

Southampton City Region

Walking and Cycling Index 2025





Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling



Pete Boustred

Director of Transport & Planning
Southampton City Council

Our vision is ‘to make Southampton a modern, liveable and sustainable place to live, work and visit by investing in better and more innovative transport’.

Over the last five years, transformational projects have been delivered across the city and along key routes connecting people to and from Totton, Chandlers Ford and Eastleigh. We will continue to invest in our city and the wider Travel to Work Area to make walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use safer, healthier and more attractive.

Over the next few years, we will continue to deliver on our ambitions to build a healthier, safer, greener and growing city and ensure that everyone benefits from opportunities. Walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use will remain a key focus of this approach.

To achieve this, we will be developing and delivering exciting plans to create healthier, safer and more attractive streets, including:

- a programme of walking and cycling improvements set out in our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans
- expanding the Southampton Cycle Network, including better walking and cycling facilities along Lovers Walk
- public realm improvements in the city centre, including Portland Terrace.
- co-designing Active Travel Zones with communities, including enhancements connecting to the Outdoor Sports Centre
- Safer Routes to Schools to make it safer for children to walk, wheel and cycle to school, such as those planned for St Monica’s School
- improving public transport facilities so they are better integrated into walking, wheeling and cycling routes.

Finally, we will be preparing for the new Hampshire and Solent Mayoral County Combined Authority, which is expected to be in place from May 2028.

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The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index is the biggest assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling in the UK and Ireland. It is delivered by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) in collaboration with 22 regional and local partners. Each area reports on the progress made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling a more attractive, everyday way to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the fourth report from Southampton City Region, produced in partnership with Southampton City Council and Hampshire County Council. The data in this report comes from 2025 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent, demographically representative survey of 1,169 residents aged 16 or above. The survey was conducted from March to June 2025. Social research organisation NatCen conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

Across this report we have included comparisons to 2023 data where available.

Our thanks to the people of Southampton City Region who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all reports and an interactive data tool to explore the data in more depth can be found at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index



Defining wheeling

Some people who use a wheelchair or a mobility scooter may not identify with the term walking and may prefer to use the term wheeling. We use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

Headlines

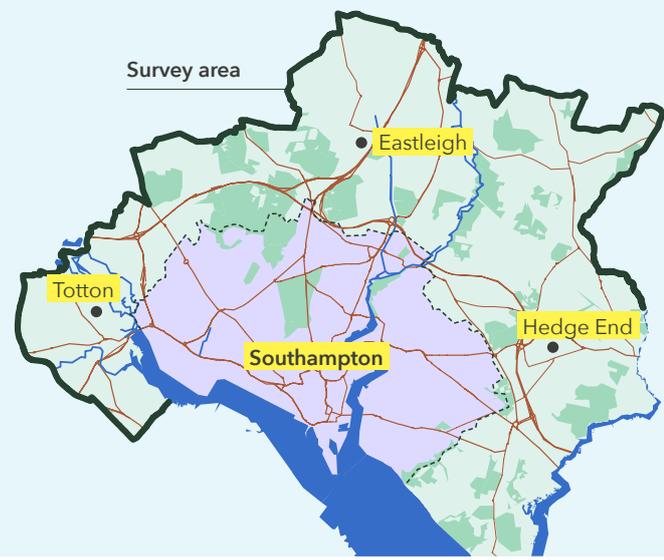
Southampton City Region

Population^[i]

446,939

366,349 adults

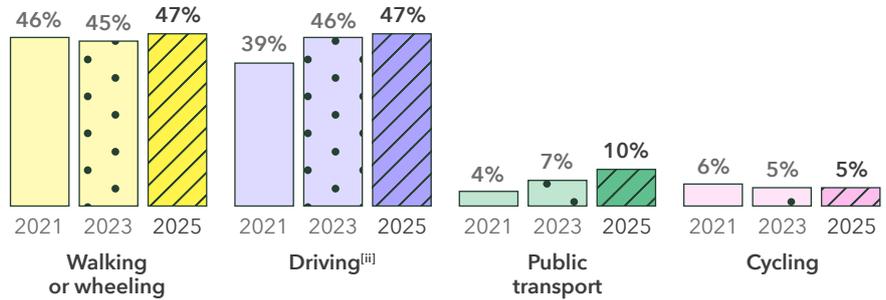
80,590 children



Frequency of different modes of travel

Walking and wheeling as well as driving are the most common modes of travel amongst residents of the Southampton City Region.

Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in the region



i. ONS mid-year 2024 population estimates. This is the most recent available for Southampton City Region.

ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle.

Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

Residents' travel choices and their perceptions of walking, wheeling and cycling sometimes vary widely between different groups.

47%

of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

43% of disabled people

49% of non-disabled people

15%

of residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

16% of people aged 16-25

20% of people aged 36-45

Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area^[iii]

64% of socio-economic group C2

75% of socio-economic group AB

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area^[iv]

38% of women

51% of men

Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood^[iii]

53% of socio-economic group DE

76% of socio-economic group AB

iii. Socio-economic groups AB are managerial, C2 are skilled manual while groups DE are manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment. See page 6 for full definitions.

iv. See footnote on page 6.

