

Nottinghamshire County Council

School Travel Pathfinder Bid 2008 – 2012

“BEST: BEtter School Travel”

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Summary

Nottinghamshire's Pathfinder proposal aims to improve the quality and flexibility of travel arrangements for children and young people across the county. Our key objectives will build on best practice and develop further measures to boost sustainable transport solutions and provide access to new learning opportunities for children and families.

The key objectives of the Pathfinder are to:

- Make existing transport arrangements more responsive to changes in the 14-19 curriculum
- Support the development of extended services by improving access to opportunities
- Improve confidence in school transport by improving its quality and promoting further integration
- Promote cycling in secondary schools
- Promoting safety in relation to all travel issues, and good behaviour amongst children and young people
- Develop an approach that could support continued reductions in the costs of public transport for young people

This will be achieved through a mix of capacity-building and pilot initiatives including:

- Developing a small project team to ensure that travel and access arrangements are addressed as part of 14-19 curriculum and extended services developments, and are fully integrated with the work of the school travel planning and transport services teams
- Adoption of the *SafeMark* scheme to promote travel safety and better behaviour
- Promoting cycling and bus use amongst secondary aged pupils. We wish to break new ground by developing smartcard-based concessionary travel which conforms to the new ITSO national standards.

These measures have been planned to complement a range of other transport innovations already being pursued in the county, such as promoting walking to school, use of CCTV on buses, and training primary school pupils in safe cycling.

We aim to improve access to the new curriculum choices that will be available to young people by improving sustainable transport services and making them more affordable, and by reducing dependence on, and use of, private cars for getting to education. Parents and other interested parties have shown their support for the proposed arrangements which will enable these goals to be realised. This application seeks support from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCFS) for these activities under its Transport Pathfinder Initiative.

Section A – Contact details

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Section B – Background

B1 Overview of the proposed scheme area

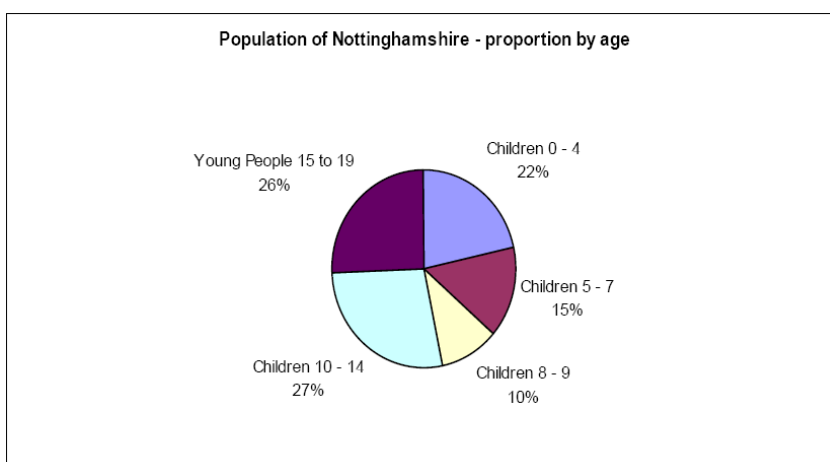
There are 182,000 children and young people aged 0-19 in Nottinghamshire. The numbers of children and young people in each district of the county are roughly equal. The breakdown of ages in each district is also similar.

Fig B.1 : Population of Children and Young People aged 0 to 19

	Children 0-4	Children 5-7	Children 8-9	Children 10-14	Young People 15-19	Children & Young People 0-19
Ashfield	6,275	4,246	2,804	7,581	6,932	27,838
Bassetlaw	5,610	3,974	2,787	7,434	7,024	26,829
Broxtowe	5,108	3,542	2,573	6,815	6,630	24,668
Gedling	5,536	3,795	2,644	7,155	6,828	25,958
Mansfield	5,206	3,591	2,611	6,978	6,616	25,002
Newark & Sherwood	5,886	3,948	2,815	7,273	6,708	26,630
Rushcliffe	5,787	3,851	2,687	6,796	6,266	25,387
Nottinghamshire	39,408	26,947	18,921	50,032	47,004	182,312

Source: Mid-2003 Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics

Fig B.2: Proportion of Young People by Age



In the coming years the number of children and young people is expected to fall. Between 2003 and 2023, whilst the number of 0-4 year olds is expected to increase, there will be significant reductions in the number of older children (see Figure).

Fig B.3: 2003-based sub-national population projections, Nottinghamshire

Age (years)	2003	2013	% change: 2003 - 2013	2023	% change: 2003 - 2023
0 to 4	39,400	40,100	1.8%	42,200	7.1%
5 to 9	45,900	43,300	-5.7%	44,400	-3.3%
10 to 14	50,000	43,400	-13.2%	44,300	-11.4%
15 to 19	47,000	46,100	1.9%	43,600	-7.2%

Source: Office for National Statistics

Schools and Education

There are 355 schools in Nottinghamshire, providing education to 121,600 children and young people. There are over 61,000 children at primary schools and 49,700 in secondary education.

Of all primary-aged pupils living in the county, 59% attend their designated school and 41% attend their preference school. Rushcliffe district has the highest percentage of primary pupils attending their designated school (74%) and Ashfield district the lowest (52%). Rural areas tend to see a higher percentage of pupils attending their designated primary school (73%) compared with urban areas (52%). This possibly reflects the greater density of available schools within convenient distance in urban areas.

Preference is less marked for secondary-aged pupils (11-18 years). For all pupils living in the county, 67% attend their designated school and 33% attend their preference school. Again, Rushcliffe has the highest percentage attending their designated school

(86%) and Ashfield the lowest (64%). 71% of secondary pupils in rural areas attend their designated school and 65% in urban areas.

