Intervention 3 – Influencing travel choices

1   Description of Package

This intervention will deliver a package of measures focused on "locking- in" the benefits of the positive effects on travel choices that COVID-19 has had, and support on-going efforts to influence travel choices, in order to deliver long term modal shift. The COVID-19 pandemic saw a national lockdown introduced, with individuals advised to stay at home and only to travel for essential purposes. This saw the level of motorised traffic drop and an increase in walking and cycling. In order to lock-in these sustainable travel behaviours and help deliver long term modal shift when travel restrictions are lifted, several interventions are identified where Transport Scotland will offer to support local authorities and other partners in expanding the delivery of:

- Targeted communication campaigns towards high priority audiences including office workers and those travelling to town and city centres, encouraging sustainable and active travel as and when their travel requirements increase (and it is appropriate for them to do so);
- Campaigns focused on encouraging travelling locally and sustainably within Scotland's communities; and
- Workplace engagement and travel planning by delivering practical support and interventions that enable and encourage people to travel sustainably or reduce the need to travel (e.g. working from home, travel actively) as new work practices emerge.

Family Walking to School

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2   What we have heard?

At the start of the first COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, usage of all motorised modes fell sharply, but increases were seen in the numbers of people cycling, and to a lesser extent, walking. Cycling was up by 50% in the 3rd week of April[1] and by the following week levels of cycling were up by 120% compared with typical travel patterns for that time of year[2]. Further to this, Transport Scotland's COVID-19 public attitude surveys[3] found that 8-9% of respondents in May 2020 stated that they walked or wheeled more and subsequent surveys have seen this figure rise to over 30% in September 2020.

The research also showed that the pandemic has undermined confidence in use of public transport, in response to Government advice to avoid using it where possible, and that many people intend to increase private car use as a result.

3   The evidence base to support a case for change

Longer term transport trends show that cars have the largest percentage of modal share for all journeys in Scotland: 66% of all journeys are undertaken by car compared to just 21% by walking or cycling[4]. Figures from 2018 show most journeys tended to be over short distances, with 16% of all journeys being under 1 km long and a further 25% between 1 and 3 km, with the mean journey distance being 11.4 km. The data shows that the car is still being widely used even over relatively short distances[5]. Further data from the Scottish Transport Statistics shows there has been a 15% decrease in pedal cycle traffic in the 5 years to 2018[6].

However, research carried out by Paths for All on their 'Smarter Choices, Smarter Places' (SCSP) programme, Transport Scotland's primary mechanism for delivering transport behavioural change interventions, shows that behaviour change funding can

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[1] Monitoring data available from 14 -19 of April 2020

[2] Transport Scotland, COVID-19 Statistics, 2020, https://www.transport.gov.scot/publications/?publicationtype=1271&topic=63625&page=5

[3] Transport Scotland, COVID 19 Public Attitudes Survey Data, 2020, https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/covid-19-public-attitudes-survey-data-wave-6/

[4] Transport Scotland, Scottish Transport Statistics, Chapter 5: Road Traffic, 2019, https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-transport-statistics-no-38-2019-edition/chapter-5-road-traffic/

[5] Transport Scotland, Scottish Transport Statistics, Chapter 11: Personal and Cross-Modal Travel, 2019, https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-transport-statistics-no-38-2019-edition/chapter-11-personal-and-cross-modal-travel/

[6] Transport Scotland, Scottish Transport Statistics, Chapter 5: Road Traffic, 2019, https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/scottish-transport-statistics-no-38-2019-edition/chapter-5-road-traffic/

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have a positive impact on active and sustainable travel. The programme saw an increase in the outputs aligned to the outcome 'People's knowledge about sustainable transport choices increases' with a media reach of nearly 23 million; a 190% increase on the previous year. The report found a significant increase in the number of people 'choosing to walk or cycle for short local journeys', with over 150,000 people reporting that they have made more journeys by foot or bike[7], this despite the relatively modest scale of investment.   Where targeted investment is made into specific communities or workplaces, behavioural change interventions can lead to significant changes in travel choices, even without substantial investment in transport infrastructure or services.   For example, early work on the SCSP programme in Dundee led to over 40% of members of target communities making positive changes to their travel mode choices[8].

A programme of measures which would lock-in the benefits of increased use of active modes as a result of COVID-19 restrictions could help support a long-term reduction in the level of car use for shorter journeys and reverse the decrease of pedal cycle traffic. It could also help support the recovery in use of public transport services when it is appropriate to do so.

4   The Strategic Rationale

As part of the response to COVID-19, Transport Scotland is continuing to consider the impacts of the pandemic on the transport system and society. NTS2 sets out a vision for a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors. While it did not consider the specific COVID-19 challenge, NTS2 and the associated Delivery Plan will continue to provide the guiding principles for long term transport recovery; this measure helps deliver on those principles.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in line with Scottish Government guidance on suppressing the virus, a range of physical distancing measures have been implemented. These measures have reduced the capacity of, and demand for, public transport. Measures which lock-in benefits will help support on-going COVID-19 measures and encourage a switch to active travel for shorter journeys and a safe return to public sustainable transport for more people when it is appropriate for them to do so.

In a wider policy context, Transport Scotland has strong framework for supporting a programme of measures which lock in sustainable travel behaviours, as part of behaviour change initiatives including the *Cycling Action Plan 2017- 2020* and the *Active Scotland Delivery Plan*. Through Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding, Transport Scotland is already supporting the delivery of walking and cycling behaviour change programmes throughout Scotland at a local level; this measure recommends expanding the

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[7] Paths for All, Changing Travel Behaviour Annual Report, 2019/20, https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/mediaLibrary/other/english/smarterchoicessmarterplaces_report2019-20.pdf
[8] DHC, Going Smarter: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places Programme, 2012

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reach of these interventions.