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Based on modelling of survey data, every year, walking, wheeling and cycling:

prevents
862

serious long-term
health conditions

creates
£312.2 million
in economic benefit for
individuals and the region

saves
20,000 tonnes
of greenhouse gas emissions

Walking, wheeling and cycling reduces congestion by taking up to 120,000 cars off the roads every day.

Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more and drive less

Percentage of residents who would like to use different types of transport more or less in the future:

25% of residents want to drive less. 44% of residents agree that they often use a car because no other transport options are available.

Walk or wheel

48% more

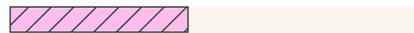


4% less



Cycle

43% more



3% less



Take public transport

33% more



8% less



Drive

14% more



25% less



Cycling is seen as less safe than other forms of transport

Percentage of residents who think it's safe in their local area to:

72% walk or wheel



45% cycle



77% use public transport



83% drive



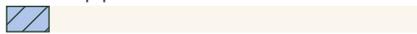
Residents support more connected neighbourhoods

50% of residents support shifting investment from road-building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. 22% oppose such a shift.

74% support



10% oppose

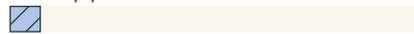


stopping vehicles parking on the pavement

77% support



7% oppose

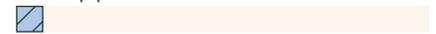


improving and increasing off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

71% support



6% oppose

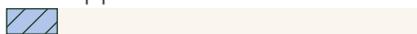


improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations

67% support



12% oppose

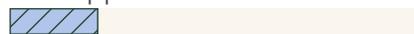


reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

55% support



21% oppose

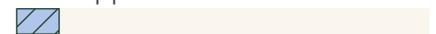


closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

74% support



10% oppose



having shops, schools, green space and public transport within a short walk or wheel of their home^v

v. Local places with services and amenities nearby your home are often known as 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Walking and wheeling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Southampton City Region the number of residents walking and wheeling at least five days a week has stayed about the same since 2023.

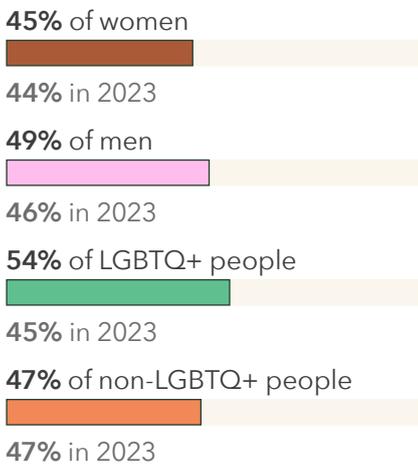
Encouragingly, the majority of residents feel it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area and think it is a good place to walk or wheel.

94%
of all residents walk or wheel
94% in 2023

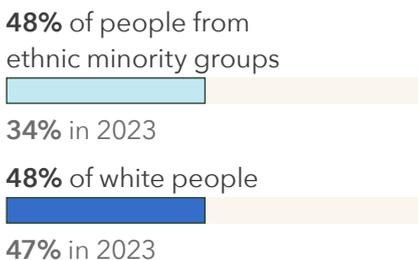
47%
of all residents walk or wheel at least five days a week
45% in 2023

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

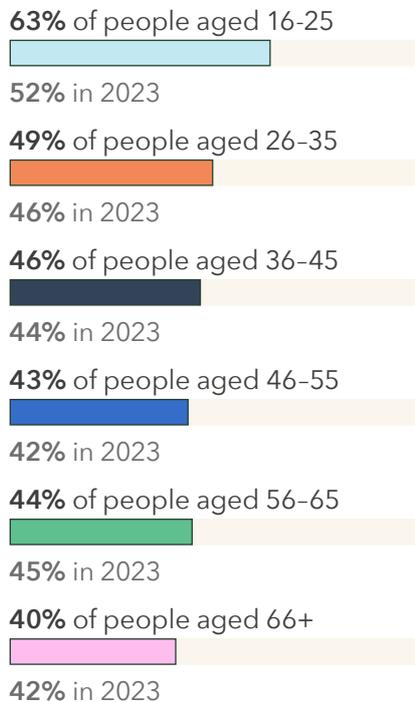
Gender and sexuality^[i]



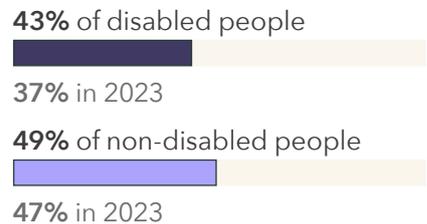
Ethnicity



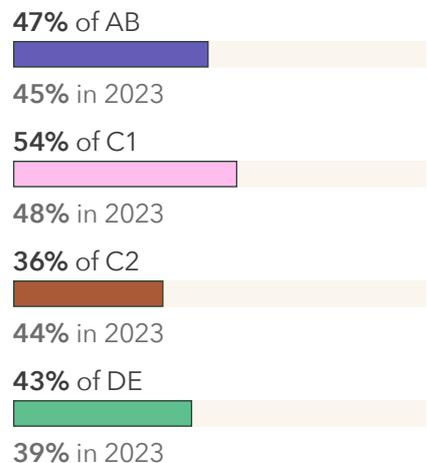
Age



Disability



Socio-economic group^[ii]



i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and is not shown.
 ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C1 is supervisory/clerical and students. Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

72%

of all residents think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

63% in 2023

52%

of all residents think it's safe for children to walk or wheel in their local area

