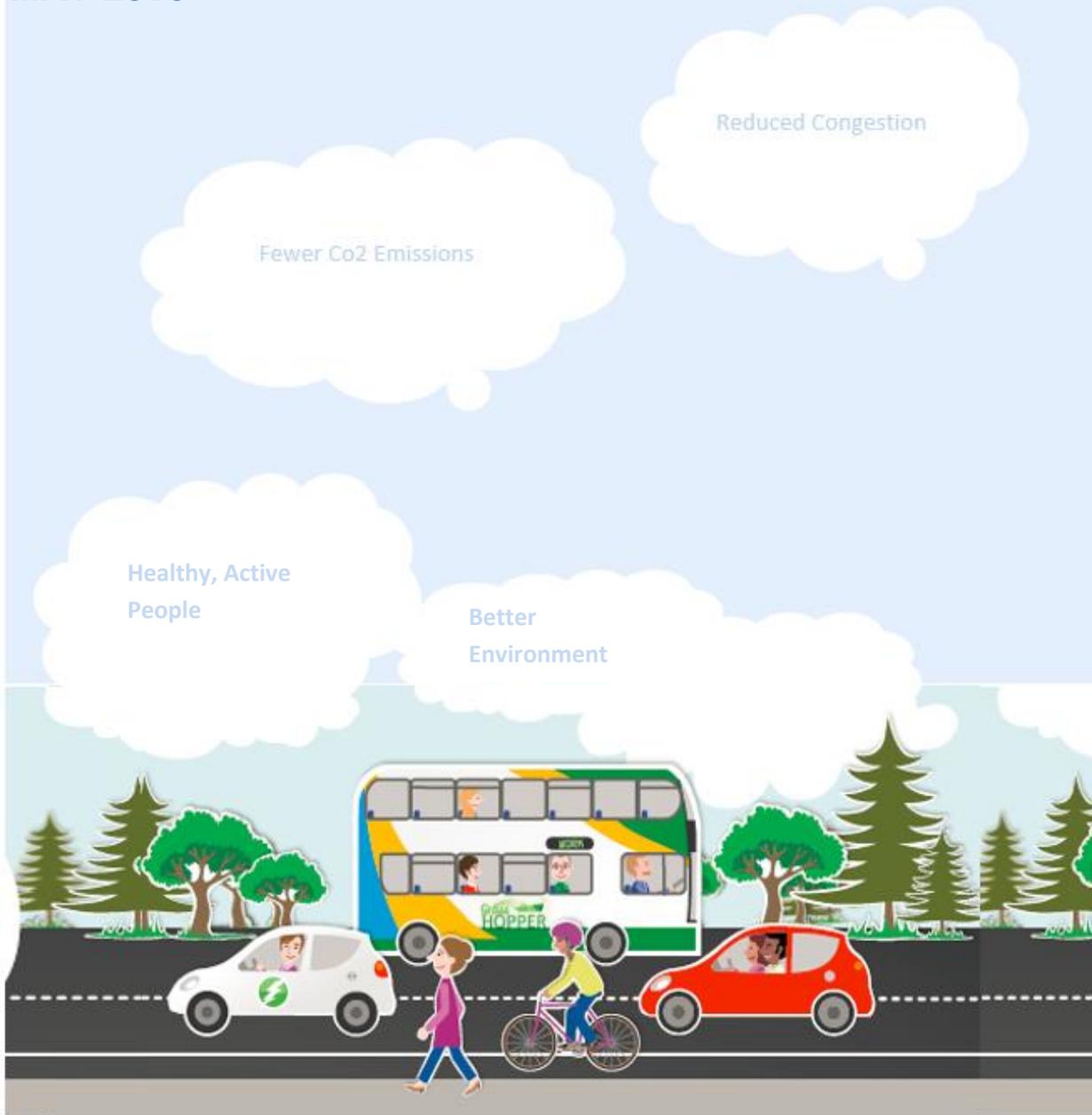


Integrated Travel Towns Huntly Masterplan



DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION
MAY 2016



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Foreword

The Integrated Travel Town Project (ITT) takes a lead from the experiences and lessons learned from the Council’s successful Peterhead Cycle Demonstration Town Project (CDT). The ITT project builds on the strengths of the CDT pilot and capitalises on the findings of the Smarter Choices Smarter Places funded projects across Scotland.

