

"If we don't take action the collapse of our civilisations is on the horizon"

Sir David Attenborough, 3 December 2018

Only a person with the stature of Sir David Attenborough could make such a stark claim and even hope for the public to hear. Yet that is what science tells us, when we do listen.

For many people 2018 is the year when climate change became a tangible reality, with an unending litany of wildfires, flood, storm, unseasonable heat and frequent breaking of weather records. Wildfires cost 100 lives in both Greece and the USA, floods killed over 1000 in India alone and pre-storm evacuations of 100,000s were increasingly common, not least in the USA.

Already in 2019, climate disruption brought Australia a record *average* January temperature over 30°C, peaking at nearly 50°; whilst parts of the US were at minus 50°.

Transport is one of the most intractable contributors to emissions. In Scotland most carbon emission sources are falling - but transport emissions continue to rise, not helped by Scottish Government policies to expand trunk road capacity and encourage air travel.

Within transport, **cycling** is one area of hope, where serious political commitment, investment, and demand-management measures to reduce road and air travel could make a real difference. Indeed, half of car trips are under 3 miles, i.e. no more than 10-20 minutes by bike.

This Bulletin supplement contains a feature on climate, transport and cycling from the sustainable transport alliance, Transform Scotland, statements from the main political parties, and useful contacts. There's also a great chance to hear/discuss the issues at our public meeting.

SOURCES/RESOURCES

Scientific background – see the research papers linked in Guardian articles on p5. Also the IPCC site www.ipcc.ch.

Transform Scotland transformscotland.org.uk Scotland's Sustainable Transport Alliance – see overleaf

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland www.stopclimatechaos.scot Coalition of over 40 faith, environmental and other groups, providing high quality research, lobbying and campaigning

Friends of the Earth Scotland foe.scot – campaigning on toxic and climate emissions. Major joint campaign with SCCS on the Climate Bill foe.scot/campaign/climate-action

Fridays For The Future [#schoolstrike4climate](https://twitter.com/schoolstrike4climate) (twitter) international school pupils' campaign inspired by 16-year-old [@GretaThunberg](https://twitter.com/GretaThunberg), many 10,000s now striking on Fridays.



#Fridays4Future Climate protest at Scottish Parliament

2050 Climate Group 2050.scot For and by young adults, to develop climate leadership knowledge and skills.

Extinction Rebellion [Facebook-xrEdinburgh](https://facebook-xrEdinburgh) international non-violent direct action climate campaign [recently backed by 100 opinion leaders in a [letter to The Guardian](https://letter.to.theguardian), 9.12.18]

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- ◆ Join/support whichever you like of the groups above.
- ◆ Email or visit your MSPs www.parliament.scot/msps.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

The Scottish and UK governments see cycling policy in a bubble unaffected by other policies which boost motor transport. There is a **10% cycle use target** (or "vision") but no parallel **target to cut car use**. Yet the reality is...

- ◆ More traffic makes roads more hostile, especially rural roads where speeds are high. In towns, pollution and congestion rise, and it becomes harder to cross the road.
- ◆ Motorisation disperses shops, workplaces and leisure, so fewer people can make everyday trips by foot or bike – reducing the incentive even to own a bike.

◆ Cash used for road building is cash not used elsewhere. Yet **Scotland** allocates £3bn each to dual the A9 and A96 (parallel railways remain single). However a hopeful sign is the decision to give councils *premises parking levy powers* – but this needs to cover all non-residential spaces [p5].

At **UK level** £30bn *vehicle excise duty* has been moved from general spending to road expansion, whilst the 8-year *fuel duty freeze** has already meant some 5m tons more CO₂, a trend to larger vehicles/SUVs and falling bus use.

* [The Unintended Consequences of Freezing Fuel Duty](https://theunintendedconsequencesoffreezingfuel.com), by Prof David Begg [search for *unintended* at greenerjourneys.com].

CLIMATE, TRANSPORT & CYCLING policies from the political parties

We asked the Transport Spokespersons from the parties represented in the Holyrood Parliament to send us a **150-word statement of their party's policies in advance of our public meeting on Climate, Transport and Cycling**.

Our email was sent on January 19, giving parties 3 weeks before the Bulletin went to the printer. We were impressed that the Conservatives, Greens and Labour each sent us almost exactly 150 words – they obviously thought carefully!!

SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVES - Jamie Greene MSP

The Scottish Conservatives are committed to reducing emissions and improving air quality. We believe that sustainable travel is key to reducing transport emissions, but recognise that a shift to greener and more active travel requires bold thinking, innovation, and co-operation.

We have set out a range of measures to incentivise owning an electric vehicle. These include the use of bus and taxi lanes, free town centre parking, and establishing a fund to expand charging points in small towns and rural areas.

