

A photograph of a woman and a young child riding bicycles on a paved path. The woman, on the right, has short brown hair and is wearing a bright pink t-shirt, blue jeans, and sunglasses perched on her head. She is smiling at the camera. The child, on the left, is wearing a yellow and red helmet and a high-visibility yellow safety vest over a white shirt. They are both riding towards the camera. In the background, another person in a yellow shirt is partially visible, and there are green trees and a clear sky.

West Lothian  
Active Travel Plan summary:

# **“Making Active Connections”**

(2016-2021)

# Welcome to West Lothian's first Active Travel Plan (2016-2021)



Springfield Primary School with their Cycle Friendly School banner

***“Making active connections” is a plan to link people to places by active travel. It’s not just about physical connections however - it is also a framework for mainstreaming active travel in West Lothian, and creating a culture where active travel becomes the norm for everyday suitable trips. To achieve this, it is crucial that West Lothian Council works successfully with external partners and with local communities, and “joins up” policies and projects delivered across the Council.***

## What is active travel?

Active travel is defined as **making journeys by walking, cycling and scooting**. It can also include horse-riding (and even running and non-motorised water-based transport.) It is an approach to travel and transport that focuses on physical activity as opposed to motorised means.

## Why do we need an Active Travel Plan?

This Active Travel Plan seeks to provide a policy framework which will inform and influence the development of policy and projects within the council and by external partners. It aims to understand the spatial travel needs of communities and tackle barriers to increased levels of active travel with all the benefits this brings to health, the environment and the economy. The development of the Plan has been informed by an evidence-led approach and community engagement.

The Active Travel Plan fulfils a requirement on local authorities to prepare a strategic approach to active travel, as set out in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) 2013.

### Why travel actively? It's:

- good for our health
- good for the environment
- good for the economy
- fair and equitable
- good for our quality of life

## What does this Active Travel Plan aim to achieve?

The vision for this Active Travel Plan is:

*“West Lothian is a place where people travel actively for everyday trips. From school children to employees, from jobseekers to those in retirement, they feel confident and safe in their active travel choices. Regardless of location, income levels, ethnicity, age or gender; active travel is a viable, affordable and enjoyable choice for residents, employees and visitors.*



*Communities are connected, and trips of up to 5 miles are routinely made by bike, with trips of up to 2 miles regularly made on foot. Our open and green spaces and thriving urban centres are easily accessible by active travel modes. Places are focused on people and not the private car."*

### **The strategic aims of the Active Travel Plan are:**

- create a safe, convenient, effective and direct active travel network (on- and off-road) for non-motorised users;
- create a culture of active travel, where people make informed travel choices; and
- achieve a shift away from the private car towards active travel modes for every-day, functional trips.

The Plan particularly focuses on supporting more walking, cycling and scooting for:

- shorter journeys (including journeys to rail stations, to town centres, retail and leisure destinations);
- the journey to school; and
- the journey to work.

### **Action Plans**

The Active Travel Plan contains actions focused on:

- creating a spatial network and infrastructure to support active travel;

- behaviour change to support more trips by active travel; and
- delivery including funding and partnership working.

### **Infrastructure**

Creating safe and adequate infrastructure for walking and cycling is a crucial element of any effort to encourage active travel. This Active Travel Plan focuses on infrastructure at a local level (within settlements) and at a strategic level (between towns and across boundaries). Overall, it aims to create a comprehensive active travel network to support active travel journeys.

To support the development of active travel infrastructure, the Plan prioritises:

- continuing to secure walking and cycling infrastructure in new development through the development management process;
- developing walking and cycling infrastructure according to established design guidance and good practice e.g. "Cycling by Design", Sustrans design guidance, Designing Streets;
- prioritising capital requests for new pedestrian and cycling paths in a clear and transparent manner which supports functional active travel within the prioritisation framework set out in the Plan;
- proactively seeking external funding for new active travel infrastructure in addition to that already committed in existing council budgets;
- developing appropriate infrastructure which responds to needs - on-road infrastructure to support functional cycling trips alongside off-road segregated and shared use paths to create a family friendly network;
- developing a network of strategic active travel connections between settlements, prioritising those within a 5 mile threshold of major destinations for services, education and work;
- delivery of local networks to support walking and cycling with a priority focus on access to schools, town centres, significant areas of employment, rail stations, community and leisure facilities (including parks and open spaces) – encompassed within new Local Active Travel Network Plans produced in partnership with communities;
- provision of lit and adequately maintained walking and cycling routes within an agreed hierarchy;



- provision of adequate cycle parking at schools and town and local centres, support for cycle parking and related facilities at workplaces, and continued work with Abellio Scotrail to secure additional cycle parking at stations;
- joint-working with external partners to ensure strategic active travel routes in and through West Lothian are represented and joined up in a regional context;
- support for the development of active travel routes and projects for leisure, access to open space, tourism and cycling as a sport; and
- building of active travel into green infrastructure and open space projects.