46% in 2023

76%

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk or wheel

71% in 2023

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

Gender and sexuality

69% of women



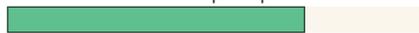
62% in 2023

75% of men



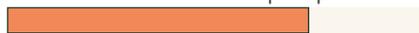
64% in 2023

72% of LGBTQ+ people



70% in 2023

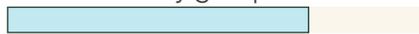
73% of non-LGBTQ+ people



63% in 2023

Ethnicity

73% of people from ethnic minority groups



63% in 2023

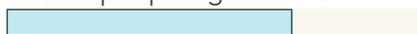
72% of white people



63% in 2023

Age

69% of people aged 16-25



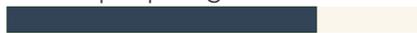
73% in 2023

77% of people aged 26-35



67% in 2023

75% of people aged 36-45



58% in 2023

69% of people aged 46-55



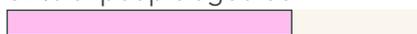
64% in 2023

73% of people aged 56-65



62% in 2023

69% of people aged 66+



55% in 2023

Disability

66% of disabled people



54% in 2023

75% of non-disabled people



66% in 2023

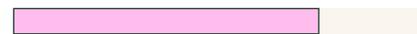
Socio-economic group

75% of AB



64% in 2023

74% of C1



63% in 2023

64% of C2



73% in 2023

68% of DE



54% in 2023



Jason Bell

I started walking to work in the city centre after my Type 2 diabetes diagnosis. It's about 3.5km each way and has really helped with weight loss and controlling my blood sugar levels.

Southampton is quite a walkable city, and I enjoy walking through some of the parks. Crossing Woolston Bridge [Itchen Bridge] is great exercise! It would be much better if the bikes and e-scooters kept to the cycle path on the bridge though. A safer cycle route would keep bikes off the pavements. I'd love to see a network of walking highways through the city with fewer and easier road crossings.

Cycling

Participation, safety and satisfaction

Cycling participation

There is great potential for cycling in Southampton City Region.

Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.^[i]

Encouragingly, perceptions of safety have improved since 2023 and nearly half of residents think it's safe to cycle in their local area.

35%
of all residents cycle
36% in 2023

15%
of all residents cycle at least once a week
16% in 2023

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

Gender and sexuality

10% of women



10% in 2023

19% of men



21% in 2023

16% of LGBTQ+ people



16% in 2023

14% of non-LGBTQ+ people



16% in 2023

Ethnicity

12% of people from ethnic minority groups



14% in 2023

15% of white people



16% in 2023

Age

16% of people aged 16-25



18% in 2023

14% of people aged 26-35



17% in 2023

20% of people aged 36-45



18% in 2023

17% of people aged 46-55



22% in 2023

16% of people aged 56-65



11% in 2023

6% of people aged 66+



8% in 2023

Disability

7% of disabled people



10% in 2023

18% of non-disabled people



18% in 2023

Socio-economic group

16% of AB



17% in 2023

14% of C1



18% in 2023

18% of C2



16% in 2023

9% of DE



8% in 2023

i. See Bike Life 2019 Southampton City Region report.

Cycling safety and satisfaction

45%

of all residents think it's safe to cycle in their local area

37% in 2023

32%

of all residents think it's safe for children to cycle in their local area

28% in 2023

51%

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle

42% in 2023

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

Gender and sexuality

38% of women



33% in 2023

51% of men



41% in 2023

41% of LGBTQ+ people



39% in 2023

45% of non-LGBTQ+ people



38% in 2023

Ethnicity

59% of people from ethnic minority groups



49% in 2023

43% of white people



35% in 2023

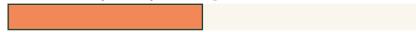
Age

45% of people aged 16-25



41% in 2023

47% of people aged 26-35



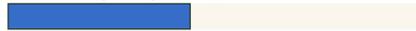
39% in 2023

51% of people aged 36-45



35% in 2023

44% of people aged 46-55



44% in 2023

45% of people aged 56-65



35% in 2023

37% of people aged 66+



29% in 2023

Disability

36% of disabled people



31% in 2023

48% of non-disabled people



39% in 2023

Socio-economic group

45% of AB



39% in 2023

46% of C1



36% in 2023

48% of C2



41% in 2023

39% of DE



28% in 2023



Claire Whyte

Claire took part in a cycle confidence session in spring 2023 with Monty's Community Hub in Sholing.

I hadn't been on a bike in 30 years when I joined a training session on one of the electric bikes. It was enjoyable, so I joined a women's ride after that, and then an adult social ride.

I went on to build a bike for myself with help from the Wednesday evening team, then trained up as a ride leader and volunteer mechanic! I lost three stone. It wouldn't have been possible without the cycle rides by Monty's Bike Hub.