2% of children or young people attend one of 15 independent schools situated in the county. 6% of children attending Nottinghamshire schools live outside the authority area, the majority of who live in Nottingham City. Meanwhile, 3% of pupils living in Nottinghamshire travel to a school in another authority area (the majority to Nottingham).

Eligibility for free school meals is a recognised proxy for child poverty. In Nottinghamshire there are variations across districts, with Mansfield and Ashfield generally having the highest concentrations of eligibility. The highest rates of eligibility are in wards in Worksop, Newark and Mansfield. Looking more generally at child poverty scores generated from the indices of deprivation (which takes account of children in households receiving a range of benefits), there are clear concentrations of poverty in the north and west areas of the county.

Overall, 12% of Nottinghamshire students receive Free School Meals (FSM). Broken down by age; 13% of primary pupils are eligible for free school meals, 11% of 11-16 year olds, and 4% of post-16 pupils.

B2 Current pupil travel patterns

The annual school census (PLASC) in January 2007 included for the first time a question on how pupils usually travel to their school. The overall results shown are for schools with a travel plan.

Fig B.4: Mode of travel to school

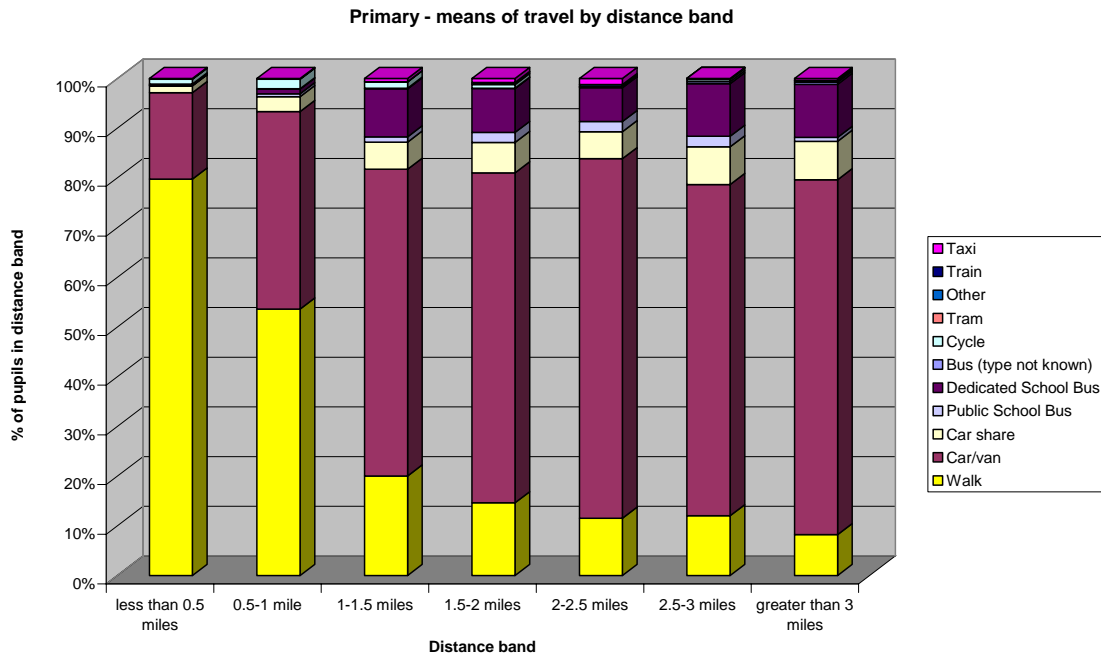
Usual mode of travel to school (schools with a travel plan)	Primary school pupils years 1-6	Secondary School pupils years 7-11	Post-16 secondary school pupils years 12-13
Walk	57%	53%	56%
Car or van	35%	13%	10%
Car share		0.4%	
Dedicated School bus	3%	17%	13%
Public School bus	0.5%	14%	20%
Other bus (type not known)	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%
Cycle	1%	2%	0.5%
Train			
Tram			0.1%
Taxi	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%
Other	0.1	0.2%	0.7%
Total absolute number of pupils	21,625	7,712	1,283
Total schools surveyed	118	8	8

Source: PLASC/School Census, January 2007

Overall, across all sectors, about 55% of all pupils walk to school. However, there is greater variation in the levels of car use, with much higher levels of use occurring amongst primary pupils. Bus use is much higher amongst secondary pupils.

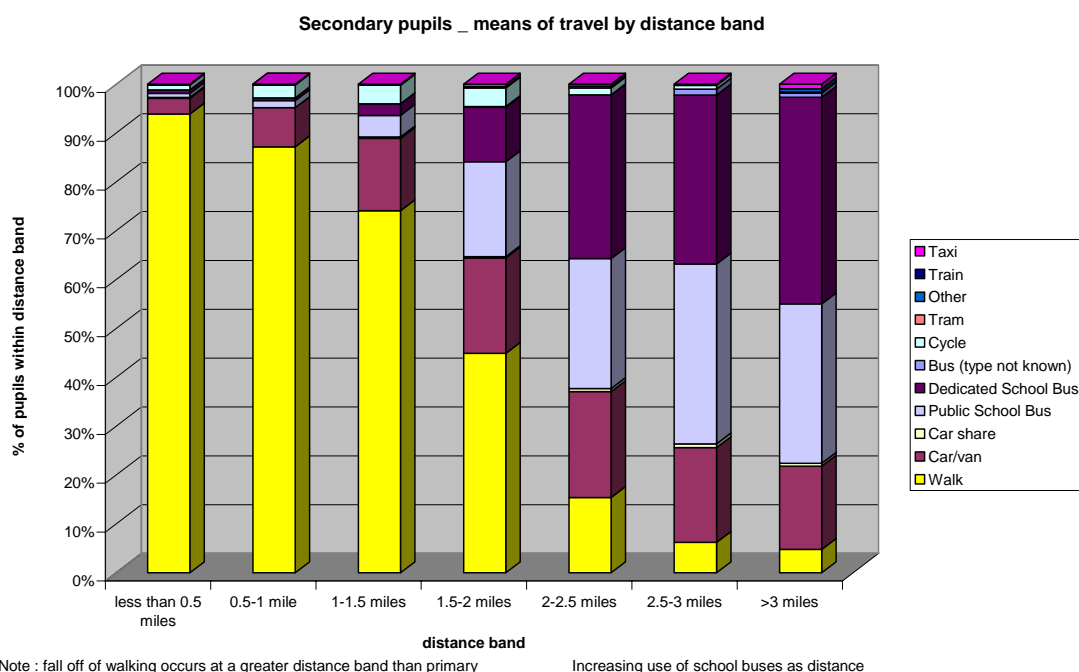
Further analysis of data focussing on the road distances travelled has shown that 51% of primary school pupils live less than 0.5 miles from their school, and 75% within 1 mile. This reduces to 17% and 41% respectively for secondary pupils. Furthermore, 26% of secondary pupils live over 3 miles from their school.

