

Notice of Meeting and Agenda Leadership Board

| Date | Time | Venue |
|------------------------|-------|--|
| Wednesday, 01 May 2024 | 13:00 | Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN |

MARK CONAGHAN
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Councillor Iain Nicolson (Convener): Councillor Jacqueline Cameron (Depute Convener):

Councillor Alison Ann-Dowling: Councillor Michelle Campbell: Councillor Graeme Clark:
Councillor Audrey Doig: Councillor Gillian Graham: Councillor Neill Graham: Councillor Anne
Hannigan: Councillor Alec Leishman: Councillor Marie McGurk: Councillor Iain McMillan:
Councillor Emma Rodden: Councillor John Shaw: Councillor Andy Steel:

Hybrid Meeting

Please note that this meeting is scheduled to be held in the Council Chambers. However, it is a hybrid meeting and arrangements have been made for members to join the meeting remotely should they wish.

Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>

For further information, please email
democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

Webcasting of Meeting

This meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site – at the start of the meeting the Convener will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. To find the webcast please navigate to

<https://renfrewshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Items of business

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Members are asked to declare an interest or make a transparency statement in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest or the transparency statement.

- | | | |
|----------|---|------------------|
| 1 | Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report | 5 - 18 |
| | Joint report by Chief Executive, Director of Finance & Resources and Chief Financial Officer, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership | |
| 2 | Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-committee | 19 - 22 |
| | Minute of meeting of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-committee held on 27 March 2024 | |
| 3 | Fairer Renfrewshire Update | 23 - 44 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 4 | Best Value Update | 45 - 50 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 5 | Review of OneRen's Annual Business Plan for 2024/25 | 51 - 76 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 6 | Funding for Engage Renfrewshire 2024/25 | 77 - 86 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 7 | Migration and Asylum Update | 87 - 94 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 8 | Renfrewshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024/25 | 95 - 114 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |
| 9 | Review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport Provision | 115 - 214 |
| | Report by Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure | |

| | | |
|-----------|--|------------------|
| 10 | City Deal Update | 215 - 220 |
| | Report by Chief Executive and Director of Finance & Resources | |
| 11 | Renfrewshire Council Major Events – 2023 Performance and 2024 Programme | 221 - 260 |
| | Report by Chief Executive | |



To: Leadership Board

On: 1 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Resources, and Chief Finance Officer Renfrewshire HSCP

Heading: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring as at 5 January 2024

1. Summary of Financial Position

- 1.1. The projected revenue outturn at 5 January 2024 for those services reporting to the Leadership Board is an overspend of £0.819m.
- 1.2. The projected capital outturn at 5 January 2024 for projects reporting to the Leadership Board is a break-even position against the revised budget for the year.
- 1.3. This is summarised in the tables below and further analysis is provided in the Appendices.

| Division | Revised Annual Budget £000 | Projected Annual Outturn £000 | Budget Variance (Adv)/Fav £000 | Budget Variance % |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|
| Adult Services | 97,500 | 98,322 | (822) | (0.8%) |
| Chief Executives | 19,192 | 19,189 | 3 | 0% |
| Total | 116,692 | 117,511 | (819) | (0.8%) |

| Division | Revised Annual Budget £000 | Projected Annual Outturn £000 | Budget Variance (Adv)/Fav £000 | Budget Variance % |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|
| Chief Executives | 48,706 | 48,706 | 0 | 0% |
| Leisure Services | 1,239 | 1,239 | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 49,945 | 49,945 | 0 | 0% |

2. Recommendations

2.1. Members are requested to:

- (a) Note the projected Revenue outturn position detailed in Table 1 above;
- (b) Note the projected Capital outturn position detailed in Table 2 above; and
- (c) Note the budget adjustments detailed at sections 4 and 6.

3. Revenue

- 3.1. The Revenue Budget Monitoring report at Appendix 1 identifies a projected annual overspend of £0.819m for all services reporting to this Board. Detailed division reports can be found in Appendix 2, along with an explanation of any significant projected variance.
- 3.2. The projected outturn is based on information currently available and assumptions made by service budget holders.
- 3.3. The main reasons for the projected outturn position are indicated in the appendices showing both the subjective analysis (what the budget is spent on) and the objective analysis (which division is spending the budget).

4. Revenue Budget Adjustments

- 4.1. Members are requested to note, from Appendix 1, that budget adjustments totalling £0.020m have been processed since the previous report to board. The adjustment reflects funding transferred to the Service in respect of non-domestic rates budgets allocated in-year.

5. Capital

- 5.1. The Capital Investment Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 was approved by the Council on 2 March 2023.
- 5.2. For the Chief Executive's Service, the revised capital spend for 2023/24 is £48.706m. For Leisure Services, the revised capital spend for 2023/24 is £1.239m.
- 5.3. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

6. Capital Budget Adjustments

- 6.1. For 2023/24, the current revised programme totals £49.945m which is a decrease of £2.014m since the last report. This is due to budget adjustments as follows:
 - **Leisure Service £0.154m:** Budget transfer from External Sports project for Linwood Running Track at On-X, as agreed by Council in December 2023.

- **Chief Executive (£2.168m):**
 - Budget carried forward (£2.437m) from 2023/24 into 2024/25 for Clyde Waterfront & Renfrew Riverside, due to timing of payment applications; and
 - Budget increase in 2023/24 of £0.269m for AMIDS: South reflecting a drawdown from the Investment Capital Fund.
-

Implications of this report

1. **Financial**

The projected budget outturn position for the revenue budget reported to the Leadership Board is an overspend of £0.819m. Income and expenditure will continue to be monitored closely for the rest of the financial year and, where necessary, steps will be taken to mitigate any overspend.

The projected outturn position for capital budgets reported to the Leadership Board is breakeven.

2. **HR and Organisational Development**

None directly arising from this report.

3. **Community/Council Planning**

None directly arising from this report.

4. **Legal**

None directly arising from this report.

5. **Property/Assets**

Capital projects will result in new assets (City Deal) and refurbishment, and improvement to Cultural Infrastructure and Public Realm assets.

6. **Information Technology**

None directly arising from this report.

7. **Equality and Human Rights**

None directly arising from this report.

8. **Health and Safety**

None directly arising from this report.

9. **Procurement**

None directly arising from this report.

- 10. Risk**
The risk that the Council will overspend its approved budgets for the year will be managed at a Council-wide level by the Chief Executive and Directors.
- 11. Privacy Impact**
None directly arising from this report.
- 12. Cosla Policy Position**
N/a.
- 13. Climate Risk**
None directly arising from this report.
-

List of Background Papers

Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2023/24, Council 2 March 2023.

Non Housing Capital Investment Programme, Prudential Framework and Treasury Management Strategy, and Capital Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28, Council 2 March 2023.

Authors: Revenue - Valerie Howie, Finance Business Partner / Alison Burns,
Corporate Finance Manager
Capital – Linsey McGregor, Capital Accountant

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 5 January 2024

POLICY BOARD : LEADERSHIP BOARD

| Objective Summary | Annual Budget at Period 8 | Budget Adjustments | Revised Annual Budget at Period 10 | Projected Outturn | Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable | | Previous Projected Outturn Variance | Movement |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | % | £000 | £000 |
| Adult Services | 97,500 | 0 | 97,500 | 98,322 | (822) | (0.8%) | (1,548) | 726 |
| Chief Executive's Service | 19,172 | 20 | 19,192 | 19,189 | 3 | 0.0% | 6 | (3) |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 116,672 | 20 | 116,692 | 117,511 | (819) | (0.7%) | (1,542) | 723 |

| Subjective Summary | Annual Budget at Period 8 | Budget Adjustments | Revised Annual Budget at Period 10 | Projected Outturn | Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable | | Previous Projected Outturn Variance | Movement |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | % | £000 | £000 |
| Employees | 43,511 | 1,479 | 44,990 | 44,382 | 608 | 1.4% | 210 | 398 |
| Premises Related | 885 | 67 | 952 | 1,115 | (163) | (17.1%) | (83) | (80) |
| Transport Related | 819 | 0 | 819 | 604 | 215 | 26.3% | 215 | 0 |
| Supplies and Services | 17,727 | 6 | 17,733 | 17,985 | (253) | (1.4%) | (182) | (71) |
| Third Party Payments | 80,231 | 890 | 81,121 | 82,361 | (1,240) | (1.5%) | (2,103) | 863 |
| Transfer Payments | 4,694 | 6 | 4,700 | 4,555 | 145 | 3.1% | 158 | (13) |
| Support Services | 74 | 0 | 74 | 60 | 14 | 18.9% | 15 | (1) |
| Depreciation and Impairment Losses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| GROSS EXPENDITURE | 147,941 | 2,447 | 150,388 | 151,062 | (674) | (0.4%) | (1,770) | 1,096 |
| Income | (31,269) | (2,427) | (33,696) | (33,551) | (145) | (0.4%) | 228 | (373) |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 116,672 | 20 | 116,692 | 117,511 | (819) | (0.7%) | (1,542) | 723 |

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 5 January 2024

POLICY BOARD : LEADERSHIP BOARD - ADULT SERVICES

| Objective Summary | Annual Budget at Period 8 | Budget Adjustments | Revised Annual Budget at Period 10 | Projected Outturn | Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable | | Previous Projected Outturn Variance | Movement (Adverse) or Favourable |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | % | £000 | £000 |
| Older People | 61,973 | (123) | 61,850 | 63,425 | (1,575) | (2.5%) | (2,036) | 461 |
| Physical or Sensory Difficulties | 7,863 | (9) | 7,854 | 7,630 | 224 | 2.9% | (96) | 320 |
| Learning Difficulties | 23,006 | 109 | 23,115 | 23,218 | (103) | (0.4%) | 65 | (168) |
| Mental Health Needs | 3,990 | 17 | 4,007 | 3,405 | 602 | 15.0% | 476 | 126 |
| Addiction Services | 667 | 7 | 674 | 644 | 30 | 4.5% | 42 | (12) |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 97,500 | 0 | 97,500 | 98,322 | (822) | (0.8%) | (1,548) | 726 |

| Objective Heading | Key Reasons for Projected Variance |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Older People | <p>The projected overspend reflects increased demand, and increased patient acuity of discharges from hospitals with more complex needs, resulting in more intensive care packages. This has led to an overspend within care at home and our three HSCP care homes.</p> <p>The current increased dependencies of clients supported within our care homes reflects the impact of COVID and the level of increased staffing put in place to manage levels of need due to inability at that point to move residents on to nursing care when required, and a number of clients admitted during COVID are still within the care homes, with increased support reflective of their higher care requirements. The reduction in overspend within Older People since last period reflects a number of focused pieces of work and mitigating actions put in place by the Senior Management Team over the past few months, as well as the impact of non-recurring monies, including £1.968m of winter pressure reserves.</p> |
| Physical or Sensory Difficulties | The forecast underspend here reflects both changing client needs and some unavoidable delays due to the complexity of need and the availability of appropriate adult placements. |
| Learning Difficulties | This projected overspend is reflective of the current demand, client profile, and associated costs within adult care placements. |
| Mental Health Needs | The forecast underspend reflects both changing client needs and some unavoidable delays due to the complexity of need and the availability of appropriate adult placement. There are also ongoing challenges in terms of recruitment and retention issues across all service areas due to the limited availability of the skills mix required within the workforce market. |
| Addiction Services | The projected underspend here reflects ongoing challenges in terms of recruitment and retention issues due to the limited availability of the skills mix required within the workforce market. |

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 5 January 2024

POLICY BOARD : LEADERSHIP BOARD - ADULT SERVICES

| Subjective Summary | Annual Budget at Period 8 | Budget Adjustments | Revised Annual Budget at Period 10 | Projected Outturn | Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable | | Previous Projected Outturn Variance | Movement |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | % | £000 | £000 |
| Employees | 39,797 | 1,478 | 41,275 | 40,678 | 597 | 1.4% | 183 | 414 |
| Premises Related | 462 | 48 | 510 | 685 | (175) | (34.3%) | (96) | (79) |
| Transport Related | 818 | 0 | 818 | 603 | 215 | 26.3% | 215 | 0 |
| Supplies and Services | 3,668 | 5 | 3,673 | 3,919 | (247) | (6.7%) | (166) | (81) |
| Third Party Payments | 80,231 | 890 | 81,121 | 82,361 | (1,240) | (1.5%) | (2,103) | 863 |
| Transfer Payments | 2,978 | 6 | 2,984 | 2,837 | 147 | 4.9% | 163 | (16) |
| Support Services | 70 | 0 | 70 | 56 | 14 | 20.0% | 15 | (1) |
| Depreciation and Impairment Losses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| GROSS EXPENDITURE | 128,023 | 2,427 | 130,450 | 131,139 | (689) | (0.5%) | (1,789) | 1,100 |
| Income | (30,523) | (2,427) | (32,950) | (32,817) | (133) | (0.4%) | 241 | (374) |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 97,500 | 0 | 97,500 | 98,322 | (822) | (0.8%) | (1,548) | 726 |

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 5 January 2024

POLICY BOARD : LEADERSHIP BOARD - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICE

| Objective Summary | Annual Budget at Period 8 | Budget Adjustments | Revised Annual Budget at Period 10 | Projected Outturn | Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable | | Previous Projected Outturn Variance | Movement |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | % | £000 | £000 |
| Chief Executive and Management | 282 | 0 | 282 | 280 | 2 | 0.7% | 2 | 0 |
| Policy and Commissioning | 3,073 | 0 | 3,073 | 3,076 | (3) | (0.1%) | 0 | (3) |
| Marketing and Communications | 3,198 | 9 | 3,207 | 3,203 | 4 | 0.1% | 4 | 0 |
| City Deal & Infrastructure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Leisure Services (incl Renfrewshire Leisure) | 12,619 | 11 | 12,630 | 12,630 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 19,172 | 20 | 19,192 | 19,189 | 3 | 0.0% | 6 | (3) |

| Objective Heading | Key Reasons for Projected Variance |
|--|--|
| Chief Executive and Management | No significant projected year end variances to report. |
| Policy and Commissioning | No significant projected year end variances to report. |
| Marketing and Communications | No significant projected year end variances to report. |
| City Deal & Infrastructure | No significant projected year end variances to report. |
| Leisure Services (incl Renfrewshire Leisure) | No significant projected year end variances to report. |

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2023/24
1 April 2023 to 5 January 2024

POLICY BOARD : LEADERSHIP BOARD - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S SERVICE

| Subjective Summary | Annual Budget at Period 8 | Budget Adjustments | Revised Annual Budget at Period 10 | Projected Outturn | Budget Variance (Adverse) or Favourable | | Previous Projected Outturn Variance | Movement |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | % | £000 | £000 |
| Employees | 3,715 | 1 | 3,715 | 3,704 | 11 | 0.3% | 27 | (16) |
| Premises Related | 423 | 19 | 442 | 430 | 12 | 2.7% | 13 | (1) |
| Transport Related | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Supplies and Services | 14,060 | 1 | 14,060 | 14,066 | (6) | 0.0% | (16) | 10 |
| Third Party Payments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Transfer Payments | 1,716 | 0 | 1,716 | 1,718 | (2) | (0.1%) | (5) | 3 |
| Support Services | 4 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| Depreciation and Impairment Losses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0 |
| GROSS EXPENDITURE | 19,918 | 20 | 19,938 | 19,923 | 15 | 0.1% | 19 | (4) |
| Income | (746) | 0 | (746) | (734) | (12) | (1.6%) | (13) | 1 |
| NET EXPENDITURE | 19,172 | 20 | 19,192 | 19,189 | 3 | 0.0% | 6 | (3) |

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY - NON-HOUSING SERVICES
1 April 2023 to 5 January 2024
POLICY BOARD: LEADERSHIP

| Project Title | Prior Years Expenditure to 31/03/2023 £000 | Current Year 2023-24 | | | | | | Full Programme - All years | | | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------|--|--|---------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| | | Budget at P8 2023/24 £000 | Budget Adjustments 2023/24 £000 | Revised Budget 2023/24 £000 | Projected Outturn 2023-24 £000 | Budget Variance (Adverse) or | | Total Approved Budget to 31-Mar-27 £000 | Projected Outturn to 31-Mar-27 £000 | Budget Variance (Adverse) or | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LEISURE SERVICES | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Community Halls Refurbishment | 24,736 | 885 | 0 | 885 | 885 | 0 | 0% | 3,433 | 3,433 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Linwood Running Track at On-X | 0 | 200 | 154 | 354 | 354 | 0 | 0% | 200 | 200 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Lagoon Internal Play Centre | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Total Leisure Services | 24,736 | 1,085 | 154 | 1,239 | 1,239 | 0 | 0% | 4,633 | 4,633 | 0 | 0% | | |
| CHIEF EXECUTIVES | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| City Deal Projects | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Glasgow Airport Investment Area | 40,616 | 372 | 0 | 372 | 372 | 0 | 0% | 43,053 | 43,053 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Clyde Waterfront & Renfrew Riverside | 55,054 | 44,208 | (2,437) | 41,771 | 41,771 | 0 | 0% | 118,604 | 118,604 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Airport Access | 2,934 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% | 141,992 | 141,992 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Economic Development | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GAIA Regeneration | 0 | 3,391 | 0 | 3,391 | 3,391 | 0 | 0% | 3,391 | 3,391 | 0 | 0% | | |
| AMIDS: Public Realm Phase 1 Netherton Square | 3,596 | 337 | 0 | 337 | 337 | 0 | 0% | 3,933 | 3,933 | 0 | 0% | | |
| AMIDS: District Heating Network | 6,263 | 830 | 0 | 830 | 830 | 0 | 0% | 7,093 | 7,093 | 0 | 0% | | |
| AMIDS: South | 3,096 | 1,735 | 269 | 2,004 | 2,004 | 0 | 0% | 43,625 | 43,625 | 0 | 0% | | |
| Total Chief Executives | 111,559 | 50,874 | (2,168) | 48,706 | 48,706 | 0 | 0% | 361,691 | 361,691 | 0 | 0% | | |
| TOTAL LEADERSHIP BOARD | 136,295 | 51,959 | (2,014) | 49,945 | 49,945 | 0 | 0% | 366,324 | 366,324 | 0 | 0% | | |

*Rolling programmes have a prior year expenditure of £0 as the expenditure is not directly linked from one year to the next as a singular project.

Minute of Meeting Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-committee

| Date | Time | Venue |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| Wednesday, 27 March 2024 | 10:00 | Council Chambers (Renfrewshire), Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN |

Present: Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Graeme Clark, Councillor Anne Hannigan, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Andy Steel

Chair

Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Partnerships, A Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnership & Inequalities Manager, D Dunn, Social Renewal Lead Officer (all Chief Executive's); and C MacDonald, Senior Committee Services Officer and D Cunningham, Committee Services and Licensing Officer (both Finance & Resources).

Apology

Councillor Leishman.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Webcasting of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Sub-committee would be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site.

1(a) **Cost of Living Update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to an overview of the key context and evidence around current pressures on household finances, both in terms of household income and expenditure.

The report intimated that since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 31 January 2024, there had been a number of changes in economic factors including a decrease in the Energy Price Cap from 1 April 2024, meaning households were paying less for their energy use, while inflation had reduced to 4% and interest rates had remained the same. The report also highlighted the latest insights into the cost of living from the Office of National Statistics in January.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

1(b) **Draft Cost of Living Dashboard**

The Strategic Partnership & Inequalities Manager gave a presentation relative to the Cost-of-Living Dashboard.

The presentation gave a brief overview of the dashboard; highlighted key statistics; and detailed average monthly rent costs and rent affordability.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.

2 **Fairer Renfrewshire Programme Update**

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to key projects being progressed through the Fairer Renfrewshire Programme, highlighting key priorities which would be the focus of future activity.

The report provided updates on current projects, detailed within Section 4 of the report, including the Scottish Government Council Tax Debt Pilot Project; School Support Service; Lived Experience Panel; Community Needs Assessment in Gallowhill; Easter holiday provision; Thrive Under 5; and the Fair Food Renfrewshire. The report also highlighted key priorities for the Fairer Renfrewshire Programme for March to June 2024.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3 **Alcohol and Drugs Change Programme Update**

The Strategic Partnership & Inequalities Manager gave a presentation relative to an update on the Alcohol and Drugs Change Programme.

The presentation outlined the timeline; gave an update on service; partnership and research developments; highlighted the resources available; advised of the importance of housing services; detailed facilities visited; gave a brief overview of the

focus on trauma; indicated how the evaluation would be carried out; and advised of the next steps.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.



To: Leadership Board

On: 1 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Fairer Renfrewshire Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council and its partners continue to work together to progress the Fairer Renfrewshire Programme, with a strong shared focus currently on the local response to the cost-of-living crisis.
- 1.2 This paper provides a summary of the key headline issues, as reported to the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee on 27 March 2023. Specific updates are also provided in relation to:
- The most recent programme update including information on recent statistics and research in relation to the cost-of-living crisis.
 - The proposed Fairer Renfrewshire Programme 24/25.
 - Response to the Scottish Government's National Good Food Nation Plan Consultation
- 1.3 At Council on 29th February 2024, members reaffirmed their commitment to the Fairer Renfrewshire programme with further investments in a number of targeted interventions including additional welfare rights funding, a targeted programme of summer activities for children and young people from low-income families, additional resource to explore inequalities experienced by older people and strengthen engagement with young people, and a further winter school clothing payment in 2024.
- 1.4 This paper makes recommendations for the allocation of a further £0.516m of Council funding to support the Fairer Renfrewshire work programme for 2024/25, sustaining and developing a number of key projects and services that contribute to the Fairer Renfrewshire programme as detailed at Section 5 of this report.

- 1.5 Section 6 of this paper notes the planned closure of the Renfrewshire Head Injuries Service on 7 June, and recommends that officers work with all stakeholders involved including service users, to develop options for the transition to a new model of support, with an additional £90,000 being earmarked from the Fairer Renfrewshire programme funding to support the development of a community led support model for people impacted by a brain injury and their families. Further proposals in relation to the allocation of the funding will be brought to Leadership Board on 19 June 2024, subject to the agreed development work to be undertaken by the Policy and Partnerships service.
- 1.6 Officers continue to work with partners to progress the Fairer Renfrewshire programme. Priority actions over the next quarter include:
- Evaluation of the Winter Connections 23/24 programme
 - Development of the Local Child Poverty Action Report
 - Developing and delivering budget investments, particularly the design and delivery of the summer holiday programme
 - Development of equalities workstream as detailed in February 2024 Leadership Board
 - Launch of Renfrewshire Community Survey 2024
-

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that elected members:

- Note the content of the report and the work being undertaken to progress the Fairer Renfrewshire programme;
 - Approve the allocation of £0.516m from the Fairer Renfrewshire Programme budget, to deliver key additional elements of the 24/25 Fairer Renfrewshire programme detailed in Section 5
 - Agree that officers will engage with stakeholders on the development of a new community-led model of support for people impacted by a brain injury and their families, with £90,000 funding earmarked from the Fairer Renfrewshire funding to support this upon final agreement and approval of the model in June 2024.
 - Agree that delegated authority is provided to the Head of Policy and Partnerships in relation to the award of grant funding for the summer holiday activity and food programme, in consultation with the Council Leader and;
 - Homologate the consultation response attached at Appendix 1 submitted in relation to the National Good Food Nation Plan.
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3. Background

3.1 The Fairer Renfrewshire Programme has continued to develop during 2023, with the immediate focus of the Council and its partners being in relation to the ongoing cost of living response and wider initiatives which seek to tackle poverty and inequality. This is a fast paced and constantly evolving programme and the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee continues to meet to provide oversight on all related activities being undertaken.

3.2 As previously reported to Board, four key themes were identified for the initial Fairer Renfrewshire programme:

- Improving financial security
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Building community capacity and resilience
- Listening to lived experience

3.3 At its meeting on 27 March 2024, the sub-committee considered:

- The most recent programme update including information on recent statistics and research in relation to the cost-of-living crisis.
- A presentation of an initial Renfrewshire Cost-of-Living dashboard which has been developed
- Updates in relation new projects being brought forward such as the Schools Support Service providing advice in secondary schools, as well as progress updates on priority actions such as supporting the Fairer Renfrewshire lived experience panel
- An update on the Alcohol and Drugs Change Programme

3.4 In terms of key statistics highlighted at the meeting of the sub-committee it is worth noting:

- The rate of inflation has reduced to 3.2% (Feb 24), falling from 4% in January 24 but remaining above the 2% target set by the Bank of England. This was largely attributed to a fall in some core food staples. Whilst it is positive to see lower rates of inflation, this does not mean prices are falling. Put most simply prices are now rising less quickly and most things continue to cost more than they did before.
- The Bank of England has kept the interest rate unchanged at 5.25% as of 21 March 2024, which is the highest rate in 15 years.
- The Energy Price Cap, originally introduced by Ofgem in January 2019 to set limits on the underlying rates energy suppliers, is now set at £1,928, but will reduce to £1,690 from the 1 April until 30 June 2024 for a typical dual fuel household. This will be the lowest rate for 2 years.
- Standing charges for pre-payment meters have reduced to below those for households who pay by direct debit, meaning those on pre-payment meters are currently likely to be paying less for their energy.

4. Fairer Renfrewshire Programme Update

4.1 Since the last update to Leadership Board in February 2024, a range of activities have continued to be progressed by officers and partners. A summary is provided in the sections below.

Scottish Government Council Tax Debt Pilot Project

- 4.2 As previously reported, in November 2023, Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) approached the Council to collaborate in a Council Tax Debt Pilot funded through the Scottish Government. The pilot focuses on exploring how local Citizens Advice Bureau and local authorities can work together to improve the journey of those who are in council tax arrears or struggling to make council tax payment. The aim is to provide better outcomes for people and for local authorities and Renfrewshire is one of three Council areas involved.
- 4.3 The Pilot ran to the end of March 2024, however due to the very short period of the Pilot, allowing for only limited outcomes, the Council and RCAB have agreed to continue to collaborate over the next year to develop supports and better information about these supports for those struggling to pay Council Tax, as well as working to encourage those who can pay to do so timeously and those who are not liable for Council Tax to claim their reductions or exemptions.
- 4.4 The Fairer Renfrewshire Panel were consulted as part of the Pilot, and provided feedback in a number of areas, including the current processes for billing and payment, barriers to paying Council Tax, communications, including better letters, and supports for those struggling to pay. The first tangible outcome from this has been the development of a leaflet by RCAB giving details of where to get advice on different aspects of Council Tax and outlining supports around payment.
- 4.5 Regular meetings have commenced between relevant Council Officers and RCAB staff, and while the outcomes of the initial pilot will be provided through an evaluation report which will collate the learnings and achieved outcomes from all three funded local authority areas, Renfrewshire will consider these as part of the ongoing project.

Thrive under 5

- 4.6 Late in 2023, Renfrewshire HSCP secured Scottish Government Childhood Obesity- Early Intervention and Prevention Funding. The funding is supporting the development and implementation of a 'Thrive under 5' pilot programme. Thrive under 5 is a whole system, community food nurturing approach with families of pre-school children, combining action on food and financial insecurity, healthy eating and physical activity. Following a review of child health and wellbeing data and community assets it was agreed that Thrive under 5 would be piloted in Johnstone with a view to further roll out dependant on the allocation of further funding.
- 4.7 Key elements of the programme will include money and debt advice, provision of fruit and vegetables, free pantry membership and shops, fuel support, cooking classes, provision of cooking equipment and physical activity opportunities.
- 4.8 A steering group has been set up by Renfrewshire HSCP and includes Council Officers from several services, including Advice Works and One Ren as well as third sector partners. Representatives from Fair Food Renfrewshire are also part of the group. This group will plan,

implement, monitor and evaluate the programme. The initial pilot will be delivered by Active Communities with support from Renfrewshire HSCP Health Improvement team. Robust referral pathways will be developed to ensure the programme reaches families who may benefit most.

School Support Service

- 4.9 The School Support service provided by Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau commenced at the start of the school year, with the first appointments week commencing 23 August 2023. From that date until the end of February there had been 113 advice appointments/contacts made, and advice provided to 76 individuals.
- 4.10 The busiest schools have been Linwood with 16 appointments, followed by ASN schools, Riverbrae (14) and Mary Russell (13), then Johnstone High (11). Reasons for appointments have been varied, however the majority, 62% have been for support with benefits and benefit checks, with housing the second busiest area at 11% and 7% have come forward for crisis support, such as foodbank vouchers.
- 4.11 A meeting was arranged with Education staff in March to look at how the service is working in general and Education managers were informed about the schools where take up of the service was low. It was agreed that further promotion of the service would be targeted at those schools and a further meeting will be arranged to discuss results.

Easter holiday provision

- 4.12 A focussed programme of holiday activities for children and young people throughout the Easter break has been developed and delivered using residual funding identified from previous holiday provision. Camps were provided across six locations by Community Learning and Development staff and Street Stuff for children and young people aged 5-14. The camps are free and a meal is provided at lunch time. Information and booking for the camps was shared with key third sector organisations and also on a referral basis from Social Work in order to ensure effective targeting of places to children that need it most.

Winter Connections

- 4.13 The Winter Connections programme for 23/24 which launched at the end of September ended on 31 March 2024. At the Leadership Board in June 2023, it was agreed that £75,000 of funding be allocated from Fairer Renfrewshire programme and an additional £10,000 was awarded from the Recovery Change Fund to ensure Winter Connections activities were open to people affected by drugs and alcohol and people living with mental illness.
- 4.14 There were 58 applications to the programme which were assessed by officers from Renfrewshire Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership and Engage Renfrewshire.
- 4.15 Of the 58 applications, 46 were successful, 11 were unsuccessful and one application was withdrawn. Unsuccessful applications were signposted to alternative sources of funding where appropriate.
- 4.16 A further £6,000 was allocated to One Ren to provide hot drinks, soup and snacks in all Renfrewshire libraries. This included drinks and snacks for the twice weekly film club at Ferguslie Park which was set up as part of Winter Connections last year and has continued to run. It also provided free drinks and snacks for families using the SkoobMobile service at their community stops.

- 4.17 A wide range of activities were provided as part of the programme, some of which were tailored to the age of those attending. These included coffee mornings, choirs, fitness classes and fun activities for all ages, such as bingo, board games, quizzes and movies. Some projects were targeted specifically at older people or younger people, but many aimed to be intergenerational and to attract families.
- 4.18 A full evaluation of the programme will be carried out over April 2024, with key findings being reported to the Leadership Board in June 2024.

Lived Experience Panel

- 4.19 Elected Members have been given a number of updates relating to work of the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel. The February meeting of the Panel was used to discuss digital exclusion and the DigiZone initiative. A sub-group of Renfrewshire's digital partnership, Citizens Voice, has been working to introduce DigiZones which will be locations within Renfrewshire where any member of the public can connect to the internet as a minimum, but may also be able to gain digital skills support and access devices. Panel members were positive about the proposed initiative and also gave an insight into the issue of digital exclusion. The Digital Strategy Delivery Manager has agreed to consult with the Panel when he is reviewing the Council's Digital Strategy.
- 4.20 March's Panel, as detailed above, was used to discuss Council Tax and the Council Tax Pilot, while the Panel met with the Convener and Depute of the Fairer Renfrewshire Sub-Committee late in March to discuss Panel priorities and explore opportunities for the Panel and Sub-Committee to work more closely.

Child poverty – deep dive activity

- 4.21 Work has now commenced on a child poverty deep dive exercise at a Community Planning Partnership level, with a discussion held with the Community Planning Partnership Executive Group in January to discuss some of the initial insights. In addition to considering partners' current activity and intelligence on child poverty at a strategic level, and partners were asked to consider how we could work differently with the resources available going forward. A particular focus is on reviewing how resources are used and could be targeted to support families in the child poverty priority groups. A follow up session will be held with the Executive Group in June 2024

Community Needs Assessment in Gallowhill

- 4.22 Late in 2023, Renfrewshire HSCP was successful in a funding bid to NHSGGC Public Health to carry out a Community Needs Assessment in Gallowhill. Recognising the increase in Child Poverty rates in the Gallowhill and Renfrew South Ward, a rapid review of the data for Gallowhill has highlighted a number of health indicators which have worsened precipitating the funding bid.
- 4.23 Council Officers worked with those from Renfrewshire HSCP to pull together a specification for commissioning a local organisation to facilitate a Grassroots Community Needs Assessment in Gallowhill for a six-month period. The organisation which is commissioned will involve the community in the assessment, which will identify community needs and capture community responses to the health indicators affecting local individuals and families in the area. They will scope existing services, reporting on their findings at the end of the six-month period.

- 4.24 The closing date for organisations to apply to carry out this piece of work is 8 April, and a Panel made up of HSCP, Engage Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire Council Officers will meet soon after to make the decision on applications.
- 4.25 A partnership session took place on 21 March 2024, bringing together services from across the Council and key partners such as the HSCP, One Ren, and Engage Renfrewshire focussed on exploring and planning a place-based, partnership response to challenges around rapidly growing child poverty in the Gallowhill area. The session was focussed on sharing knowledge and insight, and starting to identify potential actions where we can develop our understanding, target resources and work collaboratively moving forward.
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5. Fairer Renfrewshire 2024/2025 Programme

- 5.1 At Council on 29th February 2024, members further reaffirmed their commitment to the Fairer Renfrewshire programme with further investments in a number of targeted interventions including:
- additional welfare rights funding, delivered by Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau
 - a targeted programme of summer activities for children and young people from low income families, working across Council services with community groups and third sector organisations across Renfrewshire to ensure that our most vulnerable families are able to access a range of activities and healthy food over the summer period
 - additional resource to explore inequalities experienced by older people, delivered by ROAR
 - strengthened engagement with young people, including the targeting of activities to support our most vulnerable children and young people in Renfrewshire through the development of a youth-led programme
 - a further winter school clothing payment in 2024, providing £50 per child eligible for the School Clothing Grant
 - continued delivery of the Dolly Parton Imagination library programme, for all children aged between 2-5
 - continued deliver of the Who Cares Scotland Communities that Care programme within Renfrewshire's educational establishments, continuing the Council's support for the care experienced community
- 5.2 In terms of the summer holiday programme, proposals for the programme are currently under development through further consultation with the Fairer Renfrewshire Panel. It is currently proposed that £50,000 of the £100,000 funding available is allocated through a grant funding process which local community and third sector organisations can access to deliver targeted local activities and healthy food to low income families and children. It is proposed that the grant guidance and process is retained from summer 2023, and launched in May 2024.
- 5.3 In order to ensure grant allocations can be made as timeously as possible ahead of the summer break, members are asked to authorise the provision of delegated authority to the Head of Policy

and Partnerships to make related grants awards in consultation with the Council Leader. A full update on all grant allocations will be provided to the Leadership Board in September 2024.

- 5.4 In addition to the commitments within the Council's budget, further proposals have now been developed for additional investments from Fairer Renfrewshire programme funding to be allocated for 2024/25. These relate to previously supported Tackling Poverty funded initiatives as well as new and emerging priorities and combined with the 2024 budget announcements will form the 2024 programme for Fairer Renfrewshire.
- 5.5 These funding proposals total an additional £0.516m to be allocated from Fairer Renfrewshire funding. All activities are intended to be very targeted with a sharpened focus on priorities identified through the wider programme, recognising the limited nature of the Council's resources. Any projects supported by Fairer Renfrewshire funding will be required to monitor impact and provide required information for collation by the Fairer Renfrewshire Lead Officer.
- 5.6 It is recommended that a further £0.516m is allocated from the Fairer Renfrewshire programme to support the following initiatives and supports as part of the 2024/25 work programme:

Improving financial security

- 5.7 There are a number of investments across the Fairer Renfrewshire programme aimed at improving financial security for households. This includes investments which directly put money into the pockets of local people, such as adding additional funding to the Scottish Welfare Fund and providing the additional winter school clothing grant for low-income families. In addition, there are several investments which provide additional capacity for local income maximisation services on a targeted basis currently funded from the Fairer Renfrewshire budget, including the Schools Support Service and Family Advice Service.
- 5.8 It is recommended that a further £115,000 is allocated to:
- sustain support to the Council's Energy Management Unit, helping people who need support to reduce their energy bills, manage fuel debt and improve the energy efficiency in their homes. Fairer Renfrewshire currently funds one energy advocate within the team.
 - Deliver another Winter Connections programme in 24/25, co-producing a programme of activities hosted by local groups that support people to connect to others within their community over the winter period. It is recommended £75,000 is allocated to this, in line with the 23/24 programme.

Supporting health and wellbeing for low-income families with children

- 5.9 There are a number of projects aimed at supporting the health, wellbeing and development of children and young people from low-income families with children as part of the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, a number of which were established in some form as part of the

Council's Tackling Poverty Programme. As part of the Council's budget £100,000 was allocated to provide a programme of activities and food for children and young people over the summer holidays.

5.10 It is recommended that a further £361k is allocated to:

- Continue providing the free universal breakfast service in nine primary schools. The project relieves financial pressure on low-income families, but most importantly, makes sure that children start the school day ready to learn.
- Continue the Cost of the School Day fund, operating across all primary and secondary schools in Renfrewshire, directly supporting families in a variety of ways including uniforms, food, transport, extra-curricular activities and curricular expenses.
- Continue to deliver the Peer Health education project in partnership with Active Communities, working with young people in secondary schools across Renfrewshire to identify key health priorities in their school and developing young people to lead their own activities to improve health and wellbeing, with a focus on mental health.
- Continue to provide the Skoobmobile, providing a mobile public library service directly to children and families in communities. The programme continues to support the delivery of the Skoobmobile which introduces children to the benefit of reading and play and supports the Council's ambitions to narrow the literacy attainment gap.

Developing understanding and insight

5.11 There are a number of key projects within the Fairer Renfrewshire programme which seek to develop the understanding and insight into the experiences of local households and inform policy and practice moving forward. These include the development of Renfrewshire's Cost of Living Dashboard and the Child Poverty Data Deep Dive which will seek to understand child poverty locally, particularly for priority families and at locality level. A Renfrewshire Community Survey will also be carried out in 2024 to continue to build understanding of impacts of the pandemic and cost of living crisis on individual households. These key enabling projects are all delivered within existing staffing resources supporting the Fairer Renfrewshire programme.

5.12 It is recommended that £40k is allocated to:

- Continue to develop models of participation for people with lived experience of poverty to inform the Council's policy and practice

Advancing equality of opportunity

5.13 At Leadership Board in February 2024, members approved the allocation of £150,000 for the development of an equalities workstream within the Fairer Renfrewshire programme to be progressed throughout 2024/25. In addition to this, further resources were allocated as part of

the Council budget relating to barriers experienced by older people in partnership with ROAR, and work is also underway to develop the Council's BSL Plan moving forward.

6 Renfrewshire Head Injuries Service

- 6.1 Elected members will be aware that the Renfrewshire Head Injuries Service provided by Quarriers will come to an end on 7 June 2024. The Council has provided some support to the delivery of the overall service in recent years, specifically through funding to support service users and their wider family to navigate the social and wellbeing impacts of a brain injury.
- 6.2 Whilst the overall service will close, there is strong support from a range of stakeholders to develop a new community led model of support going forward, which could ensure that the holistic support required by people impacted by a brain injury and their families can continue to be available across Renfrewshire. This includes support around issues such as employability, income advice, health and wellbeing and social isolation, particularly given the ongoing impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis.
- 6.3 In terms of developing a community led model of support, there is potential interest from a range of stakeholders to take this forward at pace given the planned closure of the service on 6 June. It is recommended that officers work with all stakeholders involved including service users, to develop options for the transition to a new model of support. This work would be co-ordinated by the Policy and Partnerships service, drawing in support and advice from Engage Renfrewshire on governance and potential funding opportunities.
- 6.4 Indicative funding of £90,000 has been identified from Fairer Renfrewshire programme funding, which could be utilised to support transition arrangements subject to the development of a formal proposal for consideration by elected members, which would include future recommendations on funding over a longer term period. Given the pressing nature of this issue, officers will prioritise this development work and bring a further report outlining next steps to the Leadership Board on 19 June.
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7. Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act Consultation

- 7.1 Regular updates are provided to Leadership Board on the Fair Food Renfrewshire programme. The steering group established to drive the local approach to Fair Food has recently drafted and submitted a partnership response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Good Food Nation Plan. The consultation is seeking views on proposed national Good Food Nation outcomes, ways of measuring progress and insight into how different groups envision life in a Good Food Nation.

- 7.2 The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022 places a requirement on the Scottish Government to develop and implement a National Good Food Nation (GFN) Plan, and also requires other relevant authorities (32 Local Authorities and 14 Health Boards) to develop and implement Local GFN Plans.
- 7.3 In preparing these Plans, the Scottish Government and relevant authorities must also take into consideration how food-related issues can affect outcomes relating to; social and economic wellbeing, the environment (climate change, wildlife, and natural environment), health and physical/mental wellbeing, economic development, animal welfare, education, and child poverty.
- 7.4 The draft National Good Food Nation Plan was published on 24 January 2024 with the public consultation being launched on the same day. The consultation closed on 22 April 2024 and a local response was developed and submitted in consultation with the Council Leader and Depute which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Members are therefore asked to homologate the submission of the response. The Council's consultation response has also been submitted to COSLA as a draft to inform the combined local authority response developed by COSLA.
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8. Next steps

- 8.1 Officers continue to work with partners to progress the Fairer Renfrewshire programme. Priority actions over the next quarter include:
- Evaluation of Winter Connections 23/24
 - Development of the Local Child Poverty Action Report
 - Developing and delivering budget investments, particularly the design and delivery of the summer holiday programme
 - Development of equalities workstream as detailed in February 2024 Leadership Board
 - Launch of Renfrewshire Community Survey 2024
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – this paper recommends that additional funding of £0.516m from Fairer Renfrewshire funding be allocated to support the delivery of the programme throughout 2024/25. This is in addition to budget commitments made as part of the Council's budget setting process in February 2024.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – This report provides a summary of current partnership activities being progressed through the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, with a key focus on tackling the inequalities that exist in Renfrewshire.
4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** - none

6. **Information Technology** - none
 7. **Equality and Human Rights** – The report provides an overview of key activities undertaken as part of the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, and as such there continues to be a high level of equalities and human rights consideration across this programme – the activities detailed in this report are targeted specifically at advancing equality of opportunity for a number of groups across the Renfrewshire area.
 8. **Health and Safety** - none
 9. **Procurement** – none
 10. **Risk** – none
 11. **Privacy Impact** – none
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – none
 13. **Climate Risk** – none
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Appendix 1

Scottish Government's National Good Food Nation Plan Consultation

Renfrewshire Council Response

Introduction

The Scottish Government is developing the national Good Food Nation Plan. This is a requirement of the [Good Food Nation \(Scotland\) Act 2022](#), which was passed in Summer 2022. This Good Food Nation Plan is intended to set out the Scottish Government's goals for food policy and how it intends to achieve them.

Our food system is a source of incredible success: the Scottish food and drink sector generates turnover of around £15 billion per annum, and exports of Scottish food and drink were valued at £8.1 billion in 2022. Our fantastic food industry provides employment from the local farmers' market to the export of Scotland's finest produce across the globe. This success contributes positively to the wellbeing of the food and drink workforce, while also making it easier for the population to access healthy food options. Food enables a healthy population to enjoy life to its fullest. Our establishment of the Good Food Nation body of work recognises this and the importance of Scotland's food and drink sector not only to our economy, but also to our culture, heritage, and society.

Food is fundamental to everything we do, but it can be taken for granted and the supply chain that produces it is sometimes overlooked. Whilst there is much to celebrate in our food system, there are also challenges that we must meet head-on: our food system and the people who work in the food sector need and deserve stewardship and care. A key aim of our work to be a Good Food Nation is to shift the dial so people can make healthier choices in what they eat.

We know that many households in Scotland experience food insecurity on a regular basis or are intermittently worried about being able to access food. Diet-related ill health is also more pervasive in communities experiencing deprivation. In striving to achieve our Good Food Nation ambitions we must do so for all communities and leave no one behind. Reducing socio-economic and other inequalities is part of being a Good Food Nation. When creating future food policy to align with the overarching outcomes set out in this plan, consideration of such inequalities needs to be a key focus to avoid unintended consequences.

The Scottish Government is already taking action to reduce inequality; provide greater food resilience and security; enable healthy and local food choices; and support our food and drink sector, all while working towards our net zero goals. However, making important and necessary long-term changes to our food system and achieving ambitious food-related goals will take time. As things stand, the Scottish Government does not have full control of all the levers that can be used to influence all aspects of the food system and people's ability to access healthier food. The impact of Brexit has also been significant: as the UK now sits outwith the EU it is required to conduct its own trade negotiations. Scotland's ability to influence its food system is thus further limited by the fact that we are not represented in our own right at these international-level discussions and negotiations.

An independent Scotland would have full control over all the levers and resources linked to food policy, which would have a material effect on what we can achieve and how quickly. We are publishing a series of papers on the subject of [Building A New Scotland](#): these papers form our prospectus for an independent Scotland and set out many issues linked to food.

This first Good Food Nation Plan represents how the Scottish Government intends to use the powers and levers we do have to work collectively with people, communities, businesses, agencies, and organisations to meet our Good Food Nation ambitions.

The first draft national Good Food Nation Plan sets out the following:

- Part One outlines the history of the Good Food Nation in Scotland and highlights how the plan will take effect. This part does not form part of this consultation, but it provides relevant background information.
- Part Two proposes a set of six national Good Food Nation Outcomes and sets out how they were developed and how progress will be measured. We will ask you questions about the Outcomes as well as the measures.
- Part Three highlights how working mechanisms within government will change and presents some of the key food related policies that are currently under way. It also presents what life would be like for different groups of people under a Good Food Nation. We are particularly interested in understanding if we have captured correctly what life should be like in a Good Food Nation.

This consultation seeks views on all three Parts of the draft national Plan, and we hope you and others will take part. As part of this consultation, we are also seeking views on specified functions, which will be defined in secondary legislation. Specified functions are very important as it is when Scottish Ministers are exercising these functions that the plan will take effect. Questions on specified functions will be asked after the section on the national Good Food Nation Plan. You can choose to respond to some or all of these questions.

Part A: Consultation on the national Good Food Nation Plan

In collaboration with colleagues across the Scottish Government we have developed a set of six overarching Outcomes. These Outcomes are ambitious and not meant to be achieved within the first iteration of this plan. They are necessarily broad in nature as they are designed to be applicable to policies from across a wide range of areas.

The Outcomes serve as the high-level aspirations for a good food nation: they are not a list of detailed instructions.

They reflect that there is a continued need to adjust how food is produced, processed, distributed, and disposed of in Scotland to address the undeniable challenges of climate change and environmental degradation. This transition to a more sustainable food system also needs to be managed in a just and fair manner. This includes taking the people who work to put food on our tables along with us and demonstrating our commitment to continuous improvement in animal welfare. They also acknowledge that everyone deserves dignified access to good food and that our food system should create a healthy population.

The Outcomes represent what we would like a sustainable food system in Scotland to look like. The Outcomes link to other overarching policy frameworks such as the [National Performance Framework](#) and the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#). The Outcomes also link to relevant international human rights instruments.

Q1. Does each individual Good Food Nation Outcome describe the kind of Scottish food system you would like to see?

| | Outcome 1 | Outcome 2 | Outcome 3 | Outcome 4 | Outcome 5 | Outcome 6 |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Strongly agree | | | | | | |
| Mostly agree | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Neither agree nor disagree | | | | | | |
| Mostly disagree | | | | | | |
| Strongly disagree | | | | | | |

Q2. What, if anything, would you change about the Good Food Nation Outcomes and why?

Broadly speaking, the outcomes are supported. Whilst it is appreciated that the Outcomes are high-level and aspirational, council officers have suggested some strengthening around the wording of the Outcomes. This may in turn require some further thought with regards to the applicable measures, targets, indicators, and specified functions.

