Child Miles

The motives behind parental choice of school and the inevitable cost to school transport

First principles

- If you get the school in the right place people will walk or cycle to school (800m for a Primary and 2km for a secondary).
- Parents want ‘A good school locally’.
- 50% of pupils are not attending their nearest school...
- We all have a part to play in fostering better spatial decision making and delivering what parents want – after all we all stand to gain.

So why the disconnect?

- Spatial planning for many authorities still consists of finding a spare piece of land in authority ownership and then trying to justify its suitability...
- School transport (along with active travel) are often left out of the site selection process so end up playing an expensive game of catch up *"School transport is a different budget line"*

Better mention Choice

- Like it or loathe it
- Real or illusionary
- Evidence based or **school gate gossip** (national you gov survey)
- **It is here to stay** (But we can support better informed choice)
- The good news – parents want a good school locally
- The bad news – with 50% of our pupils are not attending their nearest school there is still a lot of work to do!

So what can we do?

- Despite DfE schools are still collecting valuable spatial travel data so make use of it
- Take ownership of the data and bring to the table early in any spatial discussions
- School Transport needs to embrace other modes – **if you can guide decisions in favour of delivering what parents want rather than just providing transport to mop up poor spatial planning you stand to make significant savings**.

What am I doing?

- Encouraging all to continue with the **School Travel Health Check** – a powerful spatial tool at the strategic level that also achieves change at the school level. Better still it is cheap and works in authorities where STA's have gone.
- Developing a **pre choice** pack that supports schools to identify and target the many pupils leaking away from their own doorsteps

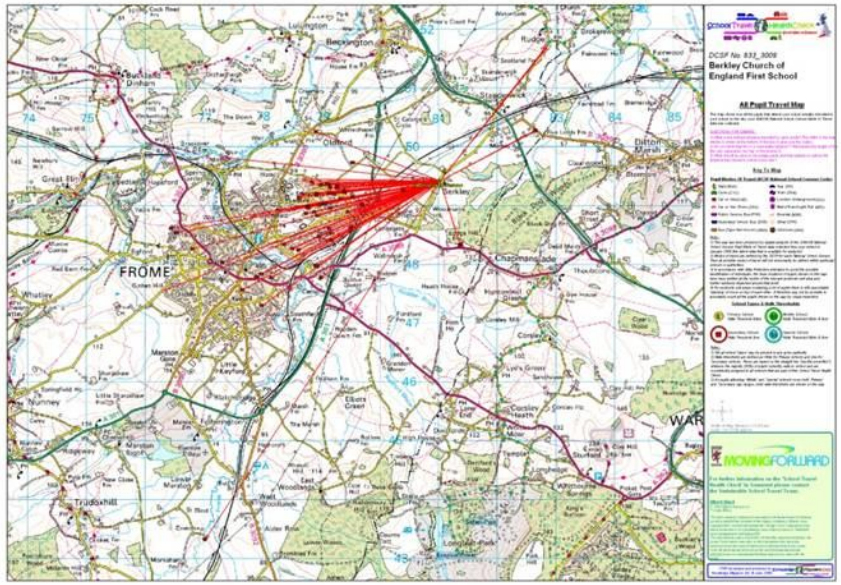
What you need to do?

- Never underestimate the power of putting spatial data on big bits of paper.
- Never assume that the transport implications of spatial decision making have been considered.
- Engage (School Travel Advisors are pretty much extinct).

Knowing what is going on out there...

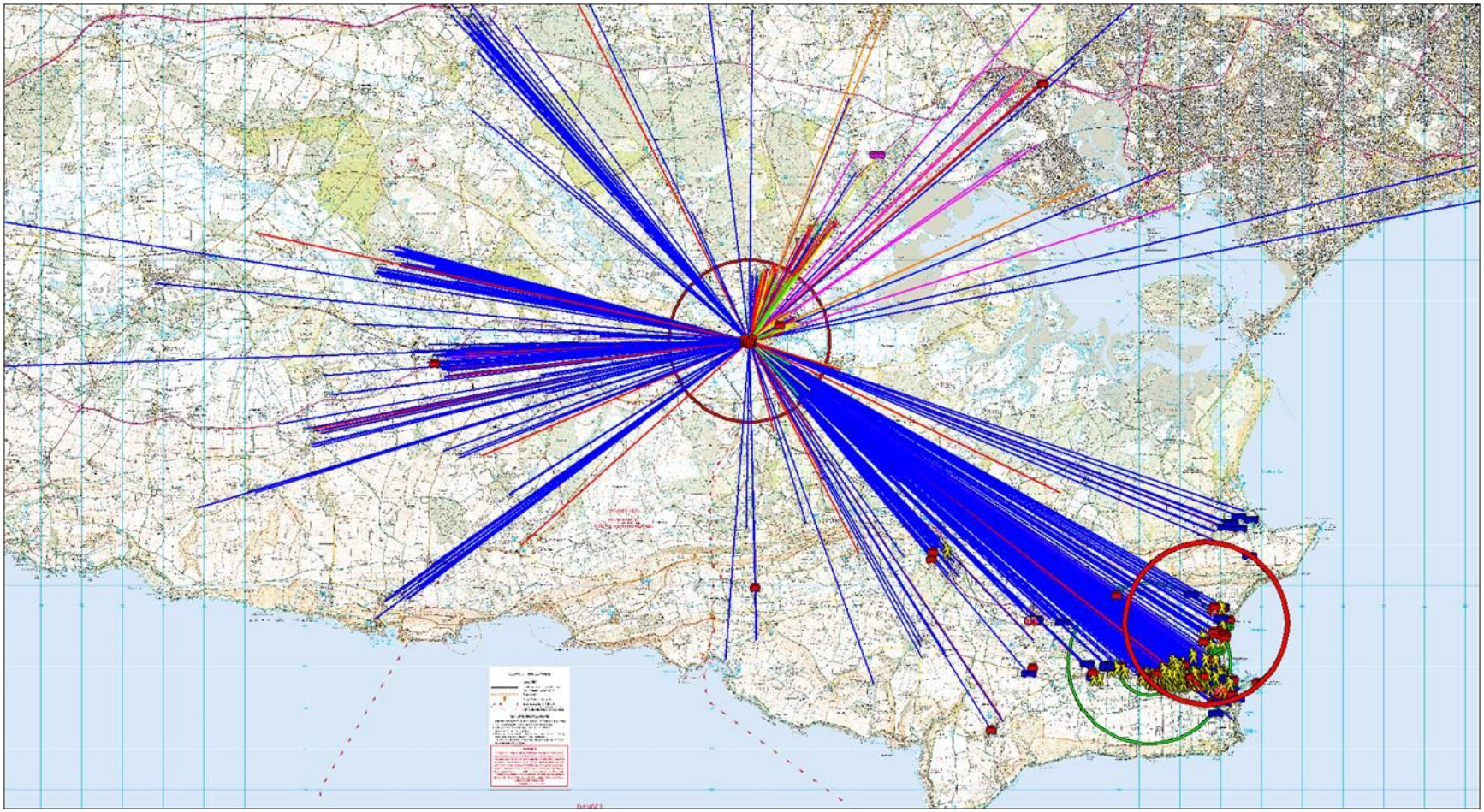
Where are all the pupils?

Oh there they are...



Minimising child miles

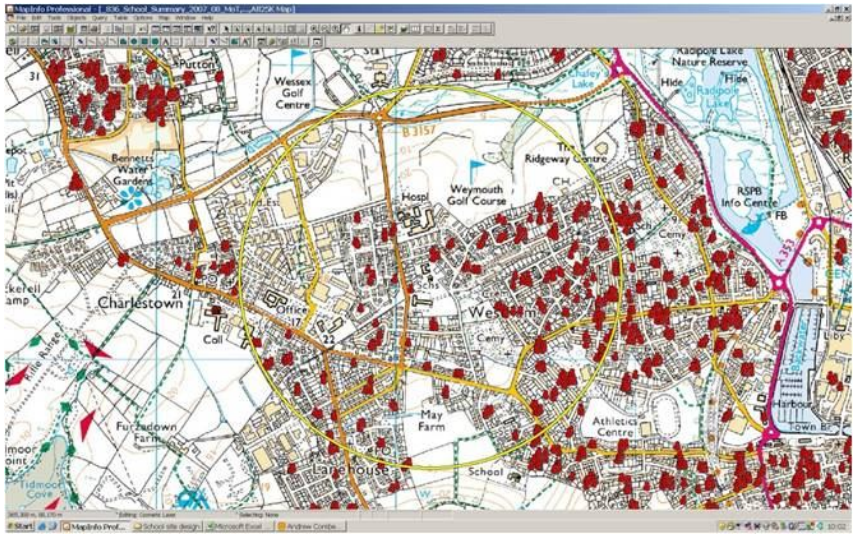
Where should we put the new school?



And then getting the parents to choose their local school...

Those going to the school

Those that could be going to the school...



Fin

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- Child Miles paper and School summary data on: www.sthc.co.uk go on have a rummage.