

Moray Council

ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY

ANNUAL UPDATE

2023



moray
council



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Introduction

Moray's 5 year Active Travel Strategy (ATS) 2022-2027, approved in Nov 2022, sets out a vision to 'create a culture and environment where active travel is embedded within our communities as the automatic and obvious choice for everyday journeys to school, work and leisure by: providing a safe, integrated and accessible network for all.' It also includes a set of six objectives from which an Action Plan has been developed, with the detailed steps that need to be carried out to achieve the objectives.

A Monitoring Plan is an essential part of an ATS and is one of the key requirements outlined in guidance published by Sustrans and Transport Scotland. It is important to ensure an effective monitoring and evaluation framework is in place for assessing progress in delivering the vision and objectives of the Strategy.

Although annual reporting on the Action Plan is managed by the Sustainable Travel officer, delivery of the targets within relies on continual input and partnership working from relevant Moray Council departments, external partners and funding bodies, local businesses and residents to highlight, inform and provide feedback on how improvements can be made.

This first annual report of the strategy presents a summarised overview of progress to date, against the 1st year of the ATS Action Plan, as well as plans for next steps of the strategy.

This report also includes observed cycle and pedestrian data count from January 2022 – December 2022, and an update on both new infrastructure provision and active travel behaviour in Moray.



Trends in Data

Active Travel monitoring is undertaken through a number of various data sources. This includes local sources such as Travel Tracker in Primary schools, Bikeability quarterly stats, staff travel surveys and data from fixed site counters that collect both cycle and pedestrian data. National sources are also assessed at regular intervals such as Scottish Household Survey, Hands Up Scotland Survey, Cycling Scotland's Annual Monitoring update and Scottish Census Survey (as yet there is no relevant data published for 2022). Other programmes delivered under the SCSP programme also provide data on the number of participants or types of journeys made, adding to the overall picture of active travel in Moray.

As mentioned one of the data sources comes from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) that is used by Cycling Scotland in their [Annual Cycling Monitoring report](#). This report provides trends and context at Local Authority level. This report would normally give good comparison data year on year, however, this has been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic, and affected the changes to the methods of data collection for a number of the report's data sources. The Covid-19 lockdowns meant the SHS 2020 surveys switched from face-to-face interviews to a telephone survey. As a result of the change in survey mode, the response rate and, therefore sample size, was greatly reduced and there was a noticeable change in the profile of respondents. At that time, there were restrictions in movement, peoples behaviours were impacted and not travelling to and from work. Next year's data will be back to a larger sample size and more representative of current behaviours. Therefore, due to the significant reduction in the SHS sample size, no individual local authority data is available for 2021 to compare with 2022 data. However, data from the 2023 report based on 2022 figures show that 67% of all journeys made in Moray are under 5km. Pre covid figures from 2019 show that this is a big increase in shorter journeys from 52% in 2019.

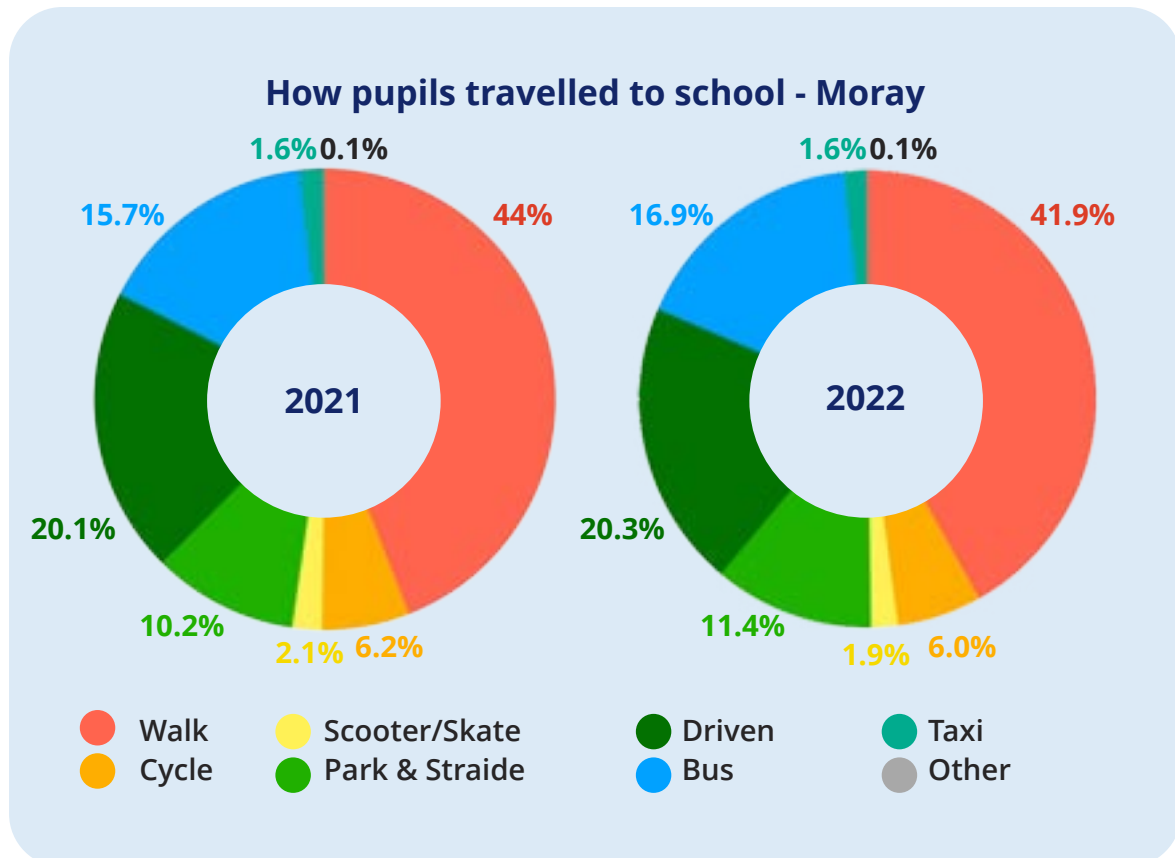
Cycling Scotland - Annual Cycling Monitoring Report, Moray Trends and Context 2021



Cycling Scotland - Annual Cycling Monitoring Report, Moray Trends and Context 2023



Sustrans 'Hands up Scotland Survey' is the largest national dataset on how children travel to school, and is an Official Statistic in Scotland. The survey is now in its 15th year, and makes it possible to compare and review more than a decade of data on how children travel to school in Moray. Whilst figures for walking have reduced over the last number of years, there has been an increase in cycling, the highest recorded since the survey began in 2008. There has been an obvious upward trend in park and stride from 5.7% in 2008 to 11.4% in 2022. These are easily identifiable as to why there is a slight decrease in walking. The numbers show that overall, all forms of Active Travel are on the increase. Figures during 2020 and 2021 were higher than normal due the impacts of Covid. Bikeability delivery has also increased from 56% in 2019 to 93% in 2022. This supports the HUSS data that cycling numbers in schools are increasing.



Fixed count sites within the urban areas of Moray are generally continuing to show an upwards trend in numbers of pedestrians and cyclists. Data from 2020 and 2021 are exceptionally high but this is related to changes in travel patterns and behaviour during the pandemic, and more people being able to work from home. Currently the only reliable data 2022 data can be compared to is from 2019 pre-covid. This data shows that the numbers on these commuting routes are increasing for both walking and cycling.



Elgin - Red Bridge East - West

| Year | AADT | Growth D | AADT | Growth D |
|------|------|----------|------|----------|
| 2018 | 82 | 9.33% | 353 | 7.62% |
| 2019 | 86 | 4.88% | 380 | 7.65% |
| 2020 | 131 | 52.33% | 434 | 14.21% |
| 2021 | 75 | -42.75% | 445 | 2.53% |
| 2022 | 88 | 17.33% | 400 | -10.11% |

Elgin - Morryston Playing Fields

| Year | AADT | Growth D | AADT | Growth D |
|------|------|----------|------|----------|
| 2018 | 36 | 20% | 175 | 6.06% |
| 2019 | 35 | -2.78% | 190 | 8.57% |
| 2020 | 81 | 131.43% | 288 | 51.58% |
| 2021 | 49 | -39.51% | 311 | 7.99% |
| 2022 | 63 | 28.57% | 318 | 2.25% |

However, counters on routes which people use for leisure purposes have shown a reduction in movements. This reduction is from the high level of use observed during the Covid 19 pandemic. There are a few exceptions to this such as at Fiddich Park and Aberlour where numbers are either the same if not more than during Covid. This can be attributed to the upgrade improvement works along the Speyside Way. However, when comparing to 2019 there is still an upwards trend in Active Travel users on these leisure routes.



Aberlour - Fiddich Park

| Year | AADT | Growth D | AADT | Growth D |
|------|------|----------|------|----------|
| 2019 | 22 | | 56 | |
| 2020 | 33 | 50% | 70 | 25% |
| 2021 | 16 | -51.52% | 62 | -11.43% |
| 2022 | 34 | 112.50% | 106 | 70.97% |

Aberlour - Sewage

| Year | AADT | Growth D | AADT | Growth D |
|------|------|----------|------|----------|
| 2019 | 17 | | 92 | |
| 2020 | 33 | 94.12% | 93 | 1.09% |
| 2021 | 27 | -18.18% | 101 | 8.60% |
| 2022 | 26 | -3.70% | 96 | -4.95% |

Specific data for each counter can be found in Appendices 1 and 2 attached to this report. Where some months are marked with an * this is because of the counters failing, or the data having been corrupted.

All the above data feed into the below overall Council KPI's;

- KPI 1:** Modal share of active travel journeys to education
- KPI 2:** Modal share of active travel journeys to work
- KPI 3:** Number of active travel journeys recorded at fixed site counters
- KPI 4:** Length of new active travel routes developed on:
 - 1) Public Road Network
 - 2) Core Path Network

Year 1 Action Plan

The tasks for year 1 Action Plan were set based on the timescale from the ATS overall 5-year action plan. All tasks committed for completion by Q3 2023 were included in year 1. The progress on these actions is set out below. Further information on all of the actions can be found within the ATS.

The status of progress against each task has been rated using a Traffic Light system. The ratings are defined as follows:

BLUE Target achieved;

GREEN On track for achievement;

AMBER On track for achievement but with some delay or uncertainty;

Action 1 Further develop the Active Travel network

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/organisation/team |
|--|--------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| A) Identify network of routes, including the identification and integration of the Core Path Network, that connect communities where 'every day' journeys could be made by cycle or foot | Achieved | The network mapping of all adopted roads and crossings has been completed, and will be subject to regular updates. Continuous work is also ongoing to update the core path network. A copy of the mapping exercise has been shared with Transport Scotland. | Moray Council |
| B) Develop an online system where the public can identify new active travel routes and/or enhancement to existing routes, and promote its use. | Achieved | The online system is now live on the Council website, and is currently in use, supporting the LDP consultations. | Moray Council |

Action 2 Develop Active Travel Masterplans for key settlements in Moray

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/organisation/team |
|---|--------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| A) Identify key settlements based on population and current transport network that would benefit from a coordinated approach to Active Travel infrastructure provision, including cycle parking, based on the 20-minute neighbourhood concept | Achieved | 12 settlements all with a population of 1200 or over have been identified to have AT Masterplans. 8 have been delivered in 23/24 alongside the LDP consultations, and the following 4 will take place in the next year. This has been funded through the regional transport partner HITRANS. | Moray Council |

Action 4 Encourage and facilitate walking and cycling as leisure and tourist activities to provide benefits to health and local economy

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/organisation/team |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| A) Continue partnership working with local organisations Outfit Moray, NHS Grampian and Cycling UK Moray to organise events and activities to trial electric bikes, pedal bikes etc. to promote the health benefits of cycling and walking to residents and visitors to the area – Public Perception Survey to be undertaken on a bi-annual basis | On track for achievement | Work is ongoing with all partners on events and activities promoting Active Travel. Three Bike Fests have been held in Elgin, Aberlour and Forres with Outfit Moray and Cycling UK, Police Scotland and along with other partner organisations. The Public perception survey is currently in draft, and is aimed to be shared with the public in Nov 23. | Moray Council |

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/organisation/team |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| B) Develop a community engagement programme to link with national campaigns i.e. Walk to Work Week, Cycle to Work Week and Clean Air Day etc. | On track for achievement with risk of some delay | A community engagement programme is planned for 2024, due to be completed by end of 2023. This will be a manageable events programme for the public, with support from partners such as NHS, Sustrans, HITRANS, Cycling UK etc. | Moray Council |

Action 5 Provide new/improved cycle parking/ facilities at key destinations and transport interchanges in Moray

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/organisation/team |
|---|--------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| B) Determine locations for additional cycle parking at transport interchanges/key destinations, where appropriate in consultation with the landowner and/or surrounding businesses. | Achieved /Ongoing | The Participatory Budgeting trial projects in both Keith and Buckie, where cycle parking needs and locations were identified have now been completed. Through the LDP consultations for AT Masterplans, cycle parking demand in other communities will also be identified. | Moray Council |

Action 6 Work with local employers (including Moray Council) and their staff to encourage more walking and cycling to and from work

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/organisation/team |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| <p>A) Work with local employers to achieve Cycling Scotland’s “Cycle Friendly” employer status.</p> | <p>On track for achievement with risk of some delay</p> | <p>This task had been paused for the update work on the Sustainable Travel website to take priority.</p> <p>However, guidance and updates for employers will be published on the Council website by the end of FY year 23/24.</p> | <p>Moray Council</p> |
| <p>B) Provide support, guidance and assistance for employers to develop or review their Travel Plan. Cluster organisations and smaller businesses may be targeted for joint travel plans.</p> | <p>On track for achievement with risk of some delay</p> | <p>This task had been paused for the update work on the Sustainable Travel website to take priority.</p> <p>However, guidance and updates for employers will be published on the Council website by the end of FY year 23/24.</p> | <p>Moray Council</p> |
| <p>F) Encourage a member of Moray Council Senior Management to act as an ‘Active Travel Champion’ to demonstrate Council commitment to Active Travel.</p> | <p>Not commenced yet, rescheduled to Q1 2024</p> | | <p>Moray Council</p> |

Action 7 Work with students and school pupils, staff and parents to encourage more walking, cycling and scooting to and from school/ further education

| Task | Status of Progress | What was achieved | Lead Partner/ organisation/ team |
|--|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| G) Audits of safe routes to school will be carried out for all Moray schools within a 3 mile radius. | Achieved | Safer Route Audits have now been completed at three primary schools, Portknockie, Milnes and Cluny. A further 5 are scheduled for 23/24. This task will require input and support from the schools, and is supported by colleagues at Living Streets. Ongoing work on this programme is subject to external grant funding. | Moray Council |

Funding

All of the below projects (excluding the staff travel survey) have been funded externally through various funding streams. Below is a list of the funders and funding amounts so far this year;

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Paths for All, SCSP £90,200</p> | <p>HITRANS, Active Travel Improvements £36,000</p> |
| <p>HITRANS, Path improvement fund £25,000</p> | <p>Cycling Scotland, Bikeability £53,600</p> |
| <p>Cycling, Walking, Safer Routes, Transport Scotland £616,000</p> | <p>Sustrans, Network Development Team £169,742</p> |
| <p>Cycling Scotland, Pool Bikes and Bike Shelter £31,500</p> | <p>Places For Everyone, Sustrans £344,000</p> |

Activity during 2023

CWSR

The Cycling, Walking, Safer Routes (CWSR) fund is a ring-fenced capital grant from Transport Scotland and was established in 2001 for infrastructure projects. Allocations have been provided on an annual basis in recent years. The allocation for 2022/23 is £612,852, a significant increase on the 2021/22 allocation of £421,000.

The programme of works for this fund during FY 22/23 included the following projects;

Construction Projects -

- Thornhill Road, Elgin - Toucan Crossing
- Morriston Road, Elgin - Toucan Crossing
- Duff Place, Elgin - new footway at Bishopmill Primary School
- High Street (East End), Elgin - Footway widening
- B9010 Main Road, Rafford – Preparatory works for new Footway
- B9040 Forsyth Street, Hopeman - New Footway
- C25E Roseisle – New Footway

Design Projects -

- St Leonards Road, Forres – Traffic Calming
- Victoria Roundabout, Forres, Reallocation of road space
- Grant Drive, Forres – Raised Cycle Crossings
- Morriston Road, Elgin – Raised Cycle Crossings
- Lossie Wynd/ Commerce Street – Improvements to cycle and pedestrian infrastructure along the north and south links through the city centre (Options Appraisal)

There is an understanding that this fund will continue to increase significantly in coming years to align with commitments made for active travel to represent 10% of the Scottish Government's Transport Budget by 2024/25.



Moray Bothy

The Bothy, which is now in its second year, is continuously increasing opportunities for all living in Moray to become involved in walking and cycling for everyday local journeys. In March 2023 the Bothy held the successful launch of the 'Cooper Park Active Travel Hub' that was very well attended with an estimated 150 people engaged. The Hub is now beginning to take form and working well, and is open to the public three afternoons a week.



As well as the launch of the Hub, the bothy has delivered four led rides, nine cycle confidence sessions, five pop up events, two Dr Bike sessions and seven Bike loans. Some of the led rides have taken place with Elgin Youth Café, Asylum Seekers and Spinal Injuries Scotland. The adult cycle training sessions have mainly been offered alongside bike loans. This is a 2- hour session allowing participants to get to know the bikes, maintenance checks, road positioning, riding in traffic, right of way and bike security. This is completed in advance of the bike loan ensuring that loanees are equipped with the skills they need. Bike loans have mainly been done from the Hub in Cooper Park and the Peoplehood container at Buckie. Most now start with a come and try session at one of the locations and if they think it is something they would use a bike loan is arranged.

Below is feedback shared from a participant of the Bike loan scheme;

"As well as the very positive impact on motivating me to cycle more and drive less, my partner, who had not been on a bike for over two years has had his interest in an e-bike rekindled having also borrowed the one I had. Due to age-related health issues, he has been limited him to a one hour walk a day, but the use of the e-bike had him out for 2 x 2-hour cycles in one day and able to go much further than previously which has had an immediate impact on his wellbeing and mental health. He is now making plans to get an E-bike as he sees the many benefits for his health, and it will also mean he can make short journeys by E-bike and not car".

Recruitment of volunteers has been low so far, but this is a priority for the project and a plan for recruitment is currently being developed which is hoped will bring success over the forthcoming project year.

HITRANS

In February 2023 HITRANS funded monitoring counters were installed at Belts Road. The corner of the Belts Road, C19E Scotstoun Hill to Fernyfield Road, was built up during the building of the new roundabout and this has caused a lack of visibility of vehicles coming from the other direction. It is being considered whether or not to close this road off to vehicular traffic, as it is a narrow road currently used as a short cut. This will enable cyclists and pedestrians using the Elgin to Lhanbryde Cycle Path to move freely across the public road. The monitoring equipment will show how all users (ped/ cyclists/vehicles) are interacting, and will inform how any scheme is brought forward and what kind of intervention is required.

In March 2023 HITRANS also funded the purchase of a new 40ft container to support the expansion of the Moray Bothy programme. Previously, the bothy was run without a physical location so was not as easily visible, accessible or centrally located. There are now two shipping containers, based in Cooper Park Elgin, which allows the public better access to come borrow and try out bikes free of charge.

Spey Viaduct NCN1

In January 2023, funding of £98,131 was secured through the Sustrans Network Development team to do upgrade works along the NCN1 from Garmouth car park to the Spey viaduct. This is a popular walking and cycling route for both residents and visitors, and this section of the route had been highlighted as a hazard and danger for both pedestrians and cyclists through the ATS consultation. The total length of path resurfaced was 688m. This also included the removal of tree roots. There will be two additional phases to this project where the path will continue to be resurfaced and any tree roots



removed. This will be split into sections; from the Viaduct to the junction with the Speyside Way route (phase 2) which is 302m, and finally from the Speyside Way to the B9104 (phase 3), which is 343m. Phase 2 works began mid October and is hoped to be completed by the Christmas holidays. This is again fully funded by Sustrans costing £71,742, and Phase 3 will aim to be completed before Q1 of FY 24/25 at a cost of £54,156.

Forres Academy Roysvale and Burdshaugh

A number of different studies (Forres 2020 Vision; Forres Active Travel Audit (Feb 2012); Moray Council Active Travel Route Feasibility Study for Forres (March 2019) and Moray Local Development Plan 2020) identified routes around Forres which would enhance the active travel network. The Forres – Forres Academy, Roysvale and Burdshaugh improvement scheme was identified by analysing where people were walking and cycling from to get to the schools in Forres.

The footbridge across the Burn of Mosset was replaced by Springfield Properties in early 2020, as part of their planning obligations to provide a suitable link to Forres Academy from new developments in the south of Forres. An opportunity arose for the Council to further enhance the route to Forres Academy and Applegrove School through a funding application to Sustrans Places for Everyone grant fund. A total of £422,000 was awarded to design, develop and construct new cycle track and footways linking Applegrove primary and Forres Academy with residential areas through the south and west of Forres.

Construction completed in July 2023 and has further joined up the active travel network in Forres, as the shared use path now provides a safer direct link to both Forres Academy and Applegrove Primary from the surrounding residential areas encouraging pupils to walk or cycle to the school. The shared use path also links the community and residents of surrounding areas to The Forres Swimming Pool and fitness centre, which thereby encouraging a modal shift to active travel journeys.



Visualisation of how scheme would look



Completed scheme

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a way for people to directly vote on how money should be spent. During 2023/24 a pilot project was trialled in Keith and Buckie using Participatory Budgeting to expand the community network related to active travel, and allocate the budget available for cycle parking and repair station infrastructure. The reason for choosing this focus was based on public and stakeholder feedback from the draft Active Travel Strategy (ATS), received March 2022). Cycle parking and repair station infrastructure emerged as a priority in the feedback, and would be deliverable within this year's budget.

The overall budget for this pilot project was £50k, and was split equally between both communities at £25k each. A local stakeholder group was set up for each area and consultation events with the public took place, both in person and online, throughout February – May. The Buckie PB was completed following the final public votes on preferred cycle parking and location. A tender process was undertaken and Broxap were awarded the contract. Installation of all cycle parking and repair stations in Buckie are due to begin works mid-November and completed by the end of the month.

The pilot project in Keith is also currently in progress, and works have now gone out to tender. Due to delivery and installation timescales, work is not expected to take place until January 2024.

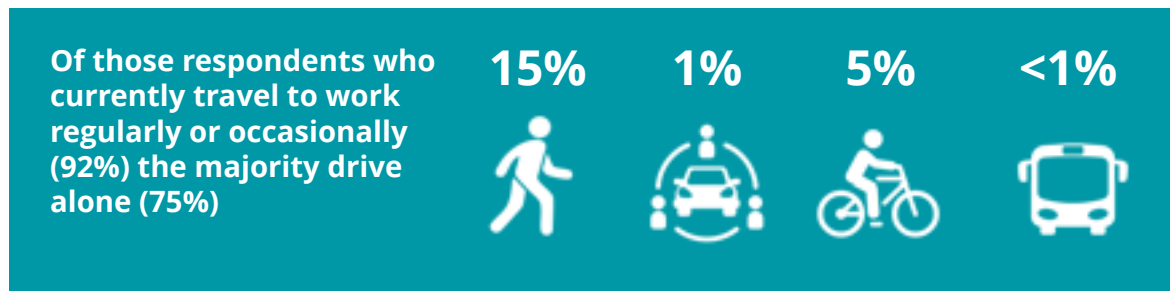
Staff Travel Survey

As part of Moray Council Staff Travel Plan, employees were invited to complete a travel survey throughout May 2023. The Council Travel Plan was renewed in 2021 and the first staff travel survey was undertaken to see how the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way staff travel to/from work and on council business and how they may travel once all restrictions were lifted. As part of the ongoing monitoring and review programme and with seeing a return to office and hybrid based working, a repeat staff travel survey was held for all employees based at HQ and Annexe. This enables a greater understanding of how staff travel to work, and when undertaking council business, as well as finding out what would make alternative options more attractive.

In total, 237 staff responded to the survey. 167 respondents were based at Moray Council Headquarters and/or the HQ Annexe, which provides a survey response rate for the two locations of 20%.



Key findings from the survey were:



The main reasons for the choice of respondents' mode of travel are convenience/flexibility; distance between home and work; and lack of viable travel alternatives.

The data will be used to identify any new opportunities that will benefit staff behaviours. It will also show trends in travel, commuting behaviour and is a good tool for measuring and comparing results when carried out on a regular basis. The data will also be shared with colleagues managing the 'Smarter Working' project to help deliver excellent services and support flexible and hybrid working.

Staff Pool Bikes

The Climate Change and Active Travel Strategy, and Council Travel Plan have all set targets and actions to increase cycling/walking rates and reduce CO2 emissions. As staff are now largely either hybrid or fully office working, many staff have already reduced the amount of travel to work. It was a good time to encourage employees to make those short business trips by bike to reduce car journeys, as well as improving health and well-being. Whilst there are some longer distance journeys being made for business purposes with pool cars, there a number of trips that are under 5km that can be swapped to bike.

In late 2022 an application was made to Cycling Scotland's 'Cycle friendly employer' fund for grant funding towards a new fleet of staff pool bikes. The old feet was over 6 years old and in need of replacing to try and encourage more engagement and use of the pool bike scheme. Once the grant was awarded two new electric bikes and six standard push bikes were purchased, as well as a new bike shelter in Jan 2023 to accommodate them. The new bikes have waterproof panniers, locks, helmets, and lights provided to assist staff in their journeys



The Launch of the pool bikes took place on Wednesday 17th May, and was well attended by staff and councillors. The launch included a staff led ride, as well as the opportunity to find out how to use the ebikes and a general Q&A session.

To achieve an increase in cycling, there are plans to provide further staff led rides to give staff knowledge of local cycling routes, offer cycle confidence sessions (1:1 or group sessions) and offer Dr Bike checks to provide staff with good maintenance skills and knowledge to use the bikes.

Staff make approximately 2,500 miles for business travel every month by car. The aim is to replace between 2.5% and 5% of those miles to cycling through the pool bike scheme. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will take place bi-annually of the uptake of the pool bike scheme.



School Engagement

Living Streets Travel Tracker Programme

This is the eighth year that WOW – The year-round walk to school challenge and the WOW Travel Tracker have been used in primary schools across Moray Council. By the end of June 2023, there were 20 schools in Moray registered in the WOW programme with 19 tracking at over 10% engagement. Two new schools have joined the programme during the year, making it the most successful year of the programme so far. This year saw 3980 children engaged in the project, 106,272 sustainable and active travel journeys made as well as 2031 children choosing to walk or cycle to school.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2021 - 22 17 schools registered | 2022 - 23 20 schools registered | |
| 3674 1800 regularly engaged | 3980 2308 regularly engaged | The number of children engaged in the project |
| 87,043 journeys counting towards badges for the period | 106,272 journeys counting towards badges for the period | The number of sustainable and active travel journeys |
| 1% increase | 0% Change | Modal shift compared to previous year |
| 1584 children | 2031 children | The number of people choosing to walk or cycle |

This year the Living Streets school coordinator has continued to support established and newly engaged schools to use the Travel Tracker through a variety of means.

These include:

- Strider visits
- School assemblies
- Parental engagement at schools
- Walk to School Week resources and support.
- School route audit activities
- Active travel zone maps

The Living Streets mascot, Strider, has visited seven schools in Moray this year. The visits included Moray Council's climate change event at Milne's Primary school; assemblies at Lhanbryde Primary and Bishopmill Primary; school gate events, including road safety week, at Linkwood Primary, New Elgin Primary and Mosstodloch Primary; and line dancing at Findochty Primary, Bishopmill Primary and at the launch of the Cooper Park Active Travel Hub.



Park Smart

Park Smart is a Road Safety and Active Travel initiative that aims to reduce congestion and improve safety at the school gate. The purpose of Park Smart is to get parents to think about their behaviour whilst actively promoting walking to school or park and stride as the easier, safer and most stress-free option. School gate parking is an area of concern across many schools in Moray that affects the safety and well-being of both Adult and Child pedestrians and cyclists alike by blocking sight lines and increased pollution.

Park Smart is a flexible initiative that can be run on a cyclical basis i.e. re-run when or if congestion problems return, and is supported by colleagues at Police Scotland. The programme currently runs on a three-week basis and covers raising awareness, enforcement and then evaluation on the final week.

This year Park Smart has run successfully at three separate schools, Bishopmill, Greenwards and Mosstodloch. Each school produces a short evaluation report with the findings of the initiative, and pledges to develop a School Travel Plan upon completion. Each of the schools reported a reduction in congestion around the school gates, with some being significantly more than others. However, all reported an increase in active trips and a decrease in non-active trips in the immediate period following the initiative.

Safe Route Audits

Living Streets staff, along with school staff and pupils, completed School Route Audits at three schools, Cluny, Milne’s and Portknockie Primary. The Living Streets School Route Audit (SRA) methodology is a way of effectively involving pupils, parents, and other community stakeholders in the process of evaluating the quality of the walking environment around schools. SRAs explore the walking routes to schools from the viewpoint of current and prospective users. With Living Streets staff acting as facilitators, the groups considered different audit categories including crossing points, facilities and signage, traffic issues, places to play and socialise and footway conditions. The findings from these audits will help feed into future infrastructure improvements around schools, and help to inform the Cycling, Walking Safer Routes (CWSR) spend.

Bikeability

Bikeability Scotland is the national cycle training programme for schoolchildren. It is designed to give children the skills and confidence they need to cycle safely on the roads, and to encourage them to carry on cycling into adulthood. Just like learning to swim, learning to cycle safely is an essential life skill.

Outfit Moray delivers Bikeability across schools in Moray on behalf of Moray Council, through annual funding provided by Cycling Scotland. Without this funding it would not be possible to deliver this essential skill to pupils across Moray. However, with the increasing costs yearly of resources, transport and delivery, Outfit Moray absorbed additional costs in both 21/22 and 22/23 to enable delivery. In the long term, this is not sustainable if it is expected to achieve the ATS target of 95% of all schools delivering L2 Bikeability by 2027.

| | 21/22 | 22/23 |
|----------------------|------------|------------|
| Total Schools | 30 | 31 |
| Total pupils | 955 | 940 |

In 22/23 Bikeability level 2 was delivered to 31 of the 45 primary schools, engaging with a total of 940 pupils. This is slightly down on last year, despite still being on target), but is a result of a reduction in the number of funded co-ordinator hours for Outfit Moray, and at times a reduction and lack of volunteers/ school staff, willing or allowed, to support the programme. It is essential that schools support delivery of Bikeability to reduce costs so targets can be achieved.

Cycle Parking Infrastructure

Following a successful application to Cycling Scotland for cycle parking infrastructure for Speyside High School, an Anti-Vandal Wardale Cycle Shelter was purchased and installed by Broxap. The shelter has a capacity for up to 14 cycles, and as there was previously no cycle parking facility at the school, this was a barrier impacting on young people being able to cycle to and from school. As well as serving the school, the cycle parking will also be available to users of the Speyside Community centre that is located on the same campus.

School Travel Plans

Schools across Moray are encouraged to develop their own School Travel Plan (STP). A STP can include a range of measures. Raising awareness is often one of the main things that this can do. This might mean raising awareness of road safety, the benefits of active travel or how transport impacts the environment. The need for travel plans has arisen due to growing concerns over:

- Increasing congestion associated with the 'school run'.
- Pupil health concerns and lack of exercise.
- Children's reduced opportunities to gain important road sense and independence.
- Road safety issues and concerns partly generated by school run related traffic.

Currently there are four schools developing their Travel Plan, but no school has an up to date Travel Plan document. This is not a mandatory requirement, and therefore schools do not always have the time or resource available, so do not see this as a priority task. In order to address the concerns above it is important that schools support the development of a School Travel Plan.

Active Travel Masterplans

Work on the review of the Moray Local Development Plan started this year, and is expected to be adopted in 2027. The LDP will shape how land and buildings are used over the next 10-20 years, which affects people's lives including work, travel, and access to open space, play and health. As part of the LDP, work has begun alongside colleagues in planning to develop local Active Travel Masterplans through community engagement. Since March 23, eight community events have been held in Forres, Aberlour, Dufftown, Elgin, Lossie, Fochabers, Keith and Buckie. Through these events, feedback has been gathered from the public on where there are missing links in the active travel network and where improvements can be made. This includes new routes, improvements on existing routes, cycle parking infrastructure and any behaviour change ideas. The 2nd phase of this project will be drafting up all the information received and putting together a short masterplan document for each community.



Bike Fest

As part of the development of the programme of community events, this year three 'Bike Fests' were held alongside the Moray Bothy and delivered by Cycling UK. They were delivered in Elgin, Forres and Aberlour. Outfit Moray, Bike Revolution, Tyred N Cranky and Police Scotland

supported the events. The events had Dr Bike sessions, a skills course, led rides, ebike try-outs and the opportunity to register your bike for free through 'Bike Registration' with Police Scotland. The events were well attended and engaged with over 400 people.



Speyside Challenge

Following on from the success of last year's Speyside Challenge, it returned for the second time this September. The challenge is about encouraging users of the Speyside Way to take up the challenge throughout the whole of September, and promotion of the Speyside Low Carbon Hub. The challenge itself is to log the most distance covered, or the most journeys, by foot or bike, on the popular route that is now part of the Speyside Low Carbon Hub, to be in with a chance of winning one of eight prizes. The challenge is free to join and allows participants to challenge themselves personally or compete within a workplace.

This year saw participants logging a total of 2,427kms, almost 100kms more than last year. And a total of 236 journeys were recorded, with 35 challengers involved. The challenge helps to promote an important active travel route that can reduce carbon emissions from daily travel.

| | | | |
|------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 2022 | 2,354km travelled | 206 journeys | 306kg CO ² saved |
| 2023 | 2,427km travelled | 236 journeys | 316kg CO ² saved |

There were twelve prize-winners all in receipt of Moray Loves Local gift vouchers. See all results at www.speysidechallenge.com

Priorities for the Year Ahead

The Scottish Government announced increased funding for active travel in its draft budget proposal for 2023-24, with almost £190m allocated for active travel. It was also agreed that at least £320m or 10% of the total transport budget would be allocated to Active Travel by 2024-25.

This year saw the introduction of Transport Scotland's new Active Travel Transformation Fund. The Active Travel Transformation Fund has a budget of £20million.

The 2023/24 Transformation Fund included funding available to partners:

- to support the delivery of eligible construction-ready AT schemes in 2023/24, and as a secondary aim
- to support those unsuccessful in applying for additional budget to deliver construction-ready projects in 2023/24 to progress towards successful applications in future years, helping to ensure that a wider pipeline of projects is being developed ahead of the budget commitment for 2024/25.

