

Transport & Environment Committee - Mon 18 Nov, 2024

Spokes [written deputation](#) on **Annual update on car kilometers** in the [Business Bulletin](#)

We note that the statistics referred to in the Business bulletin item “Annual update on car kilometres” show that, unless something radically changes, it is now incredibly unlikely that the council will meet the 30% reduction by 2030 target.

So it must now be asked how councillors plan to turn this around. What measures to reduce private vehicle use and enable more journeys to be made using sustainable modes of transport? We believe that these figures clearly make the case for increased levels of active travel investment, and much faster implementation of projects in the pipeline. The process for building the City Centre West East Link route started in 2014, and it is still not finished. Other major active travel projects, such as Meadows-George Street and Meadows-Canal, are likely to have similar (or longer) timescales. Councillors need to find ways to fix this.

There are also cheaper and quicker interventions which are known to reduce car usage and enable people to walk, wheel and cycle more. These include Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, which should be rolled out citywide.

However, we are not aware of any city in the world that has achieved anything close to a 30% reduction in car-kilometres without introducing strong demand management policies, such as congestion pricing or workplace parking levies. We believe the figures referred to in the Business Bulletin make a strong case for revisiting the decision to reject a workplace parking levy.

We also believe it is important that the council increasingly reallocates road space from private motor vehicles to sustainable modes of transport. This should be done as a matter of course in all resurfacing projects, with particular importance at junctions. Doing so is necessary to provide the space needed to create a continuous and coherent network of safe cycling routes.

Edinburgh’s target of reducing car-kilometres driven by 30% by 2030 is ambitious, but achieving it will have multiple major health and economic benefits for people who live in, work in or visit Edinburgh. It is now time to make it happen.

Spokes planning group

Relevant [Business Bulletin](#) extracts: **Annual update on car kilometers**

On 10 October 2024, the Business Bulletin included a link to the Council’s Business Plan Progress Report 2023/24 which included information on car and taxi kilometres driven in Edinburgh in 2023.

The statistics from this key performance Indicator are collated by the Department for Transport and reported annually here. This provides further statistics on all motor vehicles, a longer timeline and aids comparisons with other local authorities.

The annual km totals for cars and taxis are shown in the table at the end of this Bulletin

Council Business Plan Outcome 7						
People use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get round the city						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Target
Annual traffic kilometres by cars and taxis in Edinburgh	2,457M	1,817M	2,051M	2,293M	2,338M	30% reduction by 2030