

8 Information Bulletin

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide information and updates for the Board on a number of matters not requiring decision.

o Cross City Connections Study

As reported to the last meeting of the Board, there is an intention to conduct a study focussing on the need for transport connections between new areas of development (both housing and employment) on the periphery of Aberdeen, and in areas of Aberdeenshire close to the Aberdeen City boundary, with the aim of providing viable, attractive and direct linkages, as alternatives to private car.

A brief for this study has been issued to a range of suitable consultants and returns are due by mid-April 2015.

o Access to Laurencekirk Study

The consultation period following the drop-in event in Laurencekirk in January 2015 closed on 28 February. All exhibition material can still be viewed on Aberdeenshire Council's website <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/transportation/TransportationStudies.asp>

Feedback on the options displayed is now being collated and will be used to complete the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) report. The client group, comprising Nestrans, Transport Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council and Tactran have viewed and returned comments on initial sections of the report, with is expected to be completed in the next few months. The report will be used to inform any decision on which improvements will be taken forward to the next stage of assessment. Outcomes of the report and subsequent decisions shall be reported to a future meeting of the Nestrans Board.

o Aberdeen City Region Deal

As members may be aware, Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council have submitted a proposal to the UK and Scottish Governments for a £2.9 billion package of measures aimed at infrastructure enhancements to support the long-term economic future of the region. A copy of the document is available from the Council's website at:

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=63430&SID=26262>

In his budget speech on 18 March, the Chancellor George Osborne announced that negotiations were to begin between the local authorities and the two Governments.

o **National Walking and Cycling Network**

On 19 March, the Cabinet Secretary for Planning Alex Neil launched a National Walking and Cycling project plan, which has been prepared by Scottish Natural Heritage, Sustrans and Scottish Canals and forms part of a commitment contained in the National Planning Framework 3.

The project plan includes proposals to build on the existing network of Cycle Routes, canals and Great Trails (which currently extend to some 4,000 miles across Scotland), by a further 500 miles over the next five years, joining up and improving existing routes. An estimated £25million is the expected cost of development over the next five years.

The **existing network** extends to around 4,000 miles and includes:

- National cycle network: 2,150 miles, approx. 141 miles of which are in the north east;
- Canals network: 137 miles, none of which are in the north east; and
- Scotland's Great Trails: 26 routes, totalling 1,720 miles, of which the Formartine & Buchan Way extends to 53 miles in the north east.

Of the **proposed network** development 2014-2019, 30 new long distance routes and cycleways with a combined length of 500 miles are identified, which will extend the network to over 4,500 miles (7,000km). None of the proposed routes are in the north east.

A link to SNH's press release providing details of the network and the proposed enhancements is available from:

<http://snh.presscentre.com/News-Releases/Path-network-to-boost-health-economy-tourism-and-environment-185.aspx>

A further list of long distance routes to be developed in the period to 2034 includes Aberdeenshire Coastal Path, an extension of the Deeside Way and Kirkmichael-Ballater as schemes within a list of 16 routes.

o **Cycling Scotland: Annual Cycling Monitoring Report 2015**

Cycling Scotland released the 2015 edition of its Annual Cycling Monitoring Report on the 4 March 2015. The report provides key information on the cycling health of the nation and uses a range of indicators to access trends and statistics within key areas: levels of cycling to work and study, demographic information, general travel trends, road safety and delivery of projects directly linked to the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) 2013.

The full breakdown of standings across the various indicators for the 32 Local Authorities and 7 Regional Transport Partnerships can be found in the Annual Cycling Monitoring report at <http://www.cyclingscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Annual-Cycling-Monitoring-Report-2015-v2.0.pdf> . The following includes a few elements which might be of interest to members.

Indicator 3.1 - Cycling as a main mode of travel.

Selected Local Authority and Regional Transport Partnership areas:

	Local Authority	% cycling as main mode of travel
1	Clackmannanshire	3.5%
2	Edinburgh City	2.5%
3	Stirling	2.2%
4=	Moray	1.9%
4=	Highland	1.9%

11	Aberdeenshire	1.2%
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27=	Aberdeen City	0.3%
31=	Inverclyde	0%
31=	East Renfrewshire	0%

	RTP area	% cycling as main mode of travel
1	Highlands & Islands	1.8%
2	South West Scotland	1.5%
3	South East Scotland	1.5%
4	Tayside and Central	1.0%
5=	North East Scotland	0.7%
5=	Strathclyde	0.7%
7	Shetland	0.1%

National Average – 1.1% average taken over a two year period.

It should be noted that these figures are taken from the Scottish Household Survey, which uses fairly small samples (Aberdeen 1,302; Aberdeenshire 1,132; Clackmannanshire 1,113, so numbers using cycling as their main mode would be 4, 14 and 39 respectively). Statistics will also vary by the geography of different areas and individuals' perception of their "Main mode". The north east fares much better in terms of cycling to and from place of work with Aberdeen at 3.0% and Aberdeenshire at 1.6%.

Indicator 4.4 - Cycling as a method of travel to study (all people over 4 in full-time study).

Aberdeen is the sixth highest in Scotland for this indicator at 1.56% (Edinburgh is highest with 3.35% of students cycling) and Aberdeenshire 15th with 0.81%. This information is sourced from the 2011 Census.

Regional and Local Monitoring and Evaluation

As well as reporting on current trends and statistics within cycling, the report highlights the need for continued monitoring and evaluation of cycling inventions, of both infrastructure and behaviour change interventions.

