

People and Place

Programme 2025-26



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Introduction

In the second year of our People and Place Programme funded by Transport Scotland we supported 21 projects across five strategic themes. Projects included those delivered in communities by local delivery partners, a cycle parking programme and access to bikes funding which we delivered with our Local Authorities and other partners, and the Workplace Active Travel Grant scheme which supported 12 workplaces to install or improve facilities for staff. These interventions were delivered across the HITRANS region in Highland, Moray, Orkney, Western Isles and Argyll and Bute, with a particular emphasis on inclusivity and local capacity building.

Programme Overview

Programme Themes

This year Transport Scotland added Sustainable Transport to the four original active travel themes:

1. Active Schools & Young People

2. Active Workplaces & Communities

3. Accessibility & Inclusion

4. Capacity & Capability building

5. Sustainable Transport

Delivery Partners

Delivery of the Programme across our large and diverse region was made possible by a variety of partners, working across all five themes.

Theme	Partner
Active Schools & Young People	Living Streets Moray Council, Orkney Islands Council
Active Workplaces & Communities	ACT Adventure Oban Clach Cycle CIC Cycling UK Dunoon Community Development Trust Fyne Futures Lochaber Environmental Group Outfit Moray Positive Pedals Spin Project Volunteering Hebrides TravelKnowHow
Accessibility & Inclusion	Cycling UK Inclusive Cycling Project; Lochaber Environmental Group; Spinal Injuries Scotland; Shopmobility Inverness
Capacity & Capability Building	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar; Cairngorm National Park Authority; Highland Council; Orkney Islands Council
Sustainable Transport	Shiel Buses; HI-BIKE

Programme Summary

Overall Reach

- Over 26,000. participants from across age groups from pre-school to 65+ *(14,000 participants in 2024-25).*
- 15.2 FTE posts were supported across 11 delivery partners.
- Delivered new or upgraded infrastructure (cycle parking, facilities, adapted bikes, traffic radar sensors) in 59 locations *(30 locations in 2024-25).*

Key Outputs

- 7,713 no. primary school pupils engaged (Living Streets, Outfit Moray, Adventure Oban)
- 14 Workplaces funded through Workplace Active Travel Grant
- 451 personalised commuter plans for 3 workplaces
- Engagement with over 1,700 employees *(8,000 in 2024-25).*
- 1,783 bikes checked and repaired, e.g. Dr Bikes in the community and in schools
- 353 bikes refurbished and rehomed either free or at low-cost to children and adults *(130 refurbished bikes in 2024-25).*
- 12 projects funded through community cycle parking programme
- 7 Inclusive Cycling Members loan a non-standard cycle suited to their needs
- 4,446 hours of volunteer time donated to the programme, equating to £54,286* of time invested.

*Calculated at a rate of hours x national living wage rate for 21+ year olds in 25/26 (£12.21)

Summary by Theme

Active Schools & Young People

Outputs: school cycle parking grant; WOW Travel Tracker; walking and cycling buses; bike maintenance and repair; learn to ride & Bikeability level 1 sessions; inclusive cycling sessions; led rides; girl-specific bike sessions; active travel mapping.

Outcomes: Increased numbers of pupils cycling to school; increased perceptions of safety for walking; wheeling or cycling to school; reduced barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling.

Active Workplaces & Communities

Outputs: community cycle parking grant; workplace active travel grant; workplace engagement with TravelKnowHow; Local Officers engaging with their communities and local employers; bike fleets, loans and libraries.

Outcomes: Increased numbers of people walking, wheeling and cycling to work and for everyday journeys; increased perceptions of safety.

Accessibility & Inclusion

Outputs: Loans of non-standard cycles and eCargo bikes; community bike share /loan schemes; adapted cycling sessions; bike refurbishment and distribution; low cost bike maintenance.

Outcomes: Increase in walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys across all abilities; reduced barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling.

Capacity & Capability Building

Outputs: Local Officer posts; cycle mechanic training; maintenance sessions; volunteer opportunities; networking & learning event; funding for training and event attendance; local events and promotions; campaigns and communications.

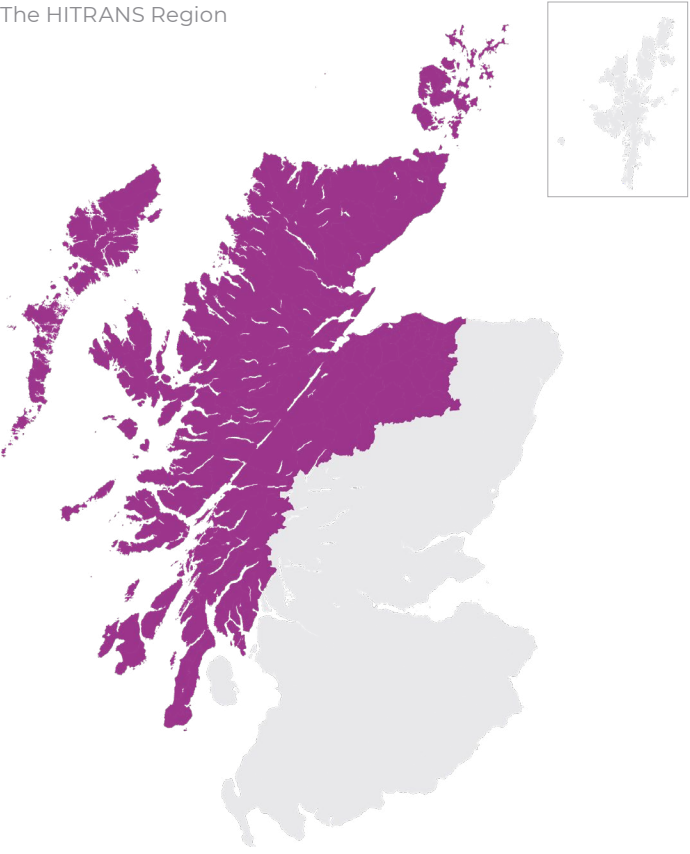
Outcomes: Walking, wheeling and cycling is supported by a range of partners; reduced perception of barriers to active travel.

Sustainable Transport

Outputs: HI-BIKE on-street ebike share scheme; Demand Responsive Transport; bus stop improvements and cycle parking; timetable information.

Outcomes: Increase in the number of people choosing sustainable transport for longer journeys.

The HITRANS Region



Best Practice & Learnings

Active Schools & Young People

Schools Approach by Outfit Moray: Outfit Moray provide a comprehensive programme of cycling activities for young people of all abilities in Moray, from nursery to high school. Outfit Moray's delivery of learn-to-ride sessions, Bikeability 1 and Dr Bikes means that almost every pupil within Moray Council can participate in Bikeability 2. The led rides following on from Bikeability 2 help to embed healthy travel behaviours for young people, demonstrating that behaviour change is a process rather than a one-off event.

- **Decision-maker engagement:** Engaging with school staff and parents is key to influencing children's travel choices and ensuring interventions such as School Streets can be implemented to make active travel the safe and obvious choice.
- **Inclusion:** Outfit Moray have demonstrated the importance of addressing accessibility and inclusion, by providing free bike loans and safety equipment to young people and delivering specific ASN sessions.
- **Infrastructure:** The provision of cycle parking at schools both raises the profile of cycling as a travel mode for school journeys, as well as making it the practical, easy option when there is a safe place to store cycles at school for staff and pupils.
- **Behaviour Change:** Outfit Moray and Living Streets' data indicates that providing a comprehensive package of cycling skills for children from the age of 3, can support lifelong healthy travel habits to become embedded from an early age.

Active Workplaces & Communities

HITRANS Active Travel Infrastructure Grants: A number of workplace and community infrastructure projects experienced delivery delays. Common factors included contractor availability, weather conditions, supply chain delays, competing estate priorities and staff capacity within delivery organisations.

These experiences highlighted that many participating organisations were delivering active travel infrastructure projects for the first time, alongside their core operational activities. As a result, we have developed enhanced guidance and support measures for future funding rounds to include clearer project milestones, strengthened our application requirements, and revised our evaluation process.

- **Infrastructure:** The provision of secure cycle parking increases access and reduces barriers to cycling across workplaces and communities. However, RTP support during the application process is important to ensure that organisations feel equipped to deliver the project. The timeline of the P&P funding cycle with funding awards received well into the first month of the financial year makes it challenging to instal infrastructure within the same financial year.
- **Grant Administration:** The administration process for workplace and community grants was very time consuming, and in 2026-27 we will switch from email-based applications and reporting to an online portal. We have been able to benefit from the experience of another RTP to choose an online platform that will make grant administration more straightforward and free up some staff capacity.
- **Dr Bike sessions** provide tangible benefits at relatively little cost.
- **Community organisations** are well-placed to engage across communities, providing bike loans to those who cannot afford their own bike and increasing confidence in cycling, route finding, and bike maintenance.

Accessibility & Inclusion

Access to Bikes: Demand for the Access to Bikes scheme remains strong, with some projects experiencing waiting lists of 4-5 weeks for more than half the year. Continued funding over the next 12-24 months would help meet sustained demand and enable more users to access bikes through loan schemes.

At-home storage remains a major challenge, particularly in remote rural and island communities where secure facilities and access to bike shops are limited. Secure and accessible storage was identified as a key factor influencing future eBike use and purchase.

Participants valued the opportunity to try different bike types before committing to buying their own. Inclusive cycling sessions supported users to build confidence, independence and cycling skills.

Sourcing particular types of non-standard cycles can be difficult as suppliers are limited, and lead times can be long as many of the bikes are built to order.

- **Access to refurbished and non-standard cycles:** To enable behaviour change at every level and ability and increase the number of people cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys, access to refurbished and non-standard cycles is essential. High demand for refurbished cycles demonstrates that many face financial barriers to cycling more.
- **Partnership working** across schools, health and social care is key to identifying and reaching those in need.

Capacity & Capability Building

Partnership Working and Networking: The partnership approach utilised by ACT, a local delivery partner, enables them to use the knowledge of key partners to identify where their service can have the greatest impact. It also allows them to work highly efficiently as partner networks allow them to cover the full local authority area from a central and fully resourced hub.

Regional Forums: The HITRANS Local Delivery Partner forum provides an opportunity for organisations to network with other funded projects. This quarterly Teams meeting is a space for partners to share updates, challenges and talk through solutions together. This joined-up approach means that behaviour change initiatives can link with and support each other. For example, Adventure Oban will refer young people to ACT,

who they identify through their schools work as in need of a bike but facing a financial barrier. ACT then supply the young person with a bike free of charge.

A 6-weekly online Behaviour Change Officer (BCO) forum was established in August 2025, to bring together the 9 local officers across the HITRANS region (all funded fully or partially through the People & Place Programme or Local Authority Direct Award). Participants share updates, knowledge and identify opportunities to collaborate. This has proven an effective way to share ideas and resulted in:

- Re-establishment of the Junior Road Safety Officer (JRSO) programme in the Western Isles, as a result of shared learning and training from the Highland Council BCOs.
- BCOs identified gaps in Bikeability 2 delivery in Badenoch & Strathspey schools and were able to support each other locally to ensure all planned delivery could be completed.
- Training opportunities were identified and shared, including Play on Pedals.

Peer Learning and Regional Collaboration: The Making Connections learning and networking event held in Orkney in October 2025 demonstrated the value of creating dedicated opportunities for peer learning between those involved in active travel across the region. Several collaborations emerged directly from the event, including:

- cross-authority sharing of learning from 20mph implementation,
- new connections between workplace active travel projects and funding opportunities,
- follow-on work to develop cycle training capacity in Orkney.

The event reinforced that regional networking can support delivery beyond the event itself, by helping practitioners build relationships; share practical delivery experience; and identify transferable approaches.

- **Revenue Funding:** To genuinely add capacity and capability to the Programme, staff roles and

training are critical. These are revenue activities, and with the current capital/revenue split of the Programme being so capital heavy, this presents a major challenge in continuing to deliver under this key theme.

- **Relationships:** Working in partnership with our Local Authorities and National Park Authority to jointly fund embedded Behaviour Change Officer posts has been key to building relationships and delivering the programme in the past two years.

Sustainable Transport

HI-BIKE: E-bikes reduce barriers caused by hills, wind, longer cycling distances, and concerns related to fitness, age or physical ability. HI-BIKE overcomes financial barriers to sustainable travel, by providing affordable access to e-bikes without the ownership and maintenance costs. It also enables easy travel for non-drivers who might otherwise be disadvantaged or limited by bus timetables. It helps to connect people to their communities, jobs, services leisure and public transport for onward journeys.

Key learnings:

- The most popular docking stations are those with good integrated travel links, e.g. Inverness Railway Station, supporting onward travel and multimodal journeys.
- Reliable operations and service are critical to ensuring users remain confident in the system and that it meets their needs.
- Demand for e-bikes is often broader than expected, with users being locals running errands, commuters, and tourists.
- Dedicated cycle lanes and a feeling of safety are a significant factor in the popularity of cycle routes, for example the new multi-use path in Caol - Fort William has significant use.
- The greater the density and therefore the visibility and usefulness of docking locations, the greater the uptake. Eg. Fort William has better coverage overall than Inverness and as such is more useful to users.

Moove Flexi: Through a digital booking app, passengers can book and manage on-demand journeys more easily, while operators benefit from improved scheduling, vehicle tracking and service coordination. This helps to make rural and community transport services more accessible, efficient and user-friendly. Operators involved in the project often do not have the capacity to complete all the configuration, training, and ongoing tasks required to become fully set up, so HITRANS have created a document outlining the process of signing up for Moove Flexi. This can be shared with prospective operators so they understand the expectations and requirements from the outset.

Case Studies

Adventure Oban – Active Travel Maps in Schools



Secure Cycle Storage for Inverness Residents



HI-BIKE Inclusive Cycling Membership



Volunteering Hebrides – Embark Project



CnES Behaviour Change Officer – Tong Active Travel Breakfast



ACT reCycle Community Bicycle Scheme



HI-BIKE





Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership

The Highlands and Islands
Transport Partnership (HITRANS)
Inverness Town House
Inverness IV1 1JJ

