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# HEALTH & TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN

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Annual Report 2022-23



## Introduction

This annual report captures the work of the many partner organisations and stakeholders who are engaged in delivering the Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) across Grampian region. The report is also provided to national partners and supporters who are interested in the progress of this partnership. The report covers the financial year period April 2022 to end of March 2023.

## Message from the Chair of the HTAP Steering Group

The work of partners on the Health & Transport Action Plan (HTAP) Steering Group and the two sub-groups continues to show that collaboration provides benefit to our collective aims around access to health and social care, promoting population health, reducing inequalities, and the sustainability agenda.

Partner organisations all face challenges as we collectively recover from the Covid pandemic. However, many issues facing communities do not respect organisational boundaries and there is growing recognition of the need for even more collaboration to maximise the benefits to patients throughout the Grampian area.

The Health & Transport Action Plan (HTAP) was last reviewed in 2013. This year we have initiated a review of the HTAP and the objectives and actions required of the partnership to refocus the agenda following some significant changes in the intervening period. We are delighted that many stakeholders have already participated in the process. As that review works through with partners what our future priorities should be I am confident we can build further on our excellent history of communication, collaboration and joint co-ordination to benefit the population we serve.

On behalf of all involved in HTAP I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the work of HTAP, support our aims and look forward to building on those relationships and creating new relationships.

### **Gerry Donald,**

HTAP Steering Group Chair,  
NHS Grampian





## Message from the Vice Chair of the HTAP Steering Group

With both a new National Transport Strategy and Regional Transport Strategy in place there is a focus around the four pillars of Equalities, Climate Change, Prosperity, and Wellbeing. Working to make progress around these themes involves working in partnership with a range of organisations. The partnership around the Health & Transport Action Plan is an important group in helping add value to the work of partner organisations working towards shared aims.

Helping promote access to health and social care, promoting population health and transport provision are interconnected. Within HTAP we have a range of colleagues engaged representing a diverse group of partner organisations. Bringing together the expertise of health and transport we have identified gaps and taken steps to address them. Whether that be joint funding of THInC (Travel to Health & Social Care Information Centre) or joint funding of an NHS Sustrans Workplace Engagement Officer to promote active travel.

Going forward it is important that partners continue to input to the HTAP review and help shape the focus of our partnership over the coming years.

**Rab Dickson,**  
HTAP Steering Group Vice Chair,  
Nestrans

## Governance Structure

The work of HTAP is overseen by a governance structure comprising of a Steering Group, and two sub-groups.

The Steering Group provides strategic oversight of the progress made towards the aims of the HTAP. The membership includes senior representatives of NHS Grampian, Nestrans, Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, Community Transport Association (Scotland)(CTA), along with agreed representation from the third sector, Health & Social Care Partnerships, a member of the Mobility & Access Committee for Scotland (MACS), Scottish Government Health Directorate and a Public Representative.

### The Steering Group oversees two themed sub-groups.

1. Transport & Public Health Sub-Group
2. Access to Health & Social Care Sub-Group

Both sub-groups report to the Steering Group quarterly providing updates on the work plan produced by each sub-group. Membership of the group is drawn from a variety of appropriate partner organisations across public sector, third sector, academia, transport operators and others.

The programme is supported by the Programme Manager. The post of Programme Manager is jointly funded by NHSG and Nestrans and hosted by Aberdeenshire Council.

Each year the HTAP Annual Report is submitted to the three Grampian Community Planning Partnerships and made available to all partner organisations wishing to submit to Committee or Board level, depending on the nature of organisation. A copy is also submitted to the Mobility & Access Committee for Scotland (MACS), Transport Scotland, Public Health Scotland, and the General Health & Social Care Directorate of the Scottish Government.

## Alignment with Community Planning Partnerships

The two visions set out by partners within the Health & Transport Action Plan can be linked to the priorities set by the three Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) within the NHS Grampian area.

### Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership Priorities

- Aberdeen prospers
- Children are our future
- People are resilient, included and supported when in need
- Empowered, resilient and sustainable communities

### Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership Priorities

- Reducing Child Poverty in Aberdeenshire
- Connected and Cohesive Communities
- Health and Wellbeing

### Moray Community Planning Partnership Priorities

The corporate vision of Community Planning in Moray is: “to increase the quality of life and develop the well-being of everyone in Moray.”

The strategic priorities, which have been identified to deliver the vision, have been sub-divided under the following seven themes:

- Achieving a healthy and caring community
- Achieving a safer community
- Building stronger communities
- Improving travel facilities, choices, and safety
- Investing in children and young people
- Protecting and enhancing the environment
- Working for increased prosperity

## What We Said We Would Do

This section summarises the work of the two HTAP Sub-Groups. Each sub-group has a chair who is a member of the HTAP Steering Group.

### Transport & Public Health Sub-Group Update

The vision for transport and public health is:

- For people in Grampian to choose to travel by active modes such as walking and cycling whenever appropriate and to have the ability to do so conveniently and safely, in order to improve activity levels and public health;
- For everyone in the region to live without unacceptable risk to their health caused by the transport network or its use.

