

Petitioner submission of 8 November 2023

PE1936/M: Remove Potholes from Scotland's Roads

I submitted this petition some time ago after being the victim of yet another pothole. Whilst driving, full attention should be given to the road conditions and to others who are using that road (whether than be cyclist, pedestrian or other motorists). However, I find that one can't concentrate fully on road conditions as one is having to take more time to swerve and avoid holes in the road to avoid hitting them and causing a serious accident. Health and safety is ignored and I find it unacceptable that potholes within our networks are simply to be accepted as an everyday hazard when they can cause serious damage to a car, and potentially an accident which takes a life. I have been behind cyclists who are having to pull out into the middle of the road to avoid a pothole. Whilst car users have the safety of suspension, a cyclist is not afforded that luxury and would be completely at risk of death if he or she comes off their bike into motor traffic. There is no consideration for this whatsoever. There is also no consideration for the Road Traffic Act in line with driving as to the conditions of the road.

When you then consider adverse weather conditions the road user is even more at risk. As humans we risk assess every day and yet we find ourselves in the position of not being able to risk assess when it is required the most. When you are driving, you are in charge of a lethal machine, which has the potential to cause injury and death. Therefore, risk assessment is notably and importantly required at all times. How can one then risk assess when the road is wet or full of ice? If you cannot see the potholes and craters in the road, how can you risk assess to ensure the safety of yourself and others? You can't.

Since the SNP Government joined forces with the Scottish Green Party under the Bute House Agreement, I honestly feel that things have gotten a lot worse. Many local roads are crumbling due to a lack of local government funding and the trunk roads are being left to rot, causing much detriment to road users. Risk assessment is not taken into account and health and safety is ignored completely. Our lives are simply deemed as potentially expendable whilst £75 million is removed from the motorways and trunk roads budget with no consideration whatsoever.

Where is accountability these days? Why are our lives being put at risk due to financial mismanagement within the Scottish Government. If they cannot manage the financial budget, it is perhaps time the Bute House Agreement was terminated, and both political parties gave way to other politicians who can work in line with what is required to protect the people of Scotland. We must all work in line with risk assessment, health and safety and the protection of human life. Until then we are simply expendable behind the wheel of a motor vehicle or a bike.

It is my view that this situation is dangerous and unacceptable and could be seen to be contravening the Human Rights Act 1998, specifically Article Two on the right to life.