



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

AGENDA

26th Meeting, 2009 (Session 3)

Tuesday 24 November 2009

The Committee will meet at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 2.

1. **Declaration of interests:** Marlyn Glen MSP will be invited to declare any relevant interests.
2. **Inquiry into active travel:** The Committee will take evidence from—

Peter Zanzottera, Principal Consultant, and Paul Zanna, Head of Development Planning, Scotland, Steer Davies Gleave;

and then from—

Dave du Feu, Spokes;

Peter Hawkins, Cycle Touring Club, Scotland;

Ian Aitken, Chief Executive, Cycling Scotland;

Jackie Davidson, Chief Executive, Scottish Cycling.
3. **Subordinate legislation:** The Committee will consider the following negative instrument—

the Railway Closures (Exclusion) Scotland Order 2009 (SSI 2009/371)
4. **PE1181:** The Committee will consider a petition by Helena Coxshall calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make representations to the UK Government about the cost of fuel in the Western Isles and other rural areas of Scotland which are now amongst the most expensive places in the world to buy petrol or diesel; to highlight in particular the refusal of the UK Government to introduce measures similar to those operating in France which reduce the tax on fuel in very remote areas; to protest at the serious consequences which high fuel prices have for fishermen, motorists and

businesses in island and rural areas and to request parity with mainland city prices.

5. **Inquiry into active travel - witness expenses:** The Committee will be invited to delegate to the Convener responsibility for arranging for the SPCB to pay, under Rule 12.4.3, any expenses of witnesses in the inquiry.

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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

Agenda item 2

Private paper

TIC/S3/09/26/1 (P)

Written evidence from Cycle Touring Club Scotland,
SPOKES and Cycling Scotland

[TIC/S3/09/26/2](#)

[Cycling Action Plan for Scotland: Consultation](#)

Agenda item 3

[SSI 2009/371](#)

Cover note

[TIC/S3/09/26/3](#)

Agenda item 4

Paper by the Clerk

[TIC/S3/09/26/4](#)

WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM CYCLE TOURING CLUB SCOTLAND, SPOKES AND CYCLING SCOTLAND

WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM CYCLE TOURING CLUB SCOTLAND

The response will follow the sequence of questions posed in the Committee's call for responses:

Q1 What more can be done to encourage people to change travel habits, and to walk and cycle more?

The historic context is of high investment in infrastructure for the motorised modes over the past 50 or more years. Successive governments in both Scotland and the UK have done everything they can to promote car use – building more roads, ensuring that developments include ample parking both for work and residential. The distances people drive is included as part of the measure of GDP, so the more driving is done, the better the GDP looks. GDP is about quantity of life but not about quality.

Since everything has been made convenient for the motorist, is it any surprise that walking and cycling have such a tiny modal share?

Walking is always lumped in with cycling, and while they have common elements, they are also very different. Cycling is about 3 times faster than walking, and in town, its speed is almost on a level with cars, since congestion has far more impact on the latter than the former. Cyclists can carry far heavier loads than are practical on foot, so bikes can be used for shopping as well as for other utilitarian purposes.

In most official transport circles cycling has always been regarded as a leisure activity. If it is to be taken seriously as a mode of transport, attitudes will have to change, and more important, investment priorities will have to change. There is a strong economic case for more cycling; recent research has shown that an investment of £100,000 pays for itself if it results in as few as 11 more people cycling regularly – and 'regularly' is generously defined as 'at least 3 times a week'.

The economic benefits derive from reducing congestion, and from health benefits including less absenteeism at work, fewer work days lost, employees being more alert, and less pressure on the NHS.

In countries with high levels of cycling, the focus is on utility purposes – cycling to work, to schools, to the shops, to visit friends. Cycling replaces the car for short journeys. To be most effective, policies should therefore focus on towns and cities, rather than rural travel. The emphasis should also be on *combining* cycling with travel to work etc, so as to maximise personal daily exercise and the environmental benefits of cleaner air and fewer GHG emissions (why spend time driving to, and paying for, a gym?)

Q2 Is enough progress being made in delivering improvements in the uptake of.... cycling?

Clearly not. Despite what infrastructure has been provided, levels of cycling have barely changed in Scotland, according to the stats gathered in the national household surveys and by other means. The problem is that the main source of investment, the National Cycle Network (NCN) is mainly rural and aimed at the leisure market. Where NCN routes are provided in towns and cities and can be used for commuting, these parts of the routes are mostly well-used, whereas the rural routes tend to be well-used only where they are close to a city and of high quality (tar surfaced).

However there are places where cycling levels have increased, for example in Edinburgh, where the Council has promoted pro-cycling policies over a number of years. These include giving road space, formerly allocated to vehicles, to cyclists, via cycle lanes and bus lanes and advance stop lines at junctions. Coloured cycle lanes and ASLs have proved especially popular and effective, according to local campaign group Spokes.

Q3 If not, what are the barriers?

A chronic lack of investment is probably the main barrier. But we have to ask – if money suddenly became available, how would it be spent? There are two separate issues here: 1 which institutions should be responsible? And 2 within these, which Departments should take responsibility?

To take the latter first: the benefits accrued through more cycling are currently enjoyed by several Departments, whether at national or local level – but cycling is owned by none of them. Is it Transport? Is it Leisure? Is it Health? Is it Education? Is it Environment? It is all of these. All the Departments want the

benefits, but none of them want to pay for them. So the top priority is to re-organise our institutions to give cycling its rightful place in the scheme. If we can't find the answer ourselves, we could look to countries with high cycling levels to see how they do it.

The other issue – which institutions should be responsible – has to be looked at nationally and locally. The Local Authorities, who have always traditionally been charged with the job, are not suitable because there are too many of them for Scotland's small population, cycling is not a high priority for them, money can't easily be ring-fenced, and they lack resources and most could not afford a single full-time Cycling Officer. To achieve the target of 10% modal share by 2020, Single Outcome Agreements with LAs would have to include annual or periodic interim targets, eg to increase cycling by 3% every 3 years. Monitoring these would be time-consuming and expensive, and little could be done if Councils fail the targets (which they would) – and the expenses of monitoring could be better spent on achieving actual progress.

The Regional Transport Partnerships are much more suited to the job. They are big enough to afford at least one Cycling Officer, and funding can be provided by the national Government without problems of ring-fencing. And since there are fewer of them, their performance can be monitored more easily. Cycle commuting could be taken on a 'city-region' basis, avoiding the problem of where one LA is reluctant to build a network which might benefit residents of a neighbouring LA.

Sustrans operates nationally, but has focussed on long-distance, mainly rural, routes intended for leisure purposes, where issues like deviousness and gradients take second place to making routes 'suitable for the average 12-year-old', which has imposed severe constraints on them.

Transport Scotland: *Transport Scotland* have the lion's share of the transport budget and the experience of spending money on large contracts, but have shown almost no interest in cycling. They have less than one full-time cycling officer, and the only schemes they promote are those which fall under the Trunk Road Cycling Initiative, ie the 'crumbs' from the road-building feast. If TS are to be truly about 'transport' rather than just 'roads', then cycling should be part of their remit. Why? Not just because cycling is one mode of transport, but because it delivers economic and environmental benefits; spending on cycling yields, it is generally agreed, a bigger CBR (Cost-Benefit Ratio) than spending on any other mode.

In our view TS has to undergo radical reform. The current spend on trunk roads is not just unsustainable and likely to deeply undermine the excellent targets of the Climate Change Bill, but the projects themselves cannot be justified on economic grounds. The bases on which economic benefits are calculated (the STAG principles) are fundamentally flawed, since they do not take into account the effects of the induced traffic on congestion and on the environment, both local and global.

It is difficult to understand, in the absence of hard evidence, the political drive to continue building trunk roads and motorways and additional Forth crossings. There doesn't even seem to be strong public demand – for example, a YouGov poll showed support for more roads at only 30%, against 72% who wanted better public transport.

The roads programme is not just unsustainable but also very expensive. Since future budgets will have to find cuts in public expenditure, the roads programme should be the prime target. Some of the money released should go towards maintenance of the road network we already have - mainly in towns and cities where we want to encourage cycling.

If the roads budget were to be drastically cut, what would be TS's future role? The organisation would be cut to size, bringing further savings, and it could apply itself to promoting cycling, as well as the maintenance of the existing network as mentioned. There could be the additional benefit that a much-reduced TS would be easier for Parliament to control – many people are of the opinion that Scotland's transport agenda is in reality driven by TS.

In sum, if cycling is to be promoted, the Government will have to decide who 'owns' it, and which organisations are best placed to deliver. In the above, we have given some suggestions as to how this might happen, and how cycling might be funded by cutting the roads programme.

Q4 Why do cycling policies in national, regional and local transport plans not result in greater modal share?

This Q has been largely answered in Q3 above. The policies in all the documents are fine – basically they say all the right things. But they are then not implemented. The way the funds are allocated is totally at odds with the policies. Only politicians are in a position to explain why this is, because they are responsible for

implementing the policies and deciding the priorities. We on the outside can only speculate as to the reasons. One might assume that politicians are subjected to heavy lobbying from unknown, and most probably unelected, Vested Interests.

One thing we do know – that every major road scheme recently has provoked massive public opposition, and not just from Nimbys. The M74 Extension for example was even rejected by a Public Inquiry, but this decision which had been democratically arrived at was overturned by Ministers. The Aberdeen Western Peripheral has provoked over 10,000 objections. We need to know therefore why Ministers are prepared to over-rule public opinion.

In sum, a change in priorities is long overdue, and could bring huge benefits, both economic and environmental.

Q5 What further action is required by SG, LAs and other bodies to ensure progress is made...?

The cycling organisations now seem to be agreed on what is needed. Top of the hierarchy is *reduction of traffic speeds*. Cycling is hard to promote to non-cyclists because it *appears unsafe* because of the behaviour of drivers. 20mph should be the norm for all residential streets, and a maximum of 30mph on main roads. Enforcement is at present extremely lax, speed limits are widely disregarded. We welcome the new Road Safety Bill with its raised targets of casualty reduction, but it's hard to see how these can be achieved unless speeds are reduced.

