

Inverness

# Walking and Cycling Index 2021



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Inverness is the heart of the Highland region, home to 30% of the Highland Council area's population, yet it makes up less than 0.001% of the land area. Its compact size

and relatively high density mean walking, wheeling or cycling should be the easiest ways of getting around for most people.

This report builds on the evidence from 2019 showing that our Inverness communities want better, safer and more cohesive walking and cycling networks. We have learned valuable lessons and gathered rich quantitative evidence through our Covid-19 Spaces for People project.

Everyone in our city has a shared experience of the pandemic where there is a heightened appreciation for access to local green space. It is therefore striking to learn from the report that 97% of people in Inverness live within 800m of a park or space for

recreation. Despite most people living in close proximity to such assets, there is still strong car dependence for short everyday trips.

The potential in getting people to choose active travel in Inverness is vast. This is important in the context of the climate and ecological emergency with the report highlighting that 13.7 million journeys of up to three miles are being driven in Inverness instead of walking and cycling meaning that there is an untapped potential to save over 4,500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year.

It is our responsibility to help people live well without a car and build upon the city's 55,000 miles travelled actively each day. This means there is a lot more work to do to create a better network to support people to choose to walk, wheel or cycle.

We welcome the publication of this Walking and Cycling Index report and look forward to working together to achieve Inverness' goal of becoming Scotland's cycling city.

**Malcolm MacLeod,**  
**Executive Chief Officer –**  
**Infrastructure, Environment and Economy**

**The Walking and Cycling Index**

The Walking and Cycling Index (formerly Bike Life) is the biggest assessment of walking and cycling in urban areas in the UK and Ireland. This is the first year walking has been included.

It is delivered by Sustrans in collaboration with 18 cities and urban areas. Each city reports on the progress made towards making both walking and cycling more attractive, everyday ways to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the second report from Inverness produced in partnership with The Highland Council. The data in this report comes from 2021 and includes local walking and cycling data, modelling and an independent survey of 1,373 residents aged 16 or above in Inverness. The survey was conducted from June to August 2021 following Covid-19 travel restrictions across the UK being lifted. Social research organisation NatCen conducted the survey which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk or cycle.

Across this report we have included comparisons to 2019 data where available.

Our thanks to the people of Inverness who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all Walking and Cycling Index reports can be found at [www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex)



**Defining wheeling**

We recognise some people, for example wheelchair or mobility scooter users, identify with the term wheeling instead of walking. Therefore we use the terms walking and wheeling together and consider walking and wheeling to include the use of mobility aids and pushchairs.

All walking survey responses within this report include responses from people who wheel. However, please note for graph labels we use walking as a shorthand for walking and wheeling.

# Report summary

## Inverness

### Population<sup>i</sup>

62,795

### Survey area

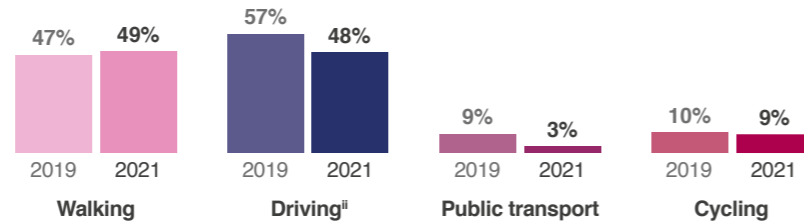


### The impact of the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on how, when and the amount we travel.

Covid-19 Analysis, Transport for Scotland, 2021

#### Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in Inverness



Participation in walking, wheeling and cycling has remained at similar levels compared to 2019.

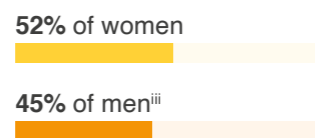
**49%** of residents walk at least five days a week  
47% in 2019

**26%** of residents cycle at least once a week  
25% in 2019

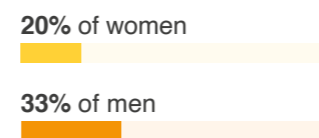
### Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

A greater proportion of women walk, compared to men, while more men cycle compared to women.

#### Proportion of residents who walk at least five days a week

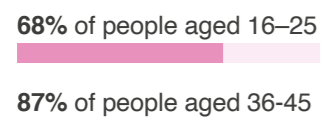


#### Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

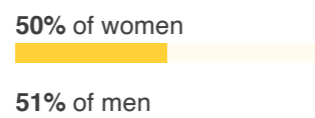


### Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

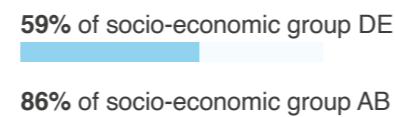
#### Proportion of residents who think walking safety is good



#### Proportion of residents who think cycling safety is good



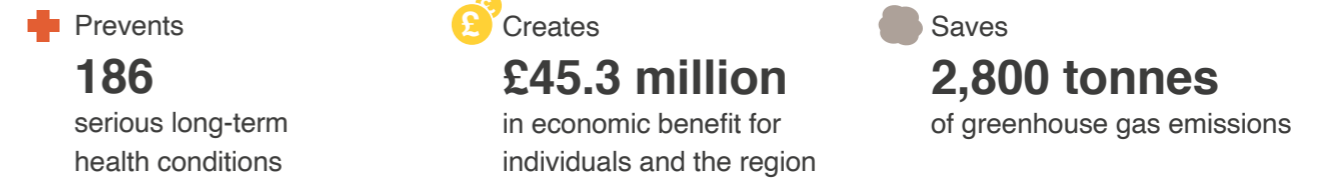
#### Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood



Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

### Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Every year, walking and cycling in Inverness:



### Walking, wheeling and cycling help to tackle the climate emergency

Every day, walking and cycling in Inverness takes up to

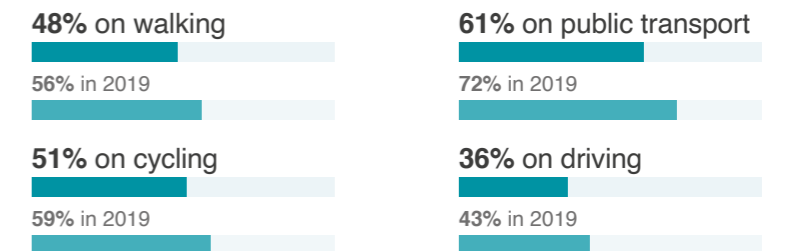
**16,000 cars off the road<sup>iv</sup>**

However, **13.7 million** journeys up to three miles are driven in Inverness that could be walked or cycled each year

If **80%** of these journeys were walked or cycled<sup>v</sup> it could save approximately **4,500 tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions

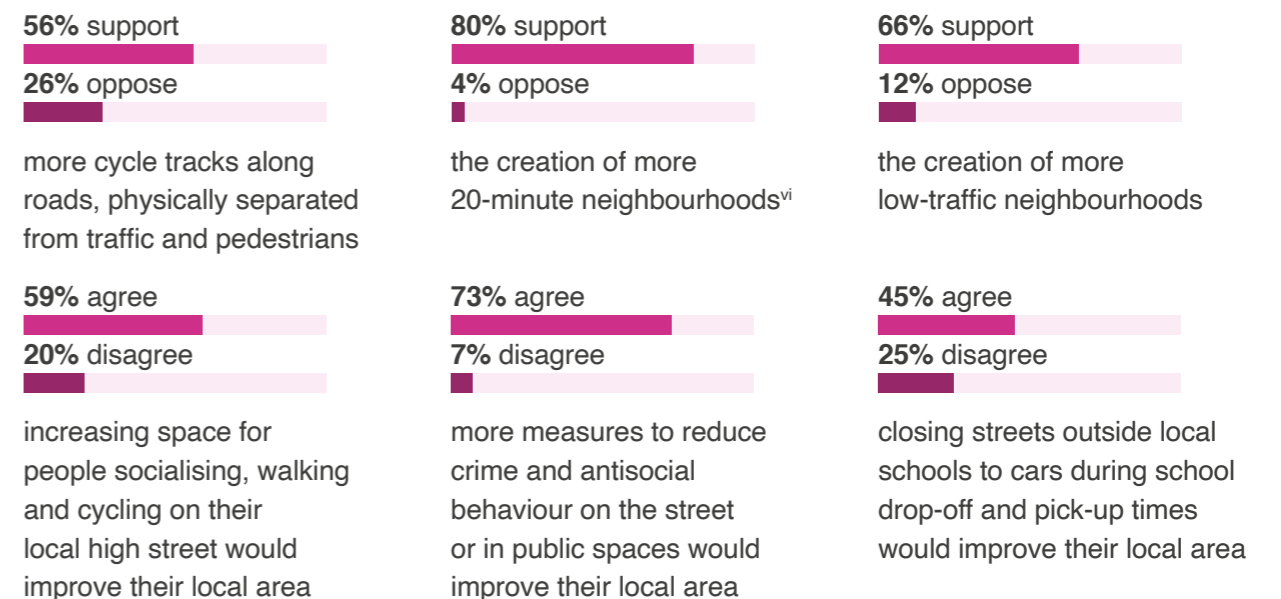
### Residents want more funding for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

#### Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending on:



### This would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

#### Among Inverness residents:



iv. Based on walking and cycling by residents that live in a household with a car. Does not include leisure cycling or leisure walking trips.  
v. Based upon each journey being 1.5 miles in length. vi See definition on page 14.

i. NOMIS mid-year 2019 population estimates. This is the most recent available for Inverness. ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle. In 2019, questions did not include traveling by motorcycle. iii. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.



# Walking in Inverness

Walking and wheeling participation, safety and satisfaction

## Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Inverness the number of people walking and wheeling regularly (at least five days a week) has remained at similar levels compared to 2019.

Walking and wheeling are often overlooked in transport. This is despite being an efficient use of space, good for our health and having no environmental impact.

**95%** of all residents walk 95% in 2019

**49%** of residents walk at least five days a week 47% in 2019

### Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

#### Gender<sup>i</sup>

**52%** of women  
48% in 2019

**45%** of men  
46% in 2019

#### Ethnicity

**26%** of people from ethnic minority groups  
52% in 2019

**50%** of white people  
47% in 2019

#### Sexuality

**72%** of LGBTQ+ people  
**47%** of heterosexual people

#### Age

**57%** of people aged 16–25  
56% in 2019

**49%** of people aged 26–35  
46% in 2019

**47%** of people aged 36–45  
44% in 2019

**51%** of people aged 46–55  
44% in 2019

**49%** of people aged 56–65  
51% in 2019

**44%** of people aged 66+  
44% in 2019

#### Disability

**42%** of disabled people  
43% in 2019

**52%** of non-disabled people  
48% in 2019

#### Socio-economic group<sup>ii</sup>

**45%** of AB  
47% in 2019

**53%** of C1  
44% in 2019

**47%** of C2  
44% in 2019

**50%** of DE  
55% in 2019

## Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

Important differences exist in how safe people feel when walking or wheeling. Safety includes both road and personal safety.

**81%** of residents think the level of safety for walking is good

**65%** of residents think the level of safety for children walking is good

### Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety in their local area is good

#### Gender

**82%** of women  
**81%** of men

#### Age

**68%** of people aged 16–25  
**82%** of people aged 26–35  
**87%** of people aged 36–45  
**83%** of people aged 46–55  
**84%** of people aged 56–65  
**80%** of people aged 66+

#### Socio-economic group

**86%** of AB  
**79%** of C1  
**83%** of C2  
**72%** of DE

#### Ethnicity

**89%** of people from ethnic minority groups  
**81%** of white people

#### Sexuality

**70%** of LGBTQ+ people  
**82%** of heterosexual people

#### Disability

**76%** of disabled people  
**83%** of non-disabled people

**84%** of residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk



Laura McGuire, Therapeutic Radiographer



I live in Inverness and work as a Therapeutic Radiographer at Raigmore Hospital.

I walk or cycle to work as it's a great way of including exercise as part of my daily routine. It's great as I don't have to deal with the busy hospital car park. I also walk and cycle to minimise my impact on the environment.

I'm lucky that there is a cycle path the whole way to the hospital as I wouldn't feel comfortable cycling on busy roads. Generally, I do feel safe cycling and walking in Inverness but I would cycle more if there were more good quality cycle lanes.

Anything that can be done to boost cycling in Inverness would be a good thing.

i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C1 is supervisory/clerical and students, Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.



