

sustaining



Oban Action Plan

for Active Travel and Sustainable Transport



January 2023

*Front cover photo:
Ben Sunderland – Adventure Oban*



Oban Action Plan

for Active Travel and Sustainable Transport



Contents

INTRODUCTION	2	4. Planning and Transport Policy Context	10
1. Executive Summary	2	Local Policy Context	10
CONTEXT	4	Related Research and Projects	12
2. Purpose & Scope of the Action Plan	4	ENGAGEMENT PROCESS	14
Sustaining Choices	4	5. Approach	14
Oban	5	Project Delivery – Overview	14
Core Team	6	Project Delivery – Detailed Steps	14
Anticipated Uses for the Action Plan	6	Marketing and Publicity	15
3. Planning and Transport Policy Context	7	Attendance and Response Information	15
National Policy Context	7	UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES	16
		6. Evidence Gathering – Community Engagement	16
		Response Data	16

MAKING IT HAPPEN	17
7. Delivery Strategy	17
Key Actions Identified	17
Next Steps	21
APPENDICES	22
Appendix 1	22
The Action Plan	22
Appendix 2	28
Key National Policy Documents	28
Key Local Policy Documents	28



This project is supported by Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) and PAS, a volunteer-led, independent and impartial charity that helps people to understand and influence the places where they live, work and visit.



Introduction

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Sustaining Choices project has worked with communities across Scotland to develop a body of evidence that demonstrates the changes they would like to see in their area regarding walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport. This is particularly timely given the challenge of climate change and net-zero targets, the need to reimagine the environments we live in as a result of the Covid pandemic, and the need to implement a green recovery as a consequence of both. This Action Plan articulates the evidence base that has been gathered for the communities of Oban.
- 1.2 Events were organised as a partnership between Adventure Oban, Argyll and the Islands Coast and Countryside Trust, and Argyll and Bute Council, with the support of PAS. Information gathering events were held in July and August 2022, with a further event held in November the same year. This event reviewed the top engagement outcomes and started to identify next steps.
- 1.3 The following Anchor Statement was developed by the local core team to define the goal of the engagement process: “Giving Oban residents a voice to decide what should be done to make active travel choices more attractive and appealing.”

- 1.4 The full list of actions (39) shared by the community can be found in Appendix 1, under the following topic headings: Active Travel; Bus Routes; Community Facilities; Maintenance; Other Comment; Outdoor Space; Parking; Public Realm; Public Transport; Road Layout.
- 1.5 The following table summarises the top 9 Key Actions identified for the area, as prioritised by the community.

“This Sustaining Choices project was a great way to bring together and catalyse lots of conversations that have been happening in the town around tackling the climate crisis, making active travel the easy option and making our beautiful town accessible for all.”

Isla McCulloch, Trustee – Adventure Oban

- 1.6 Key Actions proposed in Oban, in priority order:

Item	Topic	Action
1.	Active Travel	Introduce more safe bike routes including to and from schools.
2.	Active Travel	Improve the signage and lighting for active travel routes including public footpaths.
3.	Active Travel	Improve pavement network connectivity.
4.	Maintenance	Tidy up the general appearance of Oban including greenspace, pavements and shop fronts.
5.	Active Travel	Ensure pavements meet the needs of those with additional access needs including disabled people.
6.	Outdoor Space	Consider how access to greenspace can be improved and the quality of existing green space maximised.
7.	Active Travel	Improve infrastructure for cycling.
8.	Road Layout	Install clear signage for narrow shared-use roads.
9.	Road Layout	Ensure that pedestrian crossings are in the right place, meet modern standards and prioritise pedestrians.





“The Sustaining Choices project has worked with communities across Scotland to develop a body of evidence that demonstrates the changes they would like to see in their area regarding walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport”.



Context

2. Purpose & Scope of the Action Plan

Sustaining Choices

- 2.1 Sustaining Choices as a project was primarily set up to support economically disadvantaged and isolated communities in urban and rural Scotland who currently underutilise, or have poor access to, sustainable transport and active travel opportunities.
- 2.2 PAS is convinced that the future of engagement in the planning system will be a hybrid of face-to-face and online approaches requiring the use of open-source, locally adaptable methods and tools, and will increasingly be citizen-led. Sustaining Choices aims to explore and refine this approach to community engagement.
- 2.3 Sustaining Choices has been funded by the Paths for All *Smarter Choices, Smarter Places* Open Fund and delivered by PAS working alongside delivery partners in each community.
- 2.4 Participating communities for this cohort of Sustaining Choices (2022-23) were Doune and Deanston (Stirling); Garnock Valley (North Ayrshire); Glasgow East End (Glasgow); Oban (Argyll and Bute); Ullapool, Lochbroom, and the surrounding area (Highland); Whiteinch and Scotstoun (Glasgow).

Figure 1: Map showing the six communities completing Sustaining Choices



Context

- 2.5 The goal of the project was to develop an increased evidence base to support sustainable transport and active travel interventions in each location. It focuses on communities at the margins or which don't have an existing evidence base, to help make decisions to promote sustainable transport in each area.
- 2.6 The following wider project outcomes were achieved:
- Enabling communities to customise the Place Standard (PS) Tool for use in Active Travel engagements using a simple, replicable framework.
 - Training 25 community facilitators (citizens, third sector and public sector workers) in delivering their own engagement processes using the Place Standard within their own communities.
 - Establishing confidence to take other processes forward, such as Local Place Plans (LPPs).
 - Developing six Active and Sustainable Travel Action Plans for communities across Scotland to use as an evidence base to develop future interventions.

- 2.7 At the core each plan consists of a vision for change broken down into a series of actions. The full list of actions can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Oban

- 2.8 Oban is a town based in Argyll and Bute with a population of approximately 8,500¹. It is the largest town between Helensburgh and Fort William and is situated on the Firth of Lorn.
- 2.9 Popular with tourists, Oban features a number of attractions including McCaig's Tower. The coastal and mountainous features of the landscape of the area are also a draw for visitors.
- 2.10 The town is based on the west of the A85. Oban is also served by a train station, with a number of ScotRail trains running between Glasgow and Oban daily. Scottish Citylink also provide connections to Glasgow as well as Dundee (via Perth) and Edinburgh (via Stirling). The town also provides important ferry connections to islands including Colonsay, Barra, Coll, and Tiree, amongst others.