Second in the hierarchy is *re-allocation of road space*, from private cars to public transport (eg bus lanes) and cycling – via cycle lanes, ASLs etc, and better road design aimed at reducing vehicle speeds, eg converting roundabouts to signalised junctions, reducing the number of vehicle entry lanes, and tightening the radii of entry curves at roundabouts and street junctions. The goal of designing roads to carry as many vehicles as possible has to be abandoned and replaced by one focussed on safety and people-friendliness.

Third in importance is *better road maintenance*. Potholed roads are not just dangerous as cyclists swerve to avoid the holes, but also discourage cycling because of the discomfort (most bikes have no suspension) and the loss of efficiency (a rough road consumes far more energy than a smooth one). Bad roads also deter pedestrians, because the holes fill with water when it rains, and pedestrians get splashed by passing vehicles (whose occupants stay dry) (more incentive to use the car!) - as do cyclists.

Where cyclists have the chance to use off-road paths (old rail lines, canal towpaths) these can form an excellent alternative to the road network but only if the surfaces are good. The existing network of paths should *receive investment to bring them up to standard*.

Although off-road paths have a role to play, the main emphasis has to be on *making the existing road network more cycle-friendly*. Off-road routes are almost never a door-to-door solution. Cyclists basically want to go where the road network goes, and need to be integrated into it.

'Soft' measures:

Many measures to encourage cycling, such as training, travel plans, better public transport integration etc, are already well-known and may be widely practised. Since these measures have not, broadly, resulted in raising cycling levels, we list some of them here for sake of completeness, while recognising that they should not be seen as high in priority relative to the measures outlined above:

- *better integration with public transport***
- *cycle parking, including ensuring that home storage for bikes is available to all***
- * Cycle Centres, like Edinburgh's The Bike Station***
- *training and education of adults;***
- *universal on-road cycle training for children;***
- *make cycling to school, cool;***
- *events and incentives;***
- *cycle-friendly schools and employers***

Q6 What can Scotland learn from good practice in other countries?

One lesson is that high levels of cycling have not been achieved 'overnight' but by steady investment over many years. Scotland however has a lot of catching up to do, and because of the climate change imperative, time is not on our side.

Other countries are better at *signage*, and at *monitoring and counting cycle use* and *giving feedback* to

users. To measure progress, we need to know a) where we are now, in terms of how much cycling takes place; and b) continuous assessment of cycling levels on a yearly or part-yearly basis. In Copenhagen for example, on-street counters are made visible to users and show how many cyclists have passed that point in the previous X hours/days – there's nothing like giving users an incentive to beat a previous total!

In sum, what we need to boost active travel is not 'rocket science'. We know what works and we can see what has to be done here in Scotland. What we need now is the political will, starting with the Government, to put the policies into practice.

Peter Hawkins
CTC Right-to-Ride Scotland

WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM SPOKES

Active Travel Inquiry

- 1 Background notes on Spokes and on this submission
- 2 Core of evidence and main issues
- 3 Questions posed by the Committee
 - 3.1–3.6 These sections refer respectively to questions Q1-Q6
 - 3.7 Equality and inclusion issues

References

- Appendix 1 Extracts from the introduction to *Making Cycling Irresistible*
- Appendix 2 Benefits to pedestrians (and others) from cycle project investment
- Appendix 3 Spokes competition – getting more people to use bikes for everyday trips
- Appendix 4 Cycle infrastructure – some comments

1. BACKGROUND NOTES ON SPOKES AND ON THIS SUBMISSION

a. **Our submission concentrates largely on cycle use** rather than active travel in general. Spokes is very supportive of modal shift from car to walk and to public transport, but these are not our areas of experience or of expertise. We do, however, point out that much so-called 'cycle' infrastructure is of very considerable benefit to pedestrians [Appendix 2].

b. **We do not cover the benefits of cycling** - health, environmental, energy security, sustainable economic growth, congestion, etc. These are well known, are covered in other submissions [e.g Cycling Scotland evidence] and are in any case presumably reflected in the government decision to adopt the target of 10% of journeys to be by bike in 2020 - firmly announced by Stewart Stevenson MSP at the Scottish Government *Dreams on Wheels* conference, February 2009.

c. **Spokes, The Lothian Cycle Campaign**, is a voluntary organisation founded in 1977, with 1200 members in 800 households. Our members are concentrated in Edinburgh and the Lothians, but 5%-10% live elsewhere in Scotland, valuing their membership to use our ideas and research in their own local and national campaigning. Our formal objectives are..

(1) *To promote cycling, as part of a sustainable transport and access strategy, and to ensure that councils and government actively do the same, and (2) To publicise the benefits of cycling for the community and individuals - like walking, it is cheap, efficient, enjoyable, healthy, non-polluting and intrinsically safe.*

Our many lobbying and promotional activities include an annual survey of cycle project investment in Scotland from all main sources [7] ("*the most comprehensive analysis of funding for Scottish cycling projects*" according to the Scottish Parliament Information Centre, SPICe [4]) and highly praised cycle maps of Edinburgh, the Lothians and Glasgow, which in total have now sold over 100,000 copies.

For the avoidance of doubt, Spokes has no interest in cycle racing, mountain biking or other sports – these are largely irrelevant to our concern of sustainable and everyday travel, which is also the concern of this Inquiry. Nor are we aware of any convincing evidence that walking/cycling sport translates into increased active travel on a significant level, although obviously there will be individual examples. Of course, participative sports are valuable from a personal health perspective, though in terms of transport emissions sport may have a small negative impact due to extensive car travel to remote venues.

2. CORE OF EVIDENCE AND MAIN ISSUES**2.1 Research evidence**

In tackling the questions posed by the Committee, we can do no better than quoting in full the abstract from the following comprehensive and highly referenced review and analysis of cycling statistics, policies and outcomes in Europe, the UK and USA over recent years and decades... ***Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from The Netherlands, Denmark and Germany***, by Prof John Pucher and Ralph Buehler, July 2008 [1]. We recommend Committee members with a particular interest to read the full paper – but we have also included part of its introduction as Appendix 1.

Pucher and Buehler's conclusions fit closely with our own experience over many years. In their abstract below we have highlighted two sentences which we believe to be particularly relevant and useful.

ABSTRACT: “This article shows how the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany have made bicycling a safe, convenient and practical way to get around their cities. The analysis relies on national aggregate data as well as case studies of large and small cities in each country. **The key to achieving high levels of cycling appears to be the provision of separate cycling facilities along heavily travelled roads and at intersections, combined with traffic calming of most residential neighbourhoods.** Extensive cycling rights of way in the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany are complemented by ample bike parking, full integration with public transport, comprehensive traffic education and training of both cyclists and motorists, and a wide range of promotional events intended to generate enthusiasm and wide public support for cycling. In addition to their many pro-bike policies and programmes, the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany make driving expensive as well as inconvenient in central cities through a host of taxes and restrictions on car ownership, use and parking. Moreover, strict land-use policies foster compact, mixed-use developments that generate shorter and thus more bikeable trips. **It is the coordinated implementation of this multifaceted, mutually reinforcing set of policies that best explains the success of these three countries in promoting cycling.** For comparison, the article portrays the marginal status of cycling in the UK and the USA, where only about 1% of trips are by bike.”

2.2 Main Issues from the above

2.2.1 **It is a prerequisite for extensive cycle use for everyday journeys by a wide spectrum of the population that the road system looks, feels and is safe and welcoming for using a bike.** [For specific comments on infrastructure see appendix 4]. The more this is achieved, the greater the potential for heavy bike use. It requires funding which is *adequate* and *consistent* – neither of which have yet been seen in Scotland – and delivered through *effective funding mechanisms*.

Our submission concentrates on the funding and the political and professional commitment necessary for developing such an infrastructure, as our experience perhaps gives us most to contribute here. We see the main steps needed here as...

- a. **Increased and consistent levels of funding from government** – see 3.5.1.
- b. **Improved funding mechanisms** – see 3.5.2. These should (i) ensure a basic level of cycling investment in all parts of Scotland, (ii) provide opportunities for more substantial investment by councils who take cycling seriously as a form of transport, (iii) recognise and support the many existing and potential opportunities outside local authorities.

2.2.2 **The interaction and integration of other traffic and land-use policies is of critical importance.** The abstract above stresses the significance of compact land-use policies and urban-area car-restrictions in contributing to high cycle use. It is therefore vital that programmes to raise cycle use are not standalone – rather, all transport and land-use policies must understand and be integrated with achieving the cycling goal. Most obviously, if distances for everyday journeys are long, then cycling (or walking) are ruled out from the start. This is absolutely critical – we urge the Committee to explore it with other bodies such as Transform Scotland more experienced in general transport and land-use planning.

2.2.3 **Given suitable road conditions, a shift to cycling can be accelerated by a whole range of promotional or 'soft' measures** – provision of maps, individualised journey planning, training, events, and so on. However, this is very dependent on the prerequisite 2.2.1 and also to a considerable extent on 2.2.2. The safer and more welcoming the road conditions, the more people are likely to be attracted by promotional measures, and the more long-lasting their effects are likely to be. It may be too early to know definitively whether Smarter Choices lead to 'permanent' behaviour change, or whether such measures need repeated/reinforced every few years – or indeed every year. According to Pucher (2.1 above) they are most effective as part of a multifaceted infrastructure and land-use approach. Our submission leaves this area to other contributors with more experience in this area, such as Sustrans or the Smarter Choices analysts. It must be noted, however, that without a new approach to funding (2.2.1 above) the opportunities in this area will be greatly restricted.

3. QUESTIONS POSED BY THE COMMITTEE

3.1 Q1 What more can be done to encourage people to change travelling habits and walk/cycle more?

Our response to this question is covered by 2.2, 3.3 and 3.5.

