

Evidence Report D: Delivering Active Travel Projects and Policy



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Delivering active travel projects in Scotland can require partnership working across a variety of sectors and stakeholders. This Evidence Report sets out the key roles and responsibilities of different groups

in delivering projects and policy as well as identifying key challenges that will have to be overcome to ensure progress can be continued in East Dunbartonshire following the Active Travel Strategy 2015-2020.

Roles, responsibilities and opportunities for delivering active travel in East Dunbartonshire



Through the annual budget setting process, the Scottish Government allocates a sum of money to be spent on active and sustainable travel projects across the country. This money is then distributed to delivery partners through various funding schemes. The annual budget for 2026/27 allocated £226m for active and sustainable travel.



Transport Scotland is the national transport agency responsible for delivering the Scottish Government's national transport agenda. Transport Scotland does not get directly involved in local transport projects unless there is an impact on the strategic rail or trunk road networks. However, Transport Scotland does filter through active travel spend via the People and Place Programme and Active Travel Infrastructure Fund.



The Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly known as Sustrans) is a national charity aimed at increasing the numbers of people walking, wheeling and cycling through creating routes that are accessible and to improve the overall experience for everyone that uses them. The Walk Wheel Cycle Trust manages the National Cycling Network. The Walk Wheel Cycle Trust also coordinates the iBike programme in Scotland which involves local iBike officers working with children and young people helping them overcome barriers to cycling participation. In previous years there were two iBike officers embedded within East Dunbartonshire Council who worked in schools across the local area.



East Dunbartonshire Council is the roads authority for the area meaning the Council has a duty to provide a safe local road network. This includes managing carriageways and footways (generally referred to as pavements). The Council has the authority to change the use and function of public roads through a Traffic Regulation Order process. This process can be used to regulate the types of users allowed on specific roads and the nature of the use of specific roads such as one-way streets or speed limits. The Council's Capital Programme includes an annual budget for the maintenance of the road network however this does not include funds for the maintenance of off-road networks. Where off-road networks are situated on public land then the Council can undertake works to maintain the networks provided external funding is secured for such works. Maintenance of off-road networks situated on private land is the responsibility of the relevant land owner, however partnership working with the Council to deliver improvements is encouraged wherever appropriate.



Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) is the regional transport partnership for the Strathclyde region. SPT is a partnership of eleven local authorities across the region, including East Dunbartonshire Council. The Council can apply to SPT's annual capital programme to receive funds for delivering active travel projects which will serve functional travel trips in the local area and across the region. SPT has recently been given oversight of the People and Place Programme (on behalf of Transport Scotland) which aims to deliver a range of interventions to make active travel more accessible and appealing to more people for everyday journeys.



East Dunbartonshire has secured funding through the Glasgow City Region City Deal Place and Growth Programme to develop the Westerhill Regeneration Area, including the provision of active travel infrastructure, and the regeneration of Bishopbriggs town centre to create a more attractive town centre with a high-quality environment that is sustainable over the long-term and meets the needs of the community and its partners.



Cycling Scotland is the national cycling organisation and offers a range of programmes to help anyone, anywhere get cycling and to enjoy all the benefits cycling can provide. These programmes include training, campaigns and events. Cycling Scotland coordinates the Bikeability Scotland programme which is designed to give children the skills and confidence to cycle safely on the roads and encourage habits to carry on into adulthood. Bikeability is currently offered in all primary schools in East Dunbartonshire. Cycling Scotland also offers a number of Cycling Friendly programmes which deliver support and guidance to workplaces, schools and communities across the country.

Where appropriate, the Council will, through the planning system, seek financial contributions from developers for sustainable transport and access infrastructure to ensure new developments are accessible by a range of transport modes, including active travel, and to take cognisance of spatial planning concepts.

