

# WALKING STRATEGY



June 2005



Environment Services

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# WALKING STRATEGY

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Why a Walking Strategy?

Walking is the most frequently used way of making a trip. By promoting walking in Torbay, it will increase sustainable travel, reduce congestion and improve health of those living and working in the Bay. The strategy will also address issues concerning social inclusion in Torbay. The Walking Strategy forms an integral part of the existing Torbay and emerging second Local Transport Plan.

### 1.2 The Way Forward

The purpose of this strategy is to outline the progress that has been made to date in delivering the above purposes and identify channels that can be used to progress the encouragement of walking in Torbay.

## 2. BACKGROUND POLICIES

### 2.1 National Policies

#### 2.1.1 National Walking Strategy

A National Walking Strategy has yet to be agreed by Government. However, the 'Framework for a local walking strategy (2000)' reflects the guidance in the Transport White Paper (2000) and outlines four key objectives to be met to implement a successful walking strategy.

- Improve physical infrastructure.
- Improve safety and security.
- Promote walking.
- Involve others, such as local business and interest groups.

Measures identified in the framework that can help achieve these objectives are:

- Inspect and rectify existing physical infrastructure and improve maintenance standards;
- Identify and improve lighting, crossings, signal settings, traffic calming, accident remedial schemes and signing along pedestrian routes;
- Encourage road safety training;
- Implement safer routes to school and school travel plans;
- Encourage work place travel plans;
- Undertake travel awareness and health campaigns;
- Engage in joint schemes and development campaigns through partnership working.

The framework highlights the importance of monitoring walking and suggests the following indicators:

- The number of people walking to commute and for leisure.
- Percentage of walkers satisfied with the infrastructure.
- The number of valid claims for falls on footways.

- The number of pedestrians killed or injured.
- Percentage of school journeys on foot.
- Percentage of work journeys on foot.
- The number of patients with heart disease who walk more.
- The number of joint initiatives set up to assist in the implementation of the walking strategy.
- Amount of third party funds secured for implementing the walking strategy.

### 2.1.2 Planning Policy Guidance

Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 3 (2000) on Housing calls for sustainable patterns of development to reduce car dependence and places the need of people before the ease of traffic movement when designing the layout of residential development.

PPG 13 (2000) on Transport identifies key measures to ensure people can walk to new developments and promotes travel plans for workplaces and schools to help reduce peak-time congestion and improve fitness.

### 2.1.3 Walking and Cycling: an Action Plan

The Department for Transport have developed a Walking and Cycling Action Plan (2004) to be implemented over the next five years. 25 actions have been identified that relate to encouraging walking and improving the walking environment.

## 2.2 Local Policies

### 2.2.1 Devon Structure Plan

The Devon Structure Plan (Adopted 1999) presents an overarching strategy for integrated transport that identifies the need to reduce travel and encourage alternatives to the private car. The policies highlight the importance of landuse planning to minimise the extent of travel and to promote a transport hierarchy of 1. Walking; 2. Cycling; 3. Public Transport and 4. Private vehicles.

### 2.2.2 Torbay Local Plan (2004)

The Local Plan commits to requiring new non-residential development to be permitted only where it is possible for more than 50% of users to gain access by foot, cycle or public transport.

The need for provision of pedestrian facilities in shopping centres is identified. Commitment is made to implement pedestrian facilities in improvement schemes for Torquay, Paignton and Brixham Town Centres.

### 2.2.3 Torbay Local Transport Plan 2001-2006

S1.3 of the 2001-2006 Local Transport Plan sets out the Strategy to Encourage Walking.

The strategy notes that walking is the most frequent way of making a trip and it is also the most sustainable. The level of accidents involving pedestrians is noted as one aspect that needs addressing. A full list of Objectives and Operational Policies identified in the strategy is found in Annex A.

#### 2.2.3.1 Targets and Indicators

Targets and Indicators relating to Walking are found in Annex B.

