



# ***Assessing the Impact: Belfast*** **Healthy Cities Walking Bus Pilot** **2024-2025**



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Belfast Healthy Cities is a partnership organisation providing a platform for intersectoral collaboration to improve health and wellbeing for the Belfast population. Belfast has been a leading city within the World Health Organization (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network since 1988. A key role for Belfast Healthy Cities is to support partners in the city by providing evidence, capacity building and piloting new approaches and ways of working to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. Belfast Healthy Cities Walking Bus programme recognises the existing work in this area and will support a joined up and integrated approach that promotes stakeholder collaboration and school community engagement in the design, delivery and implementation of Walking Bus Projects.

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# Introduction

## What is a Walking Bus?

A walking bus is a group of children who walk to school in the mornings supervised by at least two adults. Students and adults wear high visibility vests and walk along a designated route, to ensure adequate safety. The starting point for a Walking Bus is located approximately a 10–15-minute walk away from school. The starting point of a Walking Bus can also include a “Park and Stride” which is a location with adequate parking or a car safe drop off point for those who live too far away from the school to walk. At a “Park and Stride” parents are able to quickly and safely drop their children off to join the Walking Bus and it provides students who would be unable to walk to school the chance to complete at least part of their journey by foot. Also, reducing congestion at school gates. Walking Buses leave from the designated starting points and walk to school stopping at additional drop off points to pick up more children. These stops along the route can pick up children who have walked to the collection point or can include additional “Park and Stride” stops.

Walking Buses are a great way for students, schools, and families to encourage a healthy active lifestyle while also working toward climate action. Walking to school creates opportunities for physical activity, social connections, and time outdoors. Teachers have found that students arrive more alert and ready to learn.

## Significance of Walking Bus Projects

Walking buses are a low-cost, arguably high-impact initiative that can support health, safety, education, environment, and social inclusion. They benefit not just the children who walk but also the broader community by fostering a culture of active travel, shared responsibility, and safer, greener neighbourhoods

### **1. For Children and Young People**

- a. **Physical Health:** Encourages daily physical activity, helping combat childhood obesity and builds lifelong healthy habits around active travel.
- b. **Mental Wellbeing:** Improves mood and reduces stress before and after school. Have been cited as helping children arrive at school more alert and ready to learn.
- c. **Social Development:** Encourages interaction with peers and adults, building communication and social skills.
- d. **Educational Benefits:** Studies have shown that active travel is linked with improved concentration and academic performance.

### **2. For Families**

- a. **Reduced Pressure on Parents:** Offers a safe, reliable school travel option, easing the burden on parents trying to navigate school drop offs.
- b. **Strengthened Parent Networks:** Encourages parent volunteers and can build stronger community ties among families.

### 3. For Communities and Local Residents

- a. Reduced Traffic Congestion and Pollution: Decreases the number of cars near schools, improving air quality and safety. Makes school zones quieter and more pleasant for all residents.
- b. Safer Streets: Encourages safer road design and pedestrian infrastructure. Increases driver awareness due to visible presence of walking groups.

### A Whole Systems Approach

The World Health Organization defines overweight and obesity as “abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health” (World Health Organization, 2020). Obesity is considered one of the most fundamental public health challenges faced by children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Children who are overweight and obese are more likely to be into adulthood. Obese children have a higher chance of disability and premature death into adulthood. Also, those who are overweight and obese as children are more likely to develop a noncommunicable disease such as certain cancers and musculoskeletal disorders as adults. As well as are at a higher risk of cardiovascular diseases and diabetes developing at a younger age (World Health Organization, 2020).

Many individual and environmental factors contribute to the rising rates of overweight and obese children. This includes poor dietary habits, and lower rates of physical activity. A modern lifestyle supports more sedentary behaviours over physical activity due to technology use and certain modes of transportation, especially in urban areas.

