

Draft Annual Report 2021/22

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Board the draft Annual Report for 2021/22, following discussion at Performance and Audit Committee of 9th September 2022.

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 Business Plan.
- 2.2 Once approved by the Board, 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 note the contents of the draft document and any comments on the draft document are welcomed for discussion.

Jim Grieve
Partnership Director
23 September 2022

Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Report 2021/22

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.



South East of Scotland
Transport Partnership

2021-22 Annual Report.

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

Foreword

CLlr Colin Davidson, Partnership Chair

As Chair of SEStran, I'm pleased to present SEStran's annual report for 2021/22.

The past year has been a success for SEStran, despite huge challenges arising from Covid-19. This annual report records the areas of impact and added value across the breadth of SEStran's activities. By way of an introduction, I would like to highlight a few accomplishments here.

SEStran's talented staff team continued to work from home throughout the year, with Board, Committee and Forum meetings held online. It falls to me as Chair of the Board to express my sincere thanks to the team for their efforts in planning engaging online meetings, delivering business continuity across many workstreams, and actively participating in numerous regional and national transport policy groupings. I also thank all Partnership Board members that served during 2021/22, for their contribution to SEStran's success.

The year saw the conclusion of all key stages in developing a new (draft) statutory Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), which reframes the transport challenges of our region and time, within the context of national policies for Transport, Planning and Climate. The draft RTS, which includes new elements of spatial transport strategy has been developed with excellent input from partner authorities and the public. The feedback provided has helped develop a strong draft RTS, to act as a framework for local transport plans, looking forward towards 2035.

During the year, the Partnership had considerable impact in its support for emerging Bus Alliances, working across sectors with partners and operators to identify bus priority schemes, establish appropriate governance arrangements, resulting in five Bus Partnership Fund awards in the region. This important work helps address the concerns of transport authorities and operators at all levels with the slow return of public transport passengers throughout the second year of the pandemic.

Another substantial milestone was the successful shift to a new region-wide Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) management system. Delivered in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council, this benefits passengers across the region with accurate bus arrival information. In addition to facilitating an increasing number of bus operators using the system, SEStran supported the improved data management system with the acquisition of nearly eighty new computers ready for deployment to regional RTPI screens.

The expansion of GO e-Bike into four new locations in the early part of the year helped raise awareness with many of the potential of e-Bikes as a convenient mode of transport. This was particularly appropriate in 2021/22, given the increasing interest in access to active travel options during the pandemic.

Finally, the Partnership's exceptional work in future transport innovations, saw significant progress. The team advanced technology trials, development and feasibility work in freight consolidation, last mile logistics, fully accessible journey planning software, Demand Responsive Transport options and Mobility as a Service solutions and others. SEStran its Board and in particular its officers, took vital steps towards making longer term aspirations for a sustainable, integrated transport system a reality.

I would like to thank you for your interest in the work of SEStran and commend to all the work of the Partnership in 2021/22. In particular, the work of the officers led by Jim Grieve, our senior officer, who displayed excellent leadership and provided stability during a time of unprecedented challenges.

COUNCILLOR COLIN DAVIDSON
Chair, SEStran
August 2022

(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 9, and 1 Cycling Scotland embedded officer, as of March 2022:

- Partnership Director, Jim Grieve
- Senior Partnership Manager, Anna Herriman
- Programmes Manager, Keith Fiskien

- Strategy and Projects Officer, Jim Stewart
- Project Officer, Julie Vinders
- Active Travel Officer, Peter Jackson
- Business Manager, Angela Chambers
- Business Support Officer, Cheryl Fergie
- Business Support Assistant, Nikki Boath
- Cycling Scotland Officer, Beth Harley-Jepson

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, and as of the 31st of March 2022 include the following members.

Partnership Board – Insert Names and Images as of March 2022

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 published a new set of [Equality Outcomes](#) 2021-2025¹ in April 2021 and will publish a biennial progress report 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 approved by the Board in March 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 2019 and retained the award. This accreditation will be kept under review to ensure compliance is maintained before the next planned audit in 2022.

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

Stantec UK Ltd were appointed in January 2021 to start work on the development of the RTS, following a competitive tendering process. The work undertaken by Jacobs to produce a Main Issues Report concluded in May 2020, which formed the basis of the ongoing work to produce the new RTS.

The development of the new RTS follows Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) stages. During 2021-22 a major public consultation took place with over 1000 responses being received from the public and stakeholders. The Case for Change was published in June 2021 and the option

development, appraisal and the drafting of the RTS took place with the initial draft RTS being approved for statutory consultation by the Partnership Board in October 2021. The statutory consultation took place from 5 November 2021 until 11 February 2022 and was supported by the Strategic Environmental and Equalities Impact Assessments and other supporting assessments. The Partnership Board highlighted some comments, including reinforcement of the transport issues in rural areas and a new report was prepared to present to the Board. However, Scottish Borders Council did not consider that the changes went far enough to reflect the concerns they have on rural transport issues. Therefore, the Partnership Board decided to delay consideration of the report until September 2022, to allow time for further discussions.

Following approval by the Partnership Board the draft RTS will be submitted to the Scottish Ministers.

(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 several 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 population.

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. [Scottish Transport Statistics 2021 | Transport Scotland](#) shows the scale of reduced travel in 2020. Public transport journeys fell by 70% and car travel by only 20% in comparison. However, this data is already outdated as transport use continues to change following the removal of pandemic restrictions. Car travel is close to pre pandemic levels even with substantial home working. Rail and bus patronage has improved but remains considerably lower than before, which is why some challenges in sections of the RTS are more acute now.

(Insert Kelpies Image)

Formal Partnership Meetings and Forums

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 2021, 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

The need to support public transport in the region following the lockdowns and travel restrictions of the previous year has been a shared priority at all levels of transport. In addition to maintaining regular contact with rail and bus operators on regional matters including rail timetable changes and

access issues for passengers, SEStran has actively supported new initiatives to improve the reliability and enhance the viability of public transport services

Throughout 2021-22, SEStran extended its involvement in regional Bus Alliances groupings and supported the development of bids to Transport Scotland's **Bus Partnership Fund**, designed to deliver congestion-beating bus priority and journey time reliability. Bids from the previous year were awarded. Funds and awards for a further two new Alliances' bids from Midlothian and West Lothian Councils, also, brought the total BPF awarded in the region to up to £6.57M. SEStran's role in developing and sharing model terms of reference and governance arrangements for emerging Bus Alliances, has helped to ensure they are in a strong position to develop more formal Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs), and key to this has been the positive engagement with bus operators as well as public sector partners.

This work of the **South East Scotland Transport Transition Group**, established on a temporary and voluntary basis in 2020 was concluded. Its purpose, to jointly plan and manage transport related measures linked to Covid-19 travel restriction was superseded by partners taking forward longer-term activity through mainstream or more long-term structures.

SEStran's work on RTPI enjoyed considerable success with the successful introduction of the new content management system delivered in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council. The arrangement, which strengthens the quality of bus arrival data across the region, is secure for five years, and has considerable potential to grow. The complementary nature of the workstreams outlined here in more detail deliver cumulative impact in the region, supporting both public transport provision, and passengers of public transport.

Thistle Assistance Programme

Thistle Assistance Programme is at the forefront of providing 'good assistance' to people with disabilities, by recognising and supporting their needs and ensuring transport operators and their staff understand these 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'¹.

In 2021-22 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.

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 promotion of Thistle Assistance throughout

¹ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/going-further-scotland-s-accessible-travel-framework/>

Scotland by increasing awareness of the programme and providing training tools for transport providers.

The programme has worked with operators to develop an information poster and leaflet that can be used to create awareness amongst their staff and help with staff training.

Thistle Assistance VoyagAR - Journey Planning and Wayfinding

SEStran through the development and implementation of two key projects, Real Time Passenger Information, and the Thistle Assistance Programme has identified 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 VoyagAR platform would deliver in two key areas which respond to passengers needs as identified by the Campaign for Better Transport²:

- improving availability of information.
- making connections between different steps in the journey, and different modes of transport, easier.

People rely on public transport to access jobs, services, facilities, family, and friends. While many of the barriers identified by disabled people and non-disabled people in undertaking journeys are the same, the impact can be different³.

In May 2021 after a successful competition Sentireal was appointed by SEStran to take the project forward from Phase 1 to Phase 2 with £150,000 of funding from Scottish Enterprises Can Do Innovation fund.

The overall system architecture for VoyagAR has been defined, consisting of three cooperating software applications:

- A mobile application that the Traveller uses to plan journeys, perform journey wayfinding, and message an authorised Carer or emergency contact.
- A web application, which executes on all modern web browsers, that an authorised Carer uses to message the Traveller and track their journeys. The Carer can also use the web application to plan journeys on the Traveller's behalf, if necessary
- A web service, hosted in the cloud, that provides the mobile and web applications with various cloud-based services, including geographical mapping and directions, public transport scheduling and user account management.

Work will continue next year with the testing and launching of a prototype scheduled for late Summer 2022.

² Transport Research Laboratory (2011) – Door to Door Journeys www.bettertransport.org.uk/files/door-to-door-journeys-full-report.pdf

³

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706248/accessibility-action-plan.pdf

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

(Insert image and logo)

Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) insert icons

SEStran began implementing a region wide network of RTPI screens, providing bus timetable information to make bus travel more predictable and reliable. Since 2010, SEStran has worked with partners to build up a comprehensive network of over 200 screens in travel hubs such as railway stations, park and choose / ride sites, hospitals, colleges, universities, shopping centres and large employer hubs. More recently SEStran has worked with the City of Edinburgh Council and Journeo to develop and launch a new, common regional RTPI system that will improve the information provided in the public facing regional screen network incorporating multiple transport operator (bus, rail & tram) data and scheduled information.

The new system went live in December 2021 with operator data being integrated over the following months.

SEStran received funding from Transport Scotland to update the existing RTPI screen system with new PCs so that the new system will operate and integrate with other systems more efficiently. The roll out of these new PCs with the new software started in February 2022 and will continue in 2022.

SEStran is also working with partner local authorities to place new on street signage across the region, again working with the contractor Journeo.

(Insert RTPI Images)

Tripshare insert icons

During 2021-22, car sharing continued to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and increased levels of home working. Car sharing has a role to play with other shared mobility modes in reducing car-based travel. SEStran embarked 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 and this work is ongoing.

(Insert Tripshare logo)

GO SEStran project:

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) seeks to unify all modes of transport in a digital environment, meaning that people wanting to make a journey can plan, book and pay for it using a single app. In the previous

year SEStran had issued a Call for Partners to see if a MaaS project could be trialled in the SEStran region.

In February 2021, SEStran, with its partners, submitted a bid to Round 2 of the MaaS Investment Fund. In June Transport Scotland confirmed that the bid had been third placed, and although the remaining funding did not cover all of the proposed project, there was an opportunity to co-create a smaller, more focused project with the money available.

After a resubmission in September 2021, Transport Scotland confirmed that they were in principle prepared to commit some £212,440 (slightly more than the original figure available) to the revised project, which proposes to trial MaaS around East Lothian's physical Journey Hubs, starting with the Brunton Hall Hub in Musselburgh.

Key features of the project include trialling tech-enabled Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) as an integral part of the overall MaaS pilot, and the integration of the physical hubs East Lothian Council are developing with the 'virtual hub' created by the launch of the GoSEStran app.

As at March 2022 discussions were ongoing with Transport Scotland and the consortium partners on the necessary legal agreements to regulate relationships between the parties.

