

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 would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

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

I believe this measure has the potential to help lower negative impacts to health and potentially save public money. I believe that the costs of the measure - both financial and in terms of annoyance / inconvenience will be slight if a bill is brought in along the lines of the consultation document. My personal perspective is as a regular user of a bicycle (most of my transport), a pedestrian and an occasional driver. I also have elderly relatives who would benefit from reduced risk of accident with lower speeds (both as drivers and as pedestrians) and obviously better outcomes in the event of any accident. I live in a fairly deprived urban area surrounded by busier roads - which would presumably remain busy and keep higher speed limits. Where cars do cut through the estate and around the school (next to a road where people go quickly) this measure may have the effect of slowing motor vehicles. There are a lot of kids, older people and disabled folk living here. Benefits I think that there is evidence for benefits to the authorities in terms of money saved on health costs (fewer injuries). I think businesses on quieter roads stand to benefit. I hope in the long run that the wider effects on health, people's happiness and the environment (quieter, more "human friendly" streets, less worry about children being out) may be substantial. Costs / negatives There will clearly be costs for changing speed limits in terms of signage, surveys / research and legislation but (as pointed out in the documents) in many places this is already occurring but in a fragmented way. A unified approach could reduce this cost. I understand that average speeds in urban areas are frequently much less than 20mph with the main limiting factors being road capacity/congestion and throughput at intersections / lights. Although I read that once on the move the average speed in a 30mph zone is over 30mph (and have experienced the same while driving), I'm not persuaded that lowering this maximum will drastically increase journey times, particularly during busy times. Distributor roads are unlikely to be given lower speeds anyway. So I think 20mph won't have much negative impact here. My concerns: coverage and enforcement. Having seen the effect of allowing "local leeway" leading to "we'll not apply that here" I hope any bill won't leave room to essentially ignore the policy where it allows for local authorities to increase speed limits. The consultation documents mention they do not envisage any change to enforcement, but rather hope driver behaviour change comes about via campaigns and social change. I think enforcement is actually an important factor in this happening. As an example I don't believe anti drink-drive campaigns without specific extra measures to combat this would have been as effective (convictions make news, which is publicity to remind people etc.)

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

No

Please explain the reasons for your response

I suspect without legislation to anchor it all the campaigning and local authority action will only be partially effective, or would peter out after a time. Legislation provides a "norm" or baseline. Where public money (more limited at present) is concerned, without legislation there can be an argument at local authority level that any spending incurred on lower speed limits would actually be wasting public resources!

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

I believe this measure has the potential to help lower negative impacts to health and potentially save public money. I think that there is evidence for benefits to the authorities in terms of money saved on health costs (fewer injuries). I think businesses on quieter roads stand to benefit. I hope in the long run that the wider effects on health, people's happiness and the environment (quieter, more "human friendly" streets, less worry about children being out) may be substantial, albeit more difficult to assess than other "financial" outcomes.

I live in a fairly deprived urban area. Where cars cut through the estate and around the school (next to a road where people go quickly) this measure may have the effect of slowing motor vehicles. There are a lot of kids, older people and disabled folk living here.

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

I also have elderly relatives who would benefit from reduced risk of accident with lower speeds (both as drivers and as pedestrians) and obviously better outcomes in the event of any accident.

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

I believe that the costs of the measure - both financial and in terms of annoyance / inconvenience will be slight if a bill is brought in along the lines of the consultation document.

There will clearly be costs for changing speed limits in terms of signage, surveys / research and legislation but (as pointed out in the documents) in many places this is already occurring but in a fragmented way. A unified approach could reduce this cost.

I understand that average speeds in urban areas are frequently much less than 20mph with the main limiting factors being road capacity/congestion and throughput at intersections / lights. Although I read that once on the move the average speed in a 30mph zone is over 30mph (and have experienced the same while driving), I'm not persuaded that lowering this maximum will drastically increase journey times, particularly during busy times. Distributor roads are unlikely to be given lower speeds anyway. So I think 20mph won't have much negative impact here.

As a strong supporter of better infrastructure for pedestrians and separate segregated tracks for cyclists/wheelchair users/mobility scooters I would be concerned that a speed limit reduction bill might be seen as a panacea for vulnerable road users. I hope it would not be seen as removing the need for pedestrian / cycle space (e.g. where traffic peak volumes are high), or removing the need to create better crossings / junctions for non-motor traffic.

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.

In many places (much of Edinburgh for example) there is already a 20mph limit and most people seem to follow this. It may be that merely making this a nation-wide default actually improves compliance since there's less confusion e.g. "when in town, slow down" etc. Evidence must already exist as to effectiveness (some referenced in consultation document). If it wasn't immediately effective I believe something similar to the anti-drink-drive measures (in terms of advertising and enforcement) might be needed.

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		

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

Police Scotland						
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Please explain the reasons for your response

Government: cost of bringing in legislation, but reductions in cost (less injuries) to NHS, police/fire services (fewer road traffic incidents). Possibly police costs involved if extra enforcement is required. Local authorities: costs of some changes in signage, consultation and new road traffic orders where a higher limit than 20 is required. Savings where 20mph limits were being introduced already (each requiring its own road traffic order). Motorists: journey times possibly slightly longer on average (although as written in my initial answer I suspect that at busy times this will be negligible due to congestion limiting throughput more than speed). Possible minor fuel efficiency savings in places where there was stop-start travel, if this encourages "smoothing" of traffic flow. Pedestrians, cyclists etc. Lots of positives: Safer streets since less chance of accident and less severe outcomes of accidents. Since we mostly pay tax (NHS, police, local authority) we're picking up less costs from these. People may feel streets are "safer" so be more likely to engage in active travel (walking, cycling). There are health and monetary benefits here. Local businesses: as mentioned above I believe that evidence shows journey times should not be greatly affected so costs of delivery etc. shouldn't go up. There are studies showing local businesses benefit from having more people on the streets e.g. use by cyclists / pedestrians as opposed to the "drive and try to park" model. Buses/taxis: will probably be the type of traffic most affected since they regularly pass through housing estates etc.. Again, speed impacts will probably be low (particularly for buses which will often stop anyway). Taxi firms will no doubt pass on costs (in terms of any longer travel times) to customers.

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

I hope this might encourage a different transport culture-at present the streets can feel unpleasant and unsafe whether in a car (trying to keep up, get through traffic) or on a bike / as a pedestrian. Slower and hopefully more observant (more time to react) driving could help all parties here. It may encourage more people to consider active transport - e.g. not using a car - by making this more pleasant (feels safer). In practice I suspect without a comprehensive network of improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists/wheelchair users (cycle tracks) there will only be a small increase in active travel due to a lower speed limit. At some point people will need to use the same distributor routes they now use by car / bus e.g. main roads into town centres or between settlements. These are currently, and will probably remain, busy with fast traffic.

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

I have stated I believe this would have positive effects for people living in 20mph areas. At present the people spending most time in and around housing areas and estates (which would call under this measure) are: the old, disabled, parents looking after children (which currently means mostly women) and people who don't have work - which again is predominantly means women, the disabled. It would also be likely that asylum seekers would be in this category (so possibly having bearing on religion / belief it sexism orientation, depending on why they are seeking asylum).

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

I believe the impacts to these groups would be largely positive.

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

Please explain the reasons for your response:

As outlined in the consultation document, the case for economic, social and environmental overall benefits are clear, so this should be sustainable on all fronts.

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?

Having seen the effect of allowing "local leeway" leading to "we'll not apply that here" I hope any bill won't leave room to essentially ignore the policy where it allows for local authorities to increase speed limits.

The consultation documents mention they do not envisage any change to enforcement, but rather hope deliver behaviour change comes about via campaigns and social change. I hope that this is the case, as 20mph limits have already been widely introduced. However I think enforcement is actually an important factor in this happening. As an example I don't believe anti drink-drive campaigns without specific extra measures to combat this would have been as effective (convictions make news, which is publicity to remind people etc.)

Again I hope this won't be seen as an alternative to e.g. segregated bike / mobility vehicle provision.