
Topic: Public Consultation on the new Local Transport Plan (LTP3) for CWaC Council
Date: 11 January 2010
Respondent: Chester Cycle Campaign (CCycC)
Contact: Mary Gillie (Secretary): enquiries@chestercycling.co.uk

Appendix C

What are 'Smarter Choices'?

- C.1 In November 2009, DfT published *'Delivering sustainable low carbon travel: An essential guide for local authorities'*^[1]. This shows how DfT expects local authorities to approach 'Smarter Choices' in the third round of Local Transport Plans and supports the LTP3 guidance published in July 2009. It states that *"Sustainable travel initiatives can play a key role in reducing carbon emissions for transport as well as contributing to a wide range of local priorities."*
- C.2. The DfT document also suggests that *"Sustainable travel is about understanding your local area and providing for its transport needs through a range of measures which promote attractive sustainable transport alternatives such as walking, cycling and public transport. And the key is in the range of measures – by introducing a carefully selected package of complementary measures in a specific targeted location, an authority can achieve a greater and longer-term impact than through individual initiatives alone. This package is then held together by a clear and strong brand with supportive marketing."*
- C.3. The measures include techniques for influencing people's travel behaviour towards more sustainable options such as:
- School, workplace and individualised travel planning.
 - Marketing public transport services through travel awareness campaigns
 - Supporting car clubs and car share schemes
 - Promotion of walking and cycling (also known as 'active travel')
 - Encouraging teleworking and reducing the need or desire for travel.
- C.4 Smarter Choices works because it closes the gaps that exist between the perception and reality of the performance and cost of the private car against other modes. It also speeds up the dissemination of knowledge of new public transport routes and services within local communities, reduce the normal behavioural response lags. Cycling in particular can extend the reach (and therefore patronage) of public transport. TfL also see potential for active travel to avoid the need for new infrastructure altogether by reducing peak demand^[2].
- C.5. The benefits of Smarter Choices measures are increasingly established with the early positive results of the Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns (STDTs) and Cycling Demonstration Towns. Benefits stated by DfT include reduced congestion, better quality of life, improved air quality, health benefits, and carbon savings. If planned effectively, sustainable travel packages can also be low in cost, have shorter lead-in times and be generally flexible to implement. The table below shows relative changes in trips in the STDTs 2004-08.

Table C1: Relative changes in trips in the Sustainable Travel Demonstration Towns, 2004-08

Travel Mode	STDT		
	Peterborough	Worcester	Darlington
Walking	+14%	+12%	+14%
Cycling	+12%	+19%	+113%*
Bus	+35%	+20%	-2%
Car (as driver)	-9%	-7%	-9%

* During this period Darlington was also a Cycle Demonstration Town, which accounts for the significantly greater increases in cycling

C.6. Except for Darlington (where the commercial bus network was cut significantly), these are impressive increases in public transport use and reductions in car trips for an investment of £4.40 per head of population per year.

C.7. Many UK urban areas have already made large investments in Smarter Choices:

- Kent is a good example where new infrastructure (in this case the Fast Track bus way) was supported by a campaign targeted at nearby residents including free tickets and comprehensive marketing.
- Merseytravel has a central team of 8 staff with a budget of around £1 million per year. Individualised Travel Marketing Campaigns have been undertaken in Childwall and Heswall. Public transport and walking/cycling is marketed under the TravelWise brand.
- Centro manage the 'Network West Midlands' initiative - a unified sustainable travel brand that has 70% local recognition - the most recognised sustainable transport network brand outside London.
- Transport for London has a substantial Smarter Travel Unit that manages intensive sustainable travel initiatives in partnership with local districts. The area-wide Smarter Travel Sutton initiative^[3] has shown impressive increases in bus travel and cycling trips.
- TfL have also investigated the use of Smarter Choices to reduce peak hour public transport travel demand to reduce the need for new infrastructure^[4]. They have calculated the number of extra trips for public transport and other modes per £10,000 spend on Smarter Choices measures.

[1] <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/guidelocalauth/>

[2] Investing in Smarter Travel Programmes - Impacting on costs foregone to Transport for London. TfL Smarter Travel Unit October 2008

[3] See - <http://www.smartertravelsutton.org.uk/faqs>

[4] Investing in Smarter Travel Programmes: Impacts on costs foregone to TfL. TfL Smarter Travel Unit – October 2008. Note that this is unpublished, although TfL have supplied a copy in confidence.