Belfast Healthy Cities *City Health Profile* highlights that the number of overweight or obese children, in the most deprived areas of Belfast, of whom are of primary one and year eight ages have increased, while the rates have decreased in Northern Ireland. In Belfast two to three out of every ten primary one children and four out of ten year eight children are overweight or obese (Belfast Healthy Cities, 2022). Similar findings were concluded from The Northern Ireland’s Department of Health, recent health inequities report covering data from 2021. This report found that those of primary one age in the least deprived areas had obesity rates of 4.6% while those in the most deprived had a 4.2%-point difference with rates at 8.8%. Also, over the last five years the inequality gap among primary one aged children who were obese has increased from 45% to 93%, as a result of increasing obesity rates. However, the most deprived areas saw an increase in obesity rates while there were no notable changes found in the least deprived areas (Media & Public Affairs team, 2023).

However, being overweight or obese as well as having other noncommunicable diseases is largely preventable. Improvements in diet and increased physical activity are all healthy habits children can develop and carry into adulthood which can assist them with maintaining a healthy weight. Walking Buses serve as a tool for obesity prevention, as they incorporate physical activity into the daily morning routine of young children, and supervising adults. It is recommended that children obtain 60 minutes of physical activity each day.



## WHO Graphic- Walking and cycling can reduce and improve



Walking Bus routes provide children who attend each morning guaranteed physical activity each day. The project also links in with health and wellbeing policies and frameworks such as *The Making Life Better Framework*. Which seeks to create conditions for communities and individuals to be able to take charge of their own lives, and to make Northern Ireland a place where people are supported and enabled to achieve optimal health and wellbeing. Walking Buses also help work toward *Making Life Better* priority areas such “Giving Every Child the Best Start, and Equipped Throughout Life,” and “Empowering Healthy Living.”

Likewise, Walking Bus projects can have a positive impact on working toward a whole systems approach to obesity prevention. Children spend a significant amount of time throughout their lives at school, which makes schools a key stakeholder within a whole system approach to obesity prevention. Incorporating schools and school environments into an obesity prevention strategy, offers a chance to reach more children especially in areas facing the most health inequalities. Walking Buses provide schools with a place within the obesity prevention system, by creating an opportunity for schools to incorporate more physical activity and development of healthy habits into their daily curriculum.

## Environmental Significance

These projects also open the door for a wider conversation around the effects our built environment can have on health and wellbeing. As routes are developed and used, discussions can be had around how the local area supports or hinders a healthy, safe and clean walking environment. Which lends itself to create positive changes within other systems that have an impact on obesity prevention and further build upon a whole systems approach. This also supports the delivery of the Belfast Healthy Cities’ Healthy Places, Healthy Children Teaching Resource which allows children to become active citizens. Moreover, schools can also use a Walking Bus project to link in with various areas of the Northern Ireland Primary School Curriculum including “Physical Education,” “Personal Development and Mutual Understanding” and “The World Around Us.” The Belfast Healthy Cities Healthy Transport Teaching Resource can assist schools with linking to the curriculum while planning their Walking Bus as well as educate children on key topic areas such as air pollution and active travel.

Walking Buses also help reduce disease burdens caused by air pollution as well have a positive impact on planetary health. The aim of establishing a Walking Bus is to not only encourage children within a close proximity to walk to school but to target student populations who regularly drive a long distance to school. By providing these families with a drop off location to bring students closer to school to walk, it reduces the number of cars on the roads. In doing so, traffic congestion is reduced, and air pollution is minimised especially around key areas such as in front of school entrances. Air pollution contributes to and exacerbates conditions such as asthma, lung cancer, stroke and heart disease. However, switching main modes of travel to active travel such as walking and cycling can reduce the burden of disease among individuals. For instance, findings from Sustrans Index indicated that in Belfast, 588 serious long term health conditions such as dementia and depression were prevented because of walking. Walking has saved the NHS £7.3 million per year in Belfast and prevented 131 premature deaths each year (Sustrans & Department of Infrastructure, 2024).

