

6. Personal travel planning

6.1 General approach in each town

6.1.1 Overview

Prior to the start of the Sustainable Travel Town programme in 2004, Worcestershire County Council had been the first of the authorities to engage in personal travel planning, commencing work in 2003 after the county council was awarded funding by Department for Transport (DfT) for a pilot study at three hospitals. Darlington and Peterborough began in 2005 (February and September, respectively) after having secured the Sustainable Travel Town funding from DfT.

Darlington differed from Peterborough and Worcester with respect to the external consultant employed to undertake personal travel planning, with Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) being used rather than Socialdata & Sustrans. This, to a certain extent, influenced the approach that was taken.

In Darlington, SDG delivered the programme in three phases across three areas of the town with the aim of contacting all households in the urban area by the final phase. All households were targeted since it was felt that, politically, it would have been difficult to select and target only a few. There were no other significant partners in the personal travel planning programme.

In Peterborough and Worcester, Socialdata & Sustrans delivered the programme in five phases and, in contrast to Darlington, only a proportion of households were targeted. The programme followed the standard Socialdata & Sustrans individualised travel marketing methodology. In Worcester, around 60% of the households in the city were targeted, focused in particular geographical areas of the city. Consideration was given to the choice of these areas in order to minimise the impact of roadworks and maximise the benefits of public transport improvements. In Peterborough, Socialdata & Sustrans contacted every other household in every street, so that, overall, around 50% of households were targeted. Other partners (in particular, bus operators) were involved in delivering the personal travel planning programme.

All three towns felt that the programme had been easy to implement because of the use of external consultants who had managed the process effectively.

The main components of the programmes are summarised below.

6.1.2 Darlington

In Darlington, approximately one-third of the town was targeted in Summer 2005, the next third in Summer 2006, and the final third in Summer 2007. Each phase of the personal travel planning work involved a series of elements. The first element was preparation of materials tailored to each geographical area. This was a joint effort between the council and SDG. SDG printed general guides to walking and cycling, while the council produced specific public transport information. Then, SDG set up a local

office, with about a dozen advisors who were employed on a temporary basis to undertake the administration of the personal travel planning, and a local supervisor.

This was followed by an introductory letter, which was sent out to every household in the target area in ‘waves’ around 10 days before the travel advisors planned a visit. In the first two years, the letter was delivered by the Royal Mail but in the third year it was delivered by hand by the team members. This change was partly due to disappointment with Royal Mail’s handling of mass mail-outs of this nature, but also to gain advantage from the visibility and on-street presence offered by visiting the neighbourhood beforehand. The travel advisors themselves also got to know the area they would be working in.

The final stage was telephone or face-to-face contact with households. Initially, the main method used to make contact was telephone, but in practice this proved ineffective because of the number of households who were signed up to the Telephone Preference Service, and so there was a shift to ‘door knocking’. Up to four attempts were made to contact each household, at different times of day. After the fourth visit, a ‘missed you’ leaflet was delivered, which encouraged residents to make contact. The team wore branded red *Local Motion* sweatshirts to raise awareness of the campaign and provide a team identity.

Once contact had been established, there was a ‘conversation’ between a householder and a trained travel advisor. The discussion was based around the householder’s specific journey patterns and constraints. The travel advisors were trained to listen out for key motivators in the conversation to determine what kind of messages and incentives people would respond to. The conversation concluded with the householder agreeing (or not) to participate further by receiving information. The travel advisors did not carry much material to hand out on the day. Instead, a tailored package of information and incentives was put together and sent to the householder shortly afterwards. Again, reliability and cost concerns led to the postal service being replaced – this time with a cycle courier in year three to deliver the resource packs. The cycle courier (who wore branded clothing but also did other work for the council) was a small scale initiative set up through the Sustainable Travel Town project (the ‘Green Link’ service).

Data from each household was recorded on a form and a database was used by SDG to schedule the visits and manage the engagement process. This included allocating the materials to be assembled and sent to each household.

The householders were categorised into three groups:

- *Participating* households who were involved in a conversation and requested a resource¹;
- *Not participating* households where contact was made but there was no request for a resource²;
- *No contact* households where four door-knocks had produced no conversation.

¹ Note the difference with Socialdata & Sustrans who split participating households into those who are already regular public transport users (Group ‘R with’) and those who are not (Group ‘P’)

² Note the difference with Socialdata & Sustrans who split non-participating households into those where at least one member already uses sustainable modes (Group ‘R without’) and those where sustainable modes are not used (Group ‘N’).