¹ <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/info/population-where-we-live>



Photo credits: Ben Sunderland



Context

- 2.11 [The Sustrans Hands Up Scotland Survey](#) indicated around 41% of students in 2021 got to school by walking. This was followed by 30% of students travelling by bus. Thirty one per cent of students were driven to school. Rates of cycling were too low to quantify without being able to maintain the anonymity of students. Only one out of the three local primary schools completed the survey in 2021. The responses revealed in 2020 that between 31% and 49% of primary school pupils were driven to school. And between 12% and 34% of pupils walked. Data varies between schools and between 2014 and 2021.²
- 2.12 Oban is also served by the Oban Community Council who hold meetings approximately ten times a year.
- 2.13 Community Boundary for Oban:

Core Team

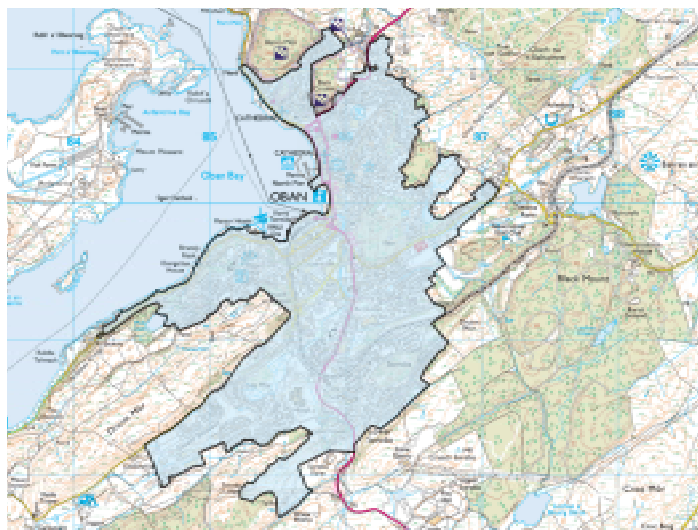
- 2.14 This Action Plan was produced by a partnership of Adventure Oban, Argyll and Bute Coast and Countryside Trust, and Argyll and Bute Council with support from PAS.
- 2.15 A core team was formed out of the partnership between the above organisations. The core team was responsible for day-to-day decisions about the engagement process, from strategy design, marketing and bookings to workshop design, selection of key actions and community-led engagement event delivery.
- 2.16 The core team consisted of Isla McCulloch and Laura Corbe, trustees of Adventure Oban (an Oban-based charity promoting equal access to the outdoors); Jamie Joyce, Project Manager of Argyll and Bute Coast and Countryside

Trust (an Argyll-wide charity with a focus on environment and sustainability); and Becky Hothersall (Community Development Officer) and Douglas Grierson (Sustainable Transport Co-ordinator) from Argyll and Bute Council. All members of the core team attended one or both of the community facilitator training sessions. All members also took active roles in designing, delivering, and capturing the engagement.

Anticipated Uses for the Action Plan

- 2.17 Following a key policy goal of the National Transport Strategy for Scotland, it is hoped that this Action Plan will be used to embed the implications of these proposals in spatial planning and land use decision making for Oban.
- 2.18 The Action Plan is also intended for use by communities and local authorities to plan changes to services and the built environment or be used as a basis for developing specific proposals. This may involve being submitted as an evidence base to help justify further funding applications for work such as feasibility studies or securing bike-storage infrastructure.

² HUSS Data for Oban



Community Boundary for Oban



Context

3. Planning and Transport Policy Context

National Policy Context

3.1 At a national level, policy controlling active travel and sustainable transport will be framed by the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)³ and Transport Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2)⁴. As of November 2022, NPF4 remains in draft form to be laid before parliament, but no significant changes are expected to the draft text before adoption. Other key policy documents governing active travel and sustainable transport are listed in Appendix 2.

3.2 The draft NPF4 aims to deliver sustainable, liveable and productive places across the whole of Scotland. It states that every decision on our future development must contribute to making Scotland a more sustainable place, in part by ensuring that all future development is accessible by sustainable travel.

3.3 To this end, the intent of the dedicated policy 13 on sustainable transport (p57) is to encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to

travel unsustainably. There is a recognition that reducing the need to travel unsustainably is the highest priority in the sustainable transport investment hierarchy and that the upgrading and provision of additional active travel infrastructure will be fundamental to the development of a sustainable travel network providing access to settlements, key services and amenities, employment and multimodal hubs (p108).

3.4 To this end, NPF4 states that proposals will be supported that improve, enhance or provide active travel infrastructure, public transport infrastructure or multi-modal hubs, in particular where proposals:

- i. Provide direct, easy, segregated and safe links to local facilities via walking, wheeling and cycling networks before occupation;
- ii. Will be accessible by public transport, ideally supporting the use of existing services;
- iii. Integrate transport modes;
- iv. Provide low or zero-emission vehicle and cycle charging points in safe and convenient locations, in alignment with building standards;
- v. Supply safe, secure and convenient cycle parking to meet the needs of users and

which is more conveniently located than car parking;

- vi. Are designed to incorporate safety measures including safe crossings for walking and wheeling and reducing the number and speed of vehicles;
- vii. Have taken into account, at the earliest stage of design, the transport needs of diverse groups including users with protected characteristics to ensure the safety, ease and needs of all users; and
- viii. Adequately mitigate any impact on local public access routes.

One goal of Sustaining Choices is to communicate to developers a baseline understanding of the needs of Oban so they can develop evidenced proposals which meet these criteria.

3.5 The Scottish Government also has a national walking strategy 'Let's Get Scotland Walking'⁵ published in 2014 which aims to promote walking as a means to improve the health of the population.

³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/documents/>

⁴ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/lets-scotland-walking-national-walking-strategy/pages/1/>



Context

3.6 Core aims of this policy include:

- Create a culture of walking
- Better walking environments throughout Scotland
- Ensure easy, convenient independent mobility for all.

All of these aims are corroborated by the outcomes of the Sustaining Choices engagement exercises.

