

REPORT TO: Leisure & Arts Services Committee 19 August 2002
REPORT ON: Outdoor Access Strategy, Action Plan and Pilot Project
REPORT BY: Director of Leisure & Arts
REPORT NO: 629-2002

1. **Purpose of Report**

To gain approval for Dundee's Draft Outdoor Access Strategy and Action Plan to go out to public consultation and to commission external consultants to undertake a pilot project on community involvement.

2. **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 agree that Dundee's Draft Outdoor Access Strategy and Action Plan is circulated for public consultation.
- 2.2 agree that Land Use Consultants undertake a pilot project as an extension to the contract for the Outdoor Access Strategy to a cost of £26,310.

3. **Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Cost of undertaking public consultation on Dundee's Draft Outdoor Access Strategy and Action Plan can be met from within existing budgets.
- 3.2 The total cost of the Pilot Project is £26,310 and this will be met by the contributions made to Dundee's Paths for All Initiative Programme by Paths for All Partnership of £19,800 and Scottish Natural Heritage of £6,510.
- 3.3 It is proposed to commission Land Use Consultants, for the pilot project, as an extension of their existing contract to undertake Dundee's Outdoor Access Strategy.

4. **Environmental Implications**

The proposal to undertake the pilot project will be advantageous to walkers, cyclists and horseriders throughout the City. Providing access to routes and enhancing the environment for walking, cycling and horseriding is sustainable, as it results in less people having to travel by private transport to work or for recreation.

5. **Equal Opportunities Implications**

The proposed Access Strategy will aim to enhance the provision of routes throughout the City which will offer affordable sustainable transport alternatives. This will especially benefit people without access to a car. The proposal will be socially inclusive by encouraging groups from all over the city to get involved.

6. **Background**

- 6.1 Reference is made to the Leisure Services Committee of 20 September 1999, Article I, when approval was given for Dundee's Paths for All Initiative and its four year Action Plan. Reference is also made to the Leisure Services Committee of 19 November 2001, Article VII

when approval was given for Land Use Consultants to undertake Dundee's Outdoor Access Strategy.

6.2 The Draft Outdoor Access Strategy and a methodology for development of the Action Plan have now been completed and it is requested to release the document for public consultation. A full copy of the Strategy is available in the Member's Lounges. A copy of the introduction which acts as an Executive Summary is attached for your information. See Appendix I The main proposals of the Strategy are for discovering a "Liveable City" which is a truly accessible City, with the five main themes being:

- A City for Living
- A safe City
- A City to enjoy
- A healthy City
- A City for everyone

This will be delivered by means of an Action Plan.

6.3 The main method for development and consultation of this Action Plan will be through the Local Access Forum. A copy of the methodology for developing the Action Plan is attached as Appendix II. Copies of the Draft documents will be available on the internet and in public buildings and libraries and will also be sent out to groups and individuals on request.

6.4 The Outdoor Access Strategy contract had an element that included a brief pilot project. This was not undertaken with the consultants last financial year as it was felt that the pilot project should be extended to include more community involvement.

6.5 The new revised pilot project that is proposed will be conducted over the period of a year. It will contribute to the development of the Action Plan and will empower communities and encourage them to become involved in Outdoor Access and the Path Network Development in Dundee.

6.6 It will entail Consultants encouraging community groups to come up with proposals for projects that fit the five themes of the Draft Outdoor Access Strategy. Projects that best fit these themes will then be facilitated by the consultants in formalising the proposals and helping community groups to identify appropriate external funding agencies and fill in funding applications to make their proposals happen on the ground. The City Council will then assist the successfully funded projects to fruition via the Access Officer. The project will empower communities to develop a comprehensive access network in their own vicinity and encourage them to undertake other similar projects on their own.

6.7 The lessons learned by the proposed pilot project will inform the development of the Action Plan and be used to encourage and empower other community groups to undertake similar projects throughout the City.

7. **Consultation**

The Chief Executive, Director of Support Services, Director of Finance, Director of Corporate Planning, Director of Planning and Transportation have all been consulted on this report and are in agreement with it's contents.