- Food waste does not feature in any of the Outcomes, and this is a critical area for both poverty and net zero agendas. This could also include surplus food re-distribution.
- Outcome 1 is very reliant on current economic conditions. Whilst we welcome the inclusion of “affordable” within the Outcome, the levers to deliver affordable food will often be outwith the devolved powers of the Scottish Government. Recent world events have contributed to rising costs and food inflation which could jeopardise affordability.
- There is no mention of Fair Trade or any ethical sources of food in the Outcomes, especially when it relates to products that cannot be grown or sourced in Scotland. Promotion of seasonal food would promote buying local, rather than imported food.
- The community element seems to be missing from the Outcomes.
- Although the Food and Drink sector is frequently referenced, it is not clear whether alcohol is deliberately missing from the Plan. Alcohol can have a significant impact on physical and mental wellbeing. The food system in Scotland with regards to available land, energy and resources, supply Scotland’s Drink sector so there is correlation between the two sectors.
- Outcomes 2 and 4 could be strengthened the benefits (particularly to net zero and the local economy) of having shorter food supply chains, this requires greater collaboration between local growers, producers, and suppliers.

Measures, Targets & Indicators

Q3. Do you think that these targets will contribute to achieving the overall Good Food Nation Outcomes?

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | I don’t know |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| | X | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|

Q4. Would achieving these targets contribute to making the kind of Scottish Food system you would like to see?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | I don't know |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q5. If you have other comments on the suggested Good Food Nation targets, please comment:

- We note that many of the targets listed, are existing targets. By the time the Plan is finalised and published, some of the timelines will already have been passed.
- Some of the targets are not fully defined. For example, “Reduce adult diet-related health inequalities” versus a defined target such as “halve childhood obesity by 2030 and significantly reduce associated diet-related inequalities”.
- The community element is not well referenced throughout but in terms of measures, it would be positive to see mention of local food growing projects around growing grounds or allotments and community larders or pantries.
- There are no targets around the provision and uptake of food education, either for children or adults.
- With regards to Outcome 3 and its associated indicators/targets it is critical that the supply market can produce quality and variety of fruit & vegetables to meet demand relating to this outcome. This will require a consider procurement strategy which supports the increase in supply, whilst remaining a cost-effective route to market which balances the support for local produce versus availability.
- There appears to be a very narrow targeting of health-related improvements in relation to weight, but nothing specific in relation to other diet related diseases or conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and even dental health.
- Whilst breast-feeding targets are welcomed, there should be acknowledgement that for a variety of reasons not all children can be breastfed. Alternative support targets could be considered to avoid stigma and ensure dignity.
- The Plan has reducing per capita food waste as a target but there are no Greenhouse Gas emissions related to food waste as an indicator (only agriculture).
- Food waste doesn't feature in the outcomes which is critical from both a social/poverty point of view but also net zero.

Q6a. Do you think these indicators will be useful for measuring progress towards the Good Food Nation Outcomes?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | I don't know |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q6b. Why or why not?

- The indicators are largely quantitative. How will qualitative information be gathered and reported upon? There is need to share effective best practice.
- We are interested in how information about fruit and veg intake of children aged 2-15 will be gathered and measured, and what implication there will be for schools, if any.

Q7. What other indicators, if any, would you like to see included?

- Number of educational establishments participating in Food for Thought programme. Case Studies related to best practice should be provided.
- Qualitative information could also be drawn from schools participating in Hearty Lives projects.
- Qualitative information drawn from Health and Nutrition Inspections (HNI) during Education Scotland inspections of schools and early years providers.
- In relation to education, measures of numbers of young people achieving Senior Phase qualifications in Food Technology.
- The Plan should consider indicators included which relate to the supply of allotments and community growing spaces, for example the percentage of local authorities complying with the statutory plots-waiting list numbers threshold stated in Sections 111 and 121 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015; Number of new allotment plots created during a reporting period, in line with Part 9 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- Fruit and vegetable intake of children and adults could be added in addition to the Percentage of adults and children consuming the recommended 5 portions of fruit and vegetables each day. By measuring intake, it would give some detail on how many individuals are below the recommended daily portions.
- The “number of pupils registered for a free school meal and the percentage of pupils utilising entitlement” would be a better indicator to have alongside or even instead of the “number of pupils registered for a free school meal” indicator.
- Outcome 1 has no indicator for safe food. Indicators relating to compliance across the food sector should be considered.
- It might be beneficial to have an indicator on funding committed to food education and community food projects. Whether or not a target is associated with community food projects/local food growing could be debated, but there is a potential to include a target related to this, like the national target for community energy. In Renfrewshire’s Plan for Net Zero there is a metric of percentage m² covered by allotments/community growing grounds but there may be a better measurement that can then be used at a national level and consequently at a local level also.
- There could be an indicator which covers the level of support to local food businesses to be able to sustain businesses in the current climate.
- Although there are indicators in relation to the number of pupils registered for free school meals, it should be noted that there are no indicators in relation to holiday food provision. This is an area of focus for local authorities to ensure access to nutritious food outwith term time.
- In terms of indicators and targets/measures, the indicators could be developed more for example, Outcome 2 could show some indicators of progression to sustainability such as “number of agricultural businesses adopting new greener technologies”. This Outcome could also benefit from some biodiversity indicators.
- Outcome 4 could include some indicators and measures around fair work such as the number of people employed on the living wage. Median weekly full-time wage would not necessarily be a good

indicator as the Food and Drink industry will have seasonal workers, lots of part-time workers and possibly agency workers on low hours or zero-hour contracts. It doesn't point to the Fair Work Action Plan in the targets/measures either which seems like a missed opportunity. Indicators of a diverse workforce could also focus on pay gap, disability, and ethnicity within employment stats in the food and drink industry. Measures could also point to the Wellbeing Economy Toolkit.

Q8. If you have other comments on the suggested Good Food Nation indicators, please comment.

- It would be helpful if there were some indicators around food advertising arounds schools.
- The Eating Out, Eating Well framework is voluntary so some indicators which food vendors near schools should meet would be welcome, to promote healthy choices especially to secondary school children.
- All school menus are compliant to providing 3 portions of fruit & vegetables. The challenge in providing this is evident within school dining halls by the increased levels of food waste. Monitoring/weighing food waste in dining halls can provide evidence of increases or decreases in food waste levels as the provision does not necessarily indicate being eaten.

Life in a Good Food Nation

Q9a. Does this reflect what you think life should look like for a child in Scotland as a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q9b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- We would suggest that the first bullet point is changed to include the word “safe” – “I have access to healthy, safe, and nutritious food that is appropriate for my age and developmental stage”.
- In the third bullet point, there could be some strengthening of wording around “food-related educational experiences”, for instance including some wording that encapsulates “At nursery and school, I routinely learn about what makes a healthy balanced diet to enable me to make healthy informed choices”.

Q10a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a parent/carer in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q10b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- There is no mention of food education for parents/carers which is needed to make a food system change.

- There is a step missing before the first bullet point, something like “I know what meals are healthy and nutritious and how to make good food choices so that I have a balanced diet”.
- The second bullet point should be amended to include dignified access to food support.
- The last bullet point potentially implies this, but there could be more explicit wording around breastfeeding support.

Q11a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as an adult in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q11b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- This could consider culturally appropriate foods, as well as age-appropriate foods as older adults may have different requirements.
- Affordability should be included, especially in terms of healthy options.
- “Healthy and sustainable options are easy to find wherever I eat and buy food” – this could include reference to local or community food, and Fair Trade/ethical foods.

Q12a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a public caterer in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q12b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- As Food safety and standards are fundamental in a Good Food Nation, there should be a reference to compliance with food law requirements, such as “I will ensure that I meet food law requirements”.
- Local suppliers are integral within supply chains to enable keeping food miles as low as possible; seasonal eating is critical to this.

Q13a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a retailer in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | X | | | | |

Q13b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- There should be a reference to compliance with food law requirements such as “I will ensure that I meet food law requirements”.

Q14a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a restaurant owner in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | | | | | X |

Q14b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- There should be a reference to compliance with food law requirements, such as “I will ensure that I meet food law requirements”.

Q15a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a farmer/crofter in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | | | | | X |

Q15b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- With reference to selling produce locally, this must be on the proviso that any food meets the same food law standards as the rest of the food sector.
- There is no mention of soil health and regenerative farming to increase environmental sustainability.

Q16a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a fisher in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | | | | | X |

Q16b. What changes, if any, would you make?

No comment to make.

Q17a. Does this reflect what you would like your life to look like, as a food processor in a Good Food Nation?

| Strongly agree | Mostly agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Mostly disagree | Strongly disagree | Not applicable |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| | | | | | X |

Q17b. What changes, if any, would you make?

- There should be a reference to compliance with food law requirements such as “I will ensure that I meet food law requirements and good manufacturing practice”.

Q18. If you have any further comments on the national Good Food Nation Plan, please comment here:

- Clearer evidence of collaboration and engagement that the Scottish Government has had with local authorities, public bodies, and other relevant organisations in the formulation of this plan would be beneficial if included.
- More information could be added on the baselining undertaken for a policy of this scale, and consequently there has been no cost impact analysis undertaken which would inform an appropriate level of funding and investment that would be required. It is essential that sufficient funding and resources are provided to allow local authorities and partner agencies to deliver these outcomes.
- Whilst the important part local authorities will play in helping Scotland become a Good Food Nation is recognised, ultimately the goal will be only met in collaboration with individual households, families, communities, community groups and charities along with growers, farmers, fishers, and all other businesses within the food sector (production, distribution, retail, hospitality).
- As per many other public sector bodies, Renfrewshire Council utilises collaborative frameworks for a lot of its food supply. It is critical that public procurement contracts are formulated in a manner to enable and support this Plan. For example, lotting structures which support variety of producers to access contracts as well as product/price lists which are suitable flexible to ensure best value for in season products. It is essential that government support is provided to the supply base, in particular local providers, to be able to access local and national frameworks/ contracts.
- It could be suggested that 45-60 minutes for 400+ pupils to sit and eat a hot meal is very difficult to achieve, and that the serving and eating environment has a direct impact on whether pupils take school meals (universal, free, or paid). Older pupils uptake of meals in secondary schools will also be driven by the local area and access to external vendors.
- Without legislative changes, procurement targets cannot currently be set around local supply or buying Scottish produce as, as per the Plan, “International trade obligations prohibit activities that would discriminate between suppliers on grounds of nationality or locality, or which would result in unequal treatment of suppliers.” Procurement continues to develop innovative routes to market to support the ambitions detailed within the Plan whilst also supporting many other government and local initiatives.
- There needs to be more emphasis on community within the Plan. Community groups and organisations play a vital role in sharing information on local food networks, and they play a big role in the social and cultural aspects of food as they service a diverse group of people in the community. Consideration should be given to including a further category in the “Life in a Good Food Nation” section, such as “As a Community Organisation/Group in a Good Food Nation”.
- The Plan could have more focus on advice, education, and skills for life. Skills links to more opportunities and better career prospects. With regards to school education there should be increased learning around cooking skills for life.
- Generally, the aspirational nature of the plan is welcomed, but must be balanced with realism, for example, are affordability issues for households sufficiently addressed, especially during cost-of-living crisis as current context?
- From a Community Wealth Building perspective, officers would like to see more in the Life of a Good Food Nation focus on supporting/contributing to thriving local supply chains through procurement choices. This will ensure more local food businesses are aware of what is being bought so they can diversify their products and ensure more local food businesses are entering the local supply chain. It would also be a good opportunity to mention supporting collaboration between local growers, producers, manufacturers, suppliers, and buyers to form denser local food supply chains.

Specified Functions

Q19. Please let us know if we have missed any function falling within a specified description or relevant specified functions in the list.

- Whilst we recognise including the list of existing functions was intended to evidence the alignment of policy intentions, there are several pieces of legislation which are not referenced and are of relevance: Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 which governs many products used by many businesses within the Food and Drink industries. This will help control food waste and environmental impact.
- Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 – the Scottish Government have powers to strengthen the promotion, widen the eligibility and increase the entitlement and support to many benefits, especially for children. (Best Start Foods, Best Start Payments, and Scottish Child Payment)

The list should also refer to current food related Bills at various stages within the Parliamentary processes:

- Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Bill,
- Human Rights Bill,
- Circular Economy Bill,
- Community Wealth Building Bill,
- Land Reform Bill,
- Natural Environmental Bill

Q20. Why do you think this specified function/function falling within a specified description should be added?

Comments to Question 19 should also cover a response to this question.



To: Leadership Board

On: 1 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Best Value Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 The duty of best value applies to all public bodies in Scotland, and requires organisations to ensure that there is good governance and effective management of resources, whilst also ensuring activities focus on improvement and deliver the best possible outcomes for the public.
- 1.2 This paper provides an update to elected members on best value audit arrangements to be undertaken by external auditors in Renfrewshire during 2024/25.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 The duty of best value applies to all public bodies in Scotland, and requires organisations to ensure that there is good governance and effective management of resources, whilst also ensuring activities focus on improvement and deliver the best possible outcomes for the public.
- 3.2 In line with the remit of the Leadership Board to consider matters relating to best value and performance management, regular updates are provided to members on any best value related activity being progressed by the Council's external audit team as part of national scrutiny arrangements.

- 3.3 The last update provided to members in December 2023, highlighted recent changes to how local authorities would be audited in relation to best value, with this now being fully integrated as part of the annual audit process undertaken each year by external auditors. This is supplemented by more detailed best value work which is also carried out each year around a particular theme selected nationally, with findings collated into a national report.
- 3.4 Over and above this annual programme, each local authority will be subject to a statutory report on best value which will be considered by the Accounts Commission.
- 3.5 An initial timetable for best value report completion and reporting to the Accounts Commission confirmed that this would take place for Renfrewshire Council in 2027, however this has now been brought forward to 2024, or at the latest early 2025. Our external audit team Azets, plan to perform this work during 2024/25 and report the outcomes from a review of the Council's best value arrangements by end December 2024.

4. Best value audit methodology

- 4.1 Within the External Audit Plan 24/25 prepared by Azets, which was reported to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny on 18 March 2024, an overview of the best value methodology used within the auditing process was provided for information, with an extract provided below for information.

| Key area | Description |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Follow up: our work will follow up on Accounts Commission findings, Controller of Audit recommendations and any outstanding improvement actions reported in Best Value Assurance Reports, Best Value thematic reports and Annual Audit Reports. Our work will reflect the Council's self-assessment against outstanding improvement actions and our findings will be based on the Council's current arrangements for delivering best value. |
| 2 | Risk based approach to Best Value themes: We pay due regard to the Council's arrangements in respect of the seven Best Value themes in identifying any significant risks |
| 3 | Assessing the effectiveness of performance reporting: the best value theme, effective use of resources, includes an expectation that councils report effectively on their performance. Councils should be able to demonstrate a trend of improvement over time in delivering their strategic priorities. Key elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council's assessment of progress against its service priority measures in 2023/24 and over time. |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what the Council is reporting on its relative performance in 2023/24 and over time (from the Local Government Benchmarking Framework and other information used locally). • The effectiveness of Council processes for reporting and scrutiny of performance against its priorities • the Council’s arrangements to demonstrate continuous improvement in how they deliver their priority services. • The Accounts Commission has a statutory responsibility to define the performance information that councils must publish. This responsibility links with the Commission's Best Value audit responsibilities. In turn, councils have their own responsibilities, under their Best Value duty, to report performance to the public. The Accounts Commission issued a new Statutory Performance Information Direction in December 2021 (applies for the three years from 2022/23) which requires a council to report its: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance in improving local public services (including those provided with its partners and communities), and progress against agreed desired outcomes (SPI 1). The Commission expects this reporting to allow comparison both over time and with other similar bodies (drawing on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework and / or other benchmarking activities) • Own assessment and audit, scrutiny and inspection body assessments of how it is performing against its duty of Best Value, and how it has responded to these assessments (SPI 2). As external auditors we are required to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for preparing and publishing the statutory performance information in accordance with the Direction. We will evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the arrangements at the Council, including assessing the appropriateness of the information provided to members in responding to the Direction |
| 4 | Thematic reviews: we are required to report on Best Value or related themes prescribed by the Accounts Commission. The thematic work for 2023/24 is on the workforce innovation and will involve auditors considering how councils are responding to the current workforce challenge through building capacity, increasing productivity and innovation. We will report our conclusions in a separate report which will be presented to those charged with governance within the Council and published on Audit Scotland’s website. |
| 5 | Contributing to Controller of Audit reports: The Controller of Audit reports to the Accounts Commission on each council’s performance in meeting its Best Value duties at least once over the five year audit appointment. The report is a summary of information and judgements reported by each auditor. |

4.2 In terms of outputs that will be visible to elected members, partners and the wider public, the following reports will be provided during 2024:

- Annual Audit Report targeted for completion in September 2024
- Best value thematic report – Workforce innovation (date tbc)
- Best value statutory report (scheduled for completion by end December 2024)

5. Follow up on 23/24 Best Value recommendations

- 5.1 Within the best value update report considered by the Leadership Board in December 2023, it was noted that Azets had completed a best value thematic report on leadership and governance at Renfrewshire Council as part of the national programme of best value activity. The overall assessment made by our external auditors in relation to the best value work undertaken this year is that “We are satisfied that the Council has appropriate arrangements in place to demonstrate Best Value under each reported area of the 2022/23 thematic review”.
- 5.2 The appendix within the Best Value thematic report contained an action plan to be progressed by the Council in response to the recommendations made by the external audit team. Two actions were identified which relate to opportunities to strengthen the prioritisation of Council Plan activities, and related monitoring arrangements. Work is underway to respond to these recommendations, and progress will be reported to the Leadership Board in June 2024.
-

6 Local response and next steps

- 6.1 As a learning organisation, the Council has established self evaluation processes which allow self assessment to be undertaken in relation to the best value audit dimensions and methodology as part of wider corporate improvement activities. This was most recently undertaken by the Chief Officer Group during summer 2023, and was subsequently followed up with further self assessment work with senior managers across the organisation in late 2023. The Corporate Management Team are currently developing a high level plan which will allow senior officers to direct resources to activities and processes which could be further strengthened in relation to the feedback received. Proposals are being developed by the Corporate Management Team to further embed the corporate self assessment process.
- 6.2 The use of self assessment and also wider benchmarking with other authorities is important, as it ensures that the organisation can continue to learn from established best practice and prioritise activities which strengthen the way in which the organisation operates, supports and develops staff, and engages with local communities and businesses.
- 6.3 It is anticipated that the best value statutory reporting process will be undertaken by Azets over the course of 2024, and further updates will continue to be provided to elected members as information becomes available.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – none
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** - none.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - none.
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** - none.
11. **Privacy Impact** - none.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** –not applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – none

List of Background Papers

None

Please contact Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Partnerships.



To: Leadership Board

On: 1st May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Review of OneRen's Annual Business Plan for 2024-2025

1. Summary

- 1.1 OneRen submits an annual Business Plan to the Council which sets out the charity's priorities for the year ahead and outlines how it will deliver the services specified in the Service Agreement. The business planning process provides the opportunity to assess the context in which the charity is operating and to consider how it is responding to changing community and customer needs.
- 1.2 OneRen's five-year business strategy is the charity's roadmap and reflects the goals of key stakeholders including Council and Community Planning Partnership objectives and forms the basis of the business plan.
- 1.3 The business plan for 2024-25 follows the principles of OneRen's business strategy. These principles present a contextual basis for the annual business plan and areas of strategic focus. Importantly, they acknowledge the focus the charity has on outcomes, whilst recognising the regional and national contexts it operates in, as well as ongoing inflationary and energy cost pressures. The business plan has been developed and reviewed with managers and staff from service areas across the business and was approved by One Ren's board of Directors in March 2024.
- 1.4 The Business Plan has been assessed by senior officers in the Council, through a process co-ordinated by the Head Of Policy and Partnerships, who acts as the Council's monitoring officer for One Ren. The implementation of

the Business Plan actions and achievement of key priorities will be reviewed through the quarterly meetings that the Head of Policy and Partnerships has scheduled with One Ren's leadership team, as part of ongoing monitoring and governance arrangements. A six monthly update on progress will also be reported to the Leadership Board.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Leadership Board:
1. agrees OneRen's annual Business Plan for 2024-25 attached at Appendix 1.
 2. notes the monitoring arrangements in place for the Head of Policy and Partnerships (the Council's nominated monitoring officer in relation to One Ren) to undertake quarterly performance monitoring meetings with OneRen and to provide six monthly progress reports to the Leadership Board.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 OneRen is responsible for the strategic management, operation and development of cultural, leisure and sport services in Renfrewshire. It provides indoor and outdoor sport and leisure, town halls, community venues, libraries, heritage, arts, museums, sports and health development services for the public of Renfrewshire.
- 3.2 An annual Business Plan is developed by OneRen which sets out the charity's main priorities and actions for the year ahead. The Business Plan is submitted to the Council in line with the terms of the Service Agreement and reflects the priorities set out in the Council Plan where they relate specifically to the role and remit of OneRen.
- 3.3 The Plan recognises the main factors which will influence OneRen over the next few years of operation and has now been reviewed by Council officers and is being presented to the Leadership Board for approval.
- 3.4 OneRen has eleven company directors with experience in business, community, cultural, leisure and sports activities. The Board comprises of six independently appointed directors, two staff directors and three appointments by Renfrewshire Council. The Head of Policy and Partnerships and Head of Finance and Procurement have also been appointed as Council observers to the Board.
- 3.5 The Head of Policy and Partnerships is the Council's nominated monitoring officer for OneRen and has established quarterly meetings as part of ongoing monitoring arrangements. An update on the progress of OneRen's Business Plan is provided to the Leadership Board on a six-monthly basis.

4. Review of OneRen's Business Plan for 2024/25

- 4.1 As the Council's agreed monitoring officer for OneRen, the Head of Policy and Partnerships has reviewed the Business Plan for 2024/25 which was approved by OneRen's Board of Directors in March 2024. As in previous years, the plan has also been assessed by senior officers and feedback provided to OneRen as required. Overall, the Business Plan has been assessed as meeting the requirements of the current Service Agreement in place between the Council and OneRen.
- 4.2 The Business Plan itself highlights the key activities that will be progressed by OneRen, informed and influenced by the current context in which it is operating. Key factors impacting the trust's activities include:
- the current economic environment in terms of managing significant inflationary cost pressures in relation to goods and service and pay;
 - the extended post pandemic income recovery period and impact of the cost-of-living crisis on our local communities, customers and employees;
 - the investment in cultural regeneration with the operation of the new Paisley Town Hall and Paisley Central Library continuing to be embedded; and continuing progress to deliver Paisley Art Centre this year and Paisley Museum in 2025.
- 4.3 Within the Business Plan the trust has identified a number of specific strategic priorities which will be progressed which support or are aligned to its ongoing programme of work to deliver a high performing and financially sustainable charity: - these included activities to increase participation and activity across the new cultural venues, strengthening income generation and supporting Renfrewshire's work to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 4.4 A full copy of the plan is attached at Appendix 1.

5. Annual Business Plan – financial arrangements

- 5.1 OneRen sets an annual budget based on the total resources available to meet its contractual obligations under the service agreement. Over the last few years, OneRen continued to manage increasing cost pressures relating to energy supplies, pool chemicals, insurance and general supplies which has added over £1million of costs to the charity. In the short to medium term, One Ren will continue to be required to manage a range of ongoing cost and pay pressures, as are being experienced by wider Council services.

- 5.2 Balancing increased community need with inflationary and budget pressures faced by all public sector organisations remains OneRen's primary task. With the reopening of two key cultural venues in 23/24 and significant developments such as the reopening of the Museum on the way, Council officers are continuing to work closely with OneRen to support the establishment of new operating models.
- 5.3 In this context, a range of assumptions were built into OneRen's financial strategy for 2024/25. The service payment for 2024-25 from the Council has been budgeted at £13,406,600. The assumptions in the financial strategy will be regularly reviewed and revised on a quarterly basis to reflect any further changes in the operating environment.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The annual Business Plan for OneRen covers the financial year 2024-25. The budget for the provision of cultural and leisure services delivered by OneRen in 2024-25 is £13,406,600.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – An organisational redesign is in progress to realign staffing resources to achieve delivery of business plan priorities.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Senior officers in OneRen were involved in the development of the Council Plan and Community Plan and the key strategic priorities in OneRen's Annual Business Plan are closely aligned to both of these plans, specifically in relation to Council plan priorities relating to tackling inequality, health and wellbeing and cultural and economic regeneration amongst others.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – None.
 9. **Procurement** – None.
 10. **Risk** – None.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – None.
 13. **Climate - None**
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List of Background Papers

- (a) None.
-

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ONE
REN

Business Plan

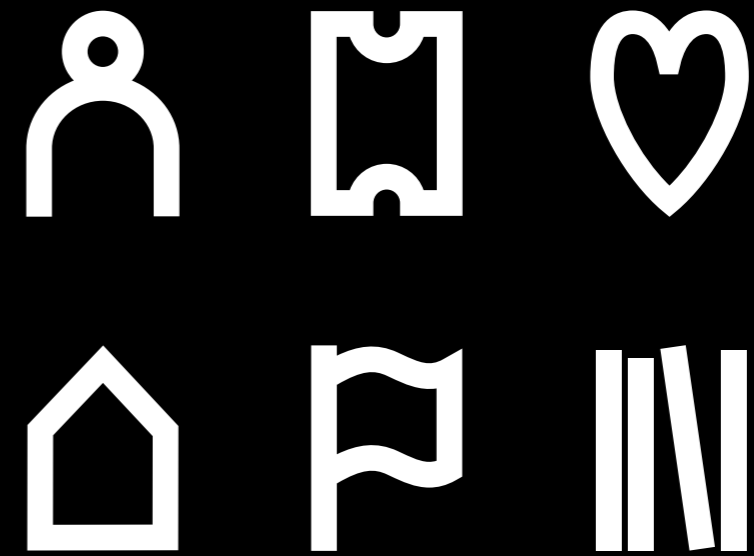
2024-2025

oneren.org



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ONE REN

Introduction: Our Shared Ambition

OneRen delivers positive outcomes for the people and communities we serve. OneRen is the local charity established by Renfrewshire Council to provide culture, leisure and sporting opportunities to help people enjoy active and healthy lives. We are passionate about the part we play in improving life-long physical and mental health in every one of our communities.

Our charity provides a range of affordable, accessible and ambitious services that are open to all and designed to improve personal, social and economic outcomes.

We are committed to our vision to ensure that everyone locally can live healthy, happy and fulfilled lives. Our mission is to improve our community's health and wellbeing by working in partnership to design and deliver a range of life-enhancing and accessible cultural, leisure and sporting opportunities that meet local needs and improve life chances across the population,

and is framed around our four strategic objectives: A Sustainable Local Economy, A Great Place to Live , Play and Visit, A Healthy Community and A Sustainable, High-Performing Charity.

Our objectives are closely aligned to those of Renfrewshire Council. Our progress is reported to the OneRen Board of Directors and the Council's Leadership Board. Quarterly performance reports to the Council's chief executive office are made through the Council's monitoring officer for OneRen. We measure and report on progress through performance indicators.

As a charitable trust, we have been able to achieve significant savings, such as relief on non-domestic rate charges, which have been re-invested into frontline services. As a charity, every pound spent with OneRen services, or in our venues, is for the benefit of supporting communities across Renfrewshire to be healthy, active and lead fulfilling lives.





OneRen: Delivering for Renfrewshire

We are passionate about the part we play in improving life-long physical and mental health in every one of our communities, supports their capacity to make a social and economic contribution to Renfrewshire, whilst generating a sense of pride and belonging.

Our services are designed to be inclusive, accessible, and adaptable to benefit as many people as possible through 1) the range of opportunities available through the week; 2) targeted services for those with health conditions, recovery needs, or who have been long-term physically or socially inactive and 3) providing additional pathways to partners and specialist services ensuring individuals' particular cultural or sporting needs and talent can be appropriately identified and supported. Across these three strands, we are building our strength in relevant methodologies such as social prescribing and co-production, which enable us to identify with communities how we can best support their current health and wellbeing priorities.

Renfrewshire Council provides an annual management fee towards the cost of delivery – approximately 55% of our operating costs. The rest of OneRen's costs have to be met through a combination of commercial income and fundraising activities to deliver our full range of

important community services. We do this by offering a range of paid-for services such as leisure memberships, charged for events, and external hires. OneRen recognises the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and while the charity needs to charge for some services, we have introduced 'pay what you can' models to ensure low, or no cost access, to programmes such as the annual Paisley Book Festival.

As a charity, we are accountable to Renfrewshire Council and the residents of Renfrewshire, and to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and Companies House (UK Companies Act). OneRen is the trading name of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited, a Company Limited by Guarantee (490998), with Charitable Status (SCO 33898). OneRen has a Board of eleven directors providing a wealth of experience in business, community, cultural, leisure and sport matters. The Board comprises of six independent directors, two staff directors, and three elected member Directors appointed by Renfrewshire Council.

OneRen employs over 500 people who deliver a year-round programme of cultural and leisure activities and services, supported by seasonal and casual workforce to meet customer demand. We also provide volunteering opportunities for hundreds of local people each year. We

typically receive over 3 million users to our services across our libraries, museums, pools, leisure centres and outdoor pitches or services accessed digitally.

OneRen is also responsible for the stewardship and care of objects and archives in Renfrewshire Council's Museum Collections and for Renfrewshire's Heritage Archives, through the provision of Renfrewshire's Museums Service. The charity plays a key role in supporting the economic regeneration and civic renewal of Renfrewshire through the development, promotion and delivery of cultural, leisure and sporting activity and provision. OneRen's developing cultural portfolio is intended to support the profile of Paisley and Renfrewshire as a national and international cultural and tourism destination.

The venues, sites and services we manage include a network of local, cultural heritage, leisure and sports facilities, a range of community development and learning services and some of the most historic buildings in the area. We work in every community across Renfrewshire and lead on the region's cultural and sports strategies.



Reach your goals.

#WeAreOneRen

Business Planning 2024-25

OneRen’s business plan is updated annually to reflect emerging changes for the region and any new priorities which may impact on the delivery of our long-term objectives. Progress is reported to the OneRen Board of Directors and the Council’s Leadership Board. Quarterly performance reports to the Council’s chief executive office are made through the Council’s monitoring officer for OneRen. We measure and report on progress through performance indicators.

The strategic focus for 2024-25 will continue to see OneRen evolve and change, driven by our commitment to deliver effectively for the people of Renfrewshire.

The business plan for 2024-25 is set within the context of the significant and ongoing financial challenges faced across the public sector. It recognises our continuing role in taking forward the region’s regeneration ambition through the return to operation of iconic cultural venues following their once-in-a-lifetime investment in their renewal.

In the last year, we reopened the iconic, Paisley Town Hall as one of Scotland’s finest performance venues and it is already living up to its billing as Paisley’s Big Stage, and the award-winning Paisley Central Library spans four floors of a former vacant retail space and provides everyone with the warmest of welcomes in the heart of the High Street. In their first few months of operation, both have achieved record attendance figures, bringing footfall not only to those venues but to other local businesses too. In 2024-25, we will be reopening Paisley Arts Centre, where audiences can get up close to the action, and we will begin the

concluding phases of Paisley Museum Reimagined, currently Scotland’s most significant cultural heritage project.

As part of OneRen’s programming, in 2024-25 we will welcome back Paisley Book Festival in its 5th edition, and we will also welcome the introduction of Paisley Comedy Festival and Paisley Arts Festival. Our programming strategy is designed to attract audiences to a year-round strand of shows and events which will attract significant numbers of locals and visitors, helping to boost the local economy and build pride in Paisley and Renfrewshire.

St James playing fields redevelopment is also underway, as is the conclusion of Ferguslie Sports Centre renewal. Further developments are also expected at the On-X site with the planned resurfacing of the On-X running track and hockey pitch. This year, Renfrewshire’s Sports Strategy is due for review and we will work alongside our partners Renfrewshire Council and sportscotland as well as the numerous club and community stakeholders who participate in hundreds of sport and activity sessions each week. Their commitment to grass-roots participation will be a key driver in the reviewed strategy.

Elsewhere, we are seeing activity numbers increase with more evening and weekend performances being booked into the wonderful theatre space at Johnstone Town Hall, exceeding pre-pandemic booking levels. From April 2024, a funded, pilot programme will offer more daytime activity including free-to-access creative sessions and tea dances, informed by community and partner needs to complement the library’s activity programme.



This year, we will activate the strategic partnership recently signed with the University of the West of Scotland. This will help to unlock opportunity across the communities we serve. Both organisations are committed to tackling inequality and improving health and wellbeing through improved access to learning opportunities and employment pathways. It's also a hugely exciting time to come together, not least as we count down the days until Paisley Museum reopens, bringing with it a wealth of engagement, learning and research opportunities.

More innovative partnership work has enabled us to secure a major grant of £100,000 from the Esmée Fairbairn Collection Fund. The funding will allow us to further strengthen our partnership with communities who are genuinely shaping every aspect of the museum service, from the objects we collect and display to the programmes and spaces we provide. This 3-year funding will specifically build on previous activity with organisations Paisley Museum has worked with to provide a voice and support for Scotland's African diaspora: Jambo Radio – Scotland's only radio station for people of African and Caribbean heritage – and Pachedu, a charity which promotes diversity and dignity for diverse communities. Focusing particularly on the experiences of children and young people, the work will continue to provide positive narratives that challenge some of the often-stigmatising perceptions of the African continent.

OneRen staff have been partnering with teachers and learning providers from across Renfrewshire to co-produce new learning experiences; to better understand the needs of learners and embed the museum in curriculum provision from an early age; and inspire the next generation to develop a passion for culture through Renfrewshire's incredible collection, working with them to design a learning programme that will make a significant difference to our young people. As a result, the Capital Appeal team were able to secure a £200,000 donation

from the Clore Duffield Foundation to the museum project to support children and young people in a dedicated learning space. This is only the second time in its history that the Foundation has chosen to support a Clore Learning Space in Scotland, the other being at the National Galleries of Scotland. This year we will continue to progress the programme design with input from every primary school in Renfrewshire as well as Riverbrae and Mary Russell ASN schools and some secondaries.

The Paisley Museum project team is working with Children North East on Poverty Proofing to drill down on access for some of our most excluded communities. The mission of Poverty Proofing Arts and Cultural organisations is to ensure that "no activity or planned activity in any cultural organisation should identify, exclude, treat differently or make assumptions about those children whose household income or resources are lower than others". The key principles are to focus on Voice (hearing from people affected by poverty), Place (recognizing the context of community & place) and Structural inequalities (identifying structural changes we can make at an organizational level). The work aims to ensure that staff have an understanding and an empathy for families suffering the effects of poverty, and that staff start to understand and unpick the impact poverty may have on the accessibility of our work.

Our Promise Keepers continue to support developments within OneRen to deliver on The Promise, including adapting recruitment processes and working with the Renfrewshire Language Policy around display interpretation for the Paisley Museum Re-Imagined Project. This year, we plan to continue to advocate for care experienced people through further changes to HR processes, as well as evolving our public programme to provide more support for care experienced young people in Renfrewshire.



The strategic focus for 2024–25 will continue to see OneRen evolve and change, driven by our commitment to deliver effectively for the people of Renfrewshire. That will be driven forward in the following key areas:

Support Renfrewshire's priorities for children and young people

We will continue to support the work of Renfrewshire's Strategic Children's Partnership Plan and the priorities for children and young people within the Fairer Renfrewshire strategy as well as developing our role as Promise Keepers.

Ongoing organisational development, supported by enhanced data

We will continue to focus on evolving our organisational development in line with internal operational and external socio-economic contexts, supported by enhanced data for decision making.

Increase participation opportunities through an integrated approach to programming

We will increase participation opportunities for locals and visitors by taking an integrated approach to programming across the region, making effective use of resources. We will continue to develop our cultural programme as we welcome back Paisley Arts Centre and expand our portfolio of festivals.

Strengthen our communications framework and brand profiles

We will undertake a review of our internal communications recognising the breadth and variety of our workforce; we will continue to build strong brand profiles for OneRen and our key venues; and we will continue to grow the profile for Paisley and Renfrewshire's cultural regeneration.

Strengthen income generation to ensure service running costs are covered

We will continue to strengthen our income generation to ensure we cover our full operating costs. We will continually benchmark our performance, and pricing strategy, to ensure we provide services that deliver best value for our communities.

Provide quality visitor experience and consistent audience profiles

We will focus on providing a consistent quality of visitor experience, understanding the customer journeys taking place across all areas of the business in person and digitally, working to clear audience profiles.





Explore our town.

#WeAreOneRen

Business Strategy

Our 5-year business strategy is our roadmap and reflects the goals of key stakeholders including Council and Community Planning Partnership objectives

Our Vision

Everyone locally living lives that are healthy, happy, and fulfilled.

Our Mission

To improve our community's health and wellbeing by working in partnership to design and deliver a range of life-enhancing and accessible cultural, leisure and sporting opportunities that meet local needs and improve life chances across the population.

Our Values

Integrity

We value honesty and high ethical standards in how we work within and outwith our organisation; we are passionate in our determination to always do the right thing.

Excellence

We will work collaboratively in pursuit of our community's shared goals; in everything we do, we aim to deliver a quality experience and actively champion high standards.

Creativity

We are innovative and flexible in responding to local needs; in meeting challenges, we are creative thinkers, with a consistent focus on outcomes.

Fairness

We focus on inclusion to ensure we deliver for everyone across our community; we are caring and kind to each other and in the way we support the community.





Strategic Objectives:

A healthy community

We aim to help everyone lead healthier, happier and more fulfilled lives. We want to play an active role in improving health and well-being outcomes, addressing inequalities and improving life chances amongst the people of Renfrewshire. We will work collaboratively to deploy a range of interventions to tackle poor mental and physical health in our community.

A great place to live, play and visit

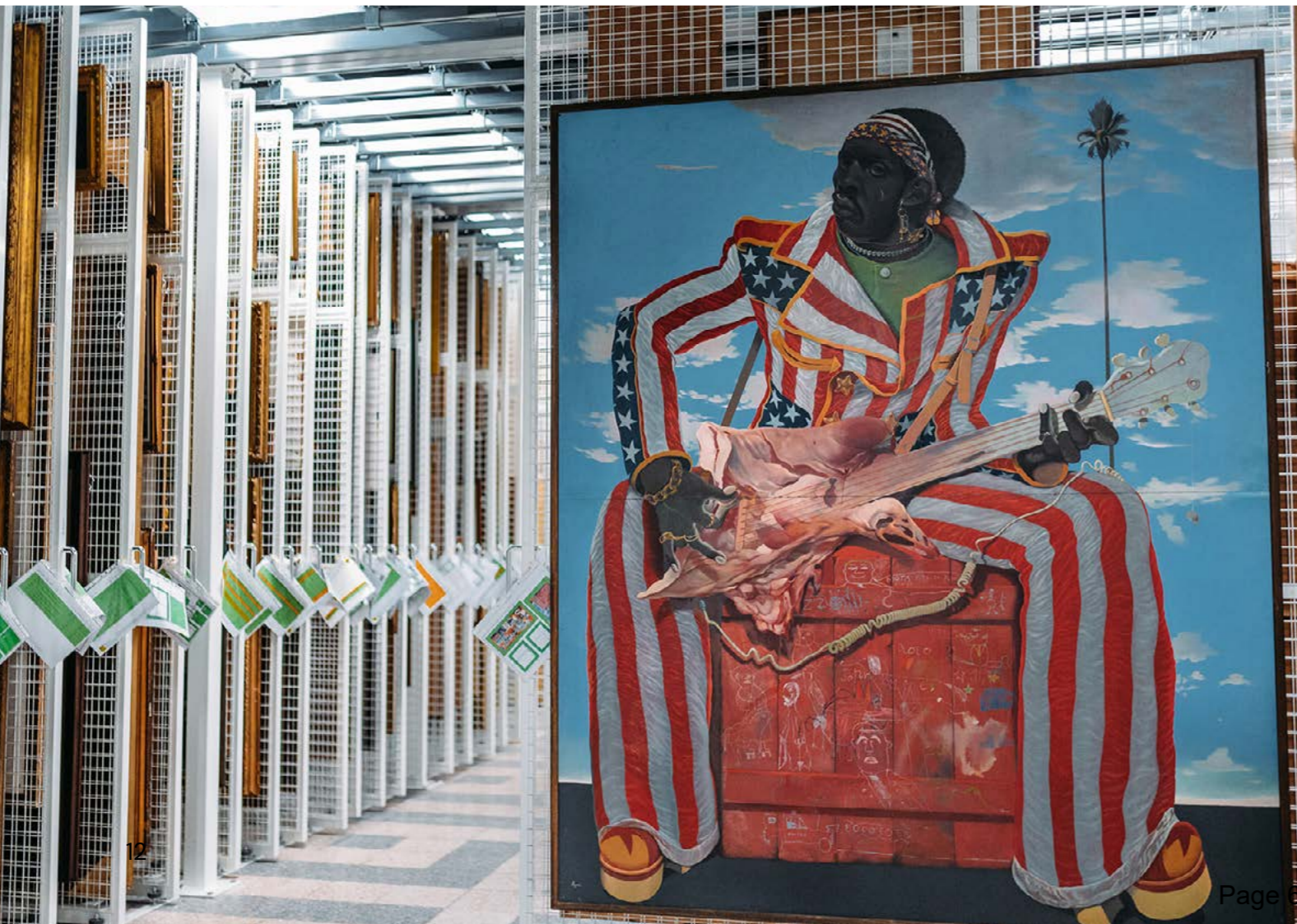
We aim to keep building a positive reputation for Renfrewshire as a place for a wide range of exceptional leisure and cultural experiences. We want a growing recognition for our regional leisure opportunities, rich local heritage and diverse cultural programme. We will help provide a high profile platform for local economic and civic opportunities.

A sustainable local economy

We aim to play a positive role in developing the local Renfrewshire economy. We want to create opportunities for high quality and sustainable jobs as well as build wider local employability through providing positive development pathways. We will contribute to the local partnership effort to build inclusive economic growth that benefits everyone.

A high-performing, sustainable charity

We aim to build a sustainable business founded on fairness, providing flexible services which enable everyone locally to live lives which are healthy, happy and fulfilled. We want to build on our charitable credentials, allowing diverse funding streams to be used to challenge inequality. We will provide modern services based on deep rooted values.



Try
something
new.

#WeAreOneRen

National Policy Context

Public services in Scotland continue to operate in a challenging environment, never more so than with the devastating impacts on communities caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Prior to Covid-19, the dominant trend was one of increasing demand with diminishing resources over the past decade with leisure and culture sectors seeing significant reductions in funding nationally.

OneRen's remit touches on a wide variety of national and local policy contexts. These include:

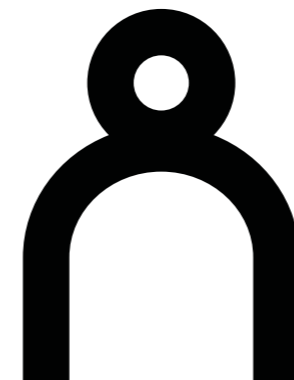
- National Performance Framework
- Public health, wellbeing and sport
- Active Scotland Outcomes Framework
- Tourism, events and destination marketing
- Cultural
- Heritage
- Learning
- Communities
- Equalities

Each of these contexts are influenced by some, or all, of the following key policy drivers:

- A focus on outcomes and prevention
- Co-design of services with people using or affected by these services
- Increased efficiency, coordination and integration
- Partnership across sectors
- Increased and improved access to services
- Growing a digital capability
- Audience development

The main challenges influencing these drivers are:

- Demographic shifts including an ageing population
- Increasing social care and health demands
- Funding pressures
- Poverty and inequality
- Improving public sector outcomes and transformation
- Enabling sustainable economic growth
- Economic and political issues linked to Brexit and Covid-19





Renfrewshire Strategic Context

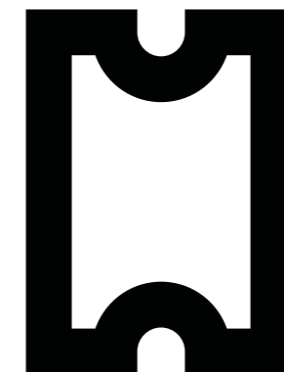
OneRen's objectives are aligned to Community Planning Partnership and Council outcomes to ensure that, through the contract for services we have with the council and as a community planning partner, we demonstrate how we deliver for both residents and visitors to Renfrewshire. In particular, as a community planning partner, we have sought to acknowledge the partnership's current priorities to support low-income families, tackle inequalities, and address the climate emergency, which will influence the design of our programmes and services. working collaboratively in a financially challenging environment.

Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership published a 10-year plan (2017-27, refreshed 2023) with four community plan themes:

- **Our Renfrewshire is thriving:** maximising economic growth that is inclusive and sustainable.
- **Our Renfrewshire is well:** supporting the wellness and resilience of our citizens and communities.
- **Our Renfrewshire is fair:** addressing the inequalities that limit life chances.
- **Our Renfrewshire is safe:** protecting vulnerable people, and working together to manage the risk of harm.

The Council's plan (2023-28) outlines five strategic outcomes:

- **Place:** working together to enhance wellbeing across communities
- **Economy:** building an inclusive, green and resilient economy
- **Fair:** nurturing bright, happy and healthy futures for all
- **Green:** leading Renfrewshire to Net Zero
- **Living our values:** making a difference together





Discover
secret
treasures.

#WeAreOneRen

Activity Plan 2024–25

A Sustainable, High Performing Charity

We are financially sustainable and make effective use of resources:

- We work to full cost recovery and optimise income generating opportunities.
- We will work to an integrated programming strategy.
- We will progress our digital and technology investment programme.
- We continue to act to reduce our impact on the climate.

We have a clear, consistent people strategy:

- We will continue to develop our staff to deliver excellent customer service.
- We will encourage workforce agility and promote a culture of supportive cooperation.
- We will update recruitment processes and pathways designed for service and community needs.

We have effective, consistent, and transparent governance:

- We will continue to review and update governance arrangements.
- We will review decision making forums across the organisation.
- We will develop a strategy for internal and external communication.

We will evolve the organisation to align with operational contexts:

- We will centralise data sets to inform targets and business decisions.
- We will work to a consistent set of audience profiles.
- We will continue with organisational development.



A Healthy Community

We communicate how we can support whole person wellbeing:

- We clearly communicate how we support physical, mental and emotional health.
- We research and utilise co-production methodologies to ensure services are user-designed.
- We focus on creating an environment across services to support children and young people.
- We will develop a clear EDI framework and policies informing our practice.

We deliver targeted interventions:

- We will continue to contribute to Renfrewshire Strategic Children's Partnership and whole family wellbeing
- We will continue to contribute to Fairer Renfrewshire
- We will continue to contribute to Local Employability Partnership
- We will continue to contribute to The Promise
- We will ensure we undertake research to provide the evidence base for all targeted interventions.

We build effective partner engagement:

- We will review our strategic partnerships for effective mutual benefit.
- We will communicate the breadth of what we do to enhance what we deliver in partnership with other services.
- We will build effective partnerships and interventions that are tailored to audience or user needs.
- We will develop our new strategic partnership with UWS.



A Great Place to Live, Play and Visit

We have a strong and confident business profile:

- We are clear about our charity status, USP and community benefits.
- We will continue to build brand identity and awareness for OneRen and individual venues.
- We will review our products to align with our strategic objectives.
- We clearly market and communicate our offer and products.

We support local talent and sector ecologies:

- We build beneficial corporate and community partnerships.
- We support local artistic talent and pathways.
- We support local literary talent and pathways.
- We support local sporting talent and pathways.
- We provide a range of volunteering and placement opportunities.

We build local pride and national and international visitor markets:

- We will work to a consistent set of audience profiles.
- We will leverage the cultural proposition for Paisley as a visitor destination.
- We will develop a calendar of organisational events and priorities.
- We will create and adopt a pan-OneRen Visitor Experience strategy.
- We communicate our achievements to relevant markets.

We make effective use of our products and assets:

- We will implement expanded sharing practices across teams, facilities and equipment, including mixed programming in different venues.
- We will take a collective approach to external funding across all teams.
- We will develop our retail strategy.
- We will continue to develop our commercial programming.



