

Children and Young People's Inquiry on Transport and Travel

Call for Evidence Guidance Document

About the Inquiry

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is launching the Children and Young People's Inquiry on Transport and Travel to improve transport and travel for children and young people across the UK.

When it comes to transport policy and practice, children and young people are often overlooked. They are not routinely asked what they want or need from the places where they live, learn and travel, despite being the people most affected by the decisions that are made.

At our recent Children and Young People's Summit, children and young people told us they often feel excluded from conversations about transport, streets and neighbourhoods. Yet their lived experiences provide invaluable insight into what works, what doesn't and what needs to change.

Involving children and young people in decisions that affect them doesn't just improve outcomes for young people – it helps create better places for everyone. When children and young people help shape the spaces they use, it creates a stronger sense of belonging, independence and agency.

The Inquiry will build a robust evidence base by bringing together children's lived experiences with evidence from organisations, researchers, practitioners and decision makers across the UK. Alongside this call for evidence, the Inquiry will include new research, surveys, local engagement events and child-led activities.

The findings will inform recommendations to local, regional and national decision makers to help create transport systems, streets and neighbourhoods that enable children and young people to travel safely, confidently and independently.

Terms of Reference

The Children and Young People's Inquiry aims to support healthier, safer and more independent journeys for children and young people across the UK.

It seeks to achieve this by:

- Giving children and young people a stronger voice in transport policy and practice within their communities and nationally.
- Developing child-led recommendations through evidence, engagement and storytelling.
- Securing long-term political commitment to improving transport and travel for children and young people.
- Encouraging collaboration and shared learning between governments, local authorities, practitioners, businesses and communities.

Call for Evidence

We are inviting written evidence from local authorities, transport bodies, schools, universities, charities, community organisations, businesses, campaign groups and researchers.

We welcome evidence from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

There is no expectation that submissions address every question. We encourage respondents to focus on the areas where they have the greatest expertise or evidence to contribute.

Where possible, submissions should be supported by evidence, including published research, evaluation, data, case studies or examples of effective practice.

Questions

1. Representation of children and young people in policy and practice

Children and young people should play a meaningful role in shaping the decisions that affect how they travel.

We welcome evidence on:

- Barriers that prevent children and young people from participating in policy and decision making.
- Examples of structures, policies or projects that have enabled children and young people to participate meaningfully in transport planning and decision making.
- Successful child-friendly place initiatives and the impact they have had.
- How participation can be made inclusive, ensuring that all children and young people, regardless of background, ability or where they live, have the opportunity to influence decisions.

2. Walking, wheeling and cycling to school, education and work

Travel habits established during childhood often shape travel choices throughout life.

We welcome evidence on:

- The role of walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport in journeys to school.
- What would increase walking, wheeling and cycling to primary school, including opportunities for greater independence.
- What would enable more young people to travel independently to secondary school.
- What would improve journeys to further education, training or employment for young adults.
- Successful school and further education travel initiatives, programmes or policies that have increased active and sustainable travel. Including those focusing on transitions from primary to secondary or secondary to further education, apprenticeships or employment.

3. Child-friendly neighbourhoods and connected places

Children and young people should be able to move safely, confidently and independently around the places where they live.

We welcome evidence on:

- Features that make a neighbourhood child-friendly.
- Examples of developments or neighbourhood improvements where children and young people have influenced the design process.
- How new neighbourhoods can be designed or existing ones retrofitted to encourage independent mobility.

- How walking, wheeling and cycling networks can be better integrated with public transport for children and young people.
 - Examples of interventions that have improved access, reduced inequalities or increased independent travel for children and young people.
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4. Addressing gender differences

Girls and young women are significantly less likely than boys to cycle as they get older and more likely to feel anxious or unsafe when walking or wheeling.

We welcome evidence on:

- Improving girls' personal safety and perceptions of safety when walking or wheeling.
 - Addressing barriers that prevent girls and young women from cycling, including infrastructure, cycle design, retail experience, culture, social norms and perceptions of safety.
 - Examples of programmes or initiatives that have successfully increased participation among girls and young women in walking, wheeling and cycling.
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Case studies and supporting evidence

We particularly encourage submissions that include:

- case studies demonstrating successful policy or practice
- evaluations of projects or programmes
- published research or data
- evidence gathered directly from children and young people

- examples of innovation
 - stories that demonstrate the impact transport and travel have had on children's and young people's lives.
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Life-stage approach

The Inquiry will consider transport and travel needs across three key life stages:

Children (0-10 years)

Children are predominantly dependent on parents and carers for many journeys. We want to understand how transport systems and neighbourhoods can better support safe, healthy and independent travel from an early age.

Young people (11-15 years)

As independence grows, journeys become longer and more complex. Walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport become increasingly important in enabling access to education, leisure and social opportunities.

Young adults (16-24 years)

The transition into adulthood brings new travel needs associated with further education, employment and training. Public transport, shared transport and active travel all play an important role during this stage.

Alongside these life stages, the Inquiry will also consider the role of parents and carers in supporting children's and young people's travel choices.

Guidance for submissions

Written submissions should:

- be by Microsoft word/PDF and be no more than **2,000 words** (excluding references and appendices)
- respond only to the questions relevant to your expertise or experience
- be evidence-based wherever possible
- clearly distinguish evidence from opinion
- include references or links to published research where appropriate
- include practical examples or case studies where these help illustrate your points.

Supporting documents, such as published reports, research papers or evaluations, may be submitted as appendices. Please ensure that your main submission summarises the key findings, as appendices will be used as supporting material only.

We encourage concise submissions that focus on practical evidence and recommendations rather than lengthy background information.

Make a submission

Please submit your written evidence by **31st August 2026**.

Evidence should be submitted by email to:

Anthea.Trainor@walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk

Confidentiality and publication

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust may publish submissions received as part of this call for evidence unless a respondent requests anonymity or confidentiality at the time of submission.

Please indicate clearly if you would prefer your submission, or any part of it, not to be published.

Evidence received may be quoted or referenced in the final Inquiry report and associated publications, with appropriate acknowledgement.

The final decision on publication rests with Walk Wheel Cycle Trust.