8. **Background Papers**

Leisure Services Committee 20 September 1999, Article I
Leisure Services Committee of 19 November 2001, Article VII

9. **Signature**

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S Grimmond, Director of Leisure & Arts

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Date

Discovering the Liveable City

Dundee's Draft Outdoor Access Strategy

Prepared for Dundee City Council,
Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Scottish
Natural Heritage, and the Paths for
All Partnership
by
Land Use Consultants

March 2002

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Discovering the Liveable City

- **A City for Living**
 - **A Safe City**
 - **A City to Enjoy**
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1 Introduction

Background

1. This Strategy has been prepared by Land Use Consultants on behalf of Dundee City Council and its partners, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Paths for All Partnership and Scottish Enterprise Tayside. The Strategy forms a framework for the future planning, development and management of access within Dundee.
2. Many different stakeholders, including Dundee's Local Access Forum, have actively developed the Outdoor Access Strategy. Dundee City Council has had substantial input through strong interdepartmental links. This broad input was to ensure the strategy is more clearly targeted towards achieving the needs of all Dundee's people. This partnership of stakeholders continues to be vital throughout the Strategy's life to deliver this vision for Dundee.
3. The key theme of the Access Strategy is that access is no longer an end in itself, but a key mechanism to address a much wider range of policy aims. This Strategy will play a key role in co-ordinating access and ensuring that its potential as a tool for integrated and sustainable urban development is realised.
4. It is important to define the use of the term 'access' in this Strategy. Access means progress by foot, bicycle, wheelchair or horse. However this is an ideal that is not always achievable in practice in all situations. The Strategy aims to achieve the highest levels of access possible, where practicable in Dundee. This includes;
 - Access to greenspace in and around settlements;
 - Non motorised paths and routes, including commuting routes to work places;
 - Access to and within key recreation sites;
 - Strategic networks for health, Safer Routes to School, for horse riding etc;
 - Access to the wider countryside for recreation.

Discovering the Liveable City

5. Dundee continues to work hard to realise a truly accessible city where people can easily go about their everyday lives. Through creative planning and civic design the ongoing City redevelopment is allowing people to move more easily through the built and green spaces. To date this has come through making safe space for pedestrians, enabling commuter cycling,
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making links to services, and providing opportunities to enjoy green and open space.

6. Yet there is recognition of plenty more to be done. New access responsibilities are also emerging through the Scottish land reform legislation alongside existing policy. So, this strategy aims to allow access to play its part in delivering Dundee's core policy needs for community, economy and environment.

A City for Living

7. Although access is traditionally associated with countryside recreation, in Dundee it provides an important functional role as a part of everyday life. Roadside pavements provide many of the existing routes in the city. Access issues often relate more to neighbourhood management as a whole, than the creation and use of purpose built, off road routes. Access needs to be available and attractive on a daily basis.
8. Transport in Dundee is at the heart of the Outdoor Access Strategy. Access in Dundee is primarily about getting out and about every day, for work, school, shops and recreation, especially as car ownership is low (55% of households had no car at the 1991 Census). Access needs to allow people access to services and facilities that they need to use.

This reflects the transport policy aims in the city, as well as an ongoing emphasis on the importance of securing economic investment and opportunities for employment for all the city's residents. For the Planning and Transportation Department the Strategy feeds into the Local Plan to provide a Walking and Cycling Strategy. For them the Outdoor Access Strategy will assist in implementing the Local Transport Strategy. By working to develop commuter routes and travel planning the aim is to identify commuting infrastructure and promotional needs, with clear links to walking and cycling.

A Safe City

9. A city-wide access network is only likely to bring benefits if it is used. Too often, people's concerns about personal safety and issues associated with road safety can be a barrier to the use of access routes. Use of routes needs to be encouraged from an early age with Safe Routes to School and services. This theme focuses on ways of addressing these issues using community involvement, creative urban design and integrated transport management.
 10. Dundee has become well known for its ongoing regeneration and environmental improvements which have transformed many areas of the city and raised awareness of civic identity. The
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Dundee City of Discovery Initiative has been a key part of this process, the principle aim of which being *'to create greater prosperity for Dundee, its industry and people by boosting economic development and moulding an environment where business and people can flourish. That means promoting Dundee to the world as an attractive place to live, work and visit and enhancing the city's role as a regional centre.'* High profile projects have included the restoration of the Discovery and the development of Discovery Point, the pedestrianisation of Dundee City Centre and the current redevelopment of the docks. Work is currently underway to achieve the best results from the city's visitor attractions, focusing on the city's industrial past and its famous three J's of 'Jute, jam and journalism' and its future as a key centre for biosciences and digital media.

