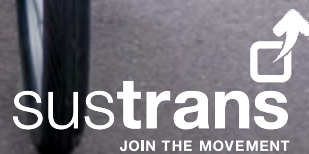


Aberdeen

Walking and Cycling Index 2021



Published May 2022



Foreword

Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling in Aberdeen



As a cyclist, a walker, and a lover of the environment, of course I'm going to encourage you to read on, hoping to persuade you that walking and cycling benefits your health, the environment, the economy, and society.

But I'm guessing you already know that, right?

The good news is that active travel in Aberdeen is normal. 97% of residents say they walk or wheel and 37% say they cycle. Of course, it's a different picture when asked about frequency, but the potential to make active travel an active choice is there.

This report is packed full of facts and figures to back up the benefits of active travel and how much of it we do already as part of our everyday lives. I believe that the changes in the past two years mean that we can make active travel much more of a reality now than we ever thought possible.

Why?

We can now imagine what our lives could be like based on our experiences of the pandemic:

- Where people are evaluating the way they work, with many expecting to work from home more often

- Where more people have been shopping locally
- Where more people have been enjoying nature and the outdoors
- Where communities have been there for each other

The experience of community has gathered pace during the pandemic with significant volunteering, kindness, and heightened awareness of vulnerability and inequality. Communities that are supported to focus on the environment and nature are more sustainable in terms of social cohesion, health, and the economy. Improving road safety and active travel infrastructure is a big part of this. Our goal is to make active travel the easy, natural and obvious choice.

So, whilst those involved in transport policy and planning continue to find ways to minimise the harms from transport and to support community schemes (see page 20), the rest of us can do what we're already doing or aspire to do, only more!

On average, it takes 66 days for a new behaviour to become automatic. Try it!

Jillian Evans, Chair of Sustainable City Outcome Improvement Group and Head of Health Intelligence, NHS Grampian



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The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index (formerly Bike Life) is the biggest assessment of walking and cycling in urban areas in the UK and Ireland. This is the first year walking has been included.

It is delivered by Sustrans in collaboration with 18 cities and urban areas. Each city reports on the progress made towards making both walking and cycling more attractive, everyday ways to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the first report from Aberdeen produced in partnership with Aberdeen City Council. The data in this report comes from 2021 and includes local walking and cycling data, modelling and an independent survey of 1,313 residents aged 16 or above in Aberdeen. The survey was conducted from June to August 2021 following Covid-19 travel restrictions across the UK being lifted. Social research organisation NatCen conducted the survey which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk or cycle.

Our thanks to the people of Aberdeen who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all Walking and Cycling Index reports can be found at www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex



Defining wheeling

We recognise some people, for example wheelchair or mobility scooter users, identify with the term wheeling instead of walking. Therefore we use the terms walking and wheeling together and consider walking and wheeling to include the use of mobility aids and pushchairs.

All walking survey responses within this report include responses from people who wheel. However, please note for graph labels we use walking as a shorthand for walking and wheeling.

Report summary

Aberdeen

Populationⁱ

228,670

Survey area

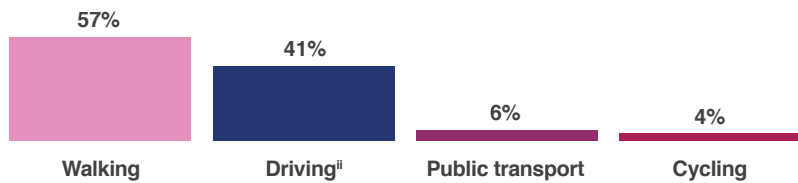


Walking and cycling in Aberdeen

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on how, when and the amount we travel, especially in relation to public transport and driving.

Covid-19 Analysis, Transport for Scotland, 2021

Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in Aberdeen



While new travel patterns are still establishing, walking is by far the most popular travel mode.

57% of residents walk at least five days a week

15% of residents cycle at least once a week

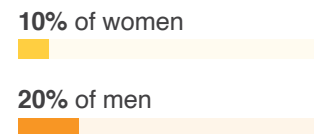
Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

In Aberdeen, fewer women cycle than men and a smaller proportion of people aged 16-25 walk at least five days a week compared to people aged 46-55.

Proportion of residents who walk at least five days a week



Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a weekⁱⁱⁱ



Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents who think walking safety is good

71% of socio-economic group DE

86% of socio-economic group AB

Proportion of residents who think cycling safety is good

40% of women

42% of men

Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood

62% of socio-economic group DE

86% of socio-economic group AB

Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

i. NOMIS mid-year 2019 population estimates. This is the most recent available for Aberdeen.

ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle. iii. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Every year, walking and cycling in Aberdeen:

+ Prevents

603

serious long-term health conditions



Creates

£162.9 million

in economic benefit for individuals and the region



Saves

8,900 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions

Walking, wheeling and cycling help to tackle the climate emergency

Every day, walking and cycling in Aberdeen takes up to

59,000 cars off the road^{iv}

However,

41.1 million

journeys up to three miles are driven in Aberdeen each year

If **80%** of these journeys were walked or cycled it could save approximately

14,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions^v

Residents want more funding for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending on:

51% on walking



55% on cycling



59% on public transport



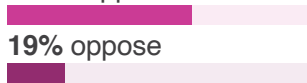
28% on driving



This would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

Among Aberdeen residents:

61% support



19% oppose

more cycle tracks along roads, physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

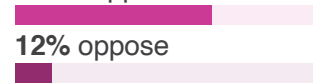
80% support



4% oppose

the creation of more 20-minute neighbourhoods^{vi}

65% support



12% oppose

the creation of more low-traffic neighbourhoods

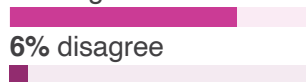
60% agree



19% disagree

increasing space for people socialising, walking and cycling on their local high street would improve their local area

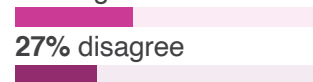
75% agree



6% disagree

more measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the street or in public spaces would improve their local area

39% agree



27% disagree

closing streets outside local schools to cars during school drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area

iv. Based on walking and cycling by residents that live in a household with a car. Does not include leisure cycling or leisure walking trips.

v. Based upon each journey being 1.5 miles in length. vi. See definition on page 14.



