



Active Travel Strategy

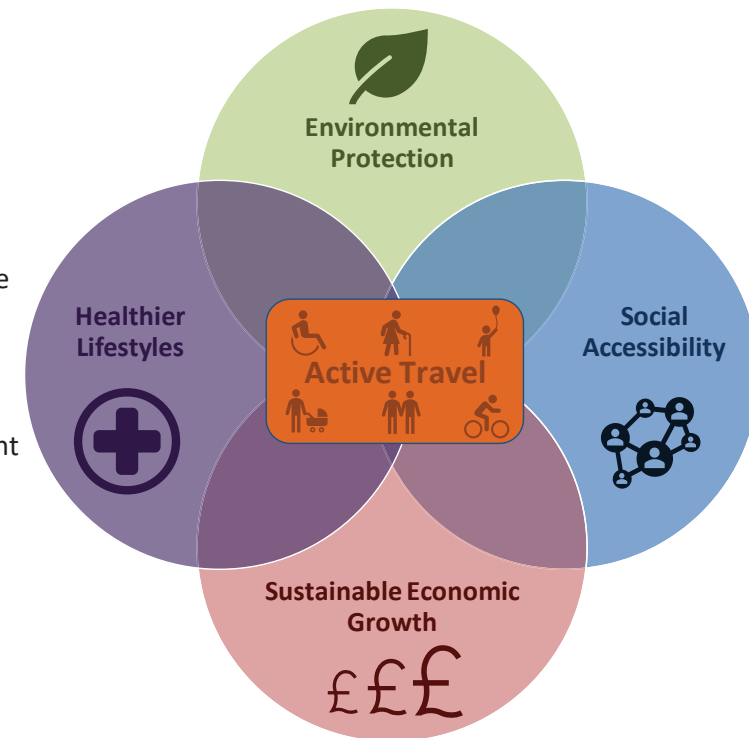
Putting People First

Across Scotland, and around the world, policy makers are adopting a **people-first approach to planning and transport**,¹ creating great places connected by a healthier and more sustainable transport system.

We know that the population of Falkirk district is projected to increase over the next decade, putting further pressure on our existing infrastructure. To address this, we need a transport network that can better promote the development of sustainable, liveable, productive and distinctive places in line with national, regional and local policy.²

Transportation is an essential part of our lives – how we move around affects our access to, and experience of, travelling between home, education, work, services and leisure. But different forms of transport have different impacts on our environment, health and wellbeing, and economy. Some transport types are also more easily accessed than others.

We know that active travel – walking, wheeling and cycling – is the best form of transport for the **environment**, **health and wellbeing**, and **local economies**. It is also the cheapest form of transport, and much less affected by cost-of-living increases than motorised transportation. By shaping our communities for walking, wheeling and cycling, we support individuals, families and businesses to make transportation choices that are best for their own needs and budgets.



¹ Note: all footnotes to be converted to hyperlinks for publication.

² National Records of Scotland (2021), *Falkirk Council Area Profile*. [online] www.nrscotland.gov.uk. Available at: https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/statistics/Council-area-data-sheets/falkirk-Council-profile.html#table_pop_proj [Accessed 16 Feb. 2022].

This Active Travel Strategy for Falkirk, builds upon the plans, strategies and frameworks at the local, regional, and national level.



**Falkirk Council
Active Travel Strategy**

This banner features six icons representing different active travel modes: a person in a wheelchair, a person pushing a stroller, a person with a cane, a person holding a balloon, two people walking, and a person on a bicycle.



**Falkirk Council
Local Transport Strategy**

This block includes icons for a person in a wheelchair, a person with a cane, a person on a bicycle, a bus, a car, and an electric car.



**Falkirk Council
Local Development
Plan**

This block includes icons for a tree, a house, a building, and a landscape with trees and a sun.



**Falkirk Council
Climate Emergency
Action Plan**

This block includes icons for a globe and a leaf.



**Falkirk Council
Air Quality
Management Areas**

This block includes icons for a cross and a car.



**Economic Strategy for
Falkirk 2015-2025 /
Falkirk Growth Deal**

£££

This block includes an icon for a network of people and three pound symbols.



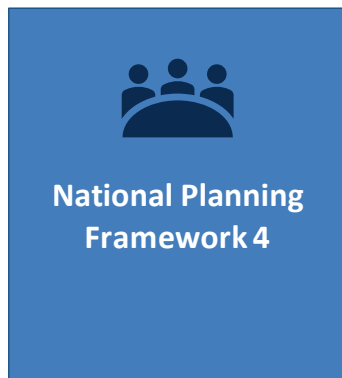
SEStran – Regional Transport Strategy

This block features a map of the Southeast of Scotland on the left and icons for a person in a wheelchair, a person on a bicycle, a bus, a train, a car, an electric car, and a truck.



**National
Performance
Framework**

This block includes an icon of a bar chart with an upward arrow and a map of Scotland on the left.



**National Planning
Framework 4**

This block includes an icon of three people.



**National Transport Strategy +
Strategic Transport Projects Review 2**

This block includes icons for a person in a wheelchair, a person on a bicycle, a bus, a train, a ship, a car, an electric car, another car, and a truck.



**Scottish Government
Climate Change Plan**

This block includes an icon of a globe.



**Public Health
Scotland**

This block includes an icon of a cross.

By building on these policies, we are contributing toward a better Scotland.

Our vision for the next decade is that our communities are shaped around people, with walking, wheeling or cycling the most popular choice for shorter, everyday journeys.

Our Values

A Shift to Sustainability
Improving Inclusion
Achieving Economic Growth
Enhancing Existing Infrastructure

In our vision, people can live their lives without owning a car. Local journeys, for school, work, appointments, services or leisure, are normally made via walking, wheeling or cycling. Longer journeys combine walking, wheeling or cycling with reliable, affordable public transport. Roads are more attractive and welcoming communal spaces, and reduced congestion increases air quality and decreases journey times for bus routes and emergency services. With car ownership truly optional, families have more control over their budgets and transport choices.

This supports the Scottish Government commitment to reducing car kilometres by twenty per cent by 2030 and is aligned to the National Planning Framework (NPF4) approach to developing liveable, sustainable places via the delivery of the Central Scotland Green Network and National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network. It also helps address some of the issues that we have identified about travel and wellbeing across the local area and is aligned with our transport values.

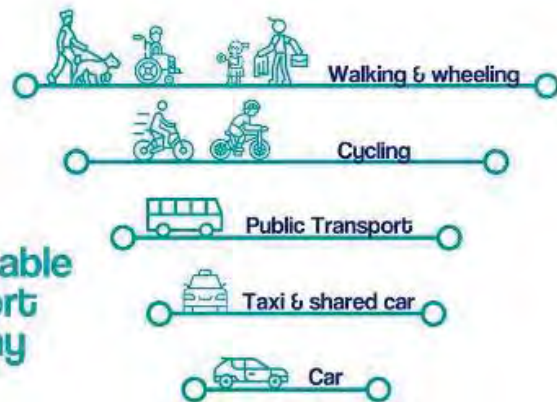
Our Guiding Principles

People First

For many years, streets have been designed for cars, with other users an afterthought. We are returning to our streets' historical origins, with walking and wheeling our top priority. Our investment priorities are illustrated in the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy.

Sustainable Investment

Our Strategy is aligned with the Scottish Government's sustainable investment hierarchy, in which we make sure that existing infrastructure is well-maintained and being used to full capacity before considering new infrastructure options.



Objectives

Our goal is to develop suitable conditions for most people to easily undertake their local journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling. Each step toward this goal will have positive impacts for individuals, the community, and the wider area.

Our work will support the development of:

- **Thriving Communities.** As more people walk, cycle and wheel for everyday journeys, they will help to create more sociable and more pleasant communities. Travelling actively will improve health levels for everyone. Connected paths, footways and more 'eyes on the street' create safer streets and places for all.
- **a Growing Economy.** Making it easier to walk, wheel and cycle will reduce inequalities of access to employment, education, services and leisure. When everyone can move across our communities more easily, they can support local businesses and facilities. This encourages more sustainable economic growth.
- **a Sustainable Place.** The shift from private car use to active modes will reduce transport-related carbon emissions and other air pollution. This shift also will allow some of the space currently used for excessive traffic-levels and parking to be used more productively, creating greener and more attractive spaces and places.

Our Approach

In order to achieve these objectives, we have identified our key priorities:

- Raising awareness of the importance of walking, wheeling and cycling for wellbeing, cost-of-living, and community.
- Supporting all road users, business owners, and key services to make walking, wheeling and cycling easier, safer, and more welcoming for everyone.
- Investing in new and upgraded infrastructure to create safe spaces for walking, wheeling and cycling.
- Committing to the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods to ensure that key facilities are within a reasonable distance for active travel.

Only by ensuring that we invest in people as well as places will we be able to see sustained progress in meeting our objectives.

Improving Inclusion:

We know that there are some groups of people who need additional support to access walking, wheeling and cycling, and we will prioritise investment accordingly.

Challenge and Solution Sliders

During the development of this Strategy, you've told us about the main transport problems you have. In response to this information, we have identified appropriate solutions to help support your needs better. These solutions have been incorporated into this Strategy.

The Falkirk district's population is older than the UK average

- Promote programmes that provide access to adapted cycles and e-bikes and mobility scooters
- Provide more rest opportunities on walking routes

Concerns about antisocial behaviour make people less active .

- Promote walking, wheeling and cycling to increase the number of eyes on the street.
- Increase investment in lighting on active travel routes, especially near integration with other transport modes

Air Quality Management Areas do not meet national objectives.

- Create opportunities for shift from private car to walking, wheeling and cycling
- Reduce vehicle traffic near schools and in neighbourhoods

The south and west of the region are hillier than other parts of the Falkirk district.

- Improve access to e-bikes and roll-out of Forth Bikes scheme.
- Ensure integration between public transport, shared mobility, and walking, wheeling and cycling.

25% of the district's residents do not have access to a car or van.

- Work with planners and businesses to ensure accessible walking, wheeling and cycling links to and between workplaces, education, key services and leisure facilities.

Cost of living increases are affecting household budgets.

- Design new connections to enable people to travel without the need to fuel and maintain a private car, by combining walking, cycling, and wheeling with public transport or use of a car club.

Reduced high street footfall reduces spend with local businesses.

- Decrease traffic congestion and reallocate road space to increase access to town and neighbourhood centres. Increase the availability of secure storage for bicycles.

Traffic congestion causes delays to emergency services and service vehicles.

- Reduce the number of private cars on the road to free up space for those who need it most.

New settlements create additional traffic.

- Ensure that new settlements are connected to active travel networks.
- Behaviour change campaigns to support more active and healthier travel choices.

We will address these issues and their solutions throughout the strategy.

Identifying Strategic Routes

In 2019, Falkirk was awarded 'Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood' by the Ramblers.³ We want to build on this, working with internal partners to develop our Core Path Plan.

With your help and feedback, we have identified the key places people travel to and from. We have used this information to ensure that the right infrastructure is in place to help you walk, cycle or wheel more often to and from the places that are important to you.

We know that in the Falkirk district, 40% of commuters travel less than 5km to work and 58% travel less than 10km. Journeys under 10km can often be easily made through active modes such as cycling, if the appropriate infrastructure, services, and equipment are available.

For longer journeys, we want to encourage the use of walking, wheeling and cycling as part of an onward trip using public transport. We know that it's not possible for everyone or every journey, but we want to make sure that those who do want to travel this way have the safer infrastructure, skills and equipment they need.



40% OF COMMUTERS TRAVEL LESS THAN 5KM TO WORK AND 58% LESS THAN 10KM.

³ <https://www.visitfalkirk.com/news/falkirk-crowned-britains-best-walking-neighbourhood/>

Village of Maddiston Monument to a Landscape

A series of nine sculptures/monuments have been situated throughout the village of Maddiston to encourage people to explore their local area.

Community artists NADFLY engaged with the community through making paper lanterns that they could put up outside their houses to show a shared experience. They also carried out an evening lantern walk where all the lanterns had bike lights in them to light up the evening. 400 residents came out on a cold January evening!

Nine granite monuments were put in place across the old and new estates, which had metal plates attached with drawings of the area. These could be used to make pencil rubbings as people explored their community.

As we develop more infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling, we will aim to incorporate more interesting and attractive features which celebrate the Falkirk region's heritage.

The Foundry Fortunes and Monuments to a Landscape were funded by Paths for All, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Falkirk Council.



Larbert & Stenhousemuir: Foundry Fortune

The six Foundry Fortune waymarker sculptures form a unique community engagement project that celebrates heritage and encourages exploration by foot and bike through the parks and pathways of the Larbert & Stenhousemuir area.