# Cycling in Inverness

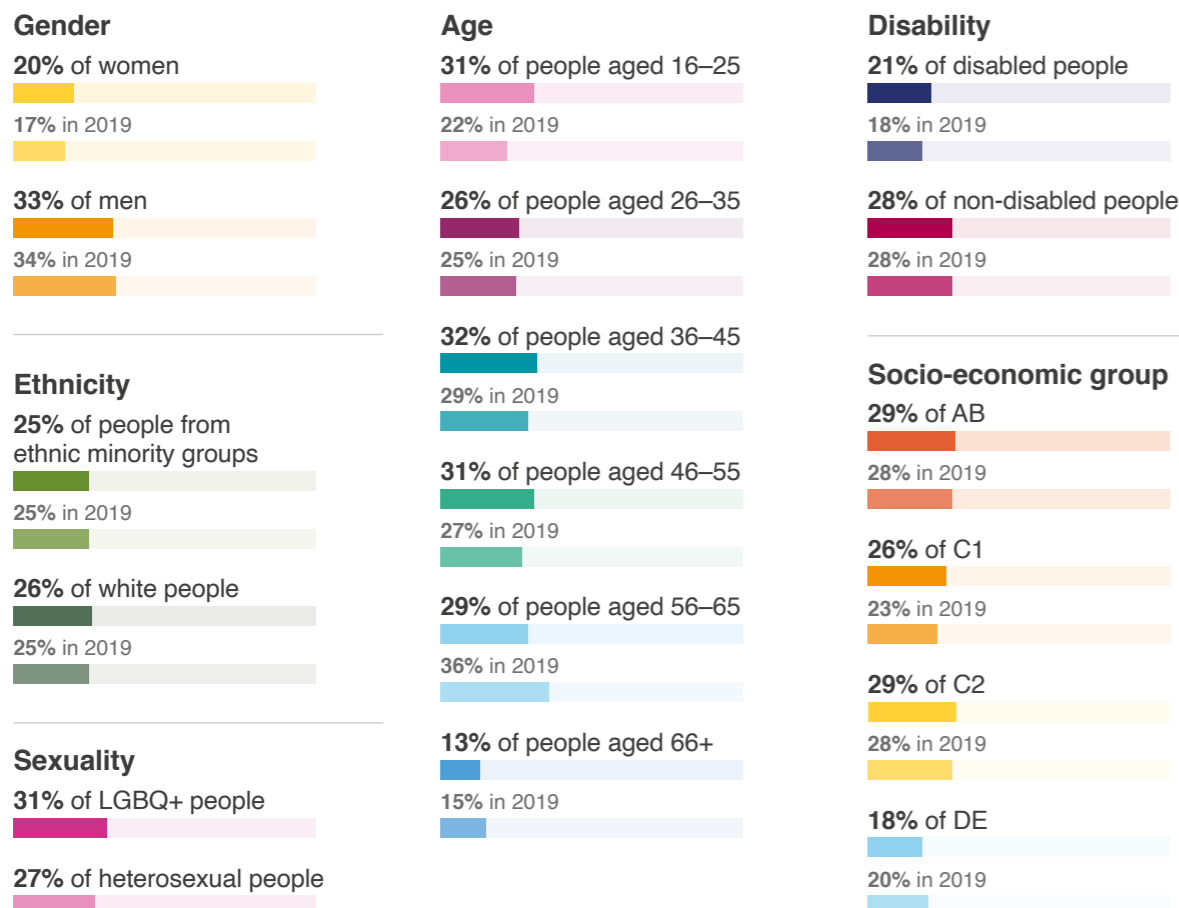
Cycling participation, safety and satisfaction

## Cycling participation

Overall in Inverness the number of people cycling has remained at similar levels compared to 2019. Despite a much larger potential, only **26%** of people cycle regularly.<sup>i</sup>

Perceptions of cycling safety have improved since 2019. Cycling participation, however, is not equal. Barriers to cycling can be far more pronounced for some people. Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.<sup>ii</sup>

### Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week



**47%** of all residents cycle  
47% in 2019

**26%** of all residents cycle at least once a week  
25% in 2019

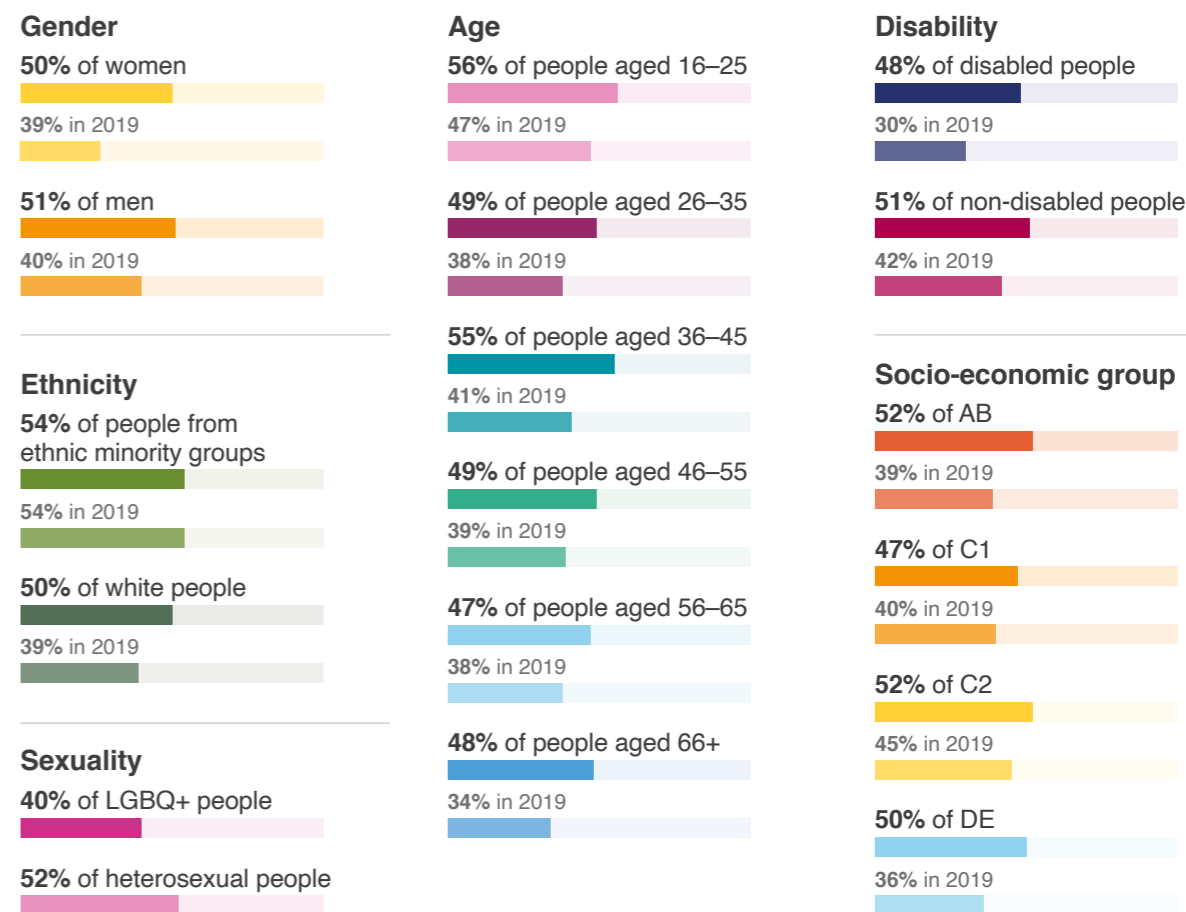
## Cycling safety and satisfaction

**50%** of all residents think the level of safety for cycling in their local area is good  
39% in 2019

**39%** of all residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good  
23% in 2019

**56%** of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle  
50% in 2019

### Proportion of residents who think cycling safety in their local area is good



Nikhil Agrawal, GP

I work as a GP in Inverness. I used to cycle to my school in India every day but stopped once I started university.