Walking in Aberdeen

Walking and wheeling participation, safety and satisfaction

Walking and wheeling participation

Walking and wheeling are good for our health and wellbeing, also having a positive impact on the environment and protecting our climate.

Walking and wheeling are an efficient use of the space in our streets, helping take the pressure off the transport network and enabling more people to access our city and local town centres.

97%
of all residents walk

57%
of residents walk at least five days a week

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

Genderⁱ

57% of women

56% of men

Ethnicity

54% of people from ethnic minority groups

57% of white people

Sexuality

59% of LGBTQ+ people

58% of heterosexual people

Age

53% of people aged 16–25

61% of people aged 26–35

57% of people aged 36–45

65% of people aged 46–55

55% of people aged 56–65

49% of people aged 66+

Disability

52% of disabled people

59% of non-disabled people

Socio-economic groupⁱⁱ

59% of AB

60% of C1

52% of C2

51% of DE

ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society.

Groups A and B are professional and managerial.

Group C1 is supervisory/ clerical and students. Group C2 is skilled manual.

Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

Important differences exist in how safe people feel when walking or wheeling. Safety includes both road and personal safety.

79%

of residents think the level of safety for walking is good

61%

of residents think the level of safety for children walking is good

Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety in their local area is good

Gender

78% of women



80% of men



Ethnicity

76% of people from ethnic minority groups



79% of white people



Sexuality

73% of LGBTQ+ people



80% of heterosexual people



Age

75% of people aged 16–25



75% of people aged 26–35



80% of people aged 36–45



86% of people aged 46–55



77% of people aged 56–65



81% of people aged 66+



Disability

74% of disabled people



80% of non-disabled people



Socio-economic group

86% of AB



73% of C1



88% of C2



71% of DE



81%

of residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk



Jeff Bruce



I like walking along the beach with my son. Aberdeen has an iconic seafront and there's not many of those around. It's great for fresh air and there's lots of coffee shops and small independent businesses in this area.

The junction where Market Street, Guild Street and the harbour meet can be challenging for pedestrians. It's on a dual carriageway but is still a retail space and the badly designed junction makes it difficult to cross. It's fenced off with cast iron street furniture at the staggered crossing so it can get jam packed and there's often a bottleneck, especially on Saturday afternoons with people coming from the shopping centre. I think it would be difficult to cross if you were elderly or were sensory impaired.

The Union Street pedestrianisation has been good during the pandemic as you can now amble up the street without difficulty. This is a positive step forward for Aberdeen. Overall, I think Aberdeen is safe to walk in; you just need to have your wits about you at the hotspots.



Cycling in Aberdeen

Cycling participation, safety and satisfaction

Cycling participation

Despite a much larger potential, only **15%** of people cycle regularly.ⁱ

Cycling participation, however, is not equal. Barriers to cycling can be far more pronounced for some people. Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.

37%
of all residents cycle

15%
of all residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

Gender

10% of women

20% of men

Ethnicity

27% of people from ethnic minority groups

14% of white people

Sexuality

13% of LGBTQ+ people

14% of heterosexual people

Age

17% of people aged 16–25

14% of people aged 26–35

20% of people aged 36–45

18% of people aged 46–55

15% of people aged 56–65

9% of people aged 66+

Disability

9% of disabled people

17% of non-disabled people

Socio-economic group

18% of AB

14% of C1

16% of C2

10% of DE

i. Based on people who cycle at least once a week.

Cycling safety and satisfaction

41%

of all residents think the level of safety for cycling in their local area is good

32%

of all residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good

40%

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle

Proportion of residents who think cycling safety in their local area is good

Gender

40% of women



42% of men



Ethnicity

58% of people from ethnic minority groups



39% of white people



Sexuality

22% of LGBTQ+ people



43% of heterosexual people



Age

42% of people aged 16–25



36% of people aged 26–35



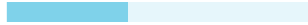
40% of people aged 36–45



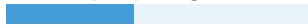
48% of people aged 46–55



40% of people aged 56–65



42% of people aged 66+

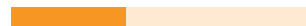


Socio-economic group

42% of AB



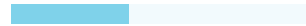
38% of C1



52% of C2

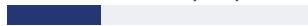


39% of DE

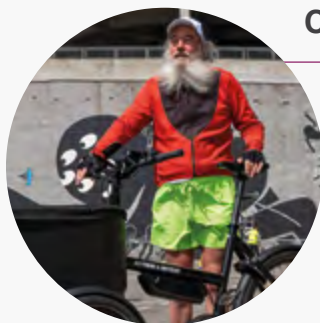


Disability

31% of disabled people



44% of non-disabled people



Clive Potter, volunteer delivery cyclist



I have been volunteering for Community Foods Initiative North East (CFINE) since October 2020, delivering food bank parcels on a cargo bike.

During lockdown I would deliver boxes with provisions such as fruit and bread to those who need them.

Using a cargo bike is really helpful to get around the city quickly in an environmentally friendly way.

I find getting around Aberdeen with the cargo bike quite easy, despite some narrow paths.



Benefits of walking

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

The large numbers of walking and wheeling trips in Aberdeen produce important health, economic and environmental benefits for everyone.

