Agenda Item	8.
Report No	CPPB/26/24



Com-pàirteachas Dealbhadh Coimhearsnachd

na Gàidhealtachd

Highland Community Planning Partnership Board – 4 December 2024

Active Highland Strategy and Action Plan

Report by: Cathy Steer, Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland on behalf of the Active Highland Strategy Partnership Group

Summary:

The Active Highland Strategy group has taken a systems-based approach to development of a refreshed Active Highland Strategy. Work to engage a range of stakeholders has been undertaken and a review of data and evidence has been completed. A refreshed set of Outcomes was agreed by the CPP Board in May 2024. The attached document outlines a set of priority actions for the partnership to deliver on the agreed outcomes.

The CPP Board is asked to:

- Note the progress to develop a refreshed Active Highland Strategy and action plan.
- Endorse the proposed set of priority actions to deliver on the agreed outcomes for the refreshed Active Highland Strategy.

1. Introduction

Being active is important for our mental, physical and social health. The available evidence tells us that physical activity can help prevent disease and improve wellbeing. Everyday activity can play a crucial role in helping to prevent and treat chronic disease and improve quality of life. Increasing participation in sport and formal exercise is important, but we also need to recognise the importance of being more active in everyday routines. This can include walking, cycling and active play. Active travel also has environmental benefits and can help reduce carbon emissions and air and noise pollution.

2. Background

In May 2024, the CPP Board approved a set of eight strategic delivery outcomes for a refreshed Active Highland Strategy that was developed by the Active Highland Strategy Group. The strategy group includes representatives from Highland Council, NHS Highland, Sport Scotland, Highlife Highland, and Third Sector organisations. The group has been working with Public Health Scotland to

develop a systems-based approach to development of a refreshed Active Highland Strategy. The approach draws on existing evidence and learning to translate the evidence of what works to

increase population levels of physical activity into a Highland context.

Since May 2024, the strategy group has been working to develop an action plan that describes

priorities to improve levels of physical activity in our population in Highland.

3. Proposed Action Plan for the Active Highland Strategy

The attached plan sets out priority actions to support delivery of the agreed Active Highland Strategy

outcomes.

4. Next steps

If agreed, the Active Highland Strategy Group will engage with a wider range of partners to progress

the range of actions set out in the plan.

5. Recommendations

It is recommended that the CPP Board endorse the proposed action plan for the refreshed Active

Highland Strategy.

The CPP Board are asked to:

Note the progress to develop a refreshed Active Highland Strategy and action plan.

Endorse the proposed set of priority actions to deliver on the agreed outcomes for the

refreshed Active Highland Strategy.

Author: Cathy Steer, Head of Health Improvement, NHS Highland

Date: 2nd December 2024

Active Highland Strategy – Action Plan

Highland's Active Highland Strategy is underpinned by the understanding that all stakeholders have a responsibility to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of the people of Highland through the power of physical activity and sport.





Active Health & Social Care

Highland Outcome: More of the least active people in Highland communities will become active

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicators
Improve pathways from health and social care to opportunities to be physically active – with focus on reducing inequalities and a trauma-informed approach	Map existing referral pathways from health and social care services to opportunities to be active	March 2025	HLH (LB)	NHSH (CS, DJ, AV)	Highland Physical Activity Levels 2018-2022 Activity Levels recorded as
	Develop additional referral pathways to fill gaps identified from the mapping exercise	March 2027	NHSH (DJ, AV)	HLH (LB) CALA 3 rd Sector	meeting recommendations: Highland – 71% Scotland – 66%
	Develop opportunities for health and social care services and physical activity providers to come together to strengthen and expand referral pathways.	Nov 2025	NHSH (DJ, AV)	HLH (LB) CALA 3 rd Sector	Scottish Health Survey (shinyapps.io)
	Develop guidance and tools to support health and social care services to incorporate assessment and brief advice on physical activity into existing processes and systems.	Sept 2025	NHSH (DJ, AV)	HLH (LB) CALA 3 rd Sector	

Active Health & Social Care

Highland Outcome: More of the least active people in Highland communities will become active

