



Welcome to the Schools Go Smarter newsletter, this is the place to find out about sustainable travel initiatives in Northumberland and news about what our schools have been doing. For more information about anything you see here please email; tracy.aitken@northumberland.gov.uk

Covid-19 and Sustainable Travel

Our lives have changed beyond all recognition over the last two months with the usual summer term initiatives, such as Walk to School Week understandably cancelled and organisations planning to reschedule in the Autumn term.

Meanwhile, some positive side effects of the lockdown have been noted; an increase in daily walking, people rediscovering forgotten bikes and an improvement in air quality due to decreased car use.

We know that once schools are back, the priority will be getting back to a normal routine for pupils, parents and staff but it would be good to hope that we can take some of these positive environmental and health outcomes and build on them to maintain a shift towards more sustainable, active travel for the future, which is surely a good thing.

Walk to School Month

October 2020 is International Walk to School Month, a celebration of walking in countries across the world. In Northumberland we will be encouraging schools to get involved as an opportunity to promote active travel and road safety for the new school term.

Each week will have a different theme, with resources and ideas for schools to get involved in over the month. Last year we chose **Walking as a Family, Be Safe Be**

Seen, The Environment and Smarter Parking as a focus for each week.

So keep a look out over the next few weeks for more information on how to get involved.

Last year our schools came up with some fantastic ideas, such as Cramlington Eastlea Primary School's Bike and Hike to the Beach, Stannington First School's Stannington Rocks Scavenger Hunt and Allendale Primary School's Bike and Scooter playtimes.



Modeshift STARS during lockdown

Our current lockdown situation could be an ideal opportunity to investigate or revisit [Modeshift STARS](#). STARS is the national schools accreditation scheme that has been established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel.

While we appreciate that schools won't be able to deliver any new activities or initiatives at the moment, staff could learn how to use the system and start to add in some basic information about their school and log past events such as Bikeability or Road Safety Week, or any initiatives you are planning for the coming terms.

So if you've never looked at STARS before or it's something that you have been meaning to investigate for a while, why not [register](#) and have a look around the site.



Contact us for help with registering or if you've forgotten your password, we can also assist with over the phone training to help get you started with STARS.

Behind the scenes



Over the last few weeks we have been busy looking at the initiatives schools have taken part in recently and have been adding this information into the Modeshift STARS database.

So if your school has taken part in Bike Week, Walk to School Week, Pedestrian Training or Walk to School Month this information should be now added to your STARS travel plan.

This means you could be one step nearer to achieving bronze accreditation and also having a national standard accredited school travel plan.

STARS schools

Well done to **Bishops Primary, Josephine Butler Campus** who achieved silver accreditation last term delivering some fantastic initiatives such as working with the school council to monitor traffic and also teach nursery and reception pupils essential road safety skills. They also used a large 5 Minute Zone Map at parents evenings to collect data about where parents are travelling from and if it would be easier to walk or cycle to school.

And also congratulations to **Highfield Middle School, Prudhoe Castle First School, Bedlington Westend First School and Grange View C of E First School** who all renewed their bronze accreditation for another year.



British Cycling, Ready Set Ride

To help keep us moving and active during the school shutdown, British Cycling in partnership HSBC have launched [Ready Set Ride](#), a tool to help parents introduce pedalling to play times and teach more children how to cycle.

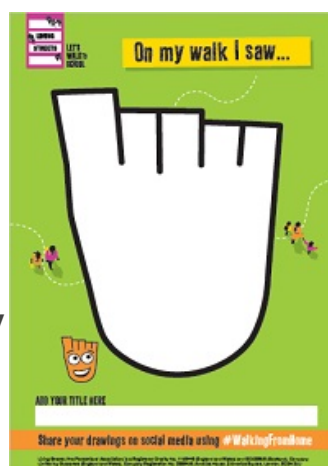
The HSBC UK Ready Set Ride programme is split into three stages; **Prepare 2 Ride, Balance and Pedals**, which provide families with all they need to support their children to start cycling.



You can access the full library of films on youtube, [here](#).

Living Streets

Our friends at [Living Streets](#) now have a dedicated page on their website with their response to walking during the Covid-19 lockdown. The page will be regularly updated with activities, news and articles which schools can share with parents. You can download the **Scavenger Hunt** and **Draw My Walk** resources now with new activities added weekly. Also, you can share any feedback from parents, using **#walkingfromhome**



Bike Week 6 - 14 June

We know that lots of schools enjoy taking part in Bike Week, the annual celebration of cycling delivered by Cycling UK every June.

This year because of lockdown the usual activities won't go ahead, however Cycling UK are encouraging us all to go online and take part in their [7 Days of Cycling](#) and hope that we will try to cycle every day during Bike Week.

Participants can log their journeys, be it a trip to the shops or a cycle around the local park, then at the end of the challenge Cycling UK will randomly select participants to receive prizes.

Bike Weeks organised activities will now take place in September with details to be confirmed at a later date.



Funding opportunities

British Cycling's Places to Ride grant is open until January 2021, with funding available to organisations that are looking to develop cycling activity in their community. The grant can be used for anything from equipment packages to activate your local space, to a brand new cycling facility, with the funders looking for innovative ideas. The aims of the programme are to;

- Inspire people to ride
- Connect the community and
- Build a lasting legacy

Schools should focus their applications on extracurricular or community involvement, a copy of the grant prospectus can be found [here](#) and full details of the different levels of grant and how they can be used on the [British Cycling website](#).

If you would like to discuss any ideas, to see if they would meet the requirements of the grant, please contact lornabennett@britishcycling.org.uk who is the project manager for the North East. Or if there is anything that Go Smarter can support you with your application please get in touch.



Coming up soon, hopefully....

Dates and events might change as the lockdown situation evolves;

- 6-14 June - [7 Days of Cycling](#) (previously Bike Week)
- 22nd September - International Car Free Day
- 1- 31 October - International Walk to School Month, details to follow
- 8 October - [Clean Air Day](#)
- 16-22 November - [Road Safety Week](#)
- 18 November - [Beep Beep Day](#)

And finally... if you aren't sure about the 2 metre rule, here is a handy demonstration from Living Streets Mascot Strider.

Take care everyone and stay safe, we hope to see you all soon.

