

Scottish Parliament 20mph Bill proposal  
(Mark Ruskell MSP, Private Member; 2017)

Spokes response to [official consultation](#)

The responses were made as part of an online Survey. I copied each Question and the Response I submitted to the Survey.

*1 Why we **fully support the Bill**:*

Many excellent reasons are given in the Bill, but we would highlight that the Bill would reduce speeds and consequently danger; would save lives and reduce casualties; would cut air pollution; and would encourage more people to walk and cycle in our towns and cities. To elaborate on this latter a little: currently our roads are dominated by moving vehicles; non-motorised users are intimidated, even though most motorists would not be aware of this. The dominant attitude is, 'might is right'. In our civilised society, we are already doing much to prove that might is NOT right (e.g. to ensure equal rights for women; to stop racism; the whole 'equality' agenda). Making the roads fairer for all can be seen as part of this agenda.

It's time for a re-think of our relationship with the car. All road users should feel comfortable with their daily travel.

Vehicles already impose very high costs on society and the majority of these are externalised, i.e. the motorist does not pay for them - examples include climate change, air pollution, sedentary (unhealthy) life-style, land-take (whether moving or stationary), the costs of crashes and casualties.

The current intimidation and dominance of the road network, mainly because of speed, is one of these externalised costs.

*2 Could the aims be better delivered in another way?*

No.

The Bill explains why. It is easier and cheaper to have a default speed limit nationally for towns and cities. Local Authorities can always make exceptions. If done piecemeal, TROs are time-consuming and expensive; extra signage is expensive; some authorities will do it, others won't.

*3 Main advantages:*

As outlined in Bill and in (1) above

#### *4 Main disadvantages:*

The Bill would have to be supported by education (especially of motorists) and enforcement (ditto). The 3 'E's of transport are engineering, education and enforcement. Engineering might be needed in some cases - speed humps and the like - where compliance is not forthcoming. Indeed it should perhaps be made clear that the Government will be prepared to introduce such measures if motorists don't co-operate.

Education, both before the measures are introduced, and after, is essential, and a substantial budget should be set aside for this.

Our experience of 20mph in Edinburgh is that by and large the widespread introduction of 20mph has made very little impact on traffic speeds, though this is from observation - no evidence is yet available (the trial showed some reduction). There has been very little by way of education, which helps explain why so little change is observed. Motorists just don't 'get' it; they don't understand the impacts of their speeds on vulnerable road users.

Enforcement is also essential. Police Scotland must be 'on board', and must be given resources to carry it out. The Edinburgh experience indicates there has been too little enforcement. Enforcement will only be necessary until motorists get the message; it must be immediate after the introduction, and it must be visible.

#### *5 What other measures needed to maximise compliance?*

An education campaign including TV advertising and use of social media. Enforcement must be immediate and widespread and visible, as noted in (4) above.

#### *6 Financial impact on 1 SG; 2 LAs; 3 motorists; 4 Other*

The Bill has some useful material here. Likely costs/benefits are difficult to assess, and some will be in departments other than transport, e.g. Health.

1 Government: start-up costs will be off-set by gains from fewer casualties, better health both for motorists (calmer lifestyle) and non-motorised road users - more walking and cycling; better health for all through less air pollution. Overall the benefits will outweigh the costs, possibly by significant amounts depending on how effective the education/enforcement aspects are.

2 Local Authorities: ditto. One might add less wear-and-tear on the roads from slower speeds, fewer air particles from smoother driving, gentler braking etc

3 Motorists: similar. Better health, better lifestyle, less fuel consumption, less air pollution

4 Other: mindful of earlier remarks about road speed being an equalities issue, our whole society would benefit from slower speeds - a fairer Scotland. One might mention tourists and visitors - more would be attracted to a calmer, less car-dominated, less noisy environment - "I came to Scotland and it was a real tonic!"

#### *7 Any other benefits?*

As mentioned in (6), a calmer road network in towns and cities will attract more tourists; will result in a fairer Scotland; could result in a healthier Scotland, as more switch to active travel. And we have an ageing population, who will find it harder to stay active unless speeds are reduced. That has huge implications for the health and care services; we have to do everything possible to enable the old to remain independent.

*8 Impact of Bill on Protected Groups:*

Very positive for disability, age (the young and the old), the pregnant and the maternal. Crossing the road is a nightmare for these groups, and it's all to do with speed and dominance/intimidation by the motorist.

*9 Could any neg impacts be minimised/avoided?*

We foresee no negative impacts - they are all positive

*10 Can Bill be delivered sustainably ie without future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?*

Yes.

The economic, social and environmental benefits, as outlined above and in the Bill itself, all heavily outweigh any costs, such as the start-up costs.

*11 Any other comments?*

Use the Edinburgh experience to do it better

**Useful Quotes from the Bill:**

“The perceived dangers of cycling on the road or letting children walk to school will be reduced and more people should feel able to make walking and cycling a daily part of their lives. People will feel more confident in exploring their local services and greenspaces on foot or by bike, and reduced air pollution will reduce the risks of heart and lung disease.

Vulnerable road users will also feel safer as cars will be passing at lower speeds. At 20mph, motorists will be able to spot children as well as older and disabled people earlier and have more time to react to their presence on the road. “

*Bill, p.19*

“Effective social marketing and engagement with motorists is essential to ensure 20mph limits are successful.

We would recommend that a national 20mph awareness campaign is rolled out by the Scottish Government to coincide with the transition to a default 20mph limit, as police enforcement will likely remain at current levels. As mentioned above, non-compliance with 20mph limits is a recognised problem in schemes already underway across the UK. In 2015, 20mph roads had the lowest level of speed limit compliance in the UK, across all vehicle types – for example, 84% of cars exceeded the limit (compared with 52% on 30mph roads).<sup>59</sup> In Bristol, 9 out of 10 drivers were caught breaking the new 20mph speed limit.<sup>60</sup> Enforcement of new 20mph limits will be dependent on effective education and awareness campaigns to effect a cultural change where 20mph becomes the new norm.”

*Bill, pp20-21*

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