Places for Everyone 2020-21 Impact Report

Executive Summary

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Executive summary

Places for Everyone is a grant fund programme, open to a range of organisations in Scotland – including local authorities and community groups – that enables the creation of infrastructure to make it easier for people to walk, cycle and wheel for everyday journeys. In addition to funding, the programme provides advice and support to grant applicants (partners) to create safe, attractive, healthier places in order to increase the number of active travel trips. The programme is funded by the Scottish Government through Transport Scotland and is administered by Sustrans Scotland.

Places for Everyone was launched in March 2019, replacing previous Sustrans-administered grant fund programmes Community Links (2010 to 2019) and Community Links Plus (2016 to 2019). The programme works to achieve the outcomes of Transport Scotland's Active Travel Framework[1]. There are currently around 250 projects in place or in development as part of the Places for Everyone programme.

This report provides evidence on the key impacts of Places for Everyone to date, demonstrating, where possible, the contributions of the programme to the achievement of the outcomes set out in Transport Scotland's Active Travel Framework. This report comprises three main sections:

- **Impacts of Places for Everyone**: Evidence highlighting the impact of Places for Everyone against the Active Travel Framework outcomes and Active Travel strategic objectives, with monitoring undertaken at three points, before, after and more than a year after project delivery

- **Monitoring and evaluation during the pandemic**: An overview of three case studies that provide data and information on how Places for Everyone projects performed during the pandemic

- **Looking ahead – baseline case studies**: Twelve case studies reporting baseline monitoring undertaken for Places for Everyone projects currently being designed.

The work was undertaken by the Sustrans Research and Monitoring Unit (RMU). RMU aims to provide evidence on sustainable and active travel that is transparent and authoritative and which influences and shapes policy, practice and behaviour in Scotland and across the UK. To this end, RMU works with Sustrans colleagues and partner organisations to monitor and evaluate the impact of specific projects, whether infrastructural or behavioural change based.

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[1] https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/active-travel-framework

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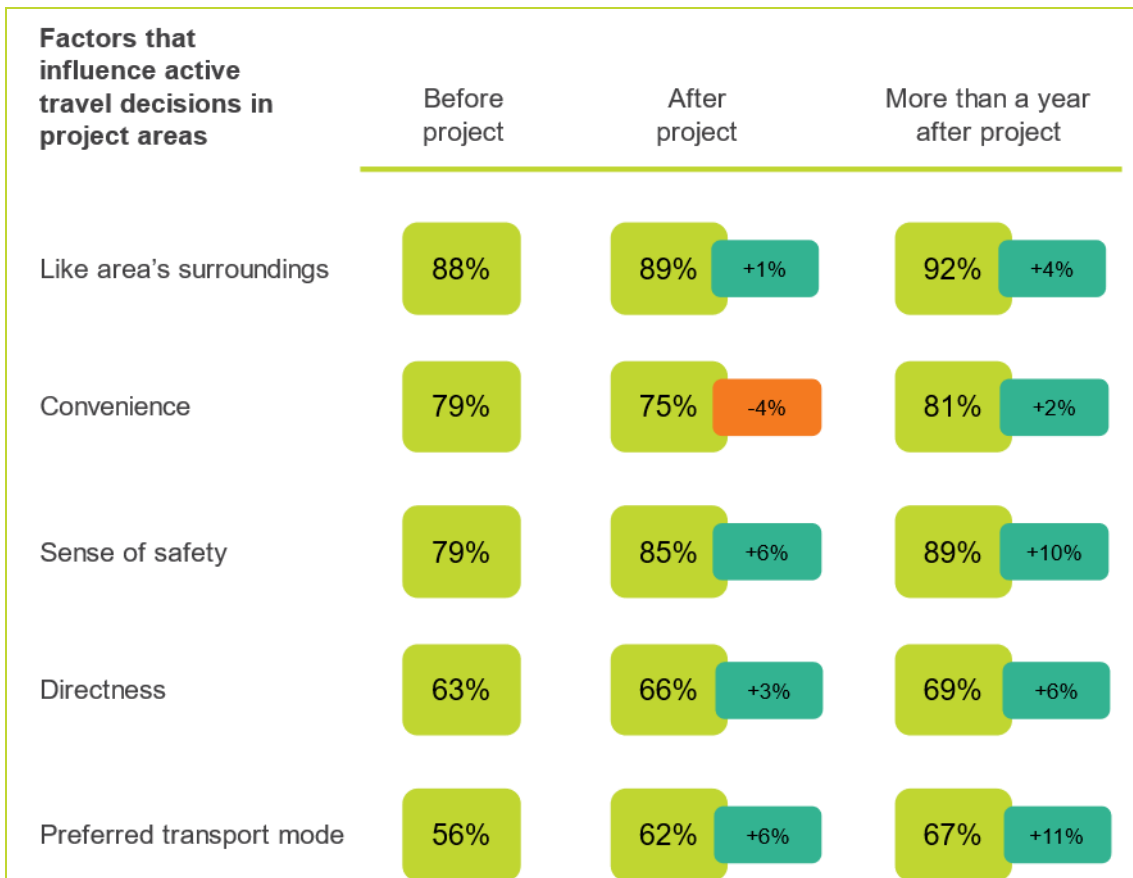sus**trans**

