

Scotland report

Walking and Cycling Index 2025



Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling



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Walk Wheel Cycle Trust

I am proud to introduce the second ever Walking and Cycling Index for Scotland, bringing together insights from our eight cities to better understand people's experiences of walking, wheeling and cycling.

This year's Index delivers a clear and consistent message: people in Scotland's cities want to travel actively more often.

Walking and wheeling remain the most common ways of getting around, and nearly half of residents would like to walk, wheel or cycle more in their daily lives.

To make these choices possible, the report shows widespread support for safer routes and more accessible streets.

The results also reveal some encouraging progress. People are feeling safer when walking, wheeling and cycling in our cities; including women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and disabled people.

However, while progress is visible, it's also uneven.

The gender gap in cycling persists, with men continuing to cycle at twice the rate of women.

And despite growing appetite for alternatives to driving, only 61% of city residents feel they can get around easily without a car - unchanged since 2023.

The report brings this data to life through personal stories which show what is possible when the right conditions are in place: healthier communities which reduce the pressure on our NHS, thriving local economies, and meaningful action on the climate crisis.

All of this underlines the need for sustained investment and local leadership to make walking, wheeling and cycling possible for everyone in Scotland. Because we all deserve to be able to move around safely, confidently and joyfully.

The Index tells us that the public are behind this vision.

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The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index is the biggest assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling in the UK and Ireland. It is delivered by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) in collaboration with 22 regional and local partners. Each area reports on the progress made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling a more attractive, everyday way to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years.

This report has been funded and supported by Transport Scotland. The data in this report comes from 2025 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent, demographically representative survey of 9,305 residents aged 16 or above in eight Scottish cities. The survey was conducted from March to June 2025. Social research organisation NatCen conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

Across this report we have included comparisons to 2023 data where available.

Our thanks to the people of Scotland's cities who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all reports and an interactive data tool to explore the data in more depth can be found at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index



Defining wheeling

Some people who use a wheelchair or a mobility scooter may not identify with the term walking and may prefer to use the term wheeling. We use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

Headlines

Scotland aggregated

Population^[i]
1,787,501

1,513,576 adults
273,925 children

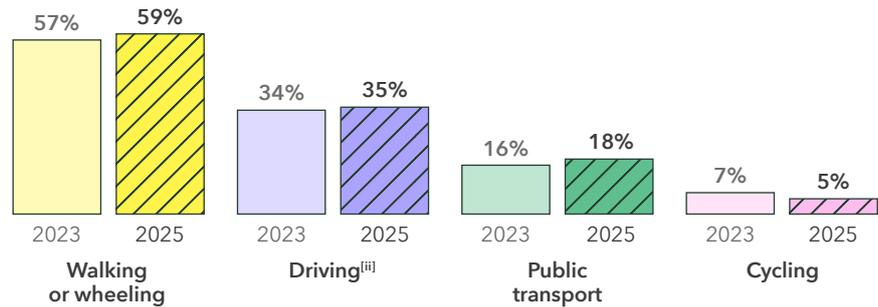


Frequency of different modes of travel

Walking and wheeling is the most common mode of transport amongst the residents of Scottish cities.

i. NRS 2024 mid-year population estimates for Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh, NRS Census 2022 for Dunfermline, Inverness, Perth and Stirling. This is the most recent available for Scottish cities.

Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in Scottish cities



ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle.

Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

Residents' travel choices and their perceptions of walking, wheeling and cycling sometimes vary widely between different groups.

59%

of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

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

50% of people from ethnic minority groups

61% of white people

15%

of residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

10% of women

21% of men

13% of people who identified their gender in another way^[iii]

Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

66% of disabled people

80% of non-disabled people

iii. See footnote on page 6.

iv. Socio-economic groups AB are managerial while groups DE are manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment. See page 6 for full definitions.

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

45% of women

52% of men

27% of people who identified their gender in another way

Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood^[iv]

68% of socio-economic group DE

82% of socio-economic group AB

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Based on modelling of survey data, every year, walking, wheeling and cycling:

prevents
4,530
serious long-term
health conditions

creates
£1.48 billion
in economic benefit for
individuals and Scottish cities

saves
93,000 tonnes
of greenhouse gas emissions

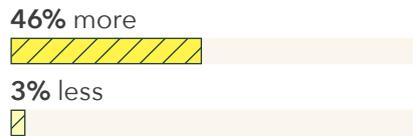
Walking, wheeling and cycling reduces congestion by taking up to 520,000 cars off the roads every day.

Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more and drive less

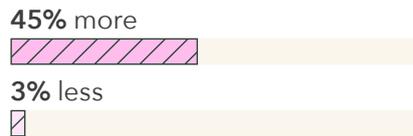
Percentage of residents who would like to use different types of transport more or less in the future:

22% of residents want to drive less. 36% of residents agree that they often use a car because no other transport options are available.

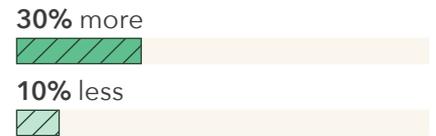
Walk or wheel



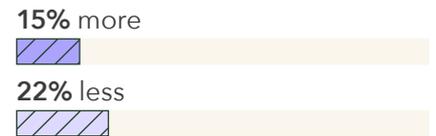
Cycle



Take public transport

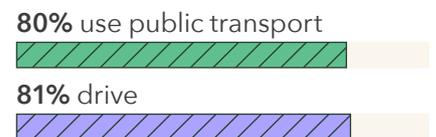
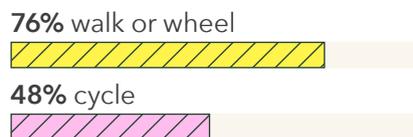


