

## **Report to Partnership Meeting 3 February 2023**

### **EUROPEAN PROJECTS**

#### **eHUBS Project**

##### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update Members on HITRANS work as a partner in the eHUBS North West Europe INTERRED project, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

##### **eHUBS OBJECTIVE**

eHUBS will demonstrate that shared and electric shared mobility (ebikes and electric cars are affordable and attractive alternatives to private cars. EHUBSs will contribute to reduce emissions, increase active travel and reduce car use.

eHUBS are on-street locations that bring together e-bikes, e-cargo bikes, e-scooters and/or e-cars, offering users a wide range of options to experiment and use in various situations. The idea is to give a high-quality and diverse offer of shared electric mobility services to dissuade citizens from owning private cars, resulting in cleaner, more liveable and pleasant cities.

eHUBS can vary in size (minimalistic, light, medium, large), type of location, and type of offer. They can be small and located in residential areas, with just one or two parking spots, or bigger and positioned close to stations and major public transport interchanges, but, in the end, the key is that they should always be where supply and demand meet.

Nine partner cities from five different countries will realise and promote eHUBS and pave the way for others to do the same. The eHUBS implementation approach will differ according to the size and needs of the respective cities. The pilot cities are:

- Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Arnhem, Netherlands
- Nijmegen, Netherlands
- Manchester, England, United Kingdom
- Leuven, Belgium
- Region of Wallonia, Belgium
- Dreux, France
- Inverness, Scotland, United Kingdom
- Kempten, Germany

In doing so, it will develop knowledge, best practices and a blueprint that would lead to replication of the experiences in other cities and regions, as well as a consistent reduction of air pollution, congestion and CO2 emissions in the cities and a growing market for commercial shared e-mobility providers aligned with local policy goals.

By kick starting the mobility transition in 6 pilot cities we will set an example for other cities in Europe, which will be able to benefit from applying the blueprint and copying best practices. A large-scale uptake will cause a leverage by significantly reducing CO2emissions in the cities and creating a growing market for commercial shared e-mobility providers.

## **HITRANS ROLE**

The eHUBS project has a City focus meaning HITRANS initial work will focus on the Inverness City Region. This will allow us to import the European eMobility Hub concept to the Highlands and learn from the experience of delivering through this project to inform how we might pioneer Mobility Hubs in other parts of the Region including the application of the concept in rural areas.

A Mobility Hub is a recognisable and easily accessible place which integrates different transport modes and supplements them with enhanced facilities, services and information aimed at encouraging more sustainable travel, creating sense of place and improving journeys and travel choices.

The Initial project proposal identified the following locations as potentially strong location to establish eHUBS in the region:

- Inverness Station / Falcon Square
- Inverness Campus
- Inverness Leisure Centre / Aquadome, Inverness
- Eden Court Theatre
- Nature Scot, Great Glen House, Leachkin
- Loch Ness Hub, Drumnadrochit
- Raigmore Hospital
- Culloden
- Hilton, Inverness
- Elgin Station

Officers will also investigate the opportunity to develop an eHUB at a Retail Park or Supermarket.

The enhancement of physical mobility choices through the introduction of new modes / services will be strengthened by offering booking of all services through the GO-HI mobility as a service app. The GO-HI app will digitally present the range of travel choices available at each mobility hub and the app will be developed to include a new resource to allow users to find nearby mobility hubs.

The eHUBS will incorporate the existing and planned eBike Dock locations. 3 new eBike Docks will be funded through the project (from the list detailed above) offering a further 24 electric assist bikes as an extension of the HI-Bike scheme. In addition to the infrastructure funded through this project the Low Carbon Transport and Travel ERDF funding will introduce a further 3 eBike Docking locations in Inverness.

The other elements of the eHUBs could include eCargo bikes, folding bikes and EV Car Club.

## PROJECT BUDGET

	Costs (EUR)	Costs (GBP) converted @ 1.177
<b>Staff Costs</b>	€83,908.89	£71,290.48
<b>Office &amp; Admin Costs</b>	€12,586.33	£10,693.57
<b>Travel Costs</b> 2 staff attending annual partner meetings	€9,000.00	£7,646.56
<b>External Expertise &amp; Services Costs</b> Hosting a partner meeting, marketing materials, evaluation report, maintenance for bikes for the duration	€53,665.92	£45,595.51
<b>Equipment Costs</b> Pilot project MaaS lease costs, ebikes, eCargo bikes, eCar clubs, electric charge point, real time information updates	€297,622.25	£252,865.12
<b>Overall Total Costs</b>	€ 456,783.39	£388,091.24

## FUNDING PACKAGE

We received £232,757.65 from the Interreg North West Europe programme, 60% of our funding. The Interreg North-West Europe Programme is part of the European Cohesion Policy and is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). Created to foster cooperation in North-West Europe, seeking projects that will deliver concrete results to improve the quality of life of citizens and reduce disparities within the regions.

We applied for funding from Transport Scotland to cover the shortfall in the project, and we have been successful in receiving £120,000 towards the project activities that will see the activities outlined above being achieved. In addition, we have secured funding from Energy Saving Trust towards the shared eCargo bikes element of the project.

<b>Interreg North West Europe Programme</b>	£232,757.65
<b>Energy Savings Trust eBike Grant</b>	£107,863.68
<b>Transport Scotland</b>	£120,000.00
<b>Overall Funding</b>	£460,621.33

## PROGRESS TO DATE

At present there are now 6 Hi-Bike docking stations operational across the city of Inverness with an additional 3 virtual docking stations that can be used to end the ride. The 3 initial docks at Inverness Railway Station, UHI Campus and Great Glen House which are the leading building blocks of the eHubs project have seen a huge uptake in usage since deployment with 645

eBikes unlocked across these three docks in September 2022 alone (please see Active Travel Report for further statistics).

In addition to the standard eBike there has been 15 eCargo bikes ordered from the supplier with the scope of distributing these across all the Inverness docks. This will enable a more varied type of user to engage in using the eHubs for trips such as shopping, family travel and moving larger items that they would otherwise be unable to transport without a vehicle.

Due to a delay in obtaining the TPPL Service Agreement the car clubs have been delayed. Now having obtained the service agreement, and as Enterprise has vehicles waiting for deployment the EV cars can now be implemented quickly without having the installation of additional infrastructure at certain locations. Discussions are ongoing with partners on agreeing locations for car club bays with the following locations being developed with a view to car club vehicles being introduced in February / March 2023:

- Inverness Campus (An Lochran) – possibly 2 vehicles
- Inverness Bus Station
- Elgin Station
- Drumnadrochit
- Inverness, Highland Council HQ / Eden Court Theatre
- Forres
- Inverness Airport Station

## **RISK REGISTER**

### RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – The eHUBS project supports several RTS objectives, particularly in supporting sustainable travel.

### Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – eHUBS is supporting broader policy work by testing the Mobility Hub concept and will be the largest introduction of Mobility Hubs in Scotland. This fits with the National Transport Strategy and STPR2.

### Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – The project has secured 100% funding through INTERREG North West Europe ERDF and Transport Scotland.

### Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – eHUBS will make it easier to access transport services and there will be specific activity with Motability relating to Car Club use.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to:-

1. Note the report.

**Report Updated by:**  
**Designation:**  
**Date:**

Chris Finlay  
Project Officer – Mobility Hubs  
20<sup>th</sup> January 2023