Impact of Places for Everyone

Active Travel Framework Outcome 1: Increasing the number of people choosing walking, cycling and wheeling in Scotland

The Places for Everyone projects included in the evaluation showed an overall increase in the number of walking, cycling and wheeling trips, with most projects showing substantial increases. Thus, a positive impact on active travel as a result of the Places for Everyone programme is strongly inferred.
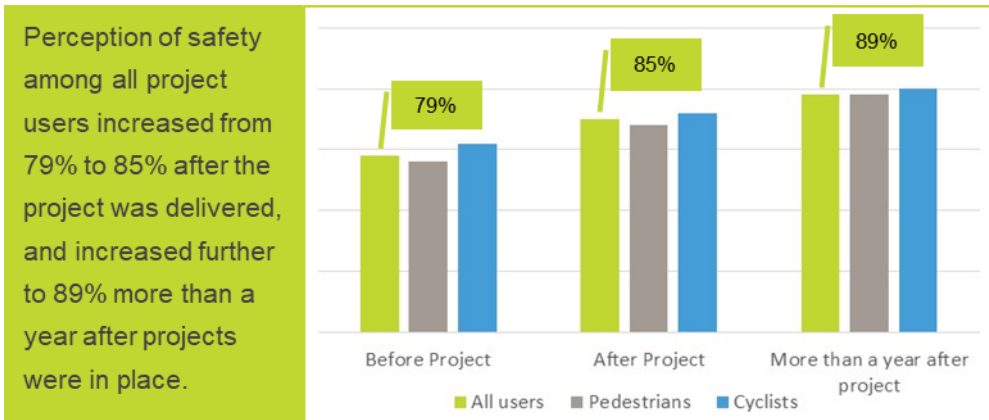
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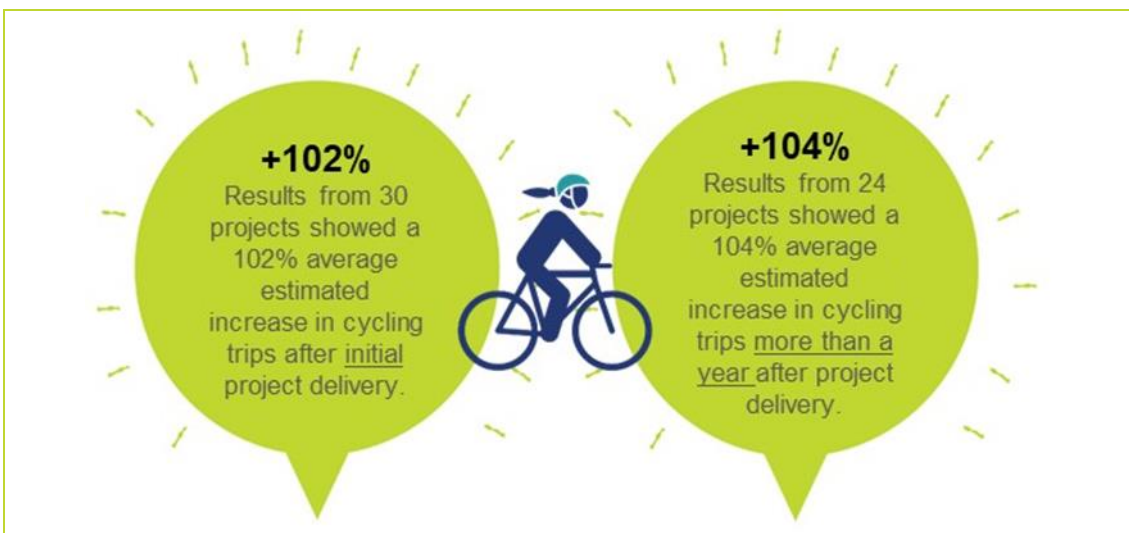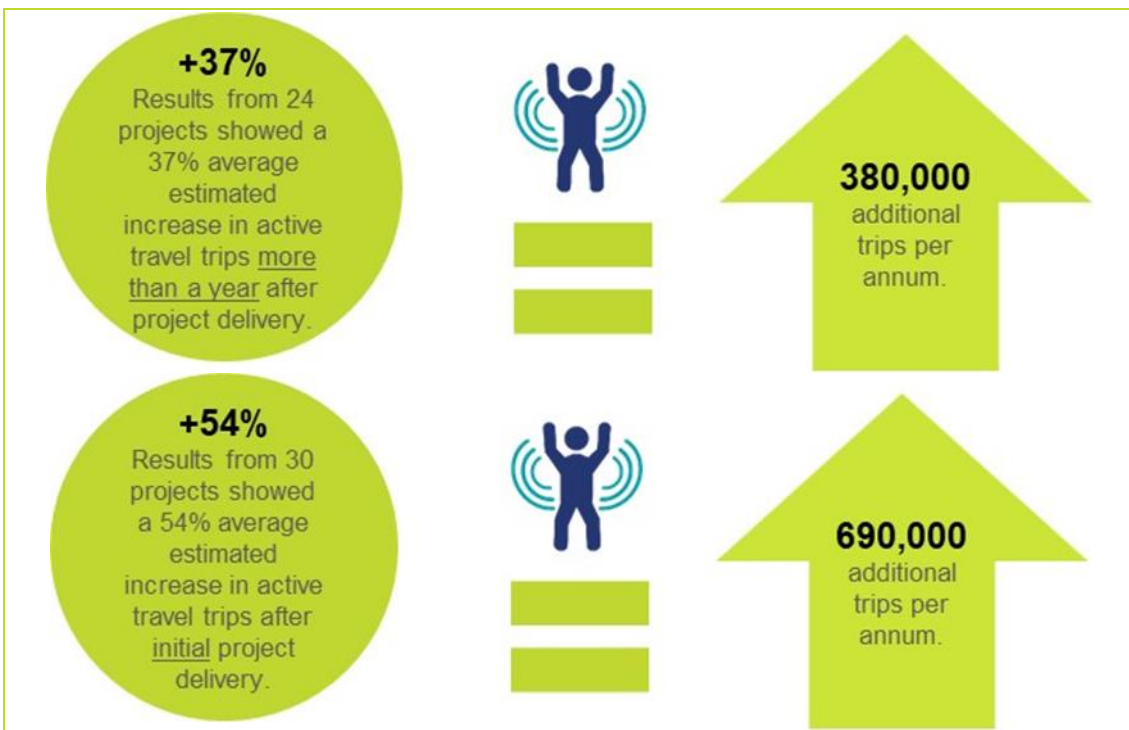
Active Travel Framework Outcome 2: High quality walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure is available to all

