GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN CYCLING
Commons debate, Wednesday 3rd February, 4.30-5.30pm Westminster Hall

Introduction

1 CTC, the national cycling charity, was founded in 1878 and has 68,000 members and supporters. CTC's central mission is to make cycling a safe, accessible, enjoyable and 'normal' activity for people of all ages and abilities. Our interests cover cycling both as a form of day-to-day transport and as a leisure activity, which can deliver health, economic, environmental, safety and quality of life benefits both for individuals and society. We represent the interests of current and would-be cyclists on public policy matters, and we support a network of local volunteer campaigners throughout the UK. We run projects to enable diverse people, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, to discover the benefits and joys of cycling. We organise cycling events and provide a range of information and legal services.

2 Along with our allies in the Active Travel Alliance, CTC was a key supporter of the 2013 'Get Britain Cycling' inquiry[1] conducted by the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (APPCG). We strongly endorsed the inquiry report's 18 recommendations[2], which led the Government to propose a draft Cycling Delivery Plan. Our campaigning then helped secure cross-party backing for a legal commitment to a Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS), which was written into the Infrastructure Act 2015.[3] CTC is represented on the Government's 'High Level Group' which is now providing input to the development of the CWIS.

3 We are very disappointed though that the Government's proposed level of ambition for increased cycle use, and the £0.3bn of funding identified to achieve it, fall a very long way short of what the 'Get Britain Cycling' report called for (see paragraph 6). To remedy this, CTC proposes reallocating around £3bn of funding from the £15bn earmarked for national roads spending (via its Roads Investment Strategy (RIS)) towards cycling and walking. We note that spending on roads, at a time when average car use is declining, will tend to aggravate the country's dependence on private motorised transport – and hence the problems of congestion, pollution, physical inactivity, blighted neighbourhoods and climate change. By contrast, investment in cycling is an excellent way to tackle these problems.

Benefits of investing in cycling

4 Investing in cycling has vast benefits for our economy, health, environment and quality of life.

Economy

- Cycling tackles congestion – a typical road lane can carry seven times as many cycles as cars.
- Making town centres and residential areas cycle-friendly enhances their attractiveness, boosting their retail vitality and desirability as places to live.
- There are also economic benefits due to better health (see below), e.g. reduced health-care costs and absenteeism, and improved productivity.
- Even with Britain's current low levels of cycle use, it is estimated to contribute annual benefits to Britain's economy of around £3bn.[4]

Health

- People who cycle regularly in mid-adulthood typically enjoy a level of fitness equivalent to someone ten years younger and their life expectancy is two years above the average.[5]
- A population-wide study in Copenhagen found that, compared with those who cycled regularly to work, people who did not do so had a 39% higher mortality rate, regardless of whether or not they also took part in other physical activities.[6]

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[1] See www.ctc.org.uk/get-britain-cycling and www.ctc.org.uk/ministers-police-and-jon-snow-appear-appcg
[2] See www.ctc.org.uk/news/get-britain-cycling-report-recommends-%C2%A310-head-year-funding-for-cycling
[3] See www.ctc.org.uk/news/20150128-cycling-walking-investment-strategy-agreed
[4] Dr Alexander Grous / LSE. *The British Cycling Economy – 'Gross Cycling Product'*. Commissioned by Sky and British Cycling. Aug 2011. http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/38063/1/BritishCyclingEconomy.pdf
[5] Tuxworth W et al. *Health, fitness, physical activity and morbidity of middle aged male factory workers*. British Journal of Industrial Medicine vol 43. pp 733-753,1986.
[6] Andersen L et al, *All-cause mortality associated with physical activity during leisure time, work, sports and cycling to work*. Archives of Internal Medicine, 160: 1621-1628, 2000 http://archinte.ama-assn.org/cgi/reprint/160/11/1621.pdf

- Increased cycle use is associated with improvements in cyclists' safety: the 'safety in numbers' effect. Moreover, cyclists have a very low rate of involvement in collisions where another road user is injured. Hence, more cycling is good not just for cyclists' safety but for other road users too.

The environment

- CTC calculates that the person making the average daily car commute of four miles each way would save half a tonne of CO_2 by switching to cycling – 5% of the average UK carbon footprint.
- Doubling cycle use through switching from driving to cycling would reduce Britain's total greenhouse emissions by 0.6 million tonnes, about as much as switching all air travel between London and Scotland to the rail network.[7]
- Cycling is one of the easiest and cheapest ways for individuals to reduce their contribution to climate change on a day-to-day basis.

5 Further evidence (with references) for the benefits of cycling can be found in CTC's campaigns briefings on national transport policy, health, air quality and climate change. These and other CTC briefings are accessible via www.ctc.org.uk/briefings.