Aberdeen residents walk or wheel 13 times around the world every day

99.9 million

walking and wheeling trips were made in Aberdeen in the past year, which adds up to

116.1 million miles

= 320,000 miles a day

This equates to each resident spending

6 days

walking or wheeling continuously in the past year

Annual walking and wheeling trips by purposeⁱ

Enjoyment or fitness – adults and children (including running):
44,000,000

44%

Destination – adults only (eg work, school, shopping):
51,600,000

52%

School – children only:
4,300,000

4%



Walking and wheeling benefit residents and the local economy in the region

In Aberdeen, the net annual economic benefit for individuals and society from all walking and wheeling trips is

£143.9 million

Of this total,

£1.3 million

is from people with a car choosing to walk or wheel for transport in the past year.

5p

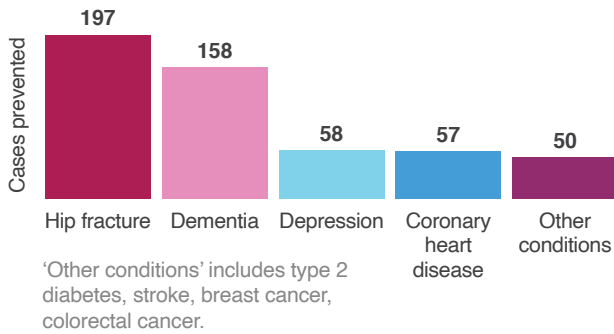
net benefit from each mile walked or wheeled instead of driven



These figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and walking. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

Walking and wheeling unlock health benefits for everyone

Walking in Aberdeen prevents 520 serious long-term health conditions each year



Saving the NHS in Aberdeen £3.4 million per year

equivalent to the cost of
110,000 GP appointments

Based on applying Aberdeen data to the Sport England MOVES tool which calculates the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity

In Aberdeen the physical activity benefits of walking

prevent 142 early deaths annually

which is valued at
£468 millionⁱⁱ

Please note wheelchair and mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

People walking and wheeling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

20,000 kg of NO_x
and
2,800 kg of particulates
(PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

62% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



Walking and wheeling in Aberdeen help mitigate our climate crisis

6,800 tonnes
of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by walking or wheeling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of

42,000 people
taking flights
from Aberdeen International to London



Transport within Scotland now accounts for **25%** of Scotland’s greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2019, transport emissions went down by **11.3%**, while overall emissions went down by **52%**.

Calculated using the Greenhouse Gas Account, which has replaced the previous method in Scotland. Scottish Government: Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics 1990 to 2019.

Walking and wheeling keep Aberdeen moving

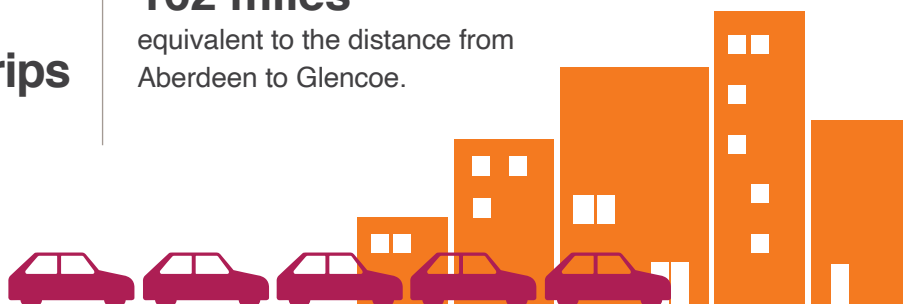
Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.ⁱⁱⁱ This helps to keep Aberdeen moving for all road users.

54,000 return walking trips
are made daily in Aberdeen by people that could have used a car.

iii. Litman, 2021. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

162 miles
equivalent to the distance from Aberdeen to Glencoe.



ii. Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking.



Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

Aberdeen residents cycle 3 times around the world every day

Cycling is a hugely efficient way to travel, and can often be quicker than travelling by car.

5.8 million

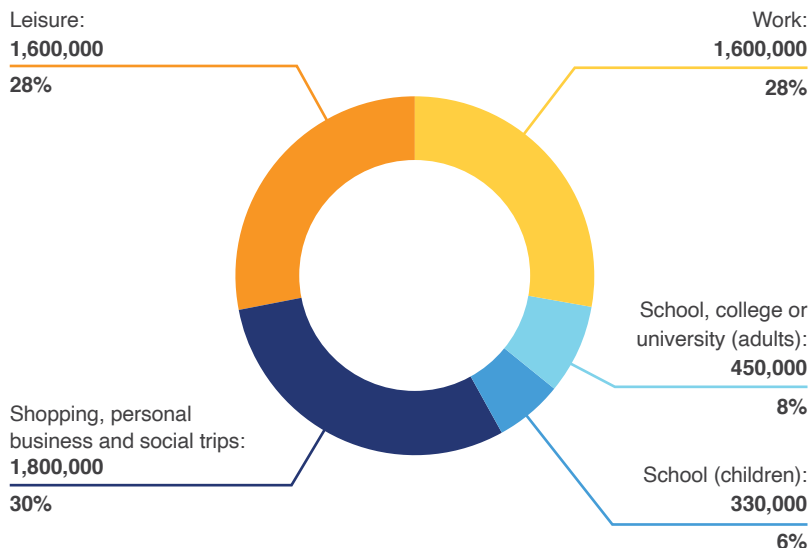
cycling trips were made in Aberdeen in the past year

This adds up to

23.2 million miles

= 64,000 miles a day

Annual cycling trips by purpose in Aberdeenⁱ



Cycling benefits residents and the local economy in the region

In Aberdeen, the net annual economic benefit for individuals and society from all cycling trips is

£19 million

Of this total,

£7.1 million

is from people with a car choosing to cycle for transport in the past year.