### **3 LOCAL PROGRESS**

#### **3.1 Torbay Local Transport Plan APR 2004**

The successes during 2003/04, as identified in the 2004 Annual Progress Report, are identified in Annex C.

### **4 WALKING STRATEGY DELIVERY PROGRAMME**

#### **4.1 Overview**

The delivery of the Walking Strategy is programmed for both the existing LTP and the 2006/11 LTP to ensure that it is in line with both local and national policies.

To support and encourage walking in Torbay, there is more to be done to reach the targets set out in the LTP. The schemes identified to achieve this have either already been implemented, need implementation as a matter of urgency, to reach LTP and Council Policy requirements, or need implementation in the future to ensure that the promotion of walking as a sustainable alternative to using the private car remains a Council priority.

#### **4.2 Ongoing**

##### **4.2.1 Walking to Work**

Developer advice for producing Transportation Assessments and Travel Plans for all major developments has been produced and has member support. This places a greater emphasis on developers having to implement facilities both on- and off-site to benefit those accessing developments on foot.

Additionally, smaller developments are expected to make a commitment to encouraging staff to use alternatives to the car to travel to work, and walking is likely to be the most obvious solution.

The effective use of developer Section 106 agreements have secured Workplace Travel Plans in many situations. 20 businesses, including the 5 major employers in the Bay now have travel plans (voluntary and from planning consent), although there are those who do not currently view them as a priority.

##### **4.2.2 Walking to School**

Liaison between staff within the Council led to the Government Safer Routes to School initiative being implemented in 1998, which aims to improve infrastructure and facilities for pedestrians around schools.

Walk to School Week, carried out twice a year, continues to be well supported by Torbay schools since it was first promoted in 2000. This also attracts media attention, which raises the profile of the benefits of walking in the Bay. Subsequently, 67% of schools currently take part in this initiative.

Walking to school has been successfully measured through a Hands Up Survey carried out in May 2004, where over 90% of the schools responded. Of these schools, covering both primary and secondary schools, 46% of children walk to school. The survey also highlighted that the schools with highest percentage of car use were denominational schools.

Road Safety Training is undertaken in schools in a number of ways. Child Pedestrian Training Courses are provided to Year 2 and 3 pupils on request. Additionally, Junior Lifeskills Training is offered to

Year 6 pupils. The Road Safety Officer can also assist in setting up initiatives, such as walking buses and 'Park and Stride' schemes.

External funding offered jointly by the DfES and DfT 'Grants for School Travel Plans Scheme' has encouraged 22 schools to draw up travel plans. This can also highlight areas that need addressing in terms of other services the Council provides such as training or highways engineering measures.

School Travel Plans have also been implemented as an integral part of new capital works made to the school through the planning process.

#### **4.2.3 Walking for Health and Leisure**

Walking for health and leisure in Torbay takes place at two distinct levels.

Partnership working with local stakeholders has enabled the Baywalks scheme, to be undertaken. It is funded by the Countryside Agency, and has direct links to improving levels of health and fitness, as well as addressing social inclusion in Torbay. The Baywalks Initiative appeals to those wishing to walk short distances for health and leisure purposes. The scheme offers walkers the opportunity to be led on short guided walks, or follow a set route, details of which are contained within an information pack. Packs have been produced for Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. Most of these walks make use of public footways and parks within the main settlements in Torbay.

For those walking greater distances either for tourism and leisure purposes, public rights of way footpaths are used to a greater extent. A Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan has been produced as a requirement of the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 and an Access Forum exists for people to debate walking issues on public rights of way. The Ramblers Association also lead walks for people of varying abilities, usually commencing with a minimum distance of four miles.

The Torbay Development Agency has produced a guide of 16 leisure walks around Torbay, which have been well received by locals and visitors alike.

