

Sustainable Transport and the ScotRail Franchise

Sustrans' position on the forthcoming franchise tender

January 2014

About Sustrans

Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible, desirable and inevitable. We're a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today.
www.sustrans.org.uk

Sustrans Scotland
Rosebery House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5EZ

© Sustrans January 2014
Registered Charity No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)
VAT Registration No. 416740656

Executive Summary

This paper sets out Sustrans Scotland's recommendations to those bidding for the Scotrail franchise Invitation to Tender issued by Transport Scotland in November 2013.

Sustrans' mission is to encourage people to choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and wellbeing. Whilst we are open to a partnership agreement with all bidders, we will not restrict collaborative working to any one bidder exclusive to all others. Sustrans is not coordinating this response on behalf of other active travel organisations, but will seek to work with our partners wherever possible in order to achieve the most positive outcomes.

This paper lists those actions that Sustrans Scotland considers vital to ensuring proper integration of the active travel modes with train travel. It is our expectation that a bidder serious about active travel – and serious about assisting the Scottish Government to deliver its policies on active travel for short trips – will include in their bid, in addition to the requirements of the tender, the following:

- Commitment to effective **cooperation** between Local Authorities and the Rail Operator
- An outline of the vision, aims and objectives of rail integration activities over the period of the contract – to be used as the basis for creating an overall cycle strategy
- A commitment to **consult** with Sustrans and other national and local user groups on provision for journeys to stations made by sustainable means
- An overarching commitment to creating better and safer **access to stations** and across railway lines for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users
- A statement of intent on improving cycle/rail **transition facilities** at all stations
- Recognition that integration improvements should **actively encourage modal shift**.

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	1
	Accessing Rail by Bicycle	1
	Accessing Rail by Foot and Other Means	1
	Scope and Structure of this Document	1
2	Principles	2
3	Partnership Initiatives.....	2
4	Successful Partnership Working	4
5	Next Steps	5

1 Introduction

The ScotRail franchise represents an opportunity to increase the number of journeys made by sustainable means to and from railway stations and to build towards a truly integrated transport system over the next 10 years.

Sustrans Scotland is a stakeholder for Scottish Government, delivering several actions listed in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS). Sustrans has a budget over the next three financial years of £32M, employs over 50 staff and is based in Edinburgh, next to Haymarket Station.

The bulk of Sustrans' work is the delivery of infrastructure aimed at making everyday short trips an easy and sensible option for those who want to travel actively. We work in partnership with all of Scotland's local authorities, Regional Transport Partnerships and other statutory agencies. We also work with communities looking to reduce the impact of short car trips on their neighbourhoods.

Accessing Rail by Bicycle

The Scottish Government has referenced increasing numbers of purposeful (i.e. non-leisure) bicycle trips in a number of their policies, ranging from improving public health, reducing obesity, tackling carbon emissions and reducing congestion. But the most relevant policy affecting the franchise is the recently updated Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), which sets a vision of 10% of purposeful trips being made by bicycle by 2020. Similarly, Sustrans has also launched a call to action aimed at local and national governments. The call to action seeks greater investment and priority placed upon doubling the number of local journeys made by sustainable methods by 2020. By integrating rail with other modes of sustainable transport, progress can be made in helping to meet the targets. To date there has been progress on travel integration but there is great scope to improve on this and provide more safe and accessible access for people cycling to and from train stations.

Sections 2.2.2.6 to 2.2.3 of the ScotRail franchise Invitation to Tender (ITT) are relevant to cycle/rail integration and are well aligned with the CAPS vision. Sustrans seeks to build upon the requirements stated within this document so that prospective operators are incentivised to maximise the cycle/rail elements of their bid.

Accessing Rail by Foot and Other Means

All trips by train start and end with a walk. Too often, the public realm around stations in particular falls between two stools; the public realm managed by the local authority and that managed by Network Rail and the rail operating company. Our experience is that pedestrians are often an after-thought and insufficient time and effort is invested in making the streets and public areas around stations safe and intuitive places to access the station by foot, mobility cart, wheelchair, etc.

In particular, we draw the bidder's attention to Designing Streets, the Scottish Government's design policy for public realm and recommend that it is appropriately referenced in the bid.

Scope and Structure of this Document

This document sets out Sustrans' policies toward rail integration with sustainable transport in Scotland and the objectives of our involvement in any franchisee partnership. As per our policy for all such competitions, it does not express a preference for any one organisation over other bidders in the competition itself. Sustrans is not coordinating this response on behalf of other active travel organisations, but will seek to work with our partners wherever possible.

The remainder of this paper sets out;

- the principles we expect train operating companies adhere to as part of any successful bid;
- some specific initiatives that we have identified, for further discussion and potential co-operation to achieve our mutual goals.

2 Principles

Our expectation is that the successful bid will include, in addition to the requirements of the tender, the following:

- Commitment to effective **cooperation** between Local Authorities and the Rail Operator. We expect bidders to tie in their activities with Local Authority CAPS plans and Local Transport Strategies
- An outline of the vision, aims and objectives of rail integration activities over the period of the contract – to be used as the basis for creating an overall cycle strategy. We would expect the vision to include reference to the creation of seamless, **integrated transport** in Scotland
- A commitment to **consult** with Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, Living Streets and other national and local user groups on provision for journeys to stations made by sustainable means
- An overarching commitment to creating better and safer **access to stations** and across railway lines for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users
- A statement of intent on improving cycle/rail **transition facilities** at major hub stations and at local stations, making reference to exemplar projects such as the Stirling Cycle Hub
- Recognition that integration improvements should **actively encourage modal shift** by making forecourts and public areas safe and pleasant places to be, prioritising sustainable modes of transport where appropriate.

