Connecting Communities

Glasgow's Cycling & Urban Sports Strategy 2023-2032



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FOREWORD

“Glasgow has a long and proud history of sport and culture, whether it's in our communities or as a host for international events like the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the UCI 2023 Cycling World Championships. This strategy focuses on cycling and other wheeled urban sports like skateboarding: how they are a force for good, and how they can be supported in the years to come at every level.

As this Cycling and Urban Sports Strategy (C&USS) makes clear, the benefits of cycling and wheeled urban sports could be felt by everyone. By removing barriers to participation, anybody who wants to “go a bike” or try skateboarding should be encouraged and able to.

This strategy is all about enabling sport and physical activity for all.”



Councillor Angus Millar
Convener for Climate, Glasgow Green Deal, Transport and City Centre Recovery

“The benefits are huge. Better individual health and wellbeing, tackling our city's deep health inequalities, and supporting the transition to net-zero by making it easier and more socially acceptable to travel around the city sustainably.

This will increase the opportunities and empowerment of our citizens in fields as diverse as culture, sport, community development and help many individuals with their skills and confidence.

In other words, the prize for Glasgow of embracing cycling and urban sports is so much more than just sporting achievements alone.”



Bailie Annette Christie
Convener for Culture, Sport and International Relations



“This strategy for cycling and wheeled urban sports is part of a wider strategic approach under the umbrella of Glasgow's Transport Strategy (GTS) covering every aspect of movement around our city. The overriding outcomes from the GTS are a successful and just transition to a net-zero carbon, clean and sustainable city; tackling poverty, improving health and reducing inequalities; inclusive economic success and a dynamic, world class city; and places where we can all thrive.

Cycling and wheeled urban sports should no longer be considered niche. This strategy explains how they have a vital role in enabling solutions to the challenges of climate change, inequality and inclusion, particularly by increasing opportunities for our citizens.

By continuing to promote Glasgow as a world-leading events destination, and by creating more accessible sporting opportunities for all.

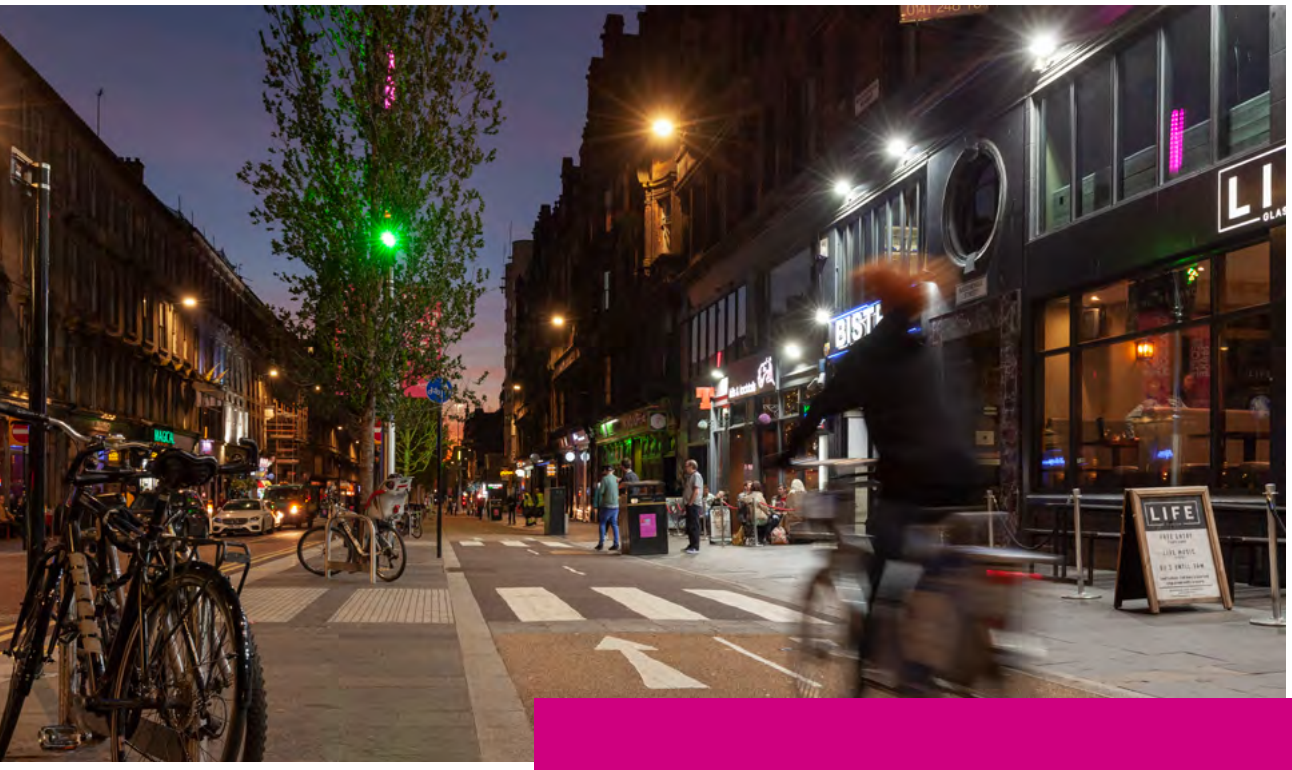
Using the themes of People, Place and Programme, this strategy shows how cycling and wheeled urban sports can and will encourage and enable physical activity and improved health & wellbeing, with the potential for a positive impact on the rates of active travel, with multiple benefits.

The council will seek to create the right environment for cycling and wheeled urban sports to be successful in Glasgow.”



Andy Waddell
Director of City Operations,
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration & Sustainability





1 INTRODUCTION

People cycle and wheel for commuting and everyday journeys, for fun, exercise, leisure, tourism, or for sport and competition. With ever-increasing numbers of people participating, this helps to embed and normalise these activities for everyone across the city.

Participation in cycling has expanded substantially in Glasgow in recent years, supported by Glasgow's Strategic Plan for Cycling (2016) which aimed for cycling to be the largest participation activity in the city by 2020.

That plan sought to build upon the city's preparation for and legacy from the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, by making best use of existing facilities, planning new infrastructure for cycling, and promoting participation in cycling as an everyday activity - whether for sport, leisure or as a mode of everyday transport.

The 2022 Active Travel Strategy (ATS) marked a step change in the approach to movement around our city. Active travel, along with other sustainable transport choices, plays a crucial role in achieving the desired transportation outcomes for the city.

This Cycling and Urban Sports Strategy is a direct output of the ATS. The two strategies combine to provide the framework to support everyone who can to cycle and wheel, whether for recreation, sport or everyday journeys.

Parallel to this are the Delivery Plans for the City Network and the wider support for sustainable transport offered through the Travel Behaviour Change Strategy. Together these will deliver the 'hard' infrastructure and complementary 'soft' measures to generate modal shift.

The innovative inclusion of wheeled urban sports within this strategy broadens the potential audience, with greater resulting benefits to the city and us all.