When the schools closed during lockdown I started cycling to work as I no longer had to do the school run. There is a dedicated cycle path all the way to the surgery, which really helps.

I take a more scenic route on the way home which helps me to relax. My son was keen for me to go mountain biking with him, so I've bought a mountain bike and we go out on the trails together.



# Benefits of walking

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

The large numbers of walking and wheeling trips in Inverness produce important health, economic and environmental benefits for everyone.

**Inverness residents walk or wheel the length of Great Britain 64 times per day**

**23.6 million** walking and wheeling trips were made in Inverness in the past year, which adds up to

**27.7 million miles** = 76,000 miles a day.

This equates to each resident spending **6 days** walking or wheeling continuously in the past year

## Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose<sup>i</sup>



## Walking and wheeling benefit residents and the local economy in the region

In Inverness, the net annual economic benefit for individuals and society from all walking and wheeling trips is **£35.2 million**

Of this total, **£300,000** is from people with a car choosing to walk or wheel for transport in the past year.

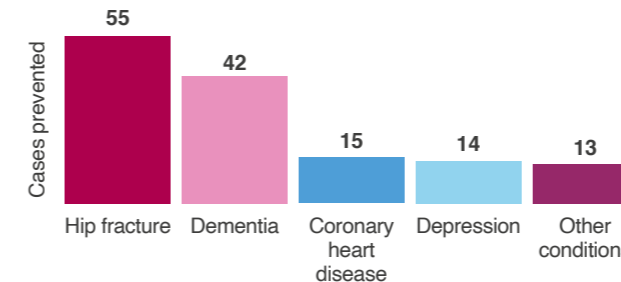
**5p** net benefit from each mile walked or wheeled instead of driven



These figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and walking. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

## Walking and wheeling unlock health benefits for everyone

Walking in Inverness prevents 138 serious long-term health conditions each year



<sup>i</sup>'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, colorectal cancer.

Saving the NHS in Inverness **£910,000 per year**

equivalent to the cost of **30,000 GP appointments**

Based on applying Inverness data to the Sport England MOVES tool which calculates the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In Inverness the physical activity benefits of walking

**prevent 33 early deaths annually**

which is valued at **£109 million<sup>ii</sup>**

Please note wheelchair and mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

People walking and wheeling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

**4,800 kg of NO<sub>x</sub>** and **669 kg of particulates** (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>)

**79%** of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



## Walking and wheeling in Inverness help mitigate our climate crisis

**1,600 tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by walking or wheeling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of

**9,000 people taking flights** from Inverness to London.



Transport within Scotland now accounts for **25%** of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2019, transport emissions went down by **11.3%**, while overall emissions went down by **52%**.

Calculated using the Greenhouse Gas Account, which has replaced the previous method in Scotland. Scottish Government: Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics 1990 to 2019.

## Walking and wheeling keep Inverness moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.<sup>iii</sup> This helps to keep Inverness moving for all road users.

**13,000 return walking trips** are made daily in Inverness by people that could have used a car.

<sup>iii</sup> Litman, 2021 Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

**39 miles** equivalent to the distance from Inverness to Elgin.



<sup>ii</sup> Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking.

<sup>i</sup> Leisure trips include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). Education trips are shown separately for children only.

# Benefits of cycling

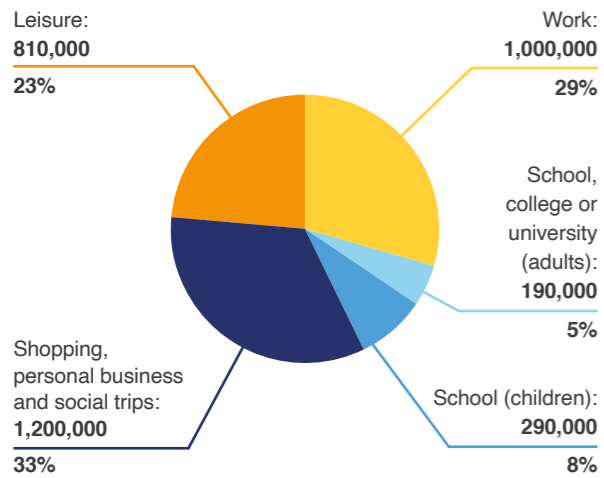
Why everyone gains when more people cycle

## Inverness residents cycle the length of Great Britain 28 times per day

There has been a reduction in commuter trips since 2019 as more people work from home. However, cycling levels increased for leisure and adult education journeys.

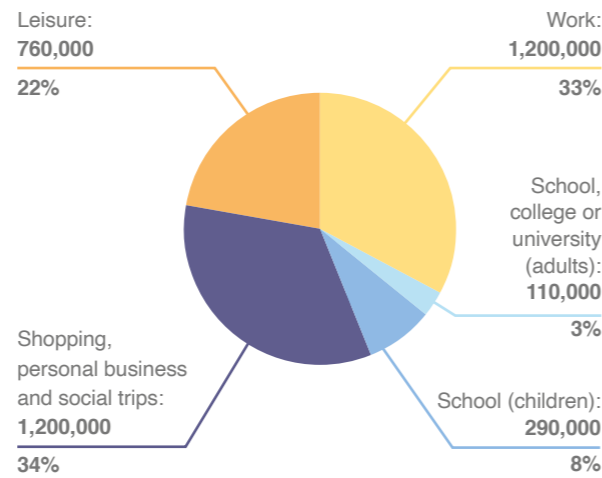
### Annual cycling trips by purpose in Inverness<sup>i</sup>

2021:  
**3.4 million trips**



This adds up to  
**12.2 million miles**  
= 33,000 miles a day

2019:  
**3.5 million trips**



This adds up to  
**12.8 million miles**  
= 35,000 miles a day

## Cycling benefits residents and the local economy in the region

In Inverness, the net annual economic benefit for individuals and society from all cycling trips is

**£10.1 million**

Of this total,

**£3.9 million**

is from people with a car choosing to cycle for transport in the past year.

