b>Walk to School Events</b>	51	1	0	83.6%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Child Scooter Storage</b>	2	1	0	3.3%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Child Scooter Training</b>	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Cycle/Child Scooter Purchase/Loan Scheme</b>	3	1	0	4.9%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Cycling Activities</b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>
<b>Cycle Buddy Scheme</b>	0	1	0	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Cycle Train</b>	0	2	0	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%
<b>Cycle to School Events</b>	7	0	0	11.5%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Practical Cycling Training</b>	44	7	0	72.1%	50.0%	0.0%
<b>Cycle Maintenance Events</b>	4	2	0	6.6%	14.3%	0.0%
<b>Cycle/Child Scooter Purchase/Loan Scheme</b>	3	1	0	4.9%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Bus Travel Activities</b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>
<b>Dedicated School Bus Services</b>	3	10	0	4.9%	71.4%	0.0%
<b>Bus Behaviour Agreement</b>	0	4	0	0.0%	28.6%	0.0%
<b>Consult with Public Bus Service Operators</b>	0	7	0	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%
<b>Independent Travel Training</b>	0	1	0	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Car Share Activities</b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>
<b>Preferential Parking Spaces</b>	0	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Car Share Database</b>	1	1	0	1.6%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>General Activities</b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>	<b><u>Primary</u></b>	<b><u>Secondary</u></b>	<b><u>Further</u></b>
<b>Produce promotional material</b>	25	8	0	41.0%	57.1%	0.0%
<b>Actively promote sustainable travel modes</b>	28	1	0	45.9%	7.1%	0.0%
<b>Consult with Police over road safety issues</b>	40	11	0	65.6%	78.6%	0.0%
<b>Student sustainable travel representative</b>	4	0	0	6.6%	0.0%	0.0%
<b>School debates on the topic of sustainable travel</b>	17	0	1	27.9%	0.0%	33.3%
<b>Road safety/sustainable travel within the curriculum</b>	50	6	1	82.0%	42.9%	33.3%
<b>Webpage containing sustainable travel information</b>	0	2	1	0.0%	14.3%	33.3%