

Written evidence submitted by Sustrans (IB 10)

Summary

- 1.1. This evidence submission from Sustrans is specifically related to the Roads Investment Strategy parts of the Infrastructure Bill and is in support of a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) to be included in the Bill.
- 1.2. The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy would have the same purpose as the proposed Roads Investment Strategy in the Bill and would provide funding certainty for cycling and walking infrastructure going forward.
- 1.3. The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy is necessary as without action from government, evidence below shows that overall investment in cycling will fall below £1 per person per year by 2020/21.
- 1.4. Annex A provides wider evidence of the need for the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy in tackling physical inactivity, congestion and air pollution and shows the support for this amendment from 16 leading health, transport and environment organisations.

Introduction to Sustrans and our submission

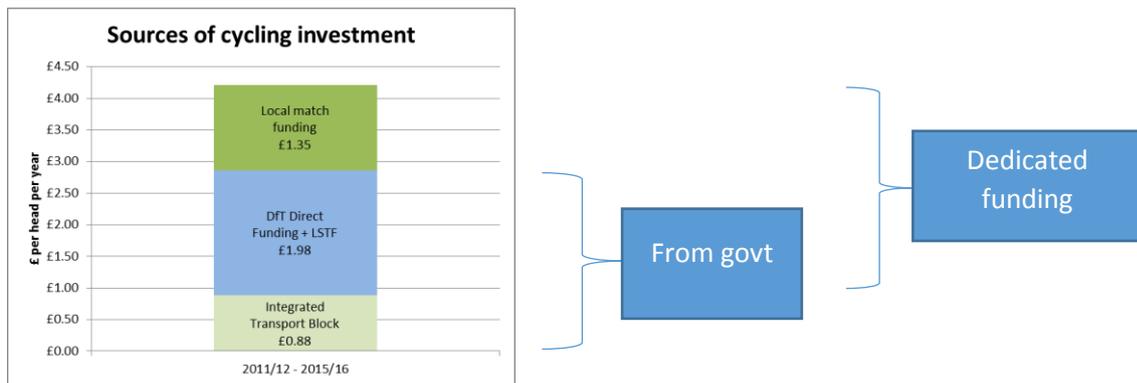
- 2.1 Sustrans is a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policymakers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in. More information on what we do can be found at www.sustrans.org.uk.
- 2.2. Sustrans evidence submission specifically relates to the Strategic Highways Company and Roads Investment Strategy elements of the Bill although it has implications for the planning of infrastructure investments. The Bill includes a proposed five year Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) to provide funding certainty for the strategic road network, while the rail network already has such an investment strategy in place. However, despite strong all party support there is no similar framework in place to provide long-term funding for cycling and walking. We are therefore calling for a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy to be included in the Bill.
- 2.3. Sustrans is part of a coalition of leading transport, health and environment charities who are campaigning in coalition for the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) which would provide the necessary framework and funding certainty needed to increase cycling and walking. The briefing from the coalition of charities on the

CWIS including the wider health and environment benefits that make such a strategy necessary is included in annex A.

- 2.4. Below, Sustrans provides further evidence on funding for cycling in England outside of London. This evidence for the need for a long-term commitment to funding through a CWIS should be taken in context with the wider benefits highlighted in annex A.

Current investment in cycling

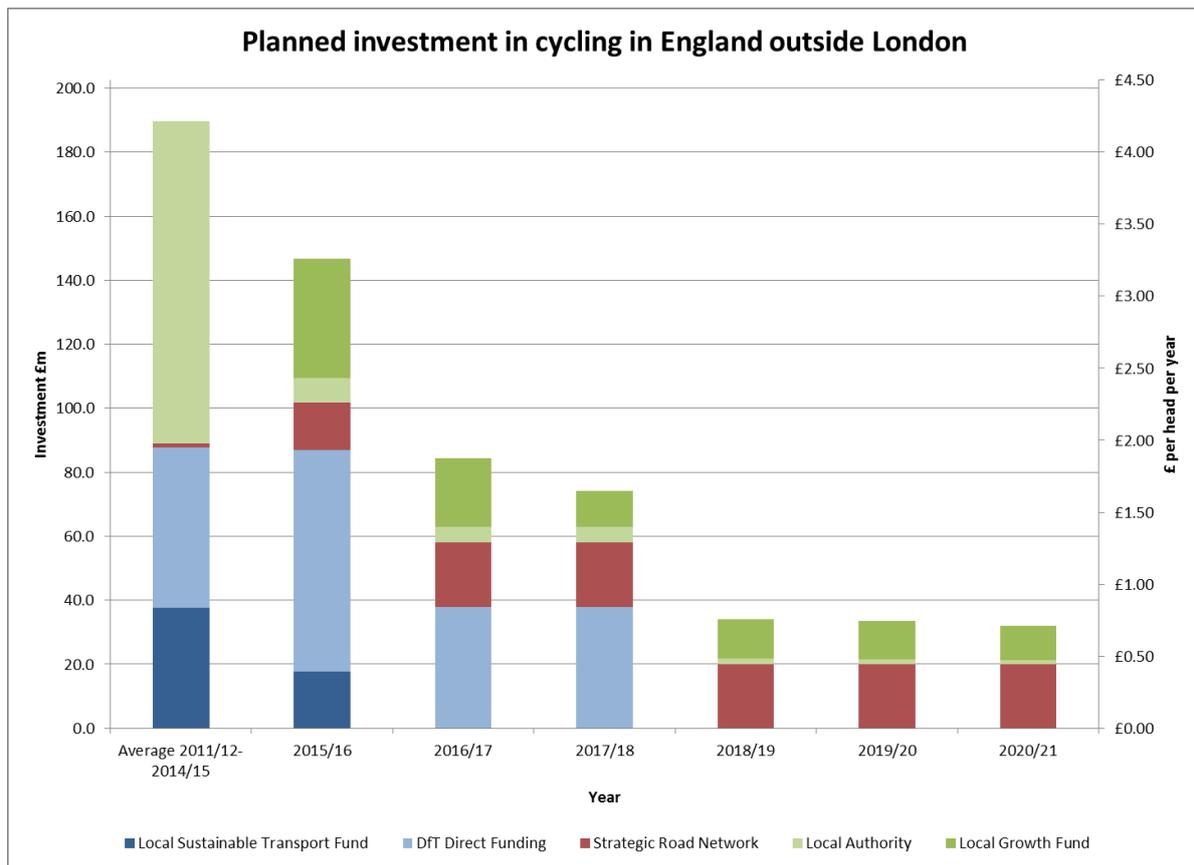
- 3.1. Sustrans has analysed publicly available information from various sources, including Parliamentary Answers, written statements, announcements, bids and reports, to gain a clearer understanding of current and planned levels and sources of investment in cycling. Our analysis clearly shows that there will be a sharp decline from even the current low levels of investment after 2015/6 and a widening funding gap after that.
- 3.2. The government estimates that total spend on cycling in England, outside of London is currently around £5 per person a year, or less than 0.7% of transport spending. This includes a wide variety of funding sources. There are broadly two types: government investment through local authorities via direct funding (e.g. Bikeability) and competitive bids (e.g. Cycle Ambition); and local investment through the Integrated Transport Block and matched contributions. There is also a very small direct investment in cycling through the Highways Agency.
- 3.3. Including government and local contributions, the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) accounts for more than a third of total investment.
- 3.4. Sustrans has done further in-depth analysis which actually shows that total investment in cycling in England outside London has been, on average, around £4.21 per head per year between 2011/12 and 2014/15. Of this around 80% is directly or indirectly attributable to funding from government, the largest component of which is the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. Equally, the majority of local contributions are to match these funding streams, again mainly the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This means that dedicated funding for cycling is both the biggest component of total investment, and the key that unlocks other funding.



- 3.5. This suggests that the government's approach to investment in cycling, founded on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, has been effective in both boosting overall levels of investment, and in leveraging local contributions. But it also raises questions about whether this investment can be sustained without significant and sustained investment by government, which is explored in the next section. With the LSTF coming to an end in 2015/16 there will be no budget line for cycling and walking and no guarantee that current levels of funding for cycling and walking will be maintained.
- 3.6. In fact, without action from government, overall investment in cycling will fall below £1 per person per year by 2020/21. This is far short of the government aspiration set out in the Cycling Delivery Plan published in November 2014 to 'achieve a minimum funding packet equivalent to £10 per person each year by 2020/21 - and sooner if possible' and highlights need for action through legislation.

Planned investment

- 4.1. The table below is based on Sustrans analysis of recent Government announcements, written answers, Growth Deals and bids for LSTF revenue funding in 2015/16. The table suggests that total investment in cycling will fall below the average achieved over the last 4 years in 2015/16, and more sharply after that, to a fraction of current levels and far below the ambition of £10 per head per year stated in the Cycling Delivery Plan.



- 4.2. There is a clear expectation from government that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) will invest in cycling. The government's more recent analysis of the final Growth Deals shows that they contain an element of sustainable transport, and 21 have included packages that explicitly contain cycling. However, these packages are still a tiny proportion by spend.
- 4.3. For example, of these Growth Deals, 14 include packages of investment in walking and cycling totalling £127.3m over the 6 years or approximately 4% of the total funds available. Assuming the same level of investment applies to mixed transport schemes, this amounts to £179.9m or approximately 6.5%. More than half of the planned walking and cycling expenditure is concentrated in just two of the 38 LEPs: the South East LEP (£45.1m) and the West of England LEP (£20m). Excluding these LEPs, spending on cycling and walking amounts to just 2.3% of planned transport spending by LEPs over the next 6 years.
- 4.4. It is clear from our analysis of LSTF bids that the revenue funding available in 2015/16 has attracted some local capital investment in cycling through the Local Growth Fund, but when this ends, the absence of ongoing revenue funding will have a negative impact both on total investment and the incentives for local spending. A number of the bids state that local contributions depend on the final Growth Deals agreed with government, and others are explicit that these depend on ongoing LSTF-type revenue funding. This analysis shows:

- 4.4.1. That current investment in cycling is overwhelmingly direct from government, with the local contributions largely dependent on this.
 - 4.4.2. That the LSTF revenue funding has been successful in attracting local contributions, but these are not guaranteed and fall sharply after 2015/16.
 - 4.4.3. That local contributions from the Local Growth Fund represent less than 25p per head per year.
 - 4.4.4. That at less than £1 per head per year, overall levels of investment in 2020/21 will fall far short of even current levels, let alone the £10 per head per year aspiration.
 - 4.4.5. That government action and investment is needed both to boost overall levels of funding and to create stronger incentives for local investment.
- 4.5. It might be argued that such an approach is top-down and conflicts with the philosophy of localism and the reality of growing devolution. However, the creation of ring-fenced or the top-slicing of budgets in the High Level Output Statement for rail for matters such as station improvement, level crossing safety and freight has worked well with growing localism.
- 4.6. A Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy would provide a long term vision for cycling and walking and a statement of funds available over the next five years that would specifically be spent on cycling and walking. Sustrans analysis above shows that it is absolutely necessary to provide long term certainty of funding for walking and cycling infrastructure and that it is a vitally important addition to the Bill to help tackle the wider issues of physical inactivity, congestion and air pollution. Please see Annex A for more details on this.

December 2014

References

- NAO 2012 Funding for Local Transport: an overview <http://www.nao.org.uk/report/funding-for-local-transport-an-overview/>
- HoC Hansard 11/02/14 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm140211/text/140211w0001.htm>
- HoC Hansard 12/06/14 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm140612/text/140612w0003.htm>
- HoC Hansard 14/02/14 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm140225/text/140225w0004.htm>
- HoC Hansard 28/11/14 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-11-28/216381/>
- HoC Hansard 03/11/14 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-11-03/213147/>
- DfT 2014 Press release: £15 million cycle rail boost <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/15-million-cycle-rail-boost>
- DfT 2013 Door to door action plan https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/326189/door-to-door-action-plan-july2014.pdf
- DfT 2014 Cycling delivery plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cycling-delivery-plan-informal-consultation>
- DfT 2014 Roads investment strategy: investment plan <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-investment-strategy-investment-plan>
- DfT 2014 Press release: Deputy PM announces £214 million investment in cycling <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/deputy-pm-announces-214-million-investment-in-cycling>
- DfT 2013 Briefing on the Government's ambition for cycling https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229473/briefing-governments-ambition-cycling.pdf
- ONS 2013 Population estimates <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pop-estimate/population-estimates-for-uk--england-and-wales--scotland-and-northern-ireland/2013/prt---table-2.xls>

Annex A

Infrastructure Bill Amendment Briefing: Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

Context

The Infrastructure Bill begins committee stage in the Commons on Tuesday 16th December. The Bill includes a proposed five year Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) to provide funding certainty for the strategic road network, while the rail network already has such an investment strategy in place. However, despite strong all party support there is no similar framework in place to provide long-term funding for cycling and walking. Therefore a coalition of the country's leading transport, environment and health organisations are working with MPs to lay an amendment at report stage to establish a long term vision and strategy for walking and cycling: **A Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS)**.

This will be preceded at committee stage by a probing amendment calling for a strategy which establishes a long-term commitment and funding to increase rates of walking and cycling, including in the planning of infrastructure projects to be lay before Parliament from Her Majesty's Government within six months of the day on which the Act is passed.

Why we need a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

- There is no secure, long term funding plan for cycling and walking, whilst the Road Investment Strategy has set out a secure, long term investment plan for strategic roads of £24bn that was announced in June 2013.
- 24% of trips in England are made on foot or by bicycle. Yet less than half of England's 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) have included any projects for cycling or walking in their Local Growth Fund plans, amounting to around 5% of their planned transport spending. Moreover, half of this proposed investment is in just 2 LEP areas. For the rest of England (outside London), cycling and walking accounts for just 3% of planned LEP transport spending¹.
- The end of vital revenue funding through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in 2015/16 will lead to a drastic reduction in funding, leaving many sustainable transport projects in jeopardy.
- Inactivity already costs the UK economy around £20 billion every year². With one in

¹ Written parliamentary question 216381, 5th December 2014 <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2014-11-28/216381/>

² Designed to Move, (2013), Designed to Move: A physical activity agenda, <http://www.designedtomove.org/>

- six deaths being linked to physical inactivity (equal to smoking as a cause of death)³.
- Currently the inactivity epidemic contributes to 40-50% of cancers, 75% of cardiovascular disease, 80% of strokes, 80% of type 2 diabetes and 30% of dementia that are all preventable⁴. For example, walking for a mile every day would reduce prostate and breast cancer patients' risks of dying by 30%⁵.
 - Road collisions, carbon emissions, noise and air pollution add at least a further £18 billion every year in costs⁶.

A step-change in ambition, strategy and funding for cycling and walking is needed, entrenching an aspiration for significant change into law.

In the last two decades, the UK has had many cycling strategies, walking plans and other delivery documents. Yet we continue to fall further behind other countries. Although the 1996 National Cycling Strategy aimed for an increase in cycling from under 2% to 8% of all travel by 2012 there has been no overall increase in this time. Meanwhile cycling in Germany has surged from 10% to 15% in under a decade, with the aim of reaching 20% by 2020.

Similarly, the average number of walking trips in the UK has also fallen by 30% since 1995/7⁷, alongside a significant drop in the number of children walking to school with less than 50% of children now walking to school. Yet 23% of cars on the road at peak traffic times are taking children to school, contributing to congestion and carbon emissions with 19% of school journeys under a mile being driven. This is at a time when getting more people active has never been more important to the health of the nation.

The Government has estimated that total spend on cycling in England is currently around £5 per person a year, or less than 0.7% of transport spending. Of this around 80% is directly or indirectly attributable to dedicated funding from government, the largest component of which is the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, which has been extremely effective in attracting local investment. Without sustained and substantial investment from government, total spend on cycling and walking will fall sharply after 2015/16, to a fraction of current levels and far below the £10 per head per year stated in the Government's Draft Cycling Delivery Plan.

To increase cycling and walking in this country a new approach to funding is needed, one that learns from the successes in turning round the rail network and making it the fastest growing network in Europe. Our amendment to the Infrastructure Bill, which is supported by

³ Lee I-M, et al. (2012) Effect of physical inactivity on major non-communicable diseases worldwide: an analysis of burden of disease and life expectancy. *The Lancet* 380: 219–29 & Murray et al. (2013) UK health performance: findings of the Global Burden of Disease Study 2010. *The Lancet* 381: 997-1020

⁴ Richmond Group, (November 2014), What is preventing progress? Time to move from talk to action on reducing preventable illnesses

⁵ Campbell A, Foster J, Stevinson C, Cavill N. (2012) The Importance of Physical Activity for People Living With and Beyond Cancer: A Concise Evidence Review (Macmillan Cancer Support)

⁶ Cabinet Office (2009) Costs of urban transport;

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20091204001009/http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/308292/urbantransportanalysis.pdf>

⁷ National Travel Survey: England 2013. Statistical release July 2014.

health, transport and environmental bodies, would harness for cycling and walking the success of mechanisms that have delivered record investment in the rail network.

We already have cross party support for long-term continuity of funding for cycling and walking as shown by the two all party inquiries and resulting reports: The 'Get Britain Cycling' report from the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group and 'Tackling Physical Inactivity – A Coordinated Approach' from the All Party Commission on Physical Activity. However, there is at present no means of taking forward the recommendations from these reports. This amendment is an opportunity to deliver these recommendations.

Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy

This amendment would create a statutory 'Cycling & Walking Investment Strategy' (CWIS). Like the High Level Output Statement (HLOS) for rail and the Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) for strategic roads, the CWIS would be made up of four elements:

- a long-term vision to increase walking and cycling rates across the whole population, in rural as well as urban areas;
- a Statement of Funds Available for the next five years that would be spent specifically on cycling and walking;
- a detailed Investment Plan of programmes and schemes - for example to improve cycle-rail integration, retrofit safe walking and cycling paths along busy roads and give provincial towns and cities London-style cycling measures and exemplary public spaces;
- a Performance Specification of measures and targets - for example increases in cycling and walking levels, improvement in safety, and the proportion of schools and stations with safe routes to them.

This statutory approach would offer significant advantages, namely that it would:

- Generate cross-party consensus, as there is for rail infrastructure;
- Secure a transformational level of long-term investment, creating a 'cycling and walking infrastructure pipeline' – by contrast much recent funding has come in dribs and drabs with strict time limits, making it challenging for local authorities to plan ahead and deliver schemes to high standards;
- Obtain economies of scale for programmes of minor schemes as well as making sure funding is shared across the country;
- Create a robust, regular review process that includes statutory scrutiny to maintain momentum and ambition.

It might be argued that such an approach is top-down and conflicts with the philosophy of localism and the reality of growing devolution. However, the creation of ring-fenced or the top-slicing of budgets in HLOS for matters such as station improvement, level crossing safety and freight has worked well with growing localism.

Investment in cycling and walking has a strategic role in supporting local economies as demonstrated by Campaign for Better Transport's report highlighting the cycling and walking opportunities for Local Enterprise Partnerships ([Improving local transport helps the economy](#)) and by Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) at the parish council and neighbourhood level with its Transport Toolkit (www.transporttoolkit.org.uk).

In the event that the Government is not ready to support this amendment at this stage, the Minister should provide an assurance that he will consider this further and provide a fuller response at the Third Reading.

Who's supporting this?

This briefing has been written by a coalition of the country's leading environment, transport and health organisations that includes: British Cycling; Campaign for Better Transport; CPRE; CTC, the National Cycling Charity; Living Streets; Sustrans and the Richmond Group (British Heart Foundation, Asthma UK, British Lung Foundation, Age UK, Breakthrough Breast Cancer, Diabetes UK, The Neurological Alliance, Macmillan Cancer Support, Stroke Association and Rethink Mental Illness).

More information

- Understanding the Roads Investment Strategy (and by implication the process for the CWIS) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-the-road-investment-strategy-now-and-in-the-future>
- Get Britain Cycling <http://allpartycycling.org/inquiry/>
- Tackling Physical Inactivity – A Coordinated Approach <http://activitycommission.com/>