

Successful Travel Initiatives In York

Beauty and the Bike

It is known that the numbers of girls cycling to Secondary school drops dramatically compared to those cycling to Primary school. In an effort to address this, a Sustrans led course (developed as part of the Cycling City programme) worked with groups of 10 girls (total 14 groups) in years 6 and 7 from around 10 schools. Three sessions were offered which explored the girls' attitudes to cycling, and the barriers they had to cycling. It then moved on to building their confidence and overcoming those barriers, before helping them plan a route into the centre of York and then cycling it (accompanied by suitably trained adults). Feedback has been positive with girls saying that they are cycling more in their daily lives.

Jack Archer Award

The Jack Archer Award is now in its 7th year and is currently running in the form of a Virtual race from Eboracum via Rome and back to Eboracum via a number of key Roman sites. It can be followed on www.roamingromans.com. It encourages schools to achieve very high levels of walking, cycling and scooting to school, with totals in excess of 80% or 90% common (maximum 97%).

In the past, the Jack Archer Award was run as part of 'Walk to School Week' where schools encouraged their children to travel actively to school for the whole week. In October 2008, 23 schools took part in the Jack Archer Award and 17 in Walk to School Week. In 2009, of the 34 schools that registered to take part in Walk to School week, 17 took part in the Jack Archer Award.

This year, the race took place between 27 September – 15 October 2010 and 10 schools registered to take part. Feedback on this year's event will be tabled at the committee meeting on 13 October 2010.

Car Free Day

Feedback on this year's event will be tabled at the committee meeting on 13 October 2010.

End to End – Virtual Race March 2010

This was a Virtual race organised by the Schools Group as part of the Cycle City project and in conjunction with the Bike It officer. Of the 56 primary schools in York, 22 registered to compete in the Virtual End-to-End. Of those schools, 19 submitted regular cycle counts.

The competition started on 1st March 2010 and ran officially for two weeks. The first school to reach the finish line took eight school days. Some schools were still submitting cycle counts at 20 school days, showing that cycling numbers were still raised over the normal level once the competition had ceased.

Key Points:

- Nationally cycling accounts for approximately 2% of journeys to school
- In York cycling accounts for approximately 7.5% of journeys to school
- During the virtual End-to-End the average daily cycling rate was 19.8% and the maximum daily cycling rate was 62.5% for the schools taking part

- During the Virtual End to End a total of 9,737 cycle journeys were made by pupils and staff at participating schools
- The Virtual End to End generated an average of 532 new cycle journeys per day across all schools, over the 10 days of the event this amounts to approximately 5300 new cycle journeys.
- The mean daily cycle count across all schools during the event showed an average 395% increase over pre-event cycle counts.

Walking Buses

A number of schools have tried to set up walking buses. Woodthorpe has one, and as noted once the original volunteers move on it can be difficult to recruit new, or if there is enthusiasm from parents for a walking bus to start those same parents tend not to be keen to actually help with the walking bus, therefore it doesn't happen. Woodthorpe now pay people to keep the walking bus running and has 10 children regularly using it. St Lawrence used to pay two people to run the walking bus as the school found that the bus helped attendance at school. The bus discontinued some time ago, as the school could no longer fund it. Carr junior school has recently identified sufficient volunteers to run a walking bus, those volunteers have received appropriate road safety training from our Road Safety team and the school is currently in the process of setting up a bus having identified pupils who would like to participate.

Park and Stride

Park and stride sites can be useful to encourage those who do drive to school to park away from the school, potentially making the road outside the school safer. Our Lady's has had two sites originally Edmund Wilson baths but on their closure the school is now using the Acomb Rugby Club car park as an alternative. they also use the Acorn Pub. The school finds the sites generally work well apart from when the weather is bad.

Robert Wilkinson school have negotiated use of a nearby pub car park which provides a safe route to the school for the children to walk. Despite heavy publicity the parents seem to prefer not to use it.

Ralph Butterfield school have set up a Park and Stride at Ethel Ward playing fields in Haxby. This site seems to be currently working well. the school is currently taking part in the Jack Archer Award and is monitoring use of the site. I hope to have some information on its use on Friday.

Members should note that regardless of how good a travel plan is when written, it's success is usually down to the enthusiasm of a member of staff, backed by a supportive Head Teacher, who is prepared to put in significant effort to encourage walking and cycling to school. The School Travel Plan Coordinators become aware of these individuals when they contact us for support and ideas.