



SURF 2021 MANIFESTO PROCESS: TRANSPORT

ABOUT THIS PAPER

SURF is **consulting** with its **members** and **wider contacts** to prepare a **2021 Manifesto for Community Regeneration**. The 2021 Manifesto will set out what SURF's network thinks the **Scottish Government** should be **doing differently** to better support the regeneration of socially and economically challenged places over the next term of the Scottish Parliament.

SURF's consultation process is structured on **13 key themes**. This briefing paper concerns one of these themes: **transport**. This topic covers the links between transport and community regeneration in the context of the climate emergency.

Briefing papers are circulated to SURF consultees with relevant knowledge and experience with a view to sharing **helpful background information** on the process and theme in advance of consultations. Please click the following links to **learn more** about: [What is SURF?](#) How will the [2021 Manifesto be developed?](#)

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

During the coronavirus crisis, **SURF policy and research staff** will be consulting via telephone calls, video interviews, and by requesting email submissions. **SURF is grateful to all participants for their time.**

The **following questions** will be used to structure interviews and submissions. They are **optional** and participants may answer as many or as few as they wish. **General comments and views** relevant to the theme are also very welcome.

1. What are your general views on public transport provision in Scotland, whether around accessibility, cost, quality, reliability or other factors?
2. In your view, are there any regions or places in Scotland that are in particular need of urgent investment in transport infrastructure?
3. How do you think public engagement in transport system planning could be improved?
4. Poor maintenance of Scotland's road network is often cited by voters as a key area of dissatisfaction with government. Do you think more government funding should be invested in this?
5. Do you agree with the 'modal shift' policy aspiration to reduce the proportion of journeys made by car and public transport, and increase those made by walking and cycling? Do you expect this policy shift to have a strong impact in Scotland in the next 5-10 years?
6. Of any public transport operators you are familiar with, do you perceive them to be responding effectively to the climate emergency?
7. A common transport issue raised by the economic development community is lack of town centre car parking, which is identified as a challenge to local business sustainability. Do you think policy-makers should respond to this by increasing supply where possible?
8. SURF contacts with responsibilities for rural places report there is often no viable alternative to car travel, while some island communities rely on air travel to connect with the mainland. Do you think this dependency on high-carbon transport modes can be resolved with climate change targets?

9. Do you think the COVID-19 pandemic will have any long-term implications for public transport usage and investment in Scotland?
10. If you are familiar with the 2020 National Transport Strategy, do you have any views, positive or negative, on its content, particularly with regard to ambitions to reduce inequalities?
11. Do you have any general comments on any aspect of the relationship between transport and place-based regeneration in Scotland?

MANIFESTO FOCUS

Some **general information** for participants:

- SURF intends to **record interviews**, for internal use only in supporting the taking of summary notes. Permission to record will be requested at the start of each interview and recording will only take place where active consent is given.
- All individual responses will be **anonymised** in the Manifesto. With permission, SURF intends to publish a list of consultees in the final presentation, noting that inclusion of an individual or organisation does not necessarily imply their agreement with the presented policy recommendations.
- SURF's 2021 Manifesto is **targeted at the Scottish Government** that will be formed after the 2021 Scottish elections. Policy recommendations must be **practical** for the Scottish Government to progress or deliver within its powers and resources over the 2021-2026 Parliamentary term;
- SURF's overall objective is to **improve the lives and opportunities of people living in Scotland's socially and economically challenged places**.
- The consultation process will run while the **COVID-19 pandemic** is unfolding. The long-term implications for Scotland's economy and society are likely to be significant. SURF would like to learn more about views on these implications.

POLICY CONTEXT

[Transport and Socio-economic Inequalities](#)

The Poverty & Inequality Commission has highlighted a number of intersections between poverty and transport.ⁱ Poor quality and expensive public transport can limit access to jobs, education and training. The cost of transport, including public transport and the cost of having to run a car, can put significant pressure on household budgets. This has implications for other important household costs; for example, the cost of transport can restrict access to affordable fresh food.

Being unable to access transport can limit access to opportunities and services, reducing quality of life and increasing risk of isolation, worsening wider inequalities. Furthermore, research indicates that areas with higher levels of deprivation tend to have worse public transport provision than more affluent places.ⁱⁱ Although not universally demonstrated, negative environmental impacts associated with transport, such as busy roads and poorer air quality, tend to be concentrated in more deprived areas.ⁱⁱⁱ

[Scottish Government National Transport Strategy](#)

Following several years of consultation activity, the Scottish Government and its Transport Scotland agency published the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2) in February 2020.^{iv}

This document does not outline specific plans or initiatives; instead, it sets out a strategic framework to guide decisions on investment and policy over the next 20 years.

NTS2 has four main priorities. It aims to develop a transport system in Scotland that:

- Reduces Inequalities;

- Takes Climate Action;
- Helps Deliver Inclusive Growth;
- Improves Health and Wellbeing.

These aims overlap and intersect, but NTS2 sets out a number of specific policies in relation to each individually. These are summarised below:

NTS Priority: Reduces Inequalities

1. Minimising the connectivity and cost disadvantages faced by island communities and those in remote rural and rural areas, including safeguarding of lifeline services;
2. Ensuring transport in Scotland is accessible for all by supporting the implementation and development of a national Accessible Travel Framework;
3. Removing barriers to public transport connectivity and accessibility;
4. Improving sustainable access to healthcare facilities for staff, patients and visitors;
5. Ensuring sustainable, public and active travel access to employment, education and training locations.

The strategy commits the Scottish Government to developing a transport system which reduces the socio-economic inequalities discussed above, and also inequalities relating to gender, disability and age. A key focal point is the inequities in access to services experienced by remote, rural and island communities. NTS2 identifies a clear link between reducing inequalities and a targeted, place-based approach to transport that responds to the specific needs of localities and regions.

NTS2 Priority: Takes Climate Action

1. Reducing emissions generated by the transport system to mitigate climate change;
2. Reducing emissions generated by the transport system to improve air quality;
3. Ensuring the transport system adapts to the projected climate change impacts;
4. Supporting management of demand to encourage more sustainable transport choices;
5. Facilitating a shift to more sustainable and space-efficient modes of transport for people and goods;
6. Improving the quality and availability of information to enable all to make more sustainable transport choices.

The Scottish Government declared a Climate Emergency on the 28 April 2019.^v The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 set targets to reduced Scotland's emissions of greenhouse gases to net-zero by 2045. Transport accounts for 37% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, and is the sector that contributes the highest annual emissions.^{iv}

NTS2 highlights the objective to balance the need to drastically reduce emissions with citizens' need to travel and access services. The route to achieving this is a dramatic shift away from private cars, towards public transport and active travel. The strategy acknowledges a need to manage this in line with the Scottish Government's commitment to securing a 'just transition', ensuring the costs of climate change are not borne by those least able to pay.^{vi} This issue is particularly pressing in remote, rural and island communities, where economies are more fragile.

NTS2 Priority: Helps Deliver Inclusive Growth

1. Increasing resilience of Scotland's transport system from disruption and promoting a culture of shared responsibility;
2. Increasing the use of asset management across the transport system;
3. Providing a transport system that enables businesses to be competitive domestically, within the UK, and internationally;

4. Ensuring gateways to and from international markets are resilient and integrated into the wider transport networks to encourage people to live, study, visit and invest in Scotland;
5. Supporting Scotland to become a market leader in the development and early adoption of beneficial transport innovations;
6. Meeting the changing employment and skills demands of the transport industry and upskilling workers;
7. Integrating transport and wider infrastructure policies and investments, including digital and energy, to unlock greater benefits.

This aspect of the strategy recognises the importance of transport to the Scottish economy, and acknowledges the need for a transport system that is better