Drive



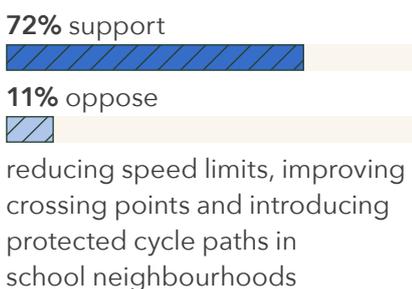
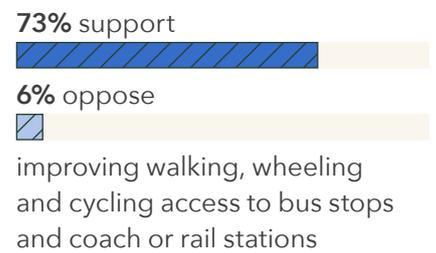
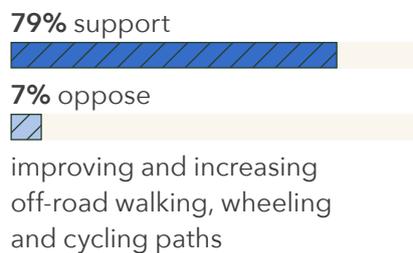
Cycling is seen as less safe than other forms of transport

Percentage of residents who think it's safe in their local area to:



Residents support more connected neighbourhoods

55% of residents support shifting investment from road-building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. 21% oppose such a shift.



v. Local places with services and amenities nearby your home are often known as 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Walking and wheeling

Participation, safety and satisfaction

Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Scottish cities, the number of residents walking and wheeling at least five days a week has stayed about the same since 2023.

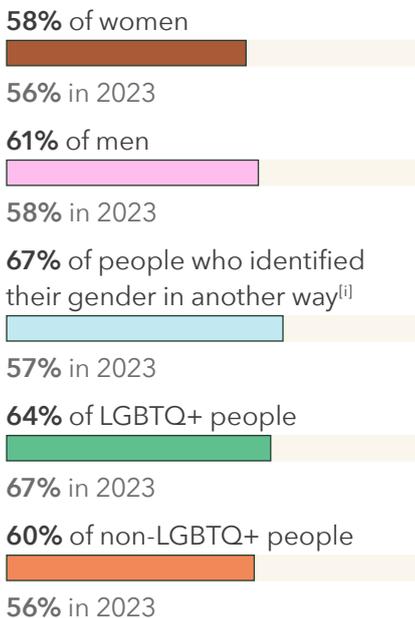
Walking and wheeling is the most common mode of transport for short journeys and vital for travelling to and from public transport. Encouragingly, perceptions of safety have improved since 2023.

95%
of all residents walk or wheel
95% in 2023

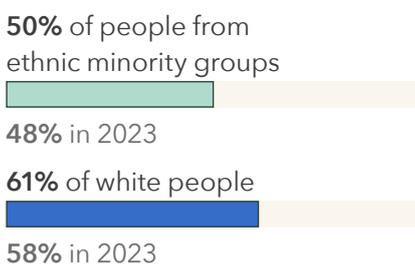
59%
of all residents walk or wheel at least five days a week
57% in 2023

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

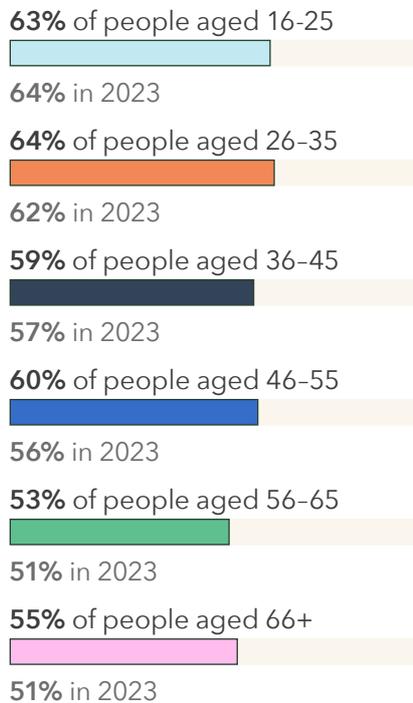
Gender and sexuality



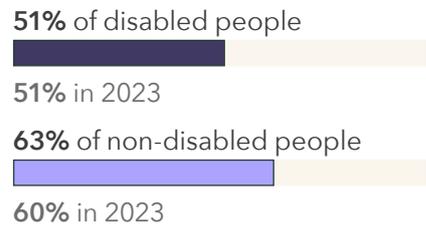
Ethnicity



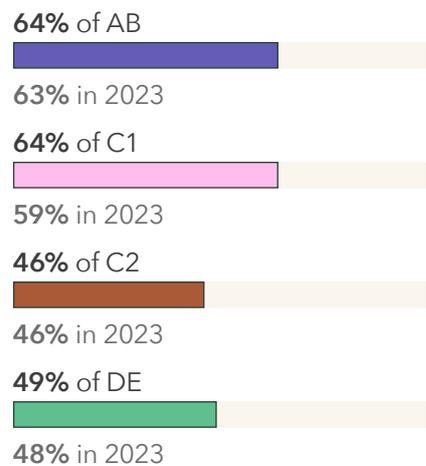
Age



Disability



Socio-economic groupⁱⁱ



i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' is 0.9% of the total sample in both 2023 and 2025.

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.

