



PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

National Cycle Network

Members' Business – S4M-13831 Jim Eadie: 20th Anniversary of the National Cycle Network in Scotland
12:30 on Thursday 17 September 2015

Key points

- We welcome Jim Eadie MSP's debate on the 20th anniversary of the National Cycle Network (NCN), and the work of Sustrans Scotland and its partners in developing the Network, and we look forward to its further expansion.
- As well as health and environmental benefits, the NCN has also proven a major factor in the expansion of cycle tourism. Our research has found that the total value of cycle tourism in Scotland is up to £239m per year.

1. National Cycle Network

- 1.1. Transform Scotland welcomes the Parliamentary debate on the NCN in Scotland, and is keen to see continued investment in the Network in order to see its further expansion in years to come.

2. The Value of Cycle Tourism

- 2.1. The NCN brings multiple benefits, including public health and emissions reductions impacts. These are set out in detail in the parliamentary briefing prepared for this debate by Sustrans Scotland.
- 2.2. The NCN also plays a major role in the development of cycle tourism. In this briefing, we would like to highlight the economic value of cycle tourism in Scotland. As well as making rural communities more vibrant and contributing to local economies, cycle tourism is also good for public health and for the environment.
- 2.3. Our research report, *The Value of Cycle Tourism*,¹ found that the total value of cycle tourism — by residents and visitors, touring and leisure cycling — in Scotland is up to £239m per year. The report found:
 - The total economic contribution from cycle tourism is estimated to be between £117.2m and £239m. These figures are the monetised benefits from health, leisure cycle events, cycle-related infrastructure, and expenditure by leisure cyclists.
 - Businesses that cater to the cycle tourism industry (accommodation, restaurants and cafes, cycle tour operators, bike shops) have noticed an increase in leisure cyclists. In responding to a survey they identified leisure cyclists as a valuable customer base.
- 2.4. Amongst other things, the report recommended:
 - Promotion of Scotland as a top destination for cycle tourism.
 - Development of themed areas for cycle tourism, for example whisky tours by bike.
 - The promotion of cycle tourism to a wider demographic.
 - More collaborative partnership between local and regional stakeholders.
 - Greater centralisation of information and technology integration.
 - Better data collection and monitoring.
 - A single coordinating body for leisure cycle tourism with links to the private sector.

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¹ See <http://transformscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/research/the-value-of-cycle-tourism/>