

Local Sustainable Transport Fund ‘What Works’ report - Summary

Department for Transport

The Transport for Quality of Life *What Works?* Report commissioned by the Department for Transport, draws out through supporting case studies, the lessons from the £540m (£600m with Bikeability) Local Sustainable Transport Fund 2011-2015 programme. The Fund itself was designed to implement the 2011 Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon Strategy; delivering, via 77 local authorities, 12 large projects receiving over £5m of funding and 84 smaller projects receiving under £5m funding.

The Local Sustainable Transport Fund (“the Fund”) was an objective-based fund that sought to achieve two primary core objectives of:

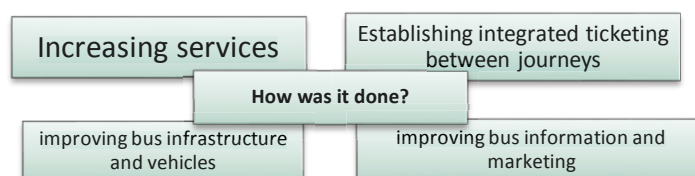
- Supporting the local economy and facilitate economic development, for example by reducing congestion, improving the reliability and predictability of journey times, or enhancing access to employment and other essential services; and
- Reducing the carbon emissions, for example by bringing about an increase in the volume and proportion of journeys made by low carbon sustainable modes, including walking and cycling.

Alongside these, were a number of secondary objectives: wider social and economic, safety, air quality, environmental, increased physical activity and health benefits.

The Fund supported a range of activities including reinforcing modal shift from car to more sustainable modes, broadening travel horizons, using vehicles more efficiently and other interventions including public realm enhancement and activities to reduce road casualties and the need to travel. It is estimated that the Fund’s projects employed between **4,700** and **6,150** people per year in direct jobs and roles in the supply chain which supported local economies.

The report is intended as a resource for local authority officers, councillors, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and other national and local organisations responsible for delivering or commissioning sustainable transport projects. The lessons from the Fund provide an overview of sustainable travel activities undertaken by LSTF projects and insights from local authority practitioners on what was successful, what challenges were encountered, how these were overcome and the lessons for delivering similar projects and programmes in the future. The lessons are presented by mode, subject and explain the intervention approach taken to deliver the schemes and identify their related lessons.

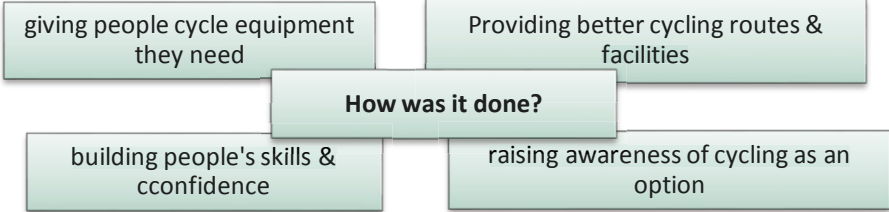
1. Increasing bus use



Lessons learnt: Target your project by identifying your area’s strategic public transport needs and opportunities. Factor in extended lead-in times for network-wide improvements, especially where there are multiple operators involved and think about timely provision of services to compliment the activity e.g. embed behaviour change with a new housing development. When developing and marketing an attractive offer, take a holistic approach and cover all aspects of the service, ie infrastructure, information, promotion and marketing. Designing tourism services for the leisure economy may deter resident use of the service so

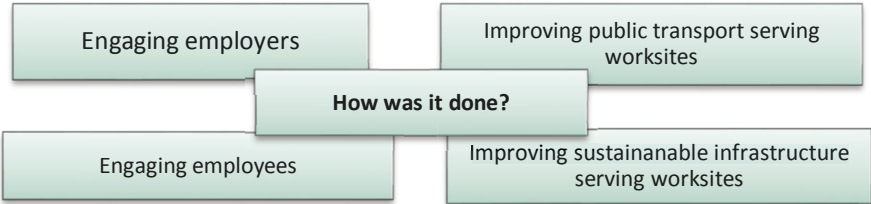
be clear about your market, and establish key relationships to help with rising above competitive tensions and delivery.

2. Increasing cycling



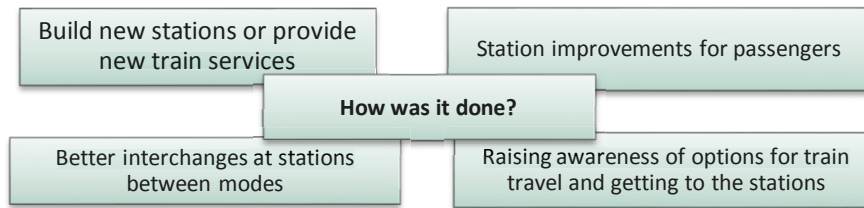
Lessons learnt: Take a holistic approach for your offer; where possible, it should involve cycling infrastructure, equipment, training and promotional activity using both capital and revenue for the complementary activities. Take a strategic approach for new and improved cycle routes and improve the network on multiple levels by, for example, creating links to key destinations as well as enhancing connectivity, ease of use, safety, and appealing to all levels of cyclists. The latter may be achieved by linking this into wider community activities. Capitalise on your existing resources by tapping into local cycling service providers, which could also help with creating and increasing continued investment to ensure the legacy can continue. Automatic cycle counters are valuable for collecting data on how effective a scheme has been, especially participant data before and after to show how a scheme influenced their travel behaviour patterns.