For any particular neighbourhood, there were about 20 resources to choose from. These resources were revised and evolved over the three phases, having been informed by feedback from delivery of the programme in the field and targeted towards the areas in question. They included the following items:

- Town centre guide and town centre walking map;
- Walking information, including Historic Walks leaflet and Leisure Walks packs. The latter was the most popularly requested item in Phases 2 and 3;
- Cycling information, including a map of cycle routes, *Pedal Power* leaflet, flier about the cycle loan scheme and flier about cycle training;
- Cycle training and a cycle loan scheme;
- Public transport information, such as a borough and town bus map; area bus service guides; bus stop specific timetables for the nearest bus stop; and bus timetables for individual services;
- *Keeping in motion*, an information booklet for those with mobility problems; Information about car use:
- a *Carnise* leaflet (with eco-driving tips) and journey share leaflet publicising the website;
- Pledges/challenges to use sustainable modes - the pledges had a low take-up and were subsequently replaced by challenges. For example, in 2007 a *10,000 Steps Challenge* was launched with a free t-shirt, pedometer and record card for the first 300 to register;
- Personal journey plans for specific journeys, though in 2007, only 146 of these were requested. SDG suggested that this might have been because the comprehensive information on offer from the other resources reduced the usefulness of this item;
- Free multi-user bus ticket for a limited period - this was offered to individuals classified as 'non-bus users but willing to give it a go', but was felt not to have worked very well because of the reorganisation of the bus network and the strict criteria to give them only to non-bus users.

During the second year of the project, the *Local Motion* club was launched. Around half of those households who participated in personal travel planning in Phases 2 and 3 chose to sign up to the *Local Motion* club. They received a loyalty card, a regular newsletter about sustainable travel initiatives and a variety of discounts and offers. The *Local Motion* club is described in more detail in Chapter 9.

The range of information and services evolved over the course of the programme, particularly as the *Local Motion* branding and resources themselves developed. For instance:

- In Phase 3, instead of leaflets advertising the cycle loan and cycle training services, the personal travel planning team made arrangements for loans or training directly with the council.
- In Phase 2, pledges had a low take up and were replaced by 'challenges'. Rewards were increasingly used (prize draws etc) to reinforce positive behaviour and were distributed as incentives for the challenges.
- In the final phase, restrictions on who could be offered free bus tickets were relaxed.

- The *Local Motion* club was introduced in Phase 2.

A number of other changes took place during the programme, for example:

- Travel advisors became increasingly involved in neighbourhood events, presentations to community groups and other local activities.
- The branding became stronger, with the introduction of a ‘uniform’ for advisors in Phase 2.
- In Phase 1, a greater attempt was made to contact households by telephone but this was reduced in subsequent phases.
- Training for travel advisors became less classroom-based and more ‘on the doorstep’.

6.1.3 Peterborough and Worcester

The Peterborough and Worcester programmes followed the standard Socialdata & Sustrans individualised travel marketing methodology.

The edited electoral register and a commercial database were used to identify addresses in the target area. In Peterborough, Socialdata & Sustrans attempted to contact every other household in every street (within each stage of the programme) although if a resident made contact after their neighbour had received an information pack, they would also be included in the programme. In Worcester, the consultants attempted to contact all households within the targeted geographical areas.

Households received an introductory letter telling residents that they would be contacted. This was followed by a phone call or, where no phone number was available, a face-to-face contact. The caller introduced the programme, discussed how household members currently travelled and asked whether the resident would be interested in having any information.

Households were divided into four groups:

- Group ‘I’ – households interested in receiving information not including regular public transport users, but including regular walkers and cyclists;
- Group ‘R with’ – households with at least one person in the household using public transport regularly, with an information wish;
- Group ‘R without’ – households with at least one person in the household using public transport regularly, without an information wish;
- Group ‘N’ – households who did not wish to participate, had no interest or were unable to use environmentally friendly modes.

Those in the ‘R with’ and ‘R without’ groups and those in group ‘I’ that regularly walked or cycled were offered a branded (*Travelchoice* or *Choose how you move*) gift (pen or travel alarm clock) as a way of confirming and rewarding their current travel behaviour.

Those expressing interest in information (groups ‘I’ and ‘R with’) were given an order form. For those contacted by phone, this was sent by post, whilst those contacted on the doorstep could either fill in the form on the spot or return it by freepost later. The requested information was then delivered by bike or by foot.

In Peterborough, most households in group 'N' were sent a pack of information on responsible driving, including information about car sharing and about how to be more environmentally-friendly when driving. This pack was only sent if it was felt to be appropriate, excluding, for example, households with strong concerns about data confidentiality or very old or infirm occupants.

Households were also offered the option of a home visit from an adviser on walking, cycling and/or public transport. Locally recruited Sustrans advisers provided walking and cycling visits in both towns. Public transport visits were provided by a former Stagecoach bus driver in Peterborough and by First in Worcester.

The range of services, advice and information offered to households expanded during the course of the five stages of the project, but broadly speaking included the following:

- City-wide walking, cycling and public transport maps, including information on local amenities (Worcester only);
- Local travel guides/local area maps, showing walking and cycling routes and information on bus services (both towns);
- Walking information, including information on local walking groups and events (Peterborough); information about local leisure walks (both towns); leaflets encouraging walking for health (Worcester) and a guide to setting up a walking bus (Worcester);
- Cycling information, including a city cycling map (Peterborough); guides to neighbourhood cycle routes (Peterborough); information about taking your bike on the train (Peterborough); and various information leaflets on choosing a bike and cycle maintenance (both towns);
- Cycling services/equipment/publicity, such as adult cycle training, LED cycle lights and 'My other car is a bicycle' car sticker (Worcester);
- Public transport information, including a guide to city bus services (Peterborough); bus stop specific timetables for the nearest bus stop (both towns); timetables for specific bus routes (both towns); rail timetables (both towns); information about the Text & Go service (Peterborough); and information about concessionary fares and discount railcards (Peterborough);
- Travel information for people with special needs, including information about local community transport schemes (both towns); information about Shopmobility (Peterborough); an 'easy read' guide to travelling by public transport (Peterborough); and a *Transport to Healthcare* guide (Peterborough);
- Car sharing information (both towns);
- Loyalty scheme pledge cards giving a range of savings (e.g. on cycle servicing and accessories) to those pledging to use environmentally friendly travel options more often (both towns);
- Safe routes to schools information (both towns);
- Details of the council's new travel information centre in the centre of town (Peterborough);
- Personal journey plans for a specific journey (both towns) and information about web-based journey planners (Peterborough);

- A visit from a travel adviser, offering guidance about environmentally-friendly travel choices. Those opting for household visits could receive additional incentives such as a free bus pass for several weeks; a bike health check; a free cycle trip computer; a free pedometer (both towns);
- Free gifts, of a personal FM radio with earphones and micro-torch (both towns);
- Information about the wider Smarter Choice Programme, including details of real-time information and cycle/walking route branding trials. This was not listed on the order form but was sent to all participants (Peterborough).

In both towns, the range of information and services evolved over the course of the programme. In Peterborough:

- a personalised journey planning service for specific journeys was dropped, because it did not prove popular;
- information about new services and resources was added as these became available (for example, Text & Go and the *Travelchoice* Centre);
- a single-sheet summary of the personal travel planning project in the ten most common minority languages, was produced for Phases 4 and 5. This was a response to the experience during Phase 2 of the project, which was in an area where a significant proportion of residents did not speak English. The summary told residents what the project was about and directed them to their local community centre, which had a stock of all the information materials. However, no households contacted the community centre as a result of this;
- an 'easy read' guide was produced, following requests for large print materials;
- advance publicity for the project was introduced with press releases, neighbourhood events, presentations to community groups, articles in parish newsletters and 'My *Travelchoice* is coming' posters at bus stops.

In Worcester:

- the quality of leaflets was improved over time, with a preference for those showing local pictures (in line with focus group comments);
- other small adjustments were made to the materials and products offered. For example, bus stop specific timetables were discontinued after feedback suggested that they were less than ideal because they only provided bus times for the outgoing journey. A free water bottle was discontinued because it would not fit through letterboxes;
- wording on the order form offering free home visits was made clearer with the result that fewer people requested visits in the third phase of the project, though the project manager considered that those that were carried out were more worthwhile and received positive feedback.

6.1.4 Ease of implementation

All three towns felt that the personal travel planning programme had been easy to implement because of the use of external consultants who had managed the process effectively.

Officers in Darlington identified some challenges to implementation. These included the short amount of time between the agreement of funding and the delivery of the first phase, which left little time to recruit consultants and prepare materials; and the disruption to bus services over the period of the initiative, which made it challenging to keep bus information up-to-date.

6.2 Scale of personal travel planning initiative

Table 6.1 summarises the proportion of households offered personal travel planning across the whole programme in each of the towns, and Table 6.2 gives details of the number of households offered personal travel planning in each phase of the initiative in each of the towns.

Table 6.1: Households offered personal travel planning, as a proportion of all households in each town

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
Number/% of households targeted	37,877 (100%)	30,006 (~50%)	23,504 (~60%)
Number /% of households successfully contacted	26,031 (69%)	24,333 (~41%)	19,281 (~49%)
Number/% of households receiving intervention materials*	17,184 (45%)	13,465 (~22%)	10,278 (~26%)

Notes: * Households who received intervention materials: these include both households who asked for specific information and/or services and households who were already using environmental means of transport and did not request any information or services, but who were sent a 'reward' to reinforce their sustainable travel patterns. In Peterborough, some households who were *not* using sustainable means of transport and who were not interested in receiving information or services (Group 'N') were sent 'driver information packs' which gave information about eco-driving and car-sharing, but not about non-car travel options. The figures for Peterborough do not include these households. If they are included, the percentage receiving intervention materials rises to 28%.

As already explained, the aim in Darlington was to offer personal travel planning to every household. Successful contact was made with 69% of households, and intervention materials were requested by and delivered to 45% of all households in the town over the three phases of personal travel planning activity.

In Peterborough, the aim was to offer personal travel planning to every other household in all areas of the city, so that, overall, approximately 50% of households were invited to participate in the programme. Here, successful contact was made with about 41% of all households in the city, and intervention materials were requested by and delivered to about 22% of all households (this figure excludes the households that were not travelling by sustainable means and not interested in receiving information, some of whom were sent 'driver information packs' that gave information about eco-driving but no information about non-car travel options).

Table 6.2: Number of households offered personal travel planning in each phase of the initiative in each of the towns

Phase	Date of intervention	Area	Number of households targeted	Number of households successfully contacted	Number of households who received intervention materials*
Darlington					
1	April-Aug 2005	N and NW	11,802	8,002	4,594
2	April-Sept 2006	NE/central/W	11,675	8,136	5,471
3	May-Sept 2007	W and SE	14,400	9,893	7,119
TOTAL			37,877	26,031	17,184
Peterborough					
1	Sept-Dec 2005	E	6,500	5,336	2,761 (4,137 including driver pack)
2	April-July 2006	N	6,103	4,981	2,530 (3,930 including driver pack)
3	Sept-Dec 2006	W	5,653	4,573	2,611 (2,875 including driver pack)
4	April-Aug 2007	SW	6,294	5,070	3,015 (3,311 including driver pack)
5	Sept-Dec 2007	SE	5,456	4,373	2,548 (2,764 including driver pack)
TOTAL			30,006	24,333	13,465
Worcester					
1	Sept-Dec 2005	NE	6,300	5,247	2,440
2.1	April-Aug 2006	E	4,775	3,913	2,058
2.2	Autumn 2006	SE	3,829	3,133	1,682
3.1	April-July 2007	W	4,545	3,728	2,253
3.2	Sept-Dec 2007	W	4,055	3,260	1,845
TOTAL			23,504	19,281	10,278

Notes: * Households who received intervention materials: these include both households who asked for specific information and/or services and households who were already using environmental means of transport and did not request any information or services, but who were sent a 'reward' to reinforce their sustainable travel patterns. In Peterborough, some households who were *not* using sustainable means of transport and who were not interested in receiving information or services (Group 'N') were sent 'driver packs' which gave information about eco-driving and car-sharing, but not about non-car travel options.

In Worcester, the aim was to offer personal travel planning to approximately 60% of households, but with complete coverage in certain areas of the city and no coverage in other areas. Successful contact was made with about 49% of households and intervention materials were requested by and delivered to about 26% of households.

Thus, in broad terms, roughly half of Darlington households and a quarter of households in Peterborough and Worcester received some form of travel information or service that was tailored to their specific requests as a result of the personal travel planning programme.