94p

net benefit from each mile cycled instead of driven

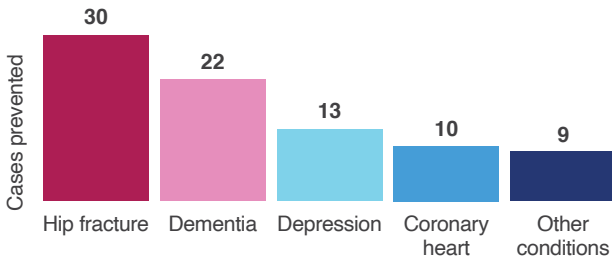


These figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and cycling. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

ⁱ Leisure trips include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). Education trips are shown separately for adults and children. All other trips are just adults.

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in Aberdeen prevents 83 serious long-term health conditions each year



'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, colorectal cancer.

Saving the NHS in Aberdeen
£550,000 per year



equivalent to the cost of
18,000 GP appointments

Based on applying Aberdeen data to the Sport England MOVES tool which calculates the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity

In Aberdeen the physical activity benefits of cycling

prevent 9 early deaths annually

which is valued at

£29.6 millionⁱⁱ

People cycling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

4,200 kg of NO_x

and

606 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

62% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



Cycling in Aberdeen helps mitigate our climate crisis

2,100 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by cycling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of

13,000 people taking flights

from Aberdeen International to London



Transport within Scotland now accounts for **25%** of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2019, transport emissions went down by **11.3%**, while overall emissions went down by **52%**.

Calculated using the Greenhouse Gas Account, which has replaced the previous method in Scotland. Scottish Government: Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics 1990 to 2019.

Cycling keeps Aberdeen moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.ⁱⁱⁱ This helps to keep Aberdeen moving for all road users.

4,300 return cycling trips

are made daily in Aberdeen by people that could have used a car.

iii. Litman, 2021. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

13 miles

equivalent to the distance from Aberdeen to Newburgh.



ii. Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of cycling.



Walking solutions

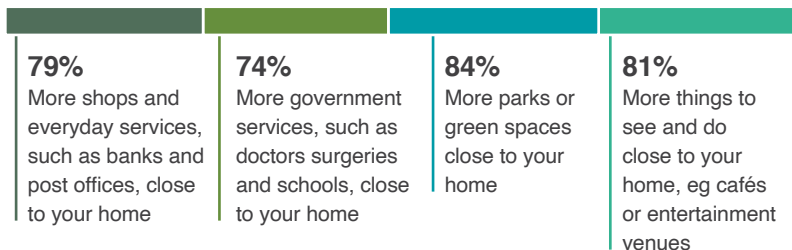
What would help make walking and wheeling better?

Residents want more services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Ideally, walking should be the most attractive transport option for the vast majority of short journeys. A city can support this by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live. The walking environment should be safe, comfortable, welcoming and attractive.

Neighbourhoods where many facilities can be reached on foot are known as 20-minute neighbourhoods. You can walk from your home to many of the things you need on a regular basis and back again within 20 minutes. This equates to around 800m each way.

What proportion of residents would find more local amenities and services useful to walk or wheel more?



63%

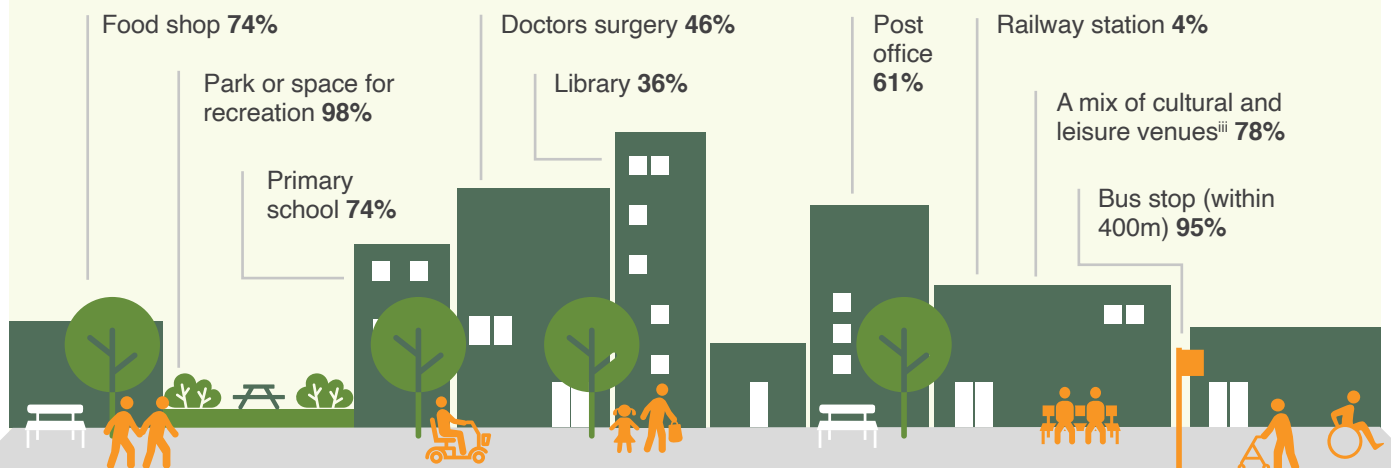
of Aberdeen households are in neighbourhoods of at least 40 dwellings per hectare. These are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods.ⁱ

Lower density neighbourhoods have too few people to make much local business or public transport viable.ⁱⁱ

56%

agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive

Proportion of households within an 800m walk or wheel of the following amenities and services



i. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021, National Model Design Code.

