Nestrans Active Travel Action Plan

(AcTrAP)

FINAL DRAFT

2014-2035

1. Introduction

1.1. The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) (published in 2008 and refreshed in 2013) states that *'increasing the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot and by bicycle will make a significant contribution to achieving the strategy's accessibility, health and environmental objectives'*.

1.2. A commitment to develop an Active Travel Action Plan (AcTrAP) was included in the 2013 refresh of the RTS with the aim of encouraging increased levels of active travel across the region. This action plan contains a long term vision for active travel in the north east, in line with the overarching vision of the RTS, and covers the period to 2035 with a review to be carried out every five years.

1.3. This action plan has taken cognisance of the Scottish Government's recently published guidance on Active Travel Strategies and the Scottish Government's Long Term Vision for Active Travel, published in November 2014. As a cross-boundary, strategic and collaborative plan the Nestrans Active Travel Action Plan aims to bring a wide range of partners together to deliver improvements for active travel in the north east.

2. Policy Context

1.4. The need to develop an Active Travel Action Plan was identified in the 2014 refresh of the Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). This action plan will sit alongside and complement action plans already developed for bus; rail; freight; health and transport; and the Nestrans travel planning strategy.

1.5. As well as contributing to achieving the objectives of the RTS, the Active Travel Action Plan also needs to take account of, and work alongside, a number of other partners and policies in the north east of Scotland and nationally. Of particular relevance is

Case study – Copenhagen

40 years ago Copenhagen was just as congested as many other major cities, but now 36% of the population arriving at work or education do so on bicycles, travelling from all over the Metro area on over 1,000km of cycle lanes.

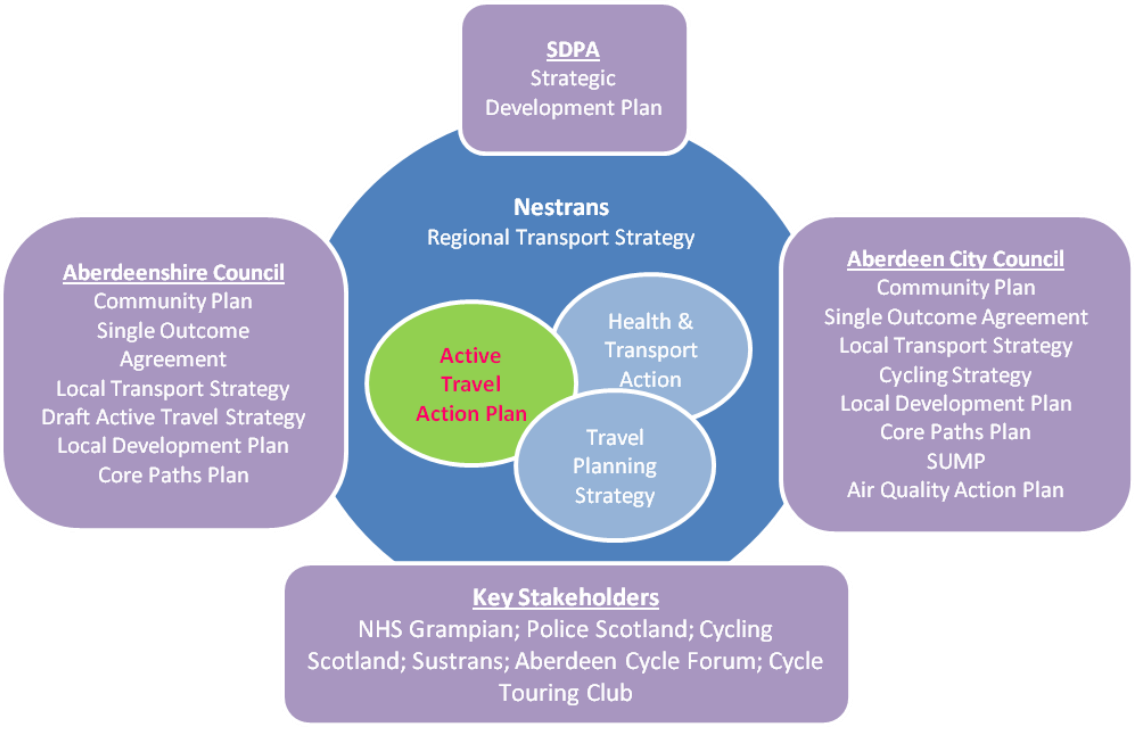
Transport Scotland's Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) which sets the vision that, by 2020, 10% of all trips in Scotland will be by bike and the National Walking Strategy, published in 2014, which aims to create a culture of walking, better walking environments throughout Scotland and ensure easy, convenient and independent mobility for all.

1.6. At a local level, the two local authorities have in place a number of plans and policies relevant to this plan including Local Development Plans, Local Transport Strategies, Core Paths Plans and emerging local active travel plans that will provide detailed guidance at a local level.

1.7. The RTS contains a range of policies and actions to work towards achieving Transport Scotland's vision for cycling and, along with the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan, identifies the need to develop a connected network of strategic cycle routes across the region.

1.8. The diagram below illustrates how this action plan sits in relation to these wider policies and the relevant key stakeholders.

Figure 1: Key partners and regional policy context



1.9. A number of stakeholders are identified in the diagram above and these all have a key role to play in the development and delivery of this action plan.

1.10. NHS Grampian is already a partner in the Health and Transport Action Plan which identifies 'promoting active travel' as one of its key strands, recognising the significant health benefits that can result. The development of the National Walking Strategy has also been led by the Scottish Government's Health Directorate showing the strong links

between the transport and health sectors. Whilst the Health and Transport Action Plan focuses on promoting active travel, this active travel action plan will provide the framework for improving the infrastructure to facilitate this. There is a strong link between the two however and Nestrans will continue to work closely with the NHS and Health and Transport Action Plan Co-ordinator to ensure a consistent and joined up approach.

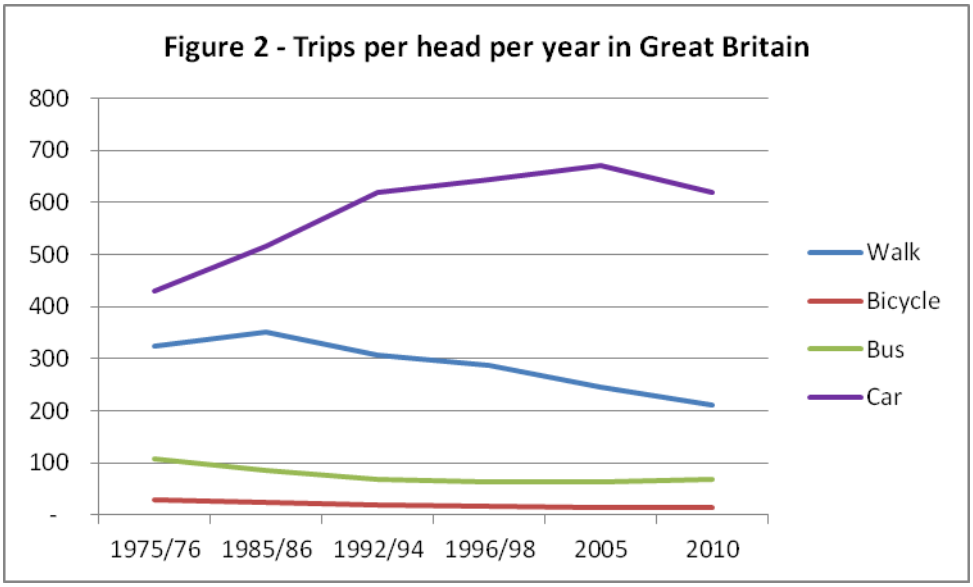
1.11. Police Scotland, as well as the local authorities will be key partners in terms of improving safety and the Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Joint Road Safety Plan identifies a number of actions specifically aimed at reducing pedestrian and cycle casualties.

1.12. Sustrans and Cycling Scotland provide the national context on active travel as well as guidelines on infrastructure and design. Sustrans are also a major funder of improvements and between 2007 and 2014 have awarded just under £2m to cycling projects in the north east of which over £1m of match funding was awarded in 2014 to 12 projects in the north east as part of its Community Links Projects. The north east also has a number of local cycle representative groups with a great deal of combined knowledge on the current network and areas for improvement. Consultation and liaison with these groups will be key to identifying actions.

1.13. In addition to the stakeholders listed above, there is a much wider range of interested parties and users, including communities and developers, who have an interest and a role in developing and promoting the north east's active travel network. There are strong opportunities for better integration and sharing of best practice across all partner agencies currently investing in active travel and behaviour change and Nestrans will continue to work to facilitate joint working.

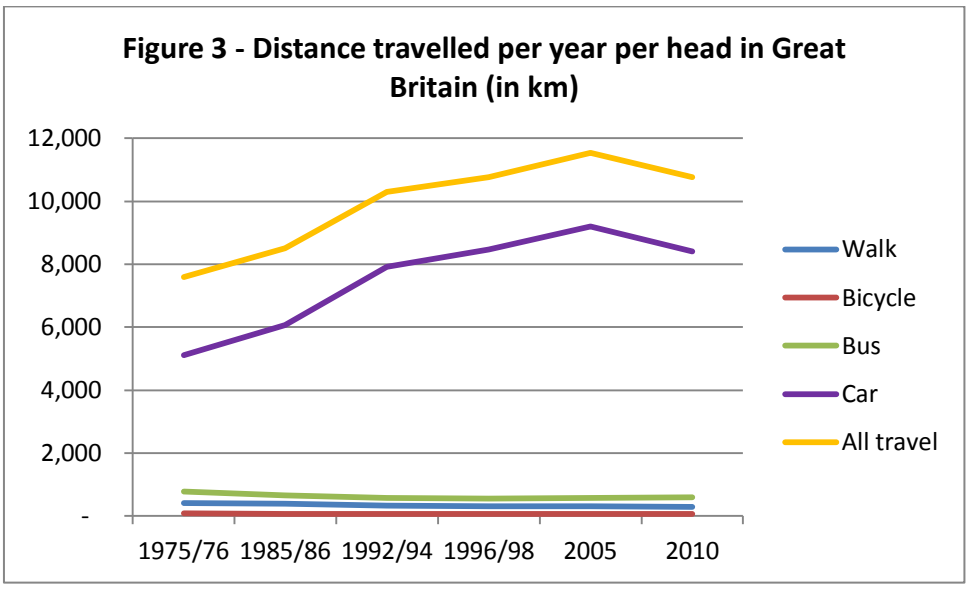
3. Trends

3.1 There has been a marked decline in physical activity over the last 50 years, with an increasing dependency on motorised transport. These changes in activity levels are intrinsically linked to the widespread adoption of motorised transport. The number of trips per person by car significantly increased between the mid 1970s and 2005. During the same period, the number of trips per person by walking and cycling has decreased.



Source: Transport, Physical Activity and Health, Present knowledge and the way ahead[1]

3.2 Increasing car ownership and development of the road network has, over a number of decades, resulted in rising traffic levels. The ability to travel further afield has resulted in the dispersion of both settlements and destinations, exacerbating car dependency and making travel by active modes unsuitable for many trips due to distance. Greater mobility subsequently impacts on car users themselves as journeys take longer, become more unreliable and lead to increasing levels of congestion. Figure 3 below shows the changing trends in the distance travelled per person per year in Great Britain since the mid 1970s. Impacts are also felt on other travellers; a worsening environment and poor road safety, with associated perceptions of danger, also result in fewer people choosing to walk and cycle.



Source: Transport, Physical Activity and Health, Present knowledge and the way ahead.[2]

[1] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/pdf/transportactivityhealth.pdf
[2] https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/pdf/transportactivityhealth.pdf

3.3 The use of bus services has also seen a decline in favour of the private car and reducing levels of patronage can lead to some services becoming unviable, particularly those in rural and edge of city locations. The continued decline of active and public transport results in further dependency on car travel and can lead to social exclusion for those who do not have access to a car (23% of the population in the north east live in households with no access to a car[3]). Noise, air pollution and community severance created by high levels of traffic can also act as a deterrent to active travel.

3.4 Reductions in physical activity brought about by many of the issues identified above have, over time, contributed to an increasing set of health problems linked to inactivity, in particular obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular problems, cancer, mental health problems and neurological conditions like dementia.

3.5 Far fewer people walk or cycle in Scotland compared to 30 years ago and obesity levels are high with many people taking little or no exercise (in Grampian, 61% of adults fail to meet recommended guidelines for physical activity with nearly a third of all adults getting less than 30 minutes exercise per week[4]). Walking and cycling as a mode of transport is widely seen as a convenient way to integrate exercise into daily life however encouraging behaviour change can be challenging.

Case Study - City of Seville 2011

Seville increased its cycling share from 0.2% of all trips to 6.6% in just 6 years. This was achieved by creating:

1. A thoroughly researched masterplan that develops cycling as an integrated part of the entire transport system;
2. A fully linked network of routes;
3. Cycle lanes parallel to main routes that are safe and mostly segregated from traffic.

Outcome

€32m was invested in cycling measures, a fraction of the €600m cost of the city's metro. Yet more than 66,000 cyclists benefit compared to 40,000 metro users daily.

Target groups

The main demands were from commuters, schoolchildren and students. Seville is working with employers, trade unions and universities focusing on the city's 60,000 students and schoolchildren. The aim is to increase cycling's share of traffic from 6.6% now to 15% by 2015.

3.6 In the north east, cycling accounts for 3% of trips to work in Aberdeen and 1% in Aberdeenshire and walking accounts for around 21% of trips to work in Aberdeen City and 10% in Aberdeenshire[5].

[3] Scottish Household Survey
[4] Scottish Health Survey 2008-2011 data combined
[5] Scottish Household Survey 2012

3.7 Between 2007 and 2014, Nestrans has spent approximately 24% of its budget on cycle facilities and routes, totalling around £5 million. Targeted investment by the two Councils and Nestrans in projects such as the Peterhead Cycle Demonstration Town Programme in Aberdeenshire and the Greenbrae Cycle Project in Aberdeen, have shown that there is potential to significantly increase levels of cycling through targeted initiatives.

4. Benefits of increasing levels of active travel

4.1. The benefits of increasing levels of active travel and reducing the proportion of trips undertaken by private car are widespread and are well documented in existing national, regional and local policy.

4.2. In summary however, increasing active travel can make significant contributions to:

- **Health:** reducing the risk of developing major chronic diseases, the risk of premature death and improving mental well-being through increasing levels of physical activity.
- **Local environment:** increasing levels of active travel matched with reducing levels of motorised trips will contribute to reductions in harmful emissions, improvements in local air quality, reductions in noise from traffic and improved health.
- **Global environment:** replacing motorised trips with increasing levels of active travel will contribute to reducing carbon emissions and slowing the effects of climate change.
- **Economic Benefits:** investment in active travel can provide high returns in terms of economic benefits through improved productivity of the workforce, reduced congestion and more efficient and effective use of land and transport networks.
- **Reducing social exclusion:** improving facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and public transport will benefit those who do not have access to a car. Public transport trips can also involve elements of active travel.
- **Improving safety:** creating a critical mass and improving infrastructure and facilities through which both the actual and perceived safety of cyclists and pedestrians can be improved.

