

## RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY

### SUBMISSION FROM CYCLING SCOTLAND

#### SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE PLAN (RPP3)

1. Cycling Scotland welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Scottish Government's Draft Climate Change Plan. We are pleased to note the government's continued commitment to the overall vision of by 2020, 10% of all journeys made will be cycle journeys, and the clear linkage this has with reductions to carbon emissions in Scotland, and their contribution to climate change.
2. Cycling Scotland is the national cycling promotion organisation for Scotland, working to establish cycling as an acceptable, attractive and practical lifestyle option with a vision of a sustainable, inclusive and healthy Scotland where anyone, anywhere can enjoy all the benefits of cycling.
  - **Progress to date in cutting emissions within the sector/sectors of interest and implementing the proposals set out in RPP2.**
3. Although the Scottish Government has met their overall target to reduce carbon emissions by 42% by 2020 six years early, emissions from transport are still an acknowledged concern. Transport accounts for 28% of total carbon emissions, with only a marginal decline from the 1990 baseline. Roads (cars, vans and motorcycles) are the single biggest contributor at 73%, an increase from 1990 baseline, and demand for road use by vehicles has increased by 22%<sup>1</sup>.
4. Scotland continues to face a significant challenge in terms of vehicle carbon emissions and there is a clear need to address these both as a significant contributor to climate change and as a public health issue. A recent survey shows that there are now 38 pollution zones in Scotland, where air quality standards are regularly broken and levels of pollution from emissions are considered unsafe and illegal. Five of these zones were announced in 2016. Vehicle emissions/vehicle-derived air pollution is also associated with a range of health conditions including cancer, heart attacks, breathing difficulties, and strokes. The research reported that this air pollution is estimated to cause 2500 early deaths each year and is second only to smoking in terms of its mortality impacts<sup>2</sup>.
5. Cycling is a viable and cost-effective way to reduce carbon emissions, as a zero-carbon option, to help move Scotland towards a carbon-neutral economy, and we would like to see greater emphasis of this in the draft Plan. Encouraging more Scots to use a bike instead of a car for short trips can significantly reduce the huge contribution road transport makes to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. 65.4% of car journeys

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government (2017) Draft Climate Change Plan: The draft third report on policies and proposals 2017-2032 <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00513102.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk/most-polluted-streets>

are less than 5 km<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup>, offering the greatest possibility to switch to cycling. A switch from carbon-intensive, motorised transport to cycling (and walking) – or public transport in certain circumstances – makes a positive contribution to lowering carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions and therefore positively contributes to conserving and enhancing biodiversity and the natural environment. We welcome the introduction of Low-carbon travel hubs in Scotland, and are fully committed to supporting them, particularly Active Travel Hubs.

- **The scale of reductions proposed within their sector/sectors and appropriateness and effectiveness of the proposals and policies within the draft RPP3 for meeting the annual emissions targets and contributing towards the 2020 and 2050 targets**
6. There is a need to focus on the contribution cycling (and active travel), and achieving the Government's 10% cycling mode share vision, can make to reducing emissions.
  7. **Broad focus required on 'decarbonising transport'** - There is a significant emphasis on 'decarbonising transport' in terms of the overall total contribution towards reducing emissions and it is worth noting:
    - The carbon reduction and wider-environmental benefit of electric and alternatively powered vehicles.
    - The policies and proposals as part of the RPP3's decarbonising transport package should emphasise the wider health, environmental, social and other benefits that increased cycling brings, as an ideal form of preventative spend.
  8. Cycling emits zero emissions at source when used as a mode for transport and the lifecycle (including production) has a mere fraction of the lifetime CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to low-carbon vehicles and private motor vehicle transport. A report by the European Cyclists Federation<sup>5</sup>, shows life cycle CO<sub>2</sub> emissions inventories of various modes of transport. The data shows that 21g of CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted per passenger kilometre travelled by bike, whereas for cars, the figure is more than ten times higher at 271g CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger kilometre travelled. The figures do take into consideration emissions impacts from extra food that cyclists may need to consume as a result of cycling more, but do NOT consider greenhouse gas impacts from construction, operation and maintenance of road infrastructure, road accidents, parking and more (where the report indicates that when taking a parking space into account, the average carbon emissions per mile for a car can increase by as much as 10%). We note reference is made to Low Emission Zones (LEZs) in the draft plan and are generally supportive of these zones. Where infrastructure exists for electric vehicles, this needs to be able to be readily accessed by electric bikes.

