

Making transport sustainable

A guide for teachers and youth leaders

Timings
One hour +

Settings
Schools
and youth
groups

Age
Approx. 7 to
11 years*

**Curriculum
links**
Citizenship,
English and
Geography

A comprehensive resource to help children explore issues around transport and the need for sustainable options. Includes an empowering activity enabling children to identify sustainable transport solutions and share them with decision makers.

Introduction

Our transport system isn't working as it should. Many people lack access to regular public transport or decent cycle paths, particularly outside of our largest towns and cities. Meanwhile, left with no other option, more people are getting in their cars, making our roads more congested.

This is a hazard to our health and our environment. Road transport contributes a third of all the UK's carbon emissions and is a major source of poor air quality. This means transport is contributing to climate change and increasing health problems, such as asthma.

Lack of access to transport, health risks and environmental hazards affect everyone. But young people are particularly impacted. Poor transport links leave young people isolated. Road traffic is a major barrier for children and young people to feel safe whilst travelling alone. Children are most vulnerable to poor air quality – from asthma to effects on mental and cognitive health. And young people will see more of the effects of climate change over their lifetime.

But it doesn't have to be this way! Improving public transport and active travel (walking and cycling) can reduce the environmental and health impacts whilst making transport available to everyone.

As children are significantly impacted, we want to make sure their voices are heard. They have a right to understand the problem, explore the solutions and take action to make their own and their communities' transport options more sustainable. This resource empowers them to take action by influencing decision makers with solutions they have found.

***Please adapt these activities to meet the needs of the children you work with.**

What you'll need

- ▶ This guide
- ▶ **Sustainable transport presentation 7 to 11 years**
- ▶ Sustainable transport: planning your journey worksheet on page 8
- ▶ My incredible sustainable journey template on page 9
- ▶ Paper and coloured pens or pencils
- ▶ Map of the local area (hand drawn or printed copy)

Learning outcomes

Children will:

- ▶ Understand the impacts of transport on people and the environment
- ▶ Identify ways to travel more sustainably
- ▶ create a plan to encourage people to use sustainable transport

Next steps

Greenpeace would love to hear about your activities. Get in touch and tell us what you've been doing by emailing:
getactive.uk@greenpeace.org

You could also book a Greenpeace Speaker to talk to your school or youth group (virtually or in person) here:
www.act.gp/speakers



Check out more educational resources:
www.act.gp/resources

What to do

ENGAGE: IGNITE INTEREST IN THE ISSUE

You'll need: sustainable transport presentation

Based on these images, what do you think today's lesson might be about? Share your ideas!



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1. What's today's lesson about?

Display the photos. Children infer what the session may be about today. Share ideas.

What are we going to learn?

You will...

- 1 **Understand** the impacts of transport on people and the environment
- 2 **Identify** ways to travel more sustainably
- 3 **Create** a plan to encourage people to use sustainable transport




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2. What are we going to learn?

Introduce the learning objectives.

Let's begin by thinking about transport...

How many different types of transport can you think of?



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3. Let's begin by thinking about transport

Ask children the question: how many different types of transport can you think of? Share ideas.

Did you get any of these?



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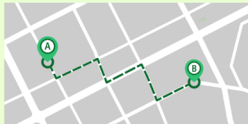
4. Did you get any of these?

Display the different transport types. Did any surprise you? Are there any you are unsure about?

What is transport?

There are many different types of transport but what is transport?

Transport is how we move people or things from one place to another.



Where do you travel to? What transport do you use?

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5. What is transport?

Ask children what is transport? Share ideas. Then display the definition.

Discuss the children's own experience of transport. Where do you travel to? What transport do you use? You could go back to slide 4 to help them think about different transport options.

EXPLORE: DELVE INTO THE ISSUE

You'll need: sustainable transport presentation

What is a transport system?

In the UK we have a **transport system**. A transport system is all the different ways people can travel from one place to another.

For example, I might want to go to the local supermarket. The choices I have are to **take a bus, walk, use my bike or drive**.



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6. What is a transport system?

Use the slide to explain what a transport system is.

UK transport system facts

Let's find out about the UK's transport system. **Stand up** if you think a statement is **true** or **remain seated** if you think it is **false**.

- 1 Britain has enough roads that they could wrap around Earth almost 6 times.
False - There are enough miles of roads to wrap around the Earth almost 10 times.
- 2 Around 4 in 10 people living in Britain feel it is too dangerous for them to cycle on the roads.
False - Around 6 in 10 people living in Britain think it is too dangerous for them to cycle.
- 3 Many roads in the countryside don't have footpaths.
True - This means people are forced to walk on the road which isn't safe.
- 4 Everyone in the UK can use buses easily.
False - More than 1 million people in the UK live at least one mile from a regular bus service.

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7 & 8. UK transport system facts

Display the statements. Children stand if true, stay seated if false. Ask children to explain their thoughts and discuss the answers. Are they surprised or shocked by anything?

What do the facts tell us?

Many people find it difficult to travel by cycling, walking or bus. They need help to travel this way.