Fig B.5: Mode of travel and distance to primary school



From the above chart it can be seen that 80% of primary school pupils living within 0.5 miles of their school actually walk. However, between 0.5 and 1 mile there is a significant reduction in the proportion walking to school. Over 1 mile, car use increases to over 60%. This seems to suggest that 0.5 miles (or 10 minutes walk at typical walking speed) is a key threshold for accessing primary schools. Clearly, various measures would need to be introduced to encourage walking up to 1 mile, including road safety awareness training and the introduction of safer walking routes. For distances over a mile, the provision of school buses would be needed to reduce car usage.

Fig B.6: Mode of travel and distance to secondary school



This chart shows that over 90% of secondary school pupils (including post-16) who live within 0.5 miles of their school choose to walk. In contrast to primary pupils, the proportion walking remains high up to 1.5 miles. With the greater distance, there is much more use of bus.

B3 Principal school travel issues

Nottinghamshire has had considerable success in promoting sustainable modes of school travel, particularly in primary schools. 55% of schools have school travel plans and 154 schools participated in the recent Walk to School Week. Similarly, the Post-16 Education Transport Partnership has encouraged colleges to develop travel plans. These initiatives tend to focus on the traditional home to school / college journey and have not taken account of the changing environment of education provision (14-19 agenda and extended services). This transformational change needs to be supported through careful consideration of travel arrangements, and creative approaches.

The County Council has recently integrated the organisation, planning and procurement of public, education and social care transport activities. This is bringing about efficiency savings which can be re-invested in improving service quality. Parents are keen to see improvements in the quality of school transport. The County Council has had success in introducing CCTV onto school buses, and would like to go further in promoting better safety and behaviour on school buses through collaborative approaches.

Significant levels of cycle training are taking place, with 3000 primary pupils trained every year (mainly off-road). However, there is more to be done to promote cycling at secondary level.

Research amongst young people in Nottinghamshire suggests that bus travel costs do deter some travel, particularly amongst young people in rural areas. Also, some operators in the county only allow children to travel at two-thirds fare, rather than half fare. In order to address these issues there have been calls for the introduction of a young people's concessionary travel scheme.

B4 Capacity of local authority and partners to manage pilot scheme

Nottinghamshire County Council has a proven track record in respect of its high performance, innovation and delivery against its objectives. It is a four star authority and was classed as "Improving well" by the Audit Commission in the comprehensive performance assessment. In 2005 Greater Nottingham was one of 17 local transport authorities awarded Centre of Excellence status for delivery of its Local Transport Plan (LTP). Nottinghamshire's LTP for 2006-11 was assessed as excellent by the Government Office East Midlands.

The authority has been highly effective in managing and implementing a host of innovative and large-scale transport projects, from the introduction of passenger train services on the Robin Hood Line and introduction of the NET tram system through to the introduction of real time information systems and smartcard technology. It has been a leading authority in a study of transport issues facing young people undertaken amongst a group of 30 rural authorities, the report of which is currently being presented to ministers prior to publication in November. The DfT has named Nottinghamshire as a mentor authority for others looking for assistance in implementing the national concession scheme for older people in April 2008; this follows the part played by the authority on a national concessionary fares working group.

The authority has faced up to the need for change, in the light of changing circumstances and other pressures. Last year it carried out a major consultation exercise on the introduction of charges for transport to faith schools. Charges have been introduced in September 2007. Internally, it has restructured and reorganised itself to provide the best possible transport services in the most efficient way. Earlier in 2007, all aspects of the planning and provision of public, education and social care transport were brought into a single Integrated Transport Unit. Already, this has realised a number of benefits, and the authority is well placed to deploy a host of solutions in response to needs.

Furthermore, the County Council established a Children and Young People's Transport Strategy Group (CYPTSG) over a year ago, specifically aimed at addressing the requirements of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The group consists of officer representatives from across the education and transport spectrum. It oversaw the formulation of the Sustainable School Travel Strategy and is responsible for delivering the associated action plan, has taken ownership of the findings of the study into discounted fares for young people, and has been instrumental in the development of this bid and the consultation on the proposals. The group has reported directly to a Cabinet Committee, established for the purpose of considering these issues; this in turn has made recommendations to the Cabinet. The CYPTSG will be responsible for overseeing and delivering the Pathfinder project.