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<sup>3</sup> Transport Scotland (2016) Travel and Transport in Scotland 2015, page 61  
[http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd\\_reports/uploaded\\_reports/j450918/j450918.pdf](http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j450918/j450918.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Car journey includes both driver car and passenger car journeys

<sup>5</sup> European Cyclists' Federation. (2011). Cycle More Often 2 Cool Down the Planet: Quantifying CO<sub>2</sub> savings of Cycling.

9. Further, vehicles on the road prevent a 'natural' volume of cycling (and walking) activity from occurring in urban areas, where 'natural' means the volume of cycling (and walking) which would take place if people were able to choose the mode of transport they use based on their preferences, where vehicle traffic did not cause them insecurity and pose other barriers<sup>6</sup>. This would remain the case even if the vehicles were increasingly electrical and had improved efficiency.
10. **Better integration with public transport** – The current Draft Climate Change plan highlights that the percentage of emissions from rail is increasing. In 2014, emissions from rail accounted for 1.3% of all transport admissions, 44% above the 1990 baseline figure, and is largely a result of increasing demand for rail services. This presents a key opportunity for increased emphasis on the need for better integration between cycling and public transport, and to promote the role cycling can play in making all parts of a journey – from start point to destination – as sustainable as possible. Joining up cycling journeys with truly integrated rail services means that longer distance journeys are able to be made in a much more sustainable way, and opens up the opportunity to create better conditions for cycling at and around stations to allow for this integration. The benefit is not only felt in terms of cycle-rail tourism, but also to support longer commuting and utility journeys that could be made by a bicycle-train combination. Key to ensuring conditions to support this are the establishment of key cycling routes, cycle parking/storage, provision of bikes, such as cycle-hire schemes at stations, public transport timetabling, ticketing and booking processes, and clear information on how people can integrate bike and train for their journey.

- **The appropriateness of the timescales over which the proposals and policies within the draft RPP3 are expected to take effect**

11. Cycling Scotland acknowledge that the overall emissions reduction target for 2020 has been met by the Scottish Government 6 years early and we welcome this development. However, emissions from transport continue to make a significant contribution to overall emission levels and there has only been a marginal decline in vehicle emissions from the 1990 baseline.
12. The Draft Plan strongly emphasises technological and fuel efficiency improvements which cannot be guaranteed or to deliver the pace of change/improvement required, and therefore the timescales laid out in the Plan may be challenging. Further, with specific regard to cycling, we would like to see funding guaranteed beyond 2021 and a continued promotion of cycling to recognise the contribution that cycling (and active travel) makes to reducing emissions.
13. We consider that greater emphasis must be placed on behaviour change and it should be acknowledged that this will not happen overnight. It is imperative that work commences immediately to influence behaviour and that a trajectory of targets is set out to demonstrate progress. Only by adopting this approach will it

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<sup>6</sup> Saelensminde, Kjartan (2004) Cost-benefit analysis of walking and cycling track networks taking into account insecurity, health effects and external costs of motorised traffic, *Transportation Research Part A* 38:593-606

be possible to influence people's travel choices effectively and make a significant contribution to reducing emissions from transport.