The report sets out six areas, outlined below which stakeholders should be developing and reporting on.

1. Cycling is specifically included in key indicators
2. Setting out of key cycling-related indicators as baseline in order to understand short and long term trends.
3. Co-ordinating of cycle data
4. Understanding the perceptions of cycling
5. Utilising automatic cycle counters
6. Monitoring and Evaluation of cycling interventions both behaviour change and infrastructure.

These six areas of evaluation and monitoring should be established where appropriate at a local and regional level in order to provide detailed information on the projects being delivered, which can be fed into the delivery of CAPS. Nestrans are working with local authorities and Sustrans towards establishing a network of cycle counters in the north east to establish a baseline and measure cycling activity going forward.

o Accessible Transport Strategy and Action Plan for Scotland

The Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA) has published a strategy and action plan aimed at ensuring disabled people throughout Scotland have access to appropriate transport services. SATA is a user-led charity with 100 members across Scotland - Its members include local and national organisations and individuals. Information about its aims and activities can be found on its website www.scottishaccessibletransport.org.uk

The strategy aims to ensure that disabled people have an effective say in how transport services are planned and that all new services are fully accessible. Among the specific proposals in the Plan are the provision of disability awareness training for public transport staff, keeping pavements free of hazards and provision of subsidised taxi fares. They also indicate that the needs of disabled drivers and others reliant on private cars should also be met.

The strategy calls for not just physical access; but also accessible information, appropriate training for staff at all levels and a joined-up approach to planning and delivering transport.

Nestrans responded to a consultation on a draft strategy following Board approval of a representation at its meeting on 9 December 2014. The response supported the principles contained in the strategy. This publication is a final version of what was considered in December.

The Accessible Transport Strategy and Action Plan for Scotland can be found here: <http://www.scottishaccessibletransport.org.uk/atsaps.php>

o Nestrans Press Releases

Since the last meeting of the Board, Nestrans has issued the following press release (please click on the heading to access details from the Nestrans' website).

20 February 2015 [North East Rail Passenger Increase](#)

“Significant levels of rail growth at stations in the north east have been announced as part of statistics from the Office of the Rail Regulator for 2013/ 2014.....”

o Marketing and Public Relations Update

Nestrans' marketing and PR activities are attached in the form of an infographic as Appendix 2 to this report. Copies will be circulated to Members at the Board meeting.

o Getabout

Since the last meeting of the Board, meetings in connection with the “Getabout” brand have focused on developing a programme for the coming year and the potential for increasing the influence of the brand through the Councils' successful bids for funding under the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places scheme. In partnership with local authorities and others, Nestrans

will seek to ensure maximum impact and best value for investment in promoting active and sustainable travel.

It is intended to review the current arrangements in respect of Travel Planning, Behaviour Change and the promotional aspects of Nestrans and the partners collaborative working to ensure that staff time is optimised, that proper arrangements are in place to appropriately reflect the partners' ambitions and to make suitable linkages between areas of work such as Active Travel, Travel Planning and Health & Transport.

It is intended to bring a report to the next meeting of the Nestrans Board outlining progress in this area.

o **Annual Reporting of Key Performance Indicators**

Nestrans reports its performance against a number of agreed indicators on an annual basis. Performance Indicators for the calendar year 2014 are detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.

Over the year, the following is a summary of the key statistics:-

1. 89% of Business miles travelled were undertaken by public transport.
2. Nestrans staff mode of travel to work indicates a good split between walking, cycling, public transport and driving with 55% of travel to work by sustainable modes.
3. The Partnership office had a full complement of staff over the year, with no vacancies or turnover. An additional member of staff, a Cycling Development Officer, started in November bringing the total of staff to seven. Only 0.5 of a day was lost through sickness, representing an average of less than <0.1 day per staff member.
4. Of some 315 letters and other correspondence requiring a response, 100% were dealt with within the target of 10 working days (20 days for Freedom of Information requests).
5. The Nestrans website had around 2,501 individual visits in 2014. Although this is a significant fall from previous years, it is believed that this might be because other websites such as Twitter and facebook are more easily accessed for information.

