

# **Sustainable School Travel Strategy for Nottinghamshire 2007 - 2011**

# 1 Introduction

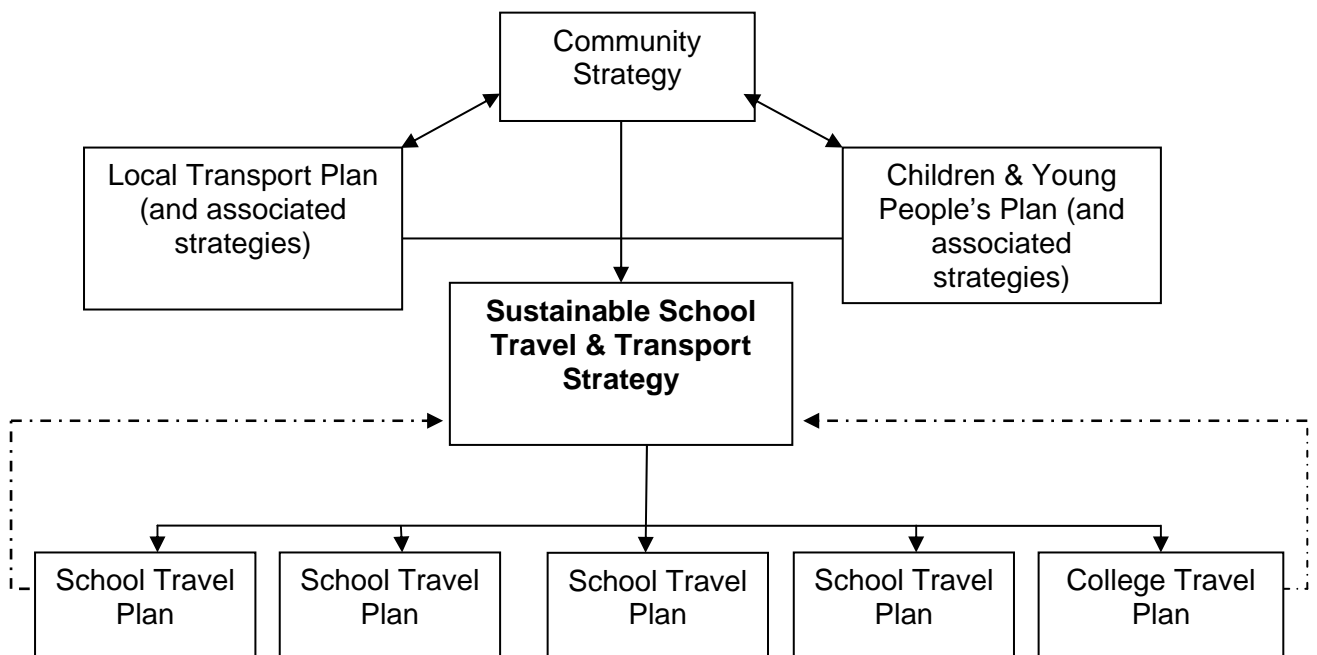
Accessibility to key facilities and services has been a central feature of recent government and local policy. Access to education is one of the main life opportunities considered by local accessibility strategies. Meanwhile, changing patterns of education provision are influencing travel needs and demands. Increasing promotion of choice, extended schools and the 14-19 agenda all rely to some extent on the ability to travel.

In recent years there has been an increasing awareness of the links between education provision and transport. Coupled with this, there has been greater environmental awareness and a desire for sustainability both in transport and education policies and provision. Schools have been encouraged to become eco-friendly and significant efforts have been put into the development of school travel plans. Indeed, the DfES has sought to bring together all these issues into its recently-published action plan, "Sustainable Schools for Pupils, Communities and the Environment" (2007).

Recognising these common themes and interests, Nottinghamshire County Council established a Children and Young People's Transport Strategy Group in 2006. Bringing together education and transport interests, this group has made significant strides in refocusing the Post-16 Transport Partnership, researching the potential for a young persons' concessionary travel scheme, and considering the various areas of common interest. The culmination of the Group's work is the formulation of this first Nottinghamshire Sustainable School Travel Strategy. This responds to the requirements set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and seeks to deliver greater sustainability in all forms of travel to schools and associated education sites.

Within the context of this strategy sustainable modes of travel are those that may improve the physical well-being of those who use them, the environmental well being of the area, or a combination of the two.

**Fig 1.1: The sustainable school travel strategy in context:**



This Strategy covers the period to 2011, in line with the Local Transport Plans covering Nottinghamshire. It seeks to build on and complement other strategies by drawing together the specific issues relating to education travel into one document. It outlines the context for Nottinghamshire, provides an assessment of need and an audit of infrastructure, and then sets out a strategy to develop the sustainable travel and transport infrastructure and promote sustainable school travel. An action plan sets out in more detail how these intentions will be met over the period of the Strategy.

By aiming to provide choice, diversity and high standards, all children will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The ability to travel in a more sustainable way to access education is key to achieving this fulfilment, as well as making a significant contribution to wider policy objectives.

## 2 Context

### Population trends

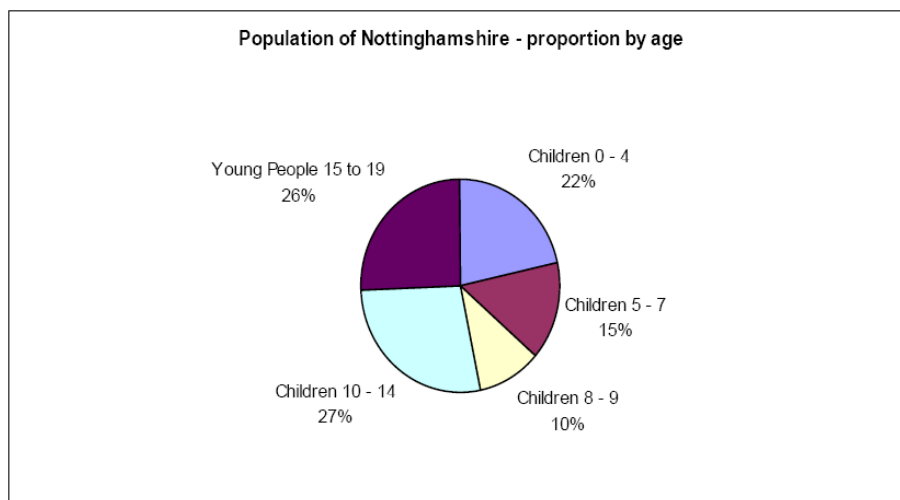
There are 182,000 children and young people aged 0-19 in Nottinghamshire. The numbers of children and young people in each district of the county are roughly equal. The breakdown of ages in each district is also similar.

**Fig 2.1: 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
<b>Nottinghamshire</b>	<b>39,408</b>	<b>26,947</b>	<b>18,921</b>	<b>50,032</b>	<b>47,004</b>	<b>182,312</b>