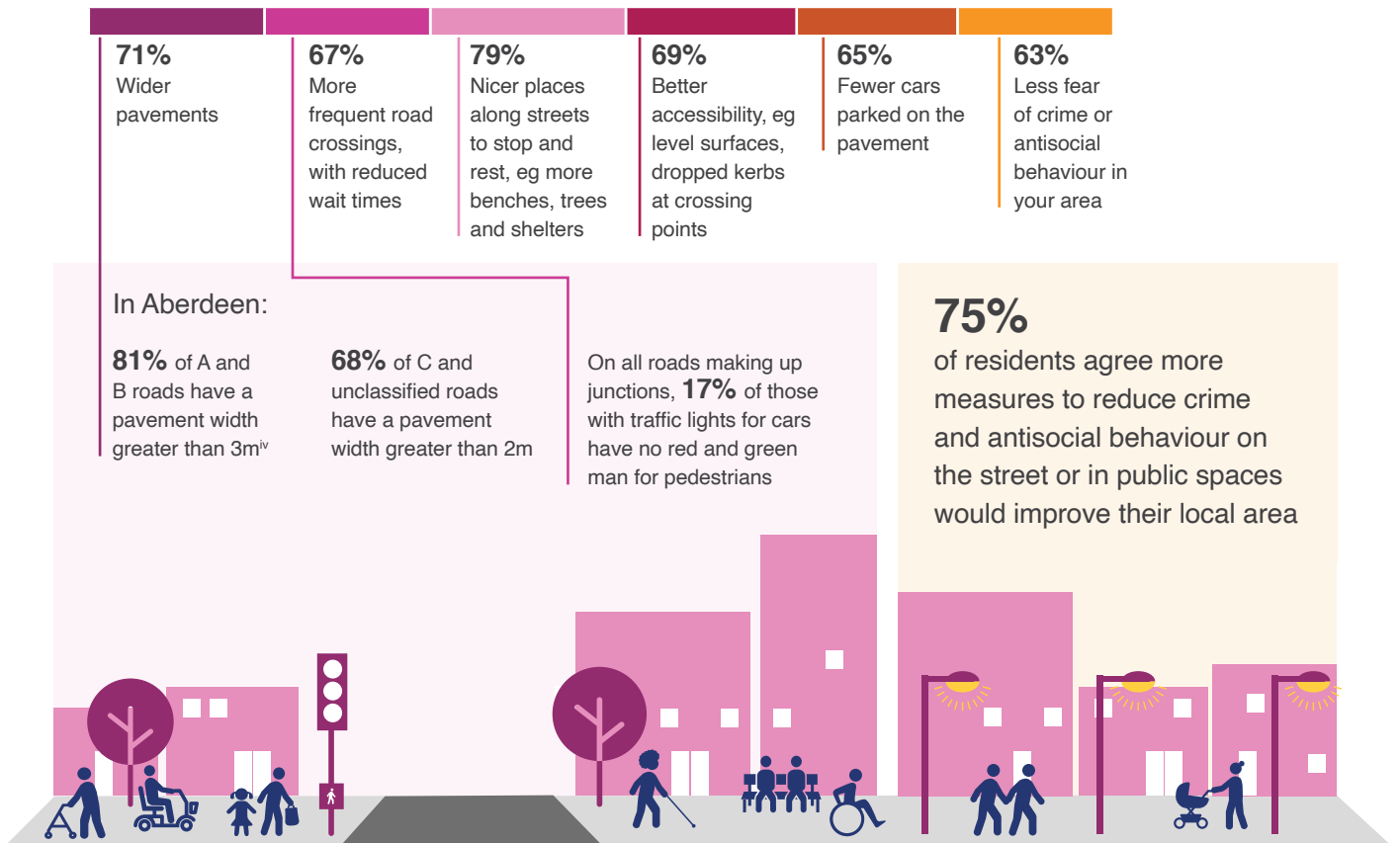
ii. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning.

iii. A minimum of three distinct types of cultural and leisure venues, eg cafés, pubs, bingo halls, cinemas, museums.

Residents want better streets

There are many ways to make our streets and neighbourhoods safe, welcoming and comfortable for everyone to walk in.

What percentage of residents think that these changes would help them walk or wheel more?



Christa Reid, accessibility advocate



I'm a member of the Aberdeen Disability Equity Partnership (DEP). I am passionate about making the city accessible for everyone. I work with and speak up for visually impaired friends who find it difficult to safely move around.

I believe their everyday trips would be improved by addressing the problem of pavement surfaces. Pavement textures are not always suitable for visually impaired people. Some can find it difficult to navigate the shared-use areas for bikes and pedestrians so I think separating these spaces with clearly defined surfaces would benefit the visually impaired community. A mutual respect is needed on these shared-use paths. The use of bells to alert people to the presence of a bike would make a huge difference. I know that some visually impaired people can find it difficult to access the bus stops around Union Street, due to the new traffic restrictions. I think re-working these bus stops could make them more accessible.

Overall I think that the council should consult people with disabilities if they want to improve access to the city for everyone.

iv. A and B roads are main roads. C roads and unclassified roads are more minor roads and often residential streets. Pavement width does not account for obstructions, such as bus stops or litter bins.



Cycling solutions

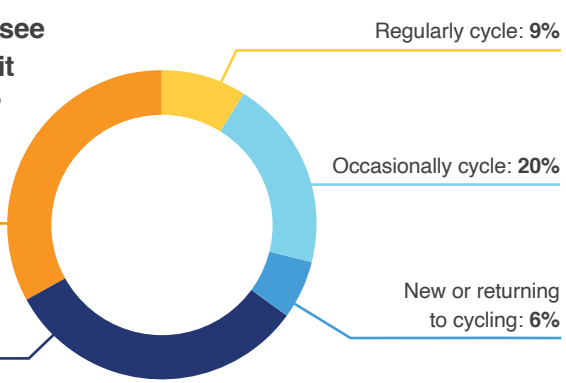
What would make cycling better?

