



## THE WAY TO GO

# Welcome to our Way to Go schools newsletter!

We really hope that you'll find the information useful and that it will help you encourage your pupils and their families – as well as your staff – to **walk, cycle, wheel** or **scoot** to school!

Before



After



## Suffolk launches first healthy school street

Ranelagh Primary School in Ipswich became the first school in Suffolk to launch a healthy school street scheme at the beginning of the year.

A healthy school street is when the roads around the school are closed to traffic during school drop-off and pick-up times. Temporary barriers, usually staffed by teachers and/or volunteers, are placed across the road to restrict the area making it both safer and healthier for everyone.

Ranelagh Primary School is located on Paul's Road which has always been heavily congested at drop-off and pick-up times. It is now a pedestrianised area and since the healthy school street was introduced, we've received some very positive feedback: **85%** of pupils feel that it's safer and there has been a **35%** increase in the number of pupils actively travelling (walking, scooting or cycling) to school.



## Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel 2024

We had great fun working with Freeman Primary School in Stowmarket as part of charity Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel challenge. This is the UK's biggest inter-school walking, wheeling, scooting and cycling to school challenge which takes place annually.

We organised an after-school Dr Bike event which involved pupils having their bikes safety-checked to make sure they were road-worthy.

Big thanks to all Suffolk schools who took part in this year's challenge!

Don't forget, we can support any school with a Dr Bike event. One of our bike mechanics will carry out safety checks on pupils' bikes. The mechanic can make adjustments during the session as well as make recommendations for further work required if necessary.

Please contact [schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk) if you're interested in having a Dr Bike session at your school.



## Behaviour change interventions = more children cycling, walking and scooting

Research in Scotland by charity Sustrans has shown that behaviour change interventions aimed at promoting active and sustainable travel has resulted in more pupils walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting to school.

What do we mean by behaviour change interventions? Well there are a number of different interventions including Bikeability training, Big Walk and Wheel inter-school challenge (see earlier story), Living Streets Walk to School Week and the installation of cycle/scooter parking to name just a few.

The research reveals that active travel rates are higher in the schools that have just one of these interventions in place and greater in schools that have two or more interventions in place.

We recommend that your school has at least one behaviour change initiative in place and where possible, two! Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you want more information about how we can support you. Email [schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk)  
Read the full Sustrans report [here](#).



## Switch off that engine

The **Suffolk Idling Action Campaign** is working to encourage drivers to switch off their engines when stationary to stop harmful emissions. Idling engines produce up to twice the amount of exhaust emissions compared to when a vehicle is moving and can be a problem at school drop-off and pick-up times.

Free materials and resources are available for all schools including outdoor banners, posters, car stickers and signs. Email: [ph.widerdeterminants@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:ph.widerdeterminants@suffolk.gov.uk) to request your materials.



## Want to become a star?

**Modeshift STARS** is a national school travel awards scheme that celebrates schools who demonstrate excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel.

We can work with you on your school's travel plan which can then be used as evidence to gain accreditation. This demonstrates to your school community as well as Ofsted that you are proactively making the school journey safer and healthier.

If you would like more information regarding Modeshift STARS please get in contact with [schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk)

Or if you are already on ModeShift STARS and want support with achieving the next level of accreditation or running an initiative, please also get in contact.



## High school pupils champion active travel

Pupils from Beccles SET, Claydon High School, Farlingaye High School in Woodbridge and Thomas Gainsborough in Ipswich were asked to pitch their active travel ideas at an Active Travel Ambassador event recently. The pitches were exceptional and very well thought-out. They included making crossing safer, introducing walking and cycling competitions and running a Park and Stride promotion.

Each school was awarded up to £200 from Modeshift with match funding from Suffolk County Council so that they can now deliver their projects. We look forward to seeing the impact they make on their school community.

# Coming up: dates for your diary

## 13th-19th May

### Mental Health Awareness week

The theme this year is Movement: moving for our mental health.

Being active is important for our mental health, with research highlighting the important link between activity levels at a young age and mental health later in life. Actively travelling to school is one way pupils can get physically active before and after the school day. Ditto for staff!

Visit their [website](#) for more information and also their [tips](#) on how to find moments for movements every day.

## 20th-24th May

### Walk to School week

May is National Walking Month and what better way to celebrate than taking part in Living Street's five-day Walk to School Week challenge which encourages pupils to walk, wheel, cycle, or scoot every day of the week.

This year's theme is *The Magic of Walking*. Pupils can earn daily stickers, tracking their progress on their classroom wall chart and learning about the benefits of active travel through activity diaries. They will also receive a pupil reward at the end of the week.

There are a number of ways to get involved – more information can be found [here](#).

## 20th June

### Clean Air Day

Every third Thursday of June marks Clean Air Day! This day is celebrated to raise awareness of air pollution and find practical ways to tackle it.

We'll be contacting you in a few weeks with ideas of how to get involved but you may wish to join the SAMHE (School's Air Quality Monitoring for Health and Education) research project in the meantime. Register by **31st May** to receive a free air quality monitor which links to a web app where you can view your data and participate in activities and experiments.

Sign up [here](#).

## Let's keep in touch!



We would love to hear from you with any news, updates or photos about your school and how you're encouraging active travel. Please do email us at [schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:schooltravelplans@suffolk.gov.uk)

And if you're interested in finding out how we can work with you to encourage more of your pupils, their families and staff members to actively travel to school, please get in touch!

## Thank you for helping us make travelling to school in Suffolk safer and healthier for everyone!

