

About the RCPCH

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) is responsible for training and examining paediatricians. The College has over 17,000 members in the UK and internationally and sets standards for professional and postgraduate education. We work to transform child health through knowledge, research and expertise, to improve the health and wellbeing of infants, children and young people across the world.

RCPCH response to the consultation questions

Safer Streets Members Bill consultation – Scotland

About you:

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? Organisation
Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".) Third Sector
I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation
Steve Turner, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Officer for Scotland.

Response:

Q1a Which best expresses your view of the proposal

Fully supportive

Q1b Why?

The RCPCH's report '[Why Children Die: Death in infants, children and young people in the UK, Part D \(October 2014\)](#)' clearly lays out the evidence behind the need to reduce speed limits in built up areas to 20mph. Road traffic injuries are a major cause of preventable death during childhood and adolescence, and on average six children (under 16 years) died annually on Scotland's roads between 2011 and 2013 (Scottish Government. Road deaths and injuries). On average between 2009 and 2013, there were two pedestrian fatalities, one pedal cyclist fatality and two car fatalities involving children, signalling a need to better protect children through targeted measures, including lower speed limits.

The proposed Bill is directly relevant to the [State of Child Health Report 2017](#) call, within the [recommendations for Scotland](#), to reduce the number of child deaths and for the implementation of a robust, consistent child death review system.

Q2 Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

No. RCPCH believes that legislation is the best way to deliver this change, to ensure that it is enforceable by law and that it is applied wholesale through all built up areas in the country so that drivers will assume if they are in a built up area the speed limit must be 20 mph (in the same way that the current assumption is 30mph).

Q3 What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of the proposal?

20mph limits in built up areas will create safer places for children to walk, cycle and play, reducing fatal and non-fatal injuries from traffic accidents and making walking and cycling more attractive options for children, young people and their parents/carers.

Q4 What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of the proposal?

None. However, the change requires clear signage and enforcement.

Q5. What other measures do you think would be needed to maximise compliance with the new national 20mph speed limit on restricted roads, for example in relation to advertising signage and police enforcement

A media publicity campaign, clear signage and police enforcement will be key. Campaigns explaining the benefits of a smooth driving style that avoids excessive acceleration and braking would increase the benefits to drivers by maximising fuel efficiency and minimising air pollution whilst travelling in 20mph areas.

Q6 Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
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Scottish Government X
(campaign)

Local Authorities X
(signage)

Motorists X
(if drive smoothly)

Other Police Scotland X
(increased enforcement costs offset by reduced number of accidents requiring a police response).

Q7 Do you believe there will be any other benefits to reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph?

[ROSPA's Road Safety Factsheet 2017](#) details the evidence and the benefits of this change. RCPCH supports this view point.

Q8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive. The proposed bill will have a beneficial impact on the young (and also likely the older members of our society)

Q9. Could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on any of these protected groups be minimised or avoided?

No negative impacts identified.

Q10. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?

Yes.

Please explain the reasons for your response:

Reductions in road traffic accidents and injuries to children and young people will reduce costs for the NHS but more importantly it will reduce the cost to society from the loss of children and young people before they have had a chance to reach their potential.

We anticipate the proposed bill will also impact positively on the environment by reducing air pollution in urban areas.

Q11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal to establish a 20mph default speed limit on restricted roads?

RCPCH believes this is a sensible policy proposal with many benefits and that that other nations in the UK and Northern Ireland (and further afield) may follow suit.

For further information about any aspect of this consultation response, please contact Dr Steve Turner, Officer for Scotland at: s.w.turner@abdn.ac.uk