

Local Government and Communities Committee

City Region Deals

Submission from Paths for All

Summary

- **City Region Deals offer the opportunity to address economic growth but also to increase physical activity to increase wellbeing and quality of life, reduce health inequalities and enhance the environment.**
- **We recognise that City Region Deals are delivering active travel benefits.**
- **We recommend that walking and cycling should be further emphasised within these programmes to align them with national policies on walking, cycling and active travel.**

Background

Paths for All is a Scottish charity founded in 1996. We champion everyday walking as the way to a happier, healthier Scotland. We want to get Scotland walking: everyone, everyday, everywhere. We welcome the opportunity for input to the Committee.

Our aim is to significantly increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland - whether that's leisure walking or active-choice walking to work, school or shops. We want to create a happier, healthier Scotland, where increased physical activity improves quality of life and wellbeing for all. We work to develop more opportunities and better environments not just for walking, but also for cycling and other activities, to help make Scotland a more active, more prosperous, greener country.

Our work supports the delivery of the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, National Walking Strategy and the Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland. We promote community and workplace health walking, path network development and active travel. We are a partnership organisation with 29 national partners.

Active Travel

Our vision is for walking and cycling to be the natural choice for short journeys, creating a healthier, socially inclusive, economically vibrant, environmentally friendly Scotland.

Active Travel is about improving quality of life and quality of place. With over 50% of all driven journeys in Scotland being less than 5km, and 26% less than 2km, there is plenty of scope for achieving a significant shift to walking and cycling as the most sustainable forms of transport.

The [Smarter Choices, Smarter Places](#) (SCSP) programme is Transport Scotland's grant scheme managed by Paths for All to support behaviour change initiatives to increase active and sustainable travel modes.

The economic benefits associated with increased physical activity levels far outweigh any initial costs. Cost Benefit Ratios for walking developments show significant value for money. Social Return on Investment (SROI) evidence shows a return of approximately £8 for every £1 invested in health walk and path development projects.

City Deals

The Fraser of Allander Institute, in its December 2016 economic commentary on City Deals, stated that any approach by cities should take into account the following:

Integration of services: It should enable integrated approaches to public transport (road, rail, bus, tram and active travel), health, unemployment, care, adult skills, and employability, so that these budgets can be combined to achieve greater impact.

We support this recommendation. City Region Deals offer the opportunity not only to address economic growth, but the opportunity to address obesity, reduce cancer levels and the incidence of heart disease in Scotland.

Reducing road usage by sole car drivers contributes to Scotland's greenhouse gas reduction targets. Less cars means that essential road users can travel more efficiently and effectively, supporting economic growth. Ensuring that homes and workplaces are well-connected by active transport routes is key to achieving these outcomes. In addition, investing in active travel is a more equitable way of investing public money.

It is clear from the table below that within existing City Region Deals in Scotland there are a number of initiatives that can deliver active transport opportunities. Integrating City Region Deals with preventative, green health services will increase the return on investment and enable the programme to deliver greater benefits.

Similarly, we would argue that road improvement initiatives that are focussed solely on vehicular movements actually have a disbenefit for Scotland. They encourage car use, thereby increasing poor health, inequality, poor air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. The benefits fall to those who are car owners, which evidence shows are already more economically advantaged.

We are aware that within the three existing City Region Deals some projects do promote active travel and we welcome this but we are not able, at present, to give an objective assessment of their value. It would be a useful if the Committee were to request more information on this from both the existing and the proposed City Region Deals.

Examples we are aware of (Glasgow City Region projects are further progressed than other areas):

The Glasgow City Region City Deal		
North Lanarkshire	Gartcosh - Glenboig Link Road	Cycling and walking paths will be provided on either side of the road and new ponds, planting and paths will be provided within the extended Gartcosh Local Nature Reserve.
East Renfrewshire	Dams to Darnley Country Park	Enhanced accessibility through road, cycle and pedestrian improvements.
	New Railway Station	Improved leisure access to Country Park.
Renfrewshire	The Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside Project	The bridge, which will carry vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists, will create an important new connection between the communities and businesses on either side of the river.
Glasgow	Canal and North	Enhanced public realm; a new pedestrian bridge in Sighthill.
	City Centre	Improvements to the public realm; the resurfacing of streets and pavements; 'smart' infrastructure such as surface water management systems and adaptable lighting systems; the creation of avenues of trees; segregated cycle lanes; underground facilities and reductions in vehicle traffic.
	Clyde Waterfront	A new bridge connecting Govan and Partick; a new pedestrian cycle route between the new hospital and the city centre; a new South Bank pedestrian route between Cessnock Underground and Pacific Quay; a new North Bank cycle and pedestrian route connecting Glasgow University and the West End with Govan, Glasgow

		Harbour, the SECC, the Partick-Govan Bridge and the city centre; and public realm improvements at Govan Cross, Byres Road, Church Street and University Avenue.
	Collegelands Barras	Calton New footpaths, roads and cycle routes will be created.
Inverness and Highland City Region Deal		Not that we are aware of at present.
Aberdeen City Region Deal		Interventions to encourage modal shift from the car to public transport, including cycling and walking options.

We do not have the necessary local knowledge to give detailed comments on the existing and proposed City Region Deals. To our knowledge, the only area where we have been asked for direct input has been in East Renfrewshire.

We can offer some general comments in relation to non-motorised users, in line with the principles of the [National Walking Strategy for Scotland](#), that may be of help as the projects develop.

The National Walking Strategy has three strategic aims:

- Create a culture of walking
- Better walking environments throughout Scotland
- Ensure easy, convenient independent mobility for all

Investing in active transport is not investing in the unknown. There are many examples of good practice across Scotland, Europe and the World that can be replicated without needing to invest in research and development. We know that to provide an effective walking infrastructure there are 5 “must haves”:

- Well maintained streets, paths and public spaces – including level, smooth surfaces that are fully accessible, fit for purpose and with reduced street clutter;
- Information on walking routes to key destinations and places to walk, including more paths with signage;
- Seating, public toilets and good lighting, as a minimum provision in a high-quality, person-centred public realm;
- Safe places to cross roads with pedestrians given priority at signaled crossings;
- Vehicle speeds limited to 20mph.

[Public Attitudes to Walking in Scotland A Comparison of Opinion Monitor Surveys - 2009 and 2014](#)

Active Travel Hubs, the Place Standard and Street Audits are important tools in designing and planning walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods - informing local decisions such as reallocating road space and re-design/regeneration of existing places and spaces. They work and have been shown to work. Making use of these tools in designing City Region Deals projects across Scotland will accelerate the uptake of active travel.

Active Travel Case Studies

We have produced a series of case studies that demonstrate how active travel can be promoted by different kinds of organisations in different settings. Each case study tells a different story and demonstrates different approaches to developing active travel. Contact details are provided within each case study so that more detailed information can be sought directly from the people who implemented the project.

[Active Travel Case Studies](#)
[Travel Behaviour Change Case Studies](#)

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