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SHETLAND ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY 2020-2025 *DRAFT*



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Foreword

Foreword to be added

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Introduction

Broadening the appeal of walking and cycling as modes of transport and leisure activities has well documented societal benefits, for the economy, public health and the environment. The Shetland Active Travel Strategy (the ATS) sets out our vision, objectives, and the actions we will take over the next five years to increase walking and cycling journeys in Shetland.

It is part of Shetland's wider response to key challenges we face in terms of climate change, population health, socio-economic inequalities, and continued prosperity.

An appetite for change to support active travel modes, accepting that this may mean reallocating some space from cars, was clearly expressed during engagement with the public and stakeholders to inform the ATS.

In this document, Active Travel is defined as walking, cycling and scooting, for all ages and abilities, including the use of adaptive bikes such as tricycle and handcycles and other mobility aids. The focus of the ATS is on walking and cycling as modes of transport primarily for day to day functional trips (to school, work, the shops, visit family, etc.). As such it will inform and form

part of the Shetland Regional Transport Strategy currently under development.

Walking and cycling as leisure and tourism activities are also important for people's wellbeing, health and the economy, and where there are overlaps, links are made with other strategy documents including the "Active Shetland" strategy which focuses on leisure activities, and with the Shetland Outdoor Access Strategy, focused on walking and cycling access as leisure.

The ATS was developed in the context of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a major impact on all aspects of our lives, including how, where and how often we travel. Early observations suggest some of those changes will last, with implications for active travel and transport provision in general. Those changes have been captured wherever possible in the ATS, and will continue to inform its delivery as the situation develops.

Context

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

Climate Change

The problem of anthropogenic climate change is one of the most pressing challenges we will face in decades. As an archipelago in the north Atlantic with a temperate maritime climate, Shetland faces its own specific climate threats, and just over two-thirds (67%) of people in Shetland see climate change as an immediate and urgent problem¹.

The Scottish Government, which last year declared a Climate Emergency, has committed to reduce Scotland emissions of greenhouse gases (CO₂, methane etc) to 'net-zero' by 2045, with a legally-binding target to achieve 75% of this reduction in GHG emissions by 2030.

The transport sector is the largest contributor to Scotland's emissions (37% in 2017), and the only one where emissions have increased over the past few years. Further, road transport makes up over two-thirds (69%) of transport emissions². Changes to the way we travel are therefore inevitable if we are to achieve the 'net zero' target. Investment in walking and cycling has a role to play; it is one of the best value transport interventions, with the potential to replace many short journeys currently made by car.

COVID-19 pandemic

The spread of COVID-19 across the world is having a profound impact on all aspects of our lives. Working and travel habits are changing as a consequence, in Shetland as in the rest of Scotland and the UK.

Some of those changes are temporary (the 5-miles travel restriction has been lifted and shops and services are re-opening at time of writing), but early evidence suggests others are likely to be longer term changes. For example, surveys undertaken in Shetland to inform this strategy, and others across the rest of the UK, suggest that

people expect to spend less time working in an office.^{3,4} This will have implications for commuting journeys, but also for all the trips undertaken "on the way" to and from the workplace, such as school drop off and pick up or grocery shopping.

Understanding these changes in travel behaviour and to what extent they are temporary is a challenge, but also an opportunity to guide and shape these changes towards a sustainable transport system, with active travel an integral part of this system.

As this strategy is published, the pandemic is ongoing and the situation is fast-evolving; the ATS will need to adapt to any national COVID-19 related guidelines, route maps or transition plans as they emerge.

Population health (other than COVID-19)

The ATS is intended to open up walking and cycling to more people, with a focus on enabling access for those who currently are unable to walk or cycle for a range of reasons, including health-related reasons. In that, it will build on the "Active Shetland Strategy 2018-23".

Physical activity is essential to good mental and physical health throughout life. There is however a high level of inactivity in Shetland as in the rest of the country, contributing to increasing levels of obesity and other preventable diseases. Between 2014 and 2017, the proportion of the population classified as overweight was higher in the Shetland Islands at 68%, compared with the national average of 65%⁵ (itself high by international standards). Some groups are more at risk of being inactive: those with a disability and/or long-standing poor health; older age groups; women and teenagers.

¹Scottish Household Survey 2018

²Scottish Transport Statistics No.38 2019 Edition

³ SYSTRA UK-wide survey (June 2020): <https://tinyurl.com/yxfs6ql8>

⁴ BBC News 28 Aug 2020: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-53946487>

⁵ Scottish Government (2020) The Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) Dashboard: <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-health-survey/>

Increasing walking and cycling levels for local journeys is one of the easiest ways of integrating physical activity in everyday life.

Socio-economic inequalities

The “Transport and Poverty in Scotland” report by the Poverty and Inequality Commission (2019)⁶ highlighted the complex situation relating to transport, for people on low income living in rural areas. Costs of travel to essential services is generally much higher in remote rural areas such as Shetland, where there are often limited affordable and practical alternatives to owning a car in spite of the running costs.

The Shetland-focused “On Da Level - Achieving a Fairer Shetland 2016”⁷ further reports that the Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland determines that households require budgets 10-40% higher to achieve a minimum acceptable living standard than elsewhere in the UK, with transport cost part of that extra cost. It also found that lack of affordability is a bigger issue than availability of public transport for those in Shetland who are receiving benefits and wishing to move into employment.

Investing in walking and cycling provision can contribute to addressing this by facilitating easy and convenient access to local services and to public transport via low-cost modes of transport.

Prosperity

Rebuilding an equitable prosperity following the economic impact of the pandemic will likely be a key challenge for Shetland in coming years. One of the core purposes of a transport system is to support economic activity and its development by providing efficient and reliable transport access. There is now good evidence showing that well-designed streets and roads, attractive to pedestrians and cyclists, can have a beneficial effect on local businesses, through increase footfall and spend.⁸

Transform Scotland has also estimated the GVA (Gross Value Added) of cycling to the Scottish economy at between £321 million and £367 million in 2015, which it describes as a conservative estimate⁹. Cycle tourism, including day trips and longer touring holidays, represented the largest part of that total.

The 2019 Shetland Visitor Survey also found that Shetland had over 40,000 leisure visitors. Walking was the most popular activity, with 69% taking a short walk (up to 2 miles) and 62% a long walk (over 2 miles).

Tourism in the region had been growing steadily in recent years, with the industry contributing 30% more to the Shetland Islands’ local economy in 2017 relative to 2013 levels¹⁰. The improvement of walking and cycling facilities will be beneficial to the tourist industry and aid its post-pandemic recovery.