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

**Fig 2.2: 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 2.3).

**Fig 2.3: 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**

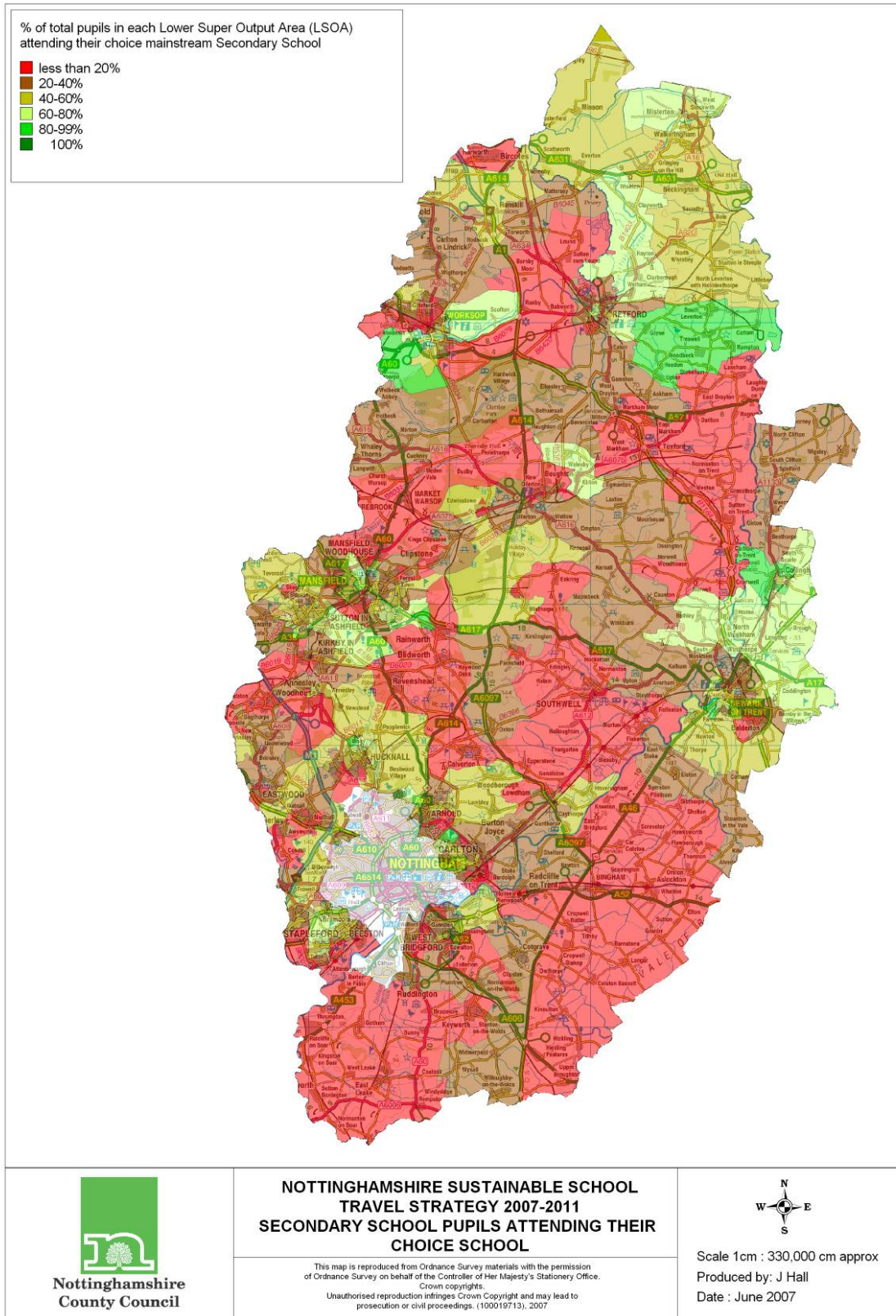
### Schools and Education

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. Figure 2.4 illustrates these variations. In particular, it shows the increasing number of pupils in the north east of the county attending preference schools, mainly in Lincolnshire where there are a number of grammar schools.

**Fig 2.4: Secondary school pupils attending their preference school**



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).

As of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007 there were 18,700 16-18 year olds residing in the county in education, employment and training. A breakdown by activity and district is given in the table below.

**Fig 2.5: Activities pursued by 16-18 year olds**

	Further education	%	Higher Education or year out	%	School sixth form	%	Employment	%	Training - not employed	%	Total
Ashfield	995	33.5	81	2.7	843	28.4	945	31.8	109	3.7	2973
Bassetlaw	834	33.33	69	2.8	719	28.7	725	28.9	159	6.3	2506
Broxtowe	1158	45.2	106	4.1	735	28.7	499	19.5	65	2.5	2563
Gelding	1084	37.8	105	3.7	927	32.4	650	22.7	98	3.4	2864
Mansfield	973	36.8	61	2.3	897	33.9	603	22.8	111	4.2	2645
Newark & Sherwood	718	27.6	126	4.8	1035	39.8	626	24	98	3.8	2603
Rushcliffe	763	30	116	4.6	1222	48	410	16.1	36	1.4	2547
<b>County total</b>	<b>6525</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>6378</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>4458</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>18701</b>

Nottinghamshire's figures for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) match those for the region (5.8% at November 2006) and are below those for Derbyshire and Leicestershire. There are variations in the incidence of NEETs, with greatest concentrations in Bassetlaw and Mansfield, and lowest numbers in Rushcliffe.

### Issues Affecting Children in Nottinghamshire

Staying safe is a key theme in 'All Together Better,' the countywide Community Strategy. A main focus for the strategy is to reduce anti-social behaviour, tackle youth disaffection, reduce drug and alcohol misuse and promote community cohesion; in addition, it also contributes to the objective relating to reducing avoidable injuries.

Poorer children are more likely to have an accident, with children aged 0-15 from the lowest socio-economic class being 15 times more likely to die in house fires than those in the highest socio-economic class. Between 2001/02 and 2003/04 there were 1129.7 hospital admissions due to accidents per 100,000 population below 15 years. Accidents are the leading cause of child death in England. In the county, 5 out of 7 districts have had significantly higher rates of mortality due to road traffic collisions than the rest of the East Midlands and England since 1995.

In Nottinghamshire, the significant past expenditure on accident remedial schemes in deprived wards means that there is now no evidence that children in these wards are involved in more road accidents than children from other wards.

For young children, crime is likely to occur on journeys to and from school, whilst for older young people more crime is connected with excessive alcohol consumption. Concentrations of youth crime occur in Mansfield, Worksop and Newark town centres; most offences are committed within a mile of the young person's home or school or in shopping centres.

Over the last 10 years there has been a reduction in road accidents. This has been true of accidents involving children (0-15 years). In comparison with the 1994-1998 average, there had been a 32.7% reduction in all child casualties in 2006 (a 51.2% reduction in killed and serious injury casualties). Nottinghamshire has already achieved its Government target to reduce the number of killed and injured child road casualties by 50%, ahead of the 2010 target year.

Obesity amongst children is a growing concern nationally. In Nottinghamshire the average percentage of children with height and weight recorded who are obese is 13.3%.

Across the county there are 16,988 children with a special educational need, of which 7.4% have a statement. A breakdown by primary need is shown below.

**Fig 2.6: SEN pupils and proportion with a statement**

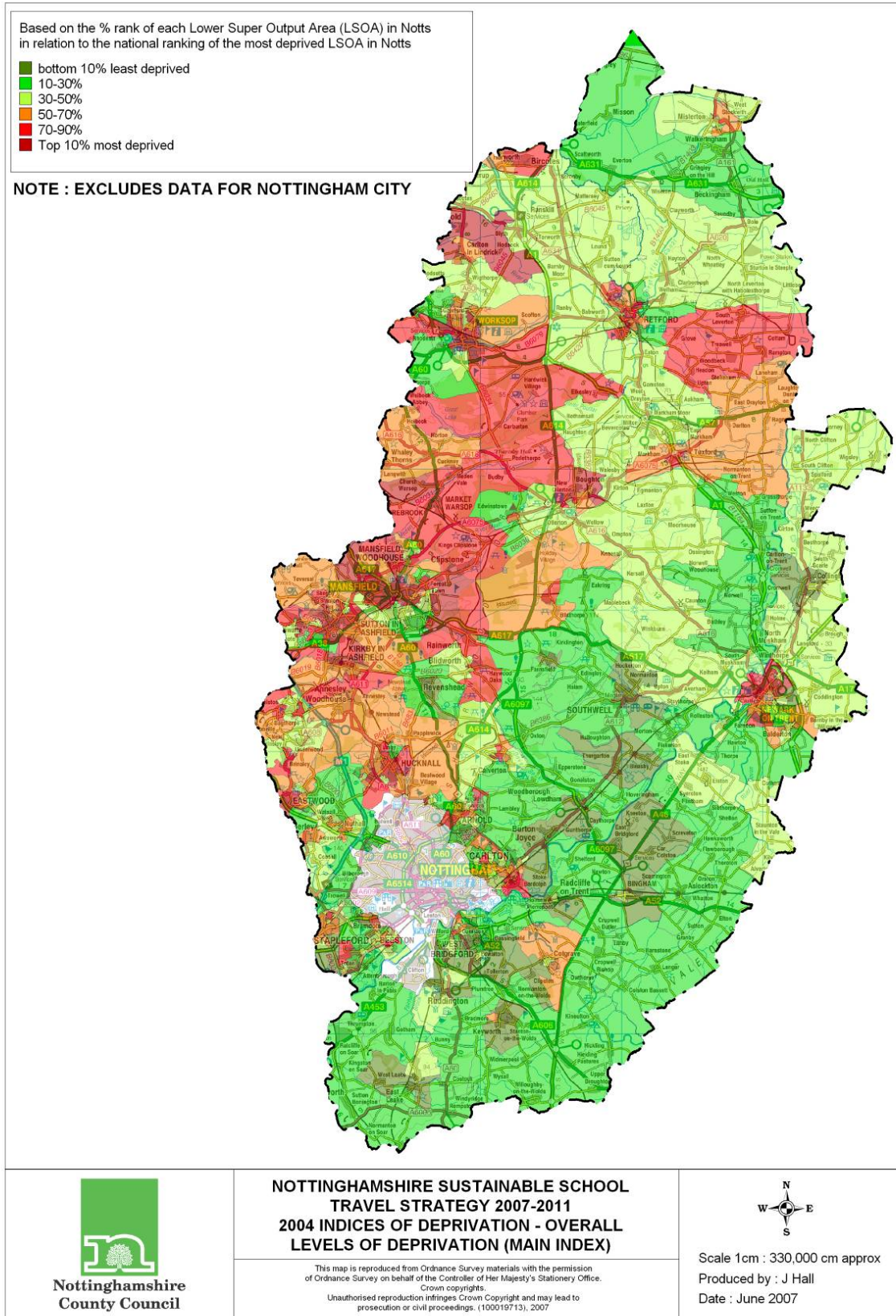
Special Need	Number with SEN	Number with a statement	% with a statement
Visual impairment	104	9	9%
Hearing impairment	147	29	20%
Multi-sensory impairment	15	3	20%
Profound multiple learning disability	101	80	79%
Severe learning disability	570	307	54%
Other learning disability	834	9	1%
Physical disability	449	120	27%
Autistic spectrum disorder	976	289	30%
Speech language and communication difficulty	1251	38	3%
Behaviour, emotional and social difficulty	2976	117	4%
Moderate learning disability	7359	226	3%
Specific learning disability	2206	25	1%

