

Top of the Town Community

ACTIVE TRAVEL ACTION PLAN 2018

ACTIVE TRAVEL HUB
STIRLING



Produced by

in partnership with



Forth Environment Link
LINKING PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT





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Summary and background

This action plan has been created with the input of your community, to benefit your community. Through surveys, conversations and focus groups, we have learned about what people who live and work in Top of the Town think about walking and cycling. We have combined these experiences with our own knowledge and experience of active travel in Stirling, to create a set of recommendations that can be used by anybody in the community who wants to contribute towards making Stirling a Cycle Friendly City. The plan is designed to offer practical and achievable steps that can be taken by community councils, schools, groups, families or individuals to help overcome barriers to walking and cycling.

The data collected through consultation will be shared directly with Stirling Council's Active Travel team. There are many ways that groups and individuals can get involved in promoting active travel, learning new skills and making connections with others. This plan has a list of practical recommendations to overcome barriers to active travel within your community. **To provide the best chance of making an impact, we advise strongly that interested parties come together and form an active travel steering group. Forming a group would open up opportunities to apply for funding from various sources that could help the community to make real changes and improvements that could benefit all who live and work in the area.** Stirling Active Travel Hub (Stirling AT Hub/The Hub) can help to facilitate this.

Why promote active travel in your community?

Walking or cycling for everyday journeys (active travel) offers benefits to both individuals and their community. Some of the most significant benefits are:

- **Healthier and happier communities**

Walking and cycling are fantastic forms of exercise that greatly improve both physical and mental health. It is important that communities feel able to build active travel into their daily routines, given that physical inactivity contributes to over 2,500 early deaths in Scotland each year.

- **Safe routes to schools and nursery**

All Stirling Council schools and nurseries are in the process of implementing new school travel plans. Every plan emphasises the importance of increasing walking and cycling. An environment that supports active travel to school offers huge physical, psychological and environmental benefits to the pupils, their families and the wider community.

- **Better places to live and work**

Active travel can make your community a more attractive and safer place to live by reducing the number of short journeys made by car. Fewer cars mean less congestion, easier journeys and roads that are safer for all road users. This will also improve air quality, which will help to improve the health of everybody in the community.

WHO WE ARE

Forth Environment Link & Stirling Active Travel Hub

Forth Environment Link (FEL) works with communities on a range of environmental, active travel and local food issues. FEL's vision is to link people and the environment for a greener, healthier future. With funding from Transport Scotland, FEL has operated the Stirling AT Hub since early 2013. The hub is there to support anyone who wants to build more active journeys into their everyday lives. We can assist with route planning, bike trails, events, training and advice – all of our services are free of charge and accessible to all.

Links to existing plans and policies

This action plan is designed to complement existing community plans. With many common goals and outcomes, it would be sensible to communicate and collaborate as much as possible in our actions.

Stirling Council – “Walking and Cycling to a Healthier Stirling” (2017)

- To increase the percentage of people walking and cycling in Stirling
- To increase the percentage of children and students walking and cycling to/from places of education in Stirling



Allan’s Primary School Travel Plan – September 2017

- Reduce the number of pupils travelling by car from 5.9% to 3%
- Address parking issues for staff, parents and visitors to allow them to access the school more easily and safely
- Increase levels of cycling/scooters from 1% to 4% over academic year 2017-2018
- Make the school more visible to traffic, in turn, making it safer for our children to travel to school



Mercat Cross & City Centre Community Council Local Community Plan - February 2018 (working draft)

- Areas of least satisfaction included: parking and traffic; streets and spaces, and public transport
- Make streets safer – traffic calming and re-pedestrianisation of King Street
- Improved cycling routes/lanes in the city centre
- Better signage for pedestrians/cyclists
- More crossings on Cowane Street
- Engage with Stirling Council and Sustrans to ensure that the community is represented in decisions made regarding the future of transport in Stirling City Centre and surrounding areas

Community consultation

Over the last few months the Stirling AT Hub has collected the views of people living and working in Top of the Town, through FEL's Community Meal events, parents' evenings at Allan's Primary School, and through speaking to members of the Community Council.

Top five concerns raised in comments

- 1** Traffic
(amount and speeding)
- 2** Infrastructure
(lack of dedicated – especially traffic-free – active travel facilities)
- 3** Time/distance
(limiting active travel participation for usual everyday journeys)
- 4** Crossing points
(lack of, and safety concerns over existing crossings)
- 5** Hilly terrain
(narrow roads and paths on steep hill challenging for active travel)

Top three most helpful activities to encourage cycling

From the 93 question responses, the top three 'helpful' or 'very helpful' activities were:

- 1** Cycle training for children
- 2** Dr Bike – free bike check-ups
- 3** Bike maintenance sessions

120
FACE **FACE**
TO
interactions

93
SURVEYS

121
comments

Survey responses

Of the 93 survey responses:

25%

don't have access to a bike

33%

would like to make everyday journeys by bike, but currently don't

77%

currently walk for everyday journeys at least once a week

77%

taking part in the consultation was their first interaction with FEL/Stirling AT Hub

“Cars drive fast in and around town so I do not/would not cycle to school from our address.”

“I am nervous of traffic and don't cycle much myself. I do enjoy walking though and take every opportunity to walk with the kids to school.”

The most common concerns were about the speed and amount of traffic, and the behaviour of drivers.. While there are some traffic-free routes that lead to the city centre, within the Top of the Town itself, there is actually very little infrastructure that is separated. This is particularly challenging for accessing the primary school; the narrow and steep road can be extremely busy with traffic and discourages active travel. A fear of sharing space with traffic can exist at any age however, and seemingly acts as a significant barrier to the community as a whole.

“Electric bike hire would be great, as the hill can be a barrier to using the heavy Nextbikes, and a lot of the community can't afford to buy their own bike.”

“Hills and lack of places to store bikes. We live on top floor flat, with no storage space.”

The fact that much of the community is built upon a significant hill, with many narrow and steep roads and paths, means that active travel is inherently more challenging to promote and participate in.

Secure storage for bikes, whether at home or in the community, can be a challenge and a real barrier to cycling for everyday journeys. This is where the nextbike UK public hire scheme could offer benefits to some residents, as this removes the burden of having to store and maintain a bicycle. However, these bikes are quite heavy and have limited gears, so not everyone will be capable of riding them comfortably up the hill.

There are plans to introduce a new, electrically-assisted public bike hire scheme, so it is worth considering how these could be a valuable asset to this community, when planning locations for these bikes. Additional cycle parking facilities could also make cycle journeys more convenient and attractive.

“Not enough time on days I work.”

“To be honest it's more time than anything else as both parents work full time. Once children are a little older, I will feel better about them cycling to school on their own.”

There was a fairly common perception that it is difficult to find enough time to travel actively. The distance of typical journeys, and the need to co-ordinate journeys with other people (especially children), were also problems. It is possible that some of these barriers could be overcome with some planning and changes in habit. Similarly with the weather, there is suitable clothing available to overcome almost all weather conditions with some planning ahead.

Infrastructure issues

- **Narrow streets and traffic calming.** Certain features designed to slow down traffic do not appear to be having the desired effect. The chicane on Spittal Street, for example, can be driven straight over. This, especially when combined with the steepness of the hill, can make for a very intimidating situation for someone cycling with fast cars approaching from behind, and potential pinch points if they attempt to overtake.

“I don’t wish my child to cycle to school at the moment given the busy nature of the roads and the narrowness of the road and steep hill.”

The width of these historic streets is certainly limited, but there is potential to greatly improve the attractiveness of these roads for walking and cycling by reallocating the available space in a different way. With so many reported complaints about the quantity and speed of traffic, it would make sense to discourage these behaviours while simultaneously making it easier for active travel.

- **Allan’s Primary School.** Access to Allan’s Primary School is challenging, given its location on Spittal Street, and all of the issues discussed above. There were concerns raised over a lack of safe crossing points, specifically on Dumbarton Road for families travelling to the school from the Kings Park side. The school has proposed operating a Park & Stride walking bus to help encourage parents to leave their cars away from the school grounds. Albert Halls has been suggested as a potential location for drop-off and pick-up, with teachers or parent volunteers walking the children up the hill to the school.

“Zebra crossing at Albert Hall, lollipop person taken away. Drivers ignore the zebra crossing often. Just last week, 4 cars in a row did not stop at the crossing, happens frequently!”

“No lollipop person at Albert Hall zebra crossing. Turn Albert Place/ Dumbarton Road into a 20mph zone, would slow down traffic for zebra crossing.”

- **Contraflow cycle lanes on one-way streets.** Being able to travel in both directions by bike on streets that are one-way for motorised traffic (e.g. Murray Place) is very useful, and this could be utilised on other one-way streets in the city centre. This section becomes a little unclear for the last stretch, so clearer signage and/or physical separation would help to make this more attractive and safer to use.

Similarly, at the bottom of Friar Street, it is possible to turn left at the zebra crossing and cycle along Barnton Street. Cycling into on-coming traffic at this point feels very intimidating, and drivers are not necessarily expecting cycles at this point, given the one-way system they are entering. Additional signage may help raise awareness.

This is a summary of some features that could be improved, reflecting comments collected through consultation and the experiences of the Stirling AT Hub, Stirling Council and Cycling UK staff that are familiar with the network.

Recommendations

This Action Plan should contribute towards the "Plan of Action" component of Cycling Scotland's Cycle Friendly Community Award.

ISSUE	ACTION	CYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY AWARD CRITERIA
Lack of promotion of existing routes and infrastructure; desire for Dr Bike; improve access to bikes	Pop-up Stirling AT Hub sessions with Dr Bike; free maps and route planning; led walking and cycling events; bike library	Barriers Needs & Opportunities
Concerns around Safe Routes to Schools; desire to increase active travel and improve road safety	School to implement travel plan actions; Park & Stride; promoting road safety; reduce number of pupils travelling by car and increase cycling/ scooting numbers	Community Engagement Partnership & Stakeholder Working
Reports of traffic offences around main routes through Top of the Town; lack of crossing points on Dumbarton Road/ Cowane Street	Work with Police Scotland and Stirling Council to establish opportunities for implementing new/improved traffic calming; speed reduction campaign; crossing points	Partnership & Stakeholder Working Barriers Needs & Opportunities
Limited access to/secure storage of bikes; gap in nextbike UK network coverage; hilly terrain for active travel	Explore opportunities for nextbike UK and e-bike share schemes to operate in Top of the Town	Barriers Needs & Opportunities Partnership & Stakeholder Working
Limited segregated active travel network in the city centre	Aspire to installing new and improved facilities; capitalise on Sustrans CL+ project for Dumbarton Road	Barriers Needs & Opportunities



WHO?

WHAT?

FUNDING?

Stirling AT Hub,
Recycle-a-bike,
Mercat Cross
& City Centre
Community Council

Stirling AT Hub to organise
pop-up hubs and rides/walks
as part of outreach programme
2018/19; build on established
partnerships

These services will be provided free
of charge, as part of the Hub's funded
outreach activities.

Allan's Primary School,
Stirling AT Hub,
Stirling Council

Liaise with Stirling Council and Stirling
AT Hub if any further training or
guidance needed;
Contact Jennifer Abernethy
(abernethyj@stirling.gov.uk)

Please contact Stirling AT Hub for the latest
information on the different funding
sources available

Police Scotland,
Stirling Council,
Allan's Primary School

Liaise with appropriate Stirling Council
and Police Scotland teams and local
councillors to explore opportunities
to improve drivers' behaviour in the
area and make the environment more
attractive and safer for active travel

Please contact Stirling AT Hub for the latest
information on the different funding
sources available

Stirling AT Hub,
Mercat Cross
& City Centre
Community Council,
Stirling Council

Assess suitability for inclusion in
2018/19 projects of nextbike UK
expansion and implementation of
flagship e-bike share scheme

Please contact Stirling AT Hub for the latest
information on the different funding
sources available

Stirling Council,
Sustrans,
Mercat Cross
& City Centre
Community Council

Engage with Sustrans/council on
Sustrans CL+ project to ensure it best
meets users' needs travelling to and
from city centre

Please contact Stirling AT Hub for the latest
information on the different funding
sources available

Next steps

This Active Travel Action Plan offers some suggestions of the barriers faced by the community, and some actions which may help to overcome them. While some of these actions are undeniably large, especially around infrastructure, there are things that every individual can do to contribute towards making Stirling a more active, healthier and greener place to live and work.

Small changes can make a huge difference; from learning a new skill to helping report problems you encounter or taking part in activities with like-minded individuals to apply for funding - there is something for everyone to get involved in. Here are some useful places to get started:

I WANT TO...	WHO CAN HELP?	PHONE / EMAIL / WEBSITE
Work with others in my community to secure funding for active travel improvements	There is funding available for communities who want to see changes in infrastructure, or gain access to training and activities. The Stirling AT Hub can help to bring people together to form a steering group who can work towards Cycling Scotland Cycle Friendly Community Award and assist with funding applications	01786 474160 stirlingath@forthenvironmentlink.org More info on award: cycling.scot/our-programmes/ cycle-friendly/community Details of funding opportunities will be on this page when the fund is open
Comment on existing and/or future walking and cycling infrastructure (paths, crossing points etc)	Speak to the Stirling AT Hub at Stirling train station or via contact details. They will collect comments and periodically pass on queries to Stirling Council	01786 474160 stirlingath@forthenvironmentlink.org stirlingactivetravelhub.org
Report a problem with roads, pavements or paths in my community	Contact Stirling Council online. Forms exist for reporting all manner of environmental problems	01786 404040 info@stirling.gov.uk my.stirling.gov.uk/forms/
Get my bike repaired and/or learn how to fix it myself	Stirling AT Hub and Recyke-a-bike regularly hold free Dr Bike sessions and Mug O' Tea and a Spanner evening classes to teach basic bike repair skills	01786 474160 stirlingath@forthenvironmentlink.org To book: eventbrite.co.uk and search for 'Stirling Active Travel Hub'

National Active Travel Delivery Partners

Sustrans

"The national walking and cycling charity."
sustrans.org.uk



Cycling UK

"The national cycling charity. Our mission is to enable millions more people to cycle"
cyclinguk.org



Cycling Scotland

"Cycling Scotland is the nation's cycling organisation. We help create and deliver opportunities and an environment so anyone anywhere in Scotland can cycle easily and safely."
cycling.scot



Energy Saving Trust

"From planning your journey with any mode of transports to living with an electric car, our experts' tips should be your first stop to achieving a greener journey."
energysavingtrust.org.uk



Paths for All

"We want to get Scotland walking, everyone, everyday, everywhere."
pathsforall.org.uk



Forth Environment Link

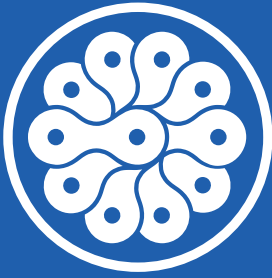
"Forth Environment Link (FEL) works with communities on a range of environmental, active travel and local food issues. FEL's vision is to link people and the environment for a greener, healthier future"
forthenvironmentlink.org



Living Streets

"The UK charity for everyday walking. We want a nation where walking is the natural choice for everyday local journeys."
livingstreets.org.uk





**ACTIVE
TRAVEL HUB**
STIRLING

Come and see us at
Stirling train station,
Goosecroft Road, FK8 1PF

☎ 01786 474160

✉ stirlingath@forthenvironmentlink.org

📘 [stirlingactivetravelhub](#)

🐦 [@StirlingATH](#)

stirlingactivetravelhub.org