



for sustainable transport

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Donald Carmichael
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6 February 2013

Dear Mr Carmichael

Cycling Action Plan for Scotland — Refresh Exercise

Thank you for your letter of 21 December 2012, which invited us to comment on progress to date with regards to the Cycle Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) and to highlight issues that we think should be given higher priority.

We agree that much has been achieved relating to CAPS over the past couple of years, especially when dealing with such issues as:

- Cycle training for young people
- Cycle Friendly Employer scheme
- Ongoing development of the National Cycle Network
- Promotion and delivery of Safe Routes to School, 20mph zones and traffic calming measures.

However, Transform Scotland firmly believes that to achieve significant levels of cycling in Scotland will require major investment in infrastructure, combined with the introduction of cycle-oriented thinking to road designers and engineers. These are the areas of investment that will deliver significant modal shift in travel habits within our towns and cities.

Transform Scotland's own research highlights that one of main barriers to the widespread adoption of cycling as a mode of travel are unsafe road conditions and an unwillingness of many people to cycle on busy roads while surrounded by fast moving buses, lorries and cars (see e.g. our 2010 report *Civilising the Streets*). Other factors identified were lack of leadership at national and local level and a lack of funding to achieve meaningful infrastructure improvements.

We feel that much of what was suggested in the original CAPS still stands and that the more 'difficult' issues should now be addressed at national and local level. Therefore, in response to your request for our themes and priorities, we propose the following:

Provision of segregated cycle paths:

There can be little doubt from the experience of many countries (e.g. The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland) that the provision of safe, segregated, cycle lanes on busy roads encourages people to cycle to work

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or to shops or for leisure. We can think of no examples where significant levels of commuter cycling have been achieved in the absence of such infrastructure.

Leadership:

Strong support for cycling at a national and local level is another important ingredient for progress and eventual success.

- The Scottish Ministers should take personal responsibility for the national development of cycling as a key mode of transport, including oversight of the national programme and collaboration with local authority and other representatives with responsibility for cycling issues.
- Local politicians need to provide strong, visionary leadership to develop, implement, and carry through a robust, comprehensive, and long-term strategy for active travel. On occasion active travel investment might not be initially popular, especially when reallocating road space or funding away from private cars, but once improvements are in place, people will appreciate and support them.
- There should also be a senior official within every major local authority responsible for the development of cycling infrastructure within their community, supported by a group of engineers and with adequate funding. The role of this official would include the following responsibilities:
 - Development of a Master Plan for their area, in collaboration with local cycle groups, identifying where cycle lanes should be developed and the way they link to existing cycle networks.
 - Liaising with developers to ensure that cycling infrastructure forms an essential part of their plans.
 - Liaising with Transport Scotland and Network Rail to ensure that national road and rail developments in their area include cycling infrastructure with links to existing networks.
 - Liaising with Sustrans and neighbouring local authorities to ensure integration of infrastructure throughout the area.
 - Liaising with the police to ensure that law enforcement is carried out relating to such things as penalties for parking on cycle lanes or for cyclists failing to have lights while travelling in the dark.

Liability legislation:

It is common in most European countries for the cyclist to be offered protection by the law, whereby if a cyclist is injured or struck by a vehicle then the driver is held responsible unless proven otherwise.

The benefit of such a legal situation is that motorists become much more aware of their obligation to allow cyclist priority at road junctions or when over-taking in restricted space and in many other ways. In effect, it leads to more considerate and thoughtful behaviour and puts the most vulnerable road user in a more powerful position legally.

Monitoring progress:

Transform Scotland contributed an NPF3 proposal to the Scottish Government in association with Ramblers Scotland, Cycling Scotland, Sustrans Scotland and Paths for all ('Walking & Cycling National Infrastructure'), with cycling as a significant element. This proposal included several measurable targets that could be used by the Scottish Government to assess progress over the years. Two targets relating to cycling from the NPF3 proposal were:

1. Within urban areas, and within five years, every Scottish local authority should have at least one fully walking-and-cycling-friendly town (or major area of a city). This would include dedicated on-road, segregated cycle lanes, pedestrianisation and 'shared space' roads, expansion of Home Zones, 20mph speed limits in residential areas and priority routes, and re-designed road crossings and traffic signals to prioritise the needs of cyclists and pedestrians, etc.

2. By 2018, larger towns and settlements will have worked with Transport Scotland to identify key strategic routes within a 5-mile radius of the centre of the town which will enable a large

proportion of the population to choose to travel into these towns by bicycle or on foot. These routes will provide continuous, safe paths segregated from the traffic to form a series of 'spokes' into the centre of the towns, as well as linking into the National Cycle Network to enable further walking/cycling routes to be developed giving safe access to other parts of town.

Funding Arrangements:

Funding programmes from central government play a key role in encouraging the development and securing the implementation of active travel strategies given that such strategies must always span several years, with specific, meaningful actions and goals.

Clearly, a significant increase in funding is required to allow major improvements in cycling infrastructure and this could be achieved by diverting funds from the Government's excessive and damaging road-building programme. We would suggest that the aim should be to increase funding allocation from central government from the current 1% to 10% over a five year period.

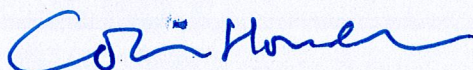
This money also needs to be ring-fenced because we think it is entirely inappropriate, as highlighted in the 'Cycling Action Plan for Scotland – Progress Report', to be using funding for active travel to build Park + Ride facilities (however beneficial they themselves may be).

Transform Scotland would like to conclude this letter by highlighting the fact that we have studied the issue of how to improve cycling levels in Scotland over several recent years and have produced meaningful contributions, a number of which are listed here and available on our website:

1. NPF3 Proposal on Active Travel (December 2012) — available at <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/GetFile.aspx?ItemId=638>
2. *Active Travel, Active Scotland* (May 2012) — available at <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/GetFile.aspx?ItemId=563>
3. Parliamentary briefing for cycling debate (March 2012) — available at <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/GetFile.aspx?ItemId=536>
4. *Civilising the Streets* (June 2010) — a major report on how continental European cities achieved high cycling rate — available at <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/GetFile.aspx?ItemId=277>
5. Evidence to Scottish Parliament active travel inquiry (November 2009) — available at <http://www.transformscotland.org.uk/GetFile.aspx?ItemId=216>

We feel we could make a useful contribution to future planning on how to proceed and offer our input to any future discussions.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Howden
Director, Transform Scotland