**Source: PLASC/School Census January 2006**

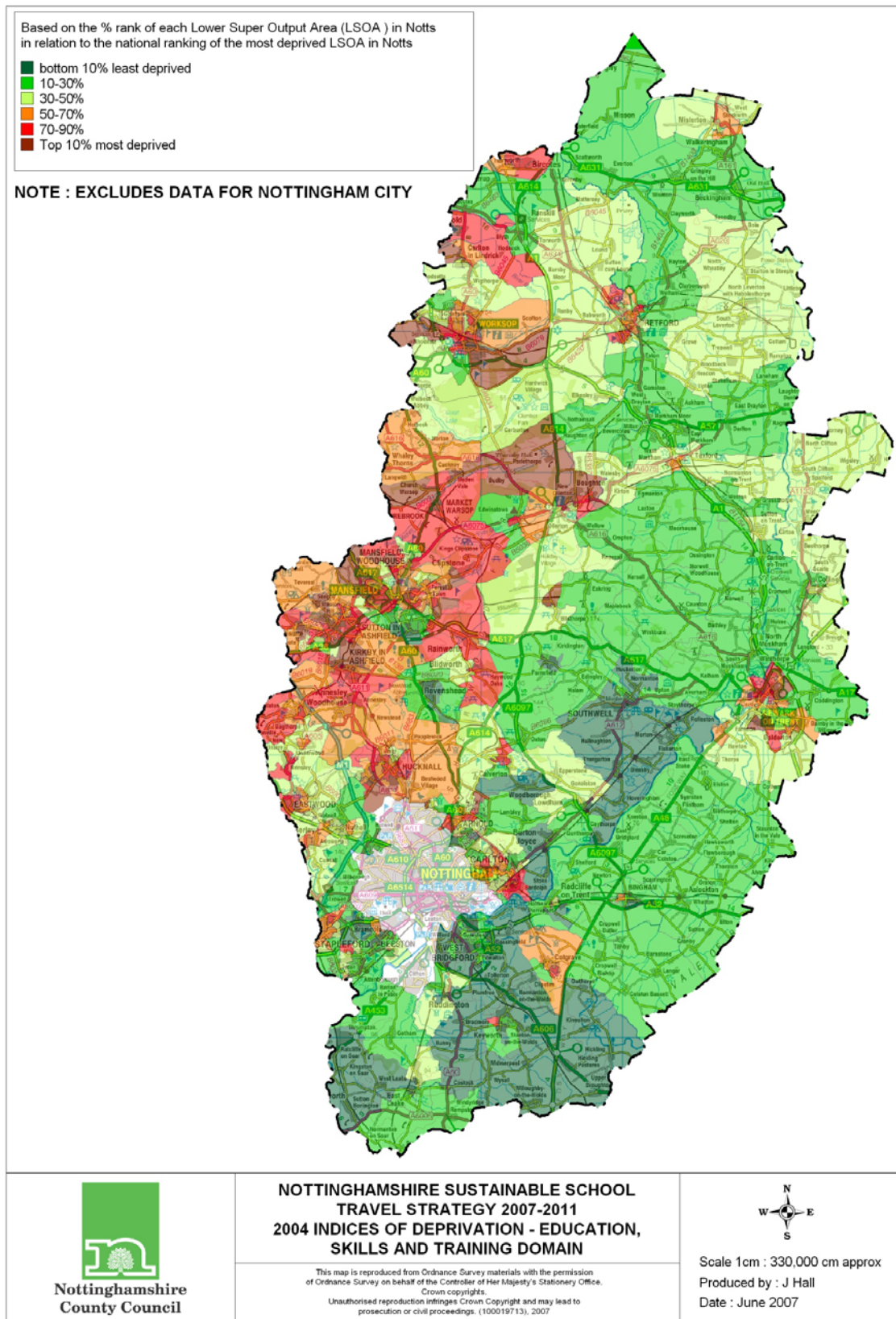
Eligibility for free school meals is a recognised proxy for child poverty. In Nottinghamshire there are variations across districts, with Mansfield and Ashfield generally having the highest concentrations of eligibility. The highest rates of eligibility are in wards in Worksop, Newark and Mansfield. 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.

**Fig 2.7: Indices of deprivation (main index)**



**Figure 2.8: Indices of deprivation (education, skills and training domain)**



The maps show that children and young people are more likely to be living in poorer households if they live in Mansfield, Ashfield or Bassetlaw. There are also some pockets of poverty in other districts. Families who live in poverty (managing with little

money, living in poor housing, not having a job) are more likely to have accidents, poor health, and poor education achievements.

Travel distance to school is a key issue to understand as part of the strategy. The tables below show how distances vary according to school preferences, nature of the area (urban / rural) and incidence of pupils in receipt of free school meals. The first is for primary pupils and the second for secondary pupils.

**Figure 2.9: Average distances to primary and secondary schools**

<b>Average road distance (miles) for all pupils living in the county and attending a Nottinghamshire primary school</b>	<b>Actual school attended</b>	<b>Pupils attending a designated school</b>	<b>Pupils attending a preference school</b>	<b>Distance to nearest school</b>
All pupils	0.9	0.4	1.6	0.4
Pupils receiving free school meals	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.3
Pupils living in urban areas	0.8	0.4	1.2	0.3
Pupils living in rural areas	1.4	0.7	3.6	0.7

<b>Average road distance (miles) for all year 7-11 pupils living in the county and attending Nottinghamshire secondary schools</b>	<b>Actual school attended</b>	<b>Pupils attending a designated school</b>	<b>Pupils attending a preference school</b>	<b>Distance to nearest school</b>
All pupils	2.4	1.7	4.2	1.3
Pupils receiving free school meals	2.1	1.4	3.5	1.1
Pupils living in urban areas	1.9	1.1	3	0.9
Pupils living in rural areas	4.8	4.1	7.1	3.2

The figures above show the greater distances travelled to preference schools. For example in the case of primary schools, the average additional distance is just over a mile. This clearly has implications for the number of pupils travelling by car, particularly given that about half a mile appears to be considered a reasonable walking distance. Pupils in receipt of free school meals tend to travel shorter distances to school, which may reflect the barriers in terms of cost and travel time in accessing schools other than the designated or nearest one.

In terms of educational attainment, performance (as measured by pupils achieving 5+ A-C GCSEs) has risen steadily between 2004 and 2006. However, compared

with statistical neighbours this is still relatively poor performance and is about 4% behind the performance of the East Midlands (51.0% against regional 55.1%)

This strategy applies to all children of statutory school age and young people of 6<sup>th</sup> form age. It includes those residents in Nottinghamshire and those travelling into the county from outside to receive education or training. It relates to journeys to and from institutions at the start and end of the day (including pre and after school activities), and journeys between institutions during the day.

### 3 Needs Assessment

This section of the strategy seeks to examine some of the needs around school travel. It looks at current travel patterns and then considers some of the influences on travel patterns and requirements.

#### School 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 3.1: Mode of travel to school**

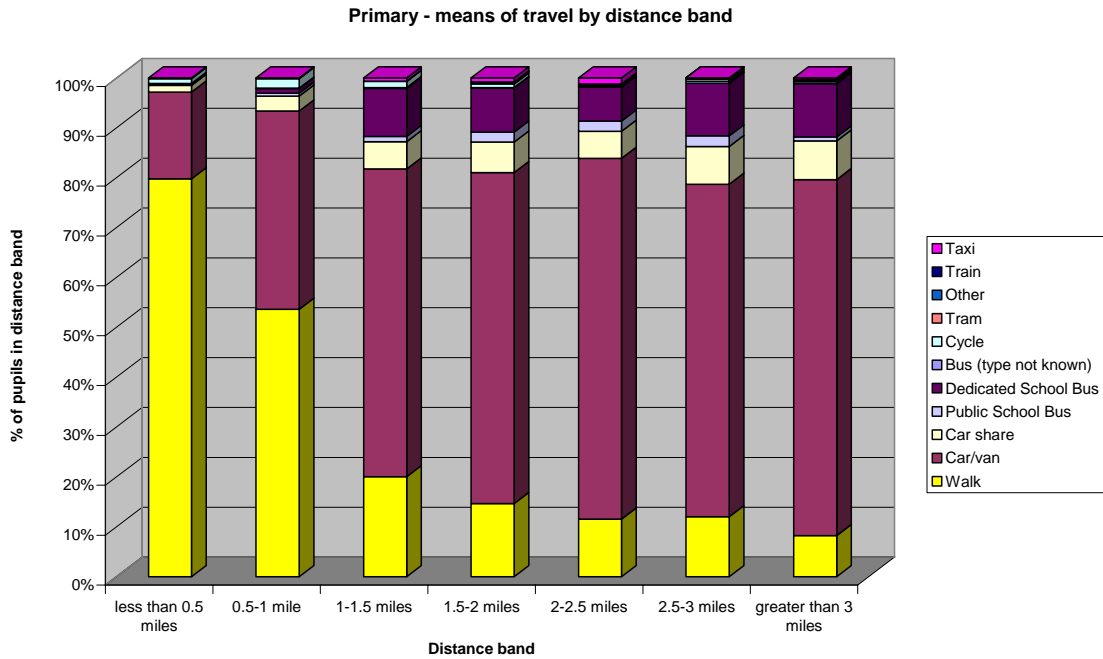
Usual mode of travel to school (schools with a travel plan)	Primary school pupils years 1-6	Secondary School pupils years 7-11	Post-16 secondary school pupils years 12-13
Walk	57%	53%	56%
Car or van	35%	13%	10%
Car share		0.4%	
Dedicated School bus	3%	17%	13%
Public School bus	0.5%	14%	20%
Other bus (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%
<b>Total absolute number of pupils</b>	<b>21,625</b>	<b>7,712</b>	<b>1,283</b>
<b>Total schools surveyed</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

