Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Strategy 2024-2034

Headlines from the three stages of engagement on a new Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Strategy

Background

This document summarises the key messages from public and organisational stakeholders that helped inform the proposed Tayside and Central Scotland Regional Transport Strategy 2024-2034 (RTS).

Process

The process for developing the RTS followed the principles set out in Transport Scotland's Scotlish Transport Appraisal Guidance and Development Planning and Management Transport Appraisal Guidance, namely following an objective led process to help ensure the Strategy's proposals address the problems identified. i.e.

- Identify problems, opportunities, issues and constraints
- These inform the desired objectives and outcomes of the strategy
- Options which can help address these outcomes are identified and assessed against the objectives and other (STAG) criteria

Engagement process

Whilst the process of developing the strategy with Angus, Dundee, Perth & Kinross and Stirling Councils was continuous, there were three major public and stakeholder engagement exercises informing the main stages of strategy development, i.e.

Stage 1: Identification of main issues: 1 Jun 2021 to 11 Aug 2021

Stage 2: Options engagement 'A conversation about how we travel': 1 Sep 2022 to 4 Nov 2022

Stage 3: Consultation on the draft strategy: 7 Aug 2023 to 27 Oct 2023

The engagement was not just on the RTS itself, but also on the strategic environmental and integrated impact assessments that ran in parallel to inform the RTS.

At each stage:

- on-line story maps were developed as a core resource for all participants
- meetings were held with local, regional and national partners. This included
 the two National Park Authorities (LLTNPA / CNPA); the two Health Boards
 (Forth Valley and Tayside); community planning partnerships; interest groups;
 planning and economic colleagues across the councils; neighbouring RTPs;
 transport network providers including bus and community transport operators,
 Scotrail and Network Rail, freight operators; Sustrans, Cycling Scotland,
 Paths for All and Living Streets¹.
- awareness of the exercise was promoted via (i) the Councils' community planning networks to local organisations, community and stakeholder groups (ii) social media (iii) press releases and press articles.

This resulted in

- 100 public and stakeholder questionnaire responses
- 268 social media conversations
- 47 meetings with 57 public and third sector partners
- 2 workshops organised by members of the Scottish Youth Parliament

Recognising the reach and the qualitative nature of the above input, **two representative public opinion surveys** were also commissioned at the options and draft strategy stage to understand a representative view of the public on the issues presented. These surveys each involved over 1000 participants and are similar in size to the level of responses to the Scottish Household Survey transport questions in the respective Council areas.

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¹ The Partnership recognise that the changes proposed in the RTS mean an ongoing conversation about how we travel needs to be maintained, hence whilst there has been a good response to date, we will continue to engage with both those that were and were not able to engage in the process

Stage 1: Identification of main issues

Identification of main issues

The consultation presented the main issues identified namely:

- highlighting the nature of the region in terms of the urban / rural split, the aging population; existing (and potential) national and regional travel demands
- the **social, economic, environmental priorities** as identified in local, regional and national strategies
- strengths and weaknesses of our transport networks as they related to the national transport strategy's priorities

TABLE 1: MOST REFERENCED ISSUES

What the public told us

- the importance of prioritising climate change
- the lack of public transport and its cost hindering access to services, including healthcare.

What stakeholders told us

- implications of cross boundary travel into and through the region, including:
 - importance of reliable and efficient strategic connections both for the region and those who travel through the region
 - o **implications of through traffic** on our transport networks
- urgency and importance of addressing climate change
- the implications of service provision (including centralisation of services) on the ability to reducing the need to travel and provide 20 minute neighbourhoods

TABLE 2: OTHER ISSUES

AVAILABILITY AND COST OF TRAVEL

What the public told us

- the requirements of:
 - o an aging population
 - o people with hidden mobility difficulties
- impact of lack of transport on social inclusion

TABLE 2: OTHER ISSUES

What stakeholders told us

- greater emphasis on:
 - o the implications of an aging population
 - o the issues faced by those without access to a car or van
 - ability for young and at-risk groups to access to jobs, training and services
- problems of integrating modes and the ability of people to travel the 'last mile'
- sustainability of our bus networks, and the consequences for school transport provision etc
- access for tourism workers

IMPACT OF TRAFFIC

What the public told us

- problems arising from an increase in leisure trips, including
 - o the traffic impact of cultural and sporting events
 - o pressure on rural roads from tourism

What stakeholders told us

- need to promote sustainable and equitable access into and around the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park
- significant growth in pallet network as result of increase in home deliveries
- the impact of trunk road traffic on communities
- increase in tourism creating issues at popular destinations

CROSS BOUNDARY TRAVEL INTO AND THROUGH THE REGION

What stakeholders told us

- the importance of efficient and reliable journey times to and through the region
- dualling of the A9 could be a generator of trips
- the need for rest and welfare facilities for hauliers

UNCERTAINTIES OF FUTURE DEMANDS

What stakeholders told us

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how fit are our transport networks for autonomous and low emission vehicles?

TABLE 2: OTHER ISSUES

• there is a need to align transport aspirations with digital and energy strategies

OTHER COMMENTS

What the public told us

the requirements of people with hidden mobility difficulties

What stakeholders told us

- that **HGVs** are required at some stage of the journey which limits the attractiveness of modal transfer
- the role of the RTS to support and inform land use planning
- placemaking enhances the assets that are our towns

Following consideration of the responses, the Tactran Board considered how all the issues and opportunities informed the priorities for the strategy and approved

- Four strategic objectives (which reflect the four priorities shaping the National Transport Strategy)
- 23 outcomes which highlighted the priorities for delivering the 4 strategic objectives in the regions

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Stage 2: Options engagement 'A conversation about how we travel'

The options engagement recognised the scale of the challenge if national aspirations were to be achieved; and that steps changes would be required by everyone if those national aspirations are to be achieved. Recognising limited resources and urgency to deliver - especially against climate change targets - proposed the need to identify and focus on priority groups and locations

Options engagement 'A conversation about how we travel'

The engagement exercise sought views on the direction of the RTS, namely:

- the strategic objectives and outcomes
- the scale of change required if national aspirations are to be met (for individuals, business, organisations and the transport agencies and regional partners)
- effectiveness and potential implications of potential measures

Table 3: Views on the strategic objectives and outcomes

What stakeholders told us

- o generally supportive of the objectives and outcomes.
- whilst most accept the need to focus on where action is most required, some community groups felt that the focus on specific areas might mean their communities are ignored

What the public told us

- whilst some respondents opposed the climate change objective, most highlighted it as being the most important challenge
- many of those that responded via the questionnaire or via social media tended to disagree with the objectives and outcomes, which is in contrast to the opinions expressed via the representative public opinion survey

Representative public opinion survey

most people agreed with the objectives to take climate action (77%);
 improve health and wellbeing (82%) or reduce inequalities (80%) and help deliver inclusive and sustainable economic growth (77%)

Table 4: Views on the scale of change required

Significant change in travel habits for individuals and businesses

Stakeholder views

- Those that we are asking to change the most for climate change reasons are those that drive the most i.e. the wealthiest in society
- Many people lead complicated lives built around the flexibility the car provides. The change required is not simply changing modes, but about changing daily routines
- there was an assumption that 20% car km reduction target can only apply to urban areas because there are few alternatives to the car in rural areas. Across the region approximately 75% of car km is generated to/from/between our rural areas
- the strategy needs to 'speak' to both urban and rural areas
- changing habits requires confidence in the alternatives
- communicating why change is required and how people could change requires consistent and coordinated messaging amongst partner organisations

Public views

- difficulties faced by those living in rural areas to reduce their car travel
- modern lives have become increasingly complex
- lack of confidence in public transport
- providing realistic alternatives both within the urban and rural areas is key to addressing issues

Commercial public transport services alone may not be sufficient to support modal shift and social inclusion

Stakeholder views

- public and shared transport solutions are at the heart of addressing climate change and social inclusion
- operators are facing significant challenges
- public have lost confidence in public transport

Additional finances (public and private) must be found to improve alternatives to the car