3.7 More recently, the Scottish Government has closed a consultation for the 'Cycling framework for active travel'. This will build on the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (2010 – 2020) and set out strategic priorities for the next 5 – 10 years.⁶

3.8 Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 articulates a vision for a sustainable, inclusive, safe, accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors. Its four priorities each have three outcomes and a series of policies to guide their implementation. Its priorities and outcomes are designed to be used as an evaluation framework to measure progress.

⁶ <https://consult.gov.scot/transport-scotland/cycling-framework/>



Photo credit: Ben Sunderland

Context

- 3.9 NTS2 acknowledges that people still face barriers when wanting to cycle or walk to their destination, and that vehicles including public transport continue to emit greenhouse gases. It commits to addressing this.
- 3.10 Regarding *inequalities*, key issues identified by NTS2 that need to be addressed regarding active travel and sustainable transport include: the risk of transport poverty for around 1 million deprived households across Scotland compounded by high costs for public transport (p10); the gendered nature of access to public transport and resultant inequalities affecting women, as well as increased safety fears when walking (p11); the barriers young people face (particularly in rural areas) regarding the availability and cost of public transport, particularly to further and higher education (p13); the need to meet the travel needs of an increasingly elderly population (p14); and the considerable barriers to travel faced by disabled people (p15). The policy also recognises divergent transport and travel issues faced by different communities across Scotland, whether urban or rural, and according to socio-economic factors. It states that “many of Scotland’s most disadvantaged communities are in cities, particularly in suburban areas. Yet, many of them are now having to travel longer distances to access employment opportunities as significant numbers of jobs tend to be in city centre locations.” (p17). But it also highlights that people in rural areas usually have to travel further to access services and tend to have more limited choices when it comes to public transport, the latter meaning that rural households tend to drive more frequently than urban households.” (p17).
- 3.11 Regarding *climate change*, NTS2 notes that a key challenge is to reduce transport impacts to help deliver the net-zero target (p20). It admits that in terms of air pollution, emissions of NOx from road transport are reducing but not at the anticipated rate (p13). It also recognises that a key challenge involves getting people to change their travel behaviour, both in terms of reducing demand for travel and how they make particular journeys, especially by encouraging walking and cycling for short journeys.
- 3.12 Regarding the *economy*, the importance of tourism is acknowledged but so too the impact that increasing number of tourists, particularly in the peak summer months, can have on the transport system. This can particularly impact rural communities, who are witnessing deteriorating road networks as traffic increases, particularly at natural and cultural attractions, with the use of much larger and heavier cars, caravans and motorhomes.
- 3.13 In terms of *health and wellbeing*, NTS2 notes that road safety is critical, and that road incidents in Scotland continue to have a significant negative impact on individuals, families and society as a whole. Similarly, all people should be able to travel without fear of crime, especially women (p37). School children can be at risk when walking to school from poor path infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Over reliance on motorised transport contributes to Scotland’s obesity culture (p38).
- 3.14 NPF4 aligns itself with NTS2 in stating that infrastructure investment should be prioritised for locations where it will achieve the preceding priorities and outcomes (reducing inequalities, taking climate action, improving health and wellbeing and helping deliver a wellbeing economy).



Context

3.15 Table 2: Core NTS2 Policy Goals

NTS2 Priority	Key NTS2 Policies
Reduce Inequalities	Minimise the connectivity and cost disadvantages faced by those in remote rural and rural areas, including safeguarding of lifeline services.
	Ensure transport in Scotland is accessible for all by supporting the implementation and development of Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework (specifically disabled access to buses and trains, improved wayfinding and signage).
	Remove barriers to public transport connectivity and accessibility within Scotland.
Take Climate Action	Ensure sustainable, public and active travel access to employment, education and training. Improve sustainable access to healthcare facilities for staff, patients and visitors.
	Reduce emissions generated by the transport system to mitigate climate change; reduce emissions generated by the transport system to improve air quality.
	Support management of demand to encourage more sustainable transport choices.
Improve our health and wellbeing	Facilitate a shift to more sustainable and space-efficient modes of transport for people and goods.
	Improve the quality and availability of information to enable all to make more sustainable transport choices.
	Increase safety of the transport system and meet casualty reduction targets.
Help Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth	Provide a transport system that promotes and facilitates active travel choices which help to improve people's health and wellbeing across mainland Scotland and the Islands.
	Provide a transport system which enables businesses to be competitive domestically, within the UK and internationally.

4. Planning and Transport Policy Context

Local Policy Context

- 4.1 The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) (one of the seven regional transport partnerships established to improve the planning and delivery of regional transport) Regional Transport Strategy Refresh (draft, May 2017) updates the 2008-22 strategy approved by Scottish ministers in 2008, articulating a vision to “deliver connectivity across the Highlands and Islands which enables sustainable economic growth and helps communities to actively participate in economic and social activities.”⁷
- 4.2 The strategy recognises that while many projects need to be delivered by a concerted effort of institutions in partnership across the region, working with local communities to tailor local responses is key. It states that it will endeavour to take a locality planning and empowerment approach to address social isolation and access deprivation at a locality-based level. In so doing, it aims to work with partners and communities to plan, design and deliver the best mix of transport for their area to address access barriers (p42).

⁷ https://hitrans.org.uk/Strategy/Regional_Transport_Strategy



Context

4.3 The strategy goes on to articulate a delivery plan (p50-51). Delivery items particularly relevant to the action points established during Sustaining Choices include:

- Approaching the road maintenance backlog on the local authority road network;
- Developing a strategy for establishing transport routes/corridors as visitor attractions including the NC500;
- Maximising the potential of the Highland rural rail routes, including journey time reductions, increased frequency and better rolling stock;
- Implementing concessionary fares, to include community transport services and local ferry, air and rail services where appropriate;
- Developing comprehensive public transport information and mapping;
- Implementing the Low Carbon Strategy;
- Implementing the Regional Active Travel Strategy.

4.4 In terms of active travel, the strategy commits to: improving integration of cycling as part of longer public transport journeys; improving walking and cycling links within the region (making the case for further financial support towards the development of improved walking and cycling links to and within towns and to employment, health, leisure and retail facilities as well as to visitor sites); the

provision of associated promotional materials, including production of high-quality, consistent mapping of routes; and supporting the provision of improved walking and cycling access at public transport interchanges (p45/6).