Section C – Proposals for local school travel scheme

C1 Outline arrangements, including aims and objectives

Nottinghamshire's Pathfinder proposal aims to improve the quality and flexibility of travel arrangements for children and young people across the county. Our key objectives will build on best practice and develop further measures to boost sustainable transport solutions and provide access to new learning opportunities for children and families.

The key objectives of the Pathfinder are to:

- Make existing transport arrangements more responsive to changes in the 14-19 curriculum
- Support the development of extended services by improving access to opportunities
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- Promote cycling in secondary schools
- Promoting safety in relation to all travel issues, and good behaviour amongst children and young people
- Develop an approach that could support continued reductions in the costs of public transport for young people

This will be achieved through a mix of capacity-building and pilot initiatives including:

- Developing a small project team to ensure that travel and access arrangements are addressed as part of 14-19 curriculum and extended services developments, and are fully integrated with the work of the school travel planning and transport services teams
- Adoption of the *SafeMark* scheme to promote travel safety and better behaviour
- Promoting cycling and bus use amongst secondary aged pupils. We wish to break new ground by developing smartcard-based concessionary travel which conforms to the new ITSO national standards.

We aim to improve access to the new curriculum choices that will be available to young people by improving sustainable transport services and making them more affordable, and by reducing dependence on, and use of, private cars for getting to education.

Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to collaborative working to achieve the best possible outcomes from Pathfinder, and this underpins all aspects of the bid proposal. As a lead authority in a recent national study of access issues facing young people in rural areas, it has benefited from a wider knowledge base and the experience of others. Since then it has met with several authorities that have been interested in, or

which are pursuing, Pathfinder bids. This has provided a wider perspective of issues and helped in the development of ideas. In particular, it has worked and shared ideas with Cheshire and Norfolk County Councils and Nottingham City Council, all three of which are preparing full bids.

Sharing information and knowledge is one benefit. However, some of the authorities have sought to collaborate on certain specific proposals within their bids, to add value and gain economies of scale. Each authority will act as a lead on certain aspects; this will avoid wasteful duplication of efforts. A summary of collaborative aspects is given in the appendices.

C2 Description of plans and targets

The draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy identifies the challenges in meeting the travel needs associated with the changing patterns of education provision. There is no single way of addressing these needs; a range of initiatives need to be taken forward. Our intention is to use the opportunity provided by Pathfinder to introduce and trial a number of initiatives; some of these involve building capacity in the system to meet the challenges, whilst others involve the introduction of specific measures. Details of each of the initiatives are described below.

Project Team / Travel Co-ordination for 14-19 and Extended Services

The action plan within the Sustainable School Travel Strategy recognises the challenges of increasing travel demands associated with the 14-19 and extended services developments.

There is a growing demand for more transport to support changing patterns of education. Not only is this in terms of the overall volume of transport, but also in terms of the increasing diversity of need and spread across the day. The extended services initiative may require alternatives for earlier and later travel in the day and throughout the year. The 14-19 curriculum developments mean that young people need to travel between sites during the course of the day. The enhanced travel right for children from low income facilities is also increasing the overall demand for travel.

Greater capacity to address these will be required within and alongside existing teams. Pathfinder will be used to introduce a small team which will specifically look to develop solutions to meet these growing needs. This team will work alongside the Integrated Transport Unit, the School Travel Plan team and colleagues working in Children and Young Peoples Service's. This extra capacity will provide a boost to achieving workable solutions and will demonstrate some quick wins. This in turn should generate more interest in addressing transport and access issues alongside education changes, such that approaches become increasingly integrated.

The recent formation of an Integrated Transport Unit within the County Council (bringing together the organisation, planning and delivery of education, social care and public transport) provides a strong basis for achieving greater co-ordination. It opens up wider opportunities and solutions to address problems and demands.

The County Council's Children and Young People Transport Strategy Group brings together officers from education and transport perspectives. Formed to meet the

opportunities arising from the Education and Inspections Act the group has been responsible for the development of the Sustainable School Travel Strategy and this Pathfinder bid. The group is also overseeing the delivery of the action plan contained within the strategy. It therefore provides a forum for joined up thinking and joint working.

Measures that will be promoted include:

- Ensuring that transport and access issues are built into the project plans 14-19 and extended services programmes.
- Opportunities for spreading demands for travel are exploited (including amendments to school opening and closing times).
- Wherever possible to accommodate demands on the mainstream public transport network, rather than establish free-standing dedicated services.

The way that this will relate to the 14-19 developments is highlighted below, as seen from the viewpoint of the county's 14-19 co-ordinator:

“Nottinghamshire is a diverse region covering urban and rural areas and has seven Area Strategy Groups, arranged around District Councils, which have a remit to plan 14-19 provision across a travel to learn area. They are steered and monitored by a 14-19 county-wide Partnership Group that will provide strategic co-ordination of provision and access to it, an outcome of which would be raised attainment 14-19 and increased participation post-16.

The need for flexible local transport arrangements will be necessary to support 14-19 reform in Nottinghamshire schools. This will include the need for access to a broader range of provision to meet all learner needs and in particular this will be the case with the future delivery of Diplomas. Four Nottinghamshire consortia are planning to pilot Diplomas from September 2008 with up to an estimated 1,000 learners involved and have identified the need for a local transport strategy. This number will increase significantly as it is anticipated that all 7 ASG Consortia in Nottinghamshire will submit bids to pilot Diplomas from September 2009 and 2010. By 2013 all 14 Diplomas will need to be available across Nottinghamshire as part of the new national entitlement for young people.

The new Diploma qualification cannot be delivered by one institution alone, but requires a collaborative delivery model where increasingly young people will undertake learning away from their host institution. Travel patterns will become more complex as the length of the learning day is extended in order to deliver the range of Diplomas and inter-site travel is increased.