A Sustainable, Local Economy

We provide skills development and lifelong learning:

- We provide literacy and digital skills development opportunities.
- We provide an integrated offer of both school based learning and public programmes.
- We have clear volunteer and placement policies and action plan.
- We provide coaching, and vocational skills that promote personal self-confidence and other life skills.

We are a proud local employer:

- We provide positive employment pathways linking to local schools, colleges and UWS.
- We celebrate success and recognise staff achievements in delivering excellence.
- We support staff and volunteers to have the right opportunities and training to grow and aspire in their careers.

We support local businesses and sector development:

- We create an environment to support a local supply chain as far as possible.
- We work to attract and retain creative, sports and events activity.
- We leverage the cultural proposition for Paisley as a visitor destination.

We support people with their productivity:

- We help people support their whole person wellbeing.
- We will continue to lead on Renfrewshire's cultural and sports strategies and conduct a formal review of both.
- We will continue to contribute to Renfrewshire's Strategic Children's Partnership strategy.
- We provide volunteering and placements.

For more information
visit www.oneren.org





Start
your
future.

#WeAreOneRen

Annual Business Plan

Financial Arrangements

OneRen sets an annual budget based on the estimated resources it has available to meet its contractual obligations under the service agreement. Over the last few years, OneRen has absorbed significant increases in cost pressures relating to energy supplies, pool chemicals, insurance and general supplies which has added over £1million of costs to the charity.

Balancing increased community need with inflationary and budget pressures faced by all public sector organisations remains OneRen's primary task. The business model requires OneRen to earn around 45% of its total operating costs which it achieves largely through the leisure operations. With the reopening of two key cultural venues in 2023/24,

the focus is very much on establishing the new operating model to grow income and attendance levels in these venues.

In the short to medium term, OneRen will potentially need to manage ongoing cost and pay pressures, alongside suppressed income streams, whilst the cost-of-living crisis continues to affect customers, our local communities and our employees.

In this context, a range of assumptions were built into OneRen's financial strategy for 2024/25. The service payment for 2024-25 has been budgeted at £13,406,600. The assumptions in the financial strategy will be regularly reviewed and revised on a quarterly basis to reflect any further changes in the operating environment.

Governance Arrangements

OneRen has eleven company directors with a wealth of experience in business, community, cultural, leisure and sports activities. The Board comprises of six independently appointed directors, two staff directors and three appointments by Renfrewshire Council. The Head of Policy and Partnerships and Head of Finance and Procurement have also been appointed as Council observers to the Board.

The Head of Policy and Partnerships is the Council's nominated monitoring officer for OneRen. The monitoring officer holds regular meetings with officers from OneRen on a quarterly basis to review the performance report in order to authorise payment of the service fee. An update on the progress of OneRen's Business Plan is provided to the Leadership Board on a six-monthly basis.

Appendix

Financial Context

OneRen spends around £23 million each year to provide culture, leisure and sport services across Renfrewshire. The activities, services and facilities which we operate are funded by a service payment, customer charges, sales, grant income and charitable donations. Any surpluses generated from our activities are reinvested in our services and activities for the benefit of the local community.

Over the last few years, OneRen has been operating in extremely difficult economic conditions with exceptional energy costs and rising supply cost and pay pressures which have added over £1 million of costs to the charity. The operating environment remains challenging, due to geo-political unrest and resultant energy crisis and supply shortages, public sector funding constraints, pay pressures and recruitment challenges, cost of living increases and pressure on disposal income.

In this context, a range of assumptions have been built into OneRen's financial

strategy for 2024/25. The assumptions will be regularly reviewed and revised on a quarterly basis to reflect any further changes in the operating environment. Financial modelling of the assumptions was conducted alongside development of the business model for the four cultural infrastructure projects which are in varying stages of completion, handover and operation.

Initial financial modelling of estimated income and expenditure and service payment levels in 2024/25 identified a gap in the region of £0.7million. However, this is before considering changes in employer pension fund rates over the next three years which will provide a temporary benefit in 2024/25; this will give a cushion for OneRen to develop and explore detailed options to address the position in the medium term and allow the charity to increase reserves in line with audit recommendations and OSCR guidelines to remaining financially sustainable.

Fees and charges in 2024/25

Over the last few years, the cost of running our facilities and swimming pools has increased significantly, due to exceptional energy prices and increases in supply costs. With inflation having reached over 10% last year, we are unable to absorb the exceptional increase in our cost base and fees and charges for services will have to increase from April 2024. A minimum 5% price increase is built into the financial strategy, with some increases of up to 10% based on benchmarking with neighbouring areas and competitors in the local market, with a further review to be conducted and implemented during the year to ensure consistency and fairness in pricing across all services.

We are working hard to continue to provide our services at as an affordable price as possible and we operate a concession policy which gives a 30%

reduction in pricing for concession access and 50% reduction for youths. Charges for commercial entities and for those delivering commercial activities will be considered within the pricing review. Throughout the year, OneRen also operates a range of promotional offers and discounts for customers to access our services and activities.

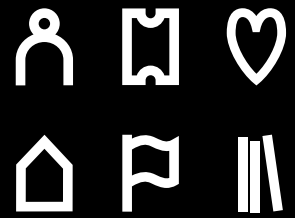
Each service manager will produce a full set of charges for all admission, hires and services for their service area and have the flexibility to negotiate an increased service/hire charge from commercial lets based on an assessment of the market and anticipated income generated from the hire. For social/community benefit hire, managers have the discretion to reduce charges subject to the hire meeting OneRen's priorities and social aims and based on a minimum of full cost recovery.



Budget for 2024/25

| | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Budget Heading | Actual £000 | Budget £000 | Budget £000 |
| Fees & Sales | -5,980,149 | -7,037,074 | -6,806,248 |
| Grants & Donations | -595,058 | -948,706 | -639,647 |
| Memberships | -1,921,731 | -2,280,472 | -2,348,867 |
| Other income | -1,528 | 0 | 0 |
| Service Level Agreement | -12,608,000 | -12,625,600 | -13,406,600 |
| Income | -21,106,466 | -22,891,852 | -23,201,361 |
| | | | |
| Employee costs | 14,644,939 | 14,878,585 | 14,250,553 |
| Supplies and services | 2,672,208 | 3,020,801 | 2,860,991 |
| Transport costs | 49,921 | 37,539 | 41,856 |
| Support costs | 572,500 | 721,481 | 1,020,116 |
| Property & Estate Costs | 3,155,027 | 4,233,446 | 4,207,845 |
| Total Expenditure | 21,094,595 | 22,891,852 | 22,381,361 |
| | | | |
| Budgeted Transfer to reserves | | | 820,000 |
| (Surplus)/Deficit | -11,871 | 0 | 0 |

ONE
REN



For further information about
OneRen, please visit our
website at: oneren.org

You can contact us:

Lagoon Leisure Centre

11 Christie Street Paisley PA1 1NB

Telephone: 0141 618 6351

OneRen, a trading name of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited

Company limited by guarantee no: 490998

Registered Charity in Scotland: SCO33898

OneRen, a trading name of Renfrewshire Leisure Trading Limited

Company limited by guarantee no: 241310

VAT Registered Company: 210 0336 83

oneren.org

#WeAreOneRen





To: Leadership Board

On: 1 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Funding for Engage Renfrewshire 2024/25

1. Summary

- 1.1 This paper outlines proposals for the allocation of £360,610 of grant funding to Engage Renfrewshire for 2024/25. Together with annual core Scottish Government funding and wider income generation, this grant funding enables Engage Renfrewshire to provide a range of activities and supports across the area and to operate as Renfrewshire's third sector interface organisation.
- 1.2 The level of funding remains unchanged from previous funding allocations, and if approved would be supported by a grant agreement between Engage Renfrewshire and the Council, subject to ongoing monitoring. The agreement has historically set out the key priorities and activities to be delivered by Engage Renfrewshire in respect of the grant funding, however this remains flexible to ensure that both organisations can continue to work together to respond to emerging issues. For example, in recent years this has been demonstrated as local partners navigated COVID and the current and ongoing cost of living crisis.
- 1.3 Information is provided in Section 4 in relation to the activities delivered by Engage Renfrewshire in 23/24 in relation to the grant funding allocated, whilst section 5 highlights the priorities that will be progressed during 24/25 subject to approval of the grant funding.

- 1.4 As elected members will be aware, the Council is progressing its Connected Communities programme which is being led by the Head of Policy and Partnerships. As part of this, work is being undertaken to map existing mechanisms and resources for developing community capacity in Renfrewshire, with the funding for Engage Renfrewshire included within the scope of this review.
- 1.5 Officials from Engage Renfrewshire have worked very proactively with officers during 2023 to provide detailed information on the activities undertaken by the organisation. This is being used to inform more detailed design work being progressed to develop the Connected Communities model. It is anticipated that further updates will be provided to elected members on these proposals and future funding proposals during Autumn 2024.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that elected members:
- approves grant funding of £360,610 to Engage Renfrewshire to deliver the priorities outlined in section 5 of this report.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 Engage Renfrewshire is the designated Third Sector Interface (TSI) for the Renfrewshire Council area. Engage provides services to support the operation and growth of community and voluntary sector organisations (also known as the third sector), including Social Enterprises, within the area. The organisation:
- supports social enterprises, community development trusts, charitable groups, mutual aid groups and more.
 - helps groups to build capacity and to be safe, by providing information, advice and training for everything from charitable structures to funding.
 - support volunteer involving organisations with recruitment and volunteer support, and work with individuals to find them rewarding and uplifting volunteer opportunities. They also work with local charities and public sector bodies to promote volunteering for all.
- 3.2 Engage Renfrewshire is funded to provide support to local community and voluntary sector organisations by the Scottish Government, and to deliver against the TSIs outcome framework for Scotland.

- 3.3 Engage Renfrewshire is based in the Engage Hub in Ferguslie Park, and a number of local organisations from both the third and public sector are tenants within the Hub. Membership of Engage Renfrewshire is free to organisations and individuals.
- 3.4 Engage also generates its own income through trading, through the provision of financial and payroll services to individuals, organisations and voluntary groups.
-

4. Key activities delivered during in 2023/24

- 4.1 In April 2023, Leadership Board approved the allocation of £360,610 in grant funding to Engage Renfrewshire for 23/24 and a grant support agreement was subsequently put into place to deliver a number of identified and agreed priorities. Progress against this programme of work has been regularly monitored by officers with key activities including:
- Building capacity within the community and voluntary sector by supporting members to access development, support and funding. Engage membership continues to grow and Engage now has a membership of 448.
 - Co-ordinating the Renfrewshire Social Enterprise network, enabling its 114 members to access specialist support to develop their organisations. Engage have helped RenSEN members secure an additional £152,000 of investment and seen £57,000 in cash grants allocated.
 - Collaborating with Renfrewshire Council's procurement team to pilot a new approach to the Community Benefits menu, with a focus on raising the importance of community engagement at a pre-tender stage
 - Supporting and promoting various local funding initiatives including Multiply, the Winter Connections programme, Culture Arts and Health Social Care and Cultural Heritage and Event Funding. In particular over 2023/24, Engage played a key role in supporting the design of community funding approaches as well as assisting with partnership decision making.
 - Managing and distributing over £0.5m of funding from the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund - the overarching aim of the Fund is to support community-based initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing and/or mitigate and protect against the impact of distress and mental ill health within the adult population. Engage are now working alongside the HSCP to deliver the Renfrewshire Community Wellbeing Network.

- Supporting the Community Planning Partnership, including chairing the Forum for Empowering Communities, connecting Renfrewshire's third sector to the wider Community Planning agenda and supporting other partnership groups and activities relating to children and young people, employability, connectedness and mental health and wellbeing
- Childrens Services Partnership development, providing insight and voice of third sector and also facilitating the Our Children Network
- Representatives on all Local Partnerships, and in particular supporting a partnership approach to identifying appropriate community funding sources
- Supporting local volunteering activity, promoting Volunteers Week and co-ordinating Saltire Awards across Renfrewshire. There are 1,483 potential volunteers registered on Team Kinetic system, receiving updates from 121 provides on volunteer opportunities.
- Continuing to lead the Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance, and supporting third sector organisations to support people around affordable credit options. Initially funded by Renfrewshire Council, Engage successfully secured external funding to continue this work and moving forward there will be increased focus on illegal money lending prevention, while promoting the affordable borrowing options.
- Establishing and growing the Renfrewshire Integration Network (IN-Ren) and supporting wider community integration of New Scots in Renfrewshire. The N-Ren training programme attracted 226 attendees to sessions across the year.

4.2 Further information on Engage Renfrewshire's full range of services and activities for 2022-23 can be found within their Annual Report ¹ published on their website.

5. Grant funding for 2024/25

5.1 As outlined in Section 1, officers recommend that funding of £360,610 is allocated to Engage Renfrewshire for 2024/25. This would support the organisation to continue to operate in Renfrewshire, and deliver the following key strategic priorities in partnership with the Council

- Building Renfrewshire's community and voluntary sector capacity
- Representing the third sector in the delivery of our Community Plan and its strategic priorities
- Providing the strategic and operational lead for volunteering in Renfrewshire

¹ [engage-annual-report-2023.pdf \(engagerenfrewshire.org\)](#)

- 5.2 A refreshed outcomes framework has been developed to support this funding arrangement if approved. As outlined in Section 1, this remains flexible in order that support can be requested by the Council and community planning partnership in relation to emerging priorities. Particular strategic priorities for 2024/25 include supporting emerging programmes of work in relation to Fairer Renfrewshire, Climate emergency, Digital, Equalities, Migration, Asylum/New Scots and Community Learning and Development.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 sets out a one-page summary of Engage Renfrewshire's Business Plan for 2024/25, which will be used to inform monitoring of performance during 2024/25, alongside the Grant Support Agreement.
- 5.4 Engage Renfrewshire will continue to submit a quarterly performance monitoring report to officers in Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive's Service for review and agreement.
-

6. Connected Communities programme

- 6.1 When considering funding arrangements for 23/24, elected members were asked to note that work has commenced to formally review the funding arrangement with Engage Renfrewshire going forward, linked to the Connected Communities programme led by the Head of Policy and Partnerships.
- 6.2 Throughout 23/24, officers have worked alongside Engage Renfrewshire to review the current funding model. Several areas have been identified where there may be further alignment and efficiencies which will be explored as the Council develops and implements its new model. These include:
- reviewing how we support community and voluntary organisations to build their capacity more broadly, including the balance of tasks carried out by various Council services as well as partners such as Engage,
 - reviewing the Council's strategy and resources related to both its own investment in communities, but the effectiveness and opportunities in leveraging in additional external investment to support the voluntary and community sector,
 - the potential role of the third sector interface in the transition to greater locality-based working, particularly the support to Local Partnerships and support and resourcing of the Local Action Plans to be developed throughout 2024,
 - how the Council supports social enterprise, and connection to wider economic development activity
 - where Engage provides direct support to the deliver of key Council services, such as the support offered in co-ordinating the distribution of community benefits

- 6.3 Engage have proactively supported the initial phase of work by providing all additional information requested. As we move into the detailed design phase of the programme it is anticipated that further updates will be provided to Leadership Board by Autumn 2024, including recommendations in relation to funding for external organisations to support the programme.
- 6.4 Officers will continue to work very closely with the Chief Executive of Engage Renfrewshire to continue to develop and strengthen this relationship as the review progresses and proposals are brought forward for consideration by elected members.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – commitment of £360,610 in grant funding to Engage Renfrewshire which can be met from the Chief Executive’s Service budget for 24/25.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – funding for the Third Sector Interface supports the third sector contribution to all priorities detailed within both the Council and Community Plans.
4. **Legal** – None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. Supporting the Third Sector Interface would have a positive impact on equalities outcomes, by developing and engaging a range of diverse voices in the community planning process and supporting the development of equalities-led third sector organisations.
8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** - None
10. **Risk** – Funding the Third Sector Interface mitigates risk of community and voluntary sector organisations not being able to contribute to community planning outcomes.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None

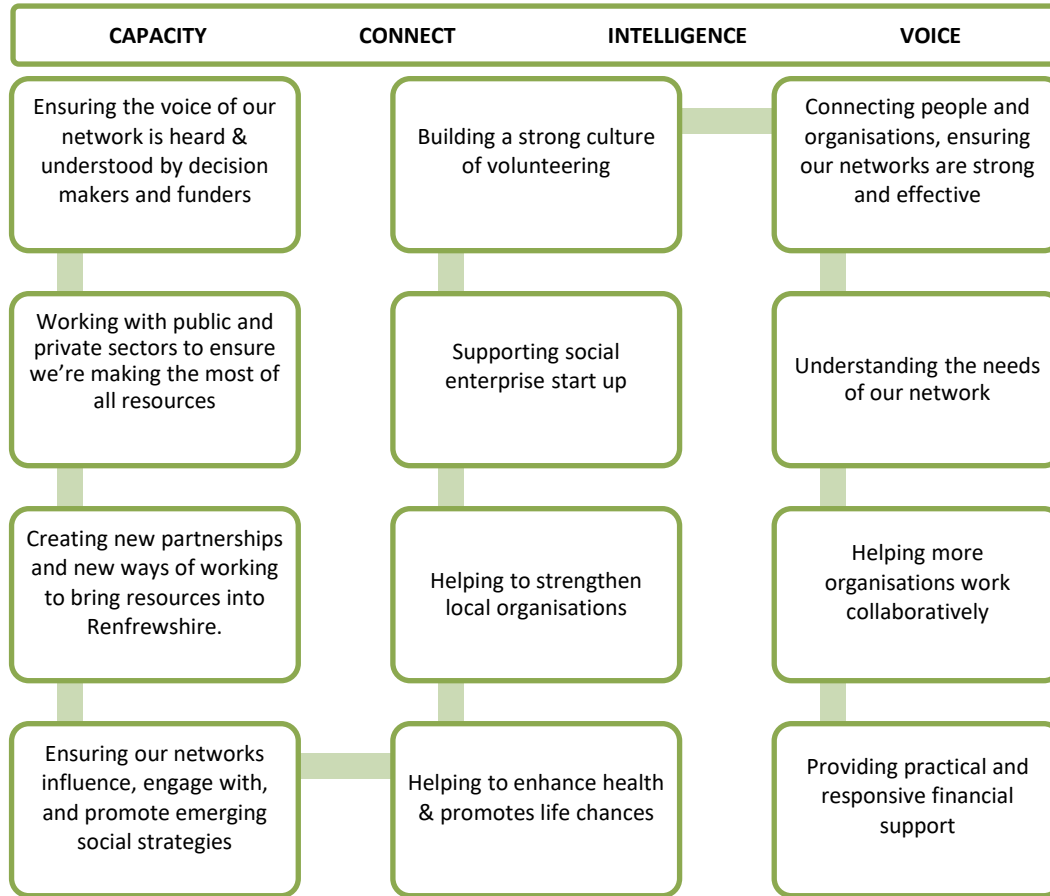
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – Cosla supports the principle of community planning as a means of improving outcomes and reducing inequalities and the importance of Third Sector Interfaces in delivering this.
13. **Climate implications** - no direct implications, however Engage have supported all partnership work in this area and encouraged active participation across the sector.

List of Background Papers - None

Author: Annabelle Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnerships and Inequalities Manager, annabelle.armstrong-walter@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Engage Renfrewshire – Business Plan 2024/25

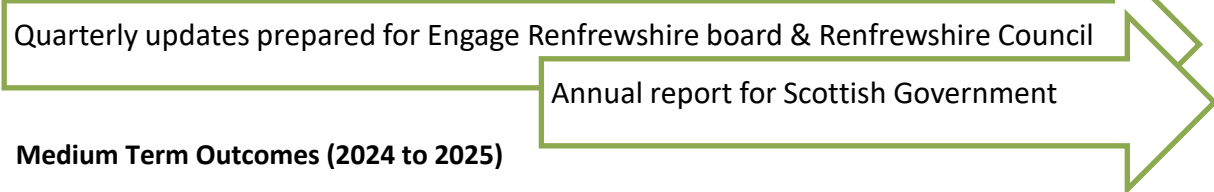
Our aim is to help charities and community groups to be well managed, well resourced, well represented and well connected.



During 2024/25 we will:

- Support Scottish Government, Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership and Renfrewshire's communities
- Support cross sector partnership work (CLD, Drugs & Alcohol, Whole Family Wellbeing etc)
- Align ourselves to key strategies including the Social Enterprise Action Plan and the Volunteering Action Plan, ensuring the strength of the sector's role in supporting recovery
- Deliver on agreements associated with the Community Mental Health & Wellbeing fund
- Support high standards of volunteer recruitment and management within our membership while promoting volunteering as part the employability pipeline
- Promote social enterprise as a viable business model through workshops and training programmes
- Assist partners to increase and develop their awareness and understanding of the local third sector
- Promote Engage Financial Services to all members and partners
- Arrange and facilitate area based initiatives in support of developing community assets
- Support the delivery of the IN-Ren Network and support equality
- Support external funding applications being submitted by members
- Provide advice and support in response to humanitarian crises as they arise
- Survey the impact of volunteering
- Promote digital as a platform for engagement and use digital communications to promote the work of the Third Sector
- Deliver a training timetable reflective of the needs of our members
- Support promotions and engagement sessions around access to fair and affordable forms of credit
- Work well with the private sector through engagement with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
- Promote financial governance as a key responsibility for local organisations and local trustees
- Develop a response to the National Health & Wellbeing Survey

Schedule of Monitoring



Medium Term Outcomes (2024 to 2025)





To: Leadership Board

On: 1 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Migration and Asylum Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 This paper provides an overview of recent developments in relation to migration and asylum provision in Renfrewshire, including specific updates in relation to support for Ukrainian Displaced Persons.
 - 1.2 Section 5 of the paper provides a more detailed update in relation to the asylum dispersal programme in Renfrewshire, and specifically in relation to the streamlined asylum process which is being implemented by the Home Office. Officers have been working over the winter period to manage the impact of associated additional pressures on housing and homelessness services, which continue to experience ongoing escalation of demand. A detailed report in relation to the work being undertaken will be reported to the Communities and Housing Board on 21 May 2024.
 - 1.3 Services and partners continue to work closely to respond to emerging policy developments in relation to migration and asylum activities, and have increased the frequency and membership of the Strategic Migration Group chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer in light of the ongoing complexity of the issues being progressed collectively.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Leadership Board:
 - note the contents of this report

- note the actions progressed by services and partners in terms of wider demands on public services, with additional resources allocated as highlighted in section 5.10 of this report

3. Background

- 3.1 In December 2023, the Leadership Board considered a report summarising the various pressures being experienced by services and partners as a result of a number of significant developments emerging in relation to migration, asylum and refugee resettlement activities at a Scottish and UK level.
- 3.2 It was noted within this report that Renfrewshire has a strong track record in terms of supporting people who come to live and settle in the area through different humanitarian programmes or resettlement routes, and that services and partners have worked very closely in recent years to develop the skills, experience and supports required in response.
- 3.3 The level of change experienced over the past 18-24 months in terms of migration and asylum related activities has been unprecedented, particularly in relation to the impact of the Ukraine humanitarian resettlement programme, the widening of asylum dispersal across the UK and increasing pressures in relation to unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people.
- 3.4 This paper highlighted a number of areas of resource pressure for the Council which had been identified in relation to asylum dispersal, particular in relation to the provision of temporary accommodation and housing support services linked to increased presentations from asylum seekers receiving positive decisions on their asylum status whilst staying in Renfrewshire, and potentially as a result of overflowing demand arising from asylum dispersal in Glasgow.
- 3.5 This paper provides an update for members on the issues raised in the December 2023 paper, and also highlights emerging issues for consideration.

4. Support for Ukrainian Displaced Persons (UDPs)

- 4.1 The Council, HSCP and partners have played a key role in national efforts to support Ukrainian people who arrived in Scotland and into Renfrewshire over the last 2 years. A core element of our role has been to support the establishment and ongoing operation of a Welcome Hub linked to Glasgow Airport.

- 4.2 As of 31 March 2024, there were 28 individuals staying in Welcome Hub hotel accommodation from a high of over 400 in Autumn / Winter 2022. The reducing number of arrivals has allowed the Resettlement Team to scale back operations at the Hub in order to direct support towards those Ukrainian households who have moved on to live in the community here in Renfrewshire, and a range of 'integration' events.
- 4.3 Housing Support Officers also provide resettlement support to a significant number of Ukrainian Displaced Persons living across Renfrewshire's communities. As of 31 March 2024, 180 social rented tenancies have been provided to UDPs by the Council and Registered Social Landlords, and 13 UDP households have been supported to move on to private rented sector accommodation. 448 Ukrainian Displaced Persons are being supported across Renfrewshire.
- 4.4. On 19 February 2024, the Home Office announced that existing Ukraine scheme visa holders will be able to apply to remain in the UK for an additional 18 months under a new Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme set to open in early 2025 (before the first UKR scheme visas start to expire in March 2025).
- 4.5 On this date changes to the Immigration Rules for applications were also laid. These changes mean that people submitting Homes for Ukraine visa applications after this time will be granted 18 months permission rather than 36 months. New sponsors of Homes for Ukraine applications must be either British or Irish citizens or have indefinite leave to remain (ILR) in the UK and commit to a minimum 6-month sponsorship period. In addition, the Ukraine Family Scheme was closed to new applications.
- 4.6 Sponsors of Ukrainian Displaced Persons who arrive under the Homes for Ukraine scheme will continue to be eligible for Thank You payments for the duration of their guest's Homes for Ukraine visa permission. This will be up to three years for sponsors of guests on a three-year Homes for Ukraine visa, at £350 per month in Year 1, and £500 per month for years 2 and 3. This also applies to sponsors of Eligible Minors. This payment is tax free and does not affect the sponsor's entitlement to benefits or their council tax status.
- 4.7 For those UDPs on an 18-month Homes for Ukraine visa (i.e. applications made from 19 February 2024), sponsors will be eligible to receive £350 per month in Year 1, and £500 for months 13-18. This also applies to sponsors of Eligible Minors.
- 4.8 Councils will continue to receive £5,900 of one-off funding per new arrival under the Homes for Ukraine scheme (including arrivals following visa changes on 19 February 2024).
-

5. Asylum Dispersal

- 5.1 In April 2022, the UK Government notified all UK local authorities of their intention to expand asylum dispersal arrangements across the UK, rather than through a number of agreed asylum dispersal areas such as Glasgow.
- 5.2 The Home Office's contractor, Mears, has to date identified only a small number of residential properties in Renfrewshire to support asylum dispersal, due to the current pressures being experienced in the local private sector housing market. However, two hotels have been utilised as contingency accommodation for asylum seekers in response to the large number of people awaiting asylum decisions across the UK – one in Paisley and one in Erskine.
- 5.3 In January 2024 the Council was advised that Mears/Home Office intended to cease use of the hotel in Erskine by end March 2024. All service users being supported in the hotel were subsequently moved to alternative accommodation across the national asylum estate by end March.
- 5.4 Approximately 70 service users are currently being supported within asylum contingency hotel accommodation in Paisley.
- 5.5 Within the update provided to Leadership Board in December 2023, officers highlighted emerging concerns in relation to the asylum dispersal process and the intention of the Home Office to accelerate the asylum decision making process over the Winter period. Through official data received in late 2023, it was estimated that up to 66 positive decisions could be provided to people being supported by Mears in Renfrewshire into early 2024, who may present to local homelessness and housing services over the festive and winter period requiring temporary accommodation.
- 5.6 A significant additional concern was the potential impact of the asylum dispersal process in Glasgow. Prior to Christmas, Glasgow City Council had declared a housing emergency due to ongoing accommodation pressures coupled with an additional 1400 positive decisions anticipated for asylum seekers living in Glasgow over the winter period.
- 5.7 At that time officers highlighted to members that the pressures in Glasgow could potentially generate an additional 200 housing applications in Renfrewshire over the 3 months to end February. A range of measures were put into place in order to respond effectively to additional demands on the service, as reported to the Communities and Housing Policy Board on 16 January 2024. These measures include:
- meeting increased targets in 2023/24 for letting Council houses to those who were homeless,

- ensuring RSL's played their part and increased the proportion of their lets to those who were homeless,
 - setting a further increased target for lets to homeless applicants in 2024/25
 - increasing the stock of temporary accommodation available
- 5.8 Whilst the winter period has been extremely challenging for homeless and housing support services in Renfrewshire due to a range of factors influencing the local and national increase in homelessness, the additional demand relating to the asylum dispersal process has not been at the level predicted.
- 5.9 The number of additional homeless applications per month from those who were part of the asylum dispersal process is in single figures. Though this alone will result in a 7% - 10% increase in the total annual number of homeless applications in Renfrewshire at a time when other factors such as the ongoing cost-of-living pressures and reduction in turnover are similarly adding pressures to the local social rented housing system.
- 5.10 Officers are continuing to work on local contingency arrangements, as there are likely to be further tranches of the accelerated asylum decision making process during 2024. Funding drawn together from across the various migration and asylum programmes has been utilised to provide additional capacity in terms of policy co-ordination, resettlement support and housing support provision, including the continued provision of support for private sector tenants which supports local housing and homeless services to manage homelessness presentations and requirements for housing support longer term.
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6. Afghan Resettlement Programmes

- 6.1 Elected members are asked to note that further national policy developments relating to the Afghan resettlement programmes are likely to have a future impact on resettlement locally. Officers have attended UK Government webinars in relation to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement scheme (ACRS) which is intended to support up to 20,000 people to settle in the UK.
- 6.2 As part of the development of these programmes, the UK Government have been consulting on a potential cap that could be introduced to guide the level of support that each local authority across the UK would provide to these schemes ie a specific number of people to be supported over an agreed time interval. COSLA prepared and submitted a response on behalf of Scottish local authorities, in its role as the Strategic Migration Authority.

- 6.3 The Council does not currently have an agreed position in relation to the Afghan resettlement scheme, and the number of people that could be supported in Renfrewshire through this. In terms of previous schemes that the Council has voluntarily participated in such as the Syrian resettlement programme, the Council committed to supporting “its fair share” of refugees as part of the national approach in Scotland rather than confirming a specific number. It is recommended that in terms of future requests made in relation to the Afghan scheme that this general commitment is adopted, as this will allow the Council to respond flexibly in light of local circumstances and pressures.
-

7. Next steps

- 7.1 As highlighted within the report, the pace and scale of change in relation to migration and asylum activities continues to develop, and it is essential that partners continue to regularly review and respond to local requirements as these are identified, particularly in light of the pressures being experienced in terms of local housing availability.
- 7.2 As highlighted above in this report, the Strategic Migration Group chaired by the Chief Social Work Officer has expanded its membership and increased its frequency of meetings to ensure local partners can continue to discuss and respond to emerging issues timeously.
- 7.3 A paper will be submitted to the Communities and Housing Policy Board on 21 May 2024 which will provide a detailed update on homelessness in Renfrewshire, related housing support pressures and the actions being progressed by officers and partners in response.
-

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the increasing demand on services has been largely managed within existing resources with some additional staffing being put into place through migration and asylum funding streams allocated to the Council by the UK and Scottish Government as highlighted at section 5 of the report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – Grant funding allocated by both the UK Government and Scottish Government for different schemes has been utilised to fund additional support staff as required.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Supporting New Scots to resettle in Renfrewshire is an important element of the Fairer Renfrewshire programme, and has been identified as a priority by members of the Fairer Renfrewshire lived experience panel.

4. **Legal** – relevant legal advice is sought from colleagues in relation to proposed policy changes and their impact on Renfrewshire.
 5. **Property/Assets** – none.
 6. **Information Technology** – none.
 7. **Equality and Human Rights** - the Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. The New Scots strategy supports a human rights based approach to the resettlement of people in local communities. These principles remain core to local discussions with partners in relation to proposed policy changes which may arise
 8. **Health and Safety** – none.
 9. **Procurement** – none.
 10. **Risk** – the paper notes potential risks in terms of increased pressure on local resources as a result of national policy changes around asylum dispersal, and particularly highlights increased financial risks which have been identified recently in relation to potentially significant pressures on housing and homeless services.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – none.
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** – regular updates on migration and asylum developments are considered through COSLA Leaders and policy boards.
 13. **Climate Risk** – none/
-

List of Background Papers: None

Author: Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Partnerships.



To: Leadership Board

On: 1st May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024 - 2029

1. Summary

- 1.1 A British Sign Language Plan has been developed to ensure that Renfrewshire Council can better meet the needs of BSL users. The actions cover a range of Council services, from improving BSL content on the website to encouraging BSL using parents on to Parent Councils.
 - 1.2 Renfrewshire Council are required by the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 to publish a BSL plan by 6th May 2024.
 - 1.3 The plan was developed in consultation with BSL users in Renfrewshire and is available in BSL and English.
 - 1.4 The plan has been developed in line with guidance produced by Scottish Government which requires local authorities to include specific actions from the national plan in local authority plans.
-

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that elected members:

- Approve the Renfrewshire Council BSL Plan attached at Appendix 1 for implementation.
 - Note the summary of feedback from Renfrewshire BSL users.
 - Agree that Renfrewshire BSL users continue to be involved in monitoring the implementation of the plan and adjust goals and activities according to local need when appropriate.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to raise awareness of BSL and improve access to services for those using the language by requiring the Scottish Government and listed local bodies to publish and implement their own plans for how they will promote the use of the language.
- 3.2 The Plan follows the BSL National Plan 2023-2029, published on 6 November 2023, which was developed through extensive engagement with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. The long-term goals of the national plan have been used to structure the Renfrewshire plan. Local Authorities are required to publish a BSL Plan by 6th May 2024.
- 3.3 The Scottish Government has produced a template for local authorities outlining the actions that must be included from the National Plan. It is then expected that local authorities develop additional actions specific to their area. The Act requires development of the plans to:
- Involve BSL users (including those who use the tactile form of the language) and those who represent them;
 - Ensure that the consultation on the draft plan is accessible to D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users; and
 - Be published in BSL as well as in English in both draft form, and in final form.
- 3.4 These requirements have guided the development of the Renfrewshire Council BSL plan and are assessed as being met.
- 3.5 Work has been undertaken with all Council services to recognise both areas of good practice, as well as areas for development. A wide range of Council services have high level actions included, in line with the guidance for the plan.
- 3.6 The full Plan is attached as Appendix 1 to this report with key actions including:

- Promoting the availability of accessible BSL interpreting services locally, and improving BSL awareness across our services and partners.
- Improving access to our information and services for BSL users, including producing information in BSL videos and highlighting BSL accessible ways to get in touch.
- Promote BSL awareness in pupils, parents, and staff by providing opportunities for raising BSL awareness.
- Build our understanding of BSL in Renfrewshire through improving evidence and data, as well as engaging with the local communities.

Consultation

3.7 The draft plan was made available on the Renfrewshire Council web site as both a BSL video and in written English. Feedback was encouraged in videoed BSL form, in English and also through meetings with individuals. A consultation event was held in Paisley with BSL interpreters and electronic note takers present. 18 local BSL users attended the event to provide input. Much of the input reflected the actions and themes already covered in the draft Plan, but where new ideas were raised, these have been included in the final plan where possible.

3.8 Most frequently raised points raised during the consultation process included:

- Improving access to our information and services for BSL users, including making our website more accessible to BSL users by including BSL videos and highlighting BSL accessible ways to get in touch.
- Promoting BSL awareness in pupils, parents, and staff by providing opportunities for raising BSL awareness.
- Including BSL content in the school's section of Renfrewshire Council's website, including key information on sending your child to school.
- The need for support in applying for jobs, and on improving accessibility within recruitment.
- The need for more involvement for young BSL users, to understand their needs and make sure enough BSL provision for D/Deaf children in Renfrewshire, including in schools and socially.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 If approved, the Renfrewshire Council BSL Plan will be translated into BSL and placed on the Renfrewshire Council website before the end of May 2024. The summary of discussion, feedback and next steps will also be translated into BSL and placed on the Renfrewshire Council web site.
- 4.2 Ongoing involvement with the BSL using community is planned to implement the plan and assess progress. It is intended that the plan responds to the needs of local BSL users through ongoing involvement, including prioritising the actions and adjusting them as needed. Collaboration will continue with Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership to support input from local BSL users about services across the organisations.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There are no financial implications associated with the BSL Plan, and actions will be met within existing resources.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – There are some implications for staff training, which are accounted for.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
- *Our Renfrewshire is well – the Plan has been developed jointly with the HSCP and NHS to ensure that BSL users have better access to mental health services and health improvement*
 - *Our Renfrewshire is fair - the plan will promote better BSL inclusion*
 - *Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all – equality will be promoted by this plan and opportunities improved in BSL*
 - *Working together to improve outcomes – the Plan has been developed in partnership with the local BSL community and partner organisations*
4. **Legal** – The publication of the Plan ensures that Renfrewshire Council complies with the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015.
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** - none

7. **Equality & Human Rights** – It is anticipated that the BSL Plan will have positive equality and human rights impacts, particularly for deaf and deafblind residents locally. It is recognised that there is a lack of data on the equalities characteristics of the local BSL user community, but further engagement with BSL users will support the development of the Council’s understanding of the needs to local BSL users.
 8. **Health & Safety** – none
 9. **Procurement** – none
 10. **Risk** - none
 11. **Privacy Impact** - none
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none
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List of Background Papers

- (a) Renfrewshire Council British Sign Language Plan
 - (b) Summary of BSL users’ input during consultation
-

Author: Annabelle Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnerships & Inequalities Manager, Chief Executive’s Service, 0141 618 5968



Renfrewshire Council British Sign Language (BSL) Plan

2024-2029

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk



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1. Introduction

This is the BSL Plan for Renfrewshire Council, as required by the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015. It sets out actions that Renfrewshire Council will take over the period 2024-2029.

It follows the BSL National Plan 2023-2029, published 6 November 2023, which was developed through extensive engagement with D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. The long-term goals of the national plan have been used to structure the Renfrewshire plan.

Renfrewshire Council provides a large variety of services. Some services are accessed by everyone who lives in Renfrewshire, such as bin collection, whereas others are for specific groups, such as primary schools. To develop this plan, different services have looked at what they are doing for BSL users and what they could do in the future. The draft actions were then consulted on with Renfrewshire's BSL users.

Involvement & where to find the plan

This plan is a living document and will be updated through the lifecycle of the National Plan.

Involvement and input from local BSL users are welcomed to inform how the plan is developed.

The BSL version of this plan can be found on Renfrewshire Council's website at <http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/7803/Renfrewshires-BSL-Plan>

If you want to discuss the plan please contact Stuart Graham on:

- 0141 487 1509 via the Contact Scotland BSL relay service
- email communityplanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk
- write to Stuart Graham, Chief Executive's Service, Second floor Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1WB.

British Sign Language (BSL) users can contact us via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#)
contactSCOTLAND-BSL

2. Summary

This plan will raise the profile of BSL in Renfrewshire and ensure that BSL users have good access to Council services. While it is divided into sections related to long term goals for Scotland, it shows how these will work in a Renfrewshire context.

Key actions within the Plan include:

- Promoting the availability of accessible BSL interpreting services locally, and improving BSL awareness across our services and partners.
- Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including producing information in BSL videos and highlighting BSL accessible ways to get in touch.
- Promote BSL awareness in pupils, parents, and staff by providing opportunities for raising BSL awareness.
- Build our understanding of BSL in Renfrewshire through improving evidence and data, as well as engaging with the local communities.

About BSL in Renfrewshire

Figures from the 2011 Census show that in Scotland 12,533 people said they used BSL (About 0.24% of the population). In Renfrewshire, that number was 349 (0.2% of Renfrewshire's population).

The 2022 Census included a question about whether people can use BSL. Another question asked what people's main language was, with BSL and tactile BSL as options. Figures for the 2022 Census on language have not been released yet but data released on population estimates that the Renfrewshire population is 183,800. If we use this estimate, then the number of people saying that they use BSL would have increased by 19 people to around 369 (0.2%).

Throughout the plan, we refer to 'BSL users', which covers all people whose first or preferred language is BSL, including those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss. BSL is a language in its own right, with its own grammar, syntax and vocabulary. We also accept that the majority of BSL users are Deaf and Deafblind, as well as the fact that there are many deaf and deafblind people who do not use BSL.

3. BSL Action Plan 2024-2029

3.1. BSL Accessibility

“To remove accessibility as a barrier for BSL users in all aspects of life, recognising the importance of having accessible information in the right format at the right time, utilising technology and increasing people’s awareness of communication tools.” (BSL National Plan)

The Council’s approach is to involve our customers and make a difference to the service we provide for the benefit of our customers. Meeting the needs of BSL users is a part of this strategy.

The Council has developed an accessibility guide for Communications and Marketing activities, which includes guidance on the use of BSL in our communications and marketing.

By 2029, we will:

Analyse existing evidence we have about BSL users in our organisation; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress, including exploring ways to identify BSL communication needs on customer records.

Implement any duties regarding inclusive communications emerging from the review of Public Sector Equality Duties and ensure that the needs of BSL users are reflected in any local response.

We will get feedback from BSL users during the development of the new Council website and its information so that we can improve access to our information and services for BSL users.

Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including producing BSL videos and highlighting BSL accessible ways to get in touch.

Promote the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services called ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’ to staff and to local BSL users.

Further options for improving BSL users’ access across Council services will be explored in consultation with the local community.

3.2. Children, Young People and their Families

“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL. We will strengthen partnerships between relevant organisations to overcome barriers for BSL users and deaf/deafblind children to ensure they have the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential.” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire’s approach to the design, delivery and evaluation of children’s services is robust and underpinned by the views and needs of our children and young people.

Renfrewshire Council’s Teachers of the Deaf work with children across Renfrewshire and our schools are working to meet the needs of pupils and parents to raise awareness of BSL in different ways. The ethos of the Additional Support Needs Education Policy is to aim for mainstream schooling, where schools are responsive to the needs of individual pupils. Where BSL provision is needed, this is provided at Garvel Deaf Unit in Inverclyde, but there is parental choice to pick other schools.

By 2029, we will:

Ensure that services for children and families reflect the United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child (UNCRC) as related to BSL users.

Explore opportunities for BSL users to inform work on Whole Family Wellbeing in Renfrewshire.

Provide early years staff with information about BSL and Deaf culture, and about resources that are available in BSL, so that they can meet the needs of families with a D/deaf or Deafblind child.

Take forward advice developed by Education Scotland to a) improve the way that teachers engage effectively with parents who use BSL and b) ensure that parents who use BSL know how they can get further involved in their child’s education.

Share good practice already in place in some Renfrewshire schools for BSL using parents' involvement.

Work with Parent Councils to improve awareness of BSL and Deaf culture and encourage representation from BSL using parents through the Renfrewshire Parent Council Liaison Group meetings.

Promote BSL awareness in pupils, parents, and staff by providing opportunities for raising BSL awareness.

Explore producing BSL information for families with children, including key information on sending your child to school.

Contribute to the national language learning programme (1+2) to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils, including sharing best practice and guidance.

3.3. Access to Employment

“BSL users will receive person-centred support to develop their skills, consider what route to employment is right for them and enter into the workforce so that they can fulfil their potential and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career.” (BSL National Plan)

In Renfrewshire, our Invest In Renfrewshire team support many people with specific needs to access employment and our widening access work in schools supports pupils making choices about their future.

Renfrewshire’s core employability services, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Renfrewshire Council (Invest Employability and Business Development Services) all have access to interpretation/translation services, using several specialist providers. Other local training and employment services also provide support to BSL users.

As a Disability Confident organisation, when advertising for jobs, we welcome applications from all disabled people including D/deaf people. We use a range of options to simplify the application process and make it more accessible for applicants who use BSL.

Renfrewshire Council Business Development Team/Business Gateway has support in place to help BSL users who are interested in self-employment to access business development support and will identify the most appropriate solution for individuals attending workshops and webinars.

For BSL clients, where written support is the best option in the first instance, further Business Support can be arranged through an appointment with an advisor and 1-1 Expert Help Surgeries can be provided in person using a BSL interpreter.

By 2029, we will:

Renfrewshire Local Employability Partnership will work with relevant specialist organisations such as RNID and Sense Scotland to further develop our Employability service offer and staff awareness and expertise. This will help to ensure Renfrewshire residents with hearing loss or impairment including those using BSL **are aware** of the employability support available, **are able to access** this and receive the support they require **to progress into and within employment**.

Signpost pupils and students to a wide range of information, advice, and guidance in BSL about their career and learning choices and the transition process, as part of our widening access work in secondary schools.

Work with partners who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability to help signpost them to specific advice on the needs of BSL users.

Continue to raise awareness locally of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' (AtW) scheme with employers and with BSL users (including those on Modern Apprenticeships) so that they can benefit from the support it provides. Invest In Renfrewshire also provide money management and financial capability support to individuals as part of a package of support.

3.4. Health and Wellbeing

“BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives” (BSL National Plan).

The Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership work to deliver adult social care services and all community health services for adults and children in Renfrewshire. The partnership brings together staff and services from Renfrewshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The sensory impairment team is part of the Health and Social Care Partnership.

These actions are joint with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

By 2029, we will:

Signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL (to be produced by NHS Health Scotland and NHS24), and b) develop complementary information in BSL about local provision, as appropriate.

Ensure information and services about mental health services are accessible to all individuals.

Through the Integration Joint Board, ensure that psychological therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users.

Take steps to improve access to information about sport, and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities.

Ensure that any local work to tackle social isolation explicitly considers the needs of BSL users.

3.5. Celebrating BSL Culture

“BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, and equal opportunities to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and deaf culture with the people of Scotland.” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire makes a significant contribution to culture and the arts, with a vibrant arts and cultural scene. This includes events at the newly refurbished Paisley Town Hall, the new Paisley Central Library in High Street, Paisley and the ongoing work on Paisley Museum and Art Centre.

In 2023 Renfrewshire Council’s Communications Team developed an accessibility guide for the communications and marketing team which outlined the process for securing BSL interpreters so that knowledge is shared among the team.

By 2029, we will:

Continue to incorporate BSL provision into our events programmes.

Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals.

Encourage and support BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts.

Make information in BSL available about culture and the arts on relevant websites and at venues.

Improve access to the historical environment, cultural events and performing arts and film for BSL users.

3.6. Democratic Participation

“BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies” (BSL National Plan)

Renfrewshire Council has 43 elected members who make decisions across a variety of Boards and committees. Local people are also encouraged to get involved in decisions about their communities.

Renfrewshire Council has carried out a review of community level governance which has shown that local people want easier ways to share in setting local priorities and input into local decision making. Improving access is a theme of this work, which will support BSL users to contribute.

Renfrewshire Council has established a Fairer Renfrewshire Sub Committee as part of its commitment to tackling inequalities.

By 2029, we will:

Ensure that support is available around the whole electoral process so that BSL users are not excluded. This will include appropriate support and information to ensure that they can register as electors and can cast their vote.

Ensure that BSL users are supported to participate fully and fairly should they choose to seek elected office, by ensuring that information is accessible and regularly reviewed and updated.

Continue to work in partnership with other stakeholders to support BSL users including political parties and the Electoral Commission.

Ensure that candidates wishing to stand will be signposted towards the financial support available via Inclusion Scotland’s Access to Elected Office Fund.

4. What happens next?

- This final version of the plan will be available in BSL and English following approval by Renfrewshire Council's Leadership Board.
- Please contact Stuart Graham if you want to continue to be involved with Renfrewshire Council as we further develop and implement the actions in our plan on:
 - 0141 487 1509 via the Contact Scotland BSL relay service
 - email communityplanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk, or
 - write to Stuart Graham, Chief Executive's Service, Second floor Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1WB.
- Some of the actions within this final plan will require further discussion to inform the detailed implementation. This will take place with those BSL users who have agreed to continue their involvement with the plan. Progress will be measured and reported on annually, with feedback provided for local BSL users.
- A Renfrewshire Council officer steering group, consisting of officers with commitments to implement elements of the BSL Plan, will be established to take the work forward.
- As part of our Fairer Renfrewshire programme, we will set up a forum for local BSL users to support the Council to improve knowledge about current community needs and inform the Council's policy and practice.