#### **4.2.4 Infrastructure**

Pedestrian facilities have been improved to encourage walking in Torbay, where funding has been secured. In particular, large pedestrianisation schemes in the four main shopping centres in Torbay have been completed. The Council has a policy of installing dropped kerbs at pedestrian crossing points where maintenance is taking place. Additionally, all schemes proposed by the Council are audited to take into account pedestrian access and safety. Implementation of pedestrian facilities has also been achieved through the development of Section 106 Agreements with major developments, through the planning process.

Central Area Studies have been carried out for the town centres of Brixham, Paignton and Torquay, which all support improving conditions for pedestrians in these towns. Work has commenced in Torquay to implement the recommended improvements.

#### **4.2.5 Consultation**

Internally, consultation and liaison takes place with Highways, Development Control, Environmental Health, Human Resources and Legal Services on all matters relating to walking. Walking issues, where they relate to highways maintenance or new road schemes, are also considered by the Transport Strategy Working Party and approved where appropriate.

Externally, walking issues are discussed through the Lifestyles and the Baywalks partnerships; more specific issues are discussed at the Public Rights of Way Access Forum.

### **4.3 Mid Term Priorities - until 2011**

#### **4.3.1 Walking to Work**

All the employers with approved company Travel Plans, in Torbay, will be revisited periodically and encouraged to actively promote them, where this is not being achieved satisfactorily. Travel to Work statistics will be compiled for all businesses in Torbay who operate an active travel plan so as to give an indication of areas where walking has increased or needs to be improved.

Businesses will be encouraged to raise the profile of walking to work, by promoting the benefits, to improve on the 2001 Census figure of 15.6%. This will be achieved, where possible, by implementing travel plans.

Businesses will be encouraged to take part in 'In Town, Without My Car Day', which was carried out for the first time in 2004 with no funding. The success of this is noted in Annex D. The possibility of a road closure for this event, to match other major urban areas in Europe, will be examined.

#### **4.3.2 Walking to School**

Promotion of Walk to School Week will be increased by using local media opportunities and through the increased implementation of school travel plans, which will encourage more schools to take part.

The Government expects all schools to have a travel plan by 2010 and has placed an emphasis on increasing levels of walking and cycling. The School Travel Strategy has been updated and actions relating to walking to school will be given priority.

The DfES/DfT funding for school travel plans will continue until at least 2006 and efforts to engage schools in this process will be increased.

#### **4.3.3 Walking for Health and Leisure**

The Baywalks scheme has funding until June 2005. While the existing walking groups are self-sustaining, funding is required to co-ordinate issues such as insurance and publicity. Without funding, it is unlikely that the scheme will continue with the same structure beyond June 2005.

The Public Right of Way (PROW) Improvement Plan, on adoption, will make a commitment to undertake yearly inspections of the PROW network and to review public comments on it. This will feed into BVPI178 of the Local Transport Plan.

Links will be made with the South West Coast Path Association to increase promotion of the South West Coast Path, which runs through Torbay following the coastline where practical.

Given the reliance on the tourist industry in Torbay to maintain and improve the local economy, hoteliers will be encouraged to promote sustainable travel for both staff and visitors to the Bay. This will be carried out by encouraging travel plans to be put in place, promoting green credentials and updating literature to ensure walking routes to and from hotel sites are clearly defined. Work will also be carried out in conjunction with the main Tourism stakeholders in Torbay to ensure that walking is promoted wherever possible.

#### **4.3.4 Infrastructure**

Torbay Council has implemented a decriminalised parking enforcement regime across the Bay which came into effect in April 2005. Prior to this, illegal and inappropriate parking on

pavements has been common place. The implementation of the decriminalisation parking enforcement, will make pavements and pedestrianised areas safer and more inviting for people to use.

Brixham, Paignton and Torquay have all been subjected to Central Area Traffic Studies and the recommendations for all three seek to improve conditions for pedestrians. The works have already started in Torquay and will commence in Brixham and Paignton when funds become available. The schemes are scheduled for completion in all three towns by the end of the Second Local Transport Plan period in 2011.

The Council will continue the Safer Routes to School schemes and look to implement Transport Action Zones, commencing with Winner Street in Paignton.

#### **4.3.5 Consultation**

Discussion will take place with the Parks Department to ensure that walking is well represented in the Parks Strategy. Links will be made with the Tourism Department and the Torbay Development Agency to improve communication help create initiatives that promote walking. A sub-group of the Environment Forum or the Access Forum may be other useful channels to debate walking topics.

#### **4.3.6 National Policy**

Government changes to the planning system will see the implementation of a Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, and the removal of development plans at County level. Transport policy will be a key part of the strategy and Torbay Council will take steps to ensure local transport policy issues are heard.

A requirement from Government is to undertake Accessibility Planning, which aims to link local facilities such as doctor's surgeries, hospitals, shops, parks and schools with the transport network. This will become a useful development tool for planners, and for providing information to the public to access local services.

#### **4.3.7 Other Issues**

The necessity to increase resource levels to accommodate the greater emphasis of maintaining and developing sustainable travel modes cannot be overplayed. This will involve meeting training requirements and monitoring to assure targets and performance indicators are achieved.

It will be necessary to provide an annual capital and revenue allocation so as to ensure that the Council's commitment to walking is maintained. This will enable the implementation of soft measures to encourage walking such as marketing and publications.

Additionally, there will also be a requirement to educate vehicle drivers to improve their understanding of pedestrians' needs on the public highway.

### **4.4 Long Term Priorities - beyond 2011**

In July 2004, the Government produced 'The Future of Transport' which highlighted their plan until 2030. In terms of walking, the key objectives will be to make targets more focussed, improve street design to meet the needs of locals, to promote Home Zones and to encourage children to learn skills that will give them the ability to walk safely.

Development in Government priorities and legislation, and those of Europe, will undoubtedly influence the future of walking as a primary mode of travel.

## ANNEX A - OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONAL POLICIES, TORBAY LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2001-2006

### Objectives

- Create and enhance a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians within urban areas;
- Reduce the actual and potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles on the highway;
- Increase perceived security for pedestrians on all footpaths and pedestrian routes;
- Increase space for pedestrians, where capacity problems exist, particularly in the main shopping and tourist areas;
- Ensure all new works to the highway improve conditions for pedestrians;
- Increase the level of walking to school and work;
- Encourage walking as a recreational activity;
- Ensure that all new development can be accessed safely and conveniently by foot.

Operational Policy	Responsible Division
Undertake a pedestrian audit of all schemes proposed by the Council and developers	Highways
Improve pavements and other pedestrian areas in the main shopping areas of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham	Highways, Operational Services
Where appropriate, increase pavement widths in district shopping centres, key tourist areas and other key locations where there is significant pedestrian activity	Highways, Operational Services
Undertake a pedestrian audit of all main road corridors to identify sites where pedestrians experience difficulties in crossing the road, and to bring forward a series of improvements to reduce these problems	Highways, Strategic Transportation
Undertake a specific analysis of accidents involving pedestrians and identify and remedial measures required	Highways
Undertake an audit of local pedestrian routes, as part of the Traffic Management Zones initiative, and include appropriate measures to reduce any identified inadequacies	Highways
Working with teachers, governors, parents and pupils, agree school travel actions plans, progress the "safer routes to school initiatives" and support measures to increase the number of staff and pupils walking to school	Highways, Strategic Transportation

<b>Operational Policy continued...</b>	<b>Responsible Division</b>
In partnership with local employers, businesses and retailers, encourage the adoption of Transport Plans and support other measures which encourage walking to work, shop or leisure activities	Strategic Transportation
Promote, particularly in partnership with local transport operators, walking as a recreational activity, including the use of the South West Coast path, country parks and urban heritage trails	Strategic Transportation, Transport Co-ordination, Tourism, Torbay Development Agency
Ensure all new development is provided with an appropriate network of safe and attractive footpath, both on-site and from adjacent areas	Strategic Transportation
Require all developers and operators of new development to implement Transport plans, which encourage access to the facility by foot.	Strategic Transportation

## ANNEX B - TARGETS AND INDICATORS RELATING TO WALKING

The targets and indicators relating to walking were initially developed during the production of the Torbay Local Transport Plan 2001-2006. However, they have been updated and included in the Annual Progress Report 2004. Most indicators is monitored annually.

