

DRAFT Cowdenbeath Area Transport Plan – working with communities 2024

Our vision is that Fife's transport system supports our communities with affordable, seamless and sustainable access to all aspects of our daily lives.

The Cowdenbeath Area Transport Plan is being developed by Roads and Transportation Services working alongside local communities. The purpose of the Plan is to consult on and agree local transport objectives and to develop an **Action Plan** for improving movement and connectivity in the local area. Local area transport plans are published at the end of the process – see process diagram.



Figure 1 – Area Transport Plan Process Diagram

What is the context for local area transport plans?

The Cowdenbeath Area Transport Plan is supported by national and regional transport strategies. Fife's Local Transport Strategy 2023-2033 sets out the strategic objectives with the following priorities:

- Fair access to daily activities
- Safe and secure travel for all
- Just transition to net zero
- Transport network resilience

The timeline for the Area Transport Plan and other key policy dates that are expected to occur during the ten-year plan timeframe are shown in Figure 2. Government policies may change but currently this is what is being planned.

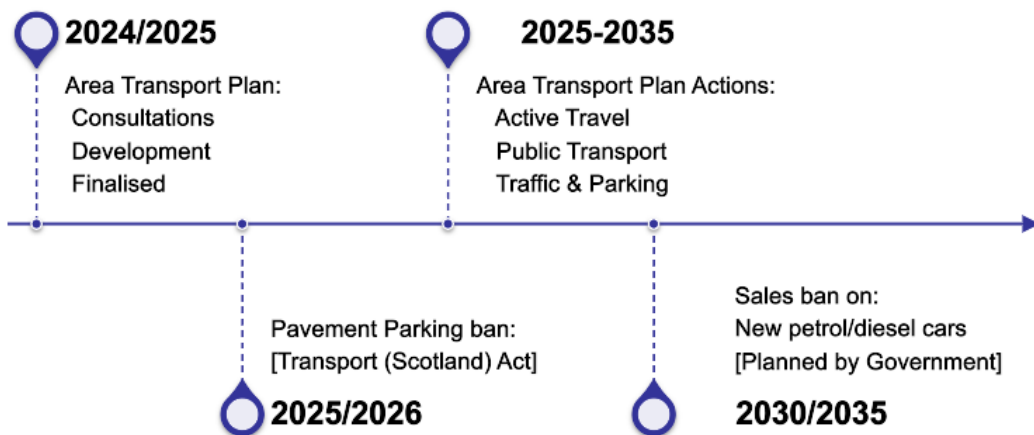


Figure 2. Cowdenbeath Area Transport Plan timeline

Why do we need to improve local travel and transport?

Over the last twenty years progress has been made in the Cowdenbeath area to improve safety and access to sustainable transport opportunities, such as the implementation of 20mph zones in residential areas, school travel plans, off-road cycleways between settlements and the Halbeath Park & Ride interchange facility.

However, some transport problems are still experienced by people and businesses, and this plan will help provide a pathway to address issues that have been identified, as well as looking to the future. To understand problems an evidence-based review has been undertaken that includes consideration of Community Plans from Cardenden, Cowdenbeath, Hill of Beath, Lumphinnans and Lochgelly and Local Place Plans for Crossgates and Mossgreen, Benarty and Kelty.

There has also been a review of comments received by Cowdenbeath area residents from the 2021/2023 Local Transport Strategy consultation, as summarised in examples of feedback shown below.

Table 1 – Cowdenbeath Transport Problems – You told us

| Moving Around (Walking, Wheeling and Cycling): | Traffic and Parking (Roads and Car Parking): |
|--|--|
| <p>You told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a full cycle network • Bike Parking requirements • Need better online mapping of segregated cycle routes • Want Better cycle paths and footpaths connecting villages • Require Walking/Cycle routes along major roads, • Would like cycle routes separate to cars. Safe for children. • Pavement issues (width and condition) | <p>You told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced speed limits in villages are needed. • Different views on measures to reduce speeds • Limited parking in village main streets • Electric car charging infrastructure needs improved • Roads need to be in better condition |
| <p>Public Transport (Bus and Rail):</p> | |
| <p>You told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More services to (town outskirts) • Frequency of public transport can be an issue • Limited direct bus routes to all towns across the area • Live updates at the bus stops wanted | <p>You told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transport Affordability • There is no ramp at Lochgelly train station just steps on northside • Electric buses should be invested in • Weather protection, seating and lighting issues • Care and Maintenance |

Where do things need to Change?