6.3 Staffing and budgets for personal travel planning

6.3.1 Staffing

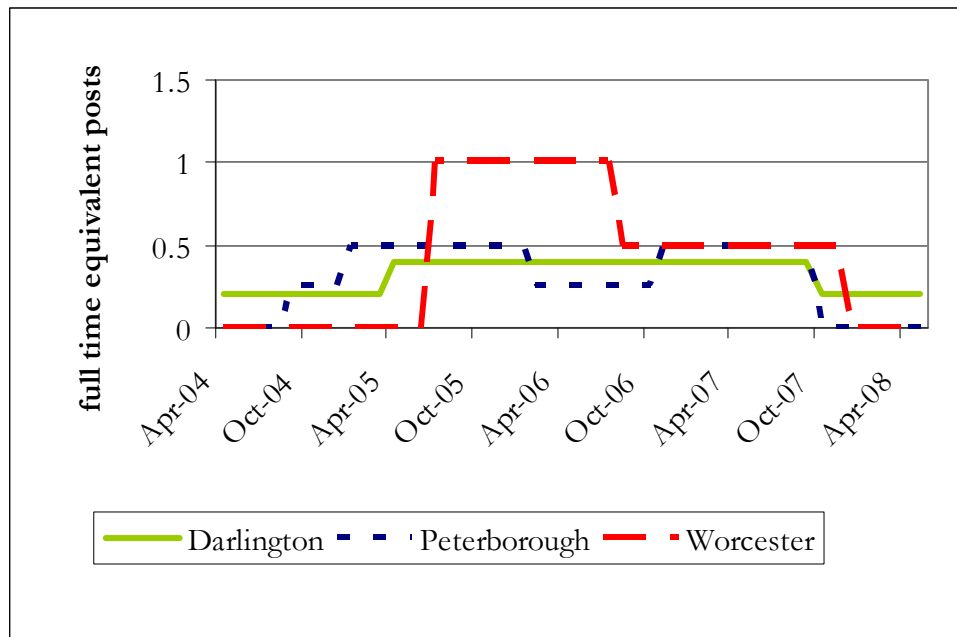
Figure 6.1 and Table 6.3 summarise how local authority staff time allocated to personal travel planning had changed over the course of the Sustainable Travel Town programme. None of the towns had been working on personal travel planning immediately before the start of the Sustainable Travel Town project, and this is reflected in the staff time allocation of zero prior to April 2004.

Between the beginning of the personal travel planning programme in 2005 and its completion at the end of 2007, the staff time commitment from the local authorities was equivalent to about half of a full-time post, although in Worcester the commitment was somewhat greater at about 1 fte for one year. In Peterborough, officers commented that the staff time requirement varied over the course of the personal travel planning project, with between one and three people at different phases dedicating substantial amounts of time to work related to the project. Nevertheless, the staff time commitment is fairly low for such a major programme. This reflects the fact that the local authorities' main roles were in managing the programmes and producing new information materials, with the delivery of personal travel planning advice (which is intensive of staff) having been the responsibility of the consultants, SDG and Socialdata & Sustrans

By 2008, the programme of personal travel planning had been completed in all the towns, and so staff time had fallen back from its peak. In Darlington, the council began to directly employ some travel advisers during 2008, in order to provide personal travel planning advice on stalls in the local market and elsewhere. However, in Peterborough and Worcester, the staff time for personal travel planning had fallen back to zero by the time of our interviews in May 2008.

Table 6.3: Staff time (fte-posts) allocated to personal travel planning

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
Before April 2004	0	0	0
May 2008	0.2	0	0

Figure 6.1: Changes in staff time allocated to personal travel planning (fte-posts)

6.3.2 Budgets

Table 6.4 summarises the total revenue costs of the personal travel planning programme in the three towns. These costs are disaggregated in Tables 6.5 – 6.8 into contractor costs; costs of materials; monitoring costs; and local authority staff costs. There was no capital expenditure for the personal travel planning work.

Contractor costs represent the cost of delivery of the programme by SDG or Socialdata & Sustrans. In addition to this ‘headline’ cost, there were also substantial costs involved in preparation of information materials (e.g. local area travel guides and other leaflets) and in providing ‘incentives’ or ‘rewards’ to encourage sustainable travel behaviour. These costs were difficult to calculate precisely, since they tended to have become subsumed into other budget heads. However, officers in Darlington and Peterborough were able to estimate approximate figures for the costs of materials used in personal travel planning work, and these figures are given in Table 6.6. The costs given here should be considered as overlapping with the costs of materials for general travel awareness work.

Table 6.4: Total costs (revenue)

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
2004/05	£200,000	£128,000	£112,000
2005/06	£335,000	£306,000	£262,000
2006/07	£372,000	£312,000	£125,000
2007/08	£312,000	£376,000	£231,000
2008/09	£125,000	£115,000	£143,000

Note: Figures in this table are the sum of the figures in Tables 6.5 – 6.8, but may not add exactly due to rounding.

