

Key Points:

- Transport is the largest source of climate emissions (36%) in Scotland.
- We welcome the development of the Just Transition Plan, and look forward to being involved in the development of the Just Transition Plan for the Transport sector.
- The Just Transition Commission made important recommendations in its 2020 'Advice for a Green Recovery' report on transport investment, buses and electric vehicle infrastructure. These should be taken forward in the transport sectoral plan.
- The transport sectoral plan must address inequalities in the transport industry to ensure fair and decent work opportunities are available to women and marginalised groups, and to ensure that the decarbonised transport network of the future serves the needs of all.

1. Just Transition and transport

Transport is the largest source of climate emissions (36%) in Scotland, with no progress in emission reduction from the sector over the past 30 years. Given the urgency of the climate crisis, we must take swift action to tackle emissions from transport with modal shift and decarbonisation measures. However, we must also ensure that the process of greening the sector is fair and inclusive.

2. Just Transition Commission recommendations

We welcome the following transport recommendations from the Just Transition Commission's 2020 'Advice for a Green Recovery'. It is important that these are incorporated into the forthcoming Just Transition sectoral plan for transport to ensure that decarbonisation of the sector is fair and inclusive.

Re-prioritise transport spend

We strongly recommend pursuit of the Commission's proposal that *"the opportunity to re-prioritise any existing transport spend currently earmarked for increasing road capacity, and direct it towards investment in low-carbon transport initiatives should be actively pursued"*.

It is widely acknowledged that new road-building generates significant greenhouse gas emissions during construction and locks in high-carbon travel choices for years to come. Furthermore, given that 28% of Scottish households do not have access to a car — rising to 60% for those earning £10,000 or less — the current road-building programme disproportionately benefits wealthier members of society. Moreover, the billions of pounds being spent on roads inevitably come at the expense of investing in sustainable transport options more likely to benefit the less well off: walking, cycling, bus and rail. As the country looks to transition to a green economy, it is imperative that Scotland avoids replicating mistakes of the past which lock-in inequalities and high-emission transport choices.

Invest in bus priority

The Commission also recommended that the Government *"rapidly roll-out spending of the £500 million previously committed to prioritise buses, including measures to reallocate motorway and other road space to high occupancy vehicles such as buses"*. An urgent rollout of the £500 million commitment to improve

bus services across Scotland will improve lives and secure jobs in the bus and coach industry, which have been at risk throughout the pandemic. However, despite being three years on from the original commitment, limited progress has been seen on bus priority investment and concrete plans to reallocate road space are yet to be seen. As buses are of particular importance to people without access to cars, older people and those on low incomes, we reiterate the Commission's call for urgent action here to improve bus services – services which the most vulnerable members of society rely upon.

Establish a nationwide bus scrappage scheme

We welcome the Commission's call for "a nationwide bus scrappage scheme to replace older diesel buses with low emissions and zero-emission buses", which presents a huge opportunity to revitalise buses and bus services across Scotland. A scheme which replaces the existing bus fleet with a clean and efficient fleet of buses made in Scotland will secure green jobs in manufacturing whilst reducing pollution, providing cleaner air and improving public health.

Develop a national plan for charging infrastructure

We also welcome the report's recommendation to "develop an enhanced and accelerated national plan for charging infrastructure for both public and private transport in the context of an overall strategy to support the electrification of road transport". It is clear that new fleets of electric buses, trains and light rail will require strategic thinking and urgent planning with operators and energy providers. In particular, we must ensure that such infrastructure does not reinforce existing inequalities by prioritising charging infrastructure for those privileged to have a private electric car. Rather, this national vision should include inclusive and accessible electric hubs which encourage sustainable transport and result in more active, and less congested spaces.

3. Gender and social equity in transport

The recent report by Transport Scotland into the safety of women and girls on public transport highlighted some of the gender inequalities present in Scotland's public transport. Issues in our transport network extend beyond safety as Scotland's transport systems are not designed around the needs of women, who are more likely to travel with dependants, take trips outside rush hour, and make shorter and more frequent journeys. Such inequalities can be attributed to decades of under-representation in key decision-making roles in the industry.

Not only limited to gender, such inequalities must be addressed as we look to build a fair and inclusive green transport system which meets the needs of all. The transition to a zero-carbon transport system must therefore be leveraged to create a more inclusive transport workforce with fair and decent opportunities for women and marginalised groups.

Further reading:

Just Transition Commission '[Advice for a Green Recovery](#)' report (Jul-20); Transport Scotland '[Women's and girls' views and experiences of personal safety when using public transport](#)' report (Mar-23); Sustrans '["Are we nearly there yet?" Exploring gender and active travel](#)' report (Feb-18)

Scotland's alliance for sustainable transport

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We campaign for walking, cycling and public transport to be the easiest and most affordable options for everyone. Our diverse membership brings together public, private and third sector organisations from across Scotland. We are a registered Scottish charity (SC041516).