It also reflects how equality, accessibility and inclusion sit at the core of this strategy to ensure that cycling and wheeling provision caters to all abilities, maximising opportunities for all residents to participate.

But the impact of this strategy reaches beyond sport: wheeled urban sports equipment such as skateboards, skates, BMX bikes and push scooters can all be means of transport in their own right.

The mutual requirements for all wheeled mobility are for safe travel networks connecting vibrant community places, and which are accessible to all.

Vision

The vision for cycling and wheeled urban sports in Glasgow is:

To create a vibrant city where cycling and wheeled urban sports activities are accessible, inclusive, safe and attractive to all. Aiming to:

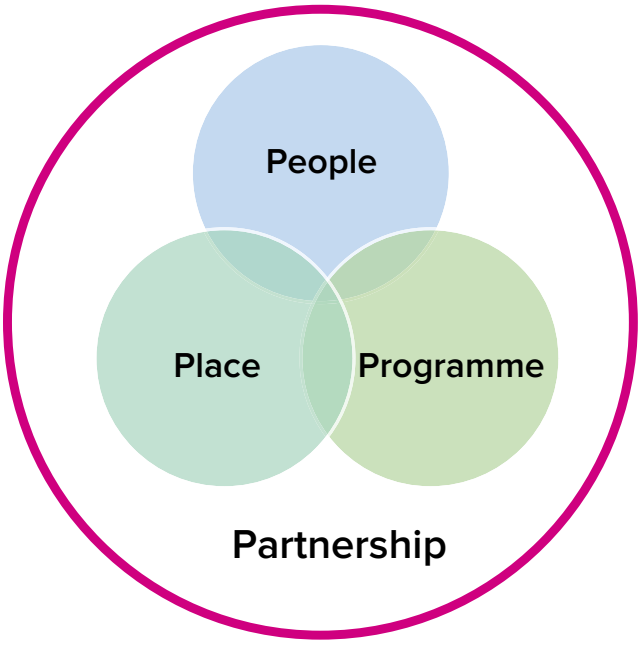
- **Develop cycling and wheeled urban sports infrastructure through investment in people, place, and programme and by working with partners.**
- **Support and grow the diverse range of cycling and wheeled urban sports cultures that already exist in the city.**
- **Support continued development of, and participation in, cycling and wheeled urban sports at all skill levels.**
- **Seek opportunities to incorporate cycling and wheeled urban sports provision in both existing and planned development of the city.**



This strategy will provide the City Council and its partners with a basis for identifying local cycling and wheeled urban sports needs and progressing opportunities based on best practice.

It will promote and build on the city's already extensive range of cycling and wheeled urban sports activities through a framework based on People, Place and Programme.

Participation opportunities developed through this framework will be welcoming and accessible, with a particular focus on areas of multiple deprivation and reaching out to under-represented groups.



We want cycling and wheeled urban sports in Glasgow to be accessible as an everyday activity through:

People

Coaches, teachers, leaders, officials, peer mentors and role models, and volunteers

Place

Cycle lanes, parks, dedicated venues, hubs, schools, and community spaces

Programme

Participation in sport, active lifestyle, commuting, exercise, recreation, social, formal, informal and events

The strategy supports the city's major cycling venues and community hubs as potential locations for active travel, incorporating training, extra-curricular activities, youth programmes and community events.



Children's BMX cycling activity

Partnership approach

The council family will be pragmatic in implementing this strategy, with a focus on working in partnership to bring People, Place, and Programme together in a holistic manner.

Working collaboratively with community and third sector groups is essential to expand participation in cycling and urban sports. When the council family delivers in tandem with community groups, it brings a better focus to identifying local challenges and opportunities.

This enables implementation that is bespoke to individual neighbourhoods and communities, all contributing to the overall city-wide vision for cycling and wheeled urban sports.



Glasgow BMX Centre



Cycling on Kelvin Way.
Photo: Brian Sweeney/Sustrans

Why cycling and wheeled urban sports?

The global climate crisis as well as the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted on local neighbourhoods and town centres, helping to highlight the importance of public space within our city and the need to re-balance the use of our streets; to be more people friendly and better for socialising and playing.

Taking a human-scale approach to our city allows our streets and open spaces to be shaped around people. By creating more space and safer environments in which to cycle and wheel, we will create more people-friendly spaces and better integrate activity into our daily lives.

The corresponding increase in social connections and physical movement in our day-to-day activities is known to have physical and mental health benefits.

Cycling and wheeled urban sports are increasingly recognised for animating our public spaces, provided that those spaces are designed so that different activities can take place simultaneously and safely.

Access to wheeled urban sports promotes shared learning between people from a wide range of ages and social backgrounds, expanding boundaries and encouraging long term changes in behaviour towards more active lifestyles.

Additional societal benefits result in the form of improved wellbeing of citizens through enhanced engagement with the wider environment, greater overall habitability of place and better opportunities for leisure, sociability, cultural access, and equity (see graphic and footnote[1]).

Benefits of cycling and wheeled urban sports

Health & wellbeing	Low-impact aerobic exercise that with regular participation can help maintain physical health and support longer, healthier lives; also improve mental wellbeing by reducing stress and anxiety.
Environmental & climate	Low-cost, green, and efficient modes of transport are essential to help reduce carbon emissions. Increasing participation helps reduce traffic congestion and make roads safer, improve air quality and reduce noise pollution, and free up space for people.
Social, cultural, and economic	Local travel helps support a broader range of retailers and fosters greater community connections. Increased demand for cycles / wheeled urban sports equipment creates job opportunities in a range of sectors including the circular economy and other innovations. Major sporting or other leisure events bring wider economic benefits and may encourage greater and sustained participation in cycling / wheeled urban sports.

[1] *Transport Scotland's Cycling Framework for Active Travel highlights how cycling and wheeling address health and wellbeing and climate change.*

Case Study 1

Active Life Club
The Go Cycle Glasgow fund has helped Active Life Club, based in the city's South Side, to develop a BMX freestyle cycling programme for young people from minority ethnic communities.

The funding has supported the purchase of BMX bikes and equipment, training for staff and volunteers and to provide coaching from fully qualified instructors. The project's BMX activities use public spaces as well as cycling-specific facilities within the city.

The initial 6-month project in 2023 is a foundation for young people to keep freestyle sports a part of their lives beyond the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships, developing creativity, sport, social inclusion and wellbeing through community action.

