

WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM CYCLING SCOTLAND

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**Introduction**

Cycling Scotland welcomes the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee’s Call for Evidence on the Draft Budget 2013-14 and has produced this report in response.

This paper provides some background and provides some evidence on why further investment is needed in cycling and active travel (also please note that our response is restricted to our areas of expertise – cycling and active travel – which we are funded to deliver on behalf of Transport Scotland).

**Background**

**Cycling Scotland**

Cycling Scotland is the national cycling promotion charity for Scotland. Our programmes and projects focus on supporting our vision of making Scotland a nation of cyclists. Our aim is to establish cycling as an acceptable, attractive and practical lifestyle option. We work together with our partners and stakeholders to increase the number of people cycling and improve the environments they can do so in.

Cycling Scotland has five “Goals”:

- Let everyone know about the role cycling can play in achieving a healthier, more sustainable and fairer Scotland
- Help promote better, greener public spaces where people of all ages and abilities can cycle safely
- Show that cycling is a great way to get around, giving people from all walks of life better access in Scotland’s towns, cities and to the outdoors
- Show that cycling is a safe, effective and economical transport option that’s better for the people of Scotland and for their environment

- Celebrate and promote that there is a type of cycling for everyone; leisure, travel, tourism, sport and play

In addition, we are fully committed to playing a central role in assisting Transport Scotland, its partners and stakeholders to achieve the vision set out in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) in 2010: *“By 2020, 10% of all journeys taken in Scotland will be by bike.”*<sup>1</sup>

### **Cycling Progress in 2012**

Cycling has undergone a sea-change in the last 12 months. From Pedal on Parliament in April 2012 to the successes at the Olympics, Paralympics and Tour de France, cycling has been brought to the forefront not only in the minds of the general public, but also in the media, such as through the Times ‘Cities fit for Cycling’ campaign, and across the political spectrum. For example, all the main parties referenced cycling in their 2011 election manifestos. In addition, in 2012, the SNP further strengthened their commitment to cycling and active travel in their national manifesto applicable to all councils for the local elections. The local elections manifesto included commitments (if the SNP is in power locally) to<sup>2</sup>:

- Have all councils develop a green transport plan to cut carbon and encourage walking, cycling or alternative forms of transport;
- Improve cyclist safety to help encourage a shift to more active travel alternatives; and
- Ensure all Scottish school pupils are offered on-road cycle training to keep them safe.

### **Funding for Cycling and Active Travel**

Revenue and capital funding for cycling comes from two principal sources, the Scottish Government and local authorities’ budgets. Due to the variety of sources of funding (e.g., from other funding sources such as the Climate Change Fund) and the fact that some of the budget lines are for other areas of investment outside of cycling and active travel (e.g., Sustainable and Active Travel for park and ride and electric vehicles) there is no absolute method of calculating total investment in cycling and active travel in Scotland.

The Budget shows a £16m, £35m and £19m commitment to “Sustainable and Active Travel”<sup>3</sup> between 2012/13 to 2014/15, along with a further commitment for active travel<sup>4</sup> and has incorporated active travel as part of the Future Transport Fund<sup>5</sup>, which includes an agreement on a three year funding profile for investment in cycling projects (most of which is capital), of £7.16m, £8.16m and £9.16m over the period 2012/13 to 2014/15<sup>6</sup>.

In addition to the above, the Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS) grant was retained for 2012/13 to 2014/15 to support local authorities, but at a reduced level (average of £6.6m per year compared to £7.5m in 2011/12) of £6.1m in 2012/13, £5.6m in 2013/14 and £8.2m in 2014/15. It is often the case that local authorities use CWSS to match funding from their own budgets or funds from Transport Scotland, channelled through Cycling Scotland or other organisations such as Sustrans, in order to put together a more substantial and meaningful capital budget for active travel.

It is important to note that these figures are not cycling or active travel specific and include funding that can be spent on other modes such as public transport and walking.

Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign, has also conducted research into the amount invested in cycling. Spokes' calculations have been endorsed by the Scottish Parliament Information Service (SPICe) in their March 2012 briefing on cycling<sup>7</sup>. In addition, in the Summer Bulletin 113, Spokes has provided analysis of Scottish Government active travel spending in light of the changes for the budget period from 2012/13 to 2014/15<sup>8</sup> (please note that these calculations are from the summer 2012 and therefore do not take into account any changes in funding levels announced as part of the announcement as part of the Draft Budget 2013-14).

Although the aims, calculations and methodologies differ, when looking at both the Scottish Government's budget commitments to sustainable and active travel and the Spokes calculations on Scottish Government active travel spending, it is clear that investment in cycling and active travel has historically hovered around 1% of the total transport budget per annum, and will continue to do so during this budget period even factoring in recent funding boosts.