**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.

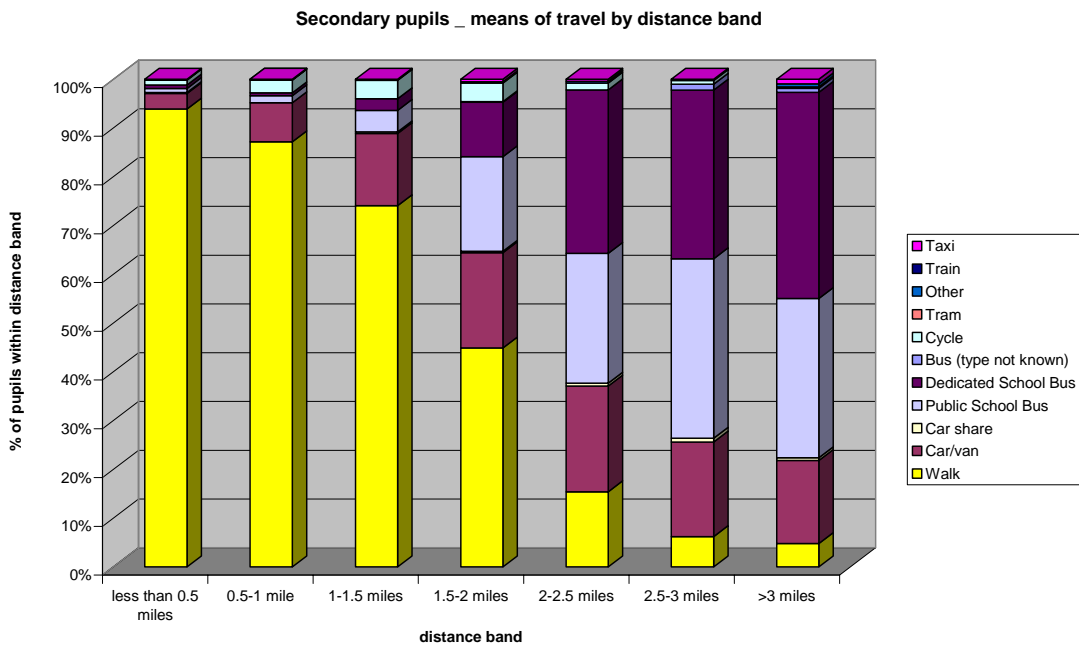
Further analysis of data focussing on the road distances travelled has shown that 51% of primary school pupils live less than 0.5 miles from their school, and 75% within 1 mile. This reduces to 17% and 41% respectively for secondary pupils. Furthermore, 26% of secondary pupils live over 3 miles from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

**Fig 3.2: 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 3.3: Mode of travel and distance to secondary school**



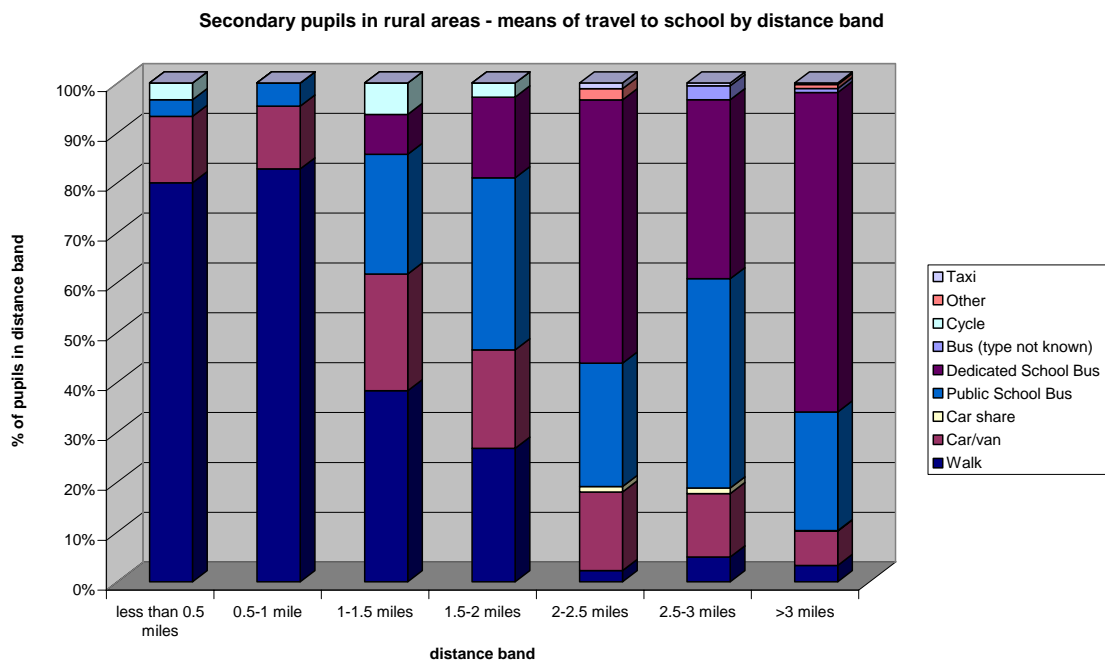
Note : fall off of walking occurs at a greater distance band than primary

Increasing use of school buses as distance

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.

In rural areas, however, there is a greater decline in walking at shorter distances (ie 38% at 1-1.5 miles compared with 74% for all pupils), as shown below.

**Figure 3.4: Mode of travel and distance to secondary school (rural pupils)**



### Nottinghamshire 14-19 Strategy

The 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper (2005) reflected the Government's intention to transform education so that all young people achieve and continue in learning until at least the age of 18. In Nottinghamshire, the aim is for the local authority and its partners to ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality education and training that prepares them for adult and working life. By 2013, every young person will be entitled to pursue any of the specialised diploma lines at a level appropriate for their needs.

This vision will be achieved through Area Strategy Groups, which are the partnerships created to strategically review 14-19 provision. Membership includes senior managers for a school as well as representatives from work based learning providers, external support agencies, the Learning and Skills Council and local authority. Through collaborative arrangements between institutions in each area young people will have access to high quality 14-19 entitlement.

Travel between institutions is an integral element of delivering a collaborative course timetable. The strategy groups are therefore in a position to assess the extent of these travel needs.

### Extending Services in and Around Schools

In Nottinghamshire, the strategy for extending services in and around schools builds on a range of strong and effective partnerships between schools and the communities they serve. It reflects the shared vision and commitment of the statutory, voluntary and community sectors to the well-being and achievement of children and young people. The development of extended services in and around schools is central to the delivery of the wider children's services agenda which flows from the Children Act 2004 as described in Every Child Matters – Change for Children. By 2010 every primary and secondary school will be expected to offer access to:

- Childcare (available 0800 - 1800)
- Varied menu of activities, such as homework clubs and support, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts and special interest groups
- Parenting support
- Swift and easy access to a wide range of specialist support services
- Wider community services including ICT, sport and arts facilities, and adult learning.

By September 2007, between 25% and 30% of Nottinghamshire schools will be recognised to be fully meeting the core requirements, and work is underway to achieve the target of 50% by 2008 and 100% by 2010. A facilitated change programme is being undertaken with families of schools. As part of this, schools are consulting with their local communities to identify local need. Access issues will be identified through this, with transport implications considered during the implementation phase.

## 4 Infrastructure Audit

This section considers the available infrastructure for school travel. It looks at each mode in turn.

### Walking

Walking is the main means of travel to primary and secondary schools, particularly for pupils who live relatively close to school (as indicated by some of the data included earlier in the strategy). Much is being done to improve pedestrian routes, particularly on routes to schools. In developing School Travel Plans, audits of routes have been undertaken and potential improvements identified. Road safety concerns and the crossing of roads can be a deterrent to walking. The county's Road Safety and Walking Strategies both seek to overcome some of these issues.

The safer routes to school programme encompasses a variety of engineering measures both outside and in the vicinity of schools, aimed at improving road safety and increasing the number of pupils cycling and walking to school. The types of measures installed range from signing and lining schemes, to formal crossing facilities, to the provision of cycle paths.

Very few child casualties occur in the vicinity of schools, so whilst child casualty locations are still used to prioritise schemes, they are also prioritised to coincide with the development of school travel plans to help encourage walking and cycling to school.

Between April 1999 and March 2005 a total of 166 safer routes to school schemes were installed throughout Nottinghamshire, improving road safety and cycling / pedestrian routes at 54 schools.

The most recent child safety audit (2005) identified that:

- Only 11% of 0-15 year old child pedestrian and cyclist KSI casualties (4 out of a total of 35) occurred on school journeys
- 26% of 0-15 year old child pedestrian and cyclist slight casualties (26 out of a total of 100) occurred on school journeys
- no child cyclist KSI casualties occurred on school journeys

The audit also showed that of the total number of 5-11 year old and 12-15 year old pedestrian casualties (which include KSI and slight casualties), 38% and 39% respectively were on school journeys. The majority of slight child pedal cyclist casualties on school journeys involved 12-15 year olds. Based on this information, the safer routes to school schemes currently focus mainly on journeys made to secondary schools.

In order to add value to other programmes of work (such as schools' reorganisations), safer routes to schools projects will be undertaken alongside.

A target to implement 203 safer routes to school schemes throughout Nottinghamshire by the end of March 2010 has been set.