4.3. Generally, the aim is to generate a virtuous cycle, whereby increasing the numbers of people opting to walk and cycle leads to improved safety through critical mass and a better environment, which in turn results in even greater demand for active travel and an improved quality of life for all.

5. Vision

5.1. In line with national, regional and local policy the vision of this action plan is:

To create an environment and culture in which walking and cycling are convenient, safe, comfortable, healthy and attractive choices of travel for everyday journeys.

6. Objectives

6.1. To contribute to the overarching objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy and the national vision of 10% of all trips by bicycle by 2020 as set by the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, the following objectives have been set:

Objective 1: **To increase active travel mode share and work towards achieving the National vision for cycling by 2020.**

Indicator 1: Mode share of active travel on journeys to work

Indicator 2: Mode share of active travel on journeys to school

Objective 2: **To improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists by reducing the total number of pedestrian and cycle casualties, the percentage of total accidents and rate per 1000 population.**

Indicator 3: Total number of pedestrian and cycle casualties across the north east and the proportion of total road casualties.

Indicator 4: Pedestrian and cycle casualties per thousand population.

6.2. Full baseline data and targets for each of these indicators is provided under Monitoring in Chapter 13.

7. Strategic active travel network

Aim: To develop a strategic network of active travel routes linking Aberdeen City and the main towns in Aberdeenshire and seek to develop this as an attractive network of links which can be promoted and prioritised over the period of AcTrAP.

7.1. Sustrans promotes develops and co-ordinates the National Cycle Network which, in the north east, currently consists of National Cycle Routes 1 (the national north/south route) and 195 (Deeside Way). Nestrans already works closely with Sustrans and the two Local Authorities to develop local cycling networks which are primarily focussed in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire towns and between 2007 and 2014, we have invested over £5 million on walking and cycling improvements across the region. Networks in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire towns remain a key focus as these provide the greatest concentrations of people, employment and services and provide the greatest opportunity to encourage cycling and walking for everyday journeys.

7.2. The purpose of identifying and developing a strategic active travel network is not to divert attention away from such local improvements but to provide a long term strategic vision for a connected network of active travel routes. Key corridors have been identified that link to both the National Cycle Network and local networks and connect regionally important employment, education, leisure, health and service destinations. Such a network should provide opportunities for both short trips along parts of the network and also for longer distance journeys.

7.3. This policy fits with the Strategic Development Plan, adopted in April 2014, which states that:

> *"as an integral part of planning for the strategic growth areas, we should explore opportunities to put in place a strategic walking and cycle network which builds on the current networks being developed in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire towns by linking these together. We should do this in a way which creates opportunities for improvements to the natural environment by linking habitats, species and open space in green networks."*

7.4. By identifying a strategic active travel network, we can also ensure that appropriate connections to new developments are made that ensure that cycling and walking provision links to longer term plans for the region as a whole.

7.5. The purpose of this network is to provide attractive and safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians for both long and short distance trips and to cater for a wide range of journey purposes from commuting trips, travel to school, tourism and leisure journeys.

7.6. Further detail on local active travel networks is provided in Chapter 8 however identifying a strategic network provides the opportunity to set out a long term vision for the development of routes that link in to and connect local networks. Along each of the strategic corridors identified, appropriate links into the local network of key settlements will be developed. This should include links to Aberdeenshire Council's Integrated

Travel Towns project which aims to create hubs for walking, cycling and public transport initially in Peterhead, Huntly, Portlethen, Fraserburgh, Ellon and Inverurie.

7.7. Nine strategic routes have been identified at a high level as making up a strategic active travel network and these are illustrated in Figure 4 below with a more detailed description of current infrastructure and opportunities for improvement provided in Appendix A.

7.8. In Aberdeen City and the surrounding area, the following key trip destinations have also been identified as key points that should be connected to a strategic network:

- Kirkhill Industrial Estate, Dyce
- Arnhall Industrial Estate, Westhill
- Badentoy Industrial Estate, Portlethen
- Aberdeen Airport
- Dyce Railway Station
- The new Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre
- Bridge of Don Park & Ride and the existing Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre
- Aberdeen University and Old Aberdeen
- Aberdeen Sports Village
- Foresterhill Health Campus
- Woodhill House
- Hill of Rubislaw
- Kingswells Park & Ride and Prime Four Business Park
- A96 and A90(S) Park and Ride sites (when constructed)
- Aberdeen Beach
- Aberdeen City Centre including Marischal College, Harbour, Bus and Rail stations
- North East Scotland College city centre campus
- The proposed new harbour in Nigg Bay
- East Tullos Industrial Estate
- Altens Industrial Estate
- Robert Gordon's University campus at Garthdee
- Areas of significant new development including Chapelton, Countesswells, Maidencraig, Craibstone / Rowett and Grandhome.

7.9. There are wider benefits to the creation of a strategic active travel network that will contribute to other policy areas, including opportunities to link to Core Path Plans and to improve the natural environment by the creation of green corridors linking habitats, species and areas of open space and improving access to open space.

7.10. In many cases, good levels of pedestrian and cycle provision are already in place and improvements continue to be made, for example the Deeside Way, the Formartine & Buchan Way and the Aberdeen to Westhill cycle route which was constructed in 2012. In areas where there is more limited provision, no attempt has been made at this stage to identify precise routes rather, for each strategic connection Nestrans will, in partnership with the two councils and key stakeholders, conduct an active travel audit identifying existing standards, gaps in the network, areas of safety concern and links to local networks. The results of these audits will be used to inform a prioritisation of

improvements required to develop and improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists across the region.

8. Local Active Travel Networks

Aim: In partnership with the Local Authorities, ensure safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes at a local level within towns and the City to maximise opportunities for short trips by walking and cycling.

