

## DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Partnership Board the draft Annual Report for 2020/21, to invite comment from the Board and to seek authority for the Partnership Director to finalise and publish the Report.

### 2. ANNUAL REPORT

2.1 The Annual Report provides an overview of SEStran’s project portfolio. It highlights the contributions that SEStran has made to the region over the last year, in line with the agreed objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) and SEStran’s annual Business Plan.

2.2 The draft attached at **Appendix 1** was approved by the Performance & Audit Committee at its meeting on 10th September 2021.

2.3 The Annual Report will be published online. It can be made available in alternative formats on request.

### 3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The Board is asked to comment on the contents of the draft document and, subject to any agreed amendments, authorise the Partnership Director to finalise and publish the Annual Report 2020/21.

Jim Grieve  
**Partnership Director**  
24<sup>th</sup> September 2021

#### Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Report 2020/21

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Policy Implications         | None.  |
| Financial Implications      | Design costs can be met from within existing budget.   |
| Equalities Implications     | Details of SEStran’s Equality Mainstreaming work are contained within the Annual Report.   |
| Climate Change Implications | The Annual Report highlights our Climate Change reporting publications and work on reducing the environmental impact of transport in the South East of Scotland. |



# 2020-21 Annual Report.

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*(Note page numbers to be confirmed pending final publication formatting)*

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# Foreword (DRAFT)

Cllr Gordon Edgar, Partnership Chair

September 2021 DRAFT

As Chair of SEStran, it gives me great pleasure to present SEStran's annual report for 2020/21.

I could not reflect on the past year without mentioning the impact of Covid-19. Changes to the wider landscape for transport have been extensive, as government at all levels responded to the unfolding impacts of Covid 19. SEStran has played a key role in the region during this period, increasing our work alongside local, regional, and national partners to support the development of appropriate responses to the changes facing the transport sector.

SEStran's staff team had already moved seamlessly to remote working before the year commenced and remained working from home throughout the year. The progress outlined in this year's annual report is therefore a testimony to the adaptability of the team, and I would like to thank each individual for their considerable efforts.

I would also like to express my thanks to the Partnership's Board members for their ongoing commitment to SEStran. Whilst there is no doubt that holding all our Partnership meetings online has meant that our members can attend formal meetings more often, their additional input and engagement has been significant in a year like no others before it.

In November 2020, work on the new statutory Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) commenced. As the framework for local and regional plans relating to transport, the RTS must be clear in its ambition to support people (and goods) to move sustainably. In the first months of 2021, consultation and engagement activities helped create a strong foundation for the Strategy. Alongside a clear ambition, the RTS policies need to reflect a region with very diverse transport needs.

During the year, the partnership progressed all core areas of work. In the area of active travel, the development of the Do the Ride Thing campaign, in depth behavioural surveying, cargo bike training and development of the strategic network for active travel routes supported our partners in efforts to increase availability of active travel choices.

Our work to promote transport equality and accessibility focussed on expanding uptake of the Thistle Assistance scheme card and app during the pandemic, was supported through our internship, offered in partnership with Inclusion Scotland. New workstreams exploring the possibilities for bringing Mobility as a Service and Demand Responsive Transport to the region got under way, as well as new areas of work with partners to develop proposals for permanent bus priority measures.

Work on SEStran projects that help contribute to the 2045 national Net Zero target continued during the year, with planning for the expansion of Surflogh and the extension of work on the

SEStran Strategic Network. At the same time, through international projects and a strategic study we explored future sustainable freight options for this region.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the organisation's work in more detail in the coming pages. The report illustrates SEStran's distinct contribution within Scotland's transport 'ecosystem', coordinating action at a regional level through its Regional Transport Strategy and partnership work.

Councillor Gordon Edgar

Chair, SEStran

*(Insert photo signature and twitter)*

## Who we are

SEStran is the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership. We are one of seven statutory Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland established under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. SEStran encompasses eight local authorities.

### SEStran's Vision

"A regional transport system that provides all citizens of South East Scotland with a genuine choice of transport which fulfils their needs and provides travel opportunities for work and leisure on a sustainable basis."

*(Insert Transport Image)*

### Our Objectives

SEStran participates in a diverse range of transport projects and events on a local, national and international scale. All our work is focused on delivering against our core strategic objective areas:

1. Economy – to ensure transport facilitates economic growth, regional prosperity and vitality in a sustainable manner
2. Accessibility – to improve accessibility for those with limited transport choice (including those with mobility difficulties) or no access to a car, particularly those living in rural areas
3. Environment – to ensure that development is achieved in an environmentally sustainable manner
4. Safety and Health – to promote a healthier and more active SEStran area population
5. Corporate – to continually improve performance to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in SEStran service delivery.

We have highlighted the relationship between our work and our strategic objectives with an icon, a number in a circle relating to each of our objectives and the key priorities represented by each of the following icons:

### SEStran Team

SEStran has a staff of 10, and 1 Cycling Scotland embedded officer, as of April 2020:

- Partnership Director, Jim Grieve
- Senior Partnership Manager, Anna Herriman
- Programmes Manager, Keith Fiskin
- Strategy and Projects Officer, Jim Stewart
- Project Officer, Julie Vinders
- Active Travel Officer, Peter Jackson
- Business Manager, Angela Chambers
- Business Support Assistant, Cheryl Fergie
- Business Support Officer, Hannah Markley
- Cycling Scotland Officer, Beth Harley-Jepson
- Marketing Intern, Rhianne Forrest

## Local Authority Partners

City of Edinburgh, Clackmannanshire, East Lothian, Falkirk, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.

*(Insert Map of Scotland with SEStran Region.)*

## Headquarters

SEStran's operational and administrative premises are based in Edinburgh at Victoria Quay.

## Governance

### Decision Making Structure

SEStran's main policy and budgetary decisions are taken by the Partnership Board, which consists of 20 Councillor and nine Non-Councillor members. Operational decisions are taken by the Partnership Director and other officers in accordance with the List of Officer Powers which forms part of SEStran's [Governance Scheme](#). The Scheme is reviewed regularly and was last updated in March 2021.

The Partnership Board delegates some decisions to Committees in accordance with the Governance Scheme. The Performance and Audit Committee remit covers scrutiny of performance, staffing, standards and audit. It comprises a Councillor member from each constituent authority, and two Non-Councillor members. It is currently chaired by Councillor Russell Imrie.

The Succession Planning Committee remit covers matters related to succession planning and Board appointments. Its membership consists of the Partnership Chair, two Board members, the Partnership Director, the Partnership Secretary and a Human Resources adviser.

## Partnership Board

The board consists of 20 elected members from the partnership local authorities and nine appointed non-councillor members. The Partnership Board meet quarterly.

*Partnership Board – Insert Names and Images as of August 2020*

**Non-Councillor Members – Insert names**

### Equalities Duty

SEStran is a listed public body under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2012 (Scotland) Specific Duties Regulations, and as such have a duty to publish a biennial Equalities Mainstreaming Report and a set of Equality Outcomes to enable the organisation to better perform the equality duty.

SEStran last published a set of Equality Outcomes 2017-2021<sup>1</sup> in April 2017 and published a biennial progress report in April 2019. The next report will cover the period 2021-2025, with a mid-term report due in April 2023.

The draft outcomes went out to consultation in February 2021. Analysis of the data indicated broad support and agreement for all the outcomes. Key comments included that SEStran statutory meetings should remain being hosted remotely, to remove barriers facing disabled people travelling to physical meetings.

The final report and new Equalities Outcomes were published in April 2021.

### Cyber Security

In order to comply with the Scottish Government's Public Sector Cyber Security Action Plan, SEStran carried out a robust review of its IT provision. Under the scheme, an independent cyber security consultant was appointed in 2018 and audited the partnership's IT environment. The outcome of this audit was SEStran being awarded Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation. SEStran were re-audited in 2020 and retained the award.

## What we do

### SEStran Regional Transport Strategy

SEStran's core statutory function is to maintain a Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). In June 2019, the Partnership Board agreed an outline approach to develop a new RTS, in recognition of emerging changes to national policy, strategy and legislation affecting transport, climate and regional planning. The new RTS will provide a framework for transport solutions in the region that meet new challenges. The RTS will be closely aligned to the priorities of Scotland's Second National Transport Strategy (NTS2) which was published in February 2020. As part of NTS2, a Roles and Responsibilities Working Group, including two Regional Transport Partnership representatives, has been set up to review transport governance arrangements.

### *Developing a new Regional Transport Strategy - SEStran 2035*

The work undertaken by Jacobs to produce a Main Issues Report concluded in May 2020. And forms the basis of the ongoing work to develop the new RTS. Following preparation of a brief

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017\\_04\\_27\\_Equality\\_Outcomes.pdf](https://www.sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017_04_27_Equality_Outcomes.pdf)

and a competitive tendering process Stantec UK Ltd were appointed in January 2021 to start work on the development of the RTS.

The development of the new RTS follows Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) stages. By the end of March 2021, a consultation strategy was prepared and an engagement and consultation programme took place. Work to develop the RTS Case for Change also commenced and continued beyond March 2021. This involved engagement with local authorities and a wide range of partners through a series of meetings, interviews and briefing notes. A public consultation also took place with approximately 1000 responses received.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping report is a statutory requirement to support development of the RTS and was published in March 2021 along with the Equalities Duties Assessment Framing note, part of the process of undertaking an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) to fulfil the requirements of relevant 'equalities duties' prescribed through statutory provisions.

Work will be ongoing throughout the remainder of 2021 to develop the draft RTS and publish it for consultation later in 2021.

*(Insert Partnership working Image)*

### *The Regional Transport Strategy – regional monitoring*

SEStran's current Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), which was refreshed in August 2015, currently runs until 2025. The RTS vision, objectives and policy framework were established when the RTS was first written, in 2007. In recent years, SEStran has identified a need to review the monitoring framework for the RTS.

The review of monitoring data during the development of the Main Issues Report revealed that there are some issues in the current RTS which have not improved, whilst highlighting a number of new and emerging challenges which need to be addressed at a regional level:

- Traffic growth has continued year on year since 2010, (11% increase to 2018)
- Carbon emissions from transport have been rising since 2013, reaching 98% of 2005 levels by 2019.
- Bus patronage is declining across the region (apart from a few areas),
- A lack of appropriate, affordable transport and road network congestion means that the accessibility of a full range of opportunities for education, employment, healthcare and other needs impacts on some of the region's people.

Transport and travel demand patterns have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore the ability to make meaningful regional monitoring comparisons has been compromised, Rail and bus use are considerably lower than before and car travel is already close to pre pandemic levels even with substantial home working.



*(Insert Kelpies Image)*

## Formal Partnership Meetings and Forums *insert icons*

The **Partnership Board** meets quarterly and did so, with four meetings during the reporting period. At its meetings, in addition to dealing with standard business, the Board considers relevant topics, with an in-depth presentation and discussion. Topics in this period included the new Regional Transport Strategy, rail schedules and improvement updates from ScotRail and the national rollout of the Thistle Assistance programme. These topics generated considerable insight which was shared in SEStran forum groups.

SEStran's quarterly **Performance and Audit Committee** and **Chief Officers' Liaison Group** meetings are held prior to each Partnership Board meeting and help shape the business of the Board.

The **Succession Planning Committee** meets biennially. The last meeting took place in November 2019, where the Committee approved a revised version of the Board Diversity Succession Plan.

SEStran hosts three forums which are all held twice a year. The aim of these forums is to facilitate policy and technical discussions within a South East of Scotland context and provide a platform for greater stakeholder engagement across the region.

***Integrated Mobility Forum:*** aims to develop a better understanding of the opportunities to improve implementation and understanding of integrated mobility in the region. The primary focus is to facilitate discussions between stakeholders to make progress in reducing the number of single occupancy car journeys, maximise the use of public transport and maximise active travel opportunities.

***Logistics and Freight Forum:*** aims to support economic growth and resilience across the region by developing, promoting and implementing sustainable business and distribution solutions. The forum supports constructive partnership between local authorities, government agencies, business and representative groups. The forum aims to provide a unified, regional voice in working with organisations such as Transport Scotland, Network Rail and ports authorities.

***Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum:*** aims to deliver our Equality Outcomes and legislative requirement to consult Health Boards and those who represent those with or who share a protected characteristic. The forum covers how equality issues should be considered and "built in" to future transport strategy development.

More information on SEStran's decision-making structures is provided at Governance, below. *(Include link /page number)*

*(source and insert image)*

## Public Transport Support

SEStran operates a wide range of programmes and projects to support and bolster the provision of public transport in the region, set out here. In addition, SEStran maintains regular contact with rail and bus operators to discuss matters relevant to the provision of public transport in the region. This includes raising any relevant mobility issues for people and communities in the region with rail and bus companies.

Key during this year has been SEStran's involvement in regional bids to the **Bus Partnership Fund**, set up by Transport Scotland to enable infrastructure-based solutions to bus delays caused by congestion and related issues. This links to the provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 allowing for the creation of Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs).

As of March 2021, SEStran was actively engaged in the development of bids to the Fund from three fledgling BSIPs: an Edinburgh-based regional corridors bid; Forth Valley Bus Alliance; and Fife Bus Partnership.

Since June 2020, SEStran has been involved in the **South East Scotland Transport Transition Group** that was established to jointly plan for the management of transport related measures during and following Covid-19 related restrictions. The work of the Group, made up of local, regional and national partners, is now moving out of transition phase.

Temporary bus priority measures were implemented across the SEStran local authorities, with funding from Transport Scotland's Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund and monitoring and evaluation of those in place is ongoing.

SEStran additionally led on a range of region-wide interventions including trialling public transport capacity information, exploring the feasibility of improved public transport through an expanded Demand Responsive Transport approach with partners and operators (building on the strategic study published by SEStran in Spring 2020), and Thistle Assistance mask exemption.

## Thistle Assistance Programme *insert icons*

Thistle Assistance Programme is at the forefront of providing 'good assistance' to people with disabilities, by recognising and supporting their needs and ensuring transport staff understand their needs. SEStran leads and manages Thistle Assistance on behalf of Scotland's seven RTPs and welcomes the acknowledgement of Thistle Assistance in Transport Scotland's 'Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework'<sup>2</sup>.

In 2020/21 SEStran worked closely with transport providers, members of our communities with mobility challenges and disabilities and SEStran Equalities and Access to Healthcare Forum members, to better understand the problems and concerns faced by many when using public transport. This has helped shape the way Thistle Assistance Programme has developed and expanded further.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/going-further-scotland-s-accessible-travel-framework/>

SEStran continues working with ScotRail, Lothian Buses/Trams, Stagecoach, First East Buses Transport Scotland, Traveline Scotland, Confederation of Passenger Transport, Bus Users Scotland and others to explore how the new Thistle Assistance approach can be integrated into their existing processes to improve awareness of the issues faced by customers, how to spot them and how to engage and help. SEStran continues work collaboratively to support the roll-out of Thistle Assistance throughout Scotland by increasing awareness of the programme and providing training tools for transport providers.

To help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 the SEStran Board agreed to fund development of a facemask exemption adaption for the card and app. The aim is to help those that are exempt from wearing a face covering, communicate in an easy and safe way letting the transport staff know

SEStran has also been working in partnership with Inclusion Scotland to provide an internship to work on the Thistle Assistance program with a particular focus on marketing and social media to help promote the programme and increase awareness.

### *Thistle Assistance Journey Planning and Wayfinding*

Our research has highlighted that there is a need to improve the door to door journey for people with mobility challenges allowing them to access the public transport network more easily and with confidence – combining journey planning, wayfinding, and disability awareness into one easy to use and versatile platform. The platform would deliver in two key areas which respond to passengers needs as identified by the Campaign for Better Transport<sup>3</sup>.

SEStran was successful with a £150,000 bid to Scottish Enterprise in February 2021 which secured funding for the development and testing for a fully developed working prototype Thistle Assistance Journey Planner App, which will be tested in the public realm. For Phase 2 we propose further exploration of the journey customisation features, both at the lower level of local personal navigation and at the higher macro level of providing better navigation transit systems such as train/bus stations). Additionally, Phase 2 must explore how the demonstrated prototype can be integrated with existing services such as Traveline Scotland.

This current award and development work builds on previous Phase 1, which commenced in 2018, when SEStran made a successful application to the Scottish Enterprise 'Can Do' Innovation fund for £150,000 to run Phase One of a project to develop a fully accessible journey planning and wayfinding mobile solution for people with a wide range of mobility challenges. A competition was run, and five software developers were commissioned to research and produce proof of concepts for a Thistle Assistance Journey Planner, this work was completed in December 2019.

Further work will be done throughout 2021 with the project due to be completed in June 2022.

<https://www.thistleassistance.com/>

*(Insert image and logo)*

**Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI)** *insert icons*

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<sup>3</sup> Transport Research Laboratory (2011) – Door to Door Journeys [www.bettertransport.org.uk/files/door-to-door-journeys-full-report.pdf](http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/files/door-to-door-journeys-full-report.pdf)

SEStran's RTPI system began in 2010 to help tackle declining bus patronage by making bus travel more predictable and reliable. SEStran is working with the City of Edinburgh Council to move towards a new Content Management System (CMS) that will improve the public facing regional screen network.

The new CMS will provide an improved interface and back office management system provided by the successful contractor *21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The new RTPI system will include additional regional bus operator's data delivering greater regional coverage. SEStran also received funding from Transport Scotland to update the hardware for the system.

Despite the project timelines being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic SEStran and local authority partners have continued to upgrade the regional system this year and this work will continue over the next 12 months.

*(Insert RTPI Images)*

## **Tripshare** *insert icons*

During 2020-21, in accordance with public health guidelines issued by the Scottish Government, SEStran and partners ceased to actively promote car-sharing, instead embarking upon conversations with other RTPs on what a longer-term approach to promotion of car and lift sharing might look like, subject to public health guidelines.

*(Insert Tripshare logo and car share image)*

## **SEStran Strategic Network Review – Cross Boundary Active Travel Routes, connecting people and places.**

April 2020 saw the completion of the SEStran Strategic Network Review, a framework for coordinated development of cross boundary active travel routes connecting cities, towns, neighbourhoods, settlements, and public transport hubs in the SEStran region.

In support of other national active travel initiatives SEStran utilised funding from Transport Scotland to continue a high level of engagement with partners and explore the opportunities to develop routes identified in the Strategic Network. A pipeline of next projects was developed for progression into the following financial year with support from partners.

In recognition of the significance of the SEStran Strategic Network's potential to create a large positive impact on the region it was submitted as a potential option for the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2. The project was taken to the next phase of sifting in the South East of Scotland Region.

## **Active Travel Projects 2020/21** *insert icons*

The Regional Cycle Network Grant Scheme continues the partnership between Sustrans Scotland and SEStran's commitment to delivering improvements to the cross-boundary utility routes. Additionally, Transport Scotland funding to the Regional Transport Partnerships Scotland has facilitated projects promoting sustainable cross boundary travel.

Several feasibility studies in West Lothian were impacted by COVID19 with much of the work delayed until early 2021. Engagement with communities has had a positive response with some additional work requested to advance to further stages and construction support from Sustrans.

Supporting Edinburgh Lothians Greenspace Trust, SEStran funded a feasibility study investigating the upgrade of a pathway alongside the Almond River. The route had several accessibility issues, and the study aimed to review changes to the landscape since a prior report in 2011. The project highlighted some excellent options to connect settlements at Kirkliston to a direct cycle route into the City Centre. A final report is due for publication in July 2021.

A longitudinal research project was commenced in September 2020, looking to understand drivers behind changes in travel behaviour over a period of two years. Using both quantitative and qualitative research, insights are being gathered from across the region. While COVID19 has influenced the level of travel undertaken the initial results have revealed some interesting trends. The research will continue through 2021 with a final report produced in March 2022.

SEStran presented at the Scottish Transport Awards and Research conference in December 2020 on a project from 2019. TravelVU captured data and preferred behaviours from a sample of users in Edinburgh in March and April 2019. The project illustrated the need for holistic thinking for planning around transport, education, health, and leisure though further research is required throughout the region. The paper and presentation were awarded 'Best Paper by a Young Professional' by the conference board.

*(Insert active travel image)*

## GO e-Bike *insert icons*

GO e-Bike is a regional e-bike share programme with a growing number of locations across the South East of Scotland. Launched in April 2017 with the aim of increasing usage and awareness of power-assisted cycling across the region and beyond, the programme now supports community outreach charities, sustainability organisations, tourism and hospitality outlets, healthcare practitioners, and academic institutions.

During 2020 development continued on the installation and setup of a public hire scheme with 4 stations across Midlothian and East Lothian, namely Eskbank, Jarnac Court, Musselburgh Train Station, and The Brunton Theatre. Final construction was completed in March 2021 with an anticipated system launch in April 2021.

Alongside these developments a behaviour change project was developed 'Do The Ride Thing'. The project initially was focussed on highlighting the use of e-bikes but during 2020 shifted to support messaging of sharing our outdoor spaces with all users. Creative content has been designed and will lead to a media campaign in 2021.

*(Insert GO e-Bike logo/ERDF/TS Logos)*

## Working in Partnership with Cycling Scotland

SEStran's Regional Cycle Training and Development Officer (RCTDO) continued to support Bikeability Scotland Local Authority Co-ordinators. The results from the last academic year had shown an increase

in schools delivering cycle training and more pupils than ever taking part. Unfortunately, closure of schools and continuing restrictions because of the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the ability to deliver to schools was restricted in most areas for all or part of the year. Despite these challenges, many areas have managed to achieve levels of delivery close to pre-pandemic levels.

Training opportunities for adults were supported over the year, adjustments were made to courses to meet new and changing guidelines because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This included a new offer, Essential Cycling Skills for families. Free sessions were made available to the public over school holidays, which proved extremely popular. Cargo Bike Training was also developed as a new offer and was successfully piloted in the region. Adult cycle training was also impacted by Covid-19 related restrictions, as it was not possible to run group sessions for some of this period.

*(Insert Cycling Scotland logo)*

## **Regional Rail Liaison Meeting** *insert icons*

SEStran along with Transport Scotland, Network Rail, ScotRail and other rail operators continued to engage via the quarterly South East of Scotland Regional Rail liaison meeting. The meetings centred on the key rail issues within the SEStran region and are an opportunity to share information with key stakeholders to better understand problems, identify challenges and opportunities, and improve the delivery of rail services across the South East of Scotland.

## **East Coast Mainline Authorities (ECMA)** *insert icons*

The Consortium of East Coast Main Line Authorities (ECMA) works to secure investment, improve the passenger experience, improve capacity and reliability, and shorten journey times on the East Coast Main Line.

ECMA is a cross-party group of Councils, Combined Authorities and Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships throughout the area served by the East Coast Main Line. Each has a responsibility for enabling economic growth in their own sections of the line – the backbone of the UK economy. The Consortium allows members to speak with a single voice.

The East Coast Main Line is one of the UK's most strategic rail routes. Stretching more than 500 miles, from Inverness and Aberdeen, through key stops at Edinburgh, Newcastle and York to London. A third of the UK population lives within 20 minutes of an East Coast Main Line station and together they deliver 41% of the UK's GDP.

Both SEStran's Chair and Partnership Director continue to represent the Regional Transport Partnerships (Tactran, Nestrans & Hitrans) with an interest in the east coast mainline as ECMA Vice Chair and Officer Group representative, respectively. Over the year, based on data from studies funded by the Consortium, the organisation has made a number of approaches to both governments to encourage increased investment in the line.

*(Insert ECMA logo and rail image)*

## The GO SEStran Forth Freight Strategy

As part of the Programme for Government Transport Scotland launched the Local Rail Development Fund (LRDF), with £2,000,000 made available to fund projects that will enhance Scotland's rail connectivity. The LRDF aligns with Scottish Government's Rail Enhancement and Capital Investment Strategy.

The GO SEStran Forth Freight Strategy has been funded by Transport Scotland through the Local Rail Development Fund. The SEStran region is of significant economic value to the Scottish economy and is a major generator of freight movements.

This study looks to investigate existing freight movements, the barriers faced by multimodal freight terminals when trying to target and encourage customers to make the switch and evaluate the potential environmental benefits and commercial viability of sustainable freight/goods movements. It also acknowledges the key role that road freight plays and how it supports other modes such as rail freight. Therefore, interventions to support a more efficient road freight sector will also be explored.

This study has been delivered on behalf of SEStran and Forth Ports by consultants AECOM Ltd supported by Napier University and sets out the Initial Appraisal Case for Change.

Using Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) principles, the aim of the study is to explore the development of sustainable multimodal freight gateways and potential for freight consolidation centres at key locations to maximise the sustainable movement of freight over regional, national and local movements.

The Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) developed for this study focussed on reflecting the identified problems and opportunities, link significantly with the key themes and express the outcomes sought for the study. They are as follows:

- TPO1: Increase the proportion of freight transported by sustainable modes, whilst stimulating economic growth
- TPO2: Reduce the adverse impacts of freight movements on public health and the natural and built environment
- TPO3: Maintain and enhance a safe, resilient, reliable, and sustainable transport network to aid delivery of consistent conditions for freight operators on the transport network
- TPO4: Enhance the freight sector's ability to facilitate economic growth in the region

The completed Case for Change was submitted to Transport Scotland for review in December 2020.

## Newburgh Transport Appraisal

In June 2018 SEStran & Fife Council supported a successful bid from the Newburgh Train Station Group for the first phase of funding. £82,000 (exc. VAT) was secured to undertake a multi-model transport appraisal in the Newburgh.

SYSTRA Limited (SYSTRA) has been commissioned to undertake a transport appraisal of Newburgh with a particular focus on improving movements to Perth, Edinburgh and Fife by sustainable modes.

The work is being undertaken in accordance with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) and builds on the Newburgh and Area North Fife STAG Pre-appraisal Transport Study, carried out by the NTSG in 2018.

This report presents the findings of the Preliminary Options Appraisal stage of the Newburgh Transport Appraisal. It follows the Pre-Appraisal (Initial Appraisal: Case for Change) stage which was completed and approved in Spring 2020.

The Pre-Appraisal (Initial Appraisal: Case for Change) submitted in March 2020 collated relevant socio-demographic and transport information for the study area, identified the key transport related problems, opportunities, issues and constraints for Newburgh, set out three Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) for the study, and recommended six potential options that could help address the identified problems and opportunities. The work was informed by an extensive stakeholder and public consultation. The Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) identified were as follows:

- TPO1 – Improve transport access to key services and markets (including employment, training, education, health and leisure opportunities) for Newburgh residents;
- TPO2 – Improve public transport connectivity and journey times to and from Newburgh for residents, businesses and visitors;
- TPO3 – Increase sustainable travel to and from Newburgh.

The second stage, the Preliminary Options Appraisal, qualitatively assessed the identified six options against the TPOs, five STAG criteria, Established Policy Directives and factors concerning feasibility, affordability, and public acceptability, to ensure they are likely to fulfil the study's requirements. The work was informed by another round of stakeholder consultation, which resulted in some 233 responses received from residents, businesses, a campaign group, transport providers and operators: as well as Newburgh visitors.

The report was submitted to Transport Scotland in November 2020 and was approved in March 2021. Work will progress over the next 12 months on the Detailed Options Appraisal with a final report due in March 2022.

<https://newburghsustainabletransport.co.uk/>

## Levenmouth Rail Link

SEStran has supported the Levenmouth Reconnected project, which guides the development of the new Levenmouth rail link and associated bus and active travel transport linkages. The Levenmouth rail extension, involving a new stop and station at Cameron Bridge as well as the new station at Leven, is due to be operational in 2023. SEStran's involvement in the project has been consistent since the initial Sustainable Transport Study was undertaken by Transport Scotland on the re-opening of the Levenmouth rail link.

During 2020-21, SEStran instigated work, in partnership with Fife Council, to identify funding for a feasibility study for Mobility Hubs within the Levenmouth Reconnected project, following on from the publication of SEStran's Mobility Hubs Strategic Study published in Spring 2020.

Parts of the Levenmouth area are currently ranked amongst the most deprived in Scotland (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation - SIMD 2020). Easier and more sustainable travel options will make it



easier for people to reach hospitals, schools and visit other areas of the country as well as giving better access to Levenmouth and SEStran's involvement over the past year has focussed on ensuring that connections between different transport modes are maximised

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/levenmouth-on-track-for-rail-investment/>

## International Projects

SEStran has continued to be actively involved in innovative and progressive EU funded transport projects, working closely with European partners and in turn contributing knowledge and ideas, to help benefit our own regional transport network. SEStran will remain involved in its current EU partnership projects until their agreed conclusion dates, ending in 2023. The UK Treasury has written to UK bodies involved in EU projects to confirm that funding for ongoing projects will be underwritten, in the case of EU funding impact linked to Brexit arrangements.

### **PriMaaS – Prioritising Mobility-as-a-Service (an Interreg Europe project)** *insert icons*

The PriMaaS project focuses on 'prioritising low carbon mobility services to improve accessibility of citizens'. SEStran is representing the region in a consortium of ten European transport partners to promote Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) through policy development.

SEStran's role is to facilitate Regional Stakeholder Meetings to assess current levels of transport integration and identify barriers to the widespread adoption of MaaS. SEStran worked closely with MaaS Scotland to bring together stakeholders to provide regional representation. This has helped establish a baseline of MaaS levels in the region, and exchange best practices with project partners. This work will inform the development of an Action Plan to promote MaaS in the SEStran region and support the development of the new Regional Transport Strategy.

More information can be found on: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/primaas/>

### **CONNECT - Connecting North Sea Region's TEN-T nodes and supporting intermodal freight movement in the North Sea Region through smart efficiency enhancements** *insert icons*

The overall project objective is to support 'smart intermodality' growth in the North Sea Region, through efficiency enhancements in and around port areas. The project focuses on implementing new 'smart' technology processes and working tools and developing strategies for using smart efficiency enhancements in freight movement. SEStran is leading on a work package based around marketing and communications.

More information can be found on: <https://northsearegion.eu/north-sea-connect/about/>

### **SHARE North – Shared Mobility Solutions for a Liveable and Low-Carbon North Sea Region** *insert icons*

The SHARE-North project promotes shared mobility as a form of sustainable transport and a viable alternative to private car ownership. SEStran has continued to support shared mobility through Tripshare SEStran and GO e-Bike.

SEStran has also actively promoted Mobility Hubs, a concept that originated in the City of Bremen, the lead partner in SHARE-North. Mobility Hubs are centrally located points where shared modes of transport such as car clubs or (e-)bike-sharing are integrated with public transport. Mobility Hubs provide information on transport and the local area, and often provide seating and additional placemaking elements, making them supportive of everyone and everyday journeys. Mobility Hubs can easily be identified by their branding.

As part of the SHARE-North project, Mobility Hubs have expanded to Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands, and SEStran has been working with Local Authorities to promote and develop the concept in the South East of Scotland, and to identify locations where Mobility Hubs could add value to everyday travel. The SEStran Strategic Mobility Hub study applies the learning from SHARE-North to the SEStran region.

During 2020-21, work focussed on supporting East Lothian Council through the preparatory stages and branding for Scotland's first Mobility Hub, in Musselburgh. This work builds upon the Transport Scotland funded Mobility Hubs Strategic Study published by SEStran in Spring 2020.

More information can be found on: <https://mobihubs.eu/> and <https://share-north.eu/>.

*(Insert image and Share North Brand Logo and EU Interreg Logo)*

## **SURFLOGH: Sustainable Urban Logistics Hubs** *insert icons*

SURFLOGH aims to improve the role of logistics hubs in the network of urban logistics through connecting long-distance freight transport and last mile distribution in strategically located urban freight centres.

Last mile distribution is part of the wider concept of city logistics, which concerns the public and private planning and management of urban logistics. The City Logistics concept has emerged as a comprehensive approach aimed at attempting to mitigate the negative impacts of urban freight transportation without penalizing many economic, social, administrative, cultural, touristic, and other activities.

SEStran are leading on a work package<sup>4</sup> along with Edinburgh Napier University Transport Research Institute (TRI), developing business models for urban freight hubs. These business models will focus on the scalability and applicability of models for different locations and circumstances.

Pilots include the ZEDIFY<sup>5</sup> pilot case study from Edinburgh established in 2018, alongside pilots in Sweden, the Netherlands and Belgium. Using 'living lab' research methodology SEStran & Edinburgh Napier University will be working with Zedify logistics to understand the positive impacts and challenges that a commercial sustainable logistics operation face. SEStran has provided funding to help the Edinburgh pilot adapt e-cargo bikes to the challenges of the Edinburgh city geography to help improve operational efficiency.

More information can be found on: <https://northsearegion.eu/surflogh/about/>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://northsearegion.eu/surflogh/news/relevant-research-review/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.zedify.co.uk/>

[INSERT SURFLOGH LOGO/IMAGE/INTERREG LOGO]

## **BLING: Blockchain in Government**

SEStran and the Centre for Design Informatics at the University of Edinburgh are collaborating on a project exploring opportunities around Blockchain technology developing practical transport focused applications for the technology with the development of a pilot project in the South East of Scotland.

Blockchain is a key enabling technology that will underpin efforts to deliver innovative services under the Digital Agenda for Scotland and Europe. Blockchain promotes user trust by making it possible to build systems that share information and record transactions in a verifiable, secure and permanent way. Based on a 'distributed ledger', blocks of information are chained together with cryptography to produce a system that stores, manages and verifies information.

The University of Edinburgh supported by SEStran has developed a pilot concept called **GeoPact**. The GeoPact system is comprised of a complex assembly of technological objects, that together enables the design, deployment of location-aware smart contracts that run on the Ethereum blockchain for study.

More information can be found on: <https://northsearegion.eu/bling/>

[INSERT BLING LOGO/IMAGE/INTERREG LOGO]

# Appendix: Annual Accounts and Reports

## Annual Accounts

SEStran's Annual Accounts can be accessed online here:

[\[INSERT LINK TO ACCOUNTS\]](#)

## Climate Change Report

Part four of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places duties on public bodies to act in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets, to help deliver any statutory climate change adaptation programme, and in a way that they consider is most sustainable. The act came into force on 1 January 2011. Following the introduction of an Order by Scottish Government in 2015, all 151 public bodies that appear on the 'Major Player' list must submit an annual report to the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN), detailing their compliance with the climate change duties.

[\[INSERT LINK\]](#)

## Public Services Reform Act

The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (Sections 31 and 32) imposes duties on Scottish public bodies to publish financial information as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year. This statement is produced annually by the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act. It can be accessed online here:

[\[INSERT LINK\]](#)

## Community Empowerment Act

SEStran is a listed public authority under the Community Empowerment Act and one of our duties under the Act is to consider requests from the community. Participation Requests can help groups from the local community (a community-controlled body) to liaise with SEStran and other listed authorities on improving issues in an area. We welcome requests from groups that can aid SEStran in delivering its strategic functions in the South East of Scotland. To gain more information on how to place a request, please follow the link:

[sestran.gov.uk/corporate/participation-requests/](http://sestran.gov.uk/corporate/participation-requests/)

## Public Records Act

SEStran is required under the terms of Section 1 of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 to produce a Records Management Plan, setting out proper arrangements for the management of its records and to submit this to the Keeper of the Records for approval. SEStran submitted its RMP in January 2011 and it is available here:

[sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SEStranRecords-Management-Planv2.0.pdf](http://sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SEStranRecords-Management-Planv2.0.pdf)

[CONTACT INFORMATION (BACK PAGE WITH COVER GRAPHICS)]

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