The Highland Council: Active Travel Strategy 2024 – 2030

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

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Foreword

The Highland Council is delighted to present its first Active Travel Strategy.

This Strategy outlines the Council's vision to make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people, more often, for more of their everyday journeys.

Active travel refers to any mode of travel which is all or mostly people-powered, including walking, wheeling, using a mobility aid, and cycling, including e-bikes. Other modes of travel will be considered in full in the Council's emerging Local Transport Strategy which this Active Travel Strategy should be considered in conjunction with. Trips by public transport are a key element of sustainable, accessible transport and very often include an active travel element, making active travel a crucial part of the sustainable transport mix.

To achieve its vision, the Highland Council's Active Travel Strategy follows the four principles of the Scottish Government's National Transport Strategy 2:

- To reduce inequalities;
- To take climate action;
- To help deliver inclusive economic growth; and
- To improve our health and wellbeing.

In this Strategy, and in our project development and delivery, we take a collaborative, integrated, diversified and data-driven approach to active travel infrastructure and culture within the Highland Council area. This local authority is large and complex, and different communities and areas will need different approaches and options, with residents and visitors realising our vision in different ways.

We hope to take you with us on this journey.

Malcolm MacLeod

Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

The Highland Council

Contents

Introduction

Good transport options make our lives better: we all need transport to get where we're going, whether to access education, healthcare, employment, goods, services, leisure, and social opportunities. Everyone living in and visiting the Highlands should have fair access to affordable, healthy, reliable, and sustainable transport choices.

One of the most effective ways of achieving this is by making it easy to choose active travel for everyday local journeys. Having access to active travel options helps to reduce inequalities, takes climate action, helps to deliver inclusive economic growth and improves our health and wellbeing.

For many people, using a car for their everyday journeys is not possible, practical, or desirable. We want to ensure that having access to a car is not the only way to travel around in our area.

In line with the transport hierarchy, which prioritises active and sustainable travel, we also want to make sure that using cars does not impact on others' ability to walk, wheel and cycle. To achieve this, we need to rebalance resource allocation to provide a wider range of affordable, safe, reliable, healthy travel options across Highland.

Our vision is to make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people in the Highlands, more often, for more of their everyday journeys.

The purpose of this Active Travel Strategy is:

- To set out the strategic framework for active travel for the Highlands as a whole, leading to the detailed Delivery Plans for infrastructure and behaviour change interventions;
- To inform key stakeholders, including the public, elected members and other decision makers, about the Vision and the Delivery Plan and to build support for a shift towards more active and sustainable modes of transport, through infrastructure development and behaviour change measures;
- To integrate our work in active and sustainable travel with multiple other Council workstreams as well as developers, to achieve coherent and efficient delivery of our vision; and
- To support funding applications for the necessary resources by providing a clear, evidence-based Strategy and Delivery Plan for walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure across the Highlands.

Our Approach

This Active Travel Strategy sets out how we can realise our vision. We have planned our approach to be:

- **Collaborative** - recognising the role of key stakeholders, the need for a strategic approach, and that for individual projects communities are often best placed to identify the local support and interventions which they need to reduce car dependence and to support those who do not have access to a car;
- **Integrated** - recognising that increased uptake of sustainable and active modes of transport depend on reliable, easy-to-navigate integration between public transport, walking, wheeling, cycling, community transport and other options;
- **Diversified** - recognising that we need flexible and creative solutions which respond to the changing needs of communities: Highland is a large and varied area and there is no one-size-fits-all answer; and
- **Data-driven** - recognising that information is key to understanding existing travel behaviours, identifying potential interventions, and prioritising actions.

We know that walking, wheeling and cycling are only a part of the transport mix. Our emerging Local Transport Strategy will address the detail of the roads network, community transport, parking policy, road space reallocation, issues around new road construction and the increased vehicle movements which they induce, measures to disincentivise car use, freight, ferries, lift sharing, Demand-Responsive Transport, public transport. In the Active Travel Strategy, however, our focus is on the role of active travel, on its own and in conjunction with other modes.

Our Objectives

The strategic objectives of this Active Travel Strategy were developed to align with the strategic objectives of both the Local Transport Strategy and Regional Transport Strategy. This approach allows alignment of all three strategies but at different scales, from the macro to the micro level.

The objectives of this Active Travel Strategy are to:

1. Increase the number of journeys made by active travel and including an active travel element;
2. Contribute to a just and fair transition to a more sustainable transport network with an appreciation of our challenging geographic layout;
3. Be fully inclusive in our approach to active travel; and
4. Provide support and advice to partners to help deliver active travel infrastructure and behaviour change projects.

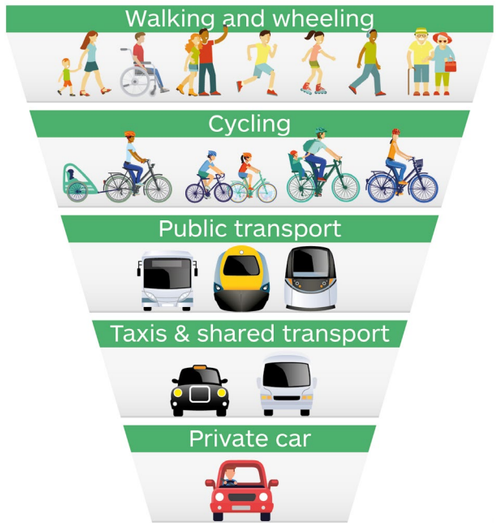
What is Active Travel?

Active travel refers to journeys made by modes of transport that are fully or partially people powered. It includes walking, using wheelchairs and other mobility aids, cycling, using ebikes, scooting and more – we call this walking, wheeling, and cycling.

Active travel includes all people-powered journeys regardless of purpose: everyday functional journeys such as travelling to work, school, or the shops, and leisure journeys such as walking the dog, exercising, or cycling to the park with friends or family.

Active travel is at the top of Transport Scotland's transport hierarchy. This means that the Scottish Government advises that active travel is prioritised over other modes of transport, with walking and wheeling considered first, followed by cycling, then other modes.

Prioritising Sustainable Transport



Why Active Travel?

It is important that we make active travel an easier choice because it offers a wide range of benefits for health, the environment, and society:

Health Benefits

- Encourages physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle as part of daily activity.
- Benefits mental health by increased physical activity and more time outdoors.
- Improves respiratory health through less exposure to air pollution.

Environmental Benefits

- Reduces air pollution.
- Lessens noise pollution.
- Boosts biodiversity and protects green spaces.
- Reduces carbon emissions and helps reach Scotland's Net Zero target.

Social Benefits

- Reduces traffic congestion making our streets more attractive places to be.
- Enhances community connectivity.
- Is the cheapest form of travel.
- Reduces congestion and parking issues.
- Enchances community connectivity through prioritising the movement of people, not vehicles.
- Increases transport independence especially for non-drivers and those who wish to drive less.
- Supports the local economy including through a specialised tourism offer.

By incorporating active travel into daily routines, people in the Highlands can experience personal and community benefits while contributing to a more sustainable, social and environmentally friendly society.

Policy and Strategy Connections

This Active Travel Strategy ties into the principles and strategic objectives present at national, regional and local levels of transport strategy. A full list of policies and strategies were considered when developing this Strategy and are included in Appendix 1; this includes national, regional and local policy. The key policies and strategies are:

NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2

The vision of National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) is that "We will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a fairer, healthier and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors". Its four principles are:

Reduces Inequalities

- Will provide fair access to services we need
- Will be easy to use for all
- Will be affordable for all

Takes Climate Action

- Will help deliver our Net Zero target
- Will adapt to the effects of climate change
- Will promote greener, cleaner choices

Helps deliver inclusive economic growth

- Will get people and goods where they need to get to
- Will be reliable, efficient and high quality
- Will use beneficial innovation

Improves our health and well being

- Will be safe and secure for all
- Will enable us to make healthy travel choices
- Will help make our communities great places to live

Active travel can contribute to all four of these priorities. The particular actions necessary to deliver on these aims will vary between places, reflecting the diversity of our Highland area, but the overarching principles are the same.

NTS2 also sets out the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy, which prioritises investing in sustainable transport:

This mirrors the Transport Hierarchy described earlier, aligning public investment with transport priorities.

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4

Another key policy considered is the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4). This policy has four principles, which are to create:

Sustainable places...
where we can reduce emissions and restore and better connect biodiversity.

Liveable places...
where we can live better, healthier lives.

Productive places...
where we have greener, fairer and a more inclusive wellbeing economy.

Again, active travel can contribute to all of these, particularly through planning spaces in line with the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods. NPF4 describes 20 minute neighbourhoods as a place-based approach to reduce inequality, improve wellbeing, and meet Net Zero carbon emission targets. This approach is not just for larger settlements but has value for smaller rural communities, where shorter car journeys to access goods and services within the settlement could be made by walking, wheeling or cycling.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN

We know that for longer-distance journeys, active travel is not practical on its own. That's why we focus on active travel as part of a bigger picture of reducing car kilometres as set out in the Scottish Government Climate Change Plan.

The Plan's route map, Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland, sets out Scotland's target of achieving a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030. This Active Travel Strategy helps facilitate that by focusing on switching modes away from private car use where possible.

HITRANS REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

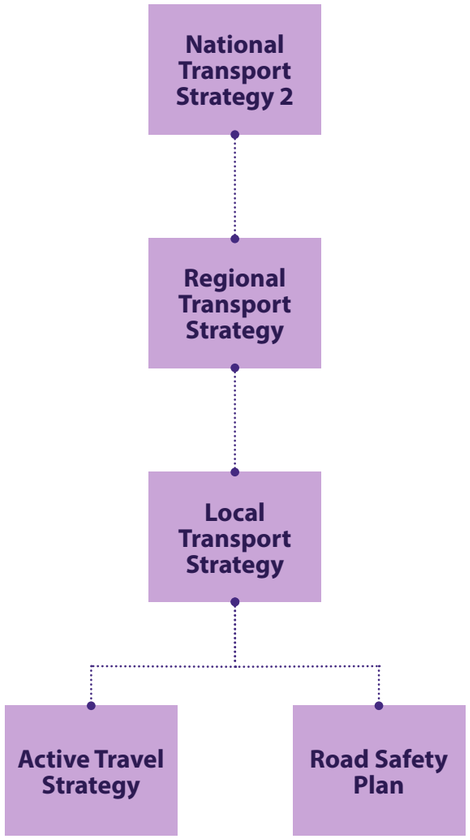
HITRANS has a statutory duty under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 to produce a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). Working with local authority partners, HITRANS is developing a new RTS for the development of transport in the region over the next circa 20 years with the aim of delivering a transport system that reduces inequalities, takes climate action, helps deliver inclusive economic growth, and improves the health and wellbeing of people in the region. The Active Travel Strategy and the emerging Local Transport Strategy align with these aims.

The new RTS will be completed by summer 2024. Full details are available here: HITRANS - Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership.

LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Highland Council's emerging Local Transport Strategy will set the policy framework for how the Council maintains, improves, and manages the transport network up to 2030.

Stakeholder consultation on the Local Transport Strategy took place in Spring 2023. The new draft Local Transport Strategy will, subject to engagement, be finalised and adopted by the Council in 2024.



ROAD SAFETY PLAN

The Council's Road Safety Plan 2024, developed in tandem with this Active Travel Strategy, states:

"Through the development of our Road Safety Plan and the authority's Active Travel Strategy, we aim to improve street design, embrace technology and welcome innovation, with a focus on behavioural change. Achieving our aims will require the coordinated action of all sectors and road users under an enhanced partnership governance structure, whereby through our core partnership approach of education, enforcement, engineering and encouragement, the plan aims to deliver an effective and safer local transport network that provides people with increased travel choices. This includes taking forward the new 20mph Speed Limit introduction. […]

This plan is aligned to Transport Scotland's 'Road Safety Framework to 2030 – Together, making Scotland's roads safer'. […]

Striving for the delivery of a safer road network and focusing on our more vulnerable road users is essential to providing Highland Council's residents and visitors with the opportunities to access the services and facilities they need to enjoy a good quality of life, and in realising our vision of a Safer, Healthier and Greener Road Network."

For full details see the Road Safety pages on the Council's website.

Problems and Opportunities for Active Travel

As part of the development of the Active Travel Strategy and Local Transport Strategy, we held a public consultation and council workshop to identify problems and opportunities for our transport network. Here, we have shown how investing resources in active travel is an opportunity for the Council to address some of these problems. For a full summary of the feedback we received in our engagement, see Appendix 2.

Residents of rural areas are at increased risk of isolation, transport poverty, financial hardship, and economic downturn.	Walking, wheeling and cycling offers low-cost travel independence for many short, everyday journeys, and can lead to increased social connections, helping to combat isolation.
Transport poverty (where people lack travel choices that are available, reliable, affordable, accessible, and safe), creates health and social difficulties by limiting people's ability to meet their daily needs and enjoy a good quality of life.	Having a good choice of travel options for everyday journeys combats travel poverty.
Our rural areas are at increased risk of depopulation.	A realistic choice of travel options for everyday journeys allows more people to live independently in rural areas.
We have an ageing population, particularly in the north and west of the Highlands.	Having a realistic choice of walking, wheeling, cycling or using other mobility aids for short local trips supports good mental and physical "healthspan" as well as lifespan.
65% of the Highland population lives in an area where access to transport is in the lowest 40% of the Scottish population (4 or lower on the SIMD).	Active travel links to public transport can facilitate journeys that would otherwise require a car.
Vehicle-based tourism can lead to congestion and to pressure on parking.	Infrastructure investment and promotion of sustainable travel options will raise awareness of alternatives to car use by visitors.
Those in the lowest income households are significantly less likely to have access to a car.	Active travel improvements will reduce the need to own vehicles, and reduce running costs for those who do have them. People without a vehicle will benefit from increased transport independence.
Sub-regions of Highland function discretely for everyday journeys: Caithness, Fort William, Portree, Ullapool, the Alness – Invergordon area, and the Aviemore area.	Shorter everyday trips within rural setttlements can be suited to active travel. Lower-carbon options for longer trips could include public transport and lift sharing.

Active Travel and Behaviour Change

Poor infrastructure is known to be the biggest single barrier to people choosing to walk, wheel and cycle. Infrastructure interventions can be large and complex, such as providing a new route of several kilometres between settlements, or very simple, such as the provision of dropped kerbs throughout a housing estate, removal of street clutter, or installing a new pedestrian crossing at a junction.

Whilst building new infrastructure can increase walking, wheeling and cycling, combining this with people-focused engagement activities can have a cumulative effect, resulting in greater numbers and diversity of people changing their travel choices.

Activities and initiatives to support, inform, incentivise and educate people who live, work, study and play in our communities can be linked to national campaigns or can be tailored to local situations; they can be aimed at the general public or sections of it such as school pupils or employers.

We recognise that different approaches are needed for interventions within different settlements and for between-settlement routes across Highland Council's large and diverse area.

Behaviour change is woven through this Strategy as an ongoing theme and commitment. In particular, close partnership working with HITRANS in the emerging "People and Place" work with partner local authorities is a key part of delivering successful behaviour change initiatives.

To deliver the objectives of this Strategy we will focus on key themes from the consultation that help support our vision of making active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people in the Highlands, more often, for more of their everyday journeys.

We know that changing travel behaviour takes time, that change will not happen overnight, and it will take a variety of different factors to see a difference. The Strategy Diagram in Appendix 3 demonstrates how we progress from objectives to actions which lead to the impacts of changing travel behaviours in across the Highlands. The diagram is based on the feedback we received during our consultation and sets out our objectives, how they will be achieved, and how the various elements of this Strategy fit together to deliver our vision. The Strategy Diagram feeds directly into the subsequent delivery plan and monitoring and evaluation plan.

Delivery Plan

Policy commitments lead to goals, which in turn lead to specific actions. The Delivery Tables below group these actions into themes, showing how everything fits together to deliver our vision to make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people in the Highlands, more often, for more of their everyday journeys.

The key themes of our Active Travel Strategy are:

- Connecting the Highlands
- Active Travel in Rural and Semi-Rural Areas
- Ensuring Accessibility
- Making the Most of our Public Spaces
- Active Travel and the Local Economy
- Partnership Working
- Maintenance
- Tourism and Leisure

Each of these themes is explored further here, along with how we will deliver change under each theme by Putting It Into Action.

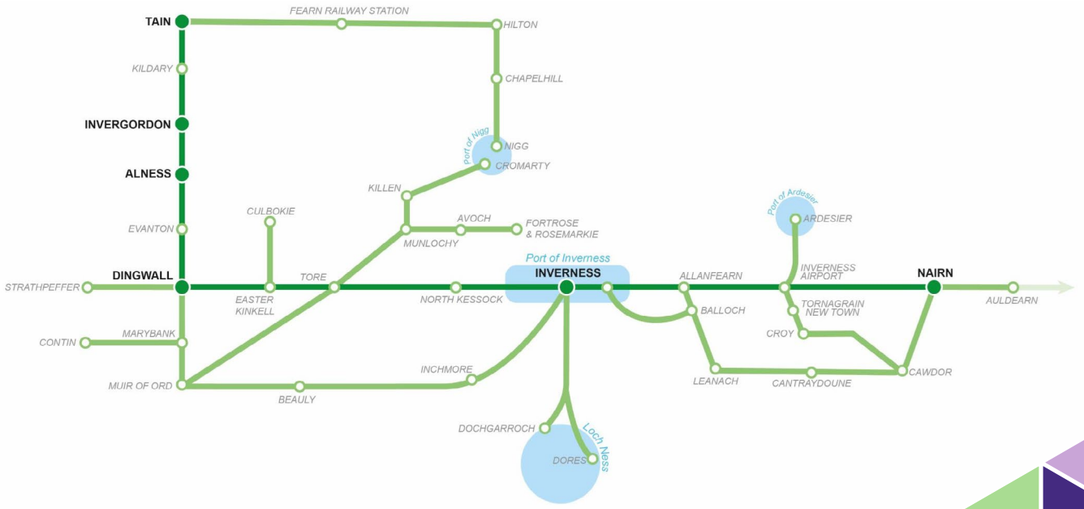
Connecting the Highlands

The Highlands have a vast and sometimes challenging geography which can impact the travel choices people make. To give more people the choice of active travel for everyday journeys, or of using public transport that includes active travel, we need to ensure there is high quality infrastructure within and between our places. Such infrastructure can include widened footways to support walking and wheeling, segregated provision for cycling, provision for safe cycling on the carriageway, and improved placemaking in public spaces as appropriate.