### Objective T&PH1

**For partners to use their collective influence and resources within and between their own organisations and at a national level to further increase provision of high-quality infrastructure for active travel, and to promote, inspire and enable more people to walk and cycle as part of their everyday lives.**

### Sub-Groups

Quarterly Sub-Group Meetings, information sharing and opportunity identification. The group is chaired by a Public Health Practitioner Advanced from the Public Health Directorate. The membership includes representatives from NHS Grampian, Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership, Robert Gordon University, Cycling UK (Scotland), Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Moray Council.

### Sustrans NHS Workplace Engagement Project

Having been established under the HTAP and made possible through part funding from NHS Grampian and Nestrans the project funded a full time Project Officer to be embedded within the health board promoting active travel. A

huge amount of staff engagement, promotion and infrastructure improvement was delivered. However, unfortunately due to national funding decisions the project will not continue into the anticipated third year.

### Spaces for People

Having highlighted the funding available for Spaces for People

funding as part of the Scottish Government programme for managing physical distancing during the pandemic NHS Grampian secured £256K. NHS Grampian seconded a member of staff to be Project Manager for the Spaces for People Project. Full details are highlighted within this report.

### NHS Grampian Travel Planning

Up to March 2023, we progressed work on an NHS Grampian Active Travel Framework in conjunction with TravelKnowHow, and with Phil Mackie, Consultant in Public Health. The Foresterhill Action Plan was also developed through this process, and is now with NHSG's Transport Overview Group for consideration. Active Travel is also part of the Health improvement Plan within Public Health.

## NHS Grampian Transport Overview Group (TOG)

HTAP Programme Manager attends NHSG TOG (Transport Overview Group) to promote links between the network of HTAP stakeholders and keep informed car parking, road layouts, Fleet, shuttle bus, public transport, and active travel issues within the NHSG estate and to ensure the group is aware of wider developments, strategies, and opportunities.

### Linking with national partners

Establishing links with Public Health Scotland (PHS) and emerging national linkages on the transport and public health agenda. This has included partners attending and contributing to the national Public Health and Sustainable Travel Network.

### Maximising coverage of campaigns

Because of the network created between health, social care, and transport partners it has been possible to widen promotion of campaigns, including Getabout, promoting active travel, road safety and air quality issues.

### Facilitating links to transport studies and infrastructure projects

Throughout the year the HTAP partners have facilitated circulation and responses to consultations on transport corridors and specific projects, such as the Sustrans project looking to improve active travel routes along Ashgrove Road next to the Foresterhill Hospital campus in Aberdeen. Ashgrove Connects has now been awarded funding for the Design Stages, from the Sustrans/ Transport Scotland Places for Everyone programme.

### Raising awareness of Grampian's HTAP

The Programme Manager prepared and presented a paper at the STAR conference held in Glasgow UK on the 2nd of November 2022. The paper set out the background, creation, and development of the HTAP and the partnership around it. The document has been of use as a briefing tool to engage local and national stakeholders. The Scottish Transport Applications and Research (STAR) Conference

is the leading annual event disseminating and debating innovation in Scottish Transport. The aims of the STAR are, “to encourage researchers and practitioners with an interest in Scottish transport to present and debate recent transport research and applications.”

### Innovating Inclusive Active Travel with Vulnerable Groups

Moray Council have been delivering the Moray Bothy project in Cooper Park, Elgin since March 2023. The project is funded by Paths for All, Smarter Choices Smarter Places. In line with the Health & Transport Action Plan aims around ensuring everyone can benefit from active travel and reducing health inequalities the project has worked with groups such as Women's Aid, Spinal Injury Scotland, Criminal Justice, Moray MS and Artiquins amongst others. In total the project has engaged with over 500 people so far. Feedback from participants have shown that the project has had a positive impact on health and wellbeing, as initial data from those engaged with the project shows that over 67% state it has helped to increase the amount of exercise they now do. Initial survey data also suggests that cycling frequency has increased with 8% of respondents reporting that they cycled regularly (i.e., fortnightly, or more) prior to taking part in the project, and since engagement this has increased to 67%. Below is feedback received from a participant who had been supported by the hub since its opening.

*“On and off for the past few years, I had been thinking about taking up cycling again. I used to cycle to work daily and at weekends – even a road trip from Dublin to Scotland. I haven't cycled for at least 30 years, so with that and a couple of hip ops, it was a struggle that I didn't expect! I couldn't manage the pedals starting off, I experienced some difficulty getting on/off some. I even tried an electric bike, but I felt it ran away with me. Over the last 6 months, I have had incredible support from the Cooper Park Active Travel Hub delivered by Cycling UK. Iain has been very helpful with researching different bikes for me to try out and FINALLY this month Iain found me a bicycle which really “fit” me and I have for the first time in a long time I cycled around Cooper Park, and I was soooooo chuffed!!! Thanks, Iain, for your support and perseverance, I really appreciate it.”*

Of particular interest to other HTAP partners are how Moray Council were able to engage organisations working with vulnerable groups and, especially those using health services. Moray Council explained the process of doing this as reaching out to local community groups and organisations to work in partnership and offer services and through promoting accessible and inclusive cycling and walking opportunities, supporting residents first and foremost. Having a centrally located hub within a safe cycling network has also added many logistical benefits to the project.