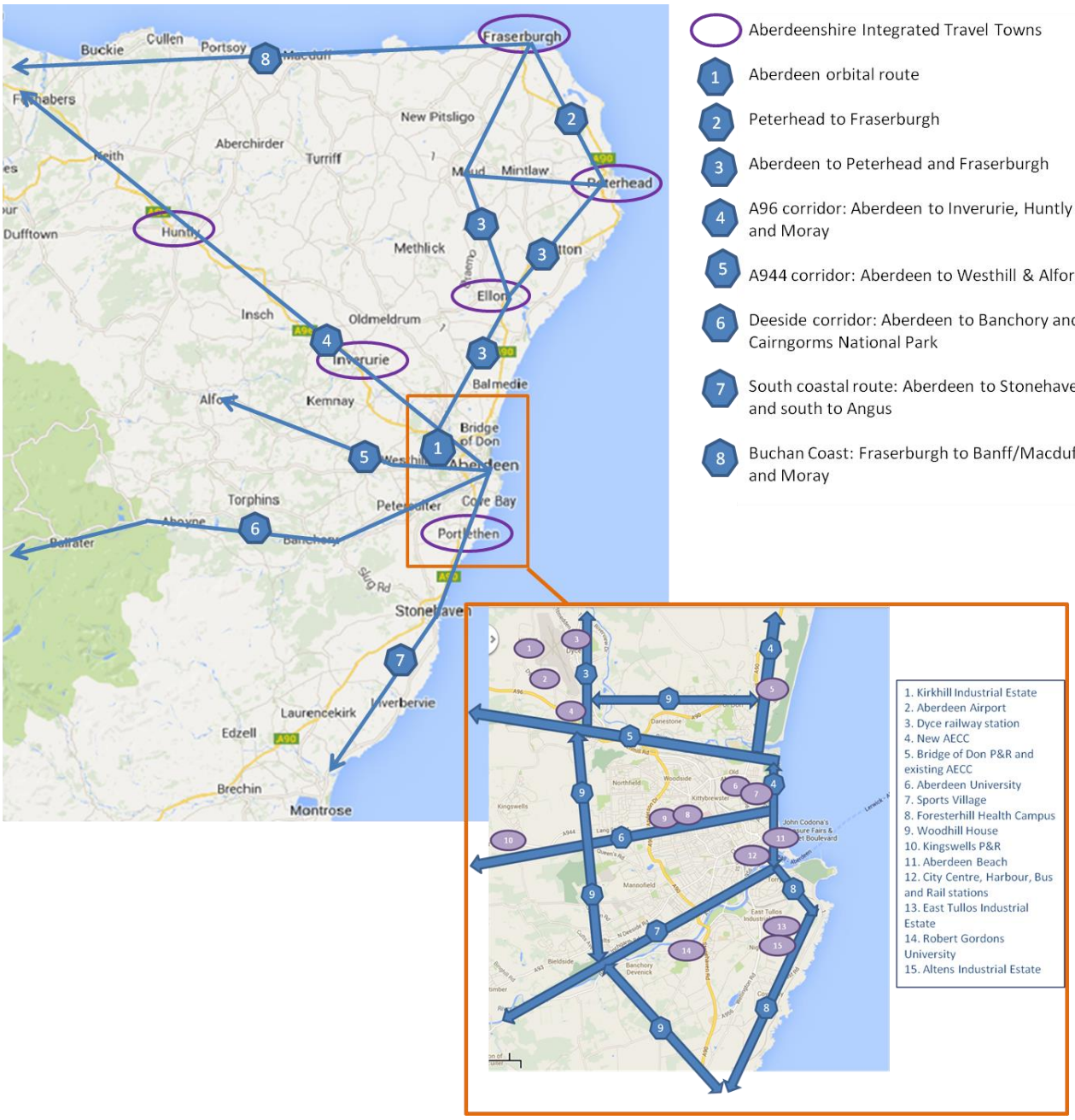
8.1. Nestrans will work with both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council to identify improvements to local active travel networks. This will focus on four key areas:

- Aberdeenshire Integrated Travel Towns (currently identified as Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Ellon, Inverurie, Huntly and Portlethen);
- Aberdeen City Centre;
- Transport interchange hubs (including bus stations, rail stations and Park & Ride sites across the region); and
- School catchment areas.

8.2. In many areas there will be overlap between each of these and also with the strategic network identified in the section above. Active travel audits will be used to identify opportunities for improvement and Nestrans will support improvements at a local level identified through the Local Transport Strategies and Local Active Travel Plans of the two Councils, in line with the overarching aims of this plan.

8.3. The development of a Masterplan for Aberdeen City Centre provides a significant opportunity to ensure that improvements for the movement of pedestrians and cyclists into and around the city centre are integrated into the overall design and development, along with improvements for public transport. Nestrans will continue to work with Aberdeen City Council to ensure that pedestrian and cycle links and infrastructure are integral to the Masterplan design and that any improvements are in line with objectives and policies of this plan.

Figure 4 North east Strategic Active Travel Network



Priorities

8.4. The priorities for improvements to both strategic and local networks will initially focus on the completion of existing routes to bring them up to an appropriate standard and to create continuous active travel provision before the creation of new routes. The focus will also initially be on those parts of the network likely to generate the most demand, whether that be for commuter or leisure walking and cycling. This will be identified through on-going monitoring and active travel audits.

8.5. The importance of encouraging and facilitating leisure cycling is recognised as a key step in increasing cycling confidence and increasing active travel mode share and opportunities for routes that are segregated from general traffic will be pursued where appropriate. It is recognised that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are different and this will be taken into consideration in the design of any improvements with audits being carried out from the perspective of all abilities and type of user.

9. Policies

9.1. As well as identifying a strategic network, this action plan aims to ensure that:

- The needs of pedestrians and cyclists are considered first and integrated into the planning and design of all new developments and infrastructure;
- Businesses and other organisations, including schools and public sector organisations, do their part to support and encourage cycling and walking;
- Provision of new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure meets desired standards;
- Cycle training is available to all children across the region; and
- New infrastructure and initiatives are supported by appropriate information and promotion to encourage a change in attitudes and behaviour.

9.2. A number of over-arching policies have been developed to support these aims and apply to the development of all active travel routes and policies across the region, including the development of the strategic and local active travel networks.

1. New infrastructure

a) Sustrans sets out five qualitative evaluations for the design of the National Cycle Network and these criteria should also be adopted for the development of the north east active travel network[6]. They are:

Coherence

- Link all potential origins and destinations;
- Be continuous and recognisable;
- Offer consistent standard of protection throughout;

[6] **Sustrans -** Handbook for Cycle Friendly Design. http://www.sustrans.org.uk/news/new-handbook-cycle-friendly-design

- Be properly signed;
- Include well located cycle parking.

Directness

- Be based on desire lines;
- Result in minimal detours and delays;
- Provide a positive advantage, in terms of directness and priority over motor traffic.

Safety

- Be safe and be perceived as safe;
- Provide personal security;
- Limit conflict between cyclists and pedestrians and other vehicles.

Comfort

- Be smooth, non-slip, well maintained, drained and free of debris;
- Have sufficient width for the level of use;
- Have easy gradients;
- Be designed to avoid complicated manoeuvres;
- Enable cyclists to maintain momentum;
- Minimise impacts of noise, spray and headlight dazzle from other traffic.

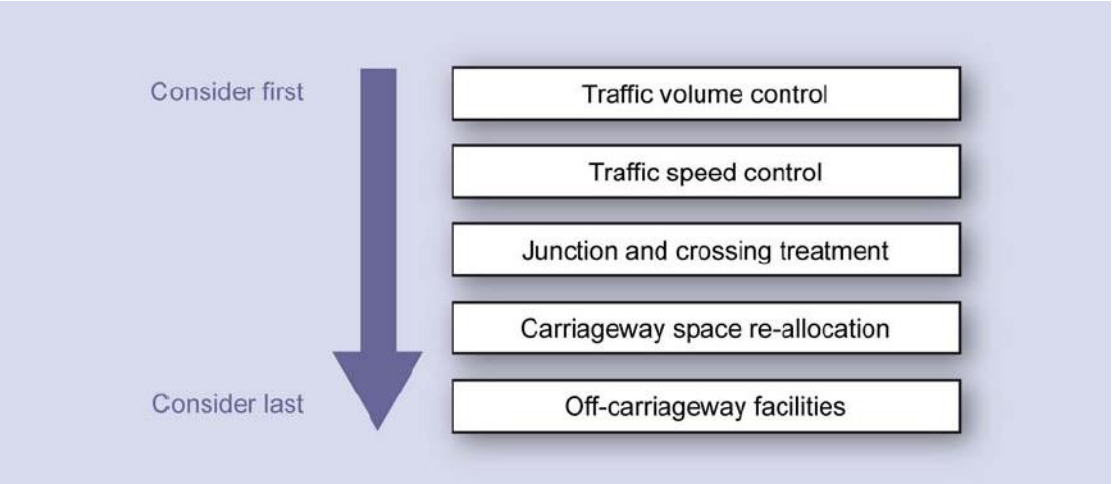
Attractiveness

- Be attractive and interesting;
- Integrate with and complement their surroundings;
- Contribute to good urban design;
- Enhance personal security;
- Be well maintained.

b) In the provision of pedestrian or shared use infrastructure the 5Cs of Comfortable; Connected; Convivial; Conspicuous; and Convenient will also be used to assess suitability of routes and identify improvements.