- 4.5 HITRANS acknowledges that while progress has been made in recent years in providing infrastructure, facilities and information to encourage more active travel, there is an ongoing need to offer:
- More extensive and better-quality pedestrian and cycle networks;
 - Design of developments and road transport improvements which meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists;
 - Information about the networks and facilities that are available;
 - Measures to increase pedestrians' and cyclists' confidence in their personal safety;
 - Convenient and secure cycle parking facilities;
 - Segregated cycle routes; and

4.6 General information, and promotion of active travel to continue to change attitudes. Argyll and Bute's Local Development Plan is in the process of being updated. A proposed Local Development Plan 2 currently outlines several objectives including 'High Quality Places'.

Under this objective is the intention that the next Development Plan will 'promote the creation of safe, inclusive and high-quality places where people want to live, work, invest and visit and where they are encouraged to lead active lifestyles.'⁸

- 4.7 Proposal A in the plan refers to a Strategic Development Framework for Oban. In relevance to this report, the proposed Strategic Development Framework includes reference to 'rationalisation of existing land uses', 'improved traffic management and parking, development of the Strategic Transport Hub', and 'investigating potential improvements to the network resilience associated with the strategic road network.'
- 4.8 Policy 4 focuses on Sustaining Development and outlines relevant aspirations including 'utilise public transport corridors and active travel networks'.
- 4.9 Policy 6 refers to Green Infrastructure including green spaces as explored during this engagement exercise.

⁸ [Argyll and Bute PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2](#)



Context



Photo credits: Ben Sunderland



- 4.10 Active travel is directly referenced under 'Connectivity' with aspirations that active travel networks improve quality of life and reduce resource consumption. Policy 32 proposes that:
- Existing active travel networks and rights of way are safeguarded and integrate with the development;
 - Active travel routes within development are delivered, as appropriate, ensuring that any special mobility and safety requirements are also addressed;
 - In all cases consideration requires to be given to the integration of active travel routes to adjoining areas, in particular to the Core Path network, Public Rights of Way, safe routes to school network, green infrastructure and to link to the foreshore and to public transport facilities. The scale and nature of the proposal and proximity of active travel routes will be taken into account by the planning authority in determining the requirement for such infrastructure, which may be subject of planning conditions or agreements.

From the review of local policy it can be concluded that there is a place for the Oban action plan for Active Travel within policy aspirations for the area. Furthermore, this plan should be able to serve as an evidence base to inform these aspirations and act as a remit for change.

Related Research and Projects

- 4.11 In 2019 the local authority carried out their own Place Standard exercise: [How Good is Your Place](#). This exercise was broad and covered all aspects of the Place Standard tool. While the Sustaining Choices exercise also used the Place Standard tool the focus was specifically on Active Travel, with emphasis given to walking, cycling, wheeling, and streets and spaces.
- 4.12 The 2019 Place Standard exercise recorded scores of 4 for both Moving Around and Streets and Spaces (with 1 meaning there is much room for improvement and 7 meaning that there is little room for improvement). Commentary from the 2019 report was echoed within this engagement exercise. Data from the Place Standard exercise have

Context

been used to inform key strategic documents for Argyll and Bute. These include informing the consultation stage of the Argyll and Bute Outcomes Improvement Plan 2024-34. Consultation is currently underway on this document, which will set out the Community Planning Partnership's vision for achieving long term outcomes for communities in Argyll and Bute. There are also plans to regenerate [Gibraltar Street](#) in Oban, developing the streetscape and improving access to the town centre.

- 4.13 Outwith the project boundary but still related to active travel, there has been some design work conducted for an active travel route between [Dunbeg and Connel](#). References to this route were made throughout the engagement.
- 4.14 Further, the Isle of Kerrera is also outwith the Oban boundary, but all the island residents rely on Oban for their public services, schooling, nursery, healthcare etc. The [local development trust](#) on Kerrera has recently brought in an e-bike scheme for residents which has been hugely impactful in reducing the need for short car journeys and has improved the connectivity of the island. They have also recently completed a significant project in the delivery of a new road for the

island which has also been transformational for the islanders' connectivity and access to Oban and the mainland.

- 4.15 A total of 41 classes from Oban High were surveyed using a short online survey. Due to time restrictions these responses were not included in the main data analysis. However, their feedback strongly echoed the overall engagement exercise. Out of 695 students from the 41 classes, 66% said that they regularly walked into Oban. Far fewer said that they cycled, with 7% of students responding that they often cycled into town.

'Too far' was the most common reason given by students for not walking or cycling to school. Suggestions for improved sustainable and active travel included: more cycle paths; more reliable and frequent public transport; foldable bikes in station square; access to electric scooters; and safer pavements. The full set of survey data can be accessed from the project team.

This Sustaining Choices engagement exercise chose to focus primarily on active travel with streets and spaces being captured within that focus.

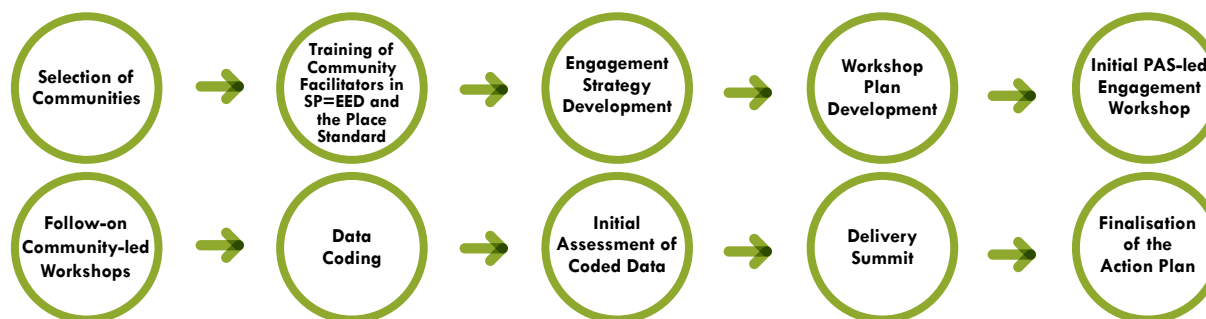


Engagement Process

5. Approach

Project Delivery – Overview

The following flow chart lays out the stages of the engagement process that was undertaken, with each stage being explained more fully in the following section.