The following approach to travel planning could be considered –

(1) The appointment of a Travel Co-ordinator to work with the consortia to investigate a range of solutions which could include:

(2) The identification of opportunities to reduce learner travel through a mix of staff and students moving

- (3) The establishment of a peripatetic team to travel to schools in rural areas to support vocational courses such as Engineering, Land-Based and Hospitality and Catering
- (4) Working with the 14-19 Partnership and key stakeholders such as the LA and the LSC to establish Skill Centres strategically located
- (5) Grant aid to learners in more rural areas to enable them to organise their own transport
- (6) Extending existing home to school transport arrangements to provide inter-site transport
- (7) Ensuring a 14-19 travel strategy is part of a sustainable school travel strategy for Nottinghamshire to achieve strategic coherence, maximum learner access and economies of scale.”

Promoting safety in relation to travel issues, and good behaviour amongst children and young people

Perceived and actual poor quality of school transport is a deterrent to its use and certainly gives a poor image overall. Evidence from elsewhere indicates the positive views of quality initiatives, such as the introduction of yellow buses. In Nottinghamshire, the fitting of CCTV equipment to some buses has been positively received by parents, schools and operators, and has brought with it improved behaviour on board vehicles.

There have been some encouraging outcomes from recent joint working between the County Council, schools and operators to address particular behavioural problems on school buses. It is the intention, therefore, to build on this work and to extend it countywide. There are also opportunities to link with the work of the anti-bullying co-ordinator recently appointed by the County Council.

The Education and Inspections Act requirement for schools to have responsibility for the behaviour of pupils on home-to-school transport is a useful lever for encouraging a partnership approach. It is the intention, therefore, to create local working groups, which bring together all key parties, to implement measures to improve quality and safety of school travel for each school. This work will be supported by adoption of an existing programme, such as the highly-acclaimed *SafeMark* scheme for South Yorkshire.

Measures will include:

- Awareness raising, ensuring that all parties (pupils, parents, school, operators & County Council) are aware of their responsibilities
- Enhanced vehicle specification within contracts
- On-bus CCTV

- Driver training, particularly in how to deal with and understand young people
- Work with pupils to promote good behaviour
- On-bus supervision (to address specific problems)
- Reward scheme for achieving problem-free periods
- Improved bus drop-off and pick-up arrangements at schools

Taking forward this element will require both staff resources and funding for particular initiatives. It will be targeted at schools where there is a keenness amongst all parties to achieve improvement. Over time, some of the vehicle-specific and driver training elements will be mainstreamed as contracts are re-tendered. Meanwhile, as progress is made, it is expected that the evaluation will demonstrate that the benefits achieved (in reduced physical damage and less time and effort dealing with problems) will outweigh the costs of running the scheme. Having proved this during the Pathfinder period, it is expected that the scheme would continue to be funded as a mainstream activity by the authority.

Promote cycling at secondary schools

Through the work of the School Travel Advisors and the development and support of school travel plans, much is being done to promote alternative travel modes to the private car. In primary schools, about 3000 pupils are receiving off-road cycle training each year as part of a highly effective programme. This has resulted in increases in the proportion of pupils cycling to school, particularly where supported by the introduction of associated infrastructure such as cycle storage facilities.

It is the intention to use Pathfinder to build on the progress already made, by extending cycle training to promote cycling at secondary schools too. There will be two main elements to this. Firstly, for pupils at the upper end of primary school to go on to receive on-road cycle training, to equip them for cycling to secondary school. Secondly, to introduce a programme of cycle promotion and training in a number of secondary schools, coupled with improvements to cycling infrastructure and storage facilities using Local Transport Plan funding. It will link with Sustrans programmes and may attract Cycle England funding in the longer term.

Cycling promotion at secondary level is known to be quite difficult to achieve, particularly in areas where there is a lack of general cycling take-up amongst the population as a whole. Pathfinder will be used as an opportunity to find successful ways of achieving this, from which others can learn.

Buy-in from schools will be vital to the success of this element. Therefore, it is the intention that the scheme will be a pilot, tested at a small number of secondary schools which demonstrate a strong interest.

Beyond the pilot period, the main on-going costs of this element will be the costs of the cycle trainers. As the programme develops there may be scope to offer cycling allowances to some pupils (who have received training) as an alternative to the provision of free bus travel. This may ultimately provide savings to the authority which can be used to fund the cycle trainers in the longer term.

Start to reduce public transport costs for young people

There is strong support for the introduction of a concessionary travel scheme for 11-19 year olds, which would unify levels of discount and extend cheaper travel to those in post-16 education. The main aims of this would be to:

- Make public transport more affordable
- Encourage use of public transport
- Enable young people to access facilities, leisure and recreation pursuits, and friends

An extensive study was undertaken in 2006 which researched the options for such a scheme in Nottinghamshire. The original interest came from the youth parliament and elected members were aware of the successful b_line scheme in Derbyshire. The study involved an on-line survey of young people and discussions with a range of interest groups, as well as reviews of other schemes around the country. It concluded that a discount travel scheme would have a number of benefits in encouraging public transport use, particularly amongst students over 16 who were faced with paying adult fares.

The final recommendation was for a smartcard that would provide:

- Standard half fare travel on any bus
- An opportunity for users to purchase unlimited bus travel for a week at a fixed price
- Proof of age in line with PASS accreditation scheme
- Retail discounts and other promotions

The additional features of the smartcard would add value and widen its appeal. As well as the benefits of reduced price travel for 16-19s, there would be benefits to under 16s currently charged two thirds fare by some operators. The weekly ticket add-on would be particularly useful to young people who use services provided by more than one operator.

