

## Report to Partnership Meeting 23 April 2021

### EUROPEAN PROJECTS

#### EU Funding Consolidated Update

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on HITRANS involvement in European funded projects. This includes programmes Interreg North Sea Region, Interreg VA Cross Border, Interreg North West Europe and European Commission Connect 2020. Feedback is welcome on additional information that might be helpful to include in the projects log.

#### OVERVIEW

HITRANS is currently involved in seven ongoing European projects, plus two further projects that received approval in March 2021. The Appendix includes details on all projects including current status, timelines, description of main activities, a Gantt Chart showing involvement into 2023 and a consolidated budgets table. Amounts have been converted into GBP using the European Commission's official monthly exchange rate. As of March 2021, including the two new projects, HITRANS total budget for European projects is £4,829,366.

HITRANS received approval for two new European projects in March – **Ride-to-Autonomy** as part of the European Commission's Connect 2020 Programme, focusing on smart urban mobility, and **eHUBS** – an Interreg North West Europe project to develop electric mobility hubs in cities. Ride-to-Autonomy will involve testing autonomous vehicles with a total budget of €85,000, starting 15<sup>th</sup> April and ending in 2022. eHUBS aim is to develop electric mobility hubs in cities with activities focusing on shared e-bike hires, e-cargo bikes, electric car clubs and Mobility as a Service. It is an existing project that HITRANS were invited to join, with the project having already had success launching eHUBS across different cities in Europe. The project commences in April and will finish in March 2023 with a total budget of €456,783 for HITRANS.

We also welcome Gemma Robinson who joined us in March as **FASTER** Project Officer, leading on our role within the project to install 24 rapid charge points across the Interreg VA Programme Area: Argyll & Bute, Western Isles, and Skye, Lochalsh & Lochaber areas of Highland Council. The project is progressing well with Strathclyde University conducting detailed site assessments for each area, working closely with local authorities to ensure sites are aligned with priority areas as well as grid capacity and demand. The modelling work should also be a helpful tool for local authorities in the future when prioritising charge point locations. The site selection work will continue up to May at which point outputs will be incorporated into tender documentation.

Our E-Cargo bikes project for **MOVE** is progressing well. Following procurement, we have now appointed suppliers for each pilot area in Orkney, Inverness and Oban and inception meetings have been held for each location. The bikes have now been ordered and we anticipate pilots will

start in May once the bikes and associated equipment has arrived and setups are complete. We will shortly reach out to BIDs and local groups to establish the first uses of the bikes in each location. The aim will be to promote a modal shift from van/car deliveries towards low carbon alternatives, helping to meet the demand for deliveries due to Covid-19 and offer uses that will benefit each community.

## **HORIZON EUROPE**

HITRANS is exploring funding opportunities in the recently launched Horizon Europe programme that replaces Horizon 2020. The European Commission has confirmed that the UK will be classed as an Associated Country to the Horizon Europe programme and be eligible to contribute to projects and receive funding. All aspects of UK association to Horizon Europe were agreed on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and no additional negotiations are foreseen. Association will enter into force with the formal adoption of the agreed protocol included in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The first calls for proposals are expected to be published before UK association enters into force, however UK applicants will be treated as if the UK is an associated country throughout the entire application process.

Funding rates depend on the type of action that the project is addressing. The actions HITRANS were involved in through Horizon 2020 attracted rates of up to 100% and the equivalent funding rate has been set for Horizon Europe. Themes of interest in the upcoming programme include smart, inclusive and sustainable mobility initiatives across all transport modes to achieve decarbonisation of the transport sector by 2050. The first round of funding is expected to launch later in April or early May.

## **COVID-19 / PROJECT EXTENSIONS**

Several projects have now received extensions for activities and expenditure as a result of Covid-19. The attached Gantt Chart shows the addition of project extensions with most projects now extending into 2022 and some into 2023.

In addition, two of our projects applied to the Interreg North Sea Region Call 12 that was open to existing projects for extension to perform new activities. Outcomes of these proposals are expected in June.

## **RISK REGISTER**

### RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS EU project work supports several RTS objectives, particularly in the field of low carbon transport.

### Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS EU project work supports broader policy work in a variety of ways, including making areas better connected and rural areas more accessible, and conducting research to assist with policy development.

### Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – HITRANS EU projects bring large investments to the area at attractive intervention rates, ranging from 50%-100%.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – A large proportion of EU project work is targeted at improving the availability and accessibility of transport services in the HITRANS area, such as increasing the number of publicly available charge points, trialling new transport services in rural areas and introducing low carbon transport services.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to:-

1. Note the report.

**Report by:** Jayne Golding  
**Designation:** Projects and Policy Officer  
**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021

# HITRANS European Projects Log

## *Approved Projects*

Project Title	Description	Programme	Status	Timeline	HITRANS Activities	Lead
Smart Cities	50/50 partnership with The Highland Council to deliver the Smart Cities programme for Inverness	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	Ongoing Phase 1 & Phase 2	2018-2021	<p><b>Smart Cities Projects:</b></p> <p><b>Phase 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>(Completed)</i> Supply &amp; Install of Smart Bus Stop Units: Successful installation of approx. 250 smart bus stop units with QR codes</li> <li>- <i>(Completed)</i> RTPi Procurement: Improvement of real time passenger travel information in the HITRANS area</li> <li>- <i>(Ongoing – delayed)</i> Fair Exchange (previously titled Press N’ Ride): project to create additional capacity, improved resilience &amp; better maintenance access on the Kyle railway line between Strathcarron &amp; Kyle, with the project funding a new Token Exchange Point near Stromferry. Site meetings were held to determine the scope of the physical works, informing the Network Rail investment panel along with estimates for the signalling design and software changes. The project has currently been delayed due to Covid-19.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phase 2 Projects:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>(Ongoing)</i> Vehicle Management System (VMS) &amp; Ferry Information Signs: the proposal has been approved with a total budget of £500k. Procurement was launched in December for phase one of the project – 3 new ferry information signs in Skye. The procurement was finalised in March with the supplier due to commence work in April.</li> </ul>	NM/JG

<b>G-PaTRA</b>	<p>Green Passenger Transport in Rural Areas</p> <p>HITRANS are project partners working with lead partner RGU to accelerate the use of zero emission vehicles and vessels in public transport</p>	<p>Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Oct 2017 - June 2021 (now extended to Dec 21)</p>	<p><b>WP3 Accelerating the use of zero emission vehicles and vessels:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS is piloting an electric bus in rural Morayshire with Moray Council for 30 months – services started Jan 2019</li> <li>- Match funding was received from SCSP to launch the service &amp; develop marketing materials – ended Nov 2019</li> <li>- An evaluation of the pilot &amp; associated carbon reduction emissions is being completed using results from a metric spreadsheet, capturing passenger numbers, total KM travelled, charge point use and any operational issues</li> <li>- Due to Covid-19 the route served by the electric bus service was suspended for a period of time, with the bus instead being used on the Kingston service which it performed well on – it has since resumed its original route</li> <li>- The final report on the business case for battery-powered trains from Wick-Thurso has been produced and is available on the HITRANS website – discussion has been held with Scottish Enterprise and Transport Scotland about extending a possible trial to include a hydrogen fuel cell centre car in the train, but further development is on hold due to Covid-19</li> <li>- There might be potential to contribute funds towards a study on hydrogen for rail being carried out by consultants for the Rail Safety and Standards Board, enabling Inverness to be considered as a hydrogen hub for fuelling trains</li> <li>- The e-bike pilots launched in Jan 2020 in Aviemore, Grantown-on-Spey and Fort William – the project was paused for a period of time due to Covid-19, but the e-bikes were offered to key workers as a means of transportation and proved extremely popular</li> </ul>	<p>JC/JG</p>
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<p><b>MOVE</b></p>	<p>Mobility Opportunities Valuable to Everybody</p> <p>Focuses on co-creation to deliver unusual transport combinations</p> <p>NHS Highland are also project partners</p>	<p>Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Sept 2018 – Aug 2021 (now extended to Feb 22)</p>	<p><b>Implement co-creation pilot to develop new sustainable and durable mobility solutions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS is working with partner councils to deliver pilots addressing social exclusion by improving accessibility and low carbon travel opportunities into main population centres from rural and peri-urban areas</li> <li>- The Highland Council is running a pilot in Sleat, Isle of Skye, using an electric people carrier</li> <li>- Due to Covid-19 and the inability to run a shared passenger transport scheme, the vehicle was instead used to transport goods around the community which was well received</li> <li>- The installation of a charge point for the Sleat vehicle has now been completed</li> <li>- The Ferintosh community bus pilot is due to launch in April</li> <li>- E-Cargo bike trials are underway, due to launch in May following completion of procurement in March</li> </ul>	<p>NM/JC/JG</p>
<p><b>Stronger Combined</b></p>	<p>Combined Mobility in the rural public transport system to build sustainable rural public services in symbiosis with private mobility providers &amp; citizens</p> <p>IBI Group are a sub-partner of HITRANS in this project</p>	<p>Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Jan 2019 – Dec 2021 (expected to receive an extension to June 22)</p>	<p><b>WP3 Opening up traffic data as the basis for attraction of third party providing simplified, transnational booking and ticketing of trips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS role is to explore data requirements &amp; framework for the development of combined mobility – exploring how open data could support visualisation of route planning, travel &amp; payment information in a digital format</li> </ul> <p><b>WP4 Iterative innovation process to develop validated service models:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS will run an innovation process to design a new combined mobility service for tourists and locals – an application was submitted to the MaaS Investment Fund in August 2019 to progress this aim, approved in Dec 2019</li> <li>- HITRANS appointed a MaaS Project Officer in May 2020 to lead on our work in the project</li> <li>- An e-bike share scheme will start in 2021 (start date dependent on movement restrictions due to Covid-19) – 3 hubs with 30 e-bikes will be setup across Inverness for residents and visitors</li> </ul>	<p>MH/RR</p>

