

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

Page 2: About you

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

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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 If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Living Streets Edinburgh Group

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

Many good reasons for supporting this proposal are given in the consultation document. In particular we support 20mph becoming the default speed limit in built up areas because there is overwhelming evidence that this is the maximum speed appropriate for the safe intermixing of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users with motor vehicles. There have been major road safety improvements made on roads in communities across Scotland (and all other countries) where reductions in speeds that have been achieved in association with the introduction of 20mph speed limits. But there remain far too many roads where speeds and the speed limits remain too high, and progress with the introduction of reduced speed limits has been variable across local authorities and too slow in many. The reduced speeds achieved also bring additional benefits for pedestrians other than safety in terms of casualty reductions. There are psychological benefits in terms of the streets being perceived as safer places to be, which in turn encourages more walking activity. It should be noted that this means there are likely to be real safety benefits even where no casualty reductions are in evidence. There are also additional benefits in terms of enhanced crossing opportunities for pedestrians, with the barrier effects of traffic being correspondingly reduced. These benefits are of particular benefit to the growing proportion of pedestrians who are elderly and frailer or slower moving, and to adults accompanied by young children.

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

Without the support of such legislation progress will remain slow and fragmented across local authority areas. Inconsistency will remain the norm. More cumbersome and expensive TRO procedures will still be required, along with greater signage requirements.

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

As explained in the answers to Q1 and Q2 above, and in the proposal itself.

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

None.

In isolation the introduction of the reduced 20mph speed limits will result in some speed reductions, but these are likely to be small in most places. In order to make it more effective the legislation will need to be backed up by educational campaigns, by enforcement activity, and by the selective introduction of traffic calming design measures: in other words by the effective deployment of the usual means to improve road safety. This should not be seen as a disadvantage, however, as they will need to be deployed irrespective of the actual default speed limit. Rather the 20mph default limit would provide the opportunity to make the use of these standard road safety measures more effective.

It should also be recognised that speed limits are relatively crude implements and that the speed reductions achieved are beneficial even where they do not reach the 20mph maximum level. Failure to reduce all speeds to a maximum of 20mph should not therefore be seen as a failure. Reducing average speeds from 30 to 25 mph say is likely to be more important for road safety than would reducing them from 25 to 20mph.

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.

See above in answer to Q4, with reference to the need for continuing educational, enforcement and engineering efforts. Initially some intensive educational and enforcement campaigns would be required to maximise the benefits.
 The initial start-up costs associated with signage should be offset by savings from reduced signage requirements in the longer run.
 To maximise compliance police enforcement costs need to be fully funded through the income from fines. The enforcement system should also be enhanced to allow local authority wardens to supplement police activity and enforce 20mph speed limits on a decriminalised basis.

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

In general the initial start-up costs can be expected to be more than offset by the longer term savings and benefits. Costs to the Scottish Government (e.g. for educational campaigns) can readily be met from within its existing transport and road safety budgets. Road safety gains and any increases in active travel can be expected to reduce costs to the health service and for the police. Costs to local authorities could also be met largely from within existing budgets, with start-up costs supported by specific grants from central government. With speeds reduced and perhaps smoother driving as a result, motorists can be expected to benefit from reduced running costs as well as reduced costs of accidents.

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

With speed reductions and less intimidating driving, there would potentially be very real benefits in terms of the perceived safety of calmer conditions on streets, and in terms of the ability of pedestrians to cross them. Such improved conditions on streets can be expected to encourage more active travel, and walking activity by the more vulnerable of pedestrians in particular.
 Driving conditions would also be improved for more anxious or nervous drivers, and there may also be marginal benefits in terms of reduced pollution.

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

The potential for improved conditions on-street would be most beneficial for the most vulnerable and slower moving categories of pedestrian, who are the most intimidated by speeding vehicles; specifically the disabled and otherwise mobility handicapped groups. The latter include many of the elderly, young children, adults accompanied by young children, and pregnant women.

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

There are no negative impacts.

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:

The potential benefits far outweigh any potential costs.

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?

The Scottish Government should issue guidance to local authorities and the police on the implementation of the 20mph limits. This would incorporate lessons learned from experience to date and give good practice advice.

It should also grant any additional powers (e.g. over enforcement) deemed necessary for effective implementation to take place.