

8th | CITY UPDATE

APRIL 2022
UPDATE #22

With the 8th City Programme now fully in delivery of its second phase, we've used this opportunity to highlight some of the work that was delivered in Phase 1, as well as providing an overview of our Phase 2 projects – two of which have recently completed.

These updates are an opportunity for us to highlight work taking place within the cities as part of the programme, and this edition has a focus on the significant activity and achievements within Perth.

With 8 projects overall across both phases, Perth have not only delivered an impressive number of outputs in line with programme targets, but have demonstrated real benefits for Perth & Kinross Council, it's residents and visitors.

We've shared some of these as well as including case studies for two of the projects delivered by Perth.

As all our partners know, Data sits at the heart of the 8th City programme and in this edition we've outlined some of the achievements and learning that has arisen from the programme's work in relation to open data and data analytics.

The achievements and learning to date, some of which we've outlined in this update, will help us build on the successes of the programme as we continue delivery of Phase 2.

Nicola McPhee, 8th City Programme Manager



2 | 8th CITY PROGRAMME: PHASE 1 – COMPLETED AND DELIVERED

The ‘Scotland’s 8th City – the Smart City’ programme is funded as a ‘Sustainable Growth’ Strategic Intervention (SI) within the 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) operational programme.

The programme is aligned with the Green Infrastructure SI in support of Scottish Government’s policy action of ‘Ensuring our communities are healthy and sustainable’. In working towards this policy action, the 8th City programme supports Scottish Government targets to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045.

In adopting a ‘Smart and Sustainable’ approach to project delivery, the first phase of the 8th City programme was grouped around themed clusters, or Smart City operations, with each intended to involve at least two cities engaged in delivery. This Phase 1 activity concluded in March 2022 and is summarised, on the basis of those ERDF Operations, across the following pages:

Data Analytics / Open Data: This operation involved Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Inverness, Perth, and Stirling. Key deliverables include nine Innovative Services, including the development and deployment of open data platforms, and the delivery of 144 open data sets. Approaches and lessons learned arising from data analytics activity has informed the establishment of dedicated data teams in some cities, with activity being progressed in Phase 2 of the programme. Cities contributed case studies and shared learning as part of an ‘Innovating with Data across the Public Sector’ conference during DataFest 2020.



Intelligent Street Lighting (ISL): Projects in Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Perth are using LED lamps with central management systems and network controls to achieve efficiency savings of around 70%; this significantly reduces energy costs and a reduction in CO² emissions – with Aberdeen noting anticipated annual savings of around £1M for street lighting costs and Glasgow reducing CO² emissions by around 700T per year.

ISL also creates opportunities for the deployment of sensors and data collection as integral support for city ambitions to deploy IoT-led Smart City solutions.

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Innovation Lab: Nested within the wider Perth Creative Exchange development led by PKC and WASPS and which opened in February 2020, the 8th City and ERDF funded Innovation Lab offers a space for stakeholders to work on urban challenges by integrating inputs across a range of perspectives to re-frame problems and prototype smart city solutions using multiple approaches, activities and tools. The focus is on combining data and digital technology to support the development of new products and services helping to tackle the challenges that Perth city faces.

The Innovation Lab subsequently secured local funding and was re-branded as The Famous Grouse Ideas Centre. The wider Perth Creative Exchange won the Regeneration Project of the Year at the Scottish Property Awards 2021.



Just Bin It!

This bin is part of Stirling's Smart City programme and will make the Council's litter collection service more cost-effective by reducing the number of visits needed to empty it.

**Love where you live.
Please don't drop litter.**

www.stirling.gov.uk



Just bin it!

Take Pride in Your City

PLEASE

£90 fixed penalty for littering

This bin is part of Dundee's Smart City programme and will make the Council's litter collection service more cost-effective by reducing the number of visits needed to empty it.



