



27 September 2016

Derek Mackay MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

We, the undersigned, urge the Scottish Government to commit a minimum of 10% of the overall transport budget to support walking and cycling by 2020, with a significant step in that direction in the next budget. This will help deliver the commitment to boost cycle use to 10% of journeys by 2020 as contained in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland and reaffirmed in the SNP manifesto and Programme for Government.

If achieved, this laudable commitment will cut carbon dioxide from the transport sector, benefit the economy, tackle toxic air pollution, contribute to healthier lifestyles, and reduce congestion, thereby benefiting the many who do need to rely on buses and cars.

However, that aim will be undeliverable without a major increase in spending. Transport Scotland has today published statistics which show that in 2015, 1.2% of all journeys were cycled, a decrease from 2014 and well below the 2020 ambition of 10%.¹ The figure has remained around 1% since 2003.

According to Transport Scotland statistics, many of the barriers to cycling are to do with concerns about traffic, safety, and infrastructure.² Investment in good

¹ Transport Scotland, 'Transport and Travel in Scotland 2015' (27 September 2016), Table SUM1

² As above, Table 26

quality infrastructure, which provides people with safe and convenient routes to work, can overcome these barriers.

Edinburgh is testament to the fact that investment in cycling yields results. In 2012, Edinburgh City Council committed to spend 5% of its transport budget to support delivery of its Active Travel Action Plan. It has increased that proportion by 1% annually. For 2016/17, 9% of the transport budget is allocated to walking and cycling. There is clear evidence that this commitment is working: the proportion of Edinburgh residents cycling as their main mode of travel to work has increased from approximately 4% to 11.8% over the last 10 years, and the proportion of all trips that are cycled is now 4.2%.³

Benefits of increased cycle use

- **Reduced carbon emissions from the transport sector:** In 2013, transport emissions accounted for 28% of Scottish CO₂ emissions.⁴ Of this, cars are the largest source, accounting for 44%.⁵ Lord Deben of the UK Committee on Climate Change recently told the Scottish Parliament that the “real problem is the number of small journeys in cars in our big cities”. Transport Scotland statistics confirm this: over 50% of car journeys in 2015 were for distances under 5km.⁶ Many of these short trips could be undertaken by cycling or walking if people had safe, convenient and reliable infrastructure.⁷
- **A boost to the economy:** Spending on active travel is highly cost effective. In assessing a sample of Community Links schemes, Sustrans Scotland found that for each £1 spent, between £18.6 and £90.5 was delivered in benefits over 30 years.⁸ Sustrans Scotland also estimated that health benefits of walking and cycling on the National Cycle Network were £229 million and £92 million respectively in 2015 (estimated using the World Health Organisation’s Health Economic Assessment Tool).⁹ A UK Government Department of Transport review of active travel schemes found a ‘highly significant’ mean benefit to cost ratio of £6.28 to £1.¹⁰
- **Improved air quality:** Air pollution, mainly caused by car traffic, is causing a public health emergency in Scotland. Public Health England calculates that an equivalent of 2000 deaths each year are attributable to fine particle air pollution in Scotland: that’s more than ten times the number of deaths caused by road traffic crashes.¹¹ Long term exposure to air pollution at levels seen in Scotland can increase the risk of lung cancer, heart attacks, or strokes. It can stunt foetal development and children’s lung growth and exacerbate health inequalities.¹²

³ Transport Scotland, Scottish Transport Statistics No 34 (2015), p 17

⁴ UK Committee on Climate Change, “Reducing emissions in Scotland: 2016 Progress Report” (Sept 2016), p 63

⁵ As above

⁶ Transport Scotland, ‘Transport and Travel in Scotland 2015’ (27 September 2016), Table TD4a

⁷ Transport and Travel in Scotland 2014 (25 Aug 2015), Table TD4a, p 48

⁸ Sustrans Scotland, Report on the outcomes of the 2012-2015 Grant to Sustrans from the Scottish Government. Third annual report, Aug 2015

⁹ As above

¹⁰ Department for Transport, “Claiming the Health Dividend: A summary and discussion of value for money estimates from studies of investment in walking and cycling” (2014)

¹¹ Public Health England, “Estimating Local Mortality Burdens associated with Particulate Air Pollution” (April 2014)

¹² “Ambient air pollution and low birthweight: a European cohort study (ESCAPE)” The Lancet Respiratory Medicine, Volume 1, Issue 9, Pages 695 - 704, (Nov 2013), British Medical Journal, “Long term exposure to ambient air pollution

Many parts of Scotland, including the centre of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth and Inverness continue to have illegal levels of air pollution in breach of safety standards which were due to have been met years ago.¹³ The Scottish Government's "Cleaner Air for Scotland" Strategy reaffirms the need for 10% of trips to be made by bike in order to achieve compliance with European air quality limits by 2020.

- **Reduced congestion (and therefore, economic savings):** 12.5% of all journeys were delayed by traffic congestion in 2015.¹⁴ This causes a significant loss to the economy, and also impacts on people with mobility disabilities who have to rely on cars or public transport to travel.
- **Healthier people:** Physical inactivity costs the NHS in Scotland £94 million annually.¹⁵ Investment in safe infrastructure will allow more people to commute to work and school by active travel, enabling them to build physical activity into their daily lives.

In conclusion, we urge you to support our call via the spending review and give Scotland the best chance of achieving its aim of 10% of all trips to be cycled by 2020.

Signed:

Irene Johnstone, Head of **British Lung Foundation Scotland & NI**
Susan Jeynes, Car Club Programme Manager, **Carplus Bikeplus Scotland**
Mark O'Donnell, Chief Executive, **Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland**
Tam Baillie, **The Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland**
Paul Timms, Chair, **Cycling UK Scotland**
Suzanne Forup, Head of Development Scotland, **Cycling UK**
Kim Harding, Director, **Edinburgh Festival of Cycling**
Dr Richard Dixon, Director, **Friends of the Earth Scotland**
Gregory Chauvet, Managing Director, **Glasgow Bike Station**
Lorraine Tulloch, Programme Lead, **Obesity Action Scotland**
Sally Hinchcliffe, Campaigner, **Pedal on Parliament**
Dave du Feu, Campaigner, **Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign**
Tom Ballantine, Chair, **Stop Climate Chaos Scotland**
Colin Howden, Director, **Transform Scotland**

cc. Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for Transport and the Islands

and incidence of acute coronary events: prospective cohort study and meta-analysis in 11 European cohorts from the ESCAPE Project" (Jan 2014) BMJ 2014;348:f7412

¹³ The Scottish Standards are set out in the Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000, the Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2002 & The Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016

¹⁴ Transport Scotland, "Transport and Travel in Scotland 2015" (27 Sept 2016), p 4

¹⁵ Sustrans, "Physical activity and health - facts and figures"