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicators
Improve pathways from health and social care to opportunities to be physically active – with focus on reducing inequalities and a trauma-informed approach	Identify and share best practice in relation to physical activity referrals/pathways aligned to the national Physical Activity Referral Standards	June 2025 and ongoing	NHSH (DJ, AV)	HLH (LB) CALA 3 rd Sector	Align to minimum dataset contained within Physical Activity Referral Standards
	Develop guidelines for evaluating outcomes from referral pathways from health and social care services to physical activity providers	Dec 2025	NHSH (DJ, AV)	HLH (LB)	
	Review provision of physical activity programmes in health and care settings and develop evidence-based interventions: including brief advice and brief interventions.	Mar 2026	NHSH	HLH	

- 1. Integrate the NHS Physical Activity Pathway into routine healthcare and existing clinical pathways as part of treatment and rehabilitation for people diagnosed with long term conditions e.g., heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and mental health conditions, as well as into the care and services for pregnant women, people with disabilities and older adults.
- 2. Develop partnerships with NHS Scotland and physical activity providers across Scotland to embed the provision of appropriate physical activity opportunities and programmes for different patient populations.
- 3. Implement the learning from the Care Inspectorate Care About ... Physical Activity Improvement Programme to enable social care providers to build physical activity into the daily lives of those they support within care settings, residential care homes and care at home.
- 4. Integrate physical activity into pre-service and in-service training for all healthcare and social care staff and associated roles, that is medics, nurses and allied health professions, healthcare support workers employed by NHS Scotland and all social care staff governed by the Care Inspectorate (making use of resources such as Moving Medicine, MAP, Encouraging and Enabling Physical Activity).

Active Travel

Highland Outcome: Increased numbers of people choosing active travel: walking, cycling and wheeling in Highland

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Increase opportunities for people in Highland to choose active elements of everyday, regular and occasional journeys	The Highland Council to deliver, in partnership, the actions identified within its Active Travel Strategy - Active Travel Masterplans and Active Travel Strategy Active Travel Strategy (highland.gov.uk)	2024-2030	THC (LC)	Active Highland partners	As per Indicators in Appendix 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of THC AT Strategy
	Participate in, support and promote relevant consultations; aim to achieve balance of recorded public views on proposals	As required	THC (LC)	Active Highland partners	Participation data for consultations
	Active Highland partner organisations to support their own staff and customers to choose active travel	March 2025 and annual review	Active Highland partners		Organisational staff travel surveys; and observational data collection
Integrate Active Travel links and outcomes to wider public transport developments and Local Transport Strategy Evidence Base:	All participants in development and implementation of LTS to support emerging active travel opportunities	tbc	THC (LC)	NHSH	Transport choice surveys

- 1. Continue to prioritise investment in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure that enables access to destinations and services, as well as actions that influence active travel behaviour to encourage modal shift.
- 2. Engage communities in urban and rural transport planning processes to enhance the design of connected and walkable communities.
- 3. Accelerate implementation of policy actions to improve road safety and the implementation and enforcement of traffic speed restrictions (for example 20 mph in residential areas and 30 mph on urban roads).
- 4. Upskill local authority transport and planning workforce to create inclusive and equitable active travel infrastructure.

Active Places & Spaces

Highland Outcome: Places and spaces in Highland are appropriately designed, created and maintained to enable people to be physically active in their community

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Develop a place-based strategy for community/sport facilities for the 29 Associated School Groups in Highland that will have a positive impact on physical activity for those communities	Reconfiguration of the Asset Base Portfolio Board to Identify resource to take forward the piece of work relating to Community Points of Delivery and produce a brief for the CPP.	December 2024	The Highland Council	High Life Highland NHS Highland sportscotland	Satisfaction with Local Authority Sport & Leisure Facilities 2022 – Very/Fairly Satisfied Highland – 39% Scotland – 42% SHS+2022+- +Annual+Report+-+Tables+- +5+Physical+activity.ods (live.com)

- 1. Align local planning and transport strategies/policies to enable and promote walking, cycling, other forms of physical activity. ('active travel', walking and cycling for recreation, play).
- 2. Integrate urban design and land-use policies; to create connected, walkable communities, with equitable and inclusive public space, as well as pedestrian access to a diversity of local amenities for daily living (for example, local shops, services, green areas, and educational facilities).
- 3. Strengthen access to good quality public and green open spaces, green networks, recreational spaces (including blue spaces such as river and coastal areas), play spaces and sports amenities through spatial design and community engagement.
- **4. Develop and or apply design guidelines for public amenities**; schools, health care, sports and recreation facilities, workplaces and social housing, designed to enable people to be physically active. (*link across all delivery outcomes*)
- **5. Co-locate local services and destinations** e.g. schools, healthcare, workplaces, shops, and leisure.
- 6. Increase the knowledge and skills of planners, transport engineers and architects to create inclusive active environments.

