
Creating walking communities- lessons from Scotland's Smarter Choices Smarter Places Programme

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1 Abstract

Local authorities need to do more than provide the physical infrastructure to get people to walk more. They need to invest scarce resources in softer initiatives that encourage changes to people's travel behaviour.

The Smarter Choices, Smarter Places Programme, funded by Transport Scotland, administered by Paths for All and delivered by Scotland's local authorities supports behaviour change initiatives that do this.

Now in its third year the aims of the Programme include making walking and cycling a mode of choice for short local journeys in our towns, cities and villages. The programme helps deliver the Scottish Government's 'Vision for Active Travel' and the Active Scotland Outcomes.

Each year local authorities submit proposals to deliver targeted initiatives that encourage people to make sustainable travel choices. Proposals build on existing work programmes, meet strategic needs and reflect local priorities. At the end of each year local authorities detail the successes and learnings from each initiative.

Project outputs have been collated and analysed for the 2015/16 year. They showed that there were over 20 diverse types of initiative; from cycle training, to car share, to led walks. Approximately 20% of the initiatives were targeted at increasing walking. For the 2016/17 year it is anticipated that there will be a tighter focus on target audiences, both geographic and demographic. Analysis of the 2017/18 applications suggest that there is a move away from supporting sustainable travel such as public transport promotion to investing in active travel behaviours.

The presentation will identify specific community-based walking initiatives funded by the Programme, look at their impact and how this was measured. Utilising data from 2016/17 submissions and projecting forward to 2017/18 the presentation will report on the upcoming opportunities for change, how priorities are shifting and what Scotland's local authorities should do more and less of.

2 Availability of Presentation Slides

Please contact the author after the conference: Stuart.Douglas@pathsforall.org.uk