Project Delivery – Detailed Steps

- 5.1 The following describes the various stages of the engagement process:
- 5.2 After an initial exercise to **select interested communities**, the project began by training community facilitators to engage their communities in an online environment. Trainees were a mix of local citizens and third-and public-sector co-workers.
- 5.3 **Community facilitators were trained** in engagement principles using an adapted version of PAS's SP=EED® training.⁹ This was focused on online engagement and encouraged the core teams that had formed to begin **developing engagement strategies** for their communities (marketing, stakeholders, consultation goals). A second session then introduced the Place Standard tool¹⁰ and

- 5.4 For each community the core team **developed a workshop plan** with input from PAS. Each community selected 3-4 high level questions from the Place Standard tool. Two further questions asking about people's high-level priorities and their suggestions for actions to implement these were included. These questions formed the basis of each engagement workshop, together with an 'Anchor Statement' which described the goals that each community wanted to achieve with their engagement.

- 5.5 The Anchor Statement designed by the Oban core team was as follows: "Giving Oban residents a voice to decide what should be done to make active travel choices more attractive and appealing."
- 5.6 A simple question and response style workshop based on these questions with groups of between three and seven people in a break-out room was generally selected by each community. This simple approach was taken to make the process accessible and deliverable by community facilitators who were often on a steep learning journey. The 'open-source' nature of the Place Standard and its teachability made it ideal as an accessible tool to be used in this format. Details of the questions chosen by each community are given below.

⁹ <https://www.pas.org.uk/what-we-do/speed/>

¹⁰ <https://www.placestandard.scot/>



Engagement Process

- 5.7 PAS staff and volunteers then used this workshop plan to **deliver an initial engagement workshop** in each community, with core teams for each community running the bookings and publicity process. Community facilitators took the role of note-taker in each break-out room, alongside a PAS volunteer facilitator. In this capacity they were able to observe how an engagement was delivered first-hand, as the next stage of the learning journey. PAS facilitators also made sure to secure the numeric data required by the Place Standard to gain the level of improvement in a given topic area that participants felt was required.
- 5.8 Each core team then went on to deliver **engagements** on their own, either face to face or online. This was the final stage of their learning journey. They were either run as sessions open to the general public or as sessions tailored to specific groups, such as young people. Some groups also chose to create online surveys, often using Microsoft Forms, to gather data, as an additional helpful stream of information.
- 5.9 Data gathered was typed-up by scribes into a series of statements, which were passed back to PAS for processing. PAS staff took the data received and **thematized the data**,

before synthesising this information into an initial draft document of priorities and actions, along with an indicative assessment of the level of importance of each, based on response rate.

- 5.10 The draft list of actions of priorities was passed for **initial assessment** back to the core team. The core teams then worked to short-list key actions that they felt warranted deeper attention by the community.
- 5.11 Lastly, an **online delivery summit** (facilitated by PAS) was held. Nine key actions were highlighted and explored further. Discussions in break-out groups facilitated by PAS volunteers developed suggestions for delivery partners and possible first steps that could be taken.
- 5.12 The outputs from the delivery summits were then integrated into the initial draft before the **finalisation of the Action Plan**.

Marketing and Publicity

- 5.13 Engagement events were publicised by the core team using Eventbrite, Facebook, newsletters and direct marketing. Engagement also happened in public spaces offering a great opportunity to engage a broad range of people.

Attendance and Response Information

5.14 Participant and/or survey response information is given below:

Location	Event type	Date	No.
Engagement 1	Online	27 June	16
Engagement 2	On Street Engagement – Atlantis Leisure Centre	10 August	25
Engagement 3	On Street Engagement – Dungallan Park	10 August	9
Engagement 4	Ad hoc conversations with parents and other interested parties	Ad Hoc	17
Engagement 5	Access Panel	24 August	4
Engagement 6	Oban High School Survey	15 September	695 ¹¹
Engagement 7	Adventure Oban Big Bike Weekend – evening open meeting	1 October	12
Total attendance/responses during information gathering phase			778
Delivery Summit	PAS-led	1 November	22

¹¹ 41 classes were surveyed as groups. Data not included in the main data analysis exercise but summarised as part of this report.



Understanding The Issues

6. Evidence Gathering – Community Engagement

Response Data

- 6.1 An extensive Place Standard exercise was conducted across Argyll and Bute by the local Community Planning Partnership, using all 14 of the Place Standard criteria as part of their ‘How Good is your Place’ community engagement. Aware that there had been recent engagement using the Place Standard locally, the Oban team wished to use this opportunity to focus and achieve detail specifically regarding active travel.
- 6.2 The Place Standard was used as the basis for the engagements held during Sustaining Choices. In its full version, 14 high-level questions based on different themes are asked of groups, with follow up questions deployed to secure more precise data. During Sustaining Choices, in order to focus on themes pertinent particularly to active travel and sustainable transport, and because of the limited time available during online sessions, core teams were encouraged to choose a smaller number of the Place Standard questions to work with, as well as the final prioritisation and implementation questions. The core team in Oban therefore elected to

split the Place Standard question 1 (Moving Around) into separate discussion focusing on walking, cycling, and wheeling/mobility aids and question 4 (Streets and Spaces).

- 6.3 Following the analysis of the data, improving signage for footpaths, tidying up Oban in an ecologically sensitive way and more safe cycle routes emerged as the core issues that participants wanted to see addressed.
- 6.4 During the workshop, participants were asked to grade their community in response to each question by giving a rating on a scale from 1 to 7. When answering together, a group agrees the rating among themselves, where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement. Usually, a compass diagram is generated to graphically display the grading of the community according to that group. It is important to note that scores were only collected during the online workshop and during the school engagement (only walking and cycling) and not at any other point of the engagement.
- 6.5 Grading still took place for the chosen questions, and are given below, but the compass diagram output has not been considered appropriate because of the limited number of core questions. The following gradings for Oban are averaged.