While this is our first Active Travel Strategy, Highland Council is not new to investment in active travel. We have developed a number of detailed active travel audits, masterplans, and networks which detail phased delivery plans and are based on a clear prioritisation process.

Infrastructure delivery focuses on three main elements: the Inner Moray Firth, larger settlements across Highland which have an Active Travel Masterplan developed, and settlements elsewhere in Highland.

Firstly, the Inner Moray Firth Active Travel Network (IMFATN) covers active travel connections between settlements in the Inner Moray Firth area. These are aimed mostly at increasing cycling, and at cycling integration with public transport.



Secondly, the Highland Wide Active Travel Network (HWATN) looks more locally at active travel proposals within settlements across Highland, based on our Active Travel Masterplans. This network includes Dingwall, Nairn, Tain, Wick, Thurso, Invergordon, Alness, Portree, Fort William and Inverness.

Both these plans set out a prioritisation of interventions and are live documents. This means that the order and phasing are indicative rather than fixed. As circumstances change - such as funding criteria, Scottish Government policy, or major developments such as the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport - priorities may need to be recalculated.

Thirdly, within Highland's smaller settlements, which do not yet have an Active Travel Masterplan, traffic volumes are relatively low. These low volumes, coupled with the new 20mph limits, mean that in many areas cycling on the carriageway is a realistic option for many. However we recognise that further improvements such as crossing improvements and installation of dropped kerbs are likely to be necessary in some settlements. The details of such measures will be assessed over time through the ongoing evaluation of the 20mph initiative. Part of this work recognises that improved access by walking, wheeling and cycling is crucial for increased uptake of public transport. In the prioritisation work, infrastructure projects which connect to public transport provision are recognised as of higher overall benefit.

Transport Scotland's Network Planning Tool (NPT) uses national databases to predict the relative demand for cycling on the majority of streets and paths across Scotland. At the time of writing, the current version covers journeys to work, which account for a disproportionately low share of cycling trips in rural areas. Future NPT releases will include school travel and other everyday journeys (travel to shops, leisure facilities and visiting friends and family) and so the tool will become increasingly useful in review of the Strategy and prioritisation work.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Connecting the Highlands

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Further develop the active travel network across Highland, striving to deliver high quality provision for walking, wheeling and cycling as appropriate for each location	Delivering the phased Inner Moray Firth Regional Active Network to connect settlements in the area	High	Long	Active Travel team	HITRANS, Transport Scotland, Sustrans
	Delivering the Highland Wide Active Travel Network by implementing the masterplans for each settlement	High	Long	Active Travel team	HITRANS, Transport Scotland, Sustrans
	Deliver phased improvements on the ICATN	High	Long	Active Travel team	HITRANS, Transport Scotland, Sustrans
	Deliver improvements outlined in the Capital Fund	High	Long	Active Travel team	HITRANS, Transport Scotland, Sustrans
Evaluate the 20mph initiative and identify where small scale interventions can improve accessibility, such as provision of crossings and dropped kerbs	Carry out 20mph initiative review	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	
	Identify and progress opportunities to improve accessibility, such as crossings and dropped kerbs.	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	
Support integration of active travel work across different Council workstreams, for coherent and efficient service delivery	Establish a Sustainable Travel Group for officers within Highland Council	High	Short	Active Travel team	
	Establish regular meetings with Planning and Transport Planning colleagues to review applications, including consideration of the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods and of placemaking	High	Short	Active Travel team	Planning, Transport Planning
	Trial the use of template Active Travel Plans for larger developments	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	
Secure funds to deliver infrastructure improvements through existing and new funding sources	Apply for funding from available funds as appropriate to the project	High	Medium	Active Travel team	Various

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Connecting the Highlands

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Support HITRANS in the roll-out of the HiBike bikeshare scheme with the aim of expanding it across the region	Work closely with HITRANS to support the existing provision and to identify additional HiBike locations	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	HITRANS
Annually revisit our prioritised list of active travel projects using the prioritisation tool and taking into account other relevant factors	Using our priority tool to help determine the priority of emerging active travel projects	High	Short	Active Travel team	
	Annually revisit our prioritised list of active travel projects using the prioritisation tool	High	Medium	Active Travel team	

Active Travel in Rural and Semi-Rural Areas

Highland is made up of a largely rural land mass; 25% of the population live rurally. Residents of rural areas face particular transport challenges such as distances to services, topography, weather, and lack of infrastructure.

Outwith the Inner Moray Firth area, distances between settlements are long and numbers of potential users of active travel routes are small, even including tourism and leisure journeys. Therefore active travel improvements should be focussed within settlement boundaries, linking to approaches like the 20-minute neighbourhood, rather than between settlements.

In terms of reducing single occupancy rural car trips, behaviour change work within the sub-regions of Highland should focus on modal shift where journeys are short, such as the school run, and on working with larger employers or clusters of smaller employers to facilitate multi-modal journeys.

While it is acknowledged that many of those living rurally need to rely on the private car to travel to their nearest settlement, behaviour change work could focus on promoting a model where rural residents drive to their nearest settlement or public transport link and then use active travel between destinations within that settlement rather than making multiple short car trips. This could be complemented by work to increase lift-sharing between settlements.

Rural residents can also benefit from the increased availability and range of e-bikes which, as well as for short trips, can facilitate medium length journeys between settlements where appropriate infrastructure is made available.

Total car kilometres travelled are increasing in Scotland and in Highland. Despite this, historic census data shows around a fifth of people have no access to cars or vans in Highland in both rural and urban areas. Even where a household has access to a car some members may regularly be left without travel options, highlighting the need for alternatives.

While many trips will still depend on the car, particularly for those living rurally, and while active travel may not be a solution that is applicable to every journey every time, there is considerable opportunity for modal shift for some journeys, some of the time, reducing car use wherever possible.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Active Travel in Rural and Semi-Rural Areas

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Continue to work on establishing Quiet Routes to reduce the speed limit of selected minor rural roads to create more walking, wheeling, and cycling friendly routes, linking this work to any national developments on Quiet Routes.	Continue Quiet Route pilot	Medium	Short	Active travel team	Roads team, Road Safety, HITRANS
	Establish three additional Quiet Route schemes	Medium	Medium	Active travel team	Roads team, Road Safety, HITRANS
Encourage multi-modal journeys by providing integrated active travel links to public transport.	Progress to design of pilot scheme for Mobility Hub locations	Medium	Short	Sustainable Travel Team	
	Identify and prioritise interventions in AT Masterplans	Medium	Medium	Sustainable Travel Team	
Focus on infrastructure improvements which will have the most impact on everyday journeys to local goods and services.	Use our prioritisation tool to determine the priority of emerging active travel projects.	High	Short	Active travel team	

Maintenance

Maintenance of existing and planned infrastructure is an important and ongoing issue for the Council. The Scottish Government's Transport Investment Hierarchy shows maintenance as the top priority; this means we should prioritise maintenance of our active travel infrastructure.

Walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure maintenance can be as simple as removing overgrown vegetation to restore a route to its full width, or as complex as resurfacing of a long footway next to a busy road.

A key part of this Active Travel Strategy is to improve the data held by the Council on the extent and condition of footways and cycleways on the adopted road network, and on the network of paths that are not adopted but are owned and managed by other Council teams, such as Housing, Education or Amenities. This knowledge will make it easier to assess and plan maintenance needs for the existing walking, wheeling and cycling network, to access any available funding for such work, and to plan for the maintenance burden of new infrastructure.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Maintenance

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Continue to seek funding for maintenance of our walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure	Seek revenue budget increases from THC	High	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team
	Search for alternative maintenance budget options	High	Long	Active Travel team	
Improve our knowledge of and data held on our existing walking wheeling and cycling infrastructure, and the maintenance requirements of that infrastructure	Establish baseline data for total length of adopted walking / wheeling / cycling infrastructure within the Council area	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU, Transport Scotland
	Establish baseline data for total length of walking / wheeling / cycling infrastructure owned by Housing / Education / Amenities departments within the Council	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU, Transport Scotland
	Seek to create capacity within the Sustainable Travel team for an officer to carry out this work	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU, Transport Scotland
	Survey and report on the maintenance needs of adopted walking / wheeling / cycling infrastructure within the Council area	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU
	Survey and report on the maintenance needs of walking / wheeling / cycling infrastructure owned by Housing / Education / Amenities departments within the Council	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU
	Create a full active travel reference map for internal audit and monitoring purposes	High	Short	Active Travel team	
	Develop & deliver a Path Improvement Plan	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Maintenance

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Improve public reporting of faults on walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure	Improve public reporting form and process	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	ICT
	Promote the use of public reporting form to the general public	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	

Ensuring Accessibility

A key theme from the consultation was the importance of walking and wheeling. Cycling and cycling infrastructure is higher-profile and more resource-intensive, and attracts more comment, than walking and wheeling provision. However, walking and wheeling is the most popular active mode and can be for many the easiest way of leaving the car at home.

Interventions to support walking, wheeling and the use of mobility aids can be relatively cheap and highly effective. Such measures include pavement improvements, pavement widening, improved road crossings, and the installation of dropped kerbs. These can often be on Council-owned land and are quick to install. Provision of benches opens up trips to those who are less able and to those caring for others and enhances social spaces.

When we consider transport equalities along with protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantage, we can see that good walking and wheeling infrastructure can be of particular benefit to certain groups of people such as:

- People (often women) with caring responsibilities for the young and the elderly;
- People (often women) making "chained journeys" between several destinations;
- Older people;
- People with a disability, such as visual impairment or those requiring the use of a wheelchair or mobility aid. Drivers, including Blue Badge holders, all walk or wheel between their vehicle and their destination;
- Those at risk of transport poverty and / or who are experiencing economic hardship.

Access to high quality walking and wheeling provision is particularly important for Highland's ageing population, many of whom are car-dependent and do not habitually cycle: walking has a much lower entry barrier in terms of skills and confidence. Active travel also improves access to independent travel for both the elderly and the young, especially for short journeys. Continuing to be physically active while ageing, or in some cases of living with a disability, brings significant health and social benefits. Being physically active at an early age as a normal part of daily life builds health, independence and life skills.

While not everyone is able to walk or cycle for all journeys, we can learn from other countries where the provision of good infrastructure and the availability of mobility aids such as adapted bikes enable some people to make at least some of their trips without a car.

Good access to transport has significant potential to reduce inequalities. Car-based travel has built-in inequity, with more affluent people driving more and owning more cars. Disabled people and people on lower incomes are less likely to own a car. A shift away from car dependency and forced car ownership could ease financial hardship and travel restrictions; improvements which benefit disadvantaged groups will improve transport choices and experiences for all.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Ensuring Accessibility

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Design all new walking, wheeling, and cycling interventions to be as fully accessible as possible	From project outset, work with groups such as local Access Panels and those representing people with protected characteristics to ensure best practice is followed	High	Ongoing	Active Travel team	
	Update the Impact Assessments alongside the ATS updates	High	Ongoing	Active Travel team	
Improve accessibility of existing walking, wheeling and cycling routes	Remove physical barriers such as gates or inappropriate bollards wherever possible, through opportunistic small scale works	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Roads team, Sustrans NCN team
	Add barrier reporting to the Council's standard fault reporting forms	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	ICT
Develop and implement an accessible signage strategy for active travel routes	Carry out a signage audit	Low	Medium	Active Travel team	
	Agree and create standard, accessible signage guidance	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	
	Roll out signage upgrades where required	Low	Long	Active Travel team	
Improve cycle storage for residents in areas of poor provision.	Establish a residents' cycle storage pilot scheme at THC owned locations	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Housing team
	Roll out residents' cycle storage pilot scheme at THC owned locations	Medium	Long	Active Travel team	Housing team
Enforce the forthcoming national footway parking restrictions to ensure footways remain accessible for more people	Work with the Principal Traffic Officer and team to promote awareness of the problem and the process for reporting pavement parking offences.	Low	Medium	Active Travel team	ICT, Parking team, Principal Traffic Officer
Seek to integrate community priorities highlighted in Local Place Plans into our work planning	Measure local priorities using prioritisation tool and include in prioritisation list	Medium	Long	Active Travel team	Local Place Plans team

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Ensuring Accessibility

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Ensure that this Strategy and its impact assessments are kept up to date and remains serving its purpose	Review the ATS Delivery Plan and Impact Assessments annually and update it as necessary to ensure that risks and opportunities are identified and acted upon	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	
	Produce an Annual Report for the public and Economy and Infrastructure Committee	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	
Improve availability of information on the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Highland Network within the Council and to the public	Combine data on all active travel infrastructure projects into one map, for internal use across Council workstreams and for public information	High	Short	Active Travel team	ICT
	Upgrade the public-facing active travel pages to include more information such as this ATS, maps etc.	High	Short	Active Travel team	ICT
	Produce easy-read and accessible versions of the ATS and reports	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Graphic design team, Accessibility group(s)
Integrate the delivery of the Road Safety Plan with active travel work	Publish Road Safety Plan online	High	Short	ICT	Road Safety
	Support the implementation of the actions in the Road Safety Plan which connect to improvements for walking, wheeling and cycling.	Medium		Road Safety	Active Travel team
Work with the Road Safety team to deliver a series of School Streets pilots with the aim of rolling these out across Highland	Implement a school street pilot	High	Short	Active Travel team	Local schools
	Review success of school street pilot	High	Medium	Active Travel team	Local schools
	Roll out school streets across highlands	Medium	Long	Active Travel team	Local schools

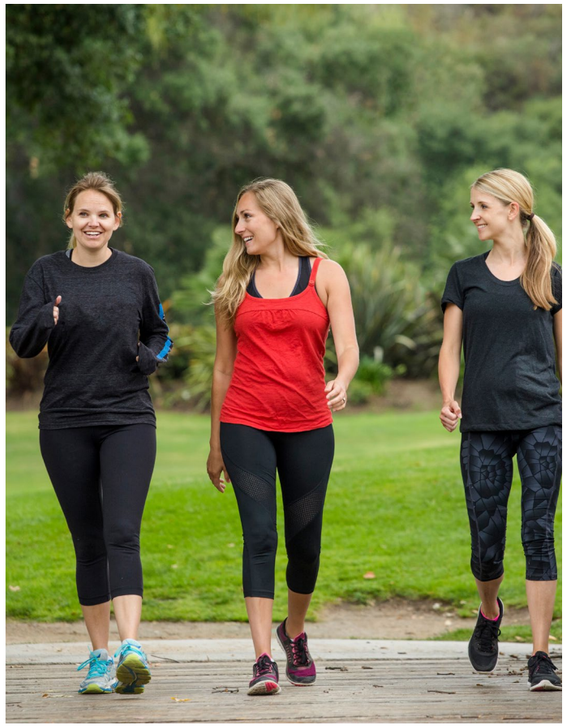
Making The Most Of Our Public Spaces

Putting people first means rebalancing our streets away from being car-dominated to including more spaces for people to enjoy, rest, and socialise in. This means reallocating space away from carriageway and parking and towards walking, wheeling and cycling in some places. This can be as simple as creating mini 'parklets' in a single parking space to include things like a bench for resting, cycle parking and planting, or can be more complex such as narrowing the road to provide segregated cycling lanes.

Public spaces with fewer cars also offer an opportunity to green our public spaces, through associated planting and natural foliage.

Access to more green space improves mental and physical health and supports social interaction within communities. Well-designed green spaces also support biodiversity, stabilise temperatures in summer and winter and manage rainwater – all increasingly important in our changing climate.

We know that a one size fits all approach isn't suitable, so all potential road space reallocation is context-specific and requires an evidence-based approach and good quality consultation with the public and other stakeholders.



PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Making The Most Of Our Public Spaces

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Require new developments to have high quality active travel infrastructure designed in from the outset	Engage with the Planning department to require delivery by the developer of high quality active travel infrastructure to and within new developments. Such infrastructure should be in place before occupancy, in line with new road infrastructure	High	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Planning, Development Planning, Transport Planning
Proactively install new accessible, placemaking facilities to support walking, wheeling, and cycling such as rest areas, benches, signage, and cycle parking	Identify locations for accessible placemaking improvements	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	
	Install accessible placemaking improvements	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	
Improve data held on the installation of new place making facilities to support walking, wheeling, and cycling	Establish a system for collating and reporting on installation of new facilities	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU, Road Safety team

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Making The Most Of Our Public Spaces

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Support the establishment of parklets	Work with a community group partner to establish a pilot parklet	High	Medium	Active Travel team	Roads team, Community Group/ Organisation
	Review pilot and create a standard application process for parklets	Medium	Long	Active Travel team	Roads team, ICT
Support a Play Streets pilot and introduce a system for communities to run these across the Highlands	Work with a community group partner to establish a pilot Play Street	High	Medium	Active Travel team	Roads team, Community Group/ Organisation
	Review pilot and create a standard application process for Play Streets	Medium	Long	Active Travel team	Roads team, ICT
Ensure that new active travel interventions positively impact biodiversity	Ensure that planting schemes within AT interventions maximise positive biodiversity impact e.g. by prioritising native species, by identifying corridors linking existing green spaces, and by tree planting wherever possible	High	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Nature-based Solutions team
	Integrate Biodiversity Net Gain approach into other workstreams within the Council	High	Long	Active Travel team	Nature-based Solutions team

Active Travel and the Local Economy

Active travel can bring benefits to the local economy, both directly and indirectly. The money spent in businesses by people who travel by walking, wheeling, or cycling is referred to as the "Pedestrian Pound"; local businesses also benefit from reduced congestion which can aid deliveries and access for essential car users. Increased active travel also brings significant savings in healthcare costs due to better physical and mental health and reduced air and noise pollution.

However in these times of economic uncertainty, and ongoing significant changes in shopping habits, particularly the rise of online shopping and the shift to working from home rather than in offices, we recognise that further change in the shape of traffic or parking restrictions can be challenging for businesses. The aim of this Strategy is to bring the multiple well-documented benefits of modal shift to our communities, to help build fully thriving and resilient places.

Research by Living Streets shows that:

- A compact town optimised for walking and cycling can have a "retail density" (spend per square metre) 2.5 times higher than a typical urban centre;
- Public realm improvements, including those that cater for walking, wheeling and cycling, have been shown to result in increased trade at local businesses;
- Per square metre, cycle parking delivers 5 times higher retail spend than the same area of car parking;
- UK-wide benefits of £128 million per year are gained from a healthier workforce having reduced absences.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Active Travel and the Local Economy

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Improve the quantity and quality of data available on walking, wheeling and cycling journeys	Ensure new infrastructure includes appropriate walking, wheeling and cycling counters wherever possible	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Roads team, PDU
Integrate cycle parking, pedestrian rest areas and enhanced green spaces, in economic centres, into infrastructure work	Identify locations for cycle parking and pedestrian rest areas in economic centres	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	
	Install cycle parking and pedestrian rest areas in economic centres	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	
Continue to consult with businesses and other stakeholders on active travel proposals in their area	Ensure business stakeholders are identified in stakeholder lists for proposed projects	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Business respresentatiive organisations
	Actively engage with businesses within project areas	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Business respresentatiive organisations
	Promote the economic benefits of more active travel to local businesses	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Business respresentatiive organisations
Work with large employers and clusters of employers to promote active travel to work	Identify employment areas to target behaviour change activities	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	
	Work with employers to promote journey planning, cycle to work schemes, and changing facilities and showers	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Business respresentatiive organisations

Partnership Working

Achieving modal shift across our large geography will require us to work in partnership with communities and partners to provide support and advice to facilitate active travel improvements and behaviour change. This partnership approach will help us to reach a wider range of communities and groups of people who have established relationships with community groups. This maximises our ability to make a difference where it is needed, for those more likely to be affected by transport poverty, and helps our resources go further by supporting partners in sourcing funding, developing infrastructure projects, and delivering behaviour change programmes.

Key partners include Transport Scotland, the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), HITRANS, Network Rail, ScotRail, NHS Highland and charities such as Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, Cycling UK and Living Streets.

As part of their work, CNPA aims to achieve a shift from car-based travel to active and sustainable modes through their Active Cairngorms programme. The Highland Council is the Roads Authority for the CNPA area and as such we are committed to working in partnership to support them to deliver these plans.

This Active Travel Strategy fully aligns with HITRANS's Regional Transport Strategy and their behaviour change work and we will continue to work closely with them.

We will continue to work closely with Transport Scotland, Sustrans, and other key funding administrators to resource our Delivery Plan.

At the time of writing the funding situation for community-led active travel projects is changing. Community-led projects can help to deliver local improvements and the Council, as the roads authority, is committed to supporting community-led projects where resources permit. Local Place Plans can be a good source for where local priorities can feed into active travel infrastructure planning.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Partnership Working

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Work with research partners and other agencies to improve knowledge of and data held on active travel journeys	Identify partners who already hold or could collect active travel data.	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	
	Engage with partners and agree a data sharing approach	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	
From project outset of individual projects and initiatives, work with groups such as local Access Panels and those representing people with protected characteristics to ensure best practice is followed	Ensure accessibility stakeholders are identified in stakeholder lists for proposed projects	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	
	Actively engage with accessibility groups within project areas	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	
	Promote the health and wellbeing benefits of more active travel to accessibility groups	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Partnership Working

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Work with HITRANS to develop and deliver a suite of behaviour change interventions focussing on those less likely to have access to a private car	Identify target groups and main barriers to active travel	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	HITRANS
	Develop a suite of behaviour change activities	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	HITRANS
	Secure funding and resource to deliver behaviour change activities	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Community groups, HITRANS
Continue to liaise with Transport Scotland on their active travel work across Highland	Set up and attend regular check ins with the appropriate people in Transport Scotland	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Transport Scotland
Continue to work with Network Rail and ScotRail on the Inverness Stations Masterplan to ensure active travel integration is embedded in the design, and continue to liaise with them on other active travel work across Highland	Engage with Network Rail, Scotrail, and HITRANS during masterplan development	Medium	Ongoing	Sustainable Travel Team	Network Rail, ScotRail, HITRANS
Establish a Walking, Wheeling & Cycling Highland Stakeholder Forum, including external organisations and individuals, to support Highland-wide partnership working in planning and delivery of active travel infrastructure	Establish a Walking, Wheeling & Cycling Highland Stakeholder Forum, including external organisations and individuals	Medium	Short	Active Travel team	Stakeholders
	Hold quarterly forum meetings	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Stakeholders
Maximise the potential of developer contributions to support ATS Delivery Plan priorities	Establish regular meetings with the Developer Contribution Action Group (DCAG)	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	Planning
Support community-led infrastructure projects within existing resources, by signposting them to appropriate funding sources and by including them in prioritisation work updates	Compile a live list of funding sources and publish online	Low	Medium	Active Travel team	ICT
	Regularly review and update the list	Low	Ongoing	Active Travel team	ICT
Work with community groups to support them to deliver behaviour change activities to under-represented groups such as cycle training, bike repair, journey planning, and led rides	Identify relevant community groups and target audiences	Medium	Medium	Active Travel team	
	Facilitate behaviour change activities through promotion and sharing of resource and funding where possible	Medium	Ongoing	Active Travel team	

Tourism and Leisure

Tourism is a significant contributor to the Highland economy and there is much scope to encourage growth in cycle tourism while also promoting using active travel as a way to help address seasonal peaks of traffic and parking congestion.

Cycle tourism can refer to short, single day leisure cycles as part of a holiday, multi-day trips and cycle-related events, for both on and off road cycling.

Safe, comfortable, well-connected routes are attractive to visitors who may have travelled to the area by other modes. These visitors may make short- to medium-length recreational cycle journeys, and there is also the opportunity to promote walking, wheeling, and cycling for their short utility journeys such as local sightseeing and attending events, as well as accessing local services such as shops, restaurants, and attractions.

PUTTING IT INTO ACTION - Tourism and Leisure

Action	Tasks	Priority	Timeframe	Lead	Support
Seek to collect information on active travel tourism from business representative organisations	Identify and engage with relevant local businesses to collect data	Low	Medium	Active Travel team	Business respresentatiive organisations
	Facilitate data collection through sharing of resources where possible	Low	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Business respresentatiive organisations
Work with partners to support the planning of non-car transport options for accessing events, facilitating access to local services while minimising impacts on local residents	Work with event organisers to promote active travel to events	Low	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Stakeholders
	Work with event organisers to appropriately plan access to events	Low	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Stakeholders
Continue to work with the Sustrans National Cycle Network team to make improvements and to improve accessibility on NCN routes within Highland, where they also have a positive impact on everyday journeys	Regularly review Sustrans list of NCN priority routes.	Low	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Sustrans
	Work with Sustrans to support NCN upgrades where funding is made available to do so.	Low	Ongoing	Active Travel team	Sustrans

Measuring Success

We have outlined the actions we'll be taking but how will we know they are working?

We have carried out impact assessments which will be regularly reviewed alongside this Strategy to ensure it is still fit for purpose (Appendix 4).

Robust structures and processes are required to support the Council to gather and analyse data to deliver an evidence-led approach to planning, maintaining and investing in the transport network.

An important step is to collect more baseline data to understand current levels of walking, cycling and wheeling across the Highland Council Area. The monitoring and evaluation framework in Appendix 5 sets out our full monitoring and evaluation approach; this details the indicators, targets, and data sources we will use to measure our progress against our objectives. Data will be reviewed quarterly by the Council's Active Travel Team, who will produce an annual outcome report.

Regular monitoring and evaluation of our progress and actions is an essential part of accountability; it is also we know that we're realising our vision, by contributing to making the Highlands a better place, by addressing problems and taking advantage of opportunities, realising our policy goals, and making our lives better.

Appendix 1: Selected Supporting Policy

Appendix 1: Selected Supporting Policy

NATIONAL POLICY

- A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021 – 2022 (& subsequent)
- Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan 2018 - 2032
- Scottish Government Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 – 2032
- Second Climate Change Adaption Programme 2019 – 2024
- National Planning Framework 4
- A Long Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2020 - 2030
- Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework (2016)
- 20% Reduction in Car Kilometres by 2030: A Route Map
- National Walking Strategy 2014
- Scottish Government Cycling Framework and Delivery Plan 2023
- Cycling By Design 2021
- Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030
- Public Health Strategy Scotland 2022 – 2025
- Parking and the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019
- Restricted Roads 20mph Speed Limit Scotland Bill
- Fairer Scotland Duty
- Equality Act 2010
- Future of Transport: Rural Strategy
- Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 (2021) and Delivery Plan
- Sustainable Travel to Stations Strategy
- Just Transition for the transport sector: a discussion paper
- Transport poverty: a public health issue

The Scottish Government's Transport Just Transition Plan states:

"Rural, remote and island communities have fewer public transport options and are particularly vulnerable to climate-related disruptions to networks. The cost of transport on the islands and in remote rural areas is much higher, relative to income, than in the rest of Scotland. Journey times are often long and can require multiple interchanges, including an overnight stay, adding further cost. Longer commutes to work combined with more expensive fuel typically adds £30 to £40 per week to costs when compared to rural England.[3]

Evidence shows that a greater proportion of people in remote rural and accessible rural areas find accessing services less convenient.[4] *We must also bear in mind rural poverty and fuel poverty. We recognise that private car travel (albeit decarbonised) will continue to be a necessary aspect of life in rural and island Scotland to ensure people are able to access the services they need."*

These longer rural car journeys also have a significant environmental impact. The Scottish Government's policy document Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland: A route map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030[1] states:

"It is important to recognise that a small number of longer journeys account for a disproportionate percentage of total car kilometres, with around 4 per cent of trips (those over 55 kilometres) accounting for nearly 30 per cent of the total kilometres driven in 2019. Conversely, despite 45 per cent of trips being under 8 kilometres in length, these accounted for just 12 per cent of trips of total car kilometres in 2019."

and

"… while Glasgow is home to 12 per cent of Scotland's population only 7.6 per cent of the total car kilometres driven in Scotland are within the Glasgow local authority area, in contrast with the Highland local authority area, where 6 per cent of Scotland's total car kilometres are driven, despite it being home to just 4 per cent of the country's population."

[1] Route Map to achieve a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030

Appendix 1: Selected Supporting Policy

The route map identifies four approaches to reducing car km:

The UK Government's 2022 Call for Evidence for their Future of Transport Rural Strategy[2] states:

"We are on the cusp of a revolution in the way that people and goods move around. Multiple changes are happening at the same time, including:

- *changes in transport technology, such as increasing levels of automation, the development of new transport modes, the transition to cleaner vehicles, and the growing availability of transport data;*
- *changes in demand for transport, driven by our evolving work and commuting patterns (particularly in light of COVID-19), an increase in online services and online purchasing, an increasingly diverse and ageing population, and the increasing importance of accessible transport;*
- *changes in transport business models, as new digitally enabled business models emerge, creating the potential for new services and improved ways of accessing services.*

These changes are happening fastest in urban areas. […] we want to ensure the benefits of transport innovation reach all parts of the country. This includes those rural communities and towns that have been left behind as a result of the lack of economic, educational and social opportunities, which flow directly from having good transport connectivity."

NPF4 states:

"[…] Future-proofing local liveability will benefit people as well as the planet. Island and coastal communities will need a bespoke and flexible approach to the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods, for example by identifying service hubs in key locations with good public transport links. This can build long-term resilience and self-reliance whilst sustaining dispersed communities and rural patterns of development.""

The 20% Road Map concludes:

"The current direction of travel is towards more car kilometres being driven each year, rather than fewer. Reducing car kilometres by 20 per cent by 2030 will not be possible just by focussing on the shortest journeys or commutes to work where it is easier for people to switch to active travel or public transport, but requires a more holistic approach that also supports people to travel less, switch to more local destinations and reduce single occupancy trips wherever possible."

[2] Future of Transport: rural strategy – call for evidence - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Appendix 1: Selected Supporting Policy

REGIONAL POLICY

- HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy

LOCAL POLICY

- Corporate Plan 2022 - 2027
- Climate Change Strategy
- Climate Emergency Declaration, May 2019
- Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan
- Highland Development Plan (emerging)
- Inverness Sustainable Transport Strategy (May 2021)
- Opportunity Cromarty Firth
- The City-Region Deal
- Local Place Plans
- Road Safety Strategy (including 20pmh limit and Schools work)
- Inverness Strategy and the draft City Centre Master Plan
- Ecological Strategy, Transport section (in development)
- Bus Service Improvement Partnership work
- Core Paths Plan
- Highland Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan
- Approach to Sustainable Business Travel

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Key Findings and Public Feedback

The following are the key findings from The Highland Council's Local Transport Strategy Case for Change and the public responses to these gathered through public consultation.

DEMOGRAPHICS, TRAVEL PATTERNS AND CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

Key Findings

Aging population: Highland's population has grown but is forecast to level out and become dominated by people of 65 years and over, who will inevitably become more dependent on alternatives to the car for everyday journeys. It also highlights the need for the transport system to support active lifestyles throughout people's lives to support health and independence. The effects of Brexit and Covid-19 are still not fully understood; any assumptions will be checked at policy development stage.

Sub-regional hubs: Our largely rural land mass masks the fact that most people (75%) live in some form of settlement. Population distribution data confirms there are discrete sub-regions for everyday travel; this illustrates that there is a continuing need to consider needs of rural communities (25%), but also to consider the untapped potential to support modal shift within the population (75%) living in these sub-regions. Evidence about travel patterns is out of date (2011 census); 2021 Census data will inform policy development.

Highland job trends: Healthcare, retail, tourism and education dominate Highland employment: industries typically located in larger population centres. Traditional land-based industries make up only a small proportion (2%) of employment. These factors highlight the need for the transport network to effectively serve both larger centres and tourism routes and networks.

Travel to Work Area: The Inverness Travel to Work Area is the dominant area of employment and population. Most people working in this area live in it and there is therefore strong potential for a high level of modal shift. Inverness is a major centre for communities across Highland for some services and facilities; this makes it different, and important that it is accessible to everyone in Highland.

Data-driven planning: High-quality, up to date data and analysis will be key to understanding current travel patterns and the effects of changes in infrastructure and services. This will require planning and proper investment.

Climate action collaboration: Tackling the climate emergency presents key opportunities to combine efforts between different Council services. We will also work with local and regional partners to deliver coordinated communication, to ensure that our transport infrastructure is adapted to and protected against climate change impacts, and to ensure current and future infrastructure includes green and blue infrastructure to reduce flood risk and extreme weather impacts.

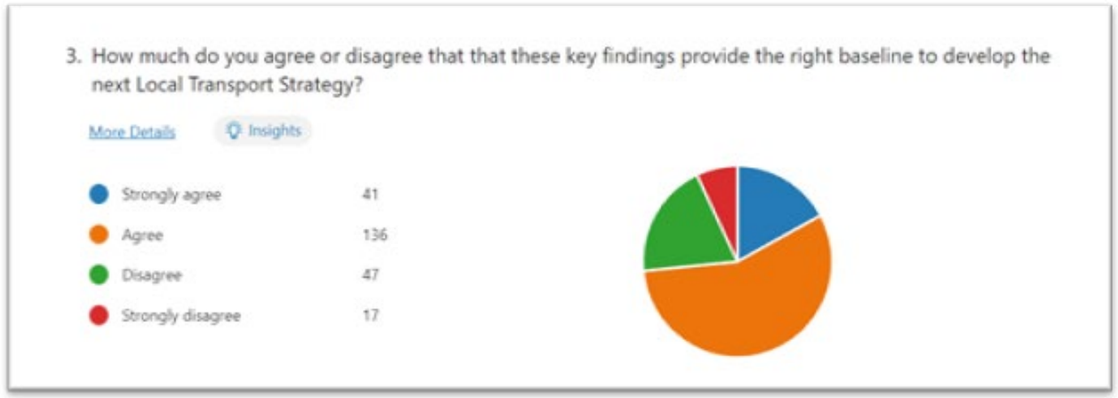
Transport emissions: Transport forms Scotland's single largest source of carbon emissions, 36%, and this has not fallen in a decade. Car, ferry and air travel are crucial both socially and economically for the region but can be in conflict with requirements to meet emissions reductions targets.

Enhancing active connectivity: Both new and brownfield developments offer opportunities to enhance the connectivity, quality and density of the active travel network and to normalise designs which are not car-centric and which support active everyday journeys and place-making. Such designs also reduce wear and tear on roads, free up public space, and potentially have a lower land take for transport infrastructure.

Balancing future travel: Reducing the need to travel through home working and delivery of services such as some healthcare online is crucial and can support the vibrancy of rural areas but needs to be balanced with supporting the vibrancy and vitality of town and city centres. The necessary measures, though, are out with the scope of this document.

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Public Engagement Responses



There is a clear concern amongst respondents about the challenges of falling rural population, ageing population, loss of young people from the area, and the distances involved in accessing goods and services. The general sentiment was that the private car should be the priority with concern expressed about any shifting of emphasis to supporting other modes.

"Many people do live in settlements, but often in the rural areas these settlements are spread out and inhabitants are entirely reliant on private cars for even the most basic journey (i.e. to shop and back)."

"Far too centred on larger towns and cities. What about the outlying villages which are very poorly served by public transport links if there are any at all? […] astronomical prices in local shops due to disproportionate transport costs. We have absolutely no alternative but to use our cars to access healthcare, our places of employment, food and all basic services essential to life."

There is a recognition of the need for different approaches in Inverness and the Inner Moray Firth area, and elsewhere in Highland.

"The key findings that 75% of people are in settlements and that the Inverness area is the dominant area of employment and population may be partly because of poor transport in other areas - people may have no choice but to settle in these areas if they can't get to work or facilities such as healthcare if they live elsewhere. Using the status quo to base future plans on may simply perpetuate existing struggles rather than find a solution to them."

"The key aspect is that's stated, the Inverness area is significantly different from the majority of the land mass in question. Therefore two strategies need to be considered, one the urban area around Inverness and second the need for the rural areas to link to the urban and at the same time interlink the smaller communities."

"A huge part of the Highlands of Scotland consists of remote, rural communities, yet everything I have read is aimed at the larger towns and cities. The Government has completely ignored the unique issues that residents living in such rural areas face every day. There needs to be a targeted policy for the most rural communities which will help such communities to thrive rather than turn them into ghost settlements."

"There needs to be a far deeper understanding of the needs of rural communities and a commitment to keep the vibrancy and diversity of our rural towns and villages. This is closely connected to the repopulation effort, inward investment and depressing housing prices."

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

In terms of current travel patterns, many respondents mentioned that certain groups of people simply cannot walk or cycle, such as older people, disabled people and those with babies and young children. However, as we see in other countries, the provision of good infrastructure and the availability of mobility aids such as wheelchairs and adapted bikes enables those people to make at least some of their trips without a car. Continuing to be physically active while ageing, or living with a disability, brings significant health and social benefits. Being physically active at an early age as a normal part of daily life builds health, independence and life skills.

EQUALITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Key Findings

Transport gaps: Access to transport in most parts of Highland is poor, based on financial cost, time and inconvenience. Even in urban areas some neighbourhoods experience poor access. In more rural areas, a lack of alternatives can lead to 'forced' car ownership, putting low-income households at risk of increased poverty.

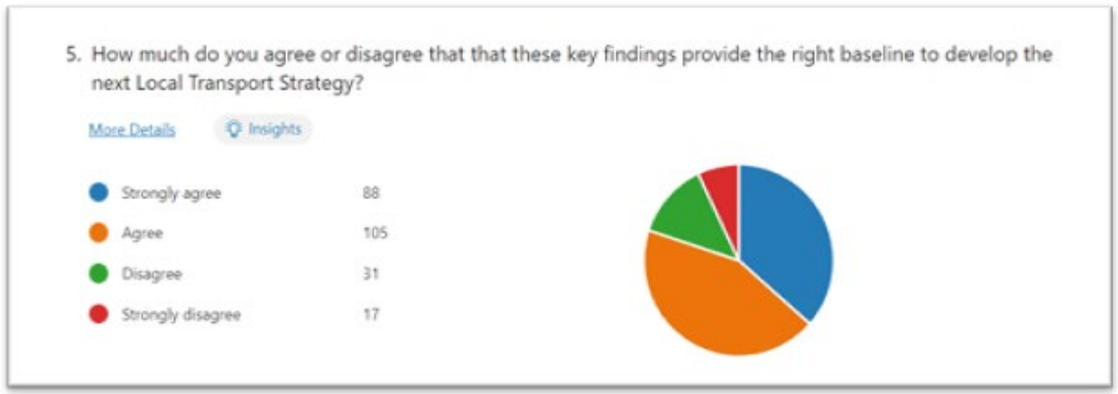
Rural transport challenges: Residents of rural areas face particular transport challenges but to sustain these communities a range of affordable, reliable, attractive transport options must be available. The increase in working from home offers potential for repopulation of rural areas but for people to be able to choose to live rurally it must, conversely, be easy for them to leave.

Active travel investment: National policies are linked by a recognition of the need to shift people to active travel for everyday journeys. This is supported by an uplift in active travel funding; to secure a share of this funding and deliver the infrastructure, Highland will require long-term planning, cross-departmental working and multiple-year funding.

Transport equality impact: Transport systems have significant potential to reduce inequalities, both from socioeconomic factors and amongst some of those who hold a protected characteristic. A shift from car dependency / forced car ownership could ease financial hardship and travel restrictions; improvements which benefit these groups will improve transport choices and experiences for all.

Health-focused commuting: Being more active for everyday journeys is a key route to increasing physical activity, supporting good mental and physical health. Reductions in traffic speed and volume reduce air pollution and accidents. This is particularly important in the context of our ageing population and other rising pressures on the NHS.

Public Engagement Responses



Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Many responses expressed concerns about lack of travel independence amongst old and young people, noting that this limits social interactions at key times of life as well as access to employment, goods and services.

"It can be difficult for the house bound to get active. There are no pavements or footpaths suitable for wheelchairs or people unsteady on their feet."

"People living in very rural areas (which is large area of The Highlands) are at a real disadvantage and have little option but to travel by private car. We often (in absence of any alternatives) have to transport non-drivers (including older members of the community, young people and non-car-owners) to e.g. hospital appointments, out of school activities etc. […] Lack of transport is leading to social exclusion and isolation for older people and young people in the community."

Many respondents accepted the health benefits of physical activity.

"I'm really encouraged to see, as a local GP, the direction of travel of these findings, at a time of health crisis caused by sedentary lifestyles and the climate emergency."

However many doubted the practicality of making everyday journeys by walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport.

One respondent noted that, rural accessibility may result in the opposite problem from forced car ownership, limiting the choices of where to live for those who cannot or do not wish to drive.

"One of the key reasons I do not live in the community I grew up in is because I did not want to have to own a car and I couldn't rely on the transport provision to work in surrounding areas."

Some respondents noted that the private car is crucial for older and disabled people; car dependency in these group is high however it is also noted that those groups are also less likely to own a car.

In terms of protected characteristics, Age and Disability were highlighted most often, with some mention of those on lower incomes.

WALKING, WHEELING AND CYCLING

Key Findings

Modal shift potential: There is significant potential for modal shift to walking and cycling for everyday journeys; measures to reduce traffic speed and volume and to separate different modes are fundamental to achieving this shift but may pose design and funding challenges in rural parts of Highland.

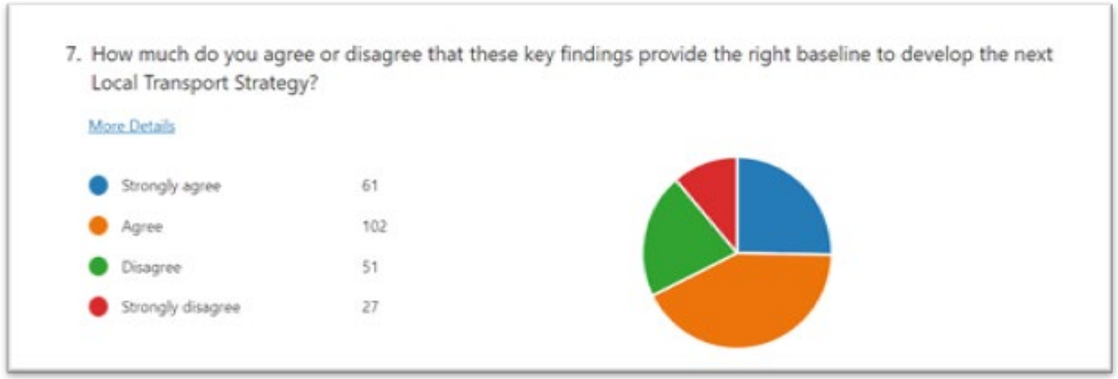
Maintenance for routes: Existing and planned walking and cycling routes also require regular planned and funded maintenance, in line with the Investment Hierarchy. Cycleways and footways alongside adopted roads, and remote cycle paths and footpaths which are not adopted, will need dedicated funding and systems for regular surveying and planning of seasonal and surface maintenance work.

Population density metrics: In the context of active travel infrastructure, population density is a more useful measure than rurality. Rural small towns can have high population density where urban designs are appropriate, whereas those designs are not appropriate for a low populated landscape such as agricultural or forested areas.

20-minute neighbourhoods: The concept of a 20-minute neighbourhood has relevance for many Highland settlements and links to principles of placemaking, resilience and a strong local economy. For rural areas the concept can be expanded to longer distances and "clusters" of settlements. These aspects need to be considered in conjunction with how to consistently assess and provide crossing facilities on the region's roads.

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Public Engagement Responses



Analysis of responses shows a mix of those who generally don't support walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys in the Highlands, citing issues of rurality, topography, weather, safety, distances to services, etc, and those who do agree with the Key Findings but many framed their response negatively they don't believe it will happen. Some of those who disagree also say that investment should go instead to public transport. Concerns over poor maintenance of existing infrastructure were also frequently raised.

Many respondents positively discussed the use of ebikes. Ebike sales are increasing year on year in the UK, with a boost to sales since the Covid 19 pandemic, however, poor infrastructure is a major barrier to uptake.

"The advent of electric bikes is a real game changer when it comes to making everyday journeys in rural areas."

For some of those who disagree or strongly disagree, their concerns on safety would be largely met by improved infrastructure.

"I want to cycle short journeys but I am put off by lack of dedicated cycle paths and I am scared to use A95 as it feels too dangerous to be with traffic doing 60 mph (if complying with speed limit)."

Similarly, there are many comments expressing concern that the Case for Change might be the right thing for Inverness but that the rural areas, particularly the north and west, risk being excluded and need different thinking about how to provide realistic alternatives to the private car – and how to get people to use these alternatives, at least some of the time.

"This seems to be a good strategy for town development, but when you live 1 hour 20 minutes from the nearest urban area then active travel to and from that is not viable."

"If you live 50 miles from a supermarket you can hardly cycle for your shopping."

The example of cycling 50 miles to a supermarket raises questions of opportunity such as can some of that shopping be done more locally, or by public transport, or less frequently, or by home delivery instead. In the future, many trips from rural areas will still depend on the car, and while active travel may not be a solution for all journeys, the challenge is to encourage car use reduction wherever possible through a mix of shifting to active and public transport where possible.

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Key Findings

Integrated transport modes: All public transport journeys also involve walking, cycling or driving. Improvements in walking / wheeling / cycling infrastructure and integration between modes are key to increasing passenger numbers on bus and rail.

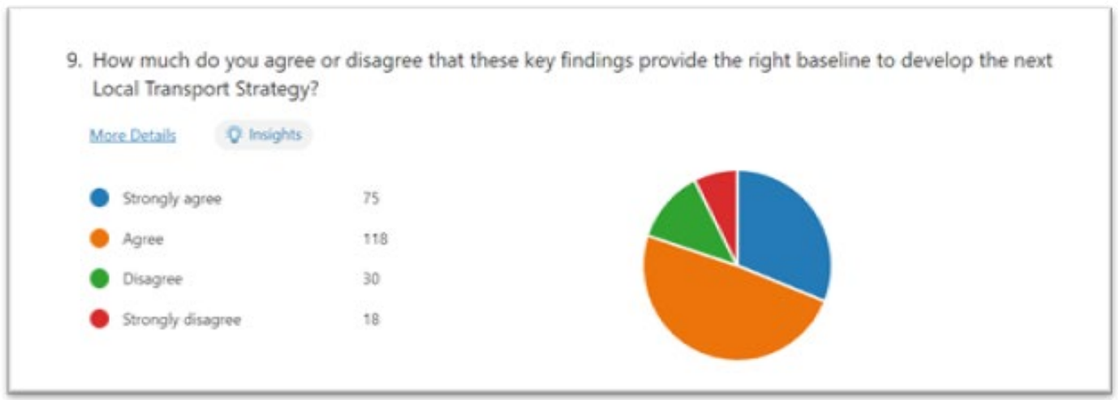
Bus network challenges: Bus provides the widest coverage for public transport in Highland. Passenger numbers are falling, accelerated by Covid-19. Outwith urban areas bus service is limited in terms of frequency and duration of day covered, meaning it often fails to offer a viable alternative to private car. A range of live initiatives are underway with Council-run services, under-22 free bus travel, capital investment and demand-responsive and community-led transport, which should inform policy development in the Transport Strategy to reverse negative trends. Further gap analysis work would help to build a more accurate picture of the coverage and performance of the bus network.

Satisfaction data gaps: Information on bus passenger satisfaction is out of date. There is no comprehensive record of what supporting infrastructure (shelters, bus times, bike parking) is needed for the region. These are gaps in our knowledge that require to be filled to understand how to deliver the best bus experience as possible. This should be informed by current work to deliver a Bus Service Improvement Partnership for Highland.

Tourism impact on transport: The Implications of tourism on the transport network are broad. For buses, facilities to accommodate growth in demand for public services; for mode integration and improvement of facilities at stations; and meeting the specific needs of the private coach market all require a coordinated understanding and policy framework.

Rail potential: Most longer distance journeys by train do not offer a competitive journey time with private car, but the Inner Moray Firth offers strong rail potential with equivalent or quicker journey times by rail, compared with car. A working day in the central belt is possible, but only from Inverness. Current and potential for rail freight is strong in Highland, despite infrastructure constraints. These limit the potential for expansion, but investment and improvements present further opportunity for modal shift from car, including freight, opening new stations and provision of discounts through the Highland Railcard, but this requires ongoing coordination and investment by Scottish Government.

Public Engagement Responses



Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Many people would like to use public transport for at least some of their journeys but find it too expensive, and experience that services are poor in frequency and reliability especially in rural areas. Poor integration between walking, wheeling and cycling provision and public transport, and between bus and train, was also raised. These comments were made by both those agreeing and those disagreeing with the Key Findings.

"If you were to do just one thing to help travel in the Highlands it would be to invest in a decent, reliable and comfortable bus network - this would assist almost everyone in the highlands by providing alternative transport, reducing congestion, improving local links and improving health."

"The free bus pass for over 60's has been a popular innovation and I know many people who use it for travel south but without any local public transport available, it's meaningless within our community. Likewise, free travel for under 25's is welcome but my son and others like him were unable to make any use of it was there wasn't any public transport to use it on."

"We do have a local lift-share group on social media - this works reasonably well for some. I often see posts from people coming or going who have been defeated by public transport. Ironically the local bus service often trundles to and fro empty - the times it goes between school runs simply don't fit with peoples' needs."

"'Forced car ownership' is inevitable in the Highlands but the way we use cars will change if the infrastructure for public transport is in place, for example using a car to get to the nearest public transport hub then travelling on by bus or train."

PORTS, HARBOURS, AVIATION, INDUSTRY AND THE ECONOMY

Key Findings

Transport as an economic asset: The transport network is a fundamental and hugely important asset for the economy and industries of the Highlands. Following the transport hierarchy, sustainable, fair and affordable transport is key to building a resilient and sustainable economy. Following the investment hierarchy, investment in existing infrastructure is a priority.

Marine industries potential: Marine industries are supported by a range of infrastructure in Highland. Renewable energy, both on and offshore, and emerging green hydrogen, present major opportunities. Opportunity Cromarty Firth Green Freeport illustrates this potential. It is essential that the region's ports and harbours are ready to support and harness the potential of the green energy transition.

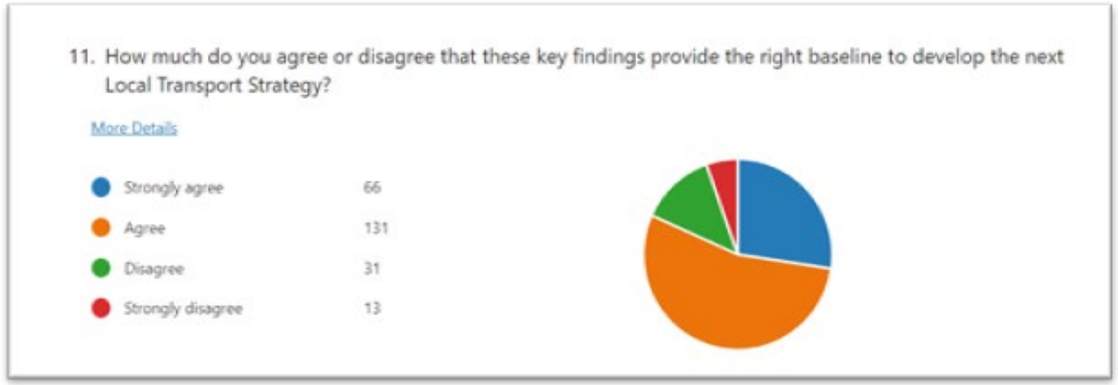
Airport hub connectivity: Inverness Airport is a major hub, principally serving the Highlands and Islands regions with access to domestic destinations, but with an increasingly important role for international connectivity such as services to Amsterdam. Wick Airport has a Public Service Obligation; flight times offer significant time reductions over other modes.

Integrated transport networks: Better integration of transport modes across the network is essential; this includes links to ferry and aviation services.

Public Engagement Responses

This section is largely outwith the scope of the ATS but it is noted that several respondents mentioned the need for integration of public transport with ferry and air services, the need to get freight off the roads, and the need for more reliable ferry services in particular for the Corran Ferry.

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback



CARS AND ROADS

Key Findings

Road infrastructure management: The Council is responsible for an extensive and complex network of roads infrastructure, including footways and cycleways alongside, which requires careful planning, prioritisation and management. The Road Asset Management Plan, currently under review, will provide a core part of the Local Transport Strategy.

Prioritizing maintenance investments: In National Transport Strategy 2's Investment Hierarchy, maintaining and safely operating existing assets is firmly above targeted infrastructure improvements. Timely maintenance also reduces longer-term needs. With shrinking capital budgets and staff resources, we need to protect and increase commitment to roads maintenance.

