

Footway Parking and Double Parking (Scotland) Bill

Evidence from Paths for All to the Scottish Parliament Local Government and Regeneration Committee

Comments from Paths for All

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this call for evidence. Our comments are limited to those aspects that have direct relevance to the work and objectives of Paths for All.

Summary

- We welcome the Bill – it will be of great benefit to many people but particularly the visually impaired, wheelchair users and people with pushchairs.
- There is a need to address parking on footways and the proposed measures to prohibit this are appropriate.
- We support the prohibition of parking at dropped footways as this is a particular problem for wheelchair and pushchair users attempting to cross roads.
- Adequately resourced enforcement of these measures by police and local authorities will be essential.

Background

[Paths for All](#) is a Scottish charity founded in 1996. We champion everyday walking as the way to a happier, healthier Scotland. We want to get Scotland walking: everyone, everyday, everywhere.

Our aim is to significantly increase the number of people who choose to walk in Scotland - whether that's leisure walking or active-choice walking to work, school or shops. We want to create a happier, healthier Scotland, where increased physical activity improves quality of life and wellbeing for all. We work to develop more opportunities and better environments not just for walking, but also for cycling and other activities, to help make Scotland a more active, more prosperous, greener country.

Our work supports the delivery of the Scottish Government's [National Walking Strategy](#) and the [Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland](#), community and workplace health walking, path network development and active travel policy development. We are a partnership organisation with [28 national partners](#).

Active Travel

Our vision is for walking and cycling to be the natural choice for short journeys, creating a healthier, socially inclusive and economically vibrant Scotland while enhancing our environment. [Active Travel](#) is about improving quality of life and quality of place. With over 50% of all driven journeys in Scotland being less than 5km, and 26% less than 2km, there is plenty of scope for achieving a significant shift to walking and cycling as the most sustainable forms of transport.

The Smarter Choices, Smarter Places (SCSP) programme is Paths for All's grant scheme to support behaviour change initiatives to increase active and sustainable travel modes.

Paths for All is a partnership organisation; for a full list of our current partners please visit our website.

Paths for Partnership is a recognised Scottish Charity No: SC025535 and a Company Limited by Guarantee No: 168554 incorporated 19 September 1996 at Companies House, Edinburgh. Registered Office: Office 8, Forrester Lodge, Tullibody Road, Alloa FK10 2HU

Comments

General Comments

We welcome the Footway Parking and Double Parking (Scotland) Bill and have supported its introduction.

Inconsiderate parking forces pedestrians onto the road and into the path of vehicles. It is a major barrier for people with visual or mobility impairments, wheelchair or mobility scooter users, families with pushchairs and cyclists.

We believe that the legislation will play an important part in supporting the delivery of the National Walking Strategy and the Scottish Government's Long-term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland.

Extent of the legislation

We agree that it is appropriate that the legislation would apply to all public roads in built-up areas in Scotland with the exception of special roads.

Prohibition of parking on footways

We consider that there is a need to address parking on footways and that the proposed measures are appropriate.

Partial or complete blockage of footways is a common occurrence that causes problems for many footpath users. It is a particularly serious issue for the visually impaired, wheelchair users and people with pushchairs.

The exemptions under Section 2(2) and 2(3) appear to be sensible.

We recommend that the Scottish Government provide guidance on when and where exemptions are appropriate. In all cases at least 1m of the footway should be reserved for pedestrians.

Prohibition of parking at dropped footways etc.

We agree that parking at dropped footways is an issue that needs to be addressed. This is a problem for wheelchair and pushchair users being unable to cross roads where a dropped kerb is blocked. We therefore support the provisions in the legislation.

The exemptions under Section 3(2) appear to be sensible.

Prohibition of double parking

The provisions to deal with double parking also seem sensible.

Enforcement of prohibitions

It will be essential that the provisions of the Act are properly enforced.

There will be a role for the police and local authorities in this and adequate resources will have to be allocated to this.

Power to Specify Exempt Areas

We agree with the provision of a power for local authorities to specify exempt areas.

We would be very happy to discuss this further.

Ian McCall, Senior Development Officer, Paths for All, November 2015