



Doncaster
Council

Get Doncaster Walking Strategy



GET
DONCASTER
WALKING

Foreword

It is great to see Doncaster's first Walking Strategy as a way to showcase joint working. It shows our commitment to build on Doncaster's strengths. We have a mix of town and countryside which are mainly flat and easily accessible, with many cultural and heritage places to explore; perfect for walking.

Doncaster wants its residents to be happy and healthy and live in a more desirable Borough. We know from talking to people that they want to see fewer cars and reap the benefit of lower carbon emissions, better air quality, safer roads and less noise. A town where people drive less and walk more is a healthier, more pleasant town which creates an improved environment for residents, businesses and visitors.

We have to be honest, there are lots of challenges; people's lives are busy, car use makes some of us feel wary of walking and some areas feel unsafe at times. This contributes to our low physical activity levels, people feeling isolated and communities being dominated by traffic.

This document describes how we want to work together to make Doncaster a walking-friendly environment.

Firstly, we want to encourage people to consider walking as part of everyday life. Whether this is for enjoyment by exploring the great places we are lucky to have in Doncaster or for travel as a positive alternative to using a car, maybe as part of using Doncaster's improving public transport system. We would like Doncaster residents to recognise the personal benefits of walking to their own health and wellbeing. People who walk regularly live longer and have healthier and happier lives.

Secondly, we want people to work together to make walking in Doncaster easier, safer and more enjoyable. Where we live and the quality of that place is important when people make decisions on how they travel to places. Working together to make Doncaster a safer, cleaner and easier place to walk will help to encourage people to walk more often.

I would like to thank all the stakeholders who have contributed to developing this Walking Strategy for Doncaster. We welcome any additional thoughts or ideas that you may have.

Cllr Nigel Ball
Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture

"Doncaster is a place where walking is an integral part of everyday life"

- More Doncaster people walking for leisure, travel and wellbeing
- Make walking in Doncaster easier, safer and more enjoyable for everyone

Introduction

The Get Doncaster Walking Strategy outlines the action needed for Doncaster to be a town that's designed for people to walk throughout their day to day lives.

Many people do not live in places where they can walk to work or take the stairs. Children can't always walk to school safely. Roads are designed for cars, instead of the people who travel in them. Places pay a high price – financially and in the health and well-being of residents. The provision of a safe and pleasant walking environment has a significant role to play in supporting quality of life, improving health and encouraging active travel. Providing environments that makes walking an easy choice of transport has a wide number of benefits. Such environments improve the ability of local communities (particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable groups) to access employment opportunities and important services including education, healthcare and greenspaces.

Benefits to Doncaster Residents

- **Regular walking can help to reduce risk of heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure as well as improving flexibility and strength of joints, muscles and bones.**
- **Road transport is the main cause of poor air quality in Doncaster. There significant environmental benefits associated with increased levels of walking as an alternative to car travel**
- **Investing in walking environments can support local economies by increasing footfall, improving accessibility and attracting new business. Redeveloping business areas to promote mixed use and walkability increased employment by 300 percent (Living Streets, 2013).**
- **Improving the walkability of a community facilitates social interaction and enables people to develop new friendships, share knowledge and information about local events and activities, and make contributions to the local community**

Doncaster Data

- Approximately 12,000 Doncaster residents who live within less than 20 minutes walk to work but currently do not do so.
- Over 68% of people who walk to work are women.
- 40% of those who walk to work are below the age of 25.
- 22% of residents walking to work have no qualifications, which suggest income may also be an influencing factor in mode choice.
- The proportion of adults walking for leisure purposes in Doncaster is lower than national and regional averages

Consultation

Over 300 residents and stakeholders were engaged using a number of methods to gain an understanding of current walking activities and practices, explore public perceptions of walking in Doncaster, recognise joint priorities and identify potential barriers and facilitators.



The main themes from the consultation were:-

Communication and Marketing

- Respondents felt they knew very little or did not know enough about walking or walking opportunities in Doncaster.
- Respondents felt information could be more user-friendly and available in more formats.

Enforcement

- Many respondents raised issues with enforcement against dog fouling and parking cars on footpaths being potential facilitators of people walking more, along with emptying litter bins and reducing litter.

Safety

- Safety and the perception of poor safety were highlighted as key barriers to walking in some places and settings.

Infrastructure

- Intermittent pavement, uneven surfaces and some paths being in poor condition were regular occurrences in consultation feedback.

Behaviour Change

- Participant's responses indicated that there are many attitudinal and behavioural barriers to walking in Doncaster, including perceived lack of time, lack of motivation and laziness along with frequent bad weather.