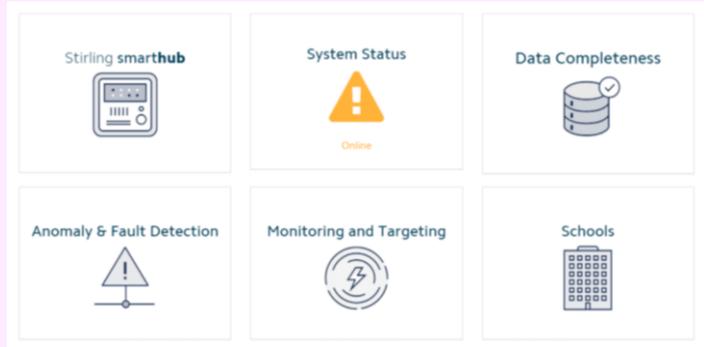
Smart Waste: Projects delivered in Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Perth, and Stirling have deployed a range of Smart Waste approaches including: solar-powered compactor bins and bin sensors to enable responsive and more efficient collections - meaning less waste going to Landfill, fewer journeys made due to data-led routing and scheduling of collection services.

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Smart Energy:

Stirling’s deployment of energy dashboards to track and monitor energy demand, carbon emissions and renewables performance across 35 key Council sites.

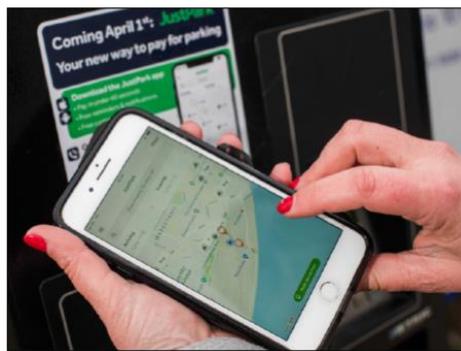
A short case study is available on Scottish Cities Alliance [website](#).



Stirling Council officers leading on this project were later able to share information and learning with colleagues at The Highland Council as they embarked on development activity for the Inverness Smarter Building project in Phase 2 of the 8th City programme.

Smart Mobility: Aberdeen, Dundee, and Stirling each delivered projects in response to issues identified in relation to traffic, transport and travel issues. The Aberdeen Digital Data Development project involves deployment of high quality sensor nodes to enhance Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) strategies and provide a better managed transport network. Stirling has also deployed sensor-based monitoring of a range of travel modes – including vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. This vehicle monitoring infrastructure helps to reduce congestion and make travel more efficient.

For Dundee City Council, the focus has been on Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions with a wide range of innovation-led projects delivered via the Dundee MILL (Mobility Innovation Living Lab). This project completed at the end of March 2022 as Covid-19 and, latterly, supply chain issues had an impact on project delivery. DCC project officers are currently working on project closure documentation, including case studies across key mobility themes such as active travel, smart parking, shared fleet, and community use of vehicles.



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City Operations / Public Safety: Dundee and Perth (with Angus Council as a non-8th City programme partner) have combined resources and learning to work on a Tayside approach to delivering an integrated public safety network. The introduction of enhanced public space CCTV and video analytics capability is playing a key role in integrating the work of partners all playing a role in tackling crime and disorder and promoting community safety.

With project closure in January 2022, work is continuing across both councils to effectively realise up to 25 Data Sets open for Innovation, in addition to the two Innovative Services outputs delivered via the implementation of these projects.



Mobile Working: Glasgow and Perth delivered a range of mobile working services in Phase 1 of the 8th City programme. This had led to the development of 17 innovative services and 2 data sets – with each city hosting ‘show and tell’ events to share information and learning across the 8th City programme and beyond. Deployment of app-based mobile working has led to significant benefits for Glasgow and Perth and Kinross Council officers and for the users of those services.



Smart Water: The Glasgow Smart Canal project uses sensors and predictive weather technology to dynamically manage water levels along the Forth & Clyde Canal - allowing it to become a drainage route for excess surface water during high rainfall events.

This smart city solution on 250-year old infrastructure has reduced local flooding risk and helped to unlock 110 hectares of previously unusable land across North Glasgow for development and regeneration. The project also delivers CO² savings of 500T per year by reducing the amount of wastewater requiring to be pumped.