Benefits of walking and wheeling

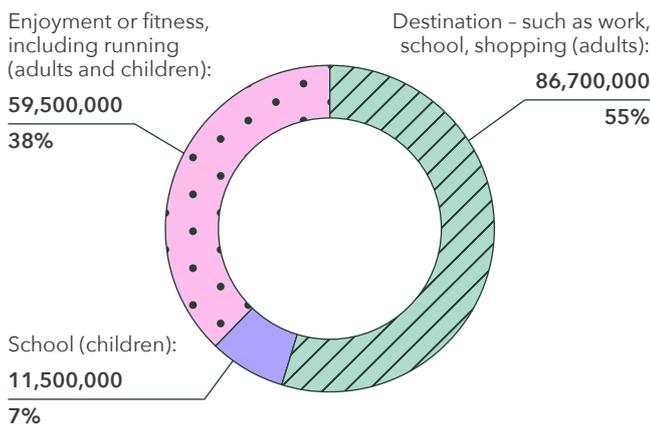
Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

Together, Southampton City Region residents walk or wheel 16 times around the world every day

Walking and wheeling improves health and air quality, saves the NHS money, and reduces congestion.

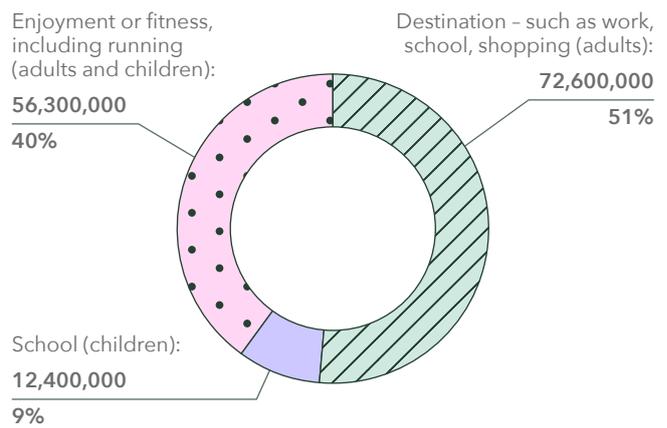
Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose

157.7 million trips in 2025 which add up to **149.1 million miles**



Average walking or wheeling trip distance: 0.9 miles

141.3 million trips in 2023 which add up to **150.7 million miles**



Average walking or wheeling trip distance: 1.1 miles

Walking and wheeling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

The total annual economic benefit from all trips walked and wheeled in the Southampton City Region is

£239.7 million

£204.9 million in 2023

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for enjoyment or fitness) our model compares the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling to those of driving.

For these journeys **98p** is saved for each mile walked or wheeled instead of driven. Over a year this adds up to **£46.3 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **47 million miles** walked or wheeled by those that could have used a car.

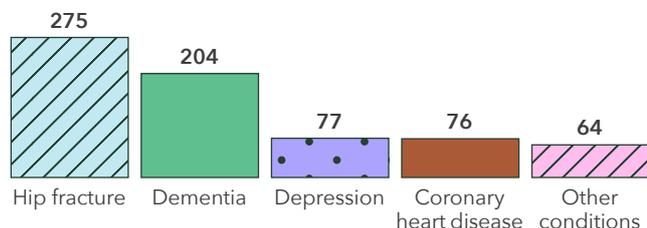


Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in the region prevents 696 serious long-term health conditions each year.

677 in 2023

Cases prevented



This saves the NHS

£8.6 million per year

£8.3 million in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

190,000

GP appointments

200,000 in 2023

Above figures are based on applying Southampton City Region data to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from walking

prevent 122 early deaths annually

136 in 2023

which is valued at

£501 million

£492 million in 2023

Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking.

Wheelchair and mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

People walking and wheeling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

31,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

26,000 kg in 2023

and

2,700 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

2,200 kg in 2023

41% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



41% in 2023

Walking and wheeling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By walking or wheeling instead of driving, residents save

13,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

10,000 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

11,000 people taking flights

from Heathrow to New York.

In 2023 domestic transport accounted for **29%** of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures.

Walking and wheeling keeps the region moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[1] This helps to keep the region moving for all road users.

100,000 return trips

are walked and wheeled daily by residents who could have used a car.

84,000 in 2023

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

309 miles

equivalent to the distance from Southampton to Durham.

251 miles in 2023

i. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

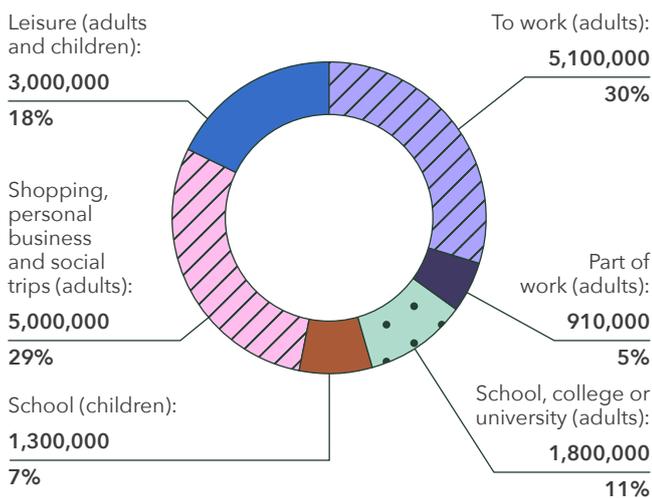


Together, Southampton City Region residents cycle 6 times around the world every day

Cycling can be convenient for many local trips, especially in cities and towns. It gives people transport choice and access to education, jobs and community.