The County Council provides a high quality school crossing patrol (SCP) service at 230 sites across the county, at an annual cost of over £0.4 million. There are recognised criteria for the establishment of school crossing patrols (PV squared);

however the County Council currently sets a significantly lower PV squared count (1.3 million) in relation to the recognised standard of 4.0 million. To ensure the effectiveness of the SCP service, an evaluation of the service was undertaken in 2004/05 which resulted in several recommendations to re-focus service provision.

In some areas, safe walking routes are not available. In such cases the County Council's School Transport Policy provides free transport for affected pupils between home and school.

## Cycling

In recent years much has been done to promote cycling. Investment has been made in developing cycling routes through the Cycling Strategy. Again, in the vicinity of schools, the development of school travel plans has enabled improvements to be identified and implemented, including the provision of secure cycle parking facilities.

An audit of current cycling facilities is currently underway and will be completed in 2009.

## Public Transport

Nottinghamshire starts from a relatively good base in relation to bus network coverage. 95% of households in urban areas are within 10 minutes (800m) walk of a bus stop with an hourly and better service between the hours of 0600-1800 on weekdays; the corresponding figure for the rural areas of the county (parishes with a population of less than 3,000) is 70%. It is estimated that 80% of the bus network is operated commercially, although the extent of commercial bus service provision varies both by area and by time of day. The commercial network largely meets an hourly and better service frequency standard on weekdays (0600-1800) in the urban areas and on inter-urban routes linking major settlements. In rural areas, however, and in some urban area networks on evenings and Sundays, service frequencies are largely maintained through the provision of supported bus services funded by the County, and marketed under the *NottsBus* banner.

The County Council spends about £5 million pa (including £850,000 Rural Bus Subsidy Grant) providing support for bus services which are not commercially viable but are considered to be necessary on economic, leisure and social grounds. There is a long standing interface with the separate statutory duty to provide home to school transport for pupils living over a certain distance from their designated school, and there are valuable cost benefits arising from the integration of the local bus and school bus networks.

## Home to School Transport

Current expenditure on school transport covers four main areas :

- Statutory / policy home to school provision
- Non-statutory home to school provision
- Inter-site and curriculum matters
- Home to school transport for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

### **Statutory provision of Home to School transport**

For pupils living over a certain distance from their designated school, the County Council arranges free school transport either by public bus, dedicated school bus or taxi. Details of this policy are given below. The County Council spends about £5 million pa on delivering the school transport policy for mainstream pupils.

**Fig 4.1: Policy on Home to School Travel Assistance**

<b>Age on 1<sup>st</sup> September</b>	<b>Walking Distance Between Home and School</b>	<b>Type of Assistance</b>
Under 8	2 miles or more	Free travel to nearest suitable school
	Under 2 miles	Assisted travel may be offered on available bus services
Over 8	3 miles or more	Free travel to nearest suitable school
	Under 3 miles	Assisted travel may be offered

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 inserted an extension of rights to free school travel for children from low income groups (ie children entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit).

**Fig 4.2: Policy on Home to School Travel Assistance for Children from Low Income Groups**

<b>Age on 1<sup>st</sup> September</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Type of Assistance</b>
8-11	2 miles or more	Free travel is available for pupils under 11 years of age who are eligible for free schools meals / max WTC if 2 miles or more from their nearest qualifying school
11-16	2-6 miles (minimum distance based on nearest available walking route, and maximum based on nearest vehicular route)	Free travel to one of three nearest qualifying schools, commencing September 2008
11-16 and preference based on parents' religion or belief	2-25 miles (minimum distance based on nearest available walking route, and maximum nearest vehicular route)	Free travel to nearest suitable preferred school on the grounds of religion or belief, commencing September 2008

Nottinghamshire County Council funds a travel assistance scheme for students in further education. An annual contribution is required to participate, and students must normally attend a full time course.

**Fig 4.3: Post-16 Travel Assistance Scheme**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Type of Assistance</b>
16-18	2 miles (crow fly distance)	Half fare pass

The policy on home to school transport up to 16 years mirrors the minimum standard in legislation. The principal policy enhancement to statutory requirements has been transport to denominational / faith schools, where free travel entitlements have been overlaid on the statutory minimum. Following a substantial consultation exercise the authority has now modified its policy and replaced free travel to denominational schools with a charge. This will be implemented from September 2007 onwards, with existing participants being protected.

**Fig 4.4: Free travel passes for primary schools**

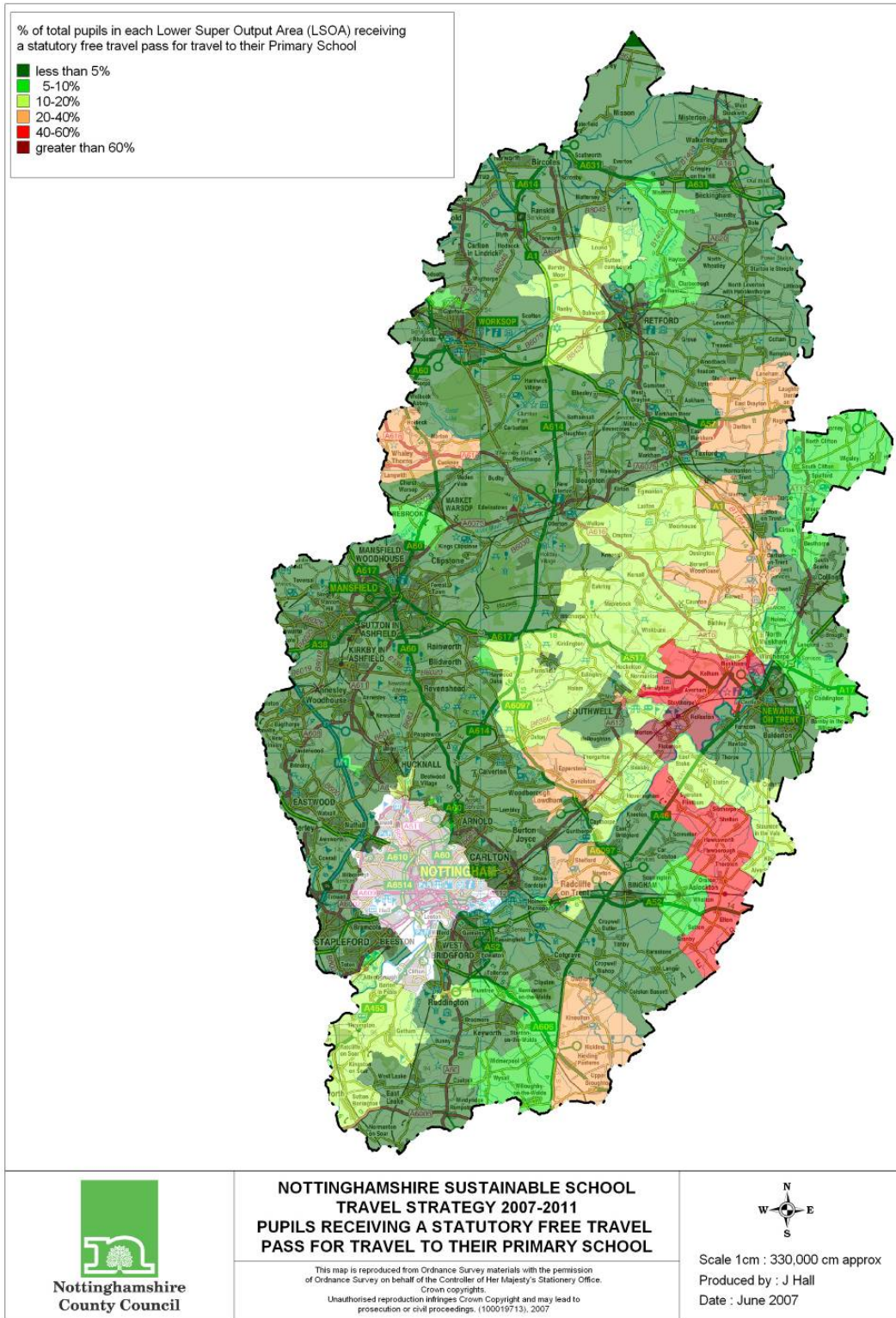
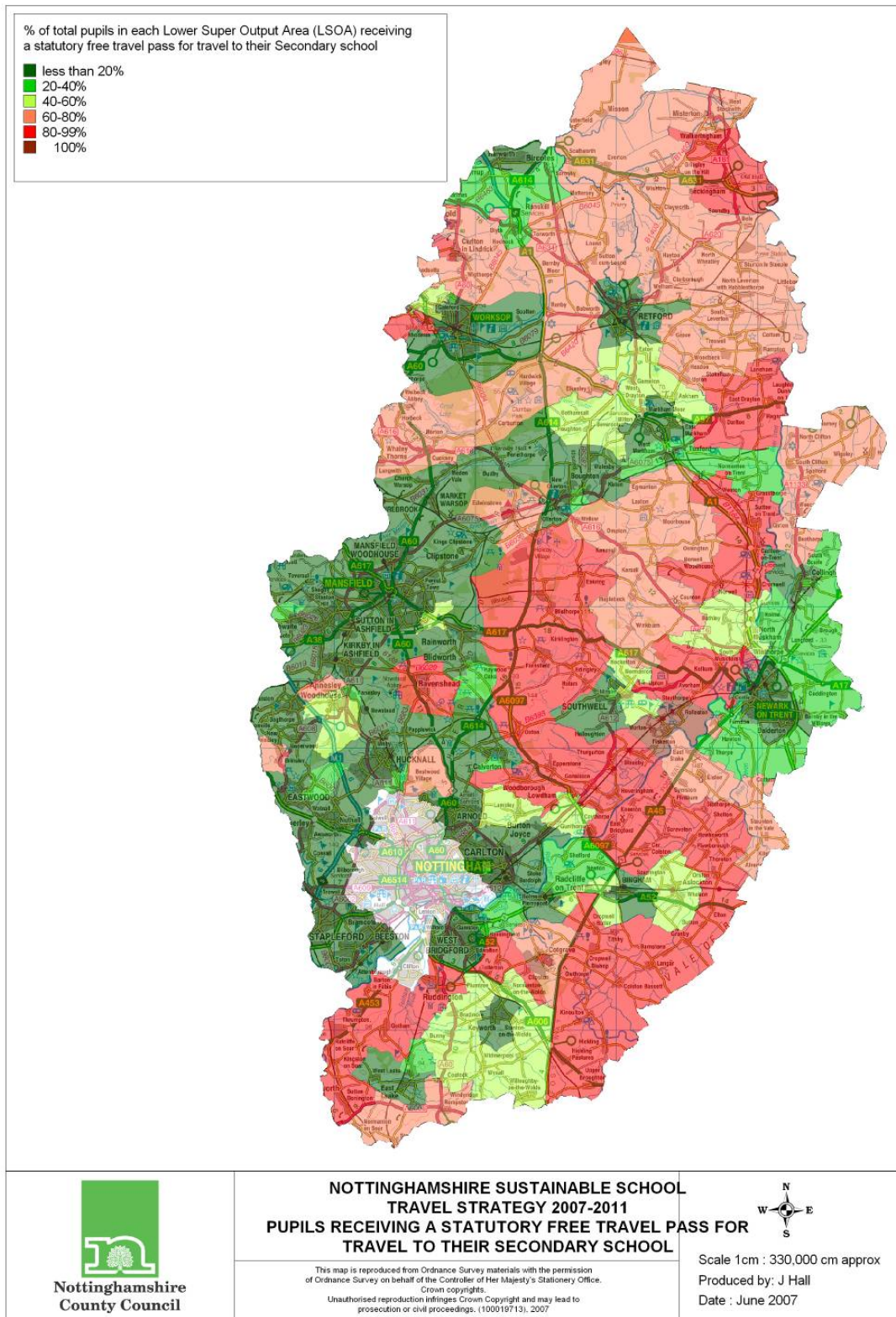


