

WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY

CONSULTATION REPORT

NOVEMBER /2008

ABERDEEN
CITY AND
SHIRE

| *a brighter
outlook*

Moving
Aberdeenshire
Forward

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Between the 21st of July and 8th of September 2008, Aberdeenshire Council undertook consultation on its Walking and Cycling Strategy. The purpose of this report is to outline the key findings from this initial consultation process.

1.2 Walking and Cycling Strategy

In 2007, Aberdeenshire Council published its Local Transport Strategy (LTS) outlining a range of actions and policies that the Council will seek to implement to deliver the Strategy's central objective of travel behaviour change. One of the first daughter documents to emerge on the back of the LTS is the development of a Walking and Cycling Strategy including Action Plans outlining specific interventions (actions and policies) that will be implemented to increase levels of walking and cycling throughout the region.

Rather than develop and present a complete, detailed, Strategy for consultation, an initial consultation on a summary strategy was undertaken. A questionnaire was developed to investigate current levels of walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire and future opportunities that the Strategy should consider.

The outcomes of this consultation exercise are described in this report.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 Introduction

To obtain the views of a wide range of people and organisations on walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire, an extensive consultation process was carried out. This enabled the collection of a range of views on walking and cycling provision in Aberdeenshire.

This section details the consultation approach that was adopted for the purpose of consulting on the Walking and Cycling Strategy for Aberdeenshire.

2.2 Review of Background Information and Previous Consultation

Results

Prior to developing the Walking and Cycling Strategy, a review was undertaken of previous consultation and reports relevant to walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire. Reports reviewed have included:

- Cycling Scotland's National Assessment of Cycling Policy for Aberdeenshire Council (2008);
- Relevant Results from Local Transport Strategy Consultations (2005 and 2006);
- Relevant Results from the Aberdeenshire Council Staff Travel Plan Survey (2007); and
- Relevant Results from consultation on the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan (2006).

A summary of the main findings from the review of the above reports and consultation is included as Appendix A.

2.3 Strategy Summary and Questionnaire Distribution

The primary means of consultation on the Walking and Cycling Strategy was through the distribution of a Summary Strategy and Questionnaire, which sought views on current walking and cycling provision in Aberdeenshire and future opportunities that the Strategy should consider.

A consultation database was developed containing approximately 420 contacts, including walking and cycling groups in the region, access groups, representatives for young and older people groups in Aberdeenshire, Community Councils and a range of other stakeholders including those representing heritage, tourism and the environment.

Copies of the Summary Strategy and Questionnaire were sent out to all consultees. In addition, copies of the document and questionnaire were available for download from the Walking and Cycling Strategy homepage, and an online version of the questionnaire was also made available. A copy of the Summary Walking and Cycling Strategy and Questionnaire is included as Appendix B.

2.4 Posters

Through liaison with the Council's Ranger Service, posters promoting the consultation and how to get involved were displayed on various routes in

Aberdeenshire, including the Formartine & Buchan Way and the Deeside Way.

Cycle shops throughout the region were also sent copies of the poster along with a letter requesting that these are posted in accessible locations.

2.5 Website

The summary strategy and questionnaire were made available online on the Council's Transportation pages at: <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/transportation/strategy/WalkingandCyclingStrategy.asp>.

A film was also made and posted on to the Council's dedicated Travel Planning You Tube channel, the purpose of which was to highlight the consultation and invite comments.

2.6 Workshops

Young people were also actively involved in the consultation process and a workshop was held with primary five pupils at Hill of Banchory School on 4th September 2008. Equipped with digital cameras, pupils investigated walking and cycling routes within the town, taking photos of places where they thought improvements could be made.

2.7 Other Correspondence

Written responses on the Walking and Cycling Strategy were also encouraged and a dedicated email address was set up to capture any additional questions or comments in relation to the consultation.

2.8 Summary

This section has described the various methods of consultation undertaken to collect views on current levels of walking and cycling provision in Aberdeenshire and future opportunities that the Walking and Cycling Strategy should look to consider. The next chapter outlines the key findings from the consultation process.

3. Key Findings

3.1 Introduction

Having outlined the approach used to consult on the Summary Walking and Cycling Strategy and Questionnaire, this chapter describes the key findings and results of the consultation process.

3.2 Previous Consultation

Prior to developing the Walking and Cycling Strategy, a review was undertaken of previous consultation and reports relevant to walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire. Reports reviewed have included:

- Cycling Scotland's National Assessment of Cycling Policy for Aberdeenshire Council (2008);
- Relevant Results from Local Transport Strategy Consultations (2005 and 2006);
- Relevant Results from the Aberdeenshire Council Staff Travel Plan Survey (2007); and
- Relevant Results from consultation on the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan (2006).

Cycling Scotland's qualitative assessment of local authority cycling policy covering the policy areas of planning, actions and monitoring concluded that Aberdeenshire Council was one of the best performing local authorities with a score of 60%.

A review of Local Transport Strategy Consultations identified various barriers to walking and cycling, such as a lack of foot and cycle path provision and safety concerns. Possible incentives and options proposed to encourage more walking and cycling included the construction of short sections of new footway to link existing paths, the development of more cycle lanes and routes in Aberdeenshire, and the provision of more cycle storage.

A review was undertaken of the results from the Aberdeenshire Council Staff Travel Plan Survey (2007) and specifically those questions related to current levels of walking and cycling and measures that would encourage employees to walk and cycle to work. These included improved foot/cycle paths to work, shower and changing facilities, and access to a pool car for business travel.

Consideration was also given to the relevant results from initial consultation undertaken on the Council's Core Paths Plan in 2006. Key points made in relation to walking and cycling across Aberdeenshire were noted and recorded.

Appendix A presents detailed results from the review of the above documents and consultations.

3.3 Questionnaire

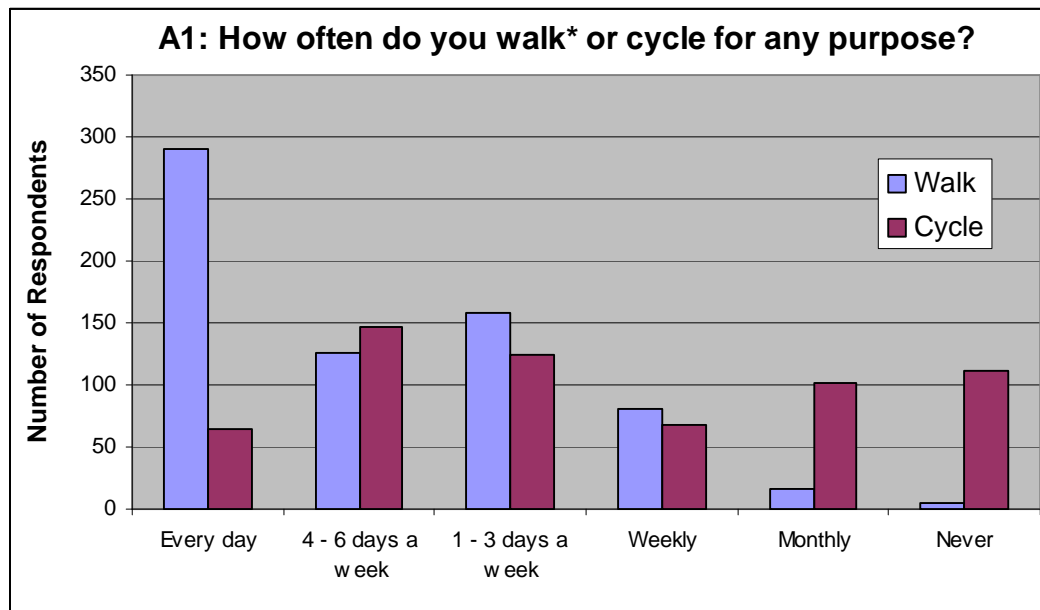
In total, 648 questionnaires were successfully completed. There was a wide coverage of responses from each of the main areas in Aberdeenshire, although 40% of responses were from people living in Aberdeen City. These

responses were not excluded from the overall analysis as it was felt that views of City residents on cycling provision in Aberdeenshire were equally valid.

In total, 94% responded on a personal basis, with the remaining 6% responding on behalf of organisations. Amongst the 44 organisations responding to the consultation were Community Councils, walking and hill-walking groups, cycle groups, agencies representing old and young people (e.g. over 50s groups, the boys brigade), Countryside Agencies and Groups (including the Cairngorms National Park), Nestrans, Scottish Enterprise, Visit Scotland and Grampian Police.

