

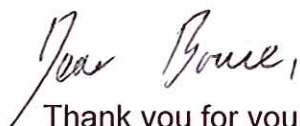
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28 January 2015



Thank you for your email of 22 December 2014 enclosing an email from your constituent, Andrew Abbess, 29 Dalmorglen Park, Stirling, FK7 9JL, regarding cycling investment levels.

Firstly, I agree with your constituent that cycling can bring significant health benefits to individuals and should be a healthy alternative to driving for cyclists of all ages and abilities. And, of course, the benefits to local communities of cycling, walking and active travel are not only confined to health and wellbeing. It also has a positive effect on local economies and businesses such as shops and hotels through increased tourism, day visitors and additional passing trade that an integrated cycle commuter route brings.

I would also like to reassure your constituent that this Scottish Government is fully committed to actively working in partnerships with our stakeholders such as Sustrans Scotland, Cycling Scotland and local authorities, to ensure infrastructure is delivered to the highest standard to make cycling a safe and realistic travel choice for cyclists of all ages and abilities.

The most recent announcement of consequentials available to the Scottish Government, around £200m, allocated £125m to the National Health Service. Further allocations on the remainder of that funding will be made during the Draft Budget Bill debate.

My predecessor Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, said on a number of occasions that when funding does become available he would make the strongest case for that funding to be allocated to cycling. This is a pledge I will also stand by. As an example of this commitment, in June 2014 additional funding of £10 million for various sustainable transport measures in 2014/15 was made available from savings from the Queensferry Crossing project. Of this funding, £7 million was allocated to cycling and walking infrastructure projects, enabling us to significantly expand the Community Links programme administered by Sustrans Scotland.