## An Appetite for Change

Reducing school traffic through the use of Walking Buses can assist the city with not only cleaning the air for the residents of Belfast but also helping reach climate targets and reduce the city's contribution to climate change.

### WHO Graphic - Benefits of walking and cycling



For example, Sustrans Walking and Cycling Index for Belfast 2023, concluded that walking or wheeling instead of driving has saved 26,000 kg of NOx and 3,400 kg of particulates. This has reduced Belfast carbon footprint by 8,000 tonnes, which is significant given that 17% of

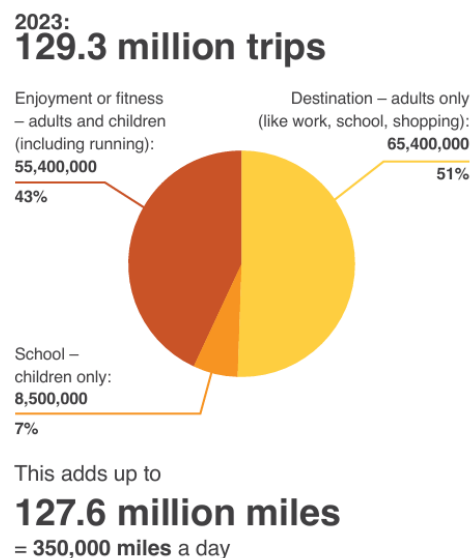
Northern Ireland greenhouse gas emissions were a result of transport (Sustrans & Department of Infrastructure, 2024).

Furthermore, Walking Buses can also assist with reaching climate targets, active travel goals and related budget spending, such as those set out in the *Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022*. Also, *The Resilient Strategy*, Belfast's first climate plan, seeks to reduce Belfast's carbon footprint, help residents to reduce their carbon footprint and promote cycling, walking and public transport. Similarly, *A Bolder Vision for Belfast* themes for change include a "City Centre as an Inclusive Place to Live, Work and Visit" and "Priorities Walking, Cycling and Public Transport." The delivery of Walking Bus projects can support these policies.

Additionally, recent data from Sustran's Walking and Cycling Index found that in 2023, 129.3 million walking and cycling trips were taken by adults and children in Belfast. However, only 7% of these journeys were conducted by children walking to school, despite 97% of households in Belfast being located within an 800m radius to primary schools. In 2023, there were zero schools in Belfast who had a school street scheme (Sustrans & Department of Infrastructure, 2024). Nevertheless, travel surveys conducted by Belfast Health Cities at participating Walking Bus primary schools have found that there is a keen interest not only among schools but as well as parents to use Walking Buses as a main mode of school transportation.

Parents recognise the health and environmental benefits of allowing their children to walk to school and appreciate that Walking Buses allow children to do so without hindering parents' morning routines. Thus, there is not only a need and outlet for change, but support for implementation of active travel projects such as Walking Buses.

Sustrans Walking and Cycling Index 2023



## Belfast Healthy Cities “Healthy Transport”

Once an identified safe route to school and set of volunteers have been obtained, Walking Buses can start at any primary school. Belfast Healthy Cities offers a set of resources to assist schools with establishing and maintaining a Walking Bus. Resources include: the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource and Walking Bus Toolkits.

### What is the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource?

Healthy Transport includes options of travel that support health and wellbeing, by providing opportunities for physical activity and nature connectedness. These travel options support sustainable development and climate change mitigation. By reducing the number of trips taken using cars, individuals can work toward reducing air pollution and promoting healthy lifestyles. The Healthy Transport Teaching Resource includes 5 Units: Air Pollution, History of Transport, Active Travel, School Travel and Road Safety. Each unit includes PowerPoints and corresponding lessons plans to assist key stage 2 teachers with implementing the resource with their class. The Healthy Transport Teaching Resource supports delivery of the Northern Ireland Primary



School curriculum particularly the [World Around Us](#) and [Personal Development and Understanding](#). Lesson plans included activities such as a DIY Pollution Catchers, Classroom Travel Survey, Designing a Walking Bus Route, and a Road Safety Jingle.