> *Demand has been high so we're continuing to give as many of our service users as possible a chance to try it for themselves. It's really showcased the resilience and bravery of young people to try something difficult and overcome their fears whilst learning and developing quickly. Most importantly, it's making the sport accessible for young people who may otherwise not get to experience it.*
> Gregor Cree, Active Life Club Project Lead



Malls Mire Pump Track, Toryglen

Connectivity, People and Place

The Cycling and Urban Sports strategy forms part of the city's suite of transport-related strategies and plans and is a direct output from the Active Travel Strategy 2022-2031 (ATS). The ATS is shaped by the three core themes, each of which is further supported by an additional document output, and as detailed in the diagram below:

Active Travel Strategy

- **Theme 1 - Connectivity, people and place** details the infrastructure needs of the city to effect real modal shift.
  - Output **The City Network Delivery Plans**
- **Theme 2 - Unlocking change** identifies the 'softer' behaviour change measures that complement the delivery of new infrastructure.
  - Output **Travel Behaviour Change Strategy**
- **Theme 3 - Thinking differently** looks at events and other activities that can further encourage and sustain those active journeys we've unlocked.
  - Output **Cycling and Urban Sports Strategy**

The C&USS also acts as an additional driver to deliver the council's proposed City Network of active travel routes by 2031, working alongside the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme to create accessible and healthy, people-friendly places.

The City Network (CN) will deliver around 270 km of on-road protected cycle lanes forming a dense network, useable year-round and providing easy access to a range of destinations such as schools, local high streets and key services.

The City Network Delivery Plan sets out the prioritisation for its roll out across Glasgow. Each phase of work will progress in tandem with the Liveable Neighbourhoods tranches of work.

Glasgow's Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN) programme aims to rebalance the city's neighbourhood streets so they are better for spending time in and for street play, while supporting local commercial activity and active everyday journeys.

The Travel Behaviour Change Strategy binds all of our transport strategies, seeking to change hearts and minds towards sustainable travel choices, and providing a framework to educate and inform citizens as we seek to tackle difficult travel behaviour issues.



By considering cycling and urban sports as we continue to develop the city, the Place theme of this strategy will be supported. Rebalancing our streets and neighbourhoods can unlock vibrant community spaces for all to use. Improved connectivity locally and across the city, and linking these places together, will help incorporate this activity into people's everyday lives.

Policy Context

This strategy is supported by a multitude of **national** and **local** policy which strengthen the vision and purpose of this document.

National context

A range of utility, leisure and competitive cycling targets exist within Scotland, in addition to the array of plans to expand wheeled urban sports.

Scottish Cycling's 2023 strategy

> *Developing a Nation of Cyclists 2.0' seeks to "inspire the nation to participate in cycling and support the Scottish Cycling community to realise their full potential. To lead and enable our members, clubs and partners to develop cycling for everyone.*

It identifies eight priority areas that they will work in partnership to deliver: Clubs, Growing Participation, Events, Places to Ride, People, Influence, Governance, Business and Operations.

This scope of activity from Scottish Cycling will provide a key overlap with the people, place and programme framing of this strategy while directly supporting competitive cycling in the city.

Skateboard GB is the UK-wide governing body for skateboarding and in their 2021-33 Strategic Plan focus on four key pillars to grow the activity: Skate more, Skate better, Skateable spaces and Connect. It proposes objectives to grow the skateboarding population, to widen access and support the increasing diversity of this urban sport.

It seeks to open up a clear and defined pathway for elite and professional skateboards, allowing them to compete at the highest level. It identifies the needs to continue expanding skateable spaces, whether they are skate 'dots' or large skate parks.

The table below is a concise overview of the most relevant national policies for this strategy.

National policy	Topic
Sport for Life – A vision for Sport in Scotland	Sport
A More Active Scotland: Physical Activity Delivery Plan	Physical activity
Cycling Framework for Active Travel – A Plan for Everyday Cycling	Active Travel
Developing a nation of Cyclists 2.0	Cycling
British Cycling – BMX Freestyle	BMX freestyle
Skateboard Scotland	Skateboarding
Skateboard GB 2021-2033 Strategic Plan	Skateboarding
Scottish MTB Strategy 2019-2025	Mountain Biking
Volunteering for All: national framework	Volunteering
Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework	Accessibility

Local context

Glasgow City Council's Strategic Plan for 2022 to 2027 identifies 'Grand Challenges' to address in achieving a fair, sustainable and flourishing city, including: reducing poverty and inequality, increasing opportunity, a just transition to net zero, and enabling staff to deliver services in a sustainable and innovative way.

'Missions' cascade from these Challenges, including promoting Glasgow as a world-leading events destination and creating more accessible sporting opportunities.

The city's transport strategies together help address these challenges: tackling the climate crisis, creating opportunities, reducing health inequalities and improving social inclusion through working towards an affordable, reliable and convenient, sustainable transport system.

The C&USS is an additional pillar within the suite of transport strategies, contributing to these positive outcomes. Its delivery framework will provide improved opportunities for involvement and participation in recreational and sporting cycling and urban sports, with further links to everyday active travel.

The table below is a concise overview of some the most relevant local policies.

Local policy	Topic
Glasgow Transport Strategy • City Centre Transport Plan • Glasgow's Active Travel Strategy 2022-2031 • Liveable Neighbourhoods Transport	Transport
GCC Strategic Plan 2022-2027	Strategic
GCC City Development Plan	Development
GCC Open Space Strategy 2020	Development
GCC Glasgow's Climate Plan	Climate
GCC Road Safety Plan 2020 - 2030	Road Safety
Glasgow Life Business Plan 2023-2025	Business
A Legacy Framework for Glasgow's Sport and Physical Activity	Sport and community



Case Study 2

Glasgow Tandem Club

GTC was formed in 2018 by Anne Fraser, a keen tandem cyclist, who wanted to develop a club in the West of Scotland for visually impaired cyclists, similar to others that already exist in other parts of the country. A small group of 'stokers' and 'pilots' were identified and supported to develop their riding skills, and started going on regular monthly rides, via local roads and cycle paths. Through various funding sources the club obtained new tandems and a storage space at Bellahouston Park's outdoor cycle track. Having a base at a training facility enables provision of taster and training sessions, along with the continuing programme of longer social rides.





Glasgow Tandem Club outings, both images courtesy Anne Fraser

Outcomes

This strategy seeks to deliver overarching outcomes for Glasgow and its residents, delivering on the opportunities identified in this document and addressing the challenges that exist in the city. It intends to align with the six Active Scotland outcomes:

- Encouraging and enabling the inactive to be more active
- Encouraging and enabling the active to stay active throughout life
- Developing physical confidence and competence from the earliest age
- Improving active infrastructure
- Supporting well-being and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport
- Improving opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport

This strategy recognises the crisis of inactivity in the city and the need to provide solutions to deliver better health outcomes for citizens. There is also an increasing awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing and having tools available to support individuals experiencing poor mental health.

