

Report to Partnership Board 11th September 2026

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

ACTIVE TRAVEL UPDATE

Purpose of Report

To update Board Members on Active Travel projects in which HITRANS and our Partner Local Authorities are involved, and on delivery of the People and Place Programme funded by Transport Scotland.

• PEOPLE AND PLACE PROGRAMME

Our 2026-27 Programme is now into Q2 of delivery, with a claim for £302k submitted to Transport Scotland at the end of Q1. To absorb the 60% reduction in our revenue grant we re-profiled the revenue/capital balance of staff posts working across the programme, reduced some of our Local Delivery Partner activity on the Programme, and cancelled all non-essential revenue activities. The reduction amounted to almost £500,000 less revenue funding than last year, leaving us just £337,028 for the whole Programme. Our capital allocation remains the same at £1.64M. We have been able to continue supporting all our existing Local Delivery Partners by asking them to refocus some of their activity to make it eligible under the new Transport to Employment allocation.

Q1 Activity:

Active Workplaces Grants totaling £107k have been made to 6 employers across the region, covering 9 sites. A total of £215,626 has been awarded in **Cycle Parking Grants**.

The **Access to Bikes Fund** of £126k is almost fully committed; this includes grants to organisations to improve access to cycling, and our own **Inclusive Cycling Membership** which now has 17 members loaning a cycle suitable for their particular needs.

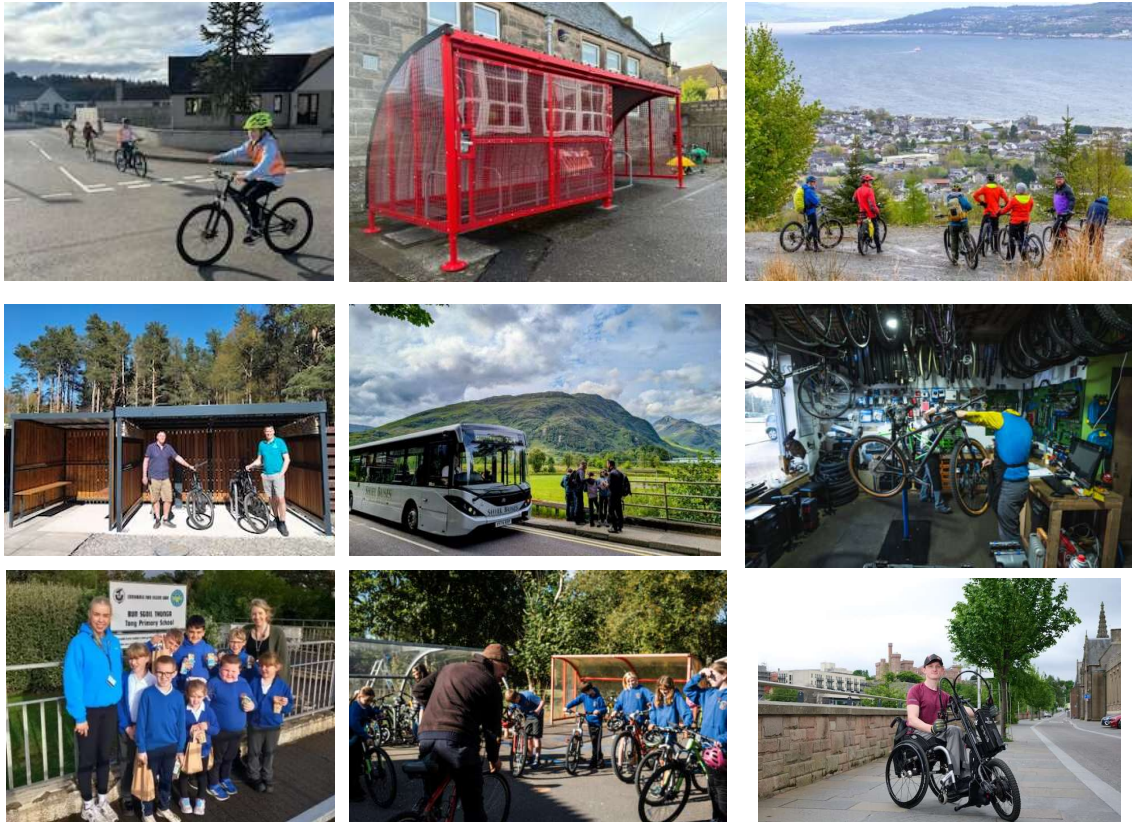
We are working with 8 **Local Delivery Partners** across the region, delivering active travel activities tailored to their local area.

The **Fort William Wayfinding** system was finally installed in July. The project faced numerous delays, including the requirement for non-prescribed signage consent from Transport Scotland for signs adjacent to the trunk road. There was a good write-up about it in the Scotsman and there will be an official launch in the autumn.



The development of an in-house digital travel tracker scheme, **Go For It**, has progressed well in Q1. This will enable us to collect data on journeys to school and how they change as the Programme progresses or as infrastructure is installed or improved. HITRANS has worked closely with our

partner local authorities to co-design the tracker, which will launch where we have local officers or partners to support the roll-out in Highland, Western Isles, Oban and one Moray primary school in September. This is a lower-cost alternative to the Living Streets WOW Travel Tracker programme, which will enable us to eventually gather data from all primary schools in the HITRANS region on how pupils travel to school, and to promote more active journeys.



- **CAPITAL PROJECTS: ACTIVE TRAVEL INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (ATIF / Islands Programme)**

At the time of writing we are expecting confirmation in the next few weeks from Transport Scotland regarding whether or not they intend to fund any of our bids to ATIF this year. The Active Travel Team Leader has begun seeking alternative routes to funding, or match funding, to enable construction of the Skye Cycle Way project to progress. The current funding model adopted by Transport Scotland makes it extremely challenging to deliver a project of this scale within one financial year.

Skye Cycle Way

Specification and tender documents have been prepared for Ground Investigation Works to begin as soon as the 2026-27 funding for full technical design is awarded, and we have begun to engage with Sweco through the Scotland Excel framework to establish scope and costings for full technical design of the route. In partnership with Highland Council's Skye Officer and the Broadford and Strath Community Company, we have submitted an expression of interest to the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund via the [BeConnected](#) portal.

Lochbroom Links

Bid submitted to progress feasibility and concept designs for a cycle route connecting settlements along the A835 between Ardmail and Braemore Junction, in partnership with Lochbroom & Ullapool Community Trust.

Oban Interchange

An application to ATIF has not been submitted for the project this year, but we are hoping it will be funded through the Islands Programme.

• REGIONAL ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

Following an 8-week engagement sprint with Strategy Story, the Active Travel Team Leader is drafting up the revised ATS. A further round of consultation is planned on the draft strategy in the early autumn, focusing on targeted stakeholders. The intention is to present the strategy to the Board in November.

Two distinct themes and one superpower emerged from the initial engagement: interrelated strands of structure and culture, and a special ability to bring partners together in order to achieve more than one organisation could do alone. We have a bold emerging vision for a region where walking, wheeling and cycling are normal, everyday choices for getting around locally, and places are well connected with high-quality infrastructure and links to public transport.



Future Nairn Beach / Dunoon seafront?

• OTHER PROJECTS

Active Travel Advisory Groups

The Fort William Active Travel group will meet at the end of September, and the next HITRANS Active Travel Advisory Group will be in October, possibly to coincide with the People & Place Networking Event (27th or 28th October) and Active Travel Strategy consultation.

Board Members are asked to note the report.

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 through the People and Place Programme (2026-27) and Active Travel Infrastructure Fund.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – HITRANS support for active travel helps eliminate the barriers to travel for all and makes walking, cycling and wheeling available to all, including by providing access to bikes.

Report by:	Vikki Trelfer
Designation:	Active Travel Team Leader
Date:	12th August 2026