The Healthy Transport Teaching Resource allows children to think more in depth and critically about the theme of healthy transport with an emphasis placed on how students travel to school. Students will have an increased understanding of how people travel, and the impact travel choices have on health and the environment. Topics covered include, air pollution, health impacts of air pollution, how transport has changed over time, what is active travel, and road safety reminders. This resource also provides students with an opportunity to be active citizens within their school community by working to assist with starting a Walking Bus.

The Healthy Transport Teaching Resource is important for primary school children because understanding healthier and more sustainable ways to travel at an early age can influence children's behaviour throughout their lives. Through walking and cycling as a main mode of transport children are able to work toward reaching the 60 minutes of moderate exercise recommended by health experts. And play a role in mitigating climate change through using less car journeys and lowering both greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. The overarching goal of this resource is to educate children on the topic of healthy transport to influence lifelong positive behaviour change and habits, that priorities active travel as a main mode of transport. To access and use the Healthy Transport teaching resource visit: [School Resources – Belfast Healthy Cities](#)

## Belfast Healthy Cities Walking Bus Toolkit

The Belfast Healthy Cities Walking Bus Toolkit includes a series of 5 Steps schools can follow to develop and deliver a Walking Bus. Primary schools begin by choosing a school staff member and/or parent/carer to serve as the Walking Bus Coordinator and the main organiser. The Walking Bus Coordinator then assess schools' interest, identifies a safe route to school, recruits all volunteers and promotes the Walking Bus. The toolkit includes all information and optional templates such as a volunteer schedule, student safety pledge and surveys to assist with Walking Bus development and delivery.

## “Healthy Transport” Belfast Primary School Case Studies

### The Process

Belfast Healthy Cities reached out to local Primary Schools with a view of identifying Eight schools to participate in a pilot study. As a result, during the 2024-2025 school year eight schools in Belfast were identified and signed up to work with Belfast Healthy Cities to pilot the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource and Walking Bus Toolkit to aid with the delivery of the schools Walking Bus. Six of the schools completed various elements of the programme and two primary schools fully completed the pilot. The two participating schools who fully completed the programme were St Annes Primary School located in Finaghy, Belfast, with 860 students and the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh located on Ballymurphy Road, Belfast, home to an attendance of 203 students. St Annes Primary School piloted the Healthy Transport Teaching Resources with four P5 classes averaging around 117 students participating. The Bunscoil an

Tsleibhe Dhuibh piloted the resources in one P5 classroom with an average of 25 students participating.

Although eight primary schools initially engaged with the programme, only the two schools that completed all elements of the full programme are included in the evaluation results below. Focusing solely on the two schools that fully implemented the programme (totalling approximately 142 participating children in the pilot) ensures that the evaluation reflects a consistent and complete delivery model. This allows for a more accurate assessment of the programme's effectiveness, reduces variability introduced by partial implementation, and strengthens the validity of any conclusions drawn

### *Assessing Interest*

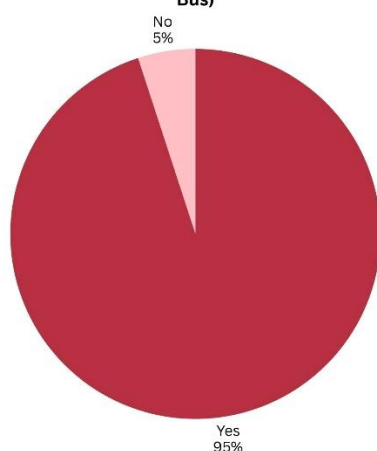
To begin the process of establishing a Walking Bus schools started by considering the interest levels and travel patterns of parents/carers within the schools. A survey was sent out to all parent/carers in the school focusing on questions such as: "How does your child/children travel to school most often?" "What is the reason for not walking to and from school?" and "What would need to change to allow your child/children to walk to and from school." The survey revealed that main reasons in both primary schools for parents not walking their children to school was time and work commitments that do not facilitate a parent being able to walk with their child/children. A Walking Bus would help eliminate this barrier as it would allow parents to drop their children off with other adults and go about their morning, as their children can walk to school using the Walking Bus.

