

The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee
Green recovery
Submission from CoMoUK

CoMoUK welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee's call for views on the green recovery.

CoMoUK is a charity that promotes the environmental, economic, health and social benefits of shared transport for the public good. We support the development of shared modes of transport including bike share, e-scooters, car clubs, ride share and demand responsive transport as alternatives to private car ownership and use.

What are the key barriers to delivering a green recovery (within your sector and / or community)?

As we transition to a green recovery, shared transport can play a critical role in enabling people to travel sustainably and in particular to not own a car, which in turn will be key to achieving the Scottish Government's ambitious target of net zero by 2045.

The shared transport sector has undoubtedly faced serious challenges during the Coronavirus pandemic, suffering sharp cuts to revenues. Whilst shared transport operators responded to the crisis by continuing to run services [to help key workers undertake essential journeys](#), one of the key barriers to delivering a green recovery is the rising demand for private car travel.

This is accelerated by health concerns brought about by the pandemic and falling public transport use. For example, in China, where the easing of lockdown restrictions began in March, car sales in June 2020 were up 11% on the previous year¹. Similarly in the UK, there are early indications that car sales are bouncing back from lockdown slumps.

Good public transport is the bedrock of shared transport. Our research, now spanning two decades, shows that users of shared transport services tend to drive less and walk, cycle and use public transport more. In July, rail journeys in Scotland were down by 75% and concessionary bus journeys were down 60% compared to July 2019². A long-term depression in public transport use represents a significant challenge for the shared transport sector.

What key policies, actions and immediate priorities are needed to deliver a green recovery (within your sector and / or community)?

- **Reduce the environmental impacts of transport and lead a shift towards positive long-term behaviours**
Transport is Scotland's single largest emitting sector, accounting for 37% of greenhouse gas emissions. The largest source of transport emissions is cars³. Prior to lockdown 68% of Scotland's commuters drove to work by car or van, and 66% of all car journeys in Scotland were single occupancy trips⁴.

Shared transport provides alternatives to the private car including shared bikes, e-scooters, car clubs, ride share and demand responsive transport, which all have a lower impact on the environment.

¹ Chinese Association of Automobile Manufacturers http://www.caam.org.cn/chn/21/cate_463/con_5231066.html

² Transport Scotland Covid-19 Transport Trend Data <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/covid-19-transport-trend-data-20-26-july-2020/>

³ National Transport Strategy 2020 <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47052/national-transport-strategy.pdf>

⁴ Scottish Household Survey, Travel and Transport in Scotland 2018 <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/45852/sct09199889061.pdf>

Bike share offers a carbon free, healthy and sustainable way to get around. Bike share is used interchangeably with public transport, 27% of bike share members use it in conjunction with the train, and 19% with bus services. It is also a powerful tool for re-engaging lapsed cyclists, with 44% of bike share users in Scotland saying it was their trigger to start cycling again⁵.

Car clubs also lead to a reduction in private car ownership and use, as well as providing a much cleaner fleet than the UK average. Emissions from car club vehicles in Scotland are, on average, 43% lower than the average UK car, and 98% of car club cars are compliant with low emission zones. By driving newer, more environmentally friendly vehicles, car club members in Scotland saved 354 tonnes of carbon last year and disposed of 6,700 vehicles that would have otherwise been on Scotland's roads⁶.

CoMoUK conducted research into the potential scale and benefits of shared mobility in Scotland. It showed that there are 634,000 households in Scotland that could potentially switch from car ownership to car club membership. Switching them would save 87,000 tonnes of carbon per year through reduced mileage and the cleaner vehicles in car club fleets⁷.

Bike sharing offers the potential to switch out 5km or shorter car trips across Scotland to cycling, saving another 64,000 tonnes of carbon per year without all those participating needing to buy, maintain or store their own bike. In addition, it was found that 49% of commuter car trips in Scotland could be shared. This would save even more carbon (135,000 tonnes per year) based on all those currently driving to work in Scotland sharing the trip with one other person⁸.

Key policies and actions for the Scottish Government

- Implement a 'Mobility Credits' scheme to encourage people to get rid of their older, polluting cars in return for cash credits for use on public transport and shared modes.
- Require employers to report on scope 3 emissions from employee commuting and business travel.
- Target the public sector fleet – set an ambitious target for the public sector to reduce its grey fleet mileage by 2025.
- Monitor and report on car occupancy levels with a mandated responsibility to increase them.
- Expand and optimise bike share schemes – provide capital funding for bike share infrastructure and increased funding for e-bikes and e-cargo bikes.
- Expand and optimise car clubs – provide capital funding for communities to purchase electric vehicles for shared use, and set local authorities targets for expanding car club provision.

Embed shared transport in the planning system and improve placemaking

Private cars clutter up our streets, drive up emissions and affect the quality of the air we breathe. However, we use them, on average, just 3-4% of the time - even at the busiest peak no more than 15% of cars are being used at any one time.⁹ Research reveals that roads, car parks and on-street parking account for between 34.5% and 41% of space in our cities¹⁰. Each car club vehicle takes around 14 private cars off the road. This can

⁵ Scotland Bike Share Users Survey 2019/20 https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CoMoUK-Bike-Share-Survey-2020-FINAL_compressed-1.pdf

⁶ Car Club Annual Survey for Scotland 2019/20 https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/80264-Comouk-Car-Club-Survey_final-WEB-R-Edit.pdf

⁷ A shared mobility vision: a greener, fairer and healthier Scotland 2020 <https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CoMo-Scotland-Vision-Summary-Final-19.03.20.pdf>

⁸ A shared mobility vision: a greener, fairer and healthier Scotland 2020 <https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CoMo-Scotland-Vision-Summary-Final-19.03.20.pdf>

⁹ Shared mobility – where now, where next? <https://www.creds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/CREDS-Shared-mobility-comm-report-WEB.pdf>

¹⁰ Stealing our cities: land use analysis https://www.scotlandfutureforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-06-LandUseResearchProject_FullReport.pdf

transform our cities, with a positive effect on parking, congestion and local air quality. This is an opportunity to redesign our towns and cities so that they work for people instead of cars.

Key policies and actions for the Scottish Government

- Embed shared transport in the new National Planning Framework 4 and reform Section 75 agreements to ensure developers contribute to the provision of sustainable transport including shared modes.
- Require developers to ensure the inclusion of shared mobility in business parks and housing developments.
- Set targets for local authorities on the development of low car neighbourhoods.

- **Prioritise climate resilient infrastructure**

The Coronavirus pandemic has had a profound impact on our travel patterns. Just 30% of workers in Scotland travelled to their normal workplace during lockdown, and demand for public transport fell by 85% to 95%¹¹. However, the number of car journeys in Scotland has been steadily rising as restrictions have been lifted: journeys were down by 75% in April 2020 compared to April 2019, but by July 2020, that figure was just 10%¹². This highlights the importance of thoughtful development; if people travel less, they emit less. Higher levels of home working, or working in hubs closer to home, would cut commuting emissions significantly.

In many European cities mobility hubs have become commonplace¹³. Mobility hubs are places where public, shared and active travel modes are co-located, incorporating bike share, buses, trains, trams, car clubs and walking and cycling paths all in one location. They support low car lifestyles and the reallocation of space from car parking to housing or public realm improvements.

Key policies and actions for the Scottish Government

- Invest in and develop a network of mobility hubs, to encourage people to travel more sustainably.
- Ensure that there are shared transport options at key transport interchanges including train, bus and tram stations.
- Facilitate the growth and enhancement of EV charging infrastructure to support an all-electric car club fleet and expanded fleet of shared e-bikes.

- **Improve health and wellbeing**

Two thirds of adults in Scotland are overweight or obese – the highest level in the UK and one of the highest in the world¹⁴. The pandemic has exacerbated the need to think about how we can all live healthier lives. During the lockdown, we saw a dramatic increase in the number of people cycling across Scotland; according to Cycling Scotland, the number of people cycling increased by 77% in May 2020 compared to the previous year¹⁵. The Scottish Government should prioritise health and wellbeing to ensure that the green recovery also improves the health and wellbeing of citizens, as well as tackling climate change.

Key policies and actions for the Scottish Government

- Incentivise GPs to prescribe cycling to help curb obesity and utilise the public bike share fleet to provide access to bikes.

¹¹ Transport Transition Plan, Transport Scotland, 2020 <https://www.transport.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/transport-transition-plan/>

¹² Covid-19 Transport Trend Data <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/covid-19-transport-trend-data-14-19-april-2020/>

¹³ Intelligent Transport April 2020 <https://www.intelligenttransport.com/transport-articles/98414/what-the-uk-can-learn-from-europe-on-mobility-hubs-and-shared-transport/>

¹⁴ Scottish Health Survey 2018 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2018-volume-1-main-report/pages/62/>

¹⁵ Cycling Scotland Lockdown Cycling Survey <https://www.cycling.scot/news-article/new-lockdown-cycling-survey>

- Create a national programme to support prescription cycling aimed at increasing participation by removing barriers and helping boost confidence.
- Invest in a fleet of shared bikes and e-bikes for NHS hospital staff and patients to improve health outcomes.

How should the 2021/22 Budget support a green and sustainable recovery and avoid locking in carbon; and what funding is needed in the ECCLR portfolio to deliver a green and sustainable recovery?

The 2021/22 Budget should continue to prioritise policies that will accelerate the transition to net zero by 2045 and help to tackle climate change. It is important that there is a cross-governmental approach with the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform having oversight of the Scottish Government's climate change plans, but also recognising the connections to the other portfolios and policies that will have an impact on the outcomes particularly transport, communities, health and infrastructure.

CoMoUK agrees with the view of the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland that spending on roads should be restricted to improving existing infrastructure rather than increasing road capacity¹⁶. Shared transport, in contrast to other green transport options such as privately owned electric vehicles, also has a positive impact on reducing congestion and improving our streets and communities. It is clear that Scotland needs not only cleaner cars but fewer cars if we are to address serious environmental challenges such as climate change, air pollution and congestion.

If the Committee requires any further information or evidence please contact Lorna Finlayson, Scotland Director of CoMoUK by emailing lorna@como.org.uk.

¹⁶ Infrastructure Commission for Scotland https://infrastructurecommission.scot/storage/281/Phase1_FullReport.pdf