



Department for Transport

Walking and Cycling Statistics, England: 2018

About this release

This statistical release presents information on walking and cycling in England using two main sources: the National Travel Survey (NTS) and the Active Lives Survey (ALS).

Some key uses of the data include describing patterns in walking and cycling, monitoring trends and contributing to evaluation of the impact of policies.

In this publication

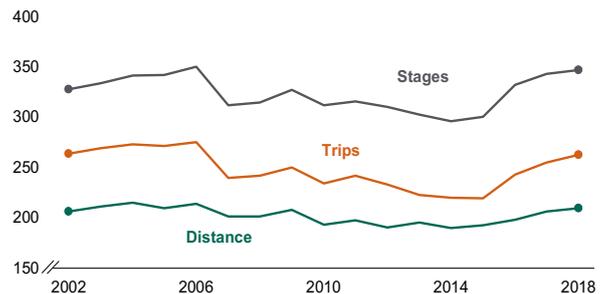
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People have walked more often and further distances over the last three years, following a period of decline.

Stages per year	Distance (miles)
2018: 347	2018: 210
2015: 300	2015: 192

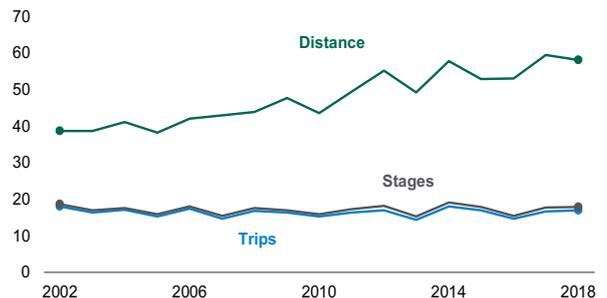


- Nearly all (97%) local authorities had at least 60% of their adult population walking at least once a week.



The average number of miles cycled has generally increased over time, but the number of cycling trips has remained flat over the same period.

Trips per year	Distance (miles)
2018: 17	2018: 58
2015: 17	2015: 53



- 11% of adults cycled at least once per week but a small number (5%) of local authorities had more than 20% of adults cycling at least once per week, with Cambridge and Oxford having the highest rates.

Interpretation of results

The results from the National Travel Survey (NTS) and the Active Lives Survey (ALS) are not directly comparable due to a number of methodological differences which are summarised below.

National Travel Survey

- Covers the calendar year, the latest being 2018.
- Interview with household members and a one week travel diary. All trip, stage and distance statistics are based on the travel diary.
- Results from the NTS in this publication are primarily based on the one week travel diary element of the survey.
- Covers all ages.
- Continuous survey which enables analysis of patterns and trends.

Active Lives Survey

- Covers a 12 month period from mid-November, the latest being mid-November 2017 to mid-November 2018.
- Push-to-web survey, with around 180,000 adults taking part in 2017-18.
- Results from the ALS are based on respondents remembering how many days they have walked or cycled in the last 28 days.
- Covers those aged 16+.
- Three years worth of data (2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18).

Feedback

We always welcome feedback to help ensure we meet the needs of users: subnational.stats@dft.gov.uk.

What dataset should I use?

The NTS includes personal travel within Great Britain, by residents of private households in England, along the public highway, by rail or by air. It allows us to look at walking and cycling in isolation, but also compare to other modes of travel and look at long term trends.

The ALS measures the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity by those aged 16+ in England. It has a much larger sample size than the NTS so allows us to look at estimates of walking and cycling at the local authority level.

National Statistics

The NTS was assessed by the UK Statistics Authority against the Code of Practice and was confirmed as National Statistics in July 2011.

Results from the ALS are not National Statistics.

Walking Factsheet: 2018

Summary [NTS]



Gender [NTS]



274 trips
212 miles



251 trips
207 miles

Women make more walking trips, and walk further than men.

Trends [NTS]

In 2018:

Trips



1% since 2002

Stages

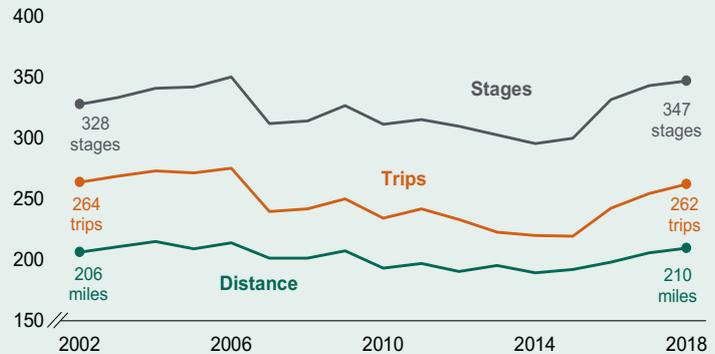


6% since 2002

Distance



2% since 2002

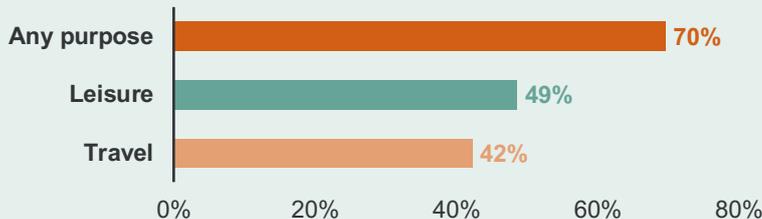


Trip: A one-way course of travel with a single main purpose. A "walking trip" is one where the greatest part was walked.