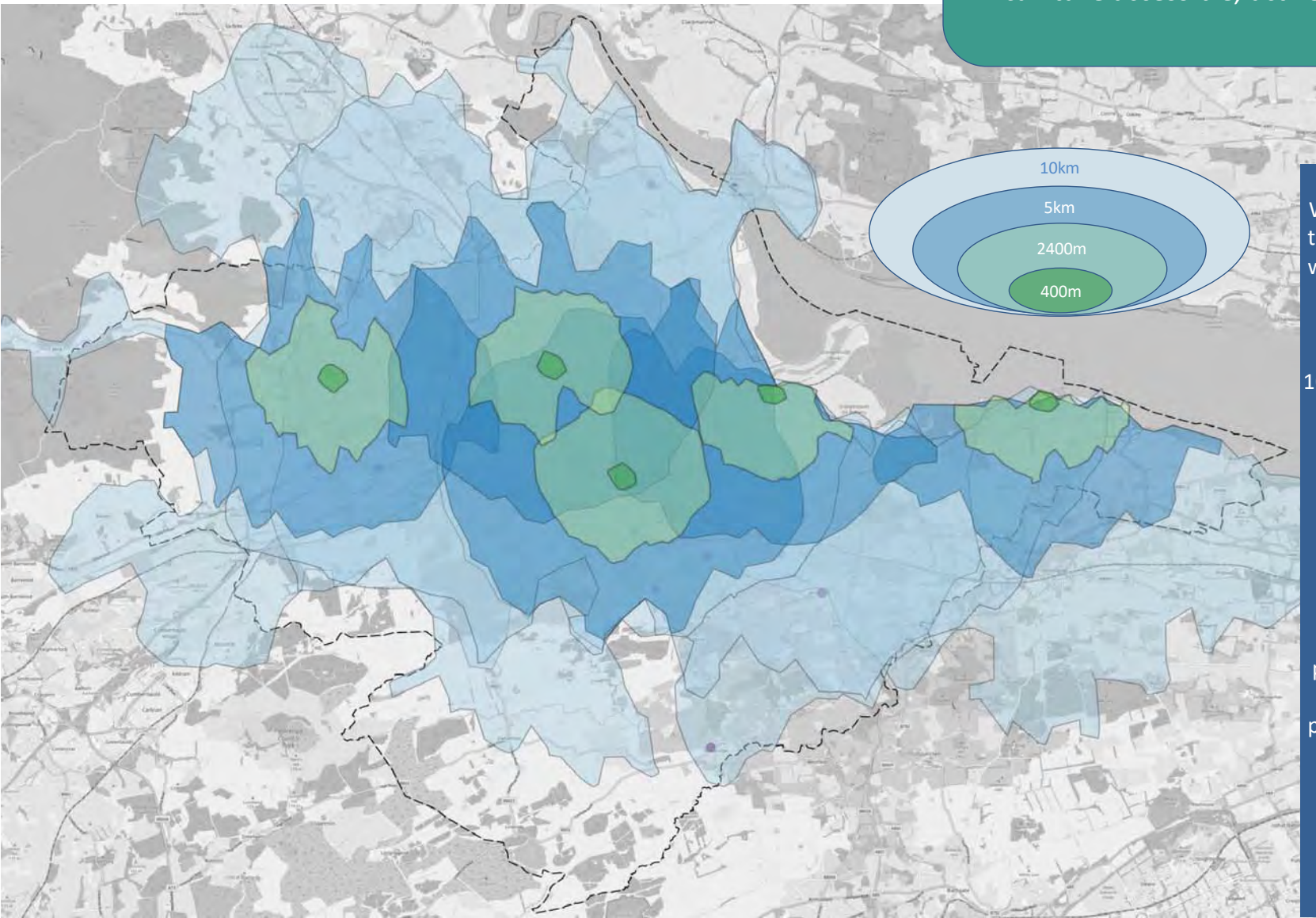
The work is greatly inspired by our industrial heritage and the many iron foundries that used to dominate the landscape across the local area.

The Foundry Fortunes project was also community led with Community Artists NADFLY engaging with the public through workshops, maps and booklets.

So what does 10km of cycling look like? The map below shows the following for the biggest settlements across Falkirk:

- a Comfortable Walking Distance (dark green): 400m
- a Reasonable Walking Distance (light green): 2400m
- a Comfortable Cycling Distance (dark blue): 5km
- a Reasonable Cycling Distance (light blue): 10km

Improving Inclusion:
Not everyone wants, or is able, to travel at the same speed. By opening areas to walking, wheeling and cycling, people can take accessible, active journeys at their own pace.



When we look at the five district centres, we see that the majority of the district is within walking, wheeling and cycling distance of a district centre.

In fact, it is estimated that over 85% of the population of the Falkirk district live within a 10km cycle distance of Falkirk town centre. This is a distance that, depending on the landscape, many people can cycle in 30 minutes – but whatever speed people travel at, if the infrastructure is right, people will have a comfortable cycling or wheeling experience at their own speed.

With the pedaling assist of an e-bike, these distances can be travelled more easily by more people. No matter their form of travel, we want and need to ensure that the infrastructure is in place to allow journeys of this length to be made easier and more accessible. If we get the infrastructure right, there is the potential for most people to make more of their everyday journeys on foot, by wheeling, or by cycle.

Bo'ness

Walking / Wheeling

400m: Bo'ness Railway Museum

2400m: Kinneil and Muirhouses

Cycling

5km: Kinneil Estate

10km: Linlithgow, Beeccraigs Country Park

Grangemouth

Walking / Wheeling

400m: High Street Shops

2400m: Sports Stadium

Cycling

5km: Helix Park

10km: Bo'ness, Larbert, Kincardine

Falkirk

Walking / Wheeling

400m: Falkirk Grahamston and Falkirk High rail stations

2400m: Callendar Park, Forth Valley College

Cycling

5km: Forth Valley Hospital

10km: Larbert & Stenhousemuir

Denny

Walking / Wheeling

400m: Broad Street shops

2400m: Herbertshire Castle Park, Chacefield Wood

Cycling

5km: Bonnybridge

10km: Larbert, Falkirk, Cumbernauld Village, Bannockburn

Larbert and Stenhousemuir

Walking / Wheeling

400m: Main Street shops

2400m: Forth Valley Royal Hospital

Cycling

5km: The Falkirk Wheel

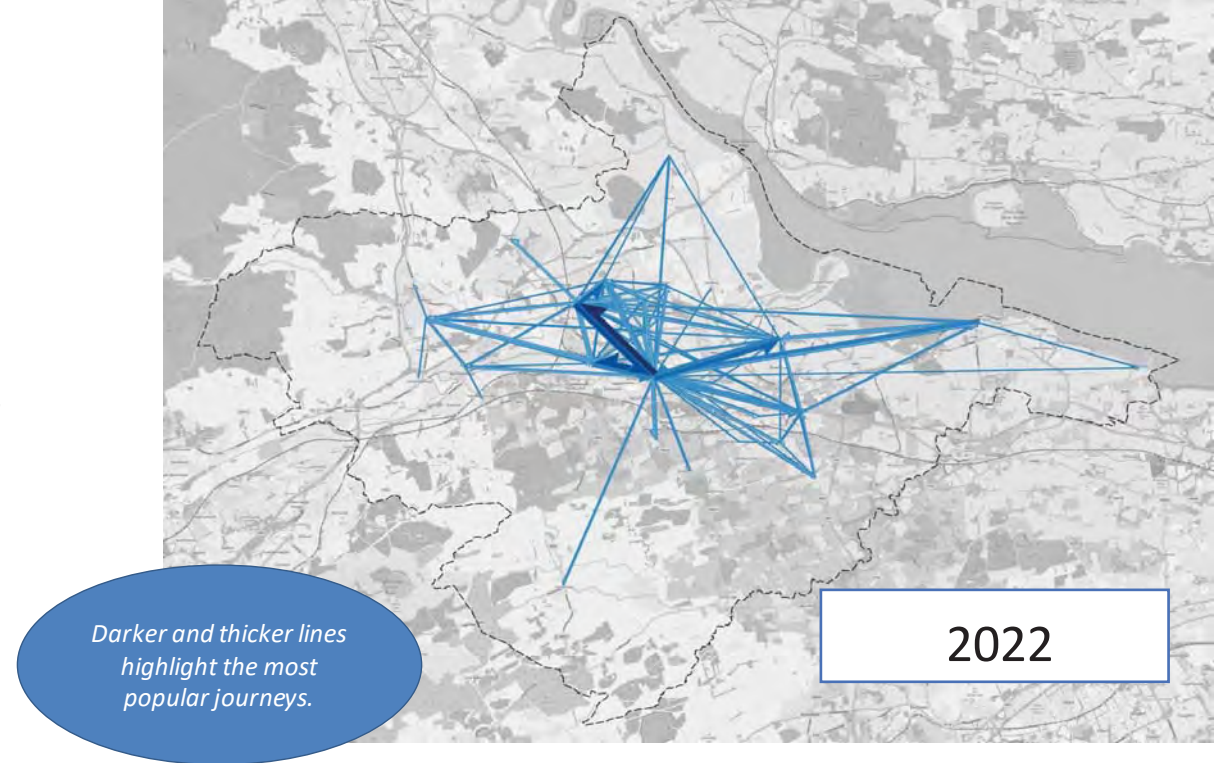
10km: Plean Country Park, Grangemouth, Polmont

Understanding Regular Journeys

We asked Falkirk district residents what their most regular journeys were, and compared this to the census data.

The result is a map which highlights the key connectivity areas of Falkirk town, Camelon, Larbert, Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Grangemouth, Bo'ness, and other key areas across the region.

We used this information to develop a proposal for a strategic active travel network across the Falkirk district. Having this network plan helps ensure that we have all the best-practice tools we need to secure funding to make our walking, wheeling and cycling vision a reality.





Improving Inclusion:
 We are including all communities, rural, urban and in-between, to make sure everyone is able to access services and opportunities across the district by sustainable modes.



WEST LOTHIAN

CASE STUDY: ABBOTSHAUGH BRIDGE



Ensuring safer and more accessible walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure across this network is the primary goal of our Active Travel Strategy over the years to come.

This does mean that we have to change the way we think about roads. To follow best practice design guidance, we need to modernise the way that we use our streets. We need to move from thinking about roads being primarily designed for the movement and storage of private cars and vans to thinking about streets as primarily designed for people. This means we will have to reallocate space from the carriageway, including on-street parking, for other users, to make our streets work better for everyone.

We need to use road space more efficiently. By replacing on-street parking with wider footways and new cycleways we can allow more people to move through a space.

The slider below compares the way that we currently use road space and the way that we *could* use it. By reallocating space to use roads more efficiently we can increase the number of people who can use a road at the same time.

The communities of Carron, Carronshore, Langlees and Bainsford identified a need for a bridge over the River Carron to connect these four communities. Before the bridge it was a 6 mile round trip to access the Helix and 4 miles to access the neighbouring communities. The bridge would allow these communities to access the Helix Park and neighbouring communities and amenities.

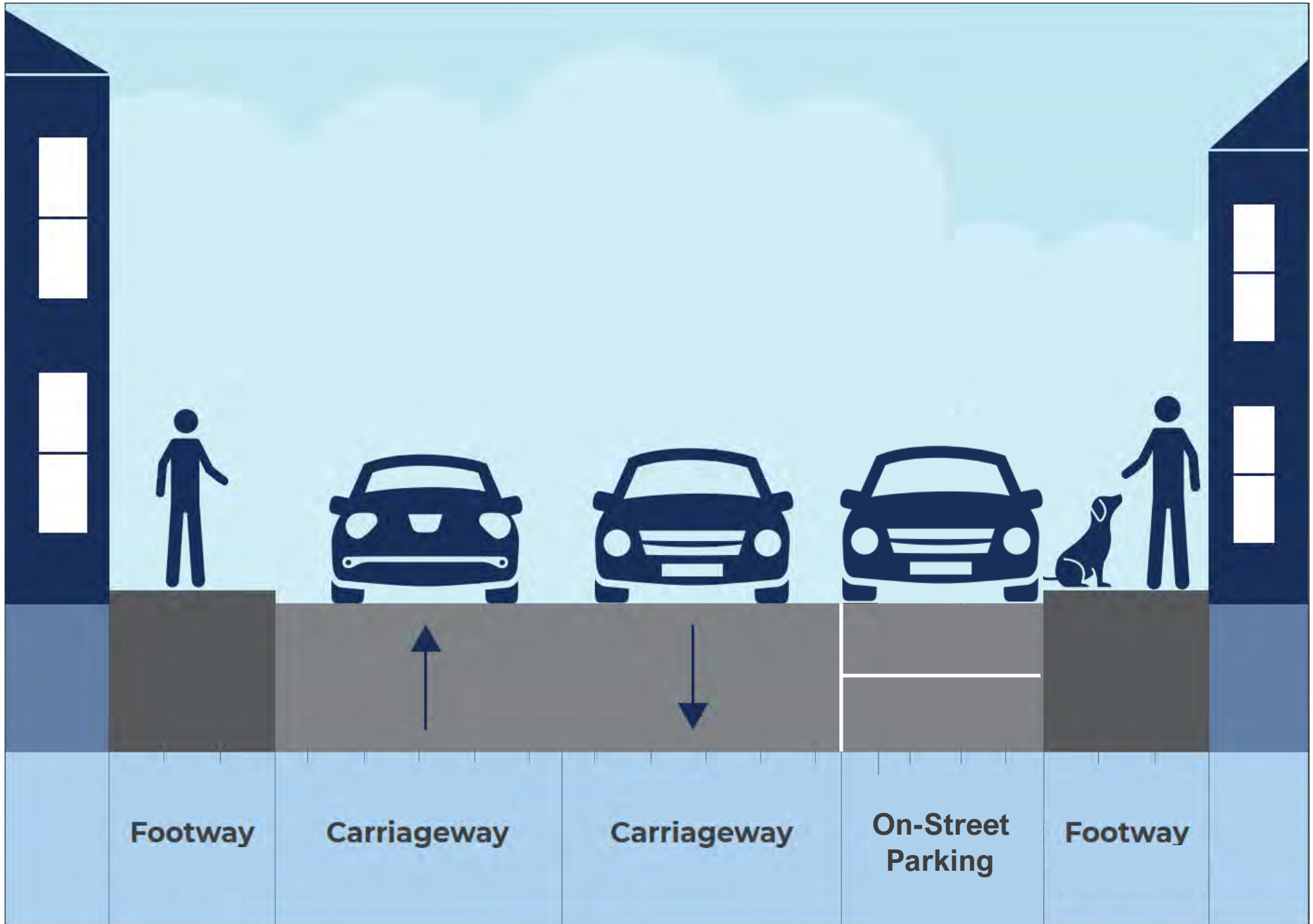
It was proposed that a bespoke cycling and pedestrian bridge was put in place to connect the path network on either side of the River Carron.

The bridge was installed in June 2018 and was named Abbotshaugh bridge after the estate it was built within. It is the biggest pedestrian bridge in the Falkirk district. It is situated in a beautiful location along the River Carron and serves as a critical link for the four communities, and beyond, to access the paths, parklands and amenities of the area.