c) New cycling infrastructure should be considered in line with the Hierarchy of Measures set out by Transport Scotland in 'Cycling by Design' which looks to make existing carriageways safe for use by cyclists before considering off-carriageway facilities:

Figure 5: Hierarchy of Measures[7]



d) Where space is limited and traffic volume and speed control are considered most appropriate, design should be used to influence driver behaviour to reduce vehicle speed to levels that are appropriate for the local context and deliver safe streets for all, as set out under the principles of the Scottish Government's 'Designing Streets' guidance.[8]

e) As most off-carriageway routes for cyclists are also used by pedestrians, consideration should be given to likely bicycle and pedestrian volumes, the function of the area to both types of user, use by disabled people and available width. Shared use footways/cycleways should be implemented where it is safe to do so. The standards set out in Transport Scotland's 'Cycling by Design' and Sustrans 'Handbook for Cycle-Friendly Design' should be considered in the design of new infrastructure.

f) Where new road schemes are being developed, cycling and walking should be prioritised as key considerations in the design. Signalised junctions should be favoured over roundabouts and crossings when considering potential routes and upgrades and signal phasing for pedestrians and cyclists should be incorporated as appropriate. Where roundabouts are proposed, the safety of cyclists and pedestrians should be considered as a key part of the design and appropriate design features incorporated to maximise safety.

g) In association with the development of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, cycling opportunities should be maximised on routes which experience reduced traffic as a result of the new road and the benefits "locked in" through implementation of schemes such as Cycle Friendly Roads.[9]

h) New urban dual carriageway roads should include separate cycling facilities away from the carriageway, on both sides if appropriate, and safe crossing points such as Toucan crossings should be implemented as standard within such schemes.

[7] Source: Cycling by Design, Transport Scotland
[8] Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland www.scotland.gov.uk
[9] See examples from Clackmannanshire and Eaglesham Moor

i) Where there are proposals to upgrade inter-urban dual carriageways (such as the proposals for the A96), complementary off-road cycling facilities should be included as an integral part of the scheme.

j) In relation to existing inter-urban dual carriageways, Nestrans will work with Transport Scotland, local authorities and the trunk road operating company (currently Bear Scotland) to ensure that facilities are provided and safe crossings are made available where possible. Our priorities for action include the A90 Muchalls-Stonehaven, A96 Inverurie-Blackburn and A90 Blackdog-Bridge of Don.

k) When undertaking roadworks or temporary closures, every effort should be made to enable safe walking and cycling opportunities without additional crossings or detours.

l) Sustran's suite of technical design guidance on active travel, including the 'Handbook for Cycle-Friendly Design' as well as Transport Scotland's 'Cycling by Design' should be used, along with the principles of 'Designing Streets' in the design and delivery of all new cycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

2. New developments

a) All major developments requiring a Transport Assessment will be expected to have a travel plan incorporating provision for active travel, including measures for walking, cycling, cycle parking and shower and changing facilities.

b) Masterplans and major areas of development should include links to the strategic active travel network, as identified in this action plan, and ensure that new links are developed to a high standard. Developments should also include appropriate walking and cycling links through their sites as well as links to the strategic network. All new developments should apply the principles of Designing Streets, Sustrans 'Handbook for Cycle Friendly Design' and Transport Scotland's Cycling by Design in their design.

3. Schools and Cycle Training

a) Every secondary school should be supported to develop a travel plan including active travel opportunities and targets for pupils and staff based on the particular geography of the catchment.

b) Every primary school should be supported to develop a travel plan including active travel opportunities and targets for pupils and staff based on the particular geography of the catchment.

c) Promote the roll out of cycle training / Bikeability for both children and adults across the region.

4. Cycle parking

a) Cycle parking should be provided at key locations including town centres and shopping centres, health facilities, parks, leisure facilities and other key trip destinations across the

region, including but not limited to, the destinations identified in paragraph 7.8. Consideration should be given to the intended use of this cycle parking and expected length of stay e.g. staff, visitors, the public, and the type of cycle parking selected to best meet these needs.

5. Safety

a) Advanced stop lines should be introduced at all signalised junctions.

b) Signalised junctions should be favoured over roundabouts to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Route audits on the strategic network will identify those roundabouts with particular safety concerns for cyclists and pedestrians, likely to include those areas where active travel routes cross the strategic road network, e.g. Anderson Drive. Where roundabouts are retained or proposed, the safety of cyclists and pedestrians should be considered as a key part of the design and appropriate design features incorporated to maximise safety.

c) The introduction of traffic management measures, reducing speed limits and 20mph zones and streets should be considered and encouraged where appropriate, particularly in residential areas, to improve safety for active travel users and to enhance the urban environment. Enforcement of speed limits is carried out by the Police and 20mph zones are often advisory only (although not in all cases e.g. outside schools). In such instances design features that influence driver behaviour to reduce vehicle speed should be considered.

d) Pedestrian friendly areas and pedestrian-priority in town and city centres will be supported.

e) Cycle Friendly Roads (normally with fewer than 800 vehicles per day) should be identified to link to and expand an overall regional network.

6. Information, Marketing and Publicity

a) The Getabout brand should continue to be supported and developed as a key tool for the promotion and marketing of active travel across the region. The Getabout partnership has now been in existence for over five years and together its partners continue to work to expand public awareness of the brand, promote active and sustainable modes and encourage behaviour change.

b) The development of a strategic and local active travel networks should be underpinned by a promotional campaign under the Getabout behaviour change banner incorporating events and other promotional activities, information and maps.

c) A programme of events and other promotional activities with a range of sectors of the population should be developed in order to change attitudes and encourage increased active travel.

d) Stakeholders and partner organisations should be engaged with and supported in their activities to promote active travel. NHS Grampian, in particular, has a role to play in health promotion and all partners should continue to work together to deliver health improvements through the Health and Transport Action Plan.

e) Local communities should be engaged with and supported to develop and sustain their own promotional activities and events.

10. Actions

10.1. The Active Travel Action Plan sets out a long term vision for the development and promotion of active travel in the north east. It sets a key outcome to develop a strategic active travel network and identifies a range of policies under which this network and improvements to the wider cycling and walking network should align.

10.2. The actions contained within this plan are shown on the following page.

11. Funding

11.1. Between 2007 and 2014, Nestrans has spent approximately 24% of its annual budget on cycle facilities and routes, totalling around £5 million over the seven year period. In a number of cases, this funding has also been matched by other organisations including Sustrans, the Councils and European funding.

11.2. Nestrans has allocated funding to Core Paths improvements across the region and over £60,000 has also been awarded through the Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme for cycling and walking improvements since 2008/09, 50% match funded by the applicant.

11.3. Nestrans will continue to allocate significant investment to walking and cycling improvements on an annual basis. This would be in addition to funding allocated by the two Councils through their own capital budgets.

11.4. We will also continue to explore and bid to other funding streams as they become available for use on active travel measures identified through this plan. It is anticipated that such funding streams will include:

- Sustrans Community Links Fund;
- Sustrans Safer Routes to schools Fund;
- Scottish Government Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding;
- Sustrans I Bike Project;
- Sustrans Cycling Development budget for projects to be developed by the jointly funded Cycling Development Officer (funded by Nestrans and Sustrans); and
- European funding.