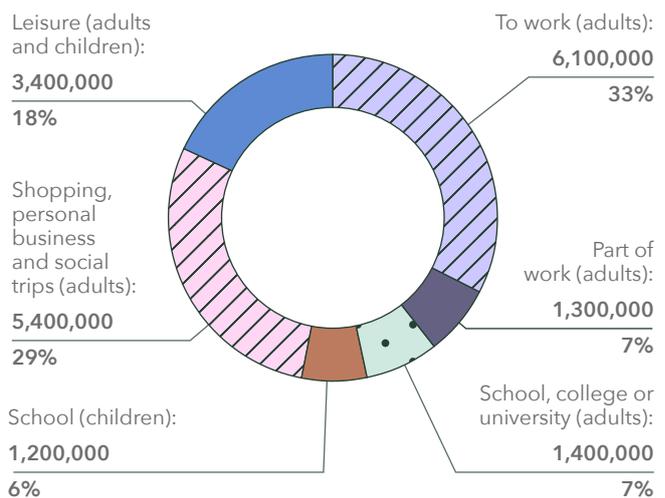
Annual cycling trips by purpose

17.1 million trips in 2025 which add up to **55.4 million miles**



Average cycling trip distance: 3.2 miles

18.8 million trips in 2023 which add up to **62.2 million miles**



Average cycling trip distance: 3.3 miles

Cycling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of cycling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

The total annual economic benefit from all trips cycled in the Southampton City Region is

£72.5 million

£66.6 million in 2023

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for leisure) our model compares the costs and benefits of cycling to those of driving.

For these journeys **£1.69** is saved for each mile cycled instead of driven. Over a year this adds up to **£48.2 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **28.5 million miles** cycled by those that could have used a car.



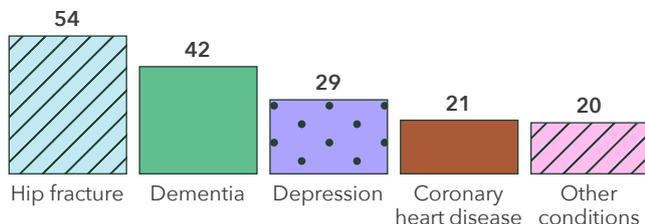
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated for the inclusion of cycling trips as part of work. See methodology report for details.

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in the region prevents 166 serious long-term health conditions each year.

192 in 2023

Cases prevented



This saves the NHS

£2.2 million per year

£2.5 million in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

49,000

GP appointments

61,000 in 2023

Above figures are based on applying Southampton City Region data to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from cycling

prevent 14 early deaths annually

17 in 2023

which is valued at

£57.9 million

£62.9 million in 2023

Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of cycling.

People cycling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

12,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

16,000 kg in 2023

and

1,300 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

1,600 kg in 2023

41% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



41% in 2023

Cycling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By cycling instead of driving, residents save

7,700 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

9,200 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

6,900 people taking flights

from Heathrow to New York.

In 2023 domestic transport accounted for **29%** of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures.

Cycling keeps the region moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[1] This helps to keep the region moving for all road users.

16,000 return trips

are cycled daily by residents who could have used a car.

17,000 in 2023

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

47 miles

equivalent to the distance from Southampton to Reading.

49 miles in 2023

i. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

Walking and wheeling solutions

What would help make walking and wheeling easier?

New homes and existing communities should have services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Putting walking and wheeling at the heart of new and existing communities gives people greater transport choice, while reducing car dependency.

48%

agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive

50% in 2023

59%

support stopping new housing developments in areas where driving is the only practical option to visit local services, such as shops and doctors surgeries

58% in 2023

New developments and existing communities can support walking and wheeling by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live.

What percentage of residents would find more local amenities and services useful to help them walk or wheel more?

82%

more shops and everyday services, such as banks and post offices, close to their home

81% in 2023

79%

more government services, such as doctors surgeries and schools, close to their home

76% in 2023

83%

more parks or green spaces close to their home

82% in 2023

82%

more things to see and do close to their home, like cafés or entertainment venues

79% in 2023

Residents want walking and wheeling to better align with buses

While walking and wheeling should be the most attractive option for short journeys, it should also be integrated with public transport for longer trips.

Walking and bus use is the most common form of multi-modal journey across the UK. If we are to increase walking and wheeling and bus trips, residents told us they need practical improvements to better integrate these modes of transport.



What percentage of residents would find these changes useful to help them take journeys that include walking or wheeling and the bus more often?

73%

more information to help them plan and take a journey (such as apps, maps, signage or public transport staff)

68%

more direct walking and wheeling routes from housing estates to bus stops

67%

accessible walking and wheeling routes to and from bus stops

71%

improved safety while walking or wheeling to and from the bus stop

72%

improved walking and wheeling crossing facilities near bus stops

83%

improved bus stops (such as accessible, well lit and maintained, cover from rain, display of service information)

Residents want better streets

There are many ways to make our streets and neighbourhoods safe, welcoming and comfortable for everyone to walk or wheel in.

What percentage of residents think that these changes would help them walk or wheel more?

75%
wider pavements
71% in 2023

72%
more frequent road crossings, with reduced wait times
68% in 2023

78%
nicer places along streets to stop and rest, like more benches, trees and shelters
75% in 2023

75%
better pavement accessibility, like level surfaces and dropped kerbs at crossing points
74% in 2023

69%
fewer cars parked on the pavement
69% in 2023

71%
less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in their area
70% in 2023

In the region, for each road making up a junction with traffic lights

55% have a pedestrian crossing



45% don't have a pedestrian crossing



For example, a T-junction has three roads making up the junction, and a crossroads has four.