⁶ <https://povertyinequality.scot/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Transport-and-Poverty-in-Scotland-Report-of-the-Poverty-and-Inequality-Commission.pdf>

⁷ https://www.shetland.gov.uk/equal-shetland/documents/OnDaLevel_Summary.pdf

⁸ University of London for TfL (2018) Walking and cycling: the Economic Benefits <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/walking-cycling-economic-benefits-summary-pack.pdf>

⁹ Transform Scotland (2018) THE VALUE OF CYCLING TO THE SCOTTISH ECONOMY, Report for Cycling Scotland <https://transformscotland.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Transform-Consulting-The-Value-of-Cycling-to-the-Scottish-Economy.pdf>

¹⁰ Shetland Island Council and Visit Scotland (2018) Shetland Islands Visitor Survey 2017 <https://www.visitscotland.org/binaries/content/assets/dot-org/pdf/research-papers/shetland-report-may-18.pdf>

POLICY RESPONSE

The promotion of active travel enjoys a strong public policy framework. Between them, a wide variety of national, regional and local policies and plans set out to change travel choices in

order to achieve a large range of policy outcomes.

The most relevant ones and how they relate to the ATS are presented underneath.

NATIONAL LEVEL

Climate Emergency

A Climate Emergency was declared by the Scottish and UK Governments in 2019. The subsequent Climate Change Bill commits the Scottish Government to a target of net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045, with a legally binding target of reducing by 75% by 2030 across Scotland.

The Fairer Scotland Duty

The “Fairer Scotland Duty” is part of the Equality Act 2010, and came into force in 2018. It puts a responsibility onto local authorities (among other public bodies) to consider actively how they can “reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions”¹¹.

The ATS has sought to incorporate this duty in its development and will continue throughout its delivery.

National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2)

Adopted in January 2020, the NTS2 sets out the following vision for Scotland: “We will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors.”

Four priorities, each with three outcomes develop the vision in more detail. The four priorities are:

- Reducing inequalities
- Taking climate action
- Helping deliver inclusive economic growth
- Improving our health and wellbeing

The NTS2 also places the sustainable travel hierarchy and the sustainable investment hierarchy at the heart of decision-making in transport.

The ATS will contribute to delivering this vision, translating it into a vision and priorities relevant and adapted to the Shetland context.

Strategic Transport Project Review

Growing active travel levels is one of the three key opportunities identified for Shetland in the STPR2 “Case for Change” report¹².

Although not a strategy in itself, the ongoing Strategic Transport Project Review will inform the Scottish Government’s transport investment programme in Scotland over the next 20 years, on the basis of the recently adopted National Transport Strategy 2.

The review is ongoing at the time of publication of the active travel strategy, however the “STPR2 Initial Appraisal: Case for Change” Shetland report was available, summarising transport-related problems and opportunities, including walking and cycling. Findings from this report have informed the active travel strategy.

The National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)

NPF3 highlights the importance of ‘place’, and identifies where the national priorities for investment should take place to support the core aim in the Government’s Economic Strategy for sustainable economic growth. The four National Planning Outcomes identified are:

- A successful, sustainable place
- A low carbon place

¹¹ Scottish government (2018) Fairer Scotland Duty: interim guidance for public bodies
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty-interim-guidance-public-bodies/pages/2/>

¹² Strategic Transport Project Review 2 (under development)
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47212/stpr2-shetland-islands-case-for-change-draft-report-for-publication.pdf>

- A natural, resilient place
- A connected place

More walking and cycling by more people on Shetland would directly contribute to all four of those outcomes.

The National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is under development, with initial work suggesting a focus on achieving the target of net zero emissions by 2045, with a shift in emphasis towards sustainable transport, health and wellbeing in planning processes and delivery. Of particular relevance for the ATS are discussions on the principle of the “20 minute neighbourhood/settlement” (having access to all goods and services we need within a twenty minute walk or cycle from home), and the possibility of requiring “Health Impact Assessments” for major developments.

Let’s Get Scotland Walking: The National Walking Strategy

The National Walking Strategy, developed in 2014, sets out clear ambitions for increasing the proportion of short journeys completed by walking, including trips to/from school. The vision is for “a Scotland where everyone benefits from walking as part of their everyday journeys, enjoys walking in the outdoors and where places are well designed to encourage walking.”

Three strategic aims were identified:

- Create a culture of walking where everyone walks more often as part of their everyday travel and for recreation and well-being.
- Better quality walking environments with attractive, well designed and managed built and natural spaces for everyone.
- Enable easy, convenient and safe independent mobility for everyone.

Cycling Action Plan for Scotland

In 2013, the Scottish Government published its Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. Its vision is that: “By 2020, 10% of everyday journeys taken in Scotland will be by bike.” It was last updated in 2017, maintaining the same vision. It sets out 19 actions to achieve this, under priority headings of:

- leadership and partnership;

- infrastructure, integration and road safety;
- promotion and behavioural change;
- resourcing; and
- monitoring and reporting.

An Active Travel Vision for Scotland

This document provides a long term vision (2030) for Scottish communities to be shaped around people, with walking and cycling the most popular choices for shorter, everyday journeys.

Its objectives include:

- better health and safer travel for all;
- reducing inequalities in access to jobs, services and leisure;
- cutting carbon emissions to tackle climate change and improve air quality;
- deliver liveable, more pleasant communities to increase feeling on connectedness; and
- supporting delivery of sustainable economic growth.

The Active Travel Framework

The Active Travel Framework was published in February 2020 by Transport Scotland in collaboration with delivery partners and Regional Transport Partnerships. It is described by Transport Scotland as “bring[ing] together the key policy approaches to improving the uptake of walking and cycling in Scotland for travel.”

Policy responses to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic

Following the initial, and ongoing, emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic, governments at all levels are developing longer term recovery, transition plans, strategies and policies to tackle the effects the pandemic is having on public health, the economy and society more widely. Current policies and strategies (transport, climate change, infrastructure investment, etc.) are also likely to be re-considered to take into account the changed reality.

In this context, the ATS will need to remain a flexible document, incorporating any local or national guidance, strategy or policy changes as they emerge.

Shetland Partnership – the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan for the Shetland Islands (LOIP), 2018-2028

The Shetland Partnership Plan presents the following vision: “Shetland is a place where everyone is able to thrive; living well in strong, resilient communities; and where people and communities are able to help plan and deliver solutions to future challenges”

The Plan is structured around four priorities – People, Place, Participation and Money. Relevant outcomes would be :

People priority

‘Shetland will continue to be a safe and happy place, with more people feeling connected to their communities and benefitting from living in good places and keeping active’

Place priority

‘People will be accessing employment, education, training and services in innovative ways designed to minimise the barriers to involvement for all’

‘Communities will be actively involved in shaping their own future resilience, creating positive places that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable’

Shetland Transport Strategy Refresh 2018-2028

The Transport Strategy establishes the following vision for transport on Shetland: “To develop travel and transport solutions for Shetland that underpin our Economy, support our Communities and conserve our Environment.” It has a strategic objective “To conserve and enhance Shetland’s unique natural environment by developing and promoting healthy, sustainable and low-carbon travel choices.”