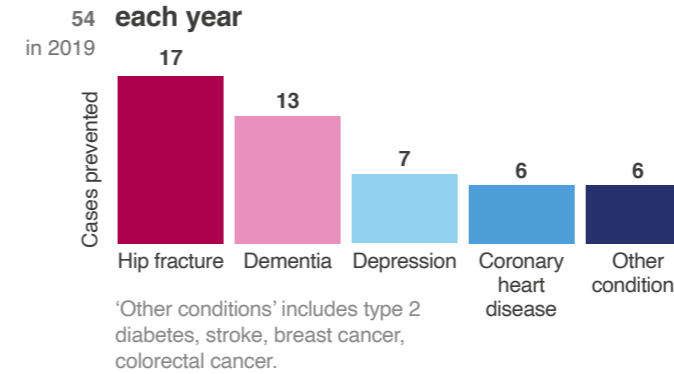
**94p**  
net benefit from each mile cycled instead of driven  
£1.04 in 2019



These figures are based upon monetising the costs and benefits of driving and walking. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, medical costs, work absenteeism, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.

## Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in Inverness prevents **48 serious long-term health conditions each year**



Saving the NHS in Inverness

**£310,000 per year**

equivalent to the cost of **10,000 GP appointments**

Based on applying Inverness data to the Sport England MOVES tool which calculates the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In Inverness the physical activity benefits of cycling

**prevent 5 early deaths annually**

which is valued at **£15.6 million<sup>ii</sup>**

People cycling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

**2,400 kg of NO<sub>x</sub>**  
and

**342 kg of particulates**  
(PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>)

**79%** of residents agree the air is clean in their local area

## Cycling in Inverness helps mitigate our climate crisis

**1,100 tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by cycling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of

**6,300 people taking flights** from Inverness to London.



Transport within Scotland now accounts for **25%** of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Between 1990 and 2019, transport emissions went down by **11.3%**, while overall emissions went down by **52%**.

Calculated using the Greenhouse Gas Account, which has replaced the previous method in Scotland. Scottish Government: Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics 1990 to 2019.

## Cycling keeps Inverness moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.<sup>iii</sup> This helps to keep Inverness moving for all road users.

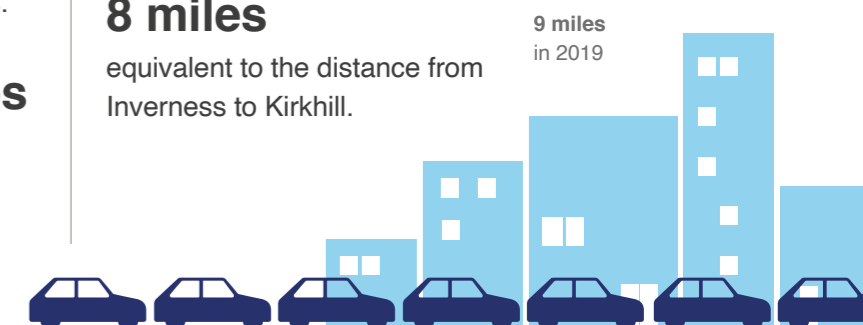
**2,800 return cycling trips** are made daily in Inverness by people that could have used a car.

iii. Litman, 2021. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

**8 miles**

equivalent to the distance from Inverness to Kirkhill.



ii. Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of cycling.

i. Leisure trips include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). Education trips are shown separately for adults and children. All other trips are just adults.



# Walking solutions

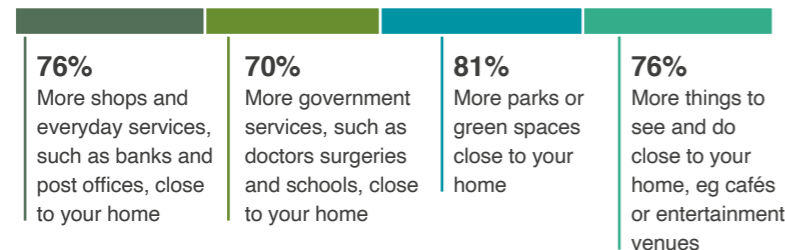
What would help make walking and wheeling better?

## Residents want more services and amenities within walking or wheeling distance

Ideally walking should be the most attractive transport option for the vast majority of short journeys. A city can support this by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live. The walking environment should be safe, comfortable, welcoming and attractive.

Neighbourhoods where many facilities can be reached on foot are known as 20-minute neighbourhoods. You can walk from your home to many of the things you need on a regular basis and back again within 20 minutes. This equates to around 800m each way.

### What percentage of residents would find more local amenities and services useful to help them walk or wheel more?

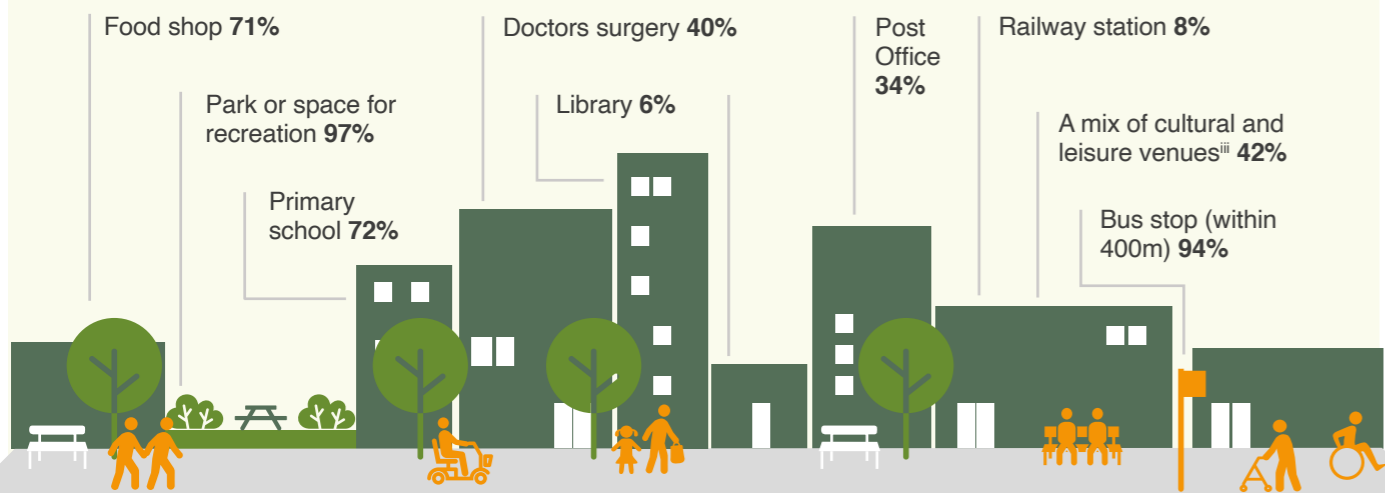


**57%** of Inverness households are in neighbourhoods of at least 40 dwellings per hectare. These are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods.<sup>i</sup>

Lower density neighbourhoods have too few people to make much local business or public transport viable.<sup>ii</sup>

**47%** agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive

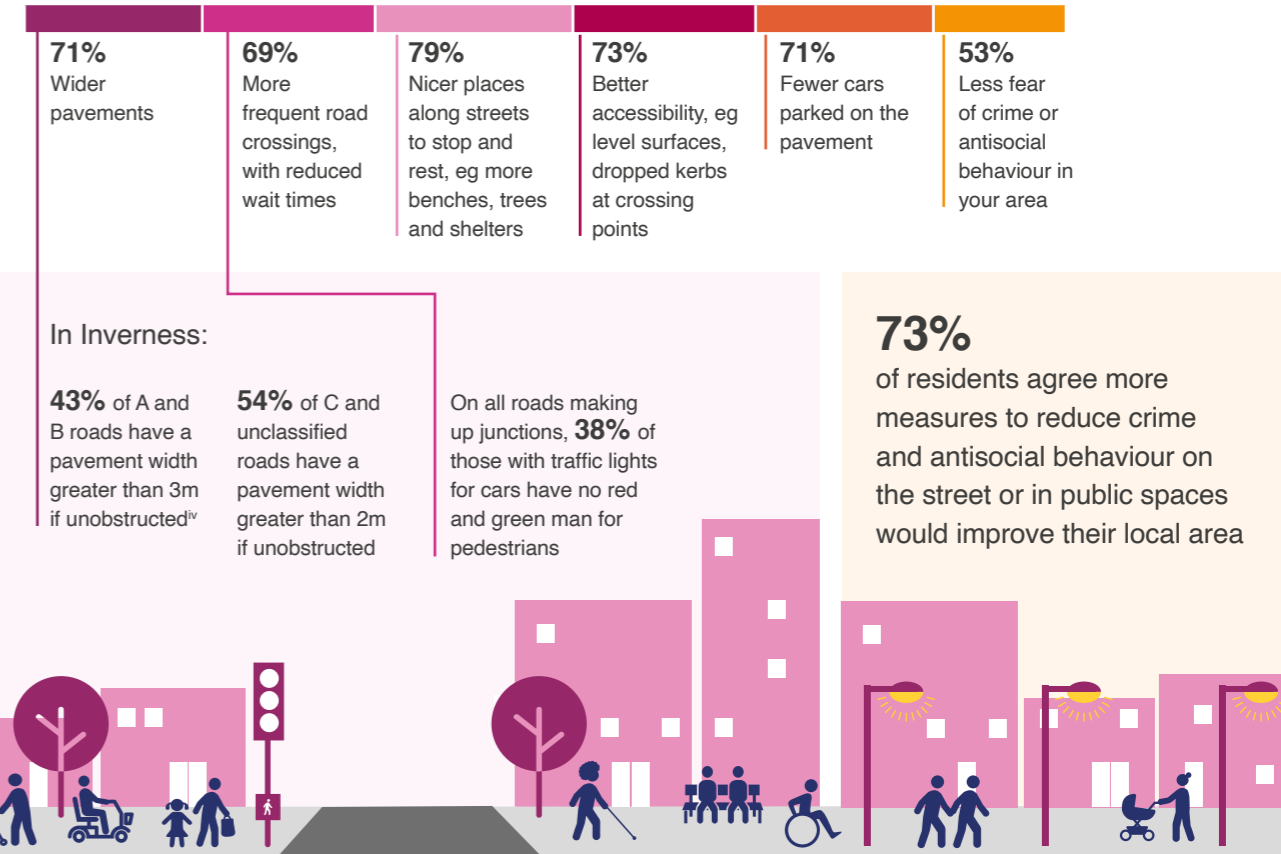
### Proportion of households within an 800m walk or wheel of the following amenities and services



## Residents want better streets

There are many ways to make our streets and neighbourhoods safe, welcoming and comfortable for everyone to walk in.

### What percentage of residents think that these changes would help them walk or wheel more?



Noelle O'Neill, Public Health Scientist



Walking simply makes me happy. I am a passionate advocate of its physical, mental health and social benefits. It's a really important and enjoyable part of my day and is the perfect brain and body exercise – the perfect pick-me-up! During lockdown, I think walking helped some people overcome the feeling of isolation and loneliness. At a global level, it can also help to reduce our carbon footprint, air pollution and noise pollution.

Having close contact with a wheelchair user, I now see the challenges in moving around Inverness through a completely different lens. Potholes, narrow pavements and pavement surfaces make it very difficult for a wheelchair user to navigate the city. The quality of street lighting around the city is also important in ensuring the safety of walkers and wheelchair users.

The new infrastructure measures put in place during the pandemic have stimulated conversation and debate around walking, wheeling and cycling. It is a good time to engage the communities of Inverness in active travel and help them to move around the Capital of the Highlands in a safe, accessible, and enjoyable way.

i. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021, National Model Design Code.  
 ii. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning.  
 iii. A minimum of three distinct types of cultural and leisure venues, eg cafés, pubs, bingo halls, cinemas, museums.

iv. A and B roads are main roads. C roads and unclassified roads are more minor roads and often residential streets.





# Cycling solutions

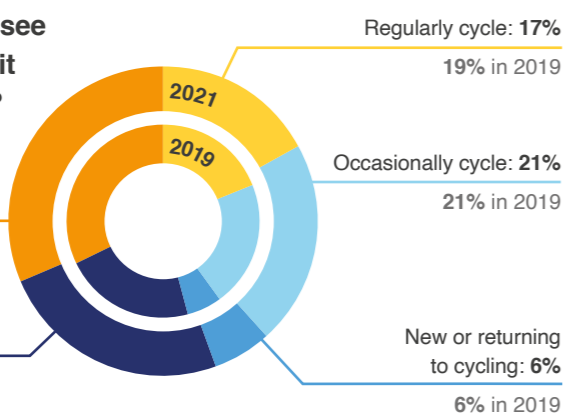
What would make cycling better?

