

Parliamentary briefing ahead of Programme for Government announcement

Tuesday 3 September 2019

In advance of the **Programme for Government**, Transform Scotland looks forward to hearing more on Scottish Government's response to the Climate Emergency and the commitment to the transformational change that is required.

Following the Climate Emergency announcement in April, Transform Scotland has **welcomed Scottish Government actions** such as:

- The cancellation of proposed Air Passenger Duty cuts in May
- The £60m announcement on active travel projects in July
- Action to secure the delivery of CalMac's hybrid ferries in August.

Responding to the **Climate Emergency** has to be a national endeavour, and as the alliance for sustainable transport we have been working with members and experts to identify constructive contributions to address this challenge.

In order to tackle transport emissions, and reduce road and air traffic - a **clean, affordable, reliable public transport system that works for everyone across Scotland** is urgently needed.

This will mean investment in infrastructure for active travel, buses and trains.

Working with rail experts, Transform Scotland has this week set out a **vision for rail by 2030**: <http://transformscotland.org.uk/blog/2019/09/02/action-needed-now-to-deliver-zero-emission-scottish-railway-by-2030-transform-sets-out-climate-emergency-response-vision-2030-clean-rail/>

Scotland's railway could be decarbonised by 2030, enabling 96% of passengers to travel on zero-emission trains for around £2.5 billion. Investment in zero-emission trains on long rural routes completing the vision!

- Three-quarters of Scottish diesel trains will need replaced by 2030, with the rest 5-10 years later. The infrastructure has to be in place so we can replace these with zero-emission (electric) trains to run on our railways.
- A complete rolling programme is needed for the required electrification and will take ten years, so work must start now to be complete by 2030.
- Investment in new hydrogen or battery trains on the long rural routes could complete the vision, allowing everyone to travel zero-emission on Scotland's railways.

Scotland's track record has an enviable record on innovation in trains and rail electrification. Work to introduce the Class 385s started in 2008, and they were delivered in 2018. In the past, Scotland has pioneered electric solutions, including battery-driven trains as early as the 1950s, and it is a leader in electrification of the rail network in the UK. The Climate Emergency means that there is a need for urgent action, and it is time for Scotland to lead again.

Transport emissions have not reduced in 30 years. In a Climate Emergency, it is the action taken now that really matters. There would be two wins from action today on rail. A clean railway, that also encourages more passengers and freight from road to rail. Moving from road to rail is one of the most effective actions we can take to reduce emissions today. Enabling everyone to move around on a zero emission network is within reach, if government acts now.

As the Scottish Parliament analysis from October 2018 shows, pipeline spend projected at the end of last year was locking us into more high carbon infrastructure that will continue to increase emissions from road and air. This needs to change to seriously respond to the Climate Emergency. <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2018/10/16/capital-spend-locking-in-high-or-low-carbon-futures/>

Public sector leadership

In this emergency, leadership from the public sector will be essential. **All public bodies must be seen to lead by example with responsible sustainable travel policies**, based on the principles of:

- #Avoid (do you need to make this journey, can meeting happen virtually, can I avoid unnecessary travel)
- #Shift (between modes, can I walk/cycle/bus/rail or in UK central belt to London etc. be obliged to use train instead of fly) and
- #Improve (if I have to drive, can I use EV instead of diesel car).

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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).