As something of an aside, in addition to obvious infrastructure and promotional initiatives there is a wide range of innovative ideas and enthusiasm waiting to be unleashed, as was illustrated in our recent Spokes competition [14] “How would you spend £1m to get more people cycling more often for their everyday journeys?” A summary of the top entries is in Appendix 3. The Cycle Projects Fund proposed in our budget submission [8] could allow some of the more interesting ideas to go ahead – a small employer fund, station

bike hubs, bike parking in all towns, etc.

3.2 Q2 *Is enough progress being made in improving the uptake of walking and cycling?*

Sadly, 'progress' is in the wrong direction! The Scottish household survey shows the % of adult commuter trips usually made by bike at 1.7% in 1999 but 1.6% in 2007 [cf. the Scottish government all-trips target of 10%]. The Sustainable Development Commission (Scotland) says "*Transport is the poorest performing area for sustainable development*" and within that poorly performing area, "*active travel is in relative decline*" [10].

Within this very distressing picture there are some positive glimmers - though the cross-Scotland figure clearly means cycle use is falling in many parts. However, in our own area, Edinburgh has grown cycle use from 1.4% of commuter trips in the 1981 census to 4% in 2006, with the bulk of the increase in the last 10-15 years during a period of consistent investment in onroad coloured cycling infrastructure - see [11] for discussion. Traffic counts by Spokes show continuing growth, reaching 20% of all rush hour vehicles on certain roads [12]. The City is now fortunate again to have a transport Convener and Director who appear committed to cycling as transport, and it has recently signed the **Charter of Brussels** [13] which includes a target of 15% of all trips to be by bike in 2020.

3.3 Q3 *If not, what are the barriers to progress? (for example, lack of policy development, lack of political leadership, lack of funding/investment, the lack of prominence given to active travel in transport policy development, project planning and construction etc.)*

3.3.1 **Safe and welcoming cycling conditions depend critically on funding.** This is essential [3.5.1] - though not sufficient [3.3.2, 3.3.3]. Funding is however a complex issue and the mechanisms by which it is made available can prove critical [3.5.2]. For example, in some councils the government's **CWSS** scheme [cycling, walking, safer streets] has in fact seen little allocated to cycling. Conversely, the former **Public Transport Fund** and the more recent **RTP capital funding** (until transferred by the new government to councils) provided unexpected yet substantial new cycling investment! *Thus, depending on local political and/or professional priorities, and views on cycling, specific funding streams will be diverted either towards or away from cycling as far as the rules allow.*

3.3.2 **Political and/or professional commitment is often lacking** – Spokes experience at both government and council level shows that relatively few politicians or senior professionals really take cycling seriously as transport – for many it is recreation or a hobby, not transport. This is critical. **Government example** – Sarah Boyack as transport minister amended PTF rules so that bids were more successful if they integrated cycling into PT schemes [eg Quality bus/cycle corridors] and she also set up the CWSS fund – both initiatives significantly boosted cycle investment, but one was lost when subsequent ministers scrapped PTF with no thought to cycle implications. **Local authority example** – in Edinburgh a committed politician/director combination such as Cllr David Begg/ George Hazel brought major impetus to cycling projects, whilst some periods have seen cycling sidelined.

It is not easy to generate or require genuine commitment. However a solution may lie in funding mechanisms [3.5.2 below]. If money can *only* be used for cycling investment, then even sceptical politicians and senior officials are likely to use it. The evidence of the annual Spokes funding survey over the last 13 years makes it plain that availability of central funding for cycling projects – both in dedicated allocations and in wider biddable funds – does increase cycling investment through local authorities and sometimes other bodies. Our annual funding surveys show step increases in total Scottish cycling investment *only* as a result of the following national initiatives...

- introduction of the CWSS fund
- modification of Public Transport Fund rules to encourage councils to include cycling in PTF bids
- large allocations to Sustrans, mainly used in partnership with local authorities, British Waterways, etc
- introduction of capital funding for RTPs [several of which, though not all, took cycle travel seriously]

Conversely, there were major negative impacts on total cycle project investment at the following times...

- when the PTF fund was scrapped [with no thought to the consequent impact on cycle investment]
- when RTP capital was transferred to local authorities [who invest much less of it in cycling]
- when Sustrans funding was drastically cut, limiting their partnership investment with councils and others.

Alongside these ups and downs from new and lost national funding opportunities, cycle investment levels by local authorities from their own capital funds largely stayed static, at a low proportion of total cycling investment.

3.3.3 **Lack of effective policy integration and implementation** This is a reflection of 3.3.2 as it is what

happens rather than what the policy says which matters. As a local example, **streetscape and public-realm policy and implementation in Edinburgh** have in reality been largely independent of cycling policy and implementation, and as a result have impacted badly on conditions for cycling and for encouraging people to use a bike (provoking many complaints from our members). The Streetscape Committee says it supports cycling but has scrapped some coloured surfacing, scuppered shopping and residential cycle parking opportunities and even removed a well-used dropped kerb to make the pavement look nicer!

3.3.4 An outdated understanding of 'safety.' Cycling is often presented as dangerous, with heavy emphasis on personal protection. However, since the public's stated main reason for not cycling is danger, further emphasis on the supposed dangers of cycling cannot be conducive to increased cycle use. *Indeed, where helmets have been made compulsory or very heavily promoted, cycle use often falls – and injury rates sometimes rise* [5].

Secondly, there is extensive evidence (between countries, between years, and between different towns in the same country) that the more people who cycle, the safer cycling becomes per cyclist [6]. Thus, by increasing cycle use, conditions for all cyclists become safer, encouraging more people to cycle. This virtuous circle appears to apply in countries of heavy cycle use such as the Netherlands, where there is little emphasis on danger or on personal protection, and where helmet use is very rare – yet where injury rates are low. Conversely Britain has perhaps seen a vicious circle, with heavy emphasis on the supposed dangers of cycling and on the need to 'protect' oneself – and if this keeps down cycling levels, that is likely to reduce safety for each remaining cyclist.

In summary, the primary 'safety' emphasis must be on making road conditions safer and more welcoming rather than telling individuals they must protect themselves in order to use a bike. Helmets must be there for those who want them, but heavy investment/emphasis on 'personal protection' could even impact negatively on cycling levels.

3.4 Q4 Why do walking and cycling policies in national, regional and local transport plans not result in greater modal share for walking & cycling?

The reasons are given in 3.3.1-3.3.4 above. Policies and targets alone are not enough – funding, commitment and political and professional understanding are essential.

3.5 Q5 What further action is required by the Scottish Government, local authorities and other bodies to ensure that significant progress is made in development and implementation of walking and cycling, particularly if transport is to make a greater contribution to reduced greenhouse gas emissions?

3.5.1 Government – Increased and consistent funding

The evidence is clear that cycling investment in Scotland is far below those countries which have already achieved and surpassed the cycling target of 10% of all trips which the Scottish government has set for 2020. The Spokes annual funding survey [7] shows total cycling investment in Scotland from all main sources at almost certainly under £20m - and falling. And that £20m is not even all government money – yet £20m represents well under 1% of the £2.5bn transport budget.

Direct comparison with other countries is fraught with difficulty, although we give some figures in our submission on the 2010-11 Draft Budget [8]. **It is important to note that some comparisons may give a falsely optimistic picture of the position in Scotland.** Funding for cycling investment in most countries (including Scotland) comes from a wide range of sources – government, regional or local; regular or special funding mechanisms; European or lottery money, and so on. *The annual Spokes survey of Scottish cycling investment [7] attempts to include all such main sources. However the figures we hear from European countries often relate just to particular funding mechanisms – e.g. a special government or city cycling initiative, and so fail to encompass all cycling investment.* Similarly a European observer might look at Scotland and take the CWSS fund as Scotland's investment in cycling, since it has the word 'cycling' in its title – whereas in fact it represents only a small element of total cycling investment [7]. To comprehensively assess cycling investment in another country would be a big task, including familiarisation with relevant political and administrative structures.

In view of political and immediately implementable realities the Spokes 2010-11 budget proposal [8] would only raise cycling investment to some 1.5% of the Scottish transport budget. However, **we urge TICC in its report on this Inquiry to propose that the Spending Review adopts the call by the Association of Directors of Public Health, Institute of Highway Engineers, Sustainable Development Commission, Royal Institute of British Architects, Royal College of Physicians and many other prestigious, professional and public bodies for 10% of transport funds to go to active travel and for full active travel integration into all relevant policy areas** [9].

3.5.2 Government - *Improved funding mechanisms*

This may be almost as critical as increased absolute funding. Our experience shows clearly that interest in and understanding of the role of cycling as transport varies drastically between councils, and also between different time periods in the same council. This is perhaps primarily dependent on the local politicians and professionals currently responsible for transport [3.3.2] though also affected by many other factors such as local lobbying. Funding streams which can potentially be used for cycling investment (e.g. CWSS, PTF, RTP, own capital) will be diverted towards or away from cycling investment depending on those local views [3.3.1]. Solutions to this dilemma need to...

- ◆ Ensure a basic level of cycling investment in all local authority areas.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for more substantial investment by councils who intend to take cycling seriously. Note that since the ending of the Public Transport Fund, and the transfer of RTP capital funding to individual councils, it is now extremely difficult to set up cycle projects requiring significant investment – say around £½m-£1m or over.
- ◆ Recognise and support the cycling investment and promotional activity that does and should happen outside local authorities (although often in partnership with local authorities) – for example, via Sustrans, British Waterways, ScotRail, community initiatives such as Edinburgh Bike Station, and many more.

Concordat issues – solutions on funding cycling investment may appear to clash with the Concordat and local authority autonomy. Our view is that if the government sets a target then it must ensure the mechanisms are in place to meet that target. However, our proposal (a) below, guaranteeing minimum levels of cycling investment, is just a re-jig of the existing CWSS fund; whilst (b)/(c) should not be seen as conflicting with the Concordat as they are to work with or fund a wider range of bodies than just councils, and even as regards councils they provide extra opportunities rather than extra duties.