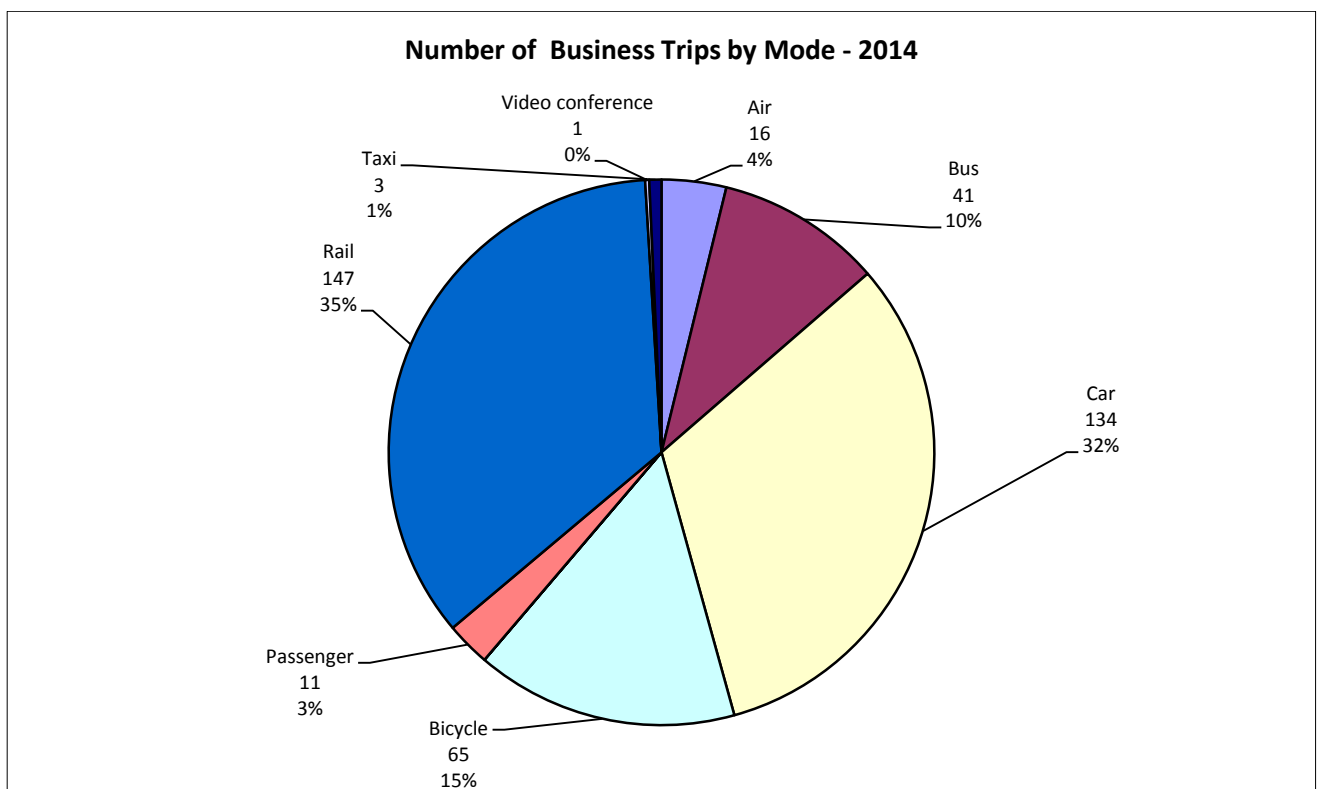
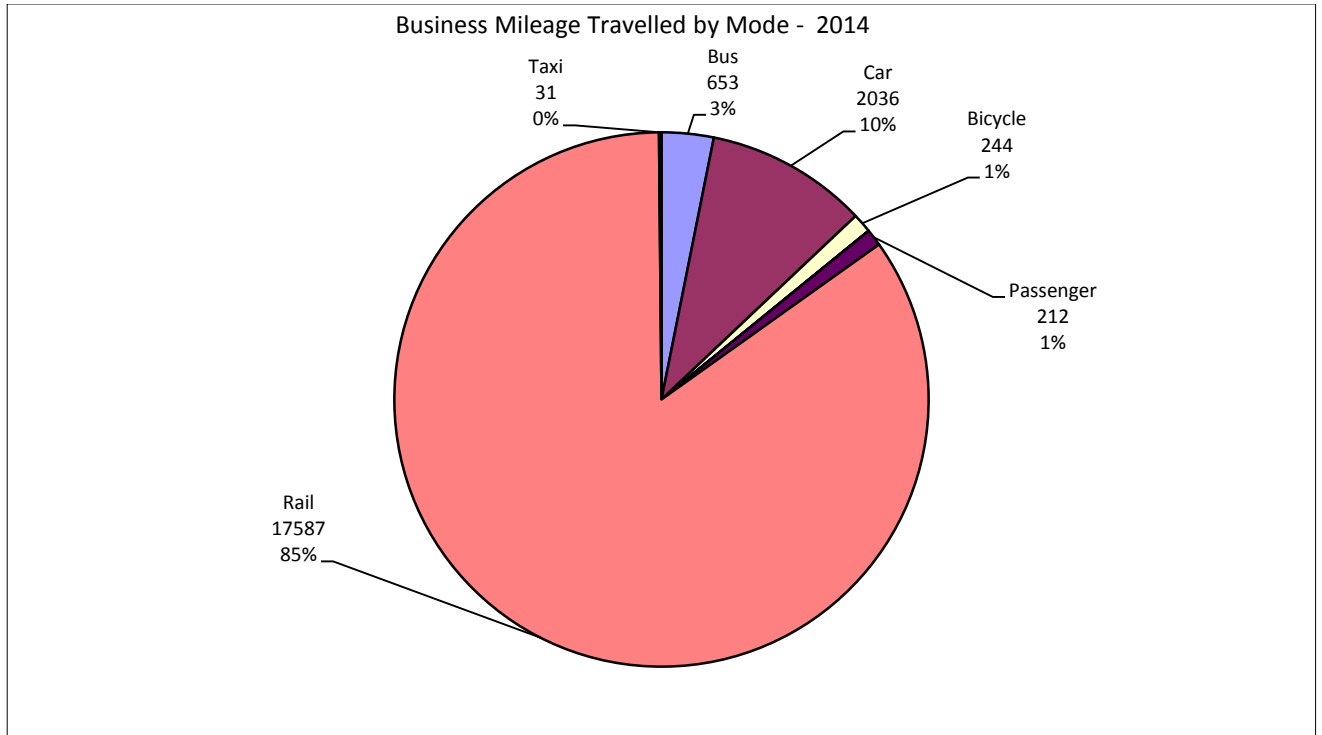
Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board note the contents of this report.