Stage: Trips consist of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the mode of transport.

Purpose [ALS]

Proportion of adults walking at least once a week, mid-Nov 2017 to mid-Nov 2018



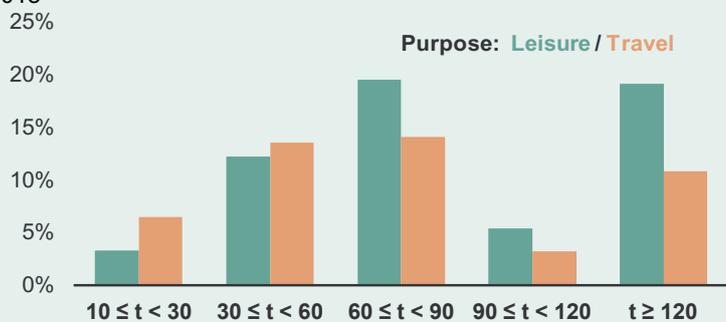
Seven out of ten adults walked at least once a week. More adults walked for leisure than for travel. This is similar to previous years.

Leisure: For the pleasure or value of the activity

Travel: Getting from A to B **Any:** Leisure or Travel

Time spent walking [ALS]

Proportion of adults walking, by purpose, mid-Nov 2017 to mid-Nov 2018



t = usual time spent walking each day walked in minutes

When adults walked for over 2 hours, they were more likely to be walking for leisure rather than travel.

Car access [NTS]



389 trips
303 miles



234 trips
189 miles

People without access to a car walk more and further than those that have access to a car.

Mobility [NTS]



264 trips
225 miles



138 trips
84 miles

Adults with no mobility difficulties make twice as many walking trips and walk nearly three times as far as those with mobility difficulties.

Travel purpose [NTS]



23% of walking trips are for **just walking**



20% of walking trips are for **education/escort education**

Escort Education: Escorting or accompanying a child/children to school.

Sources: NTS: National Travel Survey 2018 (any walking on the public highway)

ALS: Active Lives Survey 2017-2018 (aged 16+ only, walk: at least 10 minutes)

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Cycling Factsheet: 2018

Summary [NTS]



17 cycling trips
18 cycling stages
58 miles cycled
23 minutes per trip

Gender [NTS]



10 trips
25 miles



25 trips
92 miles

Men cycle 2.5 times as many trips and almost four times further than women.

Trends [NTS]

In 2018:

Trips



5% since 2002

Stages

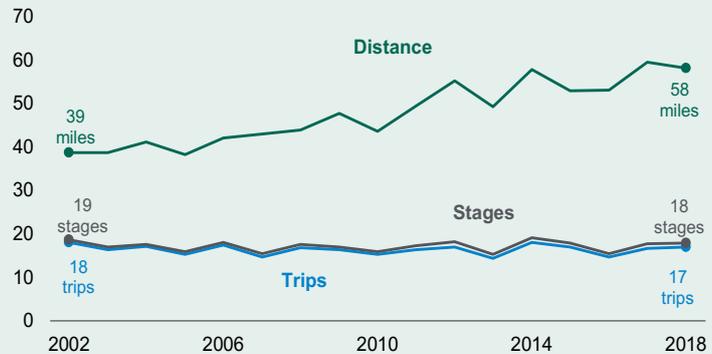


3% since 2002

Distance



50% since 2002

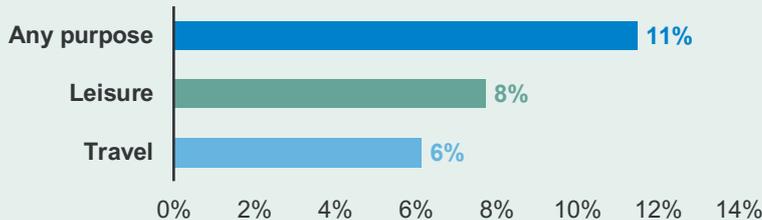


Trip: A one-way course of travel with a single main purpose. A "cycling trip" is one where the greatest part was cycled.

Stage: Trips consist of one or more stages. A new stage is defined when there is a change in the mode of transport.

Purpose [ALS]

Proportion of adults cycling at least once a week, mid-Nov 2017 to mid-Nov 2018



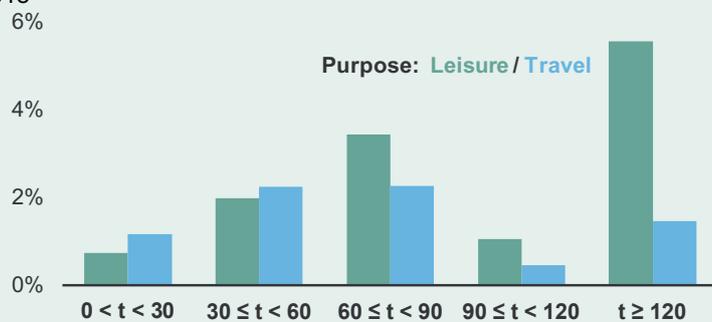
Just over one in ten adults cycled at least once a week. More adults cycled for leisure than for travel. This is similar to previous years.

Leisure: For the pleasure or value of the activity

Travel: Getting from A to B **Any:** Leisure or Travel

Time spent cycling [ALS]

Proportion of adults cycling, by purpose, mid-Nov 2017 to mid-Nov 2018



t = usual time spent cycling each day cycled in minutes

When adults cycled for over 2 hours, they were far more likely to be cycling for leisure rather than travel.