In 2021/22 the Glasgow Smart Canal project received six major awards for innovation, regeneration and infrastructure development. The project has also attracted interest from other local authorities and international visitors who are rethinking how they can use their reservoirs and canal networks.



Collaborative working across Scotland's seven cities has contributed significantly to the delivery of these 26 projects across nine Smart City domains outlined above. In line with 8th City programme core themes related to projects being open, scalable, replicable, and inter-operable, this work has been supported an extensive process of information and knowledge sharing between programme partners.

Opportunities will be sought to share the 8th City story more widely as Phase 2 of the programme continues up to June 2023; this includes the production of case studies and blogs as well as the development of open data and data sets opened for innovation as part of ongoing data project activity.

Please contact the 8th City PMO - [8th City PMO@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:8th_City_PMO@glasgow.gov.uk) - for more information on any of the projects noted above.

7 | 8th CITY PROGRAMME – PHASE 2

Phase 1 of the 8th City programme has now been functionally completed with 26 projects delivered across Scotland’s seven cities.

A few projects require sign-off on financial reporting and other programme documentation (such as outputs recording) but projects are generally all in delivery and able to show evidence of value to users, stakeholders, and funders.

Collectively, these Phase 1 projects have enabled combined investment of £13,190,782 (LUPS) and £1,751,501 (H&I) - of which £5,266,656 (LUPS) and £875,750 (H&I) is ERDF grant and £500k is via the Cities Investment Fund administered by the Scottish Cities Alliance.

In Phase 2 of the 8th City programme, we now have completion on two of the 15 projects being delivered; Glasgow Data Analytics and Stirling Open Data both came to a close as scheduled on 31st March. These projects have delivered five Innovative Services and 44 Data Sets Open for Innovation outputs.

The table, right, shows the full list of Phase 2 projects and completion dates.

When combined with Phase 1 investment and the budget to support delivery of the PMO, the 8th City programme has total anticipated spend of £48,207,074 - of which £20,296,471 is ERDF grant.

For information about any of the projects listed above, please contact the 8th City PMO at 8th_City_PMO@glasgow.gov.uk and we will forward requests to the relevant project manager or city representative.



8 th City Programme - Phase 2		
City	Project	End Date
Dundee	Data	30/09/22
	Smart Mobility	30/09/22
Edinburgh	Intelligent Infrastructure	30/06/23
	Public Safety - City Operations	28/02/23
	Public Safety - Driving Operational Efficiencies	30/06/23
Glasgow	Data	31/03/22
	ISL	30/06/23
	Mobile Working #1 (Digital Citizen / Yotta)	30/06/23
	Mobile Working #2 (Smart Fleet)	30/06/23
Perth	Data	30/06/23
	Smart Waste	31/12/22
Stirling	Data	31/03/22

8 | SMART PERTH – AMBITION AND ACTION



Although the second smallest in population terms of Scotland’s seven cities, Perth has big ambitions as a Smart City: almost 20% of the 41 projects being progressed as part of the ‘Scotland’s 8th City – the Smart City’ ERDF programme are in Perth. In part, this relates to Perth and Kinross Council’s early appointment of a Smart City Project Coordinator – an approach subsequently adopted by other cities. Several Project Officers were also appointed for some of the projects below – notably Open Data, Public Safety and Smart Waste.

Across Phase 1 (commencing 2015) and Phase 2 (2018 to 2023) of the 8th City programme Perth has funded, with ERDF support, the following projects:

Project	Status
Open Data (Phase 1)	Complete
Intelligent Street Lighting	Complete
Innovation Lab at Perth Creative Exchange	Complete
Mobile Working	Complete
Public Safety / City Operations Centre	Complete
Smart Waste (Phase 1)	Complete
Data Analytics Data (Phase 2)	In progress (to June 2023)
Smart Waste (Phase 2)	In progress (to December 2022)

Collectively, these projects add up to £3.7M investment in Perth’s Smart City projects - of which £1.48.M is via ERDF and £2.22M via PKC and other match funding - including the Scottish Cities Alliance Cities Investment Fund (CIF).