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

76%

of all residents think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

66% in 2023

53%

of all residents think it's safe for children to walk or wheel in their local area

48% in 2023

78%

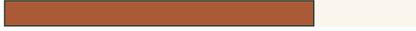
of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk or wheel

73% in 2023

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

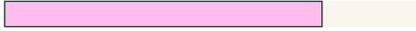
Gender and sexuality

75% of women



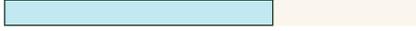
64% in 2023

77% of men



68% in 2023

65% of people who identified their gender in another way



45% in 2023

70% of LGBTQ+ people



63% in 2023

77% of non-LGBTQ+ people



67% in 2023

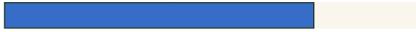
Ethnicity

78% of people from ethnic minority groups



71% in 2023

75% of white people



65% in 2023

Age

72% of people aged 16-25



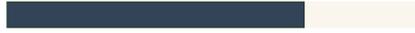
69% in 2023

77% of people aged 26-35



63% in 2023

72% of people aged 36-45



69% in 2023

78% of people aged 46-55



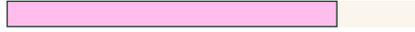
66% in 2023

75% of people aged 56-65



67% in 2023

80% of people aged 66+



62% in 2023

Disability

66% of disabled people



59% in 2023

80% of non-disabled people



69% in 2023

Socio-economic group

79% of AB



68% in 2023

77% of C1



67% in 2023

70% of C2



64% in 2023

68% of DE



59% in 2023



Stuart, mental health advocate, Stirling

I had gained weight over many years due to poor mental health. Exercise was the only social activity allowed during lockdown, so every day, me and a friend would walk the 3 miles from my village to Stirling. We'd go past all my old haunts, go for a coffee, then walk back. I lost 4 stone and reclaimed some of my old self back.

I still walk but now it's for my mental health. It's important for me to have purpose and routine. Every morning I get up early and I do a different walk each day. I say good morning to every single person.

Walking has transformed my attitude towards things.

Cycling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Cycling participation

Only 15% of residents cycle at least once a week. This has decreased since 2023.

Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.ⁱ The potential for cycling is huge, and unlocking it depends on providing safe, dedicated space for cycling. Encouragingly, perceptions of safety have improved since 2023.

35%
of all residents cycle
39% in 2023

15%
of all residents cycle at least once a week
18% in 2023

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

Gender and sexuality

10% of women



12% in 2023

21% of men



24% in 2023

13% of people who identified their gender in another way



10% in 2023

15% of LGBTQ+ people



19% in 2023

16% of non-LGBTQ+ people



17% in 2023

Ethnicity

11% of people from ethnic minority groups



17% in 2023

16% of white people



18% in 2023

Age

11% of people aged 16-25



17% in 2023

17% of people aged 26-35



20% in 2023

19% of people aged 36-45



24% in 2023

19% of people aged 46-55



23% in 2023

17% of people aged 56-65



14% in 2023

9% of people aged 66+



8% in 2023

Disability

9% of disabled people



11% in 2023

18% of non-disabled people



21% in 2023

Socio-economic group

19% of AB



23% in 2023

13% of C1



16% in 2023

14% of C2



14% in 2023

11% of DE



11% in 2023

i. See Bike Life 2019 UK report.

Cycling safety and satisfaction

48%

of all residents think it's safe to cycle in their local area

40% in 2023

35%

of all residents think it's safe for children to cycle in their local area

31% in 2023

50%

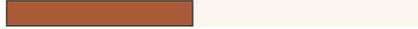
of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle

45% in 2023

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

Gender and sexuality

45% of women



37% in 2023

52% of men



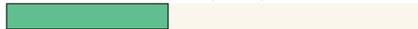
43% in 2023

27% of people who identified their gender in another way



23% in 2023

39% of LGBTQ+ people



36% in 2023

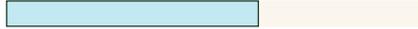
50% of non-LGBTQ+ people



41% in 2023

Ethnicity

61% of people from ethnic minority groups



55% in 2023

46% of white people



38% in 2023

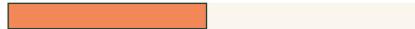
Age

48% of people aged 16-25



45% in 2023

48% of people aged 26-35



37% in 2023

47% of people aged 36-45



42% in 2023

53% of people aged 46-55



41% in 2023

50% of people aged 56-65



40% in 2023

45% of people aged 66+



36% in 2023

Disability

43% of disabled people



34% in 2023

50% of non-disabled people



42% in 2023

Socio-economic group

48% of AB



38% in 2023

49% of C1



39% in 2023

46% of C2



42% in 2023

48% of DE



43% in 2023



Emily, new cyclist, Edinburgh

I have agoraphobia so my bike's been essential in doing exposure therapy, which is the main way people with agoraphobia recover.

I really struggle with feeling not in control and I can't drive so it just got more and more difficult to get around. I tried out my friend's e-bike and I was like "this is the best thing in the whole world." So I saved my money and bought one.

I didn't see myself as a cyclist at all, but I suppose I am. I honestly never thought I'd ever be able to get into town again. I actually don't mind cycling on roads. It does feel quite empowering sometimes.

Benefits of walking and wheeling

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

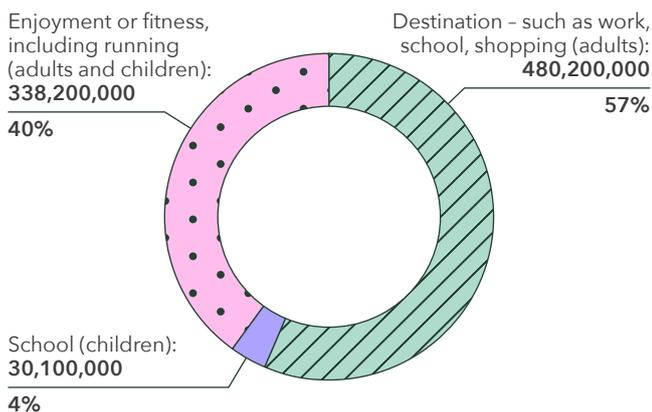


Together, residents of Scottish cities walk or wheel 91 times around the world every day

Walking and wheeling improves health and air quality, saves the NHS money, and reduces congestion.