Table 6.5: Contractor costs

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
2004/05	£83,000	£5,000	£0
2005/06	£257,000	£226,000	£135,000
2006/07	£294,000	£211,000	£98,000
2007/08	£236,000	£286,000	£157,000
2008/09	£0	£0	£0

Table 6.6: Materials and related costs

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
2004/05	£0	£0	
2005/06	£35,000	£36,000	
2006/07	£35,000	£71,000	
2007/08	£35,000	£71,000	
2008/09	£0	£0	

Note: Figures are approximations, based on officers' estimates; not known in Worcester.

Table 6.7 Monitoring costs

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
2004/05	£112,000	£118,000	£112,000
2005/06	£34,000	£34,000	£109,000
2006/07	£34,000	£21,000	£10,000
2007/08	£34,000	£12,000	£66,000
2008/09	£120,000	£115,000	£143,000

Table 6.8 Local authority staff costs

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
2004/05	£5,000	£5,000	£0
2005/06	£10,000	£11,000	£18,000
2006/07	£10,000	£9,000	£16,000
2007/08	£8,000	£6,000	£8,000
2008/09	£5,000	£0	£0

Note: Staff costs are estimated on an equivalent basis in all three towns, using rounded average salaries.

Monitoring costs are the costs of the baseline, interim and final household travel surveys conducted by Socialdata & Sustrans in all three towns. It could be argued that these costs should only partly be attributed to the personal travel planning work, since the baseline and final household travel surveys provided information on travel behaviour change as a result of the overall Sustainable Travel Town project, in addition to information on the specific effect of each phase of personal travel planning.

Local authority staff costs for personal travel planning were not available in a consistent format. Staff costs have therefore been estimated, based on the amount of staff time allocated to personal travel planning in 'full time person-months' and taking rounded averages for staff costs of £23,000 in 2004/05, rising by annual increments to £26,000 in 2008/09.

6.3.3 Costs per individual

The costs summarised in section 6.3.2 may be used to estimate the unit cost per individual³. For this exercise, the different cost elements (i.e. contractor costs, materials costs, monitoring costs and staff costs) have been considered separately. Costs incurred in 2008/9, which were almost entirely due to ‘after’ monitoring of the intervention during 2005/6 – 2007/8, have been included.

Costs were considered both in relation to the total number of individuals who were successfully contacted, and in relation to the number of individuals that received intervention materials. The figures are summarised in Tables 6.9 and 6.10. In broad terms, the cost of the programme (including contractor costs, materials costs and staff costs but not monitoring) was about £16 per individual contacted, or roughly £3 per year (assuming UK average household size). The cost per individual receiving intervention materials (again, including contractor costs, materials costs and staff costs but not monitoring) was roughly £25-£29, or roughly £5 per year over the Sustainable Travel Town period.

Table 6.9: Costs per individual contacted, 2004/5 – 2008/9

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
Contractor costs	£14	£12	£8
Materials and related costs	£2	£3	not known
Monitoring costs	£5	£5	£9
Staff costs	£1	£1	£1

Notes: Figures are for five-year period, and are rounded to nearest pound. Totals may not add exactly due to rounding. Figures per individual contacted are derived from data on number of households contacted, assuming national average household size (2.4).

Table 6.10: Costs per individual receiving intervention materials, 2004/5 - 2008/09

	Darlington	Peterborough	Worcester
Contractor costs	£21	£23	£16
Materials and related costs	£3	£6	not known
Monitoring costs	£8	£9	£18
Staff costs	£1	£1	£2

Notes: Figures are for five-year period, and are rounded to nearest pound. Totals may not add exactly due to rounding. Figures per individual are derived from data on number of households receiving intervention materials, assuming national average household size (2.4).

6.4 Benefits of personal travel planning

Interviewees were asked about the wider benefits of personal travel planning, in relation to social inclusion, health, road safety, quality of life and the way in which the council or other organisations involved in the initiative were perceived. The benefits identified are outlined below.

³ Figures are reported here in terms of individuals rather than households to aid comparability with unit costs of other interventions. We assume that households were of average size (2.4 persons, from 2001 Census data), and that intervention materials supplied to a household were available to all household members.