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

In 2021-22 funding from The Regional Cycle Network Grant Scheme, in partnership with Sustrans Scotland, combined with Transport Scotland funding to bring together a number of projects. This facilitated a larger package of work being carried out on the development of the SEStran Strategic Network.

Following continued engagement with local authority partners through the course of 2020, a series of routes were determined to progress to feasibility and options. These routes included Addiewell-Livingston, a route connecting communities along the A71; Larbert-Falkirk, a route connecting to a major NHS site; Falkirk-Polmont, a route connecting areas rated low by SIMD; Tweedbank-Melrose, extending an existing active travel route. Making use of online engagement tools, these routes were shared with stakeholders and presented for the views of the public.

These projects will progress to additional stages of engagement within local partner authorities with further investigations taking place prior to any additional design work or funding applications to construction funding streams.

To complement the design work and initial engagements with stakeholders and the public a behaviour change toolkit was created to provide a practical guide for local authorities, community groups and third sector organisations within the SEStran region working to encourage a positive shift in travel behaviour with individual groups, and throughout communities. As the SEStran Strategic Network is delivered and new active and sustainable travel infrastructure is implemented, this toolkit will provide additional support and guidance to overcome potential barriers and encouraging communities and specific user groups to try new and existing infrastructure, and to continue utilising


these networks across the region. The toolkit is designed to assist the key audience in reviewing best practice and supporting the development of initiatives, in line with key project stages required for the application for additional funding.

Active Travel Projects 2021/22

As part of another successful bid to Transport Scotland funding, a series of other active travel projects were completed in the year. Support was provided to Cargo Bike Movement with the set-up of a community-based hub offering a range of services to communities. In addition to the loan of cargo bikes used for the transport of surplus items from supermarkets to a number of food banks, Cargo Bike movement provided training sessions to members of the public on demonstrating the uses and range of different cargo bikes on the current market.

The longitudinal research project started in 2020 drew to a close with final panels due to completing in April 2022. The initial findings showed that Covid-19 had a large impact on travel though largely patterns are returning to 2019 trends. The only long-lived impact was the proportion of the population now able to continue to work from home. While active travel had been seen to increase during the height of the pandemic, it was no longer viewed as the most convenient mode of transport, this convenience being the largest determinant of choice for any journey. A further report will be made to publish the complete findings and their application into future projects.

Transport Scotland funding provided an opportunity to run a targeted marketing campaign using the previously developed “Do The Ride Thing” theme. Using the tagline of “Be more shareful” the campaign focussed on the responsible use of shared facilities as many areas in the region saw high volumes of users with the ongoing restrictions of movement and social activities. The outcome of the campaign is detailed alongside GO e-Bike.



GO e-Bike

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 supports community outreach charities, sustainability organisations, tourism and hospitality outlets, healthcare practitioners, and academic institutions. The programme also incorporates a public hire scheme at four sites in East Lothian and Midlothian.

During March 2021 final construction of the public hire scheme was completed at four stations, Eskbank, Jarnac Court, Musselburgh Train Station, and The Brunton Theatre. The system was launched in April 2021. East Lothian secured funding for two new non-charging stations in Musselburgh, which are due to be operational in early summer 2022 and further expansion of the scheme

The 'Do The Ride Thing' behaviour change media campaign, focussed on the sharing of our outdoor spaces with all users, continued throughout 2021. Using a mixed media approach of radio and podcast adverts, social media, online adverts, and public hoardings allowed for targeted contact across the region. The campaign ended with near 11 million impressions and a reach of just under 2 million. This resulted in the project returning click through rates at twice the industry benchmark.

(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. Delivery rates of Bikeability Scotland to June 2021 demonstrated an increase from the previous year, with most areas returning to close to or in-line with rates prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some restrictions remained in place and these varied by area, limiting the capacity to deliver the programme in some Local Authorities. Training opportunities for adults were supported over the year. Cargo Bike Training was expanded through providing the opportunity for Cycling Scotland tutors to take part in the training and offer it out in more areas.