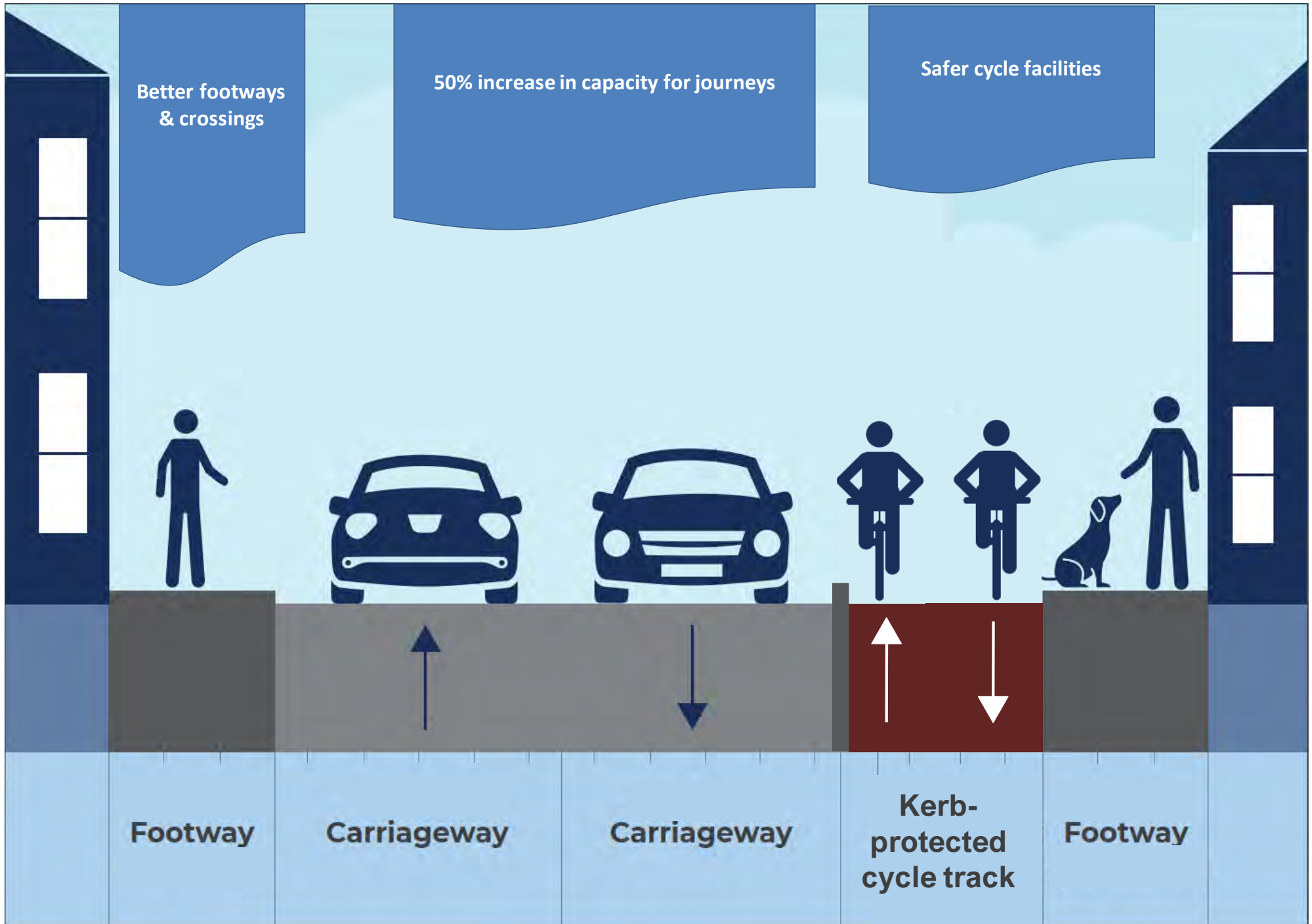
The bridge has been built to last 100 years so it will become an important community feature for current and future residents and visitors to enjoy.



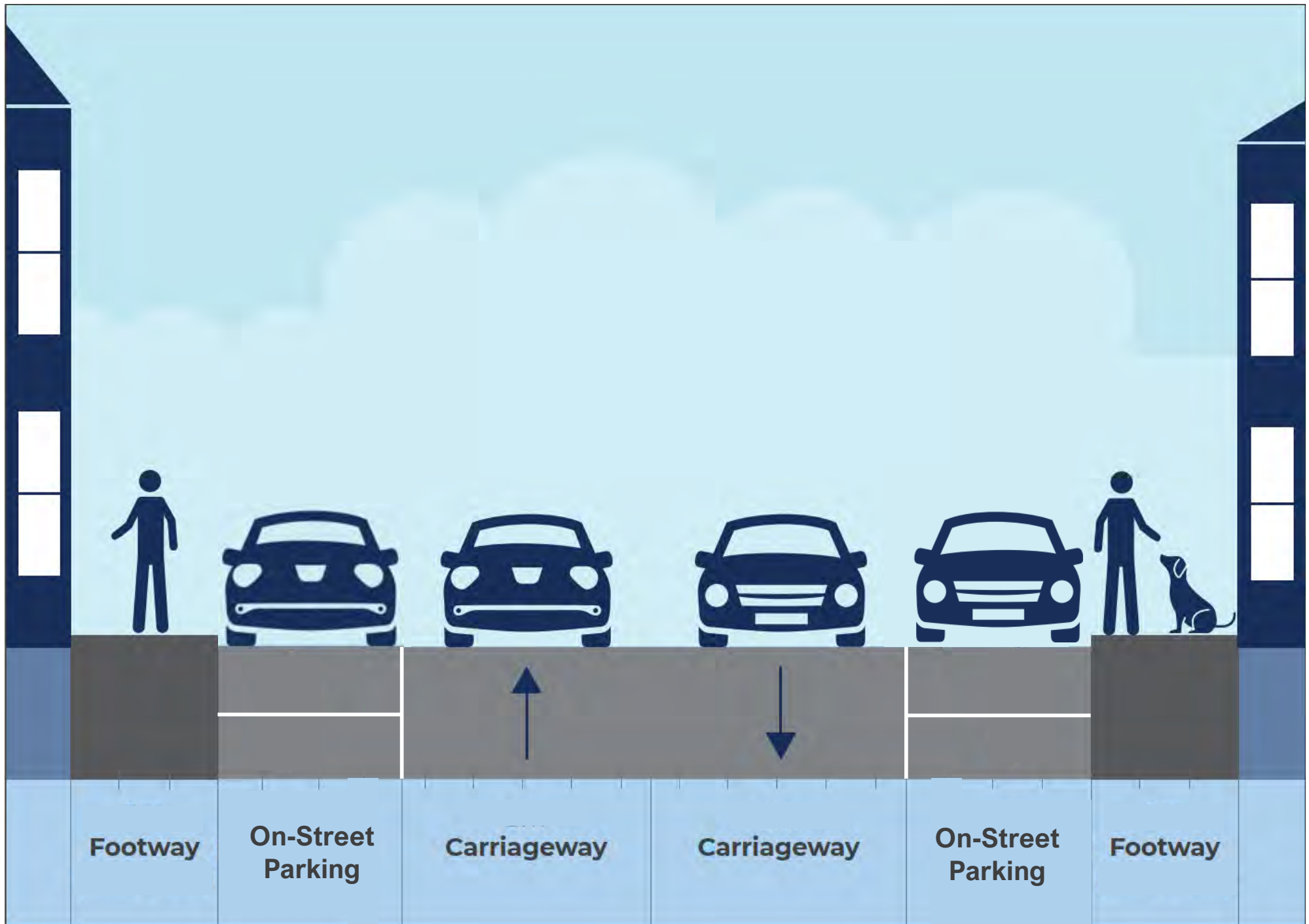
Primary Network – Typical Existing Situation



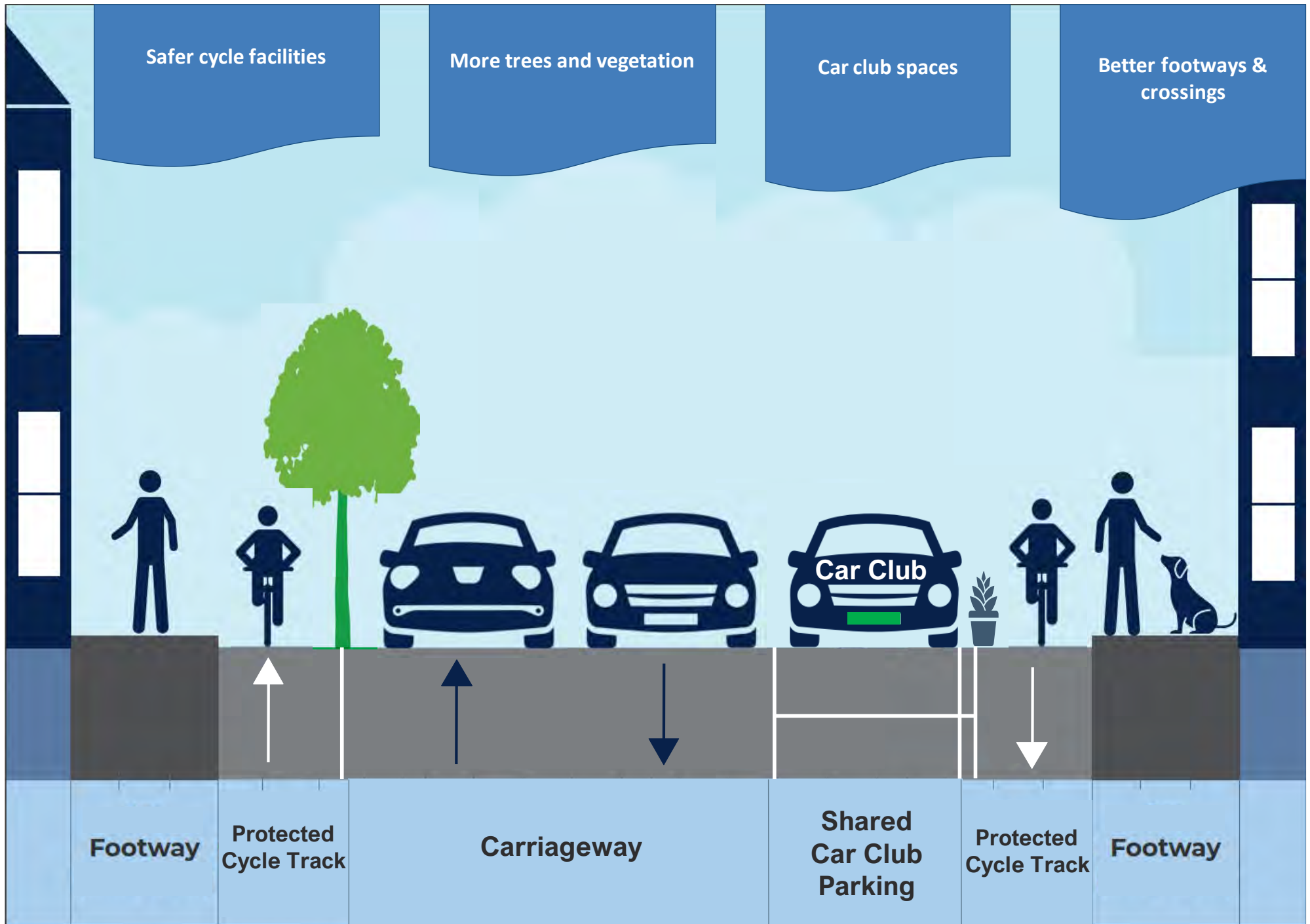
Primary Network – Future Transformation



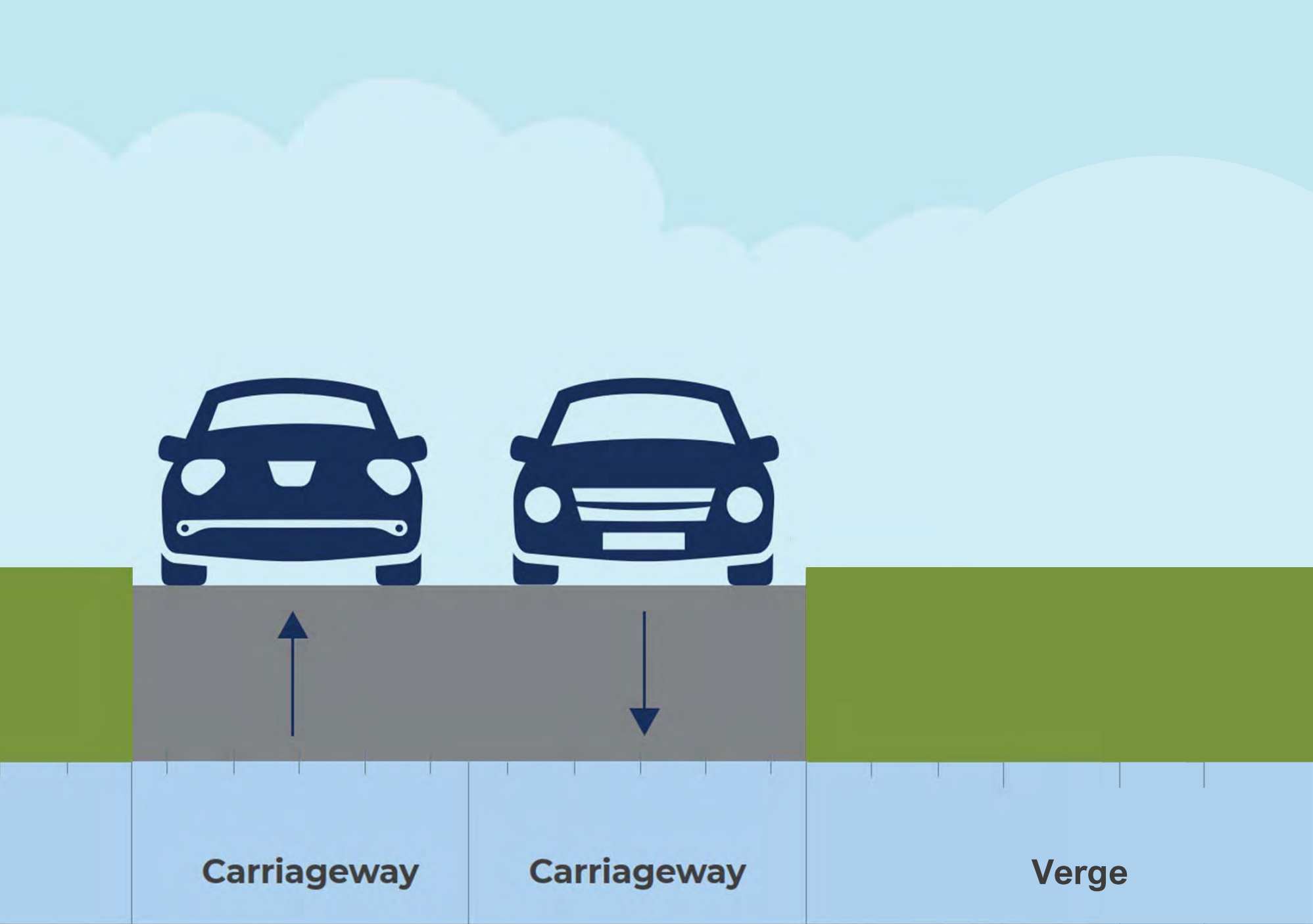
Secondary Network – Typical Existing Situation