In addition to the groups highlighted above, there are several organisations and stakeholders that all play their part in delivering active travel projects in East Dunbartonshire. Local communities can be at the heart of efforts through collaborative consultation with the Council and by delivering directly where possible. Cycling UK is an active group across Scotland and can provide support to local authorities in implementing active travel infrastructure. Living Streets is the UK charity for everyday walking and coordinates national initiatives to encourage walking including the Walk Once a Week (WOW) programme and the national Walk to School Week. The Walk Wheel and Cycle Trust coordinates the Big Walk and Wheel Challenge - the UK's biggest inter-school active travel competition – and a number of schools across East Dunbartonshire participate each year. A range of other initiatives are promoted at schools, including Park and Stride, Junior Road Safety Officer schemes, and 'Curriculum for Excellence' support and resources relating to health and wellbeing and travelling safely.

The organisations and the funding streams noted above are annual funds which can support the delivery of projects. These funds are not the only programmes the Council can access as new funds

are being announced and explored on an ongoing basis. Other groups within East Dunbartonshire can also access funds that are not available to the Council for the delivery of smaller more focused projects within the community.

Delivery of the Active Travel Strategy 2015-2020

In 2015, the Council approved and published its first Active Travel Strategy (ATS). The ATS had three aims:

1. Facilitate an increase in the proportion of everyday journeys and leisure journeys made by walking and cycling in East Dunbartonshire.
2. Deliver a more connected network of active travel routes and infrastructure incorporating high environmental and design standards.
3. Facilitate delivery of behavioural change, through activities such as training and promotion of active travel.

To deliver on these aims, the ATS had two distinct action plans for infrastructure and behaviour change actions. Each of these is considered below.

Infrastructure

To deliver active travel infrastructure projects, a three-stage delivery process is routinely followed to progress projects from the idea stage to projects on the ground. This process begins with a feasibility study to scope out what the project could entail and identify any problems that will need to be considered further down the line. Following feasibility, the next stage is to design what the infrastructure will look like and how it will be integrated into the environment which will surround it. Once the project is fully designed and planned then the construction phase will commence.

The infrastructure action plan within the ATS 2015-2020 listed a number of projects to be progressed through various stages of the delivery process. Since the publication of the ATS 2015-2020 there has been progress against many of the actions, with a number fully achieved and others ongoing. Examples are provided below.

- The Wester Way was constructed in Bishopbriggs. This converted the old Westerhill Road into an active travel corridor parallel to the fourth phase of the Bishopbriggs Relief Road.
- Planning permission was granted in October 2025 for a new / upgraded route between the existing Westerhill Road and the A803 Kirkintilloch Road (at Torrance Roundabout). The Westerhill Development Road (WDR) project is part of the Council's City Deal Place and Growth Programme and plans include a new active travel route for walking, wheeling and cycling and provision for future bus stops.
- The towpath of the Forth and Clyde Canal at Twechar was upgraded to provide an enhanced surface for walking, cycling and wheeling in the area.
- A number of access and path enhancements to green and open spaces were delivered throughout the lifetime of the ATS.
- Additional cycle parking provision was installed in town centres and at rail stations across the area including delivery of the Milngavie travel hub at Milngavie rail station.
- The Kirkintilloch Town Centre Masterplan was delivered during the ATS period including making the Cowgate a 20mph speed limit area. Subsequently, 20mph speed limits were



Wester Way

implemented within Bearsden and Twechar in 2025. Proposals to extend the 20mph speed limit to Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch and Lenzie were approved at Council in late-2025, and proposals for Milngavie and villages are anticipated to be taken to Committee in 2026.

- Traffic-free Schools were piloted and implemented at a number of schools in between 2023 and 2025.
- The first half of the Auchenhowie Road section of the A807 was upgraded between the Allander Toll Roundabout and the Rangers FC Training Centre in early-2025, forming the first section of the A807 Active Travel Project. This included widening of the existing footway, replacement of the existing kerbing along the front of the footway, implementing junction improvements at Dowan Road and the installation of street lighting. Detailed designs are being produced for the other sections of the route to provide linkage west to Milngavie rail station, and east from Allander Toll Roundabout to Torrance Roundabout. These designs will deliver a pipeline of construction phases for which the Council will aim to secure external funding to deliver in future years.

Plans were progressed for projects including an East Dunbartonshire Loop Route. The loop project aims to connect all of East Dunbartonshire's main settlement areas through one active travel circuit that can provide additional opportunities for everyday travel as well as providing an attractive tourism asset to help local businesses by encouraging people to visit the area. A feasibility study was completed on the loop route which identified existing infrastructure which could form part of the route and missing links that would require to be improved to deliver one complete circuit. This work led to additional works being programmed and progressed to address these missing links and this work and ongoing delivery will continue.



