

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 2 February 2023

Active Travel Action Plan 2023 – Delivering the City Mobility Plan

Executive/routine Wards Council Commitments	Executive All
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:
 - 1.1.1 Approves the draft Active Travel Action Plan as a basis for public consultation;
 - 1.1.2 Agrees that the initial high-level costings are used as the basis for engaging with funding bodies;
 - 1.1.3 Agrees to the development of a business case and delivery programme based on the draft Plan;
 - 1.1.4 Notes the integral relationship between the draft plan and the emerging Circulation Plan and other City Mobility Plan action plans (Air Quality, Parking, Public Transport and Road Safety).
 - 1.1.5 Delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place to make final graphic design, layout and minor editorial changes to the action plans before final publication on the Council's website

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Daisy Narayanan, Head of Placemaking and Mobility

E-mail: daisy.narayanan@edinburgh.gov.uk



Active Travel Action Plan 2023 – Delivering the City Mobility Plan

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report presents a draft Active Travel Action Plan for Edinburgh and seeks approval to carry out consultation on the Plan.
- 2.2 The plan covers actions to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling over the period to 2030 and beyond.

3. Background

- 3.1 In 2010, Edinburgh adopted Scotland's first Active Travel Action Plan (ATAP). Over the past 12 years, a wide range of measures have been delivered which have improved the city's networks for walking, wheeling and cycling. Highlights include a growth of more than 50% in cycling to work (pre-pandemic) and a stable and high level of walking against a declining national picture. In addition, one the UK's first and most extensive city-wide 20mph networks has been delivered, resulting in a 30% reduction in casualties.
- 3.2 The ATAP is one of several such plans that set out how the Council proposes to deliver the [City Mobility Plan 2021-2030](#) (CMP).
- 3.3 The draft plan would replace the current ATAP, approved in 2016.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government plans to significantly increase funding for Active Travel investment, starting in 2023 with a further significant uplift expected in 2024. The new ATAP reflects this context with ambitious and transformational proposals, which have been subject to an initial costing.
- 3.5 This report seeks approval of the ATAP as the basis for public consultation, engagement with funding bodies and development of a business plan and delivery programme.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The ATAP outlines actions needed to improve walking, wheeling and cycling (or 'active travel') in Edinburgh to 2030 and beyond.
- 4.2 Encouraging active travel has an important part to play in delivering a healthier, more inclusive, zero carbon transport system. Walking, wheeling and cycling are low cost, don't pollute and improve physical and mental health. Like public transport, they also use limited street space far more efficiently than travelling by private car. Appendix 3 provides an illustration.
- 4.3 Active Travel plays an important role in supporting a thriving, dense urban economy with vibrant town centres.
- 4.4 Many journeys by Edinburgh residents are already made by active travel, especially on foot. However, as most other journeys are short enough to be walked or cycled, there is huge potential for further growth, particularly in cycling.
- 4.5 Active travel, like travelling by car, can cater for dispersed journey patterns. So walking, wheeling and cycling can complement public transport, which works best for larger flows of people on concentrated corridors.
- 4.6 The ATAP sits alongside other Action Plans relating to Road Safety, Public Transport, Parking, Air Quality and the City Centre Transformation (CCT) Programme. All actions are intended to be complementary and cross cutting between the plans. For example, lower speed limits and improved routes to school are both safety measures as well as means of improving active travel.
- 4.7 The emerging Circulation Plan will provide the strategic mapping and decision-making framework for streetspace allocation. It will be particularly important in ensuring co-ordinated delivery of the ATAP, the Public Transport Action Plan and CCT.

The Active Travel Action Plan

- 4.8 The ATAP sets out the Vision and objectives. The Vision is summarised as ***'Edinburgh: a walkable and fully accessible city - and a city where cycling is a realistic choice for all'***.
- 4.9 The core ATAP proposals are set out in six chapters:
 - Chapter 4 - Improving walking and wheeling in Edinburgh;
 - Chapter 5 - Improving cycling in Edinburgh;
 - Chapter 6 - Joint actions: A safer and better city for active travel;
 - Chapter 7 – Planning and designing streets for active travel;
 - Chapter 8 – Getting to our green spaces and going for leisure cycles; and
 - Chapter 9 - Supporting and encouraging people to walk, wheel and cycle.
- 4.10 These chapters are complemented by an actions summary table and appendices covering policy context, delivery, cycle network development, monitoring and costing.

4.11 The main initiatives of each chapter are set out in the ATAP and summarised below.

Improving Walking and Wheeling

4.12 The ATAP sets out a wide range of actions aimed at making Edinburgh a better, safer and more convenient place to walk and wheel. They have been grouped into two initiatives, each including a range of individual actions that come together to achieve the desired outcomes. The Edinburgh Accessible Streets Initiative (EASI) focuses on creating easy-access, step-free, uncluttered pavements that work for everyone. Secondly, Action for Better Crossings (ABC) aims to make crossings work better for pedestrians, as well as continuing to provide new crossings.

4.13 The EASI is based on a proposal by Living Streets Edinburgh. The aim is to make the city inclusive for disabled people and, at the same time, much easier to get around for anyone walking and wheeling. The EASI includes actions to:

4.13.1 Make it easier to cross side roads, with dropped kerbs, 'tighter' junctions to reduce the crossing distance, raised crossings and continuous footways.

4.13.2 Prioritise level walking surfaces where driveways cross pavements, with steeper ramps at the kerb for cars.

4.13.3 Continue 'de-cluttering' initiatives, including the A board ban.

4.13.4 Enforce the pavement parking ban at the appropriate time.

4.13.5 Increased provision of places to sit.

4.14 The EASI is an ambitious concept. Tackling missing or damaged dropped kerbs alone involves 17,000 locations. Prioritising actions within EASI will be one of the issues that consultation on the ATAP will focus on. The proposal for consultation is that early priorities should be:

4.14.1 Bus routes, facilitating access to bus stops.

4.14.2 Town centres.

4.14.3 Access to Health Centres.

4.15 For most journeys on foot, the biggest delay and inconvenience is caused by crossing streets. To address this, the ABC initiative would:

4.15.1 Commit to a default maximum pedestrian delay at 'standalone' crossings and report on the percentage of crossings that have this setting.

4.15.2 Continue the programme of installing pedestrian crossings, with revised criteria giving more weight to likely pedestrian delay.

4.15.3 Review pedestrian waiting times at signalled junctions, with a view to reducing delays by giving more 'green man' opportunities per signal cycle.

4.16 Streets have a vital function as places whereby they are also interesting and enjoyable spaces to spend time. Streets that are good places are usually good for

walking and the ATAP stresses the importance of this place function. The prime means for delivering improvements will be:

4.16.1 Use of the Edinburgh Street Design Guidance (ESDG), which emphasises the 'place function', on all projects.

4.16.2 Use of the emerging Circulation Plan, which designates the city centre, designated town centres, and other significant shopping streets, as 'walking/place priority'.

4.16.3 The City Centre Transformation Programme.

4.16.4 The actions to deliver Safer and Liveable 20-minute neighbourhoods set out below under 'Joint Actions'.

Improving Cycling

- 4.17 Cyclists, like those walking and wheeling, are vulnerable when they mix with motorised traffic. Experience elsewhere in Europe clearly indicates the benefits of delivering safe cycle networks protected from busy motor traffic. These networks can enable a high proportion of urban trips to be made by cycling. Furthermore, the advent of reliable electric bikes means cycling is now a realistic choice for more people.
- 4.18 At the core of the ATAP proposals for cycling is the aim to deliver a joined-up network of routes that feel safe at all times of day for people with a range of abilities. This network will need to use segregated cycle tracks on main roads, as well as unsegregated on-street routes that have low volumes of motor traffic. Appendix 1, Chapter 5, Figure 2 shows the full extent of the proposed future network.
- 4.19 The city's existing cycle network relies heavily on traffic-free routes along green path networks. These paths, most of which are former railways, are generally fairly flat and pleasant to use during the day. However, they can feel unsafe at night or at less busy times of day, especially for women. The paths will continue to play a vital role and upgrades will seek to improve their comfort, safety and security. But, because of their intrinsic issues for night-time personal security, they cannot form the core of a network that aims to make cycling a realistic choice for all, at all times.
- 4.20 The current Active Travel Investment Programme (ATInP) is delivering some of the key components of a future cycle network. For example, projects such as the City Centre West to East Link and Meadows to George Street will provide important city centre connections.
- 4.21 In line with the developing [Circulation Plan](#), it is proposed to take forward proposals for high quality, mostly segregated cycle routes on several corridors in the city which would be integrated with renewed and upgraded bus priority routes, and improvements in relevant town centres.
- 4.22 The Travelling Safely segregated cycle lanes are currently subject to experimental Traffic Regulation Orders. Subject to the evaluation of responses to these orders, some or all of these will be retained and made permanent.

