

PATHS FOR ALL

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

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 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.

In real terms, funding support for sustainable and active travel is set to reduce by 17.1% from 2013/14 to 2014/15 and 57.1% from 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Real terms spending on sustainable and active travel will account for only 1.4% of the entire transport budget in 2014/15 and even less at only 0.7% in 2015/16.

This is set against increases in funding for road building projects of 28% across the six years from 2008-09 and 2014-15 and 39.3% across the seven years between 2008-09 and the 2015-16 plans. 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 2013) which reports that from 20011 to 2012 there has been a 0.4% increase in road traffic volume and a 7% increase in new vehicle registrations. More vehicles and more vehicle journeys on Scotland's roads is an indication that current transport spending patterns are working against Scottish Government priorities and must question the report on Scotland Performs of maintained performance for reducing traffic congestion.

Major road building projects do little to support local jobs and economies³ and if they give a benefit to cost return of 2:1 are considered worthwhile⁴.

Investment in active travel will realise environmental, economic and health benefits, giving an average benefit to cost return of 13:1⁵.

As 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 unclear how much of this already minimal allocation will be spent on walking and cycling infrastructure (capital and revenue) and promotion. A separate budget line for active travel would ensure that year-on-year investment is clear to all.

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 announcement of additional funding for cycling to support active travel is welcome, it is unclear when and if similar support will continue year on year. Recovery of funding for Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets (CWSS) is encouraging. CWSS investment must continue to be protected and should be enhanced to allow local authorities the leverage to implement active travel initiatives that respond to local need.

National Indicator	Scotland's Performance
Reduce deaths on Scotland's roads	Performance improving

In 2012 there were 54 pedestrian road deaths, 11 more than in 2011, and nine cyclist deaths, two more than 2011⁶. Within the context of largely static rates of walking (22%) and cycling (1%) as a main mode of travel⁷, this goes against an overall reducing trend for road deaths.

With pedestrian deaths accounting for 31.7% of road fatalities⁶ Scotland does not compare well against our European neighbours – 9.7% in Belgium; 10% in Norway; 10.8% in Romania. Ukraine has the highest pedestrian death rate at 55.7% and Scotland is closely ranked with Lithuania at 31.9%⁸.

Although the fatality rate for other road users is improving this is not the case for pedestrians and cyclists. With the draft budget proposals for continued emphasis on road projects and vehicular prioritisation the Scottish Government's worsening performance with regard to pedestrian and cyclist deaths will not be addressed. Enhanced funding for active travel will improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, including safety benefits.

National Indicator	Scotland's Performance
Increase people's use of Scotland's outdoors	Performance worsening

Increasing walking and cycling for everyday travel and recreation will improve the performance of all indicators above and help to tackle the low levels of physical activity⁹, high levels of obesity¹⁰ and associated health problems, facing the majority of Scots today.

Visits to local parks and open space are increasingly the most popular outdoor recreational destinations¹¹; and walking is by far the most prevalent recreational activity¹². Investment and improvement to pedestrian infrastructure will further encourage more people to walk more often in their local areas¹³. This will help tackle Scotland's considerable physical inactivity problem and obesity epidemic.

Conclusions

Scotland Performs tells us that progress is not being made towards – Reducing Scotland's carbon footprint; Increasing the proportion of journeys to work made by public or active transport; Reducing traffic congestion and Increasing people's use of Scotland's outdoors. Additionally, progress is not being made towards reducing pedestrian and cyclist deaths, and increasing physical activity.

It is clear, 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. Scottish Government expenditure should focus on those schemes and initiatives that can deliver multiple benefits that will prevent future risks and disadvantage for the people of Scotland; and which would result in preventable burdens on the state and the taxpayer. Priority should be given to:

- Spending on active travel should be doubled to £40 million in the 2014-15 budget compared to the current year. While this will help to deliver on the Scottish Government vision of 10% of all trips by bicycle by 2020 it should be remembered that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are not necessarily the same. A distinct allocation for improving the walking environment, e.g. pavement surfaces, lighting, signage etc. will be needed.
- The ring-fenced funding stream for Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets should be protected 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 and are not restricted to single issue delivery, e.g. a path or a promotional campaign, thus achieving more holistic and effective solutions.
- Delivery of actions emanating from the forthcoming National Walking Strategy should be adequately funded in its own right.
- Delivery of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland should be adequately funded.
- Rather than embarking on new road projects that will inevitably result in more traffic, more congestion and poorer air quality resources should be concentrated on maintaining existing 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 proposed 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

14 October 2013

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 21.5% of Scotland's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in 2011, second only to energy supply. Emissions from road transport dominated (88.5%) with 49.5% of transport emissions from cars alone. 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.

The estimated total volume of traffic on Scotland's roads in 2012 was over 43 billion vehicle kilometres – 0.4 per cent more than 2011. In 1993 traffic volume was 35.2 billion vehicle kilometres. 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.

In 2012 there were around 216,000 new vehicle registrations in Scotland, an increase of 7 per cent on 2011, the largest increase in the last ten years.

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 Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance, Transport Scotland.

5 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.

6 Statistical Bulletin Trn / 2013 / 1, 25 June 2013, Key Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2012

7 Statistical Bulletin Series Trn / 2012/ 3, 21 November 2012, Scottish Household Survey: Travel Diary 2011

8 European Status Report on Road Safety: towards safer roads and healthier transport choices, WHO for Europe, 2009

9 Scottish Health Survey 2011 - 61% of adults and 27% of children are failing to meet minimum recommendations for physical activity.

10 Scottish Health Survey 2012 - In 2012 27.1% of adults were obese (10% increase since 1995); 16.8% of children were obese (2.5% increase since 1998).

11 Scottish Recreation Survey 2012, Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 604 - Local parks and open spaces accounted for 41% of outdoor visit destinations in 2012 (9% increase since 2004).

12 Scottish Household Survey 2012 - Fifty-seven per cent of adults had walked for more than 30 minutes as a recreational activity in the previous four weeks, compared with fewer than one-in-five undertaking any other individual activity.

13 Walking & Public Space: Public Opinion Survey 2009, Paths for All and Living Streets – measures that would encourage people to walk more often in their daily lives include well maintained surfaces and streets using quality materials, seats, toilets, safe places to cross roads, slower traffic, signs and locality information, lighting.