Active Places & Spaces – Green Space Highland Outcome: Individuals and communities are active in nature

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Improve pathways to nature-based activities – from healthcare, wider statutory and community organisations.	Promote nature-based activities through social prescribing	Ongoing	NHSH	All Active Highland partners	Number of referrals into nature-based activities
This includes local parks, coastal areas, common ground and general outdoor access.	Expand existing mapping and build on the directory of nature-based activities on offer across Highland	March 2025 and ongoing	NHSH	HLH	Annual review of directory
	Develop 'Steppingstones' – work with Community Partnerships to create community-led pathways into nature-based activities	March 2027	NHSH	Community Partnership Chairs	Increase in participation numbers monitored in localities
	Increase the reach through the Countryside Rangers programme supporting people into nature-based activities.	March 2026	HLH	NHSH	Increase in participation numbers monitored in localities
	based activities. Create and promote resources to	September 2025 and ongoing	NHSH	All Active Highland Partners	Scottish Household Survey - living within 5 mins of a greenspace Scottish Household survey - frequency of visits to the outdoors Resources ordered through HIRS

Active Places & Spaces – Green Space Highland Outcome: Individuals and communities are active in nature

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Increase provision and use of hospital green space by patients, visitors and staff.	Develop and implement NHS greenspace strategy	Develop – June 2025 Deliver – March 2027 and ongoing	NHSH	THC	Baseline map of available green space 2024
Increase numbers of organisations and Individuals signing up to the Highland Climate Charter	Individuals and organisations pledge specific actions to protect climate, enhance biodiversity and maximise health and wellbeing	Dec 2024 and ongoing	NHSH	All Active Highland Partners	Annual report of progress. Increased list of organisations and individuals signing up. Baseline year 2024.
Increase reach and effectiveness of Active Places of Learning through outdoor and nature-based opportunities.	Deliver key initiative such as Eco- schools, Active Play and environmental education programmes. Daily mile. Bikeability. Walk to Schools Week; Cycle to Schools Week; HLH Countryside Rangers nature clubs in schools	September 2025 and ongoing	THC (Educati on)	HLH; CALA	Reported numbers of pupils participating in set programmes

- Strengthen access to good quality public and green open spaces, green networks, recreational spaces (including blue spaces such as river and coastal areas), play spaces and sports amenities through spatial design and community engagement.
- Provide programmes across multiple settings, urban and natural environments, community recreation and sports facilities, schools, workplaces and healthcare settings.
- Strengthen access to places, spaces and services that enable equitable and inclusive access and reduce inequalities; accessible and appropriate places and spaces (indoor and outdoor facilities and amenities, and opportunities through formal and informal clubs and programs), affordable and tailored programmes, opening of the school estate through the shared use of school facilities, enhance active play to enable healthy growth and development in early childhood and adolescents.
- · Create workplaces that are designed to enable employees and visitors to be physically active in and around the buildings, and access by pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport.

Active Places of Learning

Highland Outcome: More children and young people in Highland will be more active more often

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Deliver an inclusive programme of curriculum & extra curriculum time physical activity opportunities across all learning establishments in Highland.	Embed physical activity for health priorities into THC Education Improvement Plan including; quality PE Provision, use of the Daily Mile and non-PE Teachers physical activity CPD.	August 2025	THC Education		Hours of Quality PE – THC Education Daily mile % of Schools taking part.
	Develop an Active School Plan centred around every Associated School Group Cluster.	June 2025	HLH	THC Education	Active School Data – Distinct Participation (mysport)
	Use Active Campus Coordinators and HISA to develop opportunities within Higher & Further Education settings.	April 2025	UHI		Lifestyle Survey (P7, S2, S4 – every 2 years) Hands Up survey
Increased awareness of the benefits of play and the opportunities for active free play in Highland including within the natural environment.	Raise awareness of benefits of play and upskill education staff around the opportunities to incorporate play into places of learning.	June 2025	CALA	THC Education HLH Countryside Rangers National Park Authority.	
Establish and support more Community Clubs and organisations to link with places of learning to provide a pathway of opportunities from education settings into the community.	Create school to community club links through Active Schools and Community Sport Hub Programmes.	June 2025	HLH	NGBs THC Education	Mysport - School to club link data NGBs club data / membership

Active Places of Learning

Highland Outcome: More children and young people in Highland will be more active more often

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Use sport and physical activity programmes to support diversionary activities and deliver social benefits in places of learning such as through the Planet Youth initiative.	Developing a clear understanding of local sport and physical activity offering and partnership working with organisations such as Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to remove barriers to participation.	Oct 2025	HLH Sport	NHS/HADP	Planet Youth Surveys.