This is helping to mitigate the risks of physical inactivity, which increases the risk of chronic conditions including heart disease, diabetes, and other obesity-related illnesses.   Active and sustainable travel is good for health, helping to reduce the risk of chronic conditions and mitigate health inequalities.

Meanwhile, encouraging people back to public transport when it is appropriate to do so will help ensure both that the transport system's sustainability is improved, and that social exclusion risks of a car-dominated society are reduced.

Why now?

- There is a strong national policy context for measures which promote sustainable travel behaviours to deliver long term modal shift.
- *'Smarter Choices, Smarter Places'* has demonstrated that behaviour change programmes can influence peoples travel behaviours in Scotland, and that these initiatives can be used as part of a toolkit of measures which can support the delivery of long-term modal shift.
- COVID-19 has also demonstrated that people's travel choices can change in response to external stimuli, giving confidence of the appropriateness of campaigns and initiatives that seek to positively influence behaviours.
- Businesses and organisations have invested in measures to support remote working and have implemented a variety of practices to ensure sustainability during the pandemic. This forced situation provides a strong opportunity to engage and embed these measures over the medium to longer term in support of sustainable travel objectives.
- There is an opportunity to act as travel restrictions caused by the pandemic are lifted, the result of which may otherwise be a further increase in car travel over pre-COVID-19 conditions.

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5 Meeting the STPR2 Transport Planning Objectives

TRANSPORT PLANNING OBJECTIVE	CONTRIBUTION	SCALE OF IMPACT (-3 to +3)
A sustainable strategic transport system that contributes significantly to the Scottish Government's net zero emissions target.	A package of measures associated with locking in the benefits of active and sustainable travel behaviours would contribute to supporting active travel for shorter journeys and a safe return to sustainable public transport for longer journeys, providing an attractive alternative to car journeys.	✓✓
An inclusive strategic transport system that improves the affordability and accessibility of public transport.	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support the delivery of modal shift towards sustainable transport choices. Such measures can be tailored at a local level to target specific groups who are most likely to be able to travel sustainably.	✓✓
A cohesive strategic transport system that enhances communities as places, supporting health and wellbeing.	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support the delivery of modal shift from short and medium distance car journeys, benefitting the environment through a reduction in emissions and improving air quality, as well contributing to an increased level of physical activity; outputs which support improved health and wellbeing.	✓✓✓
An integrated strategic transport system that contributes towards sustainable inclusive growth in Scotland.	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support the reconnection of more people to their workplaces, retail and other locations of economic activity, hastening economic recovery from COVID-19 in an inclusive manner.	✓✓
A reliable and resilient strategic transport system that is safe and secure for users.	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable COVID-19 travel behaviours can support the delivery of longer-term modal shift, through training, advice and information ensuring that people are safe and secure when using the transport network.	✓

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6   Addressing the Post COVID-19 Priorities

POST-C19 PRIORITIES	CONTRIBUTION
Employment	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support access city centres and other key employment sites by sustainable public transport and/or active travel, and also hasten post-COVID-19 economic recovery.
Environment	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support modal shift from short and medium distance car journeys, benefitting the environment through a reduction in emissions and an increase in improved air quality.
Education	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support modal shift to more healthy and inclusive access to schools and further/higher education, helping to promote long term sustainable and active travel behaviour in children and young people.
Equalities	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support the delivery of modal shift towards inclusive transport choices, with accessibility benefits to many people that are commonly excluded from the transport system. Such a package of measures can be tailored at a local level to target specific groups, in supporting further access to sustainable and active travel choices.

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7   SEA, EqIA and Other Impact Assessments[9]

ASSESSMENT	COMMENTARY
SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment)	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours can support a modal shift from car to active and sustainable travel, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality. The measures will therefore complement the SEA and help progress the SEA objectives.
EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment)	A programme of measures which includes raising awareness of transport choices can help people who are often excluded from transport, including young and older people, people on low incomes and people with physical or sensory impairments, to access transport choices that are appropriate to their needs.
ICIA (Island Communities Impact Assessment)	This intervention is relevant in all parts of Scotland.
CRWIA (Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment)	Children comprise one of the groups that is most currently most excluded from a full range of transport choices. Provision of behaviour change measures can support children's access to a range of sustainable and active travel modes.
FSDIA (Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment)	Can provide significant benefit for inclusive accessibility and public health, including for members of target groups, identified at a local level.

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[9] All of these impact assessments are currently underway but no formal assessments have yet been undertaken.   Please note SEA and EqIA scoping reports have been produced and consulted upon.

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8   Implementability and Interdependencies

IMPLEMENTABILITY CRITERIA	COMMENTARY
Feasibility	A programme of measures to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours to support longer term modal shift is feasible, though local development work is required to identify the most appropriate interventions and initiatives.
Affordability	Overall implementation costs for comprehensive package of measures which lock in sustainable travel behaviours across Scotland are modest, though on-going investment will be required through any with- or post-COVID-19 recovery period if the benefits are to be maximised.
Public Acceptability	In Scotland there is a good level of acceptability of behaviour change measures which promote sustainable and active travel behaviours.

Key Interdependencies

A programme of measure to lock-in sustainable travel behaviours to support longer term modal shift will have key interdependencies with active travel infrastructure programmes, which can deliver safe cycling and walking infrastructure.   There are further interdependencies with sustainable public transport modes and the levels of service provision within local areas.

The overarching aim of STPR2 Phase 1 is to "lock in" the benefits and travel behaviours of individuals caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide a step change in investment which supports the priorities and outcomes of the National Transport Strategy. This intervention is directly targeted at this and seeks to build on the fact that people's travel choices can change in response to external stimuli, giving confidence of the appropriateness of campaigns and initiatives that seek to positively influence behaviours.

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