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## Local transport planning adapts to new political landscape

**The Government has slashed local transport budgets, as work continues to prepare Merseyside's next Local Transport Plan (LTP3) in the new political landscape.**

Given the funding uncertainties, the Department for Transport (DfT) has suspended all proposed major schemes, including the Thornton to Switch Island link road in Sefton, pending review.

There are some green shoots for the region, however – the M53 Bidston Moss Viaduct will go ahead, as will improvements to Edge Lane West in Liverpool and maintenance on the Silver Jubilee Bridge in Halton.

The "Better Stations" funding to improve Liverpool Central station has been scrapped but track improvement work on the rail line between Liverpool and Leeds will go ahead.

Neil Scales, Chair of Merseyside Transport Partnership, explained: "A major strand of the Government's policy is the need to reduce the economic deficit and manage the country's debt. At a national level, the Department for Transport's budget has been cut by £683 million, with £309 million of these savings being made in local transport.

"In real terms, this means that transport funding has been reduced by around 25% across all Merseyside authorities. We are also operating in a changed local and regional

government setting, with the new Decentralisation and Localism Bill returning decision-making powers on housing and planning to local councils by abolishing Regional Spatial Strategies.

"Levels of funding are likely to be very limited during the early years of our third Local Transport Plan. This was, however, becoming apparent prior to the election and we have incorporated a number of lower cost, "smarter" measures into our preferred strategy.

"The wider processes of governance review are not yet fully understood and we do not know if Government intends to make changes to the Local Transport Plan regime. We will keep abreast of these developments and continue to look to deliver a safe, sustainable, efficient and integrated transport network for Merseyside."

The next stage of consultation on Merseyside's next Local Transport Plan will launch in the autumn. Visit [www.transportmerseyside.org](http://www.transportmerseyside.org) or call **0151 330 1294** for the most up-to-date information.

## City region bids for electric car funding

The Liverpool city region (LCR) has applied for Government funding to set up a network of electric vehicle charging points for Merseyside.

The LCR has submitted an expression of interest to the second phase of the Government's Plugged-In Places initiative that ultimately aims to establish an electric vehicle charging infrastructure nationwide.

Launched late last year, Plugged-In Places will introduce electric vehicle charging points in a small number of regions to support the electric vehicles that will be entering the UK market in the near future. Learnings from this pilot activity will be used to help develop a national recharging infrastructure.

Neil Scales, Chair of Merseyside Transport Partnership, said: "We are always keen to support pioneering transport initiatives in Merseyside and very much hope that our bid is successful. The electric vehicle charging points will create a fantastic local incentive to further encourage the uptake of electric vehicles, resulting in improved air quality across Merseyside."

## Cycle of success

**A programme aimed at getting more people cycling has celebrated its first year with record success.**

Cycle Speke launched in May 2009 and has worked closely with local business, schools and community groups to increase the number of trips made by bike by 30%.

So far, Cycle Speke has provided cycle parking outside shops in the estate; bike shelters at two primary schools; free cycle training and maintenance courses for adults and Dr. Bike sessions. Bike rides are held on the first Sunday of every month in and around Speke.

Cycle Speke is supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Further information on rides and free training is available at [www.liverpool.gov.uk/cyclespeke](http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/cyclespeke) or by calling Claudia Stuerck on **0151 233 3001**.

## Health body pledges support for transport campaigns



Liverpool Primary Care Trust (PCT) is working jointly with the Merseyside Transport Partnership (MTP), to support initiatives to encourage people to consider using healthier modes of transport during the 2010 Year of Health and Wellbeing and beyond.

A contribution from Liverpool PCT will be used to develop a number of cycling and walking initiatives, including an improved cycle skills and maintenance training programme and the organisation of tailored bike rides for community groups this summer. The funding means that all Liverpool residents will now have access to free personalised cycling support.

Neil Scales, Chair of MTP, is looking forward to working with Liverpool PCT more closely. He said: "Transport and health have long shared a common agenda and, in recent months, we have worked more closely than ever to maximise the use of our resources. With the recent funding cutbacks, a joined-up approach is all the more important and we are looking to work with organisations across Merseyside to foster improved links between the transport and health sectors.

"This partnership with Liverpool PCT will help us develop existing initiatives to get more people walking and cycling this year, in the 2010 Year of Health and Wellbeing, and for many years to come."

Andy Hull, Director of Stakeholder Engagement at Liverpool PCT, said: "Merseyside's rates of obesity are higher than the UK average and many people are affected by conditions such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

"Increasing walking and cycling rates has great potential to help improve Merseyside's health and fitness levels, particularly as they are two of the easiest forms of physical activity to incorporate into our everyday lives.

"Cycling was raised as the number one big idea to improve health in the consultation for 2010 Year of Health and Wellbeing and forms a major part of the strategy going forward."

For more information on the links between the transport and health sectors, visit [www.transportmerseyside.org](http://www.transportmerseyside.org) or call 0151 330 1253.