- 1. Whole of School Approach to physical activity:
- physical education curriculum that develops knowledge, confidence, competence, and motivation to be active.
- active classrooms and outdoor learning that incorporate movement into classroom and outdoor learning experiences across the curriculum.
- after school physical activity opportunities.
- break time physical activity such as active play.
- active travel to and from school.
- 2. Preservice and in-service workforce development for teachers; enhance knowledge and teaching skills on the value of active play, physical education, adaptive physical activity, fundamental movement skills and physical literacy, and on how to include people with disabilities and the least active.
- **3. Develop and implement design guidelines for education and childcare facilities;** create accessible and safe environments for children and young people to be physically active.
- **4. Whole-of-campus approaches to physical activity in colleges and universities;** strengthen implementation of initiatives such as WHO's "Health Promoting Universities"; strengthening opportunities for students, staff, and visitors to increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour, by prioritising and enabling access to campuses by walking, cycling and public transport.

Active Sport & Recreation for All

Highland Outcome: Everyone in Highland communities has access to opportunities to be active

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicators
Provide a diverse and inclusive range of accessible activity, using sport and physical as an intentional tool to achieve both increased participation and wider social outcomes.	Aligned to the 9 Highland CPP geographical areas and demographics, map what opportunities are currently available for people across Highland to be physically active.	June 2025	HLH	NHS THC CALA NGBs Highland Disability Sport	Frequency in participation of physical activity and sport 2022 – Including Walking Highland – 91% Scotland - 82%
	Identify and address geographical and demographic gaps in physical activity provision to ensure a consistent offer across Highland.	August 2025	HLH	NHS THC CALA Highland Disability Sport	Frequency in participation of physical activity and sport 2022 – Excluding Walking Highland – 57%
	Make the case for continuation of low-cost access to leisure and the positive impact that it brings to people in Highland.	April 2025	HLH	THC	Scotland - 51% SHS+2022+- +Annual+Report+-+Tables+- +5+Physical+activity.ods (live.com)
	Develop new and enhance existing disability specific opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity across the Highlands.	Oct 2025	HLH	HDS SDS	Mysport data % of pupils with a disability taking part in Active Schools Programmes
Work with community clubs to enhance their capacity and ensure that they provide safe, welcoming and inclusive opportunities for people to be active.	To build relationships with local clubs and community groups across the 9 CPP areas to deliver local solutions to the challenges of getting people active.	April 2025	HLH	NHS SGBs	My Sport Data – Number of clubs currently active in communities

Active Sport & Recreation for All

Highland Outcome: Everyone in Highland communities has access to opportunities to be active

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicators	
Provide opportunities for people to thrive through sport by developing and delivering an inclusive performance sport pathway in Highland	Put in place a programme with partners that develops athletes, coaches and facilities that provides the opportunity for young people from Highland to be supported in their athletic journey.	April 2025	HLH	sportscotland SGBs	Number of Athletes on Programmes	
	Put in place a programme that aims to reduce the barrier of cost to performance level athletes in Highland competing on a National and International stage.	April 2025	HLH	sportscotland SGBs		
Highland as the perfect stage. Ensure that Highland is showcased as a venue for sporting events.	Establish a multi partner group tasked with driving forward sporting events in Highland that engage, motivate and inspire participation.	June 2025	THC	HLH sportscotland Nevis Range Event Scotland	Investment into Highland through sporting events (Economic Impact)	

- Prioritise the least active as well as retaining existing, and returning, participants.
- Build workforce capacity; enhance the knowledge, skills and competency of the workforce to engage, motivate and enable, inclusive and equitable opportunities.
- Provide universally accessible programmes and mass participation events for people of all ages and abilities across multiple settings; urban and natural environments, community recreation and sports facilities, schools, workplaces and healthcare settings.
- Strengthen access to places, spaces and services that enable equitable and inclusive access and reduce inequalities; accessible and appropriate places and spaces (indoor and outdoor facilities and amenities, and opportunities through formal and informal clubs and programs), affordable and tailored programmes, opening of the school estate through the shared use of school facilities, enhance active play to enable healthy growth and development in early childhood and adolescents.