We suggest that mechanisms (a)-(c) below are all implemented urgently – with a longer-term assessment, including (d), in the Spending Review. Methods (a) and (b) would ensure a minimum level of attention to promoting cycle use in all parts of Scotland, with (b) also supporting non-council initiatives, whilst (c) and (d) would provide for larger scale projects, for more enthusiastic local authorities, and to encourage innovation.

a. **Conversion of CWSS into a dedicated Walking/Cycling fund** - with a requirement to allocate at least 50%, over say 3 years, to cycling investment (this does not push walking under 50%, as cycling investment often also benefits walking – appendix 2). The scheme could possibly become match-funded, with any unused amounts being offered to other councils.

b. **Restoration of substantial capital funding to Sustrans** - to work with councils and others. Being implemented through an organisation dedicated to greater cycling and walking, funding will be used for the intended purpose. We note the comment of former Transport Minister Nicol Stephen, after Sustrans completed over 70 projects Scotland-wide from its £3.5m 04/05 allocation, “*High standard, on budget and in tight timescales.*” Subsequently Sustrans funding was increased to £8m p.a. for 2 years, though that has now been cut by 50% under the present government.

c. **A new bidding fund open to any relevant organisation in Scotland** - for example British Waterways, ScotRail, Sustrans, Councils, Transport Partnerships, etc. Its aims would be, first, to provide funding for large-scale projects and, second, to encourage innovation. How it could operate is discussed in the Spokes budget submission [8].

d. **Cycling should be incorporated into all new transport funding mechanisms.** Scotland now has no sensible funding mechanism for local but large-scale public transport projects – previously covered by the Public Transport Fund and more recently by RTP funding. Undoubtedly this needs addressed, and when it happens provision for cyclists must be an integral part of any new scheme. When Sarah Boyack as Transport Minister modified the PTF rules to encourage bids to integrate cycling – and even to include major cycling-only bids – this made a big difference to total cycling investment in Scotland.

3.5.3 **Local authorities** – Councils must do much more on cycling policy implementation if the government target is to have any meaning. Experience suggests this will only happen sporadically and in occasional councils, where there happens to be commitment at that particular time [3.3.2 above]. The only *effective* solution across Scotland – essential if the national target is to be met – is for councils to be incentivised through government funding initiatives as in 3.5.1/3.5.2.

3.6 Q6 *What can Scotland learn from good practice/successful implementation in other countries?*

Our response to this question comprises paras 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 above.

3.7 Equalities and Inclusion Issues - not covered in Q1-Q6

3.7.1 **Gender balance** – Cycle use in Britain (and the US) is very male-dominated - 72% of all UK cycle trips [1]. However, the European examples strongly suggest this is not a necessary fact, but is linked to cycling conditions and perceptions. Women make 45% of bike trips in Denmark, 49% in Germany, and a majority 55% in the Netherlands. This suggests that the best way to rectify the gender imbalance in our country is to make conditions for cycling feel

and be safer and more welcoming. This conclusion is also borne out by recent research on this issue by Sustrans [15].

3.7.2 **Age inequality** – The common British perception that cycling is unsuitable for older people is quite wrong. The % of trips made by bike by over-65s is 12% in Germany and Denmark and 24% in Netherlands – Pucher [1].

3.7.3 **Social inequality** – Against common perceptions (at least in Edinburgh) Pucher [1] states that rates of cycle use are similar across income groups not just in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands, but also in the UK. Clearly there are potential benefits for low-income groups, such as widening work-search areas where transport costs are a deterrent.

3.7.4 **People with disabilities** – Whilst some disabilities preclude use of a bike, in other cases (e.g. certain walking problems) suitably designed cycles provide increased mobility options. Some UK companies specialise in such equipment.

REFERENCES

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON EVIDENCE

The inquiry will doubtless receive much personal, anecdotal and speculative evidence. Whilst this can provide useful insights, evidence-based research is particularly important. Even here, however, Pucher [2] points out that few studies of cycling issues are of an academic standard – and it is not easy to disentangle the many variables affecting bike use.

Another problem, which may sound esoteric but is important, is that rigorous studies tend to be of specifics that can most easily be measured – and therefore risk missing the overall picture. Thus you can find careful studies of the impact of a specific cycle facility, but not of the overall impact of a city-wide multi-pronged multi-year approach. This is critical, since Pucher [2] concludes that such coordinated long-term approaches add up to much more than the sum of the parts. This ties in with our view that Edinburgh's success in raising cycle use substantially (at a time of national decline) was not due to any specific cycle facility so much as to the *widespread presence of onstreet coloured cycle facilities* – seen every day by every road user, and we believe contributing to a changing consciousness about the possibility of using a bike [11].

The most useful evidence therefore comes from wide overviews, looking at a range of cases, across countries, across time periods, etc, and identifying overall lessons. We recommend as such overviews [1], [2] and [3] below.

[1] Pucher, John and Buehler, Ralph (2008) "*Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from The Netherlands, Denmark and Germany*," Transport Reviews, 28:4, 495 — 528. Available at <http://policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher/> - publications

[2] Pucher, J., Dill, J., and Handy, S., "*Infrastructure, Programs and Policies to Increase Bicycling: An International Review*," prepared for the Active Living Research Program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and tentatively scheduled for publication in Preventive Medicine, Vol. 48, No. 2, February 2010. Available as for [1] above.

[3] *Knowledgebase on Sustainable Urban Land Use and Transport* - Extensive comparative material on cycling policies and statistics, international and UK at www.konsult.leeds.ac.uk – enter - management - cycle lanes – evidence. Or use the direct link...

www.konsult.leeds.ac.uk/private/level2/instruments/instrument046/12_046summ.htm

[4] *Cycling in Scotland* Briefing Document 09/48, Scottish Parliament Information Centre, SPICe.

[5] For extensive evidence and papers on all aspects of the helmets debate, see www.cyclehelmets.org.

[6] Safety in Numbers. The original research appears in *Safety in Numbers*, Jacobsen, Injury Prevention September 2003. See also the *Safety in Numbers* review paper by Cyclists Touring Club, 2009.

[7] Spokes annual survey and analysis of investment in cycle projects from all main sources. Most recent survey [08/09] published in Spokes Bulletin 104. Available at www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress.

[8] Spokes submission on the Scottish Government's Draft Budget 2010-11, to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee. Available at www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress.

[9] *Take Action on Active Travel*, Association of Directors of Public Health and others, at www.adph.org.uk.

[10] *Review of Scottish Government Progress*, November 2008, Sustainable Development Commission, Scotland.

[11] Discussion of Edinburgh's rising cycling levels and safety-rates – Spokes Bulletin 105, p7, at www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress.

[12] Spokes traffic count results – see www.spokes.org.uk – downloads – technical.

[13] Charter of Brussels – at www.velo-city2009.com/charter-brussels.html.

[14] "*How would you spend £1m to get more people cycling for everyday journeys?*" www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress – downloads – odds-and-ends – competition.

[15] www.sustrans.org.uk/resources – research – *Route User Monitoring Report 2008*, pages 21 and 17.

APPENDIX 1 - EXTRACTS FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO *MAKING CYCLING IRRESISTIBLE*, PUCHER AND BUEHLER [1]

“For readers in many countries, the title of this article might sound so impossible as to seem absurd. Most Britons and Americans, for example, must find cycling quite resistible indeed, since they make only about 1% of their trips by bike. Cycling conditions in most countries—including the UK and the USA—are anything but safe, convenient and attractive (Pucher *et al.*, 1999; McClintock, 2002; Pucher and Dijkstra, 2003; Tolley, 2003). Bicycling in much of the industrialized world is a marginal mode of transport, occasionally used for recreational purposes but rarely used for practical, everyday travel needs. Moreover, the social distribution of cycling tends to be very uneven, with young men doing most of the cycling, while women cycle far less, and the elderly hardly cycle at all.

Thus, it may come as a surprise to sceptical readers that there are technologically advanced, affluent countries that have managed to make cycling a mainstream mode of transport, a perfectly normal way to get around cities. In the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, cycling levels are more than ten times higher than in the UK and the USA. Dutch, German and Danish women cycle as often as men, and rates of cycling fall only slightly with age. Moreover, cycling is distributed evenly across all income groups. In the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, cycling is truly for everyone and for all trip purposes.

Moreover, cycling in those countries is not viewed as requiring expensive equipment, advanced training, or a high degree of physical fitness. Nor are cyclists forced to muster the courage and willingness to battle motorists on streets without separate bike lanes or paths. On the contrary, Dutch, German and Danish cyclists ride on simple, inexpensive bikes, almost never wear special cycling outfits, and rarely use safety helmets. Even timid, risk-averse and safety-conscious individuals can be found cycling, unlike the many millions of Americans and Britons who are terrified by the mere thought of getting on a bike.

As documented in this article, cycling was not always thriving in the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. Cycling levels plummeted in all three countries from about 1950 to 1975 (Dutch Bicycling Council, 2006). It was only through a massive reversal in transport and urban planning policies in the mid-1970s that cycling was revived to its current successful state. In 1950, cycling levels were higher in the UK than they are now in Germany: almost 15% of all trips. Just as in these other countries, cycling in the UK plummeted from 1950 to 1975, but British cycling never recovered. It continued to fall to its current level of 1.3% of trips, only slightly higher than the 0.9% bike share of trips in the USA (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2003; Department for Transport, 2007).

While history, culture, topography and climate are important, they do not necessarily determine the fate of cycling. Government policies are at least as important: transport policies, land-use policies, urban development policies, housing policies, environmental policies, taxation policies and parking policies. In many respects, the UK and the USA have given the green light to the private car, almost regardless of its economic, social and environmental costs. In sharp contrast, cycling has prospered in the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark over the past three decades precisely because these countries have given the red light, or at least the yellow warning light, to private cars. Instead of catering to ever more motor vehicles by expanding roadways and parking facilities, Dutch, German and Danish cities have focused on serving people, making their cities people-friendly rather than car-friendly, and thus more liveable and more sustainable than American and British cities.

