Slough Borough Council (SBC) was awarded £4.3m through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) from the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver a number of sustainable transport projects in the borough before the end of March 2015.

The aim of the LSTF in Slough is to improve the efficiency of businesses, retain and grow current employee opportunities, reduce CO2 emissions and improve the health of residents. School travel behavioural change is one aspect of this project, and focuses on those Slough schools identified to be generating the most congestion on Slough’s roads during the morning peak.

Khalsa Primary School has achieved great progress in promoting sustainable travel to their pupils, staff and parents.

Khalsa Primary School postcode plot (May 2012)

The school is a voluntary aided Sikh faith school, located in the northern tip of the Borough at the junction of Wexham Road and Knolton Way. The school opened in 2007 and does not have a formal catchment area, with some pupils travelling as far as Southall, Reading and Hayes. With travel distances such as these, at first, it did not appear likely that there would be much scope for the promotion of walking, cycling and scooting to school. SBC created a map with all pupils’ postcodes plotted onto it, which showed that there was scope for change as many pupils lived within a 2km radius of the school.

Khalsa Primary School, Slough
Travel surveys
The school carried out hands up surveys in September 2012 when 297 pupils took part, and again in July 2013 when 329 pupils took part. The above table that there has been a drop in car use (minus 9 percentage points) and an increase in walking, cycling, scooting and skating to school during the year.

Reduction in congestion
Previously Khalsa suffered congestion at school pick up and drop off times. Khalsa made some changes to the physical layout of its car park, which has enabled vehicles to do the school drop off more efficiently.

Since September 2013, the school created a drop off period, with nursery children being dropped off from 0815 and 0830 hours; and children in reception through to Year 6 being dropped off from 0830 to 0845 hours. This has eased congestion in residential roads around the school and within the school itself.

Parents have vocally welcomed the change. In the afternoon, the school has sought to ease congestion through offering additional extra-curricular clubs after school which end at 1630 hours. Again this helps reduce the pressure of traffic in and around the school at school pick up time.

Increased numbers of pupils cycling to school
The school has enthusiastically promoted cycling to school. Wexham Road is on Route Q (Wexham Park Hospital to Wexham Court) of the Borough's walking network, and also on the Borough's cycle network linking Route P (Elliman to Slough Town Centre) and Route R (Upton Lea to Slough Town Centre). The cycle path is part of a shared pedestrian / cycle route.

The school has also trained all of its Year 6's are trained each year. Year 5 and 6, with the aim of ensuring that all of its Year 6's are trained each year. One of the school’s staff members recently attended a Sustrans bike maintenance course called Dr Bike, and now he is now able to provide weekly free bike maintenance for the children's bikes. Having this resource within the school staff has been invaluable. Each year the school also offer Bikeability training to Year 5 and 6, with the aim of ensuring that all of its Year 6's are trained each year.

The result has been incredible, whereas once the school's cycle parking provision was at best a third full, now the school is able to provide twice the number of cycle parking as their existing facility is now able to be provided. The school has now been able to provide weekly free bike maintenance for the children's bikes. Having this resource within the school staff has been invaluable. Each year the school also offer Bikeability training to Year 5 and 6, with the aim of ensuring that all of its Year 6's are trained each year.

The result has been incredible, whereas once the school's cycle parking provision was at best a third full, now the school is considering providing more cycle parking as their existing facility is frequently at capacity.

Walking to school
The school has experienced further success in their promotion of walking to school. Safety in the car park was examined, and CRB-checked volunteer car park marshals were introduced to ensure the car park is used safely. This along with the temporary pedestrian crossing points improved pedestrian safety in the school car park.

Khalsa took part in an LSTF-funded walking and cycling mapping event. This has resulted in a useful map of the local area showing the safest way to walk and cycle to the school. This map has been given out to pupils, and is on display in the school.

The safety improvements in car park along with the production of the walking and cycling map has reinforced the school's message to parents who drive to school, to contribute as well, through parking further away from the school and walking their children to the school. The activities did not stop there, the school ran “be safe be seen” road safety lessons to all the children in KS1 and the provision of LSTF-funded secure scooter parking is on offer in the KS1 playground.

To further promote walking, Khalsa runs the LSTF-funded Living Streets’ “Walk once a Week.” (WoW) programme. The scheme provides incentives such as a badge for each child who walks / cycles / scoots at least once a week for a month. The travel tracker, provided through Living Streets help Khalsa understand the progress made in increasing the numbers of children walking to school, and allows it to present a prize to the class which has the most children walking to school each month.

Road safety
SBC’s road safety team regularly hosts assemblies at the school for KS1 and KS2. These assemblies provide valuable road safety information in interesting and memorable ways, to help ensure that the message sticks.

With the support of SBC’s LSTF funding, along with Bike It and SBC’s road safety team, Khalsa will continue promoting active travel, to encourage a more active and healthier lifestyle as well as providing them with important lessons in how to keep safe on the road which will hopefully remain with the children as they grow to adulthood.