- 6.6 Ratings by question (where 1 means there is a lot of room for improvement and 7 means there is very little room for improvement).

Question	Rating/7
Can you easily walk quality routes in Oban?	4
What do you think of cycling in Oban?	3
Are places suitable to use with a wheelchair and a mobility aid?	3
What are people’s experiences of Oban’s buildings, streets and public spaces?	3.5

- 6.7 The scoring tentatively indicates some degree of satisfaction on the points discussed with, however, significant room for improvement. The Key Actions and wider Action Plan point to opportunities for such improvement.
- 6.8 Once aggregated and coded, all of the responses made by participants resulted in a series of vision headings and aims. For each aim, priorities and concrete actions for implementation have been developed.
- 6.9 The full list of actions (39) shared by the community can be found in Appendix 1, under the following topic headings: Active Travel; Bus Routes; Community Facilities; Maintenance; Other Comment; Outdoor Space; Parking; Public Realm; Public Transport; Road Layout.



Making it Happen

7. Delivery Strategy

Key Actions Identified

- 7.1 Following an assessment of all 39 potential actions identified during the information gathering stage, the core team identified nine key actions to focus on during the delivery summit.
- 7.2 Participants at the summit discussed the key actions in break-out groups and decided whether a given action could be delivered as a Quick Win, or else could be implemented in the short, medium or long term.
- 7.3 Further discussions then explored which community organisations or outside organisations could support these actions moving forward.
Each break-out group then explored appropriate first steps to implement the key actions.



Making it Happen

7.4 Key Actions: Timeframe and Delivery Partner overview

Action	Response rate	Timescale: Short/Medium/Long Term	Who could help	First steps
Introduce more safe bike routes, including to and from schools	Very High	Long term	Local authority BEAR/Transport Scotland – trunk road authority Developers Adventure Oban Users – high school & primary school students, nurseries, cycling walking groups Housing Associations ACT (Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust) NACC (North Argyll Carers Centre) BID (Business Improvement District) Sustrans HITRANS	Identify groups involved, schools, access panel, ACT, NACC, Adventure Oban, BID Identify & prioritise routes Soroba Road (from housing area to the school campus), access roads to Atlantis Identification of ownership/responsibility of road network. Focus on existing road network initially – consider easy wins with pavement widening etc. Ensure new housing developments consider connections. Linking up existing off road/on road routes – considering shared used paths
Improve the signage and lighting for active travel routes including public footpaths	Very High	Short term	Paths for All BID (Business Improvement District) Argyll and the Isles Tourism Cooperative (AITC) Wee Walk Oban Access Panel Blind Vision Local authority Landowners Housing Associations Sustrans HITRANS	Use Paths For All grading tool for identified routes so you know what to expect from the path. Have a map in town highlighting all the marked routes. Make sure signs are also accessible. Tourist/Alba involvement. QR codes for Komoot. Road signs from Soroba to campus. Establish ownership/responsibilities. Planning authority – maintenance and management.

Timeframes: Quick Win = 6 weeks; Short Term = 6 months; Medium Term = 1 – 2 years; Long Term = 3+ years

Response rates: Low = Less than 5 mentions, Medium = 5-20, High = 20-29, Very High = 30+



Making it Happen

Action	Response rate	Timescale: Short/Medium/Long Term	Who could help	First steps
Improve pavement network	High	Long term	Local authority – consultation notices. Retail park/private landowners Transport Scotland Community councils/local councillors. Police re pavement parking Housing Associations	Understanding responsibilities of roads departments Identifying lines of communication/forum for when investment is being made and when there are opportunities to feed in. Collating and delivering evidence base (this action plan) to the decision makers Identify all the pavements that need improving and prioritise.
Tidy up the general appearance of Oban including greenspace, pavements and shop fronts	High	Medium term	Keep Oban Beautiful, Communication with homeowners keeping bins in better places, Transport Scotland for main roads, BID, local authority for better (more) placement of bins	Map bins that are an obstruction/eye sore and hazard for those with limited mobility or vision. Determine who owns green spaces & what would help volunteer groups for gardening & wildlife green spaces etc.
Ensure pavements meet the needs of those with additional access needs, including disabled people	High	Medium term	Local authority Transport Scotland Housing Associations Access Panel	Engaging with Access Panel, Blind Vision group etc. already under way. Ensure all singing from the same hymn sheet and support.
Consider how access to greenspace can be improved and the quality of existing green space maximised	High	Medium term	Local authority Dungallan Park – Sailing Club/wider community/ABC Atlantis Leisure Glencruitten Estate/Greenshoots Garden/Hope Kitchen Greenspace at back of Rockfield Oban and Lorn RFC Woodland Trust Dunollie Estate Keep Oban Beautiful Paths for All Access Panel Fieldfare Trust	Identify who is responsible for green spaces. Important to expand the areas readily accessible from town so people don't have to drive to e.g. Ganavan. Keep up momentum on recent progress at Dungallan Park and Mossfield sites while working on continued improvements and investment required to these spaces.

Timeframes: Quick Win = 6 weeks; Short Term = 6 months; Medium Term = 1 – 2 years; Long Term = 3+ years

Response rates: Low = Less than 5 mentions, Medium = 5-20, High = 20-29, Very High = 30+



Making it Happen

Action	Response rate	Timescale: Short/Medium/Long Term	Who could help	First steps
Improve infrastructure for cycling	Medium	Short term	Atlantis Leisure Rockfield Centre Retail Park Local Authority Transport Scotland Live Argyll Housing Associations Paths for All Sustrans HITRANS Cycling Scotland	Identify areas that need bike locks as e.g. Cycling Scotland have funding available.
Install clear signage for narrow shared-use roads	Medium	Short term	Local authority & roads authority Transport Scotland Police Paths for All HITRANS Link up with wider campaigning groups.	Fulfil a needs assessment. Enforcement?
Ensure that pedestrian crossings are in the right place, meet modern standards and prioritise pedestrians	Medium	Medium term	Local authority Transport Scotland Access Panel Blind Vision group HITRANS	Access Panel already moving forward with this one. Submission of needs being made.

