

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 5 February 2021

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Active Travel Update

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on Active Travel projects in which HITRANS are currently involved.

REGIONAL ACTIVE TRAVEL BUDGET (Transport Scotland)

In 2020-21 HITRANS had £187k from Transport Scotland for projects under the following headings; all has now been allocated, except for a small amount remaining for cycle parking linked to public transport / community facilities.

- **Bikes on Buses**

Partnership with West Coast Motors to install bike racks within buses on routes serving Mull and Mid-Argyll; 8 vehicles will be fitted out over 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years (subject to confirmation of funding for 2021-22).

- **Cycle Parking at Transport Interchanges**

Following bids from Partnership Advisors for funding to install cycle parking at transport interchanges and community hubs, bike stands and shelters will be installed on Orkney, Skye and in Moray. £10k remains to be allocated by the end of March 2021.

- **Active Travel Masterplan Small Interventions**

Two projects are being taken forward to improve Active Travel connections in Nairn and Lochgilphead.

- **Active Travel Project Design**

One project is complete (Rose Street, Inverness) and three design / small works projects are underway in Kirkwall, Uig and Lochgilphead.

Following discussions with Partners regarding potential projects, HITRANS has bid for £381,000 from Transport Scotland in 2021-22. If successful, the bulk of this funding will go to partners for delivery of actions from the Active Travel Audits / Masterplans. There will also be funding to continue the Bikes on Buses partnership with West Coast Motors, cycle parking linked to public transport, and for Design work.

SUSTRANS PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

Within the £100k Sustrans Partnership Fund, the following projects are complete or nearing completion:

- Wick and Thurso Active Travel Masterplan updates

- Elgin Active Travel Map
- Carrbridge Rural Spaces – 20mph, traffic calming, place-making.

Inner Moray Firth Active Travel Masterplans are also being taken forward across two financial years, to update the active travel audits for towns within the IMF Development Plan area, including links between settlements. Arup have been contracted to develop the Masterplans.

In 2021-22 financial year the intention is to make half of the Sustrans Partnership Fund (£50k) available directly community anchor organisations in rural or deprived areas to take on small projects to improve safety and active travel infrastructure within their communities. Up to £10k will be available per application, with a match funding requirement. Where interventions involve roads or speed limits, groups will be required to work with the relevant Local Authority.

OTHER PROJECTS

Inverness eBike Share Scheme – HIBIKE



Ebikes and equipment arrived in Inverness in December and are currently in storage. Arrangements are being made by Bewegen for groundworks and electrical connections prior to installing the bike docks.

The launch planned for late January has been postponed to the spring, depending on Covid restrictions. We hope to have the scheme up and running by April though.

Black Parks Active Travel Route, Fort William

A successful application has been made to Lochaber Town Centre Fund for £15k, and HITRANS have committed a further £15k in match funding toward the project, which includes further surfacing and drainage work and lighting along the route. We are advised that Sustrans' Places for Everyone Fund is oversubscribed for 2020-21 and no more awards will be made until 2021 financial year; should our application be unsuccessful it is our intention to use some of the Regional Active Travel Budget to enable this project to progress.

Fort William Wayfinding Strategy

Work is now almost complete on Stage 2 of the comprehensive wayfinding strategy to cover the network of active travel routes in Fort William identified in the Active Travel Masterplan. Funding will be sought to implement the strategy (c. £200k is required).

Rural eBikes

Monitoring and evaluation of the rural eBikes pilot which made eBikes available in partnership with bike shops in Grantown, Aviemore and Fort William, was carried out at the end of 2020 and a final report submitted to Energy Saving Trust. All three bike shops are keen to continue the partnership for another year under the EU-funded G-PaTRA / INCLUSION projects.

Wick and Thurso Active Travel Masterplans

The Masterplans are being taken to Highland Council's Caithness Committee this month. The Active Travel Officer is working to set up local groups to take forward actions within the Masterplans, similar to the Fort William Active Travel Group.

Hltravel Liftshare

Once travel restrictions are lifted and car-sharing is safe again, Liftshare is likely to be an important part of the transport mix, particularly in rural areas where bus services have been reduced. Later in the year we plan to run promotions and campaigns to promote the use of the Liftshare platform, and have asked partner Local Authorities to contribute from their SCSP allocation to the cost of maintaining the Hltravel Liftshare umbrella site.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note this report and consider opportunities for advancing projects within the Active Travel funding streams which will support HITRANS wider policy objectives and priorities.

Risk Register

RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work supports both relevant RTS objectives and those of the Active Travel Framework.

Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work supports the development of our Active Travel policies.

Financial

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work is supported by Transport Scotland's Regional Active Travel Grant Fund and Sustrans active travel partnership funding.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS support for active travel helps eliminate the barriers to travel for all and removes a number of physical accessibility barriers.

Report by: Vikki Trelfer
Designation: Active Travel Officer
Date: 25th January 2021