3. Encouraging sustainable travel to work



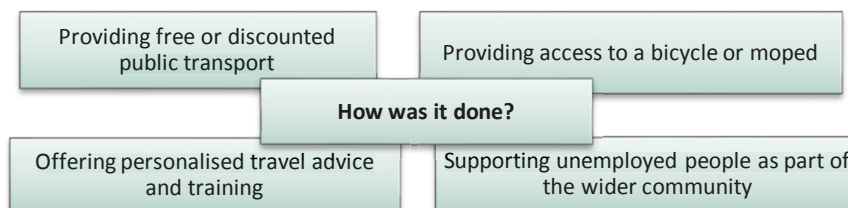
Lessons learnt: Targeting strategic employment sites, willing employers, and those moving, expanding or experiencing transport problems is effective for valuable projects. Take the time to engage employers by building relationships – this can take time so persistence is key, as well as finding ‘trigger’ issues. Take a structured approach to workplace travel plans and create an attractive employers’ package promoting health benefits. Initiatives effective in engaging employees include workplace ‘challenges’, personalised travel planning best delivered as a roadshow and transport ‘taster’ tickets. Business travel networks build commitment and capacity to boost sustainable travel; they can also offer valuable introductory contacts. When improving public transport to worksites, achieving mode switch requires a public transport offer that is attractive and fits sites working patterns as well as taking in whole journey improvements from home to office, creating sustainable commuting corridors backed by suitable on-site facilities. Creating employee champions can help with creating a long-term legacy and workplace surveys help to prove a project’s impact. These would be needed from year to year and should include mode share questions. Single business surveys work better but if combining surveys across employers, travel patterns should be kept consistent.

4. Increasing train travel and sustainable travel to stations



Lessons learnt: Strategically, a long lead-in time is required to generate support for rail projects. It is also worth focusing on those projects where there is a strong supporting business case. Creating a balanced portfolio of schemes that delivers interventions that help more people to travel to the station sustainably, complemented by awareness-raising activity, is useful. Start partnerships early, allowing sufficient time and resources for engagement. Locating contacts within the rail industry, including DfT Rail policy teams if necessary and station managers, is valuable as is identifying champions. For delivery, it is necessary to remain mindful of factors outside of your control. To maximise use of the stations, re-routing or re-scheduling existing bus services might be more feasible than introduction of new services. Secure a legacy through the cooperation of rail industry partners pending new services being written into subsequent franchises. Early thinking on capturing rail data is necessary.

5. Helping jobseekers into work



Lessons learnt: A wide geographical area will help a wide range of people and ensure people are not turned away because of postcode lottery. As establishing partnerships with jobcentres is time-consuming, social enterprises and community and voluntary organisations should be considered. Look for that unmet need, ie people who have slipped through the net and target work-ready jobseekers, particularly those prevented access due to cost. Supporting long-term jobseekers through taster tickets can help to begin a relationship with transport, but an all-encompassing approach to include support, mentoring and personalised travel options, as well as being clear about your offer is invaluable. Small projects can respond to individuals but as the project grows you will need to set criteria. In Wheels to Work, which are often focussed on rural areas, projects mopeds tend to be more popular than bikes or electric bikes though offer all three. Rather than hiring bikes, trial training unemployed people to refurbish and keep a bike, offering skills and qualifications. Strategically, being involved with bodies linked to employment and the local economy is worthwhile. Training frontline advisers can have a multiplier effect in disseminating messages, and help create a long-term impact for the project. Monitoring jobseeker projects can be beneficial for securing long-term funding.

6. Marketing sustainable travel



Lessons learnt: Strategically, all projects should have a travel awareness element, with the right budget, resources and skills from the outset. You should target your marketing by researching your audience sufficiently to understand the best channels through which to reach them. It is also advisable to be consistent in your branding, using a specific brand, and letting people know how they can participate, as well as ensuring messages highlight the benefits. Another lesson is about making the best use of digital media and word-of-mouth. Ensuring specialist skills are available for ongoing maintenance, using the potential of hard-to-reach groups to help get word round and monitoring and evaluating surveys to understand pre-and post-intervention status all appear to have worked effectively.

7. Strategy and Leadership

Lessons under strategy and leadership are grouped under four project phases.

Under the preparatory phase, strategically choosing geographical areas where there is the most potential for change, ie projects with the strongest level of community and political support, is most effective. A trade-off between ambition and deliverability, focussing on what can realistically be delivered is key. Planning the project by thoroughly researching in the preparatory phase to understand travel patterns and barriers to behavioural change will strengthen deliverability.

In the project delivery phase, when moving from planning to reality, take time to do a strategic 'reality' check, adapting the project where necessary. The determinants of success will include an experienced project manager with a proven track record of delivery and success, especially in matters such as recognising pitfalls, having pre-existing partnerships, and being persistent and adaptable with experimental initiatives. During this phase, it is advisable to keep the core delivery team in-house even if activities are delivered by an arms-length body. A one-team approach is vital, including with sub-contractors. Lastly, look for synergies between revenue and capital schemes, e.g. pushing a marketing campaign on the completion of a related scheme.

For project monitoring and evaluation, plan from the outset, keep a record of the scale of activity on a rolling basis and identify any suitable metrics as a result of your interventions. Most useful data has included: before and after mode share surveys at workplaces, stations and other trip attractors; post-intervention surveys of LSTF services and LSTF participants in LSTF activities, bus and rail patronage data and automatic cycle counters.

Programme level lessons are predominantly in competitive funding rounds which stimulate local authorities to develop new expertise. In addition, do not under-estimate lead in times for each project stage before full funding is released. This includes design, consultation, procurement, planning approvals and recruitment.