Introduction

The Integrated Travel Towns Project allows Aberdeenshire Council to support more sustainable and active travel working with communities and partners to provide the means and knowledge to facilitate a change in travel behavior. This is a model that has been successfully utilized in the Council’s Peterhead Cycle Demonstration Town Project.

Huntly is one of five Integrated Travel Towns (ITTs) that will benefit from greater awareness of the barriers to developing fully integrated and sustainable transport leading to improved opportunities for walking, cycling, public transport use and more efficient vehicle use. This Masterplan document sets the context of the ITT project, describes the background to the development of this Masterplan and sets out the actions proposed by Aberdeenshire Council to enable these opportunities to be realised. This plan will compliment plans provided for Ellon, Fraserburgh, Inverurie and Portlethen and is the direct result of the Council’s Smarter Travel Action Plan which aims to support the delivery of the Local Transport Strategy.

The ITT project has been developed with support from Nestrans, Sustrans and Paths for All and maximizes opportunities for partnership working both from within the Council and externally working with interested parties, stakeholders and local communities.

Peterhead Cycling Demonstration Town

The Peterhead CDT Project was delivered in partnership with the local community to provide new and improved infrastructure underpinned with a promotions and marketing campaign. The nationally recognised project delivered new cycle paths, an annual bike ride and cycle events resulting in a year on year increase in cycling of 50%. Levels of walking and cycling amongst primary school pupils are now amongst the highest in Aberdeenshire (Hands Up Scotland Survey, 2014).

This project has been held up as an exemplar by the Scottish Government, featuring in the recently published ‘Town Centre Tool Kit’.

1. Context

Background

The ITT Project supports the delivery of Aberdeenshire Council's Local Transport Strategy (LTS) which aims to encourage people to:

- Travel less;
- Travel more actively; and
- Travel more effectively.

The Integrated Travel Town Project has a particular focus on supporting smarter and active travel and is one of the priority areas set out in the Council's Smarter Travel Action Plan. The ITT Project draws upon previous experiences drawn from the Cycle Demonstration Town project using a high level of community engagement to develop the proposals set out in this plan. Community ownership is at the heart of the ITT project and success lies in being able to fully understand the local barriers to active and sustainable transport, developing the appropriate infrastructure to overcome these issues.

The Council's Local Transport Strategy aims to encourage individuals to consider how to reduce the number of journeys made in the first instance. Where travel is unavoidable, the emphasis is on supporting active travel for journeys less than 5km. For journeys above this consideration should be given to

other options such as car sharing or making use of public transport. Where single occupancy car use is unavoidable, individuals are asked to consider the efficiency of their vehicles.

Approach

The approach to developing this Masterplan is set out below and from this, the actions at the rear of the plan have been developed with a view to full delivery within a five year period, subject to funding.



Understanding

Research the issues, barriers and problems to Smarter Travel. Carry out site audits, engage with local communities, and share the findings.

