
Evaluation of the West of England (WEST) Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)

Background

The Local Sustainable Transport Fund was launched in January 2011 with the four West of England unitary authorities (Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils) being awarded nearly £30 million by the Department for Transport from the fund on two separate but integrated project programmes. The West of England Sustainable Travel (WEST) 'Large Project' programme involves an integrated package of measures covering the entire West of England travel to work area to be implemented in 2012/13 to 2014/15. It follows the Key Commuter Routes (KCR) project programme which was implemented 2011/12 to 2012/13.

The WEST project programme involves an integrated package of measures covering the entire West of England travel to work area which is being implemented in 2012/13 to 2014/15 and is aligned with the planned development of homes and jobs in priority growth areas up to 2030.

It has a main emphasis on influencing travel made at peak times of day with nine projects under the following three themes:

- Stimulating Growth in Priority Areas ('tackling congestion to get business and our economy moving' with aims to reduce peak-hour congestion, make it easier for employees to gain access to work and reduce carbon emissions)
 - Area Travel Plans
 - Key Commuter Routes (continuing work started with Key Commuter Routes LSTF project)
 - Business travel
- Connected and Thriving Centres ('completing end-to-end journeys' with aims to support the local economy, improve access to employment, training and education, encourage walking and cycling for local journeys and ensure that our town and city centres can continue to prosper)

- Local economic activity in urban areas
- Sustainable travel in key centres
- Transitions to a Low-Carbon Lifestyle ('Training, skills and securing long term benefits' which recognises that our interventions to change travel behaviour are more likely to be effective if they occur at times of change in people's lives, and focuses effort on influencing travel choice at these life transitions to taking advantage of life transitions as opportunities for behavioural change)
 - The move to secondary school
 - Access to work and skills
 - Universities
 - New developments

The project programme is being delivered via dedicated LSTF teams in five delivery areas working with the four unitary authorities (which each have LSTF project managers):

- Business engagement
- Marketing and communications
- Public transport
- Support services
- Transitions

The national LSTF programme has the following two primary objectives:

- support the local economy and facilitate economic development, for example by reducing congestion, improving the reliability and predictability of journey times or enhancing access to employment and other essential services; and
- reduce carbon emissions, for example by bringing about an increase in the volume and proportion of journeys made by low carbon, sustainable modes including walking and cycling.

WEST also aims to address the four secondary objectives of the national LSTF programme:

- helping to deliver wider social and economic benefits (e.g. accessibility and social inclusion) for the community;
- improving safety;
- bringing about improvements to air quality and increased compliance with air quality standards, and wider environmental benefits such as noise reduction;
- promoting increased levels of physical activity and the health benefits this can be expected to deliver.

Evaluation approach

CTS is undertaking the monitoring and evaluation of the WEST programme interventions. The evaluation approach has been developed following the steps recommended in the DfT guidance on transport impact evaluation. It has been determined that an *extended intervention logic evaluation* approach is appropriate. The approach involves bringing in elements of a theory-based approach into a study of outcomes so that the evaluation can answer questions about why change was produced (as well as what change occurred). The main features of this approach are:

- Collection of routine secondary monitoring data relevant to the programme;
- Stakeholders provide views on connections between outputs and outcomes; and
- New data is collected where important gaps are identified and resources permit it.

Methodology

With the *extended intervention logic evaluation* approach data is collected on inputs, outputs and external factors, as well as on outcomes and impacts. This is in order to test whether anticipated mechanisms for change occur. Data is collected on:

1. Inputs – expenditure and resources used will be monitored based on quarterly spend information.
2. Outputs (infrastructure and services) – infrastructure and services delivered will be monitored based on monthly progress reports from work package managers.
3. Outputs (participation) – engagement with target stakeholders and users will be

monitored based on project management data.

4. External factors – a marketing diary is kept that records the occurrence of events that could affect the delivery of the programme or outcomes.
5. Quantifiable Outcomes and Impacts – outcome and impact indicators include changes in attitudes and travel behaviour, change in congestion levels and CO2 emissions, bus patronage, road safety etc. Some of these indicators are monitored as part of the Joint Local Transport Plan delivery.

Process evaluation involves documenting what happens in a programme in order to learn about the effectiveness of its delivery. Quantitative information on the implementation of the WEST programme will be obtained through project management data on inputs and outputs. This will be complemented by qualitative data in the form of self-completion questionnaires completed by project managers every six months. These will seek to help answer:

- What interventions were implemented, by whom, and who were the recipients?
- What resources, including financial, were mobilised in each intervention?
- Which interventions worked well and why?
- Which interventions worked less well and why?
- What lessons have been learnt and how can these lessons can help improve the design and delivery of future programme interventions?

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