Car access [NTS]



26 trips
75 miles



15 trips
55 miles

People without access to a car cycle more and further than those that have access to a car.

Mobility [NTS]



19 trips
72 miles



1 trips
10 miles

Adults with no mobility difficulties make far more cycle trips and cycle over seven times as far as those with mobility difficulties.

Travel purpose [NTS]



36% of cycling trips are for **commuting/business**



35% of cycling trips are for **leisure purposes**

Leisure purposes: Visit friends at home and elsewhere, entertainment, sport, holiday and day trip.

Sources: NTS: National Travel Survey 2018 (any cycling on the public highway)

ALS: Active Lives Survey 2017-2018 (aged 16+ only, any cycling)

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Trends in walking

People on average have walked more often and further distances in the last three years, after a decline in recent years.

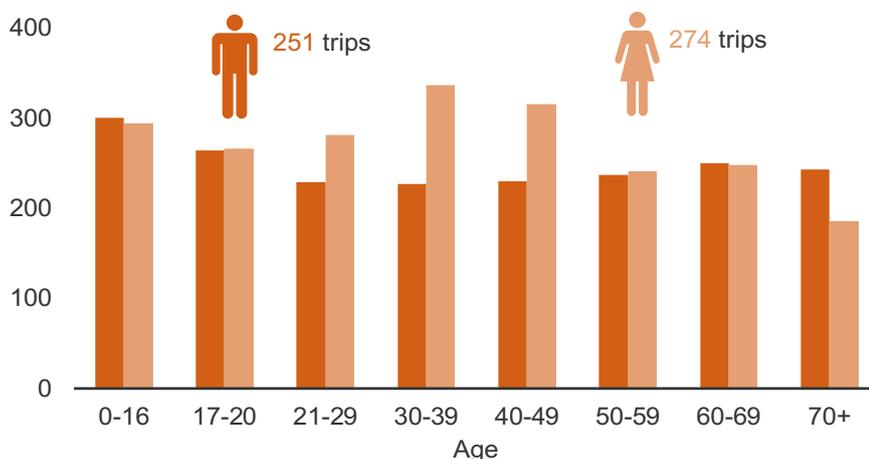
In 2018, people walked a total of 19,431 million stages in England. The average person:

- made 347 walking stages;
- walked 210 miles;
- spent about 83 minutes a week travelling by foot;
- made 27% of all their trips by walking;
- covered 3% of all their distance travelled by walking.

The number of walking trips and the reasons for walking differ between men and women, and people of different ages.

In 2018, women on average made 23 more walking trips than men and walked 5 miles further. Women in their thirties (aged 30 to 39) made the highest number of walking trips. One possible reason for this is that women in their thirties make four times as many escort education trips than men of the same age, and walking is the most common mode used to make these trips.

Chart 1: Walking trips per person per year, by age and gender, England, 2018 [NTS0601]



Walks in the NTS

A **walking stage** in the NTS is one where someone walks as part of an overall trip. If the walk stage constitutes the longest stage in the trip by distance, it is also classed as **walking trip**. Walks under 50 yards and off the public highway are excluded. Walks over 50 yards but under 1 mile (“short walks”) were recorded on day 1 of the travel diary.

Distance figures include walks made as part of any trip.

CWIS objective

Walking stages are the main metric for one of the objectives in the Department’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

For more information, please see the [Methodology notes](#).

Factors influencing walking rates

Adults with mobility difficulties walk far less often and much shorter distances.

In 2018, adults with no mobility difficulties walked twice as many trips as those with mobility difficulties (264 trips compared to 138 trips) and walked nearly three times as far.

People without access to a car are far more reliant on walking as a mode of transport.

People in households without access to a car made 53% of all their trips and 11% of their distance travelled by foot. This compares to 23% of trips and 3% of distance for those in households with access to a car.

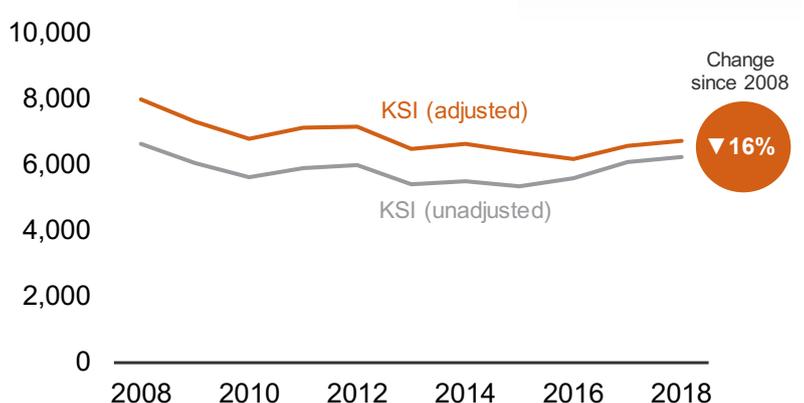
The most common reason that people cite for not walking more is that they walk enough already.

In 2018, the NTS asked respondents to select reasons that applied to them from a list of reasons for not walking more. The most common reason selected by far was “Walk enough already” with 37% of respondents indicating this was a reason for them not walking more.

The number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured has generally been decreasing.