Across the region HTAP partners will need to develop closer working relationships with organisations working with vulnerable groups and the lessons from this project are of importance more widely within Grampian and beyond.

More strategically, the Moray Council Bike Bothy project highlights the need for HTAP partners to progress engagement with Health & Social Care Partnerships in each of the three local authority areas and ensure that area Public Health teams are connected to decision making and project delivery across active travel and transport widely. This is where the region wide approach of HTAP can add strategic value.

### **Innovating new ways of working together to reduce Falls**

Health Intelligence analysis of falls attendances at ARI and RACH emergency departments during the two cold snaps this past winter, identified two Aberdeen City postcode areas (AB15/16) which experienced very high numbers of falls. Further analysis (by residence) identified Hilton, Stockethill, Cults and Bielside as having the highest incidence within those postcodes.

The council's footway gritters operate in these areas but clearly are not sufficient to prevent falls in high numbers. A self-help one tonne salt bag scheme has operated across the city for several years (200 bags per year), but it is not proactive, co-ordinated or intelligence led, and how the bags are used is not monitored.

Through engagement with the community councils, and in collaboration with the roads department, agreement was made that all three areas each create volunteer 'Winter resilience

rapid response task forces.' The task forces will receive and take responsibility for several one tonne salt bags, shovels, and hand push salt spreaders. On receipt of meteorological alerts from Aberdeen City Council (ACC), and with project support from Grampian Public Health, the task forces will grit high risk pavements in their areas. Health Intelligence analysis of falls attendances will be used to monitor impact and direct future actions. Senior Public Health Practitioner time was allocated to this, and a Consultant in Public Health supported this initially.

Funding was secured by Public Health and transferred across to ACC where it will be used by the roads department to purchase the equipment needed which will be passed onto the Community Councils involved.

Trials will be run using the alert system with a view to things being operational for the upcoming winter.

The overall aim is to reduce the number of people falling in the high-risk areas identified by our own health intelligence analysis, thereby reducing attendances at the Emergency Departments at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) and Royal Aberdeen Cornhill Hospital (RACH) and reducing the pressure on these services.





Made possible through HTAPs partnership the Sustrans NHS Workplace Engagement Programme at NHS Grampian completed its second year in July. The programme aims to increase active and sustainable travel journeys made by staff through focusing on commuting, business trips and improving overall physical activity levels of employees. We raise the profile of active travel by engaging staff through positive messaging and delivering a range of activities and events. The programme also works to ensure that active travel is embedded in every level of the organisation by creating travel plans, improving staff benefits and bringing active travel to the forefront of discussions in organisational working groups.

In year 2, we continued to raise awareness of the benefits of active travel through positive messaging via internal communication channels, our Facebook and Twitter pages and the project's monthly newsletters which now go out to over 700 staff. We delivered lots of events to engage staff with active travel including Dr Bike sessions, cycle repair workshops, bike roadshows and cycle training for beginners. Most of these were held at Foresterhill with a couple of events held at Dr Gray's, Woodend, and Cornhill. The feedback from our cycle training sessions found that attendees gained confidence and would not have learnt to cycle in another way if these free sessions were not available at their workplace.

NHS Grampian have taken part in several Love to Ride challenges, which focus on getting people riding and encouraging one another. We have won two workplace challenges and now have over 300 staff on the platform including 56 new riders. Our 2023 Staff Step count Challenge was the biggest yet with over 1800 staff taking part, which is >10% of our staff base. Many staff reported having a better mood and improved mental wellbeing as a result of taking part and continued to make more active travel journeys three months on from the challenge.

This year, NHS Grampian achieved a Scottish Walking Award which is an initiative run by Scottish Ramblers, Paths for All and Living Streets. Our success in winning this award was due to our efforts improving workplace walking at Cornhill Hospital and our huge success in delivering the Staff Step count Challenge. In addition to this, Cornhill also achieved a Walk at Work Award accreditation.

During year 2, we brought in £45,000 capital spend to improve active travel infrastructure around NHS Grampian sites. This was used to install secure cycle storage and a repair stand at Dr Gray's Hospital, secure cycle storage at Woodend Hospital and a bike shelter at the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital. These new facilities helped Dr Gray's to achieve their Cycle Friendly Employer Award. The rest of the funds were used to secure a year of funding to cover insurance and servicing for our fleet of e-bikes and e-cargo bikes across Grampian. The project has been working on improving the uptake and usage of these bikes for business journeys and lack of servicing and insurance had been a common barrier to uptake.

The Workplace Engagement Programme aims to be inclusive in its reach and activities. This year, we worked in collaboration with payroll to improve the Cycle2Work scheme. The newly refreshed scheme offers more payback options and a greater spending limit. This increases the number of staff who are eligible to apply and allows staff to access e-bikes, e-cargo bikes, and adapted cycles through the scheme.

As part of the Programme, we have been working in collaboration with Travel Know How to create an NHS Grampian Active and Sustainable Travel Strategy and a Foresterhill Active and Sustainable Travel Plan. The strategy outlines our goals and ambitions to improve active travel across the board and together with the Foresterhill plan, provides a template for other site-specific travel plans to be created.