Chief Executive's Service
Renfrewshire Council
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
Paisley
PA1 1BR

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk





To: LEADERSHIP BOARD

On: 01 May 2024

Report by: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Heading: Review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport Provision

1. Summary

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Leadership Board of 26 April 2023, the Board approved recommendations relating to a review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport provision. The recommendations approved were:
- that the commencement of the Review of Renfrewshire's Public Transport Provision be noted;
 - that the first stages of the Review as set out in section 5 of the report be noted;
 - agreed that update reports be brought back to this Board;
 - as part of the review, Officers be instructed to engage with the Community Transport Association who had a track record in supporting communities in setting up successful, sustainable not for profit public transport options;
 - that Council called on the Scottish Government to take decisive action to
 - Reverse the soon to be implemented cuts to Renfrewshire bus services;
 - Investigate the placing of strict conditions on support to private bus companies;
 - Look at introducing caps on fares to encourage people to use bus services; and
 - Move towards bringing local bus services under local authority control
- 1.2 Officers engaged a transport consultant Systra, to deliver this review on the basis of the recommendations from the Leadership Board with a view to outlining recommendations for how the public transport network in Renfrewshire could be improved for the benefit of the communities of Renfrewshire.
- 1.3 This report sets out the key stages the consultant considered as part of the review and the local and regional context for the current public transport network as well as looking further afield for any successful models currently in operation elsewhere.
- 1.4 During this period, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) have also been conducting a Regional review of public transport and have developed a Regional Bus Strategy. The Renfrewshire report links to but is not constrained by the work ongoing at a regional level.

SPT's regional bus strategy is out for consultation at the present time. The strategy presents potential future operating models for the way forward for bus services across the region. The Council intends to submit a response to the consultation and this will be presented to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board in May, along with the response the Council would intend to submit to SPT a copy of the Systra report (as attached at appendix 1) to support the development on the strategy for Renfrewshire and the Region.

- 1.5 The full report is attached as an Appendix to this report but is summarised in some detail at sections 3 to 5 below.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Leadership Board:

- 2.1 Notes the completion of the review and the results of the public consultation highlighted within the report,
- 2.2 Agrees that officers from Renfrewshire should participate in wider regional discussions on the implications of alternative delivery models for bus services in Renfrewshire,
- 2.3 Agrees that officers should engage with bus operators and SPT in relation to the development of Bus Service Improvement Partnerships, and
- 2.4 Notes the positive progress been made with delivering a community transport model for Renfrewshire.

3. Public Transport Network Review

3.1 Background to the Review

The overall aim of the review was to assess the current local bus network and understand the range of interventions that may be available to the Council as well as understanding the role that community transport could play in a future model.

- 3.2 The review is set within the context of national, regional and local policy drivers including;
- **National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2)** – the strategy for Scotland aims to provide fair, easy and affordable access to all through an inclusive, safe and accessible transport system.
 - **Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)** – the RTS for the west of Scotland covers the period between 2023 and 2028 to ensure the area is well connected with active, liveable communities, facilitated by high quality, sustainable, low carbon transport.
 - **SPT Regional Bus Strategy** – SPT's regional bus strategy has been developed and is out for consultation at the present time. The strategy presents potential future operating models for the way forward for bus services across the region as outlined below:
 - Business As Usual;
 - Voluntary Partnerships;

- Bus Service Improvement Partnerships;
- Local Services Franchising; and
- Municipal Bus Company

The consultation on the regional strategy is open until 13 May 2024 and officers will provide a response to the consultation which will be provided to the next meeting of the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board for approval. We have advised SPT that the response provided by the closing date will be subject to approval of the ILE Board on 29 May 2024.

Officers appreciate that this is a topic which generates significant interest and elected members and the general public are encouraged to submit individual responses and the consultation can be accessed at the web address below:

www.spt.co.uk/about-us/what-we-are-doing/regional-transport-strategy/bus-strategy/

- **Local Transport Strategy (LTS)** – the Council is developing a new LTS which should be ready for publication in early 2025. The should reflect the key priorities for national and regional strategies but also identify measurable actions that the Council can take to achieve these ambitions.
- **Ren Zero** – Sustainable Transport is one of the key themes within the Ren Zero plan and will be a major focus for the organisation as we work towards net zero by 2030.

3.3 Renfrewshire Demographic Context

As outlined in Section 2 of the Review Report, bus journeys have been declining in Scotland and the former Strathclyde region have dropped by around 35% since around 2008/09.

3.4 Commuting and retail journeys make up over 50% of all journeys regardless of the mode of travel. bus journey purposes. When considering public transport journeys (bus and rail) commuting to work, the Renfrewshire figure is slightly higher at 16% than the Scottish average of 15%.

3.5 Over a similar timeframe car ownership has significantly increased, with that increase figure in Renfrewshire being around 20%. However, in Renfrewshire, there are currently 25% of households who do not have access to a car, this figure is even more start in lower income SIMD areas where they reach up to 55% and therefore these communities rely on these services to be operating effectively to go about their daily lives.

3.6 Consultation Process

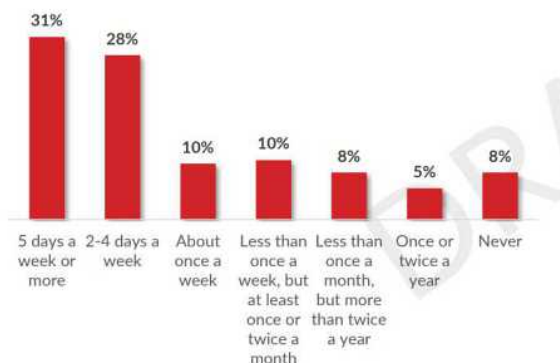
One of the key priorities within the review was to consult with the public to better understand the localised experience they have when accessing bus services and to identify the barriers to increasing public transport patronage.

3.7 The public consultation comprised of online and paper based surveys combined with a series of facilitated drop in sessions where the public could speak to Council officers about their concerns on a face to face basis.

3.8 Almost 1,800 responses were received during the consultation period with a summary of the main response issues highlighted below and expanded upon in more detail in the Appendix.

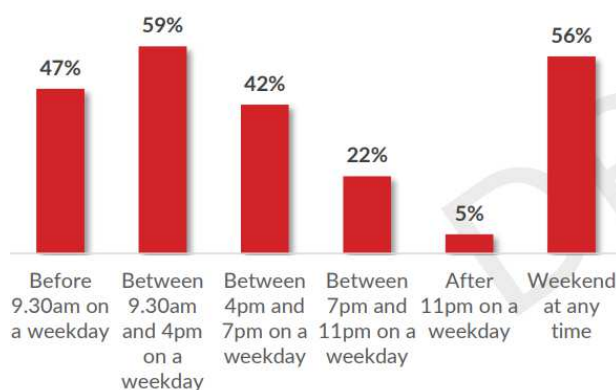
Frequency of bus use

From the figure below, many of the respondents were those who are frequent bus users with 69% using a bus at least once per week



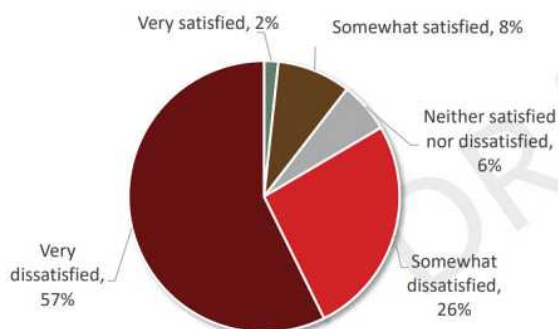
Time of Travel

The most frequent time of travel was between 9.30am and 4pm on a weekday, however more than half of the respondents also identified that they travel by bus at the weekend. The graph shows the level of demand there is for services operating in the off peak hours and weekends.



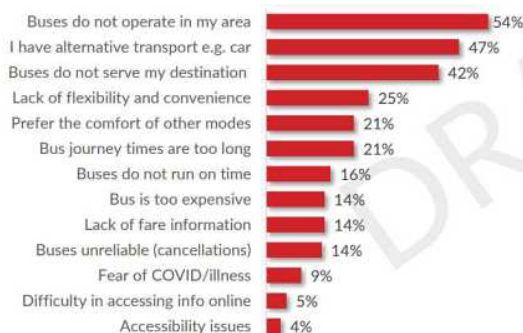
Satisfaction with buses in Renfrewshire

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 82%, answered that they were dissatisfied to at least some extent with the current provision of bus services in Renfrewshire. The response demographic outlines that bus users were on average more satisfied with services than non users although dissatisfaction reasons could include services no longer being available in certain areas.



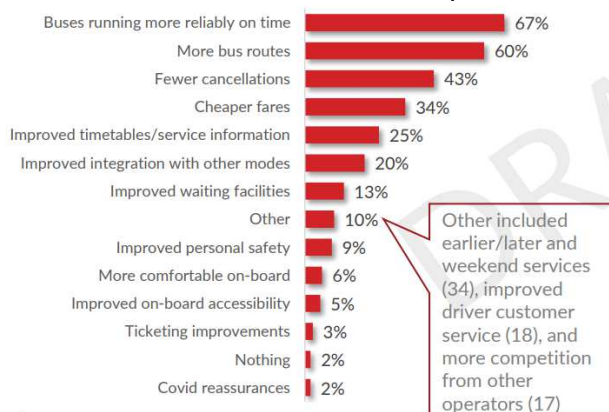
Reasons for not travelling by bus

A variety of responses were given by respondents in relation to the reason why they did not travel by bus with 54% stating it was because bus services did not operate in their area. These were closely followed by 47% stating it was due to access to alternative transport and 42% advising it was due to buses to serving their destination.



Measures to encourage more bus journeys

As expected, there were a number of improvements that would encourage more people to use bus services on a more regular basis. 75% of respondents advised that more frequent services would encourage them to use the bus as a method of transport.



Respondents also offered a number of other points including:

- 39 respondents advising they would like to see better regulation of bus operators and for them to be held accountable for service levels,
- 172 respondents felt that increasing competition and having more than one operator in the area would improve the service, and
- 53 highlighting they would like to see better customer service provided by drivers.

In addition to the public consultation document, the drop in sessions produced broadly similar themes with the key problems identified during these sessions highlighted below.



3.9 Bus Network Review

The bus network in Renfrewshire is dominated by one main bus operator (McGills) being responsible for over 75% of routes in the area, with the second biggest operator (First Glasgow) covering around 10% of the market.

- 3.10 In Renfrewshire over 80% of the bus network is service by commercial routes with the remaining share being subsidised services, where the route is not financially attractive to an operator but there is a community need and the routes are subsidised through SPT.
- 3.11 At the current time there are no direct bus services from Bridge of Weir, Kilbarchan and Houston to the Royal Alexandria Hospital or Paisley.
- 3.12 The frequency of bus services has been analysed over the time periods 2015 – 2019 and 2019 – 2023 in order to understand how bus services had changed before and after the pandemic. The changes were then analysed at different time periods during the day to identify how these changes then impacted services at peak and off peak times.

2019 v 2015 Frequency

- Between 7am and 9am the majority of routes lost up to 10 buses in the AM period, with reductions noted in key routes such as Paisley to Renfrew, Paisley to Johnstone, Glasgow to Erskine, and Paisley to Bridge of Weir,
- Between 10am and 3pm the majority of routes lost 10 buses per hour with the Paisley to Johnstone corridor showing a decrease of between 10 and 30 buses per hour.
- Between 5pm and 7pm the majority of bus routes lost up to 10 buses per hour with some stops in Renfrew showing loss of between 10 and 20 buses per hour.

2023 v 2019 Frequency

- Between 7am and 9am there were further frequency reductions across a number of Paisley routes, however some routes in Renfrew, Houston, Bridge of Weir and Howwood witnessed frequency increases.
- Between 10am and 3pm further reductions are noted across Paisley routes with some marginal increase on the Paisley to Johnstone route.
- The pattern of reduction from 2019 to 2023 continues in to the evening peak with a number of routes showing reductions.

- 3.13 In addition to frequency reductions, some bus routes have been withdrawn by operators. The Scottish Government had utilised a Network Support Grant (NSG) to assist bus operators with their recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. The removal of the NSG coincided with the withdrawal of 6 bus services which served Renfrewshire. 5 of these routes were operated by McGills, with 1 route being operated by First Glasgow.
- 3.14 Bus Services also play a key role in providing access to employment areas with Paisley, Renfrew, Johnstone and the Airport area being major employment centres. Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone are all well served with regular bus services, however the airport area only has one service and as a result any cancellations or delays have a major impact.
- 3.15 Network Review Summary
When reviewing the data on services and combining with the outcome from the public consultation process it is clear that there are a number of areas where the bus provision is sub-standard. The main areas affected are:
- Langbank to Paisley,
 - Dargavel/Bishopton,
 - Erskine to Paisley,
 - Connections to the Royal Alexandria Hospital, and
 - Connections to the Southwest area of Renfrewshire – Houston, Bridge of Weir and Kilbarchan.
- 3.16 A number of recommendations have been made in pages 67 and 68 of the report, however it should be noted that in the commercial operating market that bus provision is currently provided in, there are limitations on how many of these recommendations the Council can take forward in the short to medium term.
- 3.17 There is a specific reference to community or demand responsive transport and this is covered in more detail at section 4 of this report.
- 3.18 Previous engagement with bus operators has resulted in requests from operators for the Council to improve the infrastructure associated with public transport. The main areas that operators have highlighted which they advise would allow them to improve service frequency and reliability are:
- Provision of dedicated bus priority infrastructure including bus lanes and real traffic light priority systems,
 - Improvements to enforcement of traffic restrictions to reduce private cars being an obstruction to public transport,
 - Removal of on street parking from key bus corridors to support journey time and frequency improvements, and
 - Expansion of real time information infrastructure.

4. Bus Operating Landscape and Opportunities for Change

- 4.1 Since bus services were deregulated in 1986 the role of local authorities in the delivery of bus services is limited to the provision of infrastructure on the local road network and engagement with the regional transport authority (SPT) to make improvements to services.
- 4.2 The Council does not have the power to regulate bus operations across its area and it cannot prevent the withdrawal of services.

- 4.3 The current commercial market results in the commercial operators being responsible for bus network planning, bus fares and ticketing arrangements as well as the discretion of integrating their services with other transport modes.
- 4.4 As a result of this the bus operators have the power to plan and design services whereas the Council is only able to plan routes that are deemed to be required from a social rather than a profitable point of view and this is delivered with support from SPT.
- 4.5 As outlined at section 3.2 above, SPT's Regional Bus Strategy has highlighted a number of future potential operating models for the bus network and as part of the Council's review, Systra have carried out an assessment and options appraisal of the different models available.
- 4.6 The options considered are:
- **Status Quo** – Delivered through a voluntary partnership arrangement which seeks to strengthen current relationship and delivery of joint outcomes. At the current time the Council is already a member of the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership which is comprised of the eight local authorities, SPT and bus operators in the area.
 - **Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP)** – This is a new form of statutory agreement that would ensure agreements between operators and a transport authority were binding and can include sanctions if commitments are not adhered to.
 - **Bus Franchising Scheme** – Franchising moves competition on to an operating contract level rather than on road competition between operators. This provides a greater degree of control over bus service specifications and fares to local transport authorities. The authorities would then procure contracts to deliver the levels of service it requires necessary to meet the needs of communities.
 - **Municipal Ownership** – As a result of the changes from the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 local transport authorities can create municipally owned bus companies to compete for contracts and operate registered bus services. The municipal operator would likely be an arms-length organisation wholly owned by the authority but providing separation when competing for contracts.

The full detail of the appraisal is contained at page 74 of the review report, with a summary provided in the table below:

| Model | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Existing Competitive model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition between operators improve service provision • Financial risks lie with operators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of competition for some routes results in monopoly • Services may be withdrawn with limited notice • LA do not have any control over services and network |
| BSIP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory nature improves certainty of delivery • Responsive to customer demand | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seems to work best with just one main operator • Services may be withdrawn with limited notice |
| Bus Franchising Scheme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can give control over bus network and services • Deliver integrated branding making networks easier to follow by the passengers • Easier to achieve social and community objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires significant resources and takes time for local authorities to build up expertise. • Transfers most financial risk to local authority • May be slow to implement and high cost |
| Municipal Ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control over that part of the bus network • Allow delivery of services at lower profit margins • Any profits can be invested into service in the absence of shareholders • Easier to achieve social and community objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant resources and time to build up expertise • Start-up costs may be significant with no certainty of return on investment • Municipal bus company still open to market pressures from competing private sector • Danger of municipality diverting bus profits for other purposes |

It is agreed within the report that the status quo is not the preferred way forward and is unlikely to have any real effect on improving the bus network in the future. The summary recommendations are that the alternative models should be explored and in order to derive the most significant improvements to the network, these should be considered at a regional level.

5. Community Transport

- 5.1 There are a number of circumstances where community transport can play a role in the delivery of vital transport services for local communities, particularly where users cannot access public transport because of mobility issues or there is a lack of service provision in their area.
- 5.2 Council officers have been working with a number of different community groups who have expressed an interest in starting a community transport organisation. This work has resulted in the creation of a group called Renfrewshire Community Transport. They are now a Scottish charitable incorporated organisation and have been successful in securing £25,000 funding from the Sustainable Communities fund to develop a business plan to identify a way forward for delivering a community transport model in Renfrewshire.
- 5.3 Council officers will continue to support the organisation and will provide resources to create a robust business plan that can then be adopted by other organisations in the future.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 It is clear from the report that there are options to consider for the future direction of the public transport landscape in the future, however there are some more short-term actions that the Council can set out to achieve in order to improve services for local communities whilst awaiting more fundamental model change.
- 6.2 Council officers will review the infrastructure provided for local bus services and identify where there are opportunities for delivering improvements. It is however worth noting that the SPT capital programme for 2024/25 has been reduced to £0 so there is little scope for delivering infrastructure improvements in 2024/25.
- 6.3 Officers will also respond to the SPT Regional Bus Strategy consultation, however given the varying personal opinions on the issue elected members may be keen to provide individual responses also.

Implications of this Report

1. **Financial** – Although the expected financial impact of alternative models for bus service delivery cannot be quantified at the current time it is anticipated that a franchising model could require significant additional public expenditure to deliver.

2. **HR and Organisational Development** – none

3. **Community Planning**

Our Renfrewshire is thriving / Reshaping our place, our economy and our future –

By continuing to support public transport improvements we will continue to facilitate access to employment and economic growth.

4. **Legal** – none

5. **Property/Assets** – none

6. **Information Technology** – none

7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health and Safety** – none.

9. **Procurement** – none.

10. **Risk** – none.

11. **Privacy Impact** – none.

12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none.

13. **Climate Impact** – Delivering an improved public transport service for communities across Renfrewshire should result in a decrease in private car mileage which is a major contributor to emissions across the area.

List of Background Papers - none

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Renfrewshire Bus Network Review and Future Options

Study Report

SYSTRA


Renfrewshire
Council



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Background to the Study

Section 1

Aims and Objectives of the Study

- Aims
 - Undertake a review of local bus network in Renfrewshire and advise on the range of interventions now available to the Council to tackle any perceived shortfalls, including the potential role of the community transport sector.
- Objectives
 - Identify gaps in local bus services
 - Identify user (and non-user) needs and perceptions
 - Identify potential solutions to improve bus provision

Policy Overview

The Renfrewshire Bus Network Review is set within the context of the goals and objectives set out by national, regional and local policies. Below is a summary of the policies and strategies that are relevant to this study.

National Policy

National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2)

Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) envisage to have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors. To this end, NTS2 sets out priorities that include-

- Reduce inequalities
 - Will provide fair access to services we need
 - Will be easy to use for all
 - Will be affordable for all
- Take climate change action
 - Identify gaps in local bus services
 - Identify user (and non-user) needs and perceptions
 - Identify potential solutions to improve bus provision

Prioritising Sustainable Transport

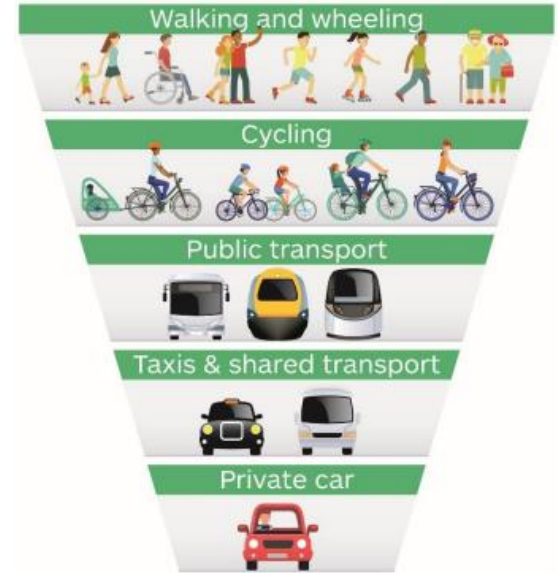


Figure 1 : Sustainable travel hierarchy

Policy Overview

Regional Policy

Regional Transport Strategy

The Regional Transport Strategy for the west of Scotland 2023-2038 aims to make the west of Scotland “an attractive, resilient and well-connected place with active, liveable communities and accessible, vibrant centres facilitated by high quality, sustainable and low carbon transport shaped by the needs of all”.

The following objectives of the RTS emphasise on the need for public transport improvement in the region to achieve its strategic vision.

- To improve accessibility, affordability, availability and safety of the transport system, ensuring everyone can get to town centres, jobs, education, healthcare and other everyday needs
- To reduce carbon emissions and other harmful pollutants from transport in the region
- To make public transport a desirable and convenient travel choice for everyone

Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy- Draft Case for Change

- The Regional Bus Strategy draft case for change aims “*To provide a world class bus network which reverses the long-term decline in travel by bus, by developing a more efficient bus system which is fully integrated with other public transport, affordable to all and plays a key role in the social, environmental and economic development of the region*”.

The SRBS sets out three key objectives-

- Increase Network Coverage
- Increase affordability of bus network
- Increase attractiveness of the bus network

Policy Overview

Local Policy

Key local Transport policies and strategies that identify public transport improvements as crucial for sustainable growth are discussed below.

Renfrewshire Local Transport Strategy

Renfrewshire is currently developing a new Local Transport Strategy (LTS). The 2017 LTS Refresh states the key objectives including-

- Extend opportunities for all by:
 - Combating poverty and promoting equality including
 - Supporting behavioural change;
 - Encouraging healthier lifestyles;
 - Encouraging a choice of transport options;
 - Improving access for all, including the mobility impaired.
- Encourage integration of services and an integrated approach by public bodies whilst achieving best value

Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020-2030

The Economic Strategy aims *“To improve the economic infrastructure of Renfrewshire including better public transport provision, rail and road capacity, and the provision of new digital connectivity and networks”*.

It recognises the need for interventions that influence travel behaviours and modal shift including public transport improvement, exemplary networks for walking and cycling, park and ride and demand management measures for private car use.

Policy Overview

Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2021

Renfrewshire LDP 2021 supports investment which assists sustainable communities by ensuring people and places are well connected through access to a range of travel and transport networks. In particular, new developments “on sites which can be accessed sustainably to encourage a modal shift from the private car to walking, cycling and public transport”.

The LDP also aims to support sustainable economic growth by delivering high quality development with “good accessibility to a range of sustainable travel modes, based on links to the hierarchy of walking, cycling, public transport networks and ensuring integration with the design and layout of the development and the wider network”.

Renfrewshire’s Plan for Net Zero

‘Sustainable Transport’ is one of the Key Themes and Actions within Renfrewshire’s Plan for Net Zero. The Priority areas for this theme include-Extend opportunities for all by:

- Maximise active travel opportunities;
- Increase public transport patronage;
- Minimise car miles;
- Enable modal shift to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs);
- Alleviate transport poverty; and
- Local carbon offsetting: to make every trip in the Renfrewshire area net zero carbon.

Improvements to public transport provision will help increase patronage and minimise car distance kilometres. This will contribute to reduction in carbon emission and help alleviate transport poverty.

Legislation

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019

This review takes cognisance of the Transport Act 2019 and the powers given to local authorities related to bus operations, intended to give local transport authorities more flexibility to respond to their own transport challenges. These include-

- Provision of bus services etc. by local transport authorities
- Bus services improvement partnerships
- Franchising frameworks and franchise agreements
- Provision of service information when varying or cancelling registration
- Smart and integrated ticketing
- Provision of information about bus services

Demographic Context

Section 2

Renfrewshire Population

Population

- 2022 Census - 183,800, an increase of 9,000 from 2011
- Male - 48.4% ; Female - 51.6% (2021 estimate)
- Renfrewshire population by age group (2021 estimate):

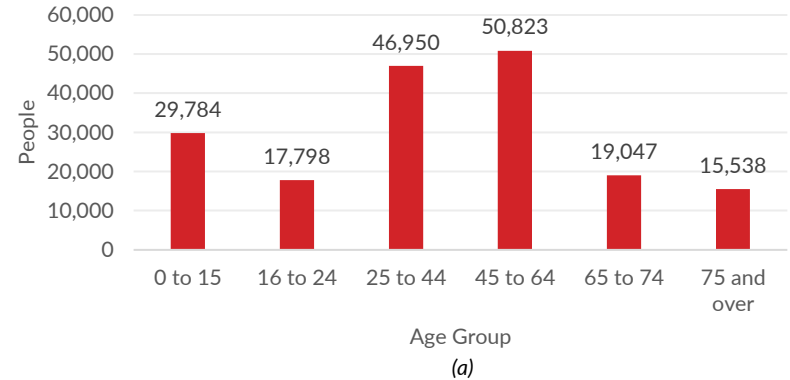
Ageing Population

- 17% are under 16; 12% are 16 to 24; 54% are 25 to 64; and 19% are 65 or over.
 - 65 and over age groups have grown since 2011, while the proportion of the population under 24 has dropped.

Ethnicity

- The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population accounts for 2.8% of the overall local population. This equates to 4,781 people. Of these:
 - 65% are Asian; 17% are African; 9% are from multiple ethnic backgrounds; 2% Caribbean; and 7% from other ethnic groups.

Population by Age Group
(NRS Mid-Year Estimate for 2021)



Population % Change by Age Group
(2011-2021, NRS Mid-Year Estimate)

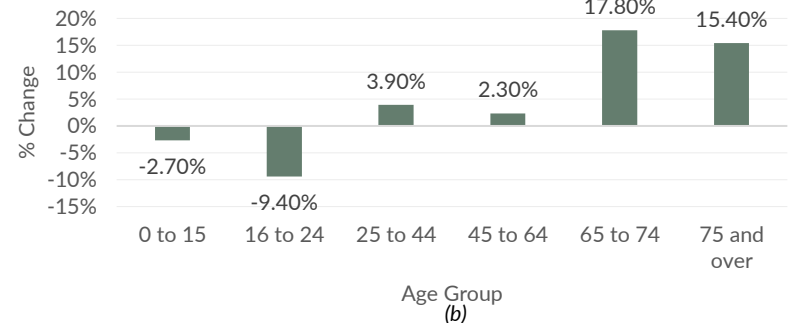


Figure 2(a,b): Age profile and population change in Renfrewshire

Socio-Economic Data

Deprivation

Figure 3 shows Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) in Renfrewshire. Most deprived areas are-

- Paisley
- Renfrew
- Johnstone
- Linwood

It is estimated that in 2019/20 6,997 (23.1%) children in Renfrewshire were living in poverty after housing costs. This is almost 1 in every 4 children. (Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership)

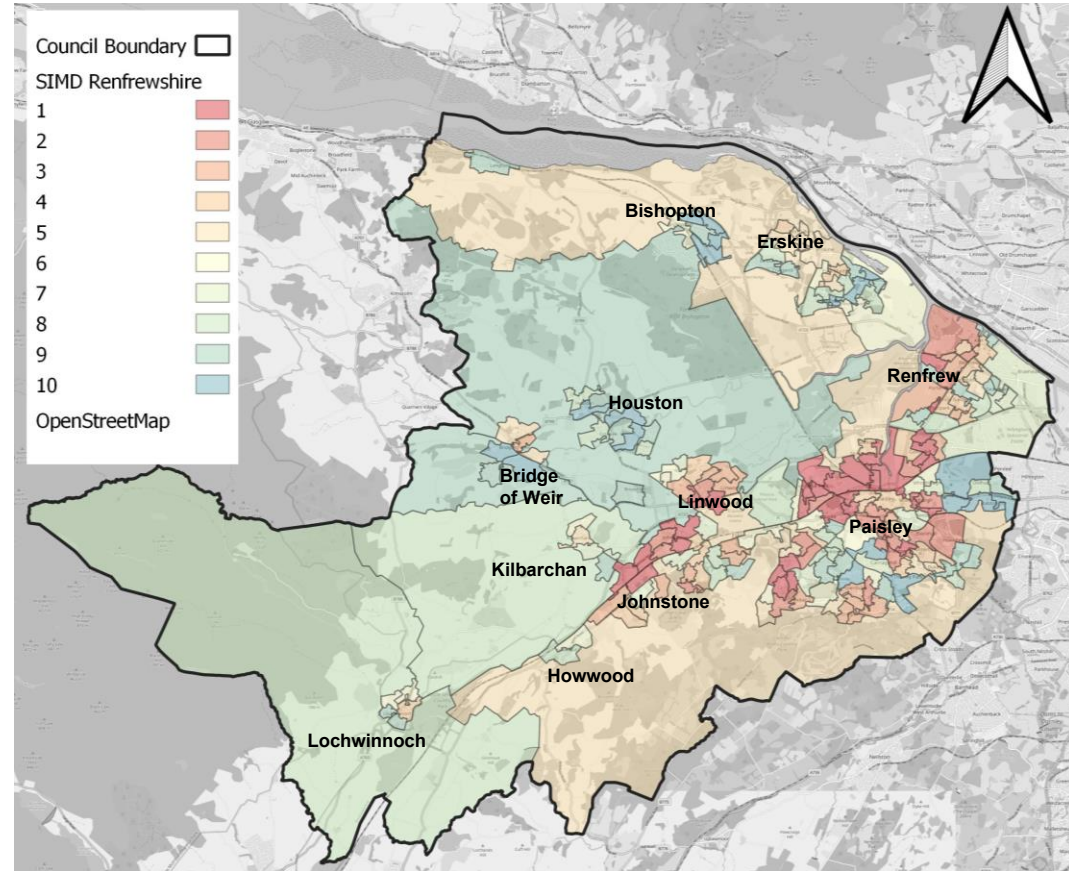


Figure 3: Level of deprivation in Renfrewshire

Historical Data

Passenger Journeys

Historical data shows that bus journeys in Scotland have been declining over the years (Figure 4). In Southwest and Strathclyde region, bus passenger journeys dropped by about 35% between 2008-09 and 2019-20.

Travel to Work and Other Purposes

Table 1 shows percentage of trips by purposes and Commute and shopping trips make up more than half of all journeys. Travel to work data 2019 in Table 2 shows that a similar proportion of people in Renfrewshire (16.0%) use public transport for commuting compared with the national average (15.0%). 2011 household survey data show that 62.4% of employed people in Scotland travelled to work by car. This implies that a majority of the commute trips in Renfrewshire are also made by cars.

Table 1: Percentage of trips by purpose in Renfrewshire and Scotland

| | % Business Journeys | % Commuting Journeys | % Education Journeys | % Health Journeys | % Shopping Journeys |
|--------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Scotland | 2.4 | 23.3 | 5.6 | 2.2 | 23.6 |
| Renfrewshire | 2.0 | 24.0 | 5.0 | 3.0 | 30.0 |

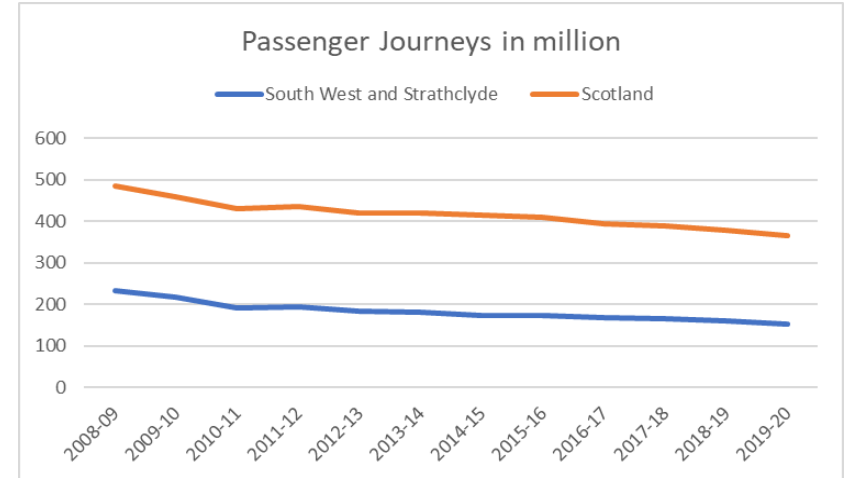


Figure 4: Change in total passenger journeys (Source: Department for Transport)

Table 2: Travel to work by mode in Renfrewshire and Scotland

| | % Bus Journeys To Work | % Cycling Journeys To Work | % Train Journeys To Work | % Walking Journeys To Work |
|--------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Scotland | 9.6 | 2.7 | 5.4 | 12.0 |
| Renfrewshire | 10 | 1.0 | 6.0 | 4.0 |

Renfrewshire Car Ownership

Renfrewshire Car Ownerships

Figure 5 shows that car ownerships in Renfrewshire have increased by about 20% between 1999 and 2021. Currently there are 25% households who do not have access to a car.

Table 3 below gives an indication of the specific Intermediate Zones with the highest percentage of households without access to a car, for within the bottom 2 deciles for SIMD Income

Table 3: Car ownership level areas in low-income areas

| Zone | Name | Income Decile | Percentage without a car |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| S02002263 | Paisley Ferguslie | 1.9 | 55.0% |
| S02002277 | Paisley Gallowhill and Hillington | 1.7 | 51.9% |
| S02002259 | Johnstone Northwest | 1.5 | 50.0% |

Bus Reliance For Travel to Work

Table 4 shows the localities in Renfrewshire with the highest travel to work by bus mode share. This table is ordered by origin percentage travelling to work by bus. Nearly 20% of commute trips from Linwood are made by bus which is almost twice the national average (10.4%).

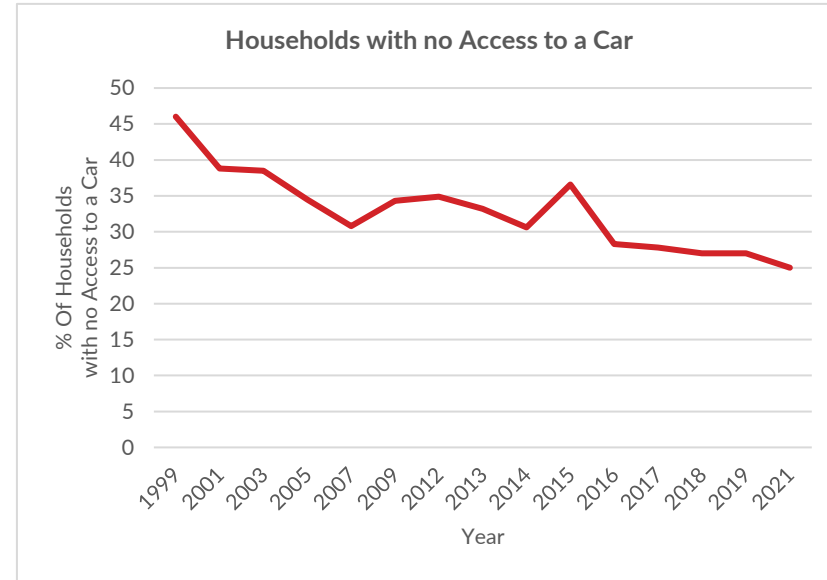


Figure 5: Household with no access to cars (Source: Statistics.gov.scot)

Table 4: Travel to work by bus in low car ownership areas

| Locality Name | Percentage without a car | Origin TTW Percentage travelling to work by bus |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|
| Linwood | 53.9% | 19.8% |
| Renfrew | 55.9% | 15.5% |
| Paisley | 60.0% | 13.0% |
| Johnstone | 55.3% | 11.0% |

Consultation

Section 3

Introduction

Public consultation has been undertaken using an online questionnaire survey and public drop-in sessions in Renfrewshire.

- **Online Survey**
 - A questionnaire survey was developed and disseminated via Renfrewshire council website, social media and targeted emails to community councils. Paper surveys were available on request. The survey was anonymous and included questions regarding the level of bus usage.
- **Public Drop-In Sessions**
 - Public drop-in sessions were held at five selected locations around Renfrewshire. The sessions were facilitated by a team of two members, one each from SYSTRA and Renfrewshire Council.

Online Survey

As part of this review, Renfrewshire Council undertaken an online survey between **Friday 20th October 2023 and Friday 24th November 2023**, to gather views from Renfrewshire residents.

The survey aimed to **understand local views** towards the bus network and **identify any gaps** in provisions/barriers to bus use.

The survey was designed by SYSTRA Ltd and hosted (online) and publicised by Renfrewshire Council through different channels, including on their website, social media and targeted emails to community councils.

A total of two hundred posters were displayed on prominent bus stops and on-board buses (Figure 6), and residents were also able to complete the survey at a number of drop-in sessions held across Renfrewshire.

The survey was anonymous and was open to all residents, regardless of their level of bus use.

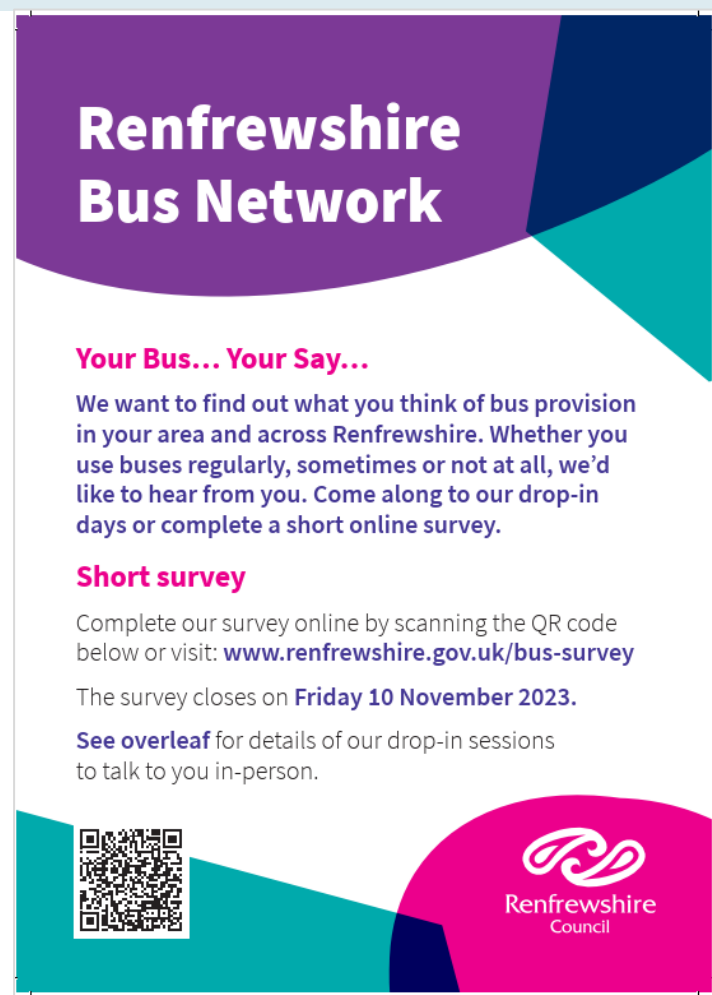


Figure 6: Renfrewshire bus survey poster

Online Survey

Sample Profile

A total of **1,787 responses** were received during the survey period. Participants were self-selecting but covered a mix of demographic types.

Figure 7 shows that the majority of the sample identified as women (71%), whilst around three in ten respondents identified as men (28%). A higher-than-average proportion of women completed the survey compared to the average in Renfrewshire (71% vs 52%¹).

Just over a third of respondents fell within the 35-54 age category (35%), followed by a quarter of respondents who were aged between 55 and 65 (26%), and a fifth who fell within the 66-79 age category (20%). Just 2% of the sample were aged 80 or older. These figures are broadly representative of the age profile within Renfrewshire.

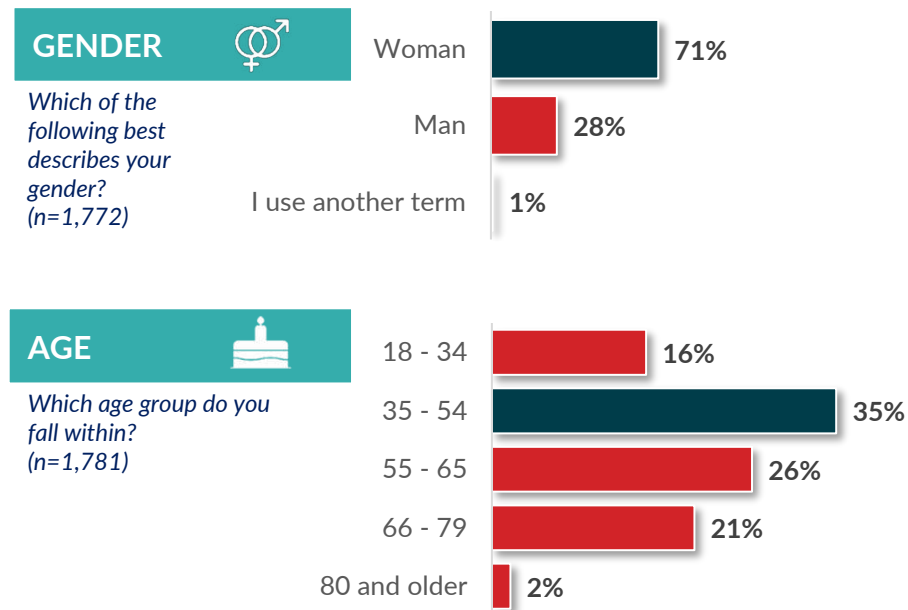
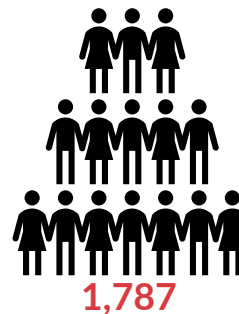


Figure 7: Survey sample characteristics in terms of Gender and Age

¹Scotland's Census 2022, National Records of Scotland

Online Survey

Sample Profile

Figure 8 shows that a fifth of the sample reported that the Equality Act definition of a disabled person applied to them (21%). This is representative of the proportion of disabled people in Renfrewshire.

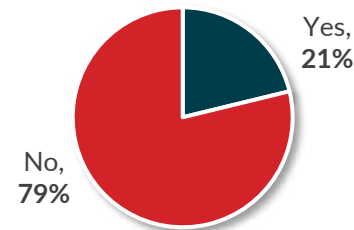
60% of the respondents did not have any concessionary bus pass. Majority of the bus pass holders were elderly people (60+).

Just under half of the respondents have access to a car or van as a driver (47%), while 1% have access to a motorbike or moped. Just over half of the respondents reported not having access to any of these vehicles as a driver (52%).

MOBILITY



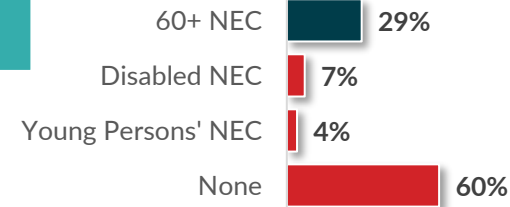
[Equality Act description of a disabled person] Does this definition apply to you?
(n=1,766)



BUS PASS



What type of Scottish National Entitlement Card do you have?
(n=1,787)



VEHICLE ACCESS



Do you have access to a car, van, motorbike or moped as a driver?
(n=1,787)

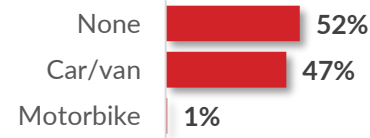


Figure 8: Survey sample characteristics in terms of Mobility, Bus Pass, and Vehicle access

Online Survey

Frequency of Bus Use

92% of respondents have travelled by bus within the last year, while 69% respondents are travelling by bus at least once a week (Figure 9).

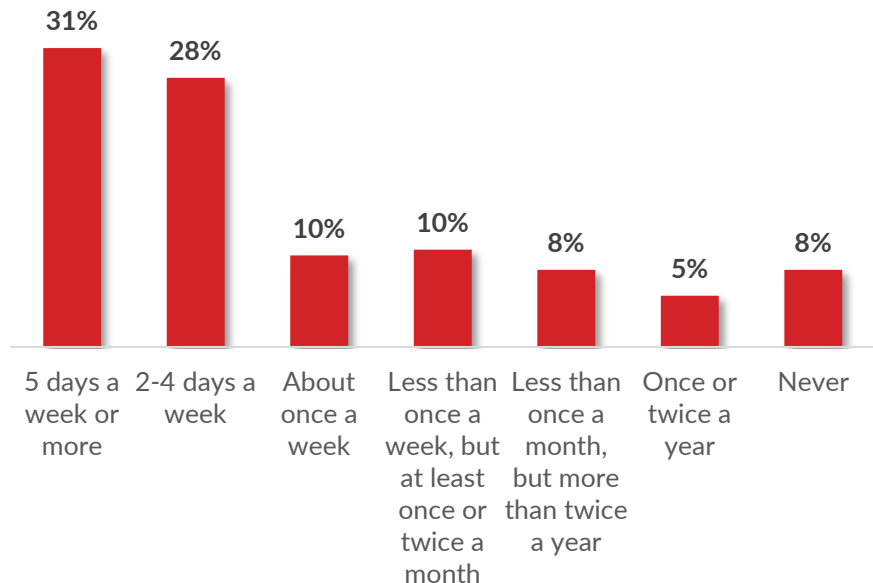


Figure 9: Participants' frequency of bus use

Q4. During 2023, how often have you used this mode (bus) on average?
N= 1,787



OVERALL SUMMARY

- Many respondents are frequent bus users, with nearly a third (31%) travelling 5 days a week or more.
- 69% travel by bus frequently (at least once a week), 23% are less frequent users (less than once a week but at least once a year), whilst 8% never travel by bus.

Online Survey

Time of Travel

As show in Figure 10, when travelling by bus, the most popular time to travel was between 9.30 and 4pm on a weekday, and at the weekends.

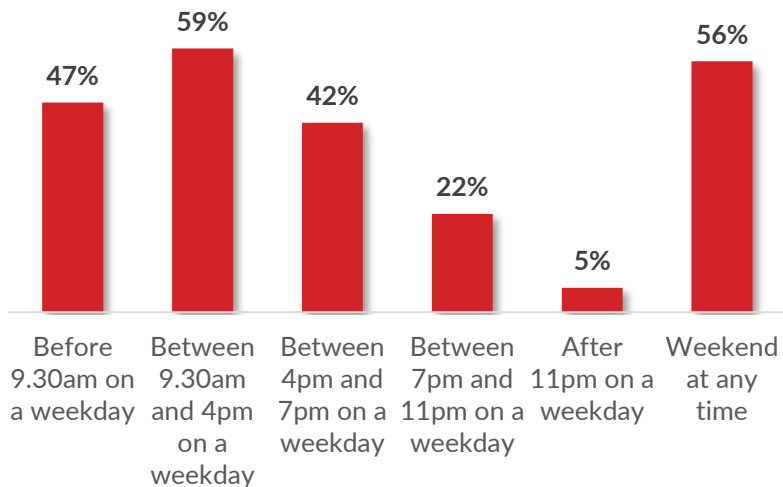


Figure 10: Participants' time of travel by bus

Q5. When travelling by bus, what time(s) of day do you tend to travel?
N= 1,644



OVERALL SUMMARY

- The most frequent time of travel by bus was between 9.30 and 4pm on a weekday (n=970, 59%).
- More than half of the respondents (56%) also reported that they travel by bus at the weekend.
- More than a fifth of the respondents travel late in the evening (between 7pm and 11 pm)

This demonstrates their reliance on buses in the off-peak hours and weekends.

Online Survey

Satisfaction with buses in Renfrewshire

Generally, respondents are dissatisfied with the provision of buses within Renfrewshire.

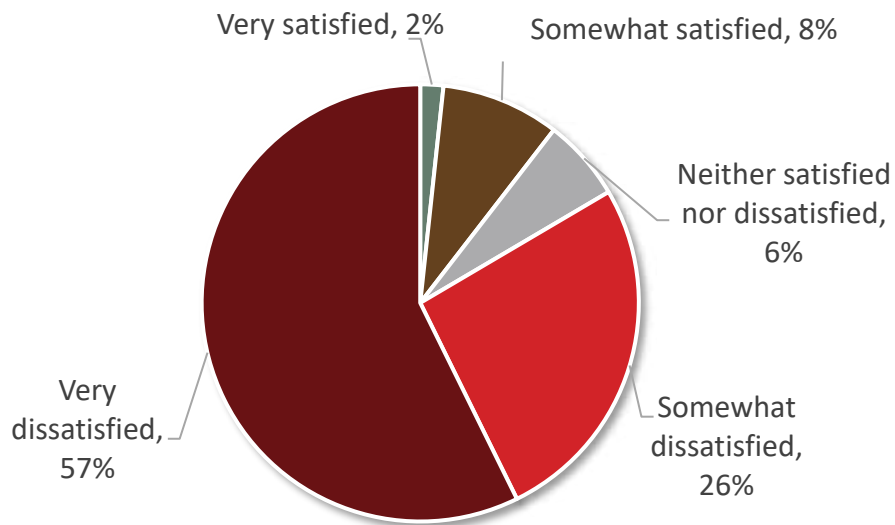


Figure 11: Bus user satisfaction

Q9. When travelling by bus, what time(s) of day do you tend to travel?
N= 1,644



OVERALL SUMMARY

- The majority of respondents (82%) answered they were dissatisfied to some extent with the current provision of buses (Figure 11).

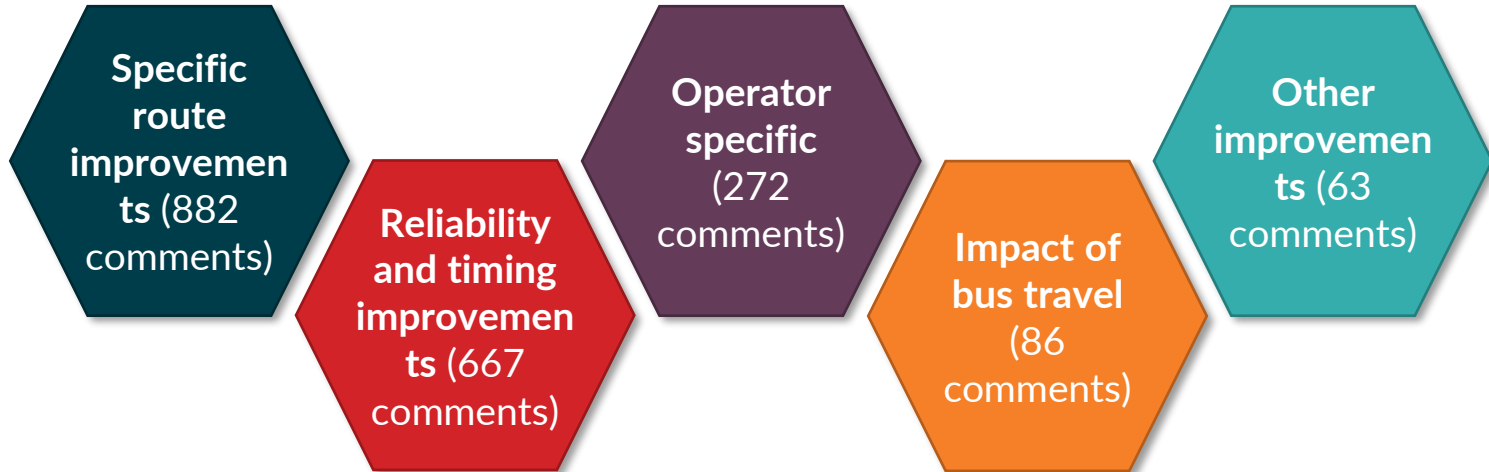


TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

- Bus users were slightly more likely to be satisfied than non-users (11% vs 2%).
- Scottish NEC owners were more likely to be satisfied than those without (15% vs 8%).

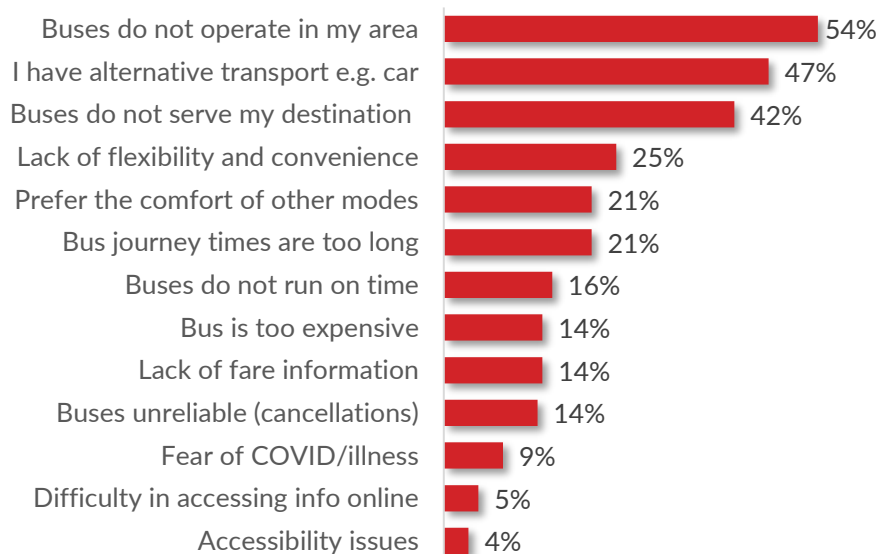
Suggested Improvements

Respondents were invited to provide further comments as to how bus provision in Renfrewshire could be improved. 1,058 respondents chose to make further comments, and these have been categorised as follows:



Non-users: Reasons for not travelling by bus

The main reasons for not using the bus are due to buses either not operating from respondents' origins or to their chosen destinations. Having alternative transport was also one of the main reasons for not travelling by bus.



OVERALL SUMMARY

- Respondents said they do not travel by bus due to buses not operating in their area (54%) or to their destination (42%) (Figure 12).
- Meanwhile 47% said they had alternative transport e.g. car.
- Male respondents were more likely to select 'long journey times' (38% vs 17%) or access to alternative transport (62% vs 42%).

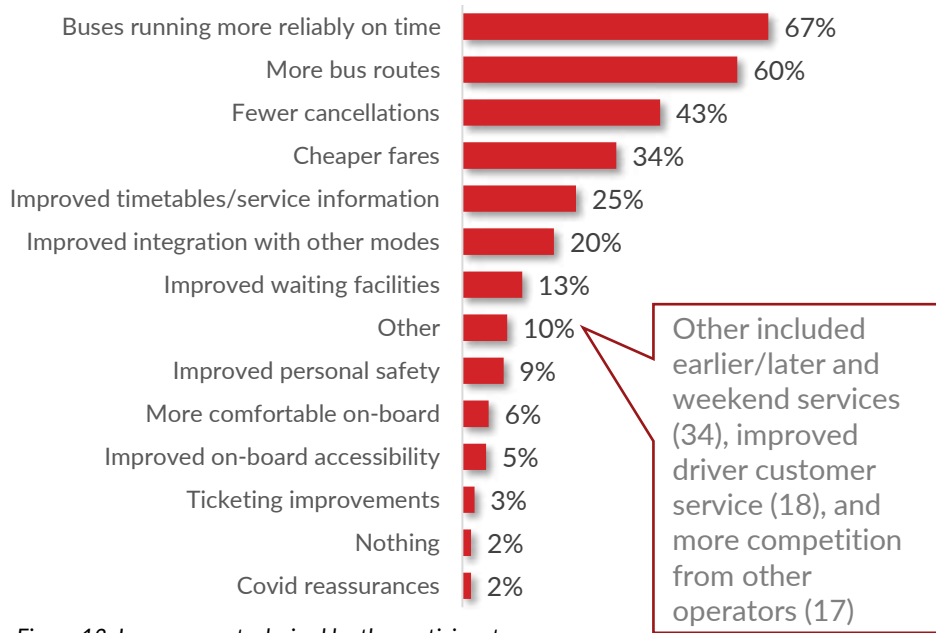
Figure 12: Participants' reasons for not travelling by bus

Q10. You mentioned that you have not travelled by bus within the last year. Why is this?

N= 143

Improvements to encourage more bus journeys

Respondents said that more frequent services, improved reliability and more bus routes would be most likely to encourage bus journeys.



OVERALL SUMMARY

- 75% respondents said that more frequent services would encourage them to use the bus, alongside more bus routes (60%) (Figure 13).
- Reliability is also an important factor, with 67% wanting more reliable services and 43% selecting 'fewer cancellations'.
- Disabled people were more likely to want improved on-board accessibility (17% vs 2%), and males were more likely to selected improved integration (28% vs 17%).

Figure 13: Improvements desired by the participants

Q11. What improvements to bus travel would most likely encourage you to make more journeys by bus?
(Select up to five) N= 1,787

Suggested improvements - Routes



Many respondents suggested locations where they felt bus routes were required:

50 respondents commented that they do not have a local bus service.

188 respondents commented that they did have a route, but it was either **withdrawn** or **changed**.

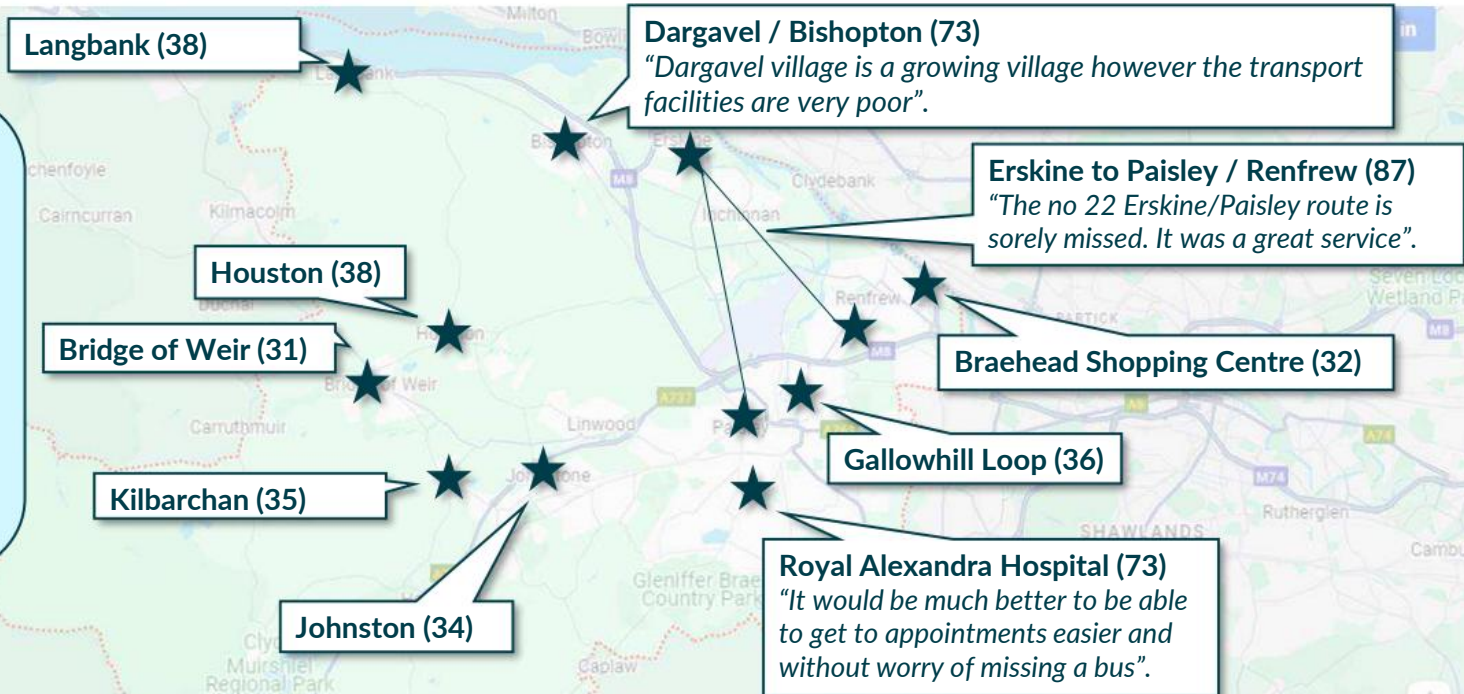


Figure 14: Location of improvements suggested by participants

N=1,058 that provided further comments. Number of comments made about each area is provided in brackets.

Suggested improvements – Reliability/timing



MORE FREQUENT SERVICES

166 respondents commented that they would like to see **more frequent bus services**. Some commented that there is one bus every 1 or 2 hours and would appreciate a half-hourly service during peak times.

“ *The current bus service is not working for most people with fewer buses and restricted times.* ”

“ *Why have an information board at a bus stop when they do not turn up on time or it is a no show.* ”

SERVICES RUNNING LATER/EARLIER AND/OR AT WEEKENDS

119 respondents commented that they would like to see services starting **earlier** in the morning or **later** in the evening, and more frequent services at **weekends**.

“ *More routes and more frequent buses. Where I live the buses stop running after 7pm.* ”



FEWER CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations were also an issue for many, with **151** commenting on this. There is also frustration around (lack of) communication of cancellations.



MORE RELIABLE SERVICES

95 respondents said they want a more reliable bus service and buses to run on time.

Suggested improvements – Operator



GREATER COMPETITION REQUIRED

Many respondents (**172**) felt that **increasing competition** and having more than one operator in the area, would improve the service provided.

“ Stop monopolising services, competition makes for a more cost effective and improved product for consumers. ”

“ With a lack of railway lines in Erskine and Renfrew, these towns are particularly left to the whims of the solitary bus provider. ”



REGULATION

39 respondents said they would like to see better regulation of operators. Some felt that operators should be held accountable for poor service, and some voiced frustration at complaints not being dealt with to their satisfaction.



CUSTOMER SERVICE

53 respondents commented that they would like to see better customer service provided by drivers.

Suggested improvements – Information, Fares and Ticketing

A smaller number of respondents made comments related to other areas, including communication/information, ticketing, and integration with rail:

- **43 comments** related to a request for **improved communication/information**, particularly when services are delayed and cancelled. Lack of information when a bus is cancelled or late is perceived to add to frustrations of customers.
- **43 comments** from respondents who feel the cost of travelling bus is too high for the service received.
- **24 respondents** commented that they would like to see **better integration with the rail network**, whilst **14 comments** were related to requests for **integrated tickets**.

“ When buses don't come there is no information as to why and if the next one will appear. ”

“ Having a connected transport system without needing to pay for separate travel fares. ”

“ Bus provision has to be reimagined as a true public service. I think the status quo is failing and that we need new thinking, and expert driven solutions. ”

Impact of Sub-standard Bus Provision



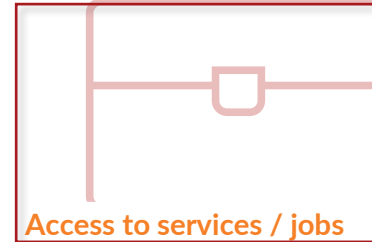
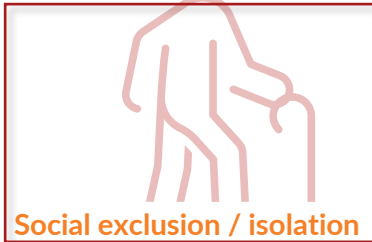
Some respondents commented on the impact that a good or bad bus service can have:

“ The bus frequency and routes have been cut and this is sometimes the only way elderly or disabled people can travel. ”

Many commented that cancelled services late at night had a negative impact on their personal safety due to having to either wait in the dark or walk home

“ It is very unsafe due to late or no-show busses, especially in the darker evenings. ”

Some felt that removal/change to services had led to some groups (particularly older/disabled people) becoming isolated



Respondents commented that a frequent and reliable bus service would help improve access to jobs.

Some respondents commented that a poor service has a negative impact on their mental health and they've felt stressed due to cancelled services



For some, an improved bus service would encourage them to get rid of their car and would have a positive impact on the environment.

Key take outs

Frequency

92%

respondents have used
the bus within the last
year

Base: 1,787

Covid changes

39%

travel by bus more since
the Covid-19 pandemic

Base: 1,787

Satisfaction

83%

respondents are
dissatisfied with the
current bus provision

Base: 1,787

Key take outs

Non-bus reasons

54%

don't travel by bus due to
lack of services in their
area

Base: 143

Improvements

75%

respondents would travel
more if services were
more frequent

Base: 1,787

Improvements

67%

would travel more if
reliability was improved

Base: 1,787

Public Drop In Sessions

To reach out to members of the public who unable to take the online survey or who feel more comfortable speaking to a member of the team, SYSTRA jointly with Renfrewshire Council undertook five public drop-in sessions around Renfrewshire. The locations were selected in liaison with the council's communications team, making sure that each location captures a certain geographic area. Two of the five sessions were run until late evening to allow people to drop in after work. Table 5 presents the schedule, locations and number of attendees in each session.

Table 5: Drop-in sessions schedule

| DATE | TIME | LOCATION | FACILITATORS | NO. OF ATTENDEES |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--|--|------------------|
| 30 th October 2023 | 10:00 to 16:00 | Erskine Library, Bridgewater Place, Erskine, PA8 7AA | Faqhrul Islam (SYSTRA) Ian Black (Renfrewshire Council) | 34 |
| 31 st October 2023 | 13:00 to 19:30 | Lagoon Leisure Centre, 11 Christie St, Paisley PA1 1NB | Faqhrul Islam (SYSTRA) Mark Higginbotham (Renfrewshire Council) | 25 |
| 1 st November 2023 | 13:00 to 19:30 | Braehead Shopping Centre, King's Inch Rd, Renfrew G51 4BN | Junaid Sahi (SYSTRA) Ian Black and Stephen Heron (Renfrewshire Council) | 6 |
| 2 nd November 2023 | 10:00 to 16:00 | Cargill Hall, Lintwhite Cres, Bridge of Weir PA11 3LJ | Craig Gow (SYSTRA) Ian Black (Renfrewshire Council) | 4 |
| 3 rd November 2023 | 10:00 to 16:00 | Johnstone Community Library, 25 Church St, Johnstone PA5 8FA | Craig Gow (SYSTRA) Ian Black (Renfrewshire Council) | 35 |

Public Drop-In Sessions- Key Problems Identified

In the drop-in sessions, participants were asked about their experience of bus journeys. Conversations with the participants revealed the following key problems with existing bus provision

Poor/ Reduced Frequency

- Short notice cancellations
- Leaves people stranded

Unreliability

- Buses don't show up
- Delayed buses

Hours of Operation

- Service stops early in the evening
- No services on Sunday

Access to Network

- Long walk to bus stops
- No services in some areas

Journey Time and interchanges

- Long journey time for some trips
- 2 or more interchanges for some key trips

Inaccurate Information

- Some services are not shown on electronic displays
- Incoming buses suddenly disappears from the app

On-board Safety

- School Kids do not move for others
- Antisocial behaviour has been witnessed on buses

Crowdedness

- Overcrowded due to School Pupils
- A passenger had panic attack and had to get off.

Public Drop-In Sessions- Key Problems Identified

Unaffordable fares

- Long journey time for some trips
- 2 or more interchanges for some key trips

Multiple Tickets

- Need single tickets for one trip with transfers
- Incoming buses suddenly disappears from the app

Poor Bus Stop Facilities

- Lack of benches at busy stops
- Access to buses is difficult due to low kerbs

Bus Bunching

- 45-minute waits, bunches of buses all coming at once
- Service 26 too many buses, frequency too high, sometimes 3 buses in minutes

Bus Cancellations

- Short notice cancellations
- Leaves people stranded

Service Withdrawal

- Number 20, 22, 54 removed
- Number 64- replaced with 7A

Unsatisfactory Driver Behaviour

- Rude behaviour
- Starts driving before elderly people settle down

Operator Reluctant to Improve

- Lack of competition between operators
- Don't communicate, and do not attend council meetings

Network Analysis

Section 4

Existing Bus Operators

- Figure 15 shows that McGill's is the main bus operator in Renfrewshire with over 75% of the Weekly Total Revenue Distance. First Glasgow is the second biggest operator covering around 10% of revenue distance.
- 81% of the network is served by commercial services and 19% by subsidised services.

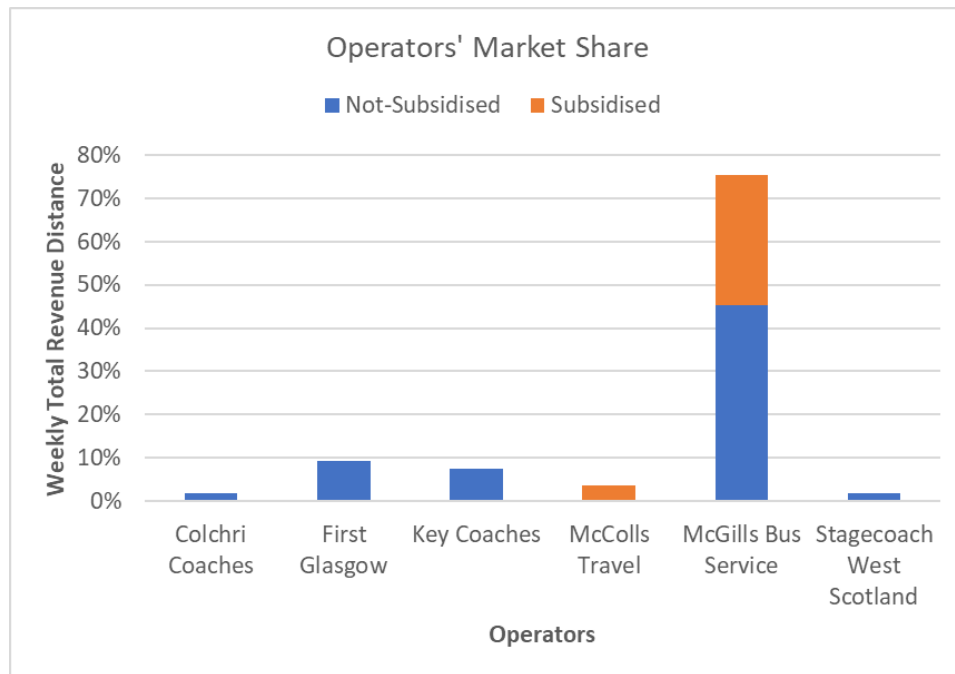


Figure 15: Bus operators market share in Renfrewshire

Subsidised services

Figure 16 Shows the bus routes in Renfrewshire that are subsidised by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport.

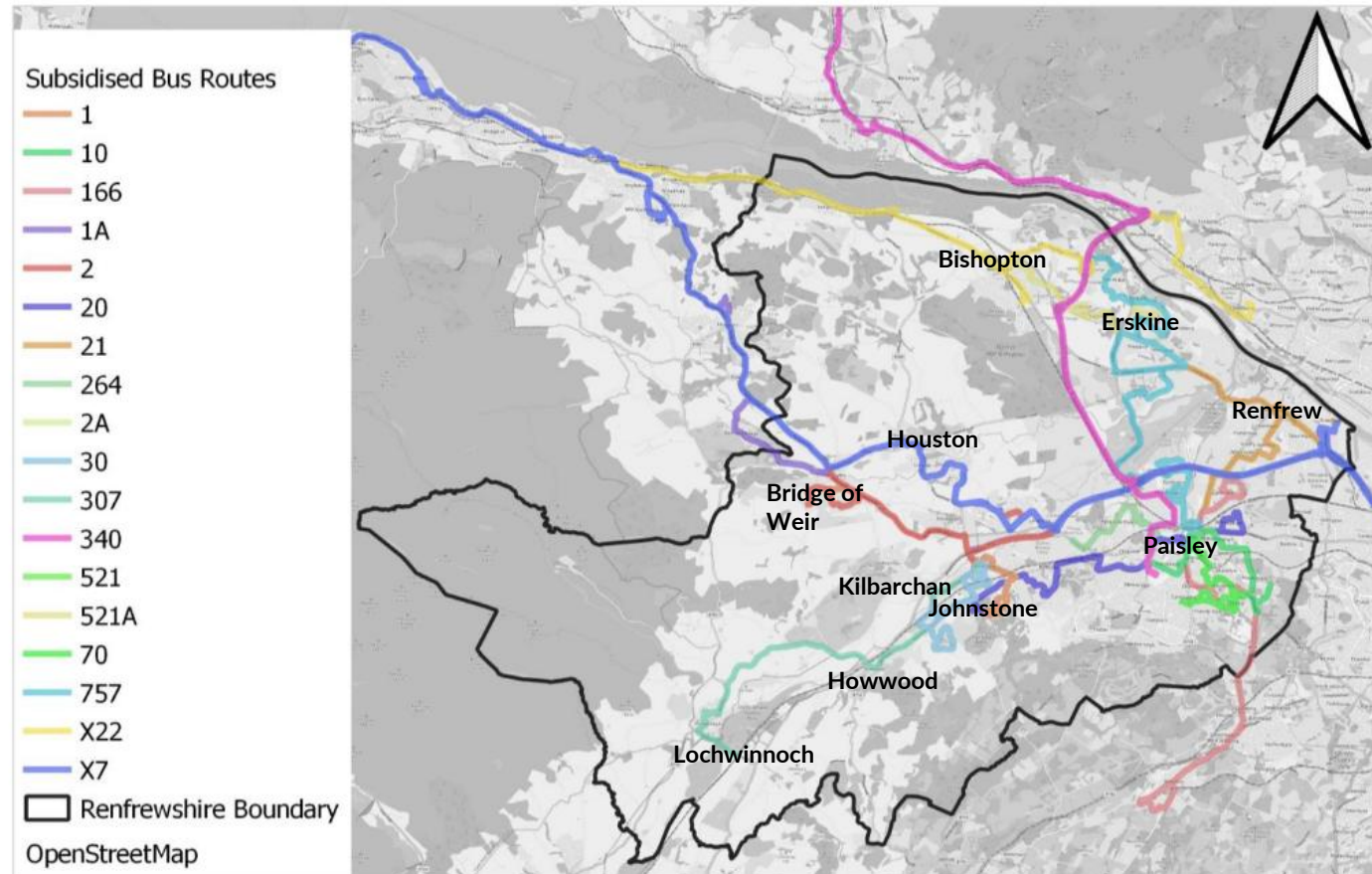


Figure 16: SPT subsidised routes in Renfrewshire

Core Service Routes

Table 6: Core service routes in Renfrewshire

| No. | Description | Connects | Type of Route | First Service | Last Service | Service Frequency | | | |
|-----|---|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | | | | Peak | Interpeak | Saturday | Sunday |
| 26 | Nethercraigs - Glasgow | Glenburn, Potterhill, Paisley Centre, Gallowhill, Porterfield, Renfrew, Braehead Shopping Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Govan, Glasgow Central | Core | 05:22 | 23:02 | 8-10mins | 8mins | 7-15mins | 10-30mins |
| 38 | Johnstone to Glasgow | Kilbarchan, Cochrane Castle, Spateston, Johnstone, Elderslie, Paisley Centre, Whitehaugh, Ibrox, Glasgow Central | Core | 05:05 | 22:28 | 8mins | 8mins | 8mins | 20mins |
| 23 | Erskine to Glasgow | Bargarran, Erskine Library, Park Mains, Inchinnan, Braehead Shopping Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Govan, Glasgow Central, Buchanan Bus Station | Core | 04:58 | 22:31 | 15mins | 30mins | 20-30mins | 30mins |
| X23 | Erskine to Glasgow | Bargarran, Erskine Library, Park Mains, Inchinnan, Braehead Shopping Centre, Glasgow Central, Buchanan Bus Station | Express | 05:55 | 19:55 | 20mins | 30mins | 30mins | - |
| 757 | Paisley to Clydebank Bus Station | Paisley Centre, Inchinnan, Park Mains, Erskine, Dalmuir, Clydebank Bus Station | Principal | 05:27 | 23:00 | 30mins | 30mins | 30mins | 60mins |
| 17 | Foxbar to Queen Elizabeth University Hospital | Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley Town Centre & Cardonald | Principal | 05:59 | 20:00 | 30mins | 30mins | 30mins | - |
| 61 | Paisley Town Centre to Foxbar | Paisley town centre & Lounsdale Road | Core | 05:25 | 23:30 | 10mins | 10mins | 10-20mins | 20mins |

No direct bus from Bridge of Weir, Kilbarchan and Houston to RAH or Paisley

Early Finishing and Night Services

Table 7: Services that stop early in the evening

| No. | Description | Connects | Type of Route | First Service | Last Service | Service Frequency | | | |
|------|--|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| | | | | | | Peak | Interpeak | Saturday | Sunday |
| 70 | Paisley – Lochfield (SPT Subsidised) | Seedhill, Hunterhill, Dykebar, Lochfield | | 09:55 | 16:24 | 60mins | 60mins | 60mins | - |
| 1 | Johnstone Station - Kilmacolm (SPT Subsidised) | Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Quarriers Village | | 08:23 | 16:23 | 120mins | 120mins | 120mins | - |
| 1A | | Linwood, Houston, Bridge of Weir, Quarriers Village | | 07:19 | 15:19 | 120mins | 120mins | 120mins | |
| 2/2A | Johnstone Station - Johnstone Station (SPT Subsidised) | Circular serving Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Houston, Linwood | | 06:37 | 17:56 | 60mins | 60mins | 60mins | - |
| 521 | Erskine- Bishopton Station (SPT Subsidised) | Mains Hill, Linburn | | 07:44 | 18:38 | 60mins | 60mins | 60mins | - |
| 6 | Silverburn - Paisley | Nitshill, Hurllet, Lonend | | 07:31 | 17:48 | 60mins | 60mins | 60mins | - |
| 10 | Hawkhead Estate - Royal Alexandra Hospital | Ben Nevis Estate, Seedhill, Paisley Town Centre, RAH | | 08:45 | 17:45 | 60mins | 60mins | 60mins | - |
| 30 | Johnstone - Spateston | Johnstone, Corseford , Spateston | | 06:45 | 18:08 | 60mins | 60mins | 60mins | - |

There is only one night service- N38 Glasgow – Paisley on weekends from 00:30 to 03:30

Changes in Bus Routes

Changes in bus routes have been investigated using GIS mapping of bus network exported from PODARIS for different years. We present a comparison between 2015 and 2019 to understand changes in the network in the pre-Covid years. A year-by-year comparison shows marginal change; hence it was deemed appropriate to present results across multiple years. Note that some areas are served by multiple bus routes, hence it may not be possible to identify the removal or addition of a specific service from this network comparison if the area is served by other routes.

2019 vs 2015 Bus Networks

Network Loss (in blue)

The Figure 17 shows the comparison between 2019 and 2015 bus network in Renfrewshire. Blue lines show the bus routes that existed in 2015 but not in 2019. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

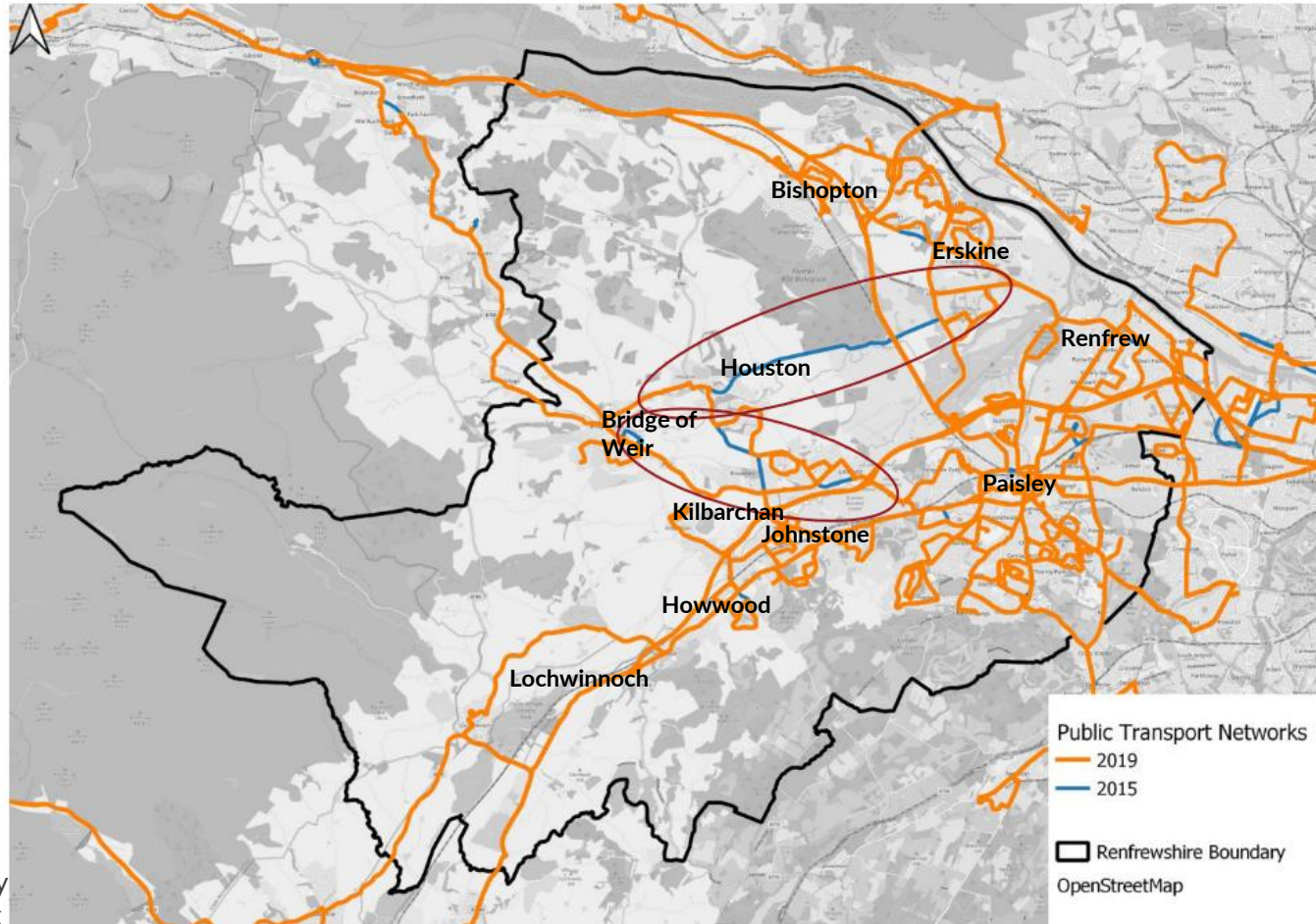


Figure 17: Loss of bus routes in 2019 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Routes

2015 vs 2019 Bus Networks

Network Gain (in orange)

The Figure 18 shows the comparison between 2019 and 2015 bus network in Renfrewshire. Orange lines show the bus routes that did not exist in 2015 but do exist in 2019. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

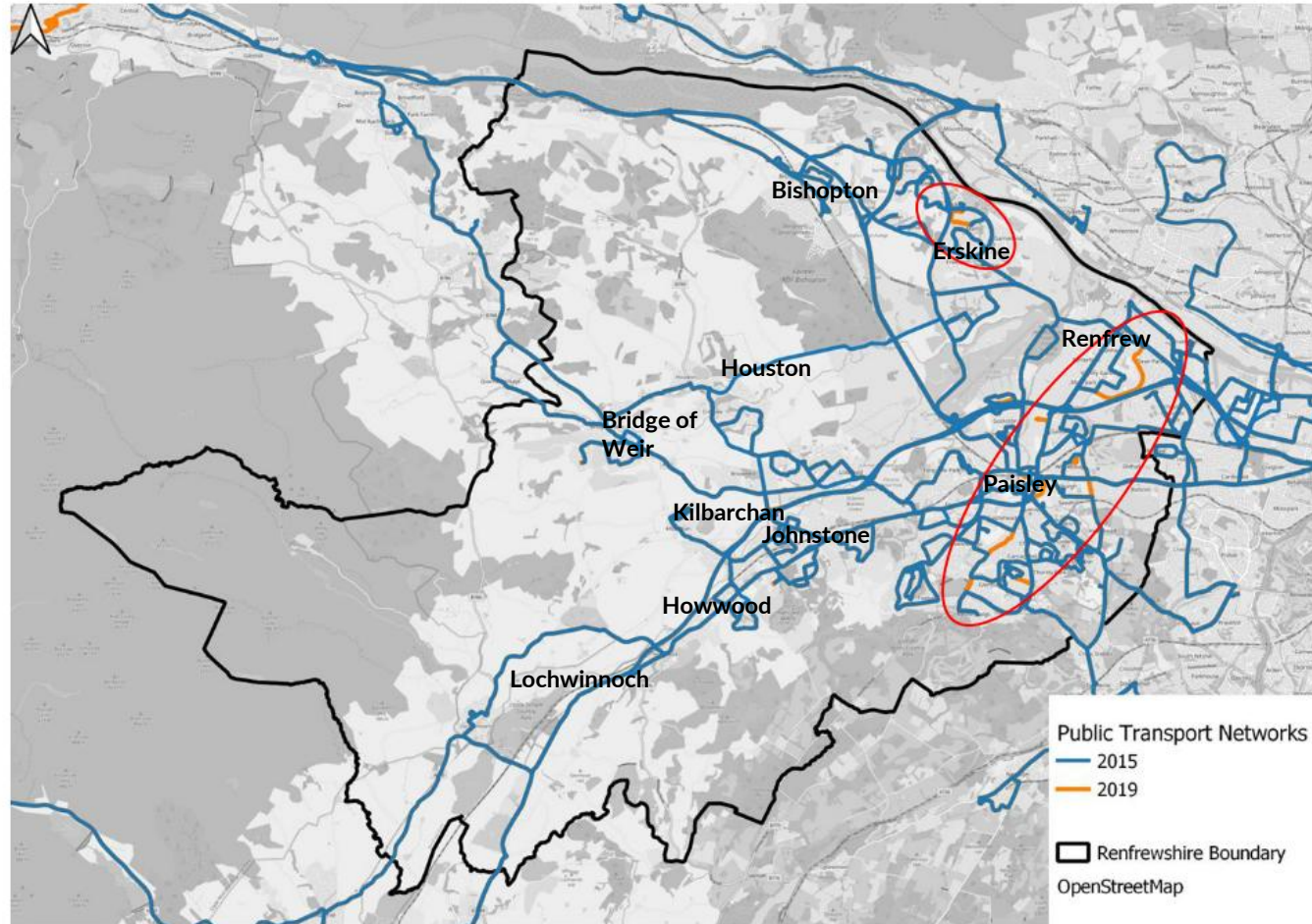


Figure 18: Gain in bus routes in 2019 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Routes

We also present a comparison between 2015 and 2023 to understand changes in the network over the 8-year period.

Note that some areas are served by multiple bus routes, hence it may not be possible to identify the removal or addition of a specific service from this network comparison if the area is served by other routes.

2023 vs 2015 Bus Networks

Network Loss (in green)

The Figure 19 shows the comparison between 2023 and 2015 bus network in Renfrewshire. Green lines show the bus routes that existed in 2015 but not in 2023. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

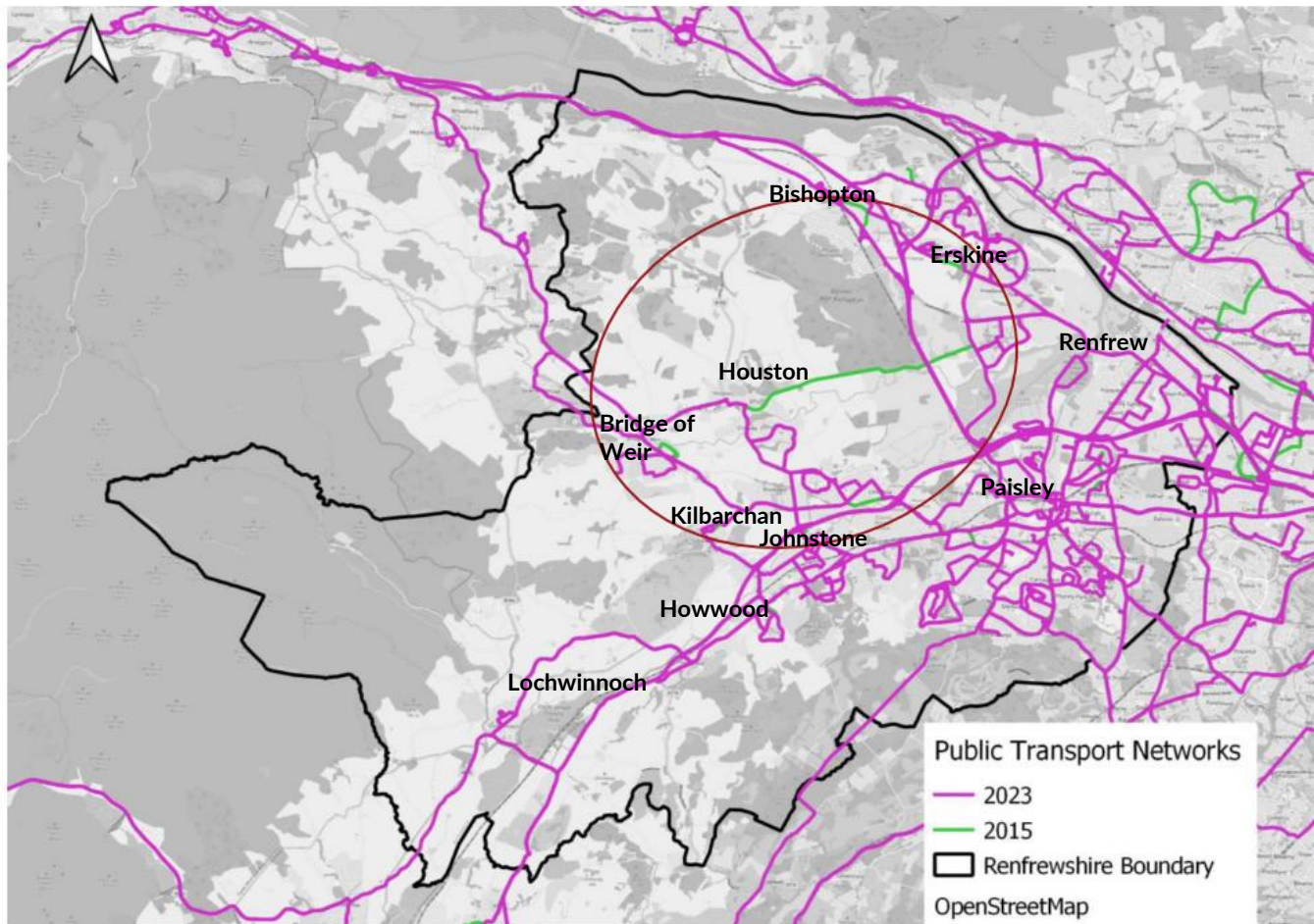


Figure 19: Loss of bus routes in 2023 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Routes

2015 vs 2023 Bus Networks

Network Gain (in purple)

The Figure 20 shows the comparison between 2015 and 2023 bus network in Renfrewshire. Purple lines show the bus routes that did not exist in 2015 but do exist in 2023. Note that this does not indicate any change in the bus frequency or re-routing of bus routes.

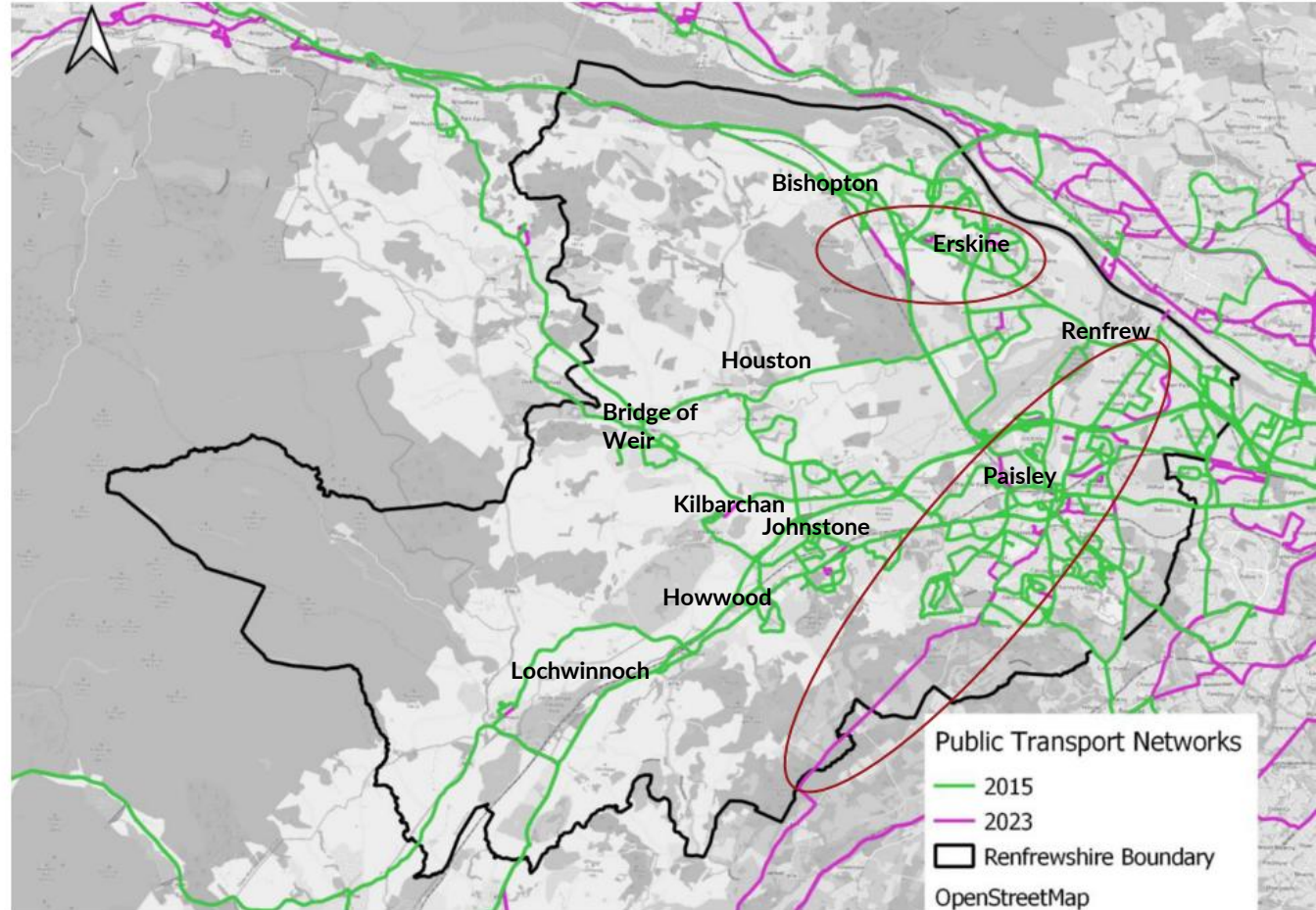


Figure 20: Gain in bus routes in 2023 compared with 2015

Changes in Bus Frequency

To understand changes in bus frequencies, we undertook frequency analysis at stops during different time periods. Average buses per hour (bph) at stops were compared between 2015 and 2019, and then between 2019 and 2023. This is deemed appropriate as it demonstrates how bus frequencies have changed before and after the COVID pandemic.