Capacity to deliver adult cycle training and Bikeability Scotland is being supported nationally with the provision of grant funding direct to delivery organisations and instructors.

(Insert Cycling Scotland logo)

Regional Rail Liaison Meeting

SEStran along with Transport Scotland, Network Rail, ScotRail and Cross Border Train Operating Companies (TOCs) continued to engage via the quarterly South East Scotland Regional Rail liaison meeting. The meetings centred on the key rail issues (timetabling, infrastructure development, accessibility and integration with other transport modes) 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)

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 and 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.

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 completed Case for Change was approved by Transport Scotland in December 2021 and work began on the Options Appraisal and sifting in February 2022, this work will continue over the next 6 months.

The Preliminary Appraisal will examine Individual Options and Packaged Options associated with helping promote more sustainable, efficient, and reliable freight movements for the SEStran area,

whilst helping promote the region as a competitive international freight hub. In-line with Transport Scotland's Guidance on Transport Appraisal (STAG) as well as being informed by best practice, each identified intervention will be robustly appraised against the identified Transport Planning Objectives (in the Case for Change), its perceived Strategic Fit, the latest STAG criteria as well as against Feasibility, Affordability and Public Acceptability.

In addition to the detailed evidence base as set out within the Case for Change informing the appraisal process are the outcomes of a significant and wide-ranging engagement process that has been undertaken with a variety of stakeholders and decision-makers across the SEStran region. The outcomes from this comprehensive stakeholder engagement have been invaluable in not only informing the appraisal of the overall deliverability of possible interventions but also in helping with the selection of interventions for the next stage of the appraisal process, which is Detailed Appraisal.

Newburgh Transport Appraisal

The Newburgh Train Station Group (NTSG), South East Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) and Fife Council, with the support of SYSTRA Ltd, are working together to develop proposals to improve sustainable transport to and from Newburgh.

The project builds on work already undertaken by the NTSG and focusses on improving links to and from Perth, Edinburgh and Fife. It follows the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG).

The first stage in the process was to prepare an evidence-based 'Pre-Appraisal' (Case for Change). This collated relevant socio-demographic and transport information for the study area, developed specific Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) for the wider study, and collated an initial list of potential interventions that might address the identified problems and opportunities.

The next stage of the STAG process the 'Initial Appraisal', which was completed in December 2020. This evaluated the potential interventions in more detail by qualitatively assessing them against the five STAG criteria of Environments, Economy, Safety, Integration and Accessibility/Social Inclusion. The appraisal also considers the options in the context of Feasibility, Affordability, and Public Acceptability.

The outcomes and conclusions of the third and final stage of the study, the 'Detailed Options Appraisal', are currently under consideration by Transport Scotland. The Detailed Appraisal Report assessed the interventions in greater detail against the STAG criteria of Environment, Economy, Safety, Integration and Accessibility/Social Inclusion and also considered the options in the context of Cost to Government and Risk and Uncertainty. The Detailed Options Appraisal Report and Executive Summary can be viewed on the project website below.

<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 commissioned 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

Throughout 2021/22, SEStran continued to participate in EU funded projects, progressing and testing innovative solutions for Mobility as a Service, shared mobility, last mile / urban freight, smart and secure freight consolidation, as well as reviewing the effectiveness of regional transport policies implemented during Covid-19 travel restrictions. Working closely with European partners and contributing gained knowledge and ideas is of immeasurable benefit to the delivery of SEStran's RTS and the transport system in the region. SEStran's involvement in EU funded activity is agreed until project conclusion (mostly in 2023) and funding is underwritten by UK Treasury.

PriMaaS – Prioritising Mobility-as-a-Service (an Interreg Europe project)

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

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, 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

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 2021-22, 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/>.



SURFLOGH: Sustainable Urban Logistics Hubs

Edinburgh Napier University and the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SEStran) through the SURFLOGH project have been examining the provision of urban sustainable logistics such as sustainable last/first mile solutions, consolidation depots, locker systems and mobile consolidation options served by cycle logistics, drones, automated vehicles and electric vans.

Smaller volume and shorter distance freight movements driven by the macro online/internet shopping trend are an increasingly important component of the logistics mix, an importance that has only been heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic and resultant lockdown. If the main transport mechanism for the 'urban' logistics movements remains HGVs and the 'white van' powered by an internal combustion engine, then as the volume of business grows the negative externalities (congestion & emissions) will also grow.

To build a more sustainable transport system an understanding of when and how businesses and consumers can be encouraged to switch to more sustainable modes of freight transport is extremely important to transport policy development. This not only relates to focusing on the last mile but also presents opportunities to examine the potential to produce modal shift from earlier stages in the supply chain, and thereby utilising the first mile as the only mile.

The next stage of SURFLOGH will look at combining the first phase outputs based on the project pilots and research, building on ideas of consolidation centres, locker systems, delivery vehicles and locally/community focused networks and linking up local businesses with a wider community focused clientele, and local government with the ability to offer a range of local produce combined with 'out of area goods' consolidated and delivered in one package.

The development site at Perth West⁴ will be used as a location for this work. Stage one of Perth West includes a city consolidation/last mile delivery centre and a mobility hub. These will be connected physically and digitally to an active travel programme leading to a series of established communities land the city centre. An extension of the Broxden Business Park and a new housing neighbourhood also form part of stage one.

The aim is to connect all these uses to a smart renewable energy network. This will be Scotland's first green, city 'living lab'.

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

[INSERT SURFLOGH LOGO/IMAGE/INTERREG LOGO]

BLING: Blockchain in Government

In 2018 SEStran entered the EU Interreg North Sea Region project Blockchain IN Government (BLING). BLING builds upon the substantial investments by the EU, national governments, corporations, SMEs, and wider networks to provide one of the first dedicated platforms to bring

⁴ <https://www.perthwest.com/>

blockchain into local and regional services. BLING provides a unique combination of public authorities, knowledge institutions and SMEs who will work to accelerate the adoption and deployment of blockchain across the NSR in order to enable the creation and delivery of the next generation of smart services for citizens, governments, and SMEs.

The South East of Scotland Transport Partnership collaborated with the Centre for Design Informatics at the University of Edinburgh, 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. The pilot project, GeoPact, uses prototyping ways to create Location Based Smart Contracts - agreements about the location and relations of smart objects in space that allow conditions such as proximity or co-location to trigger actions like financial transfers or opening physical locks. These systems are backed with blockchains, to explore new techniques for make location data secure without being invasive. The pilot ran a series of tests looking at the possible use of technology in the logistics sector.

In the next phase of the project SEStran will build on the conclusions of the GeoPact project, identifying and evaluating opportunities and challenges to the wider implementation of blockchain technology, smart contracts, and distributed ledger technology, in local government within the Scottish policy landscape, with a particular focus on the impact on transport. This work will be complete by December 2022.

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

[INSERT BLING LOGO/IMAGE/INTERREG LOGO]

REGIO-Mob (Extension): (an Interreg Europe project)

REGIO-Mob is an Interreg Europe project that ran from April 2016 to March 2020. In September 2021, it was approved funding for additional activities (under Interreg Europe's 5th call for additional activities) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The REGIO-Mob extension seeks to exchange best practices around sustainable mobility measures that were adopted across the partners' regions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During 2021 meetings were held online to identify sustainable mobility good practices implemented in response to COVID-19 across all the project partners.

Five good practices in the SEStran region have been identified and were submitted to the lead partner:

- Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund
- Spaces for People programme
- DRT proposed trial
- South East of Scotland Transport Transition Group
- Thistle Assistance mask exemption sticker

To facilitate exchange of good practice knowledge three meetings are arranged to allow presentations on these good practices. Partners from Poland and Romania shared their experiences in March 2022 and further exchange events in Slovenia and Edinburgh are planned.

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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/

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

[CONTACT INFORMATION (BACK PAGE WITH COVER GRAPHICS)]

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