## Many Inverness residents want to cycle

**How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?**

Do not cycle and do not want to: **31%**  
32% in 2019

Do not cycle but would like to: **24%**  
22% in 2019



**What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?**

**28% of women**  
26% in 2019

**58% of people from ethnic minority groups**  
33% in 2019

**24% of disabled people**  
25% in 2019

## Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

**What percentage of residents would be helped to cycle more by better facilities?**

**74%**  
More traffic-free cycle routes away from roads, eg through parks or along waterways  
83% in 2019

**69%**  
More cycle tracks along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians  
81% in 2019

**68%**  
More signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets  
75% in 2019

**60%**  
Better links with public transport (eg secure cycle parking at train stations)  
63% in 2019

There are **32** cycle parking spaces at the **1** railway station in Inverness  
32 in 2019

Inverness has<sup>i</sup>:  
**27 miles** of traffic-free cycle routes away from the road  
20 miles in 2019

**0 miles** of cycle tracks physically separated from traffic and pedestrians<sup>ii</sup>  
0 miles in 2019

**52 miles** of signposted routes along quieter streets  
52 miles in 2019

**61%** of households are within 125m of these routes  
62% in 2019

**56%** of residents support building more physically separated on-road cycle tracks, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic  
70% in 2019

## Residents want more support to cycle

**What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them cycle more?**

**37%**  
Cycling training courses and organised social rides  
51% in 2019

**51%**  
Access to a bicycle

**31%**  
Access to a cargo cycle (with space to carry children or shopping)  
29% in 2019

**46%**  
Access or improvements to a city cycle sharing scheme

**49%**  
Access to secure cycle storage at or near home

**46%**  
Access to an electric cycle  
43% in 2019

**20%**  
Access to an adapted cycle, eg a tricycle or handcycle  
17% in 2019

### Public cycle parking

There is a public cycle parking space for every **56** people who cycle in Inverness.  
59 in 2019



### Reported cycle thefts

There were **68** reported cycle thefts in Inverness in 2020/21.  
92 in 2019/20

For every **488** people who own an adult cycle in Inverness, there was **1** reported cycle theft in the past year.

### Cycle access

**64%** of residents have access to an adult pedal cycle  
64% in 2019

**26%** of households are within 800m of a cycle shop<sup>iii</sup>



## Jo De Sylva, Cyclist and Business Owner



I live in the city centre and I co-own bars and a farm in Inverness. I cycle as it is easier to get around by bike than it is by car. I love the views along the riverside as I'm cycling. My son cycles to school every day and my husband also cycles.

I found the pop-up cycle lanes during lockdown useful. I love the fact that there are more cycle lanes in the city. I understand that the cycle lanes were done quickly but I think there could have been a more cohesive consultation. As it's a difficult climate for retail and city centre businesses, I think it's important to keep in mind that the space needs to work for all users, including bikes and vehicles.

There are lots of improvements that could be made to cycling in Inverness, such as signage and more cycle parking. Poor signage causes confusion for drivers when driving along one-way streets as they are not expecting to see cyclists travelling both ways and can lead to an aggressive response.

i. To ensure comparability, figure given is correct as of 26 May 2021 for all city reports.  
ii. This does not include 'pop-up' cycle tracks installed during the pandemic.

iii. Credit to the Association of Cycle Traders (ACT) and Cycling UK for their assistance with cycle shop locations and services offered.

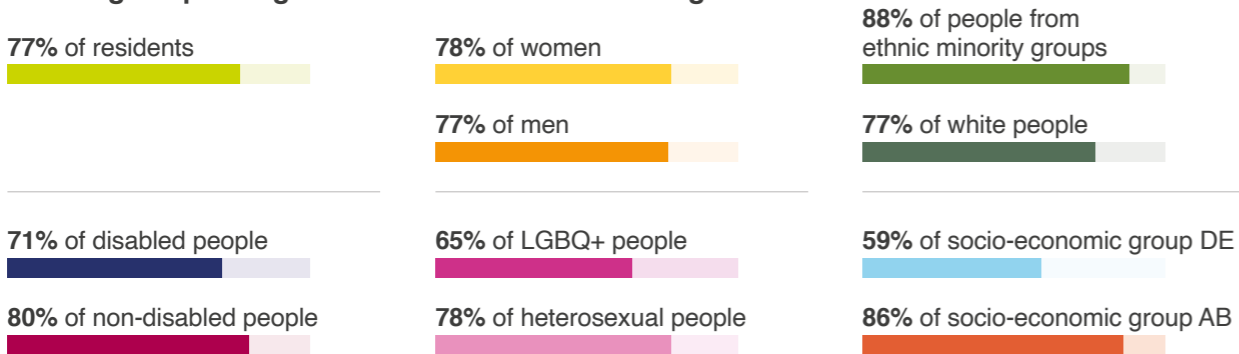


# Neighbourhood solutions

What would help make neighbourhoods better?

## All residents should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

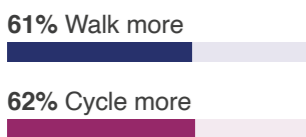
Proportion of residents that feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood



## The dominance of motor vehicles can discourage walking, wheeling and cycling

Only **35%** of respondents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles.

Residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:



Unclassified roads are not designed to carry through-traffic, but in Inverness **14%** of their total length has nothing to prevent it. This can result in rat-running.<sup>i</sup>

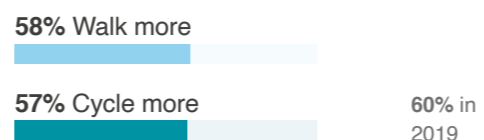
**54%** agree that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place.

60% in 2019

**8%** of Inverness' streets have 20mph speed limits.<sup>ii</sup>

8% in 2019

Residents would find more streets with 20mph speed limits useful to:



## Residents want local streets to be better spaces for people to spend time in

**59%** agree increasing space for people socialising, walking and cycling on their local high street would improve their local area

71% in 2019

**58%** agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello

**66%** support low-traffic neighbourhoods

## Paula Lloyd, Mature Student



I am a mature student and I volunteer with a local food charity in Inverness. For this role I started cycling again when I found out about the WheelNess programme from Cycling UK, which aims to improve people's health, wealth and happiness by providing them with free access to a bike.

I would have found it difficult to afford a bike otherwise. I'm delighted to be back cycling as I hadn't been on a bike in 20 years!

I seem to have become a role model as I have encouraged my daughter and grandsons to get out cycling and through a local all-ability cycling group I helped a partially sighted person in their 50s to learn to ride a bike. I would like to see more bike parking and cycle paths in Inverness as I prefer the quieter routes.

I proposed a new cycle parking rack for my neighbourhood and the council were willing but some neighbours objected. With help of Cycling UK, we are getting cycling parking along with a bike repair station at the local shops.