Kirkintilloch town centre

The A807 forms part of this, alongside resurfacing of the Strathkelvin Railway Path and works delivered at Canal Street to link NCN 754 and NCN 755 via a new fully compliant shared-use path.

Feasibility and design work was completed on the Kirkintilloch/Lenzie to Bishopbriggs link which is planned to run parallel to the railway from Lenzie station to Westerhill.

Other projects have also progressed through the delivery process with some experiencing issues. In some cases, barriers outwith the Council's control have halted progress. Examples include the Gladloch tunnel that has impacted on delivery of the Bishopbriggs-Lenzie active travel link. Other projects are continuing to be progressed by delivery partners and teams within the Council.



Forth and Clyde Canal

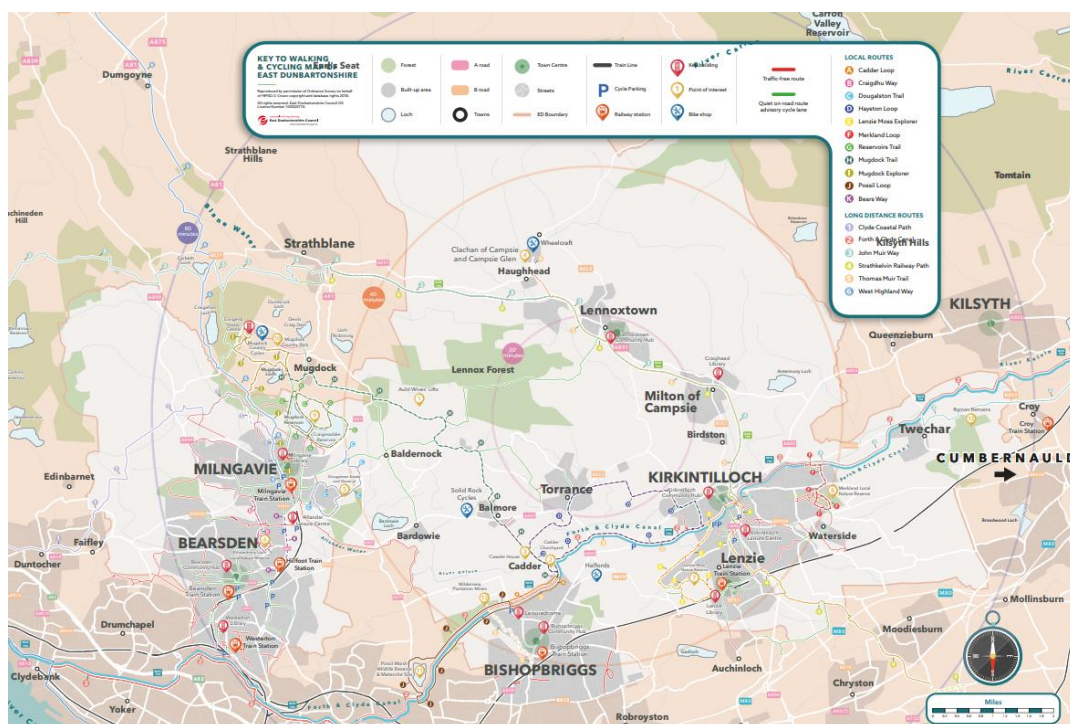
Behaviour Change

Several actions were included within the behaviour change action plan for the ATS 2015-2020. Actions focused on achieving behaviour change within schools, amongst employers and the general public.

The work completed by iBike officers and Bikeability instructors in schools across East Dunbartonshire was a positive story from the ATS 2015-2020, with a significant number of children and young people learning valuable skills and gaining confidence in travelling actively as part of their everyday lives including to and from school.