In Great Britain, the number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured has decreased by 16% from 7,977 in 2008 to 6,710 in 2018 (using the series adjusted for changes in severity reporting), although the trend in the last 5 years is broadly flat with a slight rise in the latest year.

Chart 2: Pedestrians killed or seriously injured (adjusted and unadjusted), Great Britain, 2008 to 2018 [[RAS30001](#)]



Mobility difficulties

In this context, an adult (aged 16+) has mobility difficulties, if they say they have difficulties travelling on foot, by bus or both.

In 2018, 9% of adults reported that they had mobility difficulties.

Adjusted KSI figures

Serious and slight road accident figures have been adjusted to account for a change in severity reporting systems in a large number of forces who record road accidents. We recommend using the adjusted figures for understanding trends over time.

For more information see [Reported road casualties Great Britain, main results: 2018](#).

Local area walking rates

Nearly all (97%) local authorities had at least 60% of their adult population walking at least once a week.

The local authority with the highest prevalence of walking at least once a week was the City of London* (87%), followed by Isles of Scilly* (83%) and Richmond upon Thames (83%). Note that figures for City of London and Isles of Scilly should be interpreted with caution due to their smaller sample sizes.

Ten local authorities had less than 60% of their adult population walking at least once a week, with Pendle having the lowest prevalence at 55%.

Map 1: Proportion of adults walking at least once a week by Local Authority, England, 2017-2018 [CW0303]

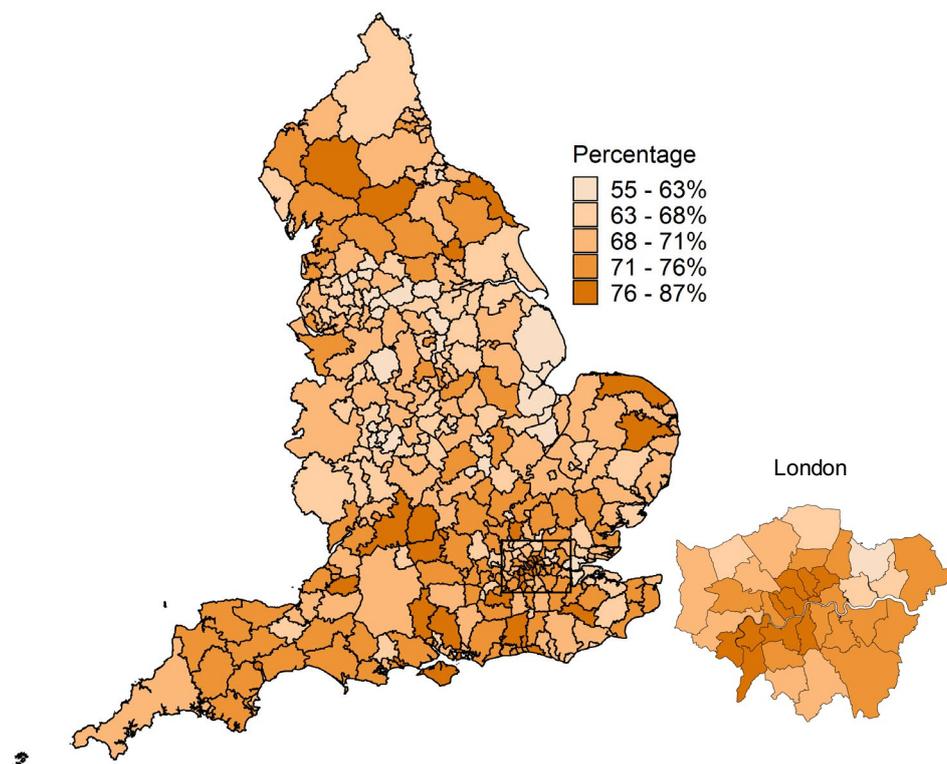


Table 1: Top and bottom five local authorities for walking at least once a week, England, 2017-2018 [CW0303]

Local Authority	%	Local Authority	%
City of London*	86.5	Boston	58.6
Isles of Scilly*	83.4	Rotherham	58.5
Richmond upon Thames	83.1	Sandwell	57.9
Kingston upon Thames	82.5	Hyndburn	56.5
Cambridge	82.4	Pendle	54.6

How accurate are these local estimates?

The Active Lives Survey has a standard sample size of at least 500 persons per local authority.

The data tables accompanying this release include 95% confidence interval half widths, which demonstrate the accuracy of the estimates and the likely range of values for the true value. For more information, see the "[Notes and Definitions](#)" document.

*Note that due to their small size, the estimate for City of London and Isles of Scilly has a higher degree of error associated with it.

Trends in cycling

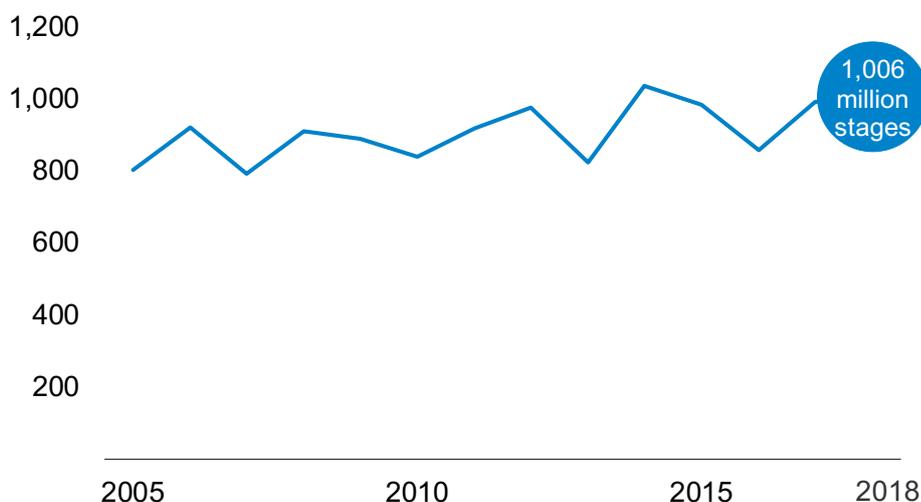
The average number of miles cycled per person has generally increased since 2002, but the number of cycling trips remained at a similar level to previous years.