Social inclusion

Interviewees identified several examples of information distributed through personal travel planning that was aimed at people on low incomes or people with mobility difficulties. In Darlington, this included larger print materials, although few were requested, and information about taxi vouchers provided by the council, which many eligible people were not aware of. In addition, a *Keeping in motion* booklet was produced to provide information for the mobility impaired, and 19% of households (in Phase 3) requested this booklet. In Peterborough, materials provided through the project included an 'easy read' guide to transport, a *Transport to Healthcare* booklet, and information about Shopmobility, concessionary fares and young persons' railcards. A Peterborough customer satisfaction survey elicited comments such as: 'Both me and my wife, who is disabled, have found the information materials very helpful'. In Worcester, it was suggested that, as the programme had promoted bus services in conjunction with bus improvements, this would imply social inclusion benefits, although no specific data had been collected on this.

Health

Interviewees in all three towns believed that their personal travel planning work was likely to have had health benefits because it encouraged residents to walk or cycle. In Peterborough, interim household surveys suggested that the time spent walking or cycling had increased by about 8-18% as a result of the intervention.

Quality of life

In Darlington, quality of life benefits were suggested by the positive feedback received from the public. In a telephone survey on whether the information received had been helpful and useful, some 70% or more of serviced households felt that it had been. In Peterborough, interviewees commented that an unexpected benefit of the project was that people who were housebound (because of age or ill-health) received some personal contact, either from someone knocking at the door or from a home visit.

Perceptions of the council and other organisations involved in the initiative

In Darlington, there was a general feeling that personal travel planning was helpful in generating a positive perception of the council as it gave people an opportunity to air views and gain more understanding of the overall strategy the council was adopting for transport. In Peterborough and Worcester, the personal travel planning project also had a positive effect on perceptions of the council, with people commenting that they were pleased that the council was doing the project.

6.5 Synergies between personal travel planning and other policies and programmes

Interviewees identified several respects in which other transport interventions (including both 'hard' and other 'soft' initiatives) had been complementary to personal travel planning.

Supportive 'hard' initiatives included, in Darlington, infrastructure improvements such as cycle lanes; speed management schemes within the town centre; town centre pedestrianisation (the 'pedestrian heart'); the installation of bus lanes as part of road

space reallocation projects; and other improvements to cycling and walking facilities. In Peterborough, while the changes to the Citi and Local Link bus services were seen as the main supporting hard initiative, improvements to cycle routes and cycle parking had also helped. It was also suggested that the disruption to traffic caused by major road infrastructure works in Peterborough during the course of the project might have encouraged people to consider alternatives to the car. In Worcester, complementary initiatives included improvements to cycle routes, increases in cycle parking, speed management and pedestrian infrastructure, and public transport improvements.

Supportive ‘soft’ initiatives included the development of a strong brand identity (*Local Motion* in Darlington, *Travelchoice* in Peterborough and *Choose how you move* in Worcester). In all three towns, engagement with the personal travel planning programme was greater in the later phases, and it was felt that this was the result of growing awareness of the overall smarter choices programme. There were also some specific examples of particular smart measures having influenced the level of residents’ engagement in personal travel planning. For example, in Darlington, parents who had heard about the *Medal Motion* campaign through school travel work at their children’s schools were thought by travel advisers to have been more receptive to having a ‘conversation’.

There was also evidence that the project had provided benefits in other areas of work. In Darlington, personal travel planning offered an opportunity for people to raise concerns about transport generally, and, by doing so, to become more informed about the work the council was doing to improve the situation. Even though there was some negative feeling, for example about the Pedestrian Heart scheme, the fact that people were able to air their concerns was seen as increasing the acceptability of other transport initiatives.

In Peterborough, personal travel planning was felt to have ‘push-started’ a lot of other projects – for example encouraging more people to use Text & Go, to benefit from the real-time information, and to use the *Travelchoice* website.

Interviewees in Worcester also pointed out the mutually reinforcing relationship between smart initiatives and political support for sustainable transport infrastructure. It was suggested that the personal travel planning programme may have contributed to public acceptance for a package of planned walking and cycling improvements.

6.6 Potential and plans for the future

Interviewees were asked to what extent the potential of personal travel planning would have been fully exploited by the end of the Sustainable Travel Town period. They were also asked to say to what extent they could expand coverage or improve the impact of their programmes in the next five years if funding were unconstrained, and to indicate the staffing and budgets that would be necessary for this. Finally, they were asked what they would *actually* be able to do in terms of personal travel planning over this period.