Alternatives to car access: total car km travelled are increasing in Scotland and in Highland. Despite this, historic census data shows around a fifth of people have no access to cars or vans in Highland in both rural and urban areas. Even where a household has access to a car some members may regularly be left without travel options, highlighting the need for alternatives.

Car ownership inequity: Car-based travel has built in inequity, with more affluent people driving more and owning more cars. Disabled people and people on lower incomes are less likely to own a car. This highlights the importance of ensuring fair access to non-car modes.

Private car dominance: Roads and road vehicles are and will continue to be an essential part of the transport network in Highland, particularly in rural and semi-rural areas. Rather than attempt to design a network without cars, consideration must be given to reducing private cars' dominance over transport choices and public spaces. Modal shift makes travel easier for essential car users by reducing congestion.

Multi-functional urban roads: Roads in most built-up areas in Highland serve a multi-functional role in creating places, far beyond their task of conveying traffic. Policy needs to recognise this, to strike the correct balance between place and movement functions.

Rural transport innovation: Innovative ways of investing in our rural transport network are being undertaken through the South Loch Ness Roads Improvements Strategy. This work offers insight into a potential model for other areas but is dependent on financial and officer resources.

EV impact and charging: Electric vehicles do not reduce congestion, community severance, and the negative health effects of sedentary lifestyles; they have significant environmental impacts both locally and from manufacture. However, they play an important role in decarbonisation including in public transport, freight, and micro mobility such as electric bikes and e-cargo bikes. The Council's Climate team is currently planning the expansion of the region's EV charging network; this will inform the development of the Local Transport Strategy.

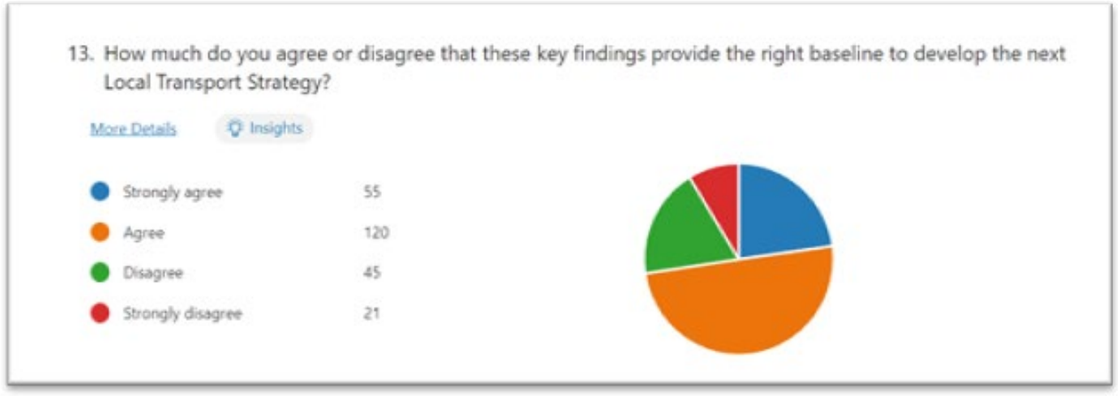
Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

Decarbonised tax implications: The move from fossil fuels to a decarbonised transport system has significant implications for tax revenue. It is not yet clear what will replace fuel tax; emerging policy will inform development of the Local Transport Strategy.

A9 Safety measures: Road safety improvements are crucial. The Perth to Inverness A9 still has high numbers of collision casualties; dualling is an option to address this. However, given the announced delay in dualling we welcome the interim measures under way such as improved signage at key locations. The Council's updated Speed Limit Policy and commitment to introduce 20mph limits within settlements by summer 2023 will also deliver safety improvements.

Parking policy impact: Parking provision and policy are important to the accessibility and economy of Highland. Opportunities to support positive change will be identified in the Local Transport Strategy.

Public Engagement Responses



Many respondents, particularly from rural areas but also from Inverness and the IMF, expressed concern about the condition of the existing roads network and felt that that should be the priority for investment.

"I travelled from Inverness to Dornoch recently and the bus was shuddering all the way [...] Banging in and out of potholes all the way."

"Although these aspirations are positive, basic things like potholes and the appalling state of far north roads should be prioritised first."

"Road structure and maintenance very important especially in rural areas."

Respondents also pointed out that roads are also important for cycling and wheeling.

"It simply is not safe for me to ride a bike in my area. The roads are not fit for cars let alone bikes. The priority needs to be on fixing the battered roads as a bike will be dangerous given the number of large potholes."

"Any investment in road infra-structure or maintenance needs to be viewed as an opportunity for improving active travel infra-structure."

"The quality of the surface is important: cyclists and "wheelers" will not use their routes if the surfaces are as dreadful as most roads nowadays. Sorting out potholes doesn't seem to figure on anyone's radar."

There were a number of responses about the negative impacts of tourism traffic and that an increase in tourist traffic requires an investment in roads.

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

"Managing tourism will be an important aspect of a future transport strategy. Tourism has both positive and negative impacts to transport and it should be recognised that unlimited tourism growth is not an appropriate goal for the region."

Several respondents recognised the problems of car dominance.

"I'm pleased that these things have been recognised, such as the importance of reducing car use and the fact that car culture is inequitable inherently, I wish that action had been taken earlier to reduce the health, climate, and economic harms from excessive use of motor vehicles."

Some respondents called for dualling of the A9 and A96, and others called for cheaper safety measures and investments in alternatives to driving, recognising that provision of new roads induces demand for driving.

SUMMARY

- Rural areas must be better served if we are to combat depopulation, support the travel independence of rural residents, and reduce car over-dependency;
- The existing road network needs investment in maintenance – this will help cyclists as well as drivers;
- Reliable, affordable public transport, and quality links to that provision, are crucial;
- The strategy for Inverness and the IMF should be different from the strategy for Highland's rural areas;
- Safe, comfortable, interconnected infrastructure is key to encouraging walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Messaging should focus on car use reduction rather than elimination; and
- Integrating sustainable transport planning and development is crucial.

"But where I live there really is no option but to use the private car and is essential to most employment. We are at the end of 15 miles of single track road, 27 miles from the nearest doctor and other services. Many households have to own two cars and it's a major drain on their finances. People on low incomes can only afford old cars this in turn leads to further expense for repairs and limits employment opportunities if one's vehicle is unreliable. The public road is a very poor state of repair leading to further expense in tyre replacement and car maintenance."

"You're just reducing choice, freedom and destroying the infrastructure that economic activity depends on."

"This is a really excellent comprehensive document, even more emphasis could be put on the need to address the reality of climate change and our part in it, health, and truly sustainable tourism, and the need for speed to address all of these."

"I agree with the findings in a broad sense and I think there needs to be more emphasis on people shifting to using cars less. I live very near into Inverness and the number of my neighbours who rarely go farther than 3-5 miles from their house is fairly high and none of them are willing to consider cycling for these journeys."

"Somehow it needs to become normal for people to leave their car at home."

Appendix 2: LTS Case for Change feedback

The Highland Council Internal Feedback

The following is a summary of the responses from internal Council stakeholders to the LTS Case for Change gathered during a workshop held in May 2023.

Attendees included Officers from Roads, Transport Planning, Planning, Road Safety, Community Transport, Project Management, Community Operations & Logistics, the Project Design Unit, Climate Change, and HITRANS.

Note that some topics covered were outwith the scope of the ATS; such feedback is not included here but will inform the LTS.

- Officers from different teams agreed that it is not straightforward to assess capital bids against NPF4 / carbon targets: some kind of standardised checklist would be helpful;
- Officers also agreed that maintenance of existing assets is a key issue although it is at the top of the Investment Hierarchy there is no certainty of funding; funding bids are competitive, and funds are not ring fenced for this purpose. Funding bids must be based on whole-life costs of projects. Ferries come into this too – maintenance for ferries (especially the Corran Ferry) is a growing problem;
- Roads colleagues welcomed a strategic approach – individual schemes are designed individually to meet standards, but an overall vision is needed;
- Developer contributions should be more fully utilised, again with a strategic approach;
- Planning and Travel Planning colleagues fully recognise the importance of spatial proximity to goods and services to reduce the need to travel and to improve community resilience;
- There are major uncertainties over Opportunity Cromarty Firth: how many new jobs will there be, emerging over what timescale? Where will those people live? What about goods movements? What are the community aspirations?;
- Retrofitting walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure within existing settlements is resource intensive and complex, and an even clearer pointer that new developments must have that infrastructure designed in from the outset;
- The THC Road Asset Management Plan is due for an update but there is not enough resource to progress it. It considers a road's traffic volume, connectivity and function;
- In much of Highland, unlike more densely populated areas, there is no minor road alternative to the trunk road or other roads with a 60mph limit but provision of walking, wheeling, and cycling space on those roads is very difficult. Cycling by Design standards are not always achievable or indeed appropriate in these settings;
- Active Travel schemes offer opportunities to improve biodiversity, as well as deliver other benefits – this has not been maximised in the past. Planting schemes can also offer temperature stabilisation (cooling effects in hot weather and warming effects in cold weather), improvements in air quality, and increased usage of infrastructure due to it being more attractive.

In summary:

- Funding both capital and revenue (maintenance): we need certainty and ringfencing;
- Rurality is huge and we need to think harder about infrastructure and transport options;
- We could integrate across different services better to help make improvements (Planning, Biodiversity, Roads);
- Opportunity Cromarty Firth will bring many changes but it is mostly unknown as yet.

Appendix 3: Strategy Diagram

Appendix 3: Strategy Diagram

Objectives	Themes	Actions	Outcomes	Impacts
Increase the number of journeys made by active travel and including an active travel element.	Connecting the Highlands.	Further develop the active travel network across Highland.	Settlements are better connected by active travel routes.	More journeys by walking, wheeling, and cycling.
			More journeys made by walking, wheeling and cycling between settlements.	Modal shift from private car to active travel for short journeys.
		Evaluate the 20mph initiative and identify where small scale interventions can improve accessibility, such as provision of crossings and dropped kerbs.	Improved walking, wheeling and cycling accessibility within settlements.	Active travel becomes a normalised, safe, and attractive transport choice for short journeys.
			More journeys made by walking, wheeling and cycling within settlements.	THC has a high quality and well used active travel network.
		Support integration of active travel work across different Council workstreams, for coherent and efficient service delivery.	Time, budget, and staff resources are used more efficiently in delivery and maintenance of active travel infrastructure and behaviour change.	Local journeys are easier for those with access needs.
			Improved cooperation between Council workstreams and improved coherence between Council policies.	More people of varying abilities are able to choose active travel.
		Secure funds to deliver infrastructure improvements through existing and new funding sources.	More funding available to deliver new schemes.	More safe, clean, sociable, attractive, people-centred places.
			More staff resource to deliver new schemes.	Improved health and wellbeing for all.
		Support HITRANS in the roll out of the Hi-Bike e-bike hire scheme with the aim of expanding it across the region.	More journeys by cycling where HiBikes are available.	Physical exercise is embedded in everyday lifestyles through active travel.
			Assisted cycling is more widely available to those less likely to own an e-bike.	Better air quality.
			More medium length journeys become achievable by active travel.	Reduced healthcare costs.
		Annually revisit our prioritised list of active travel projects using the prioritisation tool and take into account other relevant factors.	Projects are clearly prioritised and prioritisation work is kept up to date.	Improved local biodiversity.
	Active Travel in Rural and Semi-Rural Areas.	Continue to work on establishing Quiet Routes to reduce the speed limit of selected minor rural roads to create more walking, wheeling, and cycling friendly routes, linking this work to any national developments on Quiet Routes.	Traffic speeds are reduced on these routes.	Communities feel their active travel and access priorities are valued and listened to.
			Improved safety for people walking, wheeling, and cycling between rural settlements.	Active travel assets are well maintained and last longer.
		Encourage multi-modal journeys by providing integrated active travel links to public transport.	More people are making multi modal journeys.	Increased cycle ownership.
			More public transport stops are accessible to more people.	Demand for public transport services is increased.
		Focus on infrastructure improvements which will have the most impact on everyday journeys to local goods and services.	Walking, wheeling and cycling access to local amenities is improved.	More people have the opportunity to make more medium length journeys by active travel.
			More local journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling within settlements.	Forced car ownership is minimised as much as possible.
			Improved pedestrian accessibility within settlements.	Infrastructure investments are strategically targeted at places and people who can benefit most.
			Reduction in the number of short trips by private cars.	Investment in active travel delivers value for money.
	Maintenance.	Continue to seek funding for maintenance of our walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.	A pro active approach is taken to maintenance of active travel assets.	More active travel schemes are delivered.
		Improve our knowledge of and data held on existing walking wheeling and cycling infrastructure maintenance requirements of existing walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.	Future prioritisation decisions for walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure are informed by robust data.	Local economies are sustained and grown and the economic benefits of active travel are better understood.
		Improve public reporting of faults on walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.	Faults are identified and addressed quickly by the council.	Reduced congestion and improved journey times for other road users.
			Infrastructure is safer and more usable.	Promoting active travel becomes embedded in day to day council work.
Contribute to a just and fair transition to a more sustainable transport network with an appreciation of our challenging geographic layout, and be fully inclusive in our approach to active travel.	Ensuring Accessibility.	Design all new walking, wheeling, and cycling interventions to be as fully accessible as possible.	A diverse range of people and ability feel able to choose active travel for everyday journeys	
			Active travel is perceived to be more accessible by more people.	

Appendix 3: Strategy Diagram

Objectives	Themes	Actions	Outcomes	Impacts
		Improve accessibility of existing walking, wheeling and cycling routes.	Increase in everyday trips e.g. to work, school etc, by active travel across the region.	
			Increase in other purposeful trips (trips for the sake of the destination, not the sake of the journey itself) by active travel across the region.	
		Develop and implement an accessible signage strategy for all active travel routes.	Improved wayfinding for all active travel users.	
			Independent wayfinding is more accessible to more people.	
		Improve cycle storage for residents in areas of poor provision.	Remove lack of safe cycle storage as a barrier to cycle ownership.	
		Enforce the forthcoming national footway parking restrictions to ensure footways remain accessible for more people.	Footways remain clear of obstacles and accessible for all.	
			Generate revenue for THC.	
		Seek to integrate community priorities highlighted in Local Place Plans into our work planning	Recognition of local priorities as a factor in the scored infrastructure priority list.	
		Ensure that this Strategy and its impact assessments are kept up to date and remains serving its purpose.	The ATS remains serving its purpose throughout its intended period.	
			The ATS does not have negative impact on those with protected characteristics or other vulnerable groups.	
		Improve availability of information on the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Highland Network within the Council and to the public.	Council staff and the public are better informed about the network.	
			More people know about the network and where it connects them to.	
		Integrate the delivery of the Road Safety Strategy with active travel work.	Improved road safety across the region.	
		Run a series of School Streets pilots before rolling out across the Highlands.	More parents and pupils walk, wheel or cycle to and from school.	
			Reduction of traffic congestion around schools.	
			Improved air quality around schools.	
	Making the Most of Our Public Spaces	Require new developments to have active travel infrastructure designed in from the outset.	Residents are able to establish active travel habits immediately after moving into development.	
			Active travel is integrated into the new developments making best use of space and resource and minimising the needs for retrofitting in the future.	
			New developments contribute to the wider active travel network.	
		Proactively install new accessible, placemaking facilities to support walking, wheeling, and cycling such as rest areas, benches, signage, and cycle parking.	Local residents agree quick wins have improved their ability to travel easily around their area using active travel.	
		Improve data held on the installation of new place making facilities to support walking, wheeling, and cycling.	Improved reporting and promotion of public realm improvements.	
		Support the establishment of parklets.	Communities and visitors perceive parklets to have improved the quality of place.	
			Parklets are delivered across the region.	
		Support a Play Streets pilot and introduce a system for communities to run these across the Highlands.	Communities have a clear process for setting up a Play Street.	
		New active travel interventions positively impact biodiversity.	All new projects will report a biodiversity net gain.	
	Active Travel and the Local Economy	Increase the quantity of data available on walking, wheeling and cycling journeys.	THC have a better understanding of active travel use (demographic, locations, frequency, etc).	
			Better monitoring and evaluation of projects.	
		Integrate cycle parking, pedestrian rest areas and enhanced green spaces, in economic centres, into infrastructure work.	Increase in the number of cycling and walking journeys to economic centres.	
			Businesses see a benefit in people accessing their business by active travel.	
			More local businesses understand the benefits of active travel on the local economy.	

Appendix 3: Strategy Diagram

Objectives	Themes	Actions	Outcomes	Impacts
		Continue to consult with businesses and other stakeholders on active travel proposals in their area.	More businesses feel engaged and listened to throughout project development.	
			More businesses support active travel infrastructure in their area.	
		Work with large employers and clusters of employers to promote active travel to work.	More employees choose active travel for all or part of their commute.	
Provide support and advice to other partners, including community groups, to help deliver active travel infrastructure and behaviour change projects.	Partnership Working.	Work with research partners and other agencies to improve knowledge of and data held on active travel journeys.	THC hold a strong baseline data set to inform future investment in active travel.	
			More people with access needs agree active travel schemes and infrastructure designs inclusive and benefit as many people as possible.	
		From project outset of individual projects and initiatives, work with groups such as local Access Panels and those representing people with protected characteristics to ensure best practice is followed.	More people with access needs feel able to choose active travel for some journeys.	
			Achieve good levels of participation from communities in engagement activities.	
		Work with HITRANS to develop and deliver a suite of behaviour change interventions focussing on those less likely to have access to a private car.	More people feel able to access local services without the need to rely on a private car.	
			More people throughout the region are supported to gain skills in cycling, maintenance, and journey planning.	
			More people throughout the region are supporting in accessing a cycle through donation, loan, or hire schemes.	
		Continue to liaise with Transport Scotland on their active travel work across Highland.	The Council have better awareness of emerging active travel schemes being led by Transport Scotland.	
		Continue to work with Network Rail and ScotRail on the Inverness Stations Masterplan to ensure active travel integration is embedded in the design, and continue to liaise with them on other active travel work across Highland.	When complete, more people are accessing bus and rail journeys by active travel.	
			When complete, the demand for parking spaces near the stations is reduced.	
		Establish a Walking, Wheeling & Cycling Highland Stakeholder Forum, including external organisations and individuals, to support Highland-wide partnership working in planning and delivery of active travel infrastructure.	Time, budget, and staff resources are used more efficiently in delivery and maintenance of active travel infrastructure and behaviour change interventions.	
		Maximise the potential of developer contributions to support ATS Delivery Plan priorities.	More projects are delivered using developer contributions.	
		Support community-led infrastructure projects by signposting them to appropriate funding sources.	More community led projects are delivered.	
		Work with community groups to support them to deliver behaviour change activities to under-represent groups such as cycle training, bike repair, journey planning, and led rides.	More people feel more confident in their skills, use, and knowledge of the network.	
			More people who did not have access to support are supported in accessing active travel.	