RD/TH/JA 20 March 2015

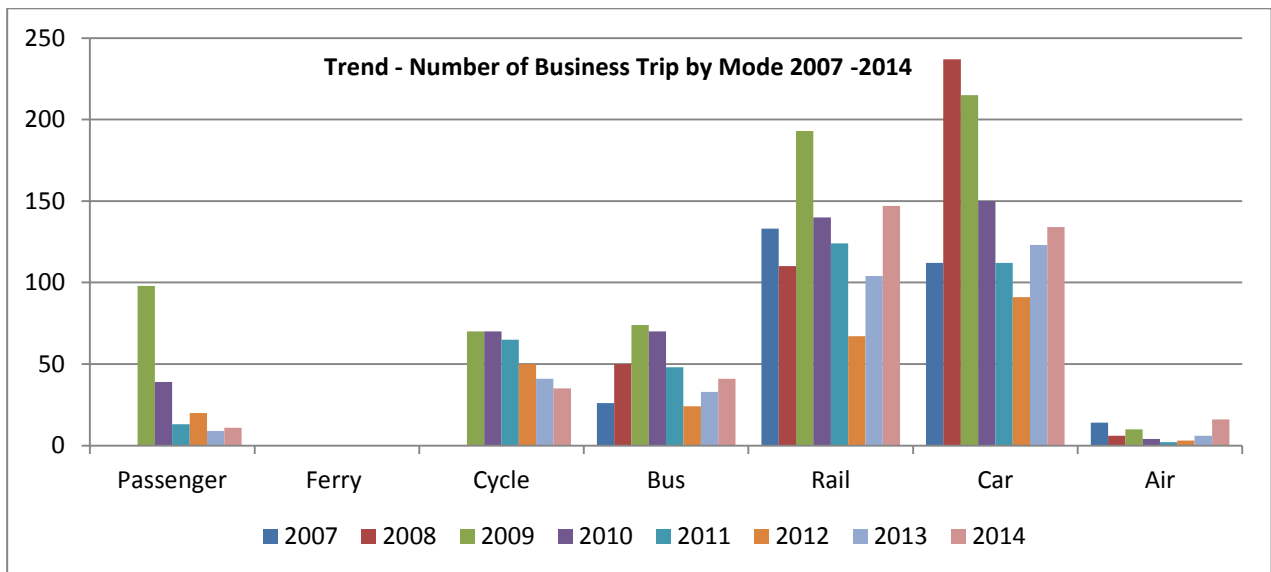
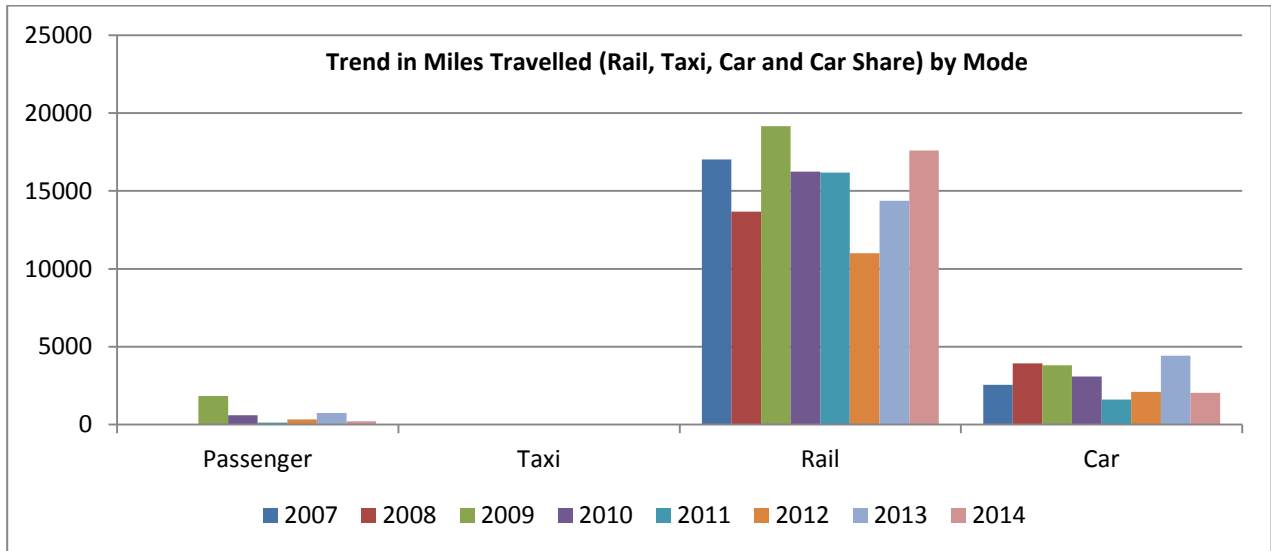
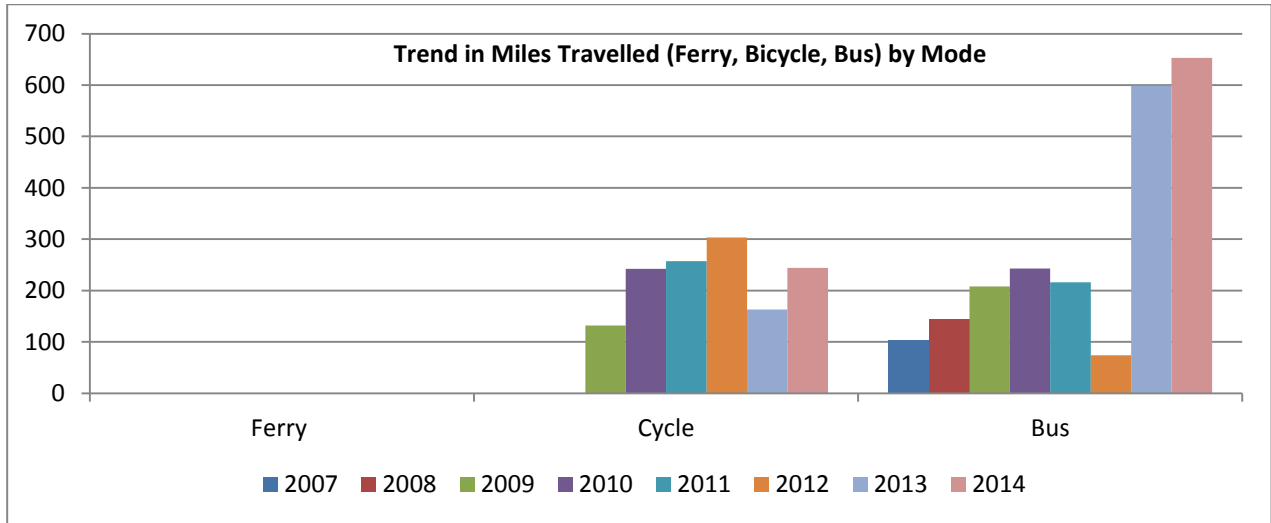
Nestrans Performance Indicator Graphics/Trends 2014