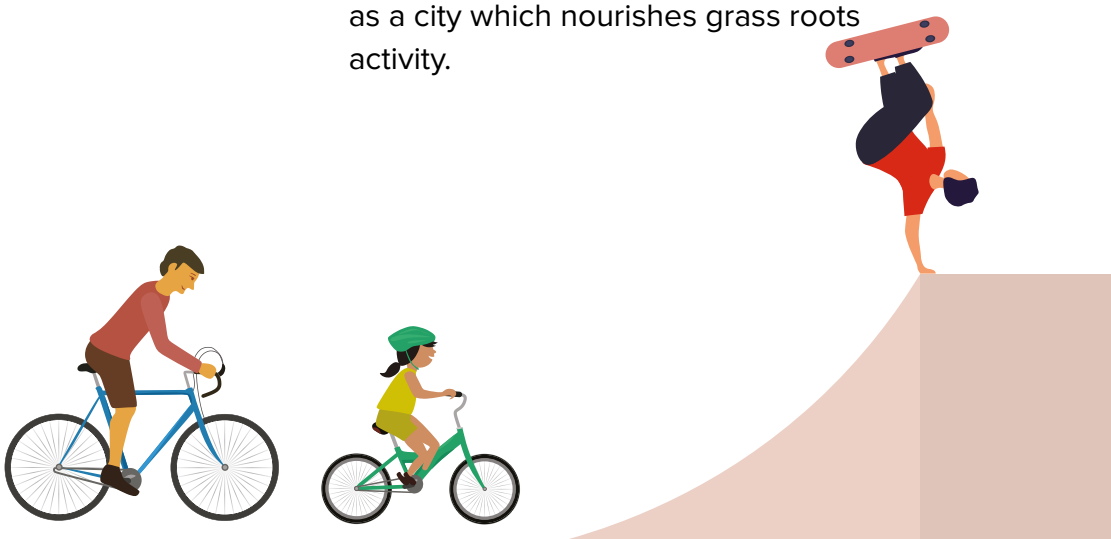
This document is supported by the Travel Behaviour Change Strategy, working in tandem to deliver nudges to enable more active lifestyles and enable access to opportunities which can support health and wellbeing.

The vision of inclusive cycling and urban sports, with the objectives of the Active Travel Strategy, combine to deliver new protected active travel routes across the city, traffic-calmed neighbourhoods, lighting improvements and accessible facilities.

The desired outcome from this is for more residents to feel motivated and supported to walk, wheel and cycle around the city and, in relation to this strategy, through participating in urban sports, use active travel more on an everyday basis.

By widening access to opportunities and reducing barriers to participation in cycling and urban sports, we will begin to see a more active population which is more reflective of the diversity of Glasgow. The importance of representation in publicity materials and role models from different backgrounds is key to encouraging uptake and achieving the outcome of greater participation.

Glasgow has a global reputation for expertise in hosting events and can only go from strength to strength. This strategy seeks to build upon a strong base, delivering the outcome of greater expertise within the resident population for supporting large sporting events and facilitating new opportunities for cycling and urban sport. This strategy will deliver more community-based activity to widen accessibility and solidify Glasgow's position as a city which nourishes grass roots activity.





2 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Glasgow has significant health disparities across the city with life expectancy often varying by postcode (see for example Glasgow Centre for Population Health).

Many initiatives are ongoing to reduce these inequalities.

Health and wellbeing

This strategy has an important role to play in tackling these inequalities and improving health outcomes. Engaging in cycling and wheeled urban sports, including for everyday mobility, can assist in mitigating the poor physical and mental health outcomes resulting from deprivation or wider societal issues such as inactivity.

This strategy will be able to work alongside and lever the outputs of the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme, utilising Streets for People interventions as a valuable opportunity for street play, cycling and urban sport. Historically Glasgow's streets were a natural playground, but this has declined due to the dominance of the motorcar.

As we rebalance our streetscape once again, it opens opportunities for street play and creative uses of our city's residential streets. This is supported by the Glasgow's Road Safety Plan 2020-2030 to deliver Vision Zero by the end of the decade: a goal of no deaths or serious injuries on our roads.

There is potential for this to be accelerated through the city-wide target for Net Zero and a 30% reduction in vehicle kilometres by 2030.



Children playing on bikes and a lorry, Glasgow, 1958. credit: Mayne, 2017

Funding

In the present climate, maintaining both capital and revenue investment presents a major challenge to realising the full ambition of the council's strategies.

The current era of stretched resources highlights the importance of working in partnership to deliver for residents utilising match funding, planning gain and funding bids to maximise the potential monetary sources. Collaborating with stakeholder groups to assist in delivering the best opportunities for the city will help with community development and will benefit from existing knowledge and networks.

Capacity

There are many competing demands on the street space within our neighbourhoods, but we need to put people at the centre of decision-making. In rebalancing our streets and spaces, they have to be safe and inviting for people to walk, wheel and cycle.

Urban Sports Generate Cultural Activity

Glasgow is already a cultural hub, so expanding and embedding urban sports into the fabric of the city presents an opportunity to generate new cultural activity and strengthen the city as an international centre of culture.





Wheeled urban sports may be considered less formalised than other forms of sports yet contemporary BMX, skateboarding and quad skating practice are built from half a century of rich cultural history and technical development.

The nature of these sports ranges from casual play and occasional recreation, through being a form of transport to dedicated progression and professional competition.

For many, participation becomes a lifestyle with all the social and cultural dimensions that might be associated with more familiar forms of collective sporting activity.

The key difference between these and organised team sports is a less developed competitive and rules based structure, these elements being replaced by a focus on personal progression, often supported organically through informal peer support.

Urban sports allow each participant to define their own approach and set their own goals because they are inherently non prescript ive and open to individual interpretation.

As a creative art form, members learn to document each other's tricks, editing and sharing videos, and even making music to go with videos. Complementary to this is creating artwork and graphics for boards and clothing.

Urban sports now have a credible profile, their influence on fashion and design being amplified to an ever-wider range of potential participants through social media and via well-established gaming platforms.

These opportunities to engage young people in beneficial physical activities and in their attendant social and cultural dimensions are highly significant.

BMX riders at the Riverside Museum





Women on Wheels Pedal in Pollok programme

Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (EDI)

Glasgow is Scotland's most diverse city but an inequality of access and participation continues to exist amongst and between our local neighbourhoods and communities. Geographic location, socioeconomic background, age, ethnicity, language ability and any other demographic characteristic – or any intersectionality of those characteristics - should not dictate a person's ability to access cycling and urban sports.

This strategy recognises the important role that cycling and urban sports venues and activities can play in welcoming and enabling people from all parts of society, and with different lived experiences, to come together for fulfilling involvement. The C&USS is committed to strengthening equality, diversity and inclusion in all its forms in its outcomes, and therefore the principles of EDI are embedded throughout. Women on



Accessible and inclusive sport

24% of the Scottish population have a long-term limiting condition (Scottish Household Survey 2019) and 80% of people with disabilities want to take part in more sport and physical activity (Activity Alliance 2019-20).

Despite a body of knowledge about the complex barriers for people with additional support needs to participate in sport, significantly fewer are engaged with regular sporting and physical activity compared with non-disabled people.

In addition to ensuring suitable facilities and opportunities exist for participation, the terminology used in communications and representation depicted in imagery must also reflect inclusion principles.

Glasgow as a feminist city

In 2022, Glasgow City Council adopted a Feminist Town Planning policy which recognises that to create public spaces that are safe and inclusive for women, and accessible for all members of the community, it is fundamental that women are central to all aspects of planning, public realm design, policy development and budgets.