Many Aberdeen residents want to cycle

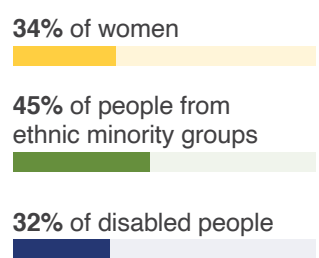
How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

Do not cycle and do not want to: **33%**

Do not cycle but would like to: **32%**

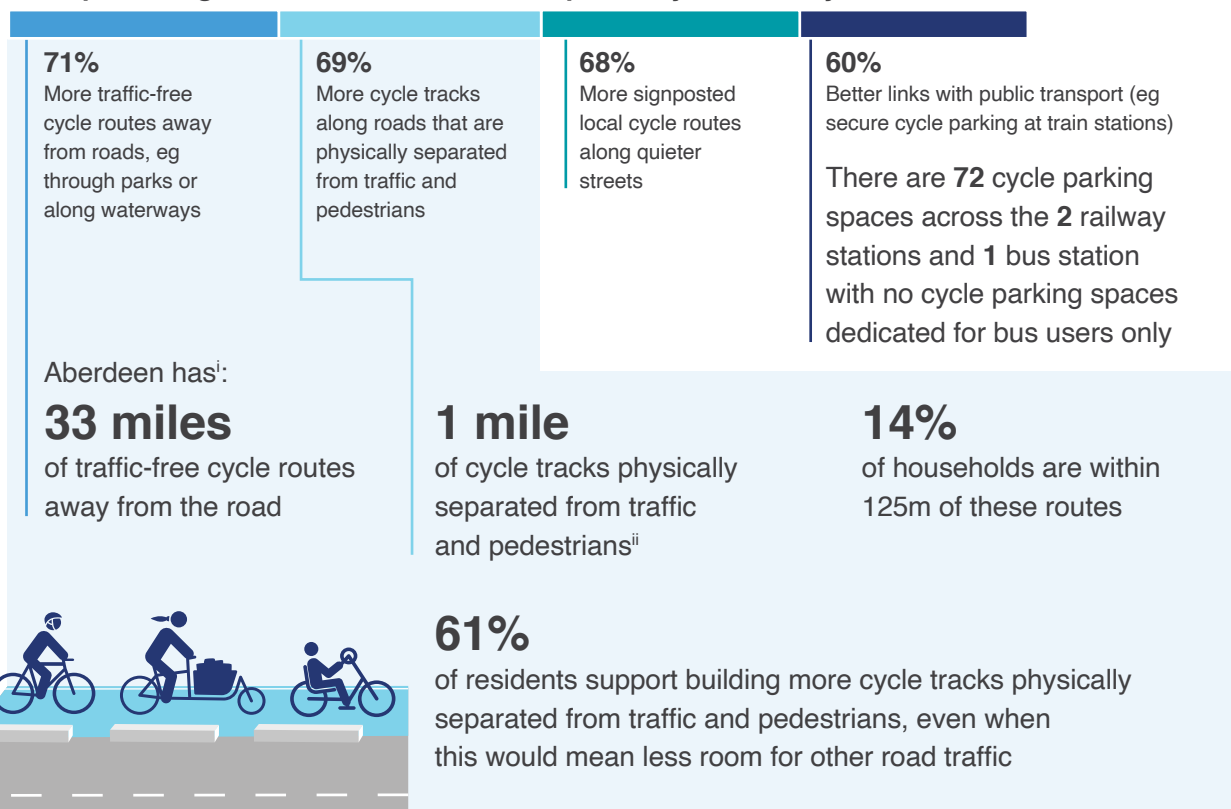


What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

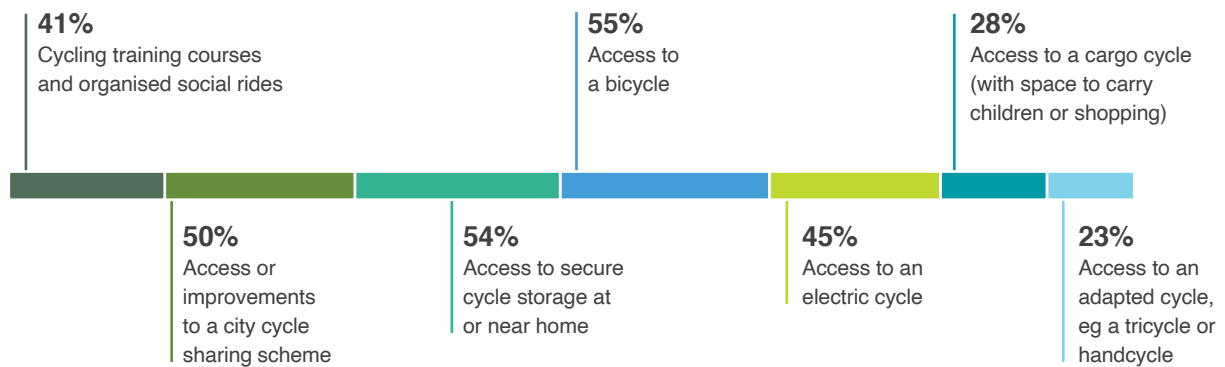
What percentage of residents would be helped to cycle more by better facilities?



i. To ensure comparability, figures given are correct as of 26 May 2021 for all city reports.
 ii. This does not include 'pop-up' cycle tracks installed during the pandemic.

Residents want more support to cycle

What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them cycle more?



Public cycle parking

There is a public cycle parking space for every **115** people who cycle in Aberdeen.



Reported cycle thefts

There were **121** reported cycle thefts in Aberdeen in 2020/21.

75 in 2019/20

For every **821** people who own an adult cycle in Aberdeen, there was **1** reported cycle theft in the past year.

Cycle access

51% of residents have access to an adult pedal cycle

28% of households are within 800m of a cycle shop.ⁱⁱⁱ



Molly, secondary school student



I joined a cycling club when I was 10 and I've been competing in road and velodrome cycling ever since. I love cycling with my club, the Deeside Thistle Cycling Club, which has one of the largest numbers of female cyclists in the UK. It feels great to train alongside women and girls my own age. We even have a female coach, ex-professional cyclist Sarah Rowe.