Left with no other option, **more people are getting in cars**.

There are more and more cars on the roads.

Cars can have negative impacts on people and our planet.



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9. What do the facts tell us?

Ask children the question: what do the facts tell us? Discuss ideas. Display the summary information.

What are the effects of cars on the environment?



10. What are the effects of cars on the environment?

Use the slide to explain the reason why many cars contribute to climate change. If children are familiar with the concept of climate change you could jumble the cards. Then ask the children to sort them into the correct order.

Optional extension: You could give children the [Climate Emergency information sheet](#). Then children can independently learn about the effects of cars on the environment.

People and transport

Let's think about some other effects transport choices have by meeting three people.

Sam's journey to school isn't safe. There are places without pavements on very busy roads. They are driven to school each day by their family.

Nial wants to join a local sports team on a Saturday but there are no buses near his house and he doesn't feel safe cycling. Nial's family doesn't own a car so they can't drive him there.

Hansa has moved house. She now lives on a busy road. Cars are often stopped waiting at the traffic lights. Hansa has asthma. Since moving house Hansa's asthma has got worse.

11. People and transport

Explain we will think about how our transport choices may affect people. Introduce the three people and read their stories aloud.

How might current transport be affecting Sam, Nial and Hansa?



Walking to school would be good exercise. Sam is missing out on this.

Sam feels lonely as they cannot socialise with their friends.

Walking could help Sam concentrate better at school.



Nial might feel bored.

Nial feels lonely because he can't join a club.

Nial might find it hard to do other activities - like seeing friends or visiting the doctors.



Hansa's asthma may stop her doing activities she enjoys.

Hansa feels unwell frequently.

12. How might current transport be affecting Sam, Nial and Hansa?

Ask children the question: how might current transport options be affecting Sam, Nial and Hansa? Discuss as pairs, small groups or a whole group. Share ideas and write them down. Reveal some of the effects. Children may have thought of more effects.

Optional extension: Are there other ways you think people might be affected by the current transport system? Children could explore how our transport system affects people outside the UK due to the impacts of climate change.

What's the solution?

We need **fewer cars on the roads**.

We need to make it **easier** and **safer** for people to use sustainable transport.

Sustainable transport means ways of travelling which are safe and have a **low impact on the environment**.

Can you name any types of sustainable transport?



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13. What's the solution?

Ask children the question: what's the solution? Use the slide to show we need more sustainable transport choices to help tackle the problems caused by car dependence. Explain the meaning of sustainable transport. Ask children if they can name any forms of sustainable transport. Prompt children to think about what makes these transport options sustainable.

Sustainable transport



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14. Sustainable transport

Use this slide to show some examples of sustainable transport.

Positive solutions worldwide

Many places around the world are already making transport more sustainable.



The Netherlands

Lots of people cycle because the government has made it easy and safe.



Paris

A busy road is now a walking and cycling route with play equipment and green spaces all the way along.

15. Positive solutions worldwide

Use this slide to show how sustainable transport schemes are already happening around the world.

Positive solutions in the UK

Transport is being made more sustainable in the UK too.



Scottish borders

Five years ago, the Borders Railway line from Edinburgh to Tweedbank was reopened after 40 years.

Many small towns and villages, which had been reliant on cars, now had a train service.

In just three years after it's reopening, more than 4 million journeys were made.

People have been given a choice and are choosing sustainable transport!

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16 & 17. Positive solutions in the UK

Use these slides to show some UK schemes that are making places less car dependent.

The benefits of sustainable transport

Read the statements giving some of the reasons why sustainable travel options are better for both people and our planet.

- Are there any more reasons?
- In your opinion, which do you think are most important?

Better air quality reduces health problems, like asthma, for people.

Sustainable transport reduces greenhouse gas emissions. This reduces the effects of climate change.

People can take part in activities, like visiting friends, using sustainable transport.

Active travel, like walking and cycling, are good ways to be fit and healthy.

Less cars on the roads make walking and cycling safer.

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18. The benefits of sustainable transport


Read the statements on the slide. In pairs or groups ask children to discuss the questions. They may wish to rank them as a group in order of importance. Share ideas as a whole class or group.

EMPOWER: GIVE CHILDREN THE CONFIDENCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE


You'll need: sustainable transport presentation, sustainable transport: planning your journey worksheet, my incredible sustainable journey template, a map of the local area (optional)

How can you help?

Make **personal changes** in your everyday life.
More....



Help others to see the benefits of sustainable transport, like your friends, families, school community and local councillors.



19. How can you help?

Introduce children to two of the different ways they can help.

- ▶ Make personal changes in our everyday lives
- ▶ Help others to see the benefits of sustainable transport

Explain we can all make personal changes, like walking, cycling and using public transport more. These changes benefit our own and the planet's health. But we can take this even further by encouraging other people to use sustainable transport too! Today, we are going to do both!

Make your travel greener and encourage others to do the same

You will...