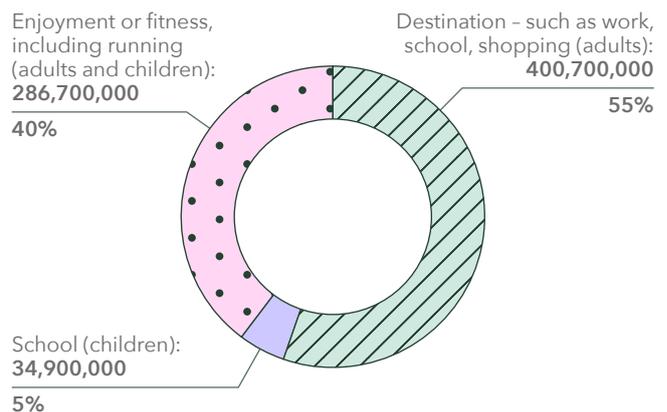
Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose

848.5 million trips in 2025 which add up to **826.7 million miles**



Average walking or wheeling trip distance: 1 mile

722.3 million trips in 2023 which add up to **727.8 million miles**



Average walking or wheeling trip distance: 1 mile

Walking and wheeling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

The total annual economic benefit from all trips walked and wheeled in Scottish cities is

£1.2 billion

£836.1 million in 2023

i. The variation is mainly due to the differences in traffic speed between cities and the cost ascribed to congestion in urban areas of different sizes.

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for enjoyment or fitness) our model compares the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling to those of driving.

For these journeys, between 57p (in Dunfermline) and £1.13 (in Glasgow) is saved for each mile walked or wheeled instead of driven.^[i] Over a year this adds up to **£220.3 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **237.7 miles** walked or wheeled by those that could have used a car.



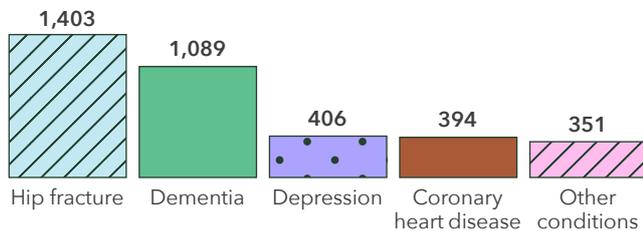
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated using Census 2022 population data instead of 2021 mid-year estimates, as a more reliable source. See methodology report for details.

Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in Scottish cities prevents 3,644 serious long-term health conditions each year.

3,172 in 2023

Cases prevented



This saves the NHS

£45.2 million per year

£39.6 million in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

1 million GP appointments

960,000 in 2023

Above figures are based on applying data from Scottish cities to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from walking

prevent 1,081 early deaths annually

986 in 2023

which is valued at

£4.43 billion

£3.59 billion in 2023

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.

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

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

150,000 kg of NO_x
(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

130,000 kg in 2023

and

13,000 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

11,000 kg in 2023

56% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



54% in 2023

Walking and wheeling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By walking or wheeling instead of driving, residents save

64,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

53,000 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

61,000 people taking flights

from Edinburgh to New York.

In 2023, transport within Scotland (excluding international aviation and shipping) accounted for **28.8%** of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions.

Scottish Government, Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics 2023.

Walking and wheeling keeps Scottish cities moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[ii] This helps to keep Scottish cities moving for all road users.

460,000 return trips

are walked and wheeled daily by residents who could have used a car.

370,000 in 2023

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

1,371 miles

equivalent to the distance from Inverness to Newquay.

1,104 miles in 2023

ii. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

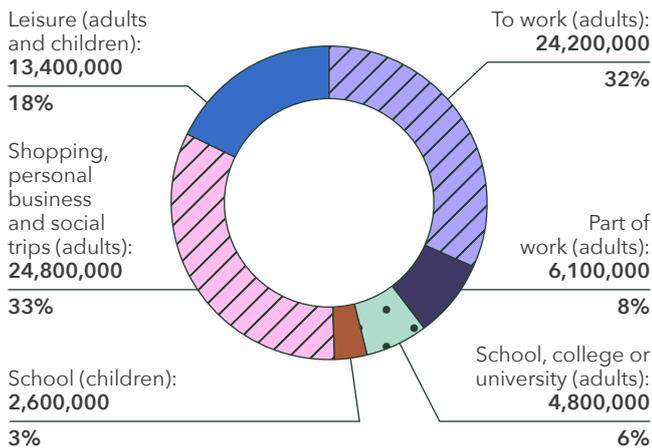


Together, residents of Scottish cities cycle 26 times around the world every day

Cycling can be convenient for many local trips, especially in cities and towns. It gives people transport choice and access to education, jobs and community.

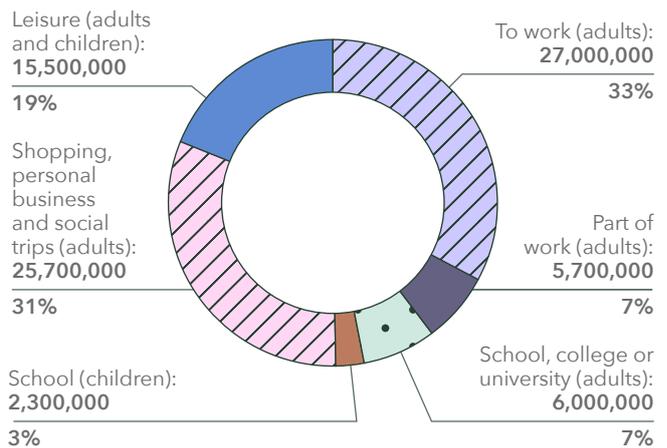
Annual cycling trips by purpose

75.8 million trips in 2025 which add up to **234 million miles**



Average cycling trip distance: 3.1 miles

82.2 million trips in 2023 which add up to **256.3 million miles**



Average cycling trip distance: 3.1 miles

Cycling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of cycling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

The total annual economic benefit from all trips cycled in Scottish cities is

£275.3 million

£257.3 million in 2023

i. The variation is mainly due to the differences in traffic speed between cities and the cost ascribed to congestion in urban areas of different sizes.

