

Proposed Restricted Roads (20mph Limit) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Stephan Matthiesen

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. 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

Q1. 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.

Please explain the reasons for your response

20mph is generally better than 30mph for many reasons (better traffic flow, safety especially in residential areas, easier for pedestrians to cross etc.), and this really shouldn't have to be explained anymore nowadays. But it is particularly important that the default speed limit is low, with signed exceptions of higher speeds for some roads, instead of the current system where the default is high speed with special signage for lower speeds. The reasons are: - a default lower speed changes the culture of driving, slowing down becomes the norm, rather than the exception - drivers often miss signs or forget them after concentrating on other things, in which case they revert to the default limit. In the current system, when people miss a 20mph sign, they will drive 30mph (or more), increasing the risks. If the system is reversed and people miss/forget a 30mph sign, they will tend to drive slower, which is safer. - a default of 20mph reduces street clutter. There is a general trend to have 20mph in residential areas, but with the current system this needs a lot of 20mph signage. If the default is 20mph everywhere, then you only need signs for the fewer roads where the limit is higher (similar to urban 40mph roads today).

Q2. Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

The key is that the default limit should be 20mph, and higher speeds should be the exception, not the other way round. I am not a legal expert and do not know what other ways there are to ensure this, but my understanding is that currently local councils do not have the power to make 20mph the default limit, and instead have to consult on individual 20mph zones and sign them explicitly (at considerable cost) - that's a waste of resources. So it seems to me that a Bill in the Scottish Parliament would be the most efficient way and save local councils a lot of money.

Q3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of the proposal?

See also question 1.

the main advantage is that it would save local councils a lot of money as they would only have to sign a few routes for higher speeds, instead of (like now) thousands of small residential streets for the lower limit.

Q4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of the proposal?

Antiquated petrolheads will start their endless moaning in the local newspapers.

Q5. What other measures do you think would be needed to maximise compliance with the new national 20mph speed limit on restricted roads, for example in relation to advertising signage and police enforcement.

Many cities already have designated 20mph zones which are enforced, so there would be little change.

It needs a national campaign to make drivers aware of the new limits, but if you target professional drivers (bus companies, taxi companies etc.) it would probably filter down very quickly.

Page 12: Financial implications

Q6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
Scottish Government				X		
Local Authorities					X	
Motorists				X		
Other				X		
Police Scotland						

Please explain the reasons for your response

Scottish Government: A reduction in road traffic collisions saves police time as well as NHS resources, plus indirect economic advantages (fewer lost days at work, fewer road closure because of RTCs etc.)
 Local authorities: no need for explicit 20mph zones with lot of signage. Motorists: Speed reductions generally reduce fuel consumption and also wear, although the cost savings may not be so obvious. It might also encourage some to use the bicycle or walk, for at least some journeys. Others: Many benefits (noise reduction, better conditions for cycling and walking etc) but these are difficult to quantify as "costs".

Q7. Do you believe there will be any other benefits to reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph?

Will generally make cities a nicer place to live, as noise and subjective dangers are reduced.

Page 14: Equalities

Q8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response

Lower speeds mean that it is much easier to cross roads, which is beneficial for everybody but especially for people with disabilities, parents with children (often women), children and elderly people, i.e. there will be positive impacts for the protected groups: disability, sex, age, pregnancy and maternity. I can't see obvious impacts with respect to race, gender re-assignment, religion and belief, marriage and civil partnership. There are some negative impacts for people who are dependent on the car (disabilities, age, maternity) although the impact is small as car use is not restricted, just possibly a bit slower in some situations.

Q9. Could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on any of these protected groups be minimised or avoided?

There are few negative impacts, mainly on people who depend on motor transport, but the impacts are small (cars are not restricted, just possibly slower), so I don't think these impacts need to be minimised or avoided.

Page 16: Sustainability of the proposal

Q10. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?

Yes

Page 17: General

Q11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal to establish a 20mph default speed limit on restricted roads?

It is a very good initiative and I hope it will get support across the political spectrum, as all groups of society benefit.