

# People and Place: Options for monitoring and evaluation of modal shift to active travel

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## 1 Executive summary

### 1.1 Background and aims

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging a reduction in single occupant car journeys is part of Scotland's path to net zero. People and Place is Transport Scotland's primary active and sustainable travel behaviour change programme (Transport Scotland, 2024, 2025a). In this report, active travel means walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys. Sustainable travel is broader. It includes active travel, public transport, shared transport and other lower-carbon ways of travelling instead of driving alone. The programme sits within Scotland's wider effort to reduce car dependence and make short everyday trips easier to take by active or shared modes (Scottish Government, 2020; Transport Scotland, 2020, 2022, 2023).

People and Place now funds a wide range of activity through the seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTP) and local authority direct awards. For 2024-25 the RTP programme was organised around four themes: Schools and Young People; Workplaces; Accessibility and Inclusion; and Capacity and Capability Building. From 2025-26 the remit was widened to include sustainable travel interventions (Transport Scotland, 2024, 2025a). In practice this now covers work with schools and workplaces, access-to-bikes schemes, inclusion measures, travel behaviour campaigns, cycle parking, small physical improvements, shared mobility and links to public transport. That breadth is one of the programme's strengths because it allows delivery to reflect local need. It also makes monitoring harder, because a single measure cannot capture these different mechanisms of change equally well.

Our work evaluates how the impacts of modal shift to active transport in the People and Place programme can be robustly measured, given the scale and breadth of active travel behavioural change interventions delivered by the programme.

This report draws together the project findings and proposes a practical monitoring and evaluation framework. It does not try to produce a final quantified estimate of programme impact. Instead, it sets out what the current evidence base can already support, where the main gaps lie, and what changes would make future reporting more useful.

## 1.2 Key findings

- Scotland already has strong active travel evidence, but it is spread across surveys, counters, project returns and administrative sources. These sources are useful together, but they are not interchangeable. National surveys can show broad travel trends, while counters can show what happened on particular routes.
- The most valuable national building blocks are clear. The Scottish Household Survey gives the best picture of travel behaviour and mode share across Scotland, while the Cycling Scotland counter network provides the strongest continuous evidence on cycling volumes. Each answers only part of the People and Place question, so the system can harness their potential through jointly using the data in a complementary way.
- The biggest challenge of the current system is to link what was delivered and how change is recorded. Interview evidence suggests that some projects are still reported through free-form responses, inconsistent metrics or ad hoc requests. This makes it hard to compare areas or build a reliable national picture from local delivery.
- A universal project reporting form would prove unwieldy – the emerging evidence points to a typology-based approach, where different interventions each have a small set of tailored minimum metrics.
- Mixed methods are essential. Ministers and programme managers need comparable numbers, but they also need short structured qualitative evidence that explains who was reached, what barriers shifted, what did not work and whether change looks likely to last.
- Wider outcomes such as health, emissions and wellbeing should be modelled only after core reporting is stable.

## 1.3 Recommendations

- Transport Scotland should formalise a small core dataset by intervention type and issue it in workable, iterative manner going forward. This is not a wholesale redesign. Several RTPs are already moving in this direction and the main need now is to align approaches.
- The first technical priority should be a national intervention register, with location, date, intervention type, delivery scale and target group recorded for every funded project.
- Reporting should be digital and structured. A short template with fixed fields and drop-down options would reduce free-form returns and make quality assurance much easier.
- Every project should submit a short qualitative return alongside the core numbers. This could use a common case-study format with prompts on reach, inclusion, barriers, unintended effects and lessons for future delivery.
- Transport Scotland should build a layered evidence model around existing national assets, especially the Scottish Household Survey, Cycling Scotland counters, school travel data and project returns. The main challenge is not collecting entirely new national data, but linking existing sources in a consistent way.
- Implementation should be phased. Phase 1 is shared architecture and templates. Phase 2 is data linkage and interpretation. Phase 3 is wider outcome modelling and targeted deep dives.

