

Report to Partnership Meeting 15 April 2016

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

HITRANS Active Travel Strategy Update.

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on the development of HITRANS Active Transport Strategy which is currently out for public consultation, with comments invited until a deadline of 22nd April 2016.

Introduction

As a Regional Transport Partnership, HITRANS are required (by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001) to have an overall Regional Transport Strategy in place. This was published by HITRANS in 2008, and is currently being updated (in early 2016).

The Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS, 2013) requires local and regional transport authorities to develop area-wide cycling strategies. This has led to the current development of the HITRANS Regional Active Travel Strategy.

The Active Travel Strategy will sit as a standalone document to the overall Regional Transport Strategy but the document will complement the wider work being undertaken as part of its refresh, with an abridged version being incorporated into the final Regional Transport Strategy.

Transport Consultants AECOM were appointed to assist officers with the development of the Active Travel Strategy. This included supporting a workshop with key stakeholders in December and one to one consultations with a wide range of public bodies and walking and cycling interest groups. Michael Nimmo of AECOM also provided members with a presentation on the emerging strategy at the last Partnership Meeting in February 2016.

The Active Travel Strategy will define the approach to encouraging walking and cycling at a regional level. This builds on work already done by HITRANS and local authorities, including the development of Active Travel Audits and Masterplans for seventeen towns within the region. It will support future local and strategic planning for walking and cycling as well as providing evidence for use in funding applications.

A copy of the Executive Summary and the consultation feedback forms are attached as an appendix to this report. An email inviting feedback went out to over 130 key stakeholders on 23rd March 2016. The deadline for providing responses has been set as 22nd April 2016. A copy of the full draft Active Travel Strategy can be found on the HITRANS website by following this link http://www.hitrans.org.uk/Corporate/Corporate_Documents/Strategy.

Budget

A budget of £10,000 has been set for this project.

Recommendation

Members are invited to review the draft Active Travel Strategy and submit feedback by 22nd April 2016. A final version of the Strategy will then be prepared in advance of the next Partnership meeting.

Risk	Impact	Comment
RTS Delivery	√	This work supports RTS objectives and the monitoring of their implementation.
Policy	√	This work supports the development of our Active Travel Policies H27a to H27d
Financial	-	A budget of £10k in 15/16 has been allocated.
Equality	√	HITRANS support for Active Travel helps eliminate the barriers to travel for all and removes a number of physical accessibility barriers.

Report by: Andrew MacKay / Neil MacRae
Designation: Active Travel Officer / Partnership Manager
Date: 1st April 2016.

1. Introduction

The Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) is the statutory regional transport partnership (RTP) covering Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Orkney, Highland, Moray and most of the Argyll and Bute area.

HITRANS has developed a Regional Active Travel Strategy to define the approach to encouraging walking and cycling at a regional level. This builds on work already done by HITRANS and local authorities, including the development of Active Travel Audits and Masterplans for seventeen towns within the region.

The Regional Active Travel Strategy will complement the HITRANS Regional Transport Strategy which has been refreshed in 2016, and will support future planning as well as providing evidence for use in funding applications.

Benefits of Active Travel

Walking and cycling, particularly for everyday journeys, have a wide range of well documented benefits – including positive health, environmental, economic and accessibility impacts. As a result, enabling active travel is strongly embedded in national, regional and local policy.

2. Overview

The Regional Active Travel Strategy was developed in early 2016, following a review of existing national, regional and local policy. Guidance from Sustrans and Transport Scotland has been used to inform the strategy development.

A stakeholder workshop was held in late 2015, and local authority advisors were engaged throughout the development of the draft. The workshop focussed on identifying and prioritising challenges and opportunities in four key areas:

- Travel within towns;
- Travel between towns;
- Longer distance routes; and
- Multi-modal journeys.

The Regional Active Travel Strategy details priority areas and an action plan as summarised in sections 3 and 4 which follow.



HIRANS Area

3. Priorities

Emerging from the work to develop the strategy, and the consultation exercise to date, there are a large number of areas in which HITRANS, member local authorities and other partners can act to promote walking and cycling.

These priority areas offer an opportunity to build on work already being undertaken for the promotion of active and sustainable travel.

All initiatives should be targeted as far as possible on delivering everyday active travel, and supporting the active travel tourism economy.

The proposed areas of focus can be broadly grouped as follows (in no particular order):

Marketing & Promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive messages about everyday active travel• Consistent messages sustained over long term• Promotional activities including training• Strong active travel tourism message
Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walking and cycling infrastructure, appropriate for the setting and targeted where it can have most impact• Ensure that opportunities to enable everyday active journeys, are maximised through major infrastructure projects such as trunk road upgrades• Cycle parking/storage and trip end facilities
Planning and Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued partnership working between HITRANS and Local Authorities• Funding applications• Monitoring
Public Transport Integration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities at stops/stations• Bike carriage on vehicles• Public information
Maintenance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning and delivery of long term maintenance to ensure best value from infrastructure
Development Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximise active travel opportunities achieved through new development

Continuing to make progress in these areas, based on the excellent levels of walking and cycling already achieved in parts of the HITRANS region, there are significant opportunities to further increase active travel levels.

This could have a range of benefits including improved accessibility, enhanced quality of place including air quality, and increased levels of physical and mental health.

4. Action Plan

The table below presents a proposed set of actions to deliver the Active Travel Strategy.