More than a year after project delivery, the proportion of people who said their decision to use the project route was influenced by its surroundings, convenience, directness and safety increased (by between 2 and 10 percentage points for each factor). The increase was particularly notable for 'sense of safety'. The proportion of people stating that walking, cycling or wheeling was their preferred mode of transport also increased (by 11 percentage points) from before project delivery to more than a year after project delivery.'

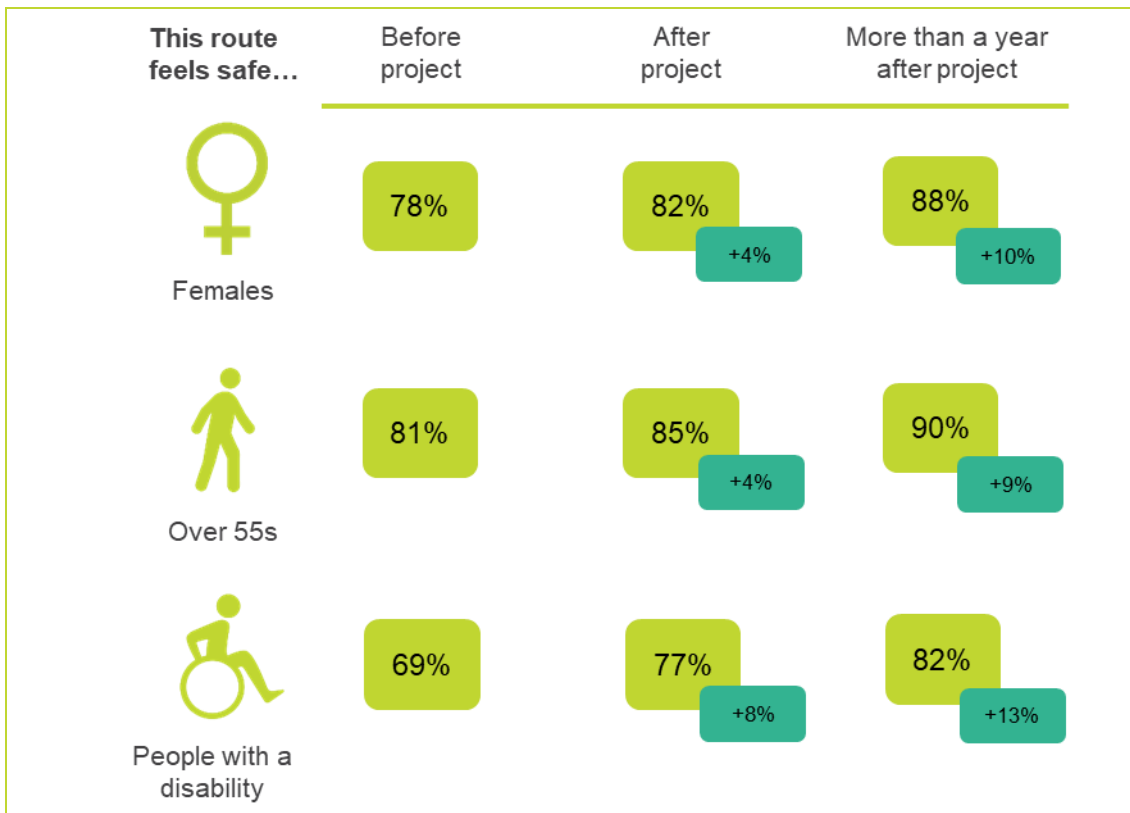| Factors that influence active travel decisions in project areas	Before project	After project		More than a year after project	
Like area's surroundings	88%	89%	+1%	92%	+4%
Convenience	79%	75%	-4%	81%	+2%
Sense of safety	79%	85%	+6%	89%	+10%
Directness	63%	66%	+3%	69%	+6%
Preferred transport mode	56%	62%	+6%	67%	+11%

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Active Travel Framework Outcome 3: Walking, cycling and wheeling is safer for all

The monitoring of Places for Everyone suggests projects lead to improvements in perceptions of safety among both pedestrians and cyclists.

Perception of safety among all project users increased from 79% to 85% after the project was delivered, and increased further to 89% more than a year after projects were in place.


Improvements were noted among groups – women, the elderly and people with disabilities – who traditionally regard safety as a major barrier to active travel. The proportion of people in these groups whose decision to use project areas was influenced by a belief that 'this route feels safe' increased *after* and *more than a year after* project delivery.

This route feels safe…	Before project	After project	More than a year after project
Females	78%	82% (+4%)	88% (+10%)
Over 55s	81%	85% (+4%)	90% (+9%)
People with a disability	69%	77% (+8%)	82% (+13%)

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Active Travel Framework Outcome 4: Delivery of walking, cycling and wheeling is promoted and supported by a range of partners

There are currently around 250 projects in place or in development as part of the Places for Everyone programme. These projects involve 28 of Scotland's 32 local authorities and more than 60 other partners, including national bodies such as Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Canals and the Rural Development Trust, regional organisations such as Highlands and Island Enterprise and Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park, and a range of community organisations and trusts, educational institutions, housing associations and NHS boards.