These projects have also delivered the following in terms of Scottish Government/Managing Authority defined outputs for the 8th City programme:

Output Indicator	Number
Data Sets Opened for Innovation	66 achieved plus 25 in progress
Innovative Services	13 achieved plus 10 in progress

Moving beyond the numbers, these projects have created many tangible benefits for PKC and for residents, workers, and visitors to Perth. Case studies for the Mobile Working and the Open Data (Phase 2) projects are highlighted respectively on pages 10 and 12 of this newsletter.

There are physical and technology projects – such as the Innovation Lab – and some that are more technical such as Intelligent Street Lighting which introduced a new Central Management System to control over 2,200 lanterns. Some of these projects are described overleaf.

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For **Intelligent Street Lighting (ISL)** the focus was on the innovation and added value that can be derived by transforming street lighting through a new Central Management System capable of controlling light levels of lanterns and also enabling street lights to support a range of Smart City functions and services. This project delivered on the five key objectives of: improvement of lighting quality; Improvements in public safety; Improved lighting maintenance; Improved energy efficiency; and Improve data collection about the city (e.g. footfall, noise, air quality, etc.) thus contributing to better city management.



The **Innovation Lab** was launched in February 2020 as 'The Famous Grouse Ideas Centre' - thanks to supplementary private funding leveraged in addition to ERDF funding - and is an integral element within the wider Perth Creative Exchange development of a disused primary school building which won the Regeneration Project of the Year award at the Scottish Property Awards 2021.



The Phase 1 focus on **Open Data** included the introduction of the [Perth Open Data Platform](#); for Phase 2 this resource is being enhanced by a PKC focus on Data Warehousing and Data Analytics, with Open Data at the heart of this activity and engagement.



The **Mobile Working, Smart Waste** and **Public Safety / City Operations** projects are delivering improved and enhanced services for Perth and, in different ways, are contributing to wider initiatives to make Perth an attractive, safe, and sustainable place to live, work, visit and play.



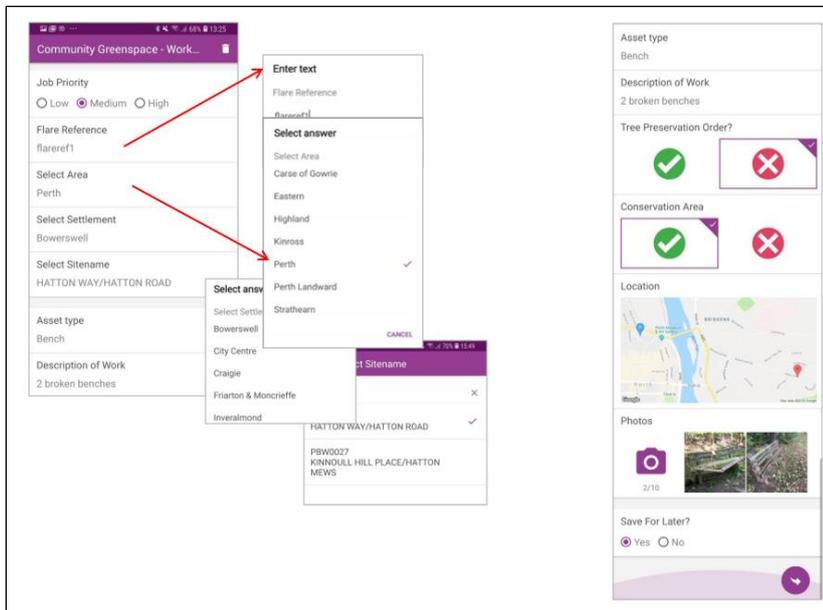
For more information about Perth's smart city project contact Graham Pinfield, Smart Perth Projects Officer, gpinfield@pkc.gov.uk

ERDF 2014-20 Operational Programme

Strategic Intervention: Scotland's 8th City - the Smart City



Perth & Kinross Council: Smart Communities - Mobile Working



Project Overview

This 8th City Phase 1 project developed mobile solutions to deliver service transformation across a number of key delivery areas including housing repairs, care at home and regulatory services.