- **The extent to which the proposals and policies reflect considerations about behaviour change and opportunities to secure wider benefits (e.g. environmental, financial and health) from specific interventions in particular sectors.**

14. There are a number of wider benefits from cycling which the Plan should emphasise.
15. Places and spaces designed for cycling have strong economic benefits associated with them including increased retail activity, higher house prices, reduced health costs and greater productivity<sup>7</sup>. Cycling is good for business. It creates greater footfall which is associated with an increase in trade. A recent report analysing the benefits of cycling in a number of countries found that annual economic impact of people cycling is almost nine times as much as the one-off public investment to construct cycling infrastructure. In the UK, in particular, cycling projects and infrastructure were shown to increase both employment and visitor numbers, each by 300%<sup>8</sup>. This could be achieved by ensuring planning understands the need for balancing investment in active travel infrastructure and makes it as easily achievable as possible.
16. Currently, 6% of adults regularly cycle to work in Scotland and 5% of children to primary school<sup>9</sup>. Investment in cycling infrastructure – such as segregated cycle lanes and cycling parking facilities – would help to increase the proportion of people cycling as their main mode of transport for their daily commute and accelerate/enhance the economic benefits accrued. Recent research undertaken on behalf of the Scottish Government, which draws on Sustrans Hands Up Scotland Survey, highlighted that there are a number of clear benefits to children and young people from participating in cycling and active travel. As well as the obvious health benefits, the research reported that the social interaction skills of the children improved. Further, the evidence suggests that children who travel actively to school are better and more confident learners, and are likely to be more active later in life<sup>10</sup>. Embedding cycling and active travel as part of everyday life is crucially important and can increase physical activity levels amongst children and young people, helping to improve their mental health and wellbeing. It reduces car congestion in local communities, improves air quality and makes the journey to school a pleasant part of the day-to-day routine.
17. Cycling helps promote an active lifestyle, which can lead to a reduction in risk factors for 'inactivity' diseases and result in lower health care costs. Increased physical activity also fosters a greater sense of physical and mental wellbeing.

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<sup>7</sup> Designed to Move: Active Cities report - <http://e13c7a4144957cea5013-f2f5ab26d5e83af3ea377013dd602911.r77.cf5.rackcdn.com/resources/pdf/en/active-cities-full-report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Cycling Scotland (2017) Annual Cycling Monitoring Report 2017 - <http://www.cyclingscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/3191-Annual-Monitoring-Report-2017-v1.1-SP.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Scottish Government (2016) Tackling the School Run Research Study Final Report, research undertaken by Systra, Sustrans and Wellside Research <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00513039.pdf>

18. The introduction of cycle-friendly infrastructure, in particular segregated cycle lanes, can help reduce accident rates and improve safety for all road users. Research shows that marked, segregated cycle lanes can reduce vehicle-bike accidents by as much as 30%<sup>11</sup>. Currently in Scotland, 84.4% of all cycle accidents involve a car or taxi, and 88% of accidents occur in urban and built-up areas<sup>12</sup>. Well-developed cycling infrastructure therefore provides considerable opportunity to significantly reduce road accident rates, and improve safety.
19. Cycling Scotland operates a Cycling Potential Tool which can model emissions savings for a defined/specified area from realising the cycling potential. Going forward, we offer to use this Tool to help contribute to further evidence gathering and in any discussions on how the cycling potential tool can be incorporated more into decision making and strategic thinking around transport policies. We believe the Tool is of particular relevance to the National Transport Strategy and Strategic Transport Projects reviews and ensuring that investment in cycling is prioritised where it will have the greatest impact, including on cutting emissions.

Cycling Scotland  
10 February 2017

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<sup>11</sup> Designed to Move: Active Cities report - <http://e13c7a4144957cea5013-f2f5ab26d5e83af3ea377013dd602911.r77.cf5.rackcdn.com/resources/pdf/en/active-cities-full-report.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Cycling Scotland (2017) Annual Cycling Monitoring Report 2017 - <http://www.cyclingscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/3191-Annual-Monitoring-Report-2017-v1.1-SP.pdf>