

15.2 Active Travel Walking Project

Improvement Project Title: Active Travel Walking project
Executive Sponsor: Jillian Evans, NHS Grampian
Project Lead: Kelly Wiltshire, Nestrans Email address: kwiltshire@nestrans.org.uk
Aim statement Increase % of people who walk as main mode of travel to 31% by 2021.
Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan: Key Driver - Stretch Outcome 15 of the LOIP is directly related to this project charter and is about increasing active travel rates - 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026 15.1 Supporting different ways for active travel in everyday journeys, using partners and volunteers to address safety, infrastructure, fitness, well-being and confidence. Increase % of people who walk as main mode of travel to 38% by 2026. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Baseline: % of people who walk as main mode of travel (Baseline 2017: 28% – Scottish Household Survey) % of people who cycle as main mode of travel (Baseline 2017: 2.4% – Scottish Household Survey) % of people using active travel for work (Baseline 2017: 26.1% – Scottish Household Survey)• 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026• Reduce? NOx and PM10 levels in areas with greatest air quality issues: PM10 levels: Anderson Drive Wellington Road City Centre Supporting strategies include: <u>National Transport Strategy</u> - Currently being refreshed with strong focus on active travel <u>Regional Transport Strategy</u> – Currently being refreshed with strong focus on active travel <u>Local Transport Strategy</u> <u>Nestrans Active Travel strategy</u> – Currently being refreshed as part of new Regional Transport Strategy. <u>Grampian Health and Transport Action Plan</u> – This plan aims to develop a social prescribing project and/or support for them. <u>Aberdeen City Council - Active Travel Strategy</u> <u>Core Paths Plan</u> <u>Civitas Portis Sustainable Transport EU project</u> <u>SUMP – Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan</u> <u>City Centre Masterplan</u> <u>Health Walks</u> – There are many health walks already happening, so encouragement of more participation <u>City Walking Trails</u> – There are many great City Trails and leaflets for these available, promote these widely and encourage people to try them. Transport Scotland – <u>Transport Transition Plan</u> – outlining the approach to travel and transport during the Covid-19 global pandemic and the easing of lockdown.

Business case

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 shopping during the easing of lockdown and beyond. Whilst continuing to promote the government guidelines in terms of physical distancing and meeting with people outside of your household. It should also try and help those who have been shielding, to walk for exercise if they are able to.

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

Aberdeen City Council were successful in their bid for 'Spaces for People' funding to encourage walking and cycling and to encourage Physical Distancing by widening footpaths and creating extra space for walking and cycling. This should allow people to feel safe and encourage walking as a healthy activity.

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, ensuring that physical distancing is available on footpaths with high footfall through the ‘Spaces for People’ programme, encouraging walking as part of the ‘build back better’ approach of the Covid-19 pandemic and easing of lockdown, working with GP practices to encourage walking for health, gritting of path network, 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:

- Increase in number of pedestrians recorded at pedestrian counters installed across the city. Data is being updated regularly as part of Spaces for People project
- Number of GP practices signed up to encouraging walking
- Increase numbers of people taking part in Health Walks (when guidance is given and is safe to do so)
- 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
- Scottish Household Survey results on travel
- Census data (after next census)
- Increase in number of park benches on key walking routes
- Increase in availability of publicly available toilets
- Increase availability of water bottle refill points

Change ideas

- Promote walking through social media, media releases and paid for advertising (if budget allows) as a good alternative mode of travel during the easing of lock down restrictions. <https://news.aberdeencity.gov.uk/people-asked-to-keep-up-the-fantastic-walking-and-cycling-habits-from-lockdown/>
- Promote the ‘Spaces for People’ projects being put in place to widen foot paths to encourage walking and physical distancing throughout main thoroughfares in the city.
- Sign up (initially one) GP practice in the City that would like to become a ‘Walking’ practice that encourages walking where possible and will actively sign patients to existing opportunities such as health walks and walking trails in the city. GPs and link workers based within GP practices are well placed to encourage walking for health and their participation has been crucial in other successful ‘social prescribing’ projects across the country. <http://www.healthscotland.scot/publications/social-prescribing-resources>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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). • Work with local businesses and public and third sector organisations to have a publicised range of locations for people to refill water bottles. • Work with existing events to promote walking and walking tours
<p>Potential Barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of uptake from GP practices • 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
<p>Project Team:</p> <p>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, Anna Gale, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, David Selkirk, Sport Aberdeen and Chris Rae, Scarf. There is no GP representation at present as one of the change idea’s to recruit GP’s and GP’s surgeries to take part.</p>

Outline Project Plan – Active Travel Walking		
Project Stage	Actions	Timescale (may be delayed due to Covid-19 pandemic)
<p>Getting Started (Project Score 1-3)</p>	<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 	<p>September 2019 to July 2020</p>
<p>Designing and Testing Changes (Project Score 4-7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project charter endorsed by CPA • Develop relationships and 	<p>August to December 2020</p>

	<p>encourage pilot GP practices to take part in the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull together information on all the current resources such as 'Spaces for People' project, health walks and walking routes • Investigate potential funding to help develop the project 	
<p>Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement (Project Score 7-10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create case studies of the GP practices that have taken part • Collate and measure using all available data • Promote and publicise walking and walking projects 	<p>January to April 2021</p>
<p>Spreading Changes (Project Score 9-10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the project further within the current GP Practices • Encourage other GP practices to sign up using the previous examples to promote • Further promote walking, the case studies and all the resources available. 	<p>April to July 2021</p>