

Press release

Almost £300 million to gear up new walking, wheeling and cycling schemes

We are making sure local authorities can provide high-quality and easily accessible active travel schemes across England.

From: **Active Travel England** (</government/organisations/active-travel-england>)
and **Simon Lightwood MP** (</government/people/simon-lightwood>)

Published 12 February 2025



- 300 miles of brand new footpaths and cycle tracks will help encourage 30 million more journeys by bike or foot every year
- new guidance to help councils engage and ensure local communities are involved in new projects

- funding will lead to 43,000 less sick days a year to ease pressure on the NHS and help deliver government mission of building an NHS fit for the future

Millions of people will benefit from 300 miles of new walkways and cycle lanes thanks to almost £300 million in funding to boost walking, wheeling and cycling in England.

The funding package announced today (12 February 2025) by the government and Active Travel England (ATE) will also allow the construction of improved crossings and junctions to make walking, wheeling and cycling easier, safer and better across the country. The investment will also help fund cycle training for hundreds of thousands of children.

In addition to today's funding, ATE is publishing its [guidance to help councils ensure that local residents and businesses are heard when designing and delivering transport changes in neighbourhoods](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-consultation-and-engagement-within-transport-schemes) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-consultation-and-engagement-within-transport-schemes>).

The improvements will help people make 30 million more journeys by bike or foot every year, including more than 20 million new walk-to-school journeys by children and their parents.

Cycle lanes and walkways funded today will lead to 43,000 fewer sick days a year, due to the health benefits of increased active travel, easing pressure on the NHS and helping people live happier and healthier lives.

The new infrastructure will also add £9 million every year to the economy by supporting local businesses and making it easier to walk and cycle to work, as the government continues to deliver its [Plan for Change](https://www.gov.uk/missions) (<https://www.gov.uk/missions>).

National Active Travel Commissioner, Chris Boardman, said:

- “ Making it simple and safe to walk, wheel or cycle to schools, shops and workplaces is one of the most effective actions we can take to improve the nation's health, economy and get to net zero, all in one.
- “ Free exercise, zero emissions and no risk of getting stuck in traffic are benefits already being enjoyed as standard by our European neighbours and it's time we had the same life-improving choices.
- “ This funding will help make our towns, cities and villages happier, healthier and greener places to live.”

Minister for Local Transport, Simon Lightwood, said:

“ Walking and cycling is an affordable way to get around and is hugely beneficial for both mental and physical health. We’re making sure local authorities can deliver high-quality and easily accessible schemes for everyone.

“ Investing in our national cycling and walking infrastructure is a key part of our mission for growth and today’s investment will not only provide better connectivity but boost local businesses, grow local economies and ease pressure on the NHS, helping us deliver our Plan for Change.”

In total, today’s £291 million funding package includes:

- £222.5 million to local authorities for the development and delivery of local walking, wheeling and cycling schemes, alongside community engagement and training
- £30 million to provide [Bikeability cycle training](https://www.bikeability.org.uk/) (<https://www.bikeability.org.uk/>) to children
- £30 million to the Sustrans charity to deliver improvements to the National Cycle Network, a UK-wide network of signed active travel routes
- £8.5 million for Cycling UK, Living Streets and Modeshift to deliver walking, wheeling and cycling initiatives in schools and communities

In addition to providing this funding, ATE is dedicated to ensuring that new schemes are built faster and to a high quality that works best for their communities. With ATE expert advice, local authorities have completed active travel projects at more than twice the rate of other small transport schemes.

Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, said:

“ Helping more people to get the health benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling is at the heart of the Bee Network. Our plan to connect 95% of our residents to within 400 metres of high-quality active travel routes is arguably the boldest in the country.

“ We’re already seeing more people choose active travel over the car for short journeys. This latest funding will help us build on our success to date and demonstrates confidence – at the highest level – in the Bee Network.

“ Stockport is the blueprint for what we want to deliver across Greater Manchester, focusing new homes and regeneration around excellent public transport infrastructure in our town centres.

“ The more people we can persuade to leave the car at home, the more we will make the traffic flow and the roads better for everyone.”

National Active Travel Commissioner, Chris Boardman, and Local Transport Minister, Simon Lightwood, will mark the announcement of this funding with a visit to Greater Manchester, where active travel policies have been hugely successful.

A recent report by Transport for Greater Manchester found infrastructure upgrades are encouraging more residents to get about under their own steam, with the number of people walking short journeys now at 57%, up from 52% 5 years ago.

Local transport authority allocations

- [Active Travel Fund](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-active-travel-fund-local-transport-authority-allocations)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-active-travel-fund-local-transport-authority-allocations>)
- [Consolidated Active Travel Fund](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consolidated-active-travel-fund-local-transport-authority-allocations)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consolidated-active-travel-fund-local-transport-authority-allocations>)

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Published 12 February 2025

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