Actions

Action		Responsibility	Timeframe
Development of a strategic network			
1	Carry out active travel audits of the strategic routes, including junctions and crossing points, to identify existing provision, standards, gaps in the network, areas of safety concern and links to local networks. Audits should take account of the criteria established under policies 1a and 1b and be undertaken from the perspective of all abilities of user.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
2	Review the links between the strategic active travel routes and the Core Path Networks of the City and Shire to examine how well they match up and link into the strategic network as well as priorities for investment in Core Paths. Use this to inform the development of the strategic network.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
3	Conduct active Travel Audits of local networks based on Integrated Travel Towns, Aberdeen City Centre, transport interchange hubs and school catchment areas across the region.	Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
4	Work with Aberdeen City Council and its partners in the development of the City Centre Masterplan and press for enhanced priority, safety and facilities for pedestrian and cycle movements linking to key destinations in the city.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council	Short term (1-5 years)
5	Work with Sustrans to ensure the National Cycle Network is developed and improved throughout the region.	Nestrans Sustrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
6	Following a full assessment of each route, including an assessment against the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) objectives of the RTS and consideration of any environmental impacts, develop a prioritised list of improvements resulting from these audits and an individual action plan for each strategic route. The priority will be the completion of existing routes and those sections with the highest demand, before the development of new routes.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
New infrastructure (to be informed by actions 1-5 above)			
7	Provision of hard surfacing along the Formartine and Buchan Way between Dyce station	Aberdeen City Council	2014/15

Action		Responsibility	Timeframe
	and Parkhill Bridge.		
8	Ellon Road cycle path feasibility – study into the feasibility of a cycle route between Murcar roundabout and the city boundary.	Aberdeen City Council	2014/15
9	Ellon Road cycle route implementation to Murcar.	Aberdeen City Council	2015/16
10	Design and construction of the Parkway cycle path between Persley Bridge and Bridge of Don.	Aberdeen City Council	2015/16
11	Design and construct Riverside Drive cycle path between Bridge of Dee and Duthie Park.	Aberdeen City Council	2014/15
12	Deeside Way resurfacing west of Peterculter	Aberdeen City Council	2014/15
13	A90(S) Stonehaven – Bridge of Muchalls design and feasibility	Aberdeenshire Council	2014/15
14	Peterhead Cycle Demonstration Town improvements	Aberdeenshire Council	2014/15
15	Ellon Integrated Travel Town improvements	Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
16	Inverurie Integrated Travel Town improvements	Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
17	Work with representatives of key locations identified within Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire towns to ensure appropriate cycle facilities are provided on site e.g. for those that are not Council locations assist in identifying appropriate provision and encourage applications to the sustainable travel grant scheme to improve facilities.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
18	Input into the city centre wayfinding project to ensure links to the strategic active travel network.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council	Short term (1-5 years)
19	Ensure consideration of and provision for the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in the design of the A96 dualling scheme.	Transport Scotland Nestrans	Long Term (11+ years)
20	Actions to ensure Locking in the Benefits of AWPR for pedestrians and cyclists by providing cycling or pedestrian priority on routes experiencing a reduction in traffic as a result of new roads infrastructure.	Aberdeen City Council	Short Term (1-5 years)
21	Ensure appropriate input into the design of urban road schemes (e.g. Berryden / South College Street improvements) to ensure consideration of the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
New developments			
22	Develop and agree a policy with Planning Authorities to ensure that all new	Nestrans	Short term

Action		Responsibility	Timeframe
	developments are providing appropriate contribution to enabling active travel and where possible, going beyond the minimum standard of provision (examples might include masterplans ensuring that links to the strategic cycling and local active travel networks are incorporated as design principles, the internal layout prioritises cycling and walking, that sufficient cycle parking and facilities are provided and ambitious targets are set for access by cycling and walking).	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	(1-5 years) and ongoing to feed into Local Development Plans
23	Facilitate training opportunities and updates for Council staff (including development management teams and roads teams) from Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, Paths for All, Living Streets and others on their design guidance to ensure these principles are fully understood and put into practice.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
24	Identify destinations across the region that have the potential to be leaders in terms of cycling and work with them towards achieving 10% of journeys to these destinations by bike. Nestrans will work with the two Councils to identify and approach potential destinations.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short to Medium term (1-10 years)
25	Links between residential and employment areas and recreation and other leisure facilities will be protected and improved for non-motorised users, making it quick, convenient and safe for people to travel by walking and cycling.	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
26	Street layouts will reflect the principles of Designing Streets and comply with the policies set out for transport and accessibility by each of the Planning Authorities.	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
27	Existing access rights, including core paths, rights of way and paths within the wider network will be protected and enhanced through new development. Where development proposals impact on the access network, the principle of the access must be maintained through provision of suitable alternative routes, in line with policies contained within Local Development Plans.	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council Developers	Ongoing
Schools and cycle training			
28	We will encourage all schools to develop a school travel plan and to be offered support and assistance to do so. Schools will be supported to undertake an audit of their catchment areas and safe routes to schools through the travel plan process.	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short to Medium term (1-10 Years)
29	All schools to be supported to undertake Bikeability training	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing

Action		Responsibility	Timeframe
30	Explore opportunities to appoint a Sustrans I-Bike Officer to work with secondary and primary schools in promoting safe cycling in schools.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
31	Continue to run events in schools to promote cycling and walking e.g. Bike Week events and the Getabout roadshow.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
Cycle parking			
32	Cycle parking to be rolled out to key locations where required. A programme of cycle parking audits and subsequent installation of cycle parking at selected locations in Aberdeenshire is programmed for 2014/15 and will be funded by Nestrans and the Scottish Government through the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places programme.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short Term (1-5 years)
Safety			
33	Conduct safety audits of junctions in identified areas of high demand that are not already covered by the strategic network, to assess safety for cyclists and pedestrians.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
34	Work with the two local authorities to conduct a review of bye-laws in parks and other local authority owned spaces to ensure that policies do not discriminate against safe and responsible cycling.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
35	Identify signalised junctions without advanced stop lines and implement a programme of improvements to ensure all have such provision.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short to medium term (1-10 years)
36	Identify and promote cycle friendly roads that link to and expand the regional network.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short to Medium term (1-10 years)
37	Through the Getabout brand and in partnership with the Police, the freight industry and others, develop a safety campaign aimed at improving road user behavior of both cyclists and drivers to improve safety for all.	Nestrans	Short term (1-5 years)
Information, marketing and publicity			
38	Continue to publish maps and information indicating cycle routes and cycle facilities	Nestrans	Ongoing

Action		Responsibility	Timeframe
	including cycle parking across the region.	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	
39	Continue to support the Getabout brand to promote active travel.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
40	Along with the wider Getabout partners, continue to develop and deliver a programme of events and promotional activities to promote active travel.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
41	Actively engage with stakeholders and partners to support and encourage the development of active travel measures, promotional events and activities (e.g. Bike Week, European Mobility Week)	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing
42	In conjunction with relevant partners, develop a public awareness campaign, through the Getabout brand, that promotes and encourages safety for pedestrians and cyclists.	Nestrans Aberdeen City Council Aberdeenshire Council	Short term (1-5 years)
Other			
43	Appoint a Cycling Development Officer to coordinate development of cycling networks, liaise between local authorities and Sustrans and advise on funding bids.	Nestrans Sustrans	Completed
44	Explore the opportunities to develop a Bike Station at one or more railway stations in the North east to provide information and advice on active and sustainable travel in the region, bicycle hire and bike maintenance.	Nestrans	Short term (1-5 years)
45	Nestrans to continue to facilitate joint working and sharing of best practice amongst all partners involved in the delivery and development of active travel policy and infrastructure and in behavior change activities.	Nestrans	Ongoing
46	Lobby the Scottish Government and Police to improve national statistics on cycling disaggregated to a local authority level, including data relevant to monitoring of the national vision for 10% of everyday journeys by bike and more detailed breakdowns of cycling related casualties at a local authority level.	Nestrans	Short term (1-5 years)