Encouraging cycling and walking will reduce emissions while improving public health. We have pledged to work with local authorities and third sector partners to improve our cycle path network. We would invest an additional £5 million in active travel to create a designated cycle way in each of Scotland's major cities to make cycling a feasible alternative to car journeys, and support safe routes to work and school.

SCOTTISH GREENS - John Finnie MSP

Greens are calling for a Climate Emergency Bill, which recognises the clear threat climate change poses. The Scottish Government's current Climate Change Bill fails to recognise the urgency required to deal with this serious threat.

The Scottish Government must change its transport priorities, ensuring that investment in high quality, reasonably priced public transport, and segregated active travel routes are prioritised.

Bus patronage has been falling year on year, yet the Transport Bill fails to propose radical plans needed to regulate services and empower local authorities.

Ministers are also failing on active travel, with the 10% of everyday journeys by bike target set to be missed, with the actual

figure around 3-4%. The recent increase in investment is welcome, but this must be targeted at segregated routes. Pedestrians should also be prioritised at crossings.

Encouraging more people out of their cars will benefit society by improving our health and our environment.

SCOTTISH LABOUR - Colin Smyth MSP

Labour believes the Scottish Government's climate change targets lack ambition and we pledge to amend the Climate Change Bill to include a target of net zero emissions by 2050, at the latest.

This will need modal shift in transport from cars to public transport and active travel. Taking public transport back into public hands will give us the powers to make environmental sustainability in transport a priority and ensure profits are invested in greener technology, more public transport and active travel initiatives and fairer fares, not in shareholders' dividends.

Funding for active travel must be protected at all levels. That's why Labour opposes the Scottish Government's plans for a £230m real terms cut in council budgets, which will mean local cuts to active travel.

But protecting sustainable travel must cut across all policy areas from planning to infrastructure. Only a joined-up approach will deliver our transport and environmental aims across Government.

SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS - Mike Rumbles MSP

Note: we were sent 178 words so cut it to 150 as fairly as possible.

Cycling is important for improving the health of the nation, air quality in our towns and cities and helping to protect our natural environment.

The Scottish Liberal Democrats support the goal of increasing the number of journeys by bicycle to 10% of all journeys in Scotland. Unfortunately, the Scottish Government has been unsuccessful in achieving this aim and the figure has stagnated at around 2%.

That is why the Scottish Liberal Democrats tabled an amendment to the transport budget for 2018/19, to ensure that every school pupil in Scotland has access to cycle proficiency training. This effectively doubled the active travel budget for this financial year to £80 million.

We want to see that continue. In 2017 we were delighted that the transport minister agreed to our proposal to double the number of available berths for bicycles on-board the new high speed Scotrail trains that entered service last year.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY – Michael Matheson MSP

Spokes note: We emailed both the Ministerial and the MSP addresses. An acknowledgement was received but, by the time we went to press, no statement. If a statement is received later we will publish all 5 statements on our website at the end of the article which introduces this Spokes Bulletin.



Pedal on Parliament

photo: Sara Simmons

Spring Public Meeting : all welcome : Weds 20 March

Climate, Transport and Cycling

- ◆ "If we don't take action the collapse of our civilisations is on the horizon"
Sir David Attenborough, 3.12.18
- ◆ Transport now accounts for **37% of Scotland's climate emissions**; that figure is rising, with road transport the main source and aviation the fastest-rising.
UK Committee on Climate Change, Sept 2018
- ◆ Only **3% of work journeys, 1.5% of all journeys and 1% of school journeys in Scotland are by bike**.
Transport & Travel in Scotland, 2017

Hear and debate the issues with the experts ...

| | |
|--|---|
| Claudia Beamish MSP <i>Parliamentary perspective</i> | Co-convenor of Scottish Parliament cross-party group on cycling, walking and buses Labour Environment & Climate spokesperson |
| Alex Luetchford <i>Young person's perspective</i> | 2050 Climate Group Co-Chair of the Policy Sub-Group |
| Dave Gorman <i>Edinburgh University example</i> | Head of Edinburgh University Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability |
| Caroline Rance <i>Climate Bill & related actions</i> | Friends of the Earth Scotland Climate Campaigner |

Audience QA & panel discussion ...
chaired by **Elizabeth Bomberg**
Professor of Environmental Politics,
University of Edinburgh



For meeting tweeting use hashtag #SpokesMtg

STARTS 7.30PM, DOORS OPEN 6.45, ENDS 9.30
Edinburgh University, Appleton Tower, 11 Crichton Street