3 Partnership Initiatives

By entering into a partnership, we would seek to make a real difference together, through finding better, sustainable and innovative ways of working with ScotRail over the next ten years. This will be the guiding force for any collaboration and we would seek to behave in a spirit and manner consistent with that overall aim.

There are several, specific areas within the ScotRail ITT document where a partnership approach could achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. These are detailed in Table 1.

Above all, we propose that the Rail Operator produce an overall cycle strategy, to be created in the first year of the contract and updated at regular intervals, which would outline the overall vision, aims and objectives of cycle rail improvements and would detail a list of actions to achieve these. Sustrans has produced, or contributed to, similar cycle plans in other locations throughout the UK and would bring this experience to bear if a partnership approach were taken.

Table 1 – Partnership opportunities

Item	Requirements of the tender	Partnership opportunity
Cycle parking	<i>Bidders will make provision for additional cycle storage at a minimum rate of 500 spaces per annum</i>	Increasing cycle parking in an ad hoc and unfocussed way will not increase the number of users accessing rail by sustainable means. Sustrans would propose a programme of monitoring, delivered through our volunteer programme and other partner organisations, allowing cycle parking improvements to be focused on the areas of greatest need.
Marketing and awareness raising	<i>Bidders must propose methods [...] to promote the benefits of cycling and station cycling facilities</i>	<p>Joint marketing activity to promote sustainable travel modes including the distribution of Sustrans information via our website and a number of other channels including the network of local and community-based walking and cycling groups.</p> <p>We would also propose a number of cycle-based community outreach activities including safety training and roadshows.</p>
Cycle route identification and development	<i>The Franchisee should ensure [...] that easily identifiable and accessible cycle routes are identified close to the station</i>	<p>Effective mapping and signage is key to encouraging passengers to access stations and onward destinations by sustainable means. Sustrans has a wealth of experience and expertise in mapping and signage of sustainable transport routes. Sustrans would advocate integration of mapping and signage at stations with paper and online maps produced by Sustrans and other partner organisations.</p> <p>The National Cycle Network brings high quality cycle routes close to (or directly to) hundreds of stations across the UK (we are within 1 mile of over 1,000 stations). Creating a series of links to existing routes is key to successfully integrating stations into a sustainable transport network that exists already.</p>
Monitoring and Reporting	<i>The Transport Integration Manager will also be required to work with Transport Scotland to determine evaluation criteria for such projects and will lead on work to evaluate the outcomes,</i>	Sustrans' Research and Monitoring Unit monitor the outcomes of sustainable transport interventions in order to feed into Key Performance Indicators for the Scottish Government. Sustrans would be able to offer advice and guidance on effective monitoring and innovative approaches to user surveys to target

Item	Requirements of the tender	Partnership opportunity
	<i>which should inform future projects</i>	monitoring activities.
Cycle Innovation Plan (provision for recreational cyclists)	<i>As part of their Bid, Bidders shall provide a Cycle Innovation Plan and demonstrate how they will develop this on contract award</i>	Sustrans would promote liaison with the cycle tourism forum and provide a link between the Rail Operator and other partners. We would propose to work closely with Cycling Scotland on development of the Cycle Innovation Plan to ensure it ties in with the wider objectives of making cycling mainstream.
Rail Integration Fund	<i>Bidders may plan to spend up to £1.25 million in each Franchisee Year on additional integration works as a Rail Integration Fund to be managed with transparency to Transport Scotland and other key stakeholders</i>	Sustrans can identify projects which would benefit from the Rail Integration Fund and may be able to provide match funding for these projects through the Community Links Fund in the scenario where the rail company and the Local Authority put in a bid for a cycle path linking the station to the nearest cycle route.

4 Successful Partnership Working

Since the 1980s Sustrans has been working with partners such as Network Rail, the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) and a number of different train operators on integrating bike and rail. From its earliest days Sustrans recognised the crucial role that rail plays in encouraging people to make journeys by sustainable means. Examples of the work Sustrans has done include:

- Working closely with Network Rail on the design and replacement of the National Cycle Route 75 Airdrie-Bathgate section lost to the re-opening of the same railway line
- Liaison with Network Rail on the re-opening of the Borders Rail Line, including links to stations and other issues
- Completed 115 detailed station studies in partnership with Network Rail
- Created, and is now managing, the Department for Transport-funded “Access to Stations” programme which is delivering £11m of improvements at 20 different stations - <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/policy-evidence/the-impact-of-our-work/access-stations-better-cycle-rail-integration>
- Worked with train operator Abellio in 2013 on their new Cycle Strategy for Greater Anglia - <http://www.greateranglia.co.uk/about-us/news/2013/09/greater-anglia-consults-on-cycle-strategy-and-further-cycle-rail-improvements>

- Carried out an “Interchange Walking, Cycling and Signage Audit for South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH)
- Joined the ATOC-led Cycle Rail Working Group helping to create best practice in cycle-rail measures across the rail industry, and contributing to the ATOC Cycle Rail Toolkit - <http://cycle-rail.co.uk/hq-cy/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/ATOC-Toolkit-low-res-single.pdf>. Sustrans is also a member of the newly formed Rolling Stock Design review group looking at best practice in cycle carriage and helping to influence the design of future rolling stock

5 Next Steps

Sustrans Scotland welcomes the opportunity to discuss the principles and initiatives contained within this document with all bidders for the franchise. If you would like to engage with us on any aspect of the ScotRail franchise please contact:

Andy Keba

Sustrans Scotland

Rosebery House

9 Haymarket Terrace

Edinburgh EH12 5EZ

M: 07766 511 592

T: 0131 346 9774

E: andy.keba@sustrans.org.uk.