Moreover, questions were also asked in relation to road safety. Results showed that at both primary schools' parents were very dissatisfied with traffic congestion levels and the main road safety issue reported was "too much traffic." Additional road safety concerns included cars traveling too quickly, not enough crossings for children on the route to school and too many cars parked on the pavement. Both schools were able to use this survey to support the need for a Walking Bus and take into consideration parents' concerns when planning their safe Walking Bus route.

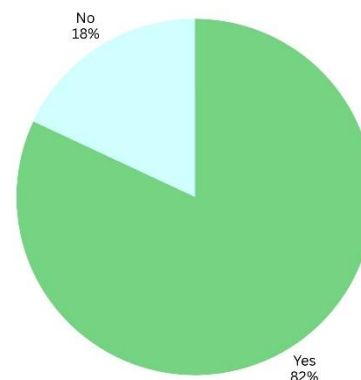
At St Annes Primary School, only 31.45% of those who answered the survey stated they currently walk to school but 94.7% said they would consider allowing their child/children to walk to school with a Walking Bus.

Similar findings were found in the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh with only 27.27% of respondent's child/children walking to school but 81.82% would allow their child/children to use the Walking Bus. Following this survey, both schools were able to use the results to support the need for a Walking Bus and take into consideration parents' concerns when planning their safe Walking Bus route.

Would you consider allowing your child to walk to school with children attending the same school, if supervised by adults? (Walking Bus)



Would you consider allowing your child to walk to school with children attending the same school, if supervised by adults? (Walking Bus)



### Planning Stages

Following the completion of the parent travel survey, the primary schools worked through the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource and Walking Bus Toolkit with their P5 classrooms. As part of the Teaching Resource students completed worksheets which helped assist with data collection focused on showing the impact a school Walking Bus can have on school travel behaviours, traffic congestion, air pollution and physical activity levels. Data was collected prior to the start of the Walking Bus as well as in the weeks following the Walking Buses regular use.

As the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource was being completed, the school Walking Bus Coordinator began to develop the Walking Bus 'starting with working with the students to first identify a safe Walking Bus route and then conduct a risk assessment of the route. The schools recruited volunteers and began promoting the Walking Bus.

### Project Delivery

At the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh the Walking Bus now operates every Friday averaging 25 students. The bus is mainly staffed by a P5 teacher and classroom assistant with help from parents. The school hopes to add more days in the 2025-2026 schools year. In contrast, at St Annes Primary School the Walking Bus runs every day of the week and averages around 20 students per day. The school has chosen to use elements of the Walking Bus Toolkit such as a parent permission form and student sign up to register those who wish to participate. Just one week after starting the Walking Bus the demand to participate was higher than the school's ability to staff the Walking Bus. Children have been placed on a waiting list, showing the impact the project can have on encouraging children to want to walk to school. Also, when the Walking Bus first started it did not operate on a Tuesday however, by the end of the first week more parents had come forward wishing to help staff the Walking Bus on a Tuesday. Thus, showing support from parents is key to Walking Bus delivery and that once started, parent interest to help can increase. The school plans to continue the Walking Bus in the upcoming school year with the hope to add two additional routes by the end of the 2025-2026 school year. St Annes Primary School's Walking Bus is staffed entirely by parent volunteers.

