

**From:** (redacted)  
**Sent:** 10 October 2021 08:49  
**To:** Central Enquiry Unit <[CEU@gov.scot](mailto:CEU@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** Safety and active transport.

Dear Minister

May I firstly acknowledge that wearing of head protection whilst cycling is not enshrined in legislation. I also fully appreciate the free choice of individuals.

With the rights of freedom of choice a proportionate degree of responsibility accompanies the right.

That responsibility extends to the society in which you live and in particular to preserving our rights to free healthcare.

It is however accepted wisdom that wearing such protection greatly reduces levels of serious injury or death should the cyclist be involved in an impact.

At a time when A and E and the nhs is at breaking point surely it's time to reinforce the safety advice.

Professionally I have first hand experience of dealing with seriously cyclist injury incidents some of which sadly resulted in death.

Leading by example us a duty of government as is the promotion of environmental benefits of cycling.

Perhaps the Active Transport Minister would undertake the safety headwear message and lead by example.

Cycling is an activity well worth promoting on so many advantageous levels.

It is not an extreme sport but an honest everyday activity enjoyed by all ages.

I look forward to the Ministers response and to see him wearing a safety helmet when cycling.

Regards

(redacted)



(redacted)  
(redacted)

Our Reference: 202100246789

9 November 2021

Dear (redacted) ,

Thank you for your email of 10 October addressed to Patrick Harvie MSP, Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights, asking if consideration could be given to making it mandatory to the wearing of cycle helmets. I am responding as I deal with walking and cycling behaviour change policy in Transport Scotland.

As you recognise in your email, the wearing of cycle helmets is covered by the Highway Code and is a matter reserved to the UK Government, however, the Scottish Government is committed to improving the safety of vulnerable road users including cyclists. Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030, endorses the Highway Code which recommends that cyclists wear a cycle helmet which conforms to current regulations, is the correct size and securely fastened.

The Department for Transport has carried out a public consultation and review of the Highway Code in the two years and which is due to be published in Spring 2022, and Scottish active travel stakeholders and others have contributed to this exercise. However, as you have said before, the wearing of a cycle helmet is not a requirement in UK law, and still remains a matter of personal/parental choice.

Please do get in touch again if you have any further questions which I will endeavour to answer.

Yours sincerely



(redacted)  
(redacted)

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From: (redacted)  
Sent: 17 March 2022 18:55  
To: Harvie P (Patrick), MSP <[Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)>  
Subject: Helmets for cyclists

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I think you are dangerously misinformed about this. I lived in Australia many years ago. At that time NSW had just introduced compulsory helmets for cyclists. The number of incidents of cyclists' injuries - both light and severe reduced dramatically. The extent of the improvement surprised even those most in favour. I am sure that there are other countries, where this is also true. Why should Scots not enjoy the protection of this very straightforward and popular initiative. Here, in Scotland, I no longer cycle on the roads and I do not even live in a city. I find road cycling too risky and have actually seen my sister seriously injured. Without her helmet she would have been even worse. Would you please take urgent steps to better inform yourself? Would you then correct this error as publicly as you made it - for the sake of all cyclists and also other road users?

(redacted)



(redacted)

(redacted)

Our Reference: 202200288977

Your Reference: FW: Helmets for cyclists

19 April 2022

Dear (redacted) ,

Thank you for your email of 17 March to Patrick Harvie MSP, Minister for Active Travel, about information regarding road safety and the wearing of cycling helmets. I have been asked to respond as I deal with cycling behaviour change policy. I am sorry to hear that your sister experienced serious injuries relating to a cycling incident and I wish her a good recovery.

You may already be aware that the wearing of cycle helmets is covered by the Highway Code and is a matter reserved to the UK Government, however, the Scottish Government is committed to improving the safety of vulnerable road users, especially cyclists and pedestrians. Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030, published in February 2021, endorses the Highway Code which recommends that cyclists wear a cycle helmet which conforms to current regulations, is the correct size and securely fastened. This is not a requirement by UK law, and remains a matter of personal choice.

I can assure you that this Scottish Government actively promotes road safety for all road users and will continue to invest in road safety campaigns and the promotion of the updated Highway Code which was published recently by the UK Government.

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Yours sincerely

(redacted)  
(redacted)

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From: (redacted)  
Sent: 21 March 2022 09:15  
To: Harvie P (Patrick), MSP <[Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)> Cc: Slater L (Lorna), MSP <[Lorna.Slater.MSP@Parliament.scot](mailto:Lorna.Slater.MSP@Parliament.scot)>  
Subject: Cycle Saftey and Helmet Comments 17th March 2022

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FAO Patrick Harvie  
The Scottish Green Party

Cycle Saftey and Helmet Comments 17th March 2022

Dear Mr Harvie,

I note with incredulity and great disappointment, your comments in the Scottish parliament stating that there is no proven evidence on the effectiveness of cycle helmets.

