

To: Members of the Scottish Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee

[Patrick.Harvie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk), Committee Convener

[Cathy.Peattie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Cathy.Peattie.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

[Rob.Gibson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Rob.Gibson.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

[Charlie.Gordon.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Charlie.Gordon.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

[Alex.Johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Alex.Johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

[Alison.McInnes.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Alison.McInnes.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

[Des.McNulty.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Des.McNulty.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

[Shirley-Anne.Somerville.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Shirley-Anne.Somerville.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

Cc: [ticc.committee@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:ticc.committee@scottish.parliament.uk)

[John.Swinney@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:John.Swinney@scottish.parliament.uk), Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth

[Stewart.Stevenson@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Stewart.Stevenson@scottish.parliament.uk), Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change

17 November 2008

Dear Member of the TICC Committee

## Draft Scottish Budget 2009/10 – Submission from Spokes

We the undersigned, working in the areas respectively of Public Health, Transport and Climate Change, ask that the Committee, in its recommendations on the government's draft budget, include the proposal by Spokes to set up a new £20m Scottish Cycle Projects Fund, paid for through a £20m reduction in the proposed £134m growth in spending on trunk roads and motorways.

The Spokes submission is a well thought-out proposal, with a detailed rationale. We are encouraged to hear that the practicalities of how such a scheme would function have been discussed at a meeting between Spokes and senior government transport officials. Likewise, we understand it has already been debated within your Committee with considerable support expressed by a number of members.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

Transport has to play a full part in emission reductions, as the government's own 2007/8 Climate Change report makes clear. It was encouraging that Communities Minister Stewart Maxwell referred recently to the remarkable Copenhagen target of 50% cycling modal share, and stated that Scotland may have to think along the same lines if it is to reach its climate change emissions target [CAPS conference 7.10.08]. Higher levels of cycle use, and a shift to more local journeys, are also critical in the context of increasing fears over energy security.

### PUBLIC HEALTH

The necessity for increased levels of cycling (and walking) for reasons of public health could not have been made clearer than in the report *Take Action on Active Travel* by the Association of Directors of Public Health and other professional and expert bodies earlier this year [at [www.adph.org.uk](http://www.adph.org.uk)]. That report called for 10% of transport budgets to be spent on active travel, in which context the Spokes proposal, which would raise cycle investment from 1% to still only 2% of total transport expenditure, is modest indeed.

## **TRANSPORT**

The recent book *Traffic Jam* edited by Dr Iain Docherty of Glasgow University and Prof Jon Shaw, has shown clearly the failure in recent years of policies based largely on providing for ever-increasing motorised travel. Continuing expansion of the trunk road network is likely to result in ever more such problems. In contrast, provision of a safe and welcoming cycle infrastructure (often also very beneficial to walking trips) will encourage local journeys, support local communities, and help combat congestion.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the proposed Cycle Projects Fund would be a really significant step by the Scottish government towards the levels of policy and expenditure commitment seen in other small European nations such as Norway and Denmark, who have clearly demonstrated that cycle modal share can be significantly increased through such means. It would thereby contribute to Scotland's priorities in the areas of climate change, energy security, public health, and local transport and accessibility.

Finally, we emphasise that the Spokes proposal should be seen as the first stage of a continuing and growing shift towards sustainable, local and active travel. In particular, we hope to see the government moving rapidly and enthusiastically in future years towards the above Association of Directors of Public Health target of 10% of transport expenditure being devoted to active travel.

Yours Sincerely

**Raj Bhopal CBE**, Bruce and John Usher Professor of Public Health, and Honorary Consultant in Public Health Medicine, University of Edinburgh. Raj.BhopalATed.ac.uk

**Tom Rye**, Professor of Transport Policy and Mobility Management, Napier University. Contributor to *Traffic Jam* [above] [www.policypress.org.uk](http://www.policypress.org.uk). T.RyeATnapier.ac.uk.

**Dr David Reay**, Lecturer in Carbon Management, University of Edinburgh. Author of *Climate Change Begins at Home* and editor of the leading climate change science website *Greenhouse Gas Online*, [www.ghgonline.org](http://www.ghgonline.org). David.ReayATed.ac.uk.

Also signed by **Dr Dave du Feu** (primary author) on behalf of Spokes.

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The full Spokes submission on the Scottish Government's draft budget 2009/10 is at [www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk) – downloads – submissions – Scottish government.

The direct link is <http://www.spokes.org.uk/modules.php?op=modload&name=DownloadsPlus&file=index&req=viewdownload&cid=15&orderby=dateD>