The Workplace Engagement Programme is unfortunately coming to an end shortly due to the withdrawal of funding from Transport Scotland. Year 3 which NHS Grampian had planned and budgeted for will not be going ahead. However, the future of active travel work within NHS Grampian is vital for reaching sustainability and health targets and for the wellbeing of our staff. Our ongoing work will be guided by the new Active and Sustainable Travel Strategy and will build on the efforts, achievements, and ambitions of the Workplace Engagement Programme.

### **Katrina Schofield**

Project Officer | Sustrans Scotland







Through HTAP the opportunity to bid for Spaces for People funding was highlighted to NHSG. NHS Grampian was one of only two Scottish health boards to receive funding from the Spaces for People grants.

The project has delivered several improvements for staff, patients, and the community. This has included:

- **E-bike hire for the Aberdeen Health Village and Royal Cornhill Hospital and safety equipment for Health village staff to promote safe walking, particularly in the winter.**

- **Roxburghe Wellbeing Garden (staff, patients, and community)**

(May 2021) Roxburghe Wellbeing Garden, (provided new accessible benches and upgrade of the path) to provide an area for breathing space, calm, and nature (Greenspace 2020) Feedback: “A holistic area for Roxburghe patients to access.”

- **Bike Parks ARI and Cornhill (staff)**

Installation of two bike parks on the ARI site adding 40 bike spaces to the east and central on the ARI site. Installation of one Bike Park on the Cornhill site providing 20 additional bike spaces.

Installation of a covered bike rack at Glen’O Dee providing 10 bike spaces and 6 bike spaces in Woodend. Provides secure storage space for staff to house their bikes on the ARI and Cornhill, to encourage and staff to travel short distances on their bike during and post COVID. To promote health and wellbeing for staff during COVID-19 and thereafter. Feedback: Feel so much better than sitting in the traffic! “Great facility, looks more secure with PIN and swipe card, better weather proofing compared to open shelters”

- **E-bikes (staff)** 34 e-bikes (including e-cargo bikes for estates) for Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Moray. Including the Elgin and Vaccination Centre, Speyside, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) e-bike fleet 2021, at the City Hospital.

(Feb 2021) e-bikes/cargo Elgin and Vaccination Centre & Speyside. Allows the Public Health Team to travel short journeys between sites. Promotes health and wellbeing for staff. Promotes the use of e-bikes for essential journeys such as patient appointments and travel to and from the vaccination centre. Feedback: “Excellent way to get to and from work every day. Fast, reliable and a pleasant journey - everything the bus isn’t!”

- **CAHMS e-bikes Fleet.** To travel to other NHS sites without using public transport and reduce short car journeys. To support staff wellbeing and take time for exercise during lunch. To travel sustainably to patient appointments. Feedback from CAMHS team:



*“The e-bikes allowed me the opportunity to take some light exercise during my lunchbreak and enjoy the beach front near to the office. The fresh air and cardiac aspect helped me to remain positive and focussed for the rest of the day.”*

- **Final new e-bikes were delivered in the summer of 2022 to Huntly and Turriff.** Formartine HSCP on Twitter: “A few months ago we were lucky enough to take receipt of an E-bike at Turriff Hospital. This has been the perfect solution to rising fuel costs. The pics below are of our Physio Team based in Turriff. They have been using the bike for local home visits. @NHSG\_Sustain <https://t.co/kai5JLcenS>” / Twitter
- **Bike Pod – Maternity August 2022 (staff)** Removal of the wooden stand at maternity and installation of a new bike pod to provide 6 additional covered bike spaces for staff.
- **A further bike pod was installed in 2023 in Elgin as part of their redevelopment on site.**
- **Blackbird Walk – Staff, Patients, and the Community** September 2022 opening of Blackbird Walk from Foresterhill and Woodhill House. The Blackbird path funded via Sustran’s Spaces for People project. It improves the connectivity between Foresterhill and Woodhill house and encourages active travel as well as three benches for resting. It winds its way attractively downhill past Foresterhill Health Centre and the new Aberdeen University BioHub research building. From there it is a 5-minute walk to the main entrance to ARI. Great walk-in nature even in the rain. The project succeeded in increasing biodiversity with planting 10 native trees (Cherry, Rowan and Oak), Scotia Seeds meadow and replacing the non-native bushes removed with lavender to support pollinators.

NHS Grampian would like to thank SUSTRANS and staff in supporting a lasting legacy for Spaces for People Project.