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1	Background and aims .....	1
1.2	Key findings .....	2
1.3	Recommendations .....	2
<b>2</b>	<b>Glossary / Abbreviations table</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>6</b>
3.1	Policy and programme context .....	6
3.2	Scope of this report .....	6
<b>4</b>	<b>Approach</b> .....	<b>6</b>
4.1	Evidence used.....	6
4.2	Stakeholder interviews.....	7
4.3	Analytical approach.....	7
<b>5</b>	<b>Findings</b> .....	<b>8</b>
5.1	A rich but fragmented evidence base .....	8
5.2	Harnessing potential across datasets .....	9
5.3	Alignment of monitoring needs and expectations .....	9
5.4	A minimum shared framework .....	10
5.5	Mixed methods and phased approaches.....	10
<b>6</b>	<b>Recommended monitoring and evaluation framework</b> .....	<b>12</b>
6.1	Design principles .....	12
6.2	Intervention typologies and minimum metrics .....	12
6.3	The minimum national architecture .....	13
6.4	A layered evidence approach.....	14
6.5	A phased implementation pathway.....	15
<b>7</b>	<b>Recommendations for Transport Scotland</b> .....	<b>16</b>
7.1	Adopt a typology-based core framework. ....	16
7.2	Publish the minimum dataset and definitions as soon as possible. ....	16
7.3	Build a geotagged and time-stamped intervention register.....	16
7.4	Make mixed-methods reporting standard, not optional.....	16
7.5	Harness the strengths of existing national datasets for long-term programme interpretation.....	16
7.6	Provide shared implementation support.....	17
7.7	Phase wider societal outcome modelling and longitudinal deep dives.....	17

8	Conclusions .....	18
8.1	Next steps.....	18
9	References .....	19
10	Appendices .....	20
	Appendix A Illustrative minimum fields by intervention type.....	20
	Appendix B Suggested short qualitative evidence template.....	21
	Appendix C Semi-Structured Stakeholder Interview Questions.....	22

## 2 Glossary / Abbreviations table

Term	Working meaning in this report
Active travel	Walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys.
Sustainable travel	Active travel plus public transport, shared transport and other lower-carbon travel choices that reduce single-occupancy car use.
Modal shift	A change in how trips are made, especially from car use towards active or shared modes.
Intervention	A funded activity or measure delivered through People and Place, such as a school programme, cycle parking, training or a behaviour change campaign.
Output	What a project delivered, how many people it reached or how many assets it distributed, such as sessions run, bikes loaned or cycle parking installed.
Outcome	The change that followed delivery, such as more people cycling to school, greater use of cycle parking or a rise in repeat participation.
Contribution	Evidence that a programme likely helped bring about change, without claiming it was the only cause.
Attribution	Evidence that a specific intervention directly caused the observed change.
RTP	Regional Transport Partnership.
Deep dive	A more intensive case study or more complex, longitudinal evaluation used to understand how and why change happened.

## 3 Introduction

### 3.1 Policy and programme context

People and Place sits within a clear policy chain. Scotland's transport and climate policy now expects fewer short trips to be taken by single-occupancy car and more to be made by walking, wheeling, cycling, shared transport and public transport. That expectation runs from the Climate Change Plan update and the car kilometre reduction route map through to National Transport Strategy 2 and the Cycling Framework for Active Travel (Scottish Government, 2020; Transport Scotland, 2020, 2022, 2023).

That policy role explains why the programme is deliberately broad. Some projects work through schools or workplaces, while some widen access to cycles or e-bikes. Others rely on community organisations, with projects also linking active travel to shared transport or public transport. This diversity is a strength of the programme, but it also means that no single indicator or metric can fairly describe every intervention. The official programme themes should therefore remain distinct from the monitoring typologies proposed later in this report. Those typologies are analytical groupings for evidence purposes rather than replacements for the programme's policy categories (Transport Scotland, 2024, 2025a; People and Place project team, 2026d).

### 3.2 Scope of this report

Our work evaluates how the impacts of modal shift to active transport in the People and Place programme can be robustly measured. It therefore focuses on framework design, sequencing and delivery implications. The question is not only which indicators are conceptually desirable, but which ones RTPs, local authorities and delivery partners can use consistently within funding and staffing constraints.

## 4 Approach

### 4.1 Evidence used

This report is based on existing evidence already assembled for the commission. That material includes the bid and scoping documents, the evidence mapping workbook, the literature review, synthesis notes, slide decks and stakeholder interviews, alongside the earlier Cycling Scotland report on methods for monitoring cycle use (Cycling Scotland, 2013; People and Place project team, 2025a, 2025b, 2025c, 2026a, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d).

These materials were used for different purposes. The evidence mapping and quality appraisal show what data already exists and where the main gaps sit. The literature review helps distinguish between behavioural outcomes and wider determinants of change. The interviews show which reporting approaches are feasible in practice. The slide decks are useful because they capture the project's emerging design logic and implementation pathway (People and Place project team, 2025b, 2025c, 2026a, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d).

## 4.2 Stakeholder interviews

Stakeholder interviews were used to understand needs and delivery reality as well as testing feasibility. They included conversations across RTPs, delivery partners, Cycling Scotland and other relevant organisations involved in monitoring, programme management and delivery. The interviews were not designed as a representative survey of the whole active travel sector. They are best read as feasibility evidence on what can be implemented proportionately within a live programme (People and Place project team, 2026d). Fourteen stakeholder interviews were conducted across Transport Scotland teams, delivery partners, third parties and all seven RTPs. Appendix C contains details of the semi-structured interview scripts, which focussed on data availability, utility and aspirations to inform evidence mapping and methodological recommendations.

The interviews were especially useful for three reasons. First, they showed where reporting burdens sit in practice, especially in small teams. Second, they surfaced examples of emerging good practice, such as project-type-specific templates, digital forms and shorter school-based question sets. Third, they made clear that stakeholders want more structure from the centre, but not a rigid one-size-fits-all model (People and Place project team, 2026d). They also highlighted the importance of a mixed-methods approach to combine qualitative and quantitative information.

## 4.3 Analytical approach

Our work is a secondary synthesis of published information, supplemented by findings from stakeholder interviews. It compares the different project materials, looks for recurring findings across them, and places those findings inside a practical policy framework.

This approach has limits. The materials were produced at different points in the project and not all datasets are equally mature. The programme itself is also still early in delivery, so some monitoring systems are being built while the programme is already running. The diverse and place-based nature of projects also results in variation across monitoring and evaluation needs and capacities, which is an important consideration in formulating methodologies.

## 5 Findings

### 5.1 A rich but fragmented evidence base

Scotland does not lack active travel data. It currently lacks a cohesive architecture that joins together national surveys, counter data, school travel data, project returns and local evaluation in a way that supports programme learning. Different datasets were created for different purposes, use different geographies and timeframes, and often sit with different organisations (Cycling Scotland, 2013; People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a).

That fragmentation matters because People and Place is asked to answer several questions at once. Ministers may want to know whether the programme is contributing to reduced car dependence, RTPs may want to know which delivery models are working best, and local delivery partners may want to know whether a specific project reached the people it was designed for. The diversity of programme delivery underscores the need to combine complimentary data-based approaches based on their strengths and weaknesses in a future monitoring and evaluation framework (Table 1) (People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a).

The evidence shows that Scotland already has a set of complementary sources. The task is to use them together and to be explicit about which question each one can answer (Cycling Scotland, 2013; People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a).

Evidence source	Strongest use	What it cannot do on its own	Best role in People and Place M&E
Scottish Household Survey	Shows national and regional behaviour trends, mode share and broad travel patterns.	As a national dataset, it is too high-level for most local projects and too infrequent for rapid programme learning.	National behavioural baseline and trend monitoring.
Cycling Scotland counter network and related traffic surveys	Shows observed changes in cycling volumes over time on monitored routes and corridors.	It cannot show total modal shift across an area or explain why change happened.	Observed flow trends, before/after signals and validation.
Hands Up Scotland and school-based travel tools	Shows school journey patterns and child-focused outcomes where coverage exists.	It is limited to school travel and school populations.	School-related monitoring and child-focused trend signals.
Project returns, local surveys and scheme evaluations	Shows what was delivered, who was reached and how delivery partners understood local change.	Methods are inconsistent and often not comparable between areas.	Local learning, validation and case-based interpretation.
Contextual data such as STATS19,	Shows safety, demographics,	It does not measure behaviour change directly.	Context for interpretation, equity

Evidence source	Strongest use	What it cannot do on its own	Best role in People and Place M&E
Census and place indicators	deprivation, rurality and baseline conditions.		analysis and wider appraisal.

Table 1 - Main evidence sources and the questions they are best placed to answer.

## 5.2 Harnessing potential across datasets

Across the material reviewed, one conclusion is consistent: the Scottish Household Survey remains the best single source for understanding mode share and travel behaviour at national scale. It is broad, long-running and methodologically strong, through the use of random sampling collection methods and annual reporting. Due to these strengths, this dataset has potential to form the basis for active travel indicator monitoring. (People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a; Transport Scotland, 2025b).

A second national asset is the Cycling Scotland monitoring network and associated traffic survey work. These data are valuable for a different reason. They are sensitive to change over time and can show how cycle use changes on particular routes, corridors or local networks. They are therefore especially useful for spotting local movement in places where interventions happened. A further nuance from the evidence mapping is that this part of the system remains strongest for cycling and, in some places, walking. Comparable continuous evidence for wheeling and broader sustainable travel is much thinner and more uneven (Cycling Scotland, 2013, n.d.; People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a).

The problem is that these strengths are different. A counter can show that cycling increased on a route after a project, but it cannot show whether overall car use decreased across the wider area. A national survey can show Scotland-wide behaviour change, but it is not granular enough to track most individual projects. School travel data adds a further useful layer, but only for school journeys. The framework should treat these sources as complementary layers, not as alternatives. This is reflected in the strategy currently underway in Transport Scotland’s People and Place team for the new financial year (People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a; Sustrans, 2025; Transport Scotland, 2025b). The combination of these mutually-reinforcing datasets with local contextual information, for example from small area census data, can help inform the development of typology-based monitoring and evaluation approaches. This could take various forms, including an interactive online dashboard which is currently being discussed within Transport Scotland (People and Place project team, 2025c).

## 5.3 Alignment of monitoring needs and expectations

The key challenge to address in the current system is the mismatch between reporting requirements, delivery timescales and organisational capacity. Interviewees described a first programme year in which delivery was often prioritised over evaluation design, which is understandable in a new funding environment but limits understanding of impact (People and Place project team, 2026d).

Several practical examples recur. Some projects were reported through free-form templates that asked broad questions rather than a stable set of defined fields. In some cases, cycle

parking or small infrastructure was delivered near the end of the funding year, then an evaluation return was requested almost immediately afterwards. In others, new quantitative requests arrived late in the year even though that data had not been collected from the start. These are not minor operational issues. They shape what evidence can exist at all (People and Place project team, 2026d).

The burden also falls unevenly. A small grant to a community group cannot be expected to produce the same quantity or quality of data as a large multi-partner programme. Small RTPs and local authorities reported that monitoring competes with day-to-day programme management, partner support and governance reporting. That makes proportionate expectations essential (People and Place project team, 2026d).

At the same time, some RTPs are already improving their own systems. Examples include digital final evaluation forms, shorter question sets for schools, and typology-based frameworks. This is important because it suggests the programme is not starting from zero. The next step is building on progress via alignment and consolidation (People and Place project team, 2026d).

## 5.4 A minimum shared framework

The interviews point in a clear direction. Stakeholders do not want a return to completely ad hoc local reporting, but they also do not believe that one standard form can work across every project. What they want is a short shared minimum requirement, with flexibility above that floor (People and Place project team, 2026d).

A typology-based framework is the most promising route. Under this model, projects are first grouped by what they are trying to do and how they work. A school travel initiative, an access-to-bikes scheme, a workplace programme, a gamified behaviour change campaign and a cycle parking measure would not all report exactly the same fields. They would report a small set of fields that make sense for their intervention type, with some common metadata across all projects (People and Place project team, 2026c, 2026d).

This approach is already visible in current practice. Some RTPs have developed six to eight project categories and require only one or two essential datasets for each category, while allowing additional evidence where local capacity exists. Another advantage is interpretability. When a reader sees data from one category, they know what change mechanism the metric is supposed to represent (People and Place project team, 2026d).

## 5.5 Mixed methods and phased approaches

A more structured quantitative framework will improve reporting, but it will not remove the need for qualitative evidence. People and Place often works through confidence, inclusion, convenience and habit formation. Those processes matter because they help explain why an intervention may look different across places and groups, even when headline outputs appear similar (People and Place project team, 2025b, 2026d).

Structured qualitative evidence can take various forms. In this context, it refers to a short, consistent template. For example, each project could provide a brief account of who was reached, what barrier was addressed, what changed, what did not work, and whether effects appear likely to last. This is more useful than long free-text case studies because it

supports targeted comparisons without losing context (People and Place project team, 2026d).

The same logic applies to wider outcomes such as health, emissions and wellbeing. These are clearly relevant to the programme, but they should not be loaded onto frontline delivery reporting before the core architecture is stable. It is more realistic to phase them in later, using observed programme activity and national data as inputs to careful modelling. That would improve interpretation, but it would still be decision support rather than direct proof of causality (People and Place project team, 2025a, 2026b, 2026c).

## 6 Recommended monitoring and evaluation framework

### 6.1 Design principles

The framework proposed here is built around five design principles drawn from the project evidence and stakeholder interviews (People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026c, 2026d).

- Metrics should follow intervention type rather than assume one universal template.
- Monitoring should show contribution without overstating impact or assuming attribution.
- Context should sit beside outputs so that place differences are visible.
- Reporting and monitoring should be proportionate to project scale and organisational capacity.
- Wider societal outcome modelling should be staged and transparent.

### 6.2 Intervention typologies and minimum metrics

The first practical decision is typology. The programme needs a stable shortlist of intervention types used consistently across funding, delivery and reporting, with exact labels able to be co-produced or refined with RTPs. The official People and Place programme themes should remain in place for programme management. The typologies proposed here are analytical groupings for monitoring and evaluation, designed to link similar interventions to similar evidence requirements rather than to replace the programme’s policy categories (Transport Scotland, 2024, 2025a; People and Place project team, 2026d).

A workable starting point is six broad types: active schools, active workplaces, access to bikes and inclusion, community behaviour change, shared mobility and integration, and small capital or supporting measures. This is a workable starting point for evidence purposes because it translates the programme’s broad delivery model into categories that can reasonably share minimum metrics and similar interpretive logic, including under the wider sustainable travel remit introduced for 2025-26 (Transport Scotland, 2025a; People and Place project team, 2026c, 2026d).

This is not a call for over-engineering. The aim is a small, stable set of essential fields for each type, plus optional additional evidence where capacity exists. That is a manageable change and RTPs are already close to it in practice (People and Place project team, 2026d).

Table 2 - Illustrative intervention typologies and the type of evidence each one should prioritise.

Intervention type	Typical examples	Minimum quantitative fields	Non-quantitative fields
Active schools	School travel planning, cycle skills, pupil challenges, cycle parking or route support around schools.	Schools supported; pupils reached; sessions delivered; physical measures installed; repeat measures where feasible.	What changed for pupils, staff or parents, and what barriers still limit active school travel.

Intervention type	Typical examples	Minimum quantitative fields	Non-quantitative fields
Active workplaces	Travel planning, staff challenges, workplace facilities, cycle parking, loan schemes or behaviour support.	Workplaces engaged; staff reached; type-specific actions completed; repeat measures where feasible.	What made participation easier or harder for staff, and whether change looks likely to persist.
Access to bikes and inclusion	Cycle loans, adaptive cycles, repair schemes, affordability support, confidence building and inclusive access measures.	Bikes or e-bikes loaned or distributed; participants supported; repeat use; retention, return or progression measures.	Who benefited, which barriers fell, which barriers remained, and whether the intervention widened access.
Community behaviour change	Travel coaching, campaigns, challenges, gamification, community events and repeated behaviour change support.	Participants; repeat engagements; recorded trips, pledges or completions; duration of engagement.	What motivated participation, who stayed engaged, and whether habits appear to have changed.
Shared mobility and integration	Links to public transport, shared mobility trials, first and last mile support, hub-based access measures.	Users; trips; memberships or subscriptions; station or hub access counts or surveys where feasible.	Whether the intervention changed access to other modes and reduced barriers to multi-modal travel.
Small capital and supportive physical measures	Cycle parking, wayfinding, minor route improvements, storage, repair points and other enabling measures.	Assets installed; locations; delivery date; utilisation or follow-up use where feasible; maintenance status.	How the measure was used, whether it addressed a specific local barrier, and who benefited most.

### 6.3 The minimum national architecture

Once typologies are agreed, the national framework should be built around a minimum set of shared components. These are the pieces Transport Scotland needs in every case, regardless of local delivery model (People and Place project team, 2026c, 2026d).

This architecture does not require a whole new national data system in year one. The relatively easy steps are agreeing definitions, issuing consistent templates and setting up digital returns. The more demanding steps are data linkage, quality assurance and shared interpretation. That difference matters because it means reform can be sequenced rather than treated as a single large change (People and Place project team, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d).

There is also an important consideration here regarding multi-level governance. There are two phases to reporting and monitoring impact; the first is projects reporting back RTPs and LAs, with the second being RTPs and LAs reporting back to TS. Agreeing these steps and definitions at different levels of governance is crucial to maintain proportionality and a

utilisable framework. The dynamicism and frequency of reporting can be tailored across governance levels as well as across project types.

Table 3 - Suggested minimum national architecture for People and Place monitoring.

Component	Minimum national requirement	Why it matters
Intervention register	Every funded project logged with project type, geotagged location, delivery date, lead organisation, funding scale and target group.	Creates the missing link between what was funded and what can later be analysed.
Typology-based core metrics	A short set of defined quantitative fields for each intervention type, stable for the full reporting year.	Improves comparability without forcing unsuitable indicators onto every project.
Digital reporting template	A common online return with fixed fields, metadata prompts and clear reporting deadlines.	Reduces free-text reporting, improves quality assurance and lowers administrative friction.
Structured qualitative return	A brief case-study template with fixed prompts on reach, barriers, change, inclusion and lessons.	Captures mechanism and lived experience without relying on long narrative submissions.
Observational linkage	A standard process for noting nearby counters, school datasets or other relevant observational sources.	Helps connect project reporting to real-world signals of change where these exist.
Governance and QA	Named responsibility for definitions, data checks, version control and support to delivery partners.	Stability and quality assurance matter as much as indicator choice.

## 6.4 A layered evidence approach

The evidence supports a layered approach rather than a single-metric model. Each layer answers a different question (People and Place project team, 2026b, 2026c).

This layered structure, or logic model, helps avoid a common problem in programme reporting. Outputs are often presented as though they were outcomes, and outcomes are sometimes presented as though they were proven impacts. A layered model is more robust because it separates delivery records, observed signals of change, contextual interpretation and modelled wider outcomes (People and Place project team, 2026b, 2026c).

For Transport Scotland, Layer 1 and Layer 2 are feasible under current operations. Much of this information already exists, even if it is not yet standardised. Layer 3 is achievable where existing national or local datasets can be used intelligently. Layer 4 should be developed more cautiously, because it depends on appraisal assumptions and should support interpretation rather than claim attribution (People and Place project team, 2025a, 2026a, 2026c).

Table 4 - A layered evidence model for programme-level interpretation.

Layer	Main content	Main question answered	Main sources
1. Delivery record	What was funded, where, when and for whom.	What happened?	Intervention register and grant records.
2. Core outputs	What was delivered and how many people or assets were reached.	What did projects do and who did they engage?	Typology-based project returns.
3. Observed outcomes	Signals of behavioural change, uptake or use in the affected place or group.	What appears to have changed?	SHS, counters, school travel data, utilisation data and selected local follow-up measures.
4. Context and modelled wider outcomes	Baseline conditions, equity context and carefully caveated wider outcome estimates.	How should change be interpreted and what wider value may it imply?	Contextual datasets, appraisal assumptions and later-phase modelling.

## 6.5 A phased implementation pathway

The framework can be introduced sequentially rather than through wholesale reform. That matters because delivery partners are already working within live funding cycles (People and Place project team, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d).

This sequence keeps early demands realistic. It does not ask delivery partners to provide challenging, resource-intensive data up front, and it lets Transport Scotland concentrate first on the enabling steps that will make later analysis more credible (People and Place project team, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d).

Table 5 - A phased route from fragmented reporting to structured programme evaluation.

Phase	Indicative timing	Main actions	Expected gain
Phase 1: Shared architecture	Next funding round	Agree typologies, issue definitions and digital templates, launch the intervention register, and provide light-touch support.	A feasible and comparable reporting baseline across Scotland.
Phase 2: Integration and interpretation	Following year	Link interventions to counters, school travel data and contextual baselines; improve QA and pilot simple dashboard outputs.	Stronger interpretation of observed change and better use of existing data.
Phase 3: Wider outcomes and validation	After core data are stable	Develop health, emissions and wellbeing modelling where defensible, and commission targeted deep dives to test assumptions.	A richer strategic account of value without over-claiming causality.

## 7 Recommendations for Transport Scotland

### 7.1 Adopt a typology-based core framework.

Transport Scotland should replace the idea of a universal reporting form with a nationally agreed typology-based framework. This is not a large conceptual departure from current practice. RTPs are already moving in this direction, and the main task is to converge around a stable minimum rather than invent something wholly new (People and Place project team, 2026c, 2026d).

### 7.2 Publish the minimum dataset and definitions as soon as possible.

The dataset should be stable for the full year and accompanied by plain-English definitions, metadata rules and deadlines. This would solve one of the most persistent problems raised in interviews: data requests arriving too late or changing after projects are already underway (People and Place project team, 2026d).

### 7.3 Build a geotagged and time-stamped intervention register.

Every funded project should have a consistent spatial and temporal record. This is the missing link between local delivery and national analysis. It is a medium-effort change because it requires agreed identifiers, simple mapping rules and basic quality assurance, but it does not require advanced modelling to begin with. Done well, it would make later linkage work with counters, school travel data and contextual variables much easier. It would strengthen contribution analysis, but geotagging alone would not demonstrate causality (People and Place project team, 2026b, 2026c).

### 7.4 Make mixed-methods reporting standard, not optional.

Alongside the core numbers, each project should submit a short qualitative return using structured prompts. A sensible template would ask who was reached, what barrier was addressed, what changed, what remained difficult, and what was learned. This is proportionate, useful and widely aligned with what interviewees said they need (People and Place project team, 2026d).

### 7.5 Harness the strengths of existing national datasets for long-term programme interpretation.

Transport Scotland should treat the Scottish Household Survey, Cycling Scotland counters, school travel data and selected contextual datasets as the stable national foundation. This is feasible because those assets already exist. The improvement needed is not to build them from scratch, but to connect project reporting to them more deliberately and interpret them more systematically (Cycling Scotland, n.d.; People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a; Sustrans, 2025; Transport Scotland, 2025b).

## **7.6 Provide shared implementation support.**

A light touch support offer is needed if the framework is to work consistently. This should include templates, a definitions guide, example completed returns, training for new staff and a named route for analytical queries. Interview evidence suggests that this would remove friction more effectively than asking each region to solve the same problems independently (People and Place project team, 2026d).

## **7.7 Phase wider societal outcome modelling and longitudinal deep dives.**

Health, emissions, wellbeing and social value analysis should be introduced once Phase 1 reporting is stable. These indicators could be tailored to include specific policy targets related to active travel, such as reductions in child poverty or modal shift (People and Place project team, 2026c). A small number of deep-dive case areas should then be commissioned to test assumptions about behavioural change and wider impacts. That would build a stronger evidence base over time without turning routine monitoring into an unmanageable burden (People and Place project team, 2025a, 2026b, 2026c).

## 8 Conclusions

People and Place can be monitored effectively through a shared information architecture, through harmonising and harnessing pre-existing data and collection methods across Scotland. The evidence reviewed here points to a framework that is typology-based, layered and mixed-method. That framework would be more proportionate for delivery partners and more useful for national interpretation (People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a, 2026d).

Scotland already has many of the ingredients required: robust national survey data, an expanding counter network, school travel data, local project intelligence and growing experience within RTPs. The priority now is to connect those ingredients more deliberately, simplify what is asked of delivery partners, and build wider outcome modelling only once the core reporting foundation is secure (Cycling Scotland, n.d.; People and Place project team, 2025c, 2026a, 2026d; Sustrans, 2025; Transport Scotland, 2025b).

### 8.1 Next steps

- Agree the national intervention typology and minimum fields with RTPs and delivery partners.
- Finalise digital templates, definitions and the reporting timetable before the next funding round.
- Build the intervention register and assign governance and quality-assurance responsibilities.
- Pilot observational linkage in a small number of areas using counters, school travel data and contextual baselines.
- Identify candidate deep-dive case areas for later-phase validation and learning.

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## 10 Appendices

### Appendix A Illustrative minimum fields by intervention type

Table 7 provides an expanded starting point for discussion. It is deliberately practical rather than exhaustive. The purpose is to show the sort of fields that could form the minimum dataset, while keeping the burden on delivery partners proportionate (People and Place project team, 2026c, 2026d).

Table 6 - Expanded illustrative minimum fields by intervention type.

Intervention type	Essential fields	Examples of indicators	Suggested qualitative prompts
Active schools	School name and local authority; pupils reached; sessions or activities delivered; infrastructure or parking installed; delivery period.	Hands Up Scotland results where available, or a short repeat school travel question in participating schools.	What changed for pupils, staff or parents; what still limits active travel to school; any inclusion issues.
Active workplaces	Workplaces engaged; employees reached; actions delivered; facilities installed; follow-up point agreed at project start.	Workplace commute follow-up, sign-up retention or repeat engagement data.	What supported uptake; what blocked participation; whether change looks likely to continue after support ends.
Access to bikes and inclusion	Type and number of cycles or e-bikes provided; participant profile; duration of access; repeat use or retention measure.	Repeat use records, booking data or a short follow-up question on changed travel behaviour.	Who benefited most; which access barriers were removed; which barriers remained.
Community behaviour change	Participants; repeat participation; duration of engagement; core activity delivered; target audience.	Recorded trips, pledges, challenge completions or repeat contact over time.	Why people engaged, what seemed to influence behaviour, and what would improve future delivery.
Shared mobility and integration	Users; trips or memberships; sites or hubs involved; delivery period; target connection to public transport or shared travel.	Hub access counts, station access surveys or repeated use of shared services where available.	How the intervention changed access to other modes and whether it reduced reliance on private car use.
Small capital and supportive physical measures	Asset type; location; installation date; scale; responsible organisation; maintenance status.	Utilisation counts, occupancy checks, nearby counter data or simple follow-up observation.	Whether the measure addressed the intended barrier, who used it and what further changes may still be needed.

## Appendix B Suggested short qualitative evidence template

A structured qualitative return should be short enough to complete quickly but specific enough to support synthesis. Devising a usable framework which minimises reporting burdens while capturing valuable outputs is the key challenge. This can be led by Transport Scotland and refined with RTPs and DPs. Table 8 shows a simple format that could sit alongside the quantitative return (People and Place project team, 2026d).

Table 7 - Suggested prompts for a short qualitative return.

Prompt	Suggested response format	Why it matters
Who was the project trying to reach?	One or two sentences, plus simple audience tick-boxes if useful.	Supports inclusion analysis and helps explain who the evidence does and does not cover.
What was delivered and which barrier was it meant to address?	Two or three short sentences.	Links activity to theory of change rather than listing outputs alone.
What changed, or appears to have changed?	Short narrative with one practical example.	Captures mechanism and early outcome signals that may not yet show up in counts or surveys.
What did not work as expected or what remains difficult?	Short narrative.	Improves learning and avoids over-positive reporting.
One example of lived experience or local context	A short vignette or anonymised quote.	Retains the place-based and human dimension of the programme without requiring long case studies.
What would you do differently next time?	One or two sentences.	Turns reporting into a learning tool for future funding rounds.

## Appendix C Semi-Structured Stakeholder Interview Questions

### 10.1.1 Introduction and Context

- Introductions and project context
- Explain where this interview feeds into project process
- Highlight that confidentiality will be ensured – no quotes attributed personally, notes/recordings taken with permission.

### 10.1.2 Interview Structure and Core Questions

#### 10.1.2.1 High-Level Background

- i. Could you briefly describe your role and involvement in active travel delivery or monitoring?
- ii. What are your organisation's current priorities or challenges around monitoring and evaluation of modal shift?

#### 10.1.2.2 Existing Data

- i. What data sources does your organisation currently use to monitor active travel in general, or specific to walking and cycling?
- ii. Which indicators are reported internally or externally (e.g., modal share, trip length, participation rates)?
- iii. How reliable, useful or comprehensive do you find your current methods/datasets (spatially, temporally, or methodologically)?

*(Prompt if needed: Are there any notable strengths, gaps, or inconsistencies?)*

#### 10.1.2.3 Data Collection and Integration

- i. How is monitoring data collected - for example, automated counters, surveys, app data, or local reporting from funded projects?
- ii. Are there currently strategies for data integration across local authorities, RTPs, or delivery partners?
- iii. Does your area/organisation have specific requirements/considerations around monitoring and evaluation?

#### 10.1.2.4 Evaluation and Learning

- i. Are there examples of evaluations or monitoring approaches you've found particularly useful or effective?
- ii. How do you currently use monitoring data - for example, for funding decisions, strategy, or reporting?
- iii. How would you estimate your organisation's access to analytical tools or staff with data expertise?"
- iv. What capacity does your team have in terms of monitoring and evaluation? To what extent is this outsourced? What skillsets currently exist within the team regarding data collections/analysis/reporting?

#### **10.1.2.5 Emissions and Co-Benefits Estimation**

- i. What are your thoughts/experiences on the crossover between active travel interventions and emissions/co-benefits impacts? How connected do you see these outcomes?
- ii. How, if at all, does your organisation currently evidence the contribution of active travel interventions to wider outcomes such as emissions reduction, health, or place quality, and where do you see the main evidence gaps?
- iii. To what extent do you feel confident attributing wider co-benefits or emissions impacts to active travel interventions, as opposed to broader contextual or policy factors?
- iv. How important do you view the symbiosis between these shared outcomes?
- v. At what stage of the design/implementation process, if any, does climatic or co-benefit related considerations emerge?

#### **10.1.2.6 Forward Look**

- i. Do you see future changes to current issues affecting Scotland's active travel evidence base?
- ii. Are there data or methods you think are underused (e.g., mobile data, community engagement, health data)?
- iii. Is there anything you'd like to see from future evaluation frameworks or data tools developed through Transport Scotland or CXC?

#### **10.1.3 Closing**

Thanks and reminder of how their insights will feed into:

- i. The Step 1 evidence mapping
- ii. Step 2 methodology mapping
- iii. Step 3 emissions and co-benefits estimations

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