Laura Corkindale - Parent

There is an amazing new crossing on our school run.

There was nothing there before and it was a dangerous road that saw a bad accident a couple of years ago.

They've taken out places where people were parking illegally, the speed limit is now 20mph, and the crossing is the best one I've seen. It's big, bright and vibrant and really quite spectacular!

It's now clear for drivers to see and they slow down. My son has autism and he knows it's a safe place to cross. We use it a lot.

My husband uses it to link onto a cycle path to get to work. I use it to get into town.

Older kids are now able to get to school by themselves. I would love to see more of these. All schools should have these sorts of crossings.

What would make cycling better?

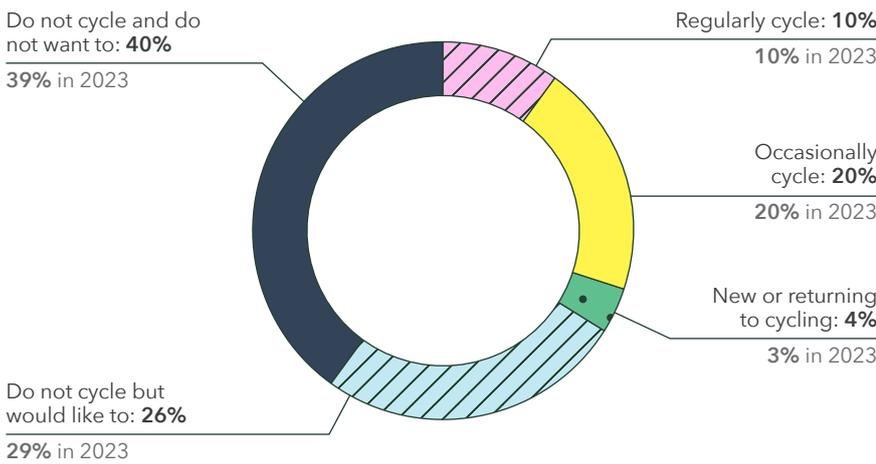


Many residents want to cycle

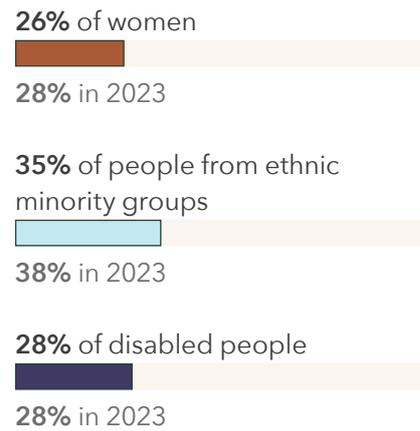
There is considerable appetite to start cycling from residents who don't already.

To meet this demand we must address safety, ensuring people have dedicated space for cycling, as well as supporting access to a cycle, training, cycle parking, and better integration of cycling with public transport.

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

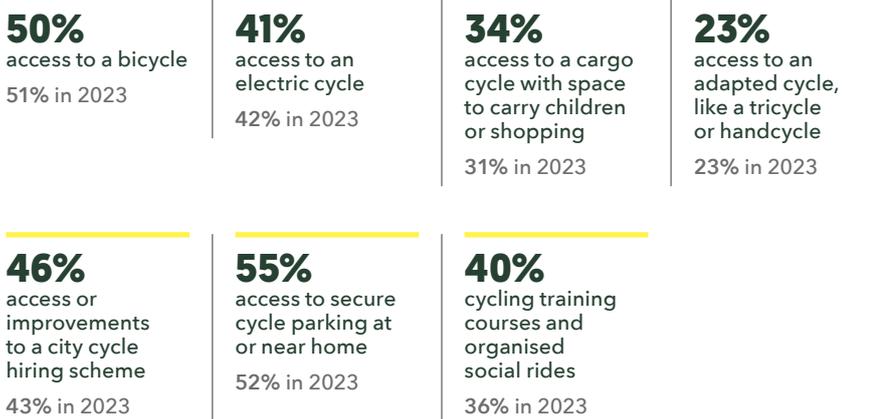


What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?

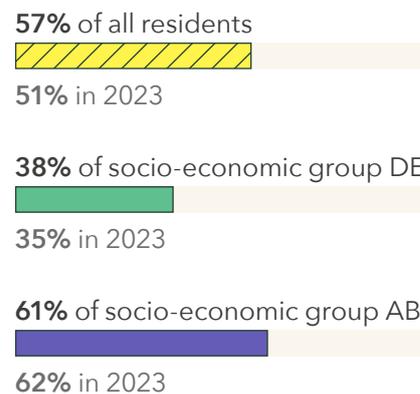


Residents want more support to cycle

What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them start cycling or to cycle more?



Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

People want networks of dedicated and safe cycle paths, cycle parking and better integration with public transport.

In the region there are:

17% of households

are within 125 metres of either traffic-free cycle paths away from the road, or cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

16% in 2023

37 miles

of traffic-free cycle paths away from the road

37 miles in 2023

9 miles

of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

7 miles in 2023

1,006

cycle parking spaces across 18 railway and bus stations

1,014 spaces across 17 stations in 2023

What percentage of residents would be helped to start cycling or to cycle more by better facilities?