## The Data

### Step 1: Classroom Survey

Using the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource, the first step in data collection was for the P5 classes to complete a classroom survey to identify if children travelled to school by: Car, Bus, Carpooling or Walking. At the Bunscoil An Tsleibhe Dhuibh the Walking Bus operates every Friday, as depicted in the infographics below, prior to the start of the Walking bus 5 out of 25 students in the P5 class walked to school on Fridays. However, after the Walking Bus started this increased to 8 students in the class. And at St Annes Primary School the Walking Bus runs every day of the week. As illustrated in the infographics below, prior to the start of the Walking Bus 50.8% of P5 students surveyed used walking as their mode of travel to school at least one day a week. Following the delivery of the Walking Bus this number increased to 57.8% of P5 students surveyed using walking as their mode of travel to school at least once a week. Therefore, the classroom survey showed potential correlation between the introduction of a Walking Bus and an increase in the number of students choosing to use walking as their mode of travel to school at both primary schools.



Prior to the start of the Walking Bus  
5 out of 25 students in the P5 class  
walked to school on Fridays



After the start of the Walking Bus 8  
out of 25 students in the P5 class  
walked to school on Fridays

Post Walking Bus



50.8%

Of the P5 students surveyed used walking as their  
mode of travel to school at least one day a week



57.8%

Of P5 students surveyed used walking as their mode  
of travel to school at least one day a week

### Step 2: Traffic Counts

Next, the schools completed a traffic count at the front entrance of the school each morning during school drop off time, over the course of one week. This involved a small group of the children from the P5 class standing at the front entrance of the school tallying the number of cars, buses, cyclists and walkers they saw at the front of the school during school drop off time. At the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh prior to the start of the Walking Bus the weekly average number of people recorded walking was 45 and weekly average number of cars was 39. However, after the Walking Bus started the weekly average increased to 3 additional people recorded walking and 1 less car. However, at St Annes Primary School the weekly average number of people recorded walking was 265 and weekly average number of cars was 485, prior

to the start of the Walking Bus. After the Walking Bus began there was a decrease in the average number of people seen walking (256) however there was also a decrease in the average number of people seen driving (467).

While the data is limited in that we cannot confirm causation, this evidence does suggest correlation with the introduction of a Walking Bus positively influencing school travel behaviours with a decrease in the number of cars seen at the front of the school, at both primary schools. And an increase in the average number people choosing to walk to school, as seen at the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh. Possible reasons for the decrease in the number of people seen walking at St Annes Primary School could be attributed to student absences, different class events and weather. If this trend at the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh continues and St Annes improves, data suggest over time there could be potential to see a significant reduction in the number of cars seen at the school entrance and thus less traffic congestion as more people being to choose use walking as their mode of travel to school.

In conjunction with traffic counts, a school staff member also used as a Atmotube Pro Air Quality Monitors at the front entrance of the school during school drop off times. These monitors were loaned to the primary schools by Belfast City Council. The monitors clip onto the person and air quality is measured and reported using a phone app. Unfortunately, due to human error and difficulty connecting the devices with the app, no data was collected. However, the learnings and suggestions would be for air quality monitoring to take place at participating schools in the near future, with the use of air quality monitors that can be fixed to a structure outside of the schools such as a lamp post and tracked using data mapping. We would also suggest this data be collected over an extended period for more consistent results. Also, if a citizen science approach is piloted again we recommend using additional capacity building and training to ensure more consistent and visible data collection and less human error when using these types of devices.

### *Step 3 : Tracking steps*

The final step in data collection by each participating P5 class was to record students steps each morning and write the number on a worksheet upon the student's arrival to school. Pedometers donated by Queens University Belfast were provided to each student in the classes. Data from the Bunscoil an Tsleibhe Dhuibh was inconclusive due to issues with school closures, student absences and broken pedometers. However, the evidence collected by a small sample of five students did show that students who walked to school took more steps than those who travelled by car, with similar findings found across the four P5 classes at St Annes Primary School. Moreover, at St Annes the weekly average number of steps recorded each morning for a P5 student significantly increased after the start of the Walking Bus. Furthermore as shown in the infographics below, at St Annes prior to the start of the Walking Bus the weekly average for number of steps for a P5 student each morning was 1,055 steps. However, after the implementation of the Walking Bus this number increased significantly to 8,557 steps on average each morning.