## Behaviour change

To support smarter travel choices and behaviour change, the Plan prioritises:

- cycle training in schools and with adults to develop confidence;
- development of school travel plans and participation by schools in sustainable travel events;
- workplace travel plans and associated promotion;
- information provision to support positive choices, including on the council's website, mapping, route-planning mechanisms;
- adequate signage on routes;
- campaigns and messages to encourage responsible driver behaviour and mutual respect amongst all transport network users;
- capacity building with communities to support community mapping, information provision, training and identification of infrastructure priorities to support more everyday walking and cycling;
- encouragement of the development of commercial bike hire schemes and continuation of bike lending libraries for those without access to a bike;
- provision of "All Ability Cycling" sessions and access to adaptive bikes for those who require additional support;
- effective integration of active travel measures into emerging air quality management action plans in Broxburn, Linlithgow and elsewhere;
- further development of the evidence base to support funding applications for external grants;
- promotion of sustainable travel to rail stations through mapping and cycle parking; and
- support for council staff to make active journeys for business travel.



Community Links ramp connecting the NCN 754 / Canal Towpath and Linlithgow Leisure Centre, funded by Sustrans Community Links and West Lothian Council in 2015 with wildflowers planted by the local community through Burgh Beautiful and Transition Linlithgow

## Funding and delivery

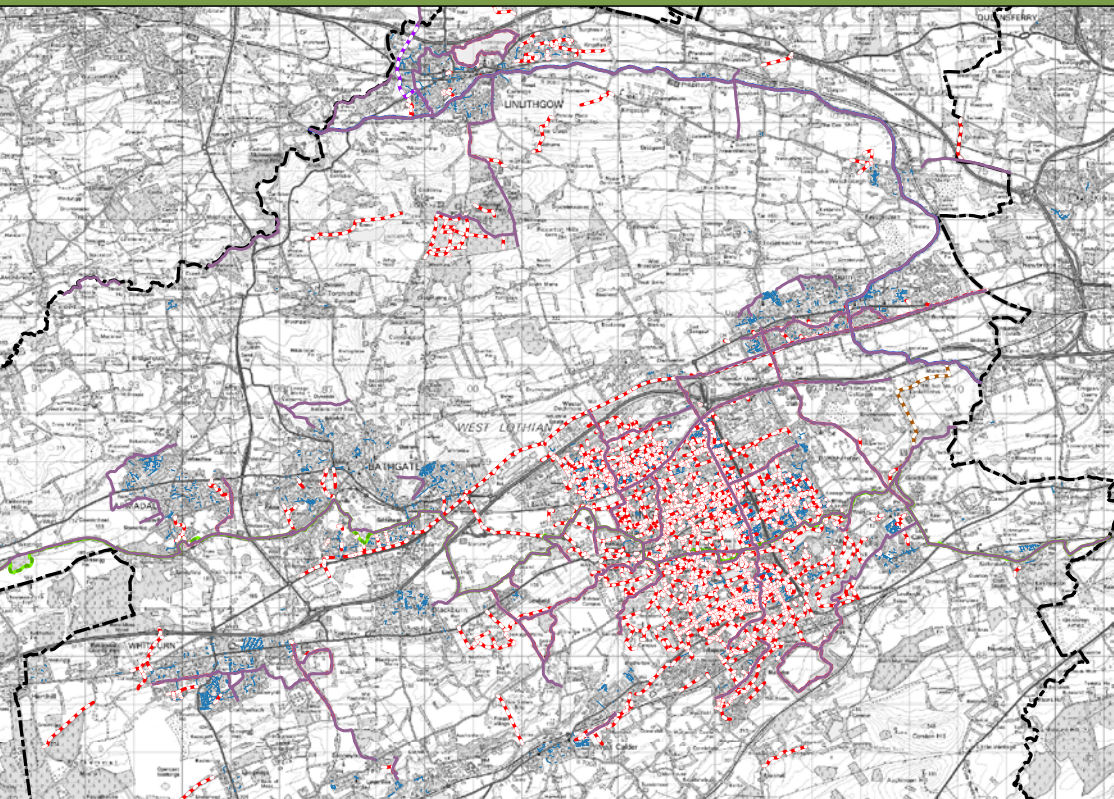
The council already commits investment to active travel from a variety of Services and in a variety of forms. Funding continues to be required to make progress on some actions. This funding will come from various sources, as it already does, internally and externally to the council. This Plan provides the framework to prioritise funding applications. Moreover, it aims to help the council proactively secure funding from a number of external sources by working in partnership and providing a consistent and evidence-based approach to active travel policy direction and associated projects development.

West Lothian Council will work to support active travel choices across the area to the best of their ability. There is a lot the council can do, particularly by working together across Services and teams within the council. The council cannot normalise active travel on its own however.

There is a need to work with Community Planning Partners, external national and local organisations, employers, communities – and every single individual in West Lothian.

(April 2016)





An overview of West Lothian's walking and cycling network (excluding footways), 2016.

**For more information** on how you can make smarter travel choices to benefit you, your community and the world around you, head to **[www.westlothian.gov.uk/smarter-travel](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/smarter-travel)**.

To access the full Active Travel Plan for West Lothian, visit **[www.westlothian.gov.uk/activetravel](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/activetravel)**

This booklet is available on request on CD, Braille, large print and community languages. Ask for the interpretation and translation service on 01506 280 000.