There are about 1,200 students at my school. A good number of boys cycle to school, but there are only one or two girls who cycle. I've seen people looking at me and thinking "why is she doing that", but I don't care. I think that the uniform, the lack of safe infrastructure and being intimidated by the boys, can stop girls from cycling.

I dream of a future where girls would feel safe to cycle to school. I think if there was better cycling infrastructure in Aberdeen it would make it easier for girls to start cycling, and if more girls cycled then it would become normal.

iii. Credit to the Association of Cycle Traders (ACT) and Cycling UK for their assistance with cycle shop locations and services offered.



Neighbourhood solutions

What would help make neighbourhoods better?

All residents should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents that feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood

77% of residents



77% of women



76% of people from ethnic minority groups



78% of men



78% of white people



67% of disabled people



83% of LGBTQ+ people



62% of socio-economic group DE



81% of non-disabled people



78% of heterosexual people



86% of socio-economic group AB



The dominance of motor vehicles can discourage walking, wheeling and cycling

Only **32%** of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles.

Residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:

61% Walk more



57% Cycle more



Unclassified roads are not designed to carry through-traffic, but in Aberdeen **23%** of their total length has nothing to prevent it. This can result in rat-running.ⁱ

50% agree that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place.

22% of Aberdeen's streets have 20mph speed limits.

Residents would find more streets with 20mph speed limits useful to:

55% Walk more



54% Cycle more



Residents want local streets to be better spaces for people to spend time in

60%

agree increasing space for people socialising, walking and cycling on their local high street would improve their local area

52%

agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello

65%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods

i. Based on analysis by CycleStreets www.lowtrafficeighbourhoods.org.
Unclassified roads are all public roads that are neither motorways, A, B nor C roads.



Stuart McPhee, business owner

I manage a hotel and bar on Belmont Street in Aberdeen. Since the latest vehicle restrictions and pedestrianisation of the street, there has been no impact on my deliveries, guests and customers.

I think the new pedestrianised area adds value and gives a neighbourhood feeling to the city centre. People can relax and socialise.

I think that it is the best way forward for Aberdeen to permanently pedestrianise this area. It increases the connectivity and has an important role to play in place making.

I work with a baker for our pizza dough and they are based a couple of streets from the hotel. Before restrictions, the baker would walk with the dough, which is heavy and was time consuming, or I would drive to collect it but it was difficult to get to by car, and not environmentally-friendly.

Since the new restrictions, my baker gets the dough delivered by cargo bike and it is a great solution for both of us!

Neighbourhoods must be designed with children in mind

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive: to grow up in, live their lives in and grow old in. Increasing independence, providing space to play and socialise, and improving the journey to school are all important.

If we design neighbourhoods with children in mind they will then work better for everyone else too.

10 years old

average age when people living with children would let them walk or cycle independently in their neighbourhood.

Over 80% of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school (parents' responses).ⁱⁱ

55% of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play

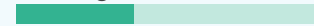


78% of households are within 800m of a children's playground

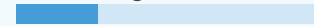


Among Aberdeen residents:

39% agree



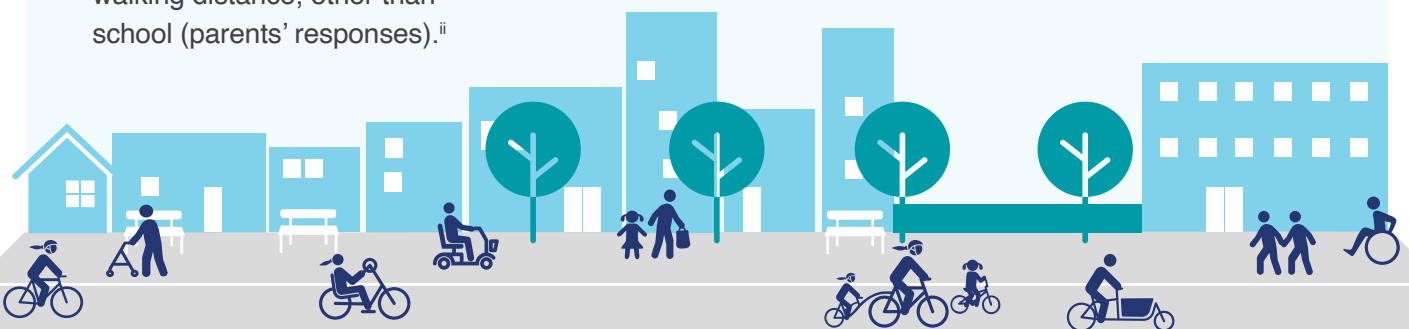
27% disagree



closing streets outside local schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area.

These kind of closures are known as 'School Streets'.

0 permanent School Streets schemes exist in Aberdeenⁱⁱⁱ



ii. Children's Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015.
iii. Figure given is correct as of 26 May 2021.



Developing Aberdeen

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

Aberdeen, Europe's foremost energy city, is going through important change, taking it from the oil and gas capital of Europe to leading the way for the transition to alternative and sustainable energy production with a focus on hydrogen. To achieve this, the city is working in partnership with BP to create Scotland's first 'green' hydrogen facility.

During the pandemic, increases in the number of people walking and cycling were recorded, supported by temporary cycle lanes and footways, thereby shining a light on what can be achieved. If routes are improved and space is allocated for active travel, the transformation from private cars to active travel can happen. Major infrastructure and behaviour change projects have been completed to improve walking and cycling in the city.

These include paths created alongside the new Diamond Bridge, a programme of cycle parking and maintenance stands and counters to monitor pedestrian/cyclist numbers.

Behaviour change and soft intervention projects promoting active travel have been improved with the addition of walking wayfinding boards throughout the city centre and the GoABZ travel-planning app.

Flood Management Scheme

At Maidencraig, essential flood defence work, created an ideal opportunity to increase sustainable travel across the flood plains. Walking and cycling paths were constructed along the top of the flood prevention bunds to connect residential areas and provide a safe route to school for children and young people. Another benefit is the increase in local biodiversity due to the planting of wildflowers, providing a sand martin nesting wall and the construction of a pond-dipping platform for educational use by local schools.



Aberdeen City Council has completed major infrastructure and behaviour change projects to improve walking and cycling in the city.



GoABZ

GoABZ is a recently launched journey planning application for smartphones. It encourages users to plan their journeys ahead and think about how they want to travel. It offers alternative methods of travelling to the private car, detailing public transport (bus and train) and active travel options (walking, wheeling and cycling). The app highlights the cost saving and the reduction in travel time if applicable. It is anticipated that this will promote the benefits of using more sustainable methods of travel, not only to a person's health but also to their budget.

A new feature on the app is GoABZ Discover which details a series of 10 new trail guides which will help locals and visitors discover places full of history, heritage and open green spaces in the city. The e-bike share scheme will also be integrated with GoABZ when it is launched in spring 2022.

Broad Street Partial Pedestrianisation

This street is located outside Marischal College, the home of Aberdeen City Council, where there is a significant amount of pedestrian traffic accessing many premises.

This development offered a prime opportunity to create some high-quality place-making in the form of a grassed area, water fountains, seating, mature tree planters and high-quality external lighting.

The completion of the Broad Street regeneration works has transformed a key part of the city centre and created a flexible new event space.

I-Bike Officer for Aberdeen City

The Aberdeen I-Bike Officer has delivered a total of 25 scooter skills sessions for all year groups, from Primary 1 to Primary 7. They also worked with some pupils to help them to learn how to ride a bike. To facilitate future work, new cycle and scooter parking has been purchased for 22 schools. Scooters have also been purchased for a school and training provided to school staff to ensure scooter sessions can be safely delivered for years to come.



Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

Aberdeen is transforming from a city traditionally based on fossil fuel energy to a carbon net-zero city. To support this transition there are many transformational projects planned, such as the city centre Low Emission Zone (LEZ), the City Centre Masterplan and the Beachfront Masterplan.

Some shorter-term upcoming projects include the Core Path Condition Survey and a Cycle Signage Strategy.

Bike Hire Scheme

A 450 e-bike share scheme for Aberdeen is currently underway and will launch in spring 2022. It is hoped that the scheme will add to the change from end-to-end private car commuting, providing a flexible alternative for short commutes and for 'the last mile' of longer commutes. This would be another step closer to the council's goal of reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality across the city.

Multi Modal Studies - Radial Corridors

The redetermination of the city's roads hierarchy, post Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), has spearheaded multi-modal studies along six radial routes connecting Aberdeenshire to the city.

These studies are concentrating on transformational changes to the public transport network including bus priority (Aberdeen Rapid Transit), and active travel elements. The objective is to have the city centre as a destination rather than a through-route. This change will allow congestion and associated emissions to be reduced in the city centre and for air quality to improve.

Cross City Connections

The Aberdeen Cross City Transport Connections project aims to provide transport connections, public transport and active travel between new areas of development. The project focusses on areas on the outskirts of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, with



The objective is to have the city centre as a destination rather than a through-route. This will allow congestion and associated emissions to be reduced in the city centre and for air quality to improve.

the aim of providing viable, attractive and direct linkages that can be used as an alternative to the private car. Essentially, the aim is to increase the sustainable transport-based accessibility options associated with new developments.

I-Bike Officer

Looking forward, the I-Bike Officer will be delivering the learn to ride course with the ultimate goal of having all Primary 6 pupils completed the Bikeability Level 1, in the spring. The aim is to provide students with the skills to safely ride their bikes to school and for leisure, and increase the likelihood of cycling becoming a travel habit among young people.

The hope is that this will increase the number of adults cycling in future years, supporting the move from the car as the primary means of transport for short journeys.

City Centre and Beach Masterplan

The City Centre and Beach Masterplan is a transformational proposal to revitalise the city centre and beachfront areas, comprising many individual projects. The transport elements, which are detailed in the supporting Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, include re-prioritising the city centre and beachfront into spaces with a focus on walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport access and use, and improving active travel connectivity.



Jacqui Lang, dog walker



I became a dog owner during lockdown and I've loved discovering new places to walk to. In Aberdeen you never have to go far to find somewhere enjoyable to walk – the beach, hills and woods. I have easy access to the city centre and would usually choose to walk to the shops, cafes and restaurants.

The pop up spaces for walking and cycling during the pandemic felt pleasant to walk down so I would have loved to see these being kept and enhanced as they could benefit walking and cycling in the city. In general Aberdeen feels very much like cars have priority, with walking and cycling treated as secondary.

The attitude seems to be the car is the ruler and that people should have the right to drive into the city centre and park there. There are some areas in Aberdeen where walking feels quite unsafe, for example crossing to the riverside from Duthie Park, as there is a lack of safe crossing for pedestrians.

I have visited other European cities where they have made it difficult to bring your car into the city. This results in a more pleasant environment and it would be great to see more of this in Aberdeen.

Notes on methodology:

The attitudinal survey was conducted from June to August 2021 by independent social research organisation NatGen.

The survey is representative of all Aberdeen residents, not just those who walk or cycle.

All other data is sourced from our city partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Sustrans.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Sustrans. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys cycled by journey purpose.

Rounding has been used throughout the report. In many cases we have rounded to the nearest whole number. Rounding is avoided where this may cause confusion, for example with modelled estimates shown in the summary and benefits sections.

More information and a detailed methodology are available at www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

Sustrans is a registered charity in the UK No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)

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