

PLAN TO DEVELOP AN ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

1.0 HEADLINES

- 1.1. The Active Travel Strategy will set out the Council's vision and strategy to increase opportunities for residents and visitors to choose to make journeys by physically active means, for example walking or cycling. This will establish the context for the future development of plans for infrastructure to enable and encourage active travel, as well as behaviour change programmes to encourage uptake.
- 1.2. The subsidiary Active Travel Development Plan will set out a prioritised set of actions for both infrastructure and behaviour change projects. The prioritisation will apply the strategic context set in the Active Travel Strategy to a specific set of deliverable projects to ensure the principles established in the Active Travel Strategy are delivered on the ground. It is planned to present the Active Travel Development Plan to each of the four Area Committees for member input at the appropriate point in development.
- 1.3. The Scottish Government has committed to increasing national funding for active travel to 10% of the total transport budget by 2024/25, estimated to be in the region of £320M/annum. However, opportunities to secure a share of this funding are increasingly requiring Local Authorities to demonstrate a relevant and up to date Active Travel Strategy and Delivery Plan as one of the key criteria, a trend which we understand from Transport Scotland is planned to continue.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee approve the Strategic Transportation Team within Development and Economic Growth to develop an Active Travel Strategy and subsidiary Active Travel Delivery Plan for future approval.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1. The Strategic Transportation Team has successfully secured £9.4M external funding over the past 5 years to develop active travel across Argyll and Bute. Additionally, the staff costs of the 1.7 FTE staff in the team working on active travel are funded via successfully securing highly competitive external challenge funds. There is a limited budget available through a grant from the Scottish Government for Active Travel, which is utilised for match funding.
- 3.2. Funding for active travel has recently been secured from the following sources:
- Cycling Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR). A ring-fenced annual allowance awarded for active travel infrastructure work to each local authority on a per capita basis. This can be used as match funding for the Transport Scotland derived funds or stand-alone to deliver infrastructure. Recently CWSR has supported delivery of the Helensburgh Waterfront Cycleway and cycle parking at Helensburgh Waterfront, Dunoon Castle Gardens access improvements, Colchester Square & Argyll Street pedestrian improvements, Bruchladdich-Port Charlotte Path and Ralston Road/Meadows Avenue Cycleways.
 - Places for Everyone (PfE). Transport Scotland derived funding for construction of new active travel routes which Sustrans are paid to administer. Offers a maximum of 100% of design funding (up to 10% of total project cost) and 70% of construction funding, with 30% required to be secured from non Transport Scotland derived sources. PfE requires repeated highly competitive funding applications for each set of design stages and again for construction (min 3 applications to get to construction), and Sustrans set a very exhaustive list of requirements on the design, design process and level of control they have over each project.
 - Regional Transport Partnerships Active Travel Grant (RATG). Transport Scotland funding pot which is only open to regional transport partnerships. Have secured funding from RATG via both HITRANS and SPT. Recently the RATG has enabled the construction of the segregated cycleways on Ralston Road/Meadows Ave to serve Campbeltown Grammar, Castlehill Primary and Campbeltown Hospital.
 - Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP). Transport Scotland derived funding for behaviour change projects which Paths for All are paid to administer. Offers a maximum of 50% funding in a single financial year towards non-infrastructure projects which are designed to encourage or enable people to choose to walk, cycle or travel sustainably (e.g. public transport). The 50% match funding required can be made up of a maximum of 25% staff time and a minimum of 25% cash, which we currently derive from CWSR. Recently SCSP has enabled the development of the popular Active Travel Smartphone Apps for Bowmore/Islay, Campbeltown, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Oban, Rothesay and Tobermory/Mull.

- Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) Capital Programme. SPT holds an annual capital programme which we submit annual applications to for projects in the Helensburgh and Lomond area. Recently SPT have supported delivery of sections of Helensburgh-Cardross-Dumbarton Cyclepath, and design of Rosneath and Helensburgh-Garelochhead cyclepaths.
- 3.3. The Scottish Government has committed to increasing national funding for active travel to 10% of the total transport budget by 2024/25, estimated to be in the region of £320M/annum. However, opportunities to secure a share of this funding increasingly require Local Authorities to demonstrate a relevant and up to date Active Travel Strategy (ATS) as one of the key criteria, a trend which we understand from Transport Scotland is expected to continue.
 - 3.4. An increasing number of active travel funding sources are requiring evidence of a robust, relevant and up to date ATS as part of the application process to these highly competitive challenge funds. Transport Scotland, where most active travel funding conduits originally derive from, has stated they plan to require all their funds criteria to require an up-to-date, adopted ATS and Delivery Plan prior to accepting funding applications. To continue to secure external active travel funding, Argyll and Bute Council is now required to develop and adopt an ATS and subsidiary Active Travel Delivery Plan (ATDP).
 - 3.5. The ATS will set out the Council's vision and strategy to increase opportunities for residents and visitors to choose to make journeys by physically active means, for example walking or cycling, and set out clear objectives for success. This will establish the context for the subsequent development of an ATDP which will establish a prioritised programme of infrastructure and behaviour change programmes to enable and encourage uptake of active travel.
 - 3.6. It is forecast that the ATS would be available for approval by summer 2024. This is due to the significant consultation, research and engagement required to develop an ATS, combined with the pressures of existing workloads on very limited staff resources.
 - 3.7. It is forecast that the ATDP would be available for approval by summer 2025. This is due to the significant route identification, prioritisation, consultation and engagement required to develop a robust, deliverable plan, combined with the pressures of existing workloads on very limited staff resources. It is planned to present the ATDP to area committees for member input at the appropriate stage of development.
 - 3.8. Community consultation and engagement is a key element of development of a robust ATS and ATDP. This will provide our communities, residents and businesses with the opportunity to input to the development of the Strategy and guide the forms of active travel interventions which their communities require in future.

- 3.9. An outline programme for development of the ATS (Table 1) and ATDP (Table 2) is below, noting that this is subject to change depending on the limited staff capacity available to develop these important strategic plans.

Table 1: Active Travel Strategy Programme

Action	Period
Review of existing relevant guidance, incl. national, regional and local strategic guidance	2023/24 Q2
Identify range of potential interventions for improvement of Active Travel	2023/24 Q3
Internal key stakeholder engagement on Strategic Guidance Identified and Potential Interventions Identified	2023/24 Q3
Update draft plan based on key stakeholder engagement	2023/24 Q4
Community Engagement	2023/24 Q4
Update draft plan based on community engagement	2024/25 Q1
Approval	2024/25 Q2
Publish Approved Active Travel Strategy	2024/25 Q2

Table 2: Active Travel Delivery Plan Programme

Action	Period
Review existing Active Travel Masterplans / Proposals	2024/25 Q2
Identify potential new active travel routes / interventions	2024/25 Q3
Internal key stakeholder engagement on potential new active travel routes / interventions	2024/25 Q3
Update proposals based on key stakeholder engagement	2024/25 Q4
Community Engagement	2024/25 Q4
Update proposals based on community engagement	2025/26 Q1
Approval	2025/26 Q2
Publish Approved Active Travel Delivery Plan	2025/26 Q2

- 3.10. Funding to support staff time to develop an ATS and ATDP is planned to be secured from external sources. Most external active travel funding sources operate on an annual basis and it is expected separate funding will require to be identified for each financial year, albeit potentially from the same source.
- 3.11. Active travel supports delivery of a range of outcomes. The main of these are identified below.
- SOA outcome 2: We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth.
 - SOA outcome 5: People live active, healthier and independent lives
 - Climate Emergency Declaration
- 3.12. There is a wide range of guidance relevant to active travel, the main of these are noted in appendix 1.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1. The development and adoption of a robust Active Travel Strategy (ATS) and subsidiary Active Travel Delivery Plan (ATDP) will provide a basis for development of active travel projects to support our residents and visitors to choose actively, supporting improved health, access to services and economic development.
- 4.2. As an increasingly requested requirement for access to external funds for active travel, the adoption of an ATS and ATDP will enable continued successful securing of funding to improve our communities.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. Policy Development of an Active Travel Strategy will support the Council's SOA outcomes 2: We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth and 5: People live active, healthier and independent lives. The project also supports achievement of the Scottish Government's objectives set out in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) and Let's Get Scotland Walking - The National Walking Strategy.
- 5.2. Financial The development of an Active Travel Strategy will not require any financial support from Argyll and Bute Council. Costs will be funded from external funding sources.
- 5.3. Legal None
- 5.4. HR None.
- 5.5. Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 5.5.1 Equalities – Protected Characteristics The Active Travel Strategy will be accompanied by a socio and economic impact assessment.
- 5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty Creation of an Active Travel Strategy will support development of projects to enable our residents and visitors to travel more sustainably and actively which will help reduce transport and fuel poverty and improve access to essential services. Evidence indicates individuals who choose to travel actively have a higher annual spend in local businesses.
- 6.5.3 Islands The Active Travel Strategy will include all islands within Argyll and Bute on an equal basis as the

