



## Briefing for the Public Petitions Committee

**Petition Number:** [PE1607](#)

**Main Petitioner:** Peter Gregson

**Subject:** Congestion charging in major Scottish cities

Calls on the Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to legislate for congestion charging in every major Scottish city (population over 300,000) with the proceeds from such charges to be used to subsidise more sustainable modes of transport, such as re-opening suburban railways that were closed, or reduced to freight, due to Beeching cuts; fixing cycling black spots; better park and ride facilities; and improved road surfaces (e.g. filled potholes).

### Background

Legislation already exists that allows Scottish local authorities to introduce road user charging schemes. Part 3 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 grants each local authority, or two or more authorities acting jointly, the power to introduce road user charging schemes. The details of any proposed charging scheme must be set out in an Order made by the charging authority/authorities. The Order cannot come into force until it has been confirmed by Scottish Ministers.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 also broadly specifies what a local authority can spend the proceeds of a road user charging scheme on. Schedule 3 of that Act requires a local authority to invest proceeds "...for the purpose of directly or indirectly facilitating the achievement of policies in the authority's local transport strategy".

### Scottish Government Action

The advisory Committee on Climate Change, in its [2015 report on progress](#) towards meeting the emission reduction targets established by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, recommends that "The Scottish Government should consider other options to drive down emissions such as congestion charging." However, a [media report](#) quotes a Scottish Government spokesperson responding to this recommendation as stating that the "Scottish Government has no plans to introduce road user charging" and "Our vision is to work to develop low-carbon vehicle technology, promote active travel choices and encourage a shift to public transport, while ensuring our road network is as efficient as possible."

## **Scottish Parliament Action**

The Scottish Parliament has not considered the issue of congestion charging in any detail since the passage of the Transport (Scotland) Bill during 2000/2001.

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**Senior Researcher**  
24 May 2016

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