Active Communication & Public Education Highland Outcome: Improved public awareness of the diverse benefits of physical activity and the opportunities to be active in Highland

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Apply consistent public education and awareness raising messages	Develop an Active Highland Communication Toolkit with key messages, tag lines and infographics and joint campaigns	June 2025	HLH / NHSH	SportScotland	Social media analytics
	Improve information sharing, best practice, shared learning and joint working across the Active Highland strategy group and beyond.	September 2025 and ongoing	HLH / NHSH	SportScotland	Tracked through the communication plan - put in place measures, currently no measures of joint working underway?
Increased information to support the effectiveness of Active Workforce initiatives and wider outcomes from partner organisation initiatives	Develop guidance for partners and encourage role models, mentors and champions	December 2025 and ongoing	HLH / NHSH	SportScotland	Refer to indicators for Active Workforce and linked to communication plan

- 1. Best practice principles applied to campaigns:
 - Positively "gain" framed messages highlighting short-term outcomes relating to social and mental health;
 - Tailoring and targeting messages to specific audience(s) in order to mitigate inequalities;
 - Use of formative research, psychological theory, social marketing principles to develop appropriate messages and dissemination strategies;
 - User testing to validate messages pre dissemination;
 - Combining messaging campaigns with supportive infrastructure and other opportunities for physical activity, including setting/community-based programmes.

Active Workforce

Highland Outcome: Increased knowledge, skills and competency of the professional and volunteer workforce, regarding physical activity

Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Lead	Support	Indicator
Ensure sport development team (and wider network) are appropriately trained and upskilled to support equality, diversity, inclusion & growth in sport & physical activity across Highland.	Identify training and support needs through need analysis of staff and volunteers. Deliver programme of training and development opportunities through, HLH, sportscotland and other key partners (NHS / SAMH) Upskill and develop a tutor workforce to deliver bespoke CPD course and workshops to coaches and volunteers delivering sport and physical activity.	June 2025	HLH	sport scotland	Number of courses / workshops delivered Number of staff / volunteers trained
Develop a platform to share knowledge, expertise, and relevant training across all partners that will support the continued upskilling of those within the system to ensure the opportunity/importance of physical activity is embedded into their daily work to improve the lives of people in Highland.	Explore approaches to sharing and learning initiatives, including digital platforms to enable access to shared information and training across health, education, place, planning, leisure and sport.	June 2025	Active Highland Partnership	NHS THC HLH sportscotland	
Increase awareness of mental health and the benefits of sport & physical activity	Work with partners to develop training, guidance and tools to increase staff awareness of the benefits of sport & physical activity on mental health	Dec 2025	NHS/HLH	sport scotland SAMH	Guidance & tools available Staff training courses / workshops completed

Active Workforce

Highland Outcome: Increased knowledge, skills and competency of the professional and volunteer workforce, regarding physical activity

- **Strengthen workforce development** (knowledge, skills, capability and capacity) across sectors (health, social care, sport and physical activity, education, transport, and planning).
- Strengthen the preservice and in-service curricula of all medical, nursing and allied health professionals to ensure effective integration of the health benefits of physical activity into the formal training on prevention and management of non-communicable diseases, mental health, healthy ageing, child health and development, and wider promotion of community health and well-being.
- **Preservice and in-service workforce development for teachers**; enhance knowledge and teaching skills on the value of active play, physical education, adaptive physical activity, fundamental movement skills and physical literacy, and on how to include people with disabilities and the least active.
- Upskill local authority transport and planning workforce to create inclusive and equitable active travel infrastructure.
- Increase the knowledge and skills of planners, transport engineers and architects to create inclusive active environments.
- **Build workforce capacity**; enhance the knowledge, skills, and competency of the workforce to engage, motivate and enable, inclusive and equitable opportunities.
- Provide leadership by implementing workplace health initiatives to support employees increase physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour, particularly through increasing incidental physical activity during the working day.
- Develop and disseminate guidance and promote implementation of workplace health programmes aimed at increasing physical activity, reducing sedentary behaviour and promoting incidental physical activity during the working day for employees, in different occupations and settings, with a priority focus on the least active.
- Create workplaces that are designed to enable employees and visitors to be physically active in and around the buildings, and access by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.