

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on PE2065: Improve and prioritise pedestrian safety, submitted by Shauna Rafferty

Background

Walking and wheeling¹ are healthy, free, sociable, and environmentally friendly forms of transport. Walking and wheeling for transport accounted for 30% of all trips made in Scotland during 2021-22, with a median trip distance of 1.1 kilometres. There is scope for more trips to be made by foot, with 44% of all trips made in Scotland during 2021-22 being under three kilometres in length.

Numerous Scottish Government policy documents highlight the important role that walking and wheeling can play in reducing vehicle emissions and tackling health problems associated with obesity and inactivity. These include:

- [National Transport Strategy 2](#) places walking and wheeling at the top of the sustainable transport hierarchy, stating that “We will design our transport system so that walking, cycling and public and shared transport take precedence ahead of private car use.”
- [Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland](#), which aims to ensure that “Scotland’s communities are shaped around people, with walking or cycling the most popular choice for shorter everyday journeys.”
- [Fourth National Planning Framework](#), which sets out a policy “To encourage, promote and facilitate developments that prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel and reduce the need to travel unsustainably.”

The Scottish Government sets out its policy on street design in [Designing Streets: A Policy Statement for Scotland](#).

The Scottish Government has increased the annual budget allocated to walking, wheeling, and cycling over recent years, as set out in the table below:

Year	Amount
2024-25	£220 million
2023-24	£190 million
2022-23	£150 million
2021-22	£100.5 million

¹ ‘Wheeling’ is a term used to describe travelling by wheelchair.

2020-21	£85 million
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Responsibility for the maintenance, management, and development of most of Scotland's streets, including footways and crossings, rests with Councils, which are the roads authority for their areas. This includes responsibility for the enforcement of the prohibition on pavement parking. Scottish Ministers are directly responsible for the trunk road network, which is managed by Transport Scotland.

Standards relating to the design and location of traffic signs, including light-controlled crossings, and road markings are a reserved matter.

Government Action

Scottish Government action in this area is briefly described above.

Scottish Parliament Action

To date, the Scottish Parliament has not considered this issue in any detail.

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26 February 2024

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Published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), an office of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP