

A blue-tinted photograph of a woman and children on bicycles in a park setting. The woman is in the foreground on the left, wearing a helmet and looking towards the children. Several children, also wearing helmets, are on bicycles in the middle ground. The background shows bare trees and a building. The overall mood is active and community-oriented.

// 2022

# The Active Nation Commissioner's Final Report

MARCH 2022

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// BY LEE CRAIGIE

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LEE CRAIGIE

My three years spent in this inaugural post have been as challenging as they have been rewarding. As I reach the end of my agreed term, I feel both frustrated and proud of what has been achieved through the creation of this role. However, more importantly, I want to ensure it continues to exist in a way that will increase levels of physical activity in Scotland in tangible, timely and transformative ways. We desperately need this now for a healthier, happier, fairer Scotland and as part of the answer to our shared global environmental crisis.

Covid-19 has served the physical activity agenda in that it has made many of us more grateful for the time and space to move our bodies freely. It has also made us more aware of the inequalities that exist, particularly in our built up areas, with regards to the accessibility of green space that encourages physical activity.

The importance of physical activity for our mental and physical health has been highlighted by the pandemic. Unfortunately, Covid has ultimately exacerbated inequalities, pulling those of us who have the choice of private transport out of public transport and into single occupancy vehicles.

Now we have an opportunity to build back our communities and our economy in ways that benefit everyone and our planet.

“ Now we have an opportunity to build back our communities and our economy in ways that benefit more people and our planet. ”

LEE CRAIGIE

The importance of physical activity for our mental and physical health has been remembered as a result of the pandemic but unfortunately, Covid has ultimately exacerbated inequalities, pulling those of us who have the choice of private transport off public transport and into single occupancy vehicles.

LEE CRAGIE

The Scottish Government's ambition to reduce the number of car kilometres by 20% before 2030<sup>1</sup> will help close this inequality gap and reduce carbon emissions, as will some of the policies focused on sustainable travel in The National Transport Strategy (NTS)<sup>2</sup> and second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2)<sup>3</sup>. Placemaking, including the commitment to fostering 20 Minute Neighbourhoods<sup>4</sup>, is being promoted as integral to effective active travel strategies through the Place Based Framework<sup>5</sup>. Also, Sustainable Transport is a priority in the Strategic Framework<sup>6</sup> for the Future of Participatory Budgeting in Scotland<sup>7</sup>.

The Scottish Government's long-term Active Travel Vision<sup>8</sup> sits at the heart of their actions and ambitions for a Net Zero Nation<sup>9</sup>. Together with the appointment of a dedicated minister for Active Travel in post and a bigger financial commitment to active travel measures than ever before, Scotland has never been in better position to turn this vision into a reality.

Actions and ambitions that incentivise active travel are very welcome but bold leadership that dis-incentivises the use of motorised transport will, at the same time, ensure that the social inequalities in our transport system stands a chance of being addressed.

We have some of the best social policies in the world, but collaboration in order to achieve them will be vital.



1. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/a-route-map-to-achieve-a-20-per-cent-reduction-in-car-kilometres-by-2030/>  
 2. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/developing-an-active-nation/sustainable-travel-and-the-national-transport-strategy/>  
 3. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/investment-focused-on-sustainable-travel-for-a-green-recovery/>  
 4. <https://www.climateexchange.org.uk/research/projects/20-minute-neighbourhoods-in-a-scottish-context/>  
 5. <https://www.ourplace.scot/moving-around>  
 6. <https://pbscotland.scot/pb-framework-1/2021/9/29/priority-10-sustainable-transport>  
 7. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/future-of-participatory-budgeting-in-scotland-framework/>  
 8. <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/33649/long-term-vision-for-active-travel-in-scotland-2030.pdf>  
 9. <https://netzeronation.scot/take-action/active-travel>



# A Whole Systems Approach



In retrospect, it is widely agreed that the role of Active Nation Commissioner should have been more transparent and defined from the beginning. An independent commissioner with the narrow focus of increasing levels of Active Travel alone would have been a challenging enough role. However the title of Active Nation Commissioner always suggested to me the necessity of a Whole Systems Approach to tackling a public health issue, with transport leading the conversation but only as part of the solution.

Public Health Scotland is currently leading the development of a Whole Systems Approach to physical activity of which there are eight investments:

1. **Whole-of-School Programmes**
2. **Active Transport**
3. **Active Urban Design**
4. **Healthcare**
5. **Public Education (including mass media)**
6. **Sport and Recreation for All**
7. **Workplaces**
8. **Community-Wide Programmes**

“Increasing physical activity requires a systems-based approach – there is no single policy solution.”

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

My recommendations for a more active Scotland wholeheartedly supports the adoption of this systems based approach and the appointment of a specific independent Active Travel Commissioner to help achieve investments 2 and 3 is of utmost priority. This new ATC should have the experience and vision to be able to practically support and current local and national measures prioritising active travel, public transport and placemaking. They should also have creative, innovative ideas to help drive change further and faster and the authority and support to trial them.



10. While people from rural communities and those with mobility restrictions may not be able to reduce their car km's by 20% by 2030 it is hoped that the principle of this objective is understood to be of benefit to society at large and will be supported accordingly.

11. <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272722/9789241514187-eng.pdf>

Further to this, I believe that the success of the ATC depends on the public understanding the importance of this work in order to influence change effectively. For this reason, I believe the Commissioner should be guided by a permanent People's Panel (appendix 1) made up of a randomly selected and diverse cross section of the Scottish public including the voices of people young and old from all walks of life.

The People's Panel, appointed to ensure transport plays it's part in readdressing social inequalities, improving health and helping our planet, will help politicians and business leaders to be bold and to make the difficult decisions our society requires for the greater good. The evidence compiled from the Panel's recommendations should inform the Active Travel Commissioner's objectives and help to keep them on track.

Ensuring the public narrative for reducing car km's by 20% remains focused on how driving less improves the health, wealth and social disparity of our society as a whole will encourage this change in behaviour. It is often said that people don't like change, but actually it is uncertainty that people find anxiety inducing. Co-creating healthy, affordable and fair travel solutions with the communities these solutions serve, makes change feel less scary. To assist with the re-writing of historic, car-centric narratives that negatively impact our personal and planetary health<sup>10</sup>, I recommend an additional advocacy role be created. This Ambassador for Active Travel would work closely with the People's Panel to establish their evidence base and, although rooted in Transport, would work across several government portfolios including Public Health.

The Active Travel Commissioner and Ambassador, guided by the recommendations of the People's Panel, should try to change our society using The World Health Organisation's Global Action Plan on Physical Activity<sup>11</sup> which focuses on creating:

1. **Active Societies**
2. **Active Environments**
3. **Active People**
4. **Active Systems**

In collaboration with Local Authorities, delivery partners and other divisions of government (including Public Health, Active Scotland, Sport Scotland, Energy and Climate Change and Housing and Social Justice), the Active Travel Commissioner and Ambassador would unite government agendas thus achieving joint health, environmental and economic outcomes.

Transport can play a vital role in improving the health and happiness of people and in mitigating climate change, however it cannot, and should not, attempt to do so in isolation.

# My Objectives Reviewed

At the end of my first year in post, I published a report that detailed my focus for the remaining two years. Covid-19 took hold just as the report was due to be published and, like everyone, I had to adapt. How we move around has shifted more than anyone could have possibly foreseen in the last two years and many of my objectives have also changed in order to respond to our new needs.

The objectives I set myself in 2021 spanned four priority areas:

1. Community infrastructure
2. Travelling to school
3. Our workplaces and the economy
4. The importance of play

I will report on the current situation of each objective and make recommendations for it going forward. However, I would like to make it clear that any advancements or achievements have, without exception, been made collaboratively. Without the many advisors and partnerships across government, local authorities, transport providers, delivery partners, campaigning groups, communities and schools, the role of the Active Nation Commissioner would be meaningless and impotent.



## 1. Considering community infrastructure

1. Advocate for a national network of traffic-free paths that connect towns, villages and countryside, for everyone to enjoy.

Sustrans, the UK's walking, wheeling and cycling charity, has worked tirelessly to ensure a financial and strategic commitment is made by government to improve the National Cycle Network for the benefit of all active users. I added my advocacy to their appeal that the network be included in Transport Scotland's Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) so that it might have the same legal standing and financial investment as the trunk road network.

STPR2 (the review of Scotland's transport network performance that informs what projects receive investment over the next 20 years) has since identified the development of the NCN as one of the emerging options for further appraisal with a view to combining all traffic-free routes into a single high quality, safe, nationwide active travel network. Over short distances these routes will be known as Connecting Neighbourhoods - improvement measures to active travel infrastructure in and around town and neighbourhood centres to footways, road crossings, route surfacing, lighting and street furniture. Over longer distances, these measures will come under the heading Active Freeways - safe, segregated longer routes linking communities together.



### → further action required

It is crucial that the strategic role of the National Cycle Network is recognised through commitments both to invest in its' development on a national scale and to provide it with a legal status that protects and enhances it.

To be effective, implementation of these STPR2 recommendations would require a partnership approach, principally with the local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships but also with communities. Initiatives already based in a community are best placed to ensure important aspects such as play, biodiversity loss and creative interpretation don't get lost amongst functional active travel aspirations.

While STPR2 and NTS2 propose that all decisions on transport places active and sustainable travel front and centre, they remain recommendations and are still heavily caveated, although a Programme for Government commitment does propose a welcome increase in NCN budget for 2022-23.





This sign, advising people driving to give 1.5metres space when overtaking people cycling, resulted in the proportion of dangerous close passes dropping from 50% to 29% and extremely dangerous close passes dropping from 1% to 0%.

This demonstrates a marked improvement in driving behaviour after sign installation in one location. Insufficient overtakes were recorded after sign installation to assess any impact in the other location.

**Further action required**

Extend the trial to several new locations with different road characteristics, using the same approach.

Develop the concept with Roads Authorities, Transport Scotland and Sustrans for potential long term roll-out options.

Take into account new Highway Code guidance on overtaking.

In partnership with Police Scotland and their emerging third-party reporting initiative, ascertain the legal extent to which this footage might assist prosecutions in the case of close and dangerous passes.

- 2. Help establish and monitor a road sign pilot project in one local authority that educates drivers to give cyclists safe space when passing.

When riding my bike on roads in other European countries, I have been reassured by road side signage that reminds drivers of the correct way to behave around cyclists. In discussion with people in Scotland who ride bikes frequently and those who refuse to ride them at all for safely reasons, I became convinced that a trial signage project would provide a favourable evidence base to installing these signs on key roads in this country.

The pilot project managed by Cycling Scotland, (in partnership with myself, East Lothian and South Lanarkshire Councils and delivered by Aecom with a road signage literature review by the Transport Research Institute at Edinburgh Napier University) took place in early 2021. Trials were conducted in early 2021 near Longniddry (East Lothian) and Strathaven (South Lanarkshire) where temporary cameras recorded the distance given by vehicles before and after sign installation.



- 3. While the Spaces for People programme already allows for temporary 20 mph limits on some roads, I advocate the increased enforcement of speeding restrictions in built up areas and support 20 mph bill as the default across Scotland.

I strongly supported the Restricted Roads Bill (20 mph Speed Limit Scotland Bill) first put forward by Mark Ruskell in September 2018. Since the fall of that Bill, robust evidence has emerged as a result of a collaborative project between Borders Council Road Safety and Professor Adrian Davis and colleagues at Napier University. This 20mph pilot project resulted in drivers reducing their speed by an average of 3mph and, most importantly, residents welcomed this change that had been requested for many years.

The Scottish Government is supportive of 20mph limits and zones in the right environment. It recognises that reduced speed limits can have a positive impact on the perceptions of road danger and encourages people to walk, wheel and cycle more. However, the Government argues that a default 20mph speed limit across all built up areas is not necessarily the best way to make our streets safer. Instead a 20mph Task Group to initiate the scaling up of current local programmes and initiatives to provide new or expanded 20mph limits on appropriate roads in cities, towns and villages across Scotland has been established and more 20mph zones are appearing across Scotland. This group now includes independent experts operating from a sound evidence base.

→ **Further action required**

If 20 mph speed limits in built up areas are not to be the default that Local Authorities either accept or apply for exceptions from, then we run the risk of large geographical areas across Scotland having few or no 20 mph limits. Furthermore, this approach limits our opportunity to develop road networks strategically and with uniformity which would offer drivers greater consistency of messaging.

- 4. Encourage a simplification of the TRO process so that these trial changes to our infrastructure can continue beyond Spaces for People.

In talks with local authority representatives and stakeholder groups, I was frequently asked to advocate for the review of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to allow Local Authorities more autonomy and flexibility to trial new, innovative street design favouring people not travelling in cars. In late 2019 a TRO Review Working Group (which included local authority representatives, Sustrans, COSLA and SCOTs) gathered views of all 32 local authorities and the general public which revealed some issues with the TRO process. These included the outdated nature of Experimental Orders which didn't allow for ongoing consultation and modification and the requirement for a Public Local Inquiry (PLI) if objections are not resolved and withdrawn.

As a result, new ETRO regulations progressed through the Scottish Parliament unopposed and came into force on the 26th November 2022. This now gives Transport Scotland and Local Authorities the authority to put experimental traffic schemes in place with a minimum of 7 days' notice. Also, it offers the public an enhanced consultation period of at least 6 months while the project is still on the ground. This allows local authorities to hear and manage objections while the scheme is in place and lets people see what any permanent change will mean for them.

→ **Further action required**

The TRO review identified other opportunities to simply the process, including streamlining the advertising regime currently in place and digitalising the whole process.



“All too often it is easier to consult the representatives of a group of stakeholders to help steer something as big as transport policy but the methods we use to do this only serve the percentage of the population who have the confidence and skill set to make their points understood at policy level.”

LEE CRAGIE

5. Work with expert facilitators to establish a citizens' jury, that will include including young and marginalised voices, to give our local authorities confidence that the changes made to our shared spaces are for the greater good and not disproportionate, individual gain.

The pursuit of true representation and meaningful consultation on issues that affect our diverse society has remained my motivation over the past three years. Often, it is easier to consult stakeholder representatives to help steer major policy initiatives but the methods we use to do this only serve the percentage of the population who have the confidence and skill set to make their points understood at this level.

Throughout 2019 I worked closely with Open Government Partnership<sup>12</sup> and Involve<sup>13</sup> to learn more about proportionally representative consultation. With proportional representation, the views of a randomly selected cross section of society are actively sought and balanced against the views of the articulate, self-selecting minority who put themselves forward. My intention was to establish a People's Panel to help guide my advocacy on issues that affect Scotland's levels of physical activity, however at the same time Transport Scotland began their own People's Panel to help inform the National Transport Strategy. I then diverted my attention to ensuring that this process was truly representative of a wide cross section of society.

Initially the panel assisting NTS2 was made up of stakeholder groups and civil servants but together we concluded that these groups and individuals would be better placed on the NTS steering group, leaving the People's Panel free to recruit a cross section of society who might offer diverse public opinion.

The National Transport Strategy People's Panel was set up by independent expert facilitators on a pilot basis to test the approach to informing the NTS Delivery Plan which forms part of the NTS2 Forum. The Panel comprises 20 members of the public from a range of backgrounds and locations across Scotland with different experiences of transport.

Four sessions of the Panel, covering the four priority themes of NTS, have now taken place. These sessions have typically involved open discussion around the themes before focussing on three key areas the NTS has proposed through the delivery plan. Discussion topics have included 20% Car KM Reduction, Road Safety, Free Bikes for School Children, 20 Minute Neighbourhoods and Last Mile Deliveries.

Initial feedback received from participants confirms they felt engaged by the topics discussed, had learned something new and enhanced their understanding of the issues discussed.

The Panel has provided an invaluable mechanism for Transport Scotland to gauge reaction to policy ideas and to sense check their plans for delivery.

A full evaluation of the Panel is underway and the report from this will be shared with the NTS Delivery Board. Transport Scotland officials are currently considering the next steps for the Panel and what its future role could and should be.

#### → Further action required

Transport Scotland's participatory approach to gathering opinion illustrates a willingness to develop thinking and adapt structures to ensure more voices are heard and as a result policy making becomes fairer, more inclusive and transparent. All encompassing societal issues such as transport must not exacerbate inequalities, but this level of investment means transport strategy might also play a large part in the reduction of social inequality across all sectors of society.

If authentic proportional representation models such as this are to be established, it is important we ensure participants are remunerated for their time and that there is a clear, transparent process for their findings and recommendations to be considered.

6. Hold Transport Scotland to account in the publication of the 4th iteration of the Cycling Action Plan document.

In 2019, Transport Scotland commissioned Cycling Scotland to produce a review of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) 2017-20. The review was submitted in February 2020, however further work was put on hold in order to prioritise the Scottish Government Covid-19 emergency response.

Transport Scotland officials, in conjunction AECOM and Arcadis, are now taking forward work on a new Cycling Framework for Active Travel which will be published in 2022. The framework sets out recommendations for the next 20 years, ranging from the detailed to the highly strategic. Favourable are the sections on Access to Bikes, connectivity at transport hubs, Increasing Active Travel to School and the Expansion of 20mph Limits and Zones. The Framework is being developed in consultation with key partners including local authorities, Sustrans and Cycling Scotland. As a member of the Framework stakeholder group, I have been consulted on the development of the draft Framework and have had multiple opportunities to feed into the process.

#### → Further action required

It is my opinion that the current version of the Cycling Framework for Active Travel doesn't go far enough. While the action plan within is a word perfect blueprint for promoting the uptake of cycling in Scotland, the document itself uses non-committal terminology that I feel doesn't reflect the level of commitment required to deliver the action plan.

At the time of writing this report the Cycling Framework for Active Travel was still in draft form with a public consultation pending. It would be my hope that the new ATC be in post in time to offer their bold, informed critique on it before publication and that the public consultation phase includes creative ways of gathering the views of a diverse population.

7. Sit on the board of 2023 World Cycling Championships policy team to ensure joined up political thinking around health, transport, social justice and environmental agendas.

The UCI Cycling Worlds Championships will take place in Scotland in 2023. Cycling is a diverse activity and cuts across a number of government policy portfolios, including transport, sport, the environment, tourism and social justice. Historically, plans and strategies for change sit within individual policy portfolios, but collaborative working across government portfolios needs a joint focus if it is to be truly productive. Hosting an international event can provide the joint focus required to make meaningful change.

I joined the Cycling World Championship Policy Advisory Group (comprising representatives from the Scottish Government, funding partners and the key national agencies) to ensure collaborative working through the One Scotland Approach to Cycling<sup>14</sup>. The 'Power of the Bike' demonstrates a shared vision that addresses social and environmental issues such as diversity and inclusion, empowering and connecting communities, promoting positive mental wellbeing and the necessity to reduce our carbon footprint not usually tackled directly by large scale sporting events.

#### → Further action required

Although 2023 Cycling Worlds Ltd have a predetermined budget to run the thirteen combined world championships, it was based on previous models and did not contain any enhanced resource to prioritise sustainability. By taking the current collaborative multi-agency approach, it is hoped innovative approaches, solutions and adequate resources can be identified and secured to ensure the event has environmental sustainability at its core.

More detailed plans and costed proposals will be fleshed out during 2022 and will be considered by the Sustainability Working Group, 2023 Cycling Worlds Board / Cabinet, Scottish Government and partners. The Policy Group will be advised and consulted on future plans and proposals.

Hosting this championship event in Scotland in 2023 is an opportunity to inspire and engage an entirely new generation of cyclists whether for health, transport or for fun. The new Active Travel Ambassador role could work closely with the championships team and the Scottish Government Free Bikes for Children initiative to ensure the benefits for our young Scottish population get filtered deeply into the communities surrounding championship venues

## 2. Travelling to school

8. Encourage local authorities to close streets to cars around schools at the start and end of the school day and promote alternatives to driving children to school.

Increasing active travel to school leads to health and wellbeing benefits for young people and their family which can help create healthy active travel habits for life. Furthermore, car journeys to school continue to be a major contributor to traffic levels. Rates of walking to school in Scotland have been steadily declining over the past decade, only partly offset by increases in scooting and cycling. Research indicates that safer routes and slower traffic speeds are the main improvements that would encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling to school.

However local authorities face real challenges in promoting alternatives to children being driven to school from parents, local businesses and some residents who are reluctant to restrict their private car usage.

In light of this, I commissioned independent roads engineer Jess Read to facilitate workshops with local authorities on the concept of Child MPH speed limits. The inspiration for this stems from play streets in Germany where the Child MPH speed limit is one where motorised transport can still access limited zones at a speed literally defined as 'walking pace', - the speed of the slowest user. In conjunction with traffic calming and placemaking, this is a pragmatic, intuitive approach which keeps children safe and free to play, cycle, and wheel, all while accommodating the realities of car-dependency and deliveries. The term Child MPH helps

communicate more human-centred approaches to our roads and allows drivers to do their bit in making everyday walking and cycling safe for children and young people in Scotland.

The Child MPH report<sup>15</sup> explores the wider data and evidence base around active travel for children in Scotland, as well as best practice from Scotland and Europe. A set of identified measures, including the use of Child MPH speed limits, were explored with four participating local authorities. The report raises a number of key recommendations to be explored further. Firstly, national data shows clearly how important walking infrastructure is for children particularly where younger children walk, wheel and cycle to school. Beyond making the case for investment in good quality walking infrastructure, the report identifies the potential to improve data practices around both walking and cycling to support better decision making and ensure there is a baseline to measure impact against.

Finally, the report highlights the strong historical context for play streets in Scotland. The evidence for outdoor street play supports that they are great places for children to be active and feel happy, and also to learn to ride a bike. Play streets can be attractive places to walk too and could form a cornerstone of 20 minute neighbourhoods and the delivery of a ban on pavement parking.

Some local authorities in Scotland are making great moves towards implementing a cultural shift in the way young people get to and from school. Glasgow City Council has introduced 44 school streets with 8 more planned for Autumn 2022. That leaves them with nearly 100 primary schools and 45 secondary schools to review and assess for their suitability to take part in the school streets programme. Glasgow City Council also plans to



introduce a new STARS (School Travel and Road Safety) website where schools can share their good news stories and request support for active travel measures from the Road Safety Unit. Together, we approached Police Scotland to discuss enforcing school street closures by implementing Automatic Number Plate Recognition systems (ANPR), but with limited success.

As we emerged from our first period of lockdown, a joint campaign between Living Streets, Daily Mile, Sustrans, Paths for All and myself was launched in an effort to lock-in the increased levels of active travel that had taken place while our streets were less congested with motorised traffic. Rather than risking the provocation of guilt or shame, we chose to focus the messaging on the health and wellbeing benefits to be enjoyed on an active school run using the headline:

*"Families can reclaim the joy of movement on the walk to school."*<sup>16</sup>

#### → Further action required

Behaviour change campaigns such as this are an important part of the answer to increasing levels of physical activity across Scotland. They would be all the more powerful if they were designed and supported by Public Health, Transport and the Environment Agencies of the Scottish Government as opposed to delivery partners already funded by Transport Scotland. Furthermore, if they were launched in conjunction with landmark policy and infrastructure changes, we would stand a chance of achieving our health and carbon reduction targets by 2030.

Glasgow City Council continues to report that a lack of enforcement is making compliance with Schools Streets closures difficult. If complete road closure measures are implemented by a local authority, help to enforce this through ANPR or other measures is necessary.

The overarching conclusion of the report is that the use of a Child MPH speed limit does have the potential to radically change driver behaviour when applied to play streets, school streets, pedestrian and cycle priority zones. A pilot partnership between Play Scotland, a willing local authority and an academic research department would be a constructive next step.

14. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f899fa2775d8a65962a7452/t/619e6c4b3d41d76ea29f73f4/1637772374338/Strategy+-+2023+Cycling+World+Championships+Ltd.pdf>

15. <https://www.2030.co.uk/Child%20mph.pdf>

16. <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/news-and-blog/press-media/families-can-reclaim-the-joy-of-movement-on-the-walk-to-school>





### 3. Supporting our workplaces and the economy

11. Businesses and workplaces should consider the ways they support their staff to travel actively and distribute their products. Employers should incentivise their staff to continue travelling to work as actively as they did during lockdown.

Cycle Friendly Employer<sup>20</sup> (CFE) awards and grant funding continued to attract significant interest during lockdown in 2020, with an increased interest in the award from SME businesses and a dedicated focus for health & social care as well as retail workplaces. Applications for CFE development grant funding exceeded available funding in 2020/21 with unsuccessful and viable projects encouraged to resubmit funding requests.

The award's assessment was revised 2021 to move from solely commuting activity to focus on cycling as part of the working day. This has now been implemented across the assessor network.

There has been an impact on the delivery and completion of funded projects at workplaces due to Covid-19, with extensions in place for funded project reporting requirements.

→ Further action required

The revision of this award to include cycling in it's broadest sense is very welcome. This is yet another example of how more healthy, active lifestyles can be encouraged by pooling agendas. Viewing active travel as separate from sport, tourism and education limits the number of people enjoying cycling. Further moves to support e-bike trials, in conjunction with Home Energy Scotland / Changeworks outlets for GP surgeries, would be very exciting.



19. <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/cycling-scotland/>  
 20. <https://www.cyclinguk.org/cycle-friendly-employer>

12. Investigate the use of e-cargo bikes to promote first and last mile deliveries in low emission zones, low traffic neighbourhoods and 20 minute neighbourhoods.

During our first period of lockdown, I was involved in the redistribution of supermarket food waste around Edinburgh on my cargo bike. A small group of us who had access to cargo bikes ensured supermarket surplus was redirected to the emergency homeless shelters set up around the city. Using motorised transport was an option, but the streets were so quiet and outdoor exercise so therapeutic that we were motivated by more than our environmental responsibility to complete these tasks in carbon neutral ways. As restrictions lifted, the roads became busier than ever as people favoured their own cars over public transport to avoid transmitting the virus.

However, people's memories of the freedom offered by non-motorised movement around a quiet city have remained and since then more initiatives have sprung up to help build back our delivery services in greener, fairer more sustainable ways.

I was instrumental in establishing the charitable organisation Cargo Bike Movement<sup>21</sup> (CBM), which manages the bikes and volunteers who continue to distribute supermarket surplus to those who need it most in Edinburgh.

In 2021, CBM's 38 volunteers covered 7000km and distributed 26 tonnes of food, saving 27 tonnes of carbon in waste and transportation costs in the process. There is now a hub for this project in Tollcross which also houses a commercial cargo bike courier service Farr Out Deliveries. CBM now hosts events promoting cargo bike usage and lends its bikes to individuals and organisations keen to move themselves, their goods and their children around the city in carbon neutral ways. This movement is especially important for women who drive short distances more often due to trip-chaining (having to drop children at school before going to work or the shops).

21. <https://www.cargobikemovement.com>

→ Further action required

Cargo bikes offer a low carbon, healthy alternative to driving short distances, but they can be expensive and difficult to store. More opportunities to lend cargo bikes to families would help remove these barriers.

Compared to vans, cargo bikes offer a more efficient and cleaner way to move goods around our cities. Subsidising bold, grassroots initiatives such as Edinburgh's Farr Out Deliveries would help this type of delivery access a sceptical market and increase the prevalence of cargo bikes across our cities.

Restrictions to parking and loading due to roadworks on Leith Walk in Edinburgh have allowed local business's to trial low congestion alternatives to last mile deliveries by making use of logistics hubs. These hubs allow goods to be dropped off in one city centre location and then delivered by foot, trolley or cargo bike. With the learning from this pilot approach, more logistics hubs could be trialed around cities in Scotland.



**13. Work with delivery partners to increase take up of Bikeability cycle training for adults.**

Cycling Scotland is currently working with 30 delivery providers to support access to national standard cycle training for adults, through the 'Essential Cycling Skills' brand. The Adult Cycle Training officer has been consulting with providers to provide funding support so that they might reach new audiences. In the current financial year, 978 adults have accessed training. In anticipation of forthcoming changes to the Highway Code, Cycling Scotland, in conjunction with partners including the Bikeability Trust, has audited all current cycle training messaging to promote a consistent approach.

**→ Further action required**

These 30 delivery providers operate across private and public sectors in Scotland. As a result, it can be challenging to keep the messaging consistent, to share learning and resources and ensure participants are accessing the right training.



**14. Celebrate the free access to Nextbike hire bikes in city centres and continue to establish better access to bikes for all abilities via bike share, bike libraries, e-bike loans and cycle schemes.**

Many people do not own or have access to a bike. Only one-third of Scottish households own one or more cycles. Although the cost of a bike and associated accessories – such as lights, locks and helmets – can be inexpensive it is still a significant cost for many people, especially families or people who need more specialist cycles. Furthermore, the environmental cost of producing and selling new bikes for private ownership is not a sustainable. Yet there have been some setbacks in the increase of bike hire across cities in Scotland, for example, the removal of the NextBike scheme in Edinburgh.

Until now, such schemes involved a collaborative approach between Local Authorities and commercial sponsors working together to make the hire model

sustainable. However, with this scheme and others like it failing, there is a general consensus that bike hire schemes need to be subsidised in the same way as buses and trains are.

Transport Scotland is looking at examples of best practice from around the world, including well established schemes, such as in London, to determine what makes them work, and how they might best be supported in Scotland.

As a result of an SNP manifesto promise to ensure all children have equal access to bikes, ten pilot projects across Scotland were established quickly. There have been some welcome developments since the initial Delivery Board and Advisory Board were established. Now a dedicated team is leading on the delivery and evaluation of these pilot projects and it is working closely with Young Scot to ensure young people in receipt of these bikes help co-design the approach for distribution going forward.