All of the mobile working solutions were built using the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) corporate mobile working platform. This has supported new ways of working across PKC with seven mobile applications and innovative services being developed to provide staff with the technology and data they require whilst delivering services in the community.

Why is it needed?

This project was approved as part of PKC Digital Transformation Programme and focussed on providing operational field staff with the information and functionality to deliver services in our communities, resulting in efficiencies and an enhanced customer experience.

- The key objectives were:
- Improvement to services delivered to citizens, including targeted scheduling of work and the ability to update users more proactively on progress of jobs
- Workforce efficiencies – leaning processes, removal of duplicate activities and the need for re-keying of information
- Improvement in availability and quality of data; gathering data in real time; improved management information
- Reduce costs of service delivery

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Impact and Benefits

Staff / stakeholder engagement and benefits realisation were key areas of activity in the development of these solutions. A multidisciplinary team was set-up to define and support the delivery of each Mobile Working solution. Regular reviews were (and continue to be) scheduled with the teams to discuss enhancements and additional opportunities.

As staff become more familiar with the solutions and experience the benefits of new ways of working, they are generating ideas for additional functionality / improvements. Process mapping (as was v as built) was used to illustrate process improvements; cashable and non-cashable benefits were captured.

Benefits include:

- Front line staff up-skilled in new technologies and IT literacy skills
- Reduced risk to lone workers through the introduction of mobile technology
- Front line staff enabled to spend more time with vulnerable clients
- Reduced paperwork across service areas, contributing towards PKC's reduced carbon footprint
- Reduction in carbon emissions due to better routing and scheduling of work based on geographic location
- Increased productivity across the workforce, resulting in lower operating costs for the service
- Enhanced real time information about service operation - providing opportunity to respond positively to real time challenges of service delivery and reduce service failure and re-work.
- Enhanced management information providing opportunities to review performance and manage the workforce more effectively
- Mobile devices give front line staff a direct link into the council and easier access to a variety of supporting services.

Delivery of these innovative mobile working solutions has changed ways of working across the Council; these new ways of working are now the new standard.

For more information please contact:

Jacque Rogers, Perth & Kinross Council – jrogers@pkc.gov.uk

ERDF 2014-20 Operational Programme

Strategic Intervention: Scotland's 8th City - the Smart City



Perth & Kinross Council: Open Data (Phase 2)



Project Overview

Data literacy can be defined as the ability to work with data – to capture and maintain it correctly, to analyse it, to use it to gain insight and to communicate with it effectively. Data literacy improvement is important for any organisation seeking to make better use of data. Recognising this, Perth & Kinross Council's (PKC) Data & Analytics programme incorporates high-level objectives to improve data literacy across the organisation.

The Council's data literacy improvement plan sets out a blended approach to improvement, and started with an initial assessment of data literacy across council services, using an online questionnaire supplemented by workshops with various staff groups. This assessment was used to establish a baseline and inform approaches to improvement.

A key element of the improvement plan is communications and engagement, to ensure that staff are generally 'data aware'. Recognising this, the festive period of 2021 provided an ideal opportunity to run a communications campaign which provided information about the data and analytics programme in a light-hearted, non-technical and innovative way under the banner '12 Days of Data'. The idea came from a campaign facilitated by the Scottish Local Government Digital Office the previous year.

Why was it needed?

PKC undertook research and consulted with other councils to understand approaches being taken to data literacy improvement, finding that while it is an emerging area of interest, there is little in the way of mature best practice examples. Therefore, development of the data literacy improvement plan has been an opportunity for innovation, adopting new approaches to awareness raising, learning and staff development.

In addition to this, data literacy assessment survey respondents commented that one of the barriers to understanding is that data and analytics related communications are often perceived to be overly technical and are difficult to understand for non-specialists.

The 12 Days of Data campaign set out to address this, using non-technical language and Microsoft Teams based channels staff were already comfortable with. The main learning point being that data and analytics is relevant to everyone and is not just for the specialist.

