

6c Other Publications

o Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members of recent publications of interest but not requiring a response.

o Publications

❖ SUSTRANS Five Year Strategic Plan (2017 – 2022)

Nestrans works very closely with sustainable transport charity Sustrans towards planning strategic active travel routes throughout the north east of Scotland. This partnership, in recent years, has allowed a significant increase in investment in walking and cycling facilities throughout the region and resulted in many high quality cycle/pedestrian paths being constructed.

In May, Sustrans launched its new five year strategic plan addressing a number of current challenges.

Within this document, Sustrans details the changes that it has made within the organisation, both in its focus and also in the delivery of its aims.

Since its previous strategic plan, Sustrans' focus has altered from promoting a more general 'sustainable travel' message, which included bus travel, and to a certain extent rail travel, to concentrating more on walking and cycling as alternatives to the private car. This is where their experience and skills are best served and where most benefit can be gained.

Sustrans is also decentralising to better serve a devolved UK. It has also shifted its focus from the original campaigning angle, previously adopted to educate people towards alternatives to the car, to finding solutions for increased active travel, i.e. walking and cycling.

Within its new Strategic Plan, Sustrans has highlighted that Scotland, as a whole, has seen relatively higher investment in walking and cycling infrastructure than the rest of the UK, however this investment is still considerably lower than in other European countries.

To read this document in full, please click [here](#).

❖ Improving Air Quality in Towns and Cities, Greener Journeys

Greener Journeys is a campaign funded mainly by bus operators, aiming to encourage people to make more sustainable travel choices and reduce CO2 emissions from transport by encouraging people to switch some of their car journeys to bus or coach instead. They have recently commissioned and published the attached report in relation to air quality in towns and cities:

<http://www.greenerjourneys.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Improving-Air-Quality-in-Towns-and-Cities-PROF-DAVID-BEGG-Final.pdf>

This publication examines the impacts of Clean Air Zones (CAZs), particularly with reference to the role that buses can play in improving air quality and the impact of CAZ proposals on the bus industry. The report comes to a number of conclusions and makes recommendations that will be relevant to the north east of Scotland in any future considerations going forward regarding the possible need for a Low Emissions Zone. These conclusions are as follows.

- CAZs will not be successful if their focus is purely on buses and HGVs and their scope does not also apply to diesel cars;
- Buses must be an integral part of the solution in CAZs, if they are to be successful in dramatically cutting harmful emissions, reducing congestion and stimulating economic growth;
- If buses are seen as a problem, and not part of the solution, CAZs will be less successful in tackling harmful emissions and congestion will rise to even more intolerable levels in our urban conurbations with an adverse impact on the economy, the environment and society as a whole;
- Buses are becoming increasingly green. Since 2004, NOx emissions from diesel buses have been reduced by a factor of 20, but emissions from diesel cars have only reduced by less than a third;
- If retrofitting of buses is not permitted there is a prospect of fares rising in urban conurbations and consequently bus patronage falling.

o **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note the publications outlined above.

RD/KC/RM/KW 13 June 2017