### Core Indicators

- Number of people killed or seriously injured - thus far Torbay Council has delivered a reduction in the number of KSI's in line with the national target.
- Number of children killed or seriously injured - Torbay Council has already delivered a reduction in child KSI's equal to the national reduction target for 2010. A new target will be developed for the next LTP.

### Local Indicators

- T1 - Reduce percentage of trips to work by car - data from 2002/3 showed small reduction in the proportion of work trips made by car, in line with the local target. Progress against this target will be reviewed following further surveys next year
- T3 - Reduce number of children being driven to school - the recently 2004 hands up surveys shows that the proportion of children being driven to school has returned to 2000 levels, indicating a small reduction over recent years.
- PT3 - Reduce social exclusion for the elderly - Torbay Council has increased the number of Devonwide cards by 12% this year. The Council is on track to meet its target to double the number of cards by 2010.
- RS1 - Reduce pedestrian KSI's - as a result of the implementation of local safety schemes, and the pedestrianisation of main shopping streets, the number of pedestrian KSI's has now levelled off at a figure in line with local targets.
- RS2 - Reduce number of slight injuries - the number of slight injuries continues to fall in line with targets, as a result of the continuing implementation of local safety schemes at accident cluster sites.
- RS3 - Reduce number of reported accidents - this figure continues to fall, although inconsistencies between the Council and Police databases mean that figures for 2003/4 are not available.
- RS5 - Reduce number of child KSI's - as a result of a wide range of Council initiatives, including the safer journeys to school programme, this figure has now levelled off in line with Torbay Council's target.
- RS6 - Reduce total number of KSI's - this figure continues to fall in line with targets. This results from the programmes of the Council in treating accident cluster sites sites, improving road safety education throughout the community, the safer journeys to school programme and the implementation of area wide traffic management zones.
- A7 - Improve multi-modal interchanges - although it has not been possible to deliver an interchange scheme this year, due to delays with the Torquay Station project, Torbay Council is still on target to have improved all 6 identified interchanges by 2006.

- W1 - Improve the percentage of footways that are easy to use BV178 - although this is a newly adopted target, timeline data is available. This shows a steady improvement in the condition of footpaths, in line with local targets.
- W2 - Upgrade pedestrian crossings - Torbay Council has delivered a further 4 improved crossings during 2003/4. This means that the Council is on track to meet its target for all crossings to have been treated by 2006.
- T2 - increase the number of employers with travel plans - although delays with major planning applications have reduced the number of new travel plans implemented in 2003/4, Torbay Council is still on track to meet its target of 25 travel plans by 2006.
- T4 - increase the number of safer journeys to school schemes completed - during 2003/4 the emphasis within this programme has been on a number of smaller schemes. However, with only 2 sites left to be treated by 2006, Torbay Council is well ahead of schedule to meet its targets.
- T5 - increase the proportion of students covered by school travel plans - Torbay Council has continued the implementation of new travel plans, with a further 9% of students being covered this year. Torbay Council is on track to meet its target of having all students covered by 2010.
- S4 - improve pedestrian infrastructure for the mobility impaired - Torbay Council continues to provide new drop kerbs in response to public requests. The Council exceeded its target for new kerbs during 2003/4.
- TM1 - increase pedestrianisation of main streets - although no new pedestrianised areas have been delivered during 2003/4, Torbay Council is still on target to meet its target of doubling the length of pedestrianised streets by 2006.
- TM2 - the implementation of a TMZ scheme during 2003/4 was delayed due to the need for extensive consultation, linked to the Paignton CATS scheme. However, the Council is ahead of schedule to deliver 10 of these area based schemes by 2010.