67%

more traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways

69% in 2023

66%

more cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

65% in 2023

62%

more signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets

62% in 2023

67%

better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations, bus stops/stations

63% in 2023

Among residents:

77%

support improving and increasing local off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

55%

support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic

60% in 2023

71%

support improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations



Chazz Bauldry - Cycles4All

Our mission is to make cycling accessible and enjoyable for people of all ages and abilities. We run regular sessions with adapted cycles from our hangar in Fleming Park. It provides exercise and a huge amount of fun. Without the wide paths in the park, we simply wouldn't be able to offer this service, and many people wouldn't have access to this experience.

"Accessible Cycling at Cycles4All is a fantastic activity, providing not only physical wellbeing but also social and emotional wellbeing".

Customer, Sheiling College

I'd love to see a network of accessible paths, allowing our clients to travel more freely across the region.

Neighbourhood solutions

Thriving places, centring children



Neighbourhoods should prioritise the needs and wellbeing of the people who live there and visit. They should be planned to support community, foster social connection, and be places where everyone feels welcome.

Designing neighbourhoods with children in mind means they work better for everyone.

Improving the journey to school

Schools are at the centre of many neighbourhoods and should be part of any plan to make neighbourhoods better.

This means working with schools to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling, but also improving the neighbourhood around schools to reduce traffic and improve pavements, crossing points and cycle provision.

55% support



21% oppose



closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

67% support



12% oppose



reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

These are known as 'School Streets'.

19 schools

in the region have School Streets schemes

13 schools in 2023



Giving children the independence to roam, play and develop

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive. Well-designed neighbourhoods can give children freedom to move around, play and socialise, helping children's independence, social skills, and autonomy.

Average age when parents and carers would let children travel independently in their neighbourhood

12 years old
to walk or wheel

12 years old
to cycle

13 years old
to use public transport

53%

agree there is space for children to socialise and play

51% in 2023

Fewer children play out on their streets than ever before. Just 27% of children said they regularly play outside their homes, compared to 71% of those born between 1946 and 1964.

Save the Children, Summer of Play campaign survey, 2022.



Residents support child-safe neighbourhoods

Adults support child-safe neighbourhoods, including traffic-reduction targets and measures to reduce through traffic and traffic speed, but this must be done fairly.

26%

of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles
29% in 2023

53%

support setting traffic-reduction targets and taking action to achieve these
58% in 2023

54%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods^[i]
(20% oppose)
61% in 2023

19%

of the total length of unclassified roads in the region have nothing to prevent through traffic.
This can result in rat running.^[iii]
20% in 2023

Residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:

61% walk or wheel more



55% cycle more



47%

support reducing speed limits on local roads in built-up areas to 20 mph speed limits
(31% oppose)

34%

of the region's streets have 20 mph speed limits (excluding motorways)
9% in 2023

Residents would find more streets with 20 mph speed limits useful to:

46% walk or wheel more



44% cycle more



Everyone should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

Improvements to neighbourhoods must also recognise the needs of adults, for example women, disabled people and people from ethnic minority groups.

52%

agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello
46% in 2023

45%

feel able to participate in making their neighbourhood a better place to live
40% in 2023

Proportion of residents that feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood

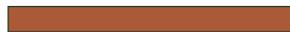
69%

of all residents



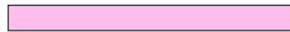
70% in 2023

69% of women



70% in 2023

69% of men



70% in 2023

67% of LGBTQ+ people



54% in 2023

69% of non-LGBTQ+ people



72% in 2023

70% of people from ethnic minority groups



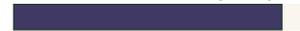
72% in 2023

69% of white people



70% in 2023

65% of disabled people



54% in 2023

70% of non-disabled people



75% in 2023

53% of socio-economic group DE



58% in 2023

76% of socio-economic group AB



74% in 2023

i. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are known as Active Travel Zones in Southampton

ii. Based on analysis by CycleStreets www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org. Unclassified roads are all public roads that are neither motorways, A, B nor C roads.



Developing the region

Improving walking, wheeling and cycling

Through the Southampton Transforming Cities, Future Transport Zone, and active travel programmes the area has seen major improvements to make it safer and easier for people to walk, cycle and wheel.

New routes and public spaces have been created in Southampton City Centre, Eastleigh Town Centre, on routes into Southampton from Hythe and Totton, and within residential areas, in collaboration with local communities. These have been alongside other projects such as the enhanced transport interchanges at Southampton Central and Eastleigh Stations.

In the City Centre, significant changes have helped to remove the barrier of the ring road, with more and safer places to cross this busy route. Traffic, except for buses and taxis, has been removed from East Park Terrace and Portland Terrace which has reconnected Solent University with the Central Parks, and West Quay with the Bargate area creating a more attractive walking, wheeling and cycling route.

These improvements have led into Albion Place Bus Hub and Arundel Gardens which together form the first new urban park in the City Centre in over 60 years. Created on two former car parks, this exciting new space integrates transport with the historic fabric of Southampton. The gardens provide access to the Old Town Walls and Castle Walls, allowing a celebration of Southampton's heritage while supporting improved travel journeys.



In the City Centre, significant changes have helped to remove the barrier of the ring road, with more and safer places to cross this busy route.