As a cyclist, both commuter and former racing cyclists, I can confirm that cycle helmets have, without question, effectively protected me against severe head injuries. I have the broken helmets and protected cranium to prove this. As a father, organiser of cycling events and advocate of cycling, I am horrified to hear a leader of a political party stand up and openly state your views on helmets...especially a party who are supposedly trying to increase low carbon travel. It not only sets a very poor example to those who require protecting, especially young children, but moreover evidences a startling level of ignorance within the Scottish Government given the following studies;

<https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/cyclists/cycle-helmets.pdf><<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rospa.com%2Frospaweb%2Fdocs%2Fadvice-services%2Froad-safety%2Fcyclists%2Fcycle-helmets.pdf&data=04%7C01%7CPatrick.Harvie.msp%40parliament.scot%7C7603cc126d51492d1fbc08da0b1b4eff%7Cd603c99ccfd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1%7C1%7C637834509170596698%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoicjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0&odata=jI9MXg6s9SrzOaXHhXPEclKXI1cfL5j%2B9W0VUKBZ3Q%3D&reserved=0>>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2598379/><<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov%2Fpmc%2Farticles%2FPMC2598379%2F&data=04%7C01%7CPatrick.Harvie.msp%40parliament.scot%7C7603cc126d51492d1fbc08da0b1b4eff%7Cd603c99ccfd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1%7C1%7C637834509170596698%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoicjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0&odata=xFUQWm4X7ahG3EE5NXGM4iCM0%2FkykRwn3P0aMgHPH6o%3D&reserved=0>>  
<https://academic.oup.com/ije/article/46/1/278/2617198><<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Facademic.oup.com%2Fije%2Farticle%2F46%2F1%2F278%2F2617198&data=04%7C01%7CPatrick.Harvie.msp%40parliament.scot%7C7603cc126d51492d1fbc08da0b1b4eff%7Cd603c99ccfd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1%7C1%7C637834509170596698%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoicjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0&odata=9IL48hTaPsFf31TN0QnhnmCzmzJ5zLvLozGe1VvAi1w%3D&reserved=0>>

There are numerous studies, most concluding an approximate 70%+ reduction in injury.

In the interests of public safety and honesty, I would ask that you offer a humble apology and correction to your original statement immediately.

Your sincerely

(redacted)

(redacted)

(redacted)

(redacted)





(redacted)  
(redacted)

Our Reference: 202200293533

Your Reference: FW: Cycle Safety and Helmet Comments 17th March 2022

9 May 2022

Dear (redacted)

Thank you for your email of 21 March 2022 to Patrick Harvie MSP, Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights regarding cycle helmets. I have been asked to reply as I deal with active travel policy at Transport Scotland.

You may already be aware that the wearing of cycle helmets is covered by the Highway Code and is a matter reserved to the UK Government, however, the Scottish Government is committed to improving the safety of vulnerable road users, especially cyclists and pedestrians.

Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030, published in February 2021, endorses the Highway Code which recommends that cyclists wear a cycle helmet which conforms to current regulations, is the correct size and securely fastened. This is not a requirement by UK law, and as stated by the minister on a number of occasions, remains a matter of personal choice as per the Highway Code.

I can assure you that this Scottish Government actively promotes road safety for all road users and will continue to invest in road safety campaigns and the promotion of the updated Highway Code which was published recently by the UK Government.

I would also like to thank you for highlighting the studies included in your email and again assure you that Transport Scotland considers available evidence in the delivery of active travel and road safety policy. However, the Highway Code remains a reserved matter for the UK Government.

Yours sincerely

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**From:** (redacted)

**Sent:** 02 November 2022 10:49

**To:** Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel and Tenants' Rights

<[MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterZCBATTR@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** Cycling

Dear Mr Harvie,

I send this e-mail in the knowledge that you are a cyclist.

Now the dark nights are upon us, I once again express my concern at the number of idiotic cyclists in Edinburgh, who cycle in the dark, with no lights (or inadequate lights), often with dark clothing and no helmets.

I have to go into town two or three evenings a week, and on more than one occasion, I have had near misses with such cyclists. It is particularly bad around the Meadows, and on the Royal Mile. Sadly, the offenders are often Deliveroo cyclists. I did contact them, and received a watery assurance, which clearly does not work.

Worse still, I am fed up with such cyclists who go through red lights. Absolute idiots who give decent cyclists a bad name.

I have written twice to Police Scotland, and not even received a reply. One evening, an offending cyclist overtook a police car, but they ignored him!

Is there anything you can do to introduce some meaningful enforcement of the law, and ensure the many offenders are penalised?