Stakeholder views

- must not only ask "What is the cost of undertaking action, but what is also the cost of not taking action"
- charging car use can provide an income stream
- finances should be directed both to where they are most required; and directed via agencies and to activities

Table 4: Views on the scale of change required	
	which maximise the amount spent on improving our transport networks
Unlikely that carrots alone will encourage a sufficient modal shift, and demand management measures that reflect people's realistic choices, will be required. This is likely to require discouraging car use by those who have alternative travel options	Stakeholder views
	 we must give people alternatives before asking them to change behaviour.
	 it is very unlikely that all desired alternatives will be in place before we will need to introduce restrictive measures to make significant progress towards the climate change targets
	 to provide an alternative to the car, facilities need to exist for the whole journey
	given inability to provide alternatives for the whole region by 2030, should we co-ordinate programmes on corridors and in settlements where change is most required?
	 there must be a geographic link between charging for car use and provision of alternatives
	Public views
	 it is important to provide alternatives before enforcing change
	• some recognised the urgency behind the measures and suggested that "there is a need to lead public attitudes on this rather than follow the most vocal opinions. Some of the changes that are needed will be unpopular with some – there is a need to show why we need to act and how it will make life better for more people."
The location of services and new development must not be car dependent.	Stakeholder views
	 locating land uses to reduce travel, whilst the right thing to do, will contribute little to reducing car travel by 2030
	 improving walking and cycling to local neighbourhoods is the right thing to do to promote active lifestyles and help reduce the number of car trips; but to either reduce distances travelled or improve access to facilities, more services are required locally
To maximise	Stakeholder views
available resources, greater collaboration and maximising the co-ordination of partner activities is required	 limited resources, need to focus activity on where investment will have greatest impact across key outcomes

Table 4: Views on the scale of change required

 need to focus and co-ordinate investment and activity between partners to ensure that the 'whole journey' is provided for. Deliver integrated solutions

Table 5: Views on potential measures

What the public told us

- public responses to the questionnaire largely supported the delivery themes and measures.
- o respondents identified the delivery themes to address climate change as being the most important. This was followed by the delivery themes to reduce inequalities. Improved public transport was considered key in addressing both climate change and social inclusion.
- respondents felt that measures being implemented to restrict car travel could be perceived as punitive

What stakeholders told us

Stakeholders supported the delivery themes and measures

Representative public opinion survey

- all but one of the types of measures received net support
 - four of the delivery themes garnered almost universal support (90%+). These are: Promote Fair Fares; Improving public transport; Improved accessibility & security for all across public transport; and Improved accessibility & security of the street environment.
 - while 18% object to wider parking controls and 14% object to road space re-allocation and traffic management (e.g. lane closures, bus lanes, cycle lanes) these measures still received a net positive support
 - the only measure which did not receive net positive support was additional charges for car drivers (such as congestion charges, toll roads or road user charging) which only 29% of people supported (48% objected, 17% neither support or object; and 6% were unsure)
- the most affluent SIMD groupings were most supportive of all measures except for new charging mechanisms
- o there was little difference between urban and rural residents

Stage 3: Consultation on the draft strategy

Taking account of the work undertaken, including the first two rounds of public engagement, a draft strategy was developed which promoted:

- · targets reflecting national targets and aspirations
- prioritisation and co-ordination of activity to deliver integrated solutions in rural areas, urban areas and along strategic corridors
- parameters for considering restraint measures to achieve car km reduction
- investigating a step change in bus provision

Consultation on the draft strategy

The consultation sought views on a draft strategy, in particular:

- · targets and the level of aspiration
- how we deliver the strategy in terms of
 - Step changes for everyone
 - Integrated solutions
 - The guiding principles for how the Partners would investigate charges to car users to support the Government's target of reducing car km driven
 - Actions and their applicability to rural areas, urban areas and strategic corridors
- how we will measure success in terms of the monitoring framework

Table 6: The challenge and level of ambition

What the public told us

Overall, respondents agreed that the challenges have been correctly identified and agreed with the objectives, outcomes and targets.