A City to Enjoy

11. Even though a path network is accessible and safe people need to be motivated to use it. People use access not only as a means of transport but for a number of more personal reasons, because they like the place, it has memories for them, it may simply be fun. Access can be enjoyable, educational and inspirational. Building on opportunities for recreation and tourism which already exist in the city, the Outdoor Access Strategy aims to define ways in which projects can help to raise awareness of, and interest in the city's built, cultural and natural heritage through planned and evaluated interpretation. This in turn is likely to not only enhance the quality of life of local people, but also to help build on ongoing initiatives which aim to stimulate visitor interest in the city. This will also link with Dundee's Public Open Spaces Strategy (DCC 1999) and the Local Transport Strategy (2000). The Access Strategy will also benefit Economic Development and Scottish Enterprise Tayside by attracting the 'green pound'.
12. The Access Strategy can facilitate connections between the path network and open space and provide added value to the Paths for All Initiative in Dundee with guidance for the years to come. The Arts and Heritage Department want to attract inward investment to strengthen communities through Artworks and community artists.

A Healthy City

13. This emphasis on access as a part of everyday life, as well as its recreational value, is also reflected in the growing recognition of its potential benefits for health and community well-being which has emerged at the national level in recent years.
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14. Access can play a key role in improving people's health and well-being. The Healthy Dundee Strategic Action Plan states that only one in four of the Dundee population take sufficient physical activity, and that 40% of the Dundee population is overweight. The Access Strategy therefore defines the ways in which access can encourage people to improve their personal health, as well as focusing on the role of access as an integral part of healthy communities.
15. Alongside these high profile initiatives, a great deal of work has also been undertaken through the city's social inclusion partnerships, including major improvement schemes on housing estates and local regeneration projects. Furthermore Dundee's Healthy Living Initiative is seeking to ensure that the health problems, which too often accompany conditions of social deprivation, are targeted and proactively addressed. These projects have made significant steps towards improving the lives of local people, although such a process is, by its very nature, long term.
16. Dundee City Council, Scottish Enterprise Tayside and Ninewells Hospital will use the Access Strategy to promote sustainable and healthy travel planning.

A City for Everyone

17. The development of an inclusive access network, which is 'owned' by the people of Dundee is central to the success of the Strategy. The aim is to create access that is freely available for all people regardless of age or ability.
18. It is important that all of the citizens of Dundee have the opportunity to be involved in the access planning and management of access. The Strategy provides advice, ranging from specific projects which aim to encourage participation, as well as organisational structures to be developed in the longer term.
19. Through this broader emphasis on the role of access within regeneration and place promotion programmes it is the aim to strengthen the perception of Dundee as a place to live.

Delivering the Liveable City

20. Dundee anticipates that more organisations will wish to become involved in delivering the Outdoor Access Strategy themes of health, quality of life and community ownership. By promoting the benefits of Dundee's Paths for All Initiative, they will be striving to attract substantial capital and revenue from major funding sources and local businesses. Communities will be also empowered to take the lead in smaller local projects, seeking
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other sources of funding, with Council technical support and co-ordination.

21. These themes combine, to provide the following Vision for Access for Dundee:

'A city that works for all its people as they move easily through its built and green spaces to go about their everyday lives – for work or play. Safe, healthy and friendly – a good place to be.'

Structure of the Strategy

22. The following chapters set out the rationale for each of these themes in turn. Each theme is also developed further to form a series of more focused objectives, to help ensure that the advice set out here is as practical as possible.

The Strategy is structured in the following way:

- *Chapter 2* sets out a brief review of the Audit element of the work. This brings together the findings to identify key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
 - *Chapters 3 to 7* detail each of the Action Themes, illustrating how the objectives should guide the development of the path network in Dundee.
 - *Chapter 8* prioritises each of Dundee's Action Zones, which are geographically defined areas of the city for implementing the action themes.
 - *Chapter 9* sets out the Delivery Mechanisms that should be in place to realise the aims of the Strategy and action plan for implementation
 - Finally, *Chapter 10* summarises the planning advice given in from the development of the strategy.
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