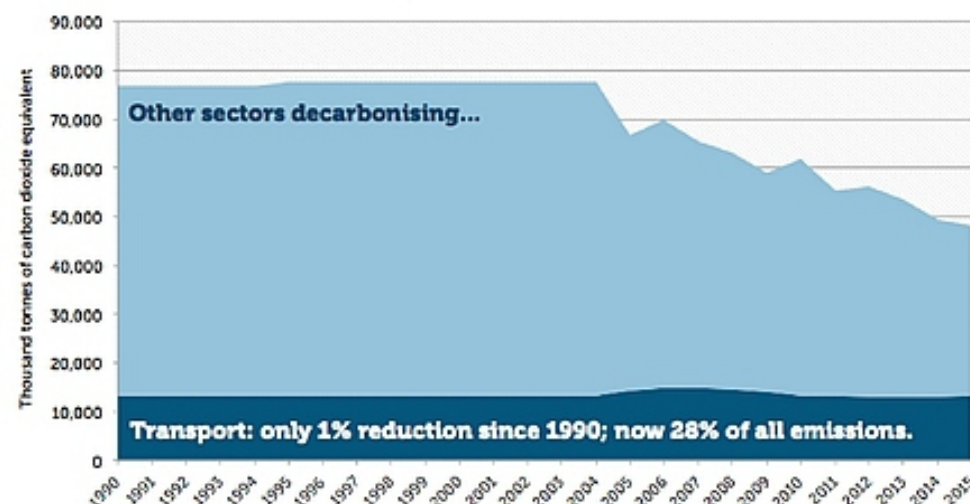
☘ Come early ☘ coffee ☘ Spokes stall ☘ exhibition ☘ chat

Organised by **Spokes The Lothian Cycle Campaign**
St Martin's Community Resource Centre, 232 Dalry Rd, Edinburgh EH11 2JG
spokes@spokes.org.uk (0131) 313 2114 (Ansaphone)
www.spokes.org.uk Twitter: @SpokesLothian

Download this A4 poster pdf at spokes.org.uk

Transport is the biggest problem for tackling climate change

Transport is now Scotland's largest source of emissions, and one where there has been almost no progress since 1990. While other sectors of the economy have made progress, there has been a signal failure to decarbonise the Scottish transport sector.



Despite the global climate emergency, the Scottish Government's current Climate Change Plan remains deeply inadequate.

The Plan takes a narrow focus on vehicle technology, ignoring the greater social and economic benefits that would result from a focus on walking, cycling and public transport. New car sales may be great for the economies of Germany, Japan and the USA, but there is zero car production in Scotland. Better economic policies would be promoting Scottish industrial capacity in bus and train manufacturing, supporting shipbuilding, and taking advantage of the health economic benefits provided by walking and cycling.

The waste hierarchy ('Reduce, Reuse, Recycle') gives clear priorities. We need to implement 'Avoid, Shift, Improve' in transport: Demand management; then modal shift; then efficiency improvements.

By only focussing on vehicle efficiency, the current Climate Change Plan is not fit for purpose in delivering deep emission reductions in transport.

To tackle climate change, we need urgent government action to:

- Focus on **traffic demand reduction**;
- Achieve a **modal shift away from private car use**;
- **Reverse the decline in bus patronage**;
- Achieve the **cycling target for 10% of journeys to be by bike by 2020**;
- **Reverse the present policies to expand aviation**, Scotland's fastest growing emissions source.

Priorities for climate action in Scottish transport

Scotland's transport sector provides ample opportunities for greater ambition in cutting emissions. This would also deliver benefits for public health, equalities, congestion, and supporting the Scottish economy.



Walking and cycling are the most sustainable modes of transport. However, much greater ambition is needed if the Cycling Action Plan target of 10% by bike is going to be met. We want **segregated cycle provision on all primary routes into towns and cities**. By 2020, each of Scotland's seven cities should have in place at least one high-quality, segregated route on a key commuter road; by 2030, all main roads should be provided with cycle facilities matching the best in Europe.



There is inadequate ambition for **clean, green buses**. The Climate Plan commits to 50% of Scottish buses to be low-emission by 2032. But globally, 47% of the world's buses are projected to be electric by 2025. Scotland has globally-important bus operators in First and Stagecoach and a world leader in the manufacturing of low-carbon buses in Falkirk's ADL. So why do clean, green buses get so little attention in the Climate Plan?



The electrification of Edinburgh-Glasgow line is welcome, but there has been no progress on routes to Aberdeen & Inverness. This was a Government commitment in the 2008 'Strategic Transport Projects Review', but there has been zero progress in the decade since. **Low-carbon rail** should not only be for inter-city journeys: Scotland was pioneer of battery-powered trains on rural lines 60 years ago, and could be again.



We have already positive moves on **low-carbon ferries**. CalMac Ferries are operating diesel-electric hybrids, and supporting shipbuilding on the Clyde in doing so. There is a need for investment in the ferry fleet – and the Scottish Government should ensure that all new ferries are low-emission.