In the following, the results are broken down according to each consultation question.

Question A1) Frequency of walking and cycling

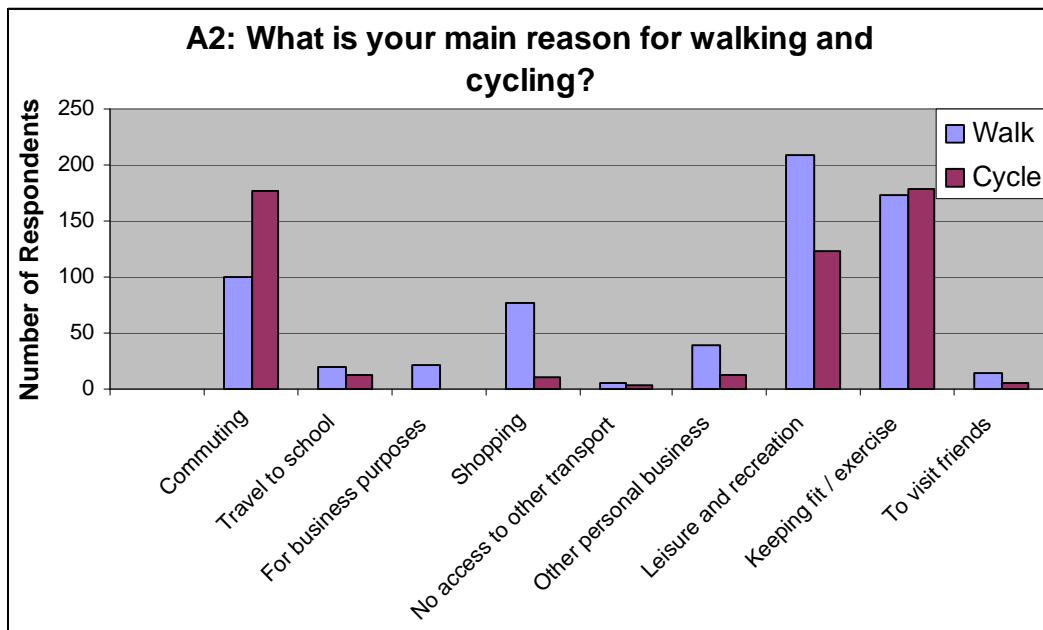


* For walking, respondents were asked to state only those trips of more than a quarter of a mile.

Nearly 43% of those who walked (for any purpose) did so every day and less than 1% stated that they never walked more than a quarter of a mile for any purpose. Approximately a quarter of cyclists cycled between 4 and 6 days a week, with a fifth cycling up to 3 days a week.

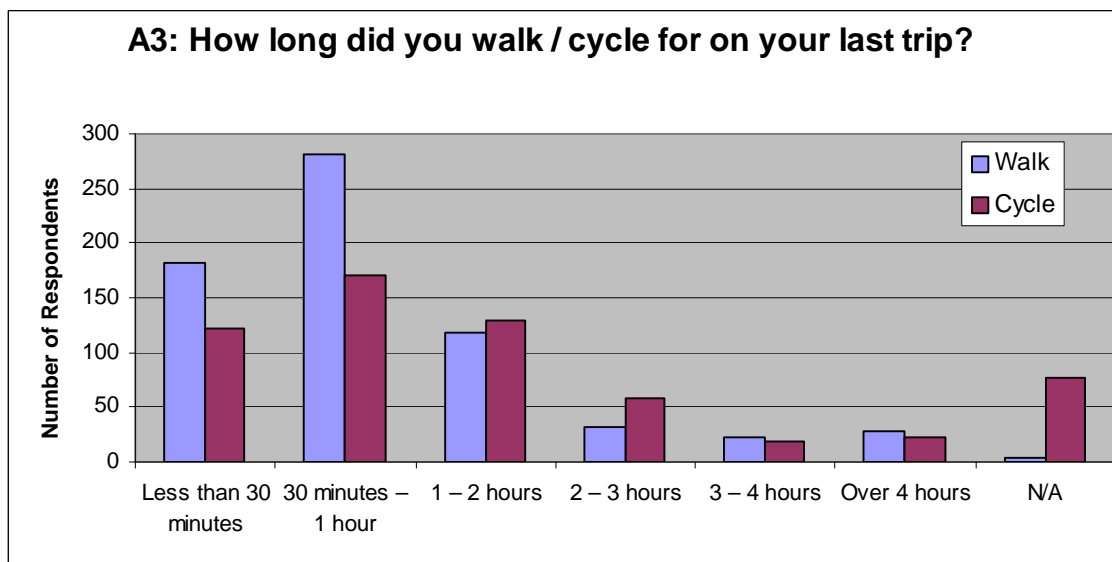
These statistics would tend to suggest that there is a bias in the results, with respondents to the questionnaire tending to be those who are already actively involved in walking and cycling. For example, results to similar questions from national surveys, which are based on a random sample of the public, such as the Scottish Household Survey, suggest walking and cycling levels amongst the general population are significantly lower than the results collected through this questionnaire.

Question A2) Trip purpose



Leisure and recreation was the most common reason for walking (31.4% of those who walked). Commuting to work and keeping fit/healthy/exercise were the two main reasons for cycling. Of those who provided alternative responses to the options listed, dog walking was the most frequently cited other main reason.

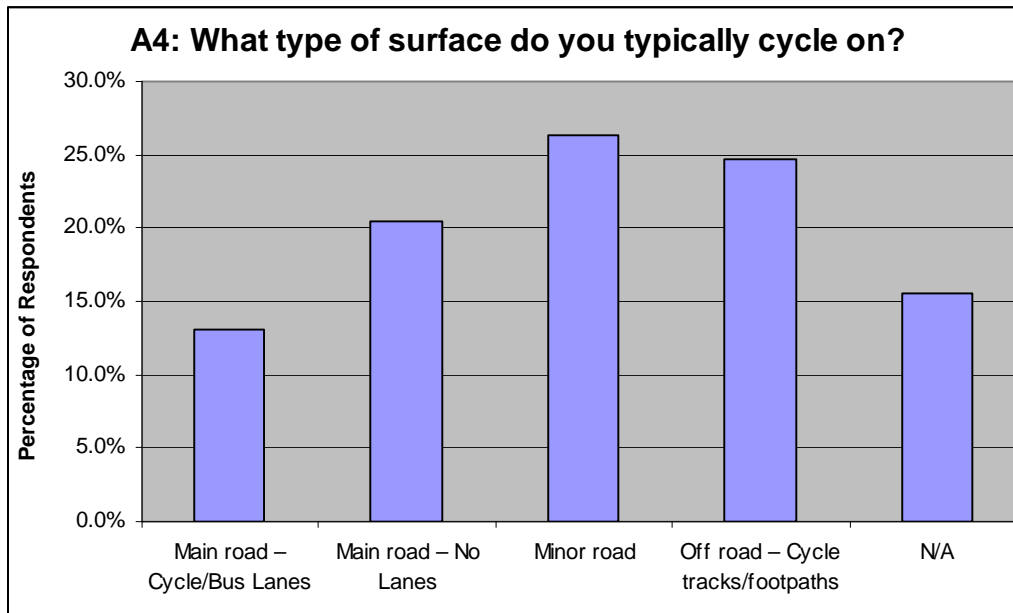
Question A3) Trip duration



In terms of duration of walking trips, survey results reveal that the majority of walking trips undertaken last between 30 minutes and one hour (42%). Assuming an average walking speed of 3 mph, this would represent a trip distance of 1.5 miles and 3 miles respectively. Taken together with those trips of less than 30 minutes, 70% of respondents state that they walked less than an hour for their last trip. The majority of cycling trips also lasted between 30

minutes and an hour (29%). Taking an average cycling speed of 10 mph, this would represent a trip distance of 5 and 10 miles respectively.

