

CYCLING SCOTLAND

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Introduction

Cycling Scotland welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Scottish Parliament Infrastructure & Capital Investment (I&CI) Committee's call for evidence on the Draft Budget 2014-15.

As the national cycling promotion charity for Scotland, Cycling Scotland understands the importance that budgetary decisions have on supporting projects and programmes established to make cycling more accessible to more people and encourage people to cycle more often, with the aim of reaching the 10% of everyday journeys by bike in Scotland by 2020 (Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 2013).

Cycling Scotland was pleased to hear the announcement by John Swinney, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, of an additional £20 million over two years for cycling as part of the Draft Budget 2014-15. This announcement of an incremental increase of funding for cycling highlights that, in the year since its publication, there has been action on all recommendations that Cycling Scotland made in the Progress Reportⁱ on the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, including the establishment of the Ministerial Leadership Summit on Cycling (held on 24 September 2013) and the 2013 refresh of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland itself. Cycling Scotland also supports the call for clarity in the presentation of figures for cycling and active travel within the Draft Budget and the continuation of the Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets allocation to local authorities (with a large proportion of this being spent specifically on cycling).

The evidence provided below will show that there has been some progress in relation to cycling within the context of the National Performance Framework; however, there is also opportunity to improve, where greater prioritisation – along with consistency and continuity – of funding for cycling within the Draft Budget 2014-15 and beyond is necessary to ensure that the 10% CAPS vision is reached.

“Increase the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport”; **Scottish Government noted performance:** ↔

The Scotland Performs websiteⁱⁱ clearly shows that, in terms of journeys to work made by public or active transport, there has been a decrease since 1999 (30.5% in 1999, 30.1% in 2012). Therefore, the transport, health, environmental, social and economic benefits that could be had from an increase in sustainable and active transport are not being fully realised.

However, it is important to note that there is some incremental progress in that same timeframe with regard to cycling to work. The Scottish Household Survey (SHS) shows that there has been a slight increase in cycling to work (as a usual method of travel to work) from 1.7% in 1999 to 2.0% in 2012. To put this more into perspective, the average for the period from 2009-2012 was 2.18% compared to 1.6% average from 1999-2002. Please also keep in mind that this statistic is for the whole of Scotland. When looking at more local levels of cycling, the situation varies considerably.

At a more local level, there are some local authorities that have a significant proportion of people travelling to work by bike as their 'usual' mode. For example the 2009/10 Local Area Analysis of the SHSⁱⁱⁱ shows that the City of Edinburgh is at 7.3%, Moray is at 4.7%, Dumfries & Galloway is at 4.5% and Aberdeen City is at 3.6%. The SHS also asks about the mode a person uses as a regular alternative to travel to work apart from their usual mode. If this is combined with 'usual' mode, City of Edinburgh is at 10.8%, Moray at 10.8%, Dumfries & Galloway at 7.8% and Aberdeen City at 6.4%, with a further five local authorities over 5%¹.

Through the CAPS Delivery Forum, as well as the Making Cycling Mainstream professional development programme and the National Assessment of Local Authority Cycling Policy - both delivered by Cycling Scotland – there exists support for facilitated communication and learning between local authorities and partners that are taking the lead to ensure that best-practice is shared across Scotland. To lock-in the benefits of any additional capital funding, it is essential that knowledge is shared across delivery partners so that the projects and programmes delivered are strategic, high-quality and safe. In addition, the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places programme has shown that behaviour change initiatives delivered alongside infrastructure improvements lead to increased walking and cycling and reduction in car use^{iv}.

“Reduce traffic congestion”; Scottish Government noted performance: ↔ and “Reduce deaths on Scotland’s roads”; Scottish Government noted performance: ↑ (but note that pedal cycle casualties/KSIs are increasing)

The public has made it clear, as supported by the findings in the consultation for CAPS in 2010 as well as Scottish Household Survey responses, that a large proportion of people are put off cycling due to concerns over safety, and those who currently cycle would cycle even more if conditions were safer.

Although the risks of cycling are very low, particularly compared to the benefits gained from cycling more often, there are some disconcerting emerging trends with regard to pedal cycling casualties. Overall road traffic casualties – including Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) and slight casualties – have decreased substantially in Scotland over the last few decades; however, the most recent Key Reported Road Casualties in Scotland report (2012)

¹ Confidence intervals for 'regular' alternative mode are (at 90%) +/-1.5% for Edinburgh, +/-3.41% for Moray, +/-2.44% for D&G and +/-1.91% for Aberdeen City.

shows that pedal cycling casualties in 2012 have gone against this trend and increased by 9% from 2011. This one year rise is worrying enough, but the trends are also showing an increase in cycling casualties compared to the mid-2000s. The Transport Scotland report shows that, compared to the average figures between 2004-08, there were 25% more seriously injured in 2012, with particularly alarming figures on 'non built-up roads', which saw 34% higher overall pedal cycle casualties in 2012 compared to the 2004-08 average.

