Does Scotland have the right policies (Clean Air for Scotland Strategy), support and incentives in place to adequately tackle air pollution?

No - The Clean Air for Scotland Strategy needs to go beyond compliance with European law by 2020 and ensure that more Low Emission Zones are resourced and supported as soon as possible.

Scotland is breaking the European Ambient Air Quality Directive, which required a legal limit for NO\textsubscript{2} to be met by 2010, with a possible 5 year extension. Four of the six zones in Scotland regularly break limits.

How does the Scottish policy fit with the UK and EU policy on air quality?

With respect to UK policy, there has been sustained criticism at the UK Government’s plans to tackle air pollution. In July 2017, the UK Government released a plan specifically to tackle roadside NO\textsubscript{2} concentrations in the UK, rather than one to tackle air quality as a whole. This plan has been criticised by campaign groups including ClientEarth and Cycling UK, not least because it puts too much onus on local authorities and not enough on central government, and is unlikely to tackle the NO\textsubscript{2} threat “as soon as possible”.

The plans in respect of Scotland are also deeply inadequate: they are only aiming for compliance with European law by 2020 which is not the same as reducing all exposure “as soon as possible”.

It is also important to mention Brexit within this context. EU limits on air pollution will no longer apply or will be weakened because of leaving the EU, therefore Scottish policy must ensure that adequate legal protections are in place for its citizens so they are safeguarded for the future. Cycling UK supports stronger Scottish policy and legislation that would help make sure that the withdrawal from the EU does not compromise protection against harmful levels of air pollution.

Are the policies sufficiently ambitious?

No - Scottish policy needs to be more robust, with further targets and a clear, resourced route map for achieving the targets.

The Scottish Government and its agencies should:
  - Co-ordinate effective action by local authorities and other bodies to tackle air pollution, and support and fund local authorities to create Low Emission Zones in every city;
  - Invest 10% of its transport budget in walking and cycling infrastructure on a sustained basis;
  - Introduce a Bus Act to give local authorities greater powers over bus services;
- Make 20mph the default speed limit in cities;
- Encourage the UK Government to use the tax system to discourage activities that contribute to traffic-related air pollution through, for example, fuel duty and vehicle taxation;
- Produce a national framework for local authority road user charging, which should adopt a presumption in favour of charging for LEZs;
- Regard cycling as a preferable solution to relying on ‘green’ cars and other ‘techno-fixes’, given its wider benefits;
- Support a UK Government nationally co-ordinated scrappage scheme that not only supports the purchase of the cleanest new cars, vans, buses and lorries, but also pedal cycles and cargo bikes, including e-bikes;
- Take full account of the impact of road building on air quality;
- Make it clear in national planning guidance that all development projects should be vetted for the impact they are likely to have on road traffic pollution, and ensure that local planning authorities can easily dismiss applications on air pollution grounds.
- Work to ensure that local authorities recognise air pollution as an urgent public health problem.
- Help fund Scotland’s first Low Emission Zone in 2018 and support the rapid roll out of Low Emission Zones in at least Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen. Using Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology for enforcement, these Zones would initially apply Euro VI emissions standards to buses, lorries, and vans, with the dirtiest taxis and cars included in a later phase. As well as contributing to cleaner air, Low Emission Zones would have a beneficial impact on local economies, and would speed up the transition to electric vehicles on our roads.

**Are the powers and resources of Local Authorities and SEPA to address air pollution adequate?**

No. Currently, once an AQMA has been declared, the local authority must develop and implement an Air Quality Action Plan, but they are not obliged to achieve the objectives because they do not have enough control over all the sources of pollution (e.g. from a road for which Transport Scotland is responsible). This arrangement has meant that direct responsibility for achieving air quality objectives is diffuse.

Under *Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) Regulations*, local authorities in Scotland can carry out emissions testing on vehicles being driven through or about to pass through, an AQMA. Offenders are subject to a fixed penalty fine.

Having analysed all AQMAs and published a map of them (2015), the Institution of Environmental Science highlighted inconsistencies in the approach that local authorities take - e.g. some declare their whole area or a large part of it (making the problem harder to tackle), while others target only a small proportion. Cycling UK believes that local authorities should take a consistent approach to air quality management.

Cycling UK also recommends that local authorities’ powers and resources should include:

- Recognise that tackling air pollution is a key duty;
• Make the most effective use of local air quality management measures available to them (e.g. Ultra Low Emission Zones and Air Quality Management Areas);
• If applicable, all charging LEZs areas’ revenue generated should go towards high quality infrastructure improvements to make non-polluting, active travel more appealing;
• Build strong partnerships between those responsible for transport, air quality and public health to address the harm caused by road transport pollution in the locality, and promote cycling as a healthy and sustainable alternative;
• Promote car-free days and other events as a means of highlighting the need to improve air quality through local action and behaviour change.
• A Bus Act that gives local authorities greater powers over bus services. With the exception of Lothian Buses in Edinburgh, the bus sector in Scotland is in rapid decline, at the expense of people who do not have access to a car or viable walking and cycling options. Local councils should be enabled to regulate fares, plan routes, introduce integrated ticketing systems, and operate entire networks rather than attempting to join up piecemeal services in an incredibly challenging financial climate.
• The Scottish Government should legislate to reduce the default speed limit in urban areas from 30mph to 20mph to support clean air, safe streets and help social cohesion so that local authorities can make it easier to reduce speeds and therefore air pollution, rather than having to go through TROs for each area they wish to reduce speed limits.
• Local authorities should ring-fence 10% of their capital and revenue transport budgets for cycling.