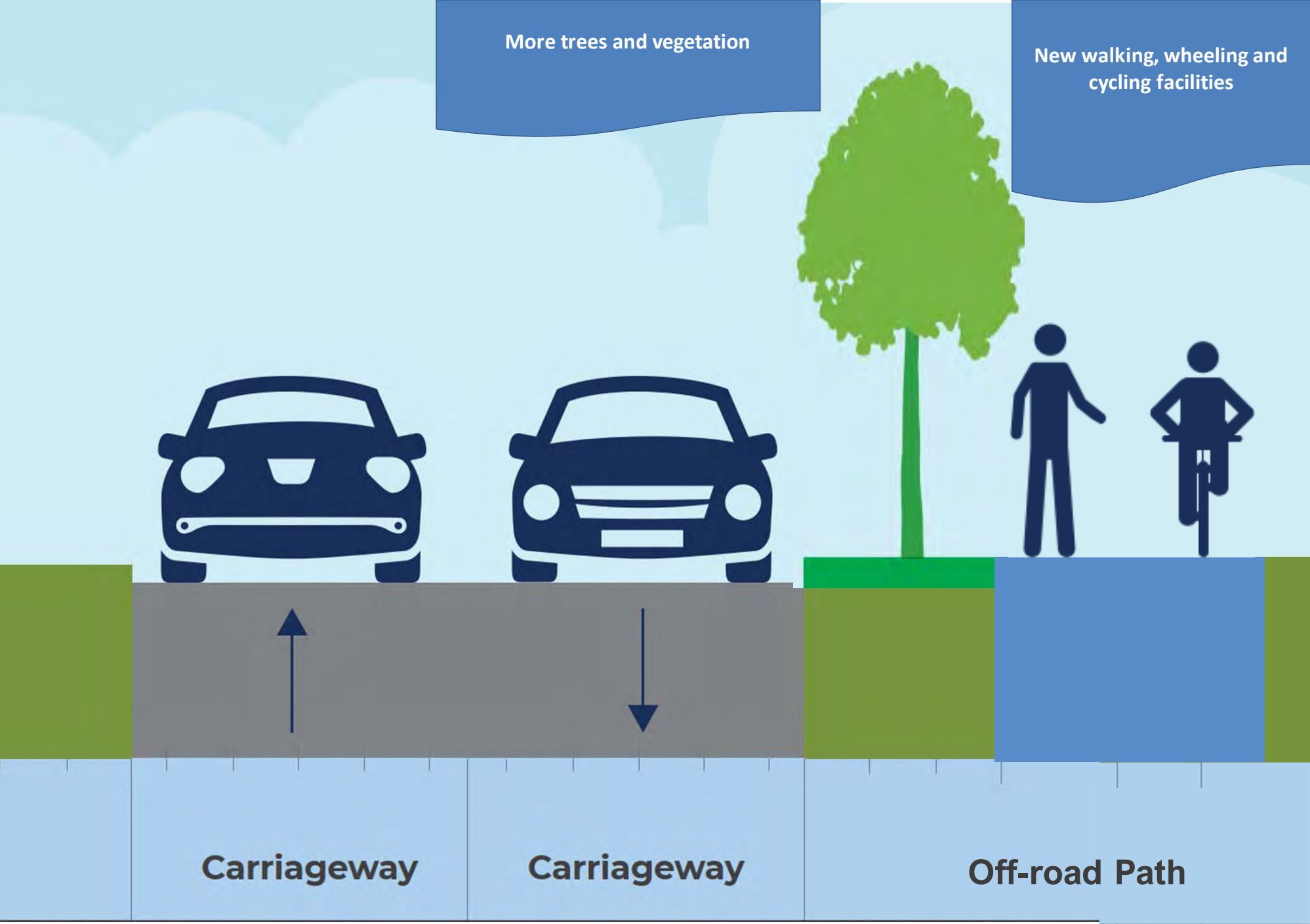
Secondary Network – Future Transformation



Rural Network - Existing Situation



Rural Network – Future Transformation



It's important to remember that we're not starting from scratch. We've made significant walking, wheeling and cycling investments, with over 1700km of footway, footpaths, and cycleways around the Falkirk district.

Our ambition and challenge is to connect these routes, and make sure that key journey origins and destinations are all accounted for.

The Falkirk District has nearly 600km of path network and has invested in the region of £31 million in the district's path network over the past 25 years.

This extensive network saw Falkirk receive the Rambler's award for 'Britain's Best Walking Neighbourhood' in 2019. Falkirk Council have, and will continue, to improve this network for residents and visitors to comfortably commute by walking, cycling or wheeling.



Improving Inclusion:
Small gaps in footway and path provision – even one step instead of a ramp, or a narrow pinch point caused by a barrier – can keep some people from using entire sections of route. Filling in the 'gaps' in the accessible active travel network is essential to making sure everyone has the option to make each journey they want to by walking, wheeling and cycling.

Putting it into Action

We will invest in our strategic active travel network, with a goal of completing the primary network by 2038, fifteen years after this strategy is published.

We will develop and maintain an ambitious delivery plan for delivering the strategic active travel network.

We will prioritise investment in street lighting, the footway network, and cycle routes to provide safe, sustainable travel options.

We will work with the Council's Core Path Plan to enhance the existing path network and develop multi-use paths that are easily accessible and well-connected.

We will improve the pedestrian and cycle environment in the busiest used areas to enhance safety for walking, wheeling and cycling.

We will continue listening carefully to communities through prioritizing consultation and collaboration with community groups.

Promoting Thriving High Streets

In line with the Scottish Government's 'Town Centre First' principle, we are working to renew and regenerate town centres.

A key part of this regeneration is safe and welcoming active travel routes to Falkirk town and the four district centres of Bo'ness, Denny, Grangemouth, and Stenhousemuir.

Our town centres form the heart of our local communities and play a crucial role in sustaining the local economy.

Making walking, wheeling and cycling easier, safer and more accessible increases accessibility to opportunities across the Falkirk district, improving quality of life for everyone.

We want to see communities in which business, residential, education, and leisure areas flourish together, with accessible well-signposted connections between local areas.

Part of promoting place requires us to work collaboratively across Council services and with expert partners to ensure that the spaces connected by transport infrastructure are places that people want or need to visit. We want to see space used flexibly, able to be adapted as the needs of the community change.



Improving Inclusion:

Making it easier to travel by walking, wheeling and cycling means that people are not excluded if they do not drive or have access to a private vehicle.

The Pedestrian Pound

There is strong evidence that the 'pedestrian pound'⁴ supports High Streets, as pedestrians spend more per month than people arriving by car. That's why improving our high street environments for pedestrians is an essential part of community regeneration and planning for sustainable economic growth.



Improvements to Kelso's traffic management and pedestrian experience in the early 2010s led to a 28% increase in footfall along the High Street, supporting local retail sales.

Falkirk Council have been using Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding since 2008. Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding allows a location-specific approach to suit the unique characteristics of each community. Locations throughout Falkirk district have benefited from interventions such as network of signs to key destinations and walking and cycling events that encourages active travel.

We can also trial temporary interventions to understand their impact on local businesses. In a trial in Shoreditch, East London, two car parking spaces were turned into seating for 14 people and 8 cycle parking spaces. During the trial period, the adjacent shops' takings increased by 20%.

⁴ <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/3890/pedestrian-pound-2018.pdf>

⁵ Transport Scotland (2022a). *Smarter Choices, Smarter Places* | Transport Scotland. [online] www.transport.gov.scot. Available at: <https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/smarter-choices-smarter-places/#42403> [Accessed 3 Mar. 2022].

Opportunities for All

Transport is important for promoting social inclusion and wellbeing, allowing people access to employment, healthcare, education, and other services. When barriers to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport emerge, it is often vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities or mobility issues who are most affected.

To make walking, wheeling and cycling viable choices for parts of longer distance journeys, active travel infrastructure has to be well-connected to public transport systems. Even where public transport might cover most of a journey, users still need to walk, wheel or cycle to the transport hub where they access the public transport. This part of the journey is referred to as the 'first mile and last mile'. Steps taken by the Council going forward will contribute to enhancing safety during the 'first and last' mile to improve accessibility.

Connections between public transport and walking, wheeling and cycling do not just make sustainable transport an easier choice – for many residents of the Falkirk district they are essential. **A quarter of the Falkirk district's residents do not have access to a car or van** – making it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle to where they need to go ensures that no opportunities are missed as a result of transport differences. Making it easier for people to travel actively also creates an opportunity for those who do have access to a vehicle to consider giving it up or using it less to reduce running costs.

We know that some new technology, like electric cars, are harder to fit into families' budget. We also know that with rising fuel prices, car ownership may not be a financially sustainable choice.

Walking, wheeling and cycling are much more affordable, and help to address *transport poverty* within the council area.⁶ Our strategy includes investment in the infrastructure, skills and materials that people need to feel confident moving about actively. This means reducing risks around cycle theft, and making it safer to store cycles at home and at key destinations.

Improving Inclusion:
1 in 4 Falkirk district residents do not have access to a car or van. Improvements to active travel routes and connections to public transport will improve their ability to move around the district.



⁶ Transport poverty exists when people do not have access to essential services because of a lack of affordable transport options. See *Transport poverty in Scotland*. [online] Sustrans. Available at: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/research/all-themes/all/transport-poverty-in-scotland> [Accessed 15 Feb. 2022].

To reduce the number of vehicles needed in our town centres, we need to support businesses to have active **‘first-mile’ and ‘last-mile’ delivery solutions**, such as cargo bikes or hand trolleys. We also need to make it easy for people to use **walking, wheeling and cycling to ‘click and collect’**, meaning that even online purchases will create some footfall for the high street.

£21 million has been dedicated to a Central Sustainable Transport Hub known as ‘Falkirk Central’ at the current Falkirk Grahamston Station and an associated ‘Green Corridor’ that will connect local communities.⁷ This investment will ensure that walking, wheeling and cycling is a key component in sustainable development, and will support the rejuvenation and growth of the Falkirk district’s economy.

Putting it into Action

We will trial pedestrian and cycling improvements and monitor the economic impacts on local businesses through business engagement.

We will invest in secure cycle parking infrastructure at key destinations.

All new flats will have dedicated secure cycling storage.

We will invest in infrastructure and placemaking to make the walking, wheeling and cycling gateways to town centres welcoming and accessible.

We will work collaboratively to increase the flexibility of land use, to encourage thriving high streets.

We will remove time restrictions for cycle access on Falkirk town’s high street to increase cycle access and facilitate greater use of cargo bike delivery models.

We will explore opportunities for cargo bikes in the Grangemouth Investment Zone, and make arriving at this zone by foot, cycle or wheel a welcoming and accessible experience.

Ensure the Grangemouth Investment Zone is accessible via walking, wheeling and cycling.

⁷ Falkirk Council (2022a). *Business & investment - Falkirk Growth Deal* | Falkirk Council. [online] www.falkirk.gov.uk. Available at: <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/business-investment/falkirk-grangemouth.aspx> [Accessed 2 Mar. 2022].

Creating Liveable Neighbourhoods

20-minute neighbourhoods aim to create attractive, safe, accessible environments which connect people to the facilities and services for their everyday needs via short, convenient walking, wheeling and cycling trips without depending on a car.

Within a 20-minute neighbourhood there are typically schools, green space, grocery stores, health facilities, recreational opportunities, and diverse and affordable homes – keeping jobs and spending local, and journeys achievable by active modes.

We know that for liveable neighbourhoods to be successful, vehicle speeds and traffic flows need to be managed. Our public consultation revealed that more than 50% of over 65-year-olds felt roads were unsafe for them as a pedestrian. As a response, in line with the global Streets for Life campaign,⁸ led by the United Nations, we are working to make 20mph the norm for places where people mix with traffic. We know that limiting vehicle speeds reduces risks to pedestrians and is an important part of making a more equitable balance between road users. We are committed to a phased approach to the introduction of 20mph restrictions in all towns and most villages as a first step. We will continue to investigate and implement appropriate measures to improve safety and accessibility for all people, whether walking, wheeling or cycling.

Being able to move around the community safely is particularly important for children. That's why Falkirk Council is making a commitment to ensure that **all children attending school within their local catchment have a suitable walking, wheeling or cycling route to school.**

This will reduce traffic around schools, and congestion and parking issues at the beginning and end of the school day and encourage more active lifestyles from early age.

Playing outside is facilitated by street closures and semi-permeability (cars cannot 'rat-run' through a neighbourhood, whilst people walking, wheeling or cycling have unrestricted access).



CASE STUDY: I BIKE and BIKEABILITY

I Bike is a partnership project between Sustrans Scotland and Local Authorities designed to support schools to embed walking, wheeling and cycling into the curriculum in Scotland. The main benefit of I Bike is schools have focussed support through an I Bike Officer to become more active with their travel habits at no financial cost to the school.

The project has supported schools in Falkirk since 2015 through dedicated I Bike officers, events, activities and staff training. The majority of the budget has been used to gift fleets of high-quality age-appropriate bikes to both primary and secondary school including bikes for staff as well as helmets and fleets of scooters. I Bike Falkirk has also supported several schools to install cycle parking and cycle storage.

Over 130 led rides have been delivered in schools, allowing pupils and teachers to access the curriculum in more interactive ways while benefiting from physical exercise, improved wellbeing and mental health and learning life skills such as navigating the local area and riding safely and considerately.

As part of its focus on long term sustainability and behaviour change, I Bike Falkirk has trained 52 senior pupils through engagement with the Sports Leaders programme as well as 90 Teachers and school staff. 30 teachers have been trained in Cycle Ride Leader training.

Improving Inclusion:
Children and young people under 17 cannot legally drive private cars. Investment in walking, wheeling and cycling promotes independence and opportunity for young people.

⁸ <https://www.unroadsafetyweek.org/en/streets-for-life>

⁹ <https://blogs.napier.ac.uk/tri/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2020/08/School-Streets-Closure-Traffic-Displacement-Literature-Review-FINAL2.pdf>

³: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayora/school-streets-improve-air-quality>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people enjoyed cycling across the UK, and used it as an alternative to their previous method of travel. Cycle sales rose by 677% during the pandemic.¹⁰ We want to promote long-term investment in these plans, undertaking schemes like those in Milan, Italy. The Italian city launched an ambitious scheme to reduce car usage after lockdown. Called *strade aperte* [open streets], the plan aims to reallocate 35 km of street space from cars to cycling and walking.



The ability to play outside is not just important for children, but also for adults. Recreational exercise such as walking, cycling, and jogging is an important component of active travel provision, particularly where leisure destinations can be made accessible by walking, wheeling and cycling.