The target outcome for the strategy, in line with the LOIP is to increase the Shetland Place Standard ‘score’ for Public Transport from a baseline of 3.6 in 2016 to 5 by 2028.

An updated Transport Strategy is under development, which will be informed by and incorporate the ATS.

Active Shetland Strategy 2018-2023

The Active Shetland Strategy set the following vision: “We aim to make Shetland the most Active Community in Scotland”

Of the six priorities of the Active Shetland strategy, two are most relevant to the ATS:

- **Places:** Provide the people of Shetland with the best facilities and infrastructure possible to let them lead active lives. To achieve this, it commits to: “Engage with decision makers including community councils to prioritise active living/active travel through the design of roads, footpaths and transport policies that promote walking, cycling and public transport”.
- **Stay Active:** Make physical activity and sport part of the daily lives of everyone who lives in Shetland.

Shetland Local Development Plan (LDP) 2014

On transport, the LDP states that it will support proposals which, amongst other items:

- promote awareness of travel options in order to limit traffic growth;
- develop public transport corridors and promote innovative and flexible public transport usage;
- develop facilities for walking and cycling as an alternative and healthy means of transport;
- support an improved path network within and between settlements; and
- improve the human environment by promoting road design that meets the policy framework set out in Designing Streets and the six qualities of successful places as set out in Designing Places.

Further, the Placemaking Supplementary Guidance of the LDP states:

Vehicular use is a fact of modern day life and can be a life-line mode of transport within Shetland’s rural communities - placemaking does not seek to victimise the car user. However, at the heart of good placemaking is the need to start prioritising the movement of cyclists and

pedestrians, and to develop communities that have better access to public transport routes.

Shetland Islands Council “Our Plan, 2016 to 2020”

The Corporate Plan highlights seven transport related outcomes that Shetland Islands Council (SIC) will work towards by 2020 to improve connections and access for the population of the Shetland Islands. These outcomes include: “Have a clearer understanding of the options and investment needed to create a sustainable internal transport system over the next 50 years.”

An updated Corporate Plan is in development, which will take account of the Active Travel Strategy.

Shetland Tourism Strategy 2018-2023

Developed by a partnership of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, the tourism

strategy aims to: “Work together to help make Shetland a year-round sustainable tourism destination, offering unique and outstanding visitor experiences.”

The ATS can support this aim by supporting leisure walking and cycle touring, delivering sustainable travel links to visitor attractions, and delivering a high quality, attractive public realm for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Shetland Outdoor Access Strategy 2019

Building on the initial 2005 strategy, this Shetland Outdoor Access Strategy sets out the priorities for the provision and development of access to the countryside in Shetland. There is significant overlap between the 18 priorities identified in the document and the objectives and actions of the ATS.

Active travel in Shetland today

CURRENT TRANSPORT SITUATION AND TRENDS

Shetland's nearly 23,000 inhabitants are dispersed over a large territory across multiple islands; this is a major factor in the current high level of car use. It has amongst the highest levels of car ownership in Scotland at 74% of households.

The 16% of households in Shetland which have no access to a car¹³, although much lower than the national average, still represent a sizable number of people whose journeys need to be provided for via other modes. Another group of people, harder to identify, own a car even though they cannot afford or have difficulty affording the running cost, because of the lack of alternative transport options.

Available data shows that the distance travelled for each trip, suggests the potential for a lot more journeys to be walked or cycled: 58% of journeys in Shetland are under 5km, a distance which can be cycled in approximately 15-20 minutes. That is very close the Scottish average of 59%. Further, close to half of journeys, 44%, are under 2km, which can be walked in about 15-20 minutes.¹⁴ Although not all those short journeys can be walked or cycled for a range of reasons (terrain, heavy load, certain disabilities, etc.), there is potential for significant increase, given the right conditions and incentives.

Looking specifically at the commute to work, at the 2011 census, the proportion of the journeys to work undertaken within Shetland with a distance of less than 2km (22%) was higher than the national average (17%). Overall, it appears that commuting distances in Shetland are broadly similar to those across Scotland¹⁵. Yet, at

the same time, 72% of those in employment in Shetland travelled to work by car, 9% on foot, and 0.4% by bike.

Looking at travel to school, 26% of primary and secondary pupils walk, cycle or scoot to school in Shetland. This is quite a lot lower than the Scottish average (49%).¹⁶ It reflects in part the northern and remote rural nature of Shetland, however there will be potential for more active travel in Lerwick and in the more compact settlements where the school is located near houses.

This situation has been affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with an increased proportion of workers, mostly office-based workers, now working from home most or all of the time. The online survey undertaken as part of the ATS development, as well as surveys undertaken across the UK all indicate a desire, or an expectation, from workers to continue working from home more on a permanent basis. Although the implications for transport policies are difficult to establish, it may suggest a need for a change in emphasis for transport policy interventions, away from the commute and on to other journeys we undertake (personal business, school run, leisure, etc.).

The statistics presented above are averages across Shetland, there will be significant disparities between the situation in Lerwick and the rural and more remote areas, in the current levels of active travel and in the potential. Likewise, potential solutions will need to be tailored to those very different environments.

¹³ Transport and Travel in Scotland 2018 - Scottish Household Survey Local Authority results (Published 2019)

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Census 2011: Table QS703SC - Distance travelled to work

¹⁶ Hands Up Scotland Survey (HUS) 2018

PROVISION FOR WALKING AND CYCLING

Like any mode of transport, walking and cycling require good quality, reliable and safe infrastructure and facilities to become attractive and convenient choices for people.

There are a number of good quality, attractive paths like the Clickimin path in Lerwick, built as part of the Anderson High School new building as well as the path linking Hoswick to Sandwick developed and funded by local group GAETS. The size and relatively compact nature of Lerwick also places most destinations within walking distance.

However, current provision in Shetland is unevenly spread and can be of inconsistent quality. The good quality paths are not linked to each other, interrupted by busy road crossings, and where destinations are within walking distance, footways may be narrow, or lacking the necessary dropped kerbs to make it accessible to all.

In rural areas, some roads accessing local destinations do not have footpaths to make it possible to walk and cycle there safely.

WHAT DO PEOPLE IN SHETLAND THINK?

To guide the ATS development and understand where we are starting from, public and stakeholder engagement events were organised in March and May 2020. The aims of those events were to raise awareness of and gauge appetite for an active travel strategy; understand how people travel currently; gather views on barriers and issues to travel more actively in Shetland; and hear ideas on potential improvements.



The events scheduled throughout March 2020 were designed to reach as wide a range of people. They included:

- a Council / ZetTrans board members' seminar;
- stakeholder workshops in Lerwick; Sandwick, Brae, Scalloway, and Aith
- Area Transport Forum meetings: 16 across all regions;

- public drop-in events and walkabouts in Lerwick, Sandwick, Brae, Scalloway, and Aith;
- a school workshop at Anderson High School;
- an online survey questionnaire; and
- an interactive online map (Placecheck) to collate location-specific comments.

From the middle of March, The COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions led to the cancellation of some events as schools were closed and public gatherings restricted. To mitigate the impact of these cancellations, and to capture some of the changes to travel and working patterns which emerged during this period, a new online survey was set up in May 2020 (still under lockdown restrictions). Primary and secondary school "active travel activity packs" were also produced and promoted online to further raise awareness of the active travel strategy.

Overall, during the face-to-face events which did take place, nearly 500 individual comments were collected on what people like and dislike about active travel in Shetland, and their ideas for improvements.

Between the two online surveys, 520 questionnaires were completed, providing insight into how people travel, their views on active travel and changes during lockdown.

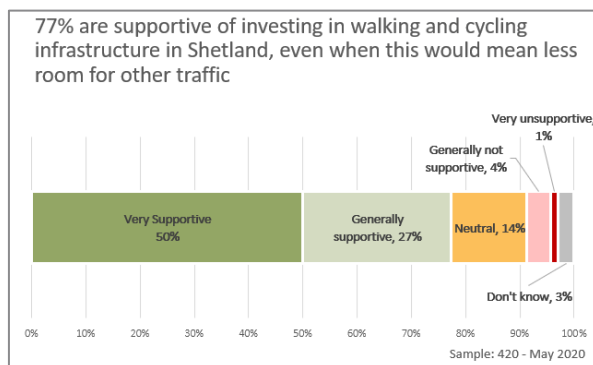
The analysis of responses collected during the engagement activities led to some key themes

emerging. People were keen to walk and cycle more, but they often felt unsafe cycling and walking there.

When asked what they disliked about walking and cycling in Shetland or what discourages them from doing it, traffic speed and volume and lack of dedicated space for people walking and cycling were the main issues raised.

More dedicated space was also the most common response when asked what they liked or would encourage them to walk or cycle more, often citing some of the existing better quality paths in Shetland as examples (Clickimin, Knab peninsula, Sletts, Hoswick). They also expressed a clear support for investment in walking and cycling, even when it means less space for other traffic.

Finally, the online survey suggests that working



and travel habits are changing as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, in Shetland like in the rest of the Scotland and UK. Only half of respondents to the survey expected to go back to their previous working arrangement. This finding is in line with findings from larger UK-wide surveys which all suggest an expectation to spend less time in the office and work more

flexibly. This is both a challenge and an opportunity to guide and shape that change, and see where walking and cycling have a place, as people spend more time in their local area.

The findings from the 2020 engagement events are also consistent with those from the 2016 Place Standard consultation. The Shetland Place Standard¹⁷ consultation sought to understand how people see their local area, their 'place', both the physical elements (buildings, streets, transport etc.) and social aspects (for example, whether people feel they have influence/a say over decisions). The survey received nearly 1,000 responses from across Shetland and led to the identification of key issues at both regional and Shetland-wide scales. The key issues identified under the "Moving Around" heading were:

- the need for new and improved safe cycle and walking access to promote active travel – in both rural and urban areas;
- walkers and cyclists not feeling safe due to traffic speed and driver behaviour;
- a need for more seating and shelter for walkers and cyclists along key routes; and
- a need for improved pavements and verges in places.

Under the "traffic and parking" heading, key issues were also consistent with findings from the 2020 engagement work:

- Concern over traffic speeds
- Competition for road use between cyclists, walkers and vehicles in some places
- Safe road-side walking in rural areas
- Pedestrian and vehicle access issues on Commercial Street, Lerwick

¹⁷ [Shetland Place Standard 2016](#)

PREVIOUS AND ONGOING WORK

ZetTrans and its partners are already engaged in activities to enable and promote active travel across Shetland.

Recent new or improved infrastructure have included the Clickimin path, delivered as part of the Anderson High School construction or the Hoswick to Sandwick path delivered by local community group GAETS.

Hjaltland Housing Association secured funding in 2019 to deliver bike stores and communal storage rooms in some of their properties where residents had no space to store bikes, prams or scooters.

NHS Shetland's Gilbert Bain Hospital site has officially become a "Cycle Friendly Employer", with improved cycle parking and repair facilities, and the provision of an ebike pool for commuting, work uses such as home visits, and for general staff use as exercise. These improvements and other promotion activities across NHS Shetland are coordinated by a dedicated Active Travel Officer, and it is their aim to help more NHS Shetland sites to attain Cycle Friendly Employer status.

At the planning stage, the two masterplan areas in Lerwick, the Knab and Staney Hill both have emphasised placemaking, walking and cycling access in their design.

A feasibility study on Low carbon and active travel hubs has also been undertaken, with recommendations on types of facilities and potential locations across Shetland.

Community Councils across Shetland were approached by Council officer to suggest active travel routes to be created or upgraded in their area. An initial assessment of suitability if the suggestions has been carried out, which has informed the development of the ATS.

The Scalloway "Local Place Plan", the first in Shetland, was adopted in September 2020 as non-statutory planning guidance. The Plan is the result of extensive engagement since 2018 with local stakeholders and residents through the "Re-create Scalloway" project to identify local development and investment priorities.

To discuss and coordinate those initiatives, an "Active Travel Group" meets regularly, with representatives from several Council departments (Roads, Planning, Community Planning & Development, Sport & Leisure), NHS Shetland, Shetland Recreational Trust, Scottish Natural Heritage and Visit Scotland.

Our vision for active travel in Shetland

Walking and cycling are attractive and realistic travel choices for short journeys in Shetland

OUTCOMES

Delivering the vision will help to meet the following outcomes:

- Reducing the effects of climate change and other negative environmental impacts through the development of a low carbon transport system;
- A resilient local economy through better, sustainable access to local businesses and services;
- Improving physical and mental health within the population by facilitating and encouraging active travel choices from childhood to old age; and
- Creating a more equal society through greater access to low cost and convenient transport, and streets and settlements accessible to all abilities.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives will guide the delivery of the vision:

- an increase in walking and cycling across a range of purposes (e.g.: not only leisure, but also travel to school, to work, personal business, visiting friends/family);
- an increase in active travel levels across Shetland (e.g. not only in Lerwick), although the potential will vary depending on local context;
- an increase across ages and abilities, with more children, more older people and more people with disabilities walking/wheeling/cycling, independently;
- more walking and cycling at all times, not only during the day or in summer, although seasonal variations are inevitable; and
- increase our share of the visitor market as an attractive walking and cycling destination.

TARGETS

The targets set for the 2020-2025 timeframe are presented here, with an outline monitoring plan including baseline levels and data sources shown on page 27.

- Increase the number of children walking, cycling or scooting to school, across all primary and secondary schools.
- Increase the percentage of those employed usually cycling to work.
- Increase mode share of walking and cycling in all journeys.
- Sustained increase in cycling and walking at selected count locations across Shetland.
- Increase cycling and walking mode share to public facilities and services.
- Increase percentage of people walking as means of transport once a week or more.
- Increase the percentage of the population participating in walking and in cycling (at least 30min) in the past four weeks.
- Increase the percentage of households with access to a bike.
- Increased satisfaction with walking and cycling provision amongst the population.
- Spend at least 5% of the transport budget every year on walking and cycling projects throughout the ATS lifetime (up to 2025).

DELIVERY PRINCIPLES

Key principles will be used as a guide, or a design brief, for the delivery of each of the measures listed in the Action Plan (page 21). These were derived from the objectives set for the ATS, the findings from the engagement activities and recognised best practice.

- Make people feel safe when they walk or cycle around.
- Walking, cycling and public transport should be the most convenient ways of getting about for most journeys in built-up areas.
- Routes and other measures will link up local destinations (services, amenities, schools, workplaces, etc.), where people want and need to travel to, along the most direct, safe, and convenient route achievable.
- Integration with other modes of transport to build an integrated transport system which makes sustainable modes convenient.
- Design with universal access in mind at all stages of design, from preferring route alignment with the lowest gradient to suitable colour contrast or kerbs, via paths widths radii accessible to adaptive bikes, cargo and tricycles.
- Placemaking: making places more attractive to spend time in is an integral part of the active travel strategy.
- Development and delivery in partnership and collaboration with organisations, users, and with the local population.
- Delivering infrastructure designed to last, and which is well maintained over time, including in winter, to give people confidence that a route will be accessible in all, or most, seasons and in the longer term.
- Proposals, layouts and designs which are relevant and adapted to the context of Shetland.

DELIVERY PARTNERS

Shetland has a particularly rich network of specialised and local organisations across the public, private and third sector. Effective delivery of the ATS will rely on a collective effort, through close cooperation between many, if not all, council departments, and other public, private, and third sector organisations.

Listed below are organisations which are likely to have a stake or be involved in at least some of the measures proposed in the ATS, and where appropriate contribute or take a leading role in their delivery. This is not an exhaustive list; more organisations are likely to be added as projects are developed and evolve.

- ZetTrans
- SIC Roads
- SIC Planning
- SIC Community Planning & Development
- SIC Sport & Leisure
- NHS Shetland
- Visit Scotland
- Ability Shetland
- Public transport operators
- Shetland Tourism Association
- Hjaltland Housing Association
- Living Lerwick
- Businesses/employers
- Community Councils
- Local community groups
- Local sports clubs
- Shetland Sport for All
- Shetland Community Bike Project
- Shetland Recreational Trust
- Employers
- Transport Scotland
- Sustrans
- Paths for All
- Living Streets
- Cycling Scotland
- Cycling UK
- Sportscotland

FUNDING SOURCES

A range of funding sources are available to support the delivery of the ATS. Listed below are the main external funding programme aimed at enabling and promoting active travel.

Places for Everyone (Pfe) (Sustrans): Transport Scotland's funding programme for active travel infrastructure projects (administered by Sustrans). This is likely to be the main source of external funding for infrastructure projects. It should be noted that the Scottish Government has now reduced the match-funding requirement for the Pfe programme to 30% of the construction cost and design and feasibility studies are funded at 100%.

Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (Paths for All): also funded by Transport Scotland, this programme is administered by Paths for All. The fund is aimed at projects to encourage travel by sustainable modes of transport (promotion, travel behaviour change campaign, etc.).

Street Design (Sustrans): a design and engagement service delivered by Sustrans to develop neighbourhood public realm improvement projects to Outline Design stage.

E-bike grant and loans (Energy Saving Trust): run by the Energy Saving Trust, three types of grants are available, for local authorities, for businesses, and for individuals.

Practical Cycle Awareness Training (Cycling Scotland): the programme establishes cycle awareness courses to HGV and bus drivers in a local authority.

School Cycle and Scooter Parking Grant (Sustrans)

Bikeability Scotland (Cycling Scotland) supports the delivery of cycle training in primary schools.

Play Together on Pedals (Cycling Scotland and Cycling UK) is aimed at enabling and promoting cycling (and balance bikes) for pre-schoolers. It is currently focused on Glasgow and Edinburgh.

I Bike (Sustrans) delivers a range of activities in primary and secondary schools to encourage young people to cycle more.

WOW walk to school programme (Living Streets Scotland): a year-long "walk to school challenge" where primary schools pupils record through an

online tracker how often they walk to school to win badges every month.

National Monitoring Framework (Cycling Scotland): installation of cycle and people counters and surveys.

More specialised funding programmes are available, although not aimed at local authorities they can support and be promoted by the ATS:

Cycle Friendly Programme (Cycling Scotland) provides funding to make workplaces, schools, campuses and communities more cycle-friendly.

Active Travel repair stations (Sustrans): provides grants to install cycle repair stations at NHS, university, college and school campuses.

Community Paths Grants (Paths for All): accessible by community groups to improve or create new paths.

Campus Cycling Officer (Cycling Scotland) in colleges and universities.

Big Bike Revival (Cycling UK), supporting community organisations in delivering community cycling events.

National Cycling Facilities Fund (Sportscotland): The fund aims to capitalise on the upsurge of interest in cycling during the Covid-19 pandemic by developing a network of accessible, inclusive and inspiring facilities that encourage people of all ages to ride bikes.

Where match-funding from the local authority is required to secure external funding, a range of sources can qualify, including:

- SIC's own budget (Local Government Settlement)
- Funds from Section 75 agreement with developers
- Walking Cycling and Safer Streets grant
- Other active travel infrastructure projects across the local authority
- In kind match funding

Funding already awarded to SIC through Transport Scotland's **Spaces for People** fund for temporary measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will deliver short term interventions which could be pilots of some of the ATS actions.

Action plan

To deliver on the ATS vision and reach the set targets, ZetTrans will lead on the delivery of the following actions, presented under five broad categories:

- An attractive walking and cycling environment
- Policy integration
- Promotion, travel behaviour change, and information
- Leadership and governance
- Training and education

The action plan has been informed by the public and stakeholder engagement events, ongoing and planned programmes, and best practice and evidence from elsewhere on the most effective measures.

For each action, the proposed delivery timescale is included, either in the **short term** (over the next two years), **medium term** (over the next five years), or **longer term** (beyond the lifetime of the ATS).

The action plan will be reviewed and added to each year on the basis of progress and outcomes from the first actions to be delivered. The ATS will also need to reflect the latest national policy changes, and response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

An illustrative Shetland-wide map of key actions and delivery principles is included at the end of this section.

AN ATTRACTIVE WALKING AND CYCLING ENVIRONMENT

Significant concerns were raised during the engagement events about safety and comfort when walking and cycling. For people to walk and cycle more, they need to feel safe and it needs to be as convenient than other transport mode for short journeys.

This will be achieved by creating a network of cycle routes connecting local destinations and integrated with other modes of transport, which is coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive, following established best practice, adapted to the context in each part of Shetland.

Walking provision will be brought up to good standards where it is lacking, notably in terms of access, comfort and safety. New walking routes will be created where gaps in provision prevent safe and convenient access to local destinations.

Actions under this heading are listed here, labelled Nx for “network”.

N1: ZetTrans will undertake **settlement “walkability” and “cyclability” audits** (including all ability access and placemaking) across Shetland. They will be centred on an area within 5km of local destinations for cycling (about 20

min ride) and within 2km for walking (about 20 min walk), or other logical end point (e.g.: the end of the built-up area). The audit will identify opportunities to improve existing routes, identify where new links are needed. Local placemaking opportunities will also be considered.

For each settlement these audits will take account of routes already identified by Community Councils and any existing old roads alignments with potential for use to form a list of prioritised measures, with a delivery timescale and funding plan.

Measures may include lower speed limits, segregated cycling infrastructure, new or better pedestrian crossings, area-wide modal filtering (“low traffic neighbourhoods”), etc.

For all settlements, issues, actions and priorities will be developed with and shaped by the local community.

In **Scalloway**, the settlement audit and action plan will build on the work already undertaken through extensive public and stakeholder

engagement for the Scalloway Local Space Plan and Action Plan recently completed.

In **Lerwick**, following the same process as for other settlements will mean undertaking a review of the transport network as a whole, with the view of re-prioritising sustainable modes of transport and quality of public realm. The scope will extend to the areas within commuting distance, particularly cycle commute.

Timescale: Audits programme and first set of audits in the short term, all audits completed in the medium term.

N2: Recommendations from the settlement audits (Action N1) will be progressed by ZetTrans and other bodies through design / implementation stages annually on a rolling basis as audits are completed. **Timescale:** *medium term, as audits are completed (action N1).*

N3: ZetTrans review the existing list of proposed schemes by Community Councils strategy to inform the settlement audits and to identify schemes which could be implemented in the short term, in parallel to the audits. **Timescale:** *short term.*

N4: ZetTrans will explore the feasibility and appetite for **speed limit lowering in built-up areas** (town, villages and settlements) to 20mph as default, increased along main roads. This will include interventions to the road layout where the new speed limit is unlikely to be self-enforcing. A pilot and monitoring programme are going ahead in 2020 as part of the Spaces for People COVID-19 related short term interventions programme. **Timescale:** *short term.*

N5: ZetTrans identify and implement a pilot **School Streets** (temporary street closure during the school run), with the aim of making it permanent if successful and rolling it out to other suitable schools. A pilot and monitoring programme are being explored in 2020-21 as part of the Spaces for People COVID-19 short term interventions programme. **Timescale:** *short term.*

N6: ZetTrans will establish a **minimum level of facilities at bus stops and ferry piers** and set up an programme of upgrades where needed (hard surface, shelter, lighting, (sheltered) cycle parking, information, etc.). This action will consider the recommendations from the “Low

carbon and active travel hub Network Feasibility Study” to establish levels of provision at the main road-ends and other key locations. **Timescale:** *In the short term and then ongoing.*

N7: ZetTrans will **audit all walking routes to bus stops and ferry piers** within 15-20min walk (if not already covered by the settlement audit in action N1) and produce an upgrade programme where needed. (new or wider paths, lighting, crossing, etc.). **Timescale:** *medium term.*

N8: ZetTrans will encourage and facilitate **installation or upgrade of cycle parking at all public buildings** (schools, library, leisure centre, health centre, community halls, etc.) to have suitable cycle parking near the main entrance. **Timescale:** *medium term.*

N9: ZetTrans will identify where more **on-street cycle parking** may be needed (near shops and visitor attractions, at access points to popular beaches or paths.) **Timescale:** *short to medium term.*

N10: SIC will review its **maintenance regime and prioritisation**, with the aim of increasing the prominence of walking and cycling routes, including for winter maintenance. **Timescale:** *Short term.*

N11: SIC will systematically incorporate relevant small scale improvements to walking infrastructure as part of road/other work (missing or inadequate dropped kerbs or cross falls, hard surface at bus stops, etc.). **Timescale:** *short term, then ongoing.*

N12: SIC will establish a programme of small scale improvements to walking infrastructure not already covered in other work (see action N11 above) covering missing/inappropriate dropped kerb or cross fall, hard surface at bus stop, etc. **Timescale:** *short to medium term.*

N13: ZetTrans will undertake an audit of the “old roads” alignments to establish the potential for sections to be used as part of a long distance cycling network (see action N14 below). **Timescale:** *short term.*

N14: ZetTrans will work with Sustrans to promote existing family friendly cycle routes in Shetland and seek to bring the former NCR1 to NCN standards. It will aim to re-gain NCR status for a **long distance network** supporting both local journeys, leisure rides and the tourism sector. This could be along the former route

and/or new alignments. *Timescale: existing route promotion in the short term, longer route feasibility in the medium term, delivery in the longer term.*

N15: ZetTrans will develop **design guidance** for attractive and accessible walking and cycling infrastructure which is adapted to the context in Shetland. The guidance will draw on established best practice and guidance across the UK and elsewhere. *Timescale: short term.*

POLICY INTEGRATION

PI 1: ZetTrans review ongoing planned projects across SIC departments which could be used as **match funding** for active travel projects. *Timescale: short term.*

PI 2: ZetTrans will incorporate the active travel action plan's vision and actions into **the regional transport strategy** under development. *Timescale: short term.*

PI 3: ZetTrans/SIC will **review all relevant planning policies, design guidance and practices to emphasise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists**, and universal access requirements, in line with best practice and guidance, building on efforts made through the development of the

Staney Hill and Knab masterplans. *Timescale: short term.*

PI 4: ZetTrans/SIC will emphasise provision for, and the needs of, pedestrians and cyclists in public contracts as they are renewed. *Timescale: ongoing.*

PI 5: ZetTrans will engage with bus operators to establish the feasibility of and likely demand for the possibility of **taking bikes on buses** and/or integrating bikes with buses along some or all routes. *Timescale: ongoing.*

PROMOTION, TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE, AND INFORMATION

P1: ZetTrans work with key organisations to **Develop a Shetland-wide brand** to be used for all communications around transport and sustainable transport interventions. The brand may be shared across organisations. *Timescale: short term.*

P2: ZetTrans develop a **communication plan and awareness raising campaign** to promote sustainable travel from the development of the transport strategy to project delivery. *Timescale: short term and ongoing.*

P3: ZetTrans provide a **single authoritative source of information** on sustainable transport provision, advice, local walking or cycling routes, etc. through a range of media online/paper/app using a single brand (See P1). This may include a multimodal journey planning tool. *Timescale: short term and ongoing.*

P4: ZetTrans will set up and **regularly update a website/page** as a key source of information on progress and engagement events on sustainable transport in Shetland. The website will include a regularly monitored email address **activetravel@shetland.gov.uk**, widely publicised to build on the dialogue established during the 2020 engagement events. *Timescale: short term, then ongoing.*

P5: ZetTrans will **support and advise employers wishing to improve facilities for cyclists as well as improve access to all** by making information readily available online and give more tailored advice on how to become "Cycle-Friendly Employers". *Timescale: ongoing.*

P6: SIC review and upgrade signposting and mapping of local walks, and cycle routes where they exist. *Timescale: initial review in the medium term, then ongoing delivery*

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

The vision and the measures described in the previous sections are wide ranging and their successful delivery will rely on close collaboration between partners in the public, private and third sector. It will also rely on strong commitment across those organisations, both in financial and political terms. To this end, the following action will be taken.

LG1: ZetTrans **confirm that all funding potential is being maximised.** A review of the funding sources listed on page 20 will be carried out to determine whether any are currently being un- (or under-) used by the Council or its partners and which could provide assistance with short-term support. *Timescale: short term.*

LG2: ZetTrans will **allocate 5% of the transport budget to walking and cycling**, across capital and revenue spend, covering a range of infrastructure, behaviour change, and promotion measures. *Timescale: short term, then ongoing.*

LG3: ZetTrans will appoint **a dedicated (or part dedicated) staff** to deliver walking and cycling measures identified in the action plan. *Timescale: short term, then ongoing.*

LG4: ZetTrans will continue to chair the **Active Travel Group**, which will be formalised with regular meetings (at least twice a year). Its remit will be to coordinate actions/investment, promotion and behaviour change measures between partners and review progress in the delivery of the action plan. The membership of the group will also be reviewed to make sure all relevant interest groups are represented (e.g.: representatives of disabled groups/individuals). *Timescale: short term, then ongoing.*

LG5: One or more “**champion(s)**” in position of leadership/decision making to be appointed, by ZetTrans, as advocates for the ATS and active travel/liveable environments, and keep walking and cycling high on the agenda in ZetTrans, SIC, NHS, and other key stakeholder organisations. *Timescale: short term, then ongoing.*

LG6: ZetTrans will regularly **inform and update Councillors and ZetTrans board members** on the benefits and costs of investing in active travel, at least annually. *Timescale: short term, then ongoing.*

LG7: As part of its annual reporting, ZetTrans will publish an **annual report** on progress in the delivery of the ATS. *Timescale: short term, then annual.*

LG8: ZetTrans will expand and maintain the **GIS (Geographic Information System) database** established during the ATS development to both inform investment decisions in active travel infrastructure and monitor progress. *Timescale: ongoing.*

LG9: As major employers in Shetland, ZetTrans SIC and NHS will lead by example by becoming “**Cycle-Friendly Employers**”, building on the existing designation of the NHS Gilbert Bain hospital. To achieve this SIC will review and upgrades facilities for cycling (parking, showers, lockers, financial incentives etc.). *Timescale: medium term.*

LG10: SIC will make **pool bikes (or possibly e-bikes)** available to staff and actively encourage their use in replacement to pool cars as often as possible. This will build on the NHS Shetland pool bike scheme already running, and could extend use of the bikes to the wider public outside of working hours. *Timescale: medium term.*

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

T&E 1: SIC already offers **Bikeability** level 2 in all primary schools, but will consider **follow up activities in secondary school** to refresh skills and promote cycling to this age group. *Timescale: medium term, then ongoing.*

T&E 2: ZetTrans will support all schools in Shetland to update or produce a **School Travel Plan**. *Timescale: medium term.*

T&E 3: ZetTrans will set up (or support the set-up of) **adult cycle training and walking groups**. *Timescale: medium term.*

T&E 4: ZetTrans will investigate options and feasibility of providing **access to bikes and e-bikes** across organisations, private sector

employers, residents and/or visitors. Options could include provision through ZetTrans or through a third party provider on the car-club model. *Timescale: feasibility in the medium term, delivery in the longer term.*

T&E 5: ZetTrans will discuss with Police Scotland the feasibility of introducing “**operation close pass**” in Shetland to educate drivers on passing cyclists at a safe distance or take further action as appropriate. *Timescale: initial discussions in the short term.*

T&E 6: ZetTrans deliver **training sessions or material** to staff and elected/board members on sustainable transport, and liveable town and settlement. *Timescale: short term, then ongoing*

SHETLAND ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY 2020-2025

Settlement audits

All settlements with local services and amenities will be audited to identify measures to make them more attractive to walk and cycle, and accessible to all.



Measures to improve cycling conditions will be identified within 20min cycling (about 5km). Cycle routes will be designed with the needs of disabled cyclists and non-conventional bikes in mind.



Within the 20min walking range (about 1.6km), the priority will be to make the environment more accessible and attractive to pedestrians through better, safer walking infrastructure and public spaces.



Sustainable transport hub options (eg: sheltered cycle parking, upgraded bus stop facilities, park & ride, EV charging, etc.), within towns (▲), at "road ends" (▲) at ferry piers (▲), and at airports (▲).



Routes proposed by Community Councils to be considered as part of settlements audits and for short term delivery.

