

PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Low Carbon Scotland: Meeting our Emissions Reduction Targets 2013 - 2027

Everyone involved in Pedal on Parliament likes cycling for a whole host of different reasons. One of the more common reasons is the fact that cycling is a tried and tested zero emission form of transport. While we have targeted our comments on the Draft Second Report on Proposals and Policies (RPP2) on issues around cycling, we do have four of general concerns.

1. The transport chapter in RPP2 is far less detailed than that in RPP1 and is written in such a way as to make comparisons between the two documents effectively impossible.
2. There is no indication of what, if any, progress has been made in the implementation of any of the proposals or policies set out in RPP1, including the implementation of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland.
3. Emissions reductions in the transport chapter rely far too heavily on expensive, untried technological fixes, e.g. plug-in electric vehicles and hydrogen buses that may well turn out to be the betamax of transport technology. We would like to see far greater focus on walking and cycling, which are zero emission and already have a proven track record in providing cost/benefit figures that no other transport investments can produce.
4. RPP2 is as notable for what it doesn't mention as for what it does. There is no mention of the Scottish Government's huge trunk road building programme which is likely to result in increased road travel, possibly negating any reductions in individual vehicle emissions and making the switch to public and active travel less attractive than it currently is.

Our specific comments on RPP2 are outlined in three sections below:

What we like

Pedal on Parliament welcomes the fact that achieving a modal share for cycling of 10% by 2020 remains a transport milestone RPP2.

What we think could be improved

We are concerned that the Scottish Government's commitment to actually achieving a 10% modal share seems lukewarm at best, given that RPP2 gives it the unusual status of a "vision" rather than an actual target. We think this anomaly could be removed by making the 10% modal share figure a [National Indicator](#). There are strong arguments for doing this as cycling clearly assists in meeting many of the Scottish Government's [National Outcomes](#) which in turn supports the Scottish Government's purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth.

What we think is wrong

Pedal on Parliament's main concerns regarding RPP2 relate to the following paragraphs in the Technical Annex:

“4.4.31 For walking, it is assumed that the package of measures will increase the number of walking trips by 50% with a third of these trips replacing journeys by car by 2022. For cycling, it is assumed that the package of measures achieves at outcome of 10% of all journeys being made by bicycle, with 33% of those additional trips being switches from car journeys.

4.4.32 Investment in cycling and walking infrastructure are based on evidence of intensive cycle programmes in Europe which have involved expenditure in the order of £5 per person per year over a 10 to 15 year period. A further assumption made is that the investment will be front loaded to help change the current culture of very low cycle use and to further increase the number of walking trips.”

These paragraphs indicate that:

- Achieving the RPP2 emissions reduction targets for transport requires the 10% modal share for cycling to be reached
- The Scottish Government assumes that this will happen on the current level of investment
- Investment in active travel is currently being front loaded

Pedal on Parliament is not aware of any organisation involved in transport issues which thinks the 10% modal share for cycling will be achieved on the current level of investment, e.g. the Scottish Parliament's Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee states in its Stage 1 Report on the Draft Scottish Budget 2013/14 that:

“**178.** The Committee remains concerned that funding available to support the implementation of this strategy appears inadequate to meet the 10% target by 2020...If the required level of investment is not made, the Committee believes that there is a very real risk that the 10% target will not be met, and that the Scottish Government would need to consider scaling back on this ambitious objective.”

There is certainly no evidence that the Scottish Government is front-loading investment in active travel, as annual investment remains at the level it was when the current administration entered office in 2007.

Pedal on Parliament is not aware of any “...intensive cycle programmes in Europe which have involved expenditure in the order of £5 per person per year over a 10 to 15 year period” that have resulted in a step change in cycle use. Countries and cities that have successfully achieved 10% plus modal share for cycling have invested considerably more than these amounts to achieve significant modal shift to cycling and walking.

We would like the Scottish Government to provide robust evidence in support of the assertions it has made in the paragraphs highlighted above. We remain concerned that the Scottish Government is not backing up its active travel policies with either financial or political investment. Meeting the emissions reductions targets will take political leadership and a complete rebalancing of the Scottish Government's budget. To date we have not seen either in relation to cycling. We know this can change, as it has in other small northern European countries such as Denmark, and we hope Pedal on Parliament and others have shown how this can be achieved.

**PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT
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