

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 12 November 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)

This year's projects are progressing as follows:

Budget Heading	LA Area	Project
Transport Integration	Argyll & Bute / various	Partnership with West Coast Motors to enable bikes to be carried on buses in rural areas; installation of bike racks has been delayed due to reduced staffing levels related to Covid-19. Cycle parking linked to public transport delivered in Lochaber and planned for Caithness.
Active Travel Masterplan Interventions	Argyll & Bute CnES Highland Moray Orkney	Small works to carry out priority interventions identified in the HITRANS Active Travel Masterplans for settlements across the HITRANS area, to remove barriers to utility active travel.
Active Travel Project Design	Various	Design and appraisal work to support Regional Active Travel Fund programme, particularly detailed design of small works to support the delivery of the Active Travel Masterplan Action Plan. (100% funding)

SUSTRANS PARTNERSHIP FUNDING

The following projects are being delivered this financial year:

Inner Moray Firth Active Travel Masterplans

Masterplans for the main settlements have been produced with an outline Active Travel Network connecting settlements within the Inner Moray Firth area. These will be presented to Highland Councillors in December as part of the Inner Moray Firth Development Plan.

Rural Spaces

Part of the Sustrans Partnership fund has been allocated for distribution to community-led initiatives to deliver small interventions or missing active travel links in rural areas. Three awards have been made to communities, and although several more applications have been received, they did not meet Sustrans' standards for design and accessibility so could not be

supported with this fund. Part of the funding allocated to Rural Spaces has therefore been reallocated to support development of the Outer Hebrides Active Travel Strategy and associated Masterplans.

20-Minute Rural Communities

We are in the process of commissioning a piece of work to explore 20-minute neighbourhoods in a rural context.

Outer Hebrides Active Travel Strategy & Masterplans

The Active Travel Strategy is due to be presented to the Comhairle in December, and following approval work will begin on developing a Delivery Plan and associated Masterplans for the main settlements.

OTHER PROJECTS

HIBIKE - Inverness eBike Share Scheme



HI-BIKE was launched on 1st October by Drew Hendry MP and Trish Robertson, chair of Highland Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee.

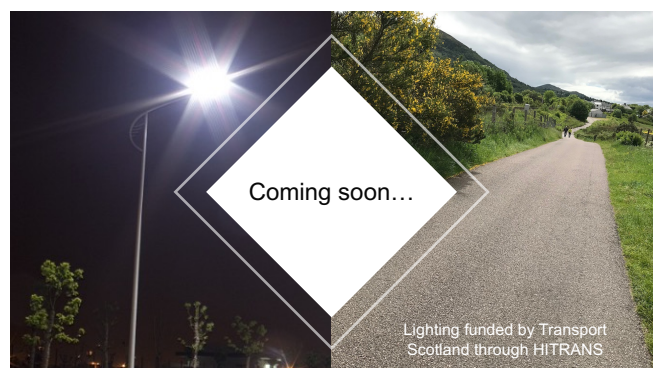
Membership and usage have been very healthy, with almost 2,000 miles ridden in the first month. The bikes were promoted in the run up to COP26, with half price monthly and annual memberships, discounted membership for students, and Equal Access Passes for those on low incomes. Promotions are supported by funding from Smarter

Choices, Smarter Places.

We continue to work with Highland Council to expand the scheme over the next 12 months using Low Carbon Travel & Transport funding, and with HITRANS funding from the EU-funded eHUBS project. This will add another 50 bikes and 6 docking stations to the scheme.

Black Parks Active Travel Route, Fort William

We are working with local teams at Highland Council to install lighting along the route, and to replace the temporary TRO with a permanent order to maintain the traffic-free route. There will be a community event in Inverlochty as part of the consultation process for this, organised by the Community Council.



CnES SCSP

Through the SCSP allocation to CnES which is managed by HITRANS again this year, we have funded monitoring equipment and are commissioning a consultant to help develop Active Travel Masterplans as part of the Delivery Plan for the Outer Hebrides Active Travel Strategy.

Active Travel Strategies

We continue to support Highland and Moray Councils and CnES in the development of their Active Travel Strategies.

PLANNING AHEAD

HITRANS will be asked to submit our bid for funding for 2022/23 to Transport Scotland in December/January, so ideas are invited for capital projects which HITRANS funding can add value to, and design projects which we can fund at 100%. The Active Travel Officer is in contact with individual partner councils to develop bids. The Transport Scotland fund can be matched against Cycling, Walking, Safer Routes funding.

Quiet Routes

We propose to bid for funding for the development of “Quiet Routes” in 2022/23, to make active travel safer in rural areas where there is little existing infrastructure other than the road, and where installing segregated infrastructure is not feasible due to cost and other constraints.

Several requests for this type of intervention were made to the Rural Spaces fund from communities in Highland, where projects were proposed that did not meet Sustrans’ standards, but would nevertheless improve the safety and comfort of those wishing to travel actively in rural areas.

The new Cycling By Design guidance includes quiet streets and lanes – where traffic speeds can be significantly reduced and the presence of those walking and cycling can be made clear. Within settlements, the guidance allows for mixed traffic streets within suitable conditions, with the degree of protection required for cycles influenced by the volume and speed of motor vehicles. Mixed traffic streets are considered to have a high level of service suitable for most users at traffic speeds up to 30mph with traffic flows of no more than 1000 vehicles per day or 100 per hour.

Interventions are likely to include speed limit reductions and visual cues and signage to slow traffic and make drivers aware of the presence of people walking or cycling on the carriageway.

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: 1st November 2021