



SECTION 4

Towards sustainable services

Guide for services and paths to improvement for:

TRANSPORT

Sustainable Development at the service level

The Local Government in Scotland Act (2003) established Sustainable Development as a statutory duty within the Best Value regime. The Best Value regime requires all local authorities to continuously improve their performance and secure services of the highest quality at a cost that is acceptable to their local communities. **Sustainable development is an integral part of local authorities' efforts to deliver Best Value.**

'A local authority which secures Best Value will be able to demonstrate a contribution to sustainable development — consideration of the social, economic and environmental impacts of activities and decisions both in the shorter and longer term.'

As well as being a corporate aim, sustainable development should be part of every service's plans and operations. This chapter aims to answer the question **"what would a sustainable development approach to transport look like?"**

As Chapter 7 of the Best Value guidance states, "2. Contributing to the achievement of sustainable development (should be) reflected in the authority's objectives and highlighted in all strategies and plans at corporate and service level"

This chapter provides a **self-assessment questionnaire** outlining **Paths to Improvement**. This is designed to enable you to **assess your current position**. It also sets a framework within which you may, step by step, progressively engage more fully with sustainable development.

On the right hand side of each 'Paths to Improvement' table are three columns headed **'Policy'**, **'Being Implemented'**, and **'Outcomes'**. These stages enable the authority to assess whether they have reached the stage of policy; or progressed to implementation; or have moved on to reach outcomes.

The stages are defined below:

Policy	The Council has considered the topic, then adopted a policy to address it. There is a commitment and decision to seek change and improvement ; and outcomes are being set.
Being Implemented	The Council is implementing policy ; this is reflected in financial allocations ; revenue and/or capital allocations; plans and strategies for the topic; agreement with relevant partner agencies; staff responsibilities and job descriptions. Resources and procedures are in place to secure change and improvement.
Outcomes	The outcomes of the policy are being measured, and there are measurable deliverables. Change and improvement is being achieved, and is being monitored and reported.

It must be stressed that the process of continuous improvement is not prescriptive:

- **If this chapter does not pose the right questions for you please adapt the questionnaire accordingly.** Many local authorities have done this, to great effect.
- **It is also not intended that the questionnaire should be used solely as a checklist with 'yes' or 'no' answers.** Please add detail, such as – what evidence do you have to show that policy is being implemented? Who is responsible for this?



Towards sustainable services: Transport

Local authorities have been in the vanguard of the marked shift in transport policy over the last 10 years. The vehicles for delivering improvements are the local transport strategies and from 2007 the regional transport strategies to be drawn up by the regional transport partnerships. The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that regional transport strategies "be consistent with the principle of sustainable development", and Scottish Government guidance on local and regional transport strategies both stress the importance of sustainability. The emphasis is on **accessibility** and **reducing dependency on the car**. The bus and, in the some places also the train, are the main alternatives to the car with important roles for cycling and walking. However, sustainable development is not anti-car. Cars have given those that can afford them great freedoms, and with a greater diversity of where people live, work, shop and spend their leisure time, many journeys depend on private vehicles. **Policy options for transport are constrained by geography and population density, and will be different in rural and remote areas.**

In this context, the key issues to address are to:

- **Reduce the need to travel** by locating related activities near one another, or enhancing remote service provision;
- Support development which **enhances the viability and attractiveness of** more resource efficient means of transport, including **public transport, cycling and walking**;
- **Improve the load factor of vehicles**, increasing the number of people per vehicle; and
- **Increase the fuel efficiency of**, and reduce the emissions from and impact of, vehicles.

Local authorities (or regional transport partnerships, where these powers have been taken by them) have the lead role in the first two of these. They also have a role in the others, both by setting an example and by measures such as keeping extraneous traffic out of residential environments and traffic calming. The policy framework for Planning and Transport is set out in SPP17.

Paths to improvement include:	Policy	Being Implemented	Outcomes
Is the need to travel being reduced by land use planning policies to locate related activities close to one another?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is remote service provision and accessibility being enhanced, including reducing the need for staff and citizens to have to travel to access services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is provision of public transport being secured prior to major new development being occupied?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are park and ride, and interchange, facilities; the prioritisation of bus, cycle and walking spaces and facilities; and co-ordination of transport services to encourage modal shift being provided, supported by an increasing proportion of the transport budget?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there partnership with public transport operators , leading to redesigned services, improved and real time information, through and advanced ticketing, leading to increased ridership?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there co-ordination of bus routes and priorities, parking and servicing provision, traffic management, and AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) action plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a planned approach to identifying and addressing the accessibility needs of local populations , taking into account different partners, including local authority (planning, transport, education and social work), public transport providers, health boards, the ambulance service and community transport operators?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are demand responsive and flexible transport solutions actively considered in addressing the transport needs of local populations on a Best Value basis compared to traditional fixed routes? Is there partnership with industry,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Paths to improvement include:	Policy	Being Implemented	Outcomes
Is there partnership with industry , business and commerce to secure adoption of sustainable travel plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the Council have a fully implemented and regularly updated sustainable travel plan for its own staff and visitors, to promote more sustainable transport use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there innovation in the Council's vehicle fleet , including fuel efficiency and alternative (low emission) fuels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there action on traffic calming, home zones , securing safe streets and accident prevention?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
See also climate change mitigation and adaptation measures (under climate change and energy)			
See also child transport (under education)			

Case Study: Aberdeen Quality Bus Partnership

Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council have formed a **unique Quality Bus Partnership** with First Aberdeen and Stagecoach Bluebird with the aim of improving bus services, and making public transport more attractive and accessible, throughout the city. **In consultation with local communities, the entire route network has been redesigned.** Routes are indicated by colour coding, with improved maps and real time information at many stops. Physical changes implemented include improved park and ride services, waiting facilities, interchange points for easier transfer to other bus routes, further **bus priority measures** and low floor buses on most services. The Partnership was updated and renewed in October 2005 with a **target to increase bus use** in the north-east by 10% by 2011.

Case Study: Demand Responsive Transport and service improvements in Angus

Angus Council has financially supported a number of **innovative bus services**, particularly in the rural areas around Forfar and Kirriemuir. A number of these services are '**demand responsive**', which means that services are available to potential passengers on request to the bus operator. If no such requests are received, then a journey will not run, thereby reducing unnecessary mileage and reducing emissions. These new journeys were developed to not only replace a number of lightly used traditional bus services, but also to enhance the travel opportunities for rural residents who were previously reliant on 'shoppers' buses to access amenities. Many of these demand responsive journeys operate at times when no alternative services were available and allow connections to and from other bus services operating to and from both Dundee and Arbroath. The introduction of Service 27 between Forfar and Arbroath in February 1999 with finance from the Scottish Government's Rural Transport Fund provided a basic hourly daytime service between these towns. Previous service provision on this corridor had been four return journeys per day at times not entirely suitable to all potential passengers' needs. These **new journeys enhanced access to employment and recreational activities** for residents of the towns and villages en-route to such a degree that most daytime journeys now operate on a commercial basis with funding now supporting extra journeys in the evenings and early on weekday mornings.

[Source: Angus Council]

This chapter is part of the **Sustainable Scotland Network's Best Value & Sustainable Development Toolkit**. To view the complete toolkit, go to www.sustainable-scotland.net/bestvalue