### Evonne Llewellyn

Spaces for People Project Manager 2020 to 2022 | NHS Grampian



## Objective T&PH2

**For health professionals to ensure planners and decision-makers are informed of the adverse public health impacts of the transport system and to support those partners already working to resolve them, most notably in order to:**

- **Reduce air pollution, especially within Air Quality Management Areas;**
- **Reduce the number of people exposed to high transport noise levels;**
- **Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the transport network;**
- **Reduce the number of people isolated from their communities and key services by lack of appropriate transport;**
- **Ensure that transport policies support sustainable and healthy communities.**

### Road Casualty Reduction Group

Public Health involvement in North-East Scotland Road Casualty Reduction group. Figures for the calendar year 2022 are shown below.

| <b>2022</b>       | <b>Fatal</b> | <b>Serious</b> | <b>Slight</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|-------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| The Moray Council | 4            | 21             | 31            | 56           |
| Aberdeenshire     | 13           | 110            | 123           | 246          |
| Aberdeen City     | 1            | 28             | 52            | 81           |

The primary focus of local road safety activity remains on reducing the number of road users killed and seriously injured on north east roads. This supports the aims and interim targets contained within the national 'Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030', with 50% reductions sought for those killed and seriously

injured, along with a 60% reduction in the number of children killed and seriously injured. The Covid-19 period saw reductions in local road casualty totals which were linked to periods of travel restrictions, however, since then normal travel patterns have resumed, and local road collision and casualty statistics have slowly been returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Vulnerable road user groups continue to receive specific attention from Road Safety North East Scotland partners and during the reporting period, the 'New Driver Scheme' was launched. Led by Police Scotland and supported by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the programme is a replacement for the annual 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' event and has been delivered to senior pupils within various schools across North East Scotland.

Police Scotland's successful 'Rider Refinement North' motorcycle safety initiative was again delivered to north east motorcyclists and continues to receive positive feedback. The scheme is both classroom and road based and provides attendees with a unique opportunity to hone their riding skills with the aim of reducing the likelihood of involvement in a road traffic collision.

### Aberdeen's Low Emission Zone

The Public Health input to Low Emission Zone group continues. ACC are working towards enforcement starting in June 2024. Cameras and signage should be in place by the end of 2023.

### Aberdeenshire's HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living)

Inputs to Healthy Eating, Active Living (Aberdeenshire).

### Working together to conduct Health Impact Assessments

A virtual workshop was held via MS Teams on 29 June 2023 to discuss potential impacts on health of the proposed Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy (LTS).

Workshop participants were from the local authority Aberdeen City Council, Public Health Scotland, NHS Grampian, and NESTRANS.

Collectively the group had specialist skills in public health, equalities, planning and transport,

and expert knowledge of the locality, including local concerns, needs and priorities, and the policy landscape. They had read and reflected on the draft LTS before the workshop.

Workshop participants agreed with LTS vision. They aimed to use this structured workshop to identify potential impacts, positive, negative and areas of uncertainty, of the LTS if implemented as proposed. A health impact checklist was used in a facilitated discussion to identify how the proposed LTS was likely to affect different populations and health determinants.

### **Improving rest points on pedestrian routes to Foresterhill Campus**

As part of the Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership, Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Nestrans is leading on two project charters, promoting Walking and Cycling. These charters involve implementing 'small tests of change' to see if they make an impact. A recent walking project which was raised by a member of the local community was to install park benches from the city centre up to the Foresterhill Campus.

This is to encourage people to make more walking journeys between Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and the City Centre. Aberdeen City Council have installed nine benches on Westburn Road and Hutcheon Street. Given how hilly this corridor is, these should provide useful resting places for pedestrians, especially those who may have been discouraged from walking between the hospital and the City Centre previously. The benches have been procured by the Aberdeen City Council using external funding from the Scottish Government's Cycle Walking Safer Routes (CWSR) funding. To establish whether the benches are encouraging more walking to take place, it was necessary to undertake monitoring of walking levels on the corridor.

### **Joint training**

Public Health and Transport training day (29th of June 2022) led by Professor Adrian Davis of Napier University. In 2018 Edinburgh Napier appointed Dr Adrian Davis to the groundbreaking position of Professor of Transport & Health. The post is believed to have been the first of its kind in the world. Professor

Davis has a track record of more than 30 years work in helping to develop and grow this interdisciplinary field. He was the author of the British Medical Association's first report on road transport and health, back in 1997, a founding Editor of the academic Journal of Transport & Health and is an adviser to the World Health Organisation. Participants said they found the training day of high value. One attendee from a transport background said the event inspired them to undertake a university course in Public Health.

On the 1st of November 2022, an online briefing was given to over 60 attendees by Dr David Walsh, Glasgow Centre of Population Studies, on the findings of research into changing life expectancy and mortality rates across the UK.

### **Place Making to Improve Health**

Partners attended an event, Using Place as a lens to improve Health: A North East of Scotland Symposium, held at Cowdray Hall in Aberdeen on 28th of September 2022.

## **Access to Health & Social Care Sub-Group**

The vision for access to health and social care is:

- For everyone in the region to be able to access the health and social care they need and if transport is required, for this to be appropriate, convenient, and affordable;
- For the environmental impacts of journeys to be minimised.

### **Objective AHSC1**

**For partners to gain a detailed understanding of the gaps or inequalities in access to or from health and social care services, and to resolve identified problems.**

### **Sub-Groups**

Quarterly Sub-Group Meetings, information sharing and opportunity identification. The group is chaired by the Nestrans Strategy Manager. The membership includes representatives from NHS Grampian,

Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, Moray Council, Royal Voluntary Service, commercial bus operators and Scottish Ambulance Service.

By meeting, the group gains a collective sense of the issues facing operators and how this intersects with communities and the issues around access to and from health and social care services. The group is mindful of the issues around poverty, pressure on organisations using volunteers, pressure on commercial operators and the ongoing pressures on the NHS and Scottish Ambulance Service.

### **Dialogue with national partners**

Within the HTAP partnership links are maintained with the Scottish Government and Mobility & Access Committee for Scotland (MACS). This has included a Scottish Government representative attending the HTAP Steering Group and a member of MACS sitting on the Steering Group.

### **Public engagement**

The partnership has also supported public engagement events where residents have raised concerns about access to health, including an event in November 2022 held by Fittie Community in Aberdeen.

### **Investigating local access to health issues**

A student from Aberdeen University on placement with NHSG worked with HTAP partners to produce a research paper on how transportation affects healthcare access, focusing on the access to healthcare services for residents in the Banff and Buchan areas. It investigated how hospital administrators schedule appointments, the factors considered, and other health boards' strategies to overcome transportation barriers and reduce missed appointments.



*Knowledge of the advice service grew during 2022-2023 as a result of NHS Grampian improving the information included in patient appointment letters for Aberdeen hospitals.*

*We dealt with approximately 4,125 calls for transport assistance in Grampian during 2022-2023 from people travelling to health or social care appointments. Calls included requests for one-way, return, or multiple journeys. Callers were mainly people who could not use public transport or told us they had no friends or family who could help them. We arranged transport using THInC in the City minibuses or other community transport providers for approximately 4,050 requests but were unable to secure transport for approximately 450 journeys.*

*We took part in an Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership Workshop about transport and THInC continued to be represented by Aberdeenshire Council at NHS Transport Programme Board meetings.*

#### **Marion Mackay**

Principal Officer (DRT, Fares & Ticketing)  
Aberdeenshire Council



### **Objective AHSC2**

**For partners to more fully co-ordinate the planning and delivery of health and social care and transport in order to improve the efficiency and financial sustainability of services.**

#### **NHSG Transport Programme Board**

NHS Grampian created a group to review Patient Transport with a focus on hospital discharge and the pressures on bed occupancy. A business case was produced and approved to fund additional weekend transport cover to improve efficiency of patient flow. Work on this emerged because of the pandemic but a focus on improving patient discharge continues as a priority as hospitals continue to face unprecedented pressures. A short life working group has been formed to investigate transport solutions around patient discharge. The Chair of

the SLWG is linked in to the HTAP Access to Health & Social Care Sub-Group.

## **THInC**

THInC, the Travel to Health & Social Care Information Centre, has continued to be funded by NHS Grampian, Nestrans, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council. The project is staffed by colleagues at Aberdeenshire Council's Passenger Transport Unit who offer advice and liaise with community transport providers, whenever possible, to coordinate transport for health and social care appointments.

Health and social care professionals are encouraged to contact THInC for advice, on 01467 536111 or [travel@thinc-hub.org](mailto:travel@thinc-hub.org), either on behalf of service users or to raise general transport issues.

A new webpage for THInC has been created and is hosted on the Nestrans website.

## **THInC in the City**

This Aberdeen city-based service is funded by Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership to support patients getting to and from health and social care appointments. Passengers pay a fare equal to that of Aberdeen City Council's demand responsive Transport service. The transport is provided by Buchan Dial a Community Bus and offers wheelchair accessible door to door transport exclusively for health and social care appointments. Two minibuses operate on Mondays to Fridays between 08:30 and 17:00 hours with booking arranged via THInC.

## **Supporting Community Transport**

Supporting linkages between NHSG work around hospital discharge and dialogue with community transport operators.

The Grampian Volunteer Transport Awards presentations took place on Friday 9 December 2022. The awards which began in 2014 have been delivered five times. The presentation was held at Woodhill House and prizes sponsored by Colin Lawson Transport. The awards were presented by Aberdeenshire Council's Provost Judy Whyte. The awards are intended to recognise individuals and organisations who

support residents to attend health and social care appointments and encourage interest in others to volunteer with our local organisations. The winners were Edith MacDonald, Royal Voluntary Service, Ken Fairweather, Mearns & Coastal Healthy Living Network, and the special contribution award went to Rebecca Ross of Banffshire Partnership.

Engagement with Community Transport happens locally via the Aberdeenshire Community Transport Forum and having the Director of the Community Transport Association. This has flagged issues around volunteer driver cost reimbursement, use of Blue Badges (organisations cannot apply) and pickup/drop off issues at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Relevant partners contributed to an independent evaluation of the BeLink'D community transport pilot. The final report sets out recommendations around lessons to be learned when developing future community transport pilots.

## **Supporting and aligning emerging plans**

Several HTAP group members supported Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership deliver a workshop on the 10 November 2022 on the themes of Health & Transport. The planned output is a series of actions which the partnership can take forward. Several of these actions are relevant to the HTAP objectives around different partner organisations supporting each other and have been incorporated into the developing HTAP review.





The Grampian Volunteer Transport Awards are a great opportunity to highlight the hard work and dedication of local Community Transport Organisations, and the impact they have on enabling people to attend a wide range of appointments and activities to support health and wellbeing, and to live well in their communities.

We were delighted to win both the Organisation of the Year, and the Volunteer Driver/Escort of the Year in December. The Awards recognise the time, effort, hard work, and enthusiasm of all our volunteers who deliver this well-used service, and it was great to see Ken's dedication over the past 20 years being recognised too.

The demand for services like ours continues to grow, with an increase in referrals from THInC, Care Management, local organisations, and family members. We've also seen changes to the types of requests, with greater demand for cancer treatment-related transport, much of which is needed 5 days a week for 5 weeks. All this shows in our mileage stats, up from 20,847 in 2021/22 to 39,620 in the 15 months from May 2022 to July 2023.

Delivering this much-needed service is only possible through support with funding, and the time, energy, and support of our fantastic volunteers, without whom, none of this is possible.

### Jane Mitchell

Manager, Mearns, and  
Coastal Healthy Living Network



### National Treatment Centre - Grampian

The National Treatment Centre-Grampian (NTC-G) Design and Build cell currently has an Access and Transport short life working group (SLWG) considering the options and opportunities that will be available for the patients and staff who will use the new building. Due to its location on the Foresterhill Campus, consideration needs to be given to the site as well as those accessing the services that will be relocated to the new building. As such, the SLWG has four workstreams feeding into the strategy it is developing; the active travel plan, the development of the loop road, the car park review and the wider car parking and site access strategy. Information from the four workstreams will be fed into the group for analysis.

A questionnaire has been developed by the group to gather information about individual habits and requirements currently when travelling to the clinics. Members of the SLWG will attend clinics in the autumn to gather information and collate this for consideration by the group.

Paul Finch from Nestrans co-chairs the SLWG.

### Angela Douglas

Service Project Manager  
Acute Major Capital Projects | NHS Grampian



## Objective AHSC3

**For partners to work together to ensure that Transport to Health & Social Care is undertaken by sustainable modes wherever possible, or that care is provided without travel if appropriate.**

### New Developments

The Access to Health & Social Care Sub-Group continues to provide a forum for partners to hear about new health and/or social care site developments to promote early engagement between those planning new developments and the relevant local authority and transport operators. On specific infrastructure projects transport partners are providing direct inputs to NHS Grampian planning. The group also seeks to have awareness of changes to GP practices.



### **Dr Gray's Hospital Development Framework**

The NHS Grampian Board adopted its 'Plan for the Future' in June 2022 and in February 2023 it approved the Dr Gray's Hospital - Plan - Strategic Intent. The plan highlighted the need for a clearer role and function for Dr Gray's Hospital and the development of the Strategic Intent set out the priority areas and principles for how the future of the hospital could be ensured as a highly valued part of the health and care system in the north of Scotland. A report on Space Utilisation, Quality and Functional Suitability at Dr Gray's Hospital that was published March 2023. The report concluded that the site is very constrained with little or no expansion space for future development. To support retaining appropriate clinical services and modernising the estate to meet current clinical and environmental standards and to support future need, a 'Development Framework' is required so that the development of the estate can be planned over the next 20 years. The intention is to submit the finalised Framework to Moray Council to form part of the Local Development Plan.

The Development Framework will be a map-based plan that will show the available space for development, the footprints and heights of future buildings as well as identifying the key uses and landscape features that must be considered when developing the site. The framework process will interrogate the existing transport and energy infrastructure to maximise opportunities for better site permeability and sustainability. The Framework Document will also have a detailed narrative to set the context within which all future proposals and planning applications within the site will sit. NHS Grampian values the Health & Transport Action Plan and the communication, collaboration and joint co-ordination of projects, campaigns, and initiatives that we have delivered together over previous years. The organisation fully recognises this multi-agency partnership as a key to our aims and that we are the only health board in Scotland to have such a partnership.

### **Aberdeen Royal Infirmary Foresterhill Campus Framework**

In 2008 NHSG and the University of Aberdeen had a Development Framework for the Foresterhill Campus approved by Aberdeen City Councils Planning Authority. This was further updated in 2012 because of changes in Planning Policy to ensure it fully reflected the latest changes and was still relevant. This is now regarded as material in the consideration of any planning applications for the Campus and referred to as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Planning Authority. A Development Framework is expected to have a life of around 20-25 years. The majority of the work detailed in the updated Development Framework is complete with the new Baird Family Hospital and Anchor Centre at an advanced stage and construction underway on a new Integrated Mortuary. Foresterhill Campus is principally an acute site and should only accommodate acute services that need to be on site. The Foresterhill Campus is limited by size and has now limited options for further extending services on the site with the clinical core of ARI requiring to be protected. An updated Development Framework with an 'infrastructure first' approach will be required for the campus. In March 2022, a feasibility study was undertaken by consultants to assess options for an internal ring road within the Foresterhill Campus. The ring road will enable greater site circulation as well as providing opportunities for active travel and public transport to permeate the site. NHSG identified a preferred ring road option, and this is currently under more detailed assessment.