For more information on the Year of Health & Wellbeing 2010, log on to [www.2010healthandwellbeing.org.uk](http://www.2010healthandwellbeing.org.uk)

## Merseyside schools lead the way on the BIG Walk to School 2010



Matthew Crutchley, a pupil at St Peter's CE Aided Primary School in Heswall, has won a TravelWise competition to design a cartoon character to encourage more children and their parents to walk to school more regularly.

Matthew's "SuperShoe" character was used to encourage as many children and parents as possible to put their best feet forward during this year's BIG Walk to School campaign. Matthew won a trip to FACT for his class.

Now in its third year, the TravelWise initiative aims to create healthier, happier and greener schools by encouraging the school community to walk to and from school. There are 178 schools participating this year.

Roy Goulbourn, TravelWise Officer, said: "The aim of the BIG Walk to School is to have fun – but the underlying message is about cutting down on traffic emissions and congestion and helping our children to become healthier."

## Chamber joins with MTP to develop freight strategy for Merseyside

Liverpool Chamber of Commerce has been working with the Merseyside Transport Partnership (MTP) to support efforts to put the movement of freight at the heart of the region's transport strategy.

A member of Chamber staff has been working on secondment at MTP to help develop strategy. MTP has also been looking to strengthen links with Mersey Maritime by, for example, working together on an educational project to enhance interest in freight and logistics.

A specific freight consultation event was held at Liverpool Chamber of Commerce in the spring. Representatives from the Freight Transport Association and the Department for Transport joined with other organisations to discuss issues surrounding freight. This feedback will be used to help prepare the strategy for the next Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

Key topics discussed include the importance that the movement of freight plays in supporting the growth of the economy in Merseyside and the need to consider more sustainable movement options to reduce carbon

emissions and improve air quality. There was strong support for Superport and the importance of maintaining good access to the Port of Liverpool was stressed.

Peter Evans, Freight Partnership Co-Ordinator, said: "Recent years have seen increasing numbers of goods travelling across the region, with a particular growth in the number of light good vehicles. As we continue to prepare the next Local Transport Plan (LTP3), events such as these have helped us identify the key issues surrounding freight and this feedback will be incorporated into our proposed strategy.

"A partnership approach is crucial for success. Working with organisations such as Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Mersey Maritime will help us deliver a strategy that will support economic growth in the region, as well as cutting carbon emissions."



## Scooter brings four hour commute to an end for Allan

In September 2009, 18 year old Allan Mason-Whelan started an apprenticeship with Airbus UK, based in Broughton in North Wales.

Living in Wirral, Allan had to leave home at 4am every morning to arrive in time to start work at 8.30am. He had an equally arduous journey home every evening.

Allan then found out about the Scooter Commuter scheme, operated by Wirral Council and Pentra Service Ltd and in partnership with WorkWise Merseyside. The scheme lends young people a scooter for 12 months to help them get to apprenticeships that would be difficult to reach using public transport. The young person is

also provided with training, insurance, tax and safety equipment in exchange for a small weekly fee of £10. The scheme is funded by the Youth Opportunity Fund, which was designed to enhance the options available to young people; the fund's decisions are made by local people aged 13-19.

Allan now has his scooter and is reaping the benefits. He said: "Having a scooter makes me more mobile in my day-to-day life. It also means I can have an extra two and a half hours in bed which makes my life much better now!"

## Funding gives lifeline to award-winning accessibility scheme

An award-winning programme designed to help thousands of people into work has been granted funding to continue until December 2010.

The long-term future of the programme – which helps people from disadvantaged communities who are having difficulty getting to employment opportunities - remains in doubt, however, with additional funding still needing to be secured.

Delivered as part of the "Let's Get Moving" project, WorkWise offers a wide range of advice and support to eligible applicants, including free travel cards, bikes and the loan of scooters. A series of 'How to Get to Guides' have been produced, providing information on the most convenient and least expensive ways of reaching key employment sites.

In 2008 "Let's Get Moving" won Beacon Status for Merseyside Transport Partnership and Halton Council, recognising its excellence and innovation in improving the quality of life for local communities.

Neil Scales, Chair of MTP, said: "This programme has been breaking new ground since its inception, and we are extremely proud of what has been achieved throughout the region.

"This new funding will ensure that this hugely important work continues through a time when supporting people into work and training is even more vital than before. We want this project to continue to make a real and lasting difference to people's lives and are working hard to secure funding to enable it to continue in the long term."



## Merseyside celebrates 21st anniversary of the Trans Pennine Trail

Hundreds of people came together to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the Trans Pennine Trail recently.

A series of guided bike rides, neighbourhood events, walks and equestrian events helped transport a baton along all 360 miles of the trail – from Southport to Hornsea.

Jane Moore, TravelWise Officer, said: "Since summer 1989, thousands of walkers, cyclists and equestrians have enjoyed using the Trans Pennine Trail to explore some of the most beautiful parts of Merseyside. The Trail has gone from strength to strength over the past two decades and I hope these events remind people that walking and cycling along the Trail are fantastic ways to get fit during the 2010 Year of Health and Wellbeing and beyond."

## Cycling up a gear

People from across Merseyside have been taking part in the TravelWise Cycle Challenge.

