

Foreword

Darlington is a compact town with an existing pattern of sustainable travel behaviour, a suite of demand management measures and increasing traffic congestion. It has good accessibility and we seek to improve this by all modes, with a focus on sustainable means of travel, in particular walking and cycling.

The top priority in the Community Strategy for Darlington, agreed by all partners, is to enhance the economy. Darlington's Economic Regeneration Strategy relies on two special characteristics working in conjunction with each other; Darlington's quality of life and its accessibility. Darlington's Transport Strategy, aimed at improving accessibility in a sustainable way, is therefore a key factor in the shared, longer term vision for the Borough.

This Plan seeks to deliver Darlington's Transport Strategy, which is based on the Shared Priorities agreed between national and local government and to enable other initiatives being delivered by Government and the Council. Delivery of this plan will be based around the reasons for travel, with the emphasis being on the overall outcome of actions undertaken. The Council has a long history of working in partnership and strong partnership working across all sectors will deliver transport outcomes in Darlington. Such partnership working includes that with the Department for Transport in providing smart travel choices through the Sustainable Travel Demonstration Town initiative.

The Plan focuses in on the issues that local people have told us are of greatest importance:

- improving peoples' accessibility, especially for those with a mobility or sensory impairment, and for those who are socially excluded,
- tackling traffic congestion,
- making the transport network safe and secure for all; and
- helping people make the best travel choices.

I commend it to the people of Darlington and our partners as a plan, based on what you have told us, which will make a substantial step forward towards the transport system Darlington needs.

Councillor N. Wallis, Cabinet Member with Highways & Transport Portfolio.