12. Monitoring

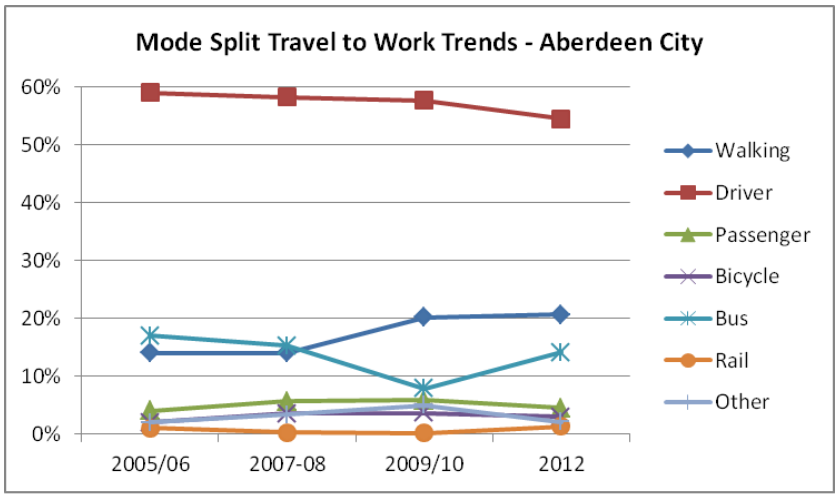
12.1. Five indicators have been selected to monitor the progress of this action plan in delivering its objectives. These indicators, along with the baseline figures are presented below and all of these will be reported through the Nestrans annual monitoring report.

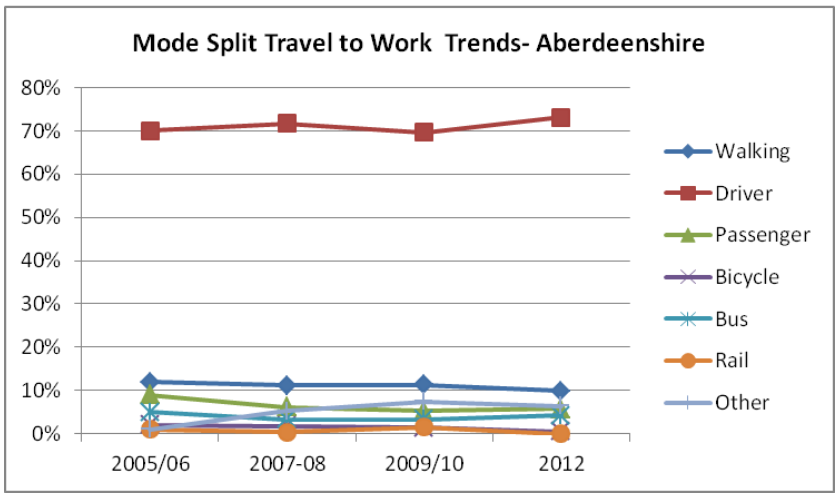
Indicator 1: Mode share of active travel on journeys to work

2012 Baseline	Walking	Cycling	Active Travel Total
Aberdeen City	21%	3%	24%
Aberdeenshire	10%	1%	11%
North East	15%	2%	17%
Scotland	14%	2%	16%

North East Target	To increase active travel mode share on journeys to work to **25%** by **2021**

Source: Scottish Household Survey



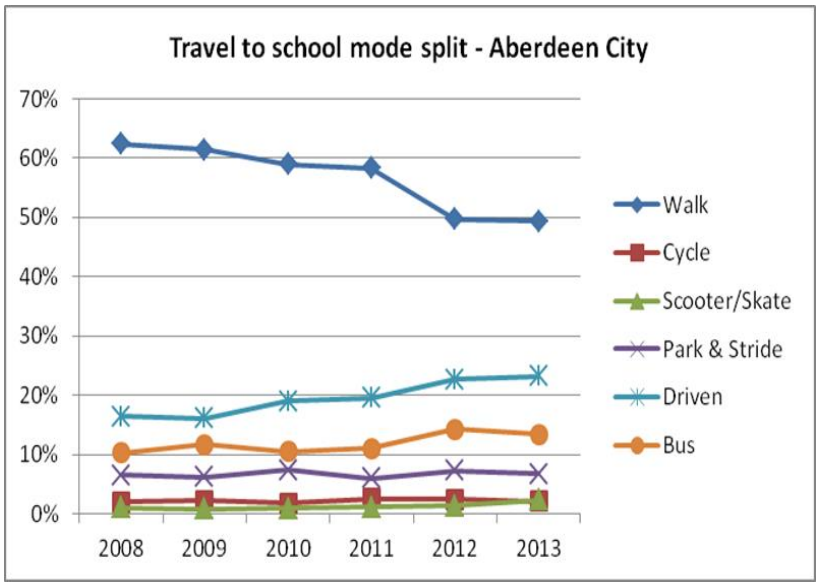


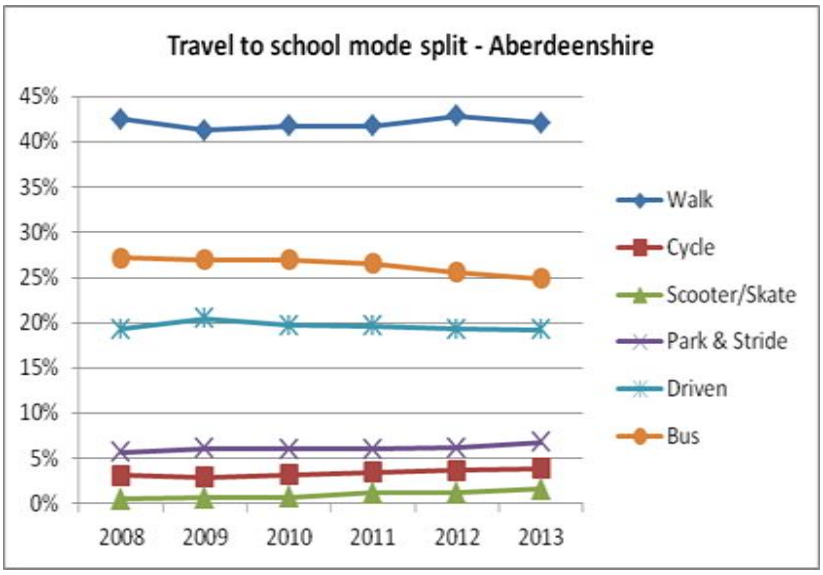
Indicator 2: Mode share of active travel on journeys to school

2012 Baseline	Walking	Cycling	Scoot	Active Travel Total
Aberdeen City	50%	3%	1%	54%
Aberdeenshire	43%	4%	1%	48%
North East	46%	3%	1%	50%
Scotland	45%	3%	2%	50%

North East Target	To increase the proportion of children travelling actively to school in the north east to 60% by 2021

Source: Sustrans Hands Up Survey





Indicator 3: Total number and proportion of pedestrian and cycle casualties (all severities) across the north east

2013 Baseline	Pedestrian Casualties	Cycle Casualties	Total
Aberdeen City	97 (24%)	48 (12%)	145 (36%)
Aberdeenshire	45 (7%)	25 (3%) (this figure is combined for Aberdeenshire & Moray. A disaggregated figure for Aberdeenshire is being sought and will be updated when available)	70 (9%) (Aberdeenshire & Moray figure)
North East / Grampian	142 (14%) (North East figure)	73 (6%) (Grampian figure)	234 (20%) (Grampian figure)
Scotland	1,747 (15%)	883 (8%)	2,630 (23%)

North East Target (2021)	To reduce the number of cyclist and pedestrian casualties in the north east and ensure that the proportion of all casualties does not exceed 20%

Source: Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2013

Indicator 4: Pedestrian and cycle casualties per thousand population

2013 Baseline	Pedestrian Casualties	Cycle Casualties	Total
Aberdeen City	0.43	0.21	0.64
Aberdeenshire	0.17	0.07 (Aberdeenshire & Moray figure)	0.2 (Aberdeenshire & Moray figure)
North East / Grampian	0.29	0.13 (Grampian figure)	0.4 (Grampian figure)
Scotland	0.33	0.17	0.49

North East Target (2021)	To reduce the number of cyclist and pedestrian casualties in the north east and ensure that the rate per thousand population does exceed 0.4

Source: Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2013

12.2. Further data and trend monitoring for the full range of modes, including cycle count data on routes across the region, is provided on an annual basis in the Nestrans Annual Monitoring Report available at www.nestrans.org.uk.

