

14.1 Walking as One Mode of Travel

Improvement Project Title: Walking as One Mode of Travel
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Aim statement Increase % of people who walk as one mode of travel by 10% by 2023.
Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan: Stretch Outcome 14 Increase Sustainable Travel: - 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026. Linked also linked to the following LOIP Improvement Projects: Stretch Outcome 11 (Healthy Life Expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support 50 low income families in priority neighbourhood to improve eating behaviours and adopt positive lifestyle choices to help towards a healthy weight by 2023. • Refer 20% of people living with COPD or other respiratory conditions into specific PR physical activity and other support programmes delivered in community settings by 2023. Stretch Outcome 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase % of people who cycle as one mode of travel by 2% by 2023. Supporting strategies include: National Transport Strategy - Currently being refreshed with strong focus on active travel Regional Transport Strategy – Currently being refreshed with strong focus on active travel Local Transport Strategy Nestrans Active Travel strategy – Currently being refreshed as part of new Regional Transport Strategy. Grampian Health and Transport Action Plan – This plan aims to develop a social prescribing project and/or support for them. Aberdeen City Council - Active Travel Strategy Core Paths Plan Civitas Portis Sustainable Transport EU project SUMP – Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan City Centre Masterplan Health Walks – There are many health walks already happening, so encouragement of more participation City Walking Trails – There are many great City Trails and leaflets for these available, promote these widely and encourage people to try them. Transport Scotland – Transport Transition Plan – outlining the approach to travel and transport during the Covid-19 global pandemic and the easing of lockdown.
Link to Locality Plans This project has community ideas from the North and Central locality Plans aligned to it.
Why this is important and issues with the current system?

Benefit to community will be a model shift in travel from cars (motorised vehicles) to more active forms of transport such as cycling and walking. This will improve air quality, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, improve public health and make Aberdeen a nicer place to be, due to reduced congestion, reduced pollution and a healthier population.

Walking is one of the easiest forms of exercise for those that are able and is a cheap way to travel.

There are many projects, plans and work ongoing to increase the amount of walking in Aberdeen, with lots of good walking routes and health walks available in Aberdeen. Aberdeen already has high walking rates comparable with other European Cities. This improvement project is to encourage walking and promote the large number of resources, health walks and walking trails and routes that are already available to see if it increases the number of people walking and helps overcome the barriers to walking.

During the Covid-19 global pandemic, the number of people walking, particularly for leisure as part of daily exercise, has been much more visible and has increased on the pedestrian counters that are installed at various locations across the city. This project should try to encourage continuing this increase in walking for health and leisure, as well as accessing services such as shopping during the easing of lockdown and beyond. Whilst continuing to promote the government guidelines.

This project will actively encourage and signpost people to existing resources such as walking routes and health walks available. This will be done through Health walk co-ordinators, Link workers, as well as other public and third sector organisations, promotional materials and social media.

Below is some research on the barriers to walking.

[National survey of attitudes and barriers to walking in Scotland – Paths for all, 2019](#)

[Barriers and Facilitators to Recreational Walking: An Evidence Review – University of Edinburgh, Physical Activity for Health Research Centre \(PAHRC\) October 2019](#)

The review identified 12 critical factors that can act as barriers and/or facilitators to recreational walking. Organised by the levels of the Ecological framework, these were:

Individual Factors:

Ill-health and poor health status, Awareness of health and well-being benefits, Knowledge of routes and options, Existing negative attitudes to walking, Experience of walking and sense of achievement, and Practicalities and expectations of walking and walking ability.

Social Environment Factors:

Companionship and Social deprivation

Physical Environment Factors:

Scenery and landscapes, Natural environment, Accessibility and access, and Safety

[The Scottish Health and Inequality Impact Assessment Network \(SHIAN\) report – Health and Transport: A Guide 2018](#)

Key actions which could help overcome these barriers and address the critical factors above could include; promotional of walking as a healthy activity, good maintenance of path network, encouraging walking as part of the 'build back better' approach of the Covid-19 pandemic and easing of lockdown, encourage walking for health, through health walks, park benches at regular intervals to allow people to rest if required. Easy to access toilet stops along the routes. Access

to water along the routes. Ensure lighting and CCTV where appropriate are installed and maintained.

Measures:

Outcome Measures:

% of people who walk as one mode of travel (baseline 81% in 2020)

Process Measures:

- Number of pedestrians recorded at pedestrian counters installed across the city.
- Number of people accessing walking trails information
- Number of people taking part in Health Walks
- Number of Health Walks in the Localities
- Number of people accessing the Scarf telephone helpline, receiving advice/signposting for active travel.
- Change in 'hands up' survey that happens once a year in schools
- Number of park benches on key walking routes
- Number of publicly available toilets
- Number of water bottle refill points
- Campaign analytics from promotion campaign test

Change ideas

- Promote walking through social media, media releases and paid for advertising (if budget allows) as a good alternative mode of travel.
- Use the current Scarf/ Energy Saving Trust advice helpline to disseminate information and signposting to active travel and record the number of these interactions.
- Work with communities to highlight key walking routes that could have an increase in benches to allow rest stops along a route. Once identified install some low maintenance park benches and publicise these locations. (North & Central LP)
- Work with local businesses and public and third sector organisations to have a publicised range of locations for people to be able to use as toilet stops when out and about. (Similar to Aberdeenshire Council's comfort partnership). (North LP)
- Work with local businesses and public and third sector organisations to have a publicised range of locations for people to refill water bottles. (North LP)
- Work with existing groups and communities to co-produce a list of all existing such as health walks and walking tours and undertake targeted promotion of these in the localities and promote to organisations supporting people (North & Central LPs)

Location/Test Group

The location for the tests of change initially is likely to be in the Middlefield area of Aberdeen in the North Locality. Initial thoughts after speaking to the Community Connector, are to promote the existing health walk in Woodside and to see if there is interest in developing another health walk in the Middlefield area. We also plan to promote the new walking routes being developed as part of the Haudagain works once they are completed.

Resources

Stuart Bews from the external funding team has been contacted in regard to potential funding for some of the change ideas e.g. benches.

Potential risks and/or barriers to success & actions to address these

- Lack of community engagement (in provision and uptake)
- Difficulty sourcing funds (e.g. benches, promotional material)
- Unable to accurately monitor or collect data
- Covid-19 restrictions

Project Team:

Kelly Wiltshire, Nestrans, Jon Barron, Nestrans, Joanna Murray, Aberdeen City Council, Alan Simpson, Aberdeen City Council, Andrew Stewart (Health and Transport Action Plan Manager), Jillian Evans, NHS Grampian, Joanne Riach, NHS Grampian, Katie Reekie, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, David Selkirk, Sport Aberdeen and Chris Rae, Scarf. Angela Newlands, Farrands, North Locality community connector.

Community Ideas for Improvement Evaluation/Status

Community Ideas for Improvement	Evaluation Rationale
North	Connecting with localities Form submitted on 24/8/21 and Angela Newlands, Farrands, identified as community connector. Project Lead Kelly Wiltshire and project team member Jon Barron met with Angela Newlands on 7 September 2021 via Teams to discuss potential projects.
Build on learning during lockdown – encourage more “walk and talks” encouraging others from across the locality to adopt a similar approach.	Promotion of all walking/jogging groups will be undertaken as part of promotion change idea,
Encourage more buggy walks and similar approaches across generations.	Further discussion required to explore this idea.
Promote facilities on walking routes, i.e. accessible for wheelchairs; toilets on route, etc in local area.	This is a change idea for the project.
Promote and upgrade local paths, e.g. Northfield to Bucksburn.	Promotion of local paths and walking routes is a change idea for the project.
Work together to promote all the walking/jogging groups in the local area.	Promotion of all walking/jogging groups will be undertaken as part of promotion change idea, this includes walks by other organisations e.g. current Sport Aberdeen Health Walk at Woodside and encourage participation
Promote new walking routes around Haudagain development.	Included in existing change ideas, once the new paths are built as part of the Haudagain works are built, these will be promoted.
Promote local walks in community magazines.	Promotion of walking groups will be undertaken as part of promotion change idea and we’d look for that promotion to be in local magazines etc and locality support on identifying those comms routes beneficial.
Development of Heathryfold woodland area.	This is outwith the scope of the project at present and would require significant resourcing. Further discussion required on idea.

Offer Paths for all training to build on network of Health Walks.	Further discussion required to explore this idea.
Work together to promote all the walking/jogging groups in the local area. (Health Walks/Over 50s network).	Work will be undertaken to identify these and help to promote them.
Develop a 'Park Walk' for those not keep on the Park Run.	Further discussion required to explore this idea.
South	There are no community ideas for improvement from the South locality aligned to this project.
	Currently working with Katie Reekie from Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership and member of the project team to develop Health Walks at RGU and encourage staff and students at RGU to undertake Walk leader training and volunteer on health walks.
Central	Connecting with localities Form submitted on 24/8/21 and community connection awaited.
Increase prevalence of benches to enable people to sit outside and rest whilst walking.	Existing change idea for the project.
Raise awareness of various walking groups and connect people into them.	Existing change idea for the project.
Encourage pedestrian first policy.	This aligns with the aim of the project and throughout ideas aim to encourage walking.
Street Design – delivery of improved safety at the underpass	This is outwith the scope of the project at present and would require significant resourcing. Further discussion required on idea.

Outline Project Plan – Active Travel Walking		
Project Stage	Actions	Timescale (may be delayed due to Covid-19 pandemic)
Getting Started (Project Score 1-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable City Group research into Active Travel • Sustainable City group have a workshop to come up with change ideas and complete a driver diagram • A project team is compiled • Project Charter Drafted 	September 2019 to July 2020
Designing and Testing Changes (Project Score 4-7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project charter endorsed by Sustainable City Group 	August to December 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate potential funding to help develop the projects 	
Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement (Project Score 7-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate and measure using all available data • Promote and publicise walking and walking projects 	January to April 2022
Spreading Changes (Project Score 9-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further promote walking, the case studies and all the resources available. 	April to July 2022