

SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEW INTO THE COUNCIL'S ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES AROUND THE BOROUGH'S SCHOOLS SUPPORTING INFORMATION REPORT

Committee name	Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee
Officer reporting	Lisa Mayo, Place Directorate David Knowles, Place Directorate
Papers with report	None
Wards	All Wards

Who are the STaRS (School Travel and Road Safety) Team?

The School Travel and Road Safety Team provide Education, Training and Publicity to all residents in Hillingdon. The team currently totals at 41 employees including STaRS officers, practical pedestrian trainers, cycle instructors and school crossing patrol officers all of which work together to provide an exceptional and invaluable service in Hillingdon.

The School Travel and Road Safety Team (STaRS), our primary objective is to ensure the safety and well-being of students on their journeys to and from school. We work closely with schools, parents, and local communities to promote safer and more sustainable travel options for students and develop TfL (Transport for London) Accredited School Travel Plans.

We currently have nine members of the team providing Practical Pedestrian Training to all primary aged children in a various number of schools.

School Travel Plan Development

'A School Travel Plan (STP) is a document which sets out how a school will promote safer, active and sustainable travel, with the main emphasis on reducing the number of journeys made by private vehicles.'

An effective School Travel Plan should put forward a package of measures to reduce the number of vehicles on the journey to school, encourage more active and sustainable travel choices, and improve safety on the journey to and from school.'

The team provides assistance and guidance to all schools to develop their School Travel Plans through the TfL Accreditation Scheme. All schools are invited to take part in projects and campaigns the team offers throughout the year and booster packs are accessible to make it easy for schools to showcase their work. Aside from the standard offers, schools are encouraged to develop their own projects that are school specific, and the team will assist them to help educate, train and publicise their messages. Regular meetings take place with School Travel Leads and their

Junior and Youth Travel Ambassadors to keep their Travel Plan and live and working document.

Accreditation Information:

- 5 Engaged schools
- 10 Bronze schools
- 5 Silver schools
- 21 Gold schools

Practical Pedestrian Training

Every primary school in the borough is offered Practical Pedestrian Training led by a small team who deliver these life skills to a range of ages, adapting the service as needed. Year 3 pupils are prioritised, however over the past 16 years the interest has increased dramatically, and now the training can be delivered to all years from Nursery – Year 6 budget dependent.

Hillingdon's Practical Pedestrian Training is a scheme for children ranging from Nursery to year 6 which develops their awareness of the road and provides the basis for lifelong skills. They are taught the basic ability to identify safe places to cross and how to do it in an acceptable and intact manner. Children are made aware of distractions we face in the modern-day world and how it can affect their judgment. Throughout the training children will be practically learning how to put their new skills and knowledge into practice.

The team and programme continue to grow and develop, ultimately increasing numbers of children trained. The London Borough of Hillingdon has been providing Practical Pedestrian Training free of charge for over 15 years and in this time the service has been widely recognised and desired by not only schools, but also nurseries, scouts, brownies and children's centres.

In 2013/14, Hillingdon trained 5310 children in both KS1&2. In 2022/2023, the borough has trained 13,484 pupils ranging from 3 to 11 years old. This identifies a 154% increase in 9 years.

Annually, the team visits over 80% of infant, junior and primary schools in the borough up from 30% in 2013/14.

Cycle Training/ Bikeability

We currently have 16 in house cycle instructors who deliver several different services borough wide. The London Borough of Hillingdon has been providing Cycle Training free of charge for over 15 years and in this time the service has been widely recognised and desired by not only schools, but to adults and families alike.

Bikeability - Levels 1, 2 and 3 Bikeability Training is delivered in primary and secondary schools' borough wide. Each level is designed to improve cycling skills,

no matter what is known already. Levels take trainees from the basics of balance and control, all the way to planning and making an independent journey on busier roads. Hillingdon adopted Bikeability in 2006 replacing the well-known 'Cycling Proficiency Test'. Six qualified Cycle Instructors were to deliver sessions to as many 10/11-year-olds as they could. In 2010 a new booking system and course set up was introduced. This change saw a rise in interest from the schools. By the end of 2010 the team had increased to 12 instructors and bikeability courses were running almost weekly. To date the team has now risen to 16 with more posts currently to recruit. Bikeability has at least one course if not two running every week of the school term, school holidays and weekends.

In 2007, 353 children were trained in Level 1 and 2 compared with 1132 children trained in 2022.

Hillingdon Council has offered free Adult Cycle Training to all residents in Hillingdon 16+ in the past, unfortunately since Covid and loss of experienced instructors we have not seen this return – however we are introducing new free training designed to teach all ages from learning to balance right through to route planning and riding on roads. This will take place at Pield Heath School on their dedicated cycle track between the months of April – October.

The team regularly provides pop up Dr Bike maintenance in different locations across the borough. Residents can bring along their bikes to these locations for a free service, minor repairs and basic replacements. Advice is given on how to keep your bike 'healthy.'

School Crossing Patrol Officers (SCPO)

Over the past three years, the Council has lost 15 SCPOs, dropping from 27 to 12 due to reasons including retirement, resignation, poor health, and death. Three of the SCPOs still in post suffer from long-term health issues, causing the crossings to be unattended for prolonged periods throughout the year. As the colder months set in, we see more sickness absences from several of the remaining SCPOs, age, health and the nature of the role could contribute to these absences.

Recruitment of these posts is difficult, several applications that make it through to the interview stage do not attend the interview at all and we have only recruited three new SCPOs since 2019. This is a common challenge for many other local authorities; funding may be a challenge but irrespective of that, recruitment is even more so.

In 2019 the Council commissioned Project Centre to review all sites in the borough and complete an in-depth safety audit of each crossing point and its SCPO. Out of the 27 sites it was found that four sites did not meet the latest SCPO guidelines and requirements, three quarters of the sites no longer have SCPOs operating, however they were not dismissed but have resigned from the post and have not been recruited back into.

Many of our SCPOs have described the abuse they receive - sometimes daily - from motorists and sometimes even parents/ carers. Cars do not always stop, despite it being illegal to do so, and this puts not only the SCPO at risk but the children crossing too.

The plan for the future of the School Crossing Patrol Service is, overtime and especially as and when SCPOs leave their post, to assess the site against the recommendations made by Project Centre and improve the safety of the crossing. This could range from more signage, road markings, traffic calming or the implementation of an alternative crossing such as, where appropriate, a zebra crossing or similar measure. Dialogue with the schools concerned is clearly a vital part of this process.

The Council's School Travel and Road Safety Team already works with a number of schools in the Borough to develop a School Travel Plan and educate, train and publicise aspects of road safety and sustainable travel. The interest in 'School Streets' by schools is increasing (subject to consultation and funding) although it is appreciated that there may be a range of views on the merits of such enforcement. The primary objective of the team is to see safer roads outside of schools for both pupils and the wider school community.

Moving On

Moving On is an initiative delivered to Year 6 pupils assisting them with their new journeys to secondary school. Walking is a heavily discussed subject as pupils walking to school increases as they move on to secondary education. Behaviour on public transport and being a respectable car passenger is also touched upon. The initiative encourages good and acceptable behaviours, which bad habits to break and new habits they may develop as they get older. The project involves route planning and focuses on safe places to cross during their journey. Route planning is encouraged to continue with the parents at home, so the safety message continues through different routes.

Previous projects

- Highfield School Street
- 20mph zones outside schools & 20mph signage competitions
- Banner competitions
- Story books – Grace & Snugglefluff, Captain Safety
- Walking Zone maps & workshops
- Theatre in Education – Abbey Ayre, Riot Act, Wizard Theatre
- Events – Virtual Dragons Dens for YTA (Youth Travel Ambassador) and JTA, Junior Citizenship
- Previous active travel & road safety competitions – art comps, be bright be seen
- Road Safety online quizzes and assembly presentations
- Safe Drive Stay Alive until 2019

- Travel Smart (online version of SDSA)
- Pan London Road Safety Campaigns

2023/24 Plan of Events

- Active Travel Movement
- Walk To School Month – Road Safety Invention Competition and Active Travel Drawing Competition
- Be Bright Be Seen – Are You The Brightest School
- Dragons Den for JTA/YTA
- Walk To School Month – Walk The World
- The Big Walk

School Related Engineering Measures

In order to support schools, the Transport & Projects team have a programme of engineering works to ensure road safety near a school or to create routes to make travelling by more sustainable modes a more viable option. Works completed to date include but are not limited to the following:

Harlyn Primary School: creation of a 20mph zone and traffic calming on Harlyn Drive.

Coteford Junior School: extension of the 20mph zone on Fore Street and installation of dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

Bishops Winnington Ingram Primary School: footpath improvements to connect school to more residential properties.

Meadow High SEN School: provision of a zebra crossing outside the school.

An ongoing programme has also been developed, in conjunction with the School Travel and Road Safety team and is currently proposed as follows (delivery of the 2024/25 & 2025/26 programme subject to funding):

2023/24

- Cherry Lane Primary School
- Wood End Park Academy
- Hermitage Primary School
- Minet Infant & Junior School
- St Catherine's Primary School
- Grange Park Infants & Junior School
- St Bernadette's Primary School
- Hewens Primary School

2024/25

- Holy Trinity Primary School
- Hayes Park Primary
- Dr Triplett's Primary School
- Hillside Junior School
- Oak Farm Primary School
- Charville Primary School

2025/26

- Colham Manor Primary School
- Harefield Junior School
- Yeading Infant and Junior School
- Botwell House Primary School
- Cranford Park Primary School
- Field End Junior School