This approach strives to develop a healthier city that is gender equal and considers walkability, proximity to services, mixed-use environments, a safe public realm, and open greenspaces. These factors are key considerations for creating a healthier, more liveable city for everyone, not only women, with positive impacts in terms of physical and mental wellbeing and air quality.

The consideration of gender when designing access to cycling and urban sport places and programmes, in addition to facilities on site, is core to ensuring inclusivity and realising the vision of this strategy.

An academic study identified specific measures needed to overcome barriers for women and girls to skateboard, and to truly realise the vision of inclusive urban sports.

The study recommended including role models and prioritising targeted sessions, welcoming spaces and prolonged support to widen access to skating. The continued dismantling of wider structural factors in society which prevent uptake in sport, are also influential and must be addressed.

Although participation in cycling and urban sport is becoming more diverse, effort is still needed to reduce the barriers experienced by under-represented groups in society.



Cycling in Glasgow Green.
Photo: Brian Sweeney/Sustrans

Case Study 3

Pedal at Pollok Project, Women on Wheels

Women on Wheels (WOW), with funding from Glasgow Life, delivered a 10-week cycling programme, assisting 37 women in the Pollok area to get out cycling. The free activities included learn to ride sessions, confidence building led rides and two introductory mountain biking sessions held in Pollok Park. Cycles and use of an off-road track for the learn to ride and confidence sessions were provided by Pollok United and Blackwood Housing Association, while Scottish Cycling loaned mountain bikes for the Pollok Park sessions.

The Pollok Artist in Residence and The Village Story Telling Centre added a creative element to some of the confidence building rides, exploring how cycling made the women feel.

Local mum Helena attended all of the confidence building rides as well as the mountain biking introduction, saying that it was the first thing she had done for herself in 10 years: *"I have never felt so alive as I've just been on that bike. Never smiled so much!."*

Rachel learned to ride: *"As a complete beginner cyclist, aged 64, this has been an amazing experience for me. I have been able to do that little bit extra every week and I am doing things I never thought possible. It has been a great, supportive environment, and I was encouraged to go at my own pace."*





Women on Wheels – Helena (left) & Rachel (right)



Infrastructure

The network of interconnected routes being developed through Glasgow's Active Travel Strategy and the development of the City Network will have a significant role in not only supporting everyday cycling and wheeling journeys by residents, but also attracting cycle tourists to locations in Glasgow and beyond (see below).

Glasgow's City Network will provide an accessible, safe, coherent, and direct active travel network across Glasgow, connecting key destinations such as education, business, retail, and culture. The network of around 270km of new protected cycleways will pass within 400m of every primary school meaning safe, connected wheeled journeys to school can become an everyday reality for young people.

In addition to infrastructure improvements, marketing and promotion will also play a vital behaviour change role. The Travel Behaviour Change Strategy details how maps, digital resources, wayfinding, bike hire and events can all encourage people to explore their area and to travel actively.

Cycle tourism

This has seen significant global growth in the past decade including in Scotland and, by extension, Glasgow. It offers considerable local economic benefits to the city. Cycle tourism can be considered in two distinct categories:

- Destination cycle tourists who are motivated to travel to places primarily because of their routes, trails and riding experience.
- Leisure cyclists who might ride whilst on holiday, but cycling is not the main activity or primary reason for their holiday.

Glasgow's significant off-road leisure cycling routes, developed over the past few decades, includes canals, parks, and the National Cycle Network promoted by Sustrans. These routes are essential for making connections to neighbouring communities and to local green spaces, as well as helping people to connect with nature. There is considerable potential to improve the connectivity of these routes and to promote them to leisure cyclists.

This strategy will act as a catalyst to shape future bids and developments to expand the network of recreational routes within the city and connect it to neighbouring authorities, helping to grow this aspect of leisure and tourism in Glasgow.

The proximity of Glasgow to the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park and other key destinations places it well to continue building its reputation as a hub for cycle tourism and attracting cyclists wishing to explore the area. The routes radiating from the city allow it to act as a base for destination cyclists wishing to explore the region by cycle.

Some visitors will have multiple interests due to the array of cycle venues and facilities, bringing in riders who wish to partake in amateur or competitive sport cycling as their reason for cycle tourism to the city.





3 DELIVERY

The delivery of this strategy is framed by three themes which are at the core of increasing and broadening participation in cycling and wheeled urban sports:

People, Place and Programme.

The following table gives a brief outline of what is meant by each.

People	Place	Programme
The volunteers, leaders, peer mentors, coaches, teachers, and officials who help to make cycling and wheeled urban sports happen. Growing and diversifying participation in cycling and urban sports requires us to support, retain and develop this essential people-resource.	The natural and built environment in which people can practice and participate in cycling and wheeled urban sports. Creating more and better-quality facilities, places and spaces that are safe and accessible will increase opportunities and remove barriers to participation.	The cycling and wheeled urban sports activities available to participants across Glasgow. Delivering diverse activity programmes across our communities provides the participation opportunities that many need to help them build cycling and urban sports into their lives.



Girls' cycling programme, Glasgow BMX Centre

People

People refers to our host of volunteers, peer mentors, leaders, coaches, teachers and officials who enable cycling and wheeled urban sports. They are essential to facilitate and deliver activities, provide coaching and training and support events for participants at our venues and in our communities, across Glasgow.

Retaining and recruiting dedicated, high-quality and inspiring people, is key to sustaining and increasing the delivery of programmes of activities for cycling and wheeled urban sports throughout Glasgow.

To ensure we increase and diversify participation in programmes requires that our people delivering activities should also come from all backgrounds so that they reflect the diversity of Glasgow's society as a whole. Participation in cycling and wheeled urban sports of all forms has been growing, prompted partly by experiences of the Covid19 pandemic, and by heightened visibility through sporting events.

Skateboarding in particular has benefited from recent inclusion in the Olympics, with the resulting increased participation of girls and young women a significant cultural change. We must ensure this is capitalised on.

Increasing diversity among our people will help to attract and encourage a broader range of participants who are new to cycling or urban sports, including those who are inactive or disengaged from more mainstream sports. This is an opportunity to help them build a healthier, more active lifestyle.

We recognise that local peers can become champions, heroes and role models, particularly in the realm of wheeled urban sports, and helping to develop within the city a culture that accepts street play and practice as everyday activity. Part of this process which helps to grow participation is the use of social media content, such as sharing tricks and stunts.

The retention of people, particularly volunteers, is dependent upon ensuring they feel empowered, valued and rewarded with opportunities for personal growth.

Transferrable skills developed may longer term improve employment opportunities. Important to the longer-term sustainability of our cohorts of people will be to support young people already active within their area of activity to progress towards leading and delivery roles.