Are the policies and delivery mechanisms (support and incentives) being effectively implemented and successful in addressing the issues?

No. AQMAs have increased from 35 in 2015 to 39 to date (Aug 2017). With worsening air quality contributing towards issues including climate change, public health, inequalities and economic impact, it is imperative that policy and delivery mechanisms for tackling air pollution are improved and their implementation accelerated.

The plans in respect of Scotland are deeply inadequate: the Scottish Government is only aiming for compliance with European law by 2020 which is not the same as reducing all exposure as soon as possible. We need action in Scotland now rather than plans for plans.

Is Scotland on target to have a pilot low emission zone (LEZ) in place by 2018 and should there be more than one LEZ pilot?

As action on tackling air quality is urgent and considered a national emergency, Cycling UK recommends that the LEZ pilot be implemented by 2018 at the very latest and would like to see the pilot expedited. Other key deadlines have been passed without action, such as a National Low Emissions Framework. This was originally due to have been finalised by 2016 and will only be consulted on later this year. We do not want to see LEZ implementation slipping.
Cycling UK agrees that there should be more than one LEZ pilot across Scotland – LEZs have been shown by the UK Government to be the most effective way to tackle air pollution and therefore pilot initiatives should be encouraged in cities with the worst record on air quality: Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow and Dundee.

Is adequate consideration given to air pollution from agriculture?

While pollution from agriculture plays a role in air quality, Scotland’s 39 AQMAs are focused around urban thoroughfares and built up environments that see significant levels of motorised traffic. The most polluted areas in Scotland are in Glasgow, Dundee, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. We would therefore advise that measures to mitigate air pollution from motorised vehicles in urban areas should be delivered as a priority.

Are there conflicts in policies or barriers to successful delivery of the air quality objectives?

Yes. It is clear through a catalogue of evidence that the bulk of air pollution in Scotland is caused by vehicular emissions.

Transport

While Scottish Government transport policy is generally supportive of active travel and reducing reliance on vehicles, the implementation of this is sadly lacking.

For the last decade, cycling rates have stalled at 1-2% of all trips, despite the Scottish Government’s vision for the modal share of cycling to reach 10% of all trips by 2020. Transport Scotland statistics reveal that a key barrier to cycling is lack of safe infrastructure and people fearing sharing road space with cars. Global evidence shows that significant cycling modal shift cannot be achieved by behaviour change alone, and that high quality segregated infrastructure is key to generating modal shift to cycling for everyday trips.

Cycling UK calls for the Scottish Government to allocate an ongoing and sustained 10% investment of the transport budget in safe, dedicated active travel infrastructure to tackle this barrier. In Seville, a widespread rollout of cycling infrastructure, coupled with other demand management measures, contributed to the city slashing its nitrogen dioxide levels in half and seeing a modal share increase of cycling from less than 0.5% to over 6% (and 9% for non-commuter journeys) in less than five years.

Despite Transport Scotland’s own sustainable transport hierarchy stating that walking and cycling should receive the most resource and investment, the current (and historic) Transport Scotland budget has been heavily weighted towards road building. While Cycling UK is pleased to see active travel investment at its highest ever level in Scotland, the level of budget (less than 2%) is woefully inadequate to tackle air pollution via modal shift and the reduction of vehicular journeys.

Promoting active travel and reducing the need to travel by car in the first place should take much higher precedence than road building. Spending large sums on
road building is counterproductive but, despite this, the 2017 transport budget increased trunk road spend by 18% to £967m. While a populist option, building roads will do nothing to reduce emissions and reduce vehicular journeys.

Thanks to Pedal on Parliament for this infographic for spending on infrastructure, it’s clear that spending does not follow Government priorities for clean air.

**Planning**

As all national and local planning policies and local decisions on development make a significant impact on travel patterns and travel choice, Cycling UK believes that Scottish planning policy *as well as implementation* need to promote cycling and other healthy, non-polluting and sustainable options. They can do this, for example, by locating development where it can be easily reached by walking, cycling and public transport, and providing good cycle access to and within new developments.
Climate Change

The draft Climate Change Plan’s focus on transport says almost nothing about active travel, instead relying solely on technology “fixes” in the form of electric vehicles to combat CO2 emissions.

While technological solutions do contribute to reducing CO2 and improving air quality in urban areas where motor vehicle is high, shifting people away from driving to walking and cycling, especially for short trips, makes the best sense as it helps tackle physical inactivity and all the associated health problems it causes at the same time.

Also, while electric cars may help clean up urban air, the impact on the wider environment is compromised unless their power comes from a sustainable, pollutant-free source. Only about 7% of the UK’s energy supply is generated from renewables, while 81.5% still comes from fossil fuels, which are responsible for high levels of pollutants, including NOx, CO, PM, along with the greenhouse gas CO2.

To help tackle NO2 emissions, the UK Government has committed to end the sale of all new conventional petrol and diesel cars/vans by 2040. However, this has been criticised as not soon enough and to date the Scottish Government has not clarified its position on the prohibition of polluting engines.