- Business Travel

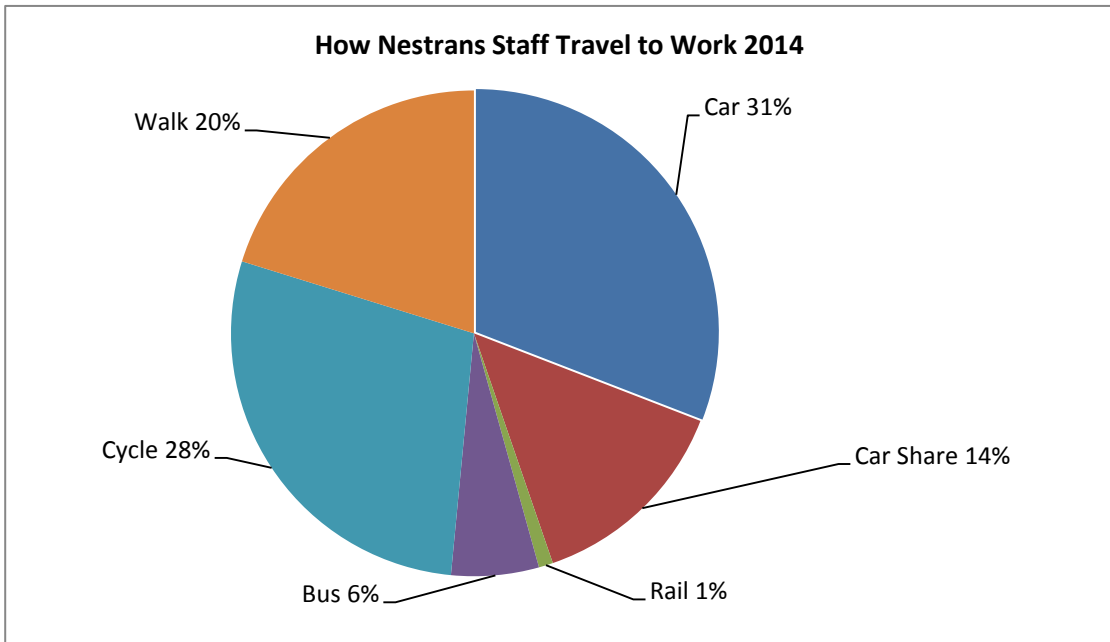


Business Travel – Trend over Time 2007-2014

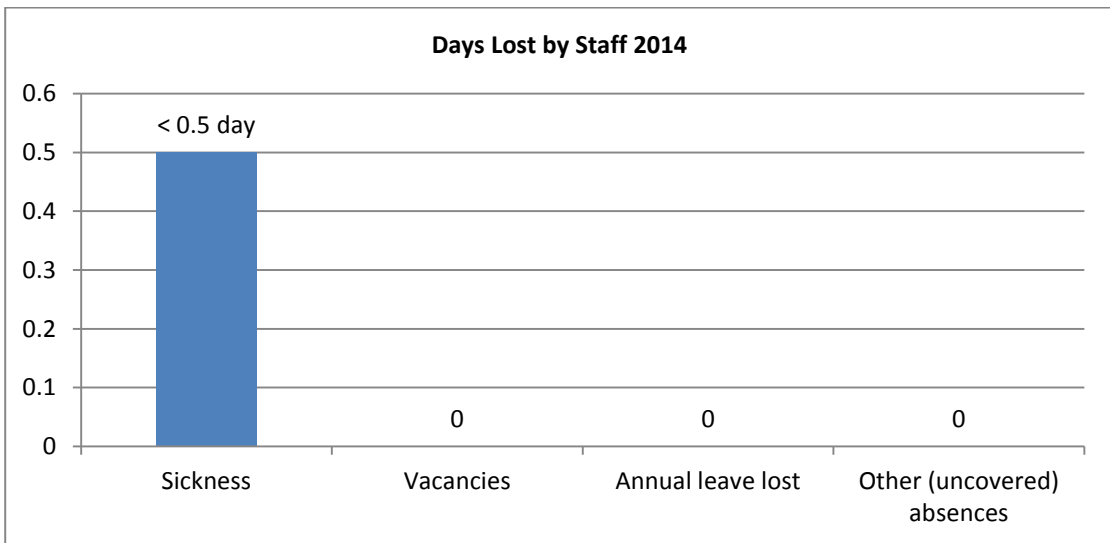
- Trend in Miles Travelled (Sustainable and Car) by Mode**