<b>PAV (formerly SUV)</b>	Planning for autonomous vehicles by local authorities	Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)	Ongoing	Sept 2019 – Sept 2022 (expected to receive an extension to March 23)	<p><b>WP1 Project Management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS is lead partner with a proportion of budget being contracted out for project management services</li> <li>- The contract for project management &amp; communications support was awarded in 2020 to Bax Innovation Consulting following public procurement</li> </ul> <p><b>WP4 Pilot Project:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS is exploring Inverness Campus as the pilot project location and has held initial meetings with HIE</li> <li>- Now working on a detailed Implementation Plan and progressing with procurement options for a late Summer/Autumn 2021 launch</li> <li>- Also exploring potential to run a short AV trial in Orkney to test the technology in settings such as remote airports</li> </ul>	JG/RR
<b>FASTER</b>	Project between NI, Ireland & Scotland to install EV rapid charge points in the Interreg VA programme area	Interreg VA – Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)	Ongoing	Sept 2020 – Mar 2023 (TBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The project will install 73 EV rapid charge points across the Interreg VA programme area of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland to increase the number of publicly accessible rapid charge points, and subsequently increase the number of EV car registrations</li> <li>- HITRANS will install 24 rapid charge points (or more if budget allows) across the HITRANS proportion of the Interreg VA programme area</li> <li>- HITRANS will liaise with Transport Scotland to work together on the site selections and procurement of charge points</li> <li>- Several meetings have been held with University of Strathclyde to progress site selection work and individual meetings with each of the three local authorities, with early results now being established and shared with the local authorities from Strathclyde’s GIS work</li> <li>- HITRANS appointed a FASTER Project Officer in March 2021 to lead our involvement in the project</li> </ul>	JG/NM

