

# ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL PLYMOUTH

## February 2021 newsletter



We'd love to hear from you...



We're Ryan Evans and Claire Harris, Sustrans Schools Officers working in partnership with the Plymotion team to get more people cycling, walking and scooting for the school journey.

If you want to know more about promoting active travel in school, or have a story you'd like to see included in the next newsletter, do get in touch!

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### What's coming up?

**19 - 30 April:** The Sustrans Big Pedal is back for 2021! Registration is open now and the challenge will cater for children learning at home as well as at school, see page 2 for full details.

**17 June:** The UK's largest clean air campaign **Clean Air Day** is back in its usual summer slot, and to keep everyone safe has been updated to be more virtual. For more information visit [www.cleanair.org.uk](http://www.cleanair.org.uk)



## Dr Bike to the rescue!

The autumn and winter months would usually be busy with classroom sessions, led rides, assemblies and much more that has been postponed due to current restrictions in schools. Luckily, Sustrans Schools Officers Ryan and Claire have been able to get out and deliver more Dr Bike days than ever before in schools across Plymouth. Over 400 bikes were checked, serviced and repaired to allow pupils, parents and staff to ride safely to school and work. If you'd like a Dr Bike day (fully COVID-secure of course) at your school, email us at [plymotion@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:plymotion@plymouth.gov.uk)

## New Sustrans resources focus on ways to well-being

Sustrans Schools Officers produced a very successful set of resources for Children's Mental Health Week, but encouraging children to get outside and active for their mental well-being is something that should happen all year round.

These resources are aimed at parents and teachers, and include two sets of videos with accompanying resources sheets, aimed at primary and secondary pupils. They can be downloaded here <http://tiny.cc/6xi8tz> and here <http://tiny.cc/5xi8tz>

Where's Wheely and his friends have made another appearance to encourage children to get out and explore their local area. Online treasure hunts have been created for schools in Devonport, Honicknowle, Ernesettle and Whitleigh. If you'd like Wheely to come to your school, please get in touch!



Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey.  
[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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## Infrastructure update

Work has just started on a brand new off-road walking and cycling route from **Broxtton Drive to Saltram Meadow**. This will extend the current route that stretches back past Laira Bridge, running parallel to Billacombe Road to the new roundabout at the entrance to Saltram Meadow.

Councillor Mark Coker, Cabinet Member for Strategic Transport and Infrastructure, said: "It's great to see work starting on this project, which extends a route that is already popular with walkers and cyclists further into Plymstock. Neighbourhood-based schemes like this are crucial to providing the infrastructure needed to tackle the climate emergency."

Work is commencing for 14 weeks on the **Ponsonby Road to Somerset Place** walking and cycling scheme to widen the path, improve lighting and enhance access to Central Park, SDCC and Scott College.

Work is nearing completion on the **Southway to Plymbridge** walking and cycling route. This scheme will provide an off-road link running from Pendean Crescent in Southway to Plymbridge Woods, and will also include improvements for people with disabilities.

The schemes are mainly funded through the Transforming Cities Fund programme, along with other funding from the Department for Transport and the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, thanks to successful funding bids by the council.

To find out more, visit [www.plymouth.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/cycling)



## Marine Academy Primary achieves Modeshift STARS in record time

One of our Plymouth schools, Marine Academy Primary have fast tracked their way to a Modeshift STARS Bronze award with the support of their school's Bike It Plus Officer, Claire Harris. Within a remarkable three weeks, running up to Christmas, school champions, Alex Druce and Alistair Wilson had understood the process, received training through Teams, and collated evidence to meet the criteria for a Bronze level sustainable transport award. On receiving the award, Alistair said: "Wow this has made my day. Thank you so much, I am excited to carry this on".

Claire said "Working remotely has had a few positives, such as being able to have a live training session with our school champions, through screen sharing and live examples. The school leads really rose to the challenge and met the criteria before the end of term deadline to become accredited in record time."

The Modeshift STARS membership is paid for by Plymouth City Council, so there is no cost to participate. Modeshift helps to promote a more strategic approach to sustainable transport issues around the school gate and wider health issues, and the national award is recognised by the Department for Transport.

It's a simple process, completing each tab in a logical progression. Firstly you make a quick transport audit of your school i.e. what bus stop is nearby, is there bike parking. You then take a base line measurement of school travel through a very simple survey generated by the database, asking how pupils and staff normally travel, and how they would like to travel to school. This gives your school accurate data to set yourself a target for positive increases in walking and cycling or other methods of sustainable transport.

The third part is to meet a set amount of initiatives, including administrative, educational and pupil led active travel tasks. Many of the initiatives are already being done by many schools, such as Bikeability, Walk to School Month, Be Safe Be Seen, Dr Bike or that you walk to visit the local library. Some are more ambitious such as setting up park and strides or a school working group to engage parents and pupils to think again about driving in when they are within a one mile zone. Initiatives can be up to three years old and are evidenced by photos, lesson plans, emails or registration forms etc. This year Modeshift has expanded their awards system ranging from a early entry Green award up to a Platinum.

For more information or to sign up visit [www.modeshiftstars.org/education](http://www.modeshiftstars.org/education) and for Modeshift support contact [claire.harris@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:claire.harris@plymouth.gov.uk)



## Sustrans Big Pedal returns for 2021

Last year would have been the 10th anniversary of the Sustrans Big Pedal, the UK's biggest inter-school cycling, walking, wheeling and scooting competition. Unfortunately, the first lockdown hit just as we were gearing up to go, so we are delighted to announce that the Big Pedal is back on for 2021!

The challenge will run for 10 days from **19 – 30 April 2021** and is open to all primary and secondary schools in the UK, including SEN schools. Join in for one, five or ten days to be in with a chance of winning fabulous prizes every day. On each day of the challenge schools compete to see who can record the most pupils, staff and parents cycling, walking, scooting or using a wheelchair to school.

The challenge will be extra flexible this year to in case of pupils having to isolate. Children learning remotely can take an active journey from home or complete a physical challenge - you can find lots more information about this on the website. Register now at [www.bigpedal.org.uk](http://www.bigpedal.org.uk)



# YOU ASKED, WE'RE DOING!

At the end of the 2020 summer term we asked you about your children's school travel. 521 parents / carers responded to the survey and many thanks to everyone who did – it was great to hear how your children are travelling to school, how they'd like to travel, and how we can help more journeys to be by bike, by scooter, or on foot.

The results show that the percentage of the respondents' children who usually walk, cycle, scoot or skate to school is 60.9% which is fantastic – great job everyone! What's also really exciting is that although usually travelling to school by car accounted for 35.0% of school journeys, the preference for children to travel by car was far lower at only 22.4%. This means that many of you want to change the way you travel to school, and we're here to help you make that happen!

**This is what you said would encourage you to walk, cycle or scoot to school<sup>1</sup>**

**39.3% wanted to see safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists**

**23.8% wanted to see less traffic near school**

**23% wanted to see more secure cycle and scooter storage spaces at school**

**20.7% wanted to see wider pavements**

**16.3% wanted to see more traffic-free cycle lanes**

**15.7% wanted to see access to affordable bikes and scooters**

**14.2% wanted to see less pavement parking**

**11.7% wanted to see cycle training for parents, carers and children**

<sup>1</sup>More than one option could be selected.

This is really helpful feedback – thank you! We're thinking about how we can deliver the measures you said would help and are really pleased to be able to share with you that, before April 2022 we're proposing to introduce:

- a new **pedestrian crossing** on Larkham Lane
- **'20 when lights show' signs** outside another 15 schools, adding to the 15 which were introduced in 2020
- Two **20mph zones**; one in Plympton St Maurice and one in Laira
- **Traffic calming** near Thornbury Primary School

These measures aim to make it easier, safer and more pleasant to walk and cycle.

The proposals are being predominantly funded through the Council's Active Travel Fund programme. Full details are available at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/activetravelfund](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/activetravelfund). As part of the programme we're also looking to remove barriers from pavements and cycle paths to make more space available. With the budget available we won't be able to remove every barrier. However, if you have a location on your journey to school which you think we should look at please let us know by emailing [plymotion@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:plymotion@plymouth.gov.uk)

Through Plymotion, we're also offering free adult cycle training and, hopefully soon, the popular **Bike and Baby rides** will be back if you'd like to gain more confidence cycling with young children. For parents and carers we offer the 'Commuter Tutor' service where you are accompanied on journeys, such as to work or place of study, by a professional cycling instructor. This is a fantastic opportunity to identify best possible routes and for tips and advice for riding along the way. Adults who want to learn to ride or brush up their skills can book a 'Cycle Confidence' session. For more information or to book a session contact Jonathan Tutte at [j.tutte@sjhcsc.co.uk](mailto:j.tutte@sjhcsc.co.uk) or call **01752 515384**.

10 of the Plymouth schools that have been granted Plymotion School Sustainable Travel Grants are using the funding to purchase either bikes, scooters or bike and scooter storage - for more information, see the article on page 4.