Timeframes: Quick Win = 6 weeks; Short Term = 6 months; Medium Term = 1 – 2 years; Long Term = 3+ years

Response rates: Low = Less than 5 mentions, Medium = 5-20, High = 20-29, Very High = 30+



Making it Happen

Next Steps

- 7.5 The Strategic Transportation team and other partners/funders will use this plan to better understand what are the active travel priorities in Oban and who are the key stakeholders. The Action Plan will also serve as evidence of support for projects. It will be very useful as supporting documentation in funding applications and to inform community-led development such as Community Action Plans or Local Place Plans.
- 7.6 Correspondence regarding the implementation of this Action Plan should be directed to hello@adventureoban.org



Appendices

Appendix 1

The Action Plan

Full list of actions suggested by community during engagement events

Key Action	Notes/Detail
Primary theme – Active Travel (AT)	
1. Improve active travel routes for wheelchair users and buggies etc.	
Ensure pavements meet the needs of those with additional access needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict parking by dropped kerb at exit of little lane at Millpark • Reducing obstacles and incorporating dropped kerbs (i.e. where the green foot bridge over the rail track comes out at Soroba & at Soroba bus stops). • For example, at Station Square appropriately colour coded dimple paving should be installed at the table top feature on the vehicular approach. Further, the shared (level) surface makes this area very difficult to navigate for those with visual impairments (e.g. guide dogs are trained to follow a raised kerb and will stop only at an upstand). • Gibraltar Street (currently under consultation and earmarked for investment)
2. Improve access to multi-modal paths, including cycle routes	
Improve pavement network connectivity	<p>Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulpit Road • Soroba Road • Between Dungallan Park and Calmac Pier • Rockfield Road • Pedestrian routes to McCaig's Tower • Glenshellach Terrace • Laurel Crescent to Hazeldene Crescent • Glencruitten Road • Route to High School • Glenshellach to High School • Catalina Avenue to Hayfield • To Tesco and Homebase (across the retail park in general) • Roads to Gallanach and Ganavan • Reinstate old right of way out the back of Wee Ganavan • Tesco and Gibraltar Street (currently under consultation and earmarked for investment) • Open a short cut between the ferry terminal and the station car park for pedestrians & bikes



Appendices

Key Action	Notes/Detail
Pavements could be widened in some areas to improve safety and accessibility	Suggestions include widen the footway on A85 opposite Croft Road, below the Eventide home and on George Street pavements
Improve safety on key roads	<p>Rockfield Road Consider incorporating 'pedestrian refuges' that pedestrians can step into to allow cars to pass.</p> <p>Soroba Road Full pavement connectivity for pedestrians to schools and the hospital. Explore the possibility of an offroad or 'quiet road' cycle path from Glencruitten to Soroba as current road is a significant barrier to cycling south out of town at the moment.</p> <p>Glencruitten Road Improved pavement connectivity and better street lighting to Mossfield area (as a minimum).</p> <p>Ganavan Road Signage of shared use of the road with pedestrians and cyclists, speed limit enforcements. Explore alternative off road/path options.</p>
Improve maintenance of paths and pavements	<p>Examples included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'chicken run' route • Jacob's Ladder • The wooden steps on the path from Kilbowie to Ardbahn Crags • Broken water ways at the top of Craigard Road • Path from Glenshallach Terrace down to Tesco carpark
Police training on cycle safety	
Promote Oban as an active town and active space	
3. Develop a culture that promotes safe active travel	
Introduce behaviour change initiative for both drivers and cyclists to improve safety for road users	
Have police patrol on bikes	
4. Improve facilities for cycling	
Provide opportunities to learn about safe ways to cycle	Bikeability is now being delivered by Live Argyll in A&B schools, encourage uptake of this, linking with community-led bike events delivered by Adventure Oban/ACT
Improve infrastructure for cycling	<p>At key points in town the Retail Park, Atlantis Leisure, The Rockfield Centre, the Hospital, etc.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure bike parking • More places to lock bikes • Charging points for e-bikes • Parking outside of town and showers for people to cycle into work • Water fountains



Appendices

Key Action	Notes/Detail
5. Develop comprehensive and safe cycle routes	
Introduce more safe bike routes including to and from schools	<p>Potential locations could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To high school to Rockfield primary school campus • South Pier to Dungallan & Gallanach • The Oban town end of the CalMac pier has a short barrier to allow bikes to pass The same at the other side of the terminal building would make a bike route to Pulpit Hill/Gallanach easier avoiding the ferry foot passenger area • War Memorial to Ganavan • Oban hill • Pulpit hills • Quarry road to Mossfield Drive (and other parts of Glencruitten Road) • Ganavan Road • From the primary school campus south out of town to Kilmore • Develop safer cycle route to Atlantis that avoids the Bealach-an-Righ, possible contraflow for bikes on (currently one way) Breadalbane Street as an option • Remove street parking to accommodate bike lane on the one way system in town • Explore connecting Star Brae/Stevenson Street with Market Street for bikes (thus connecting Longsdale to the high school avoiding the trunk road) • Make Market Street two way for bikes • Connect the bike route from “The Summit” (by Achnalarraig Stable) to Polvinister Road
Keep existing cycle paths clear and well maintained (including mountain bike trails)	Regular community-led cycling events like Adventure Oban’s Big Bike Weekend can bring volunteers together to support with this, especially mountain bike trails.
Allow concession from police when cycling on pavements	Particularly if roads are less safe (e.g. A85) and one-way roads e.g. Breadalbane Street



Appendices

Key Action	Notes/Detail
6. Develop more signage and information about routes	
Improve the signage and lighting for active travel routes including public footpaths	<p>Potential routes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The path from Kilbowie to Ardbahn Craigs • Glencruitten woods • To the beaches (wee Ganavan & Ganavan)* • Corran halls to war memorial via The Witches* • To SAMS • Up to the Hydro <p>Multiple routes to McCaigs Tower (current signs point walkers up Hill Road which has no pavement and is already difficult to negotiate without pedestrians)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulpit Hill • Pulpit Drive to Glenmore Road • Glenshellach to the hospital & campuses* • Between Lynn Road and Millpark Road* • Golf course • Birchwood to Mossfield* • Develop clearer signage to the bike paths in and around town centre the regularly used footways linking George street and the Esplanade on either side of the Regent Hotel* <p>* <i>Better lighting was specifically mentioned on these routes</i></p>
<p>Improve signage at Station Square for key walking and cycling routes from town</p> <p>Develop a boardwalk from Oban to Ganavan</p>	
Primary theme – Bus Routes (BR)	
7. Improve options for accessing bus travel	
Trial a free shuttle bus day/week from Ganavan to Gallanach or Soroba to help get people back on buses & gauge interest in routes	
Review suitability of bus stops	Review the location of bus stops, the seating in bus stops and also the proximity of drop kerbs, especially in Soroba
Primary theme – Community Facilities (CF)	
8. Consider the use of properties and public spaces	
Develop bad weather public spaces	Opportunities for more community-led activities at Corran Halls, Rockfield Centre etc.



