

School Streets trial

The trial is being delivered by the Local Transport Improvements Group who have officers experienced in dealing with school gate initiatives and improvements. In response to the emails being received regarding the trial, here is an update.

Extensive research has been completed into how School Street initiatives are delivered in other local authorities outside of London and it is clear there is a wide range of diversity and ongoing development, delivery and monitoring options currently being used. The County Council's trial will include 5 primary schools and will utilise the information we have gathered to create a framework of documents to ensure our monitoring and evaluation goes above and beyond the requirements of Active Travel England (ATE).

The Memorandum of Understanding has since been shared by Sustrans with North Somerset County Council as a best practice example and with Brighton and Hove Council.

An overview of the trial so far

- 10 schools were contacted (8 primaries in Adur and two primaries in Arun District) they were asked if they would like to be considered for a place on the trial. Shoreham was chosen due to excellent baseline data (including casualty and travel data), and background information collected from recent work there including Upper Shoreham Road ongoing work, and the 2 Arun schools, 1 of which has been running an unofficial School Street since lockdown that needs formalising. The other has a long running need for an improvement with no clear infrastructure solution.
- 7 of the 10 schools indicated interest in the trial and these schools were asked to complete a questionnaire to support their interest whilst officers conducted desktop feasibility which was then backed by a site visit at peak school run times. Of the schools that declined to participate, 1 school indicated a lack of school resource, 1 school was unable to commit due to time constraints but indicated a desire to be considered again in the future and 1 school did not respond to our invitation communications.
- The remaining 7 schools returned their questionnaires and a suitability report has been compiled for each school. This information has been used to score the schools in relation to casualty data, road type, bus routes, alternative parking and routes and other criteria.
- 5 schools have been offered a place on the trial. We are awaiting confirmation of their acceptance together with their signed memorandum of understanding.

Next steps

During the summer term the Council:

- will be working in school on journey planning with pupils
- will support schools to update their travel plans
- will support schools engaging with neighbours/local communities to raise awareness of the 'school street' trial

- will continue to work with Sustrans to deliver active travel initiatives and actions
- will seek to work with district council parking and air quality colleagues to promote/deliver active travel links
- will seek to support in school promotional event – active travel breakfast/car free day/local newsletter etc

WSCC Officers will:

- Design each individual School Street and the supporting Experimental TRO (ETRO)
- Deliver necessary infrastructure to implement school street trial where resources and funding permit
- Raise awareness through communications and on dedicated web pages

From September 2023

- The School Street trial will be live and will be monitored using fixed sensors and manual monitoring, through schools and officers and community feedback
- The ETRO will be constantly monitored as it is a live consultation for the duration of the trial until either formalised or removed
- This will be a constant review process until April 2024 when a 6-month report will be completed. This report will inform members of the outcome of the trial

Future schools / April 2024

- There is a list of schools expressing an interest for a place of the next 'School Street' programme – this is subject to funding through ATE/other sources and will include the schools who did not make it through scoring onto the trial
- A 'Get Ready' pack for those schools is being developed so they can start gathering background data and evidence, including updating travel plans, engaging with parents and communities and collecting travel data and survey responses

Officers are aware that a number of schools will want a 'School Street' but it may not be possible at all locations. The School Street is a school-led initiative, supported by WSCC officers and will require on-going engagement and monitoring as detailed within the memorandum of understanding that each school will sign before taking part.

Each stage of the trial is being closely monitored and reviewed so officers can potentially apply for funding to offer the project to other schools within West Sussex. ATE and the Department for Transport are currently working on guidance for 'School Streets'. However, it is not anticipated this being public until our trial is in progress. Officers have consulted other local authorities and Sustrans to use infrastructure and initiatives that have worked elsewhere to develop a trial that can support our Active Travel agenda both now and in the future.