1. **Identify a journey** you make regularly
2. **Map the route** using sustainable transport
3. **Encourage more people** to use sustainable transport by sharing your route



Let's begin by thinking of a journey you make often. Share ideas.








20. Make your travel greener and encourage others to do the same

Inform children of their task today. Begin the task by asking the children to think of a journey they make often. You may wish to give examples like going to school, visiting a friend's house or going to the local shops. Discuss their ideas. You might want children to think of a journey that they all make as a group. An example might be a weekly trip to the park or to the swimming pool.

If children already use sustainable transport they can map that route and use it to encourage people. If children don't currently use sustainable transport they can look at ways to make their travel sustainable.

Your journey

What will you need so you can use sustainable transport on your journey?

 Pavements	 Road crossings	 Cycle lanes	 A trusted adult
 Bike or scooter storage	 Bus stops		

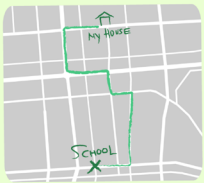
21. Your journey


Pose the question: what will you need so you can use sustainable transport on your journey? Discuss as a group. Then share the images on the slide and 'sustainable transport: planning your journey' worksheet. It is important to always consider road safety when talking about mapping a journey.

Optional extension: Discuss each feature in more detail. Has anyone seen them before? Are some pavements better than others? etc.

Mapping your journey

Let's draw a route using **sustainable transport**!





22. Mapping your journey

Model mapping a journey. You may wish to use a satellite image, road map or encourage the children to draw their own maps of the area. If children are finding it difficult to use sustainable transport they can map what they would like their route to be.

Optional extension: Children could travel their route before mapping it. This could be done as a whole group activity within a session or set as homework.

ACT: TAKE ACTION ON THE ISSUE

You'll need: sustainable transport presentation, my incredible sustainable journey template, completed map

Encourage more people

Why is sustainable transport good for both **people and the planet**?

Sustainable transport is great because...

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23. Encourage more people

Explain to the children they will use their route to encourage more people to use sustainable transport. As well as showing people the route it is important to tell them why sustainable transport is good. By telling people the benefits to sustainable transport they are more likely to use it.

Discuss some of the benefits to sustainable transport (go back to slide 18 if helpful). Then model writing or drawing your reasons in the box on the slide.

Remind children of the features of writing persuasively.

Share your journey

Who would you like to share your journey with?

Friends Class Headteacher
Family Club MP or local councillor

What will you do to encourage them?

Ask your parents or carers to travel your journey with you and tell them all about why sustainable transport is good for people and planet.

With friends, your class or group see if you can join your routes together to make a sustainable transport network! Share this with more people.

Send your routes to an MP or local councillor and tell them why you think sustainable transport is good for people and planet.

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24. Share your journey

Discuss with the children who they would like to encourage to use sustainable transport. For example, they might want to encourage a family member or their class.

Pose the question: how will you encourage them? Discuss as a group. There are ideas on the slide for inspiration. Once children have decided who they'll encourage and how they'll do it give them the time and resources to carry out their plans. This will help them see they have the power to make positive changes.

If a child found it challenging to map a route using sustainable transport you could help them to contact a local political decision maker. Members of Parliament and local elected representatives have the power to make walking, cycling and public transport easier and safer across the UK.

Sending it to the local decision maker

To find out who your MP is type your postcode into:
www.theyworkforyou.com

To find out who your local councillor is type your postcode into
www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors

Share your actions with Greenpeace!

At Greenpeace we love to hear about what you are doing to make transport safer, greener and fairer for everyone.

Share your letters, maps and posters with us by asking an adult to send them to getactive.uk@greenpeace.org

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25. Share your actions with Greenpeace!

Greenpeace would love to hear from you about the actions children take after using this resource. Get in touch and tell us what you've been doing by emailing: getactive.uk@greenpeace.org



Questions that may arise

Here are two questions that may arise during the session.

1. Children may ask why buses and trains are more sustainable than cars.

The answer: Trains and buses are more sustainable because they usually use less fuel to carry many more passengers which makes them more efficient.

2. Children may ask why having electric cars on the roads doesn't solve the problem.

The answer: Electric cars do have a lower environmental impact compared to cars running on fossil fuels. However, they are still not as efficient as walking and cycling due to sourcing of materials. And electric buses are more efficient than cars. Any form of traffic still makes roads less safe for walking and cycling.



Sustainable transport: planning your journey



Cycle lanes

Look for cycle lanes. These will usually be marked with a bike symbol.



Places to cross the road safely

Look for pedestrian crossings. For example a zebra crossing, a pelican crossing or a school crossing.



Pavements

Look for a pavement for the whole of your journey. It should be easy to walk along.



Bike or scooter storage

Look for a safe place to leave your bike or scooter. This could be a bike rack or a room in a school building.



Bus stops

Look for bus stops. Check the time the buses come.



Trusted adult

Make the journey with an adult you trust.

Remember to always follow road safety when travelling

My incredible sustainable journey

Map of my journey

Travel this journey by...

Sustainable transport is great because...