...

The Netherlands, Denmark and Germany have been at the forefront of policies to make cycling safe, convenient and attractive, while the UK and the USA have lagged far behind. Differences between these countries in cycling levels are enlightening because all five of them are democratic, capitalist, affluent societies with nearly universal car ownership. The success of cycling does not depend on poverty, dictatorial regimes or the lack of motorized transport options to force people onto bikes. This article shows how the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany have managed to make cycling a popular, mainstream way of getting around cities.”

The paper then compares Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, UK and USA in respect of...

- Variations in the nature of cycle use - amounts, purposes, types of cyclist, etc
- Variations and trends in cycling casualties
- Policies, programmes and funding

The paper concludes with an overall assessment - lessons to make cycling safer, more convenient and more attractive.

APPENDIX 2 – BENEFITS TO PEDESTRIANS (AND OTHERS) OF CYCLE PROJECT INVESTMENT

Whilst the term 'cycle facilities' is often used, such facilities in fact often have very significant benefits for other road users, notably for pedestrians.

ASLs [advance stop lines] - Better visibility of all and by all. Council officials have mentioned reduced casualties to all road users at ASL locations, though we don't know if there is hard data on this. Indeed, perhaps 'Cycle advance stop lines' might be better named 'Road user visibility zones'!

Cycle lanes – Can make pavements much more pleasant, giving pedestrians and pushchair-occupants 1m-2m extra protection from noise, particulate and other pollution, splashing and general traffic stress. Cycle lanes also keep heavy traffic away from road edges, thus almost certainly *reducing road maintenance costs* as this is the area where the relatively fragile drainage systems are installed. A picture demonstrating the benefits for both pedestrians and cyclists of an effective cycle lane can be found at www.spokes.org.uk – pictures.

Light-controlled road crossings – Total ped+cyclist numbers can sometimes justify a toucan crossing where there are insufficient pedestrians to justify a pedestrian-only crossing [this has happened several times in Edinburgh].

Offroad paths – shared-use path construction can sometimes be justified where there would be insufficient walker-only numbers to justify a pedestrian-only path.

APPENDIX 3 – GETTING MORE PEOPLE ON BIKES FOR EVERYDAY TRIPS

Spokes holds an annual summer competition, with a different topic each year. In 2009 we asked entrants to tell us how to get more people cycling for ordinary journeys more often in Scotland, now and into the future, using as a focus for responses a notional £1 million pot of money. The competition was open to all, and was promoted beyond the Spokes membership. The results make interesting reading in the context of our evidence on the low levels of cycle investment in Scotland [7], and our budget proposal for a £20m fund for major schemes to grow cycling [8].

The judging panel (including Tom Rye, Professor of Transportation at Edinburgh Napier University) considered each entry on its merits according to how effectively it might tackle the issue of getting more people on bikes more often, and in relation to the entrant's description of the proposal itself.

Three major themes emerged in the entries...

- ◆ infrastructure to improve safety, perceptions of safety and the visibility of cycling as a means of transport
- ◆ working directly with people, around leadership, demonstration, training and promotion
- ◆ integration with other transport options – buses, trains, park and ride etc.

All entries had a central concern of breaking down existing disincentives to cycling around actual / perceived dangers, with many also looking to promote the positives. Several specific problems were identified - missing links in cycle networks, ignorance by officials or others of cycling issues and needs, over-reliance on volunteers for training, storage issues, and constraints to combining cycling with other forms of transport. In particular, there were repeated calls for a continuous network of safe cycling routes – i.e. cohesive, fully-connected, clearly designated. Some recommendations focused on improving the training and awareness of cycling for transport planning and policy officials - cyclists have a legitimate place on Scotland's roads and should be officially welcomed rather than grudgingly tolerated.

A number of entries looked specifically at Edinburgh, with an ambitious take on the possibilities enhanced funding could bring. Special mention should be made of the very strong calls for a focus on safe and high-profile cycle routes across the heart of the city to allow cyclists of all ages, abilities and types to cross the city without current obstacles and hindrances.

A flavour of the winning entries is given below. The top three winners cover neatly first, the essential need to invest in infrastructure to improve safety and to promote cycling in a highly visible way; second, the 'people' factors of promotion, demonstration and leadership; and thirdly integrating cycling more into other forms of transport. The complete set of the entries are on the Spokes website at www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress – downloads – odds-and-ends – competition.

1st = **A £1 million fund for small employers** (e.g. under 100 employees), to provide facilities (secure parking, lockers changing facilities and showers) and promote cycling to employees to achieve a growth in cycle commuting.

1st = **Create/extend existing red cycle lanes**, plus advanced stop lines at junctions, on every A and B road in Edinburgh, to create a continuous network of cycle routes on every street throughout the city - and within existing greenways and on roundabouts. The lanes should be demarcated by rumble strips to discourage vehicle

encroachment. Parking in cycle lanes should be banned and properly enforced. In conjunction, the speed limit on all other roads should be reduced to 20mph.

3rd **'Rack'n'Roll': equip 200 Scottish bus routes** with US-style bike racks, so each bus can carry two bikes securely. This provides commuter back-up, encourages leisure cycling, and is a highly visible reminder of the existence of bikes. Routes would lead from cities and large towns into surrounding commuter towns and countryside, e.g. Edinburgh-Melrose.

4th **Multi-pronged child-centred programme to promote cycling** – for school, with parents, at weekends. Promote with pregnant women or post-natally; promote cycling to and at school – e.g. subsidising bikes for children in schools. Giving cyclists who are parents time off to support school cycling activities. Promotion for older children (S3+) with community development workers helping design, fund and implement local (infrastructural) projects.

5th **A South-Edinburgh-to-Bush link** involving a new cycle path across farmland, pavement re-classified as cycle path, traffic calming measures, link with existing Edinburgh University path, and enlargement of the bypass tunnel. To encourage inexperienced and leisure cyclists as well as existing. Organisations on Bush estate would help promote the new route.

6th **Mainline rail station Dutch-style FietsPoint cycle hubs** – with staffed bike storage, repairs, hire, parts retail, etc – for commuters and visitors- also creating employment. e.g. at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Leuchars).

7th **Bike parking in towns and cities** - invite them to identify street locations for bike parking and bid for a share of the £1m to fund their installation. Visible cycling facilities encourages more people to cycle, as in Edinburgh already.

8th **Introduce cycling in the driving test** - possibly an on-road cycling element under a qualified instructor, with relevant questions, and/or as a simulation. To raise awareness of cycling, encourage more cycling, and help normalize cycling.

9th **A social-enterprise Scottish cycle training network** employing and assessing qualified Bikeability cycle trainers at national standard. Children and adults in Scotland would be offered the three levels of Bikeability training, building on the Scottish Cycle Training Scheme but with higher investment and marketing to promote cycling as safe everyday transport.

10th **Three Bridges Roseburn Cycle Path to Union Canal Link** - a strategic missing link from the cycle network of north Edinburgh to the Union Canal and South Edinburgh. Cyclists and pedestrians could then make a seamless journey across busy rail, tram and road routes linking Route One from Roseburn to Route 75 at the canal. Signage from the integrated Haymarket Station and Tram stops, and cycle storage facilities here to encourage cycle/train/tram combinations.

APPENDIX 4 – SOME NOTES ON CYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

As stated in 2.2.1, it is a prerequisite for extensive cycle use for everyday journeys by a wide spectrum of the population that ***the road system looks, feels and is safe and welcoming for using a bike***. The more this is achieved, the greater the potential for heavy bike use. What does this mean in practice? We need to move towards...

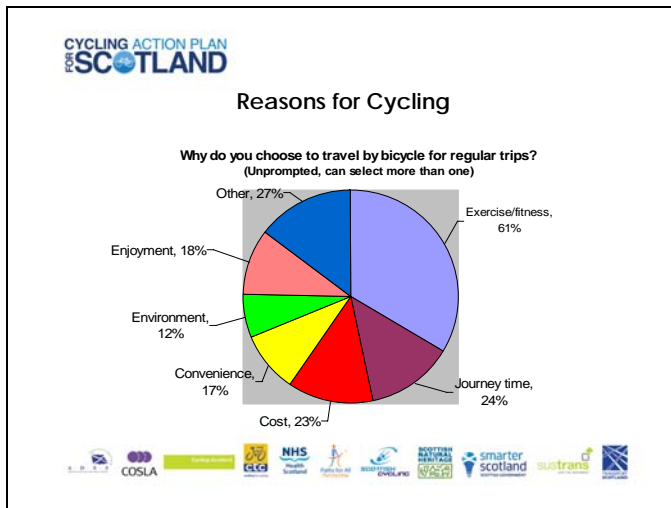
- ◆ 20mph zones in all residential areas
- ◆ in 30mph+ streets (and possibly some 20mph main streets), high-quality cycle or bus/cycle lanes and advanced stop lines – all with surfaces coloured, car-parking prohibited, and adequate cycle-lane widths.
- ◆ other measures to increase convenience and reduce distances for cycling – cut-throughs, 2-way cycling in one-way streets, etc.
- ◆ where space allows, European-style physically segregated sections. That is not possible in the near future on a wide scale in our existing towns and cities due to road widths, but should be tried wherever possible, and particularly in area-based new developments.
- ◆ experimentation with European innovations like 'bicycle streets' where cyclists have priority – Pucher [1], p524.