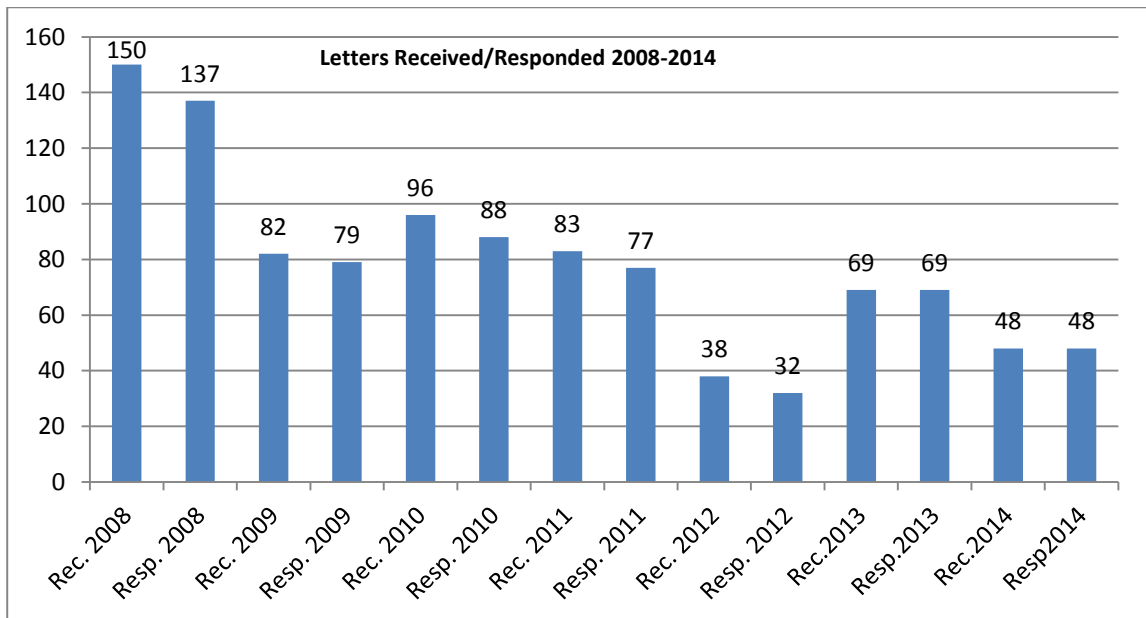
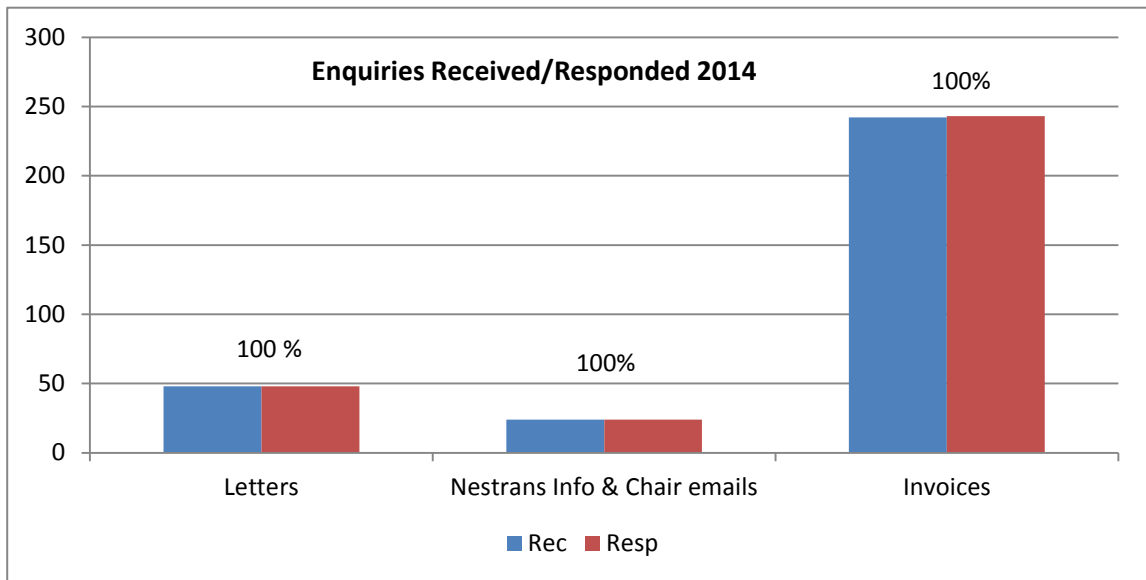
- **Staff Travel To and From Work 2014**

