

## Cycling UK briefing – Scottish Parliament election 2026

### Greater transport choice & connectivity for all

Our current transport system in Scotland is unfair and fails to provide affordable, attractive or realistic alternatives to driving a car. This forces many people in Scotland into costly car ownership. We need an overhaul to make it safer, cheaper and easier to choose travel by bike, foot and public transport, and to combine modes of transport into a whole journey.

#### Cycling UK's manifesto ask

The next Scottish Government should deliver:

- A **delivery plan for transport choice and congestion reduction** to be published by the end of 2026.
- **Better integration of active travel and public transport**, including secure bike parking at bus and train stations, more pedal cycle spaces on trains and rural buses, and joined-up route planning that reflects the needs of everyday users.
- Local cycle network plans brought together into a **Scotland-wide network map** which shows the public our existing cycleable routes and those being planned. Also crucial to identify gaps in the network and guide funding to where it's needed.

#### Context

The [Scottish Government says](#) it remains 'wholeheartedly committed to reducing our reliance on cars in a fair way', however, it has not yet published a new 'route map' to making this a reality – including how it will provide better transport choice and make multi-modal journeys easier for people.

The Scottish Government has long committed to integrated ticketing for Scotland – although travellers are still waiting for this innovation. However, integration of transport involves so much more than this, for example, creating better cycle parking at stations and ensuring councils work together to create joined up cycle networks across the nation.

In its [Cycling Framework for Active Travel](#) the Scottish Government committed to ensuring 'coherence and consistency in the planning and delivery of cycling networks across the country' and creating a network blueprint for Scotland. This blueprint is yet to be delivered.

## Evidence and Impact

- Choosing better: The building blocks for transport choice already exist - walking, wheeling and cycling are widely recognised as viable modes for everyday travel, not just recreation. Governments and public-health bodies in Scotland have long endorsed active travel as key to healthy, sustainable mobility.
- Social Inclusion & Equity: A transport system offering real alternatives to cars provides mobility to people who cannot afford or do not own cars - unlocking access to jobs, education, services, and social opportunities.
- Increasing connections: When well implemented - with good connections, affordable pricing, and easy access - multimodal systems make it easier for people to reach their destinations efficiently. Transport hubs significantly improve connectivity and accessibility.
- Improved health and environment: Reducing dependence on cars helps lower air pollution and improves urban quality of life.
- Cycle routes work: In Scotland, when safe, well-connected cycling routes are built, cycling rates increase significantly. For example, usage surged on recently completed routes such as the “West-to-East Link” in Edinburgh. This demonstrates that investments in dedicated infrastructure - safe lanes, secure parking, integrated routes - are essential to shift travel behaviour at scale.

## Conclusion

The case for providing greater transport choice through active travel and public transport, and for better integration of modes is strong, both on health and environmental grounds — and it makes social and economic sense. Investing in coherent, nationwide active-travel and public-transport networks is not a “nice to have”, it is a **foundation for a fair, healthy, sustainable and inclusive transport system**.