Appendix 3: Strategy Diagram

Objectives	Themes	Actions	Outcomes	Impacts
	Tourism and Leisure	Seek to collect information on active travel tourism from business representative organisations.	THC hold a strong evidence base in support of active travel related tourism.	
			THC are able to plan appropriately for tourism peaks.	
			Develop a better understanding of the contribution and potential of cycle tourism to the Highland economy.	
		Work with partners to support the planning of non-car transport options for accessing events, facilitating access to local services while minimising impacts on local residents.	More visitors choose to access events by active travel for all or part of their journey.	
			Routes are well used for leisure and tourism.	
		Continue to work with the Sustrans National Cycle Network team to make improvements and to improve accessibility on NCN routes within Highland, where they also have a positive impact on everyday journeys.	Long distance routes are well maintained and closures minimised.	

Assumptions
Support from communities for actions and outcomes.
Implementation of the LTS and Road Safety Plan.
Interest and availability of resources from partners.
Availability of internal staff time and resource.

External factors
Availability of funding streams.
Support from third parties such as HITRANS and Police Scotland to implement actions.
Adoption and implementation of HITRANS Regional Transport strategy.
Availability of internal staff time and resource.

Appendix 4: Integrated Impact Assessments

The Highland Council

Integrated Impact Assessment

Screening Assessment

DRAFT Screening Assessment

Contents

1. Author Details

Further information and guidance can be found on the Impact Assessment intranet page.

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Job Title	Senior Project Officer, Active Travel
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Service	Economy & Infrastructure

Back to Contents

2. Proposal Details

What type of proposal does this relate to?	☐ policy ☒ Strategy ☒ Action or delivery plan ☐ redesign or delivery plan ☐ Introduction of a new service ☐ Budget savings proposal ☐ Service plan or programme ☐ Other (Please state here):
Proposal Name	Highland Council Active Travel Strategy 2024 - 2030
High level summary of the proposal	This Strategy outlines the Council's vision to make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people, more often, for more of their everyday journeys. Its objectives are to: 1. **Increase the number of journeys** made by active travel and including an active travel element; 2. Contribute to a **just and fair transition** to a more sustainable transport network with an appreciation of our challenging geographic layout; 3. Be **fully inclusive** in our approach to active travel; and 4. Provide **support and advice** to partners to help deliver active travel infrastructure and behaviour change projects.
Who may be affected by the proposal? *For instance, all Highland Council residents, children, older adults, staff, individuals with specific disabilities*	All Highland Council residents and visitors.
Time period of proposal development through to implementation *This will be the date between when the policy, strategy or service change began development until it is implemented.*	Date development of proposal began: March 2023 Planned implementation of proposal date: May 2024

If this relates to an existing proposal, please provide the name and high-level summary.	
Which Council services are impacted by this proposal:	☒Communities and Place ☐Deputy Chief Executive ☐Education and Learning ☒Health, social Care and Wellbeing ☒Infrastructure, Environment & Economy ☐Performance and Governance ☐Property and Housing ☐Resources and Finance

Back to Contents

3. Equalities, Poverty, & Human Rights

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination*
- *Advance equality of opportunity*
- *Foster good relations*

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act. Assessments should 'consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of impact'.

*Human rights are devolved to Scotland by the Scotland Act (1998) and are enshrined in the Human Rights Act (1998). They are based on the Articles within the **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)**.*

In summary, these Articles require essential levels of economic, political, social, and cultural rights for people to live a safe and dignified life. The Articles are based on key principles of:

- *non-discrimination,*
- *participation,*
- *care and protection,*
- *physical, economic, and social security,*
- *dignity*
- *self-fulfilment*

*The purpose of an Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EQ & HR IA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans, or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the **Equality Act 2010** and/or the **Human Rights Act 1998**.*

It will also consider the likely impact of policies or proposals on groups in poverty or at risk of becoming affected by poverty. This should include taking account of the potential impact of changes (especially withdrawal or reduction) to any 'pro-poor' services that the Council delivers and any associated policies. In addition to low income, poverty also covers related socio-economic issues including social exclusion, poor health, inadequate housing, access to services such as childcare or transport, or lack of employment, training, and educational opportunities.

Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised.

This Screening is a short exercise to determine if a policy is relevant to equality, poverty, and human rights and whether a full EPHR IA should be carried out.

Protected Characteristics

As part of your assessment here, consider the impact of your policy on people and how they will be able to access goods, services, and information with no barriers.

Sex	☒Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Age	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Disability	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Religion or Belief	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Race	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Sexual Orientation	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Gender Reassignment	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Pregnancy / Maternity	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Marriage & Civil Partnership	☐Positive ☐Negative ☒ No Impact

List details of any identified impacts above, including any mitigating actions for negative impacts.	Key strategic objectives of the ATS are to contribute to a just and fair transition to a more sustainable transport network with an appreciation of our challenging geographic layout, and to be fully inclusive in our approach to active travel. In general terms, active travel interventions have the potential to deliver a range of co-benefits. The following summary is from the Scottish Government STPR2's summary of potential impacts on protected characteristic groups from improvements in active travel infrastructure, behaviour change interventions, enhancing access to affordable public transport, decarbonising transport and increasing safety and resilience on the strategic transport network: "*Active travel infrastructure and interventions could potentially have a positive impact on groups with protected characteristics with regards to improving access to key services such as education, healthcare, employment, shopping and recreational activities as well as connecting towns and villages through an active travel network. Increased uptake of active travel could improve physical health and mental wellbeing outcomes and is also likely to lead to air quality improvements if the uptake is matched by a reduction in private vehicle use and traffic congestion. Improved health outcomes as a result of better air quality are of particular benefit to those who are more vulnerable to air pollution, including children, older people and disabled people. Design guidelines accommodate adapted cycles. Segregated infrastructure will also benefit people who are more likely to lack confidence or are underrepresented amongst cyclists such as women. Improved safety measures would also reduce road and personal safety concerns for active travel users, including children who account for 44% of all pedestrian casualties.* *However, the extent to which those people with protected characteristics, those living in rural areas and those living in deprived neighbourhoods will benefit from active freeways and long distance*

	active travel networks will depend on implementation, accessibility and location / routing. *Recent examples of behaviour change interventions to promote modal shift are free bus tickets for asylum seekers, free bus travel for the under-22s, work in schools, and the Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme. The impact on groups with protected characteristics will depend on how well these schemes reach them."* We note the flagging of potential negative effects here, which depend on the details of each particular project. The ATS states that in terms of detailed design THC aims to follow Cycling by Design guidelines where the aim is design for mass cycling with infrastructure providing a High Level of Service. Excellence in walking and wheeling design is also crucial – walking and wheeling are at the top of the Travel Hierarchy. Designs are Disability Discrimination Act compliant and we are committed to engagement with access groups on design details and to design to ensure improvements for people with mobility impairments including blue badge holders – see below for more on this. The projects listed in the Delivery Plan have been prioritised taking into account a range of factors including project location re SIMD rating, contribution to the wider AT network, links to key trip generators such as education, healthcare and retail. Another factor taken into account is the proposal's links to public transport provision: enhancing access by walking, wheeling and cycling to affordable, fully accessible, integrated public transport is likely to benefit those at risk of transport poverty. Linking the ATS to THC's Road Safety work, the expansion of 20mph zones is predicted to have a positive impact in reducing casualties as well as encouraging uptake of walking, wheeling and cycling. **Sex:** From the EqIA for STPR2*: "There is a disparity in how different sexes use transport. Men are more likely to hold a driving license than women*

	(77% compared to 66%) and drive more frequently (49% drive every day compared to 38% of women). Men also walk and cycle more frequently. In 2017, women used the bus slightly more than men with 40% having used a bus in the last month compared to 37% of men, however there is little difference when comparing train use (Transport Scotland, Sep 2020). Women are more likely to make multi-stop and multi-purpose trips, combining travel to work with trips for other purposes such as taking children to school, looking after family members or shopping and are more likely to walk, be a passenger in a car or take a bus than men (Sustrans, 2018). Women's concerns when traveling on public transport largely relate to gender-based violence and assault, including sexual harassment when travelling." Note also the 2023 report from Transform Scotland "Mind the Gap: Women's safety and gender inequality in public transport" which gives further details of the disadvantages suffered by women. Measures to bring about a shift to active and sustainable travel modes are likely to have a positive impact on women by making these travel patterns easier, cheaper and more enjoyable. Increased uptake of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport will increase natural surveillance and reduce isolation leading to improvements in safety. Work is also needed to support a change in the damaging, overwhelmingly male, behaviour which is a barrier to women choosing active and sustainable modes. **Age**: for potential impacts on children and young people see "Childrens' Rights & Wellbeing" below. Older people are more likely to use public transport for journeys in comparison to other age groups (Transport Scotland, Sep 2020). Accessibility issues are more likely to affect older people than other age groups with some older people having limited mobility, hearing or vision impairments, difficulties in understanding information or accessing digital resources and difficulties in alighting to and from transport services, using station facilities or standing for long periods of time. These factors may affect an older person's ability to safely access and use public

	transport services. Older people can be disproportionately affected by environmental impacts of traffic. For example, evidence shows that traffic-related noise has increased health risks for older people (Halonen. J, Oct 2015). and they are more vulnerable to the effects of poor air quality compared to the overall population. **Disability:** from the EqIA for STPR2: *"Around 24% of Scotland's population live with a long-term physical or mental health condition that limits their daily life. Yet, those with long-term limiting illnesses, including disabled people, often experience higher levels of inequality. Accessible transport is an important aspect of enabling disabled people to enjoy equal access to full citizenship. Disabled adults are more likely to use the bus than non-disabled adults (11% of journeys vs 7%) (Transport Scotland, 2021). In 2019, 44% of sick or disabled adults had used a bus in the last month compared to 39% of all adults. (Transport Scotland, Sep 2020). However, they were less likely to use a train. There are a range of accessibility issues that may affect a disabled person's ability to safely access and use public transport services. These include steps or multi layered stations, inaccessible transport information, lack of trained support staff and lack of accessible connectivity between modes."* Cycling rates amongst disabled people are lower than those who are not disabled even though 65% of disabled cyclists use their cycle as a mobility aid, with the same proportion finding cycling easier than walking. However, disabled cyclists cite inaccessible cycle infrastructure, cost of non-standard cycles and the inability to cycle in places where a mobility scooter would be allowed as the biggest barriers to cycling (Wheels for Wellbeing, 2020). In addition, the Scottish Household Survey *states "On average, disabled people tend to be older, less likely to be working and more likely to be in a household with a low income than people without disabilities. These demographic factors are all likely to affect transport*

	and travel habits in addition to any impact from disability." and *"A lower percentage of disabled people possess a driving licence than the non-disabled population (51% vs 75%) and a lower percentage have access to a car (52% vs 77%)."* As above under "Age", Aldred et al (2016:41) noted that *"It has often been assumed in low-cycling countries that older and disabled people are incapable of cycling, despite evidence to the contrary from higher cycling contexts, and this has led to a neglect of these groups' needs in research." Given the prevailing narratives around their capabilities, disabled people, along with the elderly, are often implicitly assumed to fall in the 'no way' bracket of cyclists. Disability cycling advocates argue that these assumptions are unfounded*." However without infrastructure improvements and behaviour change work, there is unlikely to be an increase in cycling amongst disabled people. As noted above, individual interventions will be subject to their own EqIA; accessibility will be designed in from the outset leading to a gradual improvement in travel options for many disabled people. Disabled people are likely to be less well off and less likely to own a car, therefore safe, accessible, affordable alternatives to the car will benefit many. It is the case that many disabled people are essential car users. Reducing vehicle congestion by modal shift will make life easier for them. Blue Badge holders all walk or wheel at some point so improvements to that infrastructure will bring benefits and options. Accessibility to people with a particular impairment depends on the details of the particular scheme design. Design guidance includes accessibility and for each local project, it is a condition of funding that designs are fully accessible. There are concerns from some disabled people that poorly designed active travel infrastructure will further disadvantage them. For example, obstructions from e.g. bollards, and the blurring of space between pedestrian and vehicle use, cause danger to people with a sight impairment. As mentioned above, reallocation of road space

	away from parking provision may disadvantage disabled drivers in accessing goods and services. Robust consultation processes at the earliest stages of projects will help avoid this. **Religion / Belief:** from the EqIA for STPR2: *"There is a clear link between religion and economic inequality. Muslims are more likely to experience socio-economic disadvantages than other groups. Discrimination, assault or harassment of the basis of religious identity may affect people of certain religious groups more than others, and this may affect their choice to use public transport and public transport facilities."* Measures to bring about a shift to active and sustainable travel modes are likely to have a positive impact on these issues by making these travel modes and patterns easier, cheaper and more enjoyable. Increased uptake of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport will increase natural surveillance and reduce isolation leading to improvements in safety and perceptions of safety. Active and sustainable travel modes are cheaper than driving, leading to reduction of transport poverty and pressure on household incomes. **Race:** from the EqIA for STPR2: *"The last census (2011) found that most of the population in Scotland was white, with only Glasgow having a white population of less than 90%. Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British was the second largest ethnicity in Scotland (2.7%), with the largest populations being in Glasgow (8.1%), Edinburgh (5.5%) and East Renfrewshire (5.1%). According to the 2011 Census, certain ethnic minority households were most likely to have no car or van available including 51% of African households, 39% of Caribbean or Black households and 36% of Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British. Since ethnic minority groups are less likely to have access to a car and more likely to rely on public transport than other groups, issues of cost and safety may disproportionally impact these groups and affect the outcomes and opportunities available. Racial discrimination, harassment or abuse can create a barrier to travel for ethnic minority groups who are more likely to be subject to*

	hate crimes." Measures to bring about a shift to active and sustainable travel modes are likely to have a positive impact on people from ethnic minority groups by making these modes easier, cheaper and more enjoyable. Increased uptake of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport will increase natural surveillance and reduce isolation leading to improvements in safety and perceptions of safety. **Sexual orientation:** from the EqIA for STPR2: *"In the Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019, an annual Official Statistics publication, 94.2% of adults identified with being heterosexual, with 2% identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGBO). The remaining respondents answered, "Don't Know". It is believed that this survey may undercount the number of adults self-identifying as LGBO as they may not feel comfortable with the interviewer (Scottish Government, 2019). People in this group may be concerned about being able to access public transport and public transport facilities, especially at night when these may be poorly lit, for fear of harassment or discrimination."* Measures to bring about a shift to active and sustainable travel modes are likely to have a positive impact on LGBO people by making these modes easier, cheaper and more enjoyable. Increased uptake of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport will increase natural surveillance and reduce isolation leading to improvements in safety and perceptions of safety. **Gender Reassignment:** from the EqIA for STPR2: *"There are no official statistics relating to gender reassignment in Scotland as the Census has previously only collected data relating to sex at birth. However, [the 2022 Census will provide data on this for the first time]. There is also limited data and evidence available on the experiences of transgender people. However, research has identified that trans people have lower income, and experience structural disadvantages in accessing employment and training opportunities, and are*

	therefore at a higher risk of transport poverty (Scottish Transgender Alliance, 2008). *Transgender identity is also one of the protected characteristics covered by the hate crime legislation. For many transgender people, concerns about discrimination and harassment are part of their day to day lives, and could affect their use of the transport network."* Measures to bring about a shift to active and sustainable travel modes are likely to have a positive impact on people undergoing gender reassignment by making these travel patterns easier, cheaper and more enjoyable. Increased uptake of walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport will increase natural surveillance and reduce isolation leading to improvements in safety and perceptions. **Pregnancy & Maternity:** from the EqIA for STPR2: *"Measures to bring about a shift to active and sustainable travel modes are likely to have a beneficial effect on pregnant women by making these modes easier, cheaper and more accessible. A reduction in air pollution from reduced vehicle miles will benefit the health of both mother and baby."* **Marriage & Civil Partnership:** n/a, this applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination. However we would judge the effect of this proposed ATS to be neutral.

Socio-Economic

How is the Policy, Strategy or Service change likely to impact on the following:

Prospects/Opportunities – potential impact on people's life chances e.g., access to, or ability to access education, employment, training (e.g., transport, childcare, support)	☒Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact

Places – potential to impact on specific vulnerable areas or communities (SIMD, fragile rural, housing, transport)	☒Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact
Financial impact – potential impact on household resources (income, benefits, outgoings), ability to access a service due to reduction or withdrawal.	☒Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact

List details of any identified impacts above, including any mitigating actions for negative impacts.	Having non-car options for accessing employment, leisure, goods and services helps household budgets and increases transport independence for all household members. As noted above, the SIMD rating of the location of a potential project is taken into account when prioritising projects for delivery. In rural areas, active travel for short everyday journeys within settlements can bring co-benefits. Active travel is not likely to be suitable for longer trips between settlements in rural areas; the Council's emerging Local Transport Strategy will address options for these trips. Taking a broader view, the reduction in carbon emissions and the potential benefits for biodiversity bring wider benefits, when climate change and the ecological crisis are amongst the biggest threats we face in Highland as elsewhere.