Glasgow is home to an established and varied scene of cycling and wheeled urban sport activity, supporting from grassroots to elite levels. This has been developed by dedicated organisations, their staff and volunteers. They:

- **Work to increase opportunities and break down barriers to access within areas of multiple deprivation.**
- **Work with people of all ages, with a particular focus on children and youths.**
- **Work to increase participation by those under-represented in cycling and wheeled urban sports, particularly girls and women.**
- **Work with people with different abilities, to ensure all can take part, including those with a physical disability, sensory or intellectual impairment, medical condition or other hidden disability.**

There are many pathways towards becoming qualified to deliver activities, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, whatever the discipline, and from competitive and elite sport to developing a club or more social-based activities.

Scottish Cycling and British Cycling, who together develop sport and competitive cycling in the city, have coaching pathways covering disciplines from track and road cycling to BMX freestyle and racing, but also supporting more social and leisure cycling. The coaching framework aims to support coaches in key areas such as working with disabled riders, women and girls and young people.

The thriving club cycling scene in Glasgow is supported by the club development framework which aims to provide opportunities for everyone to play their part in the cycling community – and places People and Partnerships at the core of this.

Ride leader training is offered by organisations such as Cycling Scotland or Scottish Cycling. Over a decade of British Cycling's Breeze programme has built a network of trained female ride leaders to act as local champions to bring more women into cycling through fun, free rides.





Case Study 4

Glasgow Gals - **Ride Leader experiences**

> *The best thing about being a ride leader is taking people on adventures they didn't know they could have. We don't do big epic rides, sometimes we just go round the park. It's more about getting people on a bike and making sure they enjoy being on a bike. Then seeing them progress to longer rides, cycling more days each week, going on the roads, trying other types of cycling, getting their own bike, joining other groups, the seeing the positive impact that cycling has on them.*
> Carol Thompson, Ride leader and Coach, Glasgow Gals and Sunny Cycles

> *As a ride leader for the Glasgow Gals Cycling Club, I find pure joy in showing new routes to my fellow riders. The club's incredible support system fosters a powerful sense of empowerment as we uplift one another on our cycling adventures.*
> Ania Przygoda, Ride Leader and Coach, Glasgow Gals.



Leading a cycle ride, at Glasgow Green – image courtesy Carol Thompson, Sunny Cycles



Place

The 'Place' theme recognises that the city needs to put more value on the spaces where people engage in cycling and wheeled urban sports, from dedicated venues to public spaces, cycle lanes, parks and community hubs. Such places can engage, encourage and enable people to access and participate in cycling and wheeled urban sports, as part of more active and healthier lifestyles.

Whether an international-level venue for track cycling, a high-quality civic space with designed-in skateboarding 'dots', or an off-road pathway suitable for a leisure ride, it is essential our places provide safe, welcoming and accessible space, with good quality surfacing and connections between them.

As well as providing opportunities for people to be more physically active, increasing the numbers of purpose-built facilities, investing in improving the natural and built environment, capitalising on the advantages offered by our off-road path networks, and ensuring connectivity with the city's sustainable transport network will greatly enhance Glasgow's liveability. They will enhance the city's neighbourhoods and encourage residents to explore their local area.

This links with implementation of Glasgow's Liveable Neighbourhoods programme, where our streets and spaces are rebalanced towards people and community spaces begin to feel safer, especially when adequately lit.

Integral to this transition is accepting more street play and its development into spontaneous and informal urban sport, which can help bring vibrancy to an area, and being more accepting of our civic spaces being more welcoming to young people.

Glasgow has an enviable mix of world class cycling venues thanks not least to the legacy of the 2014 Commonwealth Games and the 2016 European Championships.

The key venues are:

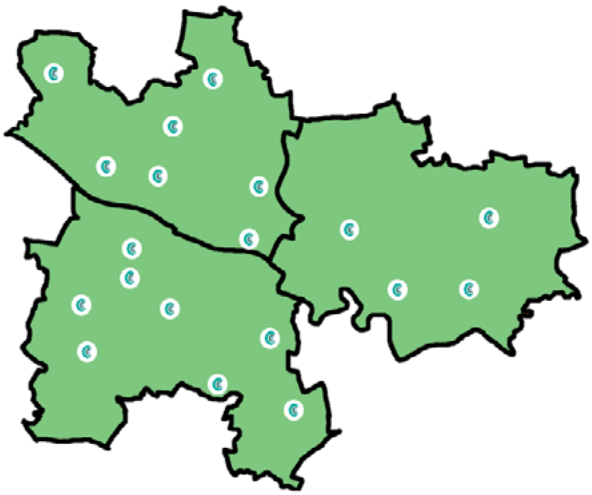
- **Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome**
- **Glasgow BMX Centre**
- **Cathkin Braes Mountain Bike Centre**

These facilities have provided focal points for Glasgow Life's sport development activities from grassroots outreach work to elite level sporting events, contributing to the development of clubs, coaches, volunteers and riders – our 'People' resource.

Glasgow also has a network of Community Sport Hubs operating either as individual venues or utilising multiple venues within a geographic area such as a community centre, schools and playing field pavilion. These bring together sport clubs and key local partners to develop and grow the sport offering in their community.



COMMUNITY SPORT HUBS



North West

- Drumchapel
- Hillhead
- Scotstoun
- Maryhill and Summerston
- Firhill YP and CSH
- Milton CSH
- The Pyramid at Anderston

North East

- Easterhouse CSH
- Active Glasgow East
- Dennistoun & Area CSH
- Shettleston CSH

South

- Castlemilk YC
- Clydesdale
- Hutcheson's
- Active Govan
- Langside Sports Club
- SAPC CSH
- Toryglen CSH
- Pollok United Corkerhill Community Hub

Community Sport Hubs in Glasgow

These hubs, along with the 20 Glasgow Club venues operated by Glasgow Life operates and numerous community organisations, are focal points for cycling-based activity.

Community organisations, including those with links to housing associations, have increasingly become a key part of the 'cycling picture' in Glasgow, offering programmes of activities to diverse audiences, and providing equipment and facilities that remove barriers to cycling for many.

Community hubs and sites often fulfil an important social role with facilities like community cafes, toilets, bike washing, storage space for adaptive or cargo bikes, space for clubs to meet and make connections, and focal points for community events.

Other cycle sport venues in the city include the Glasgow Cyclones Cycle Speedway track in Crosshill, with Glasgow Bike Polo based at the Barn Youth Centre (G5) and Mansfield Park (G11).

Urban sports landscapes

Wheeled urban sports usually takes place in either purpose-built facilities, such as skateparks (outdoor or indoor) or in public spaces and directly on streets. Skateparks can accommodate skateboarding, roller skating, BMX and scooting.

Glasgow offers a mix of indoor and outdoor spaces, incorporating vertical ramps, pump tracks and other dedicated facilities.

A number of skate facilities within Glasgow's boundary are listed on the Skateboard Scotland directory, however, many of these are ageing and in varying states of repair.

