

## **SMARTways to travel**

North Lanarkshire Council are actively encouraging walking and cycling with their new SMARTways information service. The initiative was driven by the Policy and Safety Team, Roads and Transportation Services in the Planning & Environment Department

Through a website, free maps, public transport information, car sharing schemes and a range of information and support aimed at businesses as well as individuals, the service aims to promote healthier and more sustainable travel in the area.

Craig Herriott, Technical Officer with North Lanarkshire Council's Planning and Environment department, explained, "We're trying to encourage people to think about how they travel and to look at alternative ways which will benefit their health, the local environment and in the long run, will also save them money.

"Projects like this one reflect the council's commitment to improving the quality of life for everyone and by working with the people of North Lanarkshire we can make our communities more environmentally friendly, healthier and safer – ultimately benefiting everyone."

### **Maps**

The colourful and attractive SMARTways map is free, and 5,000 copies have been distributed so far, with a second print run of 3,000.

The map shows routes for walkers and cyclists within the council's boundary and beyond. The reverse describes six key routes including National Route 75 of the National Cycle Network, the Clyde Valley Walkway and the Cumbernauld to Glasgow Cycle Commuter Route. Each of these is planned to be the subject of individual map leaflets with large-scale route information; the first, showing NCN Route 75, is now available. The back of the SMARTways map also includes health information, with suggestions, tips and sources of support to encourage an active lifestyle.

### **Online mapping**

The map will be available from Autumn 2004 on the SMARTways website, [www.smartways.info](http://www.smartways.info), alongside information on walking, cycling, public transport, car sharing and healthy activity in North Lanarkshire, in line with the Scottish Executive's 'Choose Another Way' travel choices campaign. Larger scale web-based maps are in preparation; users will be able to zoom in to sections showing greater detail such as public rights of way and additional minor cycling routes.

### **Travel planning & support to businesses**

Alongside the public information, the SMARTways initiative also promotes travel planning and provides support to local businesses, schools, colleges and hospitals. Additional leaflets include one aimed at keeping pavements clear for pedestrians.

### **Car sharing**

SMARTways uses the car sharing database provided by [liftshare.com](http://liftshare.com), a free online service external to the council. Car sharing is promoted through four separate

leaflets aimed at schools, businesses, residents and council employees. Anyone interested in finding a car share can simply register through the appropriate database on [www.smartways.info](http://www.smartways.info). This service is free to use for users.

### **Marketing**

Strong branding is important to the project, and the SMARTways logo and a range of colourful branded leaflets were designed in-house by the Planning & Environment Department's Graphics Team. The leaflets promote aspects of the scheme, such as travel planning and car sharing to different markets.

The leaflets and the SMARTways map are distributed through libraries, the council's First Stop Shops, leisure facilities, housing offices and at events and a flier describing the initiative is on display at all local health centres and railway stations. A full list of display 'roadshow' locations is available on the SMARTways homepage.

Online marketing, also branded with the logo, is important too. SMARTways features prominently on the home page of North Lanarkshire council's website, and has been promoted through media releases to local press and on local radio and television. There are links from related external sites including the Scottish Executive's Choose Another Way ([www.chooseanotherway.com](http://www.chooseanotherway.com)), and Cycling Scotland ([www.cyclingscotland.org](http://www.cyclingscotland.org)).

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation will be through the council's annual survey, which now includes questions on walking, cycling and public transport use, and through feedback on the website. In addition, four cycle counters have been installed.

### **Costs**

Staffing of the initiative came from within existing resources, and the approximate additional cost for the first year was £8,000, which covered publications and display materials. The cost was partly covered by sponsorship, and further sponsorship is being sought to cover the cost of reprints of the SMARTways map and the large-scale map leaflets.

More information: [www.smartways.info](http://www.smartways.info)