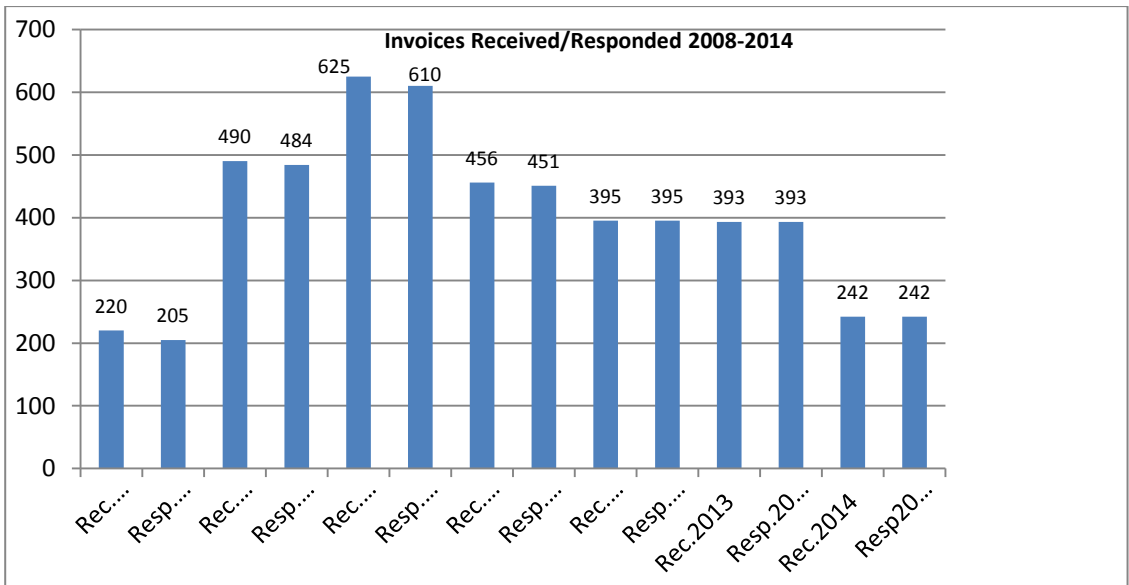
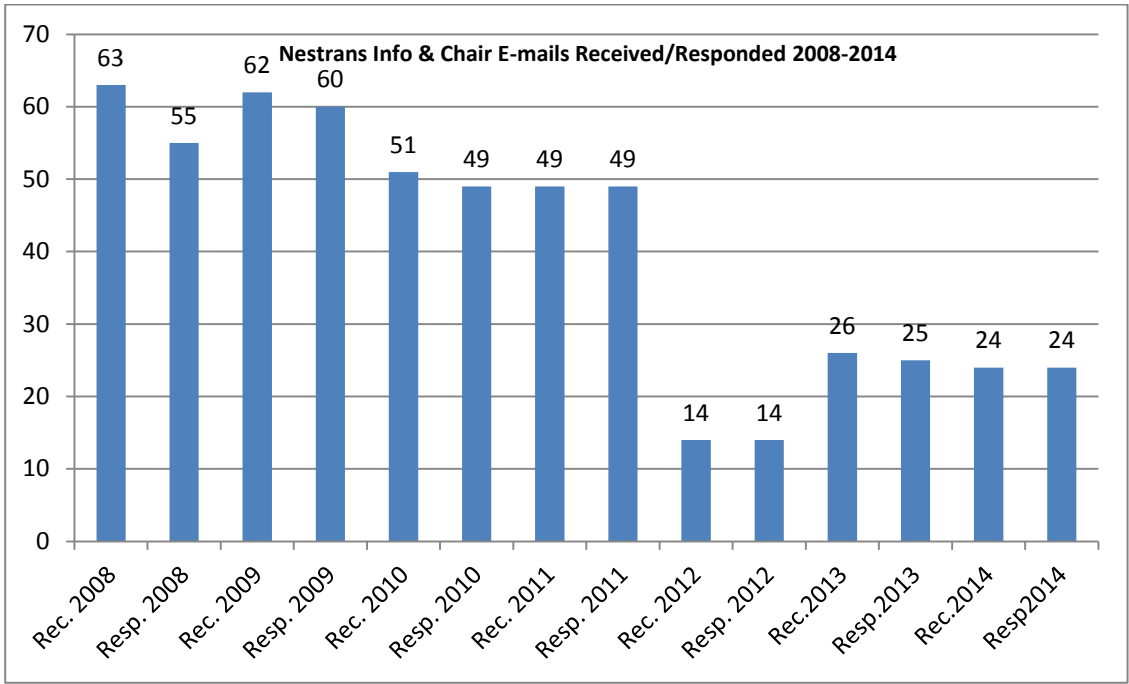