Fig 4.5: Free travel passes to secondary schools



### Non-Statutory School Transport

The County Council provides an integrated network of school bus services catering for pupils entitled to statutory free travel and for those pupils not entitled to free travel concessions (non-statutory), and many buses carry both types of pupils. In some cases, separate buses are arranged purely for these pupils travelling less than the

qualifying distance for free travel, but at the same time live a distance from their school which may be beyond a reasonable walking distance. In addition, non-statutory school transport is provided for post-16 students. The authority currently spends £1.75 million pa on non-statutory transport provision.

Supply and demand factors make the provision of buses solely for home to school services very expensive to procure. There is a limit to other infill work which means that many of the resources are used exclusively for the school journey. Overall, it is estimated that the average cost of supplying a school bus seat is in the range £3 to £4 per day. Allowing for non-use of some seats (often on a seasonal / weather-related basis), the average fare which could be charged to cover costs would be around £6 per day, far above any fare which could be reasonably charged. The authority therefore takes the revenue risk and meets this funding gap for the provision of non-statutory school transport services. In addition, there is the expectation that the County Council will continue to provide resources beyond the statutory minimum required to meet parental expectations of accessing a preference school, and also relation to other environmental and social objectives, for example to encourage travel to school by public transport.

The revenue budget for supported bus services (both local bus and non-statutory school transport provision) has come under increasing pressure in recent years due to continuing withdrawals of marginal local bus services provided by commercial operators, rising operating costs, and maintaining the policy of inclusiveness in access to school transport. To try and prioritise this revenue funding for supported services and to assess all existing and future claims on the budget in a fair and consistent manner, a Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been devised. All 350 local bus and school contracts (both statutory and non-statutory) provided by the County Council have been scored and ranked against key financial and social / economic criteria.

### ***Inter-site and curriculum matters***

This is currently a small discretionary budget which provides for some movements of pupils between school sites. However with the emerging concepts of the 14-19 agenda and the extended school day, it is envisaged that increased funding will need to be made available in the future to meet inter-site transport requirements and to ensure the provision of additional home to school transport outside of the normal school day, particularly in rural areas.

### ***Home to school transport for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)***

The County Council spends about £4.6 million pa for the provision of home to school / college transport for some 1000 pupils with special educational needs. Newark & Sherwood district has the highest number of pupils with special educational needs having dedicated home to school transport (181 pupils), whereas the districts of Rushcliffe and Gedling have the lowest numbers (88 and 103 pupils respectively). 17% of SEN pupils receiving dedicated home to school transport require wheelchair provision. 53% of pupils travel to a special school, 29% to a mainstream school, and 14% travel to a college of further education. The average distance travelled by these pupils and students is 5.8 miles.

## **Access to Primary and Secondary Schools by public transport**

Accessibility levels to schools by public transport were calculated for the Greater Nottingham and North Nottinghamshire Accessibility Strategies, submitted as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) to central government in March 2006. The original calculations assumed travel to the nearest school and took no account of parental preference; travel times by public transport were calculated without dedicated school bus services and taxi services; pupils in receipt of statutory free travel concessions were excluded from the calculations; and pupil numbers were drawn from the 2001 census.

Accessibility levels have now been recalculated using actual 2006/07 pupil data indicating the school actually attended (as well as the nearest school) and a public transport network comprising both local bus and rail services and school contract services. The results are given in the tables below.

**Fig: 4.6: Accessibility to Primary Schools for years 1-6 pupils**

	Travel time to actual School attended (average of outward & return journey times)		Travel time to nearest school (average of outward & return journey times)	
	% of all pupils years 1-6 within threshold		% of all pupils years 1-6 within threshold	
All pupils years 1-6 living in Nottinghamshire and attending a mainstream Nottinghamshire Primary School	15 min PT travel time threshold	30 min PT travel time threshold	15 min PT travel time threshold	30 min PT travel time threshold
All pupils	78%	94%	96%	99%
Pupils in receipt of FSM	86%	97%	99%	99%
Pupils attending their designated school	93%	99%	N/A	N/A
Pupils attending their preference school	56%	88%	N/A	N/A
Pupils living in urban areas	80%	97%	99%	100%
Pupils living in rural areas	66%	86%	82%	98%

**Fig 4.7: Accessibility to Secondary Schools for years 7-11 pupils**

	Travel time to actual school attended (average of outward & return journey times)		Travel time to nearest school (average of outward & return journey times)	
	% of all pupils years 7-11 within threshold		% of all pupils years 7-11 within threshold	
All pupils years 7-11 living in Nottinghamshire and attending a mainstream Nottinghamshire Secondary School	20 min PT travel time threshold	40 min PT travel time threshold	20 min PT travel time threshold	40 min PT travel time threshold
All pupils	67%	93%	90%	100%
Pupils in receipt of FSM	75%	96%	95%	100%
Pupils attending their designated school	79%	99%	N/A	N/A
Pupils attending their preference school	41%	80%	N/A	N/A
Pupils living in urban areas	74%	95%	98%	100%
Pupils living in rural areas	31%	79%	49%	96%

**Fig 4.8: Accessibility to Secondary Schools for years 12-13 (post-16) students**

	Travel time to actual school attended (average of outward & return journey times)		Travel time to nearest school (average of outward & return journey times)	
	% of all pupils years 12-13 within threshold		% of all pupils years 12-13 within threshold	
All students years 12-13 living in Nottinghamshire and attending a mainstream Nottinghamshire Secondary School	20 min PT travel time threshold	40 min PT travel time threshold	20 min PT travel time threshold	40 min PT travel time threshold
All pupils	62%	87%	88%	100%
Pupils in receipt of FSM	70%	90%	95%	100%
Pupils attending their designated school	78%	97%	N/A	N/A
Pupils attending their preference school	34%	68%	N/A	N/A
Pupils living in urban areas	70%	94%	97%	100%
Pupils living in rural areas	22%	77%	43%	97%

Points to note from the tables above include:

- Pupils in receipt of free school meals tend to enjoy higher levels of accessibility to school, largely due to the concentration of such pupils in deprived urban areas which generally have a better provision of bus services.
- Pupils attending their preference school have lower levels of accessibility compared to those attending their designated school.
- Students in school years 12-13 (post-16) generally have lower levels of accessibility compared to secondary school pupils years 7-11.
- Pupils living in rural areas generally have lower levels of accessibility to their actual school attended. However, the existence of statutory free travel concessions and the provision of dedicated school services ensure that such pupils enjoy reasonable levels of access to their designated school. Indeed, if such concessions were withdrawn and pupils forced to rely on the normal local bus service network for their journeys to and from school, it is estimated that accessibility levels would decrease by 10% for secondary school pupils and 4% for primary school pupils.
- The good provision of public transport within the county (whether it be commercial local bus services, supported local bus services, or school contract services) provides high levels of accessibility for pupils who wish to attend their nearest school (as opposed to their actual school attended).