We're also continuing to invest in more cycle lanes. More information on new cycle lanes which are currently under construction is included in our infrastructure update and at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/cyclerouteimprovements](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/cyclerouteimprovements)

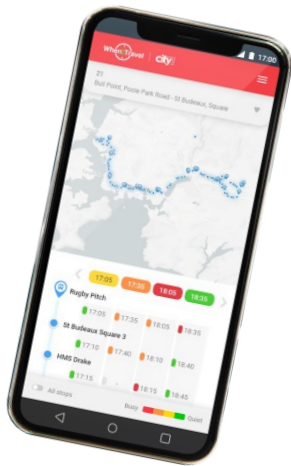


**New 20mph sign on Garfield Terrace**

## Top apps for socially distanced bus travel

### Plymouth Citybus When2Travel Tool:

As the capacity on buses has been reduced, due to social distancing measures, this useful tool allows you to plan any future journeys (up to two weeks in advance) by checking when journeys will be quieter. **When2Travel** gives you information on the latest timetables and provides up-to-date bus capacity predictions on a stop-by-stop basis.



The tool can be accessed by downloading the Citybus app on your smartphone or by visiting the Citybus website [when2travel.co/plymouthcitybus/home](https://when2travel.co/plymouthcitybus/home). All you need to do is search for your route, day and direction of travel, and the tool will give you a colour-coded view of how busy the buses are expected to be.

### Stagecoach How Busy is my Bus? Tool:

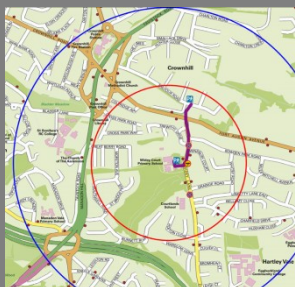
Stagecoach has introduced a new 'How busy is my bus?' tool, which is included within the Stagecoach bus app. This feature allows passengers to check a bus journey in advance and see whether it is predicted to be busy, using a simple three colour system. For further information visit: [www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/national/stagecoachbusapp](https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/national/stagecoachbusapp)

## Do you know your school's 10 minute walking zone?

Walking to school is another great way of avoiding the crowds at busy times, as well getting all the health benefits of an active journey. The 10 minute walking zone around your school may well cover a larger area than you think and our customised maps are here to help you discover it!

We know that sometimes driving to school is the only option for working parents, but parking away from the school gates within the 10 minute walking zone improves safety, air quality, and enables a more socially distanced school run.

We introduced the **Plymotion Walking Maps** in September and many schools promoted them during October's Walk to School Month challenge, and as the days get longer and the weather improves it a good time to revisit them. Download your school map from [www.plymouth.gov.uk/](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/)



## Meet Angélique Kergosien, Plymouth City Council's new Road Safety Officer

Before joining the Traffic Management Team as a Road Safety Officer, I was a languages teacher for 10 years. I am also a keen cyclist, using my bike to go to work, to go to town, to head to Devil's Point for a sea swim and occasionally for longer rides through Plymbridge. Being a cyclist, especially in an urban environment, has made me particularly attentive to road safety over the years.



In my new role, I have the opportunity to make a difference in improving road safety in the city, especially on school journeys. My work involves carrying out programmes of education, supporting national road safety campaigns locally, and I am also working closely with the Plymotion team to support walking and cycling and other modes of sustainable travel in a safe and healthy environment.

I am looking forward to keeping you updated on the Traffic Management Team's current and future projects.

## School Travel Grant success!

We're thrilled to announce that 14 schools have successfully applied for a 2020/21 **Plymotion School Sustainable Travel Grant**. The programme will see more than £85,000 invested in measures to encourage children to cycle and scoot on their school journey, before the end of the summer term with £30,323 of Council investment being matched by £57,942 of funding from the schools themselves.

The grants are intended to encourage and sustain, an increase in the number of cycling, walking and scooter trips to and from schools, improve the perception of sustainable travel amongst their entire school community and reduce carbon emissions. The 14 schools will be using the funding to provide cycle tracks and trails to encourage exercise and improve cycling skills, new storage for bikes and scooters and balance bikes and scooters which will help pupils improve their confidence and ability to ride a bike or scoot to and from school.

On awarding the funding Councillor Mark Coker, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure said "I was really impressed by the range of schemes schools proposed and am thrilled during what remains a very challenging time for schools that we're able to help invest in measures which, hopefully, will bring a lot of fun and enjoyment to school communities, and establish active travel behaviours."

Sustrans is grateful for the continued support of our schools work in Plymouth from the following:

