



## **We Walk, We Cycle, We Vote – expanded policies for parties**

### **Investment: Provide sustained, long term investment in both cycling and walking, reaching 10% of the transport budget**

Although the Scottish government is spending record amounts on active travel, the figure is still too low (approximately £5 per head, compared with Dutch levels of c. £20-30 per head). Just as importantly, the lack of a long-term commitment means that we aren't getting value for money from the money that is spent. Because additional funds are announced at short notice, councils have to scramble around for projects that can be done quickly rather than those that meet the greatest need. Although councils have been encouraged in the latest Cycling Action Plan for Scotland to create active travel strategies, it is impossible for them to take a truly strategic approach to anything without knowing what the funding will be. If the commitment for spending is there, then councils will be able to make long-term plans to develop a proper coherent network of cycling routes, and to create the environments where walking is an attractive and safe option. Local and national government will also be able to invest in the new skills needed.

We would like to see a commitment to a clear and rising share of the transport budget going to active travel, to reach 10% of the total transport budget by the end of the next parliament. This needs to cover not spending by local authorities, so this should be a platform for both the Holyrood and local elections. Nationally, there are a number of measures that the Scottish government already uses for spending on active travel, specifically the ringfenced Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets money, and funding of bodies like Sustrans and Paths for All. A commitment to increase both, year on year, would be one way of ramping up spending and encourage local authorities to plan longer term in order to benefit from the money available. More radical would be a commitment to creating proper, funded, strategies for active travel at both national and local level.

### **Infrastructure: Build and maintain dedicated cycling infrastructure, enabling people aged 8-80 to cycle**

In the last few years, it has become increasingly clear that without high-quality cycling infrastructure, cycling will never make up more than a few percent of all trips, by a minority of the population. Just as importantly, well-designed dedicated cycling infrastructure - the kind that is both attractive to fast cyclists and accessible to children and those who use adapted cycles - can benefit everyone. Cyclists no longer have to use bus lanes and pedestrians are not put into conflict with bikes on pavements, while removing a lane of traffic to make space for cycle tracks cuts casualties for all road users and in some cases has even served to speed up motorised traffic. Unfortunately, our current design standards are too ambiguous and don't reflect best continental practice. New projects are still putting bikes onto shared pavements with pedestrians, installing barriers that exclude all but conventional bikes and leaving cyclists to negotiate busy junctions and parked cars with no protection apart from some paint.

However, thinking only about cycling and cycling infrastructure - or even cycling and walking - is to frame the problem too narrowly. The Dutch approach is built upon the principle of Sustainable Safety, which considers all roads and all modes of travel. Properly transforming our towns, cities and

countryside will mean looking at the network as a whole, and ensuring that pedestrians, bikes and motorised traffic are separated out where necessary - whether through dedicated cycle tracks or 'unravelling' routes (where cyclists and pedestrians have their own routes which are not through-routes for motorised traffic). This has been very successful not only at building cycling to 25% of all journeys, but also reducing road deaths particularly for vulnerable road users: while the UK and the Netherlands have similar figures for traffic casualties as a whole, cycling casualties per mile travelled are much lower in the Netherlands, despite higher numbers of children and older people cycling, and a much lower take-up of either helmets or high-visibility clothing.

In the short term, we would like to see the Scottish government update the existing Cycling by Design document to enshrine the six principles of [Space for Cycling](#): protected space on main roads, removing through motor traffic in residential areas, lower speed limits, cycle-friendly town centres, safe routes to school and routes through green spaces. Standards should reflect the best of the UK design standards (the London or Welsh Cycling Design Standards) and should be given real teeth: no funding should be given for projects unless the standards are met.

Nor should the design guidelines only be for 'cycling' projects in the narrow sense, but for all our roads. The principles within Designing Streets or its updated successor should be implemented in every development and regeneration scheme. Scottish Government policy promotes the user hierarchy where our streets and spaces are designed to meet the needs of people on foot in the first instance, then cyclists, with private car users considered last however this should be reflected in day to day decision making (including maintenance priorities). No new road or development should be built without walking and cycling built in from the start, and no roads (trunk or local) should be upgraded without being brought up to standard for active travel as part of the work.

Longer term, we would like to see a commitment to adapting the principles of Sustainable Safety to Scotland's roads, including changes in the traffic laws where necessary.

### **Safety: Promote and deliver safer roads for both walking and cycling**

In the long term, we believe that building safer infrastructure for both walking and cycling will deliver safer roads. However, in the short term, we need to make all the roads we have safer through more immediate action. There is no single policy measure which will do this on its own; instead, a package will be needed. This could include lower default speed limits (e.g. 20mph in town, 40mph for unclassified rural roads), stronger enforcement of existing traffic laws, more thorough investigation of road deaths, safer lorry design, improved driver training and re-training, continuous and coherent road safety and driver behaviour campaigns, and a clear duty of care for drivers towards more vulnerable road users. Adoption of presumed liability in Civil Law can help to establish the principle of duty of care. Regarding driver behaviour change, we would like to see the same social intolerance of speeding and other motoring offences and inconsiderate driving that we have seen for drunk driving and not wearing seat belts.

The important thing is that we stop treating deaths on the roads as inevitable and recognise that in many cases they are preventable. There is almost no other walk of life where we consider premature deaths and injury as 'just one of those things'. Scotland is already pioneering a 'zero harm' approach to patient safety within its NHS - we need to bring the same evidence-led approach to our roads.