## Neighbourhoods must be designed with children in mind

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive: to grow up in, live their lives in and grow old in. Increasing independence, providing space to play and socialise, and improving the journey to school are all important.

If we design neighbourhoods with children in mind they will then work better for everyone else too.

### 10 years old

average age when people living with children would let them walk or cycle independently in their neighbourhood.

**56%** of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play

**90%** of households are within 800m of a children's playground

Over **80%** of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school (parents' responses).<sup>iii</sup>

Among Inverness residents:

**45%** agree

54% agree in 2019

**25%** disagree

25% disagree in 2019

closing streets outside local schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area

These kind of closures are known as 'School Streets'.

**0** Permanent School Streets schemes exist in Inverness<sup>iv</sup>



iii. Children's Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015.  
iv. Figure given is correct as of 26 May 2021.

i. Based on analysis by CycleStreets www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org. Unclassified roads are all public roads that are neither motorways, A, B nor C roads.  
ii. Excludes motorways.



# Developing Inverness

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

Inverness is at a pivotal moment where the pressures of the ever-growing city population are being met by the ambition to deliver a zero-carbon transport network. The target is for Inverness to be Scotland's cycling city retaining and attracting a skilled workforce that value a healthy and high-quality built and natural environment. This means ensuring that the city becomes more vibrant, green and resilient by centring on efforts to make it the best place in Scotland to live, work and do business. It also means taking steps to get more people living back in the city centre and connecting it to the multiple 20-minute neighbourhoods that make up the city's distinct districts.

Transformational changes have already taken place. Recent experience gained by our communities, businesses and politicians through temporary Covid-19 infrastructure has improved our collective understanding of the challenges and benefits of active travel infrastructure. This means as Inverness recovers from the impacts of the pandemic it is more important than ever that we ensure that we create a safe and welcoming place that is easy to move around by walking, wheeling and cycling.



The target is for Inverness to be Scotland's cycling city retaining and attracting a skilled workforce that value a healthy and high-quality built and natural environment.



## Spaces for People

The Highland Council secured £1.9 million from Scottish Government's Spaces for People fund to implement immediate measures to ensure that people could walk, wheel or cycle, whilst physically distancing and remaining safe from traffic.

There will remain a positive legacy for walking, wheeling and cycling as a result of the extensive minor interventions made, such as formalising footpaths and removing physical barriers to active travel. There is also a legacy of experience and evidence of the benefits of the temporary reallocation of road space.

The Highland Council took the opportunity to test and gather evidence on the range of interventions possible to deliver on ambitions set out in national and local policy. It provides valuable data for projects such as the Inverness City Active Travel Network. This information will inform what is possible to help reduce demand for car-based travel and support people to make healthier, more sustainable travel choices.

## Sustainable Travel Bridge

A key link on the City's east / west desire line was realised with the opening of the Inverness Campus Sustainable Travel Bridge (Bus & Active Travel only) linking the city centre with the Golden Bridge over the A9 and connecting the eastern suburbs and National Cycle Network.

This means people can avoid Raigmore Interchange and enjoy a traffic-free route for part of their journey including residents living in Raigmore and Millburn Road as well as students at Inverness Campus who can now enjoy a direct link to key trip generators including education, retail and employment opportunities.

As Inverness Campus continues to grow, including a new NHS National Treatment Centre, and the eastern expansion of the City progresses people will be able to travel by non-car modes embedding active travel behaviour from the outset.



# Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

## School Streets

A pilot School Street project will soon be underway at Duncan Forbes Primary School in Inverness. This will close the main street in to the school to vehicular traffic at both drop-off and pick-up times. Harnessing the positive energy of pupils and school staff, it is hoped that this pilot will have a positive impact in making local streets safer, less polluted and more vibrant. We will closely monitor the project to gather evidence to make the case for rolling this initiative out for more schools across the Highland Council area.

## Castle Redevelopment

The Inverness and Highland City – Region Deal is funding a major redevelopment of Inverness Castle into an international visitor destination. This project will attract up to 1,000 visitors a day into the heart of Inverness city centre. Being located in the city’s historic core, visitors must be able to access transport options that don’t depend on increasing road capacity for private cars. A feasibility study is exploring options to make it safer and easier for walking, wheeling and cycling to the castle.

## Academy Street

A major footfall destination in the heart of the city, Academy Street is transitioning from a thoroughfare for cross city traffic into the high-quality place it should be. Recently the council decided to permanently safeguard the space that was reallocated through the spaces for people project. This means, as detailed designs are finalised for permanent improvements for active travel and public realm on this key city street, space will simply be upgraded and the street transformed for walking, wheeling and cycling.



A major footfall destination in the heart of the city, Academy Street is transitioning from a thoroughfare for cross city traffic into the high-quality place it should be.

## Inshes Corridor

The Highland Council is funding the reconfiguration of Inshes junction. As well as making improvements for vehicular traffic to flow more consistently, this project will deliver 2050 metres of shared paths 400 metres of cycle street as well as 550 metres of segregated bike lane connecting major destinations between Raigmore Hospital and Inverness campus.



Katie Walter, GP



At our GP practice we have been working with our cycling champion, Mick Heath, to tackle some of the barriers to cycling. One project we are working on is the Bikes & Trikes for Highland Carers project, funded by Cycling Scotland and NHS Highland MOVE fund. The project aims to get a greener, happier, fitter, fairer workforce in health and social care.

This project started out by providing free long-term bike loans to lower paid health and social care workers.

In the second year, we broadened this out to GP practices with the aim to give access to the lowest paid administration and clinical staff at evenings and weekends.

In year three, we gained further funding to get more people out of cars and onto bikes for home visits.

*This project has been really successful. Some staff have borrowed a bike and have enjoyed it so much that they’ve got their own bike.*

This project has now been rolled out to eight GP surgeries in Inverness and other surgeries across the Highlands, even in rural communities.

We generally find that cycling is often faster than driving for home visits and I now do most of my home visits by bike.

## Notes on methodology:

The attitudinal survey was conducted from June to August 2021 by independent social research organisation NatCen.

The survey is representative of all Inverness residents, not just those who walk or cycle.

2019 survey data was collected from April to July 2019, also by NatCen, following the same methodology.

All other data is sourced from our city partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Sustrans.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Sustrans. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys cycled by journey purpose.

Rounding has been used throughout the report. In many cases we have rounded to the nearest whole number. Rounding is avoided where this may cause confusion, for example with modelled estimates shown in the summary and benefits sections.

More information and a detailed methodology are available at [www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/walkingcyclingindex)

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

Sustrans is a registered charity in the UK No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)

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Thanks to Open Route Service for their support with their isochrone plugin in QGIS.



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