Beyond Southampton City Centre, several projects have been delivered to make a difference to people's everyday lives, such as our new routes, community and schools projects and the roll out of bike hire in Eastleigh.



New routes

There are new cycle routes through Eastleigh Town Centre from Eastleigh Station to Lakeside Country Park - with onward connections to Southampton.

New walking and cycling links have also been created along the route between Eling and Holbury on the Waterside, featuring new crossings, widened paths for walking and cycling, and better signage. This has improved connectivity to Southampton by providing new links between Redbridge and Holbury.

These routes provide access to local schools, shops, and to the New Forest National Park, connecting onwards to Totton and into Southampton via Southampton Cycle Network (SCN) 1, creating almost 20 km of cycle-friendly route.



Community and schools projects

Community-led neighbourhood projects have delivered small-scale but meaningful improvements in residential areas. In Woolston, we co-designed a series of safer walking and cycling improvements including lighting, signage, planting and a 20 mph speed limit.

These connect to a travel hub close to Woolston Station where a range of transport options – micromobility, bus, EV charging, Car Club, and rail are co-located.

Through School Travel Planning, we have engaged with schools across the City Region leading to a number of Safer Routes to School initiatives.

This has included training more than 2,000 children in Bikeability, clean air projects, installing new crossings and routes at six schools, and 19 permanent School Streets in Southampton.

Looking forward

Better places and streets for everyone



This is an exciting time for transport in and around Southampton.

Working together, Southampton City Council and Hampshire County Council are continuing to develop approaches and schemes that make a difference to people's lives.

Both Local Transport Plans set out visions to make it easier and safer to get around using various transport options - supporting healthy lifestyles, economic growth, decarbonisation and reducing inequalities.

It is a time where there is opportunity for growth in Southampton and the wider area. A renaissance is underway, supported by the Southampton City Plan and new Local Plans being developed in Eastleigh and Test Valley. The Southampton City Plan seeks to make the city an equal, healthier, safer and greener city, with transport at the heart of delivering this.

We'll continue to build on the significant work that has been undertaken to transform the area, particularly in the City Centre. This work has provided the foundation for delivering future aspirations supporting the Renaissance Vision for Southampton and growth of the Port of Southampton. We want to create an attractive and vibrant place where people want to live, work and spend time, not only in the City Centre, but also in our district centres, towns, and neighbourhoods.

In 2028 a Mayor for Hampshire and the Solent will be elected, and through the Mayoral County Combined Authority, more decisions will be made locally. To support this over the coming years, we will be developing a pipeline of future schemes that build on the Renaissance Vision and the Waterside and emerging Eastleigh Transport Strategies.

Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending in their local area:

51% on walking and wheeling



38% on cycling



57% on buses



56% on trains



30% on trams



37% on other forms of public transport such as community transport, metro or subway, local ferry



40% on driving



It is a time where there is opportunity for growth in Southampton and the wider area.

This includes exciting plans for new public spaces around the Bargate monument, East Street, and the Civic Centre, plans for Totton and Eastleigh Town Centres. Major transport improvements will benefit people walking, cycling, and wheeling such as the replacement and enhancement of Northam Rail Bridge in Southampton, A326 to provide better access to the Waterside and the development of a Mass Rapid Transit network that will connect Southampton to Eastleigh, Romsey, Hedge End, and via ferries to the Isle of Wight.

Across the wider area, we will continue to roll out improvements that connect people and opportunities along key routes, connected to schools, shops and services, and integrated with buses and rail stations. Our aim is to make neighbourhoods safer, healthier, and greener places to live and spend time.

Residents already play a key role in community-led designs, and their involvement will become even more important as the future mayor identifies their priorities.



Richard Tyldsley - General Manager, Bluestar Bus

At Bluestar, we wholeheartedly support the innovative Albion Place scheme.

It's a significant public realm enhancement and a real step change in the quality of bus stop infrastructure in the city, creating a better environment for bus users and improving bus punctuality.

It's now easier for visually impaired passengers to locate specific buses as each route has its own stop. Bus patronage is growing in the city generally, which is really positive. Albion Place will hopefully encourage even more people to choose the bus.

Prioritising access to sustainable travel, including walking, cycling and public transport will have a positive impact on bus journey times and will greatly improve timetable reliability. This sort of infrastructure is needed in many more locations across the city region.

Notes on methodology

The attitudinal survey was conducted from March to June 2025 (and 2023) by independent social research organisation NatCen.

The survey is representative of all Southampton City Region residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

All other data are sourced from our regional and local partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. All locally-sourced data are correct as of 28 May 2025.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys travelled by journey purpose.

Trip estimates now include cycling trips as part of work for both 2025 and 2023. Previously published 2023 model estimates have been recalculated to include these and allow for direct comparison.

Rounding has been used throughout the report. In many cases we have rounded to the nearest whole number. Rounding is avoided where this may cause confusion, for example with modelled estimates shown in the summary and benefits sections.

More information on data sources and calculations, including strengths and limitations of the survey and model methodology, are available at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is the charity making it possible for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

Because people powered movement changes everything. Our health. Our wellbeing. Our world.

www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk

Funding and support

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Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is a registered charity in the UK number 326550 (England and Cymru), SC039263 (Scotland) and 20206824 (Republic of Ireland).

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