

**RURAL ECONOMY AND CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE****PRE-BUDGET/FINANCIAL SCRUTINY ON ROADS MAINTENANCE IN SCOTLAND****SUBMISSION FROM NIGEL BAYLIS****Q1. How have recent spending decisions on roads maintenance affected the quality of Scotland's roads, road users, businesses, public services, and the economy?**

Any road journey in Scotland ( and it is true of England) is a matter of driving between the potholes, irregularities, uneven service covers etc. This is dangerous. If I drove regardless of the road surface my car would never be out of the repair garage. Current spend on roads merely transfers the cost of road maintenance to the repair cost of the motorist. Clearly for whatever, reason funds are limited and priorities need to be established. However there are basics in life, clean water, nutritious food, safety, in modern times communication (wifi) and good roads without which transport costs increase and therefore the cost of goods and services. Yes it would be nice to have wheelchair access everywhere or maternity packs for new mothers but these are not basics. Nor is the extension of the tram in Edinburgh. Edinburgh centric, ditto London centric. Why ? when it will take 10 years to dual the A9, a horror of a road. Stop privileged transport for government officials, pay them a taxed, appropriate salary and let them buy and pay for their own car and the repairs. That will focus the mind.

**Q2. If spending on roads maintenance continues at current levels, what could be the likely effects on the above groups?**

More misery and expense and higher costs all round for goods and services.

**Q3. How could any negative effects of reduced road spending best be addressed?**

Rewind and consider why government at all levels came into existence - to serve all the people in an efficient and communicative manner e.g. common railway gauges, economies of scale. Government has lost sight of the basics and instead focus on middle class, inclusive, sharing policies. Remember the basics. Coffee is nice but aspirationally society cannot afford to give Blue Mountain coffee to everyone. The referendum clearly showed Scotland is not in favour of independence. The First Minister should stop putting her aspirations before those of the nation. Spend the save elsewhere.

**Q4. Is the current model of funding and delivering roads maintenance, which is split between Transport Scotland and local authorities, the most economic and efficient option?**

I do not have the knowledge to contribute. However a thought is that rather like the almost complete lack of winter maintenance on my local roads. Where there is a system of priorities local roads almost never reach a sufficiently high level of priority on a daily basis. Perhaps the same applies to major versus minor roads and hence the Transport Scotland/LA's funding split.