While skateboarding and BMX activity in Glasgow is widely recognised as a thriving cultural activity, the Kelvingrove Skatepark is the only purpose-built outdoor skatepark in central Glasgow. Now 20 years old, its enduring success and popularity renders it often oversubscribed.

Wheeled urban sports are highly social activities and the varied parks and facilities available for these sports offer riders the opportunity to practice their skills, meet others, make new friends and participate in a vibrant sub-culture with a strong visual identity and creative ethos at its heart.

Neighbourhood skateparks provide valuable larger areas for participation, but there are many smaller informal skate 'spots' and 'dots' across the city. Adopted by the riders, these sites make use of architectural features within public realm and at cultural and tourist landmarks, and can include smooth pavements, carparks, municipal building spaces and city squares.

Examples include the 'Transport spot' at the Riverside Museum, and at the Gallery of Modern Art.

Such self-designated sites have evolved organically in parallel with the growth in participation in urban sports and broadens geographic access across Glasgow.

These free-to-use spaces are accessible and inclusive, encouraging participants from a wide range of demographic backgrounds.

Skate spots
Provide an immediate entry level environment where riding style and tricks first develop. Need a smooth surface, curbs, steps and banks

Skate dots
Similar but smaller and more informal than skate spots. A dot can be an individual architectural feature within the streetscape

Skate parks
Purpose built environments, including indoor and outdoors. Pay-to-use facilities and free-to-use local parks. Varied scale from local amenity to competition level

Hybrid multi-use urban sport parks
Future development as range of urban sports progress from perceived niche pastime(s) to recognised Olympic sport(s)

Routes that connect to urban sports spaces need to ensure surfaces are usable by all wheeled forms of transport

Vacant sites and buildings can present opportunities to create new dedicated urban sports parks that could transform the built environment for urban sports riders, pedestrians, and spectators alike. Proposals for the Devon Street Urban Park, an outdoor wheeled sports facility beneath the M74 on Glasgow's south side, would animate an underused place directly linked to the South City Way, creating a new destination. Further investment like this project needs to be considered for Glasgow to fulfil its vision for C&USS.

Facilities that can host flagship events will inspire new audiences, with the potential outcome that more high-level competitive and professional riders emerge, thus enhancing Glasgow's presence on the world stage, stimulating behaviour change and leading to a wider uptake in cycling and urban sports.

Despite facing significant budget reductions over the past decade, enhancements have been made to Glasgow's existing sports and open spaces infrastructure.

The legacy of major sporting events held in the city has been to encourage healthier lifestyles but also to enable the maintenance and longevity of these facilities.

We will work in partnership to identify new opportunities and maximise usage of what we already have; there is potential to explore previously untapped resources, such as extended school grounds and other open spaces.

Kelvingrove Skatepark



Case Study 5

The Loading Bay, Glasgow

Glasgow's first indoor skate park, The Loading Bay, opened in 2019 following a six-year delivery partnership between Vision Ramps and Scottish Canals, with Glasgow City Council acting as primary funder. Since its inception The Loading Bay has worked closely with multiple partners, including GB Snowsport, Skateboard GB and British Cycling to deliver a world-class facility. In 2023 The Loading Bay became Skateboard GB's national hub with Scotland's first skateboard professional in post as 'hub lead'.

Located just a short walk from Glasgow city centre, it has become a successful and relevant centre for a diverse range of young people and Glasgow's BMX and skateboarding scenes and attracting 40,000 visitors a year. The centre promotes active travel with the majority of its visitors choosing sustainable travel modes to reach the venue.

The Loading Bay's collaborative education programme delivers approximately 1500 sessions per year through relationships with Glasgow Life, schools and community organisations from across Glasgow.

BMX Freestyle sessions were included within the 10-week Girls' Programme (see Case Study 6). Rated 'most popular' by Glasgow Life's school-age participants, this huge success has prompted development of a wider participation programme.



The Loading Bay, Glasgow. The indoors venue combines skating with other disciplines such as BMX Freestyle.

Programme

The 'Programme' theme is central to this strategy to ensure we support everyone, whether a commuter, an older recreational rider, a junior starting out on their sporting journey, or an elite sports competitor, to experience the physical and social benefits from participating in cycling or wheeled urban sports: to have fun, improve skills and fitness and meet up with like-minded people. Having a positive experience and learning appropriate skills will help ensure participation in cycling or wheeled urban sports is sustained, with the potential for people to go on to adopt healthier, more active lifestyles, including active travel.

Programme therefore focuses on delivering activities for different disciplines in the heart of our communities. These will aim to provide opportunities, remove barriers, increase accessibility and foster inclusivity for a larger and more diverse range of people to participate in cycling and wheeled urban sports.

Glasgow Life is a key player within the process of programme delivery in Glasgow, utilising its expertise in sport, culture, community and partnership working to maximise outcomes for the city. It seeks to identify funding opportunities and works with the best-placed partners to ensure delivery of activity on the ground.

The organisation has well-established strong partnerships with strategic-level organisations such as the NHS and sportscotland, the Council's Education department, and an array of smaller organisations across Glasgow.



Skateboarder in action



Glasgow Life's cycling programmes prioritise the themes of EDI: Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (see section 2). Recent funding made available through the Go Cycle fund supported 29 projects across Glasgow, delivered by a range of community organisations. The audiences these programmes engaged with included target groups within areas of multiple deprivation, New Scots, young people, disabled people, LGBTQ+, and minority ethnic communities.

Case Study 1 features the Active Life Club based in the south side of Glasgow, one of the successful applicants to the Go Cycle Fund.

Case Study 3 on Pedal at Pollok describes the multi-partner project which was made possible by funding from Glasgow Life with Women on Wheels identified as the best-fit partner organisation to deliver.

Glasgow City Council's PEPASS (Physical Education, Physical Activity and School Sports) team, within the council's Education Department, brings multiple internal and external partners together to promote cycling in Glasgow's schools.

A partnership working group focuses on identifying funding streams and helps facilitate opportunities for Glasgow's school children to take part in cycling activity programmes.

Ongoing programmes make use of spaces in local communities and at Glasgow's formal cycling venues such as Cathkin Braes and the Glasgow BMX Centre.

Activities focus on fun, confidence building and developing skills, all of which complement Bikeability Scotland road safety training.



Expanding opportunities

Although wheeled urban sports have traditionally grown organically through on street practice and performance, in informal outdoor space, the development of venues such as the Loading Bay is starting to create a new delivery model.

As BMX freestyle in particular grows in popularity with children and young people, new programmes can now be offered to school children. The venue offers a dry, warm space to defy the Glasgow climate, with an exciting and adaptable practice zone for delivering training sessions.

Case Study 6 shows how Glasgow Life helped high school girls experience BMX freestyle at the Loading Bay, among other cycle-based activities.

The wider programme includes regular term-time weekly sessions for young people, led by a diverse coaching group, and week-day holiday camps for groups of young people incorporating skateboard, BMX and parkour.