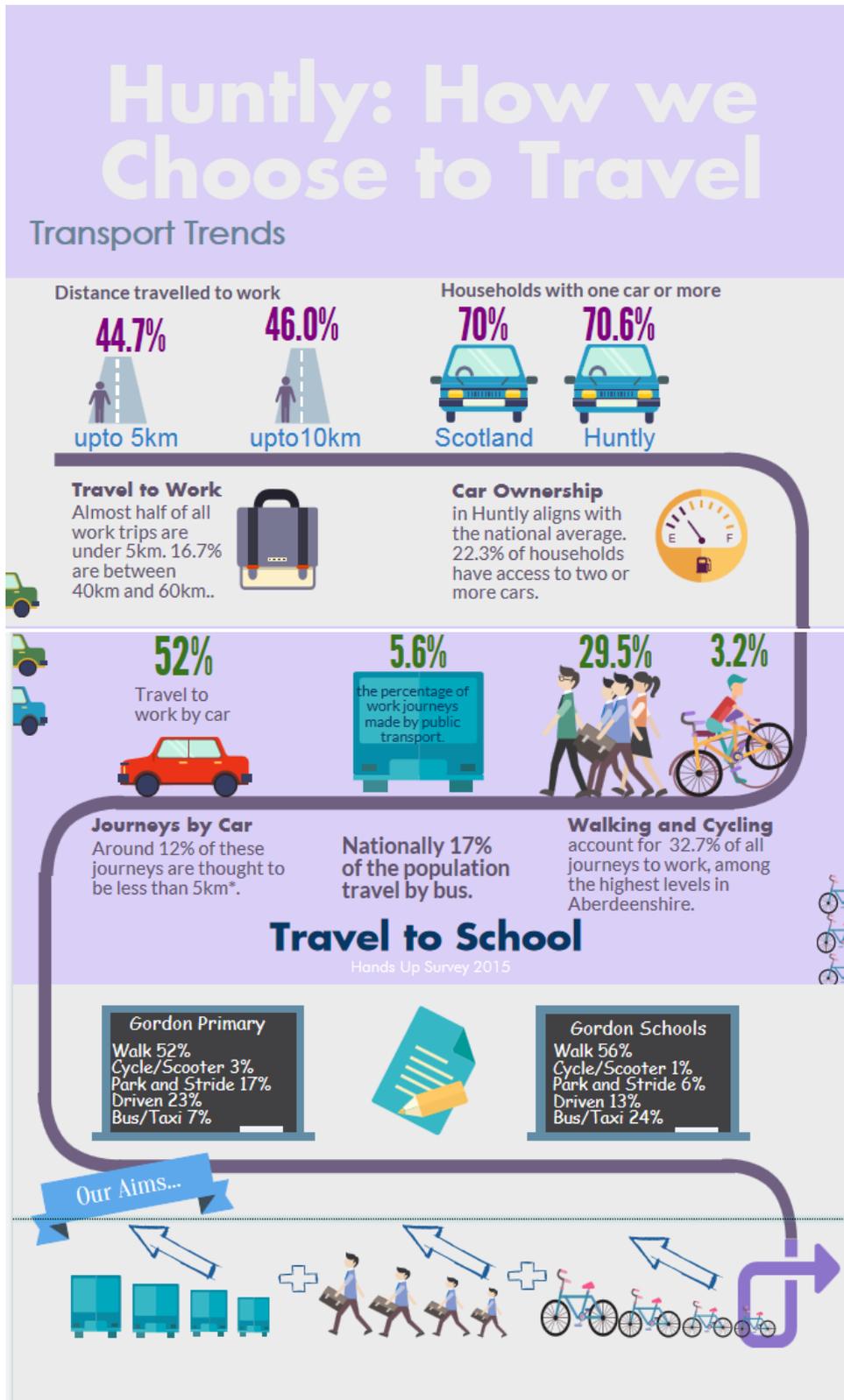
Developing

Make use of knowledge gained to develop Masterplans and proposals that will be appropriate for each location.

Promoting

Lack of knowledge or information is one of the biggest barriers to Smarter Travel. A sustained and joined up approach to marketing and promotion will be required.

Transport Trends and Travel Patterns



Vision, Aims and Objectives

Vision of the Plan

At the heart of this Masterplan is an aspiration to achieve a modal change whereby 40% of all local journeys under 5km are made by bike or foot. This is an ambitious approach, reflecting Government commitments set out in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) and the National Walking Strategy.

