



Department for Transport

From the Permanent Secretary

From the Permanent Secretary
Dame Bernadette Kelly DCB

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Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair
Public Accounts Committee

[Sent via email]

01 August 2023

Dear Chair

Active Travel in England

I wanted to write to follow up on a number of points raised in the Committee's hearing on Active Travel in England on 19 July. Please also find attached a letter to Sarah Olney MP regarding her questions on Wandsworth Bridge.

Value of active travel grants

We committed to write to you on the average value of grants awarded to local authorities for active travel capital schemes, and the monitoring that we do based on this.

The average grant per project delivered as part of the Active Travel Fund 3 and 4 was £750,000. Schemes costing £750,000 or more were required to use the Department's 'Active Mode Appraisal Tool' in order to assess potential benefit cost ratios, which includes certain health benefits from increased physical activity and other indirect benefits, such as air quality.

At a high level, the Department has commissioned an evaluation of schemes implemented in Active Travel Fund 2. This will consider the impact and value for money of, amongst other things, cycle lanes and school streets. This will conclude in 2026.

Corrections to the record

In addition, I would be grateful for several small corrections to the Hansard transcript following the 19 July hearing.

Firstly, and in response to Question 10, I referred to data that showed "an increase of 11% in cycling activity compared to 2019." The figure of 11% was however contained in provisional data. The final figures showed an increase of 7.4%.

Secondly, and in response to Question 11, Danny Williams referred to the Cycle City Ambition Fund "...in place between 2006 and 2013." The correct dates are between 2013 and 2018.

Thirdly, in response to Question 30, Danny Williams referred to Amazon delivery hubs in London and Birmingham. The hub locations are actually in London and Manchester.

Fourthly, and also in response to Question 30, Danny Williams noted that Amazon have found that using a hub is “30% more profitable than having a van”. The figure of 30% is not accurate and we ask this be amended to say that findings show it is more efficient.

Finally, and in response to Question 51, I wanted to clarify one point of emphasis in relation to funding for Local Authority capability. Danny Williams noted how ATE’s revenue funding was skewed in favour to local authorities with lower capability, and similarly in response to Question 71, Danny Williams stated that ATE’s revenue funding for local authorities was distributed “disproportionately towards those that had less capability but also had ambition.” We should clarify for both these questions that ATE has provided revenue funding to most local authorities, including authorities with less capability to enable them to build their capability, but these local authorities have not received a higher level of revenue funding from ATE on a per capita basis than authorities with higher levels of capability.

In addition to revenue funding, ATE has dedicated significant resource to supporting level zero authorities build their skills and capability in the planning and delivery of active travel interventions. Support provided has included design workshops, action planning, network development advice, training and establishing peer to peer support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bernadette Kelly".

Dame Bernadette Kelly DCB
Permanent Secretary