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for leisure) our model compares the costs and benefits of cycling to those of driving.

For these journeys, between **£1.28** (in Dunfermline) and **£1.84** (in Glasgow) is saved for each mile cycled instead of driven.^[1] Over a year this adds up to **£179.3 million** in economic benefit for residents and society from **109.5 million miles** cycled by those that could have used a car.



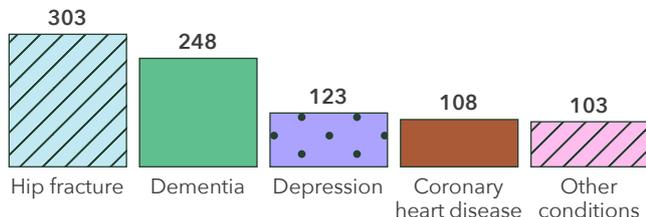
2023 model estimates in this report differ slightly to those published in 2023, due to being recalculated for the inclusion of cycling trips as part of work and using Census 2022 population data instead of 2021 mid-year estimates, as a more reliable source. See methodology report for details.

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in Scottish cities prevents 886 serious long-term health conditions each year.

813 in 2023

Cases prevented



This saves the NHS

£11.2 million per year

£10.7 million in 2023

Equivalent to the cost of

250,000 GP appointments

260,000 in 2023

Above figures are based on applying data from Scottish cities to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from cycling

prevent 101 early deaths annually

114 in 2023

which is valued at

£408.6 million

£412.3 million in 2023

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.

People cycling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

50,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

59,000 kg in 2023

and

5,100 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

5,400 kg in 2023

56% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



54% in 2023

Cycling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By cycling instead of driving, residents save

29,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

31,000 tonnes in 2023

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

28,000 people taking flights

from Edinburgh to New York.

In 2023, transport within Scotland (excluding international aviation and shipping) accounted for **28.8%** of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions.

Scottish Government, Scottish Greenhouse Gas Statistics 2023.

Cycling keeps Scottish cities moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[ii] This helps to keep Scottish cities moving for all road users.

63,000 return trips

are cycled daily by residents who could have used a car.

66,000 in 2023

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

189 miles

equivalent to the distance from Aberdeen to Hawick.

196 miles in 2023

ii. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

Walking and wheeling solutions

What would help make walking and wheeling easier?



New homes and existing communities should have services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Putting walking and wheeling at the heart of new and existing communities gives people greater transport choice, while reducing car dependency.

61%

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

61% in 2023

59%

support stopping new housing developments in areas where driving is the only practical option to visit local services, such as shops and doctors surgeries

56% in 2023

New developments and existing communities can support walking and wheeling by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live.

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

80%

more shops and everyday services, such as banks and post offices, close to their home

79% in 2023

75%

more government services, such as doctors surgeries and schools, close to their home

73% in 2023

83%

more parks or green spaces close to their home

80% in 2023

80%

more things to see and do close to their home, like cafés or entertainment venues

79% in 2023

Residents want walking and wheeling to better align with buses

While walking and wheeling should be the most attractive option for short journeys, it should also be integrated with public transport for longer trips.

Walking and bus use is the most common form of multi-modal journey across the UK. If we are to increase walking and wheeling and bus trips, residents told us they need practical improvements to better integrate these modes of transport.



What percentage of residents would find these changes useful to help them take journeys that include walking or wheeling and the bus more often?

75%

more information to help them plan and take a journey (such as apps, maps, signage or public transport staff)

66%

more direct walking and wheeling routes from housing estates to bus stops

68%

accessible walking and wheeling routes to and from bus stops

71%

improved safety while walking or wheeling to and from the bus stop

73%

improved walking and wheeling crossing facilities near bus stops

85%

improved bus stops (such as accessible, well lit and maintained, cover from rain, display of service information)

Residents want better streets

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

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

71%

wider pavements
71% in 2023

72%

more frequent road crossings, with reduced wait times
70% in 2023

79%

nicer places along streets to stop and rest, like more benches, trees and shelters
77% in 2023

74%

better pavement accessibility, like level surfaces and dropped kerbs at crossing points
74% in 2023

67%

fewer cars parked on the pavement
68% in 2023

68%

less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in their area
65% in 2023

In Scottish cities, for each road making up a junction with traffic lights

90% have a pedestrian crossing



10% don't have a pedestrian crossing



For example, a T-junction has three roads making up the junction, and a crossroads has four.



Brucefield tenants and residents association, Dunfermline

Last year we got a path installed through the field next to our estate.

We got £100,000 from Paths For All and £60,000 from the council's recovery fund. The money also funded drainage improvements which was needed because there was always flooding in the park.

Previously you had to go around the park to access the schemes.

A new entrance into the park was created as part of the

development. This joins up with the shared use path that takes you into town.

It has connected the community to the school at the other side of the field. Before it was just a dirt path – it's important to provide safe routes to schools.

It enables elderly people to access the bus stop as well. And because there is now a proper path the lighting throughout the park has been improved so it feels safer.

Cycling solutions

What would make cycling better?