This final phase of the Framework will plan development of the campus over the next 10 years to ensure the right clinical adjacencies, to assist and improve patient pathways and achieve ambitious sustainability goals in line with NHS Grampian 'Plan for the Future'. NHS Grampian values the Health & Transport Action Plan and the communication, collaboration and joint co-ordination of projects, campaigns, and initiatives that we have delivered together over previous years. The organisation fully recognises this multi-agency partnership as a key to our aims and that we are the only health board in Scotland to have such a partnership.

### **Hilary Wilkinson**

Property Development Manager  
NHS Grampian







## Looking Forward

### Health & Transport Action Plan Review (HTAP3)

The original Health & Transport Action Plan (HTAP) was produced in 2007/08 and endorsed by both Nestrans and NHS Grampian Boards in June 2008. A review of the document was carried out in 2013 and was endorsed. Considering refreshed national and regional transport strategies, the impact of the pandemic on society and other considerations, it is now felt that a review of the HTAP is necessary.

### Major developments since the last review

- Creation of Health & Social Care Partnerships.
- COVID pandemic and recovery.
- Decline in life expectancy since 2012.
- Acceleration in using online appointments.
- Transport Act (Scotland) 2019 giving health boards a duty to work with community transport bodies in providing non-emergency patient transport services in its area.
- Climate Emergency declared.
- NHS Scotland climate emergency and sustainability strategy: 2022-2026.
- Creation of Public Health Scotland.
- New National and Regional Transport Strategies
- Global energy and cost of living crisis.
- The Consultation considering creating a National Care Service.
- Such developments have and will continue to place challenges on partners in health, social care, and transport. These challenges are also opportunities to drive focus on whole system thinking and promote partnership working.
- The challenges of ensuring patient/service user access to health and social care as we transition to carbon neutrality necessitate the very dialogue between health, social care and transport partners facilitated by HTAP. Also, the need for the transport sector to improve health outcomes lends

itself to the input of Public Health which HTAP has enabled.

- The HTAP partners had followed a five-year Road Map which ended in 2020. Having worked together well supporting the NHS during the first two years of the Covid pandemic, it is now appropriate to review with partners the HTAP vision and aims and understand the strategic issues facing each organisation. In doing so we can build a refreshed consensus and renewed commitment to working together on the areas where the partnership can realistically add value.

### The process

The HTAP Programme Manager will play an integral role in leading the review and refresh of the Health & Transport Action Plan for Grampian.

The review process will be supported by a Review Group formed from Steering Group and Sub-Group members.

The process will be undertaken in three phases. Phase one and two have now been completed.

Phase 1 – Review what actions have been achieved and what actions are, for whatever reason, no longer appropriate or are extremely unlikely to be achieved and highlight those actions that would be incorporated into a refresh of the original plan (i.e., HTAP3).

Phase 2 – Comprehensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders who have an interest in the complexity and variety of issues encompassed by health and transport. Through participatory workshops, the partners will identify the challenges and opportunities facing them in the next five years.

Phase 3 – Verification of priorities and areas of focus presented to the Steering Group and final approval of HTAP3.

## Timetable

A workshop was delivered on 28th February at Cowdray Hall in Aberdeen. It was attended by 32 stakeholders. Susan Webb, Director of Public Health and Rab Dickson, Director of Nestrans spoke at the event. Five groups each facilitated led carried out a SWOT analysis identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in relation to partnership working in Grampian and progressing towards the two HTAP visions. The outputs from the workshop have been analysed and work is ongoing. Several individual stakeholder interviews have also been carried out.

## Overarching challenges

- Pressures related to climate action and a Just Transition towards net zero.
- Pressure across health and transport systems/providers.
- Increased demand for health services.
- Widening inequalities and transport poverty.
- Uncertainty and rapid change (financial, political, social, lifestyles, technological, health delivery and transport demand/travel patterns).
- The interconnectedness across multiple issues and the impacts of decisions in one part of the system on another.
- The complexity of delivering collaboration across multiple agencies with a variety of statutory duties, public, commercial and third sector interests, geographical focus, varied performance metrics, funding criteria, governance, and culture.
- The finite capacity of organisations to contribute and facilitate strategic added value across the whole system.
- Gaps in available data to influence change at local and national levels.

## Priority Areas

Priority areas are being categorised under Maintain, Develop and Influence.

*In summary:*

- Maintain:** Sharing campaigns, giving patients travel advice through joint funding of THInC, delivery of Volunteer Transport Awards, contributing to strategies and consultations. Maintain dialogue between health, social care, and transport providers (Scottish Ambulance Service, community transport, local authority transport and commercial transport). Maintain Public Health input to relevant transport groups.
- Develop:** Social prescribing, joint training, capturing lived experience, maximise opportunities relating to improving infrastructure and planning of EV charging stations regionally. Negotiating and developing opportunities to support new NHS Grampian and Health & Social Care locations around transport and accessibility. Building an understanding of how technology changes demand for face-to-face appointments in the long term.
- Influence:** Mobilise individual and collective expertise to strategically influence local and national policy, funding and data sharing between partners relating to health and transport relevant issues, including, access poverty, mobility poverty, particularly around health inequalities and access to health and social care.

For further information please contact Andrew Stewart, HTAP Programme Manager,  
(post jointly funded by NHS Grampian and Nestrans)

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