

National Development proposal – National Walking and Cycling Network

Name of proposed National Development	Scotland's National Walking and Cycling Network
Brief description of proposed national development	<p><i>A national network of connected paths throughout Scotland that provides safe and attractive opportunities for recreation and active travel for both residents and visitors.</i></p> <p>The network comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer distance paths of national or regional significance for recreation and active travel; and ▪ Shorter distance paths of local significance for recreation and active travel <p>Much of the network is already place, with key building blocks including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotland's Great Trails managed and promoted by access authorities, countryside/development trusts and public bodies providing recreational walking, cycling, paddling and riding; mainly at a national and regional level. • The National Cycle Network (NCN), managed and promoted by Sustrans, providing walking, cycling and riding provision both on road, off road and traffic free; and at all three levels: national, regional and local. The network also includes the canal towpaths managed by Scottish Canals. • Core paths, active travel routes, footways, cycle ways and paths identified in the 34 access authority areas providing for local provision, but also supporting elements of the regional and national network. <p>It is proposed that the national development will focus on improvements of national significance and scale, including upgrades to existing paths as well as new off road provision to increase connectivity and coverage. In doing so, it will also support the development of the regional and local elements of the network, and cater for both shorter and longer journeys for recreation and active travel.</p> <p>The selection of priority paths forming the national development will be informed by SNH, local authorities, national park authorities, Sustrans, Scottish Canals, CSGNT, RTPs, and growth deal partnerships.</p>
Location of proposed national development	Across Scotland
What part or parts of the development requires planning permission or other consent?	Prioritised national paths and regional paths for walking and cycling (inc e-bikes). The consents would be for new path construction, associated infrastructure including e-bike charging points, signage, gates and bridges.

When would the development be complete or operational?	The national development started in NPF 3 and has delivered the first phase, over 5 years, of a 20 year vision. The NPF 4 project would see phase 2 completed in 7 years
Is the development already formally recognised – for example identified in a development plan, has planning permission, in receipt of funding	Yes, as a national development in NPF 3. In NPF 4, we propose delivery of national and regional paths. Elements might be funded through active travel funds for shorter high specification cycle paths, but the majority, largely in rural areas, is unfunded and in particular for new strategic links, gap filling and new path creation.
<p>Contribution of proposed national development to the national development criteria</p> <p>The NWCN will facilitate walking, cycling and active journeys for recreation, health and sustainable travel. The provision of safe and largely off-road routes will complement the existing road and rail networks to create an integrated, connected active travel system, providing for all. It will link to bus/tram stops, train stations, ferry terminals, and road based active travel provision such as segregated cycle-ways.</p> <p>Key benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The network will make a significant contribution towards lowering carbon emissions in both urban, peri-urban and rural areas of Scotland. It will provide a significant element of the green active travel network of routes that will enable both residents and visitors to use low carbon forms of transport such as cycling (inc e-bikes) and walking to get around Scotland. ▪ The network will provide the means for the public to improve health and well-being through both physical, mental and social benefits provided by high quality and attractive paths for everyday use. ▪ It will contribute to sustainable economic development through the provision of a “green” tourism product that gives visitors, in particular domestic and European visitors, opportunities to make climate friendly holiday choices, whilst contributing to Scotland’s tourism economy as we develop and improve our green credentials. ▪ Connecting and sustaining rural communities, providing a mechanism to address social isolation through the development and improvement of paths that link homes, services and people; and encouraging movement within settlements and between them. ▪ Alongside the development of the network, the path corridors will provide opportunities for the improvement of habitat corridors for nature, improving and linking habitats for wildlife and maximising their contribution towards tackling climate change. ▪ Providing the mechanism that physically connects people with nature and outdoor spaces including play areas, lochs, beaches, rivers, parks, mountains, hills and woodlands. ▪ Helping to deliver inclusive growth by targeting investment in areas of high deprivation. <p>The new approach takes the original concept for a national walking and cycling network and develops it into an easy to understand model that can deliver across many cross-cutting areas of policy.</p>	