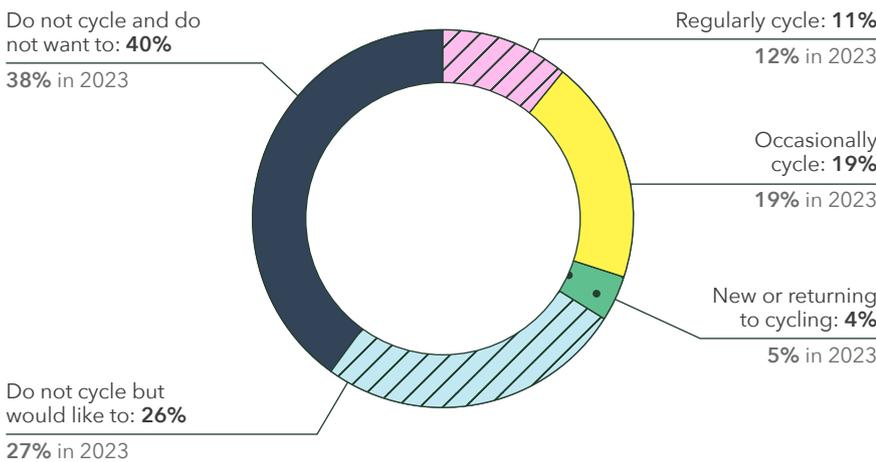


Many residents want to cycle

There is considerable appetite to start cycling from residents who don't already.

To meet this demand we must address safety, ensuring people have dedicated space for cycling, as well as supporting access to a cycle, training, cycle parking, and better integration of cycling with public transport.

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?



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

28% of women

28% in 2023

44% of people from ethnic minority groups

44% in 2023

31% of disabled people

30% in 2023

Residents want more support to cycle

What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them start cycling or to cycle more?

54%

access to a bicycle
52% in 2023

45%

access to an electric cycle
45% in 2023

34%

access to a cargo cycle with space to carry children or shopping
32% in 2023

26%

access to an adapted cycle, like a tricycle or handcycle
22% in 2023

48%

access or improvements to a city cycle hiring scheme
48% in 2023

56%

access to secure cycle parking at or near home
55% in 2023

41%

cycling training courses and organised social rides
39% in 2023

Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle

52% of residents

50% in 2023

41% of socio-economic group DE

34% in 2023

61% of socio-economic group AB

61% in 2023

Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

People want networks of dedicated and safe cycle paths, cycle parking and better integration with public transport.

In Scottish cities there are:

30% of households

are within 125 metres of either traffic-free cycle paths away from the road, cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, or signposted routes along quieter streets^[i]

343 miles

of traffic-free cycle paths away from the road^[iii]
331 miles in 2023

51 miles

of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians^[iii]
47 miles in 2023

17 miles

of signposted routes along quieter streets^[iv]
18 miles in 2023

2,421

cycle parking spaces across 111 railway, bus and 'other' stations^[v]
2,170 spaces across 104 stations in 2023

What percentage of residents would be helped to start cycling or to cycle more by better facilities?

69%

more traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways
71% in 2023

63%

more cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians
64% in 2023

63%

more signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets
65% in 2023

66%

better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations, bus stops/stations
66% in 2023

Among residents:

79%

support improving and increasing local off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

57%

support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic
59% in 2023

73%

support improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations

- i. Exclude households from Inverness. Includes optional signed route data for Edinburgh and Stirling only.
- ii. 2025 and 2023 data excludes Inverness.
- iii. 2025 and 2023 data excludes Inverness. Dunfermline had no segregated cycle routes in 2023 and 2025.
- iv. 2025 and 2023 data excludes Aberdeen, Dundee, Dunfermline, Inverness and Perth as data was not provided. Also excludes Glasgow to allow for direct comparisons following the identification of an error in 2023 data.
- v. 2025 and 2023 data includes cycle parking outside subway stations in Glasgow. In Inverness and Perth, bus station cycle parking which is outside stations and could be used by the wider public as well as passengers is not included in the total. From 2025 bus station cycle parking includes spaces at Park and Ride stations in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Perth. In 2023 there was no cycle parking at the bus station in Aberdeen.



Rachel, commuter, Perth

I cycle to get places. I enjoy it, especially going downhill! I don't enjoy it as much in the rain or in busy traffic, but it is not primarily something I do for pleasure. I feel good when I don't use a car or spend money on buses, which are overpriced.

Cycling in Perth would be better if cars did not park in cycle lanes, if we could cycle in Perth High Street and if streets which are one way for cars were two way for bicycles. We need safe, segregated cycle lanes that join up instead of abruptly stopping.

Neighbourhood solutions

Thriving places, centring children



Neighbourhoods should prioritise the needs and wellbeing of the people who live there and visit. They should be planned to support community, foster social connection, and be places where everyone feels welcome.

Designing neighbourhoods with children in mind means they work better for everyone.

Improving the journey to school

Schools are at the centre of many neighbourhoods and should be part of any plan to make neighbourhoods better.

This means working with schools to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling, but also improving the neighbourhood around schools to reduce traffic and improve pavements, crossing points and cycle provision.

57% support



20% oppose



closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

72% support



11% oppose



reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

These are known as 'School Streets'.

78 schools

in Scottish cities have School Streets schemes^[i]

60 schools in 2023



Giving children the independence to roam, play and develop

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive. Well-designed neighbourhoods can give children freedom to move around, play and socialise, helping children's independence, social skills, and autonomy.

Average age when parents and carers would let children travel independently in their neighbourhood

10 years old
to walk or wheel

12 years old
to cycle

12 years old
to use public transport

50%

agree there is space for children to socialise and play

53% in 2023

Fewer children play out on their streets than ever before. Just 27% of children said they regularly play outside their homes, compared to 71% of those born between 1946 and 1964.