Despite the additional £6m funding package and the other recent increases on the initial draft budget, many stakeholders are still concerned that this amount is insufficient to reach the 10% CAPS vision. The change in funding is still not equivalent with the general increase in transport funding overall, as total transport spending in other areas such as motorways and trunk roads has increased significantly. In addition, the Sustainable and Active Travel funding streams are not solely for cycling and walking schemes, with a significant proportion of this funding already earmarked for public transport schemes.

### **Required Funding for Cycling and Active Travel**

As the calculations point to approximately 1% of the transport budget going to sustainable and active travel – of which only a proportion goes directly to cycling and active travel, with the rest to public transport or electric vehicles, etc. – it is difficult to see how this amount of investment will lead to reaching the 10% CAPS target.

To help frame the amount required to reach the 10% CAPS target, the Scottish Government, in the carbon reduction related Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP), proposed £1.32bn for cycling and walking infrastructure from 2011-2022. This equates to an average of £120m per year taken from all sources (not just government) and covers cycling-specific investment as well as active travel investment that benefits both walking and cycling (e.g., 20mph zones, etc.).<sup>9</sup>

In addition, the report on Active Travel by the Association of Directors of Public Health (2010)<sup>10</sup> indicated that 10% of total transport spend should be allocated to active travel (approximately equivalent to £190m-200m per annum).

Philip Darnton, who was Chief Executive of Cycling England at the time, gave evidence to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee in 2010<sup>11</sup>, on the funding required to achieve significant and ongoing growth in cycle use. The evidence concluded that the minimum requirement is £10 per head per annum,

ongoing. Evidence from the English cycle demonstration towns (which invested at least £10 per head for a number of years) suggests that this amount of investment could double cycle use every 3-5 years<sup>12</sup>.

### **Why is investment in cycling and active travel needed?**

#### **A. Cycling and active travel need further funding and investment to meet the CAPS target of 10% of all journeys by bike by 2020**

The £6m funding package for cycling recently announced as part of the Draft Budget 2013/14 is a much welcomed boost and the continuation of the Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets budget will certainly contribute to continued investment in cycling and active travel and expand cycle training opportunities in Scotland.

However, as can be seen from the section on required funding, cycling and active travel are currently not funded sufficiently to meet the targets and to best make use of the preventative spending benefit that active travel brings. To fully realise the CAPS vision of 10% of journeys by bike by 2020 and the benefits this level of cycling will bring, it is imperative to bring the amount of funding specifically for cycling and active travel up to the equivalent of 10% of the transport budget. This level of funding is in line with other countries that have large cycling modal share, such as the Netherlands and Denmark.

#### **B. Consistent funding is needed to address safety concerns**

In addition to increased funding for cycling and active travel, it is important that the funding is used for purposes that will truly address the barriers that people face to cycling and therefore encourage them to get on their bikes more often.

Safety is a theme that has often permeated throughout discussions about cycling. Although cycling is comparably safe to other modes – with lower fatality rates per kilometre travelled in Great Britain compared to pedestrians and motorcyclists<sup>13</sup> – and also provides health benefits that outweigh the injury risks associated with cycling by a factor of approximately 20:1<sup>14</sup>, it is still a key barrier blocking people from taking up cycling. For example, during the consultation for the development of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, it was found that the primary reasons Scots do not cycle more is safety. The results showed that those who do not cycle cite safety concerns as the reason they do not start cycling, and even those who do already cycle state that safety concerns are the main reason they do not cycle more.

If we want Scottish people to feel safer cycling, there needs to be a combination of cycle training and better infrastructure on the ground. In particular, road space needs to be re-allocated to active travel modes and, in taking the lead from the Dutch and Danish who have extremely high levels of cycling, well-designed and well-linked segregated facilities for cyclists should be considered where appropriate, particularly on heavily-trafficked roads so that cycling not only *is* safer, but also *feels* safer, all whilst ensuring cycling links are as direct as possible.

Successful, consistent investment in cycling is not confined to Denmark and the Netherlands, however. Edinburgh provides a great Scottish example where cycling makes up over 7% of the mode share for travel to work and the City of Edinburgh Council has committed to spending 5% of its revenue and capital transport budget on cycling, and to increase this by 1% per year up to 2016/17.

**C. Cycling and active travel contribute to preventative spend**

There is a significant amount of research and best-practice available from the UK and abroad that shows that cycling provides a positive impact on health, the environment, the economy and general well-being. Investment in cycling and active travel now will allow Scotland to reap the many future rewards that the introduction of physical activity to everyday activities, such as travel, can provide.