Appendices

Key Action	Notes/Detail
Primary theme – Maintenance (M)	
9. Address issues regarding general care and maintenance in an area	
Tidy up the general appearance of Oban including greenspace, pavements and shop fronts	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting away bins which, as well as an eyesore are a hazard for those with limited mobility and vision • Clearing litter • Improving pavements • Improving shop fronts • Improving the regularly used footways linking George street and the Esplanade on either side of the Regent Hotel • Improve appearance of Jacobs Ladder • Cutting back overgrown trees
Primary theme – Other Comment (OC)	
10. Consider the development of a car club scheme	
Develop a car sharing scheme or car club	
Primary theme – Outdoor Space (OS)	
11. Better understand, maintain, and manage green spaces	
Consider how access to green and natural spaces can be improved	<p>Areas include Corran Halls, Dungallan Park and the green space at the top of Craigard Road, McCaigs Tower, the Hydro, the block above The Rockfield Centre and an area outside Mark Dan's</p> <p>Clarify ownership of these and other areas and explore if/support local groups to take ownership</p> <p>Acknowledge progress made at sites like Dungallan Park and Mossfield while keeping up momentum for further investment and improvement in these vital spaces</p>
Maximise the quality of existing green and natural spaces	Maximise the quality of existing green spaces and natural spaces to support biodiversity, to be safe, well maintained and provide multiple functions and amenities to meet the varying needs of all groups
12. Development of a skatepark or similar	
Develop a skate park/pump track/skills park to build kids confidence on bikes/scooters etc.	
Primary theme – Parking (P)	
13. Improve parking provision.	
Better management of parking in Oban including offering more free parking. Manage over-parking at the bottom of Pulpit Road	This was not a focus of the study, but it was felt that it was very much an enabler



Appendices

Key Action	Notes/Detail
Primary theme – Public Realm (PR)	
14. Consider changes which make public spaces more comfortable and accessible	
Make shops and facilities more accessible by promoting push, rather than pull doors	This makes access easier especially for those using wheelchairs or other mobility aids
Provide better seating in public places	Dungallan Park, area in front of Markie Dan's, Station Square, and going up hills
Improve green spaces by offering more amenities including public toilets	Noted that the community campaign to keep the Ganavan toilets open over the winter has made that crucial greenspace much more accessible to all members of the community
Install better signage to toilets at Station Square	
Primary theme – Public Transport (PT)	
15. Improve access to public transport	
Improve public transport and make easier to use.	
Advise passengers of the adventure carriage that it costs extra to sit in the bike carriage	
Primary theme – Road Layout (RL)	
16. Consider changes to roads to improve efficiency and safety	
Consider one way system on Oban Hill which may allow bus access to this area which is currently not serviced.	
Refresh road markings.	e.g. speed limit signs. Areas noted were at the Laurel Road and Ardconnel Road intersection
Ensure that pedestrian crossings are in the right place, meet modern standards and prioritise pedestrians.	Specifically, reassess the location of the pedestrian crossing near the Oban Inn and consider relocating to nearer the previous location outside the tourist office so that the footway is not blocked by people waiting to cross. Crossings which need modernised include the A85 George St, Esplanade, Corran Halls and A816 Fire Station. Pedestrian crossing at Lidl does not comply with regulations, consider moving to opposite Dunmar Court.
Install clear signage for narrow shared-use roads.	Areas include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Pier to Dungallan & Gallanach • War Memorial to Ganavan • Oban hill roads • Pulpit hill • Quarry road to Mossfield Drive (and other parts of Glencruitten Rd)
Manage the volume of traffic in Oban. Consider alternative solutions to reduce vehicle numbers travelling through and parking in Oban i.e. Oban Ring Road	



Appendices

Appendix 2

Key National Policy Documents

Let's Get Scotland Walking – The National Walking Strategy (Scottish Government, 2014) – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/lets-scotland-walking-national-walking-strategy/pages/1/>

Scotland's Fourth National Planning Framework – revised draft (2022) – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4-revised-draft/documents/>

National Transport Strategy 2 (Transport Scotland, Feb. 2020) – <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>

National Walking Strategy (2014) – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/lets-scotland-walking-national-walking-strategy/>

Active Travel Task Force Delivery Plan (Transport Scotland, 2019) – <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/active-travel-taskforce-delivery-plan/>

Active Travel Framework (Transport Scotland, 2019) – <https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/active-travel-framework/>

Transport and Poverty in Scotland, Report of the Poverty and Inequality Commission (June 2019) – <https://bit.ly/3i5Lwir>

Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-2020 (Transport Scotland, 2017) – <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/cycling-action-plan-for-scotland-2017-2020/>

Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework Our Delivery Plan for 2019-2020 (Transport Scotland, 2019) – <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scotland-s-accessible-travel-framework-delivery-plan-for-2019-2020/>

Key Local Policy Documents

The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) Regional Transport Strategy Refresh – https://hitrans.org.uk/Strategy/Regional_Transport_Strategy

HITRANS Active Travel Strategy (2018) – https://hitrans.org.uk/Documents/HITRANS_ReACTS_Active_Travel_Strategy.pdf

Argyll and Bute's Local Development Plan (Proposed) – <https://argyll-bute.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=36b54584028245019f8edca605511213>

How good is your place – results: Oban (Argyll and Bute Council, 2019) – <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/how-good-your-place-results>