- 4.23 As also noted in the Circulation Plan, the space required for segregated cycling represents an important delivery challenge. This will require some difficult choices between space for all traffic, for public transport, and for cycle routes.
- 4.24 A key advantage of choosing cycling as an urban transport preference is that it is much easier to park. Consequently, convenient and secure places to park bikes, on street, at home and at work are crucial to support this choice. Lack of space to park a bike at home is one of the key constraints to cycling for Edinburgh's many tenement and flat dwellers. The ATAP proposes continued and accelerated roll-out of both public and on-street residential cycle parking.
- 4.25 Cycle hire can play an important role in the mix of residents' transport options. Edinburgh's previous scheme was popular. However, as highlighted in another report on the Committee agenda, operating costs are significant. Consequently, the ATAP currently proposes that options for delivering a revived cycle hire scheme are kept under active review.

Joint Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Actions

- 4.26 A number of actions in the plan will equally benefit people walking, wheeling and cycling as outlined below.
- 4.27 The CCT Programme aims to deliver a people-focused city centre; one that is much better for people to walk, wheel and cycle around. Key projects such as George Street and Meadows to George Street are committed and work is starting on the Lothian Road boulevard.
- 4.28 The majority of Edinburgh citizens live outside the city centre. An important aspect of the ATAP is supporting the creation of pleasant, people-focused residential streets and neighbourhoods; places where everyone feels safe to walk, wheel, cycle and spend time. This will help develop 20-minute neighbourhoods, with safe local travel to school and local facilities like shops and parks.
- 4.29 Initiatives to help deliver safer and liveable neighbourhoods include:
- 4.29.1 Continuing the rollout of lower speed limits; delivering safer streets and roads for all, especially walkers, wheelers and cyclists.
- 4.29.2 Taking action to address 'rat-running' through residential areas via a prioritised 'liveable neighbourhood' programme. This would be integrated with measures from the EASI initiative to deliver more walkable streets across the city. At the heart of the liveable neighbourhood programme will be enabling safer travel to school, centred on an accelerated roll-out of traffic-free 'school streets'.
- 4.29.3 Redesigning town centres and shopping streets to improve their 'place' value and increase priority and safety for people walking, wheeling and cycling. The aim will be to integrate this with carriageway and footway renewals with work already started on this kind of project at Portobello and Dalry.

- 4.30 The ATAP sets out aims to maintain and upgrade the extensive off-road path network. It proposes to widen busier paths, build new access ramps and to provide new connections, including several new bridges (Appendix 1 Chapter 6).
- 4.31 Walking and cycling often form part of longer trips and the ATAP sets out plans for better integration. These include prioritising access to bus stops as part of the EASI initiative, bike parking at stations and 'mobility hubs'.

Street design, and supporting active travel in and from new development

- 4.32 Delivering the vision set out in the CMP, the ATAP and other action plans need to be supported by the way the entire street and road network is designed and managed. The means delivering the necessary design approach via the ESDG, which was adopted by the Council in 2015.
- 4.33 The ATAP notes the importance of using the ESDG and of continued work to develop and revise its detailed 'factsheets'. In particular, the ATAP emphasises the need for increasingly rigorous use of the ESDG in the planning process for new developments. This is essential to ensure that active travel and public transport use, rather than car-dependence, are encouraged.
- 4.34 The ATAP proposes increased funding and resources to ensure delivery of the active travel infrastructure included in the Local Development Plan and City Plan Action Programmes. Effective and timely delivery of this infrastructure needs a significant increase in public funding as well as developer contributions.