A report on the analysis of the Cycling Demonstration Towns project led by Cycling England (2010) showed that the schemes delivered a fantastic return on investment, with a benefit:cost ratio (BCR) of 2.6-3.5:1<sup>15</sup>. The BCR range increases to 4.7-6.1 if the benefits could be sustained for 30 years assuming some ongoing investment in behavioural change programmes and training, far higher than the ratio expected of road and rail projects that cost considerably more to implement. To put this into perspective, the 'Active Travel, Active Scotland' report indicates that "*the Forth Replacement Crossing scheme, which is due to cost an approximated £1.45 billion to £1.60 billion, is reported to have a maximum BCR of only 2.03 (which includes wider economic benefits).*"<sup>16</sup>

Of huge importance is the impact on people's health as a result of increased physical activity from cycling and walking. Transform Scotland<sup>17</sup> estimates that moving to a modal share of 13% for cycle trips would save the NHS in Scotland around £2 billion a year by reducing deaths and illness by increasing physical activity. Also, a Department of Health commissioned review of investment in walking and cycling by Dr. Adrian Davis<sup>18</sup> examined the costs and benefits, including health effects, from active travel infrastructure and promotion projects from the UK and abroad. The review found a median BCR of 13:1; and for UK data the median BCR was 19:1.

It has recently been widely reported that the Scottish Government has missed their first target for annual emissions reductions as set under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act, and transport is a key reason this target has been missed. The transport sector (excluding aviation and shipping) accounted for 19% of the total Scottish greenhouse gas emissions in 2010<sup>19</sup>, and, although this is a 1% decrease from 2009, transport's greenhouse gas emissions have actually increased by 2% since the 1990 baseline from which the targets are measured (requiring at least 42% reduction overall on the baseline by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050).

Encouraging more Scots to use a bike or walk instead of a car for short trips can significantly reduce the huge contribution road transport makes to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, as outlined in the Low Carbon Scotland: Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP) published by the Scottish Government.

**D. Cycling and active travel also contribute positively to sustainable economic growth**

Funding for cycling and active travel positively contributes to the economy by driving sustainable economic growth and providing benefits to employment, local small-medium enterprises and community groups. Cycling and active travel are also mediums for providing skills and improving accessibility for those who are excluded and/or facing high levels of deprivation.

Cycling has a positive impact on the economy in general. For example, the London School of Economics (LSE) indicates that cycling brings £2.9b, or approximately

£230 per cyclist, total contribution to the UK economy, with most of this figure generated from retail gains.<sup>20</sup> In addition, in further support of cycling's preventative spending credentials, LSE indicates that cycling saves the economy £128m per year through reductions in absenteeism.

Cycling and active travel also contribute positively to the vitality of local town centres. Research conducted by surveying people in town centres in London<sup>21</sup> supports this and shows that those who cycle tend to visit local town centres more often than car users, and walkers even more often than cyclists. The same research also showed that 21% of respondents said that less traffic would improve town centres – the third highest suggested improvement mentioned.

Research from the United States<sup>22</sup> has shown that bicycle infrastructure creates a total of 11.4 jobs per \$1m spent, whilst road-only (no walking or cycling facilities) infrastructure creates 7.8 jobs per \$1m spent. The research also shows that infrastructure that even just includes an element of cycling or walking leads to more jobs than road-only projects, with road infrastructure incorporating bicycle and pedestrian facilities producing 8.5 jobs per \$1m spent.

Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity, has provided analysis in their response to the I&CI's Call for Evidence in 2011 on the Draft Budget. Sustrans indicates in their response that cycling projects directly contribute to small-medium enterprises and local businesses in Scotland. Sustrans has estimated that from 2008 to 2011, "small civil engineering contractors and DLOs throughout Scotland benefited from a £40m spend via the Sustrans and [Cycling Walking and Safer Streets] funding mechanism."<sup>23</sup>

Finally, through its Cycle Friendly and Sustainable Communities Fund, Cycling Scotland has provided funds to numerous community groups and organisations, often based in areas of deprivation or who work with socially excluded groups/individuals, to provide training in cycling and maintenance skills. This training gives people in excluded and deprived areas access to the ability to build skills which could translate into employment, or to give them the skills to access employment opportunities through bike provision and skills training.

### Recommendations

- To ensure that Scots are equipped with, or able to enhance, their cycling skills through funding to ensure every child (at P6 level) has Bikeability Level 2 on-road training and adults are able to easily and conveniently access training locally.
- To ensure that cycling and active travel is clearly, consistently and specifically funded and is not in direct competition within budget lines with public transport, low-carbon vehicles, etc.
- To ensure that the Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets funding continues in the future and returns back to *at least* its pre-2007/08-2010/11 level of approximately £9m per annum.
- To take advantage of the benefits of cycling as a preventative spending measure and incrementally increase the amount invested specifically on active travel to the equivalent of 10% of the transport budget by 2020.

- To ensure that other Government budget areas that gain from the benefits cycling brings to health, education, environment, sport and tourism provide specific funding allocated to cycling and active travel (to help make up part of the total 10% equivalent of the transport budget).

## References

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