Impact and Benefits

Feedback from the 12 Days of Data campaign has been positive and the level of interaction with the daily posts on MS Teams surpassed expectations. The use of a seasonal theme encouraged engagement and each of the daily posts over the 12 days incorporated a small snapshot of information that was arguably easier to digest than longer, more formal learning materials.

The campaign also encouraged staff to visit our MS Teams Data Centre channel, building a community which will go on to participate in future data literacy improvement activities. This will include the development of targeted data literacy learning pathways and training modules, and of course further awareness raising communications.

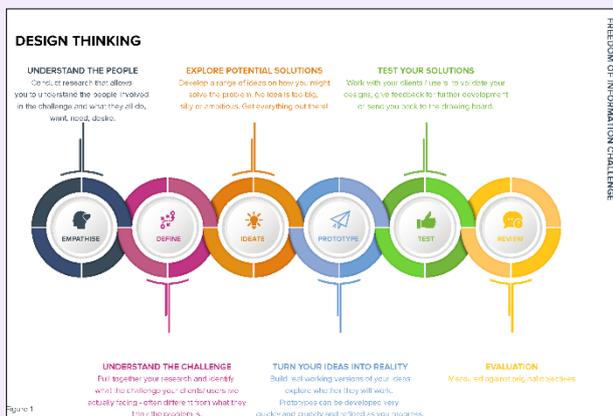
For more info please contact:

Ewan Walker, Perth and Kinross Council - EWalker@pkc.gov.uk

14 | DATA DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE 8th CITY PROGRAMME

Data, primarily in relation to open data and data analytics, has been one of the central themes of the 8th City programme since inception in 2015.

Phase 1 of the programme involved Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness, Perth, and Stirling working on the development and delivery of open data platforms - complementing those already in place for Edinburgh and Glasgow – and also the deployment of a data analytics team for Glasgow.



The use of data and data analytics to identify, monitor, and effectively respond to city issues and challenges has been continued as Phase 2 projects by the cities of Dundee, Glasgow, Perth, and Stirling. This activity includes a broad range of approaches to delivering corporate data units – with initiatives such as data warehousing, GIS mapping, open government, and service design principles incorporated as key elements. This activity is complemented by the use of sensor and video analytics derived data being used to support city operations, mobility and travel/transport, and smarter buildings management projects in Edinburgh and Inverness.

There are ten data projects across Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the 8th City programme. The recent completion, in March 2022, of data projects in Glasgow and Stirling means that eight projects have now been delivered.

To date, these projects have supported the achievement of 14 Innovative Services and 200 Data Sets Open for Innovation (against targets of 26 and 260 respectively for those data projects). The remaining two projects, in Dundee and Perth, are scheduled to complete in September 2022 and June 2023 respectively.

This 8th City data-related activity supports key aspects of the strategic aims outlined in the 8th City ERDF Strategic Intervention, namely:

- Develop data platforms for 'data driven' solutions to respond to specific challenges facing Scottish cities;
- Use new technologies and data to improve sustainability, resilience and service efficiency across Scottish cities;
- Deliver priorities through innovation, integration of service delivery and improved community engagement; and
- Address urban challenges including issues such as air quality, energy use in buildings, transport, light and waste.

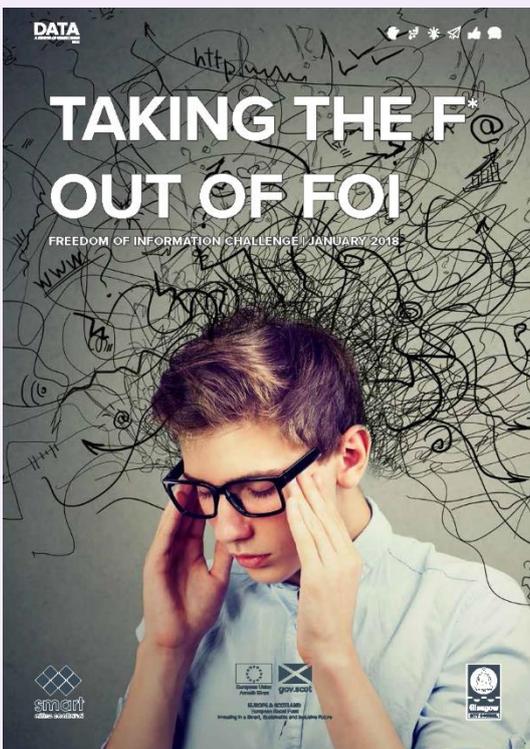
Work is ongoing however to ensure that key learning arising from these data projects is effectively captured and made available for wider sharing. Much of the Phase 1 data activity was informed by the development of the 8th City Data Cluster Steering Group, a networking and decision-making forum comprised of data project leads for each city plus Scottish Government data officers.



