

PE1802/A

Scottish Government submission of 3 August 2020

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to:

- establish a standard mandatory brightness and width of flood for bicycle lights;
- carry out a publicity campaign to encourage responsible cycling; and
- increase availability of training facilities

Establish a standard mandatory brightness and width of flood for bicycle lights

Establishing a mandatory brightness for bicycle lights is a reserved matter for the UK government.

Carry out a publicity campaign to encourage responsible cycling

The Scottish Government is wholeheartedly committed to improving the safety of vulnerable road users, including cyclists. We expect all road users to behave responsibly and adhere to the Highway Code. Cyclists were identified in 2016 as a priority area in the mid-term review of Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020. With this in mind, active travel and road safety publicity campaigns have focused on raising awareness amongst drivers rather than promoting responsible cycling.

Using Transport Scotland grant funding, Cycling Scotland run the annual 'Give Me Cycle Space' campaign (the latest one was launched on 6 July). This is a high profile media campaign to encourage drivers to give more space to cyclists, and delivered in tandem with Police Scotland's "Operation Close Pass" exercise. Evaluation of the 2019 campaign shows an increase from 26% to 36% in those who say they give people cycling at least 1.5 metres of space every time.

The UK Government announced on 28 July 2020 that they are launching a consultation on changes to the Highway Code that are designed to protect all vulnerable road users. Transport Scotland was fully engaged in the DfT-led Highway Code Review Stakeholder Focus Group that has been developing these changes. This includes plans to introduce a hierarchy of road users to ensure those who can do the 'greatest harm' have the 'greatest responsibility' to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others. The proposal also clarify existing rules on pedestrian priority on pavements, to advise that drivers and riders should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross the road.

Otherwise, on the basis of our annual road safety statistics, we have not identified issues with cycling standards that would point to the value in such a campaign. Whilst we do not think a campaign is required at this time, we do encourage and are increasing cycle training for adults and children to increase cycling standards and safety.

Increase availability of training facilities

We are continuing to invest in successful behaviour change programmes, improving and expanding the uptake of child and adult cycle training, and driver awareness training for HGV and bus drivers.

In 2019-20 we invested over £1 million for Bikeability training for schools in 29 local authorities; in 2018-19 we supported 47% of schools and over 43,000 pupils, an increase from 37% of schools in 2015-16. We want to do more in this area, so we are investing in providing greater support to local authorities to enable them to increase Bikeability delivery and we are trialling new delivery models to ensure that training is available as widely as possible.

Cycling Scotland annually support over 10,000 adults with training for ride leaders, patrollers, instructors and commuters.

We also fund Sustrans to deliver behaviour change programmes, including £711,000 for the successful iBike project. This aims to empower children, parents and teachers to walk and cycle together through activities such as cycle and scooter training, led rides, and road safety awareness sessions. iBike is currently taken up by 14 local authorities.