



### WHAT THE LOCAL PLAN SETS OUT TO DO

- Promote more sustainable modes of travel and improve travel choices for residents in the Borough.
- Manage the highway network so that it operates effectively and maintain accessibility in the Borough, particularly by tackling congestion 'hot spots'.
- Accommodate the travel needs of new development and regeneration in the Borough sustainably, by ensuring sustainable travel plans and travel choices are embedded in new development from the outset and by doing so, avoid a significant adverse impact on the effectiveness of the existing transport system.

### WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

**Sustainable Transport:** Over recent years, Darlington has been successful in encouraging and enabling more people to change their mode of travel from single occupancy car trips to more sustainable modes of transport. There has been a significant decrease in the use of the car for short trips and impressive percentage increases in walking and cycling, brought about by Darlington's status as both a Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town (2004) and a Cycling Demonstration Town (2005).

In 2011, £4.2 million of additional funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund was secured to continue sustainable travel work. It is enabling a further phase of the Travel Behaviour Programme 'Local Motion', which provides information, advice and support to local residents on sustainable transport options.

A further £0.25 million of Local Sustainable Transport funding has also been secured to put in a new shared use cycle and footpath on North Road and Harrowgate Hill, to encourage more sustainable journeys between Darlington and Newton Aycliffe. Works are due to be completed in early 2013.

In January 2012, funding was also made available to enable Arriva North East to extend the bus service from Crook and Bishop Auckland in County Durham to Lingfield Point and Darlington College, to increase connectivity between education and the workplace.

**Improving Traffic Flow:** In March 2012, improvements to the junction at Albert Road and Whessoe Road commenced as part of the North Road Bus Priority Scheme. The junction improvements are designed to improve the reliability and punctuality of bus services and to help make buses a more reliable alternative to the car. By improving traffic flow and reducing congestion, the scheme will also help to speed up journeys for other vehicles using North Road. The scheme was completed in November 2012. The investment is part of a wider Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement Project which has secured £57.6m from the Department for Transport aimed at improving bus services across the Tees Valley.



Shared Cycle and Footpath



Local Bus Services

# Darlington Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2012

## TRANSPORT FACT SHEET



During the last year, the Eastern Transport Corridor has continued to deliver benefits in terms of a reduction in congestion. The single carriageway road links the A66 to Haughton Road to the east of the Town Centre. Of particular significance is the reduction in volume of traffic along Haughton Green and Stockton Road through Haughton village. Traffic through Haughton village has reduced from an average week day traffic flow of 16,705 in 2006 to 11,124 in 2011. The shared use pedestrian and cycle path alongside the road improves safety for pedestrians and cyclists and provides direct cycle access from the Town Centre. At a strategic level, the road link gives a greater degree of accessibility to employment land which is key to promoting the economic regeneration of this area of the Town.

Council data shows a gradual decrease in Darlington's peak period traffic flows from 20,417 in 2009/10 to 20,092 in 2011/12 and investment in the transport infrastructure plays a role in managing peak traffic flows. Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan has been prepared and this sets out a transport strategy for the Borough over the next 15 years (2011-2026). This can be accessed at the following web link:

[www.darlington.gov.uk/Transport/transportpolicy.htm](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Transport/transportpolicy.htm)

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

**Travel Behaviour:** Local Plan transport policy is being positively supported by actions and funding that has been secured to implement the Local Transport Plan (LTP3). However, a travel behaviour survey in 2011 revealed there is still a lot of work to do and potential to achieve even more reductions in car use. Car trips are still the main mode of travel for many households and represented 43% of all trips in 2011. This reverses the reduction to 37% achieved in 2008, from the 2004 base of 41% of all trips. While the 2011 data shows that walking accounts for a quarter of all household trips, this is a reduction of 4% since the last survey in 2008. Cycling trips continue to account for only a marginal proportion of trips (2%) and this is a 1% decline from 2008.

#### Travel Mode by % Share (2004 to 2011)

Travel Mode (percentages)	2004	2008	2011
Walking	25%	29%	25%
Bicycle	1%	3%	2%
Motocycle	0%	0%	0%
Car as driver	41%	37%	43%
Car as passenger	21%	19%	19%
Bus	10%	10%	10%
Other public transport	2%	2%	1%

*Source: Travel Behaviour research (late 2011). The table refers to % change in trips and this includes trips made by Darlington residents within the Borough and trips made from the Borough to elsewhere.*

Public transport still accounts for only 11% of all trips which represents a 1% decline since the 2008 survey. While Council data shows a gradual increase in rail usage from 2.1 million in 2009/10 to 2.2 million in 2010/11, bus usage which accounts for the majority of public transport trips has continued to reduce over the last few years from 8.2 million trips in 2009/10 to 7.1 million trips in 2011/12.

The Council is working with providers to try to improve reliability of local bus services and encouragingly, Council data shows that the percentage of scheduled bus services running on time has improved from 57.81% in 2009/10 to 64% in 2011/12. While this is slightly lower than the 67% achieved in 2010/11, other data shows that excess waiting times have reduced over the same time period. The Council continues to monitor performance and reliability of services.

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## TRANSPORT FACT SHEET



Local Motion Travel Behaviour Programme

As part of a strategic approach to moving towards more sustainable modes of transport, the Council is supporting the extension of the coverage of the Local Motion Travel Behaviour Programme to include rural as well as urban areas. The objective is to contact all households over the next 3 years and to provide information, advice and support to residents, with view to encouraging and enabling the use of public transport and other sustainable modes such as cycling walking and car sharing.

**Service Provision:** Recent cuts in public sector funding do have implications for transport schemes and services in the Borough but this is not unique to Darlington and reflects the similar challenges facing the Sub-region, Region and UK as a whole. In terms of public transport, the reduction in expenditure set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan in 2012, has impacted on subsidised bus services. Council funding for supported bus services will be withdrawn from 30 December 2012. This means that early morning bus services paid for by the Council were withdrawn in June 2012 with rural services following in December.

However, the majority of bus services operate commercially by private operators and these are not affected by the Council's decision. The Council is also looking at more sustainable options and is seeking to help create community transport schemes where community groups run their own transport service to meet the travel needs of their area. A grant scheme using national government Local Sustainable Transport Funds already means that a bus service will be available in the west end of the town and an accessible taxi service will operate throughout the Borough from 2013 (precise start dates to be confirmed). Further applications from other areas are expected.

Arriva has also made changes to commercially operated bus routes to cover some of the journeys previously paid for by the Council and the Council will also continue to work in partnership with commercial operators to improve reliability and availability of information for bus service routes and timetables. This is complementary to physical improvements to the road system, notably the Department for Transport funded North Road Bus Priority Scheme that is designed to improve reliability and punctuality of bus services.

In terms of future investment in the physical infrastructure of the transport network, the Council is preparing plans to bring forward the key transport infrastructure required to enable economic development in the Borough. The key transport infrastructure schemes identified at the moment for delivery by 2020 are:

- **Darlington Station**
- **A1(M) Junction 58 & A68 capacity enhancement**
- **A66(T) Darlington Bypass capacity enhancement (Phase 1)**
- **Inner Ring Road Phase 2**

The funding for all of these schemes is estimated at ~ £28m. Funding will be sought from a mixture of sources including Network Rail, Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership, Darlington's Local Transport Plan and developer contributions.

This infrastructure is designed to unlock pinch (congestion) points on the transport network in order to provide more capacity to enable development of residential and employment sites; to improve sustainable travel choices and to improve travel conditions. It is important to plan strategically to enable Darlington to accommodate growth and regeneration in the Borough in a sustainable manner which maximises the effectiveness of the transport system while ensuring future development is not stifled. Travel plans and Planning Obligations on developers will be vital to embed sustainable travel choices and behaviours.

The Council is preparing a Parking Strategy for the Borough. The Strategy will co-ordinate parking investment and management actions until 2026 that facilitate and support the economy of the Borough; help tackle traffic congestion by ensuring parking does not block moving traffic; provide appropriate car parking solutions throughout the Borough; and, support a sustainable pattern of travel behaviour to minimise traffic congestion and protect the environment.



### MOVING THINGS FORWARD: KEY ACTIONS

- Develop detailed transport policy and proposals as part of the preparation of the Making and Growing Places Development Plan Document.
- Ensure policies on sustainable travel choices and behaviours are embedded within the Making and Growing Places Development Plan Document.
- Support the extension of the Local Motion Travel Behaviour Programme to include rural as well as urban areas.
- Continue to implement and monitor delivery of the Local Transport Plan (2011-2026).
- Prepare plans and funding packages to bring forward key transport infrastructure schemes for delivery by 2020.
- Approve the Parking Strategy during Summer 2013. Implement the Action Plan for the Strategy during 2013 to 2026.

**Contact Us:** You can access more information on planning policy in Darlington at:

[www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy)

If you are particularly interested in statistics and data for Darlington borough, you can view these at:

<http://lis.darlington.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, contact the Planning Policy Team on **01325 388644** or email [planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk)

This document is available in different formats on request.