Latterly, as part of Phase 2 ERDF funding, the Data Cluster Steering Group had dedicated project manager support. The work of the Data Cluster was subject to independent review and evaluation – with a report on key findings available via the Scottish Cities Alliance [website](#).

Although both the Data Cluster and the project manager post are no longer being delivered via the 8th City programme, the legacy of this data activity remains strong across the seven cities and an exercise is underway to identify how best to take forward recommendations outlined in the report, with an action plan that will take into consideration existing workstreams both within and outside of the 8th City Programme.

For example, work is ongoing to ensure that data, open data, and data analytics is better recognised by cities as part of the development and delivery of improved and effective council services and initiatives. Also, the open data platforms are key enablers in supporting citizens and communities to gain a better understanding of local issues and environments.



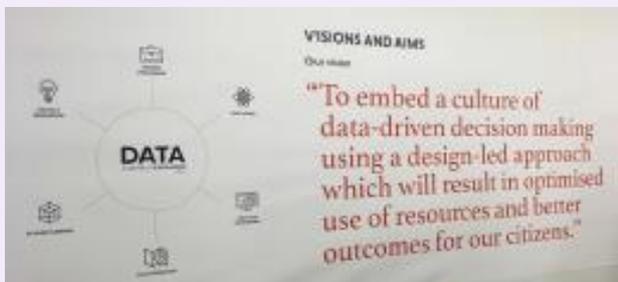
There is a strong sense that 8th City programme partners now know much more about the value of data, have a deeper understanding of its applicability, and have created opportunities for partners, stakeholders, and city residents to have easier access to data sets made open for innovation.

As Scottish cities build on 8th City programme activity and seek to extend and sustain Smart City ambitions and initiatives – for example [Aberdeen – a Sustainable, Smart City](#), [Edinburgh Digital and Smart City Strategy](#), [Digital Glasgow](#), etc. - it is intended that core values implemented via the 8th City data projects are used to inform this work ongoing.

This also includes situations where cities, often via officers working on 8th City projects, are contributors to data-driven initiatives led by other public bodies; examples of this wider engagement include:

Stirling Council’s participation in a [Data Commons](#) project which asks how can we design technologies that go beyond simply making data publicly accessible, and instead open up data to effective, innovative and potentially transformative public use? The University of Stirling is leading on the Data Commons project and bringing together issues around open data, digital platform design and the wider Circular Economy.

Work by a number of cities, with over-arching support and funding via the Scottish Cities Alliance, in the [Carbon Scenario Tool \(CST\) pathfinder project](#) being delivered by the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute. With work progressing over 2020-21, this project is developing local authority capability for decision-making to deliver area-wide strategies for emissions reduction: The CST pathfinder project aims to support Scotland’s city authorities to embed climate impact into city decision-making, in line with local climate targets and helping cities play a leadership role in achieving Scotland’s target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.



At the national level, 8th City programme partners have also participated in work strands being delivered via the [Digital Office for Scottish Local Government](#). This includes the development of a Cross Sector Data Community made up of multiple public sector organisations and which is focusing on a programme to help stakeholders to understand how data can drive transformational change through the innovative use of data and data analytics.

In support of this ambition, work has taken place on Data Maturity assessments, with a number of authorities, including Glasgow City Council, undertaking Scottish Government supported surveys as pilot projects to inform a national approach.

With the recent release of the Audit Scotland Digital Progress in Scottish Local Government Report and the refresh of the Digital Strategy for Scotland, Scottish cities are well placed to build on the collaborative 8th City ERDF programme and to utilise this learning in developing, delivering, and sustaining data and digital solutions to the near-future challenges facing Scottish cities.

**Stephen Birrell, Programme Officer,
8th City PMO**

The Centre for Cities recently hosted a series of [webinars](#) looking at the impact of Covid-19 on Britain's cities. Research findings from their Cities Outlook 2022 review suggests that [those living in cities and large towns have been hit the hardest](#) by Covid-19: The review also showed that the strongest performing city centres pre-pandemic were generally the ones most affected.

As we pass the second anniversary of the Covid-19 pandemic there has been extensive consideration of its impact on all levels of society – from individuals, families, communities, and businesses. Wider discussion, specifically in relation to cities, highlights significant and potentially long-term changes to the way that cities as places to live, work, play, and visit are perceived – including how city operations and services are subsequently planned, developed, and delivered.

This has implications for the delivery of the 8th City programme which seeks to support and sustain collaboration across Scotland's (current) seven cities and to deliver Smart City ambitions – articulated as the integration of data and digital technologies into a strategic approach to sustainability, citizen well-being and economic development.

With grant funding via the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), as part of the 2014-20 ESIF Operational Programme, the 8th City programme initial [guidance](#) notes that:

“The cities working together means that, from inception, new systems are designed to operate between cities and for all cities, enabling connectivity and offering investors an entry point to a collection of cities which are collectively at global scale and skills levels – any city is all the Cities.

The ambition is to make a step change in the use of smart technology for integrated city management not just individually but collectively, so creating the 8th City.”

This focus on agglomeration and concentration of investment and infrastructure can seem at odds with the current, pandemic-driven, shift away from the cities and the opening up of increased opportunities for Scotland's, towns, villages, and extended suburbs.

Scotland's [Agenda for Cities](#) sets out the Scottish Government's strategic framework for its interaction with Scotland's cities. The Agenda for Cities policy was produced in 2011 and revised in 2016; this refresh highlighted the symbiotic nature of the relationship between the cities and the regions outside the cities but ultimately declared that *“when our cities thrive, the rest of Scotland shares the benefit”*.

The ambition is to make a step change in the use of smart technology for integrated city management not just individually but collectively, so creating the 8th City.

In seeking to realise this declaration, 8th City programme partners have embarked upon a collaborative endeavour informed by shared values and the delivery of data and digital technology projects which aim to be ‘open, scalable, replicable, and interoperable’.

This focus on partnerships is rightly recognised for being the exception rather than the norm in terms of local authority approaches to information sharing and joint-working. Indeed, the sustaining of these cross-city collaborations was highlighted as a positive development in the recent interim review of Phase 1 of the 8th City programme (undertaken by EKOS consultants on behalf of Scottish Government).

However, as evidenced by ongoing high levels of home/hybrid working (with ONS data showing that a third of workers had been home working for at least some time during January 2022) and a strong sense that this is the preferred future way to work for very many commuters formerly tied to working arrangements based on city centre offices – the nature of cities and city centres is undergoing a significant shift. This has a particularly impacting on the retail and entertainment / hospitality sectors and has led to many cities clamouring to address these and other challenges.



In some respects, the 8th City programme is able to build on sound governance arrangements and effective partnership working experience should the need arise, post-programme delivery, to identify and build relationships beyond the cities. The wider focus on City Deals and region-based funding initiatives is showing the value of this approach.

Looking ahead, there are also opportunities for Scotland’s cities - including the potential for a new city to be announced in May, as there are seven Scottish bids on the shortlist - to engage with all the other local authorities. This work could be supported via existing national delivery structures such as the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government, Improvement Service, CoSLA, and Scottish Government in sharing the learning around smart city activity and the development of connected cities and regions.

**Stephen Birrell, Programme Officer,
8th City PMO**

The next **8th City Update** will be out in July 2022. Feedback, suggestions, and contributions are welcome from across the 8th City programme. Please contact Stephen Birrell, Programme Officer, 8th City PMO, stephen.birrell@glasgow.gov.uk