



KEY ISSUES

International literature review of wide range of benefits of cycling

Analysis of data for highlands and islands to identify economic benefits accrued from cycling by health, transport, tourism sectors.

Recommendations on ways to take forward action in partnerships, where stakeholders can see returns on their investment in cycling facilities and promotion

ABOUT DHC

Derek Halden Consultancy staff and associates have leading expertise in transport planning, community development, psychology, transport and accessibility modelling, social inclusion, marketing, environmental assessment, and economic development.

Common to all projects is a commitment to draw from state of the art knowledge to ensure that solutions are soundly based and tailored to the needs of clients.

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VALUE OF CYCLING IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS



A study of the Value of Cycling to the Highlands and Islands economy, commissioned from DHC by The Highland Cycle Forum was launched in June 2004 during Healthy Highland Week.

Quantifiable benefits from cycling fall within three main sectors. When appraising transport benefits of cycling it is important to emphasise that cycle investment makes a small positive impact on a wide range of criteria, as opposed to other interventions such as investment in air services or new roads which tend to be dominated

by economic benefits. Health benefits of more cycling include: reduction in risk for a range of diseases, mental well-being and self esteem, reduced impact of air pollution for cyclists when compared with motorised travel, and safety benefits for all cyclists. The cycle tourism market is a large and growing sector for the economy of the area and is made up of: day-trip, main activity holiday and other holiday cyclists, plus specialist tours, and competitive cyclists.

Based on data from these sectors from across the HIE area, the study indicated that cycling is currently worth around £40 million p.a. to the economy and this could grow by well over £20 million with well planned investment. Tourism accounts for the largest component and investment will be needed to maintain this value, particularly in highly competitive national and international markets. The nature of cycling means that numerous smaller benefits across a wide range of themes is the norm, whereas traditional transport investments may only provide benefits of limited types.

Investing in cycling can make a significant contribution to the economy and quality of life in the Highlands and Islands. Interventions need to tackle issues broadly with joint working between many public and private agencies. Initiatives such as safer routes to school have shown what can be achieved and these partnership approaches should allow each stakeholder



to contribute according to the benefits they receive. By identifying the stakes which each partner can bring, solutions can be identified and delivered which are both fundable and effective. Next steps should focus on building upon current partnerships within the Highland Cycle Forum to draw on the "value" identified in this study.