Human Rights

Which Human Rights will be affected by this proposal	☐ Article 8: Respect for private and family life, home, and correspondence ☐ Article 9: Freedom of thought, belief, and religion ☐ Article 10: Freedom of expression ☐ Article 12: Right to marry and found a family ☐ Article 14: Protection from discrimination

	☐ Protocol 1 Article 1: Right to peaceful enjoyment of property ☐ Protocol 1 Article 2: Right to education ☐ protocol 1 Article 3: Right to participate in free elections
Do you consider this proposal to have any impact on the Human Rights of People?	☒ Positive ☐Negative ☐No Impact

Considering the articles of the Human Rights Act, list details of any identified impacts above, including any mitigating actions for negative impacts.	Transport in itself is not a human right, but everyone needs it to access their human rights. Safe, affordable, attractive, sustainable, healthy transport options help individuals and communities to thrive. The more our communities are vibrant with people, the safer, more socially connected, and resilient they will become.

What impact do you think there will be to equalities, poverty, and human rights? *This should be based on the answers you have provided in this section.*	☒ Positive impact ☐Positive and negative impact (potential or actual) ☐Negative impact (potential or actual) ☐No impact
Provide a brief description explaining your selection and what considerations were made. *Details provided may be used in Committee Reports and relevant Board Meetings.*	As noted above, improvements to infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling brings a wide range of co-benefits to individuals, households, communities and the wider environment.

Back to Contents

4. Children's Rights & Wellbeing

Use this Screening to consider whether Children's Rights & Wellbeing will be impacted by the proposed Policy, Strategy or Service. If any specific group or children's rights will be adversely impacted by the action, a full CRWIA may be required.

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Here is a full list of the articles of the UNCRC.

However, the following Articles are the most commonly cited and so initially it may be helpful to ensure:

- *you are working in the best interests of the child (Article 3)*
- *you are providing an opportunity for children to express their views in any matter affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously (Article 12)*
- *children with disabilities can live a full life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community (Article 23)*
- *children have a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development (Article 27)*
- *children have a right to education (Article 28), that develops their personality, talents, and abilities to the full (Article 29).*

Scottish Government Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) Guidance

What likely impact – direct or indirect – will the policy/measure have on children and young people? *'Direct' impact refers to policies/measures where children and young people are directly affected by the proposed changes, e.g., in early years, education, child protection or care experienced children.* *'Indirect' impact refers to policies/measures that are not directly aimed at children but will have an impact on them. Examples include - welfare reforms, parental leave, housing supply, or local transport schemes.*	**Direct impacts** Obviously, children and young people will live with the multiple negative consequences of climate breakdown and ecological degradation for longer. A shift to sustainable forms of transport will benefit young people in Highland as elsewhere. Being confident in using public transport and being able to get around by bike and on foot are key life skills especially in the context of falling car ownership amongst young people as above. In Highland, many young people do not routinely use public transport or cycle leading to confidence issues and lack of options when they move to a larger town for work or study. The key factors affecting the ability of children and young people to access transport options are their socio-economic background, geographical location and the accessibility and

	safety of public transport and active travel facilities available. The ability to access safe, convenient and cost-effective transport in turn has an impact on access to education, public services and economic opportunities, particularly for children from deprived socio-economic backgrounds. Safety is a key issue for children with regards to transport. There were 331 child pedestrian casualties recorded in Scotland in 2019, accounting for 44% of all pedestrian casualties (Transport Scotland, Jul 2020). In particular children from deprived areas and certain ethnic groups are more at risk. According to the Scottish Health Survey, 26% of children aged 2-15 are at risk of being overweight, including 13% at risk of obesity (Scottish Government, March 2018). Access to active travel and transport systems that encourage regular physical activity is an important factor in combating obesity as well as having beneficial impacts on mental health and wellbeing. Young people in rural areas and island communities are more dependent on public transport, particularly for accessing education and training. However, the high cost and low availability of public transport in these areas is a significant challenge for young people and can act as a barrier to their educational choices and overall progress into employment. Evidence suggests that young adults (aged 17 to 29) in urban areas are travelling less, domestically (particularly driving). Some of the reasons for this include increased urbanisation (and higher density developments), high costs of transport and relying more on technology for social interaction (Chatterjee K. et al., 2018). The environmental impacts of traffic can disproportionately affect children. For example, evidence shows that traffic-related

	noise is correlated more broadly with lower health related quality of life in children (Hjortebjerg, D. et al, 2015) and they are more vulnerable to the effects of poor air quality from traffic-related emissions compared to the overall population. Therefore, in general terms, improved infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling will bring benefits to children and young people in terms of reduction in air pollution to which they are particularly vulnerable. Increased physical activity brings physical and mental health benefits and increased social interaction. Specific measures in the ATS aimed at benefiting children and young people include piloting School Streets, Play Streets and Parklets. Children with mobility impairments, and those who care for them, will potentially benefit from a wider range of transport options.
Which Children's Rights will be affected and how? Here is the full list of the articles of the UNCRC. However, the following Articles are the most commonly cited.	☒ You are working in the best interests of the child (Article 3) ☐ You are providing an opportunity for children to express their views in any matter affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously (Article 12) ☒ Children with disabilities can live a full life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community (Article 23) ☒ Children have a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development (Article 27) ☐ Children have a right to education (Article 28), that develops their personality, talents, and abilities to the full (Article 29). ☒ Children have the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities (Article 31)

Please explain all the rights impacted based on your answer given in the previous question. State if any other children's rights will be affected. *State if no Children's rights will be affected.*	It is in children's best interest that we work to achieve a shift in transport to more sustainable modes such as walking, wheeling, cycling and the use of public transport. Children with mobility impairments, and those who care for them, will potentially benefit from a wider range of transport options. Public spaces which are safer, cleaner, greener and vibrant with people will contribute to a higher standard of living for children, as will a reduction in car dependence and an increase in travel independence for household members. These will also improve children's opportunities to relax and play.

What impact do you think there will be to Children's Rights and Wellbeing? *This should be based on the answers you have provided in this section.*	☒ Positive impact ☐Positive and negative impact (potential or actual) ☐Negative impact (potential or actual) ☐No impact
Provide a brief description explaining your selection and what considerations were made. *Details provided may be used in Committee Reports and relevant Board Meetings.*	As above.

Back to Contents

5. Data Protection

The councils Data Protection policy requires the council to implement the 'Data Protection by Design and Default', this means that when processing personal data, we must put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to implement the key data protection principles effectively and safeguard individual rights. Failure to comply with the principles may leave the council open to fines. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will help you identify and minimise or mitigate the data protection risks of a project. Not all processing of personal data requires a DPIA. The list below provides examples where a DPIA would likely be required, please select as appropriate an read the accompanying advice before moving to the next question.

Personal data means any information relating to an individual (data subject is the term used by the legislation) who can be identified, directly or indirectly, from that information. Individuals can usually be identified because the personal data contains or is linked to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier (e.g., the IP number of your computer or a social media account name). However, other characteristics which can lead to the identity of an individual are also personal data. This guide refers to 'processing'. Processing means any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data including collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure, or destruction. Processing can be automated or manual.

Does your proposal involve processing personal data?	☐ Yes ☒ No (you can skip to the end of this section)
Is any of this data already processed by the Highland Council?	☐Yes ☐No
If yes – What is the purpose of the personal data being processed? *Include any changes being proposed or additional data needed.* *Please confirm that there is an up-to-date privacy notice available on the Highland Council website.* *dpo@highland.gov.uk can assist amending privacy notices.*	
If no – What purpose will the data be used for? *Please confirm that a privacy notice will be available on the Highland Council website.*	

dpo@highland.gov.uk can assist creating privacy notices.	

Please tick which option relates to this proposal. *This should be based on the answers you have provided in this section.*	☒ No personal data will be processed ☐ No significant change to current processing ☐ Significant change to current processing ☐ New data will be processed
Provide a brief description explaining why you have selected this. *Please be advised that the brief description provided may be used in Committee Reports, relevant Board Meetings, etc.*	We are not going out to public consultation on the ATS; no personal data will be processed.

Back to Contents

6. Island and Mainland Rural Communities

*The Island and Mainland Rural Communities Impact Assessment Screening is required to identify whether your **new or reviewed policy, strategy or service** is likely to have an effect on an island or mainland rural community which is significantly different from its effects on other communities (including other island and mainland rural communities) in the Council area. Impacts may be positive or negative and both should be recorded. A screening is the first stage in determining whether a Full Impact Assessment is required or not.*

Additional guidance:

- *Full guidance*
- *ICIA overview leaflet - Gaelic version*
- *Video to support beginners to the ICIA process - Gaelic & BSL versions*

Does your proposal impact island and mainland rural communities?	☒Yes ☐No - You can skip to the end of this section.
Please explain how island and mainland rural communities may be affected differently by your proposal. If there are no differential impacts, then state here. *Impact could differ within island communities and mainland rural communities. Consider travel time, higher costs, energy costs, internet access, sustainability of service and individuals (seasonal, part-time or self-employed)*	Key strategic objectives of the ATS are to contribute to a just and fair transition to a more sustainable transport network with an appreciation of our challenging geographic layout, and to be fully inclusive in our approach to active travel. Those living in island and rural communities face higher costs and more limited choices of transport options. They are more at risk of forced car ownership, leading to pressures on household budgets, and of transport poverty, leading to loss of independence, risk of isolation, and poor access to essential goods and services and to leisure. Many of the transport issues and potential solutions for those in island and rural communities will be addressed in the Council's emerging Local Transport Strategy. These include public transport, community transport, ferries, lifeline aviation services, the roads network, liftsharing and car sharing. The approach of the ATS is to make focused improvements within rural and island settlement boundaries to support walking, wheeling and cycling for those short everyday journeys, and to improve links to public transport provision. This will link to the work of the Road Safety team in evaluation the installation of

	20mph limits in Highland settlements. Active travel is unlikely to offer a realistic option for travel between rural settlements and as noted above the emerging LTS will cover other options.
Provide details of any negative impacts on island or mainland rural communities and any mitigating actions.	

What impact do you think there will be to island and mainland rural communities. *This should be based on the answers you have provided in this section.*	☐No difference – no further action required. ☐Minor differences with mitigations identified ☒Minor differences with no mitigation identified ☐Significant differences
Provide a brief description explaining why you have selected this. *Please be advised that the brief description provided may be used in Committee Reports, relevant Board Meetings, etc.*	Within the lifetime of the ATS we are unlikely to see a significant shift to active travel modes overall in rural and islands settlements, as measure by car kilometers. However as interventions are delivered in settlements we would expect to see a gradual increase in walking, wheeling and cycling for short everyday trips and the consequent co-benefits to individuals and the communities from that increase.

Back to Contents

7. Climate Change

Use this screening to determine whether your proposal has the potential to have positive or negative impacts on the climate, the environment, and/or biodiversity.

This screening and further full impact assessment is a reflective tool, not a framework for approving or rejecting a decisions, so will work best if the questions were given carefull and honest consideration.

For further advice and guidance on what to take into account when answering this screening please refer to the Climate Change Impact Assessment guidance here. For further information see the Net Zero Strategy.

Does the proposal involve activities that could impact on greenhouse gas emissions (CO2e)? *Related to transport and travel, energy use, land use, procurement, or disposal of resources…*	☒Yes ☐No ☐ Not Known
Does the proposal have the potential to affect the environment, wildlife, or biodiversity?	☒Yes ☐No ☐ Not Known
Does the proposal have the potential to influence resilience to extreme weather or changing climate?	☒Yes ☐No ☐ Not Known

Have you identified potential impact for any of the areas above of marked any as not known?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Provide a brief description explaining why you have selected this. *Please be advised that the brief description provided may be used in Committee Reports, relevant Board Meetings, etc.*	A key objective of the ATS is to contribute to a just and fair transition to a more sustainable transport network. A shift away from car over-use and car dependency to walking, wheeling and cycling helps to deliver our net zero target, to adapt to the effects of climate

	change, and to promote cleaner, greener choices. A reduction in vehicle use also leads to a reduction in air, watercourse and noise pollution. The ATS also commits to increasing the biodiversity net gain of projects by including native species in planting schemes, tree planting to stabilise temperatures, and water management via features such as water gardens. These lead to multiple benefits for biodiversity as well as increasing our resilience to extreme weather and changing climate.

Back to Contents

8. Completion Details

Please provide the details of the Responsible Manager who is responsible for this proposal and who will be reviewing this Integrated Impact Assessment Screening?	Name: Job Title Service:
Please insert the date on which this Screening has been completed	

Back to Contents

9. Responsible Manager Review and Approve

As the Responsible Manager identified by the Lead Author as having overall responsibility for the proposed Policy, Strategy or Service; you now need to Review and Approve the Screening information that has been provided by the Lead Author (and any Co-Authors) for the various areas of impact (i.e Equalities, Islands, Climate Change, Children's Rights & Wellbeing, Data Protection) by the Lead Author to determine whether a Full Impact Assessment (FIA) is required (or not) for any of these areas.

Responsible Manager Approval of the information presented above in this Impact Assessment Screening	☐ Yes ☐ No
Based on the information provided above, select which subjects will require a Full Impact Assessment.	☐ Equalities, Poverty, and Human Rights ☐ Children's Rights and Wellbeing ☐ Data Protection ☐ Island and Mainland Rural Communities ☐ Climate Change
Review completion date	

Back to Contents

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Strategic Objective	Theme	Action	Outcome	Indicator	2030 Target	Data Source	Baseline	Follow Up
Increase the number of journeys made by active travel and including an active travel element;	Connecting the Highlands	Further develop the active travel network across Highland, striving to deliver high quality provision for walking, wheeling and cycling as appropriate for each location	Settlements are better connected by active travel routes	Change in self reported modal shift for purposeful journeys to another settlement from private car to active travel	10% increase on baseline within project areas	2022 census data	2022 Census	N/A
						Public survey	N/A	2029
				Metres of new walking/ wheeling / cycling routes delivered	50km of new routes	THC records	N/A	2029
				Number of settlements connected by active travel routes which are assessed as being good quality	50% of settlements with a settlement of over 2000 will be connected to their closest neighbour via good quality active travel route(s)	Manual count based on THC records	2024	2030
			More journeys made by walking, wheeling and cycling between settlements	Number of residents surveyed who agree it is safe to make short journeys to their closest neighbouring settlement by active travel	15% increase on baseline within project areas	Public survey	2024	2029
				Number of visitors surveyed who agree it is safe to make short journeys to the closest neighbouring settlement to their base by active travel	15% increase on baseline within project areas	Public survey	2024	2029
		Evaluate the 20mph initiative and identify where small scale interventions can improve accessibility, such as provision of crossings and dropped kerb	Improved walking, wheeling and cycling accessibility within settlements	Number of residents who feel that quick win infrastructure such as dropped kerbs and crossings has improved local pedestrian accessibility	Over 60% within project areas	Public survey	2024	2029
				Number of dropped kerbs retrofitted across the region as a result of the evaluation	80	THC records	N/A	2030
				Number of new crossings delivered across the region as a result of the evaluation	20	THC records	N/A	2030
				Number of crossing improvements/upgrades delivered across the region as a result of the evaluation	20	THC records	N/A	2030
			More journeys made by walking, wheeling and cycling within settlements	Change in number of journeys within settlements made by walking and wheeling	10% increase on baseline	Automatic counters	2023	2030
		Support integration of active travel work across different Council workstreams, for coherent and efficient service delivery	Time, budget, and staff resources are used more efficiently in delivery and maintenance of active travel infrastructure and behaviour change	Number of active travel projects completed between 2024-2030	15% increase on previous 6 year period	THC records	2017-2023	2030
			Improved cooperation between Council workstreams and improved coherence between Council policies	Metres of improved walking / wheeling / cycling routes delivered	50km of improved routes	THC records	N/A	2029
		Secure funds to deliver infrastructure improvements through existing and new funding sources	More funding available to deliver new schemes	Amount of funding for active travel projects secured from external sources annually	50% increase on previous 6 year period adjusted for inflation	THC records	2023	2029
				Amount of THC capital budget allocated for active travel projects annually	50% increase on previous 6 year period adjusted for inflation	THC records	2024	2029
			More staff resource to deliver new schemes	Number of staff delivering active travel projects	6 dedicated active travel staff	THC records	2024	2030
		Support HITRANS in the roll-out of the HiBike bikeshare scheme with the aim of expanding it across the region	More journeys by cycling where HiBikes are available	Increase in number of purposeful journeys made by cycling	10% increase on baseline	Automatic counters	2024	2030
			Assisted cycling is more widely available to those less likely to own an e-bike	Increase in number of annual Hi Bike hires	100% increase on baseline	Hi Bike data	2023	2030
			More medium length journeys become achievable by active travel	Number of Hi Bike hires travelling over 10km	Increase in the number of hires travelling over 10km	Hi Bike data	2023	2030
		Annually revisit our prioritised list of active travel projects taking the prioritisation tool and take into account other relevant factors	Projects are clearly prioritised and prioritisation work is kept up to date	Number of projects assessed annually using the priority tool	80% of emerging schemes are assessed	THC records	2024	2030
	Active Travel in Rural and Semi-Rural Areas	Continue to work on establishing Quiet Routes to reduce the speed limit of selected minor rural roads to create more walking, wheeling, and cycling friendly routes, linking this work to any national developments on Quiet Routes	Traffic speeds are reduced on these routes	Number of walking, and cycling friendly roads delivered	20	THC records	N/A	2030

