



# Fact sheet 3: New homes and transport infrastructure and services

This fact sheet considers the potential impact of new homes on local transport infrastructure and services. If you are reading this online, please click on the hyperlinks for further information. See the full New Homes Fact Sheets series [here](#).



## How might people living in new homes affect demand for local transport infrastructure and services?

New homes may bring new people to an area who create additional demand for transport infrastructure and services. The type of impact will vary depending on the number, type and size of the new homes, as well as the capacity of existing public transport services and of the cycle, walking and road network.

### What is the difference between transport infrastructure and transport services?

Transport infrastructure refers to the facilities designed to help people move from place to place. It includes things such as pavements, cycle lanes, bus stops, train stations, roads, and parking spaces.

Transport services move people from one place to another, such as buses, trams, trains and bike hire. These services make use of transport infrastructure and often follow timetables or are available on-demand.

### Who plans new transport infrastructure and services?

At a local level, local authorities [plan](#) for new transport infrastructure and services as part of the Local Plan process. For further information, please refer to [Fact sheet 2: How new homes are planned](#).

Local authorities can also determine specific transport policies that reflect the local context. Local authorities can also determine specific transport policies that reflect the local context, such as the number of car parking spaces required for new homes.

Deciding where new transport infrastructure will be located is a collaborative process that is guided by national and local policy and is informed by consultation with stakeholders, such as:

- Local residents
- Government bodies such as the Highway Authority, National Highways and Active Travel England
- Transport service operators such as bus and rail companies
- Charitable organisations that focus on promoting sustainable transport, such as [Sustrans](#)

Over recent years, national policy has increasingly focussed on promoting sustainable development and the National Planning Policy Framework ([NPPF](#)) states that new development proposals should give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and facilitate access to high quality public transport.



## How do local travel patterns affect demand for transport infrastructure and services?

People travel at all times of the day and for different reasons. The [2023 National Travel Survey](#) for England provides a snapshot of how and why people travel:

- 51% of all pupils travel to school via active travel, including walking and cycling
- 67% of people travel to work via private vehicles, including cars, motorbikes and vans
- 17% of people travel to work via active travel, including walking and cycling
- 16% of people travel to work via public transport

Peak travel times can put pressure on the local transport network, usually when people are travelling to work and school. Peoples' travel patterns can vary by location across the country, as does the travel options that are available. Recent trends, such as [an increase in the number of people working from home](#), mean that some people are not commuting to work as often as in the past.



### How is the impact of new homes on transport infrastructure and services assessed?

The local authority may require that landowners, housebuilders and/or developers (known as ‘applicants’) include a [Transport Assessment](#), and a [Transport Statement and/or Travel Plans](#) as part of a planning application. This depends on the scale of the development and the likelihood for new homes to generate significant amounts of movement. The temporary impact of construction activity may also be considered and mitigated as part of a planning application, using a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Transport Assessments or Transport Statements consider the potential transport impacts of developments on transport infrastructure and services.

Travel Plans are long-term management and monitoring strategies tailored to specific housing developments. They promote sustainable and active travel to reduce reliance on cars.

An applicant would go through the following steps to assess the potential impact of new homes on local transport infrastructure and services:

- 1. Considering the policy context:** New homes are planned in accordance with national policy, such as the [NPPF](#), as well as regional and local policy specific to the local transport network, geography and demographics. Guidance is also taken into account such as by [Active Travel England](#) and [National Highways](#).
- 2. Reviewing the local transport context:** Understanding how and when people in the area travel is important to establish a baseline. This process will also consider whether there are any safety issues across the local transport network or existing capacity issues.
- 3. Creating a transport vision for the proposed new homes:** A transport vision considers how future residents are likely to travel and whether any improvements are required to the local transport network. [National guidance](#) and industry best practice aims to ensure that new housing developments are designed to provide access by all types of transport.
- 4. Consulting with stakeholders:** Stakeholders are consulted on the proposals before an application is made through the [pre-application](#) process as well as after the application has been submitted.
- 5. Developers can contribute to funding transport infrastructure and services:** Local authorities can use [planning obligations](#) to require housing developers to make financial contributions for:
  - Transport infrastructure, such as safe pedestrian crossings, bus stops and road junctions
  - Transport services, such as extensions to existing bus routes and new bus services
- 6. Ongoing monitoring of travel patterns after new homes are built:** Travel Plans are live documents that are continually monitored by surveying future residents about how they travel. This information is used to understand which of the measures have been successful in encouraging sustainable travel behaviour and where improvement may be required.

### Did you know?

The Department for Transport publishes local [road traffic statistics](#) and data [for local roads](#).