

On Behalf Of Alison.Johnstone.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

Sent: 01 February 2016 14:23

To: Undisclosed recipients:

Subject: Cycling budget

Many thanks for your email. I very much share your concern that the draft 2016/17 budget indicates spending on trunk roads will increase while support for public transport and active travel shrinks.

To honour climate change commitments made in Paris, and for the sake of bringing our infrastructure into line with that of many of our European cousins, we must take a different approach to transport in general, and active travel in particular.

The Scottish Green Party has a longstanding commitment to spend at least 10% of Scotland's transport budget on cycling and walking infrastructure, to put us on a course that would bring us up to the standard seen in many European countries where cycling rates are notably higher than our own. As Co-convenor of the Cross Party Group on Cycling, I frequently press the Transport Minister and the Finance Secretary to scale up their ambition.

It is simply unacceptable that in a transport spending of around £2 billion each year, cycle funding makes up less than 2% of this total. Since 2011/12, the trunk roads budget has increased by 36%, and yet cycle funding has plateaued, despite widespread concern that the Scottish Government is not on track to meet its 2020 target of 10% of journeys by bike.

Earlier in this term I lodged an amendment to a Government debate motion on Active Travel (a copy is included below) and I was pleased that it was selected for debate. My amendment was supported by Labour but not SNP MSPs. The full report of the debate can be found [here](#). More recently I asked a question about how the Scottish Government works with local authorities to address dangerously high air pollution levels, given that increasing the levels of cycling and walking is among the vital steps to take. You can read more about this [here](#).

In the time since I was elected as an MSP in 2011, it has been fantastic to receive such strong support from constituents on active travel issues.

Part of our ambition must be to deliver a transport network that can best serve the needs of the public in their daily lives, and I believe that an integrated approach to walking, cycling, and public transport infrastructure is the way forward. Recent research demonstrates a link between air pollution and heart disease and makes this a matter of extreme urgency.

Increased capacity and flexibility for the carriage of bicycles and other larger items is long overdue in my opinion, so it is a frustration to see missed opportunities for creating a more ambitious and user-friendly transport network, such as when new rolling stock is under consideration. Active methods of travel, such as cycling, should be an option for people taking longer journeys that require additional means of transport, and an integrated approach to transport policy is vital.

Please be assured that I am determined to do all I can to improve cycle safety and provision in the Lothian Region and across Scotland, and encourage more people to choose to take the healthy, active and environmentally-friendly option of cycling.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me in the future if I can be of assistance, or if you have any specific ideas or concerns about cycling in Scotland.

Best wishes,

@AlisonJohnstone <http://alisonjohnstonemsp.com>