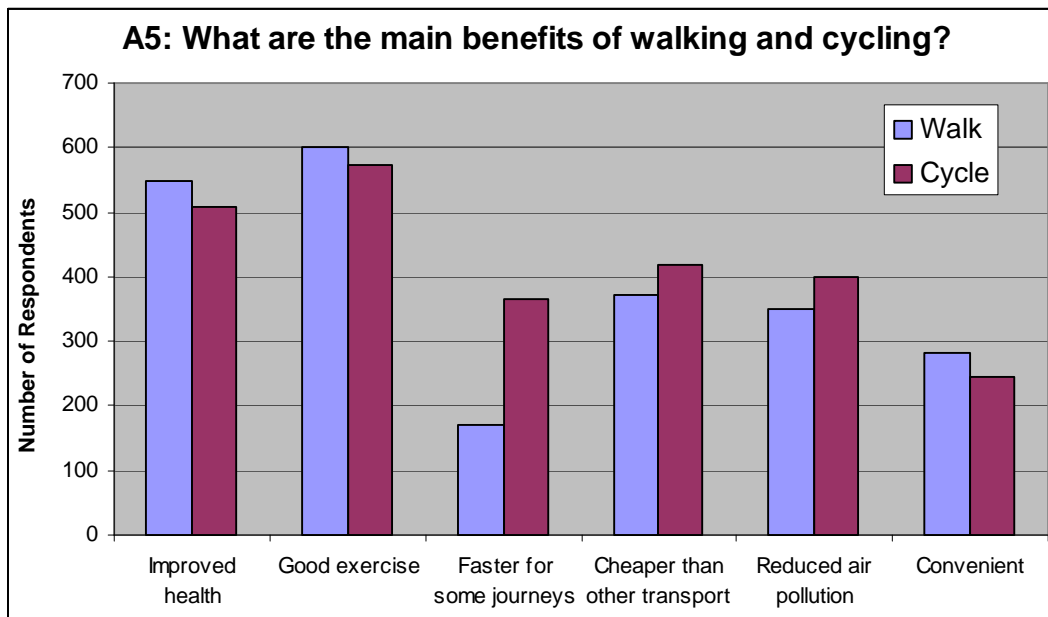
Question A4) Cycling surface



Current cyclists were asked to state the type of surface they typically cycled on. The majority of respondents to this question stated that they generally cycled on minor roads (26%). The next most common responses were main off-road routes (i.e. cycle tracks and footpaths parallel to roads) (25%) and main roads without cycle/bus lanes (21%).

A number of respondents also noted 'other' surfaces that they cycled on including the wide variety of off-road cycle routes (e.g. forest tracks). It should also be noted that many respondents noted that they cycled on more than one of the surface types equally and therefore could not comment on what was 'typical'.

Question A5) Main benefits of walking and cycling



The three most commonly cited benefits of walking and cycling were:

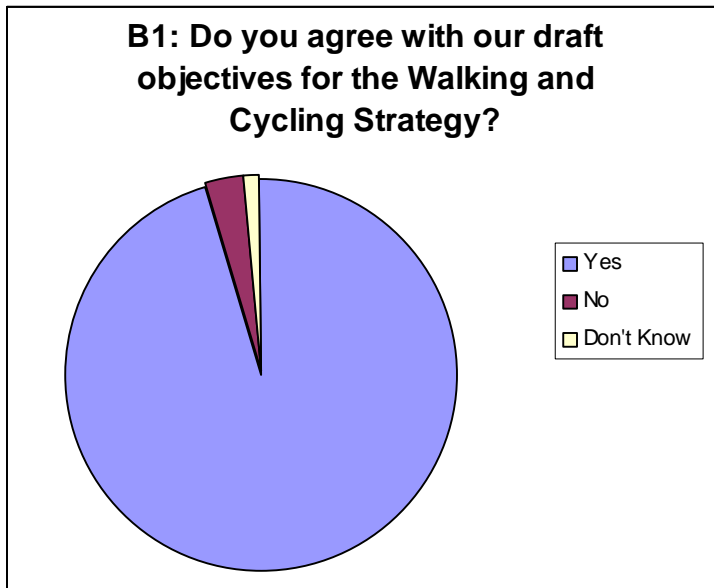
1. Good exercise;
2. Improved health; and
3. Cheaper than other transport.

It was notable from the results that respondents also acknowledged the environmental benefits of these modes (i.e. reduced air pollution). It was also notable that a high proportion of respondents acknowledged that for some journeys, cycling was a quicker mode of transport.

Frequent comments made by those providing 'other' benefits of walking and cycling, included:

- Walking and cycling provide the opportunity to enjoy the natural environment and the beautiful scenery and wildlife in the North East;
- Improved mental health and well-being;
- These modes are fun and less stressful;
- Walking and cycling are sociable modes (e.g. it is easy to stop off and talk to people when walking or cycling through town; and
- Other problems (e.g. finding a parking space) and expenses associated with owning and running a car (e.g. car tax, fuel, repairs) are removed if walking or cycling.

Question B1) Draft Objectives



Within the Summary Strategy and Questionnaire, four draft objectives were included with respondents asked to state whether or not they agreed with these objectives.

The draft objectives are:

Objective 1: To work with school children, staff and parents to encourage more walking and cycling to and from school;

Objective 2: To improve the safety of walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire, and contribute to national road safety targets;

Objective 3: To promote walking and cycling as alternative transport modes, particularly for short trips; and

Objective 4: To encourage and facilitate walking and cycling as leisure and tourist activities to provide benefits to health and the local economy.

The results show that an overwhelming majority (96%) of respondents supported the high level objectives for the Strategy.

Question B2) How could our objectives be improved?

Respondents were asked to comment on how the objectives could be improved. The main points and comments received are outlined below:

- Numerous respondents stated that the objectives should be listed in order of priority/importance;
- Objective 2 (to improve the safety of walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire, and contribute to national road safety targets) was frequently cited as the most important of the four objectives;
- Many respondents confused 'objectives' with 'actions';
- Infrastructure was viewed as poor and should be developed into objectives. It was frequently emphasised that there is a need for less talk about objectives etc. and more action. It was considered that by implementing the infrastructure on-the-ground, delivery of the objectives would naturally follow;

- It was commonly stated that following the best practice approaches adopted in Europe, particularly Holland, Denmark and Germany would be necessary to deliver the objectives;
- Some respondents stated the objectives were too specific in some cases (e.g. rather than increase walking and cycling for school pupils, this should also be the objective targeted for students);
- Conversely, some respondents stated that they felt the objectives were too vague and would not allow for the performance to be measured. It was stated that some quantitative goals (e.g. doubling the number of children walking to school, or the number of cyclist-kilometres) were needed.
- Specific wording issues were highlighted (e.g. promoting walking and cycling as 'alternative' transport modes gives the impression that these are secondary, minor modes in comparison to 'better' modes). It should be clearly stated that walking/cycling for short journeys should be the default;
- The need to work closely with the public, community groups, other councils and possible partners to deliver the objectives was repeatedly commented on;
- Greater reference should be made to vulnerable social groups when promoting the benefits of walking and cycling such as the young, elderly and disabled;
- Objectives should be developed that concentrate on improving maintenance standards of existing infrastructure used by pedestrians and cyclists;
- An objective should be included relating to improving the integration of cycling and public transport; and
- A specific objective relating to promoting cycling to work, including incentives, promotion and infrastructure at the workplace should be developed.

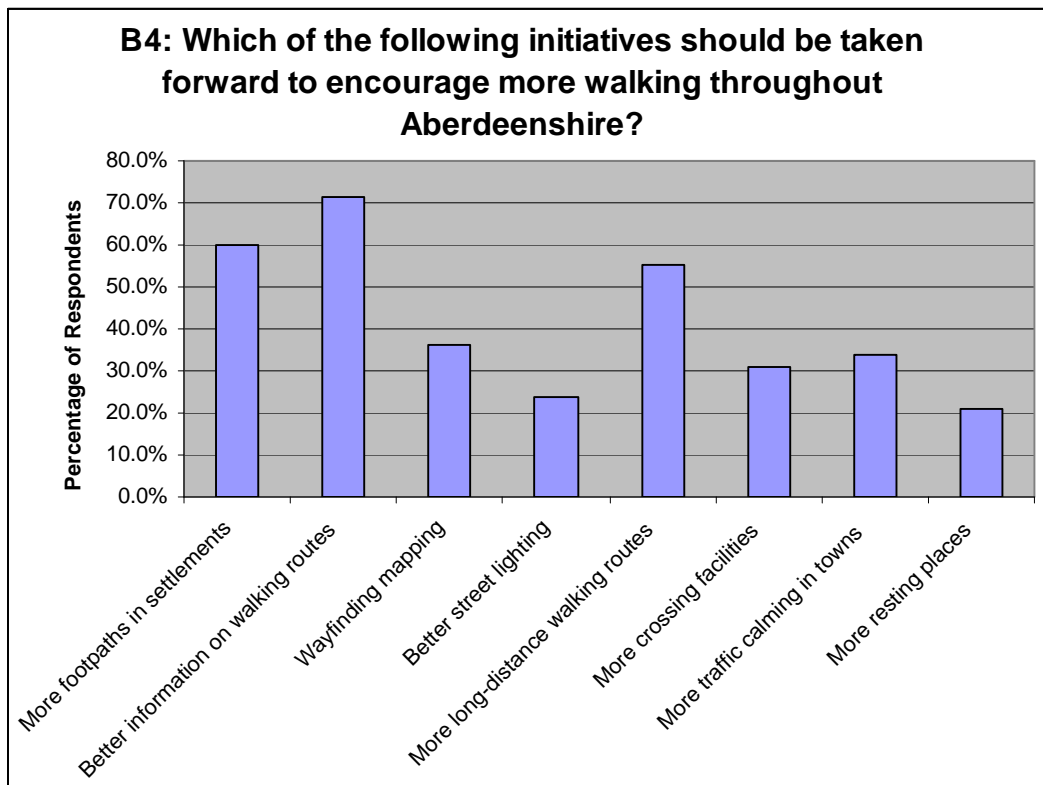
Going forward, the comments received in relation to the draft objectives for the Walking and Cycling Strategy will be used to review the precise wording of the objectives prior to producing the Final Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy.

Question B3) Barriers to walking and cycling

The main barriers to walking and cycling identified during the consultation are summarised below:

<i>Walking</i>	<i>Cycling</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of footpaths- Poor footpath maintenance (including drainage)- Safety: other road users- Safety, concerns of being attacked- Pollution- Lack of information/ signage on routes- Lack of other facilities e.g. public toilets, benches- The weather- Distance to travel- Drivers attitude to pedestrians- Traffic- Poor lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of (on-road) cycle lanes- Lack of (off road) cycle lanes- Safety concerns- Maintenance of existing routes- Lack of information/ signage on routes- The weather- Distance to travel- Drivers attitudes to cyclists- Traffic (particularly speed)- Poor lighting- Poor integration with public transport services- Poor facilities e.g. not enough cycle lockers, pool cars (i.e. some would cycle but don't as they need their car for part of their working day)- Image

Question B4) Initiatives to encourage more walking



In response to options that could encourage greater levels of walking throughout the region, the three most preferred measures were as follows:

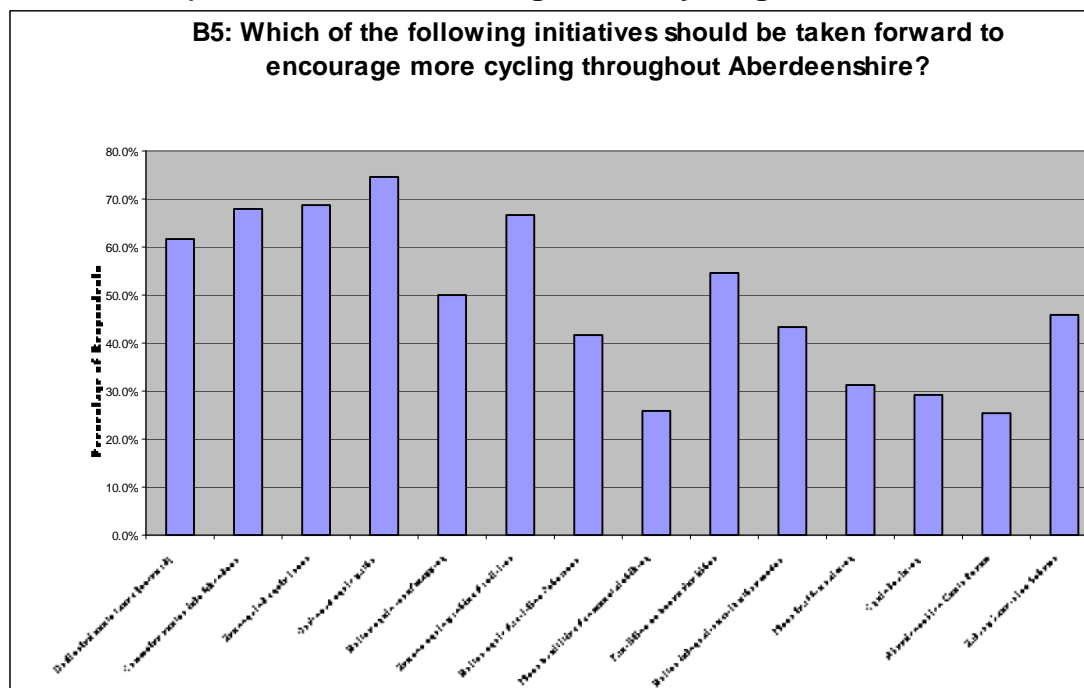
1. Better information on walking routes (72%);
2. More footpaths in settlements (60%); and
3. More long-distance walking routes (55%).

It is interesting to note that the most common measure is a “soft” measure and does not relate to the provision of additional physical infrastructure.

It is also interesting to note that there is almost equal weight put on improved infrastructure within towns and for longer distance walks.

A number of other suggestions for encouraging walking in Aberdeenshire were also given, including the provision of more footpaths between settlements, better maintenance of existing routes, greater integration between walking routes and public transport, as well as more traffic calming,

Question B5) Initiatives to encourage more cycling



Similar to B4, respondents were asked to outline which initiatives they believe should be taken forward to encourage more cycling throughout Aberdeenshire. While, in general, there was an even split amongst the options, with each of the initiatives receiving some level of support, the three priority actions according to respondents were as follows:

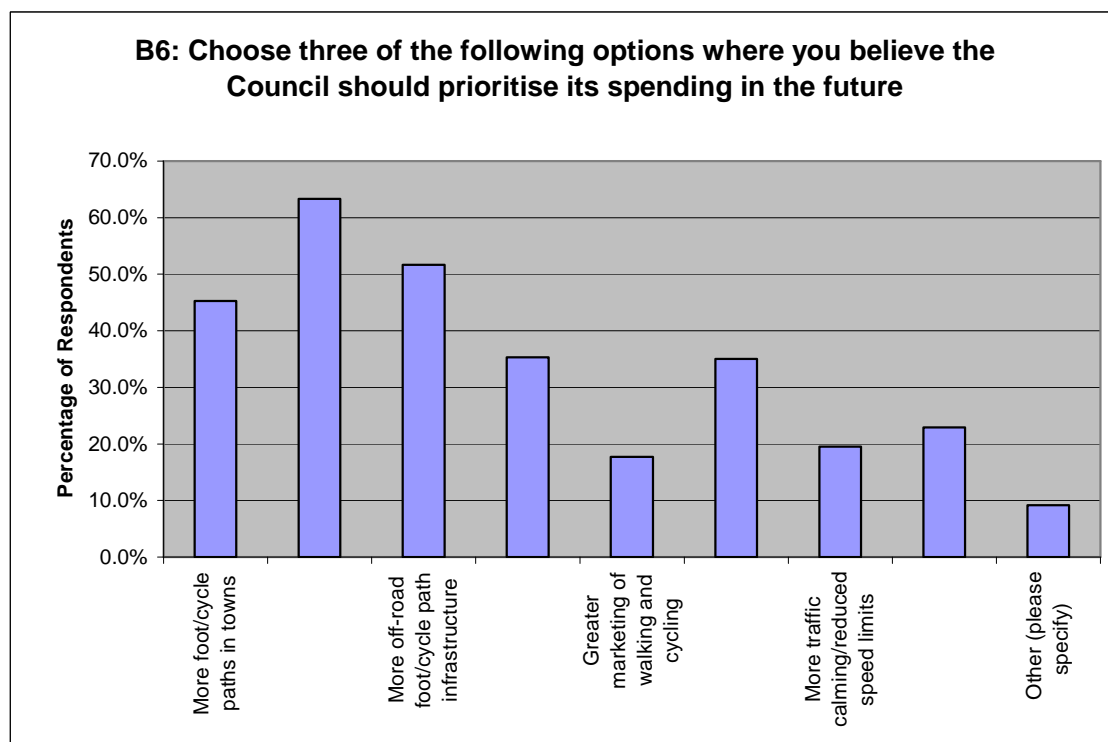
1. Off-road cycle paths (75%);
2. Segregated cycle lanes adjacent to roads (69%); and
3. Commuter cycle routes into Aberdeen (68%).