The provision of non-statutory school transport raises accessibility levels for pupils travelling less than the qualifying distance for free travel but living more than a 'reasonable' walking distance from the actual school attended. As noted above, the authority bears the revenue risk associated with this provision and the provision of such services by the Authority is entirely discretionary. Whilst in some cases it may be difficult to isolate actual numbers travelling because of the integrated network of school buses and some buses carrying both statutory and non-statutory pupils, savings could be achieved through specific route withdrawals, reductions in capacity and restructuring of school bus networks. If non-statutory provision ceased it is estimated that over 150,000 current pupil trips per year would be lost, with a transfer of most to private transport, with associated road safety, health, congestion and accessibility issues.

### School Travel Plans

School Travel Plans are an excellent means of focussing interest on travel issues relating to schools. They are documents put together by the school, its community and the local authority to reduce the number of car journeys to school by a variety of means, including measures to improve road safety. Such plans have a number of benefits.

The County Council's school travel advisors have been supporting schools in the development of school travel plans. To date 52% of schools have taken the opportunity to develop plans. School travel plans are a central feature of promoting sustainable school travel.

### Fig 4.9: Benefits of Schools Travel Plans

<b>Benefits of School Travel Plans</b>	
School	Reduce traffic in and around the school vicinity Improve safety and reduce pollution Improve relationships with the local community
Pupil	Improve road safety skills Improve fitness levels through increased levels of walking Increase travel awareness
Parents	Improve journey quality Increase community awareness Strengthen home-school links
All	Improve journey quality Increase community awareness Environmentally friendly

School travel plans start with surveys amongst parents and pupils. These consider how pupils currently travel and the issues that affect their journeys, particularly in relation to places where problems are perceived (eg roads difficult to cross). As a partnership, consideration is given to methods of improving conditions for promoting sustainable travel.

A number of programmes support school travel plans. The Local Transport Plan has funding for safer routes to schools measures to address physical aspects of the local environment and street scene. In addition, road safety education programmes are run and there is on-road cycle training for years 5 and 6. Child pedestrian training is being piloted, whereby reception children are trained alongside their parent or carer.

### **College Travel Plans**

Colleges are not obliged to produce travel plans. However, investment in post-16 education is leading to new development, which requires a travel plan alongside planning applications. Following a study into accessibility of post-16 education in 2005, for the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) and County Council, there has been a growing interest in access and travel to further education. The study recommendations have been incorporated in the accessibility strategies and pursued through the additional consideration of discounted travel. Furthermore, the LSC has promoted funding to support the development of college travel plans.

## 5 Development of Sustainable Travel and Transport Infrastructure

Much is already being done to develop the infrastructure that underpins sustainable travel behaviour.

### School Travel Plans

Whilst 52% of schools now have a travel plan, the majority of these with up-to-date plans are primary schools. To achieve the target set in the LTPs there is still much to be done. The extension of funding for School Travel Advisors will enable the County Council to support and encourage schools in the development of travel plans.

### College Travel Plans

A study into access to post-16 education across Nottinghamshire was undertaken in 2005 for the Learning & Skills Council and County Council. This considered general issues, and went on to look at accessibility to individual institutions (colleges and school 6<sup>th</sup> forms). Various recommendations were made, including the formulation of College Travel Plans. Post-16 Transport Partnership Funding made available each year via the LSC has been available to institutions in Nottinghamshire via a bidding process (Transport Innovation Funding) in the last 2 years. In order to encourage colleges to develop Travel Plans, the LSC has this year made up to £5,000 available to each for this purpose. Furthermore, colleges will only be able to bid for Transport Innovation Funding in future, if they have a Travel Plan in place.

Some colleges have plans for development or re-building. In such cases, the planning authority and County Council will require travel plans to be produced.

In Bassetlaw, two sixth form centres are being built to replace school sixth forms. Issues of travel relating to these are being built into the updating of the travel plan for North Nottinghamshire College.

### Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

Nottinghamshire County Council is included within phase six of the BSF programme. This significant investment in schools will provide the opportunity to consider accessibility as part of decisions on location, design and development, and to ensure sustainability is 'built-in'. Clearly, such developments will require travel plans to be produced in parallel to planning applications. The process of visioning and developing a 'Strategy for Change' for the county is continuing. This work will draw upon multi-disciplinary expertise to ensure that this transformational change in schools, as comprehensive learning environments and community hubs, fully embraces sustainable transport solutions and helps to meet the needs of service users.

The County Council has produced a design guide for new schools. This encompasses accessibility and sustainability issues and incorporates the desire to promote sustainable travel. It highlights the need for school travel plans and to reduce motorised travel and the impact of motorised travel.

## Extended Services in and Around Schools

The requirement for flexible arrangements possibly including earlier transport in the morning and later transport in the afternoon for extra-curricular activities and clubs spreads travel demand across the day. Whilst lessening 'peak' travel activity at the normal start and finish times of the day, it leads to more diverse flows. Also, such additional travel arrangements fall outside the scope of statutory home to school provision; as such, there is no specific transport funding provision. Many after school clubs and Childcare providers are working with schools to enable some creative solutions, including use of walking buses and minibuses to safely transport children between service points.

In order to ensure that opportunities to participate in extended provision are available to all, the demands on travel and transport provision are increasing. The need to consider innovative approaches will be sought through the work of the local clusters of schools and their partners, many of whom have established 'change teams' to take forward their plans. Their progress will be reflected in the development of the strategy for Nottinghamshire: 'Extending services in and around schools' which was adopted in 2006 and which continues to evolve. Some general funding for the development of this work has been made available to schools and through the Local Authority, but there is still much to be done to sustain and build on progress so far.

The need for more flexibility may provide a stimulus to better co-ordinate arrangements across an area to allow more effective deployment of transport resources. For example, agreeing to stagger school start and finish times may allow the same transport to serve more than one school, as well as the needs of extended activities. The LA and schools will continue to work with partner agencies to join up service delivery and support local communities in engaging with this agenda.

## 14-19 Agenda

A number of area strategy groups have been established across the county. These are consortia of schools and colleges who are working together to provide a broader range of courses and a mix of academic and vocational activities. The ability to achieve this offer relies on some young people being able to travel to undertake studies for part of the week at other institutions within the consortium. The Mansfield Area Strategy Group, for example, has introduced co-ordinated timetabling across seven institutions, with dedicated transport provided three times per day between all locations.

As with extended service provision, the 14-19 agenda does not include any specific funding for transport. Therefore, as 14-19 activities are planned and developed, transport and travel issues will need to be considered as an integral part.

## Discount Travel for 16-19 Year Olds

In support of policy objectives in respect of transport, education and social inclusion, the County Council commissioned a study into the potential for a concessionary travel scheme for young people in 2006. The study included consultation with stakeholders and a survey of young people, in order to understand perceptions and needs.

The study recommended a ticket that would:

- Provide proof of age

- Give entitlement for half fare travel on all single/return tickets
- Provide the ability to buy a fixed price weekly ticket giving unlimited travel on the county's entire bus network
- Be based on smartcard technology

The proposal is being considered for potential introduction in September 2009, as part of a possible Pathfinder bid.

### **Walking and Cycling Route Audits**

An audit of cycle routes is underway across the county and many walking routes are considered as part of safer routes to schools initiatives. Furthermore, an audit is being undertaken of those walking routes considered unsuitable or unavailable for travel to school, and so where free transport has to be provided. These audits are on-going and the outcomes feed into the improvement programmes contained in the Walking and Cycling Strategies, funded through the Local Transport Plan.

### **Accessibility Strategies**

Accessibility strategies will be central to ensuring that key life-enhancing facilities can be enjoyed by the county's population, particularly those groups that are socially-excluded. The two accessibility strategies both include access to education as one of their central features. They support the development of school and college travel plans, discounted travel for post-16 students, and highlight the need for new and developing services and facilities to be located in accessible locations.

The Nottinghamshire Accessibility Partnership brings together all key players to pursue the objectives set out in the strategy.

## 6 Promoting Sustainable Travel and Transport

Sustainable travel and transport is promoted through all key policies and strategies. The vision for the county is set out in Nottinghamshire's Community Strategy 2005-2009 '*All Together Better*'. An element of the vision is of "a place in which everyone can succeed, with fair access to opportunities and support." There are five priorities within the Community Strategy:

- **Safer and stronger** - making Nottinghamshire safer, building a strong sense of community and enriching lives.
- **Healthier** – improving health and well-being.
- **Learning and earning** – helping everyone to reach their potential.
- **Cleaner and greener** – protecting and improving the environment.
- **Travel and access** – travelling easily and safely and being able to access all the services people need.