In 2018, people cycled a total of 1,006 million stages. The average person:

- made 17 cycling trips (and 18 cycling stages);
- cycled 58 miles, 50% higher than in 2002;
- spent about 8 minutes a week travelling by bike;
- made 2% of all their trips by cycling;
- covered 1% of all their distance by cycling.

Chart 3: Total stages cycled per year in millions, England, 2005 to 2018

[\[CW0403\]](#)



If we look at "cyclists", that is people who recorded the use of a bicycle in their NTS travel diary at least once, we get a different picture. In 2018, cyclists made on average 333 trips per year (about 6 trips a week) and travelled around 1,104 miles per year, 61% further than in 2002.

What is a cycling trip in the NTS?

A cycling trip in the NTS is one where cycling is the main mode in terms of distance. Distance figures include cycling stages made as part of any trip. The number of respondents using this mode is small, so results (particularly year-on-year variability) should be interpreted with caution.

Due to these small sample numbers, sometimes we average over more than one year to increase the reliability of the data.

CWIS objective

Cycling stages are the main metric for one of the objectives in the Department's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

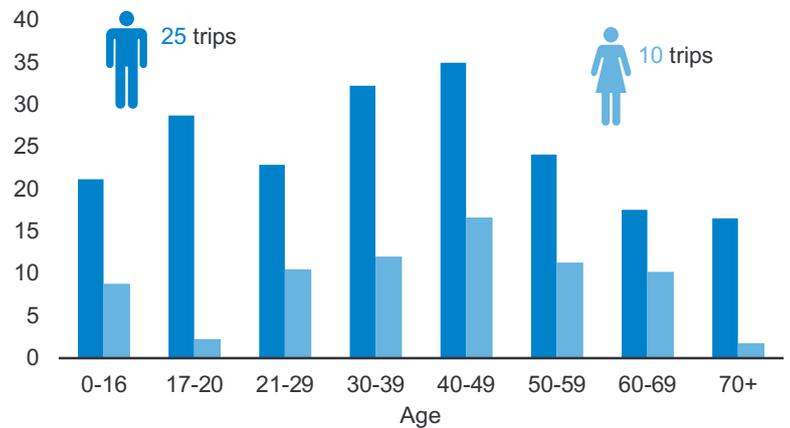
For more information, please see the [Methodology notes](#).

Trends in cycling

Men cycle more often and further than women, and adults in their forties cycle the most.

In 2018, men made 15 more cycle trips than women (25 trips compared to 10 trips), and cycled almost four times further than women (92 miles compared to 25 miles). Adults aged 40–49 made the most cycling trips for both men and women.

Chart 4: Cycling trips per person per year, by age and gender, England, 2018 [NTS0601]



Factors influencing cycling rates

Two fifths of people have access to a bicycle.

In England, 42% of people aged over 5 owned or had access to a bicycle in 2016 to 2018 combined. This proportion has remained the same as previous years. Bicycle ownership is most prevalent amongst people aged under 17 years old.

Having no interest in cycling and road safety concerns are the most common reasons cited for people not cycling more, along with there being too much traffic.

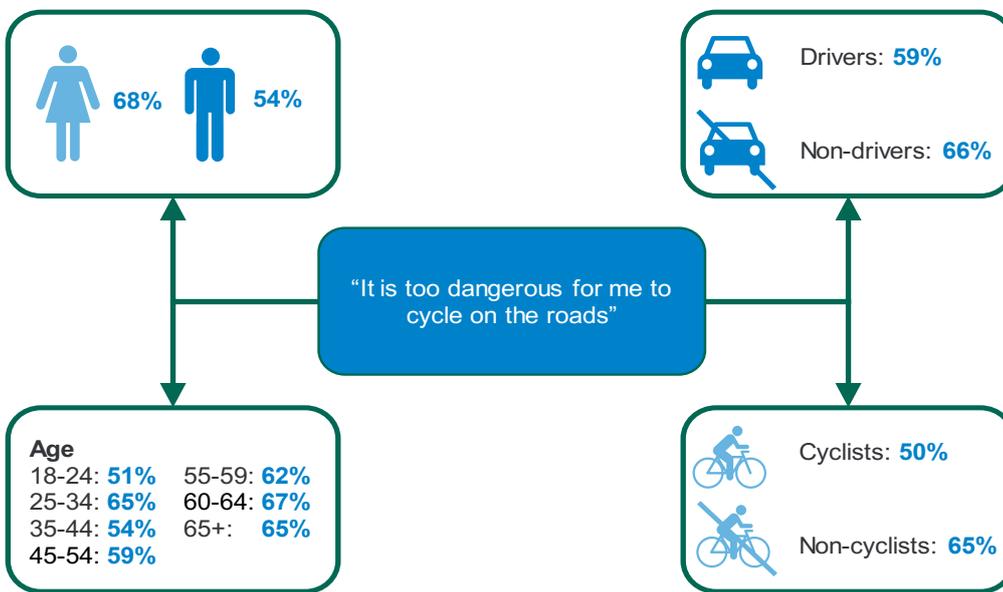
The NTS asks respondents (those aged 5 and over) about the barriers to people cycling more. Individuals were asked to look at a list of reasons for not cycling more and select which apply to them, regardless of whether they currently cycle or not. Respondents could select more than one barrier from the list. The most common barriers cited for people not cycling more were "No interest in cycling" and "Road safety concerns" with 25% each of respondents indicating these were reasons for them not cycling more. This was followed by "Too much traffic/traffic too fast" (16%).