It is clear from the results that those actions that tended to receive the greatest level of support are 'hard' infrastructure measures, (not only the top three, but other actions such as secure cycle parking facilities (67%)). However, it is also to be noted there was support for soft measures, such as the introduction of salary sacrifice / bike to work schemes.

In terms of 'other' responses, these included:

- Education for motorists to increase their awareness of cyclists;
- Bicycle hire / rental schemes;
- Maintenance of existing routes;
- Upgrading of dismantled railway tracks in and around Aberdeenshire;
- Cycle paths to be built into new developments; and
- More long distance routes and links between settlements.

Question B6) Prioritisation of spending on walking and cycling initiatives



Respondents were provided with a number of options that could be used to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and asked to choose the three options that they believe the Council should prioritise spending in the future. According to results the three options, which the Council should seek to prioritise future investment, are as follows:

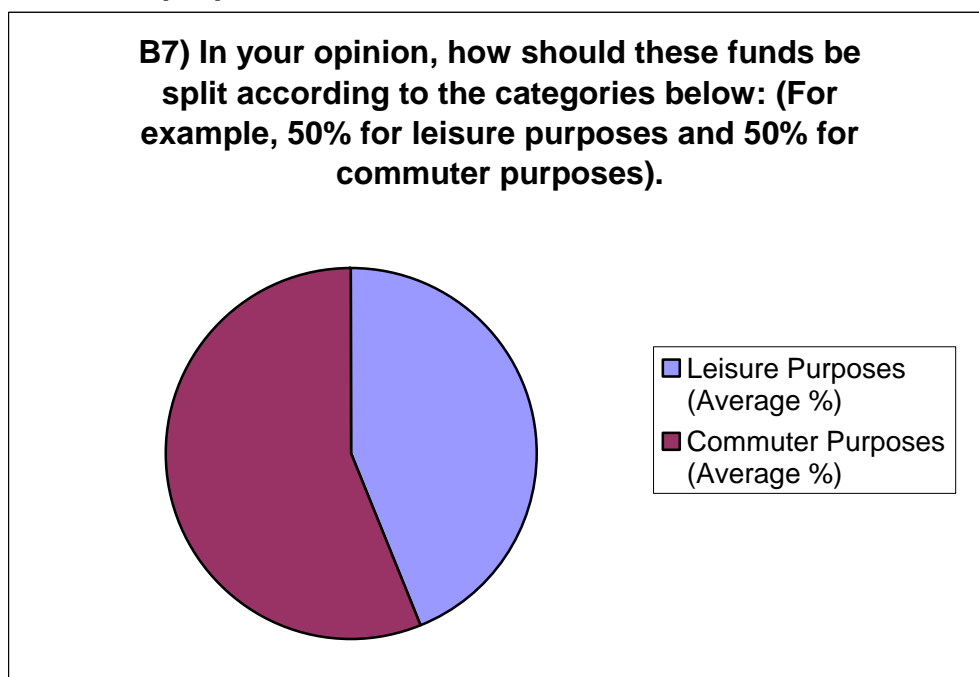
1. More foot/cycle paths between towns (64%);
2. More off-road foot/cycle path infrastructure (52%); and
3. More foot/cycle paths in towns (45%).

The results again confirm that there is a general consensus amongst the respondents to the questionnaire that the Council should concentrate improvements through the delivery of hard infrastructure measures.

In terms of other responses received, these included:

- Education for motorists;
- More mapping and signage on routes; and
- Integration of cycling and public transport.

Question B7) How should the funds be split between leisure and commuter purposes?



Respondents were also asked to outline how they would like to see the Councils investment in walking and cycling split in the future between measures to improve facilities for those taking part in walking and cycling as a leisure activity, and those who walked or cycled as a means to get somewhere (i.e. for commuting purposes). There was generally an even split amongst respondents as to where the Council should split its funds. Slightly more (56%) favoured expenditure geared towards commuter purposes, but there was wide support for spending funds on improving provision for leisure purposes.

Question B8) Promoting walking/cycling tourism and walking/cycling as a leisure activity

In response to the question as to “what could be done to promote walking / cycling tourism and walking / cycling as a leisure activity?” the main comments were as follows:

- More facilities need to be provided (e.g. BMX and off-road tracks). Facilities like these, aimed at youth groups, can in turn reduce social problems i.e. vandalism;
- To have more information available on cycling opportunities; routes; signposts, leaflets, brochures, maps, on-line information;
- Cycling and walking activities available for all social groups;
- More competitions and events to encourage people to walk and cycle for recreation;
- Raising awareness of the health and environmental benefits of walking and cycling;
- Greater marketing/publicity of walking and cycling and encouraging celebrities to be involved in advertisement campaigns (particularly stemming on the back of recent cycling success at the 2008 Olympics);

- Making bikes easier to hire / purchase;
- Developing the extra services around cycling i.e. storage, accommodation, toilets, bike wash facilities etc;
- Create transport links to key walking and cycling areas; and
- To firstly improve infrastructure before promoting.

Question B9) Other comments

Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments that they wished to make regarding the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

We received overwhelming support for the walking and cycling strategy from the comments made in the questionnaire. The majority of comments were satisfied that Aberdeenshire Council had given them an opportunity to express their views and encouraged continuous consultation throughout the development of the strategy.

Other comments included the importance of tackling the safety aspect of walking and cycling and the need to develop objectives around this theme. A number of other ideas and initiatives to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling were also provided and, going forward, these will be developed into an action plan within the strategy.

3.4 Workshops

While the primary means of consultation on the Walking and Cycling Strategy was through the questionnaire (the results of which are discussed above) in an effort to ensure the involvement of young people in the consultation, a workshop was held with pupils at Hill of Banchory Primary School.

Pupils were split into small groups and, equipped with digital cameras, walked along routes around their school, taking photos of barriers to walking and cycling in the town. Back in the class, the pupils then discussed the photos that they had taken and the improvements that they would like to see made in order to make walking and cycling through the town more attractive and easier. A summary of the key results from this consultation is outlined below.

Problems / Barriers	Solutions / Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overgrown vegetation • Narrow pavements • Holes in pavements • Busy roads • Vandalism / litter • Parked cars blocking the way / making it difficult to cross the road • Not enough other places to park bikes • Poor drainage causes puddles • Slippery, dangerous paths when it's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More footpaths • More cycle paths • More cycle parking • Better lit paths • More crossing opportunities (e.g. pedestrian and zebra crossings) • Reduced vehicle speeds (e.g. traffic calming, speed cameras) • Raised kerbs (to help people get on the bus) • Dropped kerbs (to make it easier

icy	for people to cross the road with buggies) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grit bins• Cut-back vegetation (write letter to owners)• Special pavements for those who have disabilities (e.g. tactile paving)
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3.5 Summary

This chapter of the report has presented the results from the consultation on the Summary Walking and Cycling Strategy. The following section outlines the steps going forward in preparing the Final Walking and Cycling Strategy for Aberdeenshire.

4. Going Forward

4.1 Going Forward

This report has outlined the consultation approach that has been adopted for the purpose of consulting on a Summary Walking and Cycling Strategy along with the outcomes and findings from this consultation.

Taking on board the results of the consultation, the next stage in the process of developing a Walking and Cycling Strategy is to prepare a more formal Final Draft Strategy, which will contain more specific emphasis on the key actions that the Council will look to implement to deliver the strategy objectives. These actions will be heavily informed by the results from the public consultation, particularly those questions concerning measures that the public would like to see the Council to take forward to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling throughout the region.

It is envisaged that a Final Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy will be produced and subject to further final consultation in early 2009. Taking on board these comments, a final Walking and Cycling Strategy will then be published.

Appendix A: Review of Background Information and Previous Consultation Results related to Walking and Cycling in Aberdeenshire

A.1 Introduction

Prior to developing the Walking and Cycling Strategy, a review was undertaken of previous consultation and reports relevant to walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire. Reports reviewed have included:

- Cycling Scotland's National Assessment of Cycling Policy for Aberdeenshire Council (2008);
- Relevant Results from Local Transport Strategy Consultations (2005 and 2006);
- Relevant Results from the Aberdeenshire Council Staff Travel Plan Survey (2007); and
- Relevant Results from consultation on the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan (2006).

This following section outlines the key findings from the review of each of these documents/consultations, which should be considered in taking forward the Aberdeenshire Walking and Cycling Strategy.

A.2 Cycling Scotland's National Assessment of Cycling Policy for Aberdeenshire Council (2008)

In 2008, Cycling Scotland published the results from their national assessment of Cycling Policy. The National Assessment 2008 is a qualitative assessment of local authority cycling policy. The purpose of the study is to encourage an organisational culture that ensures cycling becomes a realistic travel and leisure choice for the traveling public.

As part of the Study, which builds on the initial survey undertaken in 2005, each local authority is scored against qualitative criteria across nine key aspects covering the policy areas of planning, actions and monitoring. The study incorporates a review of self-assessment submissions and supporting policy documents.

Overall, Aberdeenshire was one of the best performing local authorities with a score of 60% (also scoring 60% were Edinburgh, Falkirk and Scottish Borders). Fife Council was the best performing Local Authority with 71%. The Council's 2008 score marks a rise of 10% since the last assessment of local authorities in 2005.

The 2008 national average was 42%. Specific areas where the Council's actions and policies in relation to cycling received positive feedback were in relation to leadership and commitment (up 17% to 77%); Strategy (up 7% to 67%); Infrastructure development (up 9% to 63%); and Cycle Skills Development (up 20% to 60%). The only area where the Council saw a reduction in its score was in 'marketing' (down 5% to 55%).

In terms of overall performance, according to Cycling Scotland's ranking system, Aberdeenshire Council performance was classified as 'Level 3 – Co-ordinated Approach' (60%).

The full results from the survey are outlined in the tables below.

Overall Score

Aberdeenshire Council		
	2008 Performance	2005 Performance
<i>Overall Score</i>	60%	51%

Policy Areas

Aberdeenshire Council		
Policy Areas	2008 Performance	2005 Performance
<i>Planning</i>	68%	54%
<i>Actions</i>	60%	52%
<i>Monitoring</i>	50%	42%

Topics

Aberdeenshire Council		
Topic	2008 Performance	2005 Performance
<i>Leadership & Commitment</i>	77%	60%
<i>Strategy</i>	67%	60%
<i>Resources & Co-ordination</i>	59%	40%
<i>Cycle Skills Development</i>	60%	40%
<i>Infrastructure</i>	63%	54%
<i>Marketing</i>	55%	60%
<i>Policy & Strategy Evaluation</i>	60%	60%
<i>Monitoring Cycling</i>	46%	36%
<i>Understanding Users & Stakeholders</i>	60%	40%

The study also outlined a number of recommendations that the Council should seek to act upon in order to ensure progress in this field is maintained, including through:

- Incorporate indicators on cycle use into the Single Outcome Agreement
- Develop cycling action plan cutting across policy areas to support strategy delivery
- Dedicate more time for a lead cycling officer to co-ordinate cycling actions
- Develop senior level Steering Group to implement actions across policy areas
- Introduce delivery of multi-stage child cycle training
- Develop system of adult led-cycle ride provision for key targets groups

- Make use of Cycle Audit and Review procedures for all new and existing transport infrastructure
- Develop holistic network plans
- Improve integration between cycles and public transport
- Develop an outcome-based marketing strategy for cycling
- Develop public reporting of local cycle use indicators
- Establish network of automated cycle counters
- Engage users as partners in decision-making

Going forward, these recommendations will be considered further in preparing the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

A.3 LTS Consultation Report (August 2005)

To summarise the results from initial consultation undertaken to assist with the redevelopment of the Council's LTS in 2005, a consultation report was produced. The main comments and findings made in relation to walking and cycling are outlined below.

Walking

Barriers to Walking

- The lack of footpaths in certain areas is seen as a barrier to walking.
- Difficult to encourage people to walk or cycle if they do not feel safe.
- There are not many safe places to walk in the countryside and it is usually the case that people have to drive before arriving at an area to begin their walk.
- A number of walking opportunities are lost in road upgrade schemes when roads are widened or improved from the perspective of car users but then become more dangerous for walkers (and cyclists) when cars are encouraged to pass each other at speed with no room for the pedestrian (or cyclist).

Schools

- Cars at school gates cause problems – the Council should promote walking buses.
- Children should be encouraged to walk to school – e.g. by upgrading footpath links to schools.
- Encouraging children to cycle when they are young – can increase the potential of providing a sustainable transport system in the future with increased levels of cycling. This can be achieved through the promotion of walking and cycling buses at school and by making the areas around schools more compatible for walking and cycling.
- The integration of travel plans with the eco-schools initiative was viewed as being advantageous in educating children about the holistic benefits of increased walking, cycling and public transport use.

Incentives / Options etc

- Locating car parks further away from town centres and encouraging car-users to walk into towns is better than providing car parks in the heart of towns and cities.
- Short sections of new footway could be constructed to link existing paths and areas of wide verge to create footway networks at relatively little cost (and also off-road cycleways).
- Linking bypasses together could increase walking opportunities.

Cycling

Cycle Storage etc

- Need to improve the provision of cycle parking at stations, and cycle carriages on buses.
- Cycle storage
 - Commented there is a need for cycle storage / cycle racks and facilities for cyclists and pedestrians (e.g. showers, changing rooms, lockers, secure parking) at existing developments.
 - Cycle lockers at railways stations are a good idea – better if they did not need to be hired for long periods (Stonehaven).
 - More people would cycle if there were more buses/coaches with cycle storage.

Cycle Lanes/Tracks etc

- Not enough cycle lanes or routes in Aberdeenshire; more cycle lanes/footways would encourage more walking/cycling.
- Signage and lining should be provided to make it clear that cyclists should be given priority at junctions.
- More off-road, amenity routes / Use of farm roads for cycle ways.
- No parking on cycle lanes should be enforced.

Surfacing

- Buchan Line should be resurfaced.
- The Council should put an end to spray-on patching on major routes. Degrades quickly under HGV traffic and provides a terrible surface for cycling.

Incentives / Options etc

- Defined bike routes to other key surrounding points could encourage increased levels of cycling. These will often be short routes to allow access through otherwise dangerous or intimidating points of the road network which give access to adjacent facilities.
- Provision of separated bike routes.
- Cheaper travel on trains for cyclists, the provision of area maps, improved cycle facilities (see above) and tax breaks for employees that cycle to work.

A.4 LTS Consultation Report (October 2006)

Following on from the development of a Draft Local Transport Strategy, the Council undertook a further stage of consultation inviting views on this document. The results from this consultation exercise undertaken in 2006, which are of relevance to this study, are outlined below.

General Points

- Agreed that walking and cycling are healthy and sustainable modes of transport and as such should be promoted.
- Cycling is seen as politically correct, but unrealistic in the context of an ageing population and North East climate.
- Infrastructure for walking and cycling should be located between areas where this a high demand for transport.
- No new housing development should be permitted without proper provision for walking and cycling.
- Walking and cycling can only be useful if the required journey is short enough.
- Walking the most socially inclusive transportation mode.
- Walking as a viable alternative to the car for short journeys within Aberdeenshire settlements.

Walking

Routes etc

- Rather than develop full concrete footpaths with lighting, which distort the rural sense of place in Aberdeenshire, simple gravel paths could suffice in some locations.
- Possibility of parking school transport further away from the school gates and encouraging children to walk the rest of the way.
- Walking clubs.

Cycling

Cycle Storage etc

- Bus stops/stations and train stations need more secure cycle storage / cyclists need to know that there will be sufficient, bookable cycle spaces on services.
- Parking facilities.
- Out of town parking options for cyclists' cars (park and cycle) e.g. connectivity with the Deeside Way.

Cycle Lanes/Tracks etc

- More cycle routes are required in Aberdeenshire.
- More off-road cycle routes, separated from the road.
- More cycle routes into and around the Cairngorms NP.
- Further development of the Deeside Way.
- Some of the current cycle lanes are dangerous. Portlethen for example has cycle lanes defined with road markings, which encourages cars

and bikes to use the same road, separated by paint lines only. Cycle lanes, which are physically separated from the road, with a grass verge, are preferred.

