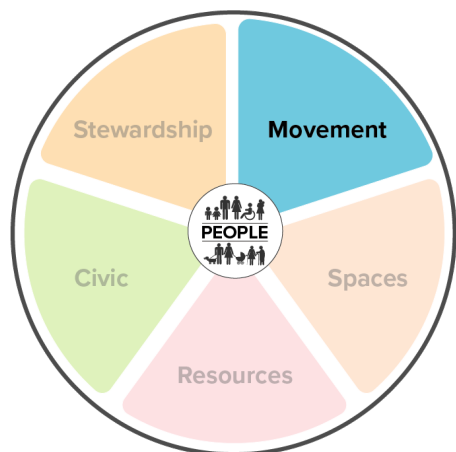


Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme

Active Travel: Impact on Dunoon's Community



Active travel can have a positive impact on people when:

- Everyone can easily move around using good-quality, accessible, well-maintained and safe segregated wheeling, walking and cycling routes and access secure bike parking.
- Everyone can wheel, walk and cycle through routes that connect homes, destinations and public transport, are segregated from, and prioritised above, motorised traffic and are part of a local green network.

This is why it is one of Scotland's Place & Wellbeing Outcomes.

Active travel simply means making journeys in physically active ways - like walking, wheeling (using a wheelchair or mobility aid), cycling or scootering.

The evidence tells us:



Active travel can improve health by increasing physical activity, weight loss and reducing obesity (1)



Active travel is associated with reduced risk of death (1)



Active travel can increase social interactions (1)



Active travel is associated with improving mental health (1)



Active travel can minimise harms to health by reducing motorised traffic (1)



Safety is a key barrier to increasing active travel amongst women (1)



Walking/cycling to school helps children achieve a healthy weight, with the benefit being greater for children in deprived areas (1)



People experiencing transport poverty are often forced to run a car despite having limited resources (2)



Active travel can provide benefits to local economies (1)



There is increased public support for investment in walking and cycling, particularly amongst people on low incomes (3)

1. Source: [Evidence Behind Place Standard Tool & Place and Wellbeing Outcomes](#)

2. Source: [Transport Poverty a Public Health Issue](#)

3. Source [Walking and Cycling Index 2022](#)

Active Travel data

Around 300 people walk/wheel per day between Dunoon and Kirn¹

Three quarters of households in Argyll and Bute own one or more vehicles²

36% of secondary pupils walked to school in Dunoon in 2022³

Spending on car fuel and on public transport are both higher in rural areas of Scotland⁴

Insights from local surveys and what we heard from the community in Dunoon.

Getting around Dunoon

Community engagement over recent years has reported that people appreciate Dunoon's scenery but lack of safe routes and poor maintenance or accessibility put people off walking and cycling. Outside the town, off-road routes are used and enjoyed for leisure purposes.

Pedestrian and cyclist safety concerns are often raised, including conflict between them. Better links to public transport, especially with the ferries, are commonly mentioned as a need.

Many people feel reliant on cars to get around Dunoon and the surrounding areas, even if they can't afford the cost. Relatively high car ownership, combined with availability of free parking in town, may impact on active travel rates in the area.

People generally report feeling safe walking in Dunoon but one survey⁵ found that women in Dunoon and Helensburgh feel less safe walking alone at night than in other Argyll and Bute towns.

Active travel habits and motivations

Ideas about how to improve routes have mostly been concerned with accessibility and safety: fixing poor surfaces; adding dropped kerbs and cutting back hedges and bushes. Persistent dog fouling also continues to be a concern and affects enjoyment of walking.

More facilities like public toilets, shelter and rest stops were also popular suggestions along with more litter bins and lighting improvements and signage.

Recent consultation and engagement by Dunoon Community Development Trust found that getting exercise or fresh air, travelling to school and shopping were the most common reasons people make active travel journeys.

'Having a friend to go with', events and inspiration (maps with routes or special interest walks) were the top ideas for encouraging more active travel, rather than a need for new or special equipment.

“ Walking is reasonable, especially the promenade area. I would like to see the areas for cyclists and people marked. ”

Respondent, Place Standard exercise 2019

Data from the
20 Minute Neighbourhood tool
suggest Dunoon has good access to GP
surgeries in walking distance ⁶



Considerations for people with health issues or disabilities

In the recent consultation and engagement⁷, people who said they had health issues affecting their ability to walk, wheel and cycle mostly described breathing or energy issues or physical mobility issues. Similar to other respondents, they reported that having a companion, accessible and well maintained routes, and availability of public toilets would make active travel easier. For this group, activities close to home, and short activities with rest stops were also popular ideas. Access to fresh drinking water was also mentioned.

In other engagements and conversations, safety, accessibility and continuity of routes were key issues.



Collaboration to increase confidence, skills and engagement

Dunoon Community Development Trust has established an Active Travel Network to build partnership working. The Trust has supported the development of the Dunoon Forward app and Cycling UK's Dunoon Bothy Project. The Bothy Project offers led walks, group rides and bike maintenance training to help people overcome barriers to active travel.

In collaboration with the council's Strategic Transportation team, the Trust is leading local engagement to create a community-led plan that will encourage more walking, wheeling and cycling in Dunoon.

“ The pavement was so uneven at the top of the street I was frightened my [wheel]chair was going to topple over onto the road... I had to turn back. ”

Local resident, 2023

“ A lot of the pavements are crumbling and very few have dropped kerbs for wheelchair or pram access ”

PST respondent 2019



The locally produced '**Dunoon Forward**' app promotes heritage-based walking and cycling routes and has proved popular

“ I love what is happening in Dunoon...community events like the weekly walking and cycling groups... I have really enjoyed going on the rides and walks. ”

DCDT survey respondent, 2023

Produced in partnership with



Visit the [website](#) for more information on [Dunoon Project Town activity](#). Follow us on X (Twitter) [@place4wellbeing](#) to keep up to date with our latest news and place-based resources.