The smartcard for young people would build on technology already developed in the county, whereby all buses will shortly be fitted with smartcard compatible ticket machines and readers. The County Council is already in the process of developing the systems and supporting infrastructure, and is offering 'back office' services to other Pathfinder authorities. Norfolk is collaborating with Nottinghamshire in its plans for a local young people's half fare travel smartcard in the King's Lynn area.

The County Council recognises the strong support for such a scheme and it is an aspiration to move towards the introduction of a scheme in the future. However, at this stage, the significant costs of such a scheme (estimated to be at least £1.5 million per annum) cannot be contemplated at this time, even with Pathfinder support. Therefore, the scheme will remain as an aspiration, and Pathfinder funding will be used in the first whole year of pump-priming (2008/09) to undertake further feasibility work. This may lead to a phased approach of introduction, whereby various parts of the scheme will be introduced one by one, particularly as more Pathfinder funding becomes available in the latter years of the programme. Stages may include:

- Introduction of smartcard as proof of age and offering some retail discounts
- Half fare on Stagecoach services, where it is currently two thirds fare
- 25% discount for post-16 students in education and training
- Increase to 50% discount for post-16 students

This approach would certainly start to realise the authority's aspirations, but minimise cost exposure and better align to the build up of Pathfinder funding.

Outputs and Targets

The Pathfinder scheme contributes towards meeting targets set out in the Local Transport Plan and effective delivery of the 14-19 agenda and extended services provision. These are embedded within the Sustainable School Travel Strategy Action Plan.

Nottingham City Pathfinder

There are a number of schools and sixth forms in the City of Nottingham that are preferred by some Nottinghamshire parents. Working in collaboration with the City Council on its Pathfinder proposals, there are clear benefits in the combined arrangements that will be put in place. The City of Nottingham proposals are to establish limited stop, direct 'Schools Link' services from the city centre to a number of schools, including popular faith schools. The aspiration is that these will be available to pupils and students travelling into the city from the county, at no additional cost to those young people (who will merely show their ticket or pass from the first leg of their journey to gain access to the service). This arrangement will clearly reduce overall journey times to these establishments and remove any financial penalty resulting from the change of bus; both of these benefits will support parental preference. Nottinghamshire will be interested in working with city colleagues as they develop these proposals.

C3 Educational benefits including impact on disadvantaged groups

The proposals offer a range of benefits. In particular they will provide improved and fair access to 14-19 curriculum offers and extended services, enabling greater choice and participation. Initiatives will be developed across all Area Strategy Groups and linked to extended service provision where travel needs arise. This will include special schools where more specialist transport provision may be needed.

The availability of more travel options and more travel flexibility will provide greater independence for young people. This will help instil sustainable travel behaviour in young people, which may also help promote such travel habits into later life. The availability of different travel options will support parental preference in respect of their children's education.

If the introduction of concessionary travel for young people comes to fruition, it will help tackle social exclusion through greater affordability and improved access.

C4 Benefits to wider community

It is estimated nationally that on average the journey to school contributes one-fifth of all traffic during the peak periods. The anticipated benefits of gaining Pathfinder Funding for the wider community would be many-fold. The benefits include:

- A reduction in pollution, and the associated benefits that brings on many scales and for many eco systems;
- A reduction in congestion, particularly outside the school gates;
- Improved local road conditions if less car journeys are made, particularly during the morning peak period;
- Healthier children for those who have new opportunities to walk and cycle; and
- Improvements in local transport where quality contracts are used as a tool for improving school bus services.

The local improvement of all of these aspects is one of the many reasons for Nottinghamshire County Council bidding for the Pathfinder funding. It is a widely held belief that if good and sustainable travel habits are developed by youngsters then these habits are more likely to be maintained into adulthood. If future travel behaviour can be influenced positively, then the benefits for the wider community can also be considered as long lasting and worthwhile.

Initiatives to promote safety and good behaviour during school travel will help improve travel conditions and respect for other travellers making them feel more confident and less intimidated.

C5 Evaluation Strategy

Evaluation is a judgement, based on evidence, about the value or quality of something. It involves collecting information about the resources used, activities that took place and the outputs and outcomes achieved. The success of the project can be shown by comparing what was intended to achieve with what actually happened.

The evaluation of the Nottinghamshire Pathfinder scheme therefore needs to consider the whole process of the project development and implementation, considering each of the individual elements, as well as the impact of the overall project.

One of the benefits of the collaboration between authorities is the sharing of information and processes. Nottinghamshire, Norfolk and Cheshire County Councils have agreed to adopt the same evaluation strategies for Pathfinder. This will provide consistency in the approaches adopted, as well as opportunities to compare impacts and outcomes of similar and differing measures. The following model will be used for the evaluation:

Project elements	Evaluation questions
<p style="text-align: center;">Resource inputs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>What are the resource inputs?</p>
<p>Project activities (including individual specific project elements, but also associated activities such as training and other capacity building, brand identity, marketing and promotion)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>What activities is Pathfinder bid pursuing? How do these link to the original objectives of the bid? How do they link to wider policy objectives and projects? What is the sequence of events for each project element?</p> <p>What are the barriers, helping factors and issues that influence success in securing targets?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Changes to services and improvements</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>What improvements are being made to services? How can these be measured?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Changes to conditions / outcomes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>	<p>What changes are occurring for the target groups and individuals?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">External influences (general economic and social changes, other interventions, events, other influences)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↑</p>	<p>To what extent are changes traceable to the Pathfinder schemes, compared with other external influences?</p>

The evaluation will take viewpoints from all parties involved, including pupils, parents, schools and other interested parties. It will involve both qualitative and quantitative assessments.

Pathfinder progress will be evaluated against the aims and objectives set out in this document. For each of the objectives a series of defining points will be identified, from which a list of evaluation questions and elements will be formulated. The evaluation framework will be developed and refined collaboratively with other authorities during the 2008/09 feasibility and planning stages of the Pathfinder process.