LCTT	<p>Low Carbon Travel &amp; Transport Hubs</p> <p>HITRANS are contributing £15k each year to each scheme for The Highland Council, Moray Council and Orkney Islands Council to deliver low carbon travel &amp; transport hubs</p>	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	Ongoing	2018-2021 (extended)	<p><b>Inverness Low Carbon and Active Travel Hubs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Low Carbon will be located within the Rose Street multi-storey carpark. The hub will establish an EV charging hub with 13 multi-use EV charge points capable of further expansion, and will trial innovative energy supply sources and storage that can act as a catalyst for encouraging the transition to ultra-low emission vehicles across the Highlands. Work to implement the new chargers is progressing with contracts documents currently being prepared.</li> <li>- Project partners held a workshop with Active Travel partners to consider revised proposals for the Active Travel Hub element of the project. This together with other information has been submitted to the LCTT Fund administrators for their consideration. The revised submission seeks to adopt a more City wide approach to Active Travel with a series of mini-hubs complementing other Active travel development in the city.</li> <li>- HITRANS Officers are managing the development of designs for the Active Travel Hub element of the project which will be located at Raigmore Hospital (NHS Highland are a project partner and also provided match funding). It is envisaged that this will include a docking station for the new e-bike hire scheme, high quality bike storage for staff and visitors, a new bus shelter and improved information on all transport modes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Orkney LCTT – Stromness Multi Modal Low Carbon &amp; Active Travel Hub:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Stromness Multi Modal Low Carbon and Active Travel Hub will provide a combination of transport decarbonising initiatives covering ferries, buses, cars and bicycles, utilising surplus electricity from Orkney’s renewable wind and tidal energy</li> <li>- The Stromness Ferry terminal has been chosen as it is where several modes of transport come together, with the mainland ferry sitting for up to 16 hours a day on diesel engines, and opportunity to electrify the arterial Stromness to Kirkwall bus route</li> </ul>	NM/VT
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<b>Ride-to-Autonomy</b>	A project to test autonomous mobility as part of the Smart Urban Mobility initiative	European Commission's Connect 2020 Programme	Approved March 2021 – Starting April 2021	April 2021-2022	<b>Autonomous Mobility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS role within the project will be to test autonomous vehicles for viability and learning</li> </ul>	JG/RR
<b>eHUBS</b>	Develop electric mobility hubs in cities  An existing project that HITRANS were invited to join – the project has already had success launching eHUBS across different cities in Europe	Interreg North West Europe (NWE)	Approved March 2021 – Starting April 2021	April 2021-March 2023	<b>Implement eHUBS in &amp; around Inverness:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HITRANS main activities in the project will be to implement shared e-bike hires, e-cargo bikes, electric car clubs and Mobility as a Service</li> </ul>	JG/RR

## EU Projects – Budgets

Status	Project Title	Programme	HITRANS Budget	Intervention Rate	HITRANS Contribution	Lead
Approved	Smart Cities (Phase 1&2)	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	£1,000,000	50-70%	£400,000	NM/JG
	G-PaTRA	Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)	€ 509,874	50%	€ 254,937	JC/JG
	MOVE	Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)	€ 349,412	50%	€ 174,706	NM/JC/JG
	Stronger Combined	Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)	€ 352,851	50%	€ 176,426	MH/RR
	PAV	Interreg North Sea Region (NSR)	€ 845,868	50%	€ 422,934	JG/RR
	FASTER	Interreg VA SEUPB Cross-Border Programme	€ 1,675,703	85%	€ 251,355	JG/NM
	LCTT	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	£135,000	n/a	£135,000	NM/VT
	Ride-to-Autonomy	European Commission Connect 2020	€ 85,000	70%	€ 25,500	JG/RR
	eHUBS	Interreg North West Europe (NWE)	€ 456,783	60%	€ 182,713	JG/RR
	<b>TOTAL £</b>	<b>Exchange Rate March 2021</b>	<b>£4,829,366</b>		<b>£1,821,245</b>	

# EU Projects Gantt Chart

	2017				2018				2019				2020				2021				2022				2023			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<b>Ongoing</b>																												
Smart Cities																					Dec	Mar		Sep				
G-PaTRA																	Jun				Dec							Jun
MOVE																		Aug				Feb						
Str. Combined																					Dec		Jun					Jun
PAV																							Sep		Mar	Jun		
LCTT																					Dec							
FASTER																											Mar	
Ride-to-Autonomy																												
eHUBS																											Mar	
<b>Previous</b>																												
SPARA																												
INCLUSION																												

NB:

	Original project duration
	Project extensions
	Possible further extensions