

06 Residential Travel Plans

Key Principle

Enabling and encouraging cycling within residential areas and providing space for cycle parking within new residential development is just as important as provision at the trip end. If there is no encouragement or parking provision at the 'origin' of a trip this is a major disincentive to cycle ownership and use.

In new residential developments, residential travel plans should include a range of measures specifically designed to encourage cycling, as part of a wider programme of measures to encourage residents to adopt more sustainable travel patterns.

Residential travel plans and supporting infrastructure can be secured through the planning process, but this is made easier if there are supporting policies such as cycle parking standards and a defined cycle route network, and by ensuring that cycling is specifically addressed in the planning brief for a site.

Background

Travel plans and cycling measures are relevant to the principles of PPS1: Sustainable Development, and contribute to easily accessible, well connected public transport and community facilities required by PPS3: Housing. PPG13: Transport states that major developments or developments likely to generate significant amounts of traffic should have travel plans submitted alongside their planning application.

Residential Travel Plans provide a set of measures designed to reduce the number and length of car trips generated by residential development. The requirement for a developer to introduce a travel plan is usually written into the planning conditions for a site or negotiated as a planning agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act. Many planning authorities also have 'cycle parking standards' that set out the minimal acceptable provision for cycle parking in new development. The [Code for Sustainable Homes](#) is a voluntary guide for sustainable development but includes recommended levels of cycle parking provision. Where an authority has a published planned cycle network this can also help to secure developer contributions for network improvements through the planning process, although within residential development the emphasis is usually on creating slow-speed environments where cyclists share the road.

Implementation of the travel plan may be undertaken by a separate body, such as a local housing association or local authority neighbourhood office using monies secured through Section 106 agreements, and this may be beneficial in offering the longer term relationships with residents that are required to maintain the effect of the travel plan.

The plans aim to improve accessibility and travel choice to local facilities through encouragement and provision of sustainable modes of transport. Residential travel plans are important for cycling. They are a means to encourage cycle ownership by ensuring that there is sufficient secure and convenient space to store bicycles in new residential developments, and to encourage cycle use by providing information about routes (see also [targeted marketing of routes](#) and [maps and signing](#)), or even providing cycles.

How residential travel plans differ to other travel plans

Travel plans are commonly 'destination' based plans, designed to reduce the impact of car journeys to a specific destination such as a school or office. The schemes are usually originated by the employer, in partnership with other bodies including the local authority and transport operators. RTP's are 'origin' based and therefore concerned with a potentially wide range of journeys and journey purposes. It is important that an ongoing management structure is put in place to co-ordinate the plan. In new development, the travel plan may initially be coordinated by the developer but as new development matures, it may require input from a residents' committee, the property management agent, a local authority neighbourhood office or travel plan coordinator depending on the scale of development, types of property involved and whether they are owner occupied or rented.

Infrastructure Measures

Planning officers can work with developers to ensure that cycle infrastructure is included within residential developments and that connections are made 'off site' into the surrounding cycle route network. If necessary, the infrastructure can be secured through planning conditions although typically for larger scale projects, developers work closely with the planning authority throughout the master planning process to agree how to cater for cyclists prior to submitting the planning application.

The 'Manual for Streets' covers cycle parking and cycle routes within residential development. There is a move away from segregated pedestrian and cycle routes as these can be a focus for anti-social behaviour, and in general pedestrians and cyclists should be accommodated within or alongside low-speed routes for motor vehicles that are overlooked by properties. In general, a standard of one cycle parking space per resident might be anticipated for typical family homes if cycling is to be a realistic mode of transport for local journeys. Providing flexible space for cycle storage might also benefit others such as families with young children or elderly people where secure storage space might be required for pushchairs, wheelchairs and other mobility aids.

The integration of cycling initiatives with other measures to reduce car use such as mixed land use to provide a range of employment, leisure, health and education opportunities within a local area can help to make cycling a convenient and realistic transport choice. The main infrastructure and design measures for cyclists include: Block permeability for pedestrians and cyclists (typically blocks no greater than 100m); cycle-friendly highway infrastructure; low speed limits; cycle parking; cycle shower and changing facilities in local workplaces; provision for cycle parking in local schools, shops etc.