Figure 21 shows change in average buses per hour (bph) at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the AM period, i.e. 7am to 9pm. Majority of the routes lost up to 10 buses in the AM period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley - Renfrew
- Paisley- Johnstone-Kilbarchan
- Glasgow-Erskine
- Paisley - Potterhill
- Paisley- Bridge of Weir

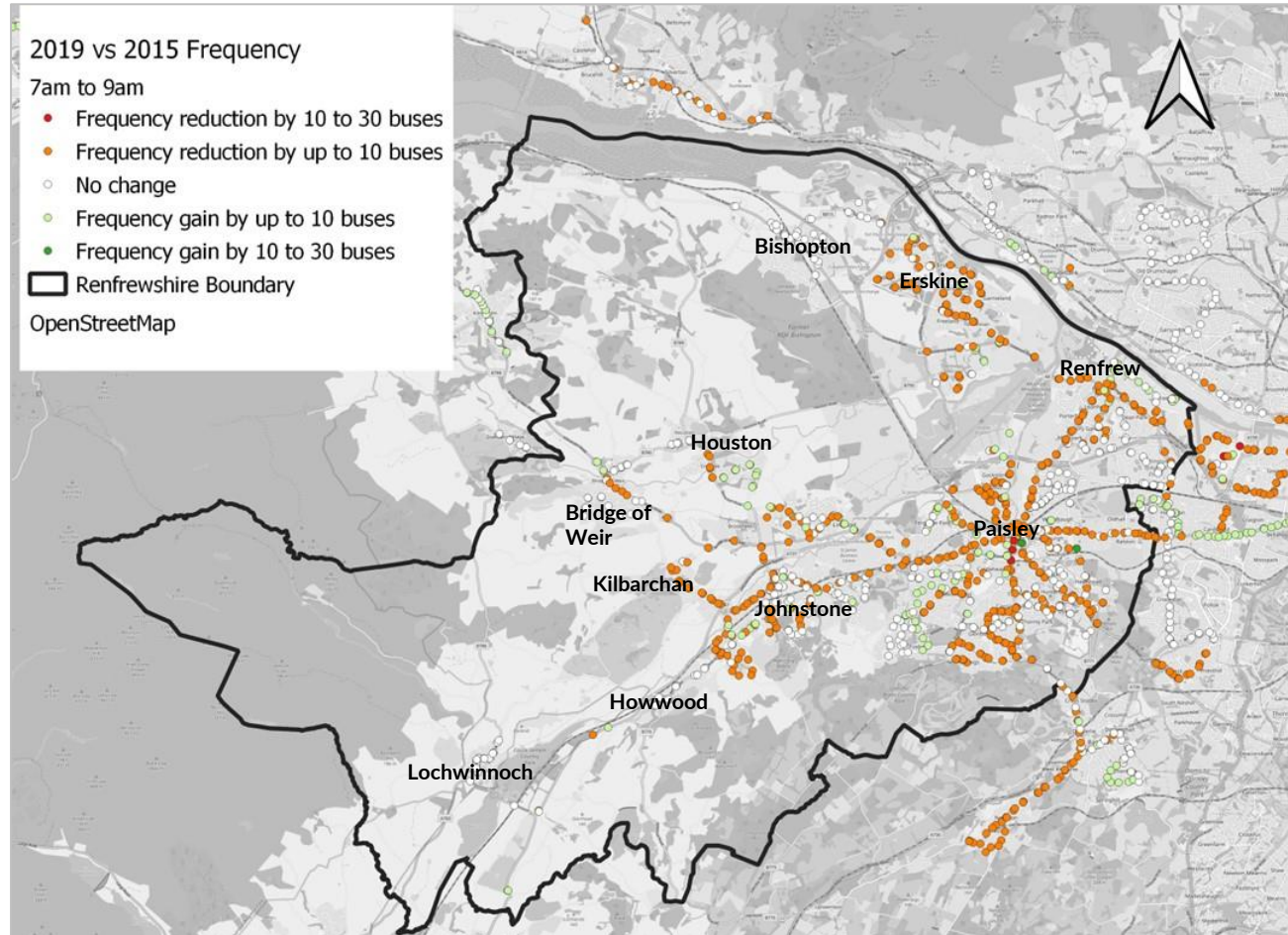


Figure 21: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the AM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 22 shows majority of the routes lost up to 10 bph in the interpeak period. Paisley- Johnstone corridor shows loss of 10 to 30 bph during this period. Some frequency gain are found within Foxbar area.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley – Renfrew- Erskine
- Paisley- Johnstone- Kilbarchan
- Paisley – Potterhill
- Paisley- Neilston (Cross-boundary)

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley – Foxbar

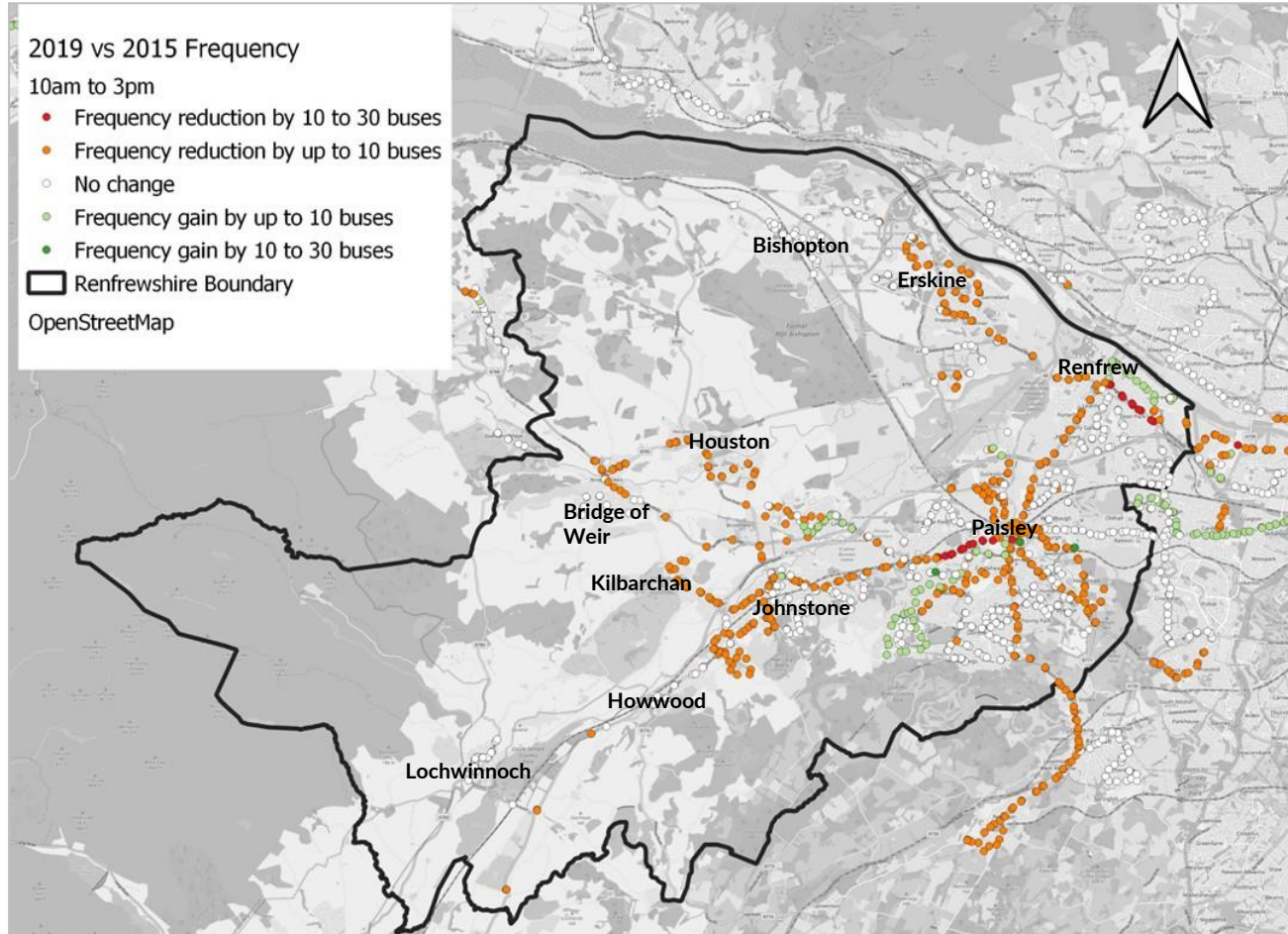


Figure 22: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the interpeak period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 23 shows that the majority of the routes lost up to 10 bph in the PM period. Some stops in Renfrew show loss of 10 to 20bph during this period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley – Renfrew- Erskine
- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Johnstone-Kilbarchan
- Paisley – Potterhill
- Paisley- Houston
- Paisley- Neilston (Cross-boundary)

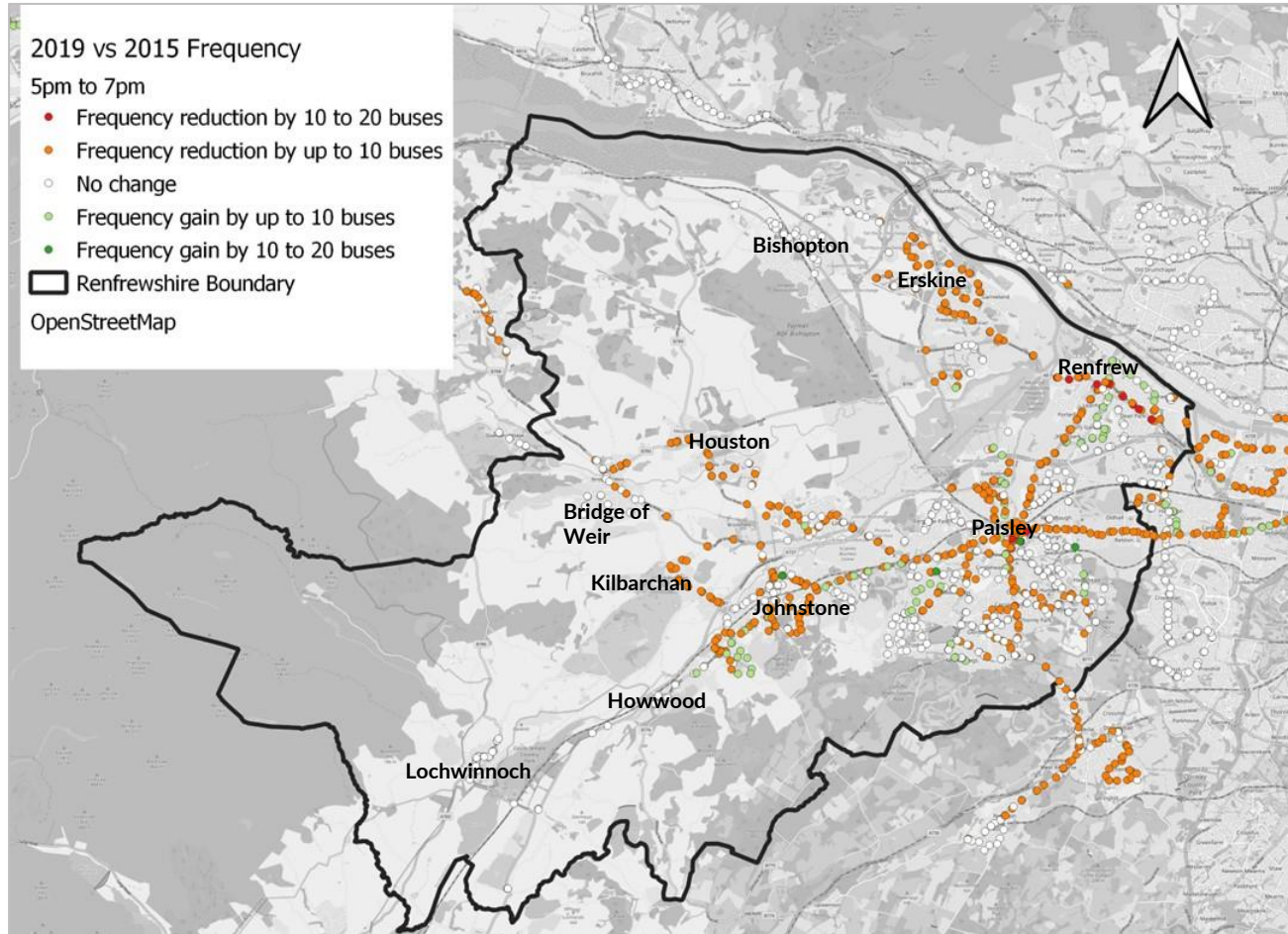


Figure 23: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the PM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 24 shows that the majority of the routes lost up to total 8 bph in the evening period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley – Renfrew- Erskine
- Paisley- Glasgow
- Johnstone
- Paisley – Foxbar /Nethercraigs
- Paisley- Auchenback

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley – Neilston (cross boundary)

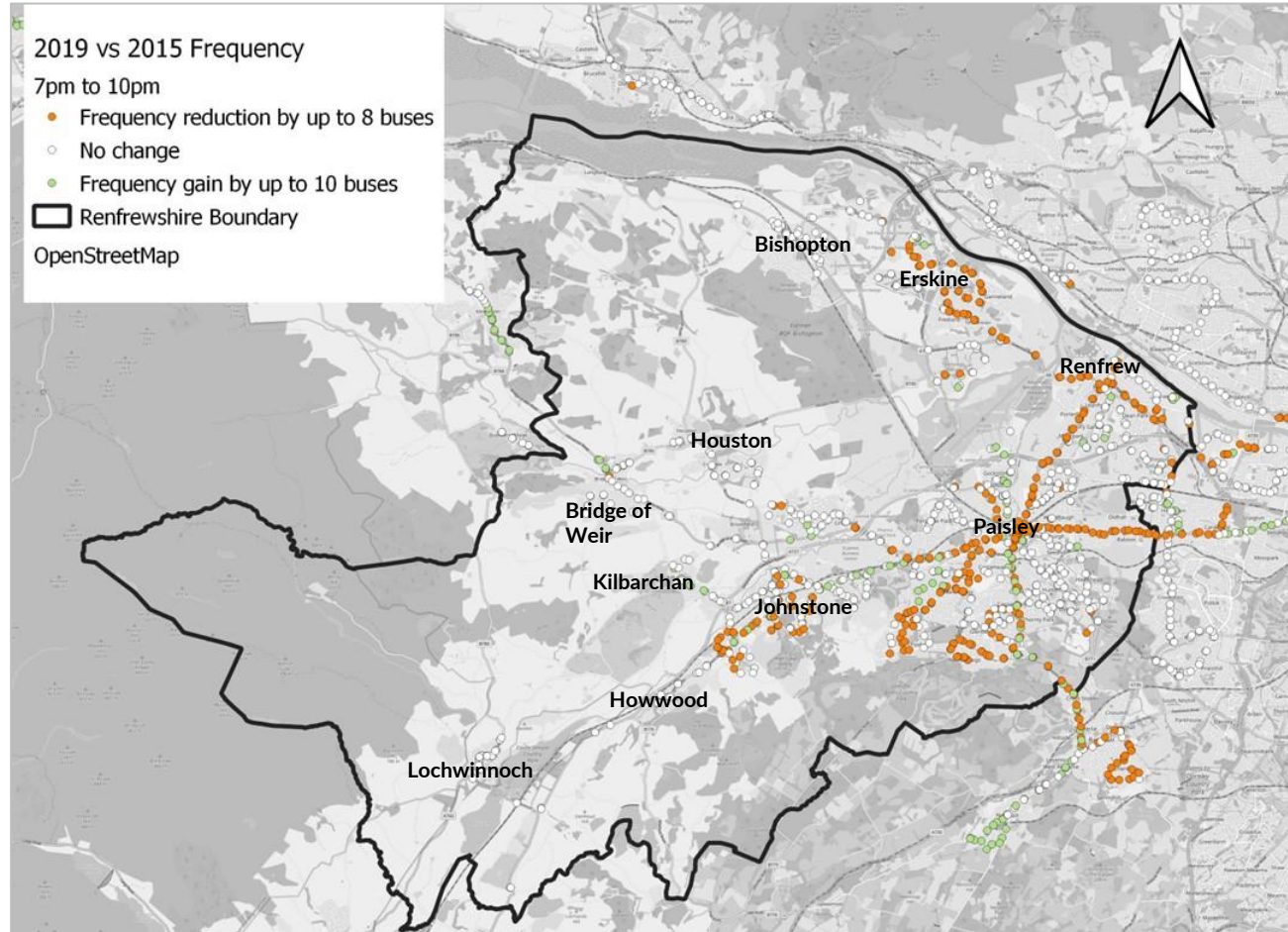


Figure 24: Change in average bph at stops between 2019 and 2015 in the evening

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 25 shows change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 during the AM period, i.e. 7am to 9pm.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Auchenback
- Paisley- Dykebar
- Paisley- Gallowhill
- Paisley- Ferguslie, Linwood
- Johnstone- Kilbarchan
- Paisley – Foxbar /Nethercraigs

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Renfrew
- Bridge of Weir
- Houston
- Lochwinnoch
- Howwood

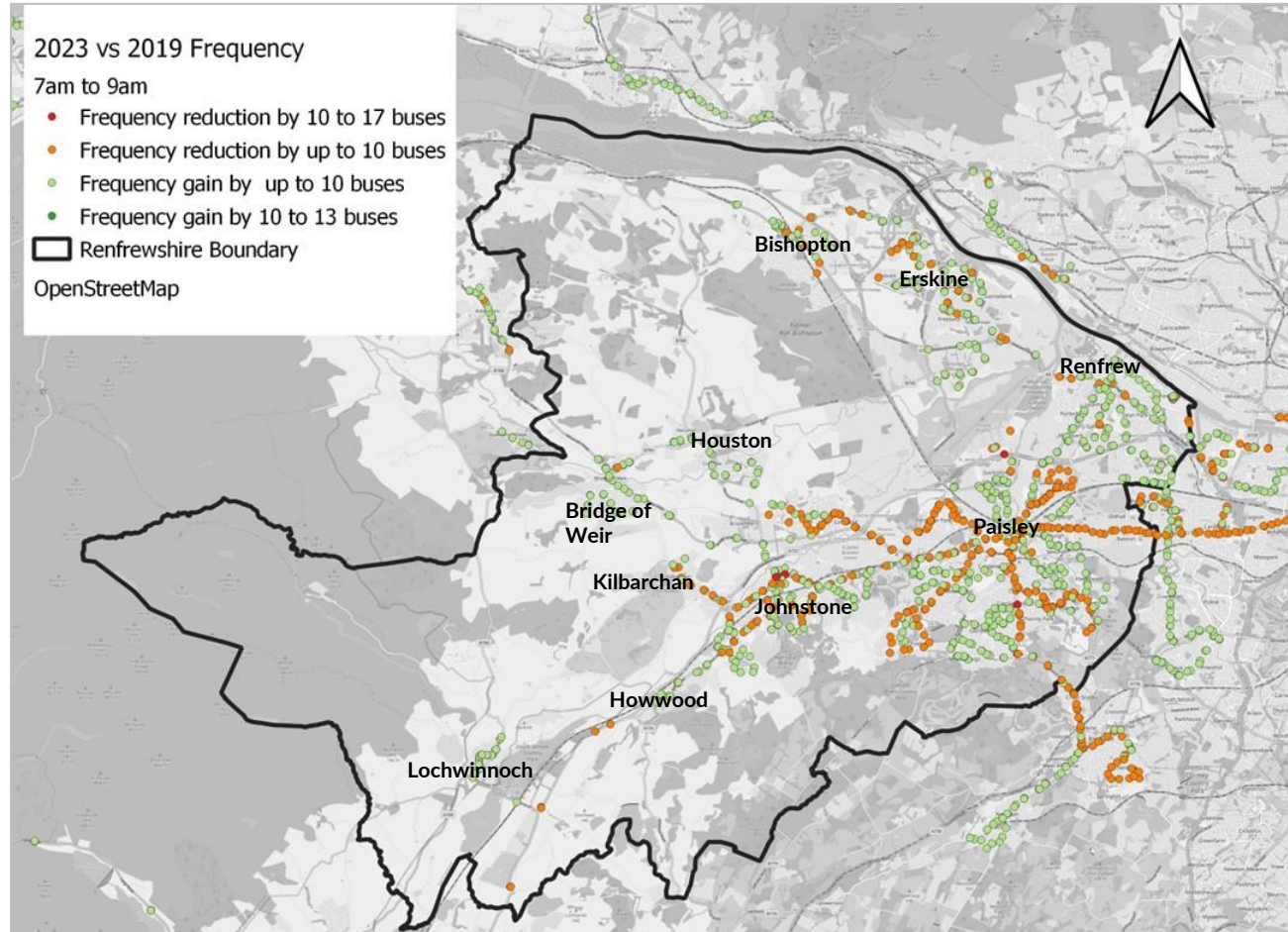


Figure 25: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the AM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 26 shows change in average bph at stops during the interpeak period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Dykebar- Barrhead
- Paisley- Gallowhill
- Paisley- Feruslie, Linwood
- Johnstone
- Paisley – Foxbar

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley- Johnstone

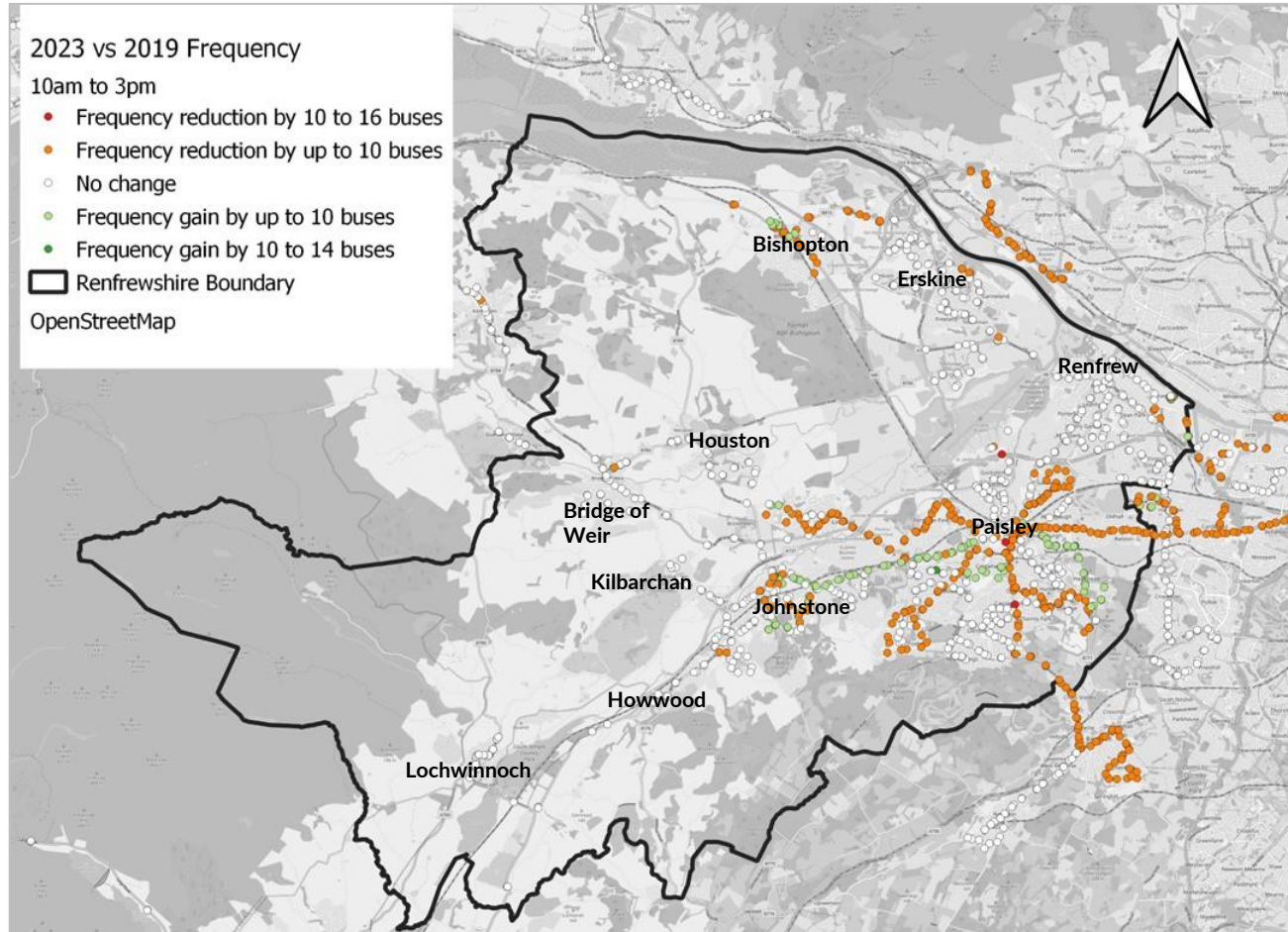


Figure 26: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the interpeak period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 27 shows change in average bph at stops between during the PM period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Dykebar
- Paisley- Feruslie, Linwood
- Paisley- Johnstone
- Paisley- Foxbar

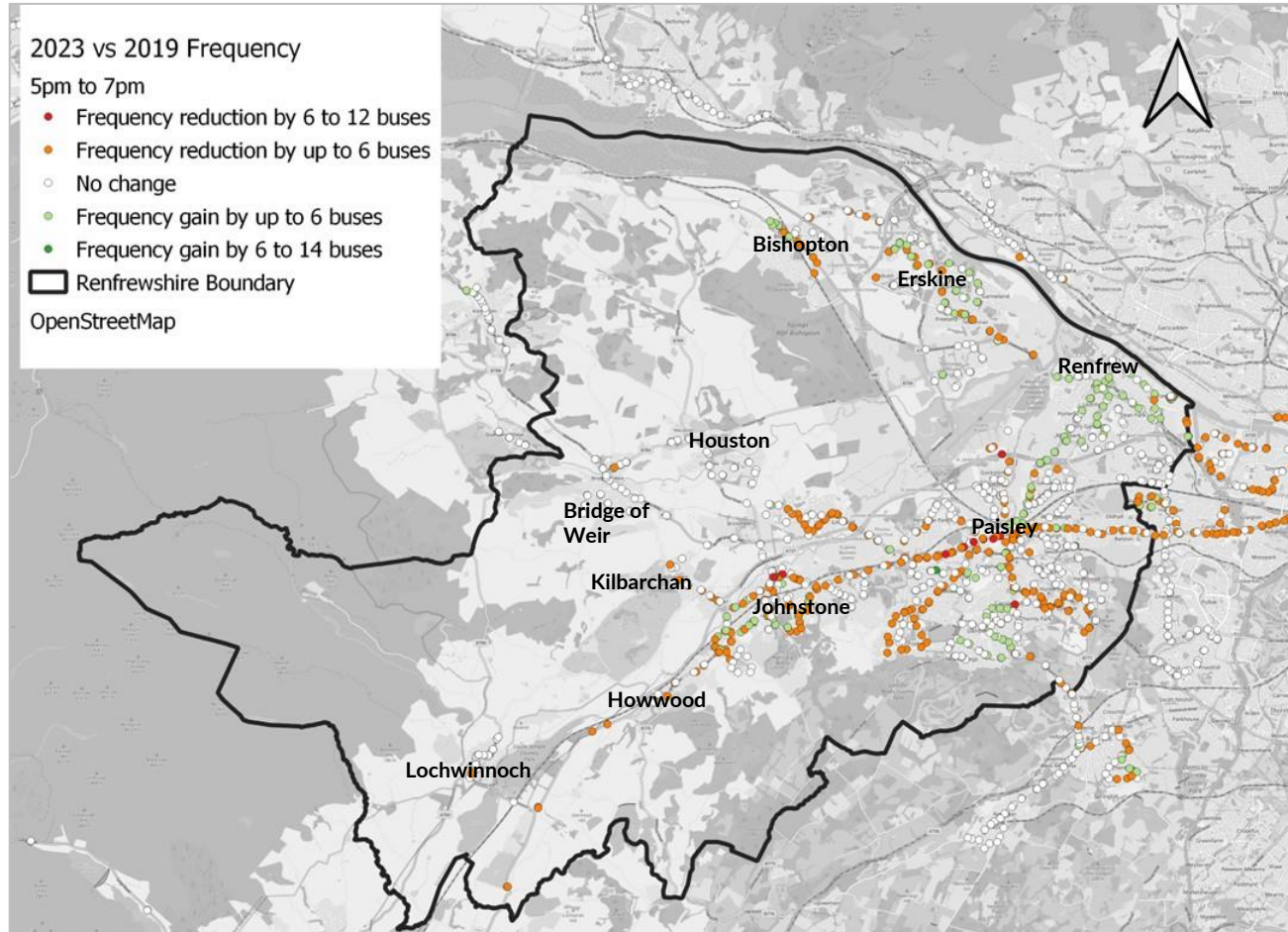


Figure 27: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the PM period

Changes in Bus Frequency

Figure 28 shows change in average bph at stops between frequencies at stops during the evening period.

Key routes with frequency reductions are-

- Paisley- Glasgow
- Paisley- Johnstone
- Paisley- Dykebar
- Kilbarchan

Key routes with frequency increase are-

- Paisley- Glasgow

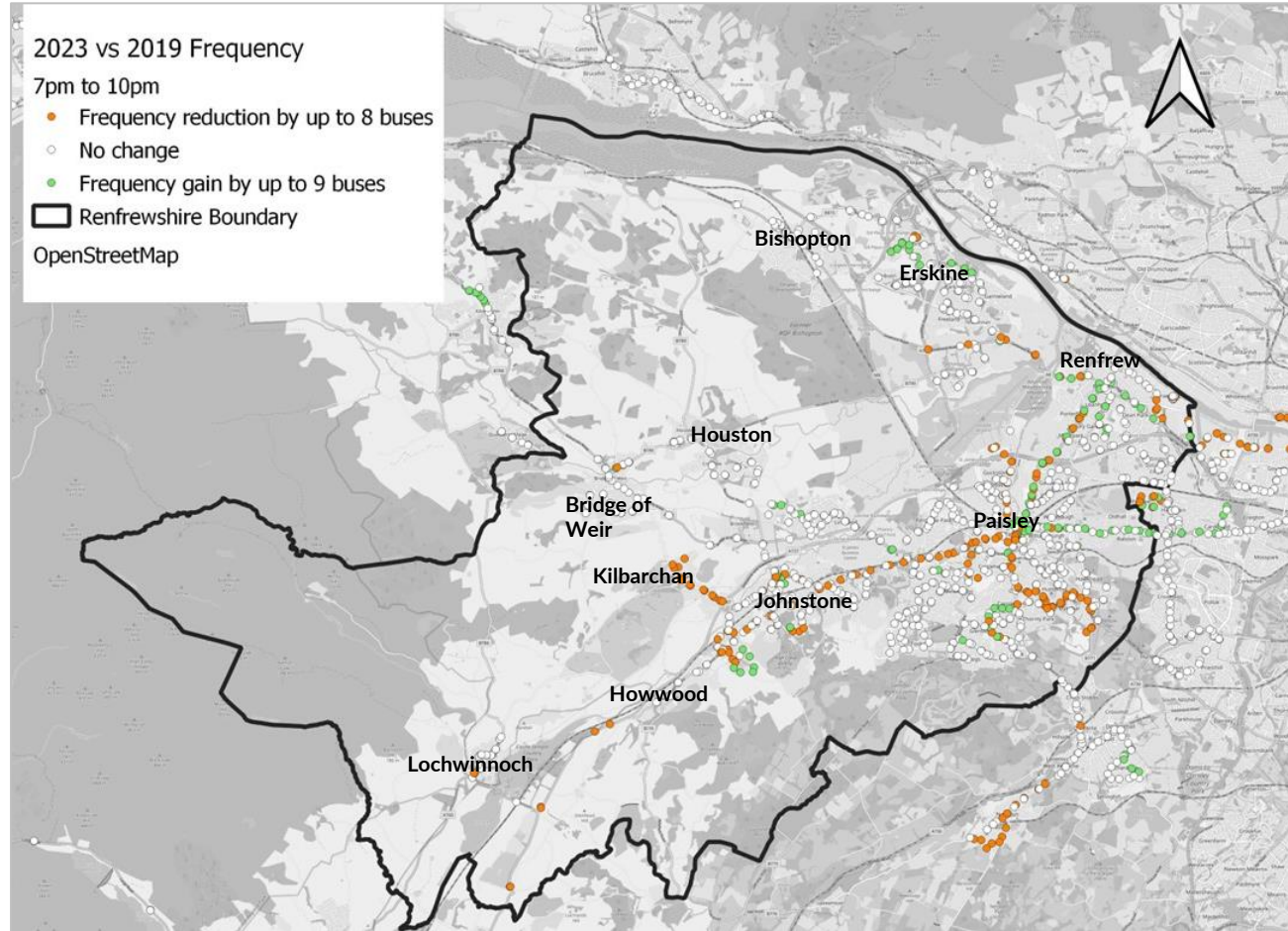


Figure 28: Change in average bph at stops between 2023 and 2019 in the evening

Bus Service Withdrawal

Scottish Government's Network Support Grant (NSG) fund was available to both commercial and community bus operators to support Scotland's bus network, keep fares more affordable and recover from the Covid 19 impacts. The NSG ceased on 31 March 2023. Consequently, six bus services were withdrawn from Renfrewshire in May- July 2023 (Table 8). Withdrawal of these services caused inconveniences for a lot of passengers, some of which were reported through the public consultation.

Table 8: Service withdrawal in May-July 2023

| Operator | Service no | Route |
|------------------------------|------------|---|
| First Glasgow (No.1) Limited | N9 | Sauchiehall St - Paisley, Gauze St |
| McGill's Bus Service | 22 | Paisley - Erskine |
| McGill's Bus Service | 31 | Johnstone Castle + Cochrane Castle circular - Johnstone |
| McGill's Bus Service | 54 | Neilston circular - Paisley |
| McGill's Bus Service | 64 | Phoenix Park or Glasgow - Gallowhill or Newton |
| McGill's Bus Service | 22S | Paisley - Erskine |

Services to Employment

We used Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data 2022 for access to employment analysis. Table 9 shows number of jobs within each locality and the available bus services and frequencies. Major employment centres with more than 2000 jobs in Renfrewshire are –

- Paisley
- Renfrew
- Paisley Airport area
- Johnstone
- Elderslie

Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone are well served with services every 8-10mins in the peak hour. Paisley airport area has only one service (No757), therefore any delay or cancellations would have serious impact on the commuters.

Services to Employment

Table 9 Existing bus provision to employments

| Name | Urban Rural Classification | No. of Jobs | Existing Bus Provision |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|---|
| Erskine | Other Urban Area | 1,300 | 757: 15 mins peak and 30mins interpeak, 521/521A- Hourly services, 23/X23: 15- 20mins peak frequency |
| Renfrew | Large Urban Area | 10,738 | 26: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 23/X23: 15- 20mins peak frequency, 21: half hourly services, 77:20-30mins |
| Bishopston | Accessible Small Town | 865 | 521/521A: hourly services, Train every 15 mins |
| Inchinnan | Accessible Small Town | 320 | 757: 15mins peak hour and 30mins inter peak time. |
| Paisley | Large Urban Area | 32,930 | 26: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 757: 15 mins peak and 30mins interpeak, 21: half hourly services, 6:hourly services, 51/51A: every 15 mins (peak), 66: half hourly services, 904: hourly services, 20/20A: 30 mins morning peak and hourly services, 61: 10mins frequency |
| Paisley-Airport Area | Large Urban Area | 7,050 | 757: 15 mins peak and 30mins interpeak |
| Elderslie | Large Urban Area | 2,210 | 20/20A: 30 mins morning peak and hourly services, 17A: 30 mins (peak and inter-peak), 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency |
| Johnstone | Large Urban Area | 3,530 | 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency, 7/7A: 9-11 mins frequency, 17A: 30 mins (peak and inter-peak), 20/20A: Hourly services, 1/1A:half hourly services, 51/51A: every 15 mins (peak), 17A: 30 mins (peak and inter-peak), 32: half hourly peak and hourly interpeak frequency, 30: hourly services, 61: 10mins frequency |
| Kilbarchan | Large Urban Area | 220 | 1/1A: half hourly services, 32: half hourly peak and hourly interpeak frequency, 38/38A: 8-10 mins peak frequency |
| Linwood | Large Urban Area | 1,540 | 7/7A: 9-11 mins frequency, 1A: Hourly services |
| Houston/Crosslee | Accessible Small Town | 615 | 1A: Hourly services, X7: 40-60 mins frequency |
| Bridge of Weir | Accessible Small Town | 635 | 1/1A: half hourly services, X7:40-60 mins frequency |
| Howwood | Accessible Rural Area | 120 | 904: hourly services |
| Lochwinnoch | Accessible Rural Area | 260 | 307/307A: hourly services between 18:00 and 22:00 |
| Langbank | Accessible Rural Area | 115 | No bus service. Trains every 30mins |

Journey Time Reliability

Bus Punctuality

Glasgow and Strathclyde Strategic Bus Network Plan (GSSBNP) study identified the routes where services get delayed within SPT area. The study used data from July to September 2022 for a sample of services. Two of the identified routes connect Paisley with Glasgow-

- Glasgow to Paisley via M8
- Glasgow to Paisley via A761 (Glasgow Rd)

Table 10 shows the percentage of services that are late by more than 2 minutes at different time periods. Overall, more than half of the services are late on these routes in a day with almost all services late by more than 2 mins in the PM period.

Table 10: Percentage of services that are late by more than 2 minutes at different time periods

| Time period | Glasgow to Paisley via M8 | Glasgow to Paisley via A761 (Glasgow Rd) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Early AM (0400-0800) | 25-50% | 25-50% |
| AM (0800-0900) | 50-75% | 25-50% |
| Interpeak (0900-1700) | 50-75% | 50-75% |
| PM (1700-1800) | 75-100% | 75-100% |
| Evening (1800-2200) | 50-75% | 50-75% |
| All day | 50-75% | 50-75% |

Accessibility to LDP Sites

Key LDP sites are concentrated across the following areas- Bishopton; Erskine; Renfrew Ferry . Industrial Supply Sites below deemed to not have access to a bus service within a 400m walk-

- Glasgow Airport – AMIDS
- Ferguslie Park
- Linwood

Table 11 shows LDP sites with proposed number of dwellings and existing bus provision. Note that new services might be planned as part of the planning applications.

Access to LDP Sites

Table 11: LDP sites with existing bus provision

| Site References | Dwellings Pre-2026 | Dwellings Post 2026 | Total Dwellings | Bus Provision |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| RFRF1037 RFRF0911Z RFRF0911Y | 576 | 1,343 | 1,919 | Bishopton - new larger housing estate and no existing bus routes in vicinity (adjacent to RFRF0911Z). Design looks to be parking space for dwellings. Site approx. 1600m walk to Bishopton Rail Station. |
| RFRF0769B RFRF0994 | 225 | 559 | 784 | Renfrew - at corner of Ferry Road and Kings Inch Road. Served by McGill's 26 and FGLA 77, with approx. 11-14 buses per hour (bph) in Peak. Located at Renfrew/Yoker Ferry which is understood to be replaced by a bridge (however limited as is a draw bridge). Located to the east of site RFRF0994 which is further away from bus corridor. |
| RFRF0971A | 420 | 200 | 620 | Dykebar - site located on McGill's 66 and 166 routes and encompasses Dykebar Hospital. Frequency approx. 4-6bph in peaks. |
| RFRF0971 | 140 | 110 | 250 | Thornly Park - on B774 Caplehill Road. Served by McGill's 51 and 54 with 11-12 bph during peak times and mapping indicating within a walking distance of existing stop |
| RFRF1003 | 165 | 81 | 246 | Erskine - located on A726 and serviced by McGill's 23D. Reasonable frequency however no bus stop infrastructure located on road at site which would be required. |
| RFRF0989A | 195 | 15 | 210 | Hawkhead - served by McGill's 10 and Key Coaches, with frequency of 1bph. Appears to be housing, many of which have driveways. Within walk distance of Hawkhead Rail Station. |
| RFRF1040 | - | 150 | 150 | Ferguslie Park - main section of site located within 400m of existing service (McGill's 24 and 264), however not all parts of site are. East end of site walkable to Paisley St James rail station. |
| RFRF1024 | 50 | 50 | 100 | Spateston - located on B787 Beith Road, service level of 7-9bph in AM peak. |

Access to Active Bus Stops

We used Scottish Government's 6-fold Urban-Rural classification to determine the population within walking distances of bus stops. The following walking distances have been used -

- Urban areas: 400m and 600m
- Small towns: 600m and 800m
- Rural areas: 800m

Table 12 shows % of population within distance of a bus stop with at least an hourly bus service at different time periods. The analysis show that a high proportion of population within urban areas are within 600m of bus stops. Small towns have relatively lower coverage (maximum 76% of population within 800m) and rural areas are poorly served with only around 40% population being within 800m of active bus stops. This indicates the limitations in terms of access to bus network in Howwood, Lochwinnoch and Langbank.

Table 12: Percentage of population within walking distances of bus stops in Renfrewshire

| URBAN - RURAL CLASSIFICATION | TOWNS/SETTLEMENTS | MORNING PEAK (0700-0900) | | | INTER PEAK (1000-1500) | | | EVENING PEAK (1700-1900) | | |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | Within 400m | Within 600m | Within 800m | Within 400m | Within 600m | Within 800m | Within 400m | Within 600m | Within 800m |
| Large Urban Area | Renfrew, Paisley, Elderslie, Johnstone, Kilbarchan, Linwood | 78% | 88% | - | 77% | 88% | - | 75% | 87% | |
| Other Urban Area | Erskine | 71% | 80% | - | 74% | 82% | - | 71% | 80% | |
| Accessible Small Town | Bishopton, Inchinnan, Houston/ Crosslee, Bridge of Weir | - | 68% | 76% | - | 69% | 76% | | 63% | 72% |
| Remote Small Town | N/A | - | N/A | N/A | - | N/A | N/A | | N/A | N/A |
| Accessible Rural Area | Howwood, Lochwinnoch, Langbank | - | - | 41% | - | - | 32% | | | 42% |
| Remote Rural Area | N/A | - | - | N/A | - | - | N/A | | | N/A |

Accessibility Gaps

Accessibility isochrones have been mapped to determine access to services by public transport, using the following criteria -

- Access to bus stops with at least an hourly service
- Number of transfers limited to 2
- Access to a bus /rail within 800m walking distance

Table 13 shows town/settlements where access to health and education by bus journeys require more than 50 mins. It is to be noted that the analysis has been undertaken using Podaris tool which takes account of average waiting time during each time period.

The analysis show that journeys to hospitals, universities and colleges from Bridge of Weir, Howwood, and Lochwinnoch take more than 50mins in all time periods, making it difficult and inconvenient to access these services for people who do not/cannot drive.

Table 13: Accessibility to health and education

| Access to | AM Journey time >50mins | IP Journey time >50mins | PM Journey time >50mins | OP Journey time >50mins |
|------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Hospitals | Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Houston, Craigends, Lochwinnoch, Bishopton | Bridge of Weir Houston, Lochwinnoch | Bridge of Weir Houston, Craigends, Lochwinnoch | Bridge of Weir Houston, Craigends, Bishopton Lochwinnoch |
| GP | Part of Langbank | - | - | - |
| College | Part of Langbank, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch | Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch | Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch | Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch |
| University | Part of Langbank, Part of Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch | Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Lochwinnoch | Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch | Erskine, Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Lochwinnoch |

Accessibility to Settlements

Definition of accessible towns and rural areas according to Scotland's Urban/Rural 6-fold Classification²:

- Accessible Small Towns: Settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
- Accessible Rural Areas: Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30-minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.

Table 14 below shows accessibility analysis results to determine whether the settlements are accessible by PT as per the definition above. The results show that majority of these settlements are out with 30mins of public transport journeys from a settlement of 10,000 or more.

Table 14: Accessibility by bus in 30 mins

| Settlements | Urban-Rural Classification (6-fold) | AM | IP | PM | OP | Remarks |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|------|------|------|---|
| Bishopton | Accessible Small Towns | Yes | Yes* | Yes* | Yes* | *Access to small areas of Paisley is possible |
| Houston/Crosslee | Accessible Small Towns | No | No | No | No | Not within 30mins of Johnstone or Paisley |
| Bridge of Weir | Accessible Small Towns | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Within 30mins of Johnstone |
| Howwood | Accessible Rural Areas | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Average wait time is much lower in the interpeak for train service to access Johnstone (morning peak wait time: 30 mins, Inter peak: 15 mins) |
| Lochwinnoch | Accessible Rural Areas | No | No | No | No | Not within 30mins of Johnstone |
| Langbank | Accessible Rural Areas | No | No | No | No | Not within 30mins of Erskine or Paisley |

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2020/pages/2/>

Bus Priority Measures

Existing Bus Priority Measures

There are currently limited bus priority measures in Renfrewshire, as described below.

- No bus priority lanes with only one bus gate at Inchinnan Road.
- SCOOT systems are currently being planned and will be implemented in early 2024

Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership Fund study proposed a number of bus priority measures. Tables 15 and 16 below present the proposed priority measures that are within Renfrewshire Council area.

Survey findings revealed that some stops (e.g. Braehead Shopping Centre) suffer from bus bunching during peak hours. This could be a result of lack of bus priority measures which generates delays for buses and results in bus bunching.

Proposed BPF Bus Priority Measures

Table 15: Glasgow City Region BPF - proposed bus priority measures (1/2)

| GSSBNP Corridor | Intervention Name | Intervention Description | Bus Priority | Interchange | Bus Service | Other |
|------------------------------|--|---|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
| 09 - Paisley Road West | Paisley Town Centre Junction Improvements | Key junctions to be recast to improve public transport priority, reduce large junction footprints, improve safety for walking and cycling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junction 1—Gordon St / Causeyside St / Canal St • Junction 2—Lonend / Bridge St / Mill St / Gordon St • Junction 3—Mill St / Glasgow Rd / Gauze St / Inle St • Junction 4—Inner Ring Road incorporating Wallneuk Gyrotory | x | | | |
| 09 - Paisley Road West | Renfrewshire East - West Corridor including Johnstone High Street | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Road to Paisley Abbey - Bus lane • Paisley High Street / Broomlands Road to junction with Gallowgreen Road - Parking and loading enforcement measures • Broomlands Street from Gallowgreen Road to A761 - Bus Priority • A761 to Johnstone - Designated Clearway with removal of parking and loading, including enforcement • Johnstone High Street from William Street to George Street - Infrastructure improvements including removal of parking, potential for bus gate | x | | | |
| 09a - Shieldhall/ Govan Road | Fastlink Extension through QEUH to Braehead/Renfrew | Western Approach to Renfrew | x | | | |
| 09a - Shieldhall/ Govan Road | Fastlink Extension through QEUH to Braehead Renfrew to Glasgow Airport/AMIDS | Renfrew to Airport/AMIDS | x | | | |
| M8/Glasgow Airport | Glasgow Airport | Upgrade facilities to accommodate future 2025/2030 network levels of service | | x | | |
| Renfrewshire | AMIDS Travel Hub | A public transport hub to serve AMIDS, Scotland's Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District in Renfrewshire. | | x | | |

Proposed BPF Bus Priority Measures

Table 16: Glasgow City Region BPF - proposed bus priority measures (2/2)

| GSSBNP Corridor | Intervention Name | Intervention Description | Bus Priority | Interchange | Bus Service | Other |
|-----------------|--|---|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------|
| Renfrewshire | Renfrewshire North – South Corridor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neilston Road - Review of parking and loading and enforcement. Potential for northbound bus lane. • Causeyside Street / St Mirren Brae - Bus priority lane • Smithhills Street - Investigation of bus only infrastructure. Potential to open Central Road bus stops for LEVs including streetscape work on Central Road. • Renfrew Road to Arklestone Road - Northbound bus lane • Renfrew Road to Renfrew - Potential to extend northbound bus lane or increase parking and loading enforcement. | x | x | | |
| Renfrewshire | Renfrewshire Orbital | Feasibility study | x | | | x |
| Renfrewshire | Upgrade to UTC system at key junctions in Renfrewshire | TLP scheme to reduce the delay experienced by buses at traffic signals primarily through SCOOT – based bus priority, making use of the recently introduced replacement SCOOT system. | x | | | |
| Renfrewshire | Camera Enforcement in Renfrewshire | Investigation of a camera-based enforcement regime on the key routes identified above. A suitable ANPR system would allow urban clearways to be created and importantly enforced. Assumed up to 20 locations. | x | | | |
| Renfrewshire | Braehead Bus Station | Upgrade facilities to accommodate future 2025/2030 network levels of service | | x | | |
| Renfrewshire | Improve interchanges - Paisley, Johnstone | Improve public transport offering (both services, connections and interchange facilities) in these locations where users are reliant on taking multiple public transport services to access key destinations | | x | | |
| Renfrewshire | Improve interchanges - Bishopton | Improve public transport offering (both services, connections and interchange facilities) in these locations where users are reliant on taking multiple public transport services to access key destinations | | x | | |
| Renfrewshire | LDP Service Change - Renfrewshire Sites - Changes to existing services (frequency, extension of existing service(s)) | Changes to existing services (frequency, extension of existing service(s)) at sites - including: Bishopton, Renfrew Ferry, Dykebar, North Barr etc | | | x | |

Network Review Summary

Suggested Route Improvements

The network review in conjunction with the public consultation reveal that there are a few areas and routes where bus provision is sub-standard. These areas include-

- Langbank to Paisley
- Dargavel/Bishopton
- Erskine to Paisley
- Connections to RAH
- Connections to Southwest- Houston, Bridge of Weir, and Kilbarchan

Recommendations

We recommend the following bus routes and associated service specification for consideration. Table 17 shows proposed new routes and Table 18 shows improved frequencies for some existing services.