Everyday users can appreciate historical and cultural projects that protect and enhance our unique historical, natural and cultural environment. We will promote and support projects that provide access to community spaces and green space, such as the Helix Park and Bo'ness Foreshore. We know that recreational exercise can be a stepping stone to having the ability and confidence to use walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys.

We also want to ensure strong connections to and from our rural communities.

We know that in rural communities walking, wheeling and cycling may look different. In many rural areas, it is not feasible for every journey to be within the urban 20-minute neighbourhood model. But this does not mean those who live in rural communities should be excluded from positive developments in the transport network. To apply the concept of '20-minute neighbourhoods' in a rural setting, we will:

- Provide the infrastructure to support more walking, wheeling and cycling;
- Promote the provision of accessible transport to remote areas;
- Improve the integration between different forms of transportation; and
- Rationalise car parking and introduce low speeds to reduce congestion and improve safety.



The Helix path network provides a stunning backdrop for walks, runs or cycling. Its pathways connect 16 communities via 26 kilometres of paths - so there's always a new route to try. Whether you're a serious runner, scenic stroller, dog walker or keen cyclist - there's plenty of room for everyone.

Cycle parking is available outside the Plaza Café and the visitor centre at The Kelpies.

We have a Forth bike docking station by our Kelpies car park. For more information on using the electric bikes, please visit here.

We're also lucky to be linked to two National Cycle Routes as well as the John Muir Way, which runs from Dunbar in East Lothian to Helensburgh in Argyll and Bute. You don't have to follow a set path, though - you can get out and explore our extensive path network.



¹⁰ <https://www.napier.ac.uk/-/media/worktribe/output-2880511/who-walking-and-cycling-evidence-2022.ashx>



Incorporating the 20-minute neighbourhood concept into our strategy aligns with our vision that prioritises a modal shift to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. Whilst we acknowledge our more rural locations, we hope to improve connectivity so that travelling by bus, bike, or train is as, or more, convenient as the private car.

As the modal shift to sustainable and active travel occurs, we aim to improve connectivity between active travel routes and train stations to reduce congestion. Additionally, secure storage facilities at transport hubs will be key in encouraging the mixed-use of sustainable and active travel. If we are to encourage the use of public transport and walking, wheeling and cycling, we must ensure the provision of infrastructure that makes this as convenient as possible.

Putting it into Action

We will review existing footway and path clutter and remove or relocate anything unnecessary which is a barrier to access for all people whether, walking, wheeling and cycling.

We will invest in new street infrastructure such as pedestrian crossings, wider footways, and protected vehicle-free spaces to improve the pedestrian experience.

We will improve connectivity and integration between different modes of transport to ensure seamless mobility. This includes steps such as exploring integrated ticketing, walking, wheeling and cycling access to train station, and active travel integration with car club vehicles (e.g. cycle racks).

In areas of high pedestrian demand we will ensure that the default position is pedestrian priority at signal-controlled junctions.

We will prioritise cycling movements over motor vehicles through greenlights, and investigate 'green wave' technology to help cyclists progress through a series of junctions more smoothly.

Embracing Sustainability

We want to create a greener, more inclusive, and more economically successful areas. Investment in active travel is not a short-term solution – it is a long-term commitment to making our communities better places to live, work and play.

It is well-known that one of our biggest changes we can make in our daily lives to reduce carbon emissions is changing the way we move around. In Scotland, transport accounts for a third of all carbon emissions – more than any other sector – with private car use making up nearly half of all transport emissions. Falkirk Council has declared a climate emergency. We know that prioritising walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use as part of our response to this emergency is essential to help all of us rapidly and significantly contribute at a local level towards tackling this global emergency.

Climate change is not the only reason to move toward cleaner transportation choices – we want the air in our towns to be cleaner for all those living in, working in, or visiting us, and for the local wildlife.

Improving habitats for plant and animal life supports our commitment to biodiversity net gain – making sure that our interventions result in an increase in more high-quality habitats.

In the Falkirk district, we have three active Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) – Falkirk Centre, Grangemouth, and Banknock and Haggs. These are areas where we know that the national air quality targets are not currently being met. Across the region, but particularly in these areas, it is essential that we make it easy to travel actively, to reduce the number of cars on the road and improve air quality.

Cars, even electric ones, release particles into the air via their brake pads and tyres. These particles create even more localised pollution than car exhaust, contributing to asthma and other health conditions. By reducing vehicle traffic on our streets, particularly near schools and homes, we can create cleaner air and a safer, more welcoming environment for walking, wheeling and cycling.

Walking, wheeling and cycling also help people to live healthier lifestyles, as physical activity is part of their everyday movement from place to place. And additionally, walking, wheeling and cycling can improve both physical and mental health.

Improving Inclusion:

Having quality spaces for recreational exercise and time outdoors can be therapeutically beneficial to many disabled people and those with learning difficulties.

CASE STUDY: SHARED MOBILITY

Forth Bike is Scotland's largest electric bike share scheme. It is made up of 144 electric bikes that are spread out across numerous stations in the Forth Valley Region, including the Falkirk district.

Using e-bikes through a shared mobility solution reduces the costs on individuals by allowing users to hire e-bikes when they have a journey. In a typical month Falkirk district residents and visitors travelled nearly 9000 miles on Forth Bikes.

The most popular checkout stations are located in The Falkirk district and include the Helix: Home of the Kelpies, Falkirk Wheel, and Falkirk High Street. There are several e-bike Stations in the Falkirk Area including Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Callander Park, Grangemouth, Bo'ness, Falkirk Community Hospital, and Denny.



The **Car Club** is funded by the Council and managed by Co-wheels. The scheme aims to improve accessibility to private vehicles without the financial responsibility of owning a car. Vehicles can be booked online up to 15 minutes before use and rented hourly. Car club and shared mobility in the area is connected as part of an intermodal system. We can reduce congestion and emissions through the shared mobility of an all-electric fleet. The use of shared mobility across the area continues to grow as members of the Car Club have almost doubled since November 2021.

CASE STUDY: Take the Right Route

Take the Right Route is a campaign to promote walking, cycling, car sharing and the use of public transport for all journeys, and particularly for short everyday journeys.

Take the Right Route covers a wide range of projects across the district including:

- Improvements to paths and cycleways
- Personal travel planning
- Marketing and promotion
- Practical support for those wishing to take up active and sustainable travel
- Cycle training

By rolling out these projects across the local authority, we support people to benefit from sustainable travel choices in their everyday lives.



Realising the Vision

Making our Active Travel vision a reality requires all of us to be on board, whether we travel actively, take public transport, or need to continue to use private vehicles.

We're not expecting everyone to ditch the car all the time – but we want to create opportunities for people to try walking, wheeling and cycling and use these modes more often and for more types of trips, and to let their active travel experience inform the way they use other modes of transport.

Creating choice is the focus of shared mobility solutions, such as Forth Bikes and car clubs.

Shared mobility solutions break traditional ownership models and allow people access to transport, including cars, on an on-demand basis. Shared Mobility is based upon providing people with short-term access to shared vehicles like cars, bikes, scooters, etc. on an on-demand basis. This removes the need for vehicle ownership and provides people with a more affordable and wider range of sustainable transport options than they would have available under the traditional ownership-based approach.

By having options, people can choose their mode of travel based on what's best for themselves, their family and community. And when they do choose to travel by private car, people will have a better appreciation of the perspectives and specific needs of those walking, wheeling and cycling.

We know that making a change to established habits can be intimidating, so we're also investing in and supporting a range of community projects, such as:

- The Take the Right Route campaign
- Driver education campaigns
- Cycling education and training for all ages

By integrating changes such as this we will work toward building a more sustainable, equitable society. The environmental, health, economic and social benefits of active travel will benefit all Falkirk district residents for generations to come.

Putting it into Action

We will continue promoting and increasing awareness of sustainable and active travel choices through the Take the Right Route campaign.

Continue to work with the schools and other partners to educate children on the benefits of walking and cycling, to increase walking, wheeling and cycling to and from school.

We commit to ensuring more than 10% biodiversity net gain across our active travel programme to improve the habitats and environments within the Falkirk district.

Our Actions So Far

Falkirk Council has been committed to active travel for many years.

Our plans for future support and investment build upon the Council's investments in active travel, from its extensive path network to behaviour change programmes.

Supporting Active Travel Journeys in School Communities

- Carried out School Travel Assessments at all 58 schools in the Falkirk District to make routes safer. Delivered physical interventions across all school clusters, such as lighting, path improvements, speed reductions, crossing points, cycle storage and bike repair stations
- Delivered behaviour change interventions, such as School Travel Plans, I Bike, education resources, and Cycle Friendly School Awards, and attained 100% of primary schools engaging in National Walk to School Weeks/Months.

Behaviour Change Projects through *Take the Right Route*

- Ran public events providing active and sustainable travel advice and support, such as Green Travel Maps, pedometers, bike repair kits and water bottles.
- Delivered area-wide advertising, using billboards, bus shelters, radio adverts, bus wraps and social media messaging to highlight the benefits of active and sustainable travel.
- Implemented walking and cycling signage to enable path users to navigate the walking and cycling network more comfortably.
- Incentivised active and sustainable travel journeys through the Better Points app. This app enabled users to log their journeys to gain points that could be redeemed for rewards, such as, free coffee, bus tickets and retail discounts.
- Provided resources to enable journey planning to be delivered in businesses throughout Falkirk area.

Infrastructure Investments

- Abbotshaugh Bridge: a new dedicated cycling, walking and wheeling bridge over the River Carron connecting the Langlees, Bainsford, Carron and Carronshore.
- Dorrator Bridge: bridge replacement over River Carron, between Larbert and Camelon, with a new accessible bridge to make walking, cycling and wheeling more comfortable
- Bo'ness to Blackness Foreshore Path: implemented a new shared use path between the communities of Bo'ness and Blackness to ensure residents and visitors could walk, cycle or wheel between these two communities. This route also forms part of National Cycle Network Route 76.

The Kelpies to Kick Off walks saw 300 participants do a 3 or 5km walk around the beautiful Helix Park and the iconic Kelpies sculptures. On completion of the walk the participants were rewarded with a goody bag, free ticket to see Falkirk FC play and a hot pie and drink!



Partnership Working

We can't accomplish everything we want to on our own.

Falkirk Council prides itself in working in partnership with others to provide residents and visitors with the means to choose walking or cycling for their journeys around the Falkirk District. These include:



Forth Environment Link (FEL):

- FEL are a charity who support and deliver environmental initiatives within the Forth Valley Area. These include local food growing projects and encouraging journeys by walking, cycling or wheeling. FEL have implemented an electric bike hire scheme, Forth Bikes, at different locations throughout the Falkirk Area. The bike hire scheme allows residents and visitors to access an electric bike, at a number of locations within the district, and experience cycling around the area to visit the areas local attractions and amenities.



Communities Along the Carron (CATCA):

- Communities Along The Carron Association (CATCA) is a volunteer community group regenerating the River Carron and 16 Communities along it. The group does this via education, community engagement, connecting communities and through physical transformation. Conservation, community gardening, improving green spaces, reducing litter and flytipping are part of CATCA's volunteering work. CATCA is the group that brought Cycling Without Age (CWA) to Falkirk. This involves taking elderly people out for Trishaw rides on specially designed bikes, so they can enjoy the green spaces and make them feel part of their community. This is now expanding throughout Scotland by CWA Scotland. CATCA provide valuable information on community views and ideas and support funding applications.



Visit Falkirk:

- Visit Falkirk provide tourism information to enable people to visit and experience all the attractions Falkirk has to offer. Key visitor attractions include, the Helix Park and the iconic Kelpies, Falkirk Wheel, Bo'ness Railway and Callander Park. Visit Falkirk support sustainable travel and provide information on how to visit the various attractions Falkirk has to offer by cycling, walking, wheeling and public transport.



Sustrans:

- Sustrans are a charity who support sustainable travel choices. They administer Transport Scotland's Active Travel funding support. This funding is used to jointly fund cycling, walking and wheeling interventions in the form of paths, cycle storage and cycling projects in schools

Our Ambitions for the Next Decade

Our vision for the next decade is that our communities are shaped around people, with walking, wheeling or cycling the most popular choice for shorter everyday journeys. This is how we'll make it happen.

Throughout this document we have highlighted our commitment to 'putting it into action'. These are the steps we will take over the years to come to make our vision a reality

By the end of 2023 we will...

- Continue promoting and increasing awareness of sustainable and active travel choices through the Take the Right Route campaign and create resources about current opportunities for accessing active and sustainable travel choices.
- Complete an update of infrastructure proposals and have an action plan for delivering improvements to the strategic network over the next five years.

By the end of 2025 we will...

- Introduce new, secure cycle parking provision for residents and visitors to key destinations.
- Complete a 'school streets' review for every primary and secondary school and develop a plan for implementing the recommended changes.

By the end of 2028 we will...

- Update the ATS to make sure it's ready for the next decade.
- Extend the infrastructure improvement action plan for developments into the 2030s.
- Complete a review of every primary and secondary school in the Falkirk district to identify safe active travel routes to school.