Although it does not make an increase in pedal cycle casualties in any way acceptable, it is important to note whether the increase in casualties could be attributed to an increase in cycling volumes. The rate of pedal cycle casualties per million vehicle km travelled in Scotland has generally fallen over the last decade; however, this rate has started to increase recently as well, with a clear rise from 2010 to 2011 (from 2.62 to 2.70 casualties per million vehicle km) and the rate of KSIs is slightly worse with the 2004-08 average around 0.55 KSI per million vehicle km, compared to the 2007-2011 average of 0.56. The traffic volume figures for 2012 have not been released as of yet, but due to the increase in pedal cycle casualties in 2012, there will need to be a significant increase in cycling volumes to show that there has been a fall in casualty rates for pedal cyclists when using this measurement.

The safety statistics and concerns are very important to note, particularly as other strategic transport projects in Scotland have been implemented with a core aim of improving safety; therefore, continued and consistent investment in cycling infrastructure and support programmes such as cycle training and behaviour change campaigns should be prioritised at least for this very same reason, but even more so due to the cross-cutting benefits brought about by increased cycling.

“Reduce Scotland’s carbon footprint”; Scottish Government noted performance: ↓

A switch from carbon-intensive, motorised transport to cycling and walking – or public transport in certain circumstances – makes a positive contribution to lowering carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, particularly for short/local trips. In 2011, 21.5% of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Scotland were from transport, with 49.5% of these transport emissions (or 10.6% of overall GHG emissions) from cars^v.

The majority of journeys in Scotland could be considered 'local' with approximately 77% of journeys under 10km^{vi}, with approximately 60% of journeys under 10km taken in a motor vehicle (either as a driver – 46% - or passenger – 13%)^{vii}. Therefore, a great opportunity for decarbonising the transport network, whilst also enhancing 'place', will be to change a large proportion of these local journeys to cycling and walking, two truly low-emission modes of transport.

Conclusion

The progress against the key recommendations as contained within Cycling Scotland’s Progress Report on CAPS is encouraging. Along with some

definite improvement in cycling levels in certain local areas across Scotland, a supportive landscape of delivery partners has developed including local authorities/regional transport partnerships, stakeholders such as Sustrans and Cycling Scotland, campaign groups such as Spokes in Edinburgh/Lothians, community initiatives and champions such as the Bike Station and Police Scotland and their enforcement work through the Vulnerable Road Users Initiative^{viii}. However, within the context of the National Performance Framework (NPF), there is a signal that some indicators that cycling contributes to are not improving. In some cases, such as carbon emissions and pedal cyclist road deaths/casualties, there is a decline in performance. Greater prioritisation, continuity and consistency of allocations for cycling in this and forthcoming Budgets will support delivery of cycling infrastructure, training, promotion and learning that will positively deliver on a wide range of indicators and outcomes within the NPF and make cycling more accessible to more people.

The additional £20m funding appears to be specifically for capital projects; however, Cycling Scotland notes that support programmes and projects such as Bikeability Scotland training, behaviour change campaigns such as Smarter Choices, Smarter Places and knowledge and information development such as Making Cycling Mainstream and the National Assessment of Local Authority Cycling Policy remain integral in supporting enhancements in policy and infrastructure to deliver an increase in cycling. In particular, Cycling Scotland notes the message of support for cycle training from the last I&CI Committee response to the Draft Budget 2013-14^{ix}. Last year's additional funding from the Scottish Government for cycle training was a key driver in taking delivery of Bikeability Scotland Level 2 training from 31.7% of primary schools in participating local authorities in 2011/12 to 37.6% in 2012/13. Continued centralised funding is important for overcoming barriers for local authorities in expanding delivery of Bikeability Scotland training and supports the cycle training commitments made within CAPS as well.

ⁱ Cycling Scotland. (2012). Progress Report on the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. Accessed from: <http://www.cyclingscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/CAPS-Progress-Report-2012.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Accessed 10 August 2013 from: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/indicator/transport>

ⁱⁱⁱ Scottish Government. (2011). SHS Transport: Local Area Analysis 2009/10

^{iv} Scottish Government. (2013). Going Smarter Final Report.

^v Salisbury, E, Claxton, R, Goodwin, J, Thistlethwaite, G, MacCarthy, J, Pang, Y, Thomson, A and Cardenas, L. (2013). Greenhouse Gas Inventories for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: 1990 - 2011 for Department of Energy and Climate Change, The Scottish Government, The Welsh Government, The Northern Ireland Department of the Environment.

^{vi} Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary 2011. (2012).

^{vii} Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary 2009/10. (2011).

^{viii} Police Scotland. (2013). Accessed from: <http://www.scotland.police.uk/whats-happening/news/2013/july/vulnerable-road-users-initiative>

^{ix} Paras 179-183 in the I&CI Committee's Report on the 2013/14 Budget. Accessed from: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/57606.aspx>