Save the Children, Summer of Play campaign survey, 2022.



i. In 2025 and 2023 there were no permanent School Streets schemes in Aberdeen, Dunfermline, Inverness and Stirling. Certain School Streets schemes in Dundee and Glasgow cover more than one school.

Residents support child-safe neighbourhoods

Adults support child-safe neighbourhoods, including traffic-reduction targets and measures to reduce through traffic and traffic speed, but this must be done fairly.

33%

of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles
30% in 2023

59%

support setting traffic-reduction targets and taking action to achieve these
59% in 2023

64%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods
62% in 2023

21%

of the total length of unclassified roads in Scottish cities have nothing to prevent through traffic. This can result in rat running.^[iii]
23% in 2023

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

63% walk or wheel more



57% cycle more



61%

support reducing speed limits on local roads in built-up areas to 20 mph speed limits

37%

of Scottish cities' streets have 20 mph speed limits (excluding motorways)^[iii]
37% in 2023

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

53% walk or wheel more



52% cycle more



Everyone should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

Improvements to neighbourhoods must also recognise the needs of adults, for example women, disabled people and people from ethnic minority groups.

52%

agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello
51% in 2023

50%

feel able to participate in making their neighbourhood a better place to live
45% in 2023

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

77%

of all residents



74% in 2023

77% of women



73% in 2023

77% of men



76% in 2023

61% of people who identified their gender in another way



52% in 2023

70% of LGBTQ+ people



69% in 2023

78% of non-LGBTQ+ people



75% in 2023

78% of people from ethnic minority groups



73% in 2023

77% of white people



75% in 2023

71% of disabled people



66% in 2023

79% of non-disabled people



78% in 2023

68% of socio-economic group DE



64% in 2023

82% of socio-economic group AB



81% in 2023

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

iii. As Inverness did not provide data in 2025, 2023 percentages exclude Inverness to allow direct comparison with 2025.

Improving walking, wheeling and cycling

Making it possible for more people to walk, wheel and cycle doesn't happen overnight. It takes continued commitment through investment, policy making, planning, and engagement with communities.

The Walking and Cycling Index is a tool that helps our cities understand people's experiences of walking, wheeling and cycling.

And crucially, what measures would help them make the choice to walk, wheel or cycle more often.

Supported by this data every two years, cities can make informed decisions to deliver change that works for everyone.

This year's Index shows widespread support across a range of different measures that would make walking, wheeling and cycling safer, fairer, and easier.

Support is strong in our cities for safer routes. Over three quarters of residents support more off-road paths for travelling actively.

And around two thirds of residents said that more infrastructure for cycling would help them either start cycling or cycle more often.

Residents would also like to see fairer streets. There is widespread support for better pavements, more frequent road crossings and places to rest, as well as fewer cars parked on pavements.

People also want to be able to get around Scotland's cities more easily.

Support is strong in our cities for safer routes.

The vast majority of residents want services and amenities closer to their homes, easily reachable by walking or wheeling. Better links with public transport, such as access to bus stops, would further support this.

On the next page, we explore examples of how our cities have responded to some of these challenges over the last two years.

Recent improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling in Scottish cities

Aberdeen

In summer, the historic Broad Hill was re-opened with green space, steps, footpaths and seating. These improvements are part of Aberdeen City Council's Beach Master Plan.

Inverness

A new cycle hub at the train station has tripled the amount of cycle parking, making it easier than ever before to connect cycle and train journeys.

Perth

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust's Accessibility Fund enabled the removal of barriers to improve disabled access from riverside neighbourhoods to National Cycle Network Route 77.

Glasgow

The Govan-Partick Bridge has re-established a historic link between communities, with over 1.4 million walking, wheeling and cycling crossings in its first year.

Stirling

Two new active travel corridors totalling 6.5km were completed in 2025 as part of the Walk, Cycle, Live Stirling project. This has connected communities, businesses and higher education institutions across the city like never before.

Edinburgh

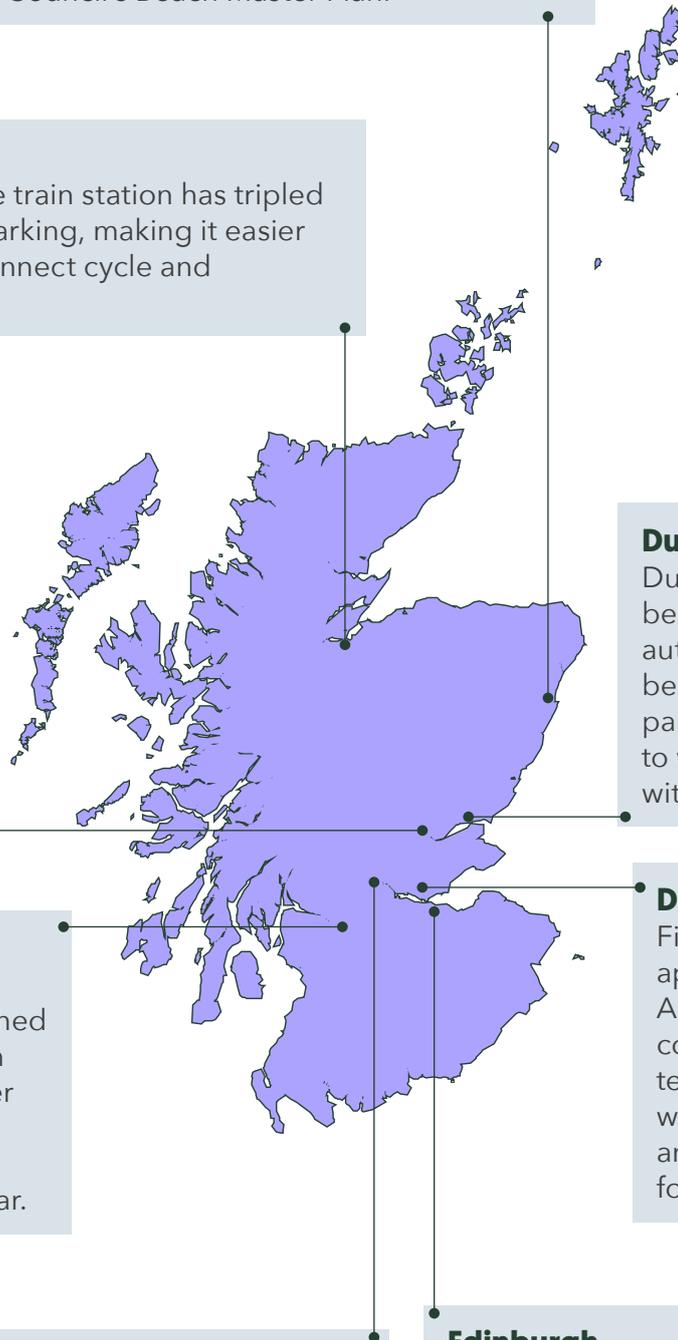
With 55% of Edinburgh residents saying access to a bicycle would help them start cycling or cycle more, 2025 saw the return of a cycle hire scheme to the city's streets.

