

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Schools Go Smarter newsletter, the place to find out about sustainable travel initiatives in Northumberland.

For more information about anything you see here please email

tracy.aitken@northumberland.gov.uk

Love Northumberland Awards School Sustainable Travel Award

We've just got back from the annual Love Northumberland Awards and what a fabulous, inspiring afternoon it was. This year we had a difficult time choosing an outright winner and our shortlisted schools and their projects were.

Ellington Primary School's Walking Bus and Stannington First School's Bike and Scooter Breaktimes

We felt that both projects were equally deserving of the award as they had each demonstrated how they embed active travel into school life in new and exciting ways. This year we decided to have 2 winning schools, well done Ellington and Stannington.

The schools were presented with their award and a £250 prize by the Duchess of Northumberland and enjoyed afternoon tea and access to Alnwick Gardens. The Love Northumberland Awards take place every year, so why not start thinking about which of your projects you could enter next year that show off your environmental credentials!

Coming soon case studies of our winning
projects on the
[Schools Go Smarter Padlet](#).



Walk to School Week round-up

We had a fantastic Intergalactic Walk to School Week in May with almost 30 schools taking part in the annual week celebrating the journey to school. There were assemblies, walking buses, scavenger hunts, mini marathons, park and stride promotion and daily walks happening all with a Space Walk theme this year, PHEW!

Here are some of the lovely comments from schools who took part.

‘EYFS did a 30-minute walk around the school grounds every morning and loved it’.

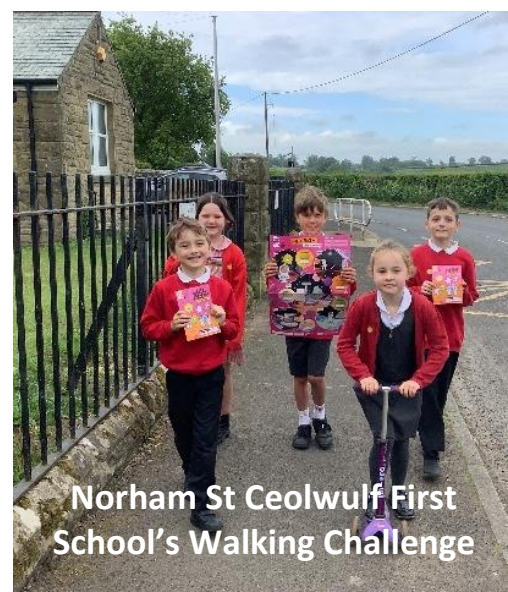
‘We had such a positive W2SW at the end of last term’.

‘We had a VERY successful walking school bus every day with 30+ children each day’

‘The classroom packs are really helpful for generating interest in W2SW’.

Children have been motivating their classmates to walk a little further each day, parking further away from school, or arranging to walk with friends

‘We’re really enjoying taking part in Walk to School Week – it’s a great opportunity to get everyone moving, chatting, and starting the day in a positive way’.



Modeshift Accreditations Easter 2025

There is a lot of hard work and determination that goes on behind the scenes to develop a travel plan and we wanted to say a huge congratulations to those schools who achieved Modeshift STARS accreditation last term.

NCEA Bishops Primary School – Excellent Travel Plan

Stamfordham Primary School – Good Travel Plan

Barndale by the Sea School – Approved Travel Plan

King Edwin Primary School – Approved Travel Plan



Balance Bike Libraries

Next term will see the roll out of a further 3 Balance Bike Libraries across Northumberland and we are over the moon that our collaboration with Northumberland Libraries continues to grow, meaning that we will soon have 2 new fleets of bikes and helmets available for schools to borrow, located at **Hexham and Berwick Libraries**.

We've also partnered with **Wall Town County Park** which will be our third new location with balance bikes available to borrow for visitors to the country park.

We'll share more details in September once the locations are up and running.



October is

International Walk to School Month

Sign up [here](#) to let us know if you are planning to take part in W2SM in October, and to request your free resources.

During [International Walk to School Month](#) we have 4 weeks of themed activities where schools choose what they'd like to take part in.

W2SM is a great way to really kick start your active travel year!

We'll be sharing a revised template over the summer but get in touch if you have any questions.

WOW Walk to School Challenge from Living Streets

We still have some fully funded spaces for the Living Streets WOW Challenge. WOW encourages more families to be active on their journey to school and reduce traffic at the school gate.

This term 2 of our schools were recognised for their achievements.

NCEA Bishops Primary School were top in the North East and 6th nationally in the WOW Top Ten with the **most active travel journeys** recorded

Ellington Primary School had the **highest level of engagement** in the North East with the most pupil journeys across all modes recorded on the Travel Tracker.

Find out how your school can get involved by contacting
sam.prior@livingstreets.org.uk

Bikeability update from our provider Outspoken Training



Outspoken Training are now providing delivery of our FREE Bikeability Training to schools in Northumberland. Outspoken told us, 'It is our belief cycling has the power to transform communities by creating fitter, healthier, less congested, and less polluted neighbourhoods. We offer accredited cycle training to help people use cycles safely as an everyday form of transport'.

We now have 6 instructors working across Northumberland delivering high quality Bikeability training. Our most recent feedback saw us receive a 10/10

score from Swarland Primary School, who thought the training was "great" and that the children "loved it". We are always so pleased to receive news that children have enjoyed our courses, and we hope that students will be confident to use their cycles more and more'.

In the new academic year Outspoken hope to expand their offer further, delivering to more schools and a wider range of year groups, with over 500 places already booked in for Level One and over 1200 at Level Two and numbers growing every day as more schools book onto training.

Any schools wishing to participate in Bikeability training should get in touch with Outspoken as soon as possible, there is also comprehensive information about the training including a Parent FAQ section on their [website](#).

Active Travel Ambassadors

Next term we'll be taking part in the **National Active Travel Ambassador** programme funded by the Department for Transport and delivered by Modeshift.

The scheme is open to Key Stage 3 pupils who will work with a coordinator to develop an active travel campaign at their school and then pitch their ideas for funding to an expert panel.



If you'd like to find out more contact tracy.aitken@northumberland.gov.uk

Northumberland Schools Sustainability Network

Would you like to get involved in the **Northumberland Schools Sustainability Network** and see how your school could contribute to addressing Climate Change?

The NSSN is a group of Teachers and School Staff who come together to discuss climate change and sustainability, the sessions offer a chance to talk about work schools are getting involved in, share best practice and chat through new ideas and activities.

Sessions are delivered online via Microsoft Teams every quarter for roughly 45 minutes to an hour.

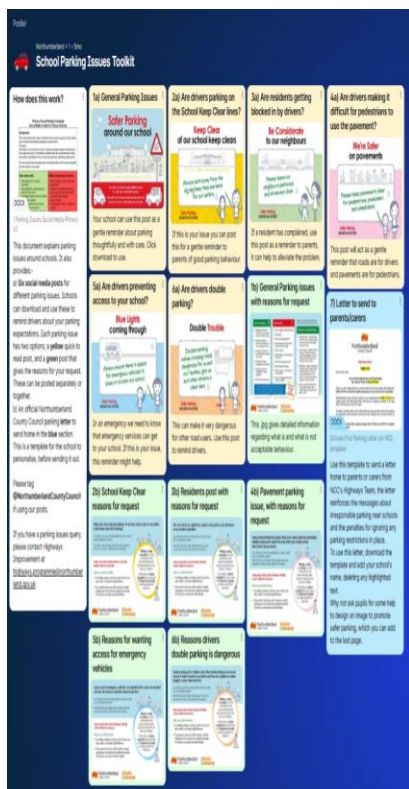
If you have any questions or would like to be contacted when the next dates are out, please email climate@northumberland.gov.uk



Modeshift updates

There have been some new features and updates to the Modeshift platform with more coming over the next few months, we'll do an overview next term and are looking at ways we can support schools gain accreditation and develop their Travel Plans.

We will share a poll next term to see what would work best for schools.



Have you used our School Parking Information Toolkit?

Our Padlet 'School's Parking Information Toolkit' launched last year, and we hope you are finding it useful as a first port of call to tackle parking issues.

Schools can use the toolkit to remind parents and carers about their responsibilities when driving to school and to discourage irresponsible parking. [Check out the Padlet here](#) or scan the QR code below.

Created in partnership with our Road Safety team you can download the resources to use on your social media



platforms, parent mail or newsletters.

If you are posting on social media please tag

@NorthumberlandCC to help us spread the message wider and encourage everyone to be a Smarter Parker!



Northern Line Rail update

The Northumberland Line continues to grow and we're looking forward to celebrating 500,000 passenger journeys during the school summer holidays.

To celebrate the line's success, train operator Northern have recently branded a train in a promotional livery and named the train "**The Northumbrian**". The train now features local

landmarks such as Woodhorn Colliery, Seaton Delaval Hall and Blyth Beach Huts.

Travelling on the Northumberland Line is great value for young people with single fares from Newsham to Seaton Delaval starting at just £1 at off peak times, with anyone under the age of 22 being able to travel on the Northumberland Line and Tyne & Wear Metro for just £1 with a Pop Blue card - visit Pop | nexus.org.uk for more details.

Have a lovely summer, see you next term

Dates for your diary

<u>World Car Free Day</u>	22 September 2025
<u>International Walk to School Month</u>	1-31 October 2025
<u>Bikeability Cycle to School Week</u>	13-17 October 2025
<u>Road Safety Week</u>	16-22 November 2025
Modeshift Autumn Accreditation deadline	31 December 2025
Annual Mode of Travel Survey	Spring Term
<u>Show the Love Climate Coalition</u>	1-28 February 2025
<u>Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel</u>	March date tbc
<u>Brake Beep Beep Day</u>	18 March 2025
<u>Walk to School Week Living Streets</u>	May 2026 tbc
<u>Great Big Green Week</u>	6-14 June 2026
Northumberland Bike Month including National Bike Week	1-30 June 2026
<u>Clean Air Day</u>	20 June 2026

Useful contacts

Bikeability admin@outspokentraining.co.uk
becky@outspokentraining.co.uk

Balance Bike Libraries ashington.library@northumberland.gov.uk
bedlington.library@northumberland.gov.uk

Climate Change Team climate@northumberland.gov.uk

Independent Travel Training itt@northumberland.gov.uk

Parking queries parkingservices@northumberland.gov.uk

Road Safety/Highways issues highwaysprogramme@northumberland.gov.uk