The Council's [Healthy Habits programme](#) is designed to encourage local people to walk and cycle more as part of their everyday journeys. This programme has continued to grow with information signage showing local routes now in place across all towns and villages in East Dunbartonshire. This has included delivering the [East Dunbartonshire Walking and Cycling Maps](#) (see image below) and associated signage for each identified route. This package of maps includes both maps of individual communities with traffic-free routes, recommended routes and green spaces, and a map of East Dunbartonshire as a whole. Delivery teams within the Council also organised and supported Healthy Habits event days where families and local communities came along and took part in activities and picked up maps and accessories to encourage them to continue to walk and cycle, and new users gained information to help them shift to active travel.

iBike Bikeability Programme



East Dunbartonshire-wide walking and cycling map, smaller maps of each local area are available [on the Council's website](#).

Resource challenges meant that limited progress was made on delivering behaviour change actions for local employers. The role and influence the Council has in delivering such actions will be re-examined to inform the type of actions which should be prioritised within the new strategy.

Learning lessons and overcoming challenges

Significant work has been undertaken to deliver the actions of the ATS 2015-2020. This work is ongoing as the Council and partners continue to identify new funding streams to deliver projects across the area. However, as identified above there have been challenges in delivering specific projects and looking wider across the transport sector in Scotland, there were significant challenges in delivering active travel projects within the timeframe of the ATS 2015-2020.

Following decisions by local authorities to halt or cancel progress on segregated cycleways (including the Bears Way), in 2016 the Scottish Government set up an Active Travel Task Force to gather views from across the sector on challenges facing the delivery of projects, setting out recommendations and an associated delivery plan. The delivery plan supported the long-term vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030, the (then) Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2017-20, the National Walking Strategy 2014, and wider strategies including the National Transport Strategy and the Climate Change Plan. The recommendations set out below are particularly relevant to the Council and will be considered as the ATS2 is prepared to ensure the Council can learn from the Active Travel Task Force findings and overcome challenges where possible. The recommendations are categorised into four groups: infrastructure; policies, processes and resources; community engagement; and behaviour change and culture.

Recommendation	Context for East Dunbartonshire
Infrastructure	
1.1 Criteria for funding for walking, cycling and place-making projects must include the delivery of infrastructure combined with appropriate behaviour change programmes, in a way that is enforced and timely, sequential and coordinated, using planning policy and international best practice.	The ATS 2015-2020 had distinct infrastructure and behaviour change action plans as a combined effort to increase the levels of walking and cycling in the area. Infrastructure projects such as the opening of the Wester Way in Bishopbriggs were complemented with behaviour change initiatives. The draft priorities for ATS2 include empowering all groups of people to actively travel more. Efforts will be made to combine infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives as much as possible to deliver on this recommendation.
1.2 As a preventative spend measure, cross-portfolio investment (for example from health, transport, environment and education directorates) should prioritise the delivery of a network of continuous and safe walking and cycling infrastructure routes, working in partnership with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.	Significant engagement has taken place through the Active Travel Discussion and development of ATS2 to gain input from a variety of stakeholders including the four portfolios mentioned within the recommendation. The draft priorities for ATS2 recognise the health benefits, including preventative benefits, for local people. Discussions with the Health and Social Care Partnership and NHS colleagues during the strategy development will aim to integrate ideas and plans for active travel from across the sector to ensure delivery is coordinated, providing multiple benefits for a variety of stakeholders. The ATS2 is being prepared alongside the Council's Climate Action Plan, therefore the proposals for enhancing active travel will be fully integrated into the Council's planning for reducing the area's emissions and overall contribution to climate change. School pupils, teachers and parents/carers are key consultees in the early stages of the ATS2 development with over 1,800 responses being received highlighting how active travel can be made more attractive to all and how schools can be supported to encourage greater participation. These stakeholders will continue to be involved to inform decision making as the ATS2 develops.
Policies, processes and resources	
2.2 The match funding criteria should be reconsidered and the range of those organisations able to bid for active travel funding should be widened to ensure an open, fair and transparent process.	Prior to 2025, the Scottish Government provided match funding for active travel infrastructure projects delivered through the Places for Everyone programme, providing the Council with an opportunity to deliver projects with

Recommendation	Context for East Dunbartonshire
	match funding. The Places for Everyone programme wound down in December 2025. In the 2026-27 budget, the Scottish Government has allocated £226 million for sustainable and active travel projects, which includes funding for infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives. The funding aims to support projects that improve walking, wheeling and cycling across the themes of schools, workplaces, accessibility, and capacity and capability. This is part of a broader strategy to decarbonise transport and encourage the use of sustainable modes. It is worth noting that bus funding and active travel funding have been combined for the first time and thus the overall active travel budget is less clear than in previous years.
2.3 The collective impact of active travel strategies/plans, and related policies across national, regional and local levels, should be measured and monitored longitudinally.	The Local Transport Strategy 2020-2025 sets out a monitoring plan based on a series of indicators. A similar approach will be taken for the ATS2 to ensure that the effects of ongoing action are measured in local communities and across the area as a whole.
2.4 National, regional and local ownership and planning and delivery of active travel projects between policy departments must be more coordinated, and include as a minimum, planning, environment, health and education departments within central and local governments. Regional Transport Partnerships need to be better resourced to address cross-boundary issues, in partnership with other stakeholders.	This is a strong element within the Council as partnership working across all relevant services is helping to progress delivery of the ATS2. All services included within the recommendation are already involved and will continue to contribute to the development and delivery of actions. SPT is the regional transport partnership for this area and has been involved in the Active Travel Discussion. SPT is also progressing work on active travel at the regional level which will feed into the process to deliver ATS2. SPT will be consulted further as the draft ATS2 is developed, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to active travel.
2.5 There must be prominent and consistent national government and stakeholder support to enhance strong leadership at the local level to help make the often unpopular, but right decisions.	Decision-making on ATS2 and individual projects is undertaken by the Council's Place, Neighbourhood and Corporate Assets Committee. Elected members have been involved throughout the Active Travel Discussion process and will continue to be involved to inform decision making.
2.7 A policy of reducing urban traffic and transferring carriageway space to active travel should be considered, including workplace parking levy, road user charging and encouraging more car-sharing.	This requires consideration through ATS2, however, the main policy objectives for transport in East Dunbartonshire are included within the Local Transport Strategy 2020-2025 which supports sustainable travel, including active travel, in preference to private car travel. This is reflected in the Council's Climate Action

Recommendation	Context for East Dunbartonshire
	Plan which includes a target to reduce area-wide car kilometres by 22% against 2019 levels by 2045, with 9% of car journeys shifted to walking, wheeling and cycling. National (National Planning Framework 4, Strategic Transport Projects Review 2, Climate Change Plan) and regional (Regional Transport Strategy, Regional Active Travel Strategy) policy share aims to reduce the total mileage of the private car. In 2025 the Scottish Government published a Renewed Policy Statement for Achieving Car Use Reduction in Scotland which sets out a commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2045.
Community engagement	
3.1 The active travel message should be promoted clearly to the general public and politicians, as being primarily about 'place', and having pride in their communities and local environment. Infrastructure projects are not just about walking or cycling. Community Planning Partnerships and local communities need to be included from the outset and consider wider public transport requirements, such as walking routes to bus stops.	The Community Planning Partnership has been involved in early discussions regarding development of the ATS2 and this will continue as the strategy develops further. The Active Travel Discussion was held in conjunction with a consultation on the forthcoming Greenspace Strategy, which aims to understand how people access and enjoy different areas of green and open space within their community, therefore the active travel consultation intertwines with this providing benefits and a larger collective response to both consultations. This partnership working on the ATS2 and Greenspace Strategy will continue as both develop due to their close links with each other. In terms of active travel to public transport, this is recognised within the priorities for ATS2: improving integration between public transport and active travel is identified as a priority.
3.2 Delivery partners must ensure they conduct strong public consultation exercises and community engagement from the very start of design and planning. This must be inclusive and representative, using appropriate and innovative techniques that enable the target population to understand the project and processes and be properly involved. This will include community groups, businesses and Police Scotland and must follow the legislation in The Fairer Scotland Duty.	Outlined in greater detail in Evidence Report F, the Active Travel Discussion was a significant and inclusive period of consultation held to kick-start the development of ATS2. New ways of working for the Council in both awareness raising and engagement were used to reach a wider audience and ensure that an open discussion was had. This included specific discussions with local school communities to ensure their voices were heard. Community groups and stakeholders were also involved in the discussion and significant work was undertaken to ensure a wide-ranging and inclusive consultation was held to gather a wide

