



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON CYCLING

JOHN SWINNEY MSP, FINANCE SECRETARY
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Dear Mr Swinney,

We are writing on behalf of the Cross Party Cycling Group, following the CPCG meeting on 26th January which discussed the 16/17 draft budget.

In particular we urge you to adopt the proposal¹ by Spokes that 1% of the £820m trunk roads budget line should be transferred to active travel (in addition to the £39m currently planned).

We recognise that active travel funding was doubled to roughly 2% of transport spending in 14/15 and remains at that record level in the 16/17 budget. However, as you will be fully aware, the CPCG supports the call, initiated by the Association of Directors of Public Health and endorsed by many Scottish organisations, for 10% of transport budgets to be used for active travel and we hope to see a move towards this in future budgets.

We are pleased that the present Parliament has seen growing interest by many local authorities in increasing cycle use. We are particularly delighted with the number and superb quality of bids (25 bids, from 24 authorities) received by Sustrans for the Community Links Plus competition recently announced by the Transport Minister, which aims to construct one, two or perhaps three 'visionary' schemes.

We are however very concerned at two aspects of the cycle funding proposed for 16/17. **First**, the Community Links Plus project is to be funded by taking money from the existing very successful basic Community Links scheme. Thus whilst one or two local authorities, winners in the competition, will gain substantial additional funding, the 30 or so others will have a much smaller pot to which to bid. **Second** is the 25% cut in CWSS funding, this being the most basic cycle funding, and widely used by local authorities to obtain 50/50 match funds from outside sources.

These two concerns mean that most councils in Scotland are likely to see reduced investment in cycling and walking – just at the time when their skills, experience and ambitions are growing. This is absolutely the wrong message when the government has an ambition for 10% of all trips to be by bike in 2020, an ambition embedded in the government's climate action programme.

The proposal to transfer 1% of the £820m trunk roads budget, as explained in the referenced document below, would overcome both the above concerns, enabling the momentum which has built up in cycling provision, expertise and ambition to be maintained and strengthened in the coming year. A shift from trunk roads to cycling, even of this small percentage, would also be a public indication of the government's commitment to sustainable travel, to public health and to climate targets.

We urge you to adopt this measure in the final budget.

1 <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/1512-Spokes-SP-ICI-15-16-Budget-submission.pdf>

Yours Sincerely

Sarah Boyack MSP

Jim Eadie MSP

Claudia Beamish MSP

Alison Johnstone MSP

On behalf of

Cross Party Cycling Group