

How UK local authorities engage the public in changes to promote everyday walking, wheeling and cycling

Participant information sheet

Outline

We are inviting you to take part in an interview for a research study. The study looks at the views of elected members and officials about engagement and communication with the public and local stakeholders affected by changes to promote active travel. Before you decide whether to take part please read this sheet to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve.

What is the purpose of the project?

Physical inactivity is an important public health issue. Active travel can help people do more physical activity through routine walking, wheeling or cycling. Gaining public acceptance for these interventions can be a challenge. We would like to learn from your professional experience in this area. Specifically, we seek to explore how local authorities¹ across the UK (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) engage the public and other affected local stakeholders when planning and delivering interventions to promote active travel. We aim to interview between 20-30 participants across the UK. We would like to generate transferable insights for elected members and officers to use when designing and implementing active travel interventions in the future.

What will I be asked to do?

We are inviting you to take part in an interview with a researcher, for around 45 minutes to one hour. Depending on your preference the interview can be done online via Microsoft Teams or telephone call. You will be asked to complete an online consent form indicating that you are happy to take part and provide some brief details about the active travel interventions you have been involved with. With your permission the interview will be recorded for the researchers to transcribe and analyse. You will be offered a £25 shopping voucher to recognise the time commitment for taking part.

During the interview you will be asked about one or two specific active travel interventions that you have been involved with, what activities were used to interact and communicate with the public and local stakeholders (e.g. residents, local businesses, commuters, children travelling to school), and to what extent you believe the activities worked or what could have been done to improve it.

¹ While structures vary across UK nations and regions in this study 'local authorities' means any local or regional authority whose elected members and officers plan and deliver active travel interventions.

Can I withdraw from taking part?

Yes, you are free to change your mind and withdraw your participation at any time during the interview without giving a reason. However, once the interview transcript has been anonymised your research data cannot be withdrawn as we will not be able to identify which transcription belongs to you. We will aim to complete the transcription and anonymisation of your interview within two weeks of completing the interview, so please keep this timeframe in mind if you do wish to withdraw your research data.

When will interviews take place?

We are aiming to complete interviews between January and April 2026. Interviews can be scheduled at a convenient time for you, whether during the working day or outside of these hours.

Will my interview be confidential?

Yes, personal information and research data you give will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Only the researcher and research supervision team will have access to your personal information. Interviews will be recorded in Microsoft Teams, or using an audio-recorder if using telephone, and transcribed by the researcher or a University of Bristol-approved transcription service. Transcripts will be anonymised, meaning any identifying information will be removed, and once transcribed the audio recordings will be deleted. With your consent written reports on this study will include some quotes from interviews, but these will be anonymous and it will not be possible to identify you from these.

How will you store my data?

During the course of the research we will retain any personal information securely on the University of Bristol secure server (RDSF, the Research Data Storage Facility) until the end of the study, when it will be destroyed. We will store consent forms and anonymised research data (the interview transcripts) securely on the RDSF for up to 10 years in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

What are the possible disadvantages and risks involved in taking part in the project?

There is a low risk that the topics discussed in the interview will cause any discomfort or distress but we would be able to pause, postpone or cancel the interview if required.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

To recognise the time commitment of taking part I will offer you a £25 voucher. You might also find it beneficial to have an opportunity to reflect on what your local authority has been doing, what went well, and what could be improved.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

The results of this study will be included as part of the lead researcher's PhD thesis and will likely be published in an academic journal. The consent form for taking part includes a question about whether you would want to be informed about the results of the project after the interview. Participants will not be identified in any publications or outputs from the study.

The research data (the anonymised transcripts) will be published as an access-restricted dataset on the University of Bristol's Research Data Respository (data.bris). This means the anonymised research data will only be available to authenticated researchers on application, subject to a data access agreement.

We intend to share results from the study in different forms with academic or local government conferences and meetings, active travel stakeholders and researchers with an interest in public engagement, and other relevant networks to influence future policy development and practice.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is conducted as part of a PhD project led by Nick Morris, based at the University of Bristol's Centre for Public Health, and funded by the UK Medical Research Council through the GW4 Biomedical Doctoral Training Programme. The PhD project's lead supervisor is Prof. Ruth Kipping, also at the Centre for Public Health.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by the University of Bristol's Faculty Research Ethics Committee as part of a full ethical review process (review reference 2025-27713-30686).

How do I get in touch to take part?

[Click here](#) or scan the QR code (*right*) to access the online consent form.

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Further information and contact details

If you would like any further information about the study or your participation, please contact the primary researcher Nick Morris via email: n.j.morris@bristol.ac.uk

If you have any concerns related to the researchers from this study, please contact the Research Governance Team: research-governance@bristol.ac.uk