In Darlington, officers felt that the personal travel planning initiative had been fully exploited in terms of reaching the widest number of people with the budget available, given that all households in the urban areas had been targeted. There was no intention to continue with the programme, but several areas had been identified where a targeted approach similar to personal travel planning might offer benefits:

- Rural areas had not been targeted through the project, and although the transport alternatives on offer were not as good in these areas, there were travel options, such as car sharing, which could benefit from targeted marketing, and the potential for addressing social inclusion issues.
- Some personal travel planning had been offered to businesses, and it was considered that more could be done.
- The use of incentives and challenges had worked well in the final year of the personal travel planning programme, and it was thought these elements could be rolled out further in other initiatives.
- As the time went on, SDG undertook more community events and used stalls outside supermarkets to raise the profile of the initiative. It was felt that more of this type of activity should have been incorporated in the programme from the beginning.
- An approach similar to personal travel planning might be used to promote sustainable behaviour in other areas, such as energy conservation and recycling.

If extra resources were available, interviewees said they would be most effectively invested in follow-up with households around six months after they had first been contacted. More could also be made of the *Local Motion* club to turn this into interactive, two-way communication. An electronic magazine was also planned for the future. In addition, small numbers of travel advisors could be retained, at least seasonally, to set up and staff community events. More resources could also be spent on external marketing experts. This expertise was felt to be expensive but key to the success of *Local Motion*. However, the key barrier to the future of the programme was a lack of revenue funding.

In Peterborough, over the period since 2004, the interviewees suggested that the potential of personal travel planning had probably been exploited as fully as it could have been given the budget available. However, only half of the city's residents had received the service, and there were various ideas that the *Travelchoice* team were interested in pursuing but which had not been possible. For example, they had wanted, ideally, to have a database of the information received by each household, so that when there were new services or service changes they could contact residents (e.g. by email or a mail-out) to offer updated information. As the personal travel planning project developed, there had been a shift towards doing more local publicity/events linked into the project. For example, in 2007 the *Travelchoice* commuter challenge started in The Ortons, at about the time of the personal travel planning intervention there. Similarly, the Seeding Sustainable Communities project run by Peterborough Environment City Trust had involved a lot of events and family days to 'create a buzz' in an area at the same time as information had been offered. It was felt that this coordinated approach would have work best if all (as opposed to just half) of households had been offered personalised information.

Looking to the future, there were three groups of people who had not been targeted by personal travel planning: the 30,000 households within the five target areas who were not offered the service; people moving into new housing developments in Peterborough; and people moving house within the existing urban area. At the time of the interview, no decision had been made on the most cost-effective way to tackle these three groups, and future action was likely to depend on the evidence of the effectiveness of the current programme.

If funding were not a constraint, the *Travelchoice* team felt it would be worthwhile to offer personal travel planning to the 30,000 households who had not received it. In any follow up project, they wanted to set up a process for capturing people's contact details so that they could be mailed or emailed information and service updates.

In addition, the *Travelchoice* team were interested in providing some sort of ongoing personal contact with households. Options suggested for this included a mobile *Travelchoice* service in a bus, visiting different neighbourhoods each day with information; a 'hit squad' running community events and events in workplaces and schools; or 'community reps', trained by the council to provide travel information in their local communities.

For new housing developments, interviewees considered it would be possible to require developers to give all new residents an information/services order form plus an attractive discount for returning the form (e.g. a six-month bus pass or £100 cycle discount). An additional member of staff could be employed at the *Travelchoice* centre to assemble new residents' personal information packs and deliver them by bike once a week.

The key barriers to taking the project forward beyond 2009 were seen as the difficulty of securing adequate revenue funding and the fact that it was hard to persuade politicians of the effectiveness of a project which had no physical manifestation.

In Worcester, it was suggested that personal travel planning could readily be expanded, targeting the 40% of households not so far included and also revisiting areas over time: those not previously interested in materials might since have become interested, while those who had already received them might benefit from a reminder. Interviewees suggested that with an unconstrained budget, it would be possible and worthwhile to contact every household in the city every other year. This would also provide an opportunity to catch people as their lifestyles and travel behaviour changed over time. It was estimated that a programme of this kind would require two dedicated full-time staff plus a further budget of around £200,000 a year.

Officers in Worcester felt that it might be possible to roll out a more basic but large-scale programme, using an order form that could be mailed to households who would fill it out and receive materials through the post. This possibility was being investigated, and a business plan was being developed for a county-wide programme of this type.

6.7 References

Steer Davies Gleave (2007) *Local Motion Individualised Travel Marketing, Year Three programme and end of project report*