Incentives/Options etc

- Greater promotion of cycling as a recreational and leisure pursuit.
- Timetables need to market walking and cycling opportunities from PT routes.

A.5 Aberdeenshire Council Staff Travel Survey (2007)

A review was also undertaken of the results from the Council's 2007 Travel Plan Survey and specifically those questions related to current levels of walking and cycling (Q12 and Q13), and measures that would encourage employees to walk and cycle (Q16 and Q17). The results from these questions are presented below.

Q12. Which form of transport do you NORMALLY use for the purpose of travelling to work?

- 1,692 answered the question
- 152 travel on foot (9.0%)
- 25 travel by bicycle (1.5%)
 - Overall, **10.5%** walk or cycle to work.

Q13. If your normal mode is unavailable which would be your next most likely form of transport to use when travelling to work?

- 1,642 answered the question
- 211 would travel on foot (12.9%)
- 44 would travel by bicycle (2.7%)
 - Overall, **15.6%** would walk or cycle to work.

Q16. Measures which would encourage employees to WALK or CYCLE to work

- Of the 1,623 who answered the question, most stated none of the measures stated / not applicable.
- Other responses:
 - Improved footpaths/cycle paths to work (279 responses, 17.2%)
 - Shower and changing facilities (231 responses, 14.2%)
 - Access to a pool car for business travel (217 responses, 13.4%)
 - A guaranteed ride home in an emergency (203 responses, 12.5%)
 - Better storage facilities at work for clothes, shoes and other equipment (197, 12.1%)
 - Workplace discounts for purchase of bicycles (162, 10.0%)
 - Improved quality of cycle storage facilities (144, 8.9%)
 - Improved capacity of cycle storage facilities at work (105, 6.5%)
 - If public transport could carry bikes (96, 5.9%)
 - Information on safe walking/cycling routes to work (95, 5.9%)
 - An Employee Cycle User Group (34, 2.1%).

Q17. *If none of the above, is there something else that would encourage you to walk or cycle?*

- Responses included:
 - Cycle lane on the A96
 - Better public transport connections
 - Better street lighting
 - Drying area for wet clothes
 - However a significant number of respondents stated that they live too far away to consider walking or cycling to work / other reasons such as the weather are also a deterrent.
 - Some employees stated they would use public transport more if there were more footpath links to public transport access points (Q19).

A.6 Core Paths Plan Consultation Report (2006)

Finally, as part of the background review, consideration was given to the relevant results from initial consultation undertaken on the Council's Core Paths Plan in 2006. Key points made in relation to walking and cycling are outlined below, according to the areas in which the comments refer.

Westhill

- Safe cycle routes for children in Westhill
- Safe walking links to Cairnie Woods; Brimmond Hill; Kirkhill/Tyrebagger Woods
- Cycle/walking path around Elrick School

Portlethen

- Need safe Portlethen-Aberdeen cycle route (East of the A90)

Mintlaw

- Safe route from Old Deer village to Stuartfield village (walkers, joggers, cyclists)
- Access provision: Formartine and Buchan Way

Laurencekirk

- Need for off-road paths
- Lack of pavements – Laurencekirk; Fettercairn

Inverurie

- Off-road provision
- Need path links between settlements
- Need cycle routes leaflet

Huntly

- Routes out of Huntly into surrounding countryside
- Routes around Inch

Fyvie

- Safe route to school from north of Oldmeldrum

- Safe cycle route between Fyvie and minor road from St John's Well
- Barthol Chapel – need for safe routes to school around the village

Fraserburgh

- Strong interest from local rambling group

Ellon

- Problems in places accessing Formartine and Buchan Way but not specific
- Keen to see safe routes to Formartine and Buchan Way north of Ellon
- Cycle/footpath along A90 Ellon-Aberdeen and Newburgh/Foveran
- Ensure new developments in Ellon are linked to existing routes
- Macdonald Park safe route to Ellon Primary
- Cycle suitable path on east side of Ellon

Banff

- Routes in Banff/Macduff area suffering from lack of maintenance
- Wish to extend Turriff Railway Line walk northwards to Macduff

Banchory

- Need to link up existing routes

Balmedie

- Non motorised commuting route to Aberdeen or Bridge of Don
- Cycling links to Formartine and Buchan Way

Aboyne

- More walks needed for the public

Appendix B: Summary Walking and Cycling Strategy and Questionnaire

Walking & Cycling Strategy – Summary

Introduction

In 2007, Aberdeenshire Council published its Local Transport Strategy (LTS) outlining a range of actions and policies that the Council will seek to implement to deliver the Strategy's central objective of travel behaviour change. One of the first projects to emerge on the back of the LTS is the development of a Walking & Cycling Strategy including Action Plans outlining specific interventions (actions and policies) that will be implemented to increase levels of walking and cycling throughout the region.

The purpose of this summary is to bring to your attention the development of the Council's new Walking & Cycling Strategy, the key benefits that the Strategy will deliver, and to outline how you can get involved!

Why do we need a Walking & Cycling Strategy?

Walking and cycling can deliver many benefits. These sustainable, active forms of transport can contribute to improving health, improving accessibility to employment and other local services and can help to reduce our carbon footprint. In Aberdeenshire, the promotion of walking and cycling can also deliver economic benefits through tourism and recreation.

Whether walking to school or the shops, or cycling to work or for leisure, this Walking & Cycling Strategy is being developed with the aim to increase levels of walking and cycling throughout Aberdeenshire. In essence, the Strategy will set the framework for the implementation of measures that reflect the primary importance of these sustainable travel modes in our daily lives.

The Strategy will also help us to deliver various LTS aims and objectives, including:

- To work in partnership to increase opportunities for walking and cycling, for purposes of transport, health and leisure, across Aberdeenshire.
- To support initiatives to reduce harmful emissions, greenhouse gases, light and noise pollution.
- To support and promote initiatives that educate on the importance of sustainable transport behaviour.
- To improve safety and security of journeys by reducing casualties and enhancing the personal safety of all users of the transport network.
- To improve the integration of the transport system between different services and modes.

The Strategy will also support the delivery of numerous LTS targets, including targets on road traffic reduction, modal shift for journeys to work and school, and increased travel awareness.

Walking and Cycling in Aberdeenshire

With a vast geographical area and a dispersed population with key employment areas, car dependency is relatively high while walking and cycling levels are generally low. Aberdeenshire has the highest levels of car ownership in Scotland, and according to census statistics, only 12% of people in Aberdeenshire walk to work, while only 1% cycle. However, over half (57%) of all trips made in Aberdeenshire are under 10 kilometres, approximately a half hour cycle ride.

The Walking & Cycling Strategy will encourage people to think about the type of journey they are making and consider if it can be made by foot or bike. The Strategy will also define criteria for on the ground improvements that will stimulate increased levels of walking and cycling, by all groups for a wide range of purposes.

Proposals and Intentions of the Strategy

An initial draft set of objectives have been identified for the Walking & Cycling Strategy:

- Objective 1: To work with school children, staff and parents to encourage more walking and cycling to and from school;
- Objective 2: To improve the safety of walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire, and contribute to national road safety targets;
- Objective 3: To promote walking and cycling as alternative transport modes, particularly for short trips; and
- Objective 4: To encourage and facilitate walking and cycling as leisure and tourist activities to provide benefits to health and the local economy.

Beneath these objectives will sit a number of specific targets. The Strategy will also set out a detailed list of actions and policies related to the ongoing development of strategic walking and cycle routes across the region, including integration with the Core Paths Plan and other local strategies; implementation of physical infrastructure and facilities to encourage walking and cycling both for travel to work and tourism/recreation; improved integration of these modes with public transport; and measures to improve the safety of walking and cycling.

How to get involved

Between 21st of July and 8th of September, we are undertaking consultation looking for your views on current walking and cycling provision in Aberdeenshire and future opportunities.

The primary means of consultation is by the questionnaire, which is provided overpage and available to complete online on our website. The questionnaire has been sent to stakeholders throughout the region and is also available for collection from the Council's Area Offices in Alford, Banff, Ellon, Inverurie, Peterhead and Stonehaven.

For further information on the development of the Strategy and how you can get involved, please visit www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/walkingandcycling

The results from the consultation will be used to develop a Draft Walking & Cycling Strategy which will be subject to final consultation in autumn 2008.

