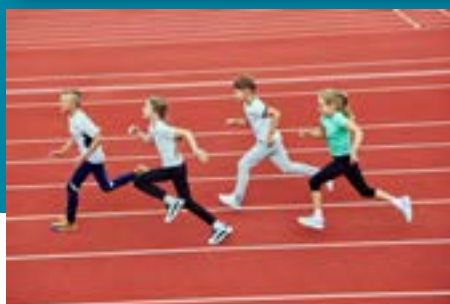


# Dumfries and Galloway Best Investments

## 2025 Update

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February 2025



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Dumfries **COUNCIL**  
and Galloway

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February 2025

Dumfries and Galloway Best Investments 2025 Update

# Background

The Physical Activity for Health Research Centre (PAHRC) at the University of Edinburgh were commissioned to conduct an update and reflective exercise on the **2017 Best Investment report** in Dumfries and Galloway. Funding was provided by **SWESTrans**, Dumfries and Galloway Regional Transport Partnership. Funding was awarded from the **Transport Scotland People and Place Grant programme** which supports behaviour change interventions which encourage people to choose active or sustainable ways to travel instead of using private vehicles with the intention of independently assessing how the future of active travel fits into the wider context of physical activity within the **SWESTrans** region given its strong presence in the 2017 Strategy

## Aims of this work

This project was commissioned to address the following three aims:

1. Assess progress against the 17 recommendations made in the 2017 report (see Appendix 1);
2. Identify new projects and activities considered Best Investments in Dumfries and Galloway;
3. Identify considerations for the development of the new Dumfries and Galloway Physical Activity Strategy (due Spring/Summer 2025).

## Approach

A series of six in-person and online stakeholder workshops and meetings were held in January and February 2025. Discussion around the three aims was facilitated and feedback presented to relevant stakeholders. Representatives from each of the eight sub-systems identified by the **Scottish Government** and **Public Health Scotland** as part of the physical activity system attended these meetings. Participants include Health and Social Care, Education, Active Travel, Workplaces, Sport, and Leisure and Recreation.

Active Travel	Active Places and Spaces	Active Workplace	Active Places of Learning
Sport and Active Recreation	Active Systems	Active Health and Social Care	Communications and Public Education

**Figure 1: Eight sub-systems constituting the physical activity systems in Scotland**

The wider approach for developing the new Dumfries and Galloway Physical Activity Strategy follows the method set-out by **Public Health Scotland** including the eight sub-systems identified above, ensuring consistency across the three aims of this work and local and national policy threads.

## Aim 1: Progress since 2017

There was consensus amongst participants that there has been substantive progress since 2017, with key themes including:

- There is a growing sense of increased collaboration and partnership across the sector, which is helping to drive progress;
- Progress often straddles multiple sub-systems indicating this partnership working, and an overall systems approach;
- Particular progress has been made in health and social care and active travel and infrastructure;
- New gaps have been identified such as tertiary education;
- Monitoring and evaluation culture has shifted, but mechanisms are needed for sharing findings and good practice.

## Aim 2: New projects and areas of activity

Multiple new projects and activities were identified in this update exercise across all sub-systems. Examples are shown in Table 1. In many cases these projects and activities were examples of partnership working between sub-systems and between local authority and third sector partners.

Appendix 2 provides an updated list of projects identified as Best Investments in Dumfries and Galloway, as identified in the 2017 and 2025 reports.

## Aim 3: Considerations for 2025 Strategy

Based on this work, there are some findings that could inform the development of the 2025 Dumfries and Galloway Physical Activity Strategy.

### Overall strategic approach

Stakeholders called for the strategy to show how there was “one overall approach” across the region. There are currently 47 actions in the Draft Strategy and while this level of detail is important for planning and delivery, a clearer strategic vision would help higher level communications, advocacy, and partnership working. For example:

**Vision:** We support and empower more people in Dumfries and Galloway to be active more often

**Strategic approach:** A systems-based strategy based on partnership working between sub-systems and between local authority, Health and Social Care Partnership and Third Sector partners.

**Actions:** 47 actions that are located in relevant sub-systems. Partners understand how they are contributing to the strategy and the system by showing leadership and collaboration on the actions in their area.

There was also a call for pragmatic realism, where strategy goals are cognisant of delivery capacity.

## Specific considerations

This work helped identify 12 specific considerations for the strategy. These have been organised into 4 overarching themes.

### Theme 1. Learning, training and evaluation

- 1 Practice worth sharing mechanisms.** This was discussed in relation to sharing projects that work and also approaches to evaluation. It could have both practitioners and local communities as the target audience. This could help build capacity in communities and to share stories. It could show models that work e.g., for getting funding and also things that don't work. Participants expressed that “we don't always just need to add another service” describing how community led initiatives can be more impactful and sustainable. Mechanisms for sharing how this could be done might lead to more of this approach across Dumfries and Galloway.
- 2 Consolidating progress.** With the shared perception that there had been marked progress since 2017 in e.g., Health and Social Care and Active Travel there was discussion about how to consolidate this. It may be supported by the sharing practice described above. And effective evaluation systems will be important to capture the evidence. Communications and advocacy could play an important role here.

**3 Workforce training and development for key groups.** This was seen as a key ingredient to supporting delivery e.g., for early years and older adults.

**4 Strategic Lead for evaluation.** Despite the progress in evaluation, the questions and gaps from stakeholders suggest that an internal strategic lead for evaluation could help address capacity and capability issues and support the evidence needs of partners.

**Theme 2. An equitable approach**

**5 Geography and rural deprivation.** The strategy needs to be clear on how those living in rural and very rural communities in Dumfries and Galloway will be supported to be more active.

**6 Mechanisms to identify key underserved groups.** It is important that there is awareness of any groups who are still not receiving available support. This is related to monitoring and surveillance at a regional level.

**Theme 3. The life-course**

**7 Support for all transitions across the lifespan.** Life transitions from early years to retirement and later life were seen as key to population activity levels. Could the strategy provide a “road map” showing opportunities at each life transition?

**8 Muscle strength and balance approach.** An ongoing discussion was whether the strategy has enough focus and clarity on muscle strength and balance.

**Theme 4. Joined up working**

**9 Infrastructure and support connectivity.** In line with a system-based and partnership approach, an important consideration is how physical infrastructure, opportunities and services are joined up. This could include how walking and cycling infrastructure are linked with public transport, and also key destinations such as places of work, schools, shops and leisure facilities. It also includes timing, for example if the last bus is at 4pm and a service finishes at 4.30pm it could exclude some people.

**10 Community awareness and engagement of key issues.** While communications and community voice are seen as areas of progress, the strategy should emphasise the importance of doing more in this area.

**11 Digital strategy across sub-systems.** As above, while communications are an area of success, the strategy should consider how digital and social media can be supportive in 2025 and beyond.

**12 Link to relevant documents.** The 2025 strategy should highlight links to other relevant strategies and frameworks e.g., transport, sport, education, and employment. This includes the Council Plan (2024-2028), with physical activity contributing directly to three from four overarching themes and five strategic outcomes (see Table 1). This is already happening in some spaces. For example, the active travel actions are reflective of actions already published in the active travel strategy. The 2025 Strategy should make this as clear as possible.

**Table 1: Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan 2023–2028 - Direct alignment to Physical Activity Strategy outcomes and actions**

Council Plan - Themes	Council Plan - Strategic Outcomes
Travel, Connectivity and Infrastructure	Roads, paths, cycling and walking networks in the region are improved
	Sustainable travel in the region contributes to net zero2
Education and Learning	Participation in creativity and play is part of early and lifelong learning experiences
Health and Wellbeing	Prevention and early intervention assist people to have independent lives
	People are active, resilient and improving their health and wellbeing

**More details for each are given in the Table 2 on next pages.**



# Table 2:

## Recommendations from 2017, progress on recommendation, new projects and activities, and considerations for 2025 Strategy

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>1</b>	Establish a project monitoring system across the entire Dumfries and Galloway Region, to better understand the geographical spread.	Active Systems (Demographic Location)	Baseline travel data from Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy now available <a href="https://www.transport.gov.scot/progress-update/bulletin-december-2024-active-travel-transformation/">https://www.transport.gov.scot/progress-update/bulletin-december-2024-active-travel-transformation/</a>
<b>2</b>	Establish a project monitoring system across the entire Dumfries and Galloway Region, to better understand the types of project being delivered. This will highlight potential areas for focus or sustainability.	Active Systems (Type of Physical Activity)	<p>Consider annual/biannual/quarterly “practice worth sharing” sessions focused on evaluation findings for interested stakeholders.</p> <p>There may still be geographical and regional variation in delivery and opportunity that the 2025 strategy could consider. Hidden rural deprivation is still an issue in some parts of Dumfries and Galloway.</p> <p>A monitoring system has been built (for PA referral). The cost and perceptions of GDPR risks remain a challenge. Awareness of this system could be raised.</p> <p>Could there be more transparency on progress? For example a “Dashboard” that reported progress against each action in the strategy?</p>

### Progress on Recommendation(s)

There has been clear progress in terms of the way monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is viewed in Dumfries and Galloway. The conversation has moved on from “making the case” for M&E in 2017. This argument is largely accepted, and the debate is now what to do and how to do it. It was however accepted that further progress is needed in terms of conducting and reporting on M&E. The difference between region wide monitoring and project specific evaluation could be clearer. Similarly, who are the key audiences and users of M&E findings? For monitoring, it is not clear if this is preferable at a sub-system, or whole of system level.

It was noted that there can be differences between Health and Social Care and Third Sector requirements for M&E.

There has been some reliance on external support and academic collaboration for M&E. This includes some success with Dissertation students. It requires resource to do and without that M&E will be limited.

There is a sense that evaluation findings and data are not routinely shared. Good in some spaces (sub-systems) not so good in others. Channels of communication could be improved. There is a question about how to get data out to right audiences and utilise national databases better (e.g. cycle counters).

Still lots to do in terms of M&E for Active Places and Spaces. Some limited user number data.

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>3</b>	We recommend a renewed focus on for provision of physical activity projects that are contextually relevant in older adults (65 years and older).	Active Health and Social Care (Age and Gender)	<p>Example project: <b>Loreburn Fit for Life</b></p> <p>Example project: <b>Let’s Motivate in Care Homes.</b></p> <p>Example project: Ageing Well includes brain health - <b>Ageing Well – DG DOING MORE / Ageing Well Toolkit</b></p> <p><b>Active Communities programmes</b></p> <p>Consider how people moving into the “older adult” age range e.g., from the workplace can be supported to maintain activity through the transition. This might require collaboration between sub-system areas.</p> <p>A strategic focus on increasing awareness and uptake of muscle strength and balance at population levels might be a priority.</p>

### Progress on Recommendation

A promotion for older adults has more of a focus than in 2017. There is also more work focused on strength and balance (which is highlighted as a priority for older adults) by the **UK CMOs** with **associated messaging work**.

UWS student nurse placements have agreed to have a physical activity focus for (predominantly older) patients. Student nurses work with multi-disciplinary team to promote PA with individuals and groups. Other HSC areas have noted an interest in having this as part of their practice profile and this is in the process of being rolled this out. Student nurses complete “let’s motivate training” and other online e-learning is enabling PA.

Brain health is increasingly a priority. The transition from workforce to retirement is seen as a gap – there is a need to support people in and leaving the workforce so they do not become inactive older adults.

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>4</b>	We recommend a renewed focus on for provision of physical activity projects that are contextually relevant in early years (under 5s).	Active Places Of Learning Active Sport and Recreation (Age and Gender) <b>Peep</b>	Example project: <b>Let's Get Sporty</b> Important projects include <b>Healthy Child Service; Access to Leisure Services;</b> Physical Literacy Training <b>Peep</b>

### Progress on Recommendation

There is still a need to upskill staff in PA provision for Early Years groups. This has been a bit sporadic in recent years.

There has been progress on Free Flow access within in pre-school settings. Let's Get Sporty classes a good example of Third Sector delivery/partnership.

There are plans to test **HENRY** (a wide range of support for families from pregnancy to age 12 including workshops, programmes, resources and online help) with NHS, Third Sector and Early Learning and Childcare which aims to provide staff with knowledge, skills and confidence to support families to participate in healthy lifestyles

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>5</b>	Continue school-based provision of access and opportunity. Seek to build sustainability and conduct assessment of equality of access. Conduct process evaluation aimed at delivery improvements.	Active Places of Learning	Important projects: <b>Active Schools, Bikeability, Play on Pedals, Sustrans I-Bike Communities programme</b>
<b>6</b>	Assess school-based projects with potential for scale up	Active Places of Learning	<b>Example project in tertiary education Active Campus Network project</b>

### Progress on Recommendation(s)

This is another area where stakeholders feel positively about maintenance of focus and progress made since 2017. The Active Schools project is now 20 years old, and Bikeability has expanded. School-based provision is more targeted with better evaluation. The Child Weight Management Programme (Go For It) has stopped and has been replaced by the '**Healthy Child Service**'. A lot of work was done taking learning from Go For It and re-designing the service working with a health psychologist. The Strategy and bringing sub-systems together has organically helped school-based provision. It is worth noting that the Council is no longer delivering Outdoor Education and it is a school-by-school decision what gets done. Leads to variation in opportunities for children.

There has also been progress on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations which has been driven by national developments. This is a positive step forward. However, some people and groups are still missed so there remains room for improvement.

There is still a gap in tertiary education. And how support between school, tertiary education and care supported populations (age 16-25) is linked and joined up. This could be seen as an area with a good opportunity to have a positive impact. A UWS partnership agreement with Paths for all to encourage walking (staff wellbeing) has been a positive. Gym staff are employed to support students and staff at Dumfries and Galloway college, UWS & UOG.

Some mechanisms to share updates on activities and programmes would be great. Greater exposure may better foster collaboration and capacity building. There is an opportunity for greater sharing of good practice, and this should include the third sector.

A termly Health and Wellbeing newsletter has been introduced within Education and goes out to all school staff, focused on sharing updates on resources, professional learning opportunities, partners and effective practice. The newsletter covers all areas of Health and Wellbeing including physical activity.

Recommendation		Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>7</b>	Evaluate existing transport projects for impact beyond reach, to understand the return on investment they may offering.	Active Travel		
<b>Progress on Recommendation</b>				
See broader evaluation comments (recommendations 1, 2 and 17).				
Recommendation		Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>8</b>	Existing Urban Design, Infrastructure and Natural Environment projects have promising evaluation data for impact and cost-effectiveness. We recommend evaluation of longer-term impacts to understand the scale at which these projects should be promoted, and their potential in terms of sustainability.	Active Places and Spaces		
<b>Progress on Recommendation</b>				
See broader evaluation comments (recommendations 1, 2 and 17).				

Recommendation		Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>9</b>	We recommend a strategic focus on lasting urban and natural infrastructure with legacy potential. Particularly those projects which could benefit all in society. This may require long sighted projections and evaluations to assess the true value.	Active Places and Spaces	<p>Important projects include Criffel project and Penpoint to Thornhill <a href="https://www.dgwego.com/dumfries-galloway-news/penpont-and-thornhill-on-the-traffic-free-path-to-success-with-new-420000-funding-award/">https://www.dgwego.com/dumfries-galloway-news/penpont-and-thornhill-on-the-traffic-free-path-to-success-with-new-420000-funding-award/</a></p> <p>7 Stanes, Sea to Sea project and Rock up and Ride</p> <p>Beat the Street (not delivered recently)</p> <p>DPAG better supported streets <a href="https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/news/2024/dumfries-town-centre-better-streets-engagement-opens">https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/news/2024/dumfries-town-centre-better-streets-engagement-opens</a></p> <p>20mph around schools</p> <p><b>Sustrans I-Bike Communities programme</b></p> <p><b>Dalbeattie E-Bike Project</b></p> <p><b>SWestrans Transport Scotland Funded People and Place Programme.</b></p>	<p>Can infrastructure connectivity be further enhanced?</p> <p>Can community awareness of mechanisms for engagement be raised?</p> <p>Is there enough content on sustainability, Net Zero, and climate goals?</p>

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<p><b>Progress on Recommendation</b></p> <p>Active travel is now seen as standard in transport decisions: “we do this now – it is intrinsically designed in these days”. There are many projects that now have health and well-being built in. This is seen as key progress since 2017. The <b>Council Plan 2023-28</b> has a strategic outcome for ‘Roads, paths, cycling and walking networks in the region are improved’ with the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy is shown in full.</p> <p>Active travel funding has changed. Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) now deliver this, and national partners are not playing the same role as before. This has created opportunity for enhanced local delivery and is a benefit of changes to national strategy/policy.</p> <p>Supportive policy now exists e.g., NHS Sustainability Policy. There has been progress on capital infrastructure investment.</p> <p>The Active Travel team have collaborated effectively with Health and Education using systems approaches to impact travel and health outcomes through investment. This helps deliver on strategic outcomes.</p> <p>People and Place Programme: As part of active travel transformation programme Transport Scotland have introduced a new place-based delivery model for behaviour change interventions. This will be driven by local active travel strategies and regional transport plans. From 2024/25 TS are providing funding directly to Scotland’s seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs). RTPs are working with their Local Authorities (LAs) and other delivery partners to identify and focus on local priorities, and to build capacity at a local level.</p> <p>SWestrans RTP have been able to use this funding to embed delivery within the local community to create a much greater sense of community ownership of interventions. For example, the Dalbeattie ebike project that provides social prescribing of ebikes, social rides and more recently support for youth cycling. This has leveraged significant community buy in and supported local investment in the form of <b>Rocks and Wheels Project Dalbeattie</b>. National providers are still providing specialist knowledge and skills with disability cycling being a particular focus of the IBike communities programme.</p> <p>National providers still play a key role in delivery where integrated to wider delivery of infrastructure e.g., Sustrans still playing a major role in the NCN. IBike Schools integrates the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence objectives around transport, health and the environment. Pupils are engaged around the changes that can be made to the built environment locally to enable a more healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>The People and Places programme now includes sustainability as well as active travel. Related to this, Under 22 and Over 60 free bus travel is as a facilitator of more activity and social interaction.</p> <p>All schools now have 20mph speed limits. It is a universal and equitable intervention. 2019 National transport Strategy has helped.</p> <p>Natural infrastructure and core paths are seen as another area of progress. There is now even an ambition to establish a continuous coastal path. More people are using the beautiful natural environment in D&amp;G. There seems to be greater awareness of the benefit D&amp;G outdoor environments can have on economy.</p> <p>Community voice is coming through more. The <b>Local Place Plans</b> (LLPs) are a good development since 2017 and are good for community engagement. There is a desire for even closer working with communities. Awareness of LLPs within communities could be even higher. Increased local community delivery (and volunteers) represents progress. It’s not just the Council e.g., Summerhill.</p> <p>Connectivity of local infrastructure is an area where more progress could be made.</p>			

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
10	Active Health and Social Care	<p><b>Active lives pathway</b></p> <p>Examples of work: <b>Active Wards</b> - Activity stations on acute wards, Mid Park hospital - Pre-ward activity with mental health focus, Seated exercise sessions in in-patient settings, combined training for AHPs, <b>SAMH work, Parkinson’s work., Versus Arthritis walking project(s)</b></p>	<p>Consider how to engage more strategic leadership at Board Level.</p> <p>Consider how to maintain and capitalise on reported progress in this area.</p>
11	Active Health and Social Care	<p><b>Branching Out</b></p> <p><b>Community Link Service</b></p> <p><b>Waiting Well – DG DOING MORE</b></p> <p><b>Cycling for Health</b></p> <p>Moving on</p> <p><b>Rehabilitation Framework</b></p> <p>Women’s Network - <b>Work with Us Portal – Staff Networks home – NHS Dumfries &amp; Galloway</b></p> <p>Digital Strategy: <a href="https://dghscp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/FINAL-Digital-Health-and-Care-Strategy-2020-2024.pdf">dghscp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/FINAL-Digital-Health-and-Care-Strategy-2020-2024.pdf</a></p>	

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<p><b>Progress on Recommendation</b></p> <p>It is seen as a positive that this is still a priority in 2025. There has been progress on the referral pathway in D&amp;G, specifically in quality and structure of delivery. This has been supported by the systems approach. The referral pathway aligns with the <b>PHS Physical Activity Pathway</b> providing resources that support person centred assessment, referral and signposting. Delivery of the referral pathway aligns directly with evidenced based actions within the <b>National Framework</b>.</p> <p>Health economic evaluation work with <b>Sport England MOVES Tool</b> has helped build the case for investment.</p> <p>The <b>PHS PARS Standards</b> have been important and exercise referral now defined as physical activity referral. There is now continuous/rolling delivery.</p> <p>The <b>Active lives pathway</b> partnership programme (various conditions) is a leap forward. The boundary between prehab, rehab and longer-term PA promotion is merging. Walking provision has evolved e.g., <b>Versus Arthritis walking project(s)</b>. The Moving On programme is now embedded within the Active Lives Pathway supporting people in recovery from problem substance use.</p> <p>Healthy connections lifestyle clinic now scaled up and mainstream. Known as <b>Community Link Service</b>.</p> <p>There has been expansion to Third Sector providers creating opportunities for key groups including older people, those with intellectual disability, and those living with long term disability.</p> <p>The implementation of the Active Lives Pathway across the H&amp;SC system in D&amp;G has strengthened strategic awareness and appreciation for the important role physical activity can play in primary and secondary prevention and improving population health.</p> <p>To maintain progress and/or scale existing physical activity work, more strategic leadership and resourcing is required to strengthen current delivery and grow opportunities/access that optimise health outcomes now and in the future. This will be challenging in highly challenging economic times. This could feature in 2025 Strategy. [note: new investment area Community-wide “Active Systems” not present in 2017 report.]</p> <p>The Healthy Child Service supports children and young people and their families living with higher body weights. This service is based on the national <b>Tier 2 and Tier 3 weight management standards for children and young people</b>. The <b>Healthy Child Service</b> has incorporated movement into the programme. The service works closely with colleagues in leisure facilities to provide opportunities to children and young people accessing the Healthy Child Service. We also signpost to other initiatives and opportunities within Dumfries and Galloway.</p>			

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
12	Active Communications	<p>Example work:</p> <p><b>DG Doing More</b></p> <p><b>Active Communities Programme</b></p> <p>Community Bulletins and Newsletter</p>	<p>Consider how to maintain and capitalise on reported progress in this area.</p> <p>National policy now recognises importance of muscle strength and balance activities in primary prevention – are tailored messages a strategic priority now?</p> <p>Do some services need their own social media accounts?</p> <p>Specific Facebook pages can help focus communications to audience.</p> <p>What is the potential role of the Actify platform?</p>
<p><b>Progress on Recommendation</b></p> <p>There was consensus that this is another area of progress since 2017. While there are identified opportunities to “do more” there has been the implementation of an evidence-based approach, across multiple sectors, that has resulted in a perceived shift in awareness and engagement in D&amp;G.</p> <p><b>DG Doing More</b> is making a big difference. Website in place since 2021. <b>Active Communities Programme</b> a success with lots of views and sharing from NHS/HSC. Has raised awareness and engagement. Could still do more though e.g., condition specific content.</p> <p>The Council’s Graphic Design Team and Digital Designer have provided excellent support including with DG Doing More website, videos and posters.</p> <p>The Council and HSC partnership on communications has been a good development. They could work even more closely in the future.</p> <p>Strategic communications has been guided by the <b>PAMF (evidence-based approach)</b>.</p> <p>Community Bulletins and Newsletter have been effective.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that communications alone will ‘not be enough’. Communications can support and enhance the existing work across the other sub-systems.</p>			

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy	
<b>13</b>	Physical activity promotion through sport appears to offer high cost-effective engagement. It is critical that the equality of access and participation is evaluated and assessed to ensure that individuals from across the social spectrum can enjoy the benefits.	Active Sport and Recreation	Example project: <b>Let's Get Sporty</b> Community Sports Hub model e.g., <b>NW Community Campus</b> <b>Active Communities</b> <b>Active Communities – DG DOING MORE</b>	Ensure that opportunities for sport are available for those who want to engage.  Consider how sport can be continued across life course and into older age for those who want to engage.
<b>14</b>	There may be small scale Sport type projects that could be scaled up for excellent return on investment. This needs local and contextual appraisal.	Active Sport and Recreation		

### Progress on Recommendation

There were some indications of progress, but it might have been expected that more would be discussed in this sub-system.

There has been some good progress in work linking to local clubs (rugby).

Be Active Upper Nithsdale has now ended but evidence from this used to reduce membership cost across all Council sites and inform Club Active membership (see recommendation 15).

The Community Sports Hub model has worked well e.g., NW Community Campus. Has improved access.

sportscotland has invested in various programmes which supports overall physical activity objectives in D&G

In active recreation: **Active Communities – DG DOING MORE** now running a range of strength and balance programmes in communities and rural communities.

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy	
<b>15</b>	Dumfries and Galloway has a strong profile in terms of leisure provision. Evaluation is required focussing on project improvement, quality of delivery and equality of access.	Active Sport and Recreation	<b>Leisure memberships   Dumfries and Galloway Council</b>  Example projects: <b>Rocks and Wheels</b> (accessibility and inclusivity), <b>Stranraer Water Sports Hub</b>	Consider how to maintain and capitalise on reported progress in this area.

### Progress on Recommendation

The Council commitment to means tested membership discounts in 2019 was a big step forward. Reported that this has been expanded and there has been a growth in memberships recently. Youth memberships have been introduced and this is a good development too.

There has also been growth in Club Sports for Care experienced populations.

There are new classes for rural communities.

Easy Access now Club Active membership - **Leisure memberships | Dumfries and Galloway Council**

There are opportunities for children and young people supported by the **Healthy Child Service** to access free leisure facilities. Currently they can access 8 weeks of leisure access and have also been able to utilise the summer memberships previously.

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy	
<b>16</b>	The workplace is increasingly an inactive environment that promotes sedentary behaviour. Dumfries and Galloway requires more workplace physical activity projects. Pedometer based workplace challenges may be an effective option.	Active Workplaces	Example projects: Workplace <b>Step Count Challenges</b>  Physical wellbeing work with DGC staff - <b>FFMOT</b>	Consider how Strategy can support the new developments that seem to be following on from initial work of RTP.

### Progress on Recommendation

The workplace journey is now one of the specific focus areas of People and Place Active Travel behaviour change programmes (SWESTRANS). Similarly, the continuation of the sustainable and active travel behaviour change 'People and Place' programme is moving forward. Notable developments include: Broadening the programme remit to include the promotion of 'sustainable travel', the incorporation of support for community projects, and drawing closer links with Local Authority work across both behaviour change and infrastructure. The **Better Points project** is coming in soon.

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>17</b> The data collection tool for this work was built from the Standard Evaluation Framework, which is very good practice. This report identified further information that will be required for future work. This should be developed in collaboration with the end users (e.g. Project Managers) to ensure fitness for purpose. Priority areas include how to assess equality of access, comparable cost data, and comparable usage, attendance or reach information.	ACTIVE SYSTEMS  (Practice and Evaluation)	<b>SCOT-PASQ</b> embedded within the Active Lives Pathway.  <b>WELLBY</b> used in evaluation	Does D&G need a Strategic Lead for Evaluation?

### Progress on Recommendation

Progress includes SCOT-PASQ embedded in PA pathway, and use of **WELLBY** in evaluation of Branching Out to help secure more funding. The M&E data were very helpful.

The Dumfries and Galloway Schools Physical Activity Survey 2024 is an important M&E indicator. Regional report with >3,000 responses. Each participating school (open to all primary/secondary schools regionally) gets a report with data broken for their pupils (e.g. PA levels, barriers, enablers, preferred activities happiness...) to allow active schools coordinators and teachers to plan based on feedback from their pupils. Results by school broken down by year group, gender and level of activity.

Still some debate around what sort of evaluation is required for different audiences e.g. Board level or third sector partner? Different organisations want to know different things.

Consistent and comparable measures are a gap. Would help assess the impact of a project. M&E requires time and resource that is not always available.

Recommendation	Investment Area / Subsystem	Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	Considerations for 2025 Strategy
<b>New area</b>	ACTIVE SYSTEMS  (Community-wide programmes (systems))		Consider how to further support collaboration between sub-systems in new strategy.  Consider what lessons can be learned from effective advocacy in e.g., active travel and cycling  Highlight links to other relevant strategies and frameworks e.g., transport, sport, education, and employment, and also the D&G Council Plan.

### Progress on Recommendation

There is more collaborative work across the sector. This is a positive move forward that helps achieve shared aims.

Advocacy is still seen as “a bit of a gap”.

The **Integration Joint Board** is seen as important in terms of key Leadership.

# APPENDIX 1

## List of Recommendations - Best Investments for Physical Activity in Dumfries and Galloway 2017

Number	Recommendation	Investment/ Promotion Area
1	Establish a project monitoring system across the entire Dumfries and Galloway Region, to better understand the geographical spread.	Demographic Location
2	Establish a project monitoring system across the entire Dumfries and Galloway Region, to better understand the types of project being delivered. This will highlight potential areas for focus or sustainability.	Type of Physical Activity
3	We recommend a renewed focus on for provision of physical activity promotion that is contextually relevant in older adults (65 years and older).	Age and Gender
4	We recommend a renewed focus on for provision of physical activity promotion that is contextually relevant in early years (under 5s).	Age and Gender
5	Continue school based provision of access and opportunity. Seek to build sustainability and conduct assessment of equality of access. Conduct process evaluation aimed at delivery improvements.	School and Education
6	Assess school based projects with potential for scale up.	School and Education
7	Evaluate existing transport projects for impact beyond reach, to understand the return on investment they may offering.	Transport
8	Existing projects have promising evaluation data for impact and cost-effectiveness. We recommend evaluation of longer term impacts to understand the scale at which these projects should be promoted, and their potential in terms of sustainability.	Urban design, Infrastructure and Natural Environment
9	We recommend a strategic focus on lasting urban and natural infrastructure and successful place making with legacy potential. Particularly those project which could benefit all in society. This may require long sighted projections and evaluations to assess the true value.	Urban design, Infrastructure and Natural Environment

10	Physical activity promotion within primary and secondary healthcare should be considered a priority in Dumfries and Galloway. It is a reasonable assumption that any provision is cost-effective in the context of healthcare costs for treating chronic disease. be considered.	Health and Social Care
11	Physical activity should be considered a vital sign across primary and secondary care. The use of the Scottish Physical Activity Screening Questionnaire (Scot-PASQ) for consistent monitoring of trends across the region should also be considered.	Health and Social Care
12	At a strategic level, Dumfries and Galloway should decide if mass media is a regional focus, or a national focus, and the role the region should play. This may be related to any social media strategies.	Mass Media
13	Physical activity promotion through sport appears to offer high cost effective engagement. It is critical that the equality of access and participation is evaluated and assessed to ensure that individuals from across the social spectrum can enjoy the benefits.	Sport
14	There may be small scale projects that could be scaled up for excellent return on investment. This needs local and contextual appraisal.	Sport
15	Dumfries and Galloway has a strong profile in terms of leisure provision. Evaluation is required focussing on project improvement, quality of delivery and equality of access.	Leisure
16	The workplace is increasing an inactive environment that promotes sedentary behaviour. Dumfries and Galloway requires more workplace physical activity promotion projects. Pedometer based workplace challenges may be an effective option.	Workplace
17	The data collection tool for this work was built from the Standard Evaluation Framework, which is very good practice. This report identified further information that will be required for future work. This should be developed in collaboration with the end users (e.g. Project Managers) to ensure fitness for purpose. Priority areas include how to assess equality of access, comparable cost data, and comparable usage, attendance or reach information.	Practice and Evaluation

# APPENDIX 2

## Updated list of projects considered Best Investments for Physical Activity in Dumfries and Galloway.

Table 3 below outlines a range of programmes and plans that physical activity partners attending meetings in 2017 and 2025 identified as being a good value or best investment approach (£) to tackling physical inactivity in Dumfries and Galloway. The approach to identifying Best Investments in Dumfries and Galloway was informed by global work undertaken globally by 'The International Society for Physical Activity and Health' in 2011 and 2020.

Due to the large scope of physical activity work being undertaken across the system in Dumfries and Galloway, it was not possible to capture all partners and projects making a valuable contributing to physical activity levels.

Instead, the programmes or plans identified include the expertise of a wide range of partners who attended meetings, from all eight sub-systems. Programmes or plans highlighted provide a good indication of the type of programmes and plans that are having impact.

Programmes or plans identified by partners in 2017 and 2025 are detailed in Table 3 below. Please note:

- Table 3 highlight projects identified specifically as best investments in 2017, 2025 or both 2017 and 2025.
- Projects identified in 2017 but are no longer delivered have been removed. These can still be viewed in the full 2017 report.
- Projects titles have been modified/updated or where programmes of work have been aligned/merged since 2017 report (see Table 4)
- Projects identified as Best Investments in 2017 were not re-reviewed in 2025. Partners were asked to reflect on 2017 projects identified and no queries were received. Therefore, all projects identified and still running from 2017 were retained for 2025 report.



# Table 3:

## Dumfries and Galloway Projects identified in 2017 and 2025 reports

Subsystem	2017 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	2025 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	2017 and 2025 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight
Active Systems	Active Systems not a category in 2017 report	<b>Physical Activity Monitoring System (PASMS)</b> <b>Baseline travel data from D&amp;G Active Travel Strategy</b> <b>SCOT-PASQ embedded within Active Lives Pathway.</b> <b>Use of WELLBY within evaluation</b>	
Active Places of Learning <sup>1</sup>		<b>Access to Leisure Services</b> <b>Healthy Child Service</b> <b>Let's Get Sporty</b> <b>Peep</b> <b>Physical Literacy Training</b> <b>Play on Pedals</b> <b>Sustrans I-Bike Communities programme</b> <b>Active Campus Network</b>	Active Schools, Bikeability
Active Travel <sup>2</sup>	iBike Active Travel Maps (temporality unavailable online)	<b>(Multiple Active Travel related projects referenced in other Active Places of Learning and Active Health and Social Care)</b>	

Subsystem	2017 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	2025 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	2017 and 2025 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight
Active Places and Spaces <sup>3</sup>	Health Dalbeattie - Core Path 20	<b>Criffel project</b> <b>Dalbeattie E-Bike Project</b> <b>DPAG better supported streets</b> <b>Penpoint to Thornhill</b> <b>Rock up and Ride</b> <b>Rocks and Wheels</b> <b>Stranraer Watersports Hub</b> <b>Sustrans I-Bike Communities programme</b> <b>SWestrans Transport Scotland Funded People and Place Programme.</b> <b>7 Stanes</b> <b>Sea to Sea project</b>	Beat the Street
Active Health and Social Care <sup>4</sup>	Play@home Out Patient Cardiac Rehab	<b>Active Communities programmes</b> <b>Active Wards</b> <b>Ageing Well – DG DOING MORE / Ageing Well Toolkit</b> <b>Branching Out</b> <b>Cycling for Health</b> <b>Digital Strategy</b> <b>Loreburn Fit for Life</b> <b>Moving On*</b> <b>Rehabilitation Framework</b> <b>Waiting Well – DG DOING MORE</b> <b>Women’s Network</b>	Active Lives Pathway** Community Link Service*** Healthy Child Service**** Let’s Motivate

Subsystem	2017 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	2025 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight	2017 and 2025 - Key Projects or Actions to Highlight
Communications and Public Education <sup>5</sup>	Give Everybody Cycle Space campaign	<b>Active Communities Programme</b> <b>Community Bulletins and Newsletter</b> <b>DG Doing More</b>	
Active Sport and Recreation <sup>6</sup>	Tennis/Athletics & Curling Clubs Public Health Improvement – Gentle Movement)***** Babes in the Woods	<b>Active Communities – DG DOING MORE</b> <b>Healthy Child Service</b> <b>NW Community Campus</b> <b>Peep</b> <b>Physical Literacy Training</b>	Access to Leisure Services***** Active Communities Programme***** Leisure memberships   Dumfries and Galloway Council***** Let’s Get Sporty
Active Workplace <sup>7</sup>		<b>FFMOT</b>	Step Count Challenges*****

# Table 4:

## Modifications/Updates or Alignment/Merging of programmes of work since 2017 D&G Best Investment report

Code	Programme / Plan	2025 Subsystem	Reference – 2017	Reference - 2025	Note
*	Programme	Active Health and Social Care	N/A	Moving On	Referral programme for people in recovery from problem substance use. Moving On programme finished and embedded within Active Lives Pathway
**	Programme	Active Health and Social Care	Exercise referral	Active Lives Pathway	Exercise Referral now embedded within Active Lives Pathway. Exercise referral now referred to as 'Physical Activity Referral'
***	Programme	Active Health and Social Care	Healthy Connections Lifestyle Clinics (Social Prescribing)	Community Link Service	
****	Programme	Active Health and Social Care	Go4it Club	Healthy Child Service	
*****	Programme	Active Sport and Recreation	Building Healthy Communities Tai Chi for Health and Wellbeing	Updated to 'Public Health Community Development – Gentle Movement'	Building Healthy Communities now part of the Health and Social Care Partnership's Public Health Community Development Team
*****	Plan	Active Sport and Recreation	Easy Access	Access to Leisure Services	
*****	Programme	Active Sport and Recreation	Chair Based Exercise Health Walk Programme - Better for Walking	Active Communities	Chair Based Exercise now embedded within Active Lives Pathway. Recoded under Active Health and Social Care

Code	Programme / Plan	2025 Subsystem	Reference – 2017	Reference - 2025	Note
*****	Programme	Active Sport and Recreation	Pre-school swimming and pre-school gymnastics  Dumfries and Galloway Council (DGC) Leisure Facility  Annan Swimming Pool	<b>Leisure memberships   Dumfries and Galloway Council</b>  <b>Leisure centres and sports facilities   Dumfries and Galloway Council</b>	
*****	Programme	Active Workplace	Big Team Challenge	<b>Step Count Challenges</b>	Two online platforms operated by different providers to encourage staff to move more as part of a workplace physical activity challenge.