Table 17: Proposed new bus routes

| Area | Route | Route Category | Recommended Service |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Langbank/ Dargavel/ Bishopton | Paisley- Renfrew- Erskine- Bishopton-Langbank | Principal or rural connector services | Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak |
| Bridge of Weir | Bridge of Weir- Kilbarchan- Johnstone- Elderslie- Paisley | Principal or rural connector services | Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak |
| Bridge of Weir | Bridge of Weir- Houston- Linwood- Paisley | Principal or rural connector services | Hourly services |
| Houston, Bridge of Weir and Kilbarchan | Connections to RAH and QEUH | On-demand | DRT or Community Transport for Hospital Runs |

Table 18: Proposed improved frequency for the existing routes

| Area | Route | Route Category | Recommended Service |
|--------------------|--|----------------|---|
| Hawkhead | 10-Hawkhead Estate to Royal Alexandra Hospital | Core services | Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak |
| Dykebar/Potterhill | 70- Potterhill- Dykebar- Hunterhill- Paisley | Core services | Half hourly services in the peaks and hourly services in interpeak and off-peak |
| Johnstone | 20/20A- Johnstone to Paisley | Core services | Half hourly services |

Recommendations

Hours of Operation

- All services should have core hours of operation between 07:00 and 19:00. Late evenings (19:00 to 22:00) can be covered by reduced frequencies.
- Night buses should be operated on 7 days a week rather than just weekends
- Night buses to late night shift workplaces, such as hospitals, Paisley airport should be considered.
- Guaranteed last bus for both regular and night services.
- Some routes do not operate on Sundays (shown in Tables 6 and 7). These routes should be served with the same services on Sundays with reduced frequencies.

Passenger Information

- An integrated real-time passenger information platform including different operators and other modes (i.e. Train) should be introduced.
- Based on survey findings, improvements need to be made to real-time information accuracy.
- Up-to-date printed maps and timetables should be available at bus stops for people who do not have access to internet.
- Information about delays, re-routeing, cancellations should be updated in the information platform to avoid inconvenience. Should such a situation arise, alternative options should be advised.

Fares and Ticketing

- Survey findings reveal that buses are expensive for the users. Affordable fare structures should be implemented: lower fares for all may be achievable (similar to the capped £2 single fares in England), and/or with a larger budget through an expansion of concessionary travel free of charge or at nominal cost for targeted groups such as those on lowest incomes.
- The existing *Glasgow Tripper* which allows multi-operator bus journeys includes First, McGill's and West Coast Motors. Other small operators should also be included under this ticketing scheme.

Alternatives for Change

Section 5

Current Operational Model

Bus services were deregulated across the UK in 1986 by the Transport Act of 1985. Existing bus companies (predominantly municipally or nationally controlled) became open to competition, provided they could satisfy some basic operational and safety requirements and obtain an operating licence. Figure 29 shows the roles and responsibilities in the current operational model.

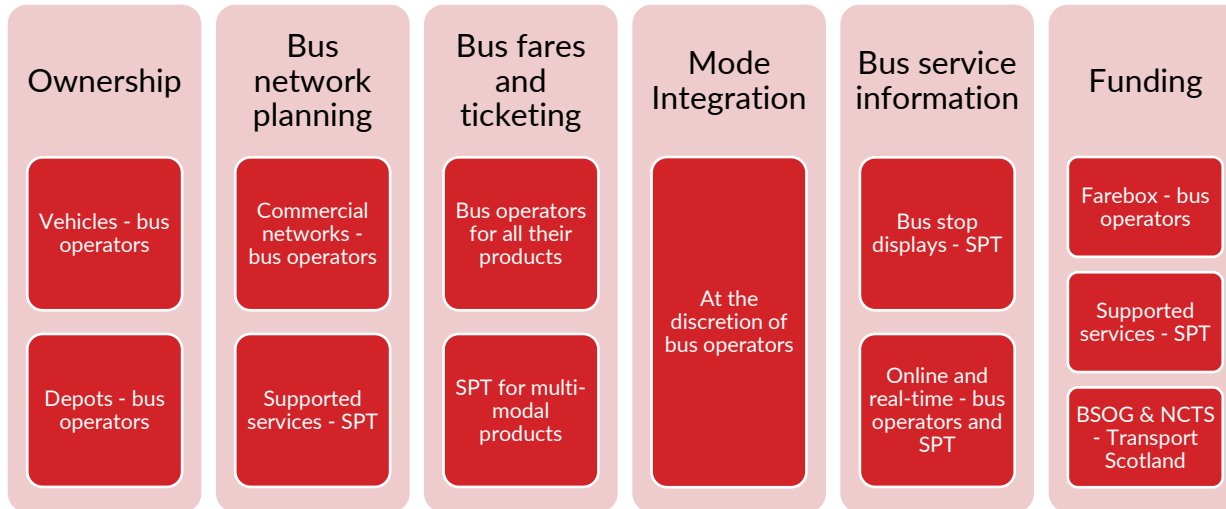


Figure 29: Roles and responsibilities in the current operating model

Limitations of the Current Operational Model

The current operational model poses certain challenges and limitations that hinder the desired improvements-

- The council does not have the powers to govern bus operations across their areas and cannot prevent the curtailment or removal of services. Example- withdrawal of Service 22.
- Lack of profits in some routes has resulted in lack of competition between operators, thus reducing service quality. McGill's currently holds a monopoly in Renfrewshire.
- Integrated transport has become more difficult as each operator has their own agenda and timetable to maintain.
- Survey findings reveal that there is lack of control and public accountability for bus services in Renfrewshire

Fundamentally under the current bus network delivery model, only bus and coach operators have the powers to plan and design their respective bus networks whereas Renfrewshire is only able to plan socially necessary bus services with support from SPT.

Bus Partnership and Reform Options

- **Voluntary Partnerships (VP):** A Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) provides a formal written framework within which bus operators, local transport authorities, local highway authorities and other relevant actors will work together to achieve stated objectives and deliver agreed measures and facilities. Renfrewshire Council is a member of the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership, which brings together SPT, eight local transport authorities, and bus operators.
- **Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP):** A Bus Service Improvement Partnership is a new form of statutory quality partnership enabled by the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. A BSIP enables partners to come together and agree binding commitments that will be delivered during the term of the partnership. If measures and facilities agreed in the BSIP are not delivered then the relevant partner can be at risk of sanctions – as an example, an operator who fails to meet the agreed standards of operation for a service (a vehicle quality standard or the acceptance of multi-operator tickets, for instance) could see its services deregistered by the Traffic Commissioner.
- **Bus Franchising Scheme:** A Bus Franchising Scheme brings an end to on-road competition between commercial operators and replaces it with competition for operating contracts, placing a higher degree of control over bus service specifications and bus fares in the hands of the local transport authority. In its place, the local transport authority will competitively procure a series of bus service contracts that will deliver the levels of service (days/times of operation, service frequency, fare products available, vehicle specification, etc) it considers to be required to meet the needs of its communities, integrate with other transport provision in the region and be afforded with the finances available to it
- **Municipal Ownership:** The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 permits local transport authorities to establish a municipally owned public bus operator(s) that can compete for contracts and operate registered bus services, reversing the provisions of the Transport Act 1985 that prevented the creation of such an operator. The municipal operator would likely be an arms-length company wholly owned by the local authority, providing suitable separation when competing for tendered bus service contracts (as is the case in Edinburgh and Lothian Buses).

Case Studies for Franchising and Municipal Ownership

Franchising

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) started appraising bus franchising in 2017 and are currently implementing it. Full network implementation by 2025.
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority: Phased franchising to be started in late 2026
- Other local authorities that are looking into bus franchising are-
 - Cambridgeshire Peterborough Combined Authority: Consultation likely to start in early 2024
 - South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority: Assessment of franchising options ongoing
- Briton and Hove City Council undertook (BHCC) Bus Franchising Feasibility Study. However, the study recommended that adoption of franchising in Brighton & Hove would be detrimental to bus users and risky for BHCC as the sponsoring authority which would incur high potential costs to set up and monitor the franchise arrangements with no guarantee that all its objectives would be addressed.

Municipal Bus Ownership

- Current Municipally Owned Bus Companies are Lothian Buses, Nottingham City Transport, Ipswich Buses, Reading Buses, Blackpool, Cardiff, Newport, Warrington.
- Many Municipal Bus Companies ceased to trade due to competition impacts or have since been sold, such as- Merthyr Tydfil, Taff Ely, Maidstone, Barrow, Chesterfield, Islwyn, Cynon Valley, Southend, Colchester, Grimsby & Cleethorpes, Darlington, Burnley & Pendle, Blackburn, Hyndburn, Fylde, Rossendale, Preston, Bournemouth, Derby, Eastbourne, Plymouth, Chester etc.
- These case studies suggest that entering new commercial local bus operations takes time, persistence, and has a major cost. Staff requirements are also a major consideration, along with the need to answer/defend complaints to the CMA, Traffic Commissioner and FOI requests.

Comparison of Operational Models

Table 19: Comparison of Operational Models

| Model | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Existing Competitive model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition between operators are likely to improve service provision Financial risks lie with operators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of competition for some routes results in monopoly Data sharing restricted Services may be withdrawn with limited notice and without regard to wider consequences (e.g. social impacts) LA do not have any control over services and network Competition law rules out area wide common fares |
| Voluntary Partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers improved benefits through bus operators' voluntary agreement Can be easily established Improved standards for all buses operating within a local authority area, and if it included cross boundary services would potentially improve services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition law rules out area wide common fare Data sharing restricted and Services may be withdrawn with limited notice and without regard to wider consequences Difference in geographies and political situation may make it an impractical proposition |
| BSIP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory nature improves certainty of delivery Can reflect wider objectives, i.e., congestion and employment There are some examples of achieving growth and improved service ratings Responsive to customer demand | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems to work best with just one main operator Competition law rules out area wide common fare Data sharing restricted Services may be withdrawn with limited notice and without regard to wider consequences, but only in line with BSIP agreement |
| Bus Franchising Scheme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give control over bus network and services including data and links to wider community Can deliver integrated branding making networks easier to follow by the passengers Does not seem to deter competition – London averages 3 tenders per route Easier to achieve social and community objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires significant resources and takes time for local authorities to build up expertise. Transfers most financial risk to local authority May be slow to implement and high cost - given as reason why West Midlands not going for franchising May not be responsive to customer demand |
| Municipal Ownership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can give control over that part of the bus network and services provided by the municipal bus company, including access to data and links to wider community Give a clear sense of local identity May reduce operating costs and/or allow delivery of services at lower profit margins Any profits can be ploughed back into service in the absence of private shareholders (the Social Dividend) Better growth and quality record than other operators (e.g. Lothian Buses, Reading Buses) Easier to achieve social and community objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires significant resources and takes time for local authorities to build up expertise Financial risk for local authorities Start-up costs may be significant with no certainty of return on investment Municipal bus company still open to market pressures from competing private sector bus operators which could potentially erode its revenue base and destabilise its financial position Danger of municipality diverting bus profits for other purposes |

Appraisal of Bus Partnership and Reform Options

A qualitative appraisal of bus partnership and reform options has been undertaken. It is acknowledged that each bus option is likely to produce partial or full benefits in terms of the proposed improvements. Hence, the appraisal used a four-point scale as shown in Table 20.

Table 21 presents qualitative Appraisal of Bus Reform Options.

It should be noted that some of the scorings for the municipal ownership option would require a significant network share in order to be realised, e.g. to improve reliability and fewer cancellations. This may not be achievable if other bus operations in the area cannot successfully be competed with or acquired.

Table 20: Appraisal criteria

| | |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| | |
| ✓ | Partially achievable |
| ✓✓ | Moderately achievable |
| ✓✓✓ | Fully achievable |
| × | Little or no scope for achievement |

Appraisal of Bus Partnership and Reform Options

Table 21: Qualitative Appraisal of Bus Reform Options

| | Proposed Improvements | Status Quo | Improved Voluntary Partnership | BSIP | Bus Franchising | Municipal Ownership |
|------------------------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Passenger Needs | Improve reliability and fewer cancellations | x | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓ |
| | Improve access to network | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓✓✓ | ✓✓ |
| | Accurate and integrated passenger information | ✓ | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓ | ✓ |
| | Extended hours of operation | x | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓✓ | ✓✓ |
| | Improve driver behaviour | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Minimise service withdrawals without adequate alternative provisions | x | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓✓ | ✓✓ |
| | Reduce bus bunching | x | x | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓ |
| | Multi-operator and multi-mode ticketing | ✓ | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓✓ | ✓✓ |
| Implementation and Operation | Data management for network analysis and planning | x | ✓ | ✓✓ | ✓✓✓ | ✓✓ |
| | Indicative cost | - | - | Implementation- around £1.5 million, Management-£200,000 to £250,000 | GMCA spent around £15m, in building the case for franchising and around £135m in total to complete the transition to a franchised network in 2025. Renfrewshire would require about £1.5m to build the case and around £15m-20m to complete the transition | At least £30m to finance acquisition of operators' businesses in Renfrewshire |
| | Required resources (local authority staff expertise and workforce) | No additional burden | Low additional burden | Low to moderate additional burden | Very high additional burden, not achievable within existing council staff resources. However, skill requirements are known and could be delivered with additional resources. | Very high additional burden, not achievable within existing council staff resources. However, skill requirements are known and could be delivered with additional resources. |
| | Legal Risk and Liabilities (to leading local authority) | As Current | Low | Moderate | Very high | Modest in the short term but high in the longer term |
| | Timescale | None | 5-10 weeks | 9-12 months from initial informal discussions | minimum of 6-7 years | 1-3 years for small scale operations and a minimum of 6-7 years for larger scale operations |

Qualitative Appraisal Summary

- It can be seen that, in relation to the criteria assessed in this qualitative appraisal:
 - The *status quo* has limited potential to deliver the types of proposed improvements required on the bus network. In some instances, such as extended hours of operation, improving reliability and having fewer cancellations, and reducing bus bunching, there is little to no scope for achieving these based on the recent trends observed in the analysis. Indeed, the status quo may be a worsening of the currently situation.
 - While Renfrewshire Council is part of an existing VPA, an improved agreement could increase the potential for delivering some of the improvements required. This would need members to agree that these improvements are a priority and approve actions and resources to deliver them. However, VPAs are not typically a suitable foundation to take forward major joint initiatives between the public and private sectors. Due to the optionality of the agreement, meaningful actions can be slow to materialise and additional resource commitments from partners can be modest, resulting in only the partial delivery of the full scope of potential improvements that could be achieved.
 - *BSIPs* are defined by statute and, therefore, intended to offer a much more robust governance structure than VPAs, whereby commitments made by partners are carefully matched, and – in certain circumstances – can even be imposed on operators who are not willing partners. The anticipation is that by making this governance process more robust it will give greater certainty and encourage all partners to make more ambitious commitments. As such, *BSIPs* may have a positive role to play in delivering the types of proposed improvements required on the bus network to a greater extent than the status quo or an improved VPA. However, achieving outcomes would be heavily dependent on availability of additional funding and positive and ambitious engagement between principal partners, and ultimately there is no absolute certainty of sustained delivery.
 - *Franchising* can take multiple forms, in terms of risk sharing, geographical scope and flexibility of operational delivery. If the franchising authority can afford to fund its initiatives, then it can take complete control to direct the outcomes it desires. Therefore, there is a very strong *potential* for delivering the types of improvements required on the bus network. However, a franchising arrangement has: very significant costs to establish and maintain; requires a long setup time, of at least 5 years; would need additional council staff members and skills to administer; and there are major risk burdens for the leading local authority. Crucially, also, improvements can likely only be delivered through additional funding from the status quo not through the delivery model alone.
 - *Municipal bus ownership* has moderate potential to deliver the types of proposed improvements required on the bus network, for example by operating services to extend operating hours, manage service withdrawals etc. However, it also comes at a significant cost, major staff requirements, long timescales for establishment, and numerous risks. Furthermore, achieving many of the improvements would require the municipal operations to either successfully compete with or acquire existing bus services in the area, which would be a significant challenge and would come at major cost.

Costs and Revenues of Delivery Models

- Table 22 below shows costs and revenues for different delivery models, including- Base (status quo), and Stability (maintain the current network based on the challenges facing the bus industry).

Table 22: Cost and Revenue for Status quo, BSIP and Franchising (in millions and rounded)

| | | Base | Stability | BSIP | Franchising |
|---------------------------------------|---------|--------|-----------|--------|-------------|
| Base | Revenue | £11.2m | £11.2m | £11.2m | £11.2m |
| | Cost | £23.1m | £23.1m | £23.1m | £23.1m |
| Level of Service Initiative | Revenue | - | - | £0.9m | £2.2m |
| | Cost | - | - | £3.0m | £8.1m |
| Affordable Fares Initiative | Revenue | - | - | -£0.5m | -£2.0m |
| | Cost | - | - | - | - |
| Quality Initiative | Revenue | - | - | £0.3m | £0.4m |
| | Cost | - | - | £0.2m | £0.2m |
| Non Farebox Income | | £12.3m | £12.3m | £13.9m | £14.8m |
| SPT Supported Services | | £0.6m | £0.6m | £0.6m | £0.6m |
| Future Additional SPT Subsidy Request | | - | £0.3m | £0.5m | £4.8m |
| Total Operators Revenue | | £24.1m | £24.4m | £26.9m | £32.0m |
| Total Cost to Operators | | £23.1m | £23.1m | £26.3m | £31.4m |

Cost of Municipal Ownership

- An approximate cost estimation to start a municipal bus company with a fleet of 75 vehicles are presented below:
 - Fleet size: 75
 - Peak vehicle for Service: 65
 - Engineering Spares: 10
- Capital cost of £3.75m and total annual cost of £10.8m. The annual cost includes:
 - 50% of costs attributed to Drivers
 - 14% of costs attributed to fuel
 - 15% of costs attributed to engineering
 - Vehicle depreciation assumed at market value and not net book value with interest at 4% to obtain capital
- This cost is for Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) of 65 vehicles. For reference, the PVR for the current network in Renfrewshire is approximately 250-300.
- Any significant increase in costs on drivers, fuel or engineering has major impact on profits. This leads to the inevitable decision of rationalising the network and/or increasing bus fares.
- Setting up an arms-length company has risks as the LA will have to compete with big companies and may not be successful in this. The alternative option is to buy the existing operators' business which will be even more expensive. For Renfrewshire, it is estimated to be around £30m.

Observations on Costs

- Under existing arrangements or a BSIP, operators will only enhance services if the cost of doing so is met by additional income generated. As Table 22 shows, even for an ambitious BSIP this is unlikely, resulting in a requirement to subsidise the operators.
- Under franchising, a significant increase in service levels and a suite of fares initiatives targeted at the most disadvantaged groups in Renfrewshire, would require even more subsidy and major start-up costs.
- Municipal operation of a bus company requires significant start-up investment, and in all models of local bus service delivery there is extensive commercial risk, which would lie with the public sector (e.g. dealing with cost increases, fluctuating demand, etc). We have not established how required subsidies or initial investments would be funded.
- However, as we also show in Table 22, doing nothing is not cost free either. It is likely that the current levels of fares and services do not represent a stable situation – without additional subsidy for local bus services in Renfrewshire it is likely that operators will need to reduce operated kms further and/or increase fares above inflation. This is represented by the ‘Stability’ scenario, which shows costs incurred just to maintain the network.

SPT Bus Reform Options Appraisal

- SPT is currently developing their Regional Bus Strategy which includes looking into bus reform options. Their committee report published on 15th March 2024 provides the following recommendations for Future Delivery of the Regional Bus Network for public consultation:
 - *SPT should commence work on franchising, in line with the requirements of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.*
 - *SPT should progress with Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) arrangements to provide a firm basis for private and public sector commitments to arrest further passenger decline and improve the bus network over the medium term. -If proven beneficial by the SPT study, these options could be considered at the regional level.*
 - *As and when it may be required, SPT will consider developing business case(s) for small-scale municipal bus company(ies) aimed at providing socially necessary services in parts of the region where private operators are currently very limited.*
 - *SPT should continue working with local authorities, Transport Scotland and bus operators to continue delivery through the Bus Partnership Fund (Temporarily suspended for financial year 2024-25 and may return under a different fund).*
 - *Business As Usual and Voluntary Partnerships should be ruled out as means to deliver a better bus network as more radical intervention is required.*

Recommendations for Renfrewshire Council

- The public consultation findings suggest that passengers want better frequency, reliability and more routes which supports the case for change, along with the other analysis presented in this study.
- The appraisal of bus partnership and reform options shows the likely benefits of the alternatives for change. It is anticipated that partnerships with bus operators – voluntary or BSIP, could improve the situation from the status quo and bus franchising and municipal ownership models offer further opportunity to tackle the problems identified in this study and help provide a world class bus system.
- While benefits are possible through the partnership and reform options, it must be clearly noted that improvements to local bus services in Renfrewshire would come at a significant cost (potentially initial investment and ongoing subsidy). These costs, lack of funding, and wider deliverability issues and risks are likely to be the main limiting factors for Renfrewshire in pursuing one of these ways forward.
- The recommendations for Renfrewshire Council on alternative transport models are as follows:
 - Based on this study and the SPT bus reform appraisal outcomes, it is clear that Business As Usual or Voluntary Partnerships do not have the potential to deliver a better bus network. Therefore, Renfrewshire Council should investigate the possibility of implementing a BSIP in the short term, as either a regional scheme with SPT or at a local level, and liaise with SPT regarding franchising for consideration at a regional level.
 - As highlighted in Slides 79-80, municipal operation of a bus company requires significant start-up investment, and there is extensive commercial risk. Therefore, it may not be suitable for Renfrewshire Council given the cost, commercial risks and competition with other operators. However, as mentioned in Slide 81, SPT will consider developing business case(s) for a small-scale municipal bus company(ies) aimed at providing socially necessary services. Renfrewshire Council should also liaise with SPT to explore this option at a regional level to serve the unmet demand within their network.
 - The bus reform options are being considered by many local, regional or combined authorities following the Bus Services Act 2017 and Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The council should seek views, knowledge and lessons learnt from other local authorities when exploring the potential for implementation of the new bus reform options.

Community Transport

Section 6

Purpose and Types of Community Transport

Community transport fills the gaps left by most public transport services. It is there to help people who:

- Can't use 'normal' buses because of health or mobility problems; or
- Don't have a bus service in their area; or
- Can't use public transport because it doesn't take them where (or when) they need to go

Types of Community Transport

- Dial-A-Ride (Demand Responsive) Services
- School Transport
- Hospital Transport
- Group Hire
- Voluntary Car Schemes
- Shopmobility – A national scheme which provides mobility equipment for hire in towns or city centres. Such as wheelchairs and electric scooters. Advanced booking is advised.
- Wheels to Work / Wheels to Learn – Mopeds or bicycles are available for low-cost loan alongside travel advice. This is for individuals, who must be at risk of losing, or have a promise of a place at either education or work.

Existing Provision

Renfrewshire Community Transport as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation have been set up recently. It aims to apply to the Renfrewshire Sustainable Communities Fund to look at scoping the need and developing a business plan for Renfrewshire Community Transport. The organisation is also looking to build a formal partnership with Community Transport Glasgow and set out service level agreement.

- Currently only one operator registered with Community Transport Association (figure from January 2024)
- Entry barrier is high, requires very large upfront investment for vehicles
- Mostly relies on volunteers to operate
- Majority of funding is from grants and donations

SPT MyBus

This is a dial-a-ride service can be booked for shopping, GP appointments, visiting friends, attending local clubs, and much more. Based on survey anecdotes, many people may not be aware of this service. Additionally, the services are available only to those with temporary or permanent mobility issues and the trip requests are not confirmed until the day before travel, which makes it inconvenient for some. As per the SPT website, MyBus currently have reduced and restricted services in place, with a reduced fleet and vehicles operating across larger areas. As such, spare capacity does not currently exist which could adequately serve unmet public transport demand.

MyBus services that run in Renfrewshire are shown in Table 23. The services run from Monday - Saturday 0900 – 1800 and Sunday 0900 – 1700.

Table 23: MyBus services in Renfrewshire

| MyBus Route | Areas where available | Areas connect to |
|---------------|---|---|
| M45 Renfrew | Renfrew, Glasgow Airport, Bishopton, Erskine, Inchinnan | Phoenix Centre, RAH, Paisley Centre, Dykebar Hospital |
| M65 Johnstone | Elderslie, Johnstone, Linwood | Paisley Centre, RAH, Dykebar Hospital |
| M85 Paisley | Foxbar, Glenburn, Thornly Park, Castlehead, Ferguslie Park, Gallowhill, Oldhall, Hillington Industrial Estate | Phoenix Centre (Linwood), Braehead |

Demand for Community Transport

Areas/Routes to be served by Community Transport

Bus network analysis revealed a few areas where the demands are not met by bus services. The following areas are not well connected with Johnstone or Paisley and Journeys to RAH or QEUH take multiple transfers and a long time.

- Houston.
- Bridge of Weir.
- Kilbarchan.

Proposal for Community Transport

Proposed Community Transport Options

The following community transport options could be explored-

- **Dial-a-Ride:** Renfrewshire Council should discuss potential service provision in these areas for people who find it difficult to use public buses due to age or long-term disabilities. SPT already have some services in Renfrewshire. However, lack of awareness about this service was realised through the public drop-in sessions. Hence, public awareness should be raised to make it known to people.
- **Hospital Services:** A community transport service for hospital. This could be planned in liaison with NHS non-urgent patient services.
- **Collector Bus:** People of these villages/settlements have less frequent and less-direct services to major towns. Hence, services with small buses could be deployed to collect people and get to a hub where a high frequency bus will take them to major towns. The services should be coordinated to minimise travel times.

Funding for Community Transport

Capital Funding

- Renfrewshire Sustainable Communities Fund through Renfrewshire Community Transport
- Transport Scotland's 'Community Bus Fund'

For feasibility studies, assessments or developing a business case, Community Transport Association (CTA) can help developing the funding plan.

Revenue Funding

- SPT Fund

Actions to Take Forward

Section 7

List of Actions to Take Forward

The following actions have been listed for Renfrewshire Council to take forward:

Short Term

- Continue to take steps to solve the identified problems that are within the Council or SPT's responsibility, such as providing new bus stops, and improving bus stop facilities and passenger information.
- Should continue to engage with bus operators to improve driver behaviour, avoid short notice cancellations and service withdrawal.
- Should start to engage with-
 - Police and wider communities to ensure on-board safety; and
 - The Renfrewshire Community Transport Association to explore the options proposed on Slide 87.
- Should explore Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) arrangements with bus operators, SPT and other neighbouring local authorities to address the key problems identified through the consultation. This will provide a firm basis for private and public sector commitments to arrest further passenger decline and improve the bus network over the medium term.
- Feed into the SPT consultation including public and key stakeholders on the recommended bus reform options.

Long Term

- Based on the outcomes of SPT's ongoing consultation, consider how Renfrewshire's local needs can be met through a regional level implementation of a bus franchising scheme or other bus delivery options taken forward at a regional level.

SYSTRA

Find out more
www.systra.com/uk





To: Leadership Board

On: 1 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: City Deal update

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is to update the Board on Renfrewshire Council's Glasgow City Region City Deal being undertaken by the Council's City Deal and Infrastructure Team.
- 1.2 Renfrewshire Council is delivering an ambitious regeneration agenda, focused on creating the infrastructure and business environment required to generate economic growth and attract more, highly-skilled jobs to the area, while also promoting active travel and green opportunities to ensure that the area is a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities, visitors and businesses thrive. As a partner in the Glasgow City Region City Deal, signed in 2014, Renfrewshire Council along with the Scottish Government, the UK Government and the other Member Authorities is tasked with growing the economy through the delivery of £1.13bn of infrastructure projects and supporting economic development activity.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Leadership Board is asked to:
- i) Note progress of the CWRR City Deal project;
 - ii) Note the submission of an Expression of Interest to the City Region Programme Management Office as detailed in this report.
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3. Project Updates

3.1 Clyde Waterfront Renfrew Riverside Project

The Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside (CWRR) project is reaching an exciting point in its delivery with the arrival, in two sections, of the new opening bridge from fabrication yards in Europe. The photograph below shows the southern span complete and ready for transit to Renfrew, due to arrive later in April with the north section following approximately one month later in late-May – with the transit from Europe taking approximately four days.



As each section of the bridge arrives, the project contractor Graham will lift each span into position and there will follow an intensive period of completion and commissioning with the bridge due to open to the public later this year.

3.2 City Deal Reprogramming

Following discussions with the UK and Scottish Governments, £64.57M of City Deal Infrastructure Grant Funds will be allocated to a new “Regional Project”. Member Authorities have been invited to submit suitable projects for consideration by completing an Expression of Interest by 17 May. This funding allows the Deal to support new opportunities or address new priorities which have emerged since initial City Deal programme assembly exercise in 2013/14.

Thereafter, the EOIs will be evaluated and scored against set parameters in accordance with the project prioritisation framework set out in the Assurance Framework by the GCR Programme Management Office. As the project(s) will require to demonstrate regional benefits, the successful project(s) will be 100% funded through City Deal Infrastructure Grant.

Each submitted project will be allocated an overall score based on the summation of the scores within each of the key components. This scoring will be used to rank/prioritise each of the proposed projects.

A Programme Prioritisation Appraisal Report will be circulated to Chief Executives on 31 May 2024 and presented to the 6 June 2024 Chief Executives' Group (CEG). The report will outline the results of the assessment/scoring exercise and the recommended New Regional Project.

The number of projects which are selected will be dependent on the amount requested in the EOIs received, for example, should no single large-scale Proposed Project with a cost of £64.57m be identified through the process, multiple projects may be considered.

The Programme Prioritisation Appraisal Report will also be shared with the UK Government and Scottish Government on 31 May 2024 for inclusion in Government decision-making processes for the period to 17 July 2024.

Following CEG review and input, the Programme Prioritisation Appraisal Report will be considered at a Special Cabinet meeting which will take place w/c 10 June 2024.

Following Cabinet review and input, the revised Programme Prioritisation Appraisal Report will be shared with the UK Government and Scottish Government for inclusion in Government decision-making processes to 17 July 2024. Both governments decisions on the overall proposals will be provided to 17 July 2024 Programme Liaison Group (includes government officers)) meeting.

Where approval has been gained from governments, a report will be presented to CEG on 25 July 2024 outlining the governments' decision and seeking agreement from CEG on the New Regional Project which should be recommended to Cabinet.

A report will be presented to 6 August 2024 Cabinet outlining the governments' decision and seeking approval for the New Regional Project. Any approved project will be given an equivalent status to those on the Initial Project List identified via the initial Programme Assembly Exercise in 2013 and will be invited by the Cabinet to proceed to Business Case development stage.

Should Renfrewshire be successful then all required governance and approvals required will be through the Leadership Board.

The City Deal and Infrastructure team are working with other officers and scoping a suitable project for submission by Renfrewshire.

This is currently being scoped but will likely be a project building on the previous City Deal investment, and other investments in cultural venues and buildings within Paisley. It will aim to provide sustainable access for our communities, businesses and the wider City Region to high quality jobs and business opportunities at employment sites in Renfrewshire, including the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS), Inchinnan Business Park and Glasgow Airport.

The proposed project will include provision of a sustainable regional transport hub around Gilmour St/County Square which would help achieve our net zero goals and support our move towards more sustainable transport options.

Further details on the project will be brought to a future meeting of the Leadership Board.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is thriving* – These projects will link our communities and facilitate new development opportunities and business growth with both projects improving skills development, educational and health opportunities for people within the local communities as well as aiding employees to access these major existing and new employment centres. The projects align with and aid the outcomes of the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020 -2030 and the Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan
 - *Our Renfrewshire is well* - The new safer walking and cycling infrastructure incorporated within these projects, will help encourage active travel by children and young people, as well as adults.
 - *Reshaping our place, our economy and our future* – These infrastructure projects provide connectivity and access to new and existing jobs for people in our communities. During the project construction period hundreds of new jobs have been created and as a result of new business creation it is estimated that thousands of additional new permanent jobs will be created. NMIS and MMIC are already up and running as a direct consequence of this enabling infrastructure. The combined projects investment in linking active travel infrastructure and education and will provide connectivity and access to new and existing jobs for people in our communities.
 - *Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all* – CWRR provides access to development opportunities along Meadowside Street, increases the potential to reinvigorate Blythswood Retail Park and improves access for the communities on both sides of the River Clyde to facilities and employers on the other side such as the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital; NHS Golden Jubilee; West College Scotland's Clydebank campus and Yoker train station.

The project also increases the employee catchment area for businesses planning to locate at AMIDS, while improving links to suppliers and customers.

- *Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy* - The completed infrastructure includes segregated provision for walking and cycling and will also enable improved public transport links CWRR opens up development opportunities, which through the LDP will be managed as sustainable linked communities.
- *Working together to improve outcomes* - Officers are working closely with local communities, neighbouring councils, private sector organisations, Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, and other partners to ensure the maximisation of positive outcomes from the projects noted within this report.

4. **Legal** – none.

5. **Property/Assets** – completed assets will require to be maintained and operated by the Council.

6. **Information Technology** – none.

7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – none.

9. **Procurement** – all contracts are tendered in accordance with Council procurement procedures and where relevant taken to FRCS Board for approval.

10. **Risk** – Project specific and Programme level risk registers have been established for all projects. These are kept under regular review and reported to the Council's internal City Deal and Infrastructure Programme Board.

11. **Privacy Impact** – none.

12. **COSLA Policy Position** – not applicable.

13. **Climate Risk** – the project will provide sustainable active travel routes and encourage sustainable neighbourhoods and transport links including provision of blue green infrastructure

List of Background Papers

None.

BW
April 2024

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To: Leadership Board

On: 1st May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Renfrewshire Council Major Events – 2023 performance and 2024 programme

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates Elected Members on the outputs of Renfrewshire Council's events programme in 2023 and how the programme has contributed to the council's current event strategy and to Future Paisley cultural regeneration programme. The report explains the economic and social impacts delivered by the programme, including the provision of high-quality volunteering opportunities, highlighting the journeys of some of the programme's volunteers.
 - 1.2 The report confirms the 2024 event programme and the intention to develop a revised event strategy for 2025 to 2028.
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2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council's events strategy 2022 to 2024 was produced to support the restart, recovery and stabilisation of cultural events in Renfrewshire following the Covid19 pandemic and is a key theme within Renfrewshire's new visitor plan. Over the past decade, delivering large outdoor events has played an important role in changing perceptions of Renfrewshire and has elevated Renfrewshire's (and the council's) reputation as a credible national event host (European Curling Championships, Scottish Album of the Year Awards, Scottish Trad Awards, British Pipe Band Championships,

About Us, Paolo Nutini at Paisley Abbey and The Royal National Mòd). The council's annual programme has helped to extend the visitor season in Renfrewshire and has maintained visitor numbers and visitor spend, especially through a period of closure of Paisley's cultural venues during their refurbishment. In addition, the significant national publicity generated by the council's programme has ensured Renfrewshire has continued to build its profile as a cultural destination and build connections with the audiences who are key to the success of the area's new cultural venues.

- 3.3 The strategy developed post-Covid, placed increased value and emphasis on the delivery of social impacts as well as traditional economic benefits. This has been heavily influenced by legacy planning which evolved through Future Paisley and the pursuit of Future Paisley's five step changes. In practice this has meant setting and achieving social impact beyond economic targets and achieving positive outcomes for communities through their active and passive participation in events.
- 3.4 The council's event strategy sets out objectives for the annual programme:
- encourage more people to spend time in Renfrewshire by offering a year-round programme of high-quality outdoor event experiences.
 - maximise co-design, participation and volunteering opportunities by embedding socially engaged practice through event design and delivery.
 - understand and remove barriers to participation so that everyone in our communities can join in.
 - seek local and national partnerships that strengthen the capacity of Renfrewshire's cultural sector and create opportunities for local talent.
 - strengthen emotional connection between local people and Renfrewshire by illuminating stories that are important and showcase the best of Renfrewshire.
 - support local businesses to fully maximise the benefits of supply opportunities and the publicity and footfall generated by events.
 - incorporate new event trends and technologies to ensure the programme continues to diversify and remain relevant.
 - deliver a programme that can withstand the impact of current and future Covid19 restrictions.
 - investigate how events can help work towards RenZero and raise awareness of climate action.
- 3.5 The event programme delivered in 2023 was marketed through Paisley marketing and was supported by Future Paisley funding. This enabled the council to partner with VisitScotland and secure EventScotland funding and has significantly contributed to a transformed image of Paisley. **Appendix 1** outlines the marketing and audience reach generated by the council's event programme.
- 3.6 A new council events strategy is being produced for 2025-28 informed by the evaluation of Future Paisley, five-years of event programme evaluations, and through detailed engagement with local and national event audiences and the cultural sector. The intention is to integrate Renfrewshire's regional programme, with the ambition and strategic priorities of Scotland's National Events Strategy 2024-2035, due to be published in April 2024 and which includes contribution from Renfrewshire Council's event manager.
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4. Economic impact (2023)

4.1 The council programme delivers two levels of events - visitor and local, with further cultural events delivered by OneRen and Renfrewshire's cultural sector. Event evaluation research is undertaken at each visitor event delivered by the council to understand economic impact, using the recognised *eventIMPACTS* toolkit. Independent evaluations are commissioned for Paisley Food and Drink Festival, Sma' Shot Day, Renfrew Pipe Bands, Paisley Halloween Festival and Paisley's Christmas. Visitor events differ significantly in terms of audience profile and in scale e.g., Renfrew Pipe Band attracted 4,000 attendees and Paisley Halloween Festival attracted 50,000 in 2023.

4.2 The structure and format of the visitor event programme reflects changes in investment and available external funding support. A comparison of event impact data provided below highlights variations in the performance of the programme and the council's return on investment:

- Paisley Food & Drink Festival contributes significantly to the economic impact of the council's programme. In 2023, the festival attracted 22,500 individual attendees, of which 18% were visitors (non-Renfrewshire residents). The festival generated an overall economic impact for Renfrewshire of £1,383,654 (47% up on 2022). This comprises £219,619 direct economic impact and £1,164,035 local spend. The average spend per attendee was £64.36, an increase of 9% from 2022.
- Sma' Shot Day attracted 6,000 attendees of which 28% were visitors to the area. The event generated an overall economic impact for Renfrewshire of £151,180. This comprises £159,643 local spend (29% down on 2022) and a direct economic loss of (-£8,463). The average spend per attendee was £38.49 consistent with 2022 (£38.97) in 2022.
- Renfrew Pipe Band Competition was new to the council's event calendar in 2022 and is supported by Renfrew Common Good. The event was included as a visitor event for evaluation purposes in 2023 due to the number of visiting bands and spectators from outwith Renfrewshire. The event attracted 4,000 attendees of which 30% were visitors. The Competition generated an overall economic impact for Renfrewshire of £137,821. This comprises £28,873 direct economic impact and £108,948 local spend. The average spend per attendee was £38.91 a 23% reduction from 2022.
- Paisley Halloween Festival is the council's nationally recognised event, with 2024 marking its tenth year. In 2023, the festival attracted its largest audience of just over 50,000 individual attendees, of which 30% were visitors. The festival generated an overall economic impact for Renfrewshire of £1,556,473 (17.5% up on 2022). This comprises £211,779 direct economic impact and £1,344,694 local spend. The average spend per attendee was £39.93, a 5% increase on 2022.
- Paisley's Christmas delivers a programme of festive activities across the Christmas shopping period – the preference of town centre traders, instead of a one-day switch-on event (pre-pandemic format). The 2023 programme attracted 10,797 attendees of which 13% were visitors to Paisley. The programme generated an overall

economic impact for Renfrewshire of £525,319. This comprises £532,670 local spend (75% down on 2022), and a direct economic loss of (-£7,351). Low spend is linked to low attendance in 2023, which is attributed to two factors, extremely poor weather throughout December which reduced town centre footfall and a reduction in free indoor festive programming (funded in 2022 by Future Paisley as a one-off contribution to support recovery). The average spend per attendee was £57.74, a 19% increase from 2022.

5. The social value of events

- 5.1 The council's approach to outdoor event delivery provides opportunities for the cultural sector and local communities to work together and with the council, to co-produce and deliver events that animate Renfrewshire and provide social benefits. Council events help to build social capital and support employability by providing credible training, skills development and volunteering opportunities for individuals who are under-represented. Sustained participation improves wellbeing outcomes by helping people to connect and develop a greater understanding of each other and by increasing individual happiness through the act of 'joining-in'. The overarching benefits of cultural engagement are well documented.
- 5.2 Council events also provide a mechanism for sustained engagement, enabling the council to build positive relationships with communities, supporting creativity and enabling communities to share stories and tackle important issues through the design of events they want to attend, and which are of a significant quality to attract visitors. Through event engagement, we have been able to reach communities, in particular young people, who are under-represented and face significant barriers to participation. The council programme offers a range of access points across all aspects of event creation and delivery, whether as an event collaborator and or an audience member.
- 5.3 In 2023 the annual event programme generated over **3,500 participation opportunities** for children and young people and local target groups. This figure represents the total number of opportunities created (the table at 9.3 confirms the number of individuals who participated).
- 5.4 The council's commitment to generating positive social impact has resulted in a specific way of working:
 - 5.41 We design events that deliver four over-arching stakeholder benefits – to showcase local talent and support the cultural sector; to provide a creative workshop programme across art forms for local people; to provide free and accessible events with a range of access points for audiences and participants; and to provide trading opportunities for local businesses.
 - 5.42 We deliver events that our communities are able to design – we ensure the design of each event programme can be directly influenced and shaped by the community and that the views of young people are actively sought and respected. The events team and artistic partners provide broad themes to allow significant interpretation in workshop settings. This ensures events remain relevant for local people and a visitor audience.

5.43 We provide sustained recruitment and engagement - we purposely work with local organisations and groups in a bespoke way to co-create programme, which requires a network of cultural practitioners to be involved and we build on those community relationships year-on-year. For months at a time, the community are involved in decision making through creative workshops, and with professional partners in preparation for performance and volunteering. Engagement is not a token element of event delivery but an integral part of the programme and is sustained across the year.

5.44 We understand and remove barriers – by listening to feedback through the engagement process we make constant adjustments and accommodations to each event to make sure as many people as possible can attend and participate, understanding that barriers are different to everyone and protecting free access to council events.

5.45 We ensure equality – high quality and high ambitious installations created by the community sit alongside professional work and professional performance takes place alongside community performers.

5.46 We are clear who we want to work with and selected four target groups for collaboration:

- Care experienced children and young people and/or young carers, ensuring support for *The Promise*
- People living with a disability or experiencing long-term ill health (including physical or mental health)
- People living in the 20% most deprived areas (informed by SIMD data)
- Local cultural groups and organisations

6. Social Impact of visitor events (2023)

6.1 Paisley Food & Drink Festival delivers social and cultural benefits, most significantly in relation to supporting the local hospitality sector. National partners such as Platform and Zero Waste Scotland bring additional profile to the event and help to attract visitors.

“It’s brilliant. My first time here and I didn’t realise it would be so busy. Loved the whole thing.”

“Love the atmosphere. Great for Paisley. Getting bigger all the time!”

(local business traders)

- Four local cultural organisations benefited from supply chain opportunities
- 115 performers contributed to the live entertainment programme (79 local to Renfrewshire)
- 368 children participated in free family activities, including pizza making, chocolate decorating and cookery classes. This included targeted family groups through STAR Project and RIG Arts.
- 26% of attendees live in areas with high levels of deprivation (20% most deprived data zones in Scotland).

- Accessibility measures were implemented at the festival, developed and tested with partners and adopted as a Renfrewshire event standard. This includes a fully accessible event site with accessible parking, kerb ramps, quiet spaces for people who are neurodivergent and a changing place facility.

***“Great atmosphere. Friendly and safe feel to it (the event).”
(event attendee)***

6.2 Sma’ Shot Day is delivered by the council with collaboration from a local partner group (nine organisations) to plan and agree the event theme. In 2023, the focus was the role of women in Renfrewshire’s weaving history.

- 350 people participated in the parade, including eight community groups.
- A total of 15 community groups (400 participant opportunities) co-designed the parade through a creative workshop programme (visual art, dance and costume workshops) led by Bridgeman Arts. This includes the development of large-scale parade makes.
- The event created a public platform for 30 local performers and 10 cultural organisations. The Shuttle Street site was activated and included a live music and spoken word programme.
- 20 local traders participate at the Abbey Close site.
- 70 older people attended the Sma’ Shot Day Tea Dance (free), enabling their participation with the wider town centre event.
- Multiple venues were used to promote and connect Paisley town centre visitor assets – Shuttle Street and Sma’ Shot Cottages, Paisley Abbey and Methodist Central Hall.
- Civic pride rated highly by those attending the event and 96% of those surveyed rated Paisley as friendly, 86% agreed there is more going on in Paisley; 84% agreed they have seen or heard something positive about Paisley recently; and 84% agreed they feel more positive about Paisley than they used to.
- 32% of attendees live in areas with high levels of deprivation (20% most deprived data zones in Scotland).

“I love the general atmosphere as it’s nice for the children plus a lot is free”

“Music - makes me feel proud of Scotland. The parade was terrific”

(event attendees)

6.3 Renfrew Pipe Band Competition - 16 bands took part in the 2023 event with 12 from outside Renfrewshire. Four local bands competed with Johnstone Pipe Band and the Renfrewshire Schools band taking home prizes.

- 180 children participated in circus skills workshops and football tasters provided by Renfrew Football Club and Street Stuff, with a programme of free activities available.
- Two local traders provided on-site trading alongside Renfrew Football Club.
- Civic pride rated highly by attendees with 86% of people noting they feel more positive towards Renfrew than they used to and 75% indicating they were proud of Renfrew’s culture and heritage.
- 27% of attendees currently live in areas with high levels of deprivation (20% most deprived data zones in Scotland).

6.4 Paisley Halloween Festival provides the greatest opportunity for social and cultural impact, engaging underrepresented groups and significant opportunities for young people to develop confidence and skills and socialise and make friends through high quality artist-led activity. The events team have worked with Disability Resource Centre and Gateway Intensive Support Service since 2018 to continuously improve event accessibility and several changes were implemented resulting in a *Renfrewshire standard* - dropped kerbs, the placement of designated blue badge parking, positioning of accessible viewing platforms, introduction of high level signage and large screens (supported by EventScotland National Fund), changing places facilities and accessibility guides - [event accessibility guide](#) and <https://paisley.is/visit/paisley-halloween-festival-access-guide/>. The team also work with ShopMobility, who reported a significant increase in users over the 2023 festival weekend (58 bookings). The Paisley Halloween Festival Case Study, prepared by the Centre for Culture, Sport and Events as part of the evaluation of Future Paisley provides more detail on the social and economic impact of the festival, see **Appendix 2**.

- The festival generated more than 700 participation opportunities and 81 opportunities for local performers.
- 238 people engaged in the creative workshop programme, which offered eight access points for participation with twenty workshop sessions delivered.
- 13 community groups directly engaged, and 27 local performers performed on each day of the event.
- The festival offered bespoke and unique creative opportunities tailored to our target groups, led by national and international event producers and carnival artists. An overview of the opportunities for co-design are highlighted below:

| Participation & co-design opportunity | Target groups | Groups engaged |
|--|---|--|
| Raven’s Realm Installation – Visual art / props making | Care experienced children and young people and/or young carers | 33rd Gleniffer Scouts Forest View Primary school and Goudie Academy Renfrewshire Young Carers |
| Spooky Bat Cave – Visual art / props making | Care experienced children and young people and/or young carers People living with a disability | Castlehead High School Girl Guides Paisley Division ArtBoss Creative Young Producers Spinners Gate - Gateway Intensive Support Service Individuals |

| Participation & co-design opportunity | Target groups | Groups engaged |
|--|---|---|
| Paisley Town Hall Chimes community composition project | Children and young people | Paisley After School Care |
| Despicable Dance performance | Children and young people | Right2dance |
| Accessibility Consultations on event site | People living with a disability or people experiencing long-term ill health (including physical or mental health) | Disability Resource Centre Spinners Gate - Gateway Intensive Support Service Individuals |
| Stage Performances | Children and young people Local cultural groups | Local singer/songwriters: Adam Dolan, Hollie Robinson, Kirsty Ward Local groups: RockUs Choir & BlocoWinnoch Samba Band |
| Ravens' Realm Physical Theatre Performance | Children and young people | PACE Youth Theatre |
| Aerial Dance Performances | People living in poverty People living in the 20% most deprived areas according to SIMD statistics | Community Circus Paisley (adult & youth groups) Cameron School of Dance |

- 100% of young people participating in creative workshops said they had a positive experience and had an opportunity to showcase their talents and skills within the festival, and confirmed they would take part again in future. All rated their enjoyment of the experience 8 out of 10 or above. Young people shared their motivation for taking part in the Halloween workshop activity - help shape the event, express myself creatively, showcase my skills and talent.

“Young people enjoyed the workshop and loved seeing their bat lanterns in the bat cave at the festival.” (ArtBoss coordinator)

“The children had an amazing experience boosting their confidence and learnt new skills such as aerial skills - trapeze and hoops.” (Cameron School of Dance)

- Civic pride is strong amongst residents attending the event, with 100% of those surveyed saying they were proud of the town and its culture and heritage.
- 99% of all people surveyed confirmed they were satisfied with the Halloween Festival experience.
- 96% of attendees confirmed attending the event has improved their impression of Paisley (100% of local residents and 88% of visitors). 92% of all attendees agree there is ‘more going on in Paisley these days’, and the ‘quality of events

has improved' in recent years. 94% of attendees to the festival had seen or heard something positive about Paisley recently.

- 36% of attendees currently live in areas with high levels of deprivation (20% most deprived data zones in Scotland). This is higher than 2022 (25%).

“Everything was fantastic, I had the best time. Lights and fire effects were brilliant. The musical skeleton band was excellent.”

“It's so big - lots to see and do. Just so good. This is my first time here and everyone has said it's fantastic and it is”

“Something for everyone, live shows, lights, sound effects. Funfair and marshmallow toasting were definite winners. Brilliant time”

“Thought everything this year was outstanding! Kids having fun seeing everything”

“The whole event is amazing. It's very well organized. I like the one-way system. It's very busy but not as congested as previous years.”

“I like the trail zone. The lights and decorations around the Abbey are fabulous”

“I feel the council have thought of everything, down to toasting your own marshmallows”

“The kids love it, it gets better every year. There's lots to see and the costumes and street performers are great”

“It's great for people that it's free and the street performers are very talented”

“The whole event is utterly amazing. I couldn't possibly choose my favourite thing”

6.5 Paisley's Christmas – the 2023 event involved significant collaboration with partners and a marketing partnership with Paisley First who delivered a programme of free family entertainment throughout December. Paisley's official lights switch was hosted by the Provost and included street performances, Santa meet-and-greet and a community stage which supported 98 local performers. The programme was promoted alongside PACE Panto and free and ticketed activities delivered by OneRen at the Town Hall, OnX, Lagoon and Libraries.

- Scotland's Theme Park provided a covered Ice Rink with daily ice-skating sessions, food concession and funfair rides throughout December. A discounted ticket price (25%) was offered to all PA post codes, student card and Young Scot card holders. Group discounts and ASN sessions were programmed to maximise accessibility for families, school groups and clubs.
- 393 visited Santa's Workshop and free family activities delivered by local cultural organisations over two weekends.

- 419 from 29 community groups were provided with free ice-skating vouchers, including Ferguslie Families, Home Links, School of African Cultures, Children Be-friending, Linstone Housing Families, STAR Project and Pals of Privies.

'Thank you from everyone at Pals of the Privies. We had the best time today at the shows and the ice-skating. You were there throughout the whole event for any questions or information we needed, what a star you are. Well done for organising such a wonderful successful day for all the groups.'

- 36% of attendees live in areas with high levels of deprivation (20% most deprived data zones in Scotland) A higher number than attendees in 2022 (24%).
- Civic pride is strongly reflected across attendees, with high levels of agreement on perceptions of Paisley. Notably, 96% of local residents describe Paisley as friendly, which is supported by 80% of visitors. Additionally, 94% of locals acknowledge an increase in activities within the town and 93% stated improvement in the quality of events.

"Love it - I come every year with kids, always a great atmosphere and kids get discount with their Young Scots card. Loads of free things"

"Ice rink discount was good and kids loved seeing Santa walking about"

7. Social Impact of local events (2023)

7.1 Renfrew Gala Day - local groups were engaged to shape the theme of the event (circus). This included Renfrew Community Council, St Margaret's Church and Our Place Our Families.

- 320 children participated in free activity
- 52 local performers appeared on the main stage provided by Erskine Arts.
- More than 30 local businesses hosted stalls on the day.

7.2 Barshaw Gala Day

- 300 children participated in free activity
- Street Stuff, Paisley Rugby Club, Paisley Small Model Engineers and Scottish Fire and Rescue Heritage Trust offered activities and taster sessions.
- 45 local performers appeared on the main stage provided by Erskine Arts.
- More than 30 local businesses hosted stalls on the day.

7.3 Renfrew Christmas

- 750 children participated in free festive activities
- 28 local performers appeared on the main stage
- 10 local traders and charities took part in the event, with further opportunity for business generated through Spend Local festive competition.

- 7.4 Johnstone Christmas - participatory budgeting was undertaken to produce the 2023 event, with £5,000 ring-fenced for event programming. Active Communities, Johnstone Business Consortium and Johnstone Community Council worked together to design the process and to gather community ideas. A series of roadshow events were held to gather community suggestions with 227 responses received to the initial call for programming ideas. A total of 654 Johnstone residents voted to shape the final event programme.
- 200 local people participated in free activities
 - 8 local performers appeared on the main stage
 - 5 local businesses took part in the event.

8. Event volunteering programme

8.1 A well-established volunteering programme underpins the delivery of events and offers numerous volunteer opportunities across the year. The programme prioritises inclusivity, actively involving students, older people, and those seeking to explore further education, employment or returning to the workforce. We successfully recruit volunteers through partnerships with educational institutions, volunteer recruitment organisations, and community groups. Volunteering opportunities are created to help drive improved health and well-being, skills development and professional advancement and community and friendship building.

8.2 Volunteering experienced significant growth in 2023, attributed in part to the Royal National Mòd, and through the creation of new volunteering roles in creative media, communications, site building, stewarding, event management and community capacity building.

8.3 Volunteer recruitment involves multiple stages, allowing the events team to identify and match volunteers into the most suitable roles, providing quality onboarding and training, support throughout the live event and follow-up survey and engagement to understand experience and future pathways. People who apply are invited to an informal interview to share what has led them to volunteer and what they would like to gain from the experience including current skill set, preferred role to be undertaken, and any additional tasks they would like to undertake beyond the advertised roles. Where a volunteer is seeking a specific role not listed within the advertised roles, the team will collaborate with creative partners, other council services and event suppliers to create a bespoke volunteering package. and provide the necessary experience for them.

8.4 A partnership with Engage Renfrewshire and Volunteer Scotland secures around 70% of all local volunteer sign-ups for major events, with a further 20% driven by University of West of Scotland and the Student Union, enabling direct access to volunteering and work experience for events students across the west of Scotland. 10% of sign-ups come direct to the team through various digital channels. While the primary objective is to recruit event volunteers, we also support opportunities through suppliers. Erskine Arts serves as exemplar in this area, and through involvement in council events, the organisation supports several youth volunteers to gain stage management experience to build skills and contribute to Saltire Awards. The table below details the volunteering opportunities provided at each event.

| Event | Volunteering Opportunities | No of volunteers | Volunteering hours |
|---------------------------------|---|------------------|--------------------|
| Paisley Food and Drink Festival | 6 - workshop buddies, event visitor welcome, radio room assistant, and shadowing opportunities for students | 8 | 63 |
| Barshaw Gala Day | 2 - workshop assistants and event visitor welcome. | 5 | 22 |
| Renfrew Gala Day | 3 - workshop assistant, stewarding and event visitor welcome. | 2 | 10 |
| Sma' Shot Day | 5 - welcoming host (Tea Dance), workshop assistant, parade support, event visitor welcome, radio room assistant. | 9 | 45 |
| Renfrew Pipe Band Competition | 2 - way finders and programme distributors. | 2 | 8 |
| The Royal National Mòd | 8 - public greeters, information guides, stewards, merchandise volunteer, competition assistant, competition steward, backstage assistant, venue assistant. | 68 | 1,623 |
| Paisley Halloween Festival | 8 - lighting volunteer, photography, installation & performance moderator, event access assistant, accessibility attendant, operational events team support, site dressing, and make-up artist. | 48 | 203 |
| Johnstone Lights | 2 - Santa's helper and event visitor welcome. | 4 | 24 |
| Renfrew Lights | 3 - Santa's helper and visitor welcome | 3 | 18 |

8.5 Where possible the teams track volunteer progression and record where individuals successfully transition to further education or employment. **Four recent journeys are presented below:**

- Paul joined the events team with the goal of gaining additional event stewarding experience to pursue a career in the field. Through his dedicated volunteer work and shadowing opportunities with SGL stewards at council events, Paul successfully secured employment in security at Paisley Shopping Centre. We were happy to provide Paul with a reference to support his job application.
- Sami dedicated her time to volunteering at multiple events before making the decision to pursue studies in events management. Thanks to her experience with the events team, Sami is now in her third year of the events management course and also holds the position of student representative at the University of the West of Scotland. As a student representative, one of her responsibilities is to organise student trips and activities.
- Estery moved to Scotland at the start of 2022, and while searching for employment, her aim was to rebuild confidence and establish connections through volunteering

at our events. Estery volunteered at our Christmas events to gain experience make contacts, and as a result, she successfully secured employment at Peterborough College. We were pleased to assist Estery by providing a reference for her new job.

- Alastair joined our event volunteers' team with the aim of rebuilding his confidence and social skills. Alastair is on the autism spectrum and experienced setbacks in his social interactions due to the impact of the pandemic. He sought to regain his confidence in socialising and becoming more actively involved in his community. Alastair began his volunteering journey by taking on quieter tasks, such as managing the events radio room during the Paisley Food and Drink Festival and as his confidence grew, he expanded his involvement by assisting with the tea dance at Sma' Shot Day. Alastair remains one of our regular volunteers.

9. Events programme 2024

9.1 The events service is in the process of transitioning to a new structure following Right for Renfrewshire and the reduction of two FTE's and will continue to progress the development of a new strategy. This will review and refine events produced in-house, identify opportunities for the cultural sector to deliver local events, and better understand the scale of opportunity for hosting external events.

9.2 The programme for 2024 is detailed below, with the events team also supporting arrangements for a General Election:

| Date | Event |
|---------------|---|
| 26/27 April | Paisley Food and Drink Festival |
| 2 June | Renfrew Gala Day |
| 23 June | Barshaw Gala Day |
| 6 July | Sma' Shot Day |
| 20 July | Renfrew Pipe Band Competition |
| 7/8 September | Renfrewshire Doors Open Days |
| 25/26 October | Paisley Halloween Festival |
| 12 November | Remembrance Day (Paisley) |
| Nov/December | Paisley's Christmas* dates subject to tender exercise |
| 23 November | Renfrew Christmas Lights Switch-on |
| 30 November | Johnstone Christmas Lights Switch-on |

9.3 The 2025 programme will be informed by the review of 2022/23 evaluation data (see the summary table below), the development of the new events strategy and the launch of the refreshed National Events Strategy, Scotland the Perfect Stage 2024 - 2035. It will reflect available resources, council priorities and the continued rising costs of events infrastructure, including the implications of the incoming Martyn's Law/Protect Duty.

| KPI | 2022 | 2023 | Target | Achieved |
|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Number of attendees | 151,000 | 139,927 | 170,000 | 290,927 |
| Number of visitors | 17,579 | 19,454 | 30,000 | 37,033 |

| | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|-------|-------------|
| Economic impact including local spend | £4,629,752 | £5,473,640 | £3m | £10,103,392 |
| Number of participants | 3,140 | 2,904 | 3,000 | 6,008 |
| Number of local performers | 568 | 509 | 500 | 1,077 |
| Number of volunteering hours | 301 | 2020 | 700 | 2,321 |
| Satisfaction rating | 96.7% | 97.6% | 96% | 97% |

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – The activity outlined in the report contributes to the Place Theme within the Council Plan 2022 to 2027 (PLACE – positioning Renfrewshire as a destination of choice, through visitor and investor marketing and major events, building on our cultural infrastructure investment - delivering Future Paisley, our far-reaching cultural regeneration programme, harnessing the power of the arts, heritage and culture for social and economic change), and to the cross-cutting theme – improving outcomes for children and their families.
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. The council event programme does not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.
8. **Health & Safety** – Event Safety Manuals are developed for individual events within the council programme with H&S and CCS, approved through the Event Safety Advisory Group.
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – A detailed individual risk assessment is developed the annual events programme.
11. **Privacy Impact** – none
12. **Cosla Policy Position** –not applicable

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2023 event programme

Marcomms OTSH



Renfrewshire
Council

Opportunities to see and hear (OTSH)

Marketing OTSH total (paid-for media)
22,373,137

Press and PR OTSH total
31,510,128

Social media OTSH total
1,228,485

Total OTSH for 2023 events
55,111,750



Marketing OTSH breakdown

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Paisley Food & Drink Festival | 3,114,563 |
| Renfrew Gala Day | 152,930 |
| Barshaw Gala Day | 238,804 |
| Sma' Shot Day | 1,615,776 |
| Renfrew Pipe Band Competition | 4,935,040 |
| Mòd Phàislig | 5,445,925 |
| Paisley Halloween Festival | 5,749,725 |
| Paisley's Christmas | 803,264 |
| Renfrew Christmas Lights Switch-On | 159,164 |
| Johnstone Christmas Lights Switch-On | 171,071 |



Press & PR OTSH breakdown

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Paisley Food & Drink Festival | 4,239,664 |
| Renfrew Gala Day | 19,828 |
| Barshaw Gala Day | 42,044 |
| Sma' Shot Day | 1,601,694 |
| Renfrew Pipe Band Competition | 51,526 |
| Renfrewshire Doors Open Days | 18,667 |
| Mòd Phàislig | 2,217,933 |
| Paisley Halloween Festival | 13,766,975 |
| Paisley's Christmas | 2,998,433 |
| Renfrew Christmas Lights Switch-On | 3,407,448 |
| Johnstone Christmas Lights Switch-On | 3,325,916 |



Social media OTSH breakdown

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Paisley Food & Drink Festival | 217,030 |
| Renfrew Gala Day | 46,452 |
| Barshaw Gala Day | 54,010 |
| Sma' Shot Day | 133,725 |
| Renfrew Pipe Band Competition | 44,136 |
| Renfrewshire Doors Open Days | 142,913 |
| Mòd Phàislig | 195,447 |
| Paisley Halloween Festival | 256,050 |
| Paisley's Christmas | 98,886 |
| Renfrew Christmas Lights Switch-On | 16,878 |
| Johnstone Christmas Lights Switch-On | 13,958 |





Paisley Halloween Festival Case Study

Dr Sophie Mamattah
CCSE/UWS

The Paisley Halloween Festival (PHF) has occupied a place in Renfrewshire's calendar of recurring events since 2014. With time and investment from *Future Paisley* and EventScotland, the festival has developed into a significant annual occurrence which secures Paisley a place on the itinerary of 'must see' seasonal events in Scotland.¹

Background & Introduction

PHF is funded through Renfrewshire Council Events budget, EventScotland² and, since 2018, *Future Paisley*. *Future Paisley* comprises a far-reaching and progressive approach to cultural regeneration which seeks to mobilise culture in pursuance of positive social change.³ In recent years, the festival has received £109,000 towards its costs from *Future Paisley*.⁴ This resource has been invaluable as match funding to leverage other funding applications.⁵ PHF is one of the UK's largest free to attend Halloween events and, a flagship event for Renfrewshire's Major Events Programme.⁶

¹ The 2018 festival was named as one of the year's 'top 10' events and festivals in a competition held by Holidaylettings.co.uk featuring the UK's spookiest Halloween event (see: EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018). PHF was named 'Best Festival or Outdoor Event' in the EventIt Awards of the same year and Best Cultural Event or Festival at the Scottish Thistle Awards, 2018–20 (See: <http://tinyurl.com/4wkrv8zy>, <https://visitscotland.eventsair.com/thistleawards2021/2019-2020> & Paisley Halloween Festival wins gold). PHF was also nominated in the Outstanding Festival category of The Herald Scottish Culture Awards 2019 (see: <https://newsquestscotlandevents.com/events/cultureawards/>).

² EventScotland funding is contingent upon annual applications to appropriate funding schemes (correspondence with Pauline Allen, 29th February 2024).

³ See: <https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/futurepaisley>

⁴ Future Paisley provided £30,000 towards a total budget of £241,000 in 2018, £10,000 in 2019, 2020 was a casualty of COVID19. The 2021 PHF recorded a large underspend as live events were still limited due to the pandemic; Future Paisley funds were reallocated. In 2022 and 2023, Future Paisley support in the amounts of £30,000 and £39,000 were committed to PHF (see: Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022)). In 2022, an additional £6,000 was made available for evaluation purposes (correspondence with Pauline Allen, 15th February 2024).

⁵ Interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, February 2024.

⁶ Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2022

PHF is a sizable undertaking, the staging of which draws upon the experience and expertise of the Renfrewshire Council Major Events Team working in partnership with commissioned event producers (such as Cirque Bijou⁷, a leading specialist in carnival arts, who have collaborated on the event since 2019) and a range of artists, cultural groups and practitioners alongside local community members to realise its multi-faceted aims. These aims—listed below—span economic, social and cultural objectives:

- Encourage more people to spend time in Renfrewshire by offering a high-quality event experiences.
- Maximise co-design, participation and volunteering opportunities by embedding socially engaged practice through event design and delivery.
- Understand and remove barriers to participation so that everyone in our communities can access the event.
- Develop partnerships locally and nationally that strengthen the capacity of our cultural and creative sectors and create opportunities for local talent.
- Strengthen emotional connection between local people and their place by illuminating stories and issues that are important and showcasing the best of Renfrewshire.
- Support local businesses to fully maximise the benefits of supply opportunities and publicity and footfall generated by events.
- Incorporate new event trends and technologies ensuring the programme continues to diversify and remain relevant.
- Investigate how events can help work towards net zero Renfrewshire and raise awareness of climate change among attendees and participants.⁸

⁷ <https://www.cirquebijou.co.uk/>

⁸ Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2022.

The increased funding from Future Paisley enabled the festival to grow and, to 'significantly improve on community programming'.⁹ It follows that the festival's scale and ambition presage its significance for a number of the aims and objectives foregrounded in the Future Paisley step changes and, recognised within the Evaluation Framework¹⁰ developed to assess the outcomes, outputs and impacts that this suite of investments has accrued.

⁹ Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022).

¹⁰ <https://ccse.uws.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/FuturePaisleyEvaluationFramework.pdf>

In this case study, data gathered for evaluation purposes, published reporting and key stakeholder interviews are drawn upon to explore the contribution that PHF and associated activities have made to the *Future Paisley* programme. PHF is an outstanding illustration of a number of the Framework's guiding Step Changes, contributing to:

- Step Change 1 [Radically Change Paisley's Image and Reputation in Scotland, the UK and Internationally] *Outcome 1: Increased civic pride; Outcome 2: Paisley is positioned as a destination of choice and Outcome 3: More people visit Renfrewshire attractions and events.*
- Step Change 2 [Raise Prosperity and Increase Wellbeing in our Communities] *Outcome 5: Children and young people thrive through everyday access to arts and culture; Outcome 6: The cultural offer is dispersed and accessible across Renfrewshire, enhancing wellbeing in our communities.*
- Step Change 3 [Paisley will be Recognised for its Cultural Innovation] *Outcome 8: Innovation in Paisley's programming leads to wider engagement by local and national audiences; Outcome 9: Community-led production and programming increases cultural participation and activism, and*
- Step Change 4: [Transform Paisley into a Vibrant Town Centre] *Outcome 10: Paisley's town centre is revitalised through the opening of major cultural venues and attractions and, Outcome 12: Paisley's town centre is animated by cultural production and participation.*

Increased civic pride, Paisley is positioned as a destination of choice & more people visit Renfrewshire attractions and events.

In recent years, the PHF has recorded a steady increase in audience numbers. In 2018—the first year in which PHF received *Future Paisley* funding—34,000 spectators attended the festival, 10,982 of whom were non-local, event specific visitors to Paisley.¹¹ At this time, PHF was a single day event¹² which included a Halloween ball and movie night.¹³ In 2022 and 2023, audience numbers had increased to 45,000 and 50,000 spectators respectively.¹⁴ In 2022, 28.7% (or, 10,322) of attendees travelled from outside Renfrewshire to visit the festival.¹⁵ In 2023, 30% of event visitors hailed from outside the local authority area (or 12,480 event specific visitors to Renfrewshire across the festival weekend).¹⁶ Furthermore, the PHF has maintained reasonably consistent participant¹⁷ numbers. Though at their highest in 2018 and 2019—when 710 and 590 community members, artists and others took part—the equivalent figures for 2021–3 have remained stable at 209 (2021), 240 (2022) and 238 (2023).¹⁸ While COVID19 is a consideration here, a change in the approach taken to community engagement is of more significance. While the 2018 and 2019 events featured centrepiece parades for which participants could potentially only show up on the night and, daring aerial performance (which did require commitment to preparatory workshops), from 2021–23 emphasis was placed on deeper and more enduring involvement in creative workshops. As Creative Events Producer, Suzi Maciver, observes 'in '21 we had no live performance because of COVID, so we got young people involved in more visual art workshops and making [...] participating in things that contributed to installations and then, we [...] retained that format for '22 [and] '23'. While fewer in overall numbers, the involvement was likely achieved in 'a more meaningful [...] slightly longer-term way [...] with the view that [participants] would be getting a little bit more out of it than just performing in the parade.' Rather than potentially coming along on a single occasion, this format means that 'everyone who's participated has been part of an engagement process'.¹⁹

¹¹ Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022) & Halloween Festival 2018, Event Evaluation (James Law Research Associated Ltd, November 2018).

¹² The festival was extended for the first time in 2019 (see: Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022)). PHF 2019 ran 25–26th October, 2021, from 26th–28th of the month, 2022 spanned 27th–29th and 2023, from 26th–28th October. In 2021 the festival's timeframe was increased in order to reduce crowd density as a COVID19 precaution/mitigation (see: Scotland's Year of Coasts & Waters #YCW2021 Events Programme Open Fund Post Event Outcome Report).

¹³ Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022).

¹⁴ Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022).

¹⁵ EventScotland, National Events Programmed 2022 Post Event Outcome Report.

¹⁶ Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

¹⁷ Here, participant refers to a person taking part in a parade or a pre-event or live-event community workshop (correspondence with Suzi Maciver 19th February 2024).

¹⁸ Correspondence with Suzi Maciver (19th February 2024).

¹⁹ Interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, February 2024.

Data show that PHF is successfully staking a claim to a place on attendees' cultural calendars; 64% of the 2023 audience had attended a prior Paisley Halloween event.²⁰ Moreover, there is clear evidence that the festival plays a role in changing people's views of Paisley for the better.²¹ For example, 66% of all those who attended the 2023 event reported 'net improved impressions of Paisley'. Although these figures were slightly lower for local authority area residents (at 59%), they were an impressive 83% among those who were visiting Renfrewshire and attending the PHF.²² These sentiments are also reflected in feedback from a cross-section of the 2023 audience who participated in vox-pop surveys during their festival visit. Feedback received included remarks such as:

"Everything was fantastic, I had the best time. Lights and fire effects were brilliant. The musical skeleton band was excellent. Toasting marshmallows was good fun."

"It's all great. Too much to just pick one thing. The one-way system is spot on."

"The whole event is utterly amazing; I couldn't possibly choose my favourite thing."²³

"The whole event is utterly amazing; I couldn't possibly choose my favourite thing."

²⁰ Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

²¹ Further evidence for such change is seen in the work of Hell & McPherson (2022) which draws on the data collected for Hell's doctoral thesis examining the public value of festivals and events. PHF is one of the events included in the study and dataset.

²² Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

²³ See: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

“Can’t wait to see what is in store for next year, this was fantastic!”

²⁴ Scotland’s Year of Coasts & Waters #YCW2021 Events Programme Open Fund Post Event Outcome Report.

²⁵ EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018.

²⁶ Scotland’s Year of Coasts & Waters #YCW2021 Events Programme Open Fund Post Event Outcome Report.

²⁷ Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018–2022).

²⁸ Gothic Halloween Proposal v10. In 2023, the 6 areas featuring programmed content developed by Cirque Bijou and collaborators included: Renfrew Lawn, Bridge Street, Abbey Close, the Cenotaph Steps and Abbey Lawn (Paisley Halloween Festival: Post Event Report, 2023).

²⁹ Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

³⁰ EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report, National Events Programme 2019.

Similar sentiments are echoed across the editions of the PHF, in 2021, for example, 88% of attendees reported that they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with their overall event experience. Vox pop feedback included observations such as:


“It’s been really cool and something different getting to see all the light displays—it’s really lovely. My family come every year and say it’s always amazing, so I thought I’d come and have a look too.”

“It was fantastic—went 3 nights in a row. Stunning.”²⁴

And, in 2018,

“Can’t wait to see what is in store for next year, this was fantastic!”²⁵

PHF draws thousands of people into the town centre where live performance is combined with installation artwork and spectacular Halloween themed decorative elements which adorn exemplars of Paisley’s built heritage. As part of EventScotland’s Year of Coasts & Waters, PHF 2021 emphasised interaction with the White Cart, the Clyde tributary navigable as far as Paisley.²⁶ With time, the festival format has evolved, offering increased opportunity for community involvement, ‘diversify[ing] art forms and purposefully work[ing] with groups in a bespoke way to co-create an exciting and diverse programme’.²⁷ Further, routing the parade around the historical town centre,²⁸ situating decorative elements of the Halloween displays to spotlight the town’s built heritage (including recently revitalised assets such as the Town Hall)²⁹ and, using new event locations to host activities related to the festival³⁰ both draws people into Paisley and brings attention to the town’s cultural and historical assets. Harnessing lighting, visual arts and other decorative elements to temporarily animate the town, PHF can be seen to contribute to the outcomes: Paisley’s town centre is revitalised through the opening of major cultural venues and attractions and, Paisley’s town centre is animated by cultural production and participation.



Children and young people thrive through everyday access to arts and culture and, the cultural offer is dispersed and accessible across Renfrewshire, enhancing wellbeing in our communities.

The PHF can be seen to have enhanced and dispersed the cultural offer at local and regional levels along a number of axes. The festival has presented opportunities for local people to become involved in aspects of the preparation for and, production and performance of the festival. Over time, adjustments and accommodations have been made to ensure that those who would wish to attend are appropriately supported to allow them to do so.

Examples of the ways in which local community members (particularly young people) have been able to participate in PHF are many. With time, the education and workshop sessions that have prepared the ground for the festival have remained quite consistent. There were approximately 40 such sessions in the run up to the 2018 and 2019 events. Prior to the 2022 and 2023 iterations of PHF, about 20 and 24 sessions respectively were hosted.³¹ This community related approach to the preparatory phases of the event provides space for co-creative activity. The approach comprises 'recruitment and, [a subsequent] engagement process [running] from the spring through to Halloween [, all of which requires a more structured commitment] from participating community members.³²

Though COVID affected the 2021 PHF, organisers nevertheless successfully arranged approximately 20 workshops attended by 209 community members from 11 community groups³³ who were involved in making and performance opportunities. Typically, attendance to between 4–6 workshops is required, depending upon the activity being undertaken. Appropriate adaptations are made for groups where fatigue or concentration span are a consideration.³⁴ The outputs from these sessions included 155 dioramas, displayed in Earthship1, the centrepiece installation³⁵ of the 2021 edition of PHF.³⁶ Similarly, for PHF 2022, spoken word films created by local people from across the Renfrewshire region formed part of the festival exhibit.³⁷

³¹ Correspondence with Suzi Maciver, 19th February 2024.

³² Halloween Festival Evaluation Summary, Paisley Halloween Festival (2018-2022).

³³ Kibble School, Ferguslie Dance Group, ArtBOSS Young Carers Group and Renfrewshire Youth Services were among these (Scotland's Year of Coasts & Waters #YCW2021 Events Programme Open Fund Post Event Outcome Report & correspondence with Suzi Maciver, 19th February 2024).

³⁴ Interview with Julian Bracey, February 2024 & Interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, February 2024.

³⁵ The development of this artwork was led by visual artist, Mick Stephenson: <http://www.mickstephenson.net/>

³⁶ Scotland's Year of Coasts & Waters #YCW2021 Events Programme Open Fund Post Event Outcome Report.

³⁷ See: Paisley Halloween Festival 2022. Films can be viewed at: [1] <https://vimeo.com/763563775/be478211cf>, [2] <https://vimeo.com/763560516/63f410b9b5>, [3] <https://vimeo.com/763557880/3439720d17>, and [4] <https://vimeo.com/763487421/644a4d7630>.

While the Festival's overall themes is agreed by the Events' Team and artistic directors, these are sufficiently broad to allow significant room for interpretation in the workshop setting. In the lead-up to the 2023 event, for example, the Gothic theme was interpreted though an immersive theatre piece based around Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*³⁸ and the supernatural comedy horror series, *Wednesday*.³⁹ The poem was read by artist and performance poet, Imogen Stirling,⁴⁰ and performed by young people who worked together to devise a unique performance piece which was then staged within a specially created outdoor installation comprising set pieces, special effects and illumination; *Raven's Realm*. Community performers were also able to develop some of their own costumes with additional support from Cirque Bijou.⁴¹ In this way, an emphasis is put on empowering community participants to create high-ambition work which can 'sit alongside the professional work' and, on 'creat[ing] a space in which the young people can feel very proud of their work'.⁴²

³⁸ <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48860/the-raven>

³⁹ <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13443470/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.imogenstirling.com/>

⁴¹ Interview with Julian Bracey, 22nd February 2024.

⁴² Interview with Julian Bracey, 22nd February 2024.

⁴³ EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018. Notably, the 2018 edition of PHF was also part of EventScotland's Year of Young People.

⁴⁴ See: EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018. A paid creative internship was also established, part of the intern's role involved supporting the panel in its work. The appointed intern excelled in the role which was extended 'to sustain [the] Youth Events Panel along with Youth Services and to pull together recommendations for working with young people in our events going forward, including young people with complex, differing needs' (EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018). The Youth Events Panel (rebranded: RYEvents) continued to operate with a core group of 8-10 RYEvents ambassadors contributing to the programming for PHF 2019 (see: EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report, National Events Programme 2019). As member retention became a significant obstacle, the Panel did not continue beyond this point. The young people participating had a variety of other interests and commitments. Some became involved with Renfrewshire Youth Voice [<https://www.ryv.org.uk/>] where the local authority had developed connections around shared aims, some also transitioned towards volunteering roles associated with PHF (interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, 14th February 2024).

⁴⁵ <https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/awards/dynamic-youth-award/>

⁴⁶ Overall—including Event Panel members—96 young people received their Hi5 Awards (<https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/awards/hi5-award/>), 10 completed their YAA (silver) and 46 their Dynamic Youth Award through involvement with PHF (see: EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018).

⁴⁷ <https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/awards/completing-your-awards/yaa-awards-completion-guide/> See: EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018.

⁴⁸ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, a tool for identifying the places in Scotland where people are experiencing disadvantage across different aspects of their lives (see: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-index-multiple-deprivation-2020/>).

⁴⁹ EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report – Year of Young People 2018. Complex needs include additional support needs, caring responsibilities, young offenders.

Established in August 2018, a Youth Events Panel comprised of 'a group of young people from across the region meeting fortnightly to co-design the Halloween event [with the support of] the Council's Events Team and Youth Services.'⁴³ The 28 young people comprising the Panel were drawn from a range of community groups, including Kibble Centre, Renfrewshire Young Carers and the Disability Resource Centre, thus bringing representatives of often un(der)heard communities into key design and planning roles.⁴⁴ Through their involvement with the Panel, four young people completed their Dynamic Youth Award⁴⁵ alongside six who completed their Youth Achievement Award—YAA—(Silver).⁴⁶ The Panel also won the 'Spirt of Halloween' co-creation award at the Positive about Youth Awards, 2018.⁴⁷ Further, in the lead up to the Halloween parade, 541 young people from 24 school groups were engaged in preparatory work and projects, of these 321 from 15 school groups took part in the Parade on the night. Twenty percent of this group came from key SIMD⁴⁸ data zones and 13% were young people with complex needs.⁴⁹

The same year, 62 young people—88% of whom resided in key SIMD areas—took part in the parade as aerial performers having participated in rigorous preparatory workshops. The taster workshops (hosted in key SIMD areas as well as central Paisley) reached a total of 163 young people overall. Notably, in comparison with the parade, there was 'no drop off in the core numbers [of young performers], all of the young people who had committed to the event [attended] rehearsals' and subsequently performed in the aerial spectacular.⁵⁰ It is notable too that wheelchair users have been able to participate as performers in aerial spectacular elements of the festival, feeding back—in 2019⁵¹—that:

"I've never been fully out of the wheelchair before, when I get lifted in the harness it's an amazing feeling, it's freedom."

And,

"It feels amazing when you're up in the air. I know I'm a wheelchair user, but I don't feel disabled when I'm up there."⁵²

For spectators, access to the overall PHF event is un-ticketed⁵³ therefore maximising attendance opportunities regardless of income level.⁵⁴ The Events Team has also sought to work with local partners⁵⁵ and, national guidelines⁵⁶ to produce an event specific accessibility guide,⁵⁷ improve accessibility and experience for event visitors with additional support needs.⁵⁸

"I've never been fully out of the wheelchair before, when I get lifted in the harness it's an amazing feeling, it's freedom."

⁵⁰ EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report—Year of Young People 2018. Also see: A local schoolgirl vows to conquer her fear of heights [...].

⁵¹ In 2019, aerial dance company All or Nothing (<https://www.aerialdance.co.uk/>) worked alongside members of Paisley-based Dirty Feet Dance Company to create the show (INSIGHT, nd.).

⁵² EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report, National Events Programme 2019.

⁵³ Some specific activities have been ticketed, for example, 2019's Silent Disco. Though ticket prices were kept very low at £3 ea. Or £10 for a family of 4 (see: EventScotland Post Event Outcome Report, National Events Programme 2019).

⁵⁴ Scotland's Year of Coasts & Waters #YCW2021 Events Programme Open Fund Post Event Outcome Report.

⁵⁵ For example: Renfrewshire Learning Disability Service and Disability Resource Centre.

⁵⁶ Visit Scotland's 'Inclusive & Accessible' events guide, Euan's Guide and Attitude is Everything.

⁵⁷ See: <https://paisley.is/visit/paisley-halloween-festival-access-guide/>

⁵⁸ Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

Innovation in Paisley's programming leads to wider engagement by local and national audiences & Community-led production and programming increases cultural participation and activism.

The foregoing clearly evidences the ways in which PHF has been leveraged to bring members of the local community into the preparatory and delivery processes for the event. Community involvement in production has—for example—been foregrounded in the production workshops for the aerial spectacular and, the making work for Earthship1. Moreover, PHF has 'created a wide range of opportunities for artists, and [...] communities to create and showcase their work and reach new audiences.'⁵⁹ Numerous and diverse workshops have involved significant numbers of school and other community groups in creative making and performance opportunities.⁶⁰ Participation opportunities have reached those who are often lesser heard and, there is good evidence of successful and sustained engagement with people from these communities.

⁵⁹ Paisley Halloween Festival 2022.

⁶⁰ In addition to the opportunities already outlined: for PHF 2019, Cirque Bijou worked with PACE Youth Theatre (<https://www.pacetheatre.com/youththeatre/>). Community Circus Paisley (<https://www.communitycircus.co.uk/>), Right2dance (<https://www.right2dance.com/>) and Jennifer Taggart Dance (<https://theworkroom.org.uk/members/jennifer-scott/>) have also been involved in production and performance (see: Paisley Halloween Festival 2022). Workshop and creative making opportunities are also on offer for festival visitors at PHF itself (for example: <https://outspokenarts.org/event/halloween/>).

Opportunities to become involved in PHF have also embraced a range of volunteer roles.⁶¹ for PHF 2023, 13 Film and Theatre Make-up Students from City of Glasgow College volunteered as make-up artists for the Ravens' Realm performance. This, in turn, counted towards their coursework work experience hours.⁶² Over the 2018-22 timeframe, 1,780 local people were 'engaged in Paisley Halloween Festival, developing creative skills and confidence, and showcasing their talents, while more than 150 volunteers have been supported across the programme'⁶³

***'What Hogmanay is to Edinburgh Hallowe'en is to Paisley'*⁶⁴**

PHF has succeeded in drawing visitors into Paisley to see the event which has developed a significant national profile,⁶⁵ attracting artists from Scotland and further afield to collaborate with the community to bring spectral visions to life.⁶⁶ The emphasis on community participation has, in Artistic Director—Julian Bracey's—view, 'generated some really brilliant work and quite different to the work that we would produce if we [...] had sole ownership of it.'⁶⁷ The festival has developed to the point where it is highly anticipated⁶⁸ and, whereby 'people expect Paisley to produce something unexpected;' packs of werewolves, flying coffins and vampires are awaited.⁶⁹ As the festival has established itself, community groups have 'been very keen to come back' and participate in preparatory workshops on offer.⁷⁰

"What Hogmanay is to Edinburgh Hallowe'en is to Paisley"

⁶¹ Including: installation and performance, event access assistant, make up artist, photography or lighting volunteer (see: Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023).

⁶² Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

⁶³ Paisley Halloween Festival 2022.

⁶⁴ Seven things for seven days: what's on in Scotland this week?

⁶⁵ See: Seven things for seven days: what's on in Scotland this week?

⁶⁶ See: Future Paisley Project Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

⁶⁷ Interview with Julian Bracey, February 2024. Renfrewshire Council's Suzi Maciver also noted the benefits that the community engagement approach developed for the Halloween festival have brought for the Major Event Team's thinking with regard to event development and the potential for community involvement across their portfolio creating 'a framework for the team of "this is how we work, this is how we wanna work, this is how we want our events to work, so every tender we develop is going to have that [community engagement and benefit opportunities] at the heart of it"' (Interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, February 2024).

⁶⁸ Interview with Julian Bracey, February 2024, interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, February 2024.

⁶⁹ Interview with Pauline Allan & Suzi Maciver, February 2024.

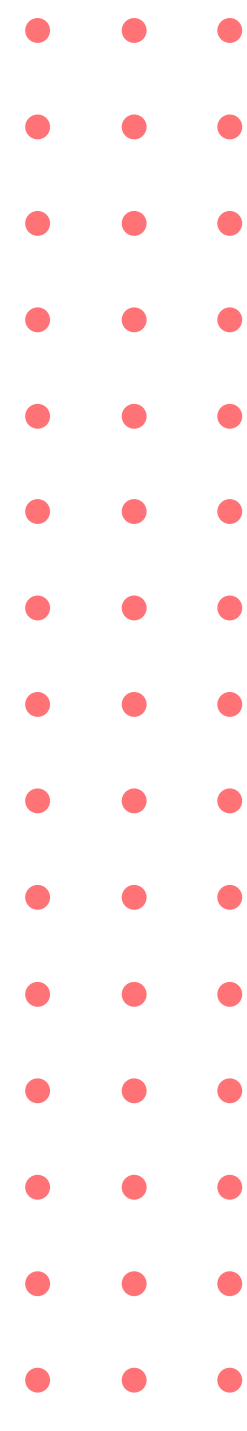
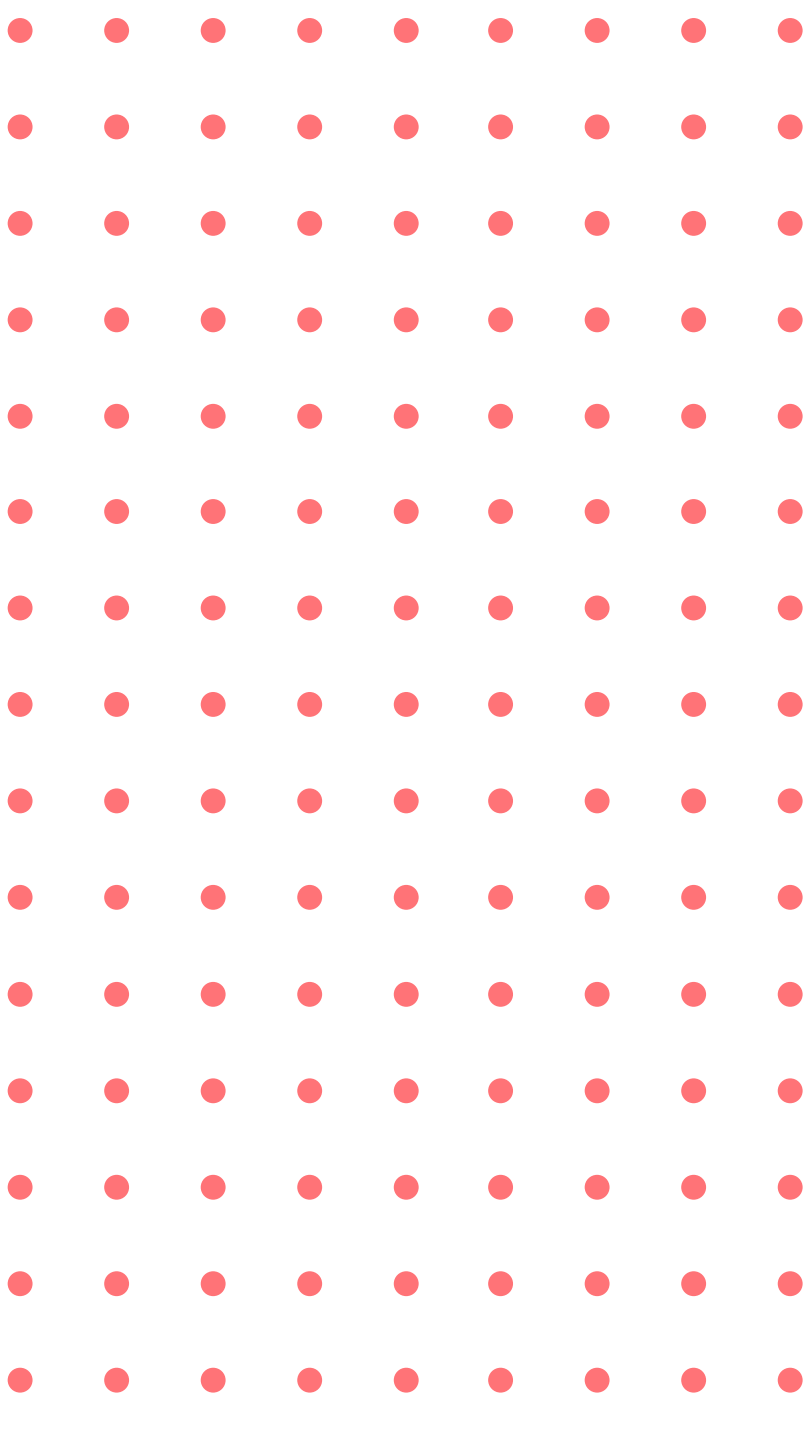
⁷⁰ Interview with Julian Bracey, February 2024.



Insights & learning from Paisley Halloween Festival

The PHF is a great example of the way in which an event of significant complexity and scale can be developed in ways that provide opportunities for members of the local community to participate in its development and delivery. These opportunities include creative and making workshops, performance and volunteering. In some cases, these activities have contributed to the achievement of arts-based qualifications.

It is noteworthy that, the benefits of community engagement have also been felt by festival organisers who recognise the ways in which community input has led to innovation and added value to the end product. The PHF has developed a significant reputation on local and national stages; drawing positive attention to Paisley and Renfrewshire, encouraging local residents to feel pride in their hometown and providing the opportunity to engage with and spectate a nationally significant event.



The festival provides good opportunity for community members from un(der)-heard groups to become involved in a large-scale event with a growing reputation. There is strong evidence of ongoing commitment to accessibility (to both event preparation/participation and, the event itself) across the arc of its development.

- There is considerable, multi-faceted value in enabling community involvement in large-scale events; benefits are evident for creative output, in terms of participant skills-development and reframing and developing event organisers' views with regard to what community participation can achieve. Building relationships with community groups over time and through repeated engagement is of value here.
- There is benefit—in terms of participant commitment and experience—to focussing on depth of engagement as well as breadth of engagement.
- Significant investment in an eye-catching, innovatively presented, large-scale event garners positive national attention and provides a locus for local engagement and civic pride. There is also opportunity to bring attention to elements of the civic realm which might ordinarily be overlooked.

Going forward, it is important to ensure that the engagement and participation opportunities provided through the PHF are retained and developed in spite of challenging funding landscapes. The significant participation and access achievements evident in the delivery of the festival to date should provide a firm platform for progress. Follow up on any longitudinal outcomes for participants in activities such as aerial performance or the Youth Panel, would provide insight into any enduring impacts that involvement with PHF has accrued for these groups.

As the reputation and popularity of the festival continues to grow, high expectations will need to be met, both creatively and with regard to spectator experience. Ongoing attention and innovation in crowd and queue distribution and management will be important for ensuring positive experiences continue to vastly outweigh any negativity.⁷¹

⁷¹ See: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023, Paisley Halloween Festival: Post Event Report, 2023 & Future Paisley Monitoring & Evaluation Report: Paisley Halloween Festival 2023.

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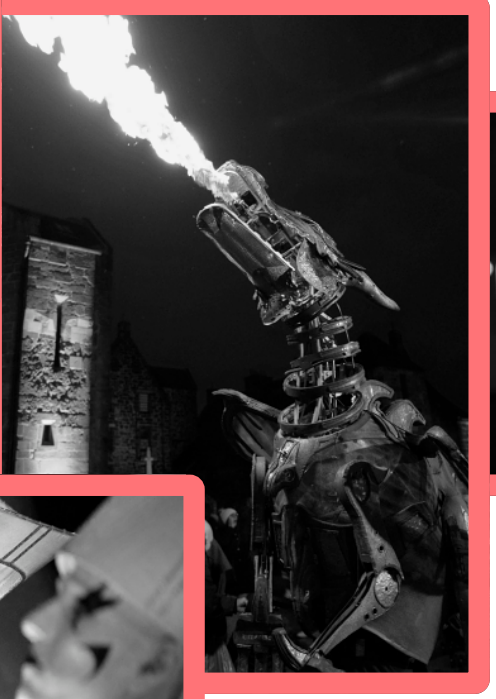
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