We really do need cyclists to be held responsible, with both registration and insurance. These are the only ways to eliminate this anti social and dangerous behaviour.

And the latest curse – electric scooters with no lights.

Yours,

(redacted)



(redacted)  
(redacted)

Our Reference: 202200331815

Your Reference: Cycling

8 December 2022

Dear (redacted),

Thank you for your email of 2 November 2022 to Patrick Harvie MSP, Minister for Active Travel, regarding enforcement of the law to prevent dangerous cycling, I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Minister as an official responsible for active travel policy in Transport Scotland.

It must first be said that enforcement of traffic offences is a matter for Police Scotland, which operates independently of Scottish Ministers.

Nevertheless, the Scottish Government do not condone any disregard for the rules of the road by any road users. As outlined in the updated Highway Code (a matter reserved to the UK Government), it is illegal to speed, ride without lights during the hours of darkness, or to put other road users at risk when cycling, for example by running a red light at a junction.

The Code also recommends the wearing of a correctly fitted cycle helmet, however this is not a legal requirement, and remains a matter of personal choice. A link to the updated Highway Code for cyclists is here for ease of reference: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/rules-for-cyclists-59-to-82>

You may be also aware we recently published a new Road Safety Framework to 2030 with the goal of making Scotland's roads the safest in the world. It adopts the highly-regarded 'Safe System' approach to road safety and sets challenging targets for the years ahead. No road user is omitted and the plan is to ensure safer travel for all, no matter what mode is chosen. A link to the framework can be found here: <https://roadsafety.scot/scotlands-road-safety-framework/framework/scotlands-road-safety-framework-2030/>

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Hope you will find the above useful.

Yours sincerely,

(redacted)  
(redacted)

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**From:** (redacted)  
**Sent:** 30 April 2023 12:48  
**To:** Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel & Tenants' Rights  
<[MinisterforZCBATTR@gov.scot](mailto:MinisterforZCBATTR@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Sunday Post, revolution in cycling.

Dear Mr.Harvie,  
I attach self explanatory email for your consideration.  
Regards,  
(redacted)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: (redacted)  
Date: 30 Apr 2023 10:18  
Subject: Sunday Post, revolution in cycling.  
To: [Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Patrick.Harvie.msp@parliament.scot)  
Cc:

Mr.Harvie,

great news about increased funding for cycling, now 10% of Transport budget at £320M.

However in photo of you in the paper you were not wearing a cycle helmet ! This is a mistake.

I am a Cycling UK member and despite what is said about cycle helmets and the link with general health I strongly disagree that cycle helmets are not beneficial.I speak from personal experience and that of others who have been involved in "crashes" that would have undoubtedly been worse had it not been for wearing cycle helmets.

I wonder if ,as part oy the budget increase, consideration could be given to ensuring the use of helmets when cycling.

This could start with Primary schoolchildren and be included in the curriculum, ( recall cycling proficiency certificates ?), include helmets as a requirement of any cycle purchase and general marketing/promotion of the benefits of wearing a helmet ?These are only a few proposals but perhaps you could consider how to take forward the benefits in wearing a helmet when cycling particularly for our children?

Regards,

(redacted)



(redacted) .  
(redacted)

Our Reference: 202300356073

31 May 2023

Dear (redacted)

Thank you for your email of 30 Apr 2023 to Patrick Harvie MSP, Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings, Active Travel & Tenants' Rights regarding the use of bicycle helmets. I have been asked to respond as I deal with active travel in Transport Scotland.

You may already be aware that the wearing of cycle helmets is covered by the Highway Code and is a matter reserved to the UK Government, however, the Scottish Government is committed to improving the safety of vulnerable road users including cyclists.

Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030, published in February 2021, endorses the Highway Code which recommends that cyclists wear a cycle helmet which conforms to current regulations, is the correct size and securely fastened. This is not a requirement by UK law, and remains a matter of personal and parental choice.

The 2021 Road Safety Framework has a renewed focus on people who cycle including specific casualty reduction targets for cyclists and sets out a vision for Scotland to have the best road safety performance in the world by 2030 and an ambitious long term goal where no one is seriously injured or killed on our roads by 2050.

Road Safety Scotland also produce resources to impart skills through fun, easy and engaging videos, games and activities for children, including how to go safely on their bike and the importance of wearing a properly-fitted helmet.

The Scottish Government continues to focus on the provision of safe walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, investing in ambitious on and off-road segregated walking and cycling routes, safer

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junctions and improved design of place. Over £52 million of the Active Travel budget was allocated in grant funding to Sustrans for the Places for Everyone infrastructure programme in 2022-23.

I can assure you that this Scottish Government actively promotes road safety for all road users and will continue to invest in road safety campaigns and safe cycling infrastructure that is accessible to all.

Yours sincerely

(redacted)

(redacted)

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