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Strategic Objective	Theme	Action	Outcome	Indicator	2030 Target	Data Source	Baseline	Follow Up
			Improved safety for people walking, wheeling, and cycling between rural settlements	Speed of vehicles on walking, and cycling friendly roads	85% percentile is lower than new speed limits	ATC	N/A	2029
				Number of accidents recorded on new walking, and cycling friendly roads	No increase in number of RTAs on routes	Crashmap data	Pre implementation	3 years post implementation
		Encourage multi-modal journeys by providing integrated active travel links to public transport	More people are making multi modal journeys	Number of self reported multi modal journeys where the first and/or last mile is taken by active travel	15% increase on baseline	Public survey	2024	2029
			More public transport stops are accessible to more people	Number of passengers boarding at active travel / public transport hubs	Increase in patronage within project areas	Bus data from operator	2023	2030
				Number of new connections to public transport stops/hubs	20	THC records	N/A	2030
		Focus on infrastructure improvements which will have the most impact on everyday journeys to local goods and services	Walking, wheeling and cycling access to local amenities is improved	Number of 20min Neighbourhood schemes delivered	3	THC records	N/A	2030
			More local journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling within settlements	Number of journeys made by walking, wheeling and cycling within settlements	25% increase within project areas	Automatic counters	Pre implementation	3 years post implementation
			Improved pedestrian accessibility within settlements	Number of residents who feel that a 20min Neighbourhood scheme has improved local pedestrian accessibility	Over 60% within project areas	Public survey	N/A	2029
			Reduction in the number of short trips by private cars	Change in self reported modal shift for short purposeful journeys from private car to active travel	10% increase on baseline within project areas	2022 census data	2022 Census	N/A
						Public survey	N/A	2029
	Maintenance	Continue to seek funding for maintenance of our walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure	Time, budget, and staff resources are used more efficiently in maintenance of active travel infrastructure	Increased funding available for maintenance.	10% increase on baseline	THC records	2024	2029
				Increased maintenance activities	10% increase on baseline	THC records	2024	2029
				Km of maintained infrastructure	50km more than routes	THC records	2024	2029
			A pro active approach is taken to maintenance of active travel assets	Number of annual audits carried out on active travel infrastructure	50% annual increase	THC records	2023	2030
		Improve our knowledge of and data held on existing walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure and the maintenance requirements of that infrastructure	Future funding decisions for walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure are informed by robust data	Each investment decision is supported by data.	100%	THC records	N/A	2029
			Strengths and weaknesses of current infrastructure are easy to identify and either exploit or rectify	Reference map of active travel infrastructure is created, and regularly updated	Audit of HC active travel infrastructure complete.	THC records	N/A	2029
			Process is in place for mapping and reporting issues and documenting repairs.	Reference map of active travel infrastructure is used to map frequent fault locations and types	Audit of HC active travel infrastructure complete.	THC records	2024	2029
				Number of reported faults repaired	30% increase on baseline	THC records	2024	2029
			Funding is targeted towards key maintenance areas	A clear prioritisation process is in place and utilised for maintenance decisions.	All maintenance decisions are made using prioritisation process	THC records	N/A	2029
		Improve public reporting of faults on walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure	Faults are identified and addressed quickly by the council	Average time taken between fault being identified and repaired	Reduction in average time compared to baseline	THC records	2023	2029
			Infrastructure is usable in all seasons	Number of users on selected routes during winter months	Increase on baseline	Automatic counters	2023	2029
Contribute to a just and fair transition to a more sustainable transport network with an appreciation of our challenging geographic layout, and Be fully inclusive in our approach to active travel	Ensuring Accessibility	Design all new walking, wheeling, and cycling interventions to be as fully accessible as possible	A diverse range of people and ability feel able to choose active travel for everyday journeys	Diversity (age, gender, disability, ethnicity)of active travel users on selected routes is representative of local population	Is representative of population	2022 census data	2022 census	N/A
						RUIS	N/A	2030
			Active travel is perceived to be more accessible by more people	Number of people surveyed who agree active travel is an accessible option	20% increase on baseline	Public survey	2024	2029
		Improve accessibility of existing walking, wheeling and cycling routes	Increase in everyday trips e.g. to work, school etc, by active travel across the region	Number of everyday trips e.g. to work, school etc, by active travel across the region	5% increase on baseline	Public survey	2025	2029

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Strategic Objective	Theme	Action	Outcome	Indicator	2030 Target	Data Source	Baseline	Follow Up
						Scottish Household Survey	2025	2029
						Hands-Up survey Scotland	2025	2029
				Number of routes where physical barriers have been removed or made more accessible	Average 5 per year	THC records	N/A	2029
			Increase in other purposeful trips (trips for the sake of the destination, not the sake of the journey itself) by active travel across the region	Number of other purposeful trips by active travel across the region	5% increase on baseline	Public survey	2025	2029
		Develop and implement an accessible signage strategy for active travel routes.	Improved wayfinding for active travel users.	Number of people surveyed in project areas who agree wayfinding is easier	10% increase on baseline	Public survey	Pre implementation	Post implementation
				Number of wayfinding complaints	25% decrease from baseline	THC records	2023	2029
			Independent wayfinding is more accessible to more people.	Change in active travel usage in project areas	5% increase on baseline	Automatic counters	Pre implementation	Post implementation
		Improve cycle storage for residents in areas of poor provision.	Remove lack of safe cycle storage as a barrier to cycle ownership	Change in cycle ownership in region	5% increase on baseline	Public survey	2025	2029
				Number of residential cycle storage spaces delivered	25% increase on baseline	THC records	2024	2029
		Enforce the forthcoming national footway parking restrictions to ensure footways remain accessible for more people.	Footways remain clear of obstacles and accessible for all	Number of penalty notices issued		THC records	2024	2029
			Generate revenue for THC	Revenue from parking infringements	Initial increase when ban is enforced followed by reduction once behaviours are changed	THC records	2024	2029
		Seek to integrate community priorities highlighted in Local Place Plans into our work planning.	Recognition of local priorities as a factor in the scored infrastructure priority list	Number of items added to priority list from LLPs	At least 1 per LLP	THC records	N/A	2029
		Ensure that this Strategy and its impact assessments are kept up to date and remains serving its purpose.	The ATS remains serving its purpose throughout it's intended period.	ATS is reviewed and updated annually	Annual updates between 2024-2030	THC records	N/A	Annually
			The ATS does not have negative impact on those with protected characteristics or other vulnerable groups.	EqIA (which is carried out in consultation with groups representing people with protected characteristics) agrees there is no negative impact	Annual updates between 2024-2030	THC records	N/A	Annually
		Improve availability of information on the Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Highland Network within the Council and to the public.	Council staff and the public are better informed about the network	"Number of council staff who are aware of the network "	Increase in number of respondents who are aware of the AT network	Staff poll	2024	2029
			More people know about the network and where it connects them to	Number of residents who are aware of the network and where it connects them to	Increase in number of respondents who are aware of the AT network	Public survey	2024	2029
				Number of hits on the AT infrastructure map	25% increase on baseline	THC records	2024	2029
				Number of hits on the AT web pages	25% increase on baseline	THC records	2024	2029
				Production of and engagement with easy-read versions	Easy read versions created and made available	THC records	N/A	2029
		Integrate the delivery of the Road Safety Plan with active travel work.	Reduction in the number of collisions involving active travel.	"Number of collisions involving active travel annually across the region. "	20% redcution on baseline	Police Scotland	2023	2030
		Work with the Road Safety team to seliver a series of School Streets pilots with the aim of rolling these out across Highland.	More parents and pupils walk, wheel or cycle to and from school	Number of pupils using active travel to school across the region	20% increase on baseline	HUSS	2023	2030
			Reduction of traffic congestion around schools	Number of cars present at pick up and drop off at schools selected for survey.	15% decrease on baseline	Video survey	2025	2029
			Improved air quality around schools	Improved Air Quality Index Score at schools selected for survey	Lower AQI compared to baseline	Air Quality Survey	2025	2029
	Making the Most of Our Public Spaces	Require new developments to have high quality active travel infrastructure designed in from the outset.	Residents are able to establish active travel habits immediately after moving into development	Percentage of active travel journeys made from new developments	20% of journeys	Automatic counters	N/A	3 years post implementation

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Strategic Objective	Theme	Action	Outcome	Indicator	2030 Target	Data Source	Baseline	Follow Up
			Active travel is integrated into the new developments making best use of space and resource and minimising the needs for retrofitting in the future	Number of new developments with good quality active travel provision included	80% of all new developments to receive planning permission include good quality active travel provision	THC records	N/A	2029
					60% of schemes delivered include good quality active travel infrastructure	THC records	N/A	2029
			New developments contribute to the wider active travel network	Number of new developments delivering connections to the wider active travel network	60% of schemes delivered include good quality active travel connections to onwards network	THC records	N/A	2029
		Proactively install new accessible, placemaking facilities to support walking, wheeling, and cycling such as rest areas, benches, signage, and cycle parking	Local residents agree quick wins have improved their ability to travel easily around their area using active travel	Number of residents surveyed agree that quick wins have improved their ability to travel easily around their area using active travel	Over 60% within project areas	Public survey	N/A	2029
				Number of rest areas and benches installed in built up areas	Average 20 per year	THC records	N/A	2029
				Number of areas benefitting from new and upgraded wayfinding assets	2 settlements per year	THC records	N/A	2029
				Capacity of non-resident cycle parking installed increased in built up areas	40% increase on baseline	THC records	2023	2029
		Improve data held on the installation of new place making facilities to support walking, wheeling, and cycling	Improved reporting and promotion of public realm improvements	Number of placemaking projects recorded and monitored	90% of projects	THC records	N/A	2029
		Support the establishment of parklets	Communities have a clear process for setting up a Play Street	Number of residents surveyed agree that parklets have improved place quality	Over 60% within project areas	Public survey	N/A	6 months post implementation
				Number of parklets delivered	Average 5 per year	THC records	N/A	2029
		Ensure that new active travel interventions positively impact biodiversity	All new projects will report a biodiversity net gain	Change in biodiversity (net gain/loss)	All new active travel interventions will report BNG	Biodiversity metric	Pre implementation	3 years post implementation
	Active Travel and the Local Economy	Improve the quantity and quality of data available on walking, wheeling and cycling journeys	THC have a better understanding of active travel use (demographic, locations, frequency, etc)	Number of data points relating to walking, wheeling and cycling journeys available to THC over a period	20% increase on baseline	M&E framework	2023	2029
				Number of automatic counters installed in the region	100% increase on baseline	THC records	2023	2029
			Better monitoring and evaluation of projects	Number of projects where pre and post M&E has been carried out	80% of projects	THC records	N/A	2029
		Integrate cycle parking, pedestrian rest areas and enhanced green spaces, in economic centres, into infrastructure work	Increase in the number of cycling and walking journeys to economic centres	Number of cycling and walking journeys to economic centres	5% Increase on baseline	Automatic counters	2023	2029
			Businesses see a benefit in people accessing their business by active travel	Number of independent shops and small businesses who agree that active travel is beneficial for their business	Over 60% within project areas	Business poll	N/A	2029
		Continue to consult with businesses and other stakeholders on active travel proposals in their area	More local businesses understand the benefits of active travel on the local economy	Number of independent shops and small businesses who are aware of the concept of the "Pedestrian Pound"	20% increase on baseline	Business poll	2024	2029
			More businesses feel engaged and listened to throughout project development	Number of AT projects which carry out specific business stakeholder engagement	80% of projects in relevant locations	THC records	N/A	2029
			More businesses support active travel infrastructure in their area	Number of AT projects which secure support from local businesses	50% of projects in relevant locations	THC records	2024	2027
		Work with large employers and clusters of employers to promote active travel to work.	More employees choose active travel for all or part of their commute.	Increase in the number of employees of participating employers choosing active travel for all or part of their commute	5% increase on baseline	Scottish Household Survey	2024	2029
						Employee surveys	2024	2029
Provide support and advice to other partners, including community groups, to help deliver active travel infrastructure and behaviour change projects	Partnership Working	Work with research partners and other agencies to improve knowledge of and data held on active travel journeys	THC hold a strong baseline data set to inform future investment in active travel	Number of partners actively collecting active travel data each year	Increase of one new partner per year	THC records	N/A	2029

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Strategic Objective	Theme	Action	Outcome	Indicator	2030 Target	Data Source	Baseline	Follow Up
		From project outset of individual projects and initiatives, work with groups such as local Access Panels and those representing people with protected characteristics to ensure best practice is followed	More people with access needs agree active travel schemes and infrastructure designs inclusive and benefit as many people as possible	Number of surveyed people with access needs who agree that active travel schemes and infrastructure designs are inclusive and benefit as many people as possible	Over 60% within project areas	Public survey	N/A	6 months post implementation
			Achieve good levels of participation from communities in engagement activities	Number of people with access needs agree that they are able to use active travel for some journeys	Over 60% within project areas	Public survey	N/A	6 months post implementation
			Achieve good levels of participation from communities in engagement activities	Number of AT projects which carry out specific engagement with identified community groups	80% of projects	THC records	N/A	2029
				Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Highland Stakeholder Forum established	Sustainable Travel Group established	THC records	N/A	2024
					Regular meetings established	THC records	N/A	2024
					Travel Plans trialled for three larger developments	THC records	N/A	2027
		Work with HITRANS to develop and deliver a suite of behaviour change interventions focussing on those less likely to have access to a private car	More people feel able to access local services without the need to rely on a private car	Number of private car journeys to access local services	Reduction of 10%, noting that active travel measures will only contribute a proportion of this	ATC	2024	2027
				Number of residents surveyed who agree local services are accessible without the need to reply on a private car	Increase of 10% on baseline	Public survey	2024	2029
			More people throughout the region are supported to gain skills in cycling, maintenance, and journey planning	Participation numbers	Annual average of 200 participants	Behaviour change partners	N/A	Annually
			More people throughout the region are supporting in accessing a cycle through donation, loan, or hire schemes	Number of Hi Bike hires	5% annual increase	Hi Bike data	2023	Annually
				Number of bikes donated by behaviour change partners to participants	Annual average of 50 donated bikes	Behaviour change partners	N/A	Annually
				Number of bike loans by behaviour change partners to participants	Annual average of 50 loans	Behaviour change partners	N/A	Annually
		Continue to liaise with Transport Scotland on their active travel work across Highland	The Council have better awareness of emerging active travel schemes being led by Transport Scotland					
		Continue to work with Network Rail and ScotRail on the Inverness Stations Masterplan to ensure active travel integration is embedded in the design, and continue to liaise with them on other active travel work across Highland	When complete, more people are accessing bus and rail journeys by active travel	Number of people accessing Inverness bus and rail journeys by active travel	5% increase compared to previous site	Manual counts at stations	Pre implementation	Post implementation
						Automatic counters	N/A	Post implementation
			When complete, the demand for parking spaces near the stations is reduced	Number of cars using parking spaces near stations	10% decrease on baseline	Manual counts at stations	Pre implementation	3 years post implementation
		Establish a Walking, Wheeling & Cycling Highland Stakeholder Forum, including external organisations and individuals, to support Highland-wide partnership working in planning and delivery of active travel infrastructure	Time, budget, and staff resources are used more efficiently in delivery and maintenance of active travel infrastructure and behaviour change interventions	More projects are completed on time and within budget relative to 2023 levels.	25% increase on baseline	THC records	2023	2029
		Maximise the potential of developer contributions to support ATS Delivery Plan priorities	More projects are delivered using developer contributions	Number of projects delivered through developer contributions	1 per year	THC records	2023	2030
		Support community-led infrastructure projects within existing resources, by signposting them to appropriate funding sources and by including them in prioritisation work updates	More community led projects are delivered.	Number of active travel projects being led by communities.				
		Work with community groups to support them to deliver behaviour change activities to under-represented groups such as cycle training, bike repair, journey planning, and led rides	More people feel more confident in their skills, use, and knowledge of the network	Number of participants who agree their knowledge and confidence have been improved	Over 60% of participants	Behaviour change partners	N/A	2029

Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Strategic Objective	Theme	Action	Outcome	Indicator	2030 Target	Data Source	Baseline	Follow Up
			More people who did not have access to support are supported in accessing active travel	Number of people supported by community partners	Average of 100 per year	Behaviour change partners	N/A	Annually
	Tourism and Leisure	Seek to collect information on active travel tourism from business representative organisations	THC hold a strong evidence base in support of active travel related tourism	Active travel tourism directory is created, referenced, and kept up to date.	Directory is updated twice a year	THC records	N/A	Bi-annually
			THC are able to plan appropriately for tourism peaks	Tourism directory includes calendar of events / high-tourism season.	Events calendar is updated twice a year	THC records	N/A	Bi-annually
			Develop a better understanding of the contribution and potential of cycle tourism to the Highland economy	Produce a research paper on the value of cycle tourism to the Highland economy	Paper is produced and published.	N/A	N/A	2030
		Work with partners to support the planning of non-car transport options for accessing events, facilitating access to local services while minimising impacts on local residents	More visitors choose to access events by active travel for all or part of their journey	Number of people accessing selected events by active travel	10% increase on baseline	Partner records	2023	2030
		Continue to work with the Sustrans National Cycle Network team to make improvements and to improve accessibility on NCN routes within Highland, where they also have a positive impact on everyday journeys	Routes are well used for leisure and tourism	Increase in the number of cycle based day trips on NCN	20% increase on baseline	Sustrans	2024	2029
				Increase the number of multi-day cycle touring trips using the NCN	10% increase on baseline	Sustrans	2024	2029
				Increase in journeys to tourist destinations in the region via the NCN	10% increase on baseline	Sustrans	2024	2029
			Long distance routes are well maintained and closures minimised	Number of annual closures on NCN routes lasting more than 7 days	25% reduction	Sustrans	2024	2029
				Users agree routes are well maintained	15% increase on baseline	RUIS	2025	2029

The Highland Council
Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

wsp