It is hoped that this can be achieved by providing the right infrastructure at the right locations and ensuring that residents are fully aware of the sustainable and active travel options that will be open to them. The benefits of achieving this will result in fewer single occupancy car journeys being made which will impact positively on tackling health, environment and issues of localised congestion.

Aims

The aim of this Masterplan is to develop these transport opportunities fully, by understanding the issues and barriers and overcoming these with support and initiatives identified and developed with the local community at the heart.

Objectives

With this approach, it is intended that the Masterplan will help the Council meet its sustainability objectives while supporting the Council's Single Outcome Agreement priorities and contributing positively to the Nation's health and environmental agenda.

**Aberdeenshire Council
aspires to achieve a modal
change whereby 40% of all
journeys less than 5km are
made by bike or foot.**

Funding the Plan

Smarter Choices Smarter Places

The Scottish Government's Smarter Choices Smarter Places programme aims to encourage more people to change their behavior to reduce their car use in favor of sustainable alternatives such as walking, cycling and greater public transport use.

The initiative aims to deliver a step change in knowledge and attitudes towards sustainable travel choices by improved knowledge, awareness and tackling common perception barriers.

Community Links

The Community Links grant is a source of match funding delivered by Sustrans on behalf of Transport Scotland. Funding is allocated following a bid application process. One of the strengths of the Masterplan is to provide the bigger picture, setting into the wider context the infrastructure schemes which will be delivered over the period of the Masterplan. This approach, adopted for the CDT project has been successful and is welcomed by funding partners including Sustrans.

2. Developing the Masterplan

Process

Following successful funding applications to Sustrans and Paths for All, the ITT Masterplans have been developed adopting the following approach.

- Desktop Review
- Site Assessments and Audits
- Presentation of Findings and Community Engagement
- Review of Infrastructure
- Development of Infrastructure proposals

Central to the Masterplan development process has been engagement with the local community within each of the towns.

The Masterplan includes background information relating to sustainable and active travel in Huntly, and details of the problems and opportunities which have been identified. The plan concludes with a list of potential actions to support active and sustainable travel.

While funding is currently only confirmed for 2015-16, Aberdeenshire Council plans to work with partners to ensure the ITT Project continues in the longer term and it is intended that the Masterplan remains a live document with the action list subject to ongoing review and update.

Desktop Review

The desktop review considered travel origins and destinations; mapping main residential

areas and areas of employment, local facilities and education centers. The review then identified the key links between these areas, looking for opportunities to enhance these links or create new ones altogether.

By adopting a corridor approach, the desktop review helped to focus the scope of the site audits which would identify both barriers and opportunities particular to these corridors.

Site Audits

The site audit process considered the factors which have either a positive or negative impact on active travel in particular. The audit looked for crossing points, considered footway widths and lighting. Pedestrian 'cut through' or 'desire lines' have been noted as these routes provide indications of where people *want* to walk when not constrained. Areas of excessive on street parking or popular pick up or drop off points, particular those related to schools were also recorded.

Areas of opportunity were noted during the audit process which included such the potential to widen existing footways, improve or provide new lighting. Based on desire lines and on site observations, locations where crossing facilities would be of benefit were also noted.

The information from these audits was logged and mapped and the information presented during the community engagement process for comment and confirmation that the audit identified recognised issues and constraints.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is central to the development of the Masterplans. A range of consultation methods were used to afford local members of the community an opportunity to provide their input. The initial approach adopted was to present information using a series of display boards in public areas such as town halls or sports centers.

