



Regional Active Travel Strategy & Delivery Plan

Date of meeting 13 December 2024

Date of report 3 December 2024

Report by Head of Policy & Planning

1. Object of report

The object of this report is to:

- update the Partnership on the development of the SPT Regional Active Travel Strategy and Delivery Plan (ATS); and
- recommend the Partnership approve the final draft of the ATS attached at Appendix 1.

2. Background to report

Further to earlier stages of strategy development work noted in previous reports to the Partnership in February 2023¹ and June 2024², the final draft ATS has been prepared and is attached at Appendix 1.

3. Outline of proposals

3.1 Rationale

“A Call to Action: The Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the west of Scotland 2023-2038” identified active travel and modal shift from private car use as being a key driver to resolve many of the issues with the region’s transport system. Under the RTS, it was determined that development of an ATS would be a key delivery mechanism in SPT’s co-ordinated approach to deliver a step-change in sustainable transport provision.

Journeys between the places where people live and the places that they want to travel every day often cover short distances. Across the region, personal travel data shows 27% of journeys are under 1km; 44% of journeys are under 2km; while 67% of journeys are under 5km. These shorter trips offer a real opportunity for a significant shift to active travel, opening up walking, wheeling and cycling to a greater range of abilities.

Many of these journeys transcend local authority boundaries, with cross-boundary travel patterns commonly being seen in trips to/from work, education, hospital and healthcare locations, and retail destinations. For example, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, one in every three of the region’s commuting journeys was to a Glasgow-based workplace.

To maximise the opportunity for people to switch to active travel for these everyday journeys, a coordinated regional approach is needed to address the gaps and diversity of

¹ https://www.spt.co.uk/media/d0kdpw40/sp170223_agenda10.pdf

² https://spt.production.d8.studio/media/pbyix1t3/p280624_agenda11.pdf

provisions in the existing active travel network. The ATS prioritises cross-boundary active travel links to provide integrated and consistent routes, enabling people to access places they need or want to go by low carbon, low cost, and accessible means.

3.2 Strategy and Network Development

The final draft ATS has been developed via an evidence-led approach and in close collaboration with SPT's twelve local authorities. The contents also take cognisance of public and stakeholder contributions gathered over an initial four-week consultation period in October 2023, and then a further eight-week consultation period that ended in September 2024.

The ATS has been developed in line with national Active Travel Strategy Guidance³. It is supported by a suite of evidence drawn from published policy documents, data acquisition, and associated stakeholder and public engagement.

Development of the ATS has followed the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) approach. STAG is recognised as a best practice and objective-led approach to transport appraisal. It provides a consistent framework to identify and appraise transport (including active travel) interventions. This objective-led process is designed to provide investment decision-makers with the information they need in a clear, structured format.

A 'Case for Change', which constitutes the first phase of STAG, was prepared in early 2024 on the active travel network in the region. This involved an extensive review of current policy, plans and frameworks, as well as a detailed analysis of data from the region. These findings were then validated and enhanced by associated engagement with the public and key stakeholders. Key transport problems and opportunities relating to active travel were identified, objectives were set, and a long-term vision for active travel in the region developed.

Following the Case for Change, an Options Appraisal Report was prepared to appraise the active travel interventions and define the content of the ATS.

Working to alleviate transport related issues and inequalities, the ATS has been directly aligned with the vision, targets and objectives of the RTS. This will support SPT's work in delivering a transport system that supports the needs of people, communities and businesses across the west of Scotland.

The ATS includes a regional active travel network and associated infrastructure delivery plan. Combined, these will help guide and co-ordinate strategic, cross-boundary active travel infrastructure projects and investments across the region. This will evidence the region's level of ambition to active travel delivery partners and funders, including investment requirements, priorities, and timescales for achieving the required step change in active travel provision and quality.

The ATS is intended to provide an effective tool to support policymakers and decision-makers to secure resources to deliver required interventions. It provides the basis for funding applications to accelerate the delivery of new active travel infrastructure; maintain and improve existing infrastructure; support the development of schemes to increase equal access to bikes; and encourage behaviour change.

The ATS also considers strategic routes that span the region and seeks to remove any 'false' boundaries and barriers a user may experience when crossing between local authority areas. It sets out how the people and places of the west of Scotland will be better connected by active travel and provides a strong justification for active travel interventions by delivering benefits across the region.

³ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/52980/active-travel-strategy-guidance-2023.pdf>

3.3 Next Steps

Commitment to active travel across Scotland is significant, and in line with the policies noted in the ATS. SPT will continue to lead, support, and invest in projects and initiatives across the region in partnership with local authorities and wider delivery partners, including through the People and Place Programme. Officers will continue to update the Partnership on ATS workstreams as they develop.

4. Partnership action

The Partnership is recommended to approve the final draft ATS attached at Appendix 1.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>Delivering active travel investment across the region in line with RTS policies will help to achieve the RTS vision and SPT's commitment to delivering sustainable and low carbon transport.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>Delivery of both infrastructure and non-infrastructure actions developed through the strategy will be dependent on funding availability (e.g. People and Place Programme).</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>Active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) is an accessible, low-cost mode of transport for everyday journeys, facilitating access to essential services, such as healthcare, education and places of employment for all. The strategy has undergone an Equality Impact Assessment, as well various stages of public and stakeholder consultation.</i>
Risk consequence	<i>None at present.</i>
Climate Change, Adaptation & Carbon consequences	<i>Delivery of the ATS will contribute to reducing transport related emissions through encouraging modal shift from private car use to more sustainable modes of transport like active travel. The strategy also aligns with SPT's Climate Change Strategy and Net-Zero Action Plan, contributing to SPT's wider efforts to reduce emissions.</i>

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