> *BMX was the start of my interest in racing and provided the entry point into professional cycle racing, that ultimately led to Olympic medals.*
> Sir Chris Hoy





4 PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Partnership is the overarching approach essential to delivering the People, Place and Programme themes of this strategy. C&USS must be owned not just by the council, but also by core partners who will help to make the vision a reality.

Glasgow Life will be pivotal to this delivery. Building on existing partnerships is at the core of everything Glasgow Life does towards bringing culture and sport to everyone in Glasgow.

Their city-wide reach and experience ensures that we will identify and make best use of all funding opportunities, to maximise on the outcomes from this strategy.

Glasgow Life will bring together and enable partner organisations to deliver inclusive programmes in priority areas of the city, and to targeted audiences.

Actions from other local organisations, stakeholders and the community are also needed to fully realise the vision. The approach of this strategy will facilitate using existing networks and build new partnerships in order to reach out to the wealth of organisations across Glasgow, ensuring effective delivery.

The strategy will serve as a guide for all those involved as the city continues to grow its network of cycling and urban sports facilities, amenities, and programmes.

Case Study 6

Girls' Cycling Programme
A Glasgow Life - 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships Legacy Project
A group of S1 girls from Drumchapel High School completed a 10-week cycling programme as part of a wider multi partnership project involving girls from 11 other Glasgow schools, all made possible by the 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships activation budget managed by Glasgow Life.

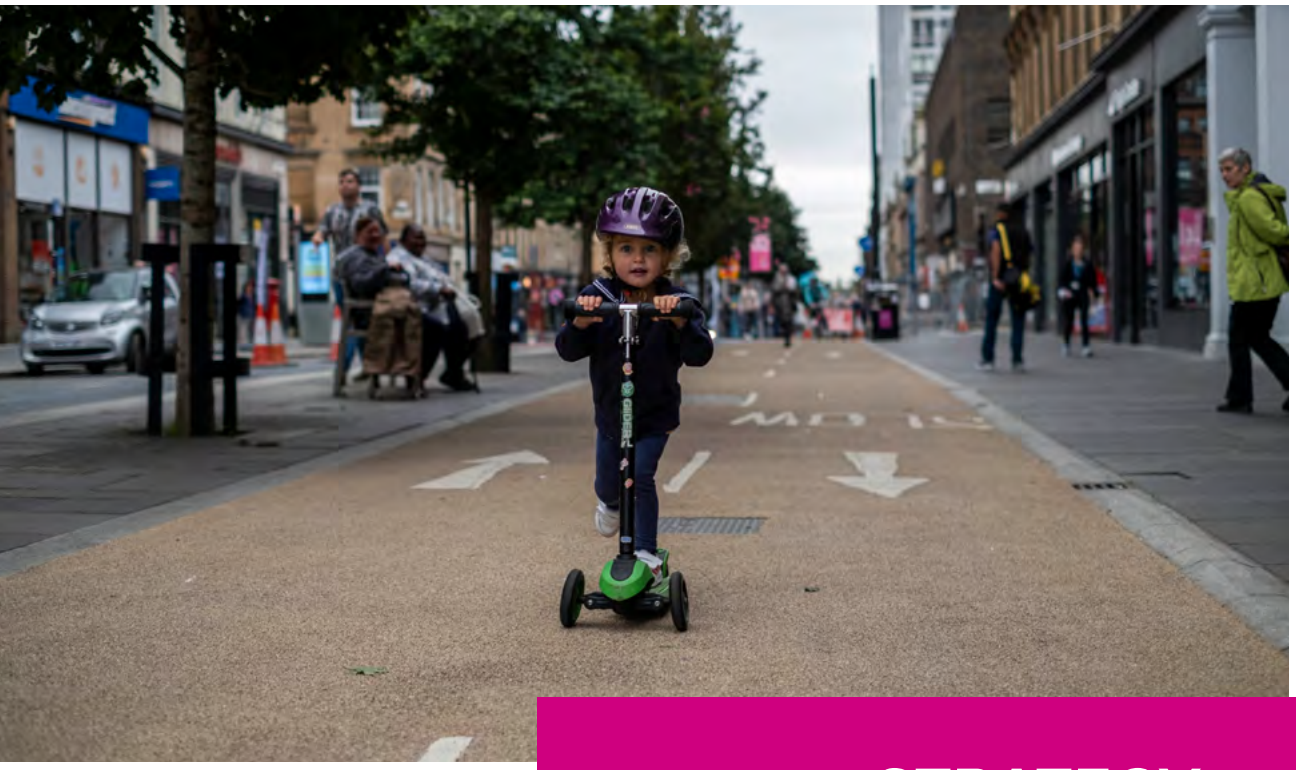
The target audience were girls transitioning from primary to secondary school, a pivotal point in a young girl's life when dropping out of physical activity, peer pressure and increased stress become real issues.

Many girls taking part were disengaged in school, struggled to focus and often disruptive in class, while others were at risk of becoming socially isolated. Taster sessions in BMX, mountain biking, road and track cycling as well as interactive, confidence building workshops were delivered.

Feedback from the girls and teachers alike was overwhelmingly positive. The girls adapted to unfamiliar environments, and their overall wellbeing, focus and attentiveness in class improved greatly. In addition, some of the participants are now choosing to cycle to school, highlighting that early years participation in urban sports can be a catalyst for behaviour change in everyday journeys.

Girls' cycling programme at Glasgow's Loading Bay indoor skatepark





5 STRATEGY DELIVERY

This document sets out the vision for supporting and delivering a significant increase in cycling and wheeled urban sport in Glasgow during the coming years.

The delivery framework of People, Place and Programme, in conjunction with the Partnership approach, presents a practical structure allowing efforts to be focused on achieving this vision for the city.

The innovative incorporation of wheeled urban sports within the strategy gives more formality to these activities and highlights possible professional pathways alongside the more established opportunities within cycling.

The document pragmatically identifies the challenges facing cycling and urban sports in contemporary Glasgow, whilst outlining the significant potential to unleash new opportunities in the city for all of these wheeled sports.

The strategy will help shape decisions for the development of future facilities, to ensure the city offers diverse and accessible options that are equitably distributed. In committing to equity and access, it further seeks to enable a broader range of People and Programme opportunities across the city, catering for a wide variety of interests and all ages and abilities.

The council family is committed to making a positive difference to its residents' health and wellbeing by facilitating opportunities to engage in physical activity via cycling and urban sports.

Successful implementation of this strategy's vision will bring social, economic and environmental benefits to all of our communities.

Glasgow's reputation as a global centre of expertise in hosting events will be further uplifted and unleash an enhanced cultural vibrancy to the city.

Action Plan development

Engagement with the public and stakeholders during the development of the C&USS has helped to identify key actions to take forward.

Following the publication of this strategy, an Action Plan will be developed to shape its delivery. The Action Plan will utilise the framework of People, Place and Programme to prioritise actions.

GCC and Glasgow Life will work in partnership to develop the Action Plan and to identify key partners for its delivery going forward.

Group cycling with Sunny Cycles