Questions on 'community involvement' were included in Places for Everyone monitoring and evaluation from 2017 onwards. Although limited, the initial data is encouraging: for example, the proportion of people using the Dalgety Bay to Inverkeithing High School project area who agreed that the area 'meets the needs of the community' rose from 51% before project delivery to 75% after project delivery.
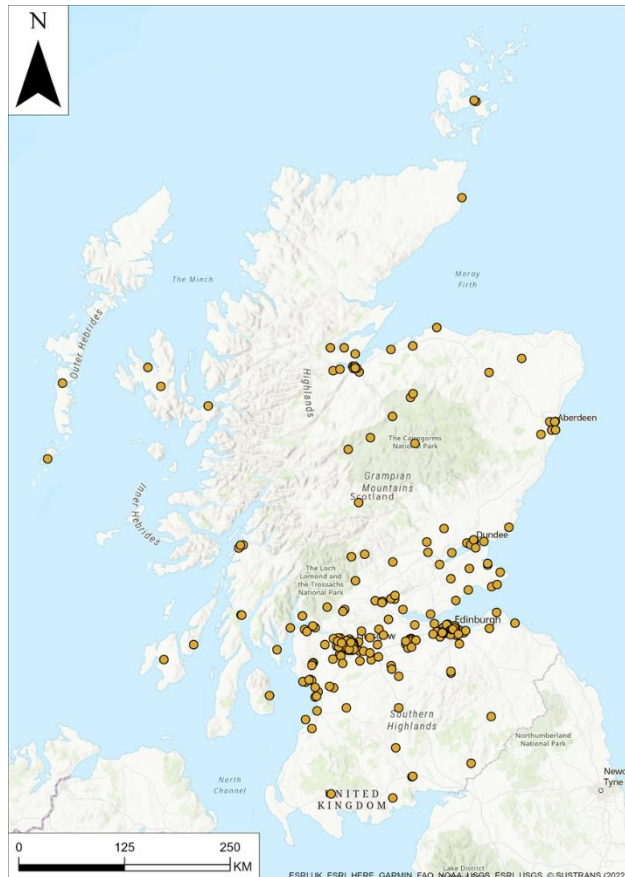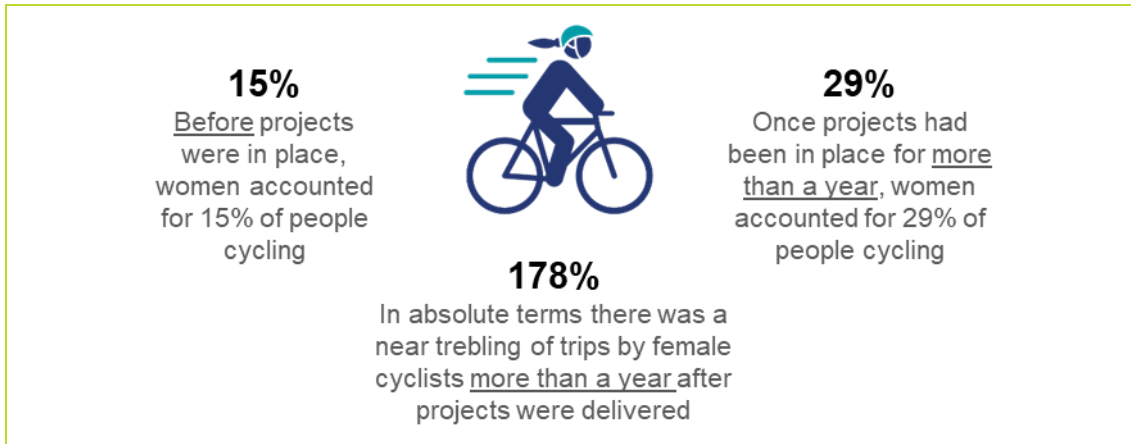
Analysis of data from summer/autumn 2021 highlights encouraging findings on local people's perceptions of community involvement for planned Places for Everyone projects:

- **Glasgow – Connecting Woodside**: A survey of 984 local residents found that 71% felt the Connecting Woodside project would either greatly or slightly improve the sense of community in their area.

- **Stirling – Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling**: A survey of 388 local residents found that 73% felt they knew at least 'a little' about the project. In the same survey, 73% of respondents felt the views of the community had been considered to some extent.

- **Highlands – Inverness city and active travel network**: A survey of 438 local residents found that 63% felt they knew at least 'a little' about the project and 58% felt community views had been considered at least 'a little'.

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Active Travel Framework Outcome 5: Walking, cycling and wheeling is available to all

Places for Everyone projects have helped to increase gender equality in people cycling, with significant increases in women cyclists observed in project areas, both as a proportion of all cyclists and in terms of the number of women cycling in project areas.