The challenge encourages people to incorporate cycling into their daily lives by using their bikes for a wider range of trips; or to start cycling if it's something they've always wanted to do. Participants have been logging their progress online and there are some fantastic prizes available for those who make the most improvement.

A number of free led Bike Time rides are also running until the autumn. Suitable for all ages and abilities, each ride lasts approximately two hours and visits a different area of Merseyside.

Jane Moore, TravelWise Officer, said: "Cycling is an excellent way to get fit, cut congestion and make the most of Merseyside in this the 2010 Year of Health and Wellbeing. In offering help and support, we hope to encourage people of all age and abilities to get on their bikes this summer."

### Bike Time Rides

Sunday 25 July	Pickering Pastures
Sunday 8 August	Liverpool Overhead Railway History Ride
Sunday 22 August	"Dream" Ride
Sunday 12 September	Riverside Ramble
Sunday 26 September	Sefton Lanes
Sunday 10 October	Autumn Parks and Gardens Tour
Sunday 31 October	Sankey Valley Halloween Ride

For times, starting points and more information on cycling in Merseyside, visit [www.LetsTravelWise.org](http://www.LetsTravelWise.org) or call 0151 330 1290.

# Prestigious award for casualty reduction initiative

Road safety initiative RideSafe BackSafe, has secured another prestigious award for its work with motorcyclists across Lancashire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester. It has just been announced as winners of the 'Northwest Safety Project of the Year 2010' by The Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT).

The award was recently made at the 2010 CIHT North Western Branch Awards Dinner at the Park Hall Hotel in Warrington, in

recognition of the remarkable achievements, professionalism and best practice adopted by the RideSafe BackSafe team.

Project Lead for RideSafe BackSafe, Linda Sanderson said: "RideSafe BackSafe has proved successful because it can rely on the constant support of so many people who are focused on casualty reduction and genuinely passionate about the well-being of motorcyclists.

"Road Safety practitioners, regional police forces, motorcycling representative bodies,

riding instructors and the motorcycling industry as a whole all play an integral part in managing RideSafe BackSafe as a dedicated and trusted 'biker-friendly' initiative.

"I would particularly like to thank both regional and specialist press & media for helping us to convey our road safety messages more effectively than ever before."

More information on the initiative can be found at [www.ridesafebacksafe.co.uk](http://www.ridesafebacksafe.co.uk)



**Tourist sites across Merseyside are to receive free business support from the Merseyside Transport Partnership (MTP) to help visitors consider more environmentally-friendly travel options.**

Merseytravel, together with MTP, has appointed a dedicated Visitor Economy Officer, Andrew Elliot, who will be working

## New support to improve green travel options to Merseyside attractions

with a number of the most popular attractions in Merseyside to overcome issues such as car park overcrowding.

He will help attractions communicate how best to reach their sites via more sustainable means, enhancing sites' existing marketing activity and potentially increasing visitor numbers.

Andrew's remit extends the existing work that the Merseyside Transport Partnership, through TravelWise, is doing to support attractions in putting travel plans in place. He aims to work with at least 50 tourism and leisure sites over the next twelve months, including Tate Liverpool, the Floral Pavilion and Liverpool Cathedral.

Andrew said: "By working closely with tourism and leisure sites to develop dedicated visitor travel plans, we can help

the environment and make it easier for everybody – regardless of whether they own a car or not - to see the best of what Merseyside has to offer.

"All Merseyside tourist and leisure sites – regardless of their size and location – are more than welcome to get in touch with me for free advice and ongoing support."

Andrew's role is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which is also supporting improvements to coastal and rural routes in Wirral and Sefton.

Visitor attractions that are interested in receiving free support from the Merseyside Transport Partnership are encouraged to call Andrew Elliot on 0151 330 1549, email [andrew.elliott@merseytravel.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.elliott@merseytravel.gov.uk) or visit [www.LetsTravelWise.org](http://www.LetsTravelWise.org).

## National Wildflower Centre

Since first working with TravelWise five years ago, the National Wildflower Centre in Knowsley has introduced a number of initiatives to make it easier for visitors to reach the site without travelling by car.

With the support of TravelWise, the team have developed a travel map to show public transport, cycling and walking routes to the Centre. Sustainable travel information is prominently displayed across the site and bus and train timetables and cycling maps are available for visitors. New cycle parking facilities have also been built.

Alison Storer, the Centre's Marketing Officer, said: "The support from the

TravelWise team over the past five years has been fantastic. With the generous financial help of the grant from TravelWise, we've been able to champion and spread the word about sustainable travel.

"It's helped us to be awarded, and retain, a 'Gold' award from the Green Tourism Business Scheme. Furthermore, it has also benefited us when applying for grants and other awards short listings."

## John Harrison retires



**Many will be sad to hear that John Harrison retired this month.**

John has worked for the Merseyside Local Transport Plan Support Unit (LTSPSU) since it was established in 2005. His knowledge and good humour will be missed by many of his colleagues both in the LTSPSU and in partner organisations.

**We wish John a long and happy retirement.**

