

INCREASING THE SPACE FOR WALKING AND CYCLING



The overall aim was the fostering of increased levels of walking and cycling, with particular consideration given to the identification of increased levels of space for pedestrians and cyclists.

CONTEXT & CHALLENGES

Aberdeen City Council's City Centre Masterplan and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan have identified various walking and cycling projects to improve the pedestrian and cycling environment in the City Centre such that it is easy and attractive to walk and cycle around. Further, the need for improved linkages to the Harbour Ferry Terminal, Railway and Bus Stations have also been acknowledged, along with the identification of Aberdeen Railway Station as a key cycle rental hub.

An analysis of rudimentary origin and destination data has been undertaken to identify opportunities and to fill gaps in the network to encourage active travel trips. The study relied mainly on census data, as this is obtained for every household and is supplemented by other data sources, including a public questionnaire, a local citizens panel and some National transport statistics. Jour-

neys with an origin and/ or destination in Aberdeen for work and study by those 16 years old or over were used. The results were then split by mode and by distance (0-3km, 3-5km, 5-10km and 10km) to show journeys with potential to be undertaken by walking, cycling and long distance cycling with the City and Aberdeenshire split into different zones to show where the movements were taking place. The resulting study has helped identify the major movements in the city and where gaps exist and has already been useful in informing the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), informing Active Travel Projects and will be used to inform the refreshing of the City's Active Travel Action Plan.

Most recently, it has also been used to help inform the planning of temporary measures, delivered as part of the Sustrans-funded, "Spaces for People" project to help enable social distancing and provide extra active travel space during the COVID-19 global pandemic. As part of the project a study has been undertaken, informed by public consultation, to investigate the active travel links between the city centre and the new



harbour and the main bus and rail station and ferry terminal. This was informed by public and stakeholder consultation.

Pedestrian wayfinding improvements were investigated too within this measure. A study, informed by two rounds of public and stakeholder consultation, was undertaken to establish the gaps in the city's wayfinding provision and look at how best to inform them. This has led to the city's wayfinding totem network being expanded with the new harbour, airport, ferry terminal, rail station, strategic car parks and the beach all incorporated to give people more information about how easy the city is to access and move around on foot.

CONTEXT & CHALLENGES

A targeted promotions and publicity campaign have taken place, to inform the public, both visitors and residents alike, of the active travel options available to them. Much of this has been funded by the Transport Scotland-funded Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding, for which CIVITAS PORTIS was used as the necessary match fund to access this funding. Much of the promotion and publicity has been delivered under the Getabout banner, the sustainable transport brand and partnership for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and has included radio adverts, advertising on the backs of buses, social media and web campaigns, the creation of leaflets and online maps to of walking trails across the city and events including the annual “In town without my car day” event, cycle roadshows and training and road safety magic shows in schools.

It has also part-funded a Sustrans I-Bike Officer to work with schools to encourage more walking and cycling.

One of the main projects undertaken in the city was ‘Broad Street’ which was one of four major projects through the City Centre Masterplan (CCMP) which is a 25-year regeneration plan for Aberdeen City. Broad Street was transformed into a pedestrian-priority space, shared with cyclists and buses. The project cost approximately £3.2 million and was funded through ACC, Sustrans Scotland and the developer ‘Muse’ who undertook the development for Marischal Square situated on Broad Street. Another project recently achieved through the CCMP was Schoolhill, which widened the pavement (reducing road width) outside Aberdeen Art Gallery and essentially improving the public realm space.

Suggested consideration 1: Do ensure that citizen and stakeholder engagement is undertaken as this is critical to the success of measure implementation

Suggested consideration 2: Do use data analysis as well as different forms of data, this helps with understanding the full picture and where gaps are in the active travel network

Suggested consideration 3: Do consider what other projects are planned to take place in your city and explore opportunities to add value to these projects.

RESULTS - FINDINGS - LESSONS LEARNED



Lesson 1: Working across a large organisation (city authority) and across numerous organisations such an approach clearly carries the potential to deliver significant benefits in terms of engagement, perception and the likelihood of interventions being accepted by wider stakeholder groups, but is also affected by continuity of engagement and at the level of staff and officers who are involved. The process is very complex and shouldn't be under-estimated.

Lesson 2: Our use of data and the knowledge and experience we have gained from participation in PORTIS will help Aberdeen for future funding

Lesson 3: Its important to build long-term action plans to ensure that Aberdeen continues to deliver active travel improvements beyond the CIVITAS PORTIS project and continues to make cycling and walking more attractive.

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More info about CIVITAS PORTIS can be found on our website <http://civitas.eu/portis>

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