15%
Before projects were in place, women accounted for 15% of people cycling

29%
Once projects had been in place for more than a year, women accounted for 29% of people cycling

178%
In absolute terms there was a near trebling of trips by female cyclists more than a year after projects were delivered

While the *proportion* of people walking, cycling or wheeling who identified as having a disability remained constant from before delivery (12%) to after delivery (13%), the projects saw the *total number* of active travel trips by people who identified as having a disability increase by 53%.

53%
Places for Everyone projects saw an increase of 53% in the total number of trips by people who identified as having a disability

In terms of age, the number of trips by people cycling aged 55+ across our sample projects increased by 16% once projects were delivered.

16%
The number of trips by people cycling aged 55+ increased by 16% after project delivery

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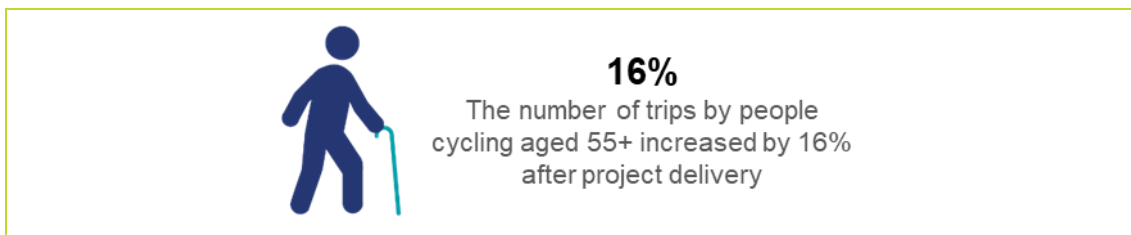
Monitoring and evaluation during the pandemic

This report presents three case studies in Fife, Dundee and Edinburgh[2] which highlight the ways Places for Everyone projects performed during the Covid-19 pandemic, by providing safe active travel options for key workers and others. In doing so, the programme helped to mitigate against some of the impacts of the pandemic at local levels. Covid-19 hugely affected the way people throughout Scotland travel and exercise, and the data included in this section of the report offers a unique snapshot of active travel behaviour during a period of unparalleled societal change.

- The projects saw increases in walking, cycling and wheeling; in particular, there was evidence of substantial increases in cycling in Fife, where the Thornton to Coaltown of Balgonie upgrade saw a 59% increase in cycling and 29% increase in walking and wheeling between 2016 and 2020, and Edinburgh, where the Innocent Railway path project saw a 344% increase in cycling between 2014 and 2020.

- The projects increased access to active travel for women and children. There was a 10 percentage point increase in female users (30% to 40%) of the Coaltown to Balgonie route in Fife between 2016 and 2020. There was a 4 percentage point increase in trips by children (5% to 9%) on the Caird Park route in Dundee from 2014 to 2020.

- The projects helped people feel that walking, cycling and wheeling is safer. In Dundee, before the project was delivered in 2017, less than half (45%) of the people using the Caird Park active travel routes felt they were safe; after project delivery this rose to 79% in 2019 and to over 90% in 2020. Similarly, in Edinburgh 66% of people using the Innocent Railway path agreed the route was safe in 2014; after the project was built, this rose to 75% in 2018 and 86% in 2020.

- The projects helped to support the government's key messaging during the pandemic of 'Stay at Home' and 'Stay Local'. For instance, survey results in Fife highlighted an increase in shorter trips using fewer modes of transport during the pandemic. The widening of footways helped people maintain safe physical distances during periods when the government's 'Stay Local' message was in place.

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[2] Fife: Thornton to Coaltown of Balgonie B9130 upgrade; Edinburgh: Innocent Railway path via the Meadows; Dundee: Caird Park and Regional Performance Centre for Sport Community Links.

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Looking ahead - baseline case studies

Baseline monitoring of a sample of projects currently at the design stage demonstrates the Places for Everyone programme's ongoing commitment to the active travel agenda. (See map below.) Planned work includes route upgrades; improvements to the public realm; increasing connectivity between settlements and key hubs; addressing local safety issues; and tackling inequalities.

T he case studies highlight the variety of the programme's work, from rural to urban and village to city, with examples of ambitious infrastructure projects that will change the way people travel, as well as the programme's contributions to wider development projects such as local masterplans and flood defence schemes.
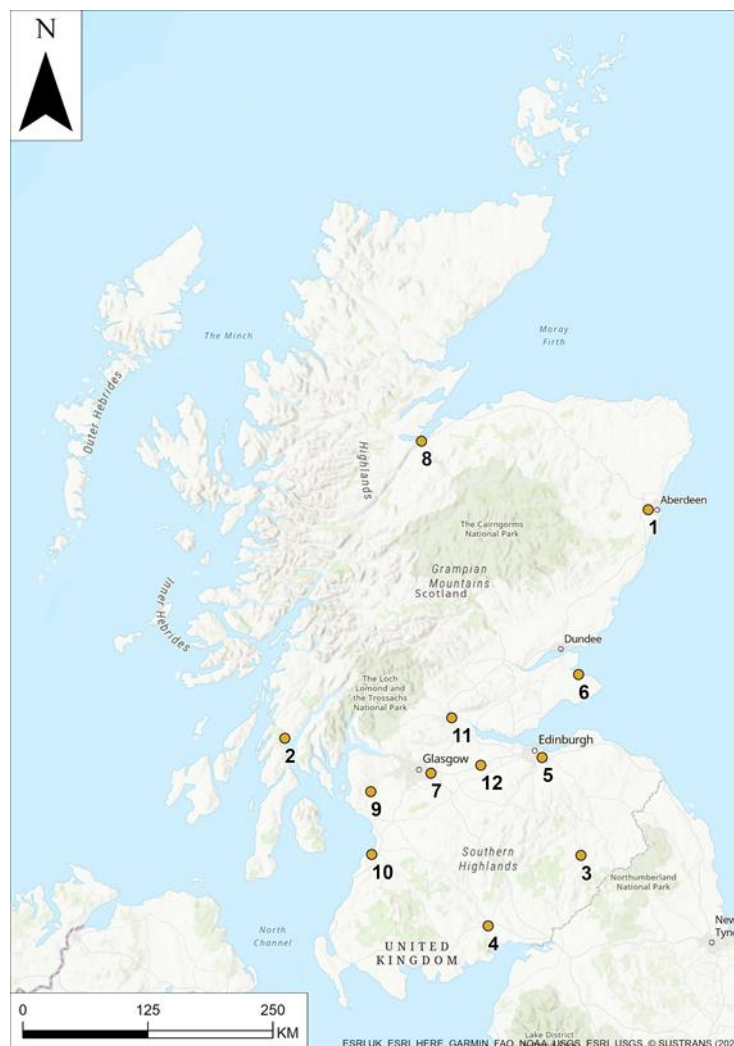
1. Aberdeen: Maidencraig active travel links
2. Argyll & Bute: Ardrishaig public realm improvement
3. Borders: Hawick Active Travel Network
4. Dumfries & Galloway: Cycle links to Royal Infirmary
5. Edinburgh and Midlothian: Quiet route 61
6. Fife: Lade Braes, St Andrews
7. Glasgow: East City Way
8. Highlands: Inverness city active travel network
9. North Ayrshire: Lochshore community links
10. South Ayrshire: Alloway to Burton cycleway
11. Stirling: Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling
12. West Lothian: Armadale-Whitburn path

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About this summary

This summary demonstrates the impacts of the Places for Everyone programme against the Active Travel Framework Outcomes, presenting a snapshot of the impacts of Places for Everyone to date. A full report, which includes and expands on this executive summary, is also available. The report includes an overview of the methodologies that have formed the analysis and commentary seen in these output documents.

The findings in this summary come from monitoring and evaluation that has been undertaken by Sustrans Research and Monitoring Unit (RMU). The RMU aims to provide evidence on sustainable and active travel that is transparent and authoritative and which influences and shapes policy, practice and behaviour in Scotland and across the UK. The evaluation of the Places for Everyone programme is designed to examine outcomes and strategic objectives contained within the Transport Scotland Active Travel Framework.

Key data collection tools and analysis used in our reporting outputs include: aggregated route user intercept surveys (RUIS) and manual counts; traffic, speed and volume surveys; postal surveys; and video observation.

Establishing a robust, aggregated data set has allowed us to identify consistent and overarching trends about the impact of the Places for Everyone programme. Nonetheless, we acknowledge that confounding variables make attribution of change challenging. To this end, a separate 'lessons learned' document has been compiled to inform future impact reporting ie in 2021-22. In addition, we will continue to liaise with Transport Scotland and other internal/external partners to inform the shape and format of our analysis and reporting outputs.

This summary and the associated full report form part of a suite of reporting mechanisms used by the Research & Monitoring Unit to disseminate our analysis and findings. This includes individual project reports; GIS and storymap representations.

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