Nottinghamshire's '*Vision Statement for Education*' is to provide high quality education; ensure all young people have the same opportunity to learn; encourage everyone to develop and achieve; promote lifelong learning; prepare all young people to contribute to society as responsible citizens; and aim for excellence. Complementing this vision, the Children and Young People's Plan seeks to improve the lives of all children and young people aged 0 to 19 in Nottinghamshire – making sure each is able to do the very best they can. The Plan's objectives are to make sure that, as far as possible, children and young people:

- **Are healthy** – enjoy good physical, sexual and emotional health appropriate to their age, and live a healthy lifestyle.
- **Stay safe** – are being kept safe from harm, neglect, bullying, discrimination, serious accidents and crime.
- **Enjoy and achieve** – in play, sport and activities such as arts, drama, music, scouts, guides and youth groups as well as in school.
- **Make a positive contribution** – to the community they live in, developing confidence and skills and being involved in decision making.
- Are free from poverty by offering children, young people and their families the opportunity to take part in work, training or further education to achieve **economic well-being**.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) integrates with various local policies and strategies. The aims and objectives of the LTP were developed both nationally and locally. Four key national objectives (adopted by all local authorities) are:

- Improved **accessibility**
- Improved **air quality**
- Reduced **congestion**

- Improved **road safety**

Following consultation, the County Council adopted a further three local objectives:

- Improved **quality of life**
- **Regeneration**
- **Making best use** of existing assets

The current Accessibility Strategies for Nottinghamshire have the following priority action areas:

<b>Greater Nottingham</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Improve access to education and training opportunities from early years through primary and secondary education and on to further education.</b>
Priority ED1	Continue delivery of school travel plan programme in Greater Nottingham including SafeMark and other initiatives to improve safety and security for school journeys.
Priority ED2	Support the development of the Surestart and Children's Centres programmes in Greater Nottingham.
Priority ED3	Support the City's primary schools organisation programme.
Priority ED4	Support new secondary education developments in Greater Nottingham (Building Schools for the Future, Academies proposal, Extended Schools).
Priority ED5	Support the development of a programme of FE travel plans for colleges and schools in Greater Nottingham as required.
<b>North Nottinghamshire</b>	
E1	Promote and support the development of college travel plans and assist through mapping.
E3	Promote and support the development of school travel plans.
E4	Building Schools for the Future
E5	Surestart Children's Centres

The successful promotion of sustainable school travel and transport will be achieved through the joint implementation of this Strategy along with the Local Transport Plans and associated strategies:

- Bus Strategy
- Public Transport Information Strategy
- Rail Strategy
- Cycling Strategy
- Walking Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy (and annual child safety audit)
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Delivery of sustainable school travel will flow from the implementation of the above, together with active local implementation of school and college travel plans.

## 7 Action Plan

This strategy has sought to highlight the issues affecting children and young people in Nottinghamshire. There are a host of different strategies and policies which seek to improve their health, well-being and attainment. In addition there are over-arching objectives to address environmental concerns and achieve sustainability. Access, travel and transport concerns cut across many of these areas of interest and will contribute to achieving the various aspirations.

A range of actions have been identified to help achieve the strategy aspirations, and an action plan is set out. Delivering the strategy will be dependant on provision of robust and active school and college travel plans. Not only will these have local interest and ownership, they will provide mechanisms for identifying local problems and formulating local solutions that are relevant to the circumstances of those establishments and their catchments. Consequently, a key action will be to ensure that all schools and colleges have travel plans, regularly update them and adopt and use them as living documents. Each of these plans should have its own programme of planned actions, targets and monitoring regimes.

Over and above travel plans, there will be a number of countywide initiatives. These relate to research, quality of provision, efficiency and effectiveness, and affordability of travel.

The action plan has a number of themes:

- Travel plans and accessibility
- Learning and skills for children and families
- Organisation, management and development
- Operational quality and efficiency.

## Sustainable School Travel Strategy for Nottinghamshire: Action Plan

### Theme: Travel Plans and Accessibility

Element	Actions	Responsibility	Key Players	Timescale	Targets	Comments
<b>School Travel Plans</b>	Develop travel plans at schools currently without one	Schools	County Council School Travel Advisors	2010	85% coverage (LTP target)	
	Ensure travel plans remain 'active' and are updated annually	Schools	County Council School Travel Advisors	On-going		Encourage regular survey updates and monitoring
	Maintain on-going two-way information flow to ensure alignment of this strategy and school travel plans	County Council School Travel Advisors		On-going		
<b>College Travel Plans</b>	Through partnership arrangements, support colleges in the development of travel plans	Colleges	LSC; Post-16 Transport Partnership	2008		
	Through partnership arrangements, support colleges to ensure that published travel plans remain 'active' and are updated annually	Colleges	LSC; Post-16 Transport Partnership	On-going		Encourage regular survey updates and monitoring
	Maintain on-going two-way information flow to ensure alignment of this strategy and college travel plans	Post-16 Transport Partnership; Colleges		On-going		
<b>Building Schools for the Future / new schools / reorganisation</b>	Ensure that the principles of sustainability and good accessibility are embedded at an early stage into proposals for new or re-sited school developments	County Council	Project promoters	On-going		

<b>of schools</b>						
<b>Accessibility</b>	Introduce measures to increase levels of accessibility to schools / colleges, either through relocating provision or new transport / travel schemes.	Communities		2011	Accessibility strategies / LTP	Measured with accessibility mapping
	Continue to introduce a range of accessibility measures over and above access to nearest school to better reflect preferences.	Communities		On-going		

### Theme: Learning and Skills for Children and Families

Element	Actions	Responsibility	Key Players	Timescale	Targets	Comments
<b>Extended services provision</b>	Consider travel and transport implications alongside plans to develop extended provision, and incorporate appropriate measures.	Children & Young People's Services in partnership with other agencies, including schools		2010	Education White Paper	
	Implications of extended services provision to be taken into account in school travel plans.			2010		
<b>14-19 curriculum reform</b>	Consider travel and transport implications alongside plans to develop collaborative learning / vocational training programmes.	Area Strategy Groups		On-going		
	Implications of 14-19 developments to be incorporated into school and college travel plans.	Schools / Colleges		On-going		

## Theme: Organisation, Management & Development

Element	Actions	Responsibility	Key Players	Timescale	Targets	Comments
<b>Children &amp; Young People's Transport Strategy Group (CYPTSG)</b>	Maintain the group as the overseer of the Sustainable School Travel Strategy and to ensure co-ordinated approaches on all education and transport developments.	Children & Young People's Services / Communities Department		On-going		Group to network with all relevant groups / bodies / initiatives.
<b>Post-16 Education Transport Partnership</b>	Develop the current partnership into a 14-19 Education Transport Partnership (aligned with the 14-19 agenda), and ensure a clear reporting link into the CYPTSG.	Children & Young People's Services	Partnership members	December 2007		
<b>Pathfinder bid</b>	Consider opportunities presented by seeking Pathfinder status. Develop a bid for submission, subject to approval by Cabinet.	CYPTSG, then Cabinet Committee / Cabinet	Children & Young People's Services / Communities	November 2007		
<b>Engaging with young people</b>	Provide opportunities for young people to be involved in shaping the policies, services and products that flow from this Strategy.	CYPTSG	Young people	On-going		Engagement already occurs with Youth Parliament
<b>Collaboration, networking and best practice</b>	Continue to collaborate with other authorities, and develop new links, to gain from best practice and achieve economies of scale.	CYPTSG	Other local authorities	On-going		Builds on joint work and networking already underway.

## Theme: Operational Quality and Efficiency

Element	Actions	Responsibility	Key Players	Timescale	Targets	Comments
<b>Extended travel rights set out in Education &amp; Inspections Act 2006</b>	Assess and evaluate the impact of the extended travel rights introduced September 2007 (primary) and September 2008 (secondary and faith schools)	CYPTSG / Communities		On-going		
<b>Concessionary travel for young people</b>	Consider options and implications of a concessionary travel scheme for young people (linked to potential bid for Pathfinder status).	Communities / Children & Young People's Services		November 2007		
<b>Efficiencies in school transport provision</b>	Following the formation of an integrated transport service (Nottinghamshire Transport Services), seek efficiencies through a range of measures, to increase levels of provision and quality, without increasing cost.	Communities		On-going	Cost per pupil	
	Work with schools / consortia to achieve more effective timetabling of transport linked to staggering school hours, in order to accommodate growing demand for transport from the 14-19 and extended services agendas.	Communities and Schools / Area Strategy Groups		On-going		
<b>Improve quality of school travel provision</b>	Develop and implement a programme of driver and escort training.	Communities				
	Extend provision of CCTV on school transport services, to help address behaviour issues.	Communities			Incidents of poor behaviour	
	Establish a group of key players to co-ordinate and develop a way forward on promoting good behaviour on transport. In the short term the	Communities / Children & Young People's Services	Schools	On-going	Incidents of poor behaviour	

	group will ensure schools understand their responsibilities in this area (as set out in the Education & Inspections Act 2006). In the longer term, the group will carry out a comprehensive review of all issues relating to behaviour, and develop a strategy.					
<b>Information provision</b>	As part of the Public Transport Information Strategy, ensure that young people have access to comprehensive and consistent information regarding travel options to support decisions about education, training and employment.	Communities	Young people	On-going		

## 8 Implementation & Progress Monitoring

The Children and Young People's Transport Strategy Group (CYPTSG) was established with the prime purpose of overseeing the development of this Strategy. The Group will continue to 'own' and take responsibility for the Strategy and its on-going development. Furthermore, it will oversee the translation of the action plan into a series of implementation plans, which will set out in detail how particular elements will be pursued and achieved. These plans will assign responsibilities to named individuals or groups / teams.

At an early stage of adopting this strategy, specific indicators will be developed. These will tend to reflect measures and targets already included within the various other plans and strategies mentioned in earlier sections.

The CYPTSG is keen to ensure that this strategy is a live and active document. Consequently, it will be regularly updated to report on progress and reflect emerging issues and changing priorities.