

**Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee**

**Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Bill**

**SUBMISSION FROM Paths for All**

**August 2018**

**General Comments**

We welcome the opportunity to submit our views to the Committee. Our comments are limited to those aspects that have direct relevance to the work and objectives of Paths for All. We would be delighted to offer more information if required.

We welcome the Bill – there is a need for major steps to reduce emissions and limit the effects of climate change. In our area of interest, transport, behaviour change and planning are most relevant. The Bill itself makes technical changes but does not focus on specific policies – this leaves the risk of little action being taken to tackle transport.

We need strong targets on carbon emissions, with specific reference to the need to increase efforts to cut carbon emissions from transport. However, the Climate Change Bill should not be restricted solely to targets and accounting measures, but should include policies to cut our emissions. There is also a need to ensure that future finance budgets are consistent with climate targets

**Sustainable Travel**

Transport became the single biggest source of emissions in Scotland for the first time in 2017, accounting for well over a quarter of emissions. It is the sector that has made least progress in cutting emissions.

Transport measures that we have recommended should be implemented to reduce both climate and air pollution emissions:

- Support and fund local authorities to create Low Emission Zones
- Invest 10% of the transport budget in safe, dedicated walking and cycling infrastructure.
- Improve bus services – walking makes up part of most travel by public transport. Bus use is in decline.
- Legislate to reduce the default speed limit in urban areas from 30mph to 20mph to support clean air, safe streets, reduced traffic and help social cohesion.

The additional health and social benefits associated with increased active travel are very significant. Increased walking and cycling will bring multiple benefits to our health, environment and economy.

Levels of walking for travel are currently stable and not increasing significantly (unlike recreational walking which has increased for the last five years). Making walking, cycling and public transport (usually encompassing walking as well) attractive options is key to encouraging less car use. There will need to be an increase in resources to meet active travel aspirations - to that end we welcome the recent increase in the Scottish Government budget for active travel.

## **Active Travel**

Our vision is for walking and cycling to be the natural choice for short journeys, creating a healthier, socially inclusive, economically vibrant, environmentally friendly Scotland.

Active Travel is about improving quality of life and quality of place. And with over 50% of all driven journeys in Scotland being less than 5km, and 26% less than 2km, there is plenty of scope for achieving a significant shift to walking and cycling as the most sustainable forms of transport.

## **Background**

Paths for All is a Scottish charity founded in 1996. We champion everyday walking as the way to a happier, healthier Scotland. We want to get Scotland walking: everyone, everyday, everywhere.

Our aim is to significantly increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland - whether that's for leisure or walking to work, school, the shops or to a nearby public transport hub. We want to create a happier, healthier Scotland where increased physical activity improves quality of life and wellbeing for all. We work to develop more opportunities and better environments not just for walking, but also for cycling and other activities, to help make Scotland a more active, more prosperous, greener country.

Our work supports the delivery of the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, National Walking Strategy and the Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland, community and workplace health walking, path network development and active travel policy development. We are a partnership organisation with 29 national partners. Our funders include the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Macmillan, The Life Changes Trust and Awards for All.

If we want to get significant numbers of people more active, then walking is of overwhelming importance – as both a recreational activity and as part of everyday life. This is particularly the case if we want to get inactive people more active.

**We have no objections to our comments being made public and would be pleased to discuss any points we have raised.**