As part of the evaluation, PLASC data and the annual Hands Up survey currently undertaken by schools will be used to measure modal shift.

Section D – Financial details

D1 Funding calculations

The Pathfinder proposals involve a mix of capital and revenue expenditure. Total cost of the proposals (assuming the inclusion of a phased introduction of smartcard concessionary travel scheme) over the entire pathfinder period will be £2.542 million. Much of the capital costs will be met by Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding.

Over the period of Pathfinder, there will be an increasing call on DCSF Pathfinder Funding. This matches the funding profile outlined by the DCSF. Over the full five year period Nottinghamshire County Council will be seeking £1.33 million of Pathfinder funding, broken down as in the table below:

Table D.1: Funding Calculations

Element	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total
Revenue Expenditure:						
Travel Co-ordinators	85	100	100	80	60	425
Support for 14-19/Extended services initiatives	50	50	90	150	150	490
Safety and quality initiative	30	30	60	90	100	310
Cycling promotion at secondary schools	15	25	25	35	35	135
Young people's concessions*	20	20	30	100	450	620
Project management	12	15	15	15	15	72
Evaluation	0	6	2	4	10	22
Capital Expenditure:						
Safety and quality initiative	18	30	30	0	0	78
Cycling promotion at secondary schools	0	20	85	35	30	170
Young people's concessions	0	50	90	50	30	220
Revenue Income and Funding:						
NCC sustainable travel grant	40	50	0	0	0	90
NCC school travel grant	0	30	40	60	60	190
NCC communities budget	0	80	80	100	200	460
NCC 14-19 funding	10	20	10	0	0	40
NCC STP funding	5	10	15	15	15	60
Capital Funding:						
LTP	12	100	115	85	60	372
Total expenditure	224	346	527	559	880	2542
Total income	67	290	260	260	335	1212
Pathfinder funding requirement	157	56	267	299	545	1,330

All values in 1000s

*Subject to outcome of feasibility work during 2008/09

D2 Pupil charging arrangements

In order to achieve greater equity across school travel arrangements, and to contribute to the sustainability of the proposals, consideration has been given to the introduction of charges to some pupils who would currently be eligible for travel transport. The

consultation leaflet clearly set this out as a possibility, together with details of who would retain free travel. It was estimated that 5000 of the 9500 pupils currently receiving free travel would be charged. Levels of charges, based on the arrangements being applied to transport to faith schools from September 2007, were assumed.

Clearly, this was the least favoured of the proposals, although 43% of responses were in favour. And whilst there was strong support for a Pathfinder bid to be made, it was evident that this would receive even greater support if the charging proposal was withdrawn. In the light of the consultation response it is not the intention to proceed with the introduction of charges, so as not to jeopardise progress with the other elements of our proposals.

Therefore, our bid is based on maintaining existing charging arrangements for non-entitled and transport to faith schools, with no extension to those currently in receipt of free travel.

Section E – Partners

E1 Partners and contributions

The Pathfinder scheme is consistent with the Sustainable School Travel Strategy and supports the delivery of the Strategy Action Plan. Many relevant linkages across disciplines are being made through the existing Children and Young People’s Transport Strategy Group. Over the last 15 months the group has increased understanding between different stakeholders and already demonstrated more rounded studies from effective joint working.

The proposals help to fully integrate the development of education services with access and transport considerations (including the planning, development and provision). They will ensure links across all relevant teams, including those involved in school travel plan development and support and those involved in planning and delivering transport services. Through these activities, the recently-formed Integrated Transport Unit (Nottinghamshire Transport Services) will seek to gain efficiencies and economies of scale through integration of all types of passenger transport (public, education, social care and community).

E2 Improved linkages

Strong partnership working across all areas of education and transport has been promoted through the Children and Young People’s Transport Strategy Group. This group has links to a range of other stakeholder groups, such as the Youth Parliament, Post-16 Partnership, and Area Strategy Groups for 14-19 provision.

The extensive consultation undertaken on the Pathfinder Proposals sought to engage with a range of interested parties. A number of lay partners and organisations have indicated their intention to contribute to the success of the proposals.

E3 Consultation

In view of the implications of submitting a Pathfinder bid, particularly in respect of proposals to introduce charging, a major consultation exercise was undertaken. This ran from 10th September to 19th October 2007.

The consultation paper and questionnaire explored a range of possible measures and innovations based upon the key areas for development identified within the Sustainable School Transport Strategy for Nottinghamshire 2007 – 2011. Respondents were invited to comment on the strategy itself, and then on 5 elements or themes which it was proposed would form the basis the Pathfinder Scheme:

- (1a) Further measures to improve safety and behaviour on school transport
- (1b) Greater promotion of bus travel, cycling and walking amongst young people
- (1c) Improved co-ordination of education and transport to allow additional and more flexible travel arrangements
- (1d) Charging for some pupils who currently receive free travel MAY be introduced. Under the scheme children and young people may purchase a subsidised annual pass to travel to and from school on a school bus (up to £250 for primary age pupils; up to £300 for secondary age pupils).
- (1e) A half fare travel scheme would be introduced for all children and young people (11-19 years) in full time education, available for use on buses and trams across Nottinghamshire. This may be used at most times of the day and evening including weekends and school holidays. Depending on the Pathfinder funding available, this may be phased in across the age range over the period 2009-2012.

A copy of the consultation leaflet is included in the appendices. The questionnaire enabled comments in writing together with YES or NO responses to be recorded in relation to each element and the overall package of proposals.