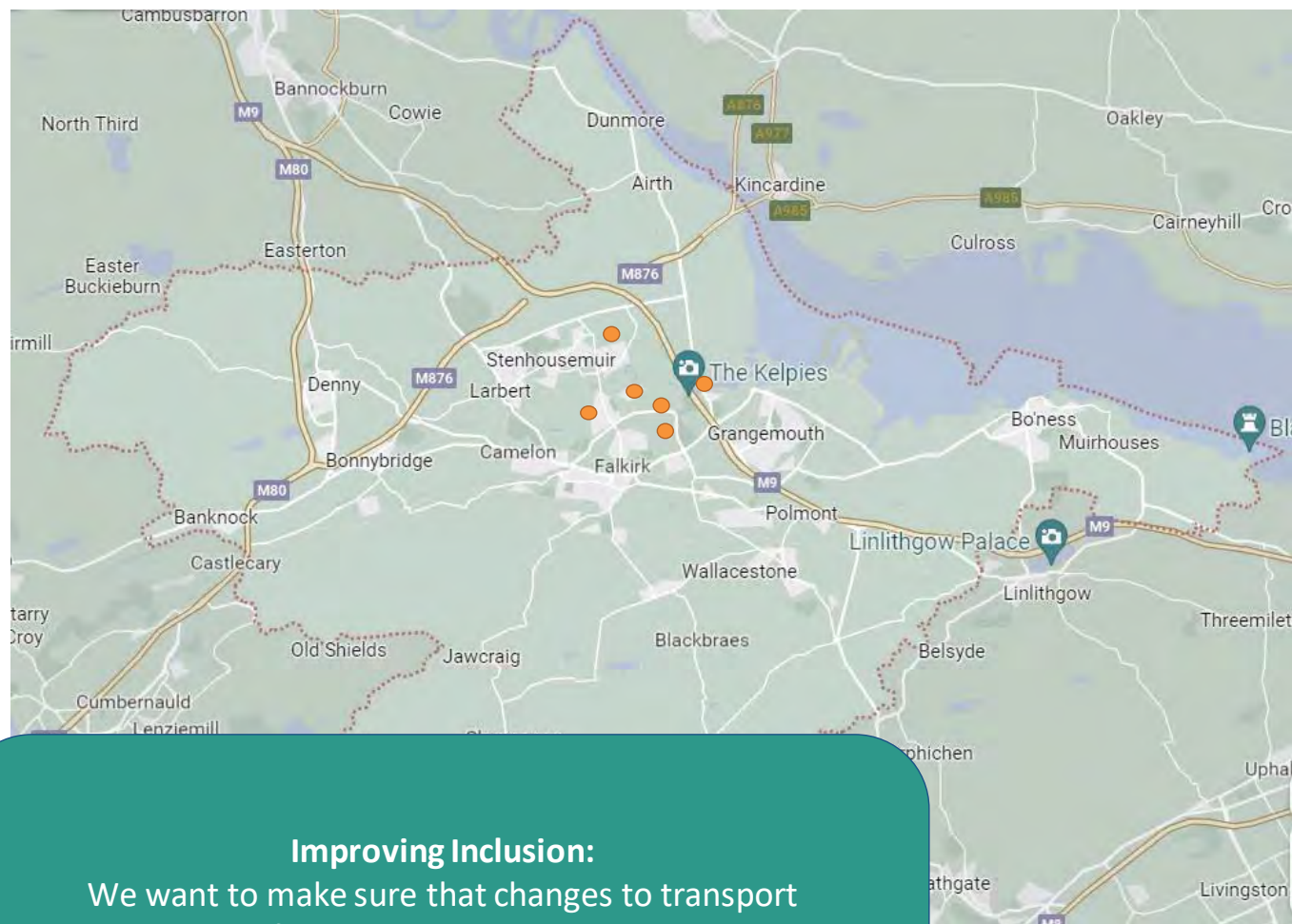
By the end of 2033 we will...

- Deliver key elements of the strategic network, including safe active travel routes to schools.
- Ensure that every new residential, commercial and neighbourhood development has an active travel route to its nearest economic centre.

Beyond 2033 we will...

- Continue to deliver the strategic network, connecting people and places across the Falkirk district.

How will we monitor progress towards meeting our Active Travel vision?



Improving Inclusion:

We want to make sure that changes to transport opportunities benefit everyone, so we will collect and analyse demographic information about who is walking, wheeling and cycling. Where we notice that some groups are not able to access active travel, we will work harder to include them.

Our vision for the future set out in this Strategy is that **most people undertake their local journeys by walking, wheeling or cycling.**

Making effective progress towards realising this vision will require us to learn the lessons from each new Active Travel scheme. This is in line with our Council-wide commitment to continuous improvement.

Investing in Smarter Data

We have already rolled out an initial network of smart walking, wheeling and cycle counters.

The map shows the locations of our current smart counter locations and the latest annual usage data.

The output data from these counters allows us to analyse changes in how people are travelling on our major active travel routes.

Over the next five years we will continue to invest in additional smart counters to provide further coverage across the transport network. This will provide us with a better understanding of how well new schemes are enabling people to benefit from more walking, wheeling and cycling trips.

Listening and Learning

We will continue our commitment to local engagement through to the stage when new active travel schemes are fully up and running. We will discuss with users, residents and businesses to capture a deeper understanding of how each scheme is meeting our objectives. We can consider additional improvements to schemes, reflecting your feedback.

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00436 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Service & Division: | Place Services Growth, Planning & Climate | Lead Officer Name: | Lynn Slavin |
| | | Team: | Transport Planning |
| | | Tel: | 01324504818 |
| | | Email: | lynn.slavin@falkirk.gov.uk |
| Proposal: | Active Travel Strategy | Reference No: | |

| What is the Proposal? | Budget & Other Financial Decision | Policy (New or Change) | HR Policy & Practice | Change to Service Delivery / Service Design |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| | No | Yes | No | No |

| Who does the Proposal affect? | Service Users | Members of the Public | Employees | Job Applicants |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| | No | Yes | No | No |

Other, please specify:

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

| | |
|------------|--|
| 11/07/2022 | To support the delivery of Falkirk Council's Transport Vision of 'a local transport network that promotes sustainable and active travel, provides everyone with a reasonable choice of travel, and priorities community regeneration and wellbeing as part of a safe, reliable, integrated, and accessible transport system' |
| 11/07/2022 | This strategy aims to protect the local environment by minimising the impact of motor traffic. |
| 11/07/2022 | This strategy aims increase accessibility, enhanced safety, increased opportunities, and improved quality of life in the Council area |
| 11/07/2022 | This strategy aims to support the growth of the local economy sustainably and contribute to community regeneration |
| 11/07/2022 | This strategy aims to promote a healthier lifestyle through the encouragement of active travel and use of green spaces. |
| | |

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

| For budget changes ONLY please include information below: | | Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average | |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Current spend on this service (£'0000s) | Total: | | |
| Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s) | Per Annum: | | |
| Increase to this service budget (£'000s) | Per Annum: | | |
| If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete. | Current Annual Income Total: | | |
| | Expected Annual Income Total: | | |
| If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved? | Start Date: | | |
| | End Date (if any): | | |

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

An online survey has been conducted to ensure fair representation across the entire Council area. Over 700 responses were received and each participant was asked which ward within the Council area they came from. Additionally, several demographic questions were asked at the end of the survey to ensure the representation of protected characteristic groups. From the analysis of the survey results, 83 responses were deemed suspicious due to the time of survey submission and the nature of the email addresses. For this reason, these responses were discounted from the analysis. This made clear that there are limitations to this method of data collection. However, to ensure good representation it was important survey work was carried out.

Key findings from the survey included:

- Approx. 7/10 of respondents said they walked or wheeled at least once a week, primarily to access local shops or services.
- Over 60% of respondents agreed with the statement that “The provision of safer, well-lit walking routes would encourage me to walk/wheel more often”
- Over 70% of respondents said that they would like to be able to walk or wheel more, primarily to access local shops or services
- More than 20% of respondents said they cycled at least once a week, primarily to access leisure interests.

More than 40% of respondents said they considered climate change when making travel choices.

B - Qualitative Evidence This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

Through the Local Transport Strategy the Council aims to improve accessibility to and through local transport. To achieve this, focus groups were conducted to gain in-depth data about the main issues in the local area.

The Sensory Centre facilitated two focus groups, one for those with hearing loss and one for those with vision impairment. An interpreter was at focus group for hearing loss and power point slides were used to aid the session.

Focus groups were also conducted with Dates n' Mates Falkirk, a dating and friendship agency for adults with learning disabilities.

Finally, focus groups were conducted with THRIVE, a local women's group. All four focus groups acted as an open discussion about the main barriers and challenges in the local area. Whilst in-depth data was gathered, the main challenge faced in conducting focus group was staying on the topic of transport issues within the local area. The focus groups may have benefitted from smaller group sizes or a more structured interview approach.

Further to this, during the Falkirk Council shop 26 event, the Transport Unit had a stall set up to promote active travel in line with taking climate action. At this event, attendees were asked to fill out a survey about transport in their local area. This took the form of five open ended questions that led to lengthy discussion.

Similar interviews were conducted at three food pantries across the local council area: Camelon food pantry, Hallglen food pantry, and Langlees food pantry. Each food pantry was visited and semi-structured interviews were conducted with people to understand their issues with the local transport system and any positive feedback. This was insightful but time restricted as each participant only had a few minutes to talk before entering the food pantry. Finally, telephone interviews were conducted with members of the Falkirk Disability Access Panel.

| Best Judgement: | |
|---|--|
| Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence? | Yes |
| Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on? | Yes, in places best judgement and expertise were used to supplement and contextualise community research data and evidence. WSP provided industry standard best judgement based on experience, policy and theory. |
| What gaps in data / information were identified? | Gaps in technical approaches and appropriate interventions to address specific issues were identified; a detailed optioneering exercise was carried out to identify site-appropriate interventions. |
| Is further research necessary? | No |
| If NO, please state why. | Quantitative and qualitative research and a thorough policy review have been conducted to ensure good representation in informing the Active Travel Strategy. |

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status? | Yes | |
| If YES, please state who was engagement with. | Yes, in conjunction with Local Transport Strategy engagement was conducted across a range of service users Local Transport Strategy Engagement: Sensory centre members Dates n Mates members Food pantry users across the council area Falkirk Disability Access panel General public through an online survey | |
| If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why. | | |
| How was the engagement carried out? | What were the results from the engagement? Please list... | |
| Focus Group | Yes | During each focus group the main issues covered were 1) cost 2) routes 3) access and 4) information. Also, participants were given the opportunity to provide suggestions at the end of each discussion. The majority of food pantry users stated that walking was there most common mode of transport as this is the cheapest compared to taxis and buses. There was often high praise of the walking network within the Council area. |
| Survey | Yes | survey finding being analysed |
| Display / Exhibitions | No | |
| User Panels | No | |
| Public Event | Yes | The SHOP26 allowed for an open discussion with the public about the local transport network, including active travel. Similar to the focus groups, there was praise for the walking and cycling network with a desire to see more active travel infrastructure in the future. |
| Other: please specify | | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement? | Yes |
| Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees? | Yes |
| Is further engagement recommended? | Yes |

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

| Protected Characteristic | Neutral Impact | Positive Impact | Negative Impact | Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic. |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Age | | ✓ | | Active Travel interventions support older and younger people by providing alternatives to the private car. Older and younger people are less likely to have driving licenses and also less likely to be confident cycling on busy roads, making traffic-free active travel infrastructure more valuable to them. Physical inactivity is particularly high in older adults, and active travel is an important component of creating age-friendly environments as it supports continuing autonomy |
| Disability | | ✓ | | People with a disability which precludes them from or affects their ability to drive a private vehicle will experience a positive impact from active travel interventions which support walking, cycling and wheeling. |
| Sex | | ✓ | | Statistically, men are more likely to use active travel than women; women are more likely to have negative associations with active travel relating to traffic safety and social safety. The implementation of separated infrastructure is therefore likely to disproportionately benefit women. |
| Ethnicity | | ✓ | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated benefits or disbenefits relative to ethnicity in the UK. However, it should be noted that in the UK some ethnic groups have strong correlations to household poverty, making the ethnic groups a correlating rather than causal variable. Within this, people from ethnic minority groups are less likely to frequently walk, wheel or cycle than white people. The Sustrans Walking and Cycling Index also found that 46% of people from ethnic minority groups in the UK said they 'do not cycle but would like to.' |
| Religion / Belief / non-Belief | ✓ | | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated benefits or disbenefits relative to religion / belief / non-belief. However, legal precedent has been set in the UK that making travel mode choices based on one's beliefs about the importance of combatting anthropogenic climate change is a protected 'belief' characteristic under the Equality Act. Therefore, facilitating active travel supports people who hold this protected belief. |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Sexual Orientation | ✓ | | | There was no evidence identified which indicated benefits or disbenefits relative to sexual orientation. Improving the active travel network may make public spaces more welcoming and increase 'eyes on the street', leading to a decrease in interpersonal crime. |
| Transgender | ✓ | | | There was no evidence identified which indicated benefits or disbenefits relative to cis/transgender status. Improving the active travel network may make public spaces more welcoming and increase 'eyes on the street', leading to a decrease in interpersonal crime. |
| Pregnancy / Maternity | ✓ | | | The active travel strategy seeks to improve active travel conditions for those with prams / pushchairs, etc. Additionally, facilitating active travel is one possible approach to prevent excessive weight gain in pregnancy, which supports maternal and postpartum health. |
| Marriage / Civil Partnership | ✓ | | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated benefits or disbenefits relative to marriage / civil partnership in the UK. |
| Poverty | | ✓ | | Low income is associated with relatively high dependence on active travel and public transport. Households with lower income and low access to essential services by public transport are also those most at risk for Transport Poverty; therefore, investment in active travel can provide a feasible alternative to private car / public transport use, reducing household costs. |
| Other, health, community justice, carers etc. | | ✓ | | Lower educational attainment is associated with higher active travel and occupational activity. This means that people with lower educational attainment are more likely to benefit from improvements to the active travel network. |
| Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change) | Two risks were identified with promoting active travel through this policy. 1) Cycles are more easily stolen than cars (and this risk is removed from the individual with public transport.) Lower-income households dependent on cycles will find it far more difficult to absorb the costs. Responsible implementation of this strategy should therefore include creating secure cycle storage in lower-income areas to minimize risk to owners. 2) Promoting active travel risks modal shift from public transport, which could lead to reduction or withdrawal of services in areas of high cycling / low public transport uptake. This would disadvantage people with disabilities which preclude them from medium-distance active travel. Responsible implementation of this strategy therefore will prioritise modal interchange opportunities (including bikes on buses) to create incentive to combine active travel and bus journeys, and ensure that the bus sector is not disadvantaged by uptake in active travel. | | | |

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

| | Evidence of Due Regard |
|--|--|
| Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct): | Promoting safe walking and cycling will increase 'eyes on the street', enhancing women's perception of safety . This potentially will also increase the perception of safety for people of colour and members of the LGBTQ community who are susceptible to harassment and victimization. |
| Advance Equality of Opportunity: | We want to ensure that everyone can access employment, education and training opportunities, regardless of age, gender or disability. Many households do not have access to private vehicles – that should not be a barrier to accessing services and leisure. Active travel as a whole (walking, cycling and/or wheeling) is broadly accessible and promotes equality of opportunity. |
| Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice): | Active travel, when integrated fully into transport planning, can be a societal equalizer, bringing people together in shared linear public spaces who might not otherwise intersect. |

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

| Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project? | | Describe the interest / affect. |
|--|---|--|
| Business | No | |
| Councils | Yes | Political and operational elements to funding behaviour change and infrastructure |
| Education Sector | No | |
| Fire | No | |
| NHS | No | |
| Integration Joint Board | No | |
| Police | Yes | Potential interest in the public safety / anti-social behaviour aspects of new active travel infrastructure, particularly traffic-free paths |
| Third Sector | Yes | E.g. Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, Living Streets – all funders / promoters of this type of work |
| Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact. | Scottish Canals – landowners of the Canal Towpath Network | |