The first milestone for 2022 will be reached in May when Research Scotland issues its interim evaluation of the pilots. This will provide an opportunity to build on the points raised by the project board in relation to qualifying criteria and costs, and allow for consideration of further actions that may be needed in 2022 to inform the final evaluation.

**→ Further action required**

A review of similar hire bike schemes from around the world suggests a strong commercial sponsor, investment in external marketing, integration with public transport and city planning (including safe storage) are essential considerations if Scotland is to deliver on its STPR2 recommendations.

Those who could benefit most from the opportunities that better bike hire and training schemes would provide include young people, women, older people, disabled people, individuals with health problems and people from more deprived communities. STPR2 recommends building on existing successful programmes and the work of established support groups to provide bikes, accessories and training to more people across Scotland. Particular focus should be given to those living in deprived communities, many of whom could benefit from the opportunities that cycling (as well as walking and wheeling) provides.

As evaluation of the effectiveness of the Free Bikes for Every Child pilot projects commences, this learning might be best shared with a range of independent experts, including those with an understanding of the circular economy and the bike industry. A robust and critical learning phase that includes the views of young people and their families will be essential to its continued success across the whole of Scotland.

**“ While I also found myself sitting in front of computer screens for too long as Active Nation Commissioner, I learned to ensure I had enough time in my diary to be able to move and breathe between meetings or events ”**

LEE CRAGIE

- 15. Advocate for adequate provision for people wishing to travel in Scotland on trains with bikes and affect cultural change within rail around integrated active travel.

Since July 2020, monthly meetings have taken place between ScotRail, Transport Scotland and myself. I now have a direct relationship with the Cycle Project Manager and together we regularly review and discuss progress on ScotRail's Cycle Projects and general service programme.

ScotRail concedes that the importance and benefits of active travel have increased in recognition over the last two years, as a result of wider social and environmental issues, events, and policy influences such as COP26, NTS2 and the impact of COVID19. As a result, a specific policy requirement of ScotRail will be the delivery of a Cycling & Active Travel Strategy which will (a) set out how rail services will increase the use of walking, wheeling, and cycling as part of a passenger's journey (b) explore opportunities to enhance the offering in respect of cycling and other active travel modes. It is anticipated that the new Active Travel Commissioner and Cycle Forum will play a major role in influencing, directing, shaping and communicating the objectives and targets of this strategy.

As a key consultee, I have provided both user and expert knowledge into the initial feasibility studies on increased cycle spaces on ScotRail's Intercity fleet (excluding Glasgow-Edinburgh). Funding has been secured and detailed final options and procurement completed. Improvements on the central belt to highland line are due to be completed by Spring 2022, with 6 six cycle spaces being made available in saloon cars.

2021 saw the launch of the Highland Explorer Service, the UK's first dedicated carriages designed for multiple cycle storage. I worked closely with Sustrans to identify the key features of the service and, together with the Minister for Transport, launched the service in July 2021.

The opportunity to introduce double cycle storage across the whole fleet was reviewed and agreed by ScotRail and Transport Scotland, with work due to be completed in April 2022 at a total project cost of £42K

Working in partnership with Sustrans, Scotrail has created a welcome landing page on it's website to guide customers through all aspects of travelling with their bikes on trains.<sup>22</sup>

ScotRail has developed a more strategic approach to cycling and wider active travel ambitions based on the three strands of "On-Train, At Station and First/Final Mile". ScotRail has undertaken a full risk assessment on all ten classes of unit for stowage of cycles, scooters, and tandems to fully understand restrictions and any areas where cycle storage could be increased.

A feasibility study has begun into the options to increase cycle storage across the fleet. Similar to the Class 385 enhancements, this will focus on extending the cycle storage belt to provide additional spaces within current units. It is expected that the options, with detailed costs, will be reviewed in early 2022.

An External Cycle Space Livery project will see the installation of new external 'Cycle Space' livery throughout the entire ScotRail fleet. This will assist customers and staff to identify the location of cycle storage and reduce delays caused by customers boarding with bikes. Initial design option/feasibility has started. This has included the provision of cycle hire facilities such as the recent Hi-Bike initiative for E-Bike sharing - initial statistics on usage are very encouraging.

In February 2021, the Caledonia Sleeper service banned E-bikes from travelling on their service. With help from Transport Scotland, local journalists and campaigning groups, we had this decision reversed in less than ten days.



22. <https://www.scotrail.co.uk/scotrail-highland-explorer#collapseaccordion-in-content-2-panel-5>

➔ Further action required

Scotrail's cycle booking procedure is not as advanced as other train operating companies and should continue to be revised to make the process easier.

Any new procurement of units should take into consideration the changing culture of train usage from commuter to leisure passengers. New trains should have suitable bike and luggage storage facilities as standard to encourage integrated active travel modes.

A Cycle Forum should be established with the new franchise agreement to ensure Scotrail is supported and challenged appropriately.

We must ensure the new franchise commitment includes safe routes to and from stations, bike hire facilities near stations and adequate on /off-train cycle storage facilities.

Where rail cannot meet bike transport demand, inter city bus services carrying bikes should be explored further.



## 4. The importance of play

- 16. Support for nurseries to give new mums and dads more opportunities to be active with their children by promoting the Play on Pedals project.

The disconnect between childhood experiences and adult behaviours is prevalent everywhere, but is particularly obvious in transport and placemaking policy. Money and resource are often granted to schemes or initiatives designed to move people from point-to-point by active means but a different policy area is responsible for encouraging people to be active where they live.

Play Together on Pedals is a partnership between Cycling UK, Play Scotland, and Cycling Scotland that delivers cycling activities to pre-school children and their families.

Since winning the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund in 2014, Play on Pedals, has developed and grown to become Play Together on Pedals. These activities are now rolled out nationally, with 21 authorities actively participating. In addition, Cycling UK delivers Play Together on Pedals sessions in its place-based programmes, allowing more children and families to enjoy the experience. In March 2022, the Play Together on Pedals book *Out on Bikes with Grampy* was released through the Scottish Book Trust. The power of storytelling in this way cannot be underestimated.



- 18. I will make time to play myself and hold active meetings wherever possible. Encourage others to move more and to remember what is important.

The busy people in national and local government responsible for making Scotland a healthier, happier, fairer society have very busy diaries. Many of them struggle to leave their desks even for a few minutes to step outside, let alone have the time to walk between meetings. The most powerful and influential people in our societies can also be the busiest and most stressed. If our political, statutory and business leaders cannot or will not make the time to look after their own physical and mental health, this will have repercussions for the transformation of inactive behaviours across society.

I found myself sitting in front of computer screens for too long in my role as Active Nation Commissioner but I learned to make space in my diary to move and breathe between meetings or events. I arranged in person, active meetings where possible and I recorded a podcast series on the struggles and rewards of fitting physical activity into a busy diary while walking with Scottish Ministers<sup>23</sup>. This was recently voted podcast of the week by The Times.

19. Everyday Active Podcast: <https://link.chtbl.com/UUAPe6X>

While I also found myself sitting in front of computer screens for too long as Active Nation Commissioner, I learned to ensure I had enough time in my diary to be able to move and breathe between meetings or events. I arranged in person, active meetings where possible and, in order to have the struggles and rewards of fitting physical activity into a busy diary, I recorded a podcast series while walking with a range of Scottish Ministers .

### ➔ Further action required

The commissioning of a qualitative research project to gather evidence of government workplace practices and how levels of physical activity correlate to MSP health and well being would be very interesting. Meanwhile, people of influence across the country should be encouraged to participate in, and share publicly, healthy, balanced work practices that embrace Scottish Government's commitment to The Wellbeing Economy<sup>24</sup>.



23. Everyday Active Podcast: <https://link.chtbl.com/UUAPe6X>

24. <https://www.gov.scot/groups/wellbeing-economy-governments-wego/>



## Appendix 1: The People's Panel

Privilege is a luxury not all of us experience. It is a rare thing to be involved at a strategic level in identifying our problems, let alone trying to solve them. One person's perception of a problem that affects a nation (even if that person prides herself on listening to underrepresented members of our communities) will always be viewed through a lens. Community consultations, lobby groups and stakeholder steering groups attract people with the confidence and eloquence to be heard and, in my experience, these are the people who find themselves in positions of influence.

*It is uncomfortable for me to admit that I am one of those people.*

Winning hearts and minds really matters if we are to achieve the changes we need to make. To do this effectively we must put in place a process that takes away the adversarial nature of debate that creeps into so many public discussions. A process that gives a randomly selected group of people the opportunity to learn about the issues; come to a shared understanding; hear different views in a respectful setting; and finally to come to a set of shared recommendations.

Citizens' Assemblies and People's Panels can do this. They are often used to provide credible answers to divisive or complex topics such as abortion in Ireland or the development of the social security charter here in Scotland. This proposition is slightly different in so much as the issue of achieving an active nation is far reaching and iterative. Because of this, the conversation should be ongoing and I recommend a panel meet to present recommendations to the Commissioner at 3 monthly intervals.

To engage the wider public, local authorities and government on the workings of a permanently established Citizens Assembly (with rotating membership). I recommend that an Active Nation Commission be led by the recommendations of a People's Panel. This would comprise 30-40 randomly selected, broadly proportionally representative members of society. They would receive payment for the time they spend preparing for and attending four virtual panels a year. Throughout 2022, the questions posed to the panel will be based on the four WHO Strategy for Physical Activity objectives. This independent panel would be supported and facilitated throughout a learning and deliberation phase and to ensure its recommendations are responded to by Government.

It is imperative that lines of communication and realistic levels of influence be established with key decision makers before the assembly is established to ensure it has maximum impact.

### Sample People's Panel / Citizens Assembly Model



Source: Author's own creation based on data in the OECD Database of Representative Deliberative Processes and Institutions (2020).

# The Active Nation Commissioner's Final Report

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