Local destinations to be accessible to all on foot or cycling within 20min walking and cycling

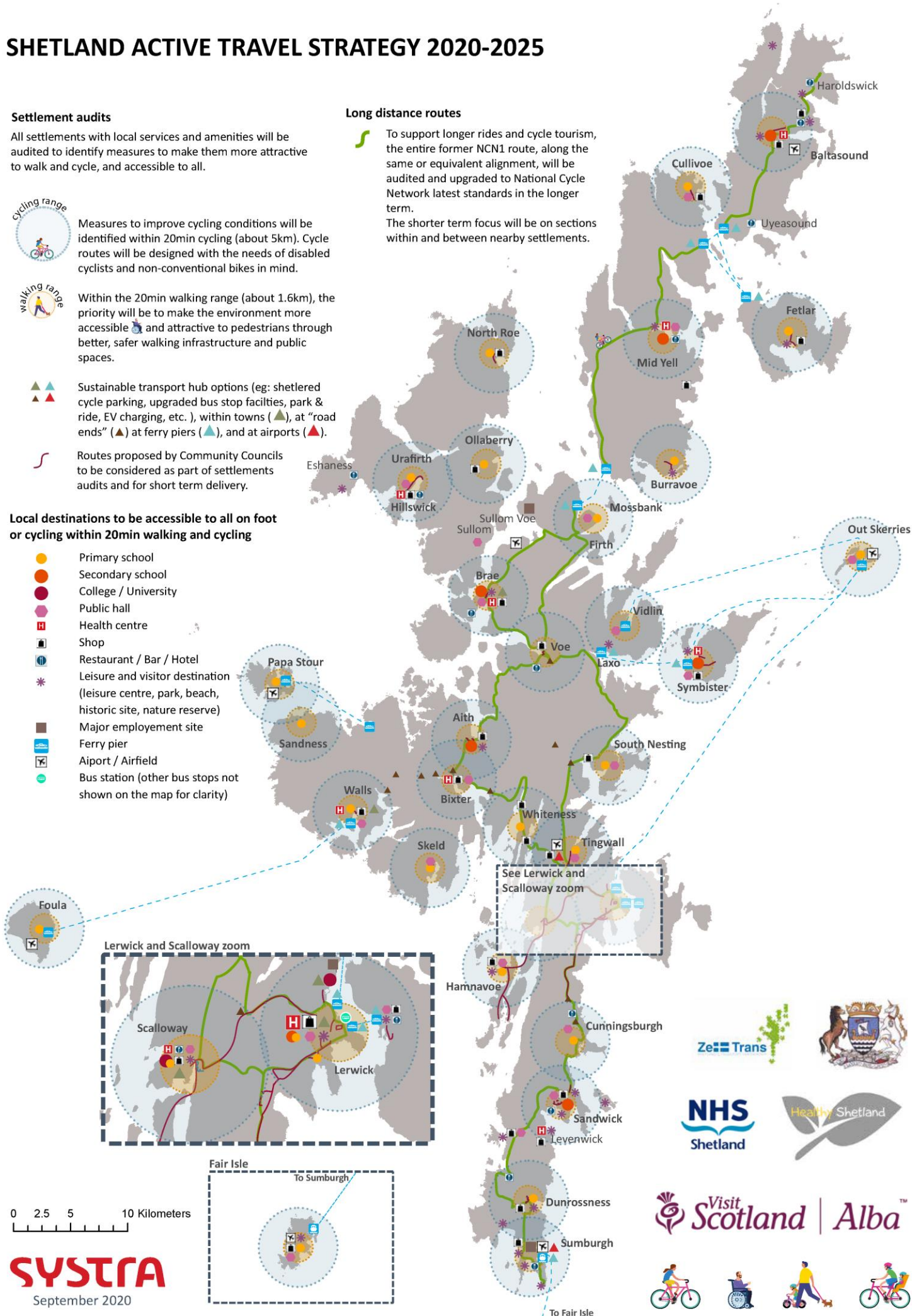
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- College / University
- Public hall
- Health centre
- Shop
- Restaurant / Bar / Hotel
- Leisure and visitor destination (leisure centre, park, beach, historic site, nature reserve)
- Major employment site
- Ferry pier
- Airport / Airfield
- Bus station (other bus stops not shown on the map for clarity)

Long distance routes



To support longer rides and cycle tourism, the entire former NCN1 route, along the same or equivalent alignment, will be audited and upgraded to National Cycle Network latest standards in the longer term.

The shorter term focus will be on sections within and between nearby settlements.



Monitoring and evaluation

The progress, and success, of the ATS will be monitored regularly and published in an annual progress report. Progress will be evaluated against the targets listed on page 18 and reproduced in the table below with the baseline and data source when available. The datasets against most targets are available externally, while four require data collection to establish a baseline and for ongoing monitoring.

- M&E 7, for which a network of automatic counters and / or a programme of manual counts at key locations across Shetland will be established to measure walking and cycling flows.
- M&E 11, for which regular counts of cycle parking use or user transport survey across public buildings will be undertaken.
- M&E 12, for which regular satisfaction surveys will be needed, possibly as part of the monitoring programme the Transport Strategy under development.
- M&E 13, which will be dependent on the current spend profile, to be established.

The set of targets and data sources to monitor the ATS will be reviewed when it is incorporated into the Transport Strategy. It will also be informed by the monitoring programme planned for the temporary measures for public health and physical distancing put in places under the “Spaces for People” programme. It should be noted that existing baselines may be disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and will require amendment to remain useful. The 2021 Census may also provide a robust and comprehensive up to date dataset, which could be helpful for medium to longer term evaluation.

ID	TARGET	BASELINE	SOURCE
M&E 1	Increase the number of children walking to school, across all primary and secondary schools.	2018: 22% (Scotland: 42%)	Hands Up Scotland Survey, Sustrans
M&E 2	Increase the number of children cycling or scooting to school, across all primary and secondary schools.	2018: 4% (Scotland: 6%)	Hands Up Scotland Survey, Sustrans
M&E 3	Increase the percentage of those employed usually cycling to work	2018: 1%	Scottish Household Survey / TATIS 2018
M&E 4	Increase in all journey mode share of walking	2018: 21%	SHS / TATIS 2018 Table 16
M&E 5	Increase in all journey mode share of cycling	2018: 1%	SHS / TATIS 2018 Table 16
M&E 6	Increase percentage of people walking as means of transport once a week or more	2016: 58%	SHS 2016 and Transport Scotland (TATIS2018 table 9) (question next asked in 2019 and then every other year)
M&E 7	Increase in cycling and walking at selected locations across Shetland	Baseline to be established	collected by permanent counters and/or regular manual counts
M&E 8	Increase percentage of the population participating in walking (at least 30min) in the past four weeks.	2018 Baseline: 70%	SHS 2018

ID	TARGET	BASELINE	SOURCE
M&E 9	Increase percentage of the population participating in Cycling (at least 30min) in the past four weeks	2018 Baseline: 10%	SHS 2018
M&E 10	Increase the percentage of household with access to a bike	2018 baseline: 34%	SHS 2018
M&E 11	Increase in cycling to public facilities (leisure centre, libraries, health centres, etc.) - cycle parking use	Baseline to be established	Annual cycle parking use survey at public buildings
M&E 12	Increased users' satisfaction with walking and cycling provision	Baseline to be established	ZetTrans/SIC to undertake regular satisfaction surveys
M&E 13	Spend at least 5% of the transport budget on walking and cycling projects every year throughout the period (up to 2025)	Baseline to be established	ZetTrans/SIC