In addition, the following suggestions were made:

- more of an emphasis on tourism issues, especially in relation to the National Parks
- travel for older and disabled people could be addressed more explicitly
- climate change targets: Some respondents questioned whether it was ambitious enough to refer to the Scottish national targets
- deliverability and political will: whilst the ambition may have been welcomed, questions were raised around the ability and political will to deliver

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Table 6: The challenge and level of ambition

What stakeholders told us

Challenges were generally well supported.

Nonetheless, some responses suggested that the strategy does not sufficiently reflect:

- causes and consequences of car dependency in rural areas
- tourism issues
- road safety issues
- community and climate resilience
- and the long-term consequences of the aging population on travel
- the accessibility gap for people with disabilities
- the scale of the climate change problem
- issues relating to carers
- safety and security for young people
- whether rail networks had the capacity to enable a modal shift?
- importance of connectivity to Edinburgh and Glasgow by rail
- do the targets sufficiently drive progress towards reducing inequalities?
- whether there be additional targets in relation to freight modal transfer and resilience?

Representative public opinion survey

Objectives

- all four strategic objectives received strong support
- While supporting climate change is the most important issue quoted within written responses, improving health and wellbeing is the strongest supported strategic objective within the Public Opinion Survey

Climate change

80% see climate change as an immediate and urgent problem

Table 7: The scale of change required

What the public told us

Overall, **respondents agreed with the overall approach** to pursue significant change. Including:

- o **integrated solutions:** Respondents welcomed consideration of the whole journey to provide an alternative to the car
- exploring new models of bus provision: Respondents welcomed consideration of local authorities to run their own bus services
- o liveable / 20 minute neighbourhoods

Nonetheless:

- o **political will and the ability to deliver**: There was a lack of confidence that the Partners would be able to deliver the aspirations of the strategy
- charging to discourage car use: Respondents suggested that, for some, charges would make it difficult for some to continue to participate in society
- electric vehicles: Respondents suggested that the cost of EV ownership is too expensive for households in the lower income brackets
- role of Scottish Government: Respondents noted that there was a role for Scottish Government and Transport Scotland where a national approach to particular programmes could be more effective and efficient
- o **liveable / 20minute neighbourhoods**: A small minority were of the opinion that the concept involved the restriction of free movement.

What stakeholders told us

There was **support for the strategic policy direction** established in the document. Comments:

- rural areas: some felt the strategy underestimates the issues relating to rural areas and the difficulty in delivering change
- **finances:** Can finances be allocated proportionality across geographies relative to addressing targets (e.g. most km in rural areas / most air quality and health problems in urban areas)
- co-ordination and responsibilities
 - support for integrated solutions
 - while some argued that more finances were necessary, others argued coordinating and prioritising spend on identified priorities could go a long way
 - the need and the difficulties of ensuring all relevant agencies work together
 - the need to co-ordinate new charges for motorists

Table 7: The scale of change required

- the strategy requires long term commitment if it is to be delivered and its objectives achieved
- strengthen ability to ensure delivery: Responses reflected on the inability of Tactran to enforce any of the strategy. Some suggestions, although not from partner agencies, for Tactran to assume the role of a passenger transport authority;
- bus operators were content to explore, with the partnership, new models of service provision
- **demand management**: Use of restrictive measures on car use are risky in terms of public acceptability. No organisational stakeholders suggested that road user charging was wrong, but all highlighted the difficulties and hence the conditions that would need to be in place for it to work.
- useful to emphasise the relationship between improving public transport and charging for car use
- lack of trust in delivery unless the reader can see how actions relate to their geography e.g. Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park; Forth Valley etc.

Representative public opinion survey

Willingness to change

- 85% believe "I personally have a duty to help combat climate change" whilst at the same time 74% believe addressing climate change "is primarily the government's responsibility"
- 53% are willing to change how they travel
 - however, less are willing to change when (41%) or where (39%) they travel
 - more willing to change for air quality than climate change
- The main reason people travel by the mode they are most reliant on is convenience. The least important reason is environmental benefit.