**Pre Walking Bus**  
Weekly average for number of steps for a P5 student  
each morning



**Post Walking Bus**  
Weekly average for number of steps for a P5 student  
each morning



Evidence from this final step shows that's collecting step tracker data can help provide data to support the use of Walking Buses as an intervention to increase physical activity levels among primary school children.

### *Final Conclusions*

Collectively, the results of all Walking Bus data collection helps support a case for evidence for the use of Walking Bus at primary schools as a way to influence travel behaviour and encourage more families to choose to walk to school. Results also support that in choosing to walk children are able to increase their steps through more physical activity each morning. The results also suggest with long term use and high participation there is potential for Walking Buses to reduce the number of cars traveling to school, which in turn could lower traffic congestions, particularly around school entrances, which may also improve air quality. Therefore, Walking Buses are key initiatives needed to improve health of both children and the environment. The Healthy Transport Teaching Resource was also well received by both school staff and children, who enjoyed engaging with the activities and plan to use the lessons again with new class years. The teachers also reported easy or use and links with the Northern Ireland Primary School Curriculum.

### **Key Lessons Learned:**

- Capacity in schools to delivery Walking Buses is sometimes limited due to competing priorities
- Long term sustainability of Walking Buses requires recruiting and maintaining staff or parent volunteers
- Positive feedback from teachers indicates the use of the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource helped educate students on key topics, and increased uptake of the Walking Bus by both children and parents
- Increased uptake of the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource requires linking with schools prior to the development of their school development plan and yearly curriculum planning
- Citizen science approaches to data collection requires training and more robust measures to ensure viability of data collection
- Data collection should be done for an extend period of time pre and post Walking Bus

## What's next?

Primary Schools across Northern Ireland can now access the Belfast Healthy Cities Healthy Transport Teaching Resource, Safer Routes, Healthy Places and Walking Bus Toolkit at [School Resources – Belfast Healthy Cities](#). We hope to see more Walking Buses running across Belfast and all of Northern Ireland. Walking Buses can now also fit into the Schools Development Plan as the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource links back to the Northern Ireland Primary School curriculum, as well as can assist primary schools with obtaining a Green Flag Award. As a result, we hope these resources will make it easier for schools to begin a Walking Bus project and engage students with understanding the benefits of choosing a “Healthy Transport” option. A small step toward making walking the easier choice and working toward promoting and protecting the health of people and the planet.

We also encourage schools to join the Sustrans Active School Travel programme as another way to promote active travel. We hope the Belfast Healthy Cities Healthy Transport Teaching Resource and Walking Bus Toolkit can assist schools with meeting the requirements of the Active School Travel Programme.

Also, in partnership with Belfast Healthy Cities, the Belfast City Council created an additional resource called the “Safe Routes to School Toolkit” which can support the Belfast Healthy Cities materials and be used by schools to engage children with understanding how to create a safe route to school and bring children into the discuss of how their local area supports or hinders active travel.

### **Safe Routes, Healthy Places**

Safe Routes, Healthy Places Belfast' is a resource co-designed by Belfast City Council, Belfast Healthy Cities, Design Clips, and Mapping for Change, aimed at helping schools create cleaner, greener, and healthier neighbourhoods through active travel. This resource invites children to actively explore and reflect on their routes to school, promoting the uptake of active travel and encouraging them to consider how climate, urban design, and placemaking can shape healthier communities.

This resource is aligned to our Healthy Transport Teaching Resource and Walking Bus Toolkit. Mapped to the NI curriculum, the Healthy Transport Teaching Resource helps children understand the broader benefits of active travel from personal health to environmental impact. While our Walking Bus Toolkit turns awareness into action, supporting more children to walk or wheel to school together.

To deepen engagement, Design Clips created child-friendly materials that encourage pupils to explore their routes to school through the lens of climate and urban design, while Mapping for Change provided digital mapping tools to help visualise and document these journeys.

All together, these resources form a structured pathway, from learning and exploration to action empowering schools to co-create safer routes and healthier places with their pupils

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