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

| Identified Impact | To Who | Action(s) | Lead Officer | Evaluation and Review Date | Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes |
|--|---|--|--------------|----------------------------|---|
| Benefits to making active travel more accessible | Accessible to older and disabled individuals and those with caring responsibilities (e.g. pushchairs) | Support infrastructure with a strong behaviour change component to ensure that skills, opportunities and cultural norms are able to shift alongside the installation of new infrastructure | lynn Slavin | | |
| Benefits to making active travel more appealing | Women (re: traffic and social safety), older and younger people (confidence on busy roads), | Support infrastructure with a strong behaviour change component to ensure that skills, opportunities and cultural norms are able to shift alongside the installation of new infrastructure | Lynn Slavin | | |
| Benefits to reducing transport poverty | Lower income households. | Support projects which provide / subsidise cycles (e.g. Cycle to Work / Free Bike programme) | Lynn Slavin | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| | |
| Are actions being reported to Members? | Yes |
| If yes when and how ? | Executive 7 April 2023 |

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| No major change required | Yes | Promoting active travel is not anticipated to disadvantage any particular type of protected characteristics. The benefits are accessible to all, with particular benefits for historically disadvantaged groups such as women, older individuals, and those with disabilities precluding them from driving. The strategy's 'case for change' explicitly highlights these benefits. |
| The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups | No | |
| Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups | No | |
| Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation | No | |

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

| | | | |
|------------|--|-------|------------|
| Signature: | | Date: | 10/02/2023 |
|------------|--|-------|------------|

SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-----|
| OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA: | Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties? | Yes |
|------------------------------------|--|-----|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| ASSESSMENT FINDINGS If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA | Strategy development was supported for extensive consultation, engagement and industry standard best practice from specialist consultants. | |
|--|--|--|

| | | |
|---|----|--------------------------|
| Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>? | No | If YES, please describe: |
|---|----|--------------------------|

LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

| LEVEL | | COMMENTS |
|--------|----------|---------------------------------|
| HIGH | Yes / No | This is a service assessment |
| MEDIUM | Yes / No | |
| LOW | No | No negative impacts identified. |

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Director / Head of Service: | | |
| Signature: | | Date: 13/03/2023 |

Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00322 (Version 1)

SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Service & Division: | Place Services Growth, Planning & Climate | Lead Officer Name: | Eve McWilliams |
| | | Team: | Transport Planning |
| | | Tel: | 07427625781 |
| | | Email: | eve.mcwilliams@falkirk.gov.uk |
| Proposal: | Local Transport Strategy | Reference No: | |

| What is the Proposal? | Budget & Other Financial Decision | Policy (New or Change) | HR Policy & Practice | Change to Service Delivery / Service Design |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| | No | Yes | No | No |

| Who does the Proposal affect? | Service Users | Members of the Public | Employees | Job Applicants |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| | No | Yes | No | No |

Other, please specify:

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

| | |
|------------|---|
| 21/12/2022 | To deliver Falkirk Council's Transport Vision of 'A local transport system that encourages active and sustainable travel choices, creates and connects better places, and promotes wellbeing and community regeneration.' |
| 21/12/2022 | This strategy aims deliver a sustainable transport system that serves the community and enhances the environment. |
| 21/12/2022 | This strategy aims to to deliver an accessible transport system across the area that is safe, accessible, and reliable. |
| 21/12/2022 | This strategy aims to deliver an efficient transport system that generates local growth and strengthens connections. |
| 22/12/2022 | This strategy aims to provide an innovative transport strategy that enhances existing assets and infrastructure. |
| | |

SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

| For budget changes ONLY please include information below: | | Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average | |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Current spend on this service (£'0000s) | Total: | | |
| Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s) | Per Annum: | | |
| Increase to this service budget (£'000s) | Per Annum: | | |
| If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete. | Current Annual Income Total: | | |
| | Expected Annual Income Total: | | |
| If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved? | Start Date: | | |
| | End Date (if any): | | |

SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE

Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

A - Quantitative Evidence

This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

An online survey has been conducted to ensure fair representation across the entire Council area. Over 700 responses were received and categorised by Council ward. Additionally, several demographic questions were asked at the end of the survey to ensure the representation of protected characteristic groups. Key findings from the quantitative evidence are set out below:

- 75% of participants stated the private car was their most used mode of transport for most journeys.
- With reference to protected characteristics, there is little difference between male and female use of the private vehicle. However, it revealed that more men are currently cycling and using electric vehicles whilst more women are using local bus and taxi services.
- Younger and older groups have the highest use of public transport.
- Just over 80% of participants walk or wheel between once a week and everyday.
- Just under 60% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that 'Walking routes are easy for me to access and use'.
- Accessibility issues within the local transport system are most significant for participants reporting a physical or mental health condition, illness, or learning disability.
- More than 50% of over 65-year-olds feel local roads are unsafe for them as a pedestrian.
- 73.36% of participants use public transport less than once a week.
- Just over 22% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they could use the bus for their most common journeys. 27% of female respondents to this statement either agreed or strongly agreed that they could use the bus for their most regular journeys, whilst on 17% of male respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Across all respondents, the 18-24 age groups are those most able to use the bus for their most regular journeys, with 42% agreeing that they could use the bus for their most regular journeys.
- Participants were presented with the statement, 'I feel safe using public transport'. 24–34-year-olds mostly disagreed to feeling safe on public transport. Additionally, safety concerns came mostly from female participants, also one of the most likely to use buses.
- Cost and a lack of charging infrastructure were the most common reasons why participants would not buy an EV, with 69.54% stating the cost and 37.16%

stating a lack of infrastructure.

- Participants were then asked for which journeys they use a private vehicle. To access the supermarket was the most common answer at 72.27%.
- Over 70% of participants either strongly agree or agree that driving is the most convenient mode of transport.
- 65.30% of the participant also strongly agree or agree that a lack of frequency in public transport influences their decision to use a private car.
- 62.97% of participants strongly disagreed or disagreed that local roads are in good condition. Only 12.43% strongly agreed or agreed, and 24.59% neither agreed nor disagreed or did not answer this question.
- Participants were asked if they felt it was important to be surrounded by nature and green space when travelling. 62.16% agreed or strongly agreed that it was important. However, 30.19% neither agreed nor disagreed. Positively, 47.27% of participants agreed that they consider climate change when making travel choices, 29.10% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 22.81% either disagreed or strongly disagreed

From the analysis of the survey results, 83 responses were deemed suspicious due to the time of survey submission and the nature of the email addresses. For this reason, these responses were discounted from the analysis. This made clear that there are limitations to this method of data collection. However, to ensure good representation it was important survey work was carried out.

B - Qualitative Evidence

This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other

Through the Local Transport Strategy the Council aims to improve accessibility to and through local transport. To achieve this, focus groups were conducted to gain in-depth data about the main issues in the local area.

The sensory centre facilitated two focus groups, one for those with hearing loss and one for those with vision impairment. An interpreter was at focus group for hearing loss and power point slides were used to aid the session.

Focus groups were also conducted with Dates n Mates Falkirk, a dating and friendship agency for adults with learning disabilities.

Focus groups were conducted with THRIVE, a local women's group.

A similar style of interview was conducted at three food pantries across the local council area: Camelon food pantry, Hallglen food pantry, and Langlees food pantry. Each food pantry was visited and semi-structured interviews were conducted with people to understand their issues with the local transport system and any positive feedback. This was insightful but time restricted as each participant only had a few minutes to talk before entering the food pantry.

Finally, telephone interviews were conducted with members of the Falkirk Disability Access Panel.

During the Falkirk Council shop 26 event, the Transport Unit had a stall set up to promote active travel in line with taking climate action. During this event, people were asked to fill out a survey about transport in their local area. This took the form of 5 open ended questions that led to lengthy discussion.

To inform the active travel aspect of the Local Transport Strategy, two focus groups were carried out with local active travel groups. These included; Belles on Bikes, Braveheart walking group, the Ramblers, and Falkirk Bicycle club. All focus groups acted as an open discussion about the main barriers and challenges in the local area.

The key themes, challenges, and findings identified across the focus groups are listed below:

Cost

The cost of travelling by car, taxi, or public transport is not affordable for everyone, and those using public transport felt prices continue to rise whilst the frequency of service decreases. During focus groups at the food pantries, participants revealed that their most common mode of transport was walking and cycling due to the cost of public transport and the cost of owning a private vehicle. In line with the cost theme, many families stated that it was cheaper to use a taxi service than the local bus service. One participant detailed his experience of it being more affordable to use a taxi service for his family of four to access Falkirk Town centre from Langlee than if he were to pay for them all to use the bus.

Similarly, THRIVE Women's group suggested it was far cheaper for them to run their car for their families than use the bus (interviews conducted before the roll-out of free bus travel for under 22s). However, those at the Sensory Centre, Dates-n-Mates, and Falkirk Disability Access Panel praised the free bus pass scheme but acknowledged the high cost of local public transport for others.

Many participants drew comparisons to other areas in Scotland where public transport prices are much lower. All participants were made aware of the commercial nature of public transport in Scotland, advising that Falkirk Council has little control over pricing.

Routes and Connectivity

The routes of local buses are not as connected as they have been previously, and they rarely go into housing estates/developments. This makes it more difficult for those with mobility issues.

Each group discussed the lack of connectivity between different modes of public transport such as bus and rail. For example, participants from the food pantry states that if they had a car, it would be straightforward to get to the train station but getting from their house to the train station via bus is challenging. Once they had used the train to travel between regions such as Falkirk and Edinburgh, they a lack of connectivity to urban areas.

As well as a lack of integration between modes, participants felt that the number of routes covered continues to decrease. All participants referred to the 'circular' route that is no longer in service but kept people well connected locally. Participants with mobility issues stated that the lack of bus services near local housing meant they could not use the service due to not having a nearby bus stop. Participants were made aware of the consequences COVID-19 has had on the number of bus services nationally.

Accessibility

Participants discussed the accessibility of local public transport as bus stops are not always safe/accessible. Additionally, this theme related to the physical challenge of getting on/off public transport and participants highlighted a lack of patience/empathy from drivers.

Accessibility was defined differently by different participants. Participants from Falkirk Disability Access Panel, Dates-n-Mates, and The Sensory Centre discussed the physical accessibility of public transport and transport more generally. However, participants from the food pantries and THRIVE women's group discussed how public transport was not accessible because it was inconvenient and infrequent.

Physical accessibility was deemed a considerable barrier to many participants. Participants clarified that bus stops are not always accessible for disabled people. They would benefit from better maintenance and more lighting. A key issue for the Sensory centre participants, dates-n-mates, and Falkirk Disability Access Panel was the lack of patience from bus drivers in the local area. They stated that they had been made to feel like an inconvenience when using the local bus service. In particular, the focus group of D/deaf or hard of hearing participants discussed the embarrassing experience of bus drivers shouting at them or losing patience when trying to explain where they would like to travel. This group suggested that their bus pass could be colour-coordinated to indicate they are deaf or hard of hearing. In addition, all groups discussed the issue of bus drivers not pulling in close enough to the bus stop due to congestion. Participants acknowledged the pressure bus drivers are under and that many drivers are unwilling to let buses out. However, they felt that if the bus were closer to the kerb, they would be more physically accessible. In contrast, participants praised the train services as there are usually 'kind' staff to help them get on and off the train.

Falkirk Disability Access Panel raised concerns with local taxi services moving to an all-electric fleet. They made clear that their concerns were with the expense of an all-electric wheel-chair accessible vehicle. They felt that many taxi drivers could only afford an electric car alone. In general, they discussed feelings of worry that much of the climate change action can reduce equality.

All focus groups stated that the lack of frequent service made buses inaccessible. This led to the establishment of the next issue as participant discussed their

frustration with out-of-date timetables that did not reflect the lack of frequency in services.

Information

The lack of information at bus stops and shelters was raised in multiple meetings. Participants highlighted that not everyone has access to online.

Across all the focus groups, participants stated that there is not enough accessible information about public transport services in the local area. Many participants praised the use of apps such as the First Bus app and Google maps, but other participants expressed a desire for accurate timetables at the bus stops. Elderly participants felt excluded as they do not have access to mobile apps.

To summarise, the main issues lie within accessibility, the routes covered and their connectivity, a lack of information, and the rising cost of public transport.

Whilst in-depth data was gathered, the main challenge faced in conducting focus group was staying on the topic of transport issues within the local area. The focus groups may have benefitted from smaller group sizes or a more structured interview approach.

Best Judgement:

Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?

No

Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?

What gaps in data / information were identified?

Is further research necessary?

No

If NO, please state why.

Both quantitative and qualitative research has been conducted to ensure good representation in informing the Local Transport Strategy.

SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status? | Yes | |
| If YES, please state who was engagement with. | Sensory centre members Dates n Mates members Food pantry users across the council area Falkirk Disability Access panel Belles on Bikes Braveheart Walking Group Falkirk Bicycle Club The Ramblers Walking Group Thrive Women's Group General public through an online survey | |
| If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why. | | |
| How was the engagement carried out? | What were the results from the engagement? Please list... | |
| Focus Group | Yes | <p>During each focus group the main issues covered were 1) cost 2) routes and connectivity 3) access and 4) information. Also, participants were given the opportunity to provide suggestions at the end of each discussion. The majority of food pantry users stated that walking was there most common mode of transport as this is the cheapest. In line with the theme of cost, they discussed the cost of buses in comparison to taxi services, stating that it costs more for a family to get the bus around the council area than it does to use a taxi. Similarly, THRIVE women's group discussed the high cost of public transport. The sensory centre groups and dates n mates praised the free bus pass scheme but acknowledged the high cost of public transport for other.</p> <p>However, they did state that as a disabled person, bus stops are not always accessible and would benefit from better maintenance. Also, a key issue for the sensory centre groups, dates n mates, and Falkirk Disability Access Panel was the lack of patience from bus drivers from the area. They stated that they were often made to feel like a burden when trying to use the bus services. Whilst there is little the council can do to control bus driver behaviour, we can work more closely with operators to feed this information back. However, all three of these groups praised the dial-</p> |

| | | |
|----------------------|------------|---|
| | | <p>a-journey scheme run by the Council. This covers the second theme of accessibility discussed during focus groups. The food pantry groups discussed how the lack of connectivity between different modes of transport can make them inaccessible. For example, they discussed how if you have a car it is straightforward accessing the train station to travel to cities, but getting from the house to the train station via bus is often difficult. THRIVE women's group discussed how the lack of frequency in local public transport makes it inaccessible, especially when travelling with young children.</p> <p>The lack of connectivity highlighted by the food pantry groups drew attention to the public transport network more widely and a consistent decline in the amount of routes now covered by the bus service. All of the focus groups discussed how the routes covered have been decreased over time. Participants acknowledged that this is a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic but also stated that it has not since picked up to what it was before.</p> <p>Finally, it was made clear by all participants that there is not enough accessible information about public transport in the local area. Specifically, bus timetables at the stops do not match what is published online. Participants claimed of buses not showing up at all at times.</p> <p>In conclusion, the main issues lie within accessibility, routes covered, the information available and the rising cost of public transport. Much of the discussion during these groups focused on public transport as this was where much of the issues lies for participants. There was often high praise of the walking network within the Council area and they claimed that the train services into Glasgow and Edinburgh were efficient.</p> |
| <p>Survey</p> | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Some of the key findings that have informed policy development within the strategy are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants were asked which mode of transport participants used for most journeys. Predictably, the data revealed that the private car was the most used mode of transport with just over 75%. - More men are currently cycling and using electric vehicles while more women are using the bus and local taxi services. - Younger and older groups have the highest use of public transport. - Participants were first asked how often they walked or wheeled a week. This was to gauge the appetite for this form of active travel in the area. Positively, just over 80% of participants walk or wheel between once a week and every day. - Participants were provided with a series of statements with which they had to strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree. Participants were |

presented with the statement, 'Walking routes are easy for me to access and use'. Positively, just under 60% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. However, that accessibility to these routes are most significant for participants reporting a physical or mental health condition, illness or learning disability.

- We questioned participants on whether they felt local roads were safe for them as pedestrians. 44% of participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Importantly, more than 50% of over 65-year-olds feel they are unsafe.

- In contrast to walking/wheeling, the amount of cycling participants do weekly was on the lower side, with just over 71% of participants reporting they cycle less than once a week.

- The consultation aimed to identify why participants did not currently cycle or use the cycle network. The findings revealed that one of the main reasons is that 27.85% of participants felt the cycle network is not safe for them as a cyclist. The data suggest that most participants neither agreed nor disagreed or did not answer the question. However, it can be assumed that this is because of the low number of participants cycling.

- When participants were asked if they could meet most of their needs by bike, 77.33% either disagreed, strongly disagreed, neither agreed nor disagreed or did not answer the question. However, 45% of participants ages 18-24 agreed, signifying the potential for this age group to change travel habits and create a modal shift. Further, over 50% of participants - except those over 65 and those with an illness or disability - agreed that they would like to cycle more.

- 73.36% of participants used public transport less than once a week.

- Participants were then asked to respond to several statements about public transport in the local area. As noted at the beginning of the survey findings, female participants are far more likely to use local bus services. Just over 22% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that they could use the bus for their most common journeys. However, there is a difference between male and female participants. 27% of female respondents to this statement either agreed or strongly agreed that they could use the bus for their most regular journeys, whilst only 17% of male respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Across all respondents, the 18-24 age groups are those most able to use the bus for their most regular journeys, with 42% of respondents in this age group agreeing or strongly agreeing.

- A key barrier to the use of public transport highlighted through the focus group sessions was the lack of connection between different modes of transport and awkward ticketing systems. Participants were asked if interchanges and ticketing influenced their decision to travel. 39% of participants agreed that this does affect their decision to use public transport, and this agreement came primarily from those aged 18-24.

- Participants were presented with the statement, 'I feel safe using public transport'. 24-34-year-olds mostly disagreed to feeling safe on public transport. Additionally, safety concerns came

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| | | <p>mostly from female participants, also one of the most likely to use buses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants were asked if they would like to use public transport more and encouragingly, 59.43% of people ticked yes. - We asked participants what journeys they would like to be able to use public transport for. This is to ensure the appropriate instalment of infrastructure. Most respondents would like to use it to access their local district centre. - 44% of respondents over 65 felt that more accessible information would encourage bus use. - Cost and a lack of charging infrastructure were the most common reasons why participants would not buy an EV, with 69.54% stating the cost and 37.16% stating a lack of infrastructure. - Participants were asked how often they use a private vehicle a week, with everyday coming back as the most common answer at 34.70%. - Over 70% of participants either strongly agree or agree that driving is the most convenient mode of transport. |
| Display / Exhibitions | No | |
| User Panels | No | |
| Public Event | Yes | The SHOP26 allowed for an open discussion with the public about the local transport network. Much of the findings were similar to the focus groups as people took issue with the local bus service and the cost of buses. Similarly, there was praise for the walking and cycling network with a desire to see more active travel infrastructure in the future. |
| Other: please specify | | |
| Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement? | Yes | |
| Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees? | Yes | |
| Is further engagement recommended? | No | |

SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

Equality Protected Characteristics: What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

| Protected Characteristic | Neutral Impact | Positive Impact | Negative Impact | Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic. |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
| Age | | ✓ | | This proposal acknowledges the ageing population and the online survey revealed that over 65% of over 65-year-olds feel unsafe as a pedestrian on local roads. A combination of feeling unsafe and a transport system that is physically difficult to access results in a higher use of private vehicles. This proposals aims to improve accessibility so that those of any age can access active and sustainable travel. The proposals sets a policy objective that ensures all existing and future infrastructure is developed with accessibility in mind. The findings also revealed that those aged 18-24 are most likely to use public transport for their most common journeys. This proposal advocates for collaborative working with partners to continue promoting free bus travel for those under the age of 22. |
| Disability | | ✓ | | The community consultation revealed that accessibility issues within the local transport system are most significant for participants reporting a physical or mental health condition, illness, or learning disability. This proposal sets a policy objective that will create a positive impact as we continue to work with taxi operators - we will maintain an appropriate level of accessible vehicles as all multi-plate operators must ensure 15% of plates held are wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVS). The proposal also takes action to continue supporting Council initiatives that advocate social inclusion across communities, widen travel choices, and increase accessibility. These initiatives include, the Blue Badge Parking scheme and the Motability scheme. This will have a positive impact as these policy objects increase the choices of travel, promoting social inclusion. |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Sex | | ✓ | | The proposals acknowledges the different travel behaviours of men and women. Our survey findings demonstrated this difference as the number of male respondents cycling was higher than female respondents, whilst female respondents are more likely to use local bus services but are also the demographic that feel least safe when using public transport. Therefore, this strategy sets out policy that seeks to improve all modes of transport for everyone. The policy will improve safety across all modes of transport as we seek to improve street lighting and develop infrastructure that separates traffic from cycling infrastructure. |
| Ethnicity | | ✓ | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic. |
| Religion / Belief / non-Belief | | ✓ | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic. |
| Sexual Orientation | | ✓ | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic. |
| Transgender | | ✓ | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic. |
| Pregnancy / Maternity | ✓ | | | Through the proposal we aim to improve the local walking, wheeling and cycling network to encourage more sustainable travel choices. This policy objective will improve the travel conditions for those with prams / pushchairs, etc. |
| Marriage / Civil Partnership | | ✓ | | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated a positive or negative impact on this protected characteristic. |
| Poverty | | ✓ | | The community engagement conducted revealed that low income is associated with relatively high dependence on walking, cycling and public transport. Households with lower income and low access to essential services by public transport are also those most at risk for Transport Poverty. This proposal aims to create a positive impact as it promotes and invests in active travel infrastructure to provide a feasible alternative to private car, public transport, and taxi services, reducing household costs. |
| Other, health, community justice, carers etc. | | | | |
| Risk (Identify other risks associated with this change) | | | | |

Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:

| | Evidence of Due Regard |
|--|---|
| Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct): | <p>The proposal prioritises the safety of women and the younger demographic as a key finding from consultation is women and younger people reporting feelings of unsafety when using the local public transport network. Increasing lighting at public transport hubs and promoting safe walking and cycling will increase 'eyes on the street', enhancing safety and promoting the use of sustainable and active travel. This will increase the perception of safety for women, younger and older demographics, people of colour and members of the LGBTQ community who are susceptible to harassment and victimization. Those with protected characteristics face more barriers when accessing the local transport network and this was considered during engagement. The physical barriers that those with mobility issues face will be addressed as part of this proposal to ensure equality across the transport network. As part of the proposal, the Council will work with local public transport operators to alleviate physical challenges. The Local Transport Strategy sets out actions, based on the evidence gathered, to mitigate these barriers.</p> |
| Advance Equality of Opportunity: | <p>We want to ensure that everyone can access employment, education and training opportunities, regardless of age, gender or disability. Many households do not have access to private vehicles – that should not be a barrier to accessing services and leisure. Sustainable transport (public transport, shared mobility etc) and active travel as a whole (walking, cycling and/or wheeling) are broadly accessible and promotes equality of opportunity. The consultation conducted through the development of the Local Transport Strategy provided us with evidence of how best to advance the equality of opportunity. As part of national objectives, we must create a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport but to simultaneously advance equality of opportunity, the transport network must be accessible and affordable to all. We are working to develop a strategic active travel network that connects district areas, with particularly strong connects to and from Falkirk Town centre. Affordable, sustainable access to the town centre will advance equality of opportunity as it acts as a connecting transport hub to other areas of Scotland.</p> |

Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):

Throughout the consultation process a variety of groups were engaged with through qualitative research to gain a better understanding of the challenges they face in accessing the local transport network. This process alone fostered good relations between the Council and these groups. It was made clear what the Council has influence over and how we can work towards promoting understanding and reducing prejudice internally and externally. Sustainable and active travel, when integrated fully into transport planning, can be a societal equaliser. Working with local public transport operators, the proposal seeks to make improvements to the local public transport network. If we can promote an efficient network it will encourage users from all backgrounds, bringing people together in shared linear public spaces who might not otherwise intersect. As part of the proposal, we will work with local public transport operators to promote understanding and reduce prejudice amongst their own staff. This will make using public transport in the local area far more accessible for many user groups.

SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

| Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project? | | Describe the interest / affect. |
|---|----|--|
| Business | No | |
| Councils | No | |
| Education Sector | No | |
| Fire | No | |
| NHS | No | |
| Integration Joint Board | No | |
| Police | No | |
| Third Sector | No | |
| Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact. | | |

SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

Mitigating Actions: If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

| Identified Impact | To Who | Action(s) | Lead Officer | Evaluation and Review Date | Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes |
|---|--------|---|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| There will be a positive impact on this protected characteristic as we work to make transport more accessible. We have identified that there is an ageing population so the local transport system must be accessible. Additionally, younger ages will benefit from this strategy as more accessible transport creates more opportunities through access to education and employment. | Age | We will take action to support this positive impact. The first action will be to coordinate with local bus operators to ensure everyone has access to up-to-date travel information. Additionally, we will work with local bus operators to ensure their buses are physically accessible for all. | Eve McWilliams | 07/03/2033 | Local Transport Strategy 2023 |

| Identified Impact | To Who | Action(s) | Lead Officer | Evaluation and Review Date | Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes |
|--|------------|--|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| There will be a neutral impact of those with disabilities as the impacts of climate change policy may reduce the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles. However, the impact is neutral because through other policy objectives we aim to improve accessibility to public transport for all. | Disability | We will take action to ensure the impact remains neutral. We will maintain an appropriate level of accessible vehicles as all multi-plate operators must ensure 15% of plates held are wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVS). The strategy also takes action to continue supporting Council initiatives that advocate social inclusion across communities, widen travel choices, and increase accessibility. These initiatives include, the Blue Badge Parking scheme and the Motability scheme. | Eve McWilliams | 07/03/2033 | Local Transport Strategy 2023 |
| This strategy will have a positive impacts on those of different sex as it will reduce the inequalities that rise as a result of the different travel behaviours amongst men and women. Our consultation revealed that women are more likely to trip chain, use public transport, and feel the least safe when using public transport. | Sex | We will take action through the Local Transport Strategy to support the positive impact. We are taking action to improve safety for all users through enhances lighting at bus shelters and public transport hubs. | Eve McWilliams | 07/03/2033 | Local Transport Strategy 2023 |

| Identified Impact | To Who | Action(s) | Lead Officer | Evaluation and Review Date | Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes |
|--|---------|---|----------------|----------------------------|---|
| This strategy will have a positive impact on this protected characteristic as it will improve inclusivity across the local transport system. | Poverty | We will take action through the Local Transport Strategy to support the positive impact. We will take action to invest in infrastructure and projects that enhance the accessibility of active and sustainable travel. Targeted investment promotes equality by increasing access to services and employment opportunities. Additionally, we will work closely with public transport operators to ensure services are targeted. Our consultation revealed that owning a private vehicle is often too expensive for many. As we move to more sustainable modes we will continue to facilitate a pay-as-you-go, all electric vehicle car club so that individuals can use an electric private vehicle if and when they require. | Eve McWilliams | 07/03/2033 | Local Transport Strategy 2023 |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| | |
| Are actions being reported to Members? | Yes |
| If yes when and how ? | Executive - 11 April 2023 |

SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

| | | |
|---|-----|--|
| No major change required | No | |
| The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups | No | |
| Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups | Yes | The proposal has been subject to extensive community consultation and the policy objectives and actions set have taken into consideration findings from community engagement. It is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristics. However, this strategy document sets out policy objectives that will improve the local transport network for the better. The strategy is a move to making the existing transport system more accessible for all to reduce inequality. Each policy objective is underpinned by actions that will help us to achieve our objectives. |
| Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation | No | |

SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF

Lead Officer:

| | | | |
|------------|--|-------|------------|
| Signature: | | Date: | 24/01/2023 |
|------------|--|-------|------------|

SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY

| | |
|--|-----|
| OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA: Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties? | Yes |
|--|-----|

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| ASSESSMENT FINDINGS If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA | The assessment is supported by thorough engagement. | |
|--|---|--|

| | | |
|---|----|--------------------------|
| Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>? | No | If YES, please describe: |
|---|----|--------------------------|

LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA

| LEVEL | | COMMENTS |
|--------|----------|---|
| HIGH | Yes / No | |
| MEDIUM | Yes / No | |
| LOW | Yes | There was no strong evidence identified which indicated a negative impact on any protected characteristics. |

SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------|------------|
| Director / Head of Service: | | | |
| Signature: | | Date: | 13/03/2023 |