Recommendation	Context for East Dunbartonshire
	range of ideas and views for the future of active travel networks in East Dunbartonshire. Further consultation will be undertaken on the draft ATS2, prior to finalisation of the strategy, to provide further opportunity for community engagement and input.
Behaviour change and culture	
4.1 There must be investment in behaviour change programmes for the longer term to normalise walking and cycling for everyday journeys, including walking to public transport as part of a multi-modal journey. These should be balanced and coordinated with infrastructure and placemaking and media campaigns and must include enforcement of road safety and parking legislation in favour of pedestrians and cyclists.	Empowering all groups to walk, cycle and wheel more through behaviour change programmes has been identified as a priority for the ATS2, as has integrating public transport and active travel. ATS2 will have a tenacious focus on proven ways to achieve behavioural change, such as expanding segregated active travel infrastructure. The Local Transport Strategy (LTS) 2020-2025 sets out objectives which support sustainable travel, including active travel, in preference to private car travel. The LTS also identifies an action for a Parking Management Plan to be put in place. A Parking Management Plan was approved by the Council in June 2022 and is being updated in 2026. It sets out the Council's approach and policies for managing parking in line with the sustainable objectives of the LTS.
4.3 The Fairer Scotland Duty, which is a key component in changing behaviour relating to active travel, will challenge all public sector bodies, including the Scottish Government, NHS and local authorities, to tackle social and economic disadvantage in local areas. This will include tackling transport poverty and increasing access to bikes.	Reducing inequalities by providing high-quality access for all is one of the objectives of the Local Transport Strategy 2020-2025. The policy and key statistics review presented in Evidence Report A highlights policy and evidence specific to active travel for different groups and the challenges they face. This is reflected in the priority for the ATS2 to empower all groups of people to walk, cycle and wheel more. Groups of people from all backgrounds were invited to join the Active Travel Discussion and the findings from this work are summarised in Evidence Report F. The impact of the ATS2 for different equality groups within East Dunbartonshire will be considered as the strategy is developed including through a wider Equalities Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment, and on a more local basis for individual projects.

Recognising the challenges experienced in the delivery of behaviour changes and infrastructure programmes, in 2024 the Scottish Government invested in a major new active travel model designed to support sustainable and active travel behaviour change initiatives, including resource funding for

the maintenance of existing infrastructure. The initiative is aligned with the Scottish Government's long-term vision to shape communities around people and place, enabling walking and cycling to be the most popular modes of travel for short, everyday journeys by 2030 and provides opportunities to support delivery of the ATS2.

Conclusion

Delivering active travel projects in Scotland requires cooperation between different organisations: national, regional and local government, Transport Scotland, charities and organisations. Alongside infrastructure projects, soft measures encouraging behaviour change towards sustainable modes of transport are important to ensure the long-term success of investment in active travel. The Active Travel Task Force, formed in 2016, provides recommendations for active travel projects, including:

- Funding infrastructure and behaviour change measures for active travel occurs in an enforced, timely, sequential and coordinated manner (Recommendation 1.1).
- Recognise benefits of active travel spending from a cross-portfolio, preventative spend perspective (i.e. investment in active travel has public health benefits) (Recommendation 1.2.).
- Coordination of active travel infrastructure and strategies across sectors and local/regional boundaries (Recommendation 2.4).
- Develop policies to reduce traffic levels and transfer carriageway space to active travel (Recommendation 2.7).
- Communication of the positive case for active travel to the public through collaboration with Community Planning Partnerships (Recommendation 3.1).
- Use wide-ranging and inclusive consultation to inform action plans (Recommendation 3.2).
- Long-term investment in behaviour change programmes (Recommendation 4.1).
- Use active travel investment to tackle inequalities (Recommendation 4.3).

The Task Force's recommendations aim to create a context for the effective roll-out of active travel infrastructure and measures in Scotland.

More recently, the Scottish Government's transformation of active travel delivery, introduced in 2024, provides further funding opportunities for the implementation of infrastructure and behaviour change programmes.