Note that cycling infrastructure in Britain is often thought of as **offroad paths**. These can be very valuable, particularly for recreation and for novice cyclists, but in most towns and cities they cannot form the heart of cycling infrastructure for local utility journeys in the near future. The existing built environment does not allow the necessary space, offroad paths are often not direct, and offroad path networks are not usually visible from the roads - so the public has to be continually made aware of them through leaflets, signs and other promotion. In contrast, the road system already exists, is well known, links virtually every origin and every destination, is generally fairly direct, and is seen every day by every road user. A safe and welcoming road system thus has the huge advantage of being a 'self-promoting' cycle facility. Obviously every case must be considered on its merits, and some offroad paths (such as the Meadows paths in Edinburgh) are direct and highly visible. **However, the main priority - with funding in short supply and when the object is to get as many people as possible onto bikes for everyday travel – must be to make the road system safe and welcoming.**

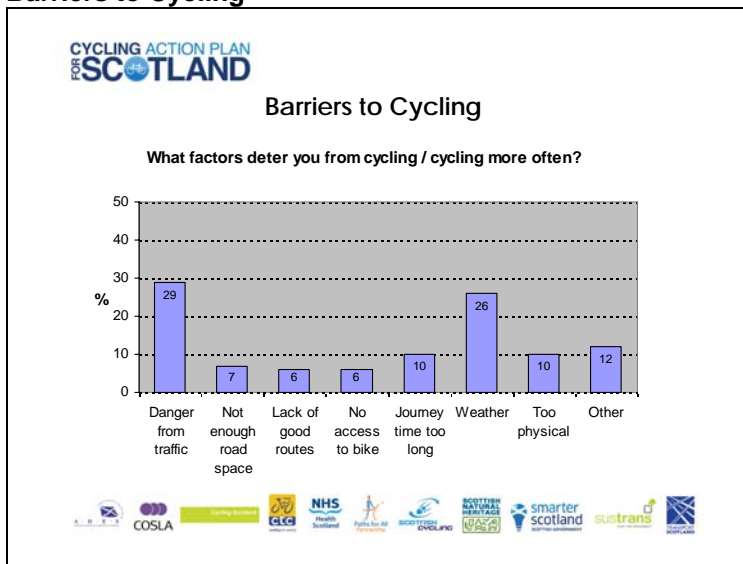
WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM CYCLING SCOTLAND

Cycling Scotland Response to Scottish Parliament Active Travel Inquiry**1. What more can be done to encourage people to change their travelling habits and walk and cycle more?**

In 2008 Cycling Scotland carried out the public consultation for the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, which asked this exact question to over 6000 respondents. The results showed:

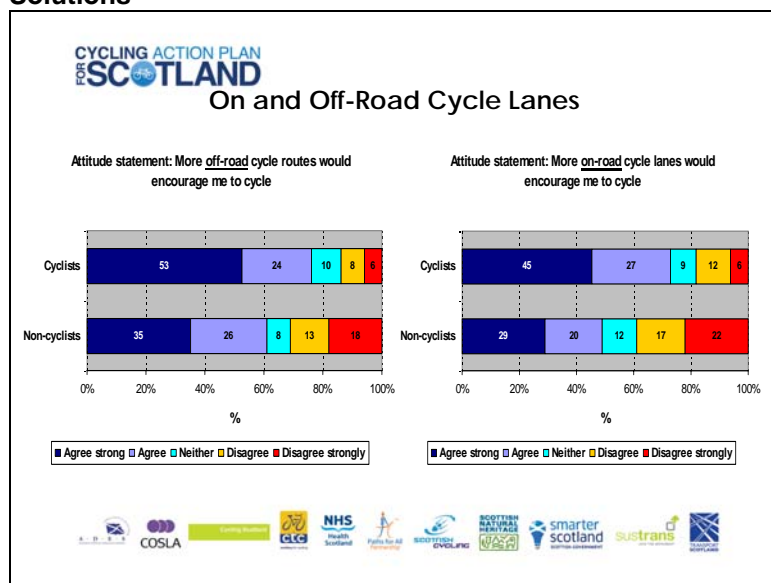
Reasons for Cycling

The chart here shows people's reasons for choosing cycling - at present the overwhelming reason for cycling is for health and fitness.

Barriers to Cycling

This graph shows the factors the public identified as deterrents to cycling in the telephone surveys. Clearly, at 29%, fear of traffic and feeling unsafe on the roads is the major deterrent. Other comments such as a lack of road space and good routes also support the idea that people don't like cycling on the roads in Scotland.

Solutions



When looking at the solutions people suggested for overcoming the barriers identified for cycling, the overwhelming request seems to be for **segregated cycle facilities**, away from traffic where possible. The graphs show that while there is a widespread opinion among cyclists and non-cyclists that some form of cycle specific route would encourage them to cycle more, the preference is clearly for off road facilities. Both groups felt that these would be more likely to achieve a higher growth in cycling levels.

One thing that is interesting to note is that despite large numbers of people saying they would like to see less traffic on the roads, their suggested solution to this is segregated cycle lanes. People seem to assume that the prospect of reducing traffic on the roads is not a realistic option, but if we are to act on the wishes of a public who want less traffic, then maybe traffic reduction should be something for us to consider.

Other suggestions from the Public

Actions rather than words

People want tangible encouragement to cycle, not just advertising messages with no substance behind them.

Above all - consistency across facilities

Too many cycle paths are broken up, with good quality sections split up with either poor quality lanes or no cycle lane at all, which is frustrating.

Public bike hire schemes

Free and low-cost bike hire schemes in urban centres have worked really well overseas, and respondents to the survey in Scotland have said they'd like them here too.

Bike lockers

There was a lot of anxiety over bike theft, so lockers were a popular suggestion in combating theft.

Cycling Scotland's View

The overwhelming response from the public consultation was that people do not like cycling amongst traffic, and would be encouraged to cycle by better segregated facilities, either on or off-road. Evidence from other countries with high levels of cycling shows that this is a key factor in getting more people cycling, but it also needs to be supported by traffic reduction measures, good quality trip-end facilities such as secure bike parking, high quality multi-stage cycle training for children and adults, promotion and events and measures to discourage car use.

2. Is enough progress being made in developing and delivering improvements in the uptake of cycling?

There is a wide range of organisations working to promote greater use of active travel in Scotland, including Cycling Scotland, Sustrans, CTC, Paths for All and Scotland's 32 local authorities. Cycling Scotland believes that some good work is being done by all these organisations, and this group of organisations are increasingly working in close partnership to achieve a co-ordinated approach to promoting active travel in Scotland.

Increased levels of cycling and active travel have real potential to reduce carbon emissions and increase physical activity levels. Programmes to realise these benefits are not however prioritised by all public funded

agencies or adopted by large proportions of the private sector. More should be done to ensure that public funded agencies and the private sector adopt and deliver such programmes as a condition of funding and/or demonstration of their corporate and social responsibility. Pilot projects by organisations in Scotland have proved to be successful and some good progress is being made. The biggest gains in active travel can be made in the schools setting and the workplace setting, by encouraging people to cycle or walk to work or school instead of driving.

Interventions by Sustrans and Cycling Scotland in the schools setting, which have included providing Safer Routes to Schools, money for cycle infrastructure, support for the School Travel Coordinator network, the Cycle Friendly Schools Award, The Riderz cycle stunt team and a social marketing campaign have contributed to encouraging numbers of children cycling to school. The Scottish Household Survey figures had reported that levels of cycling to school were at 1% for many years, yet the recent Sustrans Hands Up survey showed that overall 3.4% of primary school children cycle to school and at a regional level, in Moray the figure was 7.7% and in Highland an impressive 9.6%. In the school setting Cycling Scotland works in partnership with CTC, Eco Schools, Learning Teaching Scotland, Scottish Cycling, Scottish Government, Sport Scotland, Sustrans and Road Safety Scotland all of which are members of the Cycling in Schools Group, which meets regularly to ensure a consistent and unified approach is taken to get more children cycling to school.

The Curriculum for Excellence states that *“Learning through Health and Wellbeing promotes confidence, independent thinking and positive attitudes and dispositions. Because of this it is the responsibility of every teacher to contribute to learning and development in this area.”*
Building the Curriculum 1

This creates a potential for cycling to be embraced by every school. To realise this potential the cycling agencies need to influence and support teachers to gain knowledge and best practice examples within their own curricular specialism. In general there is a lack of similar progress in the workplace setting across all large employers in both the public and private sector. There are however isolated examples of better practice.

In the workplace setting there are numerous schemes in place, such as the Cycle to Work Scheme, which allows employees to buy bikes through a salary sacrifice scheme, and the Cycle Friendly Employer Award, which is administered by Cycling Scotland to encourage employers to provide the right facilities such as bike parking, lockers and showers, and provide incentives and encouragement to get more employees cycling to work. Across 26 Cycle Friendly Employer Sites, 16,000 people in Scotland now attend a cycle-friendly workplace and the Cycle to Work Scheme continues to grow in popularity. The latest Scottish Household Survey shows the percentage of people cycling to work is now 2.3%, up from 1.7% the previous year, which suggests that interventions in this setting do work, and with greater commitment could create high levels of modal shift away from motorised transport.

Good schemes are in place that can deliver impressive results, but overall the implementation of these schemes across the board is weak, and is let down by a lack of commitment. Despite the fact that cycling can deliver for so many important outcomes for the environment and public health there is a significant lack of commitment to increasing cycling levels by many local authorities, transport organisations, politicians and national government.

There is a perception which may also be a reality that there is insufficient funding available to carry out successful projects on a national scale. Cycling receives less than 1% of the overall transport budget. There is also a need for all public funded agencies and those in the private sector to show much higher levels of commitment to increasing levels of active travel.

3. If not, what are the barriers to progress?

Lack of funding and serious, sustained long-term commitment to active travel is the key barrier. At present there is a lack of political will to get more people cycling.

Cycle training is seen as being of huge importance to getting more people cycling. Only 50% of children receive any cycle training, and only 50% of those children receive cycle training in an on-road environment. Greater commitment is needed from Head Teachers and Directors of Education to increase the availability of cycle training at schools. Cycling and cycle training has the potential to deliver across all areas of the curriculum for excellence.

The majority of children receive only one of the three-levels recommended by the national standard for cycle training. All children in Scotland should receive progressive delivery of all three levels of national standard cycle training, with the second two stages delivered on-road, by accredited instructors. Cycling Scotland

would welcome further discussion between ministers, the Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland to address issues around the capacity to deliver training, the quality of the delivery and maintenance of standards throughout the delivery process. Cycling Scotland would advocate a coordinated and coherent approach to these training schemes with consideration in HMIE inspections to reflect the individual school commitment to cycle training and active travel. A priority should be to maximise the numbers completing level 2 of the national standard. We also need better monitoring of cycle training, to get accurate figures of how many children are receiving each level of training.

In England 200,000 children a year receive quality assured cycle training delivered by accredited instructors, costing £40 per head, paid for by grants. In Scotland training is delivered by a volunteer network of teachers, janitors, parents and classroom assistants supported by Road Safety Officers, Active School Coordinators and School Travel Plan Coordinators, where no quality assurance is in place.

Better engagement between active travel, greenspace and access agencies, local transport authorities, and Transport Scotland would help ensure major public transport, roads and path projects are designed and built to accommodate users of active travel modes, for instance, ensuring cycle parking at stations, cycle-friendly junctions at new road developments etc and an easily accessible network of cycling infrastructure. It is important that there is effective integration of all infrastructure systems and a perception by the users that the infrastructure is safe and fit for purpose.

4. Why do cycling and walking policies set out in national, regional and local transport plans not result in a greater modal share for walking and cycling?

Cycling Scotland carried out a National Assessment of Local Authority Cycling Policy in both 2005 and again in 2008, which saw all 32 local authorities in Scotland undergo a rigorous policy audit to see how well they set policy for encouraging cycling, and how well they delivered on that policy. The National Assessment 2008 demonstrated that almost every aspect of local authority cycling policy has advanced since 2005, with an overall improvement of 8%. A significant part of this improvement is attributable to local authorities implementing the recommendations of the 2005 Assessment.

The 2008 study found that across Scotland's local authorities there were areas where good work was being done, and areas where there was significant room for improvement.

Areas of strength

Cycling strategy development; staff resource allocation; Off-road child cycle skills development; School Travel Plans and associated interventions; Staff Travel Plan formulation; Use of cycle route design guidance; The implementation of individual cycle route measures; Individual promotional measures; and Strategy and scheme consultation.

Areas of development required:

Greater political leadership; More substantial and consistent capital and revenue funding; Inter-departmental co-ordination; Multi-stage delivery of child and adult cycle skills development; Integration of cycle network planning principles within development and roads planning; Integrating cycling with all modes of transport; Road traffic reduction measures; Development of outcome-related promotional strategies; Monitoring cycle use trends; Evaluation of policy and demonstration of intervention benefits; and Engaging users as strategic partners.

In many cases, local authorities are too focussed on local priorities to deliver the strategic objectives being asked of them. There is a need for consistent transport policy at a national level and a long term approach taken to sustainable investment and strategy. Regional Transport Partnerships have a key role in continuing to develop a strategic outlook and a partnership approach at a local level. National Agencies have a vital supporting role in providing expertise, guidance and delivery support. There is also a need to engage more effectively with the private sector.

Scotland generally has good cycling strategies across the board but all too often there is a lack of commitment and funding to get the strategies implemented.

The commitment demonstrated by local authorities to cycling is growing. In April Fife Council launched a Cycling Charter, and in May, Edinburgh City Council signed the Charter of Brussels at the Velo City conference committing the city to a 15% cycling modal share by 2020. Glasgow City Council has embarked on a city-wide Cycling Strategy and Aberdeenshire Council launched a new Cycling and Walking strategy in the last few weeks.

There is an urgent need for national and local monitoring of cycling levels. It is assumed that cycling and walking policies set out in national, regional and local transport plans do not result in a greater modal share for walking and cycling because we have not seen an increase in the only existing national statistic, which

comes from the Scottish Household Survey. Cycling Scotland believes that this survey is not adequate for attaining accurate statistics for cycling, and is seeking to work with all local authorities to work on consistent cycle monitoring for all areas of Scotland. There is also a need to measure modal share across urban areas, as this is where cycle commuting is able to make the highest gains in replacing car journeys. Statistics for European countries are usually reported by municipality area - in Copenhagen cycling's modal share is 36%, whereas in Denmark as a whole it is 18%. Edinburgh's modal share for cycling is 4%, 4 times greater than the national average modal share of 1%.

5. What further action is required by the Scottish Government, local authorities and other bodies to ensure that significant progress is made in the development and implementation of walking and cycling, particularly if transport is to make a greater and more meaningful contribution to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions?

Scottish Government, local authorities and other relevant bodies simply need to make the promotion of cycling a priority.

53% of all car journeys are less than 5 miles – this distance can easily be achieved on a bike and in urban areas can often be done in less time than in a car. Scotland has set a target to reduce its carbon emissions by 42%, slashing its current output of 68million tonnes of CO₂ a year by 28.5million tonnes. Each 3km journey taken by bike instead of the car saves 1kg of carbon dioxide¹. A 10% modal share for cycling could **save half a million tonnes of CO₂ emissions each year**. It would also save the health service about £2billion a year due to improved public health. Transport in Scotland is 98% reliant on oil – yet 37% of households have access to at least one bike.

Huge gains can be made by promoting cycling – it has been proven to work in countries across Europe, and with the same commitment and investment it will work in Scotland too.

Scottish Government investment in Cycle Funding fell from 2007/08 to 2008/09, currently just £17m per annum. This is less than 1% of the Scottish Government's transport budget and compares negatively with European neighbours

- Denmark **£22.97/capita**
- Amsterdam **£26.95/capita²**
- Scotland **£3.30/capita³**
- England **£1.20/capita⁴**

Cycling England carried out extensive benchmarking against European cities such as Copenhagen in Denmark and Groningen and Amsterdam in the Netherlands and found they had invested an average of at least £10 per head per year for 20 years.

The current vision set out in CAPS is that *“By 2020, 10% of all journeys taken in Scotland will be by bike.”* Even if achieved, this does not compare well compared to the ultimate scenario of close to 30% as enjoyed by countries including Denmark and the Netherlands. Low modal share in our cities can especially be seen as a result of car-orientated traffic policy as well as lack of collective cycling culture, extensive suburbanisation and large scale car infrastructure.

To deliver the benefits outlined, and meet objectives around promoting active travel, far greater emphasis need to be placed upon cycling. A correspondingly increased share of the transport budget is required to meet Scotland's responsibility to improving the health of the nation, and improving the environment we live in.

Cycling Scotland calls for greater leadership and commitment by government, local authorities and public-funded organisations to put priority on increasing the modal share of all trips by bicycle. Adoption by all publicly funded bodies of a Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment model, similar to that developed by the NHS and Sustainable Development Commission would be valuable in enforcing policy change. To achieve a significant increase in cycling's modal share of trips Cycling Scotland propose:

- 🚲 Greater investment in providing quality training through lifelong learning
- 🚲 Improved road infrastructure
- 🚲 Road traffic reduction measures

¹ Figures from Ghazi, P. and Lewis, R. (2007) *The Low Carbon Diet: Wise Up, Chill Out and Save the World*, Short Books, London

² Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat 2007, *Cycling in the Netherlands*

³ The Scottish Government, 2007, *The Scottish Budget 2006/07*

⁴ Hansard, 2007 *Written answers for 10th December 2007*

- ⌚ Robust quantitative and qualitative measuring and evaluation
- ⌚ Increased promotion and co-ordination of cycling activities
- ⌚ Legal powers to promote access and keep people safe should be introduced
- ⌚ Promotion and facilitation of joined up journeys, linking cycling with public transport networks.

6. What can Scotland learn from good practice/successful implementation in other countries?

Scotland should take heed of the strategies put in place in Denmark and the Netherlands – these were long term strategies that put in place consistent investment and commitment over a long period of time and the towns and cities were planned and designed to make cycling an easy option.

Cycling was not always thriving in the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. Cycling levels plummeted in all three countries from about 1950 to 1975 (Dutch Bicycling Council, 2006). It was only through a massive reversal in transport and urban planning policies in the mid-1970s that cycling was revived to its current successful state. In 1950, cycling levels were higher in the UK than they are now in Germany: almost 15% of all trips. Just as in these other countries, cycling in the UK plummeted from 1950 to 1975, but British cycling never recovered. It continued to fall to its current level of 1.3% of trips, only slightly higher than the 0.9% bike share of trips in the USA.

By following the example of the strategies put in place by the Netherlands and Denmark, which succeeded based on high level commitment at both national and local levels, significant long term funding and a holistic approach to developing cycling gradually over a long period of time, high levels of cycling can be achieved in Scotland.

Studies from the Cycling Demonstration Towns (CDTs) in England, where funding and commitment over a three year period in 6 towns was given to increasing cycling levels showed that across all six CDTs, cycling levels increased on average by 28% in 3 years. Cycling England's report concluded that "The CDTs represent a range of regions, types, and topographies and there is no reason to believe this success cannot be replicated in other towns and cities in England given two simple but crucial criteria: consistent political leadership and a determination to champion sustainable travel; and sustained investment over time." Cycling Scotland believes the same is true for Scotland.

Cycling England found in the Cycling Demonstration Towns the investment in the CDTs had a high benefit-cost ratio, estimated to be at least X:1. This takes account of the health benefits (due to more people being physically active) and the benefits in terms of congestion, pollution and carbon emissions. Even high-cost infrastructure pays back. Cycling England has shown that even a piece of cycling infrastructure costing £1m needs to convert only 109 people to regular cyclists in order to pay back in terms of health, congestion and pollution benefits⁵.

⁵ 1 An investment of £100k requires an overall increase of just 11 more people cycling regularly for the life of the project. An investment of £1m would require only 109 additional cyclists (cycling at least 3 times per week through the full life of the project – assumed for the purposes of calculation to be 30 years.) This does not mean that the same people must continue to cycle, but that on average, there should be 109 more cyclists each year than would be the case were the investment not made.

