
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

Mid Argyll Kintyre and the Islands

**DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH**

and HITRANS Regional Active Travel Fund. Further funding has been secured for some projects via local community organisations and from willing businesses. It is recognised at a national level that the Active Travel Team in Argyll and Bute Council secure significantly more funding, and subsequently deliver more projects, than similar staffed teams in other Local Authorities and/or local authorities with similar populations.

- 1.7. Transport Scotland have informed Officers that, as of 24/25, the funding model for active travel will change. The primary change will be the reallocation of the significant funding currently disbursed via third-sector organisations (such as Sustrans or Paths for All) and, to a lesser extent Transport Scotland (e.g. CWSR), to individual Local Authority block grants and a single Transport Scotland controlled Active Travel Infrastructure Fund (ATIF). This will be undertaken incrementally over a 2 year transition period.
- 1.8. Transitional arrangements for infrastructure design and construction are understood by Officers to be:
 - 24/25 a proportion _____ will be allocated to Local Authority block grants with the remainder remaining as challenge funding, in particular in the PFE Programme (administered by _____ ATIF fund. Transport Scotland have stated that failure to expend the block grant allocation on appropriate active

programmes which are deemed to be most effective when delivered at a national scale.

- 1.10. Separately, Officers are working to develop an Active Travel Strategy (ATS) for Argyll and Bute which will set out the policy and strategic context for the development and delivery of active travel across the whole of Argyll and Bute. Subsequent to this, an Active Travel Delivery Plan (ATDP) will be developed which will identify the specific projects to be developed in order to achieve the ambition set in the ATS.
- 1.11. Active Travel can offer significant benefits to the area:
 - Access to essential services and employment: In MAKI 22% of households (2,193 households) do not have access to a motor vehicle and are therefore reliant on public transport and active travel modes.
 - Health benefits: being more active reduces the risk of premature morbidity and death, particularly from diseases related to inactivity.
 - Economics: People who travel to shops by walking and/or cycling have a higher monthly spend than people who travel to shops by private car.
 - Improving safety: reduces injuries from car collisions.
- 1.12. A number of active travel projects link to schools, offering the opportunity to increase the numbers of pupils, parents and staff choosing to walk, cycle or wheel to school. While the main benefits are improved physical and mental health, where new active travel infrastructure creates a safe route to school where one did not previously exist it could reduce the requirement to provide school transport on safety grounds, thereby creating a revenue saving to the school transport budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.13.

1.13.4. Instruct Officers to continue to identify and develop new active travel projects to benefit local residents, businesses and communities.

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travel projects will receive an increase in their block grant allowance for active travel, with a smaller percentage of the overall funding being available via challenge funds including the closure of the PFE programme (forecast for December 2025).

- From 26/27 onwards the challenge funding available (e.g. ATIF) will be solely focused on assisting Local Authorities with the cost of delivering very highly ambitious active travel projects, as the active travel infrastructure funding for smaller projects will be included within the block grants of those Local Authorities which chose to dedicate it to active travel in 24/25 and 25/26.

- 4.7. Behaviour change funding will be transferred from third sector organisations to the Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) in 24/25 onwards. This will enable the development and delivery of behaviour change programmes/activities which are tailored to the specific requirements of each RTP area. A small element of

campaigns/programmes which are deemed to be most effective when delivered at a national scale. Officers have started to engage with our RTPs (HITRANS and SPT) in order to understand and influence the future plans for the delivery of behaviour change projects.

Current (2023/24) Funding Model

- 4.8. The Active Travel Team work to source and secure highly competitive funding

Everyone (PFE) Programme (administered by Sustrans), the Scottish

Resource Fund, Paths for All Smarter Choices Smarter Places (SCSP)

and HITRANS Regional Active Travel Fund. Further funding has been secured for some projects via local community organisations and from willing businesses. It is recognised at a national level that the Active Travel Team in Argyll and Bute Council secure significantly more funding, and subsequently deliver more projects, than similar staffed teams in other Local Authorities and/or local authorities with similar populations.

- 4.9. The primary external funding route for active travel infrastructure design is Places for Everyone (PFE) programme (which Sustrans are paid to administer). The PFE Programme is a competitive challenge fund structured around 8 project stages; with the 32 local authorities, 7 regional transport partnerships, two national parks and numerous community groups across Scotland competing against each other to secure the funding each project requires. In 23/24, the Active Travel Team secured £1.7M from the PFE Programme. It has been announced that the PFE Programme will be wound down with a final closure date of December 2025.

4.10. A minimum of three new competitive funding submissions are required to

4.16.

and mental health, such provision may also generate a saving on school transport provision. Argyll and Bute Council provide free school transport to some pupils on safety grounds. This is where pupils live less than the legislative minimum distance from school to qualify for free school transport provision, but where there is no safe active travel route to school. Where new active travel infrastructure creates a safe route to school where one did not previously exist it could reduce the requirement to provide school transport on safety grounds, thereby creating a revenue saving.

Design guidance

- 4.21. It is understood that adherence to the latest design criteria for active travel (e.g. Cycle by Design for cycle projects) will continue to be a requirement. However, the removal of national third-sector organisations from control of the main active travel funding streams should enable Officers to apply the guidance in a more flexible and specific manner to local circumstances. Utilising adopted design guidance provides a clear framework for development of designs which are appropriate, accessible, attractive and safe.

Active Travel Strategy (ATS)

- 4.22. Separately, Officers are working to develop an Active Travel Strategy (ATS) for Argyll and Bute which will set out the policy and strategic context for the

and - The National Walking Strategy.

6.2. Financial

The change in approach to the provision of active travel funding by the Scottish Government from external challenge funding to including it within the

allocate the funding to develop and deliver active travel projects.

Improved active travel provision could reduce the requirement to provide school transport on safety grounds, thereby creating a revenue saving.

There is strong evidence that people who are more active, for example by walking or cycling, have better physical and mental health and are less likely to require social care services in later life which could result in a future saving to the Council or HSCP.

6.3. Legal

Continued input will be required from Legal Services to support any land acquisition required for the creation of active travel routes.

6.4. HR

None.

6.5. Fairer Scotland Duty:

6.5.1 Equalities

Provision of new and improved active travel infrastructure and behaviour change options will provide enhanced opportunities for residents and visitors to choose to travel more sustainably and actively by walking, wheeling

Appendix 1: 2024/25 Projects

Project	Outline Programme	Detail
Active Travel Promotional Campaign	Spring 2024: launch and 1 st campaign 24/25: continue campaign	

		geofencing and virtual reality to immerse users in the trails in a way which is not possible using more traditional mediums.
Bikes back to the community	2022/23: provided 65 bikes to community 2023/24: ongoing	The Bikes back to the Community bike recycling scheme is delivered in partnership with local community group, ACT Now. The Bikes back to the Community scheme allows Mid-Argyll residents apply for a free bicycle, with preference given to those who can demonstrate a reduction in car use and/or inability to access a bike commercially. The bicycles provided are safe and suitable, and follow up support from ACT Now staff and volunteers is available to ensure the bicycle is fully utilised. The project returned 65 bikes to the community in 2022/23 and is forecast to exceed this in 2023/24.
Lochgilphead Front Green to Crinan Canal Active Travel Route	Spring 2024: complete concept design 2024/25: developed and technical design 2025/26: secure construction funding and permissions 2026/27 2027/28: construction	This project will deliver an active travel route that links the Lochgilphead Front Green with the Crinan Canal (NCN 78) and to produce a concept design for the best route option linking Lochgilphead Front Green (town centre) and the Crinan Canal (NCN 78). The new route would strategically align with the design of a new active travel route between Lochgilphead Town Centre and the Lochgilphead Joint Campus, thereby creating a safe and direct active travel link between Ardrishaig, the Canal, Lochgilphead and the Joint Campus, the Sports Centre, Kilmory Industrial Estate and Argyll and Bute Council HQ.
Lochgilphead Town Centre to Joint Campus Active Travel Route	2020 22: concept design 2022 - summer 2024: complete developed and technical design 2024/25: secure construction	This project will deliver a new active travel route linking lochgilphead town centre and Front Green with the Lochgilphead Joint Campus. The project will deliver numerous road safety and street scape improvements. The route strategically aligns with the design of a new active travel route Lochgilphead Front Green and the Crinan Canal, which together create a safe and direct active travel link between Ardrishaig,

funding and permissions

Path, Campbeltown	construction	upgrade of The Cutting shared use path and construction of a new cyclepath along Quarry Green to Hall St (A83) at the CALMAC ferry terminal.
Campbeltown Esplanade and Kinloch Park Active Travel Improvemets	<p>2023 summer 2024: concept design</p> <p>2025/26 2026/27: developed and technical design</p> <p>2027/28: construction</p>	<p>Currently at initial feasibility stage, this project is examining options to improve active travel connectivity around the Esplanade, through Kinloch Park and on adjacent roads to improve active travel connectivity between the north side of Campbeltown and the Town Centre, Schools and other amenities.</p>

		Bowmore.
Craighouse to Corran Sands Active Travel Route, Jura	2023/24: concept design 2024/25 2025/26: developed and technical design 2026/27: construction	Working closely with the community to develop plans for a route linking the existing community constructed Corran Path to the centre of the main settlement on Jura, Craighouse, as identified in the Community Action Plan. This route will also provide a safe route to the Small Isles Primary School, Jura Distillery, Jura Hotel, Jura Service Point, Community Shop, Community Hall, Church, Playpark and the majority of dwellings on Jura.