## ANNEX C - RECENT SUCCESSES RELATING TO WALKING

The information outlined below is a summary of the achievements undertaken by Torbay Council up to 2005 in relation to walking.

- Provision of pedestrian facilities through Safer Travel Schemes.
- Implementation of 22 School Travel Plans, bringing the total number of children covered by a Travel Plan to 60%.
- Negotiating 2 Workplace Travel Plans through the planning process.
- Production of draft 'Safer Routes to School' maps.
- Increase in walking for health and leisure through the Baywalks programme, in partnership with the Groundwork Trust, Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and Torbay PCT.
- Road safety measures have been implemented at all schools in the Bay to varying degrees.
- Journey to work census data identifies that 15.6% walked to work in 2001.
- Walk to school levels are currently at 46%.
- The target of reducing child accidents by 50% by 2010 has been achieved in 2002. Other local targets relating to walking remain on target to be achieved by 2010.
- Pedestrian facilities have been improved through Safer Travel Schemes at Hatfield Road and Lower Ellacombe Church Road. 13.2km of footways have been maintained through the 2003/04 delivery programme.
- Torbay Walking Guide produced to encourage leisure walking.

## **ANNEX D - IN TOWN, WITHOUT MY CAR DAY, WEDNESDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2004: AN APPRAISAL**

### **Advertising and awareness raising**

Letters and postcards were sent out to businesses within Torbay, covering Union Street and Fleet Street in Torquay, Hyde Road and Victoria Road in Paignton, Fore Street in Brixham and Yalberton Industrial Estate. 44 letters and postcards were sent to the Torbay Schools. A press release was sent out to the local press advertising the event, the event was advertised on the Torbay Council website, in libraries and Connections Offices.

Postcards were sent to all 3rd and 4th Tier Managers in Torbay Council for distribution to all staff encouraging them to take part in ITWMC day. The event was advertised on the intranet, on posters in Torbay Council offices and via a News item.

### **Response to advertising and press releases**

The event was included in a news item by Gemini Radio on Monday 20th September, as a large article on page 7 of the Herald Express on Tuesday 21st September. On the morning of Wednesday 22nd September, an as-live interview was done for BBC Radio Devon and an interview was recorded for Westcountry, which was shown on the evening news. A follow-up article was printed on page 13 of the Herald Express on Thursday 30th September.

Postcards were received from businesses, with 2 requesting help on how to cut employee car use.

Two letters were received from businesses stating that they would not be taking part because they had already paid for car parking charges.

### **Participation of In Town, Without My Car Day**

Of the teams responding to the postcards, approximately 44% of Torbay Council took part on the day.

Of the businesses, between 15% and 100% of their staff took part. Businesses that performed particularly well were The Sandwich Bar, Paignton (100%), JD Sports, Torquay (98%) and Bay Advocates, Torquay (50%).

Of the schools, those to note were Galmpton, who all car shared, 70% of staff at Eden Park Infants took part and 50% of the staff at Churston Ferrers Grammar also got involved.

### **Conclusion**

Some sections of Torbay Council staff took the day seriously, but many divisions ignored it, despite the Council being signed up to a Travel Plan.

Despite the low response from businesses, those achieving high percentages of non-car use were enthusiastic. They were also grateful for the free publicity.

The response from the schools taking place was also positive and we were thanked by some for getting them involved.

In Town, Without My Car could be more widely accepted and participated in if, in the future, there was:

- Greater advertising and promotion both internally and externally - particularly to businesses that could benefit from higher footfall.
- Road closure for the day to allow celebration of the day to be brought to 'town'.



[www.torbay.gov.uk](http://www.torbay.gov.uk)