Factors influencing cycling rates

Three fifths of adults feel that it is too dangerous to cycle on the roads.

In 2019, the first wave of the National Travel Attitudes Study (NTAS) showed that 61% of adults aged 18+ in England agreed that “it is too dangerous for me to cycle on the roads”. Women were more likely than men to agree (68% to 54%) and people were just as likely to agree if they were aged 25-34 as they were aged 65 and older. Cyclists were less likely to believe that cycling was too dangerous for them than non-cyclists (50% to 65%).

Chart 5: Proportion of adults aged 18+ who agree with the statement “It is too dangerous for me to cycle on the roads”, by gender, age band, cycling and driving status, England, 2019 [NTAS0103]



Adjusted KSI figures

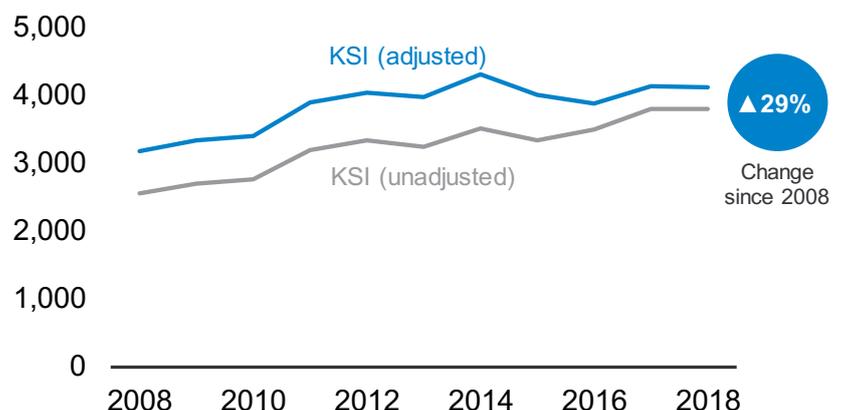
Serious and slight road accident figures have been adjusted to account for a change in severity reporting systems in a large number of forces who record road accidents. We recommend using the adjusted figures for understanding trends over time.

For more information see [Reported road casualties Great Britain, main results: 2018](#).

The number of cyclists killed or seriously injured has been rising since 2008.

In Great Britain, the number of pedal cyclists killed or seriously injured has increased by 29% from 3,191 in 2005 to 4,132 in 2018, (using the series adjusted for changes in severity reporting). This may be in part due to the 32% increase in miles cycled per person in England over this period.

Chart 6: Pedal cyclists killed or seriously injured, Great Britain, 2008 to 2018 [RAS30001]

