

About the RCPCH

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) is responsible for training and examining paediatricians. The College has over 18,000 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:

Do you support the proposed reduction in the default speed limit on most urban and residential streets in Scotland from 30mph to 20mph? *

- Yes - I support the reduction from 30mph to 20mph

You now have two options. You can either answer a series of questions about the possible impact of the proposals in the Bill, or skip these questions and quickly finish the survey. Which would you like to choose? *

- I want to answer the other questions

Possible impact of the Bill

Do you think reducing the default speed limit on most urban and residential streets would enhance road safety?

- Yes

Why do you think this?

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.

Do you think the reducing the default speed limit on most urban and residential streets would have a positive or negative impact on you or your organisation?

- Positive

Why do you think this?

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. [ROSPA's Road Safety Factsheet 2017](#) details the evidence and the benefits of this change. RCPCH supports this view point. The RCPCH has highlighted the harmful effect of air pollution from burning fossil fuel with the [Effects of indoor air quality on children and young people's health - research project](#) and reduced driving speed within residential areas will reduce everyone's exposure to the harm from air pollution (indoor air exposures to fossil fuel combustants arise from ingress of outdoor air).

If the Bill is passed, should its roll-out be accompanied by a national awareness campaign?

- Yes

Why do you think this and do you have any suggestions on the nature of any such campaign?

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.

More on the impact of the Bill

Should Police Scotland be required to take additional enforcement action, over and above that used to enforce the current 30mph limit, following the introduction of a 20mph limit on most urban and residential streets in Scotland?

- No

Why do you think this and what, if any, additional action would you like to see taken?

- Clear signage and a publicity campaign to communicate the change should be prioritised in implementation of the legislation to ensure the public are aware of the new speed limit.

If the Bill is agreed, how long should local authorities be given to complete the roll-out of the new 20mph limit?

- Within a year

Why do you think this?

The proposed bill will have an immediate beneficial impact on the young (and also likely the older members of our society). We accept that there may be barriers to the rapid introduction of a 20mph limit but the stage is already set (many urban areas already have 20 mph signage) and the considerable benefits are transparent. The timely introduction of 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. 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.

Do you have any comments on the impact that the Bill might have on the following issues:

Human rights or equalities for any particular group of people:

- Slower traffic will create a safer “place” which can be expected to encourage more children to walk to school, remove the need for transport costs to families living in poverty. Slower and less traffic through residential areas will also improve the quality of air, especially in urban areas, where inequalities are often wider.

Sustainable development:

- Fossil fuel combustion produces pollutants which are known to harm unborn babies, infants and children. Measures to reduce fuel that is burnt close to children will both improve their health (by cleaning up the air they breathe) as well as support promotion and development of more sustainable modes of transport and types of fuel.

Island, rural or remote communities:

- 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. These benefits are the same in island, rural and remote communities as in urban areas.

Anything else?

As detailed in the following blog:

[Reducing the speed limit will improve child health,](#)

Prof Steve Turner 6 January 2019

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.

Is there anything else that should be included, or removed, from the Bill?

- No

About you

To help us better understand the context of your response, please can you provide the following information:

Your name: Prof Steve Turner

Email address: Enquiries.enquiries@rcpch.ac.uk

Organisation: Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, Scotland

Postcode: EH2 1JE

Do you want to be added to our contact list to be kept up to date on this and other bits of work? You can unsubscribe at any time.

- Yes

Publishing your views *

- Yes

I am happy for my name, or that of my organisation, to be on the submission, for it to be published on the Scottish Parliament website, mentioned in any Committee report and form part of the public record.

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



**Prof Steve Turner
RCPCH Officer for Scotland**