The Cowdenbeath area has the benefit of being strategically connected to the rest of Fife and beyond by the Fife Circle rail line, the A92 trunk road, and a major bus interchange at Halbeath Park & Ride.

At the local level, assessments by the Community Planning Team in 2024 have found that in the Cowdenbeath Area that Care & Maintenance and Influence and sense of control, as well as Work & Local economy, Housing & Community identified as in greatest need of improvement. More improvement was needed for Public Transport, Traffic & Parking, Streets & Spaces and Feeling Safe.

Local area assessments from 2022 have found Personal use of the internet in the Cowdenbeath Area is high at 96.4% compared to 93.9% for Fife. The recent Census 2022 data shows that around 27% of people worked mainly at or from home, compared to 30% for Fife at the time of survey. The census also found that 25% of households in the Cowdenbeath area did not have a car or van compared to 22% for Fife.

Public Transport is available, with a network of local bus routes that is well established and predominantly run on a commercial basis, but this does not always meet expectations or specific travel needs. An analysis undertaken for Local Transport Strategy shows that 80% of locations in the Cowdenbeath area are within 60 minutes by public transport of two strategic education, employment and health sites, compared to 44% for Fife. Therefore, bus services in the Cowdenbeath area are relatively good overall when compared with the rest of Fife. However, affordability and the need to interchange can be an issue for some journeys.

Walking, wheeling and cycling facilities are increasing in the Cowdenbeath area between settlements (e.g. Kelty- Cowdenbeath) but less so in some areas, there are some missing links and perceptions of safety continue to be a problem. ['Walking and wheeling' represents moving as a pedestrian, whether or not someone is walking or wheeling unaided or using any kind of wheeled mobility aid, including wheelchairs, mobility scooters, walking frames, prams or buggies.]

To develop an action plan for the area's transport we have developed a series of place-based objectives from the identified problems on the themes of Active Travel, Public Transport, Traffic & Parking. We want to target improvements in the area that address local problems and fit with the timeline of potential policy events that may impact on Cowdenbeath in the short, medium and long term.

We are seeking your views to confirm if the local community support the following objectives that will assist in developing a transport plan with an action plan to address problems in the years to come.

What Changes will make a Difference?

Fife Council can support people's transport needs in the Cowdenbeath area by agreeing objectives with the community to direct the actions it will take over the next decade. The subsequent area transport plan actions will then be developed with community input and taken forward where resources allow. Some actions will require working with other organisations to achieve delivery or may come through the planning system.

Draft Cowdenbeath Area Transport Plan Objectives 2025-2035

The proposed draft Cowdenbeath Area Transport Plan Objectives 2025-2035 based on feedback and community sources to date are as follows:

Moving Around (Active Travel – Walking ,Wheeling and Cycling):

AT1: Encourage travel to everyday activities by more walking, wheeling and cycling

AT2: Improve walking and wheeling accessibility in towns and villages

AT3: Work to meet demand for new walking and wheeling or cycling routes

AT4: Improve people's feeling of safety when walking and wheeling or cycling

AT5: Maintain active travel facilities condition and availability.

Public Transport (Bus and Train travel)

PT1: Work with partners to increase access to key daily activities by public transport

PT2: Work with partners to increase the affordability and attractiveness of bus travel

PT3: Work with partners to improve accessibility to public transport

PT4: Work with partners to reduce transport emissions from buses

PT5: Maintain public transport infrastructure condition and availability

Traffic & Parking (Cars and Commercial vehicles)

T&P1: Work with partners to reduce road deaths and serious injuries

T&P2: Support access to local businesses and High Streets

T&P3: Enable the fair roll-out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure

T&P4: Maintain current transport network road condition and availability

Views on these transport objectives are being sought via consultation and there are other opportunities to comment. A questionnaire has been developed that asks if the above objectives are agreed with or disagreed with and gives opportunities to leave comments about Active Travel, Public Transport, Traffic and Parking. There will be further opportunities to comment when an action plan has been developed.