'Get Doncaster Walking' Offer

- Consultation revealed the demand for targeted promotion and activities, as well as more variety of walk times and better communication

Our Ambitions

Using national and local evidence including consultation with residents and stakeholders a working group across the sector have developed the following ambitions for Doncaster.

Ambition 1:

To improve the quality of where people walk

1. Carry out Community Street Audits to assess key walking routes

To help design communities for people, we will work with local stakeholders to carry out Community Street Audits to identify key walking route networks within local communities, determine challenges and barriers, and identify areas for future improvement.

2. New development design maximises opportunities for walking

Through the planning process, ensure the needs of pedestrians are provided for in relation to new developments, public realm improvements and in the design of highways and traffic management schemes, with provision of improved and/or new infrastructure where necessary.

3. Ensure new pedestrian infrastructure is high quality, legible and integrated into the wider network and considers inclusivity and pedestrian safety

Ensure all new routes and footways are designed in line with planning policy and relevant supplementary planning documents (SPD) including Doncaster Council Development Guidance and Requirements SPD and South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide SPD.

4. Support targeted improvement and repair works to footways, focusing on key priority areas

Using planned highway and footway maintenance programmes and public realm enhancement schemes, carry out targeted improvement and repair works to footways, focusing on key priority areas based on outcomes of community street audits and findings of the Public Rights of Ways Improvement Plan. Work with partners and stakeholders to ensure consideration of ease of use and inclusivity of footways. This includes looking at the use of street furniture to improve walking routes and support fluid movement and access.

5. Aspire to have clean attractive and accessible streets that people want to use.

Work with partners to explore enforcement solutions and information campaign opportunities to reduce instances of anti-social practices on public footways, such as dog fouling, littering, fly tipping, obstructions and pavement parking especially for the school journey.

6. Continue to deliver the Doncaster Air Quality Action Plan

Work with partners to improve air quality in the Borough, with a focus on key hotspots and affected pedestrian routes.

Ambition 2:

People feel safer walking

1. Continue to review pedestrian accident data to identify hotspots

Work with South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership to review pedestrian accident data, identify potential accident hotspots and explore measures to improve safety for pedestrians in these areas.

2. Review how we design and deliver places where people feel safe to walk.

Work with planning and community safety colleagues to use design principles to reduce the fear of crime to encourage more journeys on foot including the role of street lighting and improving natural surveillance.

3. Promote walking safety on recreational routes

Publish information and advice for recreational walkers through Doncaster Council communication channels, including information on route suitability and advice on walking safety.

4. Ensure all primary school aged children are offered road safety training

Work with South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership to ensure Road Safety Training is offered to all primary schools in the Borough.

5. Investigate opportunities to promote road safety in secondary schools and colleges

Work with South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership to explore how road safety training and promotional opportunities could be delivered through existing engagement and training opportunities.

6. Explore opportunities to promote and extend Independent Travel Training scheme

Investigate opportunities to enhance Independent Travel Training scheme supporting young people with a disability/learning difficulty to develop the skills needed to make the journey between home and school or college independently either on foot, bus or train.

Ambition 3:

Walking is an enjoyable way to discover Doncaster

1. Develop and enhance recreational walking opportunities in Borough

In line with the Doncaster Rights of Way Improvement Plan, explore opportunities to develop and improve recreational walking routes and the Rights of Way network by improving existing routes and creating new routes where appropriate and where the opportunities arise.

2. Explore opportunities to increase access to the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT)

Work with partners to investigate and pursue opportunities to develop new links to the TPT in Doncaster and increase accessibility. This includes opportunities to link Thorne to the TPT.

3. Ensure appropriate signage and wayfinding along key walking routes

Review signage provision along and to key walking routes in Borough such as the Trans Pennine Trail.

4. Develop and promote walking routes related to tourist attractions

Work with partners to develop and promote series of walking routes related to key sites and tourist attractions in the Borough including routes to and from the "Y".

5. Increase promotion of recreational walking opportunities, utilising a variety of communication methods

Ensure a range of market and promotional methods are used to advertise walking opportunities, including digital methods as well as physical information such as leaflets. Also ensure information is provided in tourist information points and community facilities across the Borough.

6. Support and enhance ongoing schemes and campaigns promoting walking for health purposes

Explore opportunities to further Walking for Health schemes to increase their reach to wider audiences, such as the Move More Minutes campaign and the Health Walks programme.

Ambition 4:

Make walking the first choice for short journeys

1. Ensure walking as a means of travel to work is given appropriate consideration in travel plans

Work with developers and businesses through the planning process to ensure walking as a means of traveling to work is adequately considered through travel plans and that sufficient provision and support is provided to ensure increases in modal split.