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

26th Meeting, 2008 (Session 3)

Tuesday 24 November 2009

Subordinate Legislation Cover Note

Title of Instrument	The Railway Closures (Exclusion) Scotland Order 2009 (SSI 2009/371)
Standing Order	10.4 (Negative)
Laid Date	29 October 2009
Circulated to Members	19 November 2009
Meeting Date	24 November 2009
Reporting Deadline	30 November 2009

Purpose

1. Section 30 of the Railways Act 2005 provides the closures procedure where there is a proposal by a funding authority to close a station. This Order provides for the exclusion from that closures procedure in relation to the stations at Drumgelloch and Bathgate. The stations at Drumgelloch and Bathgate are being relocated as provided for in the Airdrie-Bathgate Railway and Linked Improvements Act 2007 (the "2007 Act") and the principle of relocation of those stations is established by the 2007 Act. Article 2 of this Order provides that the stations at Drumgelloch and Bathgate are excluded from the application of section 30 of the 2005 Act.

Subordinate Legislation Committee Report

2. The Subordinate Legislation Committee drew this instrument to the attention of the lead committee and the Parliament on the grounds that an explanation was sought from and provided by the Scottish Government, with which it is satisfied. An extract from the Subordinate Legislation Committee's 47th Report 2009 (Session 3) is attached at annexe A of this note.

Recommendation

3. The Committee is invited to consider any issues which it wishes to raise in reporting to the Parliament on this instrument.

Steve Farrell
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Annexe A

The Railway Closures (Exclusion) Scotland Order 2009 (SSI 2009/371)

Section 30 of the Railways Act 2005 provides the closures procedure, where there is a proposal by a funding authority to close a station. This Order provides for the exclusion from that procedure in relation to the railway stations at Drumgelloch and Bathgate.

Correspondence between the Committee and the Scottish Government is reproduced in an appendix to this annexe.

The response acknowledges that putting the definition of the Railways Act 2005 as the “2005 Act” in the preamble to the instrument, and so the recital provisions, and not in the operative provisions of the instrument, was a drafting error.

The Committee notes that the instrument as drafted has no effective definition of the 2005 Act for the purposes of the Order, since the preamble is not part of the instrument. This error is compounded by the attempted provision of a definition which was in fact completely unnecessary, as the defined term is only used once in the Order.

The Committee would, however, agree with the Government view that, having regard to the context of the instrument (read as a whole) the reference to the “2005 Act” in article 2 would be very likely to be interpreted correctly. So it is not considered likely that this error would affect the validity or the operation of the instrument.

The Committee reports that the instrument contains a drafting error, in respect that the definition of the Railways Act 2005 contained in the preamble is of no legislative effect. The Committee observes that no definition was required, since the 2005 Act is referred to once only.

APPENDIX 3

The Railway Closures (Exclusion) Scotland Order 2009 (SSI 2009/371)

On 5 November 2009 the Scottish Government was asked:

(a) what it considers the effect of placing the definition of "the 2005 Act" in the preamble to the Order is, given that this is not part of the operative provisions,

(b) whether this affects the meaning or operation of article 2 where that expression is used, and

(c) why in doing so it has departed from standard drafting practice?

The Scottish Government responds as follows:

We recognise that in terms of standard drafting practice the reference in article 2 should be to the "Railways Act 2005" in full rather than relying on the definition which has been included in the preamble and we are grateful to the committee for pointing out this oversight.

We consider however that it will be clear to the reader that it is the Railways Act 2005 which is being referred to in article 2: there is nothing in the operative part of the Order which is in direct conflict with the words used in the preamble and there is no other Act from 2005 relating to the subject matter which could cause confusion.

As such we are of the view that it will have no effect on the intended meaning.

TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

NOTE ON PETITION PE1181

24 November 2009

Introduction

1. This note asks the Committee to consider for the second time the following petition which was lodged on 25 August 2008:

Petition by Helena Coxshall calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make representations to the UK Government about the cost of fuel in the Western Isles and other rural areas of Scotland which are now amongst the most expensive places in the world to buy petrol or diesel; to highlight in particular the refusal of the UK Government to introduce measures similar to those operating in France which reduce the tax on fuel in very remote areas; to protest at the serious consequences which high fuel prices have for fishermen, motorists and businesses in island and rural areas and to request parity with mainland city prices.

Background

2. The Public Petitions Committee (PPC) considered the petition twice and agreed the following actions:
 - Meeting on 23 September 2008¹ - to seek responses on the issues raised in the petition from the Scottish Government.
 - Meeting on 13 January 2009² - to refer the petition to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee 'as it could deal with transport fuel costs and, as part of its climate change remit, consider what extra funding could be provided for renewables and extra insulation for housing and businesses in the outer isles, to reduce demand for fuel' and write to the Scottish Government seeking a response to the specific points raised during the meeting of 13 January.
3. The PPC and the Scottish Government wrote to each other on numerous occasions regarding the contents of this petition. Copies of these letters are available from the Clerk.

Action taken by the Committee

3. The Committee considered this petition at its meeting on Tuesday 24 February 2009. For further background information see paper [TIC/S3/09/7/3](#).
8. At that meeting, the Committee noted that the UK Government has clearly stated that it has no intention of pursuing the reduction of fuel duty in remote and rural Scotland. The Committee also noted that, despite this

¹ [Link to Official Report 23 September 2008 - c.1075](#)

² [Link to Official Report 13 January 2009 - c.1395](#)

Scottish Government has undertaken to continue to ask the UK Government to address the issue.

9. The Committee agreed to write to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth asking that as part of discussions with the UK Government and Scottish Fuels, consideration should be given to the following:

- the arrangements for conveying fuel to the islands with the aim of establishing as to whether any mitigating measures can be taken;
- the availability of fuel in the islands; and
- the position of islands in relation to fuel prices as distinct from other rural areas.

Response from the Scottish Government

10. In March 2009, the Cabinet Secretary responded to the Committee reiterating the point that, despite the UK Government's persistent refusal to pursue a reduction in fuel duty in remote and rural Scotland, that the Scottish Government will continue to highlight this issue in any related correspondence with Her Majesty's Treasury. A copy of this letter is attached at annexe A to this paper.

11 The Committee received a further response from the Cabinet Secretary in November 2009. The letter stated that, although Government officials were unable to meet with Scottish Fuels due to the unavailability of representatives of the company, they did meet with a wide range of fuel companies in Scotland and explored the issues the Committee asked them to raise. A copy of this letter is attached at annexe B to this paper.

Recommended Action

12. The Committee is invited to:

- Note the UK Government has clearly stated it has no intention of pursuing the reduction of fuel duty in remote and rural Scotland.
- Note that, despite this, the Scottish Government has undertaken to continue to pursue this issue with the UK Government;
- Note the response from the Scottish Government;
- Agree to write to the petitioner providing them with a copy of all the correspondence received to date on this petition;
- Agree to request an update as appropriate from the Scottish Government on any developments in relation to discussions with Her Majesty's Treasury and consider closing the petition.

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Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth

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Patrick Harvie MSP

Convener

Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee

Room T3.40

Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

Our ref: Petition PE1181

27 March 2009

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1181: FOLLOW UP

Thank you for your letter of 12 March 2009, on behalf of the Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee regarding the consideration of Petition PE1181.

As you will know, there has been a series of exchanges with the UK Government on this issue. The most recent exchange was on the 12 February when I wrote to the UK Government on this matter in relation to Petition PE1181. The Chancellor of the Exchequer responded on 3 March 2009, again refusing to pursue a reduction in fuel duty in remote and rural Scotland. At this time a further response is not warranted as we have set out the Scottish Government's position, responded to the UK Government's return and undertaken all the requests made by the Petitions Committee. However we will continue to highlight this issue in any related correspondence with Her Majesty's Treasury.

I note the request by the Committee to examine various points in our discussions with the UK Government and Scottish Fuels.

As highlighted in my original letter to the Committee, the Scottish Government is keen to meet with all stakeholders involved in this issue, including Scottish Fuels. Scottish Government officials are due to meet with representatives of Scottish Fuels very soon and I agree that the areas that the Committee has requested should be examined as part of that process. We will then report back to the Committee following this meeting.

I hope that this letter addresses the points raised in your letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any clarification.

JOHN SWINNEY

Annexe B

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth

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Our ref: Petition PE1181

9 November 2009

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1181: FOLLOW UP

In my letter of 26 March 2009 I undertook to report back to the Committee on the outcome of meetings between Scottish Government officials, Scottish Fuels and other relevant stakeholders.

Over the summer, my officials met with a wide range of fuel companies in Scotland to discuss and gain a fuller understanding of fuel related issues including rural petrol prices. Unfortunately, the meeting with Scottish Fuels did not take place due to the unavailability of representatives of the company.

Responses to the specific questions raised in your letter of 12 March, informed by the information gained at the stakeholder meetings, are given below:

The arrangements for conveying fuel to the islands with the aim of establishing as to whether any mitigating measures can be taken.	Fuel is predominately distributed from terminals on the islands to the customers. The terminals themselves are in turn fed by sea tankers usually from Grangemouth, via Aberdeen or Inverness, although fuel can also be brought in from Scrabster and some English refineries when necessary.
The availability of fuel on the islands.	The availability of fuel is largely driven by market conditions, with those fuel suppliers which operate the terminals bringing in fuel as described above. In addition, some fuel suppliers have started to economically transfer fuel to the islands by road tanker – introducing some competition into the market on the islands.
The position of islands in relation to fuel prices as	The fuel suppliers gave a number of reasons for the increased costs on the islands and

<p>distinct from other rural areas.</p>	<p>indeed other rural areas. The main factor mentioned was the volume of fuel purchased, with sites which have a high throughput to purchase larger quantities of fuel and therefore negotiate a better price with their suppliers. Inevitably, the sites on most of the islands and many of the rural locations are small throughput sites. The other major factor in driving up costs is shipping fuel by sea tanker from the terminals on the mainland. This adds a significant overhead which is generally passed on to customers as the profit margins of most filling stations are very small.</p>
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I hope that this letter addresses the points raised in your letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any clarification.

JOHN SWINNEY