Ability to change

- if safe, affordable and convenient options available, instead of using the car
 - 71% would travel to facilities closer to home
 - 62% would walk
 - 59% would catch the bus
 - 53% the train
 - 26% would cycle
- 68% don't believe they could get to work by public transport

Table 7: The scale of change required

It is the more affluent that we need to encourage to change behaviour to support climate change while it is the least affluent that we need to help to get to facilities and services

The more affluent SIMD quintiles:

- are generally more reliant on the car and, subsequently, drive more (79% of the upper quintile are reliant on the car, compared to 58% of the lower quintile)
- feel more able and empowered and are more willing to make changes to support climate change. However, they feel more strongly than that transport provision is not sufficient to help them change (35% of most affluent vs 51% of least affluent)

Those in the least affluent SIMD quintiles:

- make less discretionary trips. Those in the lower quintiles make approximately the same number of work and education trips as those in the more affluent quintiles, but they make less trips for all other purposes.
- are more willing to change to improve air quality than to address climate change². It is also useful to note that those in the least affluent areas are more likely to agree that "there is not a lot that people like me can do to reduce the effects of climate change".

Table 8: The actions

What the public told us

Public transport and buses:

- **reliable public transport** connections, particular buses, across the region is key for social inclusion and modal shift. Including:
 - integrated service timetabling
 - improved information required
 - more welcoming interchange facilities
- the affordability of public transport was highlighted as a key barrier that needs to be addressed

Behaviour change: public respondents suggest people will respond to supportive and voluntary policies while restrictive measures, such as road user charging, will fail

Demand management: Doubts were raised in relation to actions which restricted car use

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² Most of our least affluent areas are within the urban centres where air quality is an immediate health issue

Table 8: The actions

What stakeholders told us

- affordability of public transport is not addressed in the draft strategy
- minimum levels of public transport provision desired
- greater role for community transport: Potential complementary functions for interchanges and rural bus operators for collection/drop off points and delivery of goods suggested
- connectivity between transport modes is only covered in relation to interchange facilities rather than timetables etc
- **demand responsive services** which require booking at least a day in advance, can only provide an option for some trips
- make the connection between MaaS journey planning tools enabling and supporting new transport services to be provided
- electric vehicles: Lack of confidence in sufficient charging infrastructure
- mixed response to the emphasis placed on cycling. Active travel agencies
 / groups feel that there is not enough emphasis. Others suggest there is too
 much expectation that people will start cycling
- ensuring new development is accessible by modes other than the car was supported, although the adverse economic impacts of not allowing development in (especially rural) locations where there is not public transport were highlighted.
- greater emphasis on rail freight desired
- pinch points on the trunk road network should be addressed through a modal shift
- **behaviour change campaigns** were supported by some, while others suggest that change will come from improved alternatives
- greater emphasis on **network resilience** desired
- national networks can have a negative impact on local communities in terms of air quality, noise, severance etc
- promoting air travel is questioned as it is contrary to some objectives
- noted park and ride is currently limited in some areas across the region

Representative public opinion survey

Use of resources: People agreed that resources should be directed to:

- locations / trips where the most car km is driven 72% (5% disagreed)
- assist the more vulnerable/most in need in society access jobs / training and services 88% (0% disagreed)

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Table 8: The actions

Charging mechanisms to discourage car use and the use of any income

- 96% agree that measures should recognise that some people need to travel, specifically in rural areas
- 95% agree that measures should not increase the cost of travel (specifically for those who can least afford it)
- 93% agree money should be directed at alternatives (e.g. buses and trains).
- 88% agree there should be co-ordination across regions and/or country to ensure consistency in approach/measures

Electric cars and car clubs

- 34% in least affluent areas do not know where they would charge an electric car (average 21%)
- 88% say electric car clubs would not change the number of cars in the household

The key issues emerging from the youth engagement sessions arranged by Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament included:

- Safety and Security concerns when travelling; the anxiety these leads to and the desire for reassurance
- Journey planning and reliable information (especially for when services are cancelled): Desire for apps which cover all modes
- More reliable public transport and cleaner buses

