

PATHS FOR ALL

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

About Paths for All

Paths for All is the national charity promoting walking for health and the development of multi-use path networks. Paths for All's vision is to create a ***happier, healthier, greener, more active Scotland.***

Paths for All's (PFA) strategic direction is to increase the proportion of the population who are physically active and ensure that there are conducive environments where people live to encourage and sustain this behaviour change. Our work supports the delivery of the National Walking Strategy, community and workplace health walking, path network development and active travel policy development.

Consistency of draft budget proposals to Scottish Government's strategic priorities, relative to the remit of the ICI Committee and Paths for All

Paths for All's specific areas of interest relate to increasing physical activity (particularly through walking for everyday short trips and recreation) and the creation of environments that will encourage more people to walk more often and to be physically active in other ways in Scotland's outdoors. Our comments in this submission will therefore be restricted to those aspects of Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF) that are relevant to the objects of Paths for All and the transport remit of the Infrastructure and Capital Investment (ICI) Committee.

National Indicator	Scotland's Performance
Increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport	Performance maintained
Reduce traffic congestion	Performance maintained
Reduce Scotland's carbon footprint	Performance worsening

The draft budget proposals will not support improved performance of the above Scottish Government priorities.

Compared to 2014-15, funding support for sustainable and active travel in 2015-16 is due to reduce by £4m (14%). This would continue the downward trend for spending on sustainable and active travel.

Real terms spending on sustainable and active travel will account for only 1.2% of the entire transport budget in 2015-16, compared to 1.4% in 2014-15.

This is set against an increase in funding for road building projects of 6.5% (£45m) from the previous year.

It has been accepted for some time that expanding and enhancing the road network will attract more traffic¹ resulting in increased emissions² and, in the absence of demand management measures, increased congestion. This is supported by the most recent Transport Scotland statistical bulletin (August 2014) which reports that from 2012 to 2013 there has been a further 1% increase in road traffic volume and the highest number of new vehicle registrations in 2013 (241,000) since 2007.

More vehicles and more vehicle journeys on Scotland's roads is failing to reduce traffic congestion and Scotland's carbon footprint.

Major road building projects do not generally support local jobs and economies. Active travel infrastructure and promotion initiatives are smaller in scale and tend to source materials and skills from local companies, thus supporting local economies.³ Investment in active travel will realise environmental, economic and health benefits, giving an average benefit to cost return of 13:1⁴. If major road projects give a benefit to cost return of 2:1 they are considered worthwhile⁵.

The Scottish Government's budget allocation for sustainable travel includes such measures as low carbon vehicle promotion, car club development, bus scheme support and grants for shifting freight from road to rail. It is therefore unclear how much of this allocation will be spent on walking and cycling infrastructure (capital and revenue) and promotion. We would encourage the inclusion of a separate budget line for active travel which would ensure that year-on-year investment is clear.

If we are to make a lasting impact on the health of Scotland's population then funding for active travel must be consistent and of a sufficient level to encourage long-term planning for substantive projects that will effect meaningful and continued increases in everyday walking and cycling. While the recent announcements of additional funding for active travel infrastructure and behaviour change are welcome, it is unclear when and if similar support will continue year on year. Although funding for Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS) recovered somewhat from 2013/14 to 2014/15, it is disappointing that there is no increase in the CWSS allocation in the 2015/16 draft budget. This is an important source of support for active travel; and must continue to be protected and enhanced to allow local authorities the leverage to implement active travel initiatives that respond to local need.

Conclusions

Scotland Performs tells us that progress is still not being made towards – reducing Scotland's carbon footprint; increasing the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport; or reducing traffic congestion.

We continue to advocate, therefore, that a different approach is needed if we are to enjoy the higher quality of life that improvement in these areas would undoubtedly bring. We suggest that Scottish Government expenditure should focus on those schemes and initiatives that promote the preventative spend approach and can deliver multiple benefits that will prevent future risks and disadvantage for the people of Scotland. We propose that priority should be given to:

- Spending on active travel in 2015-16 should be increased to 10% of the transport budget. This will help to deliver actions emanating from the National Walking Strategy and the Cycling Action Plan vision of 10% of all trips by bicycle by 2020.
- Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets should continue to be protected (ring-fenced) and increased to enable a much wider and intensive uptake of Smarter Choices measures. Smarter Choices measures can deliver varied interventions based on area or population needs that will promote everyday physical activity and reduce driver journeys.
- Resources should give priority to maintaining and developing existing active travel infrastructure, including pavements and paths – to the highest possible standard.
- The implementation of Core Paths Plans, (under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003) should be prioritised and resourced.
- Adequate funding to deliver the National Planning Framework 3 specifically the national developments of a national walking and cycling network; and Central Scotland Green Network priorities of developing active travel and bringing vacant and derelict land back into use.

Paths for All
30 October 2014

References and notes

1 SACTRA report 1994 - Trunk Roads and the Generation of Traffic; Beyond Transport Infrastructure, L Matson, I Taylor, Sloman and John Elliott for the Countryside Agency and Campaign for the Protection of Rural England.

2 Transport emissions accounted for 21% of Scotland's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2012, second only to energy supply. This is a 0.1% increase from 2011. Transport emissions were dominated by emissions from road transport (89% of all transport emissions in 2012, with 49% of transport emissions from cars alone). There is no improvement in this picture from the year before. With 26% of all driver journeys being less than 2km and over 50% less than 5km there is considerable scope to encourage a shift in travel mode to walking and cycling.

There were 241,000 new vehicles registered in Scotland in 2013, the highest number of new registrations since 2007. The estimated volume of traffic on Scotland's roads was 43.8 billion vehicle kilometres in 2013, an increase of

one per cent on 2012. It is estimated that the **volume of car traffic on major roads (Motorways and A roads) has more than doubled**, from an estimated 9,300 million vehicle kilometres in 1975 to around 22,170 million vehicle kilometres in 2012.

3 Does Reducing Journey Times Improve the Economy – and if not what are the implications for transport investment? Tom Rye & David Scotney, Edinburgh Napier University.

4 In his economic assessment of investment in walking and cycling interventions, from both peer reviewed and grey literature both in the UK and beyond, Dr Adrian Davis found that the average benefit-cost ratio (BCR) is 13:1. For UK interventions only, the average BCR is 19:1.

5 Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance, Transport Scotland.

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