Funding and ambition

6 The APPCG's Get Britain Cycling report called for sustained funding (from both national and local sources) of at least £10 per person annually, rising to £20 per person, in order to boost cycle use from less than 2% of trips at present to 10% (roughly German levels) by 2025 and to 25% (roughly Dutch levels) by 2050. By contrast, the Government has so far earmarked just £300m for cycling over the next 5 years, amounting to just £1.39 per person for England outside London. This funding includes: £101m to continue the eight existing Cycling Ambition Grant cities projects to 2018 (these being Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Norwich, Cambridge, Oxford and Bristol); £100m for Highways England to improve cycle access along and across motorway and trunk roads, and £50m for Bikeability cycle training. It will be clear that there little central Government funding for the next five years that is not already allocated.

Infrastructure

7 In general terms, linear cycle provision should take one of the following three forms:

- *Minor urban streets or rural lanes* where the traffic volumes and speeds are low enough that people of all ages and abilities, including children, can use them safely and confidently. 20mph speed limits should be the norm for most urban streets.
- *High-quality protected cycle lanes* on roads whose traffic volumes and speeds are (and will inevitably remain) too high for comfortable cycling by all. These should not only be physically separate from motor vehicles, but should also avoid creating conflict with pedestrians, and ensure cyclists' safety and priority at junctions.
- *Routes free of motor traffic*, e.g. through parks and open spaces, alongside watercourses or using disused railway lines and the rights of way network. They should be well surfaced, lit and maintained, with good surfaces for use in all weathers. Although they can be wonderful features (especially where they are more direct than the nearest on-road alternative), they should complement, not substitute for, a cycle-friendly road network, in order to meet people's day-to-day journey needs (e.g. journeys from homes to workplaces, shops etc, most of which are on the road network).

8 Regrettably few cycle facilities in the UK meet these standards, with many being positively dangerous. Typical failures include:

- *Forcing cyclists to share roadspace with fast or heavy traffic*, including the frequent need to pull out round parked cars and/or bus stops. This is intimidating to all but a fairly small minority of people, mostly young to middle-aged males. This is why the UK (where cycling accounts for 2% of trips) has such low levels of cycle use in comparison with countries like the Netherlands (27% of trips), with few children or older people cycling regularly.

[7] Committee on Climate Change, *Building a low-carbon economy*, p. 291. 2008. www.theccc.org.uk/publication/building-a-low-carbon-economy-the-uks-contribution-to-tackling-climate-change-2/

- *Creating conflict between cyclists and pedestrians* by simply designating the pavement as a cycle track, possibly with a line of white paint to separate the two user groups. This is never an ideal solution and, particularly in urban areas, it is almost invariably the wrong one.
- *Cycle facilities which give up at junctions* or force cyclists to give way and look over their shoulders (which they would not have to do by remaining on the road), just where they are most in need of protection. 75% of cyclists' injuries occur at or near junctions.[8]

9 CTC urges the Government to draw up consistent standards for cycle-friendly planning and design, to ensure that investment in cycling is well spent and that the Government's 'Cycle-proofing' principle is delivered to consistently high standards. (N.B. 'Cycle-proofing' means identifying and maximising the opportunities to improve cycling conditions in all relevant schemes at an early stage in the design process[9]). These could draw on the excellent standards already developed by Transport for London[10] or the Welsh Government[11] to support the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. Regrettably, DfT is reluctant to do this, citing the principle of "localism". Yet councils have clearly stated they want this guidance. They do not want to all have to create their own design guidelines, nor is it remotely sensible to have different authorities designing for cycling in different ways, or simply ignoring the woolly and contradictory guidance currently set out in a range of national government publications which have accumulated over the years.

10 In addition to the principles of cycle route design, these standards should also cover:

- *Cycle network-planning:* Rather than thinking purely about individual cycle routes and facilities, transport planners need to work towards comprehensive, coherent networks which enable anybody to make any local journey safely, conveniently and enjoyably by cycling. Within this, key routes then need to be prioritised, e.g. using the *National Propensity to Cycle Tool*, now being developed for the Department for Transport.[12] This is simply the most useful thing DfT has done for cycling in about 20 years.
- *New solutions for improving cyclists' priority and safety at major road junctions and crossings*. Some of this will require new regulations, e.g. to prioritise cycle track users over turning traffic at minor side-road junctions or to permit cycles and pedestrians to share time safely at junctions when motor traffic is stopped in all directions. However, the guidance also needs to include advice on ways to deliver safe and convenient crossings of major roads and junctions, including bridges or tunnels, for the fastest roads and junctions.
- *Cycle provision in new developments.* With significant investment in new housing planned, these and other new developments need to be located and designed so that cycling to, from and within them is a safe and natural option.
- *Cycle parking standards,* to help planners decide how much cycle parking (and of what type) is needed, both for existing locations and new developments – whether for residents, for employees or for visitors at destinations such as shopping centres, health and civic amenities, leisure destinations and public transport stations / interchanges.
- *Cycle-friendly road maintenance.* Cyclists are disproportionately affected by poorly maintained carriageway surfaces or poorly laid-out road-works. Typically around 12% of the injury claims dealt with annually by CTC's solicitors on behalf of our members are related to maintenance defects. Conversely, road resurfacing works are an excellent opportunity to consider how a road layout could be made more cycle-friendly in a very cost-effective manner.

11 The Government should then work with the professional engineering institutions and cycling groups to put in place audit processes and professional training on the principles of cycle-friendly planning and design. All the relevant stakeholders are keen to collaborate on this, but need to know that the Government will provide relevant backing.

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[8] DfT. Calculated from Table RAS 20006, *Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2014*. Sept. 2015. This figure has remained about the same for several years. See www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2014

[9] See www.gov.uk/government/groups/cycle-proofing-working-group

[10] TfL. *London Cycling Design Standards.* 2015. See https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/streets-toolkit#on-this-page-1

[11] Welsh Government. *Design Guidance: Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.* Dec 2014. http://gov.wales/docs/det/publications/141209-active-travel-design-guidance-en.pdf

[12] See www.cedar.iph.cam.ac.uk/research/modelling/npct-tool

Cycle training and other activities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities

12 Alongside high quality cycle-friendly infrastructure, we need to build up the numbers and diversity of those taking up cycling by offering people cycle training and other targeted opportunities to give cycling a try. These should be offered in schools, colleges and workplaces, for health patients, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups among whom cycle use and physical activities are low. Though such measures are no substitute for high-quality cycle use, they can still be very cost-effective ways to build up the numbers and range of people who cycle. This in turn helps build up the "cycling vote", thereby boosting the chances of securing the investment needed to maximise the value of investing in promotional activity. These "smarter choices" measures rely on revenue funding, yet they have very high value-for-money, typically yielding around £10 of benefit for every £1 spent.[13]

Other complementary measures

13 Alongside investment in cycling, the following measures also need to be put in place:

- *Integrating cycling and public transport,* particularly cycle-rail travel. This requires: good cycle access to, from and within stations; cycle parking; cycle hire and storage facilities at larger stations; space for carrying cycles on new and refurbished trains and other public transport vehicles; simple but non-compulsory reservation systems for booking cycles onto any service which also has seat reservations; clear information on what services carry cycles; and clear information about where to wait on the platform to access the cycle spaces on the train.
- *Tackling bad driving* and promote responsible road use by all, by making cycle-friendly revisions to the Highway Code and by strengthening the legal system's response to bad driving. CTC's Road Justice campaign has highlighted problems and solutions with all parts of the legal system, including under-resourced policing, a lack of clarity around the distinction between 'careless' and 'dangerous' driving offences, and an unwillingness of the courts to impose driving bans. We also need to remedy the lack of data on who is prosecuted and convicted (and what sentences they receive) for road traffic offences involving different road user groups. This is essential to determine whether the legal system responds differently to cyclists' deaths or injuries compared with those of other road users. See www.roadjustice.org.uk.
- *Improving lorry safety*, particularly by promoting safe cab designs which allow lorry drivers to see what's around them as easily as bus drivers can. To promote Government leadership on this, CTC has been working to ensure that high standards of lorry safety are adopted as policy by HS2 Ltd and by Highways England, in the same way that Transport for London led on the issue through the Crossrail project. CTC urges the Government to roll out the cycle safety measures from TfL's Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS), its Construction Logistics and Cycle Safety (CLoCS) and its London Freight Enforcement Partnership (LFEP) initiatives on a nationwide basis.[14]
- Providing advice to local authorities on *target-setting, scheme appraisal and monitoring*. Though Britain has relatively good data on cycle use and cyclists' safety (at least compared with most other countries), we still know relatively little about the cost-effectiveness of different measures to boost cycle use. Better monitoring of schemes and investment programmes will identify the most cost-effective measures to proiritise in future spending plans.

CTC, the national cycling charity
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[13] Cairns S, Sloman L, Newson C, Anable J, Kirkbride A & Goodwin P. *Smarter Choices – Changing the Way We Travel'.* DfT. 2004. "… on average, every £1 spent on well-designed soft measures could bring about £10 of benefit in reduced congestion alone, more in the most congested conditions, and with further potential gains from environmental improvements and other effects, provided that the tendency of induced traffic to erode such benefits is controlled." www.transportforqualityoflife.com/policyresearch/behaviourchange/

[14] See CTC's briefing on goods vehicles for more on these schemes: www.ctc.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_public/goods-vehicles4qrvv.pdf