Access to green space and cycling for leisure

- 4.35 Walking, wheeling and cycling have a role as means to access green space and associated leisure activities. The ATAP recognises both and proposes actions including:
- 4.35.1 New or improved crossings and accesses to support Edinburgh's Open Space Strategy; and
- 4.35.2 Low-cost improvements (for example signing, crossings and limited path upgrades) to deliver a network of routes suitable for leisure cycling. This network, for the most part, exists already. However, it is often unsigned and missing crossing points and/or short low-quality sections make some parts difficult to use.

Behaviour Change - Supporting and encouraging active travel

- 4.36 The majority of the ATAP deals with changing Edinburgh's infrastructure to make it easier and safer to walk, cycle and wheel. However, change towards active travel can be achieved more quickly when infrastructure investment is combined with 'behaviour change' measures.
- 4.37 Since the 2010 ATAP, various behaviour change methods have been deployed. These include training, events, support for community groups to encourage active travel, videos, leaflets, on street posters and social media. The main funding source is Transport Scotland's 'Smarter Choices, Smarter Places' programme.

4.38 The draft ATAP proposes an expanded behaviour change programme with the focus targeted on campaigns to complement new infrastructure.

Costing the ATAP and developing an investment business case

4.39 An initial high level costing exercise has been carried out for all the proposals in the ATAP. The plan is very ambitious and the initial costing of circa £824m - £1,124bn at Q4 2022 prices reflects this. A summary of the components of this costing is provided in Appendix 2. The extent of the investment required is such that delivery will inevitably stretch beyond 2030.

4.40 Given the magnitude of the investment involved, and subject to Committee approval, it is proposed to develop a business case and delivery programme for the ATAP. Deliverability will depend on access to the new Scottish Government (SG) funds and success will be dependent on high quality business cases, which will need to be approved by Committee. Officers will work with SG/Transport Scotland to ensure business case development can be resourced without detracting from current scheme delivery.

Relationship to the ongoing Active Travel Investment Programme (ATInP)

4.41 The new ATAP builds on the current ATInP, and delivery of it will continue as a rolling programme. Regular updates will be provided to Transport and Environment Committee on the delivery of the ATInP.

Consultation on the draft ATAP

4.42 Over the coming months, it is proposed to carry out an extensive programme of engagement and consultation on the ATAP. This programme will be integrated with consultation on the Circulation Plan and other Action Plans relating to Road Safety, Public Transport, Parking and Air Quality.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Subject to approval of this report's recommendations, engagement and consultation on the ATAP will be carried out.

5.2 The outcomes of the consultation will be reported to Committee in Autumn 2023.

6. Financial impact

6.1 The main funding sources currently available for the delivery of active travel investment are:

6.1.1 The Council's Transport Capital Investment Programme;

6.1.2 SG's Cycling Walking and Safer Routes fund;

6.1.3 The Sustrans Places for Everyone fund (distributed on behalf of Transport Scotland); and

6.1.4 SG's new Active Travel Transformation fund.

- 6.2 Full delivery of the Action Plan, even over a long period of time, will require a substantial increase in funding and resources. Consequently, subject to Committee approval, it is proposed to seek funding to develop a business case and delivery programme for the ATAP.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 In developing this draft plan, initial discussions have taken place with Spokes and Living Streets.
- 7.2 The Integrated Impact Assessment process for the draft ATAP has commenced and the current draft assessment is attached as Appendix 4.
- 7.3 Over the coming months it is proposed to carry out an extensive programme of engagement and consultation on the draft ATAP.
- 7.4 As we develop schemes based on the actions in this plan we will carry out engagement with communities and stakeholders, including disability groups who may have concerns about particular aspects of the programme

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Transport Scotland's draft Active Travel Transformation Framework](#)
- 8.2 Report to Transport and Environment Committee, [8 December 2021](#) - Circulation Plan
- 8.3 Transport and Environment Committee Business Bulletin, [12 January 2016](#) – Active Travel Action Plan Review 2016

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1: Draft Active Travel Action Plan for Edinburgh 2023
- 9.2 Appendix 2: Costing of draft Active Travel Action Plan (Further details are available from officers if required)
- 9.3 Appendix 3: Use of street space by different means of transport.
- 9.4 Appendix 4: Draft Integrated Impact Assessment