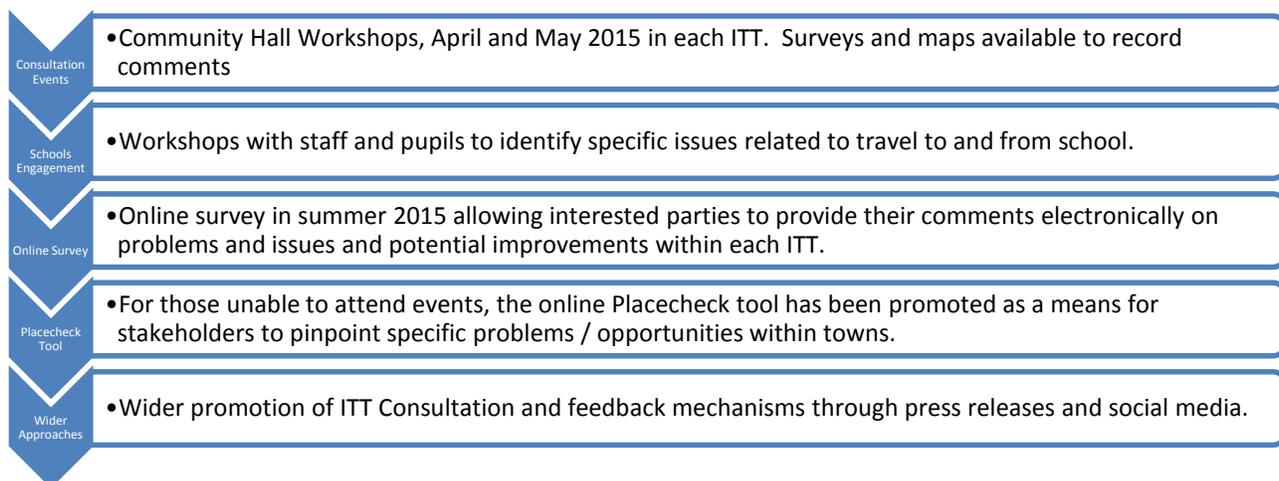
A consultation booklet was produced to accompany an online survey which was promoted to the local community, making use of Community Planning links and contacts, seeking comment on the findings and suggestions for improvements.

The recently developed Placecheck tool was piloted to provide further opportunity for residents to comment. Making use of a downloadable App, Placecheck allows users to note on an electronic map areas which are 'liked' areas 'for improvement' and general observations.

While the more traditional methods of consultation were of limited success, the electronic consultations including the survey enabled additional responses to be received.

A summary of the consultation approach adopted to deliver the ITT Masterplan is set out below.

Comments arising from the engagement included vehicle speeds in town, requests to upgrade the Bogie River Bridge and a bridge crossing the A96. Requests were made for additional shared use paths where feasible and additional cycle parking in the town center.



Initial Findings

Taking into account the findings from the community engagement exercise and the site audits, a SWOT analysis has been prepared for the Huntly area. This analysis, used alongside the place check data, has been used to inform the development of the Huntly Masterplan which sets out priority projects designed to meet the Vision, Aims and Objectives of this plan.

Strengths

- Deveron Park has a high quality shared use path network (wide even surfaces and signposted), providing connectivity to the supermarket.
- A path connects the Huntly Industrial Estate to the north of the town at Deveron Road-with permeability to Deveron Park, Scott Court and Clashmach View. However, this is very poor quality in places.
- Sufficient space to widen existing path on Deveron Road (north side).
- Good cycle storage at supermarkets in the town.
- Good provision of dropped kerbs across the town.
- Good connectivity to other towns via public transport.
- Sufficient space in The Square for cycle storage facilities. The layout also lends itself well to low traffic speeds.

Weaknesses

- Shared use paths are limited to only Deveron Park.
- No cycle storage in the Town Centre.
- Poor infrastructure and connectivity for cyclists across the town-including to/from the station.
- No bridge linking the two station platforms. Southbound platform access is via the A97.
- Lack of permeability between Huntly and areas to the south of A96.

Opportunities

- Extend the shared use path network to incorporate Deveron Road, and links between the river and Rowan Avenue/Burnside Road.
- Increase permeability at various locations across the town.
- Develop the riverside path as an attractive option for recreational activities.
- Implement a comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes to the schools.

