

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Paul Barlow

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

The weight of evidence suggests this will significantly enhance safety and substantially reduce both noise and air pollution while having very little effect on typical journey times. Currently 20 mph can feel frustratingly slow for a motorist but it is something we can all get used to over time. Slower driving could lead to less traffic light-controlled junctions and smoother traffic flow. Where conditions allow, and subject to risk assessment, a 30 mph or 40 mph limit can be signed appropriately but a default of 20 mph makes a lot of sense. A default speed limit of 20 mph also sends a clear message that we are reestablishing safety, security and wellbeing of residents where they belong - at the top of our priority list. Slower moving vehicles will encourage more cycling as the differential between motor vehicle speeds and cycling speeds is strongly reduced with a consequent reduction in the perceived and actual risks of cycling. Safer roads with slower vehicles are conducive to more children walking to school. More cycling and walking, and less driving, has clear health benefits.

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

The best analogy is the smoking ban. When something is good for all of us but is perceived as a constraint on freedom and is vehemently opposed by strong lobby groups and populists, it needs a big push from the top legislature. Like with the smoking ban, we will all be asking ourselves one day why we didn't do it earlier. While we can nudge motorists to slow down in a piecemeal fashion by force of argument, traffic calming, by appealing to reason, and by having non-enforceable common-sense speed-limit advisories, it is really only a bill in parliament with nationwide effects that can change behaviour. True, the selective introduction of specific 20 mph zones is gaining ground even without the bill, but it is haphazard and can become a political football in local elections.

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

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Safer roads with slower vehicles are conducive to more children walking to school.

More cycling and walking, and less driving, has clear health benefits.

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

I don't really see any since it won't stop 30 mph or 40 mph limits where appropriate. It is important that drivers see common sense being applied.

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.

The great thing about a default 20 mph is that we don't need much signage, we simply change the law and the highway code. It should be enforced just like the current default 30 mph with speed cameras and by police officers. There could be an issue with drivers from across the border that would need to be thought about.

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

I am struggling to see why there would be a cost for anybody here. Research suggest little impact on average overall journey times certainly during the day (and hence small extra costs). Cab drivers and other professional drivers would need reassurance that common sense rules would apply - restricting a cabbie to 20 mph at 2 am on empty streets for example probably makes no sense. Safer roads and smoother traffic flow save money for everyone as does more cycling and walking.

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

Easier merging, easier for buses to pull out, smoother traffic flow, less traffic lights, less need for cycle lanes and speed humps - driving can become less stressful and pressured.
Driverless cars are coming anyway and restricting these to 20 mph will almost certainly be a necessity.

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?

Slightly positive

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?

Please explain the reasons for your response

In general less able and older people are more negatively impacted by traffic and fast-moving traffic in particular than the average person. They take longer to cross the road, their eye sight and hearing may be impaired, they are less likely to drive themselves and if they do they are likely to drive more slowly anyway, they use buses more.

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

I don't see any negative impact whatsoever on these groups.

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:

It would need to be reviewed in the future but it is hard to see negative impacts on the economy, society or the environment.

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?

Scotland led the way on the smoking ban, plastic bags restrictions and on reducing the alcohol limit for drivers - the nation has gained a great reputation for getting these kinds of forward looking, common-sense, people-first policies in place quickly and in the face of opposition from populists, lobby groups or certain vociferous columnists and elements of the media. Good luck with this!