mainland.

- 5.6. Climate Change Active Travel is the least carbon intensive mode of travel. The Active Travel Strategy will provide the context for development of new opportunities for residents and visitors to consider an alternative to having to use a private car to travel which will help lower Argyll and Bute's carbon footprint.
- 5.7. Risk There is a reputational risk to the Council if continued improvements to opportunities to choose to travel actively are not delivered.
- 5.8. Customer Services None.

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Appendix 1 – Active Travel Guidance

APPENDIX 1 – ACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDANCE

Relevant local guidance:

- Road Asset Management Plan
- Local Development Plan / Local Development Plan 2
- Economic Strategy

Relevant regional guidance:

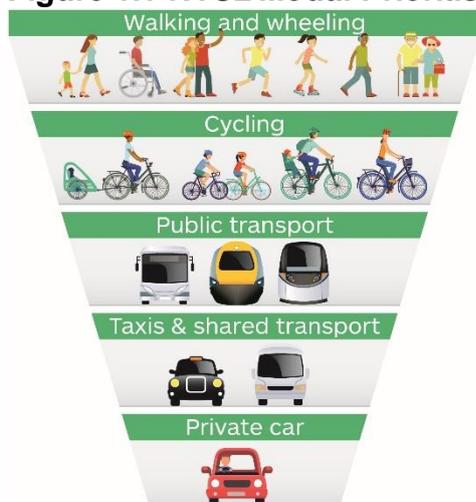
- SPT Regional Transport Strategy
- SPT Regional Active Travel Plan
- HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy
- HITRANS Regional Active Travel Plan
- NHS Argyll Activity Plan

Relevant national guidance:

- National Transport Strategy 2
- Cycling Framework and Delivery Plan for Active Travel in Scotland 2022-2030
- Let's get Scotland Walking – The National Walking Strategy
- Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030
- Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 – 2032
- Climate Ready Scotland: climate change adaptation programme 2019 – 2024
- Climate Change Plan: third report on proposals and policies 2018-2032
- National Planning Framework 4
- Public Health Priorities for Scotland
- Cleaner Air for Scotland 2
- A Connected Scotland: our strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections
- Decarbonising the Scottish transport sector
- A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan
- Cycle by Design
- Active Travel Framework
- Fairer Scotland Duty
- Scotland's Economic Strategy
- Strategic Transportation Projects Review 2 (STPR 2)
- Public Health Scotland Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025

The Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), published Feb 2020 establishes a hierarchy of transport modes, which places active travel modes (walking, wheeling and cycling) at the top of the modal priorities, as shown in **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1 NTS2 Modal Prioritisation



Transport Scotland has recently published draft guidance on the preparation of an Active Travel Strategy, this is available at www.transport.gov.scot/publication/active-travel-strategies-guidance-for-completion/

Transport Scotland's Active Travel Strategy Guidance identifies a number of suggested barriers to uptake of active travel and interventions to address common barriers, see figure 1.2. It is important to tailor interventions to local circumstances and identified barriers, which will be considered through development of the ATS and ATDP.

Figure 1.2 Barrier to and interventions to address uptake of active travel

Barriers		Interventions	
Social & physical barriers to walking		Led walking groups	
Cost of owning and maintaining a cycle		Measures to increase access to cycles, which could include:	Develop public cycle hire schemes on a scale relevant to the area
			Free cycles for school children, a pilot project which will be rolled out as a national scheme
			Cycle loan / library schemes, including adapted cycles and cargo bikes
			Promotion of Cycle to Work scheme
		Cycle recycling and re-use	
Cycle storage space / theft		Increasing secure cycle parking and storage at key destinations and in residential areas	
Distance too far to cycle, hilliness and/ or fitness		Measures to increase access to electric cycles will extend range and overcome these barriers for some people	
Inability to cycle safely		Cycle training	Bikeability Scotland training for all children
			Targeted offer of Essential Cycle Skills training for adults and families
Quality / inaccessibility of		Area-based accessibility audits with targeted improvements	

<p>the pedestrian environment; fear of slips, trips and falls</p>	<p>The quality of the built environment disproportionately prevents people who identify with certain protected characteristics (including disabled people, children and elderly) from walking or wheeling. It can also prevent people from being able to access public transport.</p> <p>Often many small changes need to be made in an area to create good conditions for walking and wheeling. Audits are a good way to identify and prioritise necessary improvements.</p> <p>Common issues and potential solutions have been reviewed by Living Streets through a nationwide study. Both detailed design and wider issues such as dominance of parking in the streetscape and passive surveillance are important issues to address to enable walking and wheeling</p>
<p>Traffic-related safety and personal security</p>	<p>On-road cycle networks, primarily composed of protected cycle lanes on main roads, in all large towns and cities</p> <p>Cycle lanes physically separated from traffic improve safety and being in the street environment provides greater passive surveillance, compared to paths remote from the road, addressing personal security concerns.</p> <p>These networks are likely to include Active Freeways, high-quality direct active travel routes, segregated from traffic, along main roads in large urban areas (both radial and other high-demand corridors) that connect outlying neighbourhoods to city/town centres and other important destinations.</p> <p>Where cycleways are constructed, it is recommended to incorporate complementary improvements for walking and wheeling on the same streets.</p>
<p>Traffic-related safety</p>	<p>Plan strategic expansions to green path networks that are suitable for walking, wheeling and cycling, connecting communities in urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Greened path networks can help achieve different outcomes to onroad cycle networks, so both types of interventions are needed.</p>

		<p>Creating greened path networks provide active travel options which address traffic-related safety.</p> <p>Where they are remote from the road network they can provide beneficial access to greenspace, help improve mental health and create leisure and tourism opportunities.</p> <p>However, they often lack passive surveillance and are perceived as poor for personal security, particularly in hours of darkness, by many people.</p> <p>Path networks can provide vital connections between communities. Some paths may be designated as part of the National Cycle Network</p>
Neighbourhood traffic-related safety		<p>Measures to reduce traffic volumes</p> <p>Conversion of residential areas to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods to reduce through traffic volumes, making streets safer and more appealing to walk, wheel and cycle, using a package of one-way streets and modal filters.</p> <p>The space freed up can create opportunities for place-making, such as adding greenery, seating, art and play spaces. These changes to streets should be co-designed with communities following the Place Principle.</p> <p>Low Traffic Neighbourhoods will also make it safer for children to walk, wheel and cycle to school.</p>
Lack of awareness of support and infrastructure available to enable travelling actively		<p>Develop a behaviour change strategy tailored to individuals and your local area</p> <p>While some general information for the local population is needed, approaches need to be tailored and targeted to specific segments of the population in order to be most effective at changing behaviour. Blanket marketing campaigns on the benefits of active travel are less likely to lead to significant changes in behaviour.</p> <p>Personal Travel Planning is a way to provide targeted information, incentives and motivation directly to individuals to help them make more sustainable travel choices.</p>
Parked motor vehicles		Enforcement of forthcoming pavement parking regulations

preventing people using pavements		
Traffic-related safety	Speed limit reductions including	Implementation of 20 mph speed limits in villages, towns and cities
		Reducing the speed limit of selected minor rural roads to enable more walking, wheeling and cycling, as part of a network approach
	Limiting street access to walking, wheeling and cycling	Implementation of School Streets, time-limited prohibitions to motor traffic on streets adjacent to schools
		Pedestrianisation of streets, retaining access by cycling

Source: Active Travel Strategy Guidance, Transport Scotland, 2023