Dundee

Dundee City Council became the second local authority in Scotland to begin tackling pavement parking, allowing people to walk and wheel without obstruction.

Dunfermline

Fife Council have approved their first Active Travel Strategy, committing to a long-term vision for walking, wheeling and cycling, and marking a new era for the region.



Looking forward

Better places and streets for everyone

Our charity's new direction as Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is timely. Walking, wheeling and cycling are now part of the mainstream in transport across the UK.

And in recent years, Scotland has been a UK leader in active travel. Investment is unlocking real change – making walking, wheeling and cycling possible for more people and giving communities across the country more choice for their everyday journeys.

The landscape across Scotland's public finance remains challenging. But we now need to make sure this positive momentum continues. Amid the noise of challenges that national and local governments are facing, how we make our everyday journeys may seem like a small matter. But it's not.

The impact of these journeys ripples out and changes everything – benefitting our health, our wellbeing, and the world around us.

Evidence produced by the Index helps us to keep making the case for changing how we invest in transport and our places. Because for people and cities to thrive in the future, we need to.

Looking ahead, we will be working with our partners across Scotland on issues where rapid progress is needed to create fairer, healthier and more connected neighbourhoods.

Making school journeys safer

Every child should have the choice to walk, wheel, cycle or scoot to school.

Almost three quarters of city residents support introducing measures to support safety in school neighbourhoods, such as reducing speed limits, improving crossings, and building cycle paths.

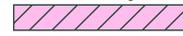
The majority of people in our cities also support School Street schemes, where residential streets outside schools are closed to cars during drop-off and pick-up times.

Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending in their local area:

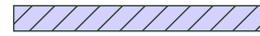
55% on walking and wheeling



43% on cycling



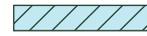
62% on buses



57% on trains



34% on trams



40% on other forms of public transport such as community transport, metro or subway, local ferry



34% on driving



**In recent years,
Scotland has been
a UK leader in
active travel**

Connecting new housing developments

With housebuilding a priority across the country, we need to put walking, wheeling and cycling at the heart of new developments.

This gives families the freedom to get around actively from the moment they move in.

The majority of city residents support stopping new developments in areas where driving is the only practical option to reach local services.

And more people in our cities are calling for amenities closer to their homes, to help them walk or wheel more.

Ensuring access to public transport

We need to make cheaper, healthier and more sustainable longer journeys possible.

By planning for active travel and public transport together, we can create a more accessible, affordable, and fairer transport network for everyone.

Around three quarters of city residents support improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations. Measures can be as simple as upgrading lighting and nearby crossings.



Leanne, Resident and business owner, Stirling

I have both a bookshop here and I've lived on this street for 12 years. The street really needed something done to it.

It's a much nicer street to live on than it used to be. There's more buzz about the street.

Upper Craigs is quite unique because it's a side street with a lot of businesses.

I was quite emotionally invested in the improvements getting done because it had been neglected.

Since the cycle lane was installed it gets used and has

reduced the traffic coming down this street. It used to be a cul-de-sac and now it's just one way traffic which stops a lot of cars and lorries coming down here to turn but because they've now got speed bumps they can't.

The traffic has reduced drastically. So it's a much nicer street to live on and have a business on. I'm able to put chairs outside for customers.

It looks nice but we need more street lighting and plants and hanging baskets.

Notes on methodology

The attitudinal survey was conducted from March to June 2025 (and 2023) by independent social research organisation NatCen.

The survey is representative of all Scottish cities' residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

All other data are sourced from our regional and local partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. All locally-sourced data are correct as of 28 May 2025.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys travelled by journey purpose.

Trip estimates now include cycling trips as part of work for both 2025 and 2023. Previously published 2023 model estimates have been recalculated to include these and allow for direct comparison and using population data from the 2022 Census, instead of 2021 mid-year estimates as a more reliable source. This has also impacted walking trip estimates from 2023. In 2025 the boundary for Inverness, Perth and Stirling changed. This was a result of changes made to data zones following the 2022 Census meaning that 2023 and 2025 data do not cover exactly the same area.

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 on data sources and calculations, including strengths and limitations of the survey and model methodology, are available at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is the charity making it possible for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

Because people powered movement changes everything. Our health. Our wellbeing. Our world.

www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk

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