APPENDIX A

Strategic active travel routes

12.3. A summary of the existing infrastructure, key features, opportunities and aspirations for each route is provided below.

Strategic Route 1: Aberdeen orbital routes

12.4. The aim of developing an orbital active travel route is to connect many of the areas of significant new development with key employment destinations and to link these in to the radial strategic routes, significantly enhancing opportunities for mode shift. Aberdeen City Council's Strategic Infrastructure Plan commits to a feasibility study to investigate ways to maximise connectivity between new developments and presents a significant opportunity to ensure that active travel connections form a key part of any proposals emerging from this work. The orbital route should connect major new developments contained within the Local Development Plans of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire including Chapelton, Countesswells, Maidencraig, Greenferns, Craibstone and Grandhome.

12.5. Detailed discussions and preliminary work will be required to identify the most appropriate routes for orbital links, which should not be restricted to one route and may include a number of orbital connections.

12.6. Opportunities exist to the west and south of the city through the development of the AWPR and the Fastlink to create cycle priority on routes such as the B979 and other routes that will experience significant reductions in traffic due to the AWPR. Furthermore, Anderson Drive and the Parkway already form an inner orbital route for motorised traffic within the city with limited provision for active travel, particularly cycling. Opportunities should be explored to improve orbital connections for active travel along a similar alignment as part of the Locking in the Benefits project, maximising the benefits of the AWPR which will reduce the volumes of traffic on roads within the city.

Strategic Route 2: Peterhead to Fraserburgh

12.7. Opportunities exist to use parts of the disused Fraserburgh to St Coombs railway line potentially creating new paths to connect the towns to major employment sites such as the St Fergus gas terminal and tourist destinations around Rattray Head.

Strategic Route 3: Aberdeen to Peterhead and Fraserburgh

12.8. The Formartine & Buchan Way is already a well established active travel corridor with the section between Dyce and Maud also forming part of the Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 1 (NCR1). Aspirations for the further development of this route include improving the surface to make it more attractive for cycling as well as signed and surfaced links to adjacent villages and developments such as Kingseat. Priorities would be the section from Aberdeen to Ellon and the areas in the immediate vicinity of Peterhead and Fraserburgh to encourage its use for utility trips and local tourism.

12.9. Improvements on this corridor should also consider the objectives and projects of the Energetica Project. Energetica is a 25 year vision to create an exemplar low carbon, sustainable development corridor. It covers a 30 mile stretch between Bridge of Don in Aberdeen north to Peterhead and west to Aberdeen International Airport. Providing high quality opportunities for active travel is a key component of the vision and there are opportunities to significantly improve provision through the Balmedie-Tipperty road improvement project. This strategic active travel route would link the north with key destinations in the city including Aberdeen University, Sports Village, Aberdeen Beach and the Harbour, Bus and Rail Stations and also connect into strategic routes 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. This corridor is identified in the Strategic Development Plan as a Strategic Growth Corridor for new development.

Strategic Route 4: A96 Corridor - Aberdeen to Inverurie, Huntly and Moray

12.10. Work has recently been completed to improve the Aberdeen to Bucksburn section of this route and a feasibility study completed for the section between Aberdeen and Blackburn. A link between Inverurie and Kintore is also programmed for 2015/16 with funding support from Sustrans. Opportunities to further extend links north from Inverurie should be explored and there are significant opportunities through the Scottish Government's commitment to dual the A96 from Aberdeen to Inverness to provide off-road cycle provision along its entire length as an integral part of the scheme. This corridor is identified in the Strategic Development Plan as a Strategic Growth Corridor and therefore has significant allocations for new development in the Local Development Plans.

Strategic Route 5: Queens Road and A944 corridor - Aberdeen to Westhill and Alford

12.11. This route has seen considerable investment in recent years with off-road cycle provision already in place between Aberdeen and Westhill. Opportunities to develop this route further include extending the route west beyond Westhill towards Alford and improving sections of the existing route to create continuous provision. In the City, consideration should be given to the re-allocation of road space for cyclists to extend the route into the city centre and to address safety concerns at junctions, particularly at roundabouts.

Strategic Route 6: Deeside corridor – Aberdeen to Banchory and Cairngorms National Park

12.12. There is already a high quality cycle route along this corridor which forms NCN Route 195 between Aberdeen and Ballater with the majority of it off-road along a former railway line. Future aspirations for this corridor include improving the surface of the Deeside way as far as Banchory, filling missing links to create a more continuous route. For instance, there is a missing link between Aboyne and Kincardine O'Neil. The route should also be signed and kept away from roads in particular the A93. The Deeside way in Aberdeen city is almost complete, with only a few short stretches that require some surfacing which will be completed in 2014/15. Issues associated with the road crossing at Milltimber will be partially resolved by the AWPR. From Banchory to Braemar the path takes on a more tourist orientated nature with some minor roads and off road paths currently being developed by Aberdeenshire Council.

Strategic Route 7: South - Aberdeen to Stonehaven and south to Angus

12.13. This is a key route with significant potential to be developed further to better accommodate active travel. Several key settlements form an almost continuous chain from Stonehaven to Aberdeen with limited connections for non-motorised modes between them. The southern corridor is also identified in the Strategic Development Plan as a Strategic Growth Corridor for development extending to Laurencekirk, another key settlement on the corridor. There are a number of missing connections on this corridor which will be identified through an active travel audit. The priority for future development is however the short missing link between Stonehaven and Muchalls. Despite the current route being rough ground and frequently muddy in this section, there is demand for active travel use, as evidenced by the worn path, tyre and footprints. It is a key aim of this plan to construct a quality path from Cove to Muchalls to be implemented prior to completion of housing and industrial development in the area connecting the communities along this corridor. The Chapelton development on the west side of the A90 is a significant development and should be required to link into the strategic active travel network as well as making appropriate provision for pedestrians and cyclists within the development itself. Sustrans NCN Route 1 also runs along the coast between Portlethen and Aberdeen and this forms a key part of the network linking further south to Angus

12.14. Consideration will need to be given to the impact that the proposed future expansion of Aberdeen Harbour will have on this route and any opportunities for improvement created as a result. NCN1 enters the city via the Wellington suspension bridge which is pedestrian and cyclists only however there are safety issues as the route enters the city with high volumes of traffic including HGVs and buses.

Strategic Route 8: Buchan Coast - Fraserburgh to Banff/Macduff and Moray

12.15. The towns and villages along the Moray Firth coast are relatively close together and form a chain from Fraserburgh to Macduff and on towards Elgin. NCN Route 1 currently runs between Macduff, Banff and onward to Moray in some places utilising former railway lines. There are missing connections in the existing stretches of cycle path along the former railway line where NCN route 1 uses local roads. Opportunities along this route include the potential to create better links between Macduff and Fraserburgh past the popular destinations of Gardenstown, Crovie and Pennan. As well as opportunities for recreation and tourism, such a connection would also provide opportunities for every day journeys connecting communities along the corridor and providing access to employment, education and other services.