2. Support the use of Health Impact Assessments (HIA) for new developments

Work with developers to support the effective use of HIA during the planning process of pedestrian routes to amenities and links to the wider area.

3. Review signage around transport interchanges, town centres and key community facilities

Ensure adequate wayfinding signage aimed at pedestrians to promote walking as a form of active travel.

4. Deliver wider promotion of walking as means of active travel

Develop current marketing and information campaign to actively target a wider audience, using a variety of online and physical promotion methods, to promote opportunities and benefits of walking.

5. Support and enhance work of Active Travel Officers in school

Work with school Active Travel Officers to ensure the scheme engages widely across the Borough, and look to increase the proportion of walking related activities delivered in schools.

6. Explore opportunities for new schemes to increase walking as part of journeys

Investigate and pursue opportunities to promote walking as part of journeys, such as a Park and Stride scheme for commuting, leisure trips or walking buses for school travel.

Delivery & Review

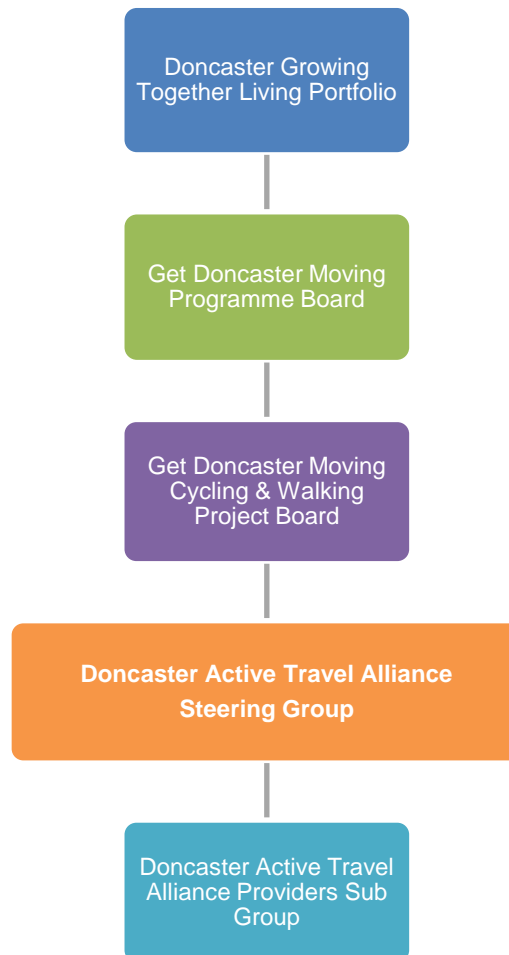
The Doncaster Active Travel Alliance (DATA) Steering Group will be principally responsible for the implementation, the governance and monitoring of the recommendations of the strategy.

DATA will be responsible for exploring the best mechanisms for delivering the recommendations of this strategy, and will develop a detailed action plan setting out priorities, work packages and timescales for delivery.

Monitoring will be ongoing, assessing both the progress of tasks allocated through the action plan alongside the impact of the recommendations on walking activities and public perceptions. It is intended that targets and monitoring timeframes will initially be set for a three year period to 2020 in line with the Get Doncaster Moving strategy.

The figure below sets out the reporting structure for the Get Doncaster Walking Strategy:

Governance & Reporting



Measuring Impact

These are the initial recommended measures for ongoing monitoring. However, it should be noted these are intended as a baseline for monitoring activity: Detailed monitoring plans will be developed in tandem with the walking strategy action plan.

Pedestrian safety		
Measure	Baseline	Suggested Target
Pedestrian all injuries (killed, serious and slight)	147 (2010-2014 average)	4% year on year reduction target

Walking for travel		
Measure	Baseline	Suggested Target
Pedestrians numbers (cordon counts)	19867 recorded in 2017 (cordon count)	7.5% increase

Walking for leisure		
Measure	Baseline	Suggested Target
Get Doncaster Walking festival attendance	1123 attendances in 2017	25% increase in Get Doncaster Walking festival attendance
Walk leaders training	438 trained since 2010	60 x new walking volunteers trained
Daily Mile Scheme	11 school in 2017	110 x primary schools doing the Daily Mile
Active Travel in Schools	61.1% of pupils travelling to school actively at schools engaged in programme	5% increase of pupils travelling to school actively

This strategy and the subsequent action plan are not intended to be static documents. Annual reviews of walking activity levels will be carried out alongside yearly walking consultations to assess changes in the numbers of people walking and in perceptions of walking. The action plan will be subject to ongoing review and will be designed to be a reactive and dynamic living document.

The DATA steering group will be responsible for the oversight of this process and orchestrate strategic reviews of this walking strategy as required to ensure the approach adopted optimises opportunities and develops walking provision that meets the needs of all users.