120,000 leaflets were produced and circulated to all schools for distribution to pupils. Details were also available on the County Council's website. Views were also sought from schools, colleges, transport operators and other stakeholders who have an interest in home to school transport. Responses could be made in hard format or by email.

A total of 1863 responses were received. Few comments were made regarding the draft Sustainable School Travel Strategy as a whole, in contrast to the many comments received in relation to the Pathfinder.

Total responses in relation to the Pathfinder proposals were as follows:

Proposals		Yes	%	No	%
1a	Further measures to improve safety and behaviour on school transport	1659	89%	180	10%
1b	Greater promotion of bus travel, cycling and walking amongst young people	1704	91%	142	8%
1c	Improved co-ordination of education and transport to allow additional and more flexible travel arrangements	1702	91%	123	7%
1d	Charging for some pupils who currently receive free travel may be introduced. Under the scheme children and young people may purchase a subsidised annual pass to travel to and from school on a school bus (up to £250 for primary age pupils; up to £300 for secondary age pupils)	797	43%	1010	54%
1e	A half fare travel scheme would be introduced for all children and young people (11-19 years) in full time education, available for use on buses and trams across Nottinghamshire. This may be used at most times of the day and evening including weekends and school holidays. Depending on the Pathfinder funding available, this may be phased in across the age range over the period 2009-2012	1579	85%	251	13%
2	Are you in overall agreement with the package of proposals?	1536	82%	273	15%
3	Do you think the County Council should apply for Pathfinder Status?	1554	83%	262	14%

Full details of the consultation results, including a breakdown of responses from different groups (eg parents, pupils, governors, school staff, post-16 students, transport providers other staff, other), are given in the appendices. A significant majority of responses (1412) were from parents. A summary of the most common comments submitted regarding the proposals are also given in the appendices.

Key messages from the consultation on pathfinder proposals

In response to proposal 1(a), **89%** of replies were in favour of there being further measures to improve safety and behaviour on school transport. Some comments indicated enthusiasm for escorted journeys and or CCTV, ie; some adult supervision on buses. A number of comments reflected the need for a wide range of measures to be explored, including improved education and awareness raising about safety and bullying issues in and out of school.

91% of respondents agreed with proposal 1(b), that there should be greater promotion of bus travel, cycling and walking amongst young people. Suggestions were received regarding improved cycle training for young people, better storage facilities for cycles, improved access to cycle routes, and vehicle exclusion zones in proximity to school entrances. Some respondents requested improvements in the standard of vehicles, fitting of seat belts, and general improvement in the travel experience for young people.

Regarding 1(c) **91%** of replies agreed that there should be improved co-ordination of education and transport to allow additional and more flexible travel arrangements, and a number of comments reflected that this should be subject to continuous improvement as a matter of course.

Element 1(d) of the proposals regarding the possible introduction of charges for some children and young people to travel to school attracted most comment. **43%** of respondents agreed with the proposal to charge for home to school travel for some children who currently receive free travel. However many respondents qualified their 'Yes' response with comments about affordability, and concern about the impact on lower income families who are above the threshold for free travel. Many expressed concern about the maximum range suggested ie; up to £250 for primary age pupils, and up to £300 for secondary age pupils. Some suggested a remission scheme for siblings. **54%** of respondents were opposed to charging. A recurrent comment was that charging for travel to the catchment area school could have the effect of reducing bus travel and increasing the volume of traffic on the school run thus undermining the intention behind proposal 1(b) in relation to health and environmental issues.

Regarding question 1(e), **85%** of respondents were in favour of a half fare travel scheme to be introduced for all children and young people (11-19 years) in full time education, available for use on buses and trams across Nottinghamshire, which may be used at most times of the day and evening. **13%** were against the proposal. Comments were received regarding the availability of transport serving rural communities and several raised the issue of inequity in relation to cross-county border travel.

Overall **82%** of responses to question 2 were in favour of the basket of proposals, with **15%** against. However a number of those who were not in favour commented that they could support the scheme if element 1(d) re charging were to be withdrawn from the package. Similarly in relation to question 3, "*Do you think the county council should apply for Pathfinder status*", **83%** were in favour and **14%** against, with a number of comments received to say that there would be more support were element 1(d) to be reconsidered.

Careful consideration has been given to all the responses and to the distribution of funds and cost issues across the lifespan of the scheme. This includes funding proposed by central government, the options available locally regarding income generation, and any possible harmonisation of LA funds. The degree of innovation and extent of the scheme are carefully balanced and must be affordable and sustainable. Following consultation and in the light of these factors, it is proposed that the scheme develops elements 1(a), 1(b) and 1(c). No changes to the current charging arrangements for home to school transport are to be proposed through Pathfinder, and whilst it remains an aspiration to introduce a concessionary travel scheme for children and young people, this should be explored through phased arrangements subject to available funding.

Other Consultation

Other relevant consultations and surveys have been undertaken over the last couple of years, including an on-line survey into young people's travel issues and opportunities for a reduced fare travel scheme and a major consultation on the introduction of charges for transport to faith schools. The former indicated support for a concessionary travel

scheme, particularly amongst students in further education and for secondary-aged pupils living in rural parts of the county or those making journeys by more than one bus. There was a desire to see any travel pass scheme have wider benefits, such as use as proof of age or in gaining retail discounts. The Youth Parliament was very supportive of such a scheme. Indeed, it carried out its own further consultation amongst young people in June 2007 at Hucknall Interchange. This highlighted strong support for a smartcard-based scheme, which provided wider benefits than travel.

Following the consultation on transport to faith schools, there was support for the introduction of charges. This was subsequently agreed and charges were introduced from September 2007.

Section F – Declaration by Director of Children’s Services

I have consulted with key partners, including the following:

To the best of my knowledge all the information provided in this form is correct.

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: