

Gender budgeting in active travel: Sustrans Scotland's Places for Everyone response

The Places for Everyone (PfE) team values the insights and findings from the Gender Budgeting in Active Travel in Scotland report.

The following response outlines the work that has been developing in this field within PfE prior to the report, since its completion and our future intentions and aspirations based on its recommendations.

Context: The relaunch of the Places for Everyone fund

From March 2021 – July 2022, the PfE programme was closed to new applications. During this time, the programme's application processes, guidance and criteria were refreshed.

The review considered the impact of PfE projects and the support the PfE team offered to delivery partners. Projects across the country had varying standards when it came to community and stakeholder engagement, behaviour change and the development of Equality Impact Assessments. Work on the Spaces for People programme¹ also identified that delivery partners wanted more support in these areas.

In response to this, a new team was established to sit alongside the Engage Inspire Learn team, specialising in engagement, equity and behaviour change in active travel infrastructure projects. Part of the team's remit was to support Grant Advisors and Delivery Partners to ensure projects have sufficient budget for effective engagement and behavior change activities, in each individual setting. The team produces guidance on engagement, attends meetings, reviews and feeds back on draft plans and delivers workshops on these subjects. Through this team and Engage Inspire Learn, PfE, as a programme, hoped to highlight and tackle inequities in active travel and the built environment.

¹ Spaces for People was a temporary infrastructure programme in Scotland to make it safer for people who choose to walk, cycle or wheel for essential trips and exercise during Covid-19 <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/2020/scotland/spaces-for-people-making-essential-travel-and-exercise-safer-during-coronavirus>

Grants would be made available for focused engagement and behaviour change activities, over and above the basic proposals seen in most projects, and the teams would support partners to understand how best to make use of this funding.

Although these activities were executed independently of (and concurrently with) the *Gender Budgeting in Active Travel in Scotland by Places for Everyone* research, the report and recommendations within it, and subsequent training with the Scottish Women's Budget Group, provided an opportunity for the PfE programme to do even more, the outputs of this are summarised below.

Current Places For Everyone context – what are we doing now and how does this relate to report recommendations?

Context is aligned to the nine recommendations in the report below.

1) **Establish an explicit gender equality goal.**

Agreement of clear gender equality goal to clarify importance of tackling gender and other inequalities in active travel. EG dedicate a certain proportion of active travel infrastructure investment to care related active travel routes.

What we are already doing

The aims of the fund and design principles were already agreed with Transport Scotland and all investment was in response to applications, however, *everyday journeys* includes school journeys, care-related journeys and other trips that are more likely to reflect women's travel behaviour.

What we can do more of

We can continue to emphasise inequalities in active travel and active travel investment. We now provide training on gender budgeting to partners and support them to identify and address gender inequalities.

2) **Require funding applicants to address how their project will contribute to this gender equality goal.**

How active travel projects will contribute to gender equality in active travel and broader society.

What we are already doing

Scoring for PfE funding applications includes prioritisation of:

- **Projects that facilitate shorter trips and include walking and wheeling.**

Women and men are equally as likely to walk ([Walking and Cycling Index Report](#)), but there is a disparity between numbers of women and men who cycle. Therefore, walking infrastructure is more likely to positively impact women's mobility.

- **Projects that serve areas of deprivation.**

The report identifies that women are less likely to have access to a private motor vehicle, and even less likely in areas of deprivation. Therefore, prioritising projects in areas of higher deprivation will also support improved mobility among women.

- **Projects that link to public transport hubs**

The *Gender Budgeting in Active Travel* report outlines that 70% of low-income households felt that affordable access to public transport should be a priority. PfE scoring prioritises improving access to public transport options for everyone. This especially benefits women and girls who have no or limited access to a private car.

- **Projects that focus on social safety issues.**

Social safety may include perceived lurking spots or poor lighting for journeys taken in the dark. The report outlines the gendered nature of road safety and gender-based harassment and violence in public spaces, and the role that physical design interventions and lighting play in minimising these issues.

A complete list of the PfE application scoring criteria can be found on page 23 of the [PfE application guidance document](#) for Stage 0-2 projects.

What we can do more of

We will continue to review applications that are received, monitor progress and monitor the impact of this scoring on the range of projects that successfully receive funding.

3) Increase capacity to apply gender expertise and support partners applying for funding to do the same.

Assess current levels of gender expertise within Sustrans, TS and Local authorities, identifying gaps and support partners to increase knowledge and expertise in partnership with relevant organisations such as the Scottish Women's Budget Group

What we already do

- **Network planning tool**

The Network Planning Tool is an interactive mapping website that supports Local authorities and others in cycle network planning by estimating cycling potential down to street level. The tool currently uses commuting and school journeys and will soon include other everyday journeys, increasing the relevance for a wider range of scenarios. Further developments plan to include data on multi-modal journeys, deprivation and social safety information.

- **Training**

We provide training to partners on a range of thematic areas relating to equity in active travel, which is free for them to attend, to increase equity expertise in project delivery.

- **What we can do more of**

In February, Scottish Women's Budget Group will deliver Gender budgeting training for partners delivering active travel infrastructure. This will support the practical implementation of gender budgeting in infrastructure projects.

4) Use the equity framework for gender budgeting in active travel infrastructure

The framework considers active travel planning in relation to six criteria:

- Engagement
- Infrastructure
- Health and safety
- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Monitoring and evaluation

This should sit alongside the active travel Outcomes framework and can be used to frame discussions with partners to ensure considerations around gender equality and inclusion are integrated into project plans and decision making from the outset.

What we already do

The equity framework criteria are the thematic areas that are prioritised in scoring (see above) and are included in equity and engagement training and support to partners.

What more we can do

We will seek to promote and frame equity discussions and guidance much more round the equity framework to provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of the key considerations for partners in relation to active travel projects.

5) Collect and analyse intersectional data.

Successful implementation of gender budgeting requires sex-disaggregated data at a minimum and if/where possible, data disaggregated by other sociodemographic categories, like socioeconomic status, ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

The aim of intersectional data collection and analysis should be removing obstacles to active travel for these vulnerable or underrepresented groups and actively engaging with them to encourage more active travel.

What we already do

- The Engagement team in PfE has produced guidance on the collection of data in relation to engagement.
- Research and Monitoring Unit currently support a selection of PfE projects, developing best practice in monitoring and evaluation to ensure we support partners to collect and use data to inform evidence-based approaches to removing obstacles to active travel for vulnerable and underrepresented groups.

What we can do more of

We will review the support we provide partners in the collection and analysis of data to inform project decisions and identify where we can provide further support to partners in this.

6) Conduct Equality Impact Assessments, gender safety audits and accessibility audits before and after active travel projects are completed.

What we already do

- **Equality Impact Assessments**

We developed a bespoke [EglA template](#) in June 2023, geared towards active travel **infrastructure** projects. It directs PfE partners to think specifically about how projects impact women and girls in relation to:

- Engagement

- Motivation and behaviour change
- User conflict
- Perceived and social safety
- **Accessibility audits and gender safety auditing tool**

Grant advisors and engagement support team members encourage PfE project teams to arrange twilight and evening site visits and conduct gender safety audits.

What we can do more of

The training will be developed around the Equity framework outlined in the Gender Budgeting report; to further focus discussion around the six criteria of engagement, infrastructure, health and safety, accessibility, affordability and monitoring and evaluation.

What we are developing

- **Women's safety audit tool**

We are developing a women's safety audit tool for active travel infrastructure partners. This aligns with the development of an internal gender safety audit tool, so we are supporting the same standards in Sustrans delivered projects as with partners. This will be used for on-the-ground audits, will come with clear guidance.

The application of the women's safety audit tool will have the following benefits:

- Enhances the community engagement process with a structure way to gather lived experience.
- Provides data to inform project design.
- May support funding decision-making.
- Provides a consistent approach to data collection.
- A dataset explicitly addressing personal safety, as opposed to traffic safety.

7) Partner with community organisations to do meaningful engagement with local people.

As an organisation we do this, but it was outwith the remit of the PfE programme.

What we already do

Effective and inclusive engagement is a core requirement of the PfE programme. The Engagement team supports partners in equity and engagement. There is an engagement guide and ongoing training available.

8) Develop a strategy to ensure inclusive community engagement with diverse groups.

E.g. as applicants to describe the diversity of their teams or how they meaningfully involve diverse voices in decision-making processes in involving other organisations as project partners.

As above, this is already part of our support offer, but not a role that the PfE programme team deliver.

What we already do

This is already built into the programme design by including essential requirements on inclusive community engagement and ongoing equality impact assessments which are reviewed regularly.

The PfE programme is designed to ensure that support and guidance on equity and engagement is provided at regular project stage reviews by the Engagement Team. Funding is contingent on effective and proportionate engagement with communities.

9) Fund both physical and social infrastructure for cycling.

Sustrans and Transport Scotland should commit active travel funding for both physical and social infrastructure, given that the Active Travel Framework acknowledges the need for educational and behaviour change programmes alongside physical infrastructure.

What we already do

As part of infrastructure projects, behaviour change planning is a programme requirement. This ensures partners consider what barriers people face beyond physical infrastructure, and consider what interventions would be impactful throughout the project lifecycle. We provide support and guidance in considering how different audiences are impacted and how to design the right interventions for the audience.