As the funding for 23/24 was prioritising construction and 'shovel ready' projects, a decision was taken to not take forward an application this year. There are currently a number of completed designs for medium size projects ready to take forward, so work is ongoing in putting together pipeline projects for the coming years through this fund. Below is a list of some of the larger pipeline projects, which may be constructed through this new funding stream in future years;

- Forres, Market Street roundabout - Road Space reallocation to pedestrians and cyclists
- Dufftown, Maltkiln Bridge - New footbridge on existing walking route, so pedestrians do not have to walk on the carriageway.
- Lossiemouth, Coularbank Road - Safety, convenience and connecting communities: from North Covesea Terrace through to the high school there is no proper connection in terms of a safe cycle and pedestrian path. Two options: a segregated track parallel to Coularbank Road on its south flank, or widening South Covesea Terrace to allow for adding a wide enough shared path, which then bends south to the high school.

The newly developed **Active Travel Prioritisation Tool** will also be key in future years when considering any new active travel infrastructure schemes or interventions, such as cycle lanes, shared pathways and controlled crossings. Schemes taken forward will be subject to the scoring outcome from the tool as well as budget availability and officer capacity.

The CWSR grant fund for 23/24 will be split across six infrastructure projects in 23/24 and five design projects. These include;

Construction

- Lang Walk, Elgin – Footway widening
- Coularbank Road, Lossiemouth - Toucan crossing
- Fochabers, Pedestrian Island upgrades
- B9010, Rafford – New Footway
- C225E, Roseisle – New Footway
- War memorial, Garmouth – New Footway

Design

- Victoria roundabout and St Catherines Road, Forres – Reallocation of roadspace
- St Leonards Road, Forres – Build out to assist pedestrians crossing the road
- Coularbank Road, Lossiemouth – Cycle track design options
- Barhill Road/ Golfview Drive, Buckie – Road spaces reallocation
- Linkwood Road, Elgin – Pedestrian island

Some of the work on these projects is likely to continue into financial year 2024/25.

HITRANS Funding

Through HITRANS funding for 23/24 it is planned to make improvements on an active travel route on Turner Street, Keith linking to the hospital. There are concerns of safety on this route due to anti-social behaviour and a lack of lighting. Therefore, new LED lighting will be installed along this section to improve safety of pedestrians. Completion of the Active Travel Masterplans for all the communities consulted with through the LDP review is planned for the end of FY 23/24.

A new path improvement fund has become available through Transport Scotland, administered by HITRANS which will help to improve existing local paths within and between communities, improving the usability and accessibility of paths for more people. An application was successful in securing £25,000 for 23/24 and through this fund both the Alexandra Road underpass in Elgin, and an 800m section of the Elgin – Lossie cycle path near Spynie Woods will be resurfaced. The Alexandra Road path is a busy Active Travel route used by both pedestrians and cyclists to access public transport connections at Elgin Bus Station. It also allows the public to avoid crossing the A96 to access the town centre. This will make the route suitable for wheelchair users, pushchairs, and less able users. The Elgin – Lossie cycle track is a popular commuting route linking two communities, giving the public access to jobs and public transport connections. Improving this section will make the path more accessible to more people for walking, wheeling and cycling.

School Engagement

Support for nineteen primary schools in Moray will be available to participate in WOW for the 2023/24 session. In addition, it is planned to carry out five school route audits, as well as developing seven active travel zone leaflets, and running the Park Smart initiative at four schools during the 2023/24 session.

In addition, this year one secondary school will be supported with a 1-day event focussing on S1 and S2 pupils. This will take place in May 2024 during senior pupils' exam leave. Information will be sent to a number of secondary schools to gauge interest in participating.

Bikeability

For the school year 23/24, a successful application was made to Cycling Scotland to continue to deliver Bikeability level 2 across schools in Moray. Despite a reduction by a third in the budget for Bikeability, an award of £57,576 was received, £4,000 more than 22/23. This will allow delivery of Level 2 to 35 primary schools across Moray and engagement with over 875 pupils.

Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP)

Moray Council will continue to grow the wide programme of activities that provides opportunities for sustainable and active travel for all. The programme for 23/24 will offer a variety of schemes to target different population groups. This year will again see the continued use of Travel Tracker/WoW in schools, delivered in partnership with Living Streets. It is also planned to work directly with whole school communities and local partners such as Outfit Moray, as well Moray Councils Climate Change team, to roll out further active and sustainable travel activities and events such as Bike Doctor sessions delivered alongside the Bikeability programme, as well as school events and assemblies that promote Active Travel. Additional events will be held to expand the 'Moray Bothy Project' will be delivered by Cycling UK, where the Bothy bikes will be available for use in other communities across Moray. Continued promotion for the Council's Demand Responsive Transport bus service to run a Saturday service operating in the Forres area will be ongoing to encourage use of sustainable transport in rural Moray. These initiatives will result in a measurable increase in the number of active and sustainable travel journeys made, where walking, cycling and bus usage is a mode of choice for local journeys across Moray.