Promotion and Awareness Raising

Travel plans for new residential development typically feature a 'resident's pack' that is given to residents moving into their new home. The residents pack may contain the following:

- A cycle route map;
- An 'isochrone' map showing cycling and walking times from the residential development to main local destinations;
- A discount voucher (fixed sum or % discount) at a local cycle shop;
- Contact details for local [cycle training](#) schemes;
- Details of any local cycle rides, leisure routes or organised rides/[events](#)
- Details of local shops / special offers etc which encourage people to access goods and services locally rather than travelling out of the area.

In addition some developers have also provided folding bikes to new residents or offered a course of cycle training. The local authority may wish to target new residents with details of [specific routes](#).

Wider Potential Benefits

- Reducing the need for car travel will help reduce congestion, pollution and accidents, perpetuating a more cycle-friendly environment;
- Greater cycle access for reaching local facilities and for multi-modal bike/bus and bike/train journeys (see [cycling and public transport](#));
- Creating people-, and particularly child-, friendly layouts with fewer roads and vehicles;
- Complementing other school and workplace travel plans, therefore supporting a wider sustainable transport culture and infrastructure;
- Creating more attractive, less car-dominated, residential environments that contribute to sustainable regeneration and renewal.

Residential Travel Plan Case Studies

Merseyside

Merseyside Travelwise (a joint partnership between the five Merseyside councils and the Passenger Transport Executive) campaigns to promote the better use of sustainable transport. A website run by the partnership, [TravelWise](#), offers a wide range of information on travel planning, including an information leaflet on residential travel plans. This offers information on how to create an effective Residential Travel plan covering issues including co-ordination, promotion, targets and measures of implementation.

The guide sets out a range of measures for cyclists that can be incorporated into a residential travel plan, including:

- Attractive and accessible cycle routes provided and signed within the development, connecting to the cycle network outside the site;
- Secure, convenient and covered cycle storage for each residential unit;
- information on local routes, parking, (cycle) shops and local cycle groups;
- a bicycle user group;
- a communal pump, toolkit and battery recharge;
- promotion of cycling e.g. through bike to work events.

Queen Elizabeth Park, Guildford, Surrey

Developer Laing and Linden Homes built a mixed-use development at Queen Elizabeth Park, site of the former Guildford Barracks, just north of Guildford town centre. The development comprises 525 residential units, 9,000m² of employment development, a crèche, a health and fitness centre, a surgery and several shop units. The residential travel plan aims to reconcile development

with the need to manage traffic growth and reduce environmental impacts. The travel plan was required by Surrey County Council as part of the transport assessment.

The main elements of the scheme are:

- *Provision of facilities that reduce the need to travel* – The development includes a crèche, community hall, and a health centre; it was also located close to the shops. This mixed land use planning reduces the need for long journeys by enabling a wide variety of services to be accessed locally by bicycle or on foot. Cycle parking was provided in all types of development.
- *Site Design* - Attractive for walking and cycling with good connections (secured through S106) to the surrounding network of routes for non-motorised users to maximise the permeability of the site.
- *Travel Plan Co-ordinator* - Consultants were appointed by the developers to promote and develop the travel plan. As part of their job they briefed sales staff on the new green transport credentials of the site as well as preparing travel packs for residents and promoting bus-use and a car-share scheme.
- *Walking and cycling measures* - Cycle and pedestrian routes were included in the scheme, including on-carriageway advanced stop lines at signalled junctions for cyclists. A £30 cycle discount voucher was given to new residents.
- *Marketing and provision of information to residents* - All residents are given welcome information packs containing a newsletter, walking, cycling, train and bus information and details about claiming cycling and public transport discounts. A website has been established providing further information about accessing the site and internal workshops were held to explain the travel plan and its purpose.

Further information

[Making Residential Travel Plans Work: Guidelines for New Development](#) (2005), Department for Transport