

Email to his MSP, Angus Robertson, from a Spokes member re the government's failure so far on its traffic reduction commitment

Sent: 26 February 2025 10:00
To: Robertson A (Angus), MSP
Subject: Letter from your constituent xxx

Dear Angus Robertson,

I was disappointed to read about the Scottish government's woeful failure to effectively reduce car use in the latest Spokes newsletter Section 3).

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2502-25-action-update.pdf>

I note a report (the link is in section 3) says car use reduction is feasible but our government has not taken decisive action.

We are in a climate crisis. We need to reduce emissions due to vehicle use. Please initiate and support moves to achieve the targets. Urgently.

Yours sincerely,

[NB: we have highlighted below in red the sentence relevant to active travel funding, as this provides a new insight into how the change from an 'active travel' budget heading to 'active and sustainable' will impact]

From: Angus Robertson MSP <angus.robertson.msp@parliament.scot>

To: "malcbruce@yahoo.co.uk" <malcbruce@yahoo.co.uk>

Sent: Friday 28 February 2025 at 14:46:17 GMT

Subject: Re: Letter from your constituent xxx

Dear xxx

Thank you for your email and for directing me to the recent Spokes newsletter. I am grateful for the opportunity to update you on the Scottish Government's commitments.

The Scottish Government is committed to managing the risks and capturing the opportunities of the transition for the transport sector. That is why on 21 February we launched a consultation on a draft Transport Just Transition Plan <https://www.gov.scot/publications/transition-draft-transition-plan-transport-scotland/>, which sets out a vision for a just transition for the sector.

As Spokes rightly highlighted, transport remains Scotland's largest source of emissions, so it is critical that we make progress on reducing its emissions in a way that is fair and just. The draft Plan sets out how we will do that and draws out key messages addressed to different groups: people and communities; workers; and businesses and organisations.

It recognises the inequalities that affect people's use of transport, including the fact that many of our rural communities are especially reliant on car use. It also sets out evidence suggesting that there will be no major sector-wide job losses - though the job mix will change - and it highlights the opportunity that the transition presents to address challenges such as upskilling and improving diversity. For businesses and organisations, the most pressing need for action will be to support the transition of road transport, focused on the transition of Heavy-Duty Vehicles and the financing this will require.

The draft Plan outlines the key actions that the Scottish Government is taking to address the challenges and opportunities of the transition. This includes delivering car use reduction interventions, supporting growth by encouraging demand for zero emission HGVs, and a focus on green transport skills. The Plan highlights our ambition to develop a transport sector that is more sustainable, safe and inclusive, and to create a healthier and fairer Scotland for communities, businesses and workers.

The consultation on the draft Plan is an opportunity to seek views on how we can continue to develop our overall approach – ensuring that communities, workers and businesses have an opportunity to shape our future policy. The responses to this consultation will inform our future approach – including the analysis and policies that will be set out in Scotland's next Climate Change Plan.

In addition to this, the First Minister has made clear that tackling the climate emergency is a key priority for the Scottish Government in the 2025-26 draft Scottish Budget. In 2025-26 the Scottish Government is investing £4.9 billion in tackling the climate and nature emergencies. The Scottish Government continues to demonstrate its commitment to using all the power and resources at its disposal to accelerate the just transition to a net zero, climate resilient and biodiverse Scotland. There should be no doubt about the seriousness with which the Scottish Government treats the climate and nature crisis - and its readiness to act and deliver.

The Scottish Government is working to deliver a world leading just transition to net zero. The draft 2025-26 Scottish Budget will almost triple investment in offshore wind to £150 million. This funding will accelerate investment to support the offshore wind sector, underlining the commitment to invest up to £500 million over five years. This money will help leverage private investment of £1.5 billion in the infrastructure and manufacturing facilities critical to growing the sector. A further £300million of ScotWind revenues in 2025-26 will be invested in measures to meet the climate challenge support the energy transition and creating green jobs across the supply chain.

Scotland's transition to net zero will be boosted with increased investment to over £300 million in delivering the Heat in Buildings Programme. Maintaining this level of investment will accelerate energy efficiency upgrades in homes and businesses across the country. This investment in energy efficiency and clean heat measures which also help to reduce household energy bills on a lasting basis and reduce the cost of living for households.

Tackling the climate crisis goes hand in hand with work to protect and restore nature. The Scottish Government's 2025-2026 draft Budget will invest almost £90 million to protect, maintain and increase our woodlands and peatlands. **Almost £190 million of funding will make it easier for people to walk, wheel or cycle, and invest in resilient, efficient bus services, and expand our electric vehicle charging network.** This budget will deliver a further £18 million for nature restoration projects.

The Scottish Government will continue to work to scale up renewable energy, restore Scotland's natural environment, expand our public transport and active travel networks, and support a step change in how we heat our homes. The Scottish Government is committed to the policy agenda of taking action on the climate. Scotland has binding statutory targets, and the Scottish Government wants Scotland to achieve those targets, because it wants Scotland to play its part in protecting the planet.

Scotland's ambitious climate change legislation sets a target date for net zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045. Our contribution to climate change will end, definitively, within one generation. We are transitioning to a net zero emissions Scotland for the benefit of our environment, our people, and our prosperity. We also need to adapt and build resilience to the impacts of climate change alongside our actions to reduce emissions. Scotland is now halfway to net zero and continues to be ahead of the UK as a whole in delivering long term emissions reductions.

The Scottish Government's commitment to ending Scotland's contribution to global emissions by 2045 at the latest is unwavering. It is crucial that the target pathway to 2045 is set at a pace and scale that is feasible and reflects the latest independent expert advice. Carbon budgets are an established model for assessment of emissions reductions used by other nations including Japan, France, England and Wales, and they will include emissions from international aviation and shipping and there will be no provision to "carry over" emissions from one carbon budget to another. The Scottish Government will continue leading on climate action that is fair, ambitious, and capable of rising to the emergency before us and reflects its commitment to the ambition of credible emissions reduction. Work is underway on development of the next climate change plan, for 2026 to 2040. This will be published in draft following receipt of advice from the Climate Change Committee, and Carbon Budget levels being set through secondary legislation.

I hope this is helpful.

Best

Angus

Angus Robertson MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Central