



FOR A HAPPIER,
HEALTHIER SCOTLAND

Consultation Response

Moray Local Development Plan consultation

31/7/23

If you have any questions about this response, please contact our policy team:
policy@pathsforall.org.uk

Who We Are

Paths for All is Scotland's walking charity. Established in 1996, we work in partnership with 30 national organisations with a shared vision of a healthier, happier, greener Scotland, where everyone can be active every day. Walking is the easiest and most accessible way to be active, and our work to change the way people move, travel, and enjoy life in Scotland is focused on the following three themes:

- Walking is for everyone.
- Walking is for everywhere.
- Walking is for every day.

Our [strategy](#) sets out our vision for tackling physical inactivity, poor mental health, increased health and transport inequalities and the climate emergency.

Our Response

Our aim is to significantly increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland - whether that's leisure walking or active-choice walking to work, school or shops. We want to create a happier, healthier Scotland, where increased physical activity improves quality of life and wellbeing for all. We work to develop more opportunities and better environments not just for walking, but also for wheeling, cycling and other activities, to help make Scotland a more active, more prosperous, greener country.

Key policies and strategies for LDP

Our work supports the delivery of the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, the National Walking Strategy (NWS), the Cycling Framework for Active Travel, and the Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland.

We do this through our work with community and workplace health walking, path network development and active travel policy development.

Our funders include The Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Life Changes Trust, the Robertson Trust and NatureScot.

Active Travel

Our vision is for walking and cycling to be the natural choice for short journeys, creating a healthier, socially inclusive, economically vibrant, environmentally friendly Scotland.

Active Travel is about improving quality of life and quality of place. There is a need to achieve a significant shift to walking, wheeling, and cycling as the most sustainable forms of transport.

The Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) programme is Paths for All's grant scheme to support behaviour change initiatives to increase active and sustainable travel modes.

Walking is often described as the perfect exercise. Almost anyone can do it, it can be done just about anywhere, at any time. In recent years, it has also become clear that everyday walking brings enormous benefits to our society, from improving our physical, mental and social health, to reducing inequalities, contributing to economic growth and vibrant communities, to reducing carbon emissions, road congestion and air pollution on Scotland's journey to net-zero.

The need to maximise the wide-ranging benefits of switching our journeys from car to walking and sustainable modes of transport are very clear.

Transport Scotland reports that 80% of households had access to one or more vehicles in 2021; representing a 9% increase in car ownership in comparison to pre-pandemic statistics. In the meantime, there has been renewed focus on improving our walking environment, urban and rural infrastructure across Scotland – from delivering more paths to improving accessibility, maintenance, signposting, lighting, improving access to shops, transport links and other facilities, or measures aimed at reducing traffic congestion and limiting vehicle speeds.

As well as the infrastructure, we are pleased that there has been greater recognition of the need for behavioural initiatives to achieve mode shift from driving to walking. Indeed, research shows that while increased investment in active travel infrastructure is important, it is “insufficient” without behavioural changes. Therefore, providing people with encouragement, support, and guidance to change their behaviour is essential to maximise positive changes for our communities, health, and environment in the long term. We are pleased that the importance of changing social norms and increasing positive attitudes towards walking and active travel has been recognised by Transport Scotland, and we hope that it will continue to be backed up with appropriate actions and investment.

We believe that walking and other modes of active travel play a vital role in Scotland's response to the current challenges posed by health and transport inequalities and the climate emergency. Considering our increasing collective interest in enjoying the great outdoors, we need to ensure that everyone can benefit from accessing natural environments. It is important to realise that investment in physical infrastructure is important, but it may be insufficient in achieving the switch to sustainable modes of transport. Paths for All is proud to be contributing to this

change and we trust that policy and decision makers will continue investing in and otherwise supporting our communities, health, and environment in the long term.

The plan should be seen in the wider policy context - the LDP should reference the National Planning Framework 4, Climate Action Plan, NTS, STPR2, Car km reduction, and should refer to National Walking Strategy – due to be reviewed.

The LDP should reference the National Performance Framework and the National Planning Framework and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).

We would welcome an intention to:

- help deliver sustainable, low carbon places.
- promote sustainable development that reduces the need to travel, reduces reliance on private cars and promotes safe and convenient active travel opportunities.
- recognise the multiple benefits of local green spaces and networks as an integral component of successful placemaking.

We would particularly welcome an intention to take on the challenges of sustainable development and climate change – including reducing the need to travel, encouraging active travel, through integrated walks and cycleways.

We would welcome an intention to promote the creation of green-blue networks within and between settlements.

We would welcome an intention to make efficient use of the transport network, reduce the need to travel and promote walking, cycling, and public transport.

Development should focus on existing transport hubs rather than bringing transport links to development.

There should be a reference to the transport hierarchy in the National Transport Strategy.

Recent developments with coronavirus highlight the need to reallocate space and infrastructure to support the National Transport Strategy travel hierarchy – particularly for walking and cycling. We consider that the National Transport Strategy transport hierarchy should apply across all developments – informing all planning, policy, and projects.

We are not in a position to comment on housing supply, but new housing developments must take on board the latest guidance on sustainability and particularly active travel and public transport.

The plan should highlight the importance of the health agenda, behaviour change and preventative spend.

New housing development must take into account the need for sustainable travel.

There is evidence that new housing is failing people and forcing car dependency. The National survey of attitudes and barriers to walking in Scotland, found the top considerations for choosing somewhere to live were access to local facilities (74%)

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and a regular bus service (64%).

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/mediaLibrary/other/english/paths-for-all-national-survey---final-report---final-version-reformatted-11th-october-2019.pdf>

A recent Transport Scotland-funded evaluation of major housing sites by Living Streets Scotland found limited steps to meet these needs in developments that put car use first. <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/news-post/new-housing-is-failing-people-and-forcing-car-dependency>

We should generally put a stop to new out of town development – we will need to redefine / repurpose our city and town centres. Around two thirds of Scottish adults would be prepared to walk to their local shop or public transport (64% and 63% respectively) but only around half would walk to their nearest urban green space (50%) and fewer would walk to their place of work (44%).

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/mediaLibrary/other/english/paths-for-all-national-survey---final-report---final-version-reformatted-11th-october-2019.pdf>

We would support an intention that development designs will only be approved when they demonstrate the six qualities of successful places – including creating well connected places.

We would support a requirement for all new developments to be accompanied by adequate public open space.

We would support an intention that existing and potential public access routes should be protected, and new developments must include appropriate opportunities for informal recreation and promote walking or cycling as a means of transport.

There is strong evidence of the social return from investing in recreation. There is the value of the tourist / visitor expenditure, but also the socioeconomic value for residents and visitors that better health, inclusion and environment can bring.



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Paths For All

Kintail House, Forthside Way Stirling FK8 1QZ

T 01786 641851

E info@pathsforall.org.uk

pathsforall.org.uk

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Registered Office: Kintail House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