

South Lakeland District Council Active Travel Position Statement

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South Lakeland District Council is working to promote active travel.

What is Active Travel?

Making your journeys by walking and cycling – it may be in combination with public transport, ‘Sustainable Transport’.

Why Active Travel?

It is beneficial for our health, our places and our environment

- Large numbers of the population are currently overweight or obese – in South Lakeland it is estimated that 65.8% of adults are which equates to approximately 57,800 adults.
- Excess weight can lead to a large number of health conditions – including obesity, some cancers, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obstructive sleep apnoea and mental health problems.
- Physical inactivity directly contributes to 1 in 6 deaths in the UK and costs £7.4 billion a year to business and wider society
- Active travel can be effective as a solution as it can fit into a person’s daily routine.
- Private transport tends to better serve those already advantaged in other ways.
- We recognise that the rural nature of the district builds great dependency on the car, yet alternatives should be pursued where opportunities exist.
- Walking is free and can be targeted at the entire population as the barriers to participation are much lower than with other forms of exercise.
- “For most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life. Examples include walking or cycling instead of travelling by car.” Chief Medical Officers, Start Active, Stay Active 2011
- A move to active travel will have benefits for the individual – but also for the population as well. We can improve air quality; reduce carbon emissions and the quality of our public realm.
- Motorised road transport contributes to a range of health hazards and health inequalities, including air and noise pollution, injuries, road danger and loss of routine physical activity opportunities.
- 75% of all car journeys in Kendal both start and end within the town –there is the potential for a large number of these journeys to move across to active travel.

- Motorists are not necessarily better customers than pedestrians, cyclists or public transport users. A report by the European Commission (1999) reports the findings of a study in Munster, Germany in which approximately 75 per cent of motorists surveyed purchased two or fewer bags of goods. A large number could easily have carried their shopping on foot, by bicycle or on the bus (Tolley, 2011).
- In South Lakeland 613 out of 1000 people own a car or a van, this accounts for 84.7% of households owning a vehicle, this ranks as 64th highest car ownership out of 348 local authority areas (RAC, 2012).

Strategic Fit

Our ambition is shared by others:

Organisation	Strategy	Priorities
Public Health England	Everybody Active, Every Day	<p>Specific focus on healthy environments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Linking across disciplines: planning and policy 2. Embedding activity for all 3. Developing health towns, villages and communities
Cumbria County Council and Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCCG)	The Cumbria Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016 to 2019	<p>Every child has the best start in life: tackling childhood obesity and improve mental wellbeing of children.</p> <p>Adults lead healthy and fulfilling lives: Tackling obesity and improving the mental health and wellbeing of adults.</p> <p>Older adults are able to live independent and health lives: reducing the number of falls and tackling social isolation.</p>
Town and Country Planning Association and Public Health England	Planning Healthy Weight Environments	<p>Themes include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Movement and access 2. Open spaces, recreation and play 3. Food 4. Neighbourhood spaces 5. Building design 6. Local economy

Active travel is relevant to all four priorities in the council plan:

Council priority	Action
Health and Wellbeing	Active travel will help to improve physical activity levels, reduce obesity and the burden of disease on the local population, it will also reduce mortality associated with particulate air pollution and improve wellbeing.
Environment	Moving towards active and sustainable transport will improve the air quality of the district and reduce carbon emissions – this is of particular importance in Kendal where there is an Air Quality Management Area in place.
Economy	Walking and cycling tourism can bring significant tourism revenue, especially to rural areas. Active travel can enable improvement in the public realm, creating more attractive and memorable places. Active travel and sustainable transport can reduce congestion. Healthier employees are more productive, happier and less likely to be sick.
Housing	Cycle, multi-use pathways and open spaces can be incorporated into both housing and business developments to improve transport choice, population health, create attractive environments and stronger communities to live in.

How we promote active travel

The council already promotes active travel, through its work as a planning authority, public health and protection, management of parks, open spaces and public realm, parking management, the financial support it provides to communities and organisations to act and being active in other partners' schemes.

The action plan brings together all of the work that the council is currently undertaking which promotes active travel. It will be used to help identify gaps and opportunities going forwards.

How we will focus our work

We will focus on work that contributes to these three priorities:

1. Improve health and wellbeing
2. Promote a move across to active and sustainable transport
3. Improves the quality of the environment

When making decisions consideration will also be given to:

- Potential impact of the initiative
- Cost
- Ability to deliver
- Likelihood of success
- Other partner organisations involved