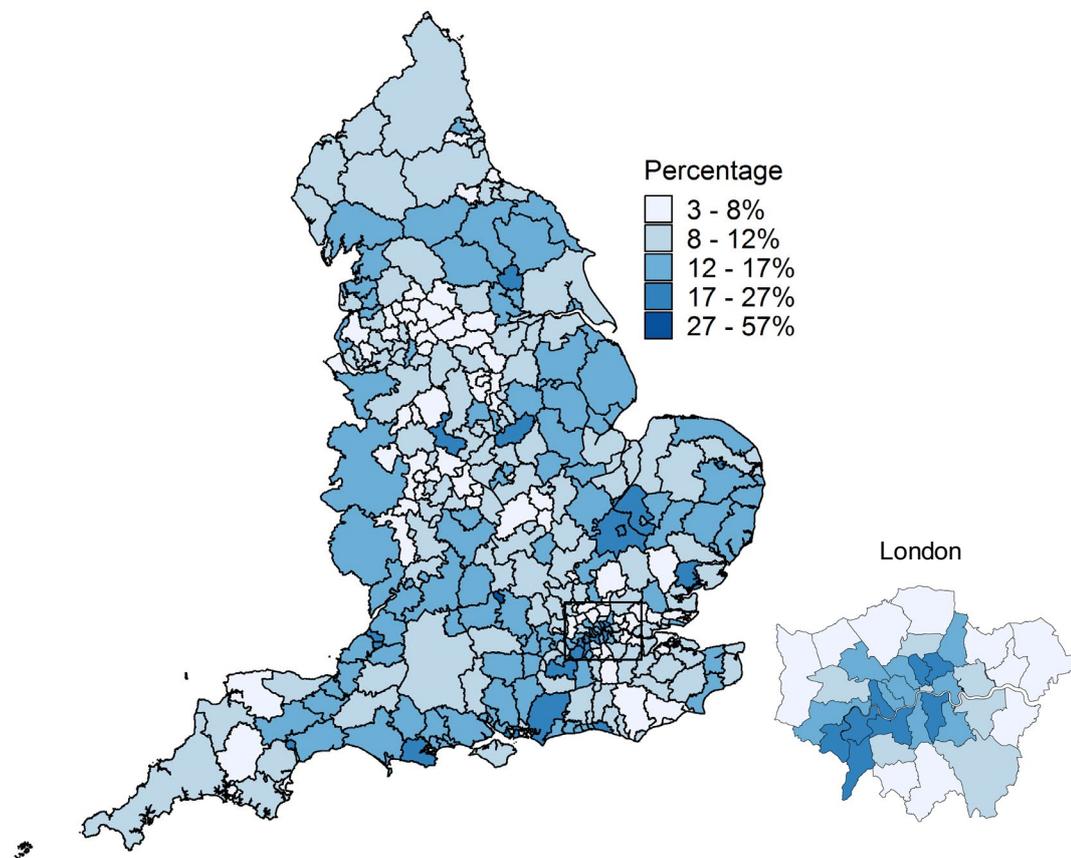


Local area cycling rates

Nearly all (95%) local authorities had less than 20% of their adult population cycling at least once a week.

The local authority with by far the highest prevalence for cycling at least once a week was Cambridge (57%), followed by Oxford (39%) and Isles of Scilly* (35%). Havering had the lowest prevalence of cycling at least once a week at 3%. Only 15 authorities had more than 20% of their adult population cycling at least once a week.

Map 2: Proportion of adults cycling at least once a week by Local Authority, England, 2017-2018 [CW0302]



How accurate are these local estimates?

The Active Lives Survey has a standard sample size of at least 500 persons per local authority.

The data tables accompanying this release include 95% confidence interval half widths, which demonstrate the accuracy of the estimates and the likely range of values for the true value. For more information, see the "[Notes and Definitions](#)" document.

*Note that due to their small size, the estimate for City of London and Isles of Scilly has a higher degree of error associated with it.

Table 2: Top and bottom five local authorities for cycling at least once a week, England, 2017-2018 [CW0302]

Local Authority	%	Local Authority	%
Cambridge	57.5	Wolverhampton	4.8
Oxford	39.2	Harrow	4.5
Isles of Scilly*	35.4	Medway	4.5
South Cambridgeshire	27.4	Wellingborough	4.3
Richmond upon Thames	26.5	Havering	3.4

Changes in local area walking and cycling rates

Walking rates have increased slightly at the national and regional level since 2015-16; with more variation at the local authority level.

The proportion of adults walking at least once a week increased overall in England from 68% in 2015-16 to 70% in 2017-18. All regions saw an increase over this period, with increases in North West, East of England, South East and South West being statistically significant.

Looking at local authority level, 36 local authorities saw a significant change (increase or decrease) in the proportion of adults walking at least once a week. Runnymede had the largest increase from 61% in 2015-16 to 74% in 2017-18. East Lindsey had the largest decrease from 72% to 62%.

Rates of cycling once a week have fallen slightly at the national level since 2015-16; the picture is more varied at local authority level.

The proportion of adults cycling at least once a week in England fell slightly from 12% in 2015-16 to 11% in 2017-18, a statistically significant decrease. East of England was the only region that saw a statistically significant change over this period, with a fall in proportion from 14% to 13%.

The picture at local authority level was more varied, with 22 local authorities seeing a significant change (increase or decrease) in the proportion of adults cycling at least once a week from year 1 of the survey. Folkestone and Hythe had the largest increase in proportion from 8% in 2015-16 to 17% in 2017-18. City of London* had the largest decrease in proportion from 22% down to 11%.

Table 3: Local authorities with largest increases in proportion of adults walking and cycling at least once a week between 2015-16 and 2017-18 [CW0302 and CW0303]

Local Authority	% point increase (walking)	Local Authority	% point increase (cycling)
Runnymede**	12.9	Folkestone and Hythe**	8.8
South Norfolk**	12.1	Stratford-on-Avon**	6.6
Torridge**	11.5	Brent**	5.7
South Kesteven**	11.2	Hounslow	5.5
Knowsley**	10.6	New Forest	5.2

** change is statistically significant.

How far back can we compare local area data?

The ALS has been captured on a consistent basis for three years, allowing us to compare local level rates from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

Statistically significant

If a change is statistically significant then we can be confident that the difference seen in those sampled are reflective of the population.

*Change for City of London should be interpreted with caution due to small sample size.

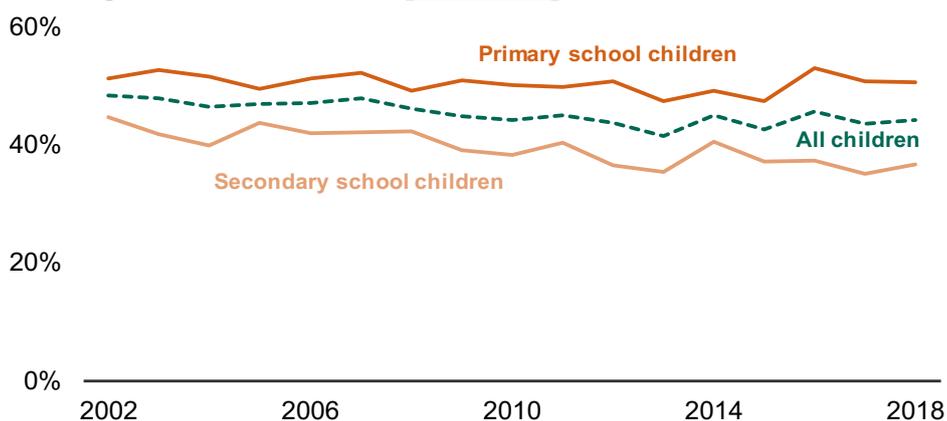
Walking and cycling to school

Half of children usually walk or cycle to school, which has remained broadly the same over the past sixteen years.