Completed questionnaires, and any other questions, comments or suggestions in relation to the Walking & Cycling Strategy can be sent to:

Walking & Cycling Strategy Consultation, Strategy Unit, Transportation and Infrastructure, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB

OR

Emailed to walkingandcycling@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Walking & Cycling Strategy – Have Your Say...

Aberdeenshire Council is preparing a Walking & Cycling Strategy. Before we develop and produce the Strategy, we would like to hear your views on current walking and cycling provision in Aberdeenshire and future opportunities that this Strategy should consider.

Prize Draw! – Those completing a questionnaire will be eligible for entry into a £200 cycle voucher prize draw. If you would like to be entered into the draw, please provide the following:

Name: _____ Tel. No or Email Address: _____

Are you responding to this questionnaire on a personal basis or on behalf of an organisation?

Personal Organisation

If you have ticked 'organisation', please provide the name and address of your organisation:

The closing date for returning questionnaires is the 8th of September 2008.

Questionnaire

SECTION A – YOUR CURRENT WALKING & CYCLING ACTIVITY

A1) How often would you say you walk* or cycle for any purpose? (tick ONE option for both walking and cycling. *For walking, please state for only those trips of more than a quarter of a mile.)

	Walk	Cycle		Walk	Cycle
Every day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 – 6 days a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 – 3 days a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A2) What is your main reason for walking and cycling? (tick ONE option for both walking and cycling)

	Walk	Cycle		Walk	Cycle
Commuting to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other personal business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel to school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leisure and recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For business purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keeping fit / healthy / exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To visit friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No access to other transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify) _____

A3) How long did you walk/cycle for on your last trip? (tick ONE option for both walking and cycling)

	Walk	Cycle		Walk	Cycle
Less than 30 minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 – 3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30 minutes – 1 hour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 – 4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1 – 2 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 4 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

A4) What type of surface do you typically cycle on? (tick ONE option only)

Main road – Cycle/Bus Lanes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor road	<input type="checkbox"/>
Main road – No Lanes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Off road – Cycle tracks/footpaths*	<input type="checkbox"/>
N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	* Includes routes parallel to roads	

Other (please specify) _____

Did You Know... Aberdeenshire Ranger Service

Aberdeenshire Council's Ranger Service organises guided walks to help people learn more about their environment and have fun at the same time. A range of walks are offered ranging from 'Easy' (mainly on paths and tracks) to 'Strenuous' walks, where some previous experience is recommended for these significant walks over rough ground with some long and steep ascents.

The majority of events are free to attend, though some require to be booked in advance. Bookings can be made by contacting the appropriate Ranger Office. Event details and Ranger contact details are available at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/rangerservice.

A5) What would you say are the main benefits of walking and cycling? (tick ALL that apply for both walking and cycling)

	Walk	Cycle		Walk	Cycle
Improved health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheaper than other transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reduced air pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faster for some journeys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Convenient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify) _____

Did You Know... The Benefits of Walking and Cycling

There are multiple benefits of walking and cycling including:

- For Health – Walking and cycling can contribute to the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity experts advise adults have per day and in turn help to increase energy and stamina levels, reduce the risk of heart disease and improve feelings of wellbeing.
- For the Economy – Not only is walking and cycling cheaper than other forms of transport but they can help to contribute to local economic growth through leisure and tourism. Cycle tourism is particularly important to the Scottish economy, with Visit Scotland estimating a contribution of £85 million per year!
- For the Environment – Walking and cycling can also have positive environmental effects by helping to contribute to a reduction in traffic congestion and pollution.

SECTION B – OPTIONS FOR FUTURE WALKING AND CYCLING PROVISION IN ABERDEENSHIRE

The following draft objectives have been identified for the Walking and Cycling Strategy:

- Objective 1: To work with school children, staff and parents to encourage more walking and cycling to and from school;
- Objective 2: To improve the safety of walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire, and contribute to national road safety targets;
- Objective 3: To promote walking and cycling as alternative transport modes, particularly for short trips; and
- Objective 4: To encourage and facilitate walking and cycling as leisure and tourist activities to provide benefits to health and the local economy.

B1) Do you agree with our draft objectives for the Walking & Cycling Strategy?

Yes – Go to B3 No Don't Know

B2) How could our objectives be improved?

B3) What are the main barriers to walking and cycling in Aberdeenshire? *(For example, for walking: lack of footways/footpaths, lack of street lighting etc? For cycling: lack of on-road cycle lanes in Aberdeenshire, lack of routes between settlements, lack of cycle storage/parking etc?)*

Walking –

Cycling –

B4) Which of the following initiatives should be taken forward to encourage more walking throughout Aberdeenshire? *(tick ALL that apply)*

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| More footpaths in settlements | <input type="checkbox"/> | More long-distance walking routes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Better information on walking routes | <input type="checkbox"/> | More crossing facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wayfinding mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> | More traffic calming in towns | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Better street lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> | More resting places | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please specify) _____

Did You Know... Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan

Parallel to the development of the Walking and Cycling Strategy, Aberdeenshire Council are also developing a Core Paths Plan for Aberdeenshire. The Core Paths Plan aims to provide the public with reasonable access throughout their area by providing opportunities for activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding and canoeing.

Further information on Aberdeenshire's Core Paths Plan can be found at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/outdooraccess/core_paths_plan

B5) Which of the following initiatives should be taken forward to encourage more cycling throughout Aberdeenshire? (tick ALL that apply)

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Dedicated cycle lanes (on-road) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Commuter cycle routes into Aberdeen | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Segregated cycle lanes adjacent to roads | <input type="checkbox"/> | Off-road cycle paths | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Better cycle information/mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> | Secure cycle parking facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Better cycle facilities i.e. showers | <input type="checkbox"/> | More facilities for mountainbiking | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Facilities on buses for bikes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Better integration with other modes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More traffic calming in towns | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cycle training | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Establishment of A'shire Cycle Forum | <input type="checkbox"/> | Salary Sacrifice/ 'Bike to Work' Scheme | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please specify) _____

Did You Know... Salary Sacrifice Scheme

The Bike to Work scheme is a tax incentive initiative aimed at encouraging employees to cycle to work, thereby improving health and having beneficial environmental impacts. The scheme allows employees to benefit from tax relief on the purchase of bikes and safety equipment, such as lights and locks, potentially saving up to 40% of the cost.

B6) Aberdeenshire Council currently spends significant funds on walking and cycling initiatives every year. Please choose THREE of the following options where you think we should prioritise our spending in the future.

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| More foot/cycle paths in towns | <input type="checkbox"/> | More foot/cycle paths between towns | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More off-road foot/cycle path infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> | More on-road cycle lanes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Greater marketing of walking and cycling | <input type="checkbox"/> | Maintenance of existing foot/cycle paths | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More traffic calming/reduced speed limits | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cycle Facilities (showers, parking) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (please specify) _____

B7) In your opinion, how should these funds be split according to the categories below: (For example, 50% for leisure purposes and 50% for commuter purposes).

Leisure purposes (in rural areas)

_____ %

Commuter purposes (in and around Aberdeenshire towns and connecting into Aberdeen City)

_____ %

B8) What could be done to promote walking/cycling tourism and walking/cycling as a leisure activity?

Did You Know... Travel Planning on the Net

In 2008, Aberdeenshire Council's Travel Planning Team launched its very own Sustainable Transport and Travel Reduction YouTube channel. The channel aims to show films that inspire more people to travel by sustainable methods of transport, such as walking and cycling. The films can be viewed on YouTube at www.youtube.com/aberdeenshiretp

B9) In the box below, please provide any additional comments or suggestions you would like to make to improve walking and/or cycling provision in Aberdeenshire.

SECTION C – ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

C1) Which of these best describes the area in which you live?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aberdeen | <input type="checkbox"/> | Aberdeenshire (Banff & Buchan) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Aberdeenshire (Buchan) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Aberdeenshire (Formartine) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Aberdeenshire (Garioch) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Aberdeenshire (Kincardine & Mearns) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Aberdeenshire (Marr) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Other (please specify) | _____ | | |

C2) Gender

- | | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| Male | <input type="checkbox"/> | Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------|

C3) Age

- | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 16-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 55+ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

C4) Use of personal details: To ensure we protect and use your personal data correctly, please tick the appropriate box.

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For Prize Draw Only
(data to be deleted after draw) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> Please keep me informed and
send me information as the Strategy develops | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact:

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AB16 5GB

Email: walkingandcycling@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
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