- **Staffing/Personnel**

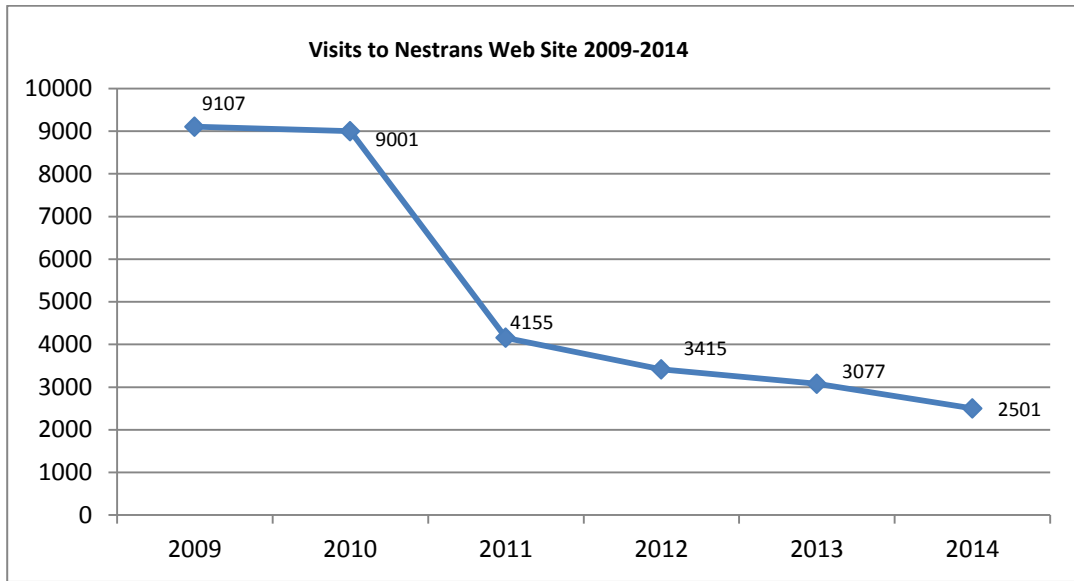


- **Enquiries Received and Responded to 2014**





- **Nestrans Web Site**



Nestrans Communications Report

February 2015 – March 2015

o Social Media

At present (March 2015) the joint @ACSEF_Nestrans account has a total of 300 followers, an increase of over 7% on the previous total in February 2015.

Tweeting and retweeting about topics including:

- Final reminders for Access to Laurencekirk (ending 28 Feb)
- Barriers to Bus Use – tweets totalling **2,486 impressions and 8 retweets**
- New Getabout Advert – The ‘Getabout Travel Report’
- City Region Deal – links to info, launch and commentary on 2015 Budget mention.
- City Centre Masterplan – links to info and questionnaire



o Nestrans Media Releases & Statements Issued

Date	Type	Details
06/2/15	Press Release	Access to Laurencekirk Reminder
20/2/15	Press Release	Rail Passenger Increase/Abellio Meeting
26/2/15	Statement	STF – Explanation of fund
26/2/15	Statement	Access to Laurencekirk criticism
11/3/15	Statement	National Connectivity – Nestrans welcomes report
17/3/15	Statement	Abellio Refurbished Trains
23/3/15	Statement	Heathrow Expansion Plans



o Press Enquiries

Date	Media	Details
23/2/15	STV BBC Radio Scotland	Interview requests to speak to Cllr Ramsay following Abellio meeting.
23/2/15	Press and Journal	Request for Park & Ride figures.
25/2/15	Evening Express	Queries on payments made into the STF (following board report) and subsequent request for comment on how the STF is used.
10/3/15	Evening Express	Request to speak to Derick Murray – view on City Centre Masterplan.
17/3/15	Press and Journal	Request for comment on Abellio's Hitachi-built trains only being used in central belt.



o News Coverage

Date	Media	Details
09/2/15	Evening Express	Residents have until the end of the month to give views on how access between A90 and Laurencekirk can be improved, council working with Nestrans on study.
11/2/15	Evening Express	Kincardine and Mearns councillors put forward their views on Access to Laurencekirk study being conducted by Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council amongst others.
20/2/15	Donside Piper	Letter - Address the issue raised: Cllr Peter Argyle writes in praise of council and Nestrans officers in reply to the letter of Charles Insch.
23/2/15	Evening Express Press and Journal	Passenger numbers at 8 Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire stations are up an average of 7.83%, Nestrans will be meeting with new ScotRail operator ahead of their takeover to discuss issues pertinent to the region.
23/2/15	Evening Express	Comment - Rail travel is booming in the north-east, the challenge is to build on previous successes and make rail even more attractive and more accessible to more people
26/2/15	Inverurie Herald	Passenger numbers at the eight stations across Aberdeen City & Shire, including Inverurie and Insch, are up.
27/2/15	Press and Journal	New figures revealed by Nestrans show drop in numbers using park and rides, Aberdeenshire Council planning new mini-hub along A947 Aberdeen to Banff road
2/3/15	Evening Express	Report will go to Strategic Development Planning Authority which covers Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils in March on funding guidance for infrastructure in the area, Nestrans will continue to seek contributions for the Strategic Transport Fund.
04/3/15	Evening Express	The boss of Aberdeen's largest bus firm (First Aberdeen) has said he is committed to working to make park and ride facilities in the north-east work (references to fall in use of Bridge of Don and Kingswells sites)
05/3/15	Inverurie Herald	EU funds could pay for A90 upgrading from Ellon. Nestrans mentioned as undertaking an appraisal which will consider the strategic transport connections on the A90 from Fraserburgh and Peterhead to Aberdeen.
05/3/15	Mearns Leader	Developers bidding to slash transport funds – Chapleton/STF
06/3/15	Press and Journal	Survey into why commuters reluctant to switch to buses: Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, First Bus and Nestrans have launched a survey to find out what would encourage northeast residents to use public transport more often.
11/3/15	Evening Express	Director of Nestrans, Derick Murray, says City Centre Masterplan could be made to work but bold steps need to be taken to ensure it remains attractive and becomes easier for people to move around even if they don't have a car.