In 2018, 44% of all children (aged 5-16) usually walked to school. 51% of primary school children usually walked to school, similar to previous years, while 37% of secondary school children did so, a decrease from 45% in 2002. The lower rate in part reflects the longer distances secondary school children travel to school: 3.5 miles compared to 1.5 miles for primary school children.

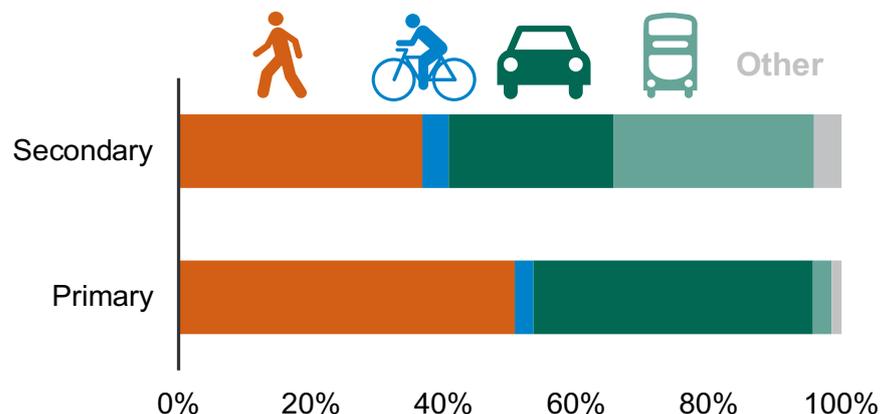
Only 3% of all children usually cycled to school. This proportion has remained between 2% and 3% since 2002. Secondary school children cycled more: 4% of them usually cycled to school compared to 3% of primary school children.

Chart 7: Proportion of children who usually walk to school, by age band, England, 2002 to 2018 [[NTS0615](#)]



The most popular alternative to walking or cycling for primary school children was car / van at 42%, which switches to bus (private or local) for secondary school children at 30%.

Chart 8: Usual mode of travel to school by age group, England, 2018 [[NTS0615](#)]



Trips to school

In this section, **primary school children** are those aged 5-10 years and **secondary school children** are those aged 11-16 years.

The usual mode used by children to get to school is not collected in the NTS trip diary but they are asked a question in the household interview.

CWIS Objective

Percentage of children aged 5-10 years walking to school is the main metric for one of the objectives in the Department's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

For more information, please see the [Methodology notes](#).

Methodology notes

General information

The web tables give further details of the results presented in this statistical release: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/walking-and-cycling-statistics

Guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics, including the calculations of confidence intervals, is available in the “Notes and Definitions” document: www.gov.uk/transport-statistics-notes-and-guidance-walking-and-cycling

National Travel Survey

The National Travel Survey (NTS) is administered by the Department for Transport (DfT) and is a household survey designed to provide a rich source of data on personal travel. In 2017, the sample size was around 6,000 households and 14,000 individuals.

Active Lives Survey

The Active Lives Survey (ALS) is a push-to-web survey administered by Sport England and is used to derive official estimates of participation in sport and physical activity. The ALS had a sample size of around 180,000 adults in England in mid-November 2017 to mid-November 2018, thus enabling analysis at local authority level.

Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

Under the Infrastructure Act 2015, the government is required to set a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) for England. In April 2017, the first CWIS was published with the ambition of: *We want to make cycling and walking the natural choices for shorter journeys, or as part of a longer journey. By 2040, our ambition is to deliver better safety, better mobility and better streets.*

The government’s strategy is set out in the published document: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy>.

National Statistics

The NTS was assessed by the UK Statistics Authority against the Code of Practice and was confirmed as National Statistics in July 2011.

Results from the ALS are not National Statistics.

Background information

Data sources used in this publication:

- The **National Travel Survey (NTS)**: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics>
- The **Active Lives Survey (ALS)**: <https://www.sportengland.org/research/active-lives-survey/>
- The **National Travel Attitudes Study (NTAS)** - a panel survey of individuals who have completed the NTS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-attitudes-study-ntas-2019-wave-1>
- **Road Accidents and Safety Statistics**: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

Related information

- The **Travel in London Report** provide walking and cycling statistics for London: <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/travel-in-london-reports>
- The **Propensity to Cycle Tool** is an interactive tool which maps the cycling rate potential at local levels: <http://pct.bike/>
- The **Scottish Household Survey** contains walking and cycling statistics for Scotland, and is reported on in Transport and Travel in Scotland: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/transport-and-travel-in-scotland-2017/7-walking-and-cycling/>
- The **National Survey for Wales** contains walking and cycling statistics for Wales: <https://gweddill.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/?lang=en>
- The **Travel Survey for Northern Ireland** contains walking and cycling statistics for Northern Ireland: <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/type/statisticalreports/topic/5165>
- **Bike Life** is an assessment of city cycling development including infrastructure, travel behaviour, satisfaction, the impact of cycling, and new initiatives: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/bike-life>



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