

To: Mark Ruskell MSP Room MG.17 Scottish Parliament Edinburgh EH99 1SP

Response to Safer Streets member's bill consultation

1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to replace the current 30mph default speed limit on restricted roads with a 20mph limit?

Fully supportive.

2. Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

No. The bill would ensure a consistency of approach across the whole country.

3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of the proposal?

We support the arguments in the consultation document setting out how the introduction of a 20mph default speed limit on restricted roads would play a substantial role in helping Scotland to achieve a change of culture with regard to transport and the way we use our urban areas. In the longer term this should lead to a modal shift away from the reliance on private vehicles for shorter journeys which could instead be undertaken on foot or by bike and by public transport, with resulting benefits for health, the environment and social justice as well as improving the quality of our urban spaces and road safety. While a range of other measures will also be required to fully achieve this culture change, such as segregated cycle routes and traffic management plans that put the needs of the pedestrian first, the reduction in overall traffic speed is an important measure which will help to improve safety and also reduce the perception that many roads are too dangerous to cycle or too unpleasant to walk, thereby encouraging more people to choose to travel actively.

4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of the proposal?

In the longer term we cannot see any disadvantages.

5. What measures do you think would be needed to maximize compliance with the new national 20mph speed limit on restricted roads?

Culture change is difficult to achieve over a short period and therefore it will be important to ensure that local authorities fully engage with communities to explain how the transition to 20mph will work and the reasons for this change, and to demonstrate public support for this measure. This consultation will include decisions over which streets would continue to be designated as through routes with higher speed limits, and local advertising and promotion of the new scheme. It is also important to consider the enforcement of these new speed limits and to engage with the police over this matter, to ensure compliance. The experience of Edinburgh council in particular will be useful to help guide other local authorities on how to implement this change.

6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed bill to have on:

(a) The Scottish Government – some increase in cost

- (b) Local authorities – some increase in cost
- (c) Motorists – broadly cost neutral
- (d) Other road users and members of the public – broadly cost neutral
- (e) Other public services (eg, NHS, fire and rescue services, etc) – some increase in cost

The suggested increase in costs noted above all relate to the process of changing legislation and the initial roll out of the scheme, including the cost of new signage, consultation and publicity measures, etc, and heightened enforcement activities by the police at the time the new speed limits come into effect. However we fully recognise that over the longer term these costs will no longer apply and there will potentially be savings, as set out in the consultation document, as a result of improved road safety and a reduction in serious accidents. Nevertheless, even though a national scheme will be cheaper to implement than effecting the same change through individual road traffic orders, as is currently the case, any new measure will bring some financial implications. We fully support the need for this change to happen as a form of preventative spend.

7. Do you believe there will any other benefits to reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph?

This measure will contribute to the government's aims of increasing walking and cycling levels as set out in the National Walking Strategy and Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, and therefore in improving the health and wellbeing of the population as a whole. At a national level, this will also contribute to reducing the costs of inactivity which are estimated at £94.1m per year in Scotland. (See: <http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/20437-D1physicalinactivityscotland12final.pdf>)

8. What overall impact is the proposed bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

We believe that overall there will be a positive impact on equalities.

9. Could any negative impact of the bill on equality be minimized or avoided?

As stated above in Q5, public engagement and enforcement will reduce the risk of any negative impacts arising.

10. Do you consider that the proposed bill can be delivered sustainably, ie, without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes.

11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal to establish a 20mph default speed limit on restricted roads?

No.

Ramblers Scotland helps everyone, across Scotland, enjoy walking and protects the places we love to walk. We are the representative body for walkers in Scotland, recognised by **sportscotland** as a governing body of sport. We have over 6,500 members in Scotland with 54 local walking groups entirely run by volunteers. Over 1,200 of our members are active volunteers, organising thousands of led walks and social activities for their groups each year.

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