Further information

Full engagement results are available at

Stage 1: Main issues engagement:

Consultation Summary Note, January 2022

Report to Partnership <u>RTP/21/26</u> 'A New Regional Transport Strategy: Objective Setting' 14 September 2021

Appendix A 'Main Issues: Consultation Report'

Stage 2: Options identification 'A conversation about changing how we travel'

Consultation Summary Note: 'A conversation about changing how we travel' February 2023

Report to Partnership <u>RTP/22/32</u> 'A New Regional Transport Strategy: A Conversation about changing how we travel: consultation summary' 13 December 2022

Quantitative public opinion research

Stage 3: Draft strategy consultation

Report to Partnership RTP/23/36 'A New Regional Transport Strategy' 12 December 2023

Representative public opinion survey

Contact

For further information, please

Visit the RTS page on the Tactran website https://tactran.gov.uk/

or

Contact: Info@tactran.gov.uk or 01738 475775

Organisations that have taken part in the RTS engagement exercises

Stage 1: Identification of main issues

Transport Authorities: Transport Scotland; Network Rail; SPT; SEStran; Nestrans; HITRANS; Angus, Dundee, Perth and Kinross and Stirling Councils' transport officers; Fife Council; Angus Road Safety Member Officer Working Group; Perth and Kinross Mobility Board

Public Bodies: Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority; Perth and Kinross Council Corporate Management Group; Tay Cities Heads of Economic Development; Stirling Economic Development; TayPlan Officers; Tay Cities Innovative and International Board; NHS Tayside; Forth Valley College; Scottish Enterprise; Abertay University; NatureScot; Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership; Angus Transport Network

Community Planning: Stirling CPP; Angus CPP; Angus Transport Network; Stirling Area Access Panel; Forth Valley Multicultural partnership; St Andrews University

Other transport bodies: Sustrans; Cycling Scotland; Living Streets; CoMo; Scottish Timber Transfer; Road Haulage Association; Scotrail

Third Sector: Royal Voluntary Service; Enable Scotland; Stirling Area Access Panel; Forth Valley Multicultural partnership

Public groups

Balquhidder and Strathyre Community Council

Stage 2: Options engagement 'A conversation about how we travel'

Transport Authorities: Network Rail; SEStran; Nestrans; Angus, Dundee, Perth and Kinross and Stirling Councils' transport officers; Fife Council; Perth and Kinross Mobility Board

Public Bodies: Tay Cities City Region Deal Management Group; Tay Cities Heads of Economic Development; NHS Tayside; NHS Forth Valley; NatureScot; Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority

Community Planning: Angus CPP; Perth and Kinross CPP; Stirling CPP; Angus Transport Network; Dundee Transport Forum; Stirling Child Poverty Working Group (CPP meetings included Police; Fire; HSCPs; Scottish Enterprise; DWP; Skills Development Scotland)

Other transport bodies: Sustrans; Cycling Scotland; Living Streets

Third Sector: Royal Voluntary Service

Public groups

Stage 2: Options engagement 'A conversation about how we travel'

- Blackford Community Council; Strathallan Community Rail Partnership
- Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament; Youth Voices Stirling

Stage 3: Consultation on the draft strategy

Transport Authorities Network Rail; SPT; SEStrans, Nestrans; HITRANS; Transport Scotland

Public Bodies: Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority; Tay Cities Tourism Officers; TayCitiesDeal Management Group & Heads of Economic Development; Cairngorms NPA; Fife Council; NHS Forth Valley

Community Planning: Dundee Plan Management Group; Angus CPP; Stirling CPP; Angus Community Resilience Forum

Other transport bodies: Scotrail; Active Travel Partners

Third Sector: Community Transport Association; Strathallan CRP

Public groups

- · Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament;
- Dundee Transport Forum
- Monifieth Community Council
- Stirling Community Councils
- Fossoway and District Community Council
- Dunblane Community Council
- Muthill and Tullibardine Community Council
- Cycle Stirling
- · Buchlyvie Community Council
- Climate Action Strathearn
- Transforming Audience Travel Through Art