Table 4.1 HITRANS Active Travel Action Plan

Marketing & Promotion		
Action	Description	Key Delivery Partners
Messaging and imagery (everyday travel)	Agree consistent core messaging, strongly promoting the benefits. Share/develop image library.	HITRANS Local Authorities
Messaging and imagery (tourism)	Agree consistent core messaging Share/develop image library.	HITRANS Local Authorities
Hltravel promotion	Use the Hltravel brand for all relevant marketing and promotion	HITRANS Local Authorities
Hltravel web presence and social media accounts	Establish Hltravel online as hub for Smarter Travel information across HITRANS region – linked to local sources	HITRANS Local Authorities
Cycle training	Ensure consistent availability of adult and schools cycle training	HITRANS Local Authorities Cycling Scotland Sustrans Scotland
E-Bikes	Knowledge sharing to learn from existing schemes and widen availability of e-bikes	HITRANS Local Authorities
Planning and Policy		
Action	Description	Key Delivery Partners
Funding	Lobbying for ongoing and increased national Government spending	HITRANS Local Authorities Sustrans Scotland Cycling Scotland Community Planning Partners
Funding	Maintain existing levels and work to increase Local Authority funding	Local Authorities
Funding	Continue to maximise diverse funding opportunities addressing different objectives – including EU InterReg: (COMBI (Commuting by Bike in Rural Areas)) and other ERDF Funding opportunities	HITRANS Local Authorities Transport Scotland
Procurement	Investigate opportunities for best value through joint procurement of services/supplies	HITRANS Local Authorities Community Planning Partners
Implement Monitoring Plan	See Chapter 6	HITRANS Local Authorities Transport Scotland Sustrans Cycling Scotland Paths for All
Strategic Planning	Ongoing partnership working to promote active travel, knowledge sharing between authorities	HITRANS Local Authorities Community Planning Partners
Public Transport Integration		

Action	Description	Key Delivery Partners
Bikes on Buses	Best practice knowledge sharing; expand bike carriage more widely through Local Authority areas and encourage bus operators to adopt consistent bike friendly policies	HITRANS Local Authorities Local Bus Operators
Public information strategy	Plan for disseminating walk+ and cycle+ information to visitors and residents	HITRANS Local Authorities Public Transport Operators
Cycle parking / Facilities	Cycle parking and facilities at key locations including ferry terminals, bus and rail stations, rural bus stops	HITRANS Local Authorities Public Transport Operators
Bus Stop Review	Review gaps and opportunities in rural bus stop provision (encourage walk+bus, cycle+bus)	HITRANS Local Authorities
Ferry Facilities	Increase the consistency and quality of conditions for bike carriage on ferries. Ensure dedicated cycle storage facilities included in specification for new or refurbished ferries.	HITRANS Local Authorities Transport Scotland Public Transport Operators
Maintenance		
Action	Description	Key Delivery Partners
Existing route maintenance	Maintain existing levels and work to increase Local Authority funding	Local Authorities
New route maintenance	Lobby Transport Scotland for multi-year maintenance funding to support new infrastructure	HITRANS
Infrastructure		
Action	Description	Key Delivery Partners
Active Travel Masterplans	Continue to implement the prioritised infrastructure improvements included in the 17 Active Travel Masterplans	HITRANS Local Authorities Sustrans Scotland
Strategic Route Audits	Audit of strategic/long distance route to prioritise localised improvements	HITRANS Local Authorities
Trunk Roads	Work with Transport Scotland to ensure appropriate active travel provision on the trunk road network when upgrades are taking place, in particular current strategic upgrades on A82, A9 and A96 – with a particular focus on enabling everyday active journeys	Transport Scotland HITRANS Local Authorities
Travel Hubs	Knowledge sharing with other Scottish authorities Secure funding including ERDF Introduce travel hubs at key locations	HITRANS Local Authorities
Cycle Parking	Install cycle parking at key destinations	HITRANS Local Authorities Ferry / Rail Operators
Speed Limits	Encourage consideration of 20mph speed limits in urban areas Knowledge sharing with other Scottish Local Authorities	HITRANS

Design Standards	Chair discussions between Local Authorities and funders regarding flexibility of design standards for rural locations	HITRANS
Development Planning		
Action	Description	Key Delivery Partners
Planning guidance	Explore the Active Travel Strategy being adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Active Travel Action plan being incorporated into Local Development Plans	HITRANS Local Authorities/ Planning Authorities
New developments	Ensure active travel built into new developments, including improvements to surrounding networks	Local Authorities / Planning Authorities Transport Scotland
High quality design and Designing Streets principles	Ensure new developments apply high design standards for active travel, with comprehensive and consistent use of Designing Street principles (including street user hierarchy which considers pedestrians first)	HITRANS Transport Scotland Local Authorities/ Planning Authorities
New developments and other consultation exercises	Promote the use of the Scottish Government's Place Standard Tool	HITRANS Local Authorities/ Planning Authorities

5. Next Steps

The Regional Active Travel Strategy will be finalised following consultation on the current draft. An abridged version will be included with the refreshed Regional Transport Strategy also being published in 2016.



HITRANS ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

Consultation Draft, 23rd March 2016

Please pass comments to HITRANS via info@hitrans.org.uk or contact directly on 01463 719002.

INTRODUCTION

- The document will be formatted once the content is finalised
- An abridged version will be included within the Regional Transport Strategy

KEY CONSULTATION QUESTIONS (Please expand space for responses as required)

1. Are the Objectives appropriate for this Strategy? <input type="radio"/> Which routes should be considered to inform objectives 6 and 7?
2. Are the Actions appropriate: <input type="radio"/> Should any actions be removed or changed? <input type="radio"/> Any actions which should be added? <input type="radio"/> Are the Key Delivery Partners appropriate?
3. Do you have any comments on the Monitoring Plan ?
4. Do you have success stories or case studies which could feature in the Strategy?
5. Do you feel any of the following should have higher priority within the Strategy: <input type="radio"/> Travel within towns; <input type="radio"/> Travel between towns; <input type="radio"/> Longer distance routes; <input type="radio"/> Multi-modal travel.
6. Any other comments?