Threats

- Some schemes may be expensive.
- Difficult for any future developments to the south of the A96 and east of River Bogie to have permeability with other parts of Huntly. Any new developments will likely generate additional traffic and should be designed with shared use facilities in mind.
- Traffic levels on key arterial routes (Deveron Street/Road, Bogie Street and George V Avenue) may cause traffic related issues.

3. Proposals

The traditional ‘grid iron’ style layout of the town of Huntly, reflects many of the guiding principles set out in the ‘Designing Streets’ design guidance document.

Smaller roads with narrow entrances to junctions for example are considered to best support the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Working within the existing street scape in Huntly would provide the best opportunity to promote walking and cycling. Currently barriers to cycling arise from perceptions of conflict with road users. Encouraging more cyclists onto the existing road infrastructure would go some way to addressing these perceptions.

The proposals below aim to support more walking and cycling in Huntly by taking advantage of the unique town layout. Much of the work will be focused on addressing access in and around the Schools and Town Centre with an emphasis on behavior change interventions.

Year 1

- Engage with the Gordon Schools to identify and address where possible pick up and drop off issues.
- Develop experimental traffic orders to encourage fewer trips to the school gate.
- Review opportunities to promote Victoria Road, Torry Street, Torry Road as cross town cycle route.

- Upgrade existing informal path Steven Road – Deveron Road.
- Support provided to local Bicycle Recycling scheme.
- Support set up of Huntly Cycle Club.
- Support HDDT with Huntly Car Club.
- Promote walking and cycling maps.

Year 2

- Development of a set down – pick up area away from the school gates considering Burnside Road and/or Meadow Avenue
- Implementation of experimental traffic orders across the town that would aim to support cycle trips.
- Widen north footway of East Park Street onto West Park Street to support improved school access.
- Implement measures on New Road and Meadow Street to provide opportunities for cycle and walking access on shared road space. Promote these routes as quiet lanes.
- Work with local businesses to identify opportunities to promote E-Bike delivery scheme.
- Work with HDDT to further promote use of E-Bikes.
- Sign post key routes across the town.

Year 3

- Review findings of experimental traffic restrictions to inform future permanent proposals.
- Work with Huntly Schools to achieve ‘Cycle Friendly Schools’ status.
- Work with two local businesses to support applications as Cycle Friendly Employers.

- Support development of annual family cycle ride.
- Develop opportunities to create cycle link to railway station.

Year 4

- Develop shared use path via Meadows Plantation to create traffic free cycle route to Gordon Schools from the west.
- Gordon Schools receive Cycle Friendly accreditation.

4. Priority Checklist

This checklist is included in the plan to ensure that the priorities identified during the development of this Masterplan are met through the delivery of the actions listed in Appendix A.

Walking and Cycling

1. Improved paths and routes for walking and for cycling
2. Signing to indicate the best routes from A to B
3. Route maps for walking and cycling
4. Extra cycle parking at key destinations
5. Marketing and events.
6. Raise awareness of E-bikes for short commutes and local delivery services.
7. Work with schools and businesses to promote walking and cycling

Public Transport

1. Bus shelters and stops
2. Information at bus stops including timetables and real time systems
3. Active travel routes connecting with bus stops
4. Cycle parking at/near to bus stops
5. Enabling consultation between communities and operators, including through Area Bus Forums.

Electric Vehicles & Car Sharing

1. Provision of charging points
2. Signage to charge points
3. Raise public awareness of EV infrastructure and vehicles
4. Encourage local traders to use EV's for short local deliveries.
5. Promotion of car sharing opportunities

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The ITTs are supported by a structured monitoring regime, to ensure that Aberdeenshire Council delivers cost effective and tailored measures. We will undertake community surveys at regular intervals, review the number of any website visits, review the distribution of promotional materials and measure the level of walking and cycling in the community.

Walking and cycling data is collected before new/improved infrastructure has been implemented so that the impact of any interventions can be monitored and measured against a baseline. Automatic pedestrian and cycle counters provide a consistent and accurate method of data collection. Fifteen new counters have recently been installed across the five ITTs, and there are now five counters in Huntly.

OUTPUT	INDICATORS	OUTCOME	INDICATORS
New shared use routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Length of new foot/cycle path implemented 	Additional trips made by bike/foot Greater uptake of Electric Vehicles Increase in bus patronage Reduced car use for short trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage journeys by walking and cycling - Pedestrian and cycle counts on key routes - Attitudes to sustainable and active travel - Bus patronage - Number of electric Vehicle charges delivered in town.
Additional Cycle Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of new cycle parking spaces - Number covered Cycle Spaces 		
Promotion of sustainable travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actives and events: number of participants - Number maps distributed 		

Appendix A – Huntly Action Plan

The action list has been developed based on the community engagement process and using Aberdeenshire Council's experience in Peterhead and elsewhere. The Council has also made reference to the experience of local authorities promoting sustainable and active travel around Scotland.

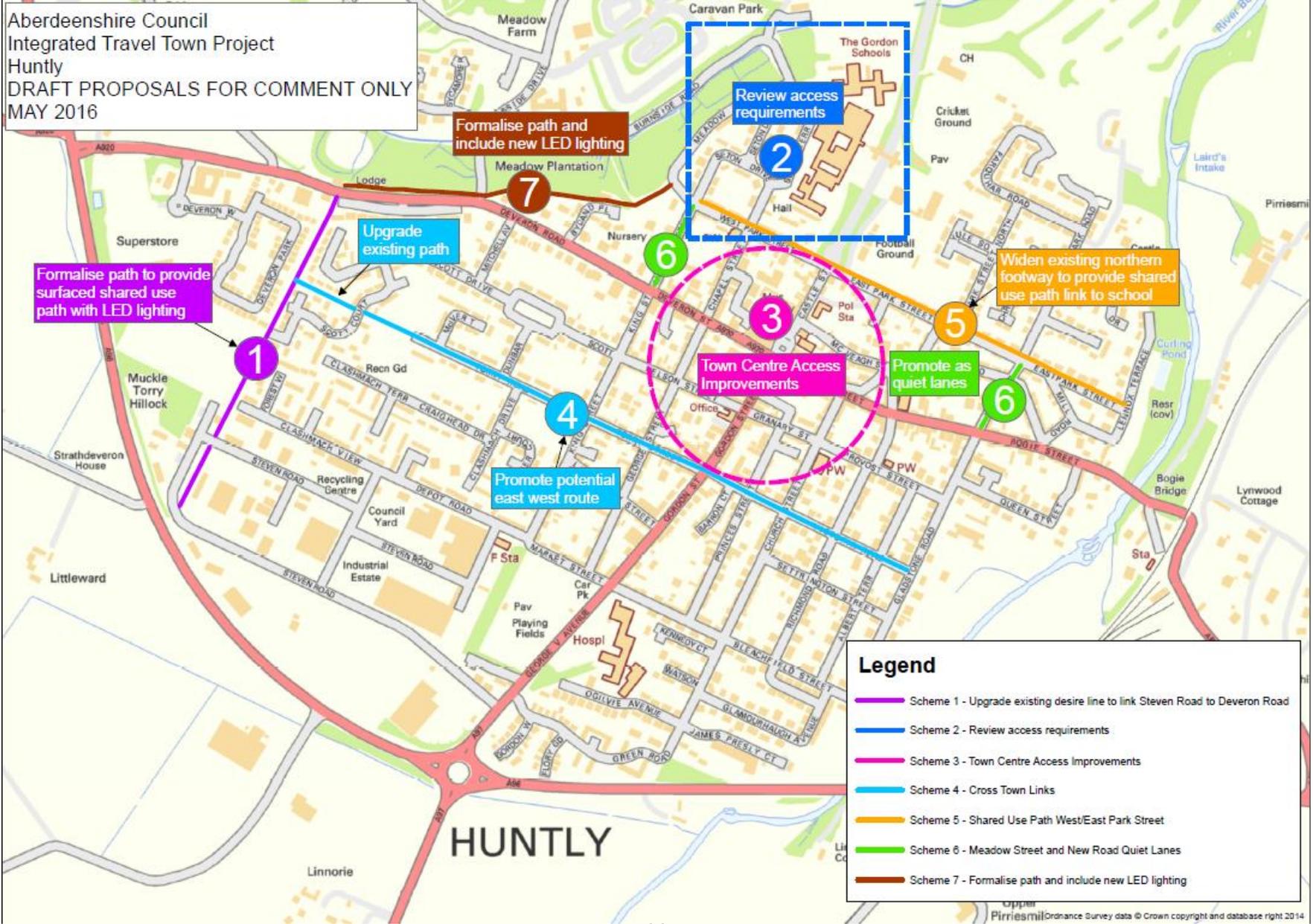
Infrastructure Proposals

Schemes	DESCRIPTION	DELIVERY	OUTPUT	OUTCOME	OBJECTIVES	COST ESTIMATE
1. Upgrade existing desire line to link Steven Road to Deveron Road	Existing 'cut through' is well used by walkers and cyclists. Route would benefit from formalisation to provide surfaced shared use path with LED lighting.					
2. Gordon Schools Access	Explore options to support improved pick up and drop off, park and stride and support walking and cycling to the school gates.					
3. Town Centre Access Improvements	Explore options that would support more shared integration between pedestrians and cyclists within the town centre environs to promote more on road cycle use within the town.					
4. Cross Town Links	Develop east west route making use of Victoria Road, Torry Street, Torry Road linking onto off road paths at Scott Court Playing Field. Upgrade existing path linking onto Steven Road-Deveron Road link.					
5. Shared use Path West/East Park Street	Widen footway on north of East Park and West Park Street to provide shared use path link to school.					
6. Meadow Street and New Road – Quiet Lanes	Develop and implement solutions to support Meadow Street and New Road to become quiet lanes to encourage shared use amongst vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.					

Softer Interventions

PROPOSAL	DESCRIPTION	DELIVERY	OUTPUT	OUTCOME	OBJECTIVES	COST ESTIMATE
Maps	Legible walking / cycling routes – To help people to travel more sustainably more often around town and in their local area the Council will build on the success of previous maps and produce a suite of sustainable travel maps covering the Huntly area.					
Signage	Legible walking / cycling routes – co-ordinated town walking and cycling signage based on comprehensive wayfinding/signage strategies will support the development of walking/ cycling infrastructure.					
Cycle Parking	Cycle Parking - Significant improvements are being made to the quality and availability of secure cycle parking. The programme looks to provide secure facilities at key location across Huntly.					
Business Travel Planning	Business travel planning – engagement with employers (prioritising those with high 'sustainable travel zone rankings'), including provision of workplace travel planning support and advice and delivering Personalised Travel Planning (PTP) / travel challenges to employees. Aim to target tbc employees by 2020. This aims to establish business networking and a joined up approach to employee travel.					
School Travel Planning	Schools / colleges – continued programme of activities, awareness raising and PTP aimed at young people and their parents.					
Marketing and Promotion	Marketing and promotion – implementation of the GetAbout Marketing and communications Strategy, co-ordinated to support initiatives delivered through the wider programme and including direct marketing techniques, targeted campaigns and events, including a programme of led walks/cycle rides and a bike and electric bike loans.					
Bike Workshop/Repair Station	Huntly Cycle Hub - support for a community cycle hub at tbc, linked by the proposed tbc route. The cycle hub will be multi-functional, encompassing a combination of cycle repair and bike recycling, lockers and cycle storage, and the proposed bike share scheme.					

Aberdeenshire Council
 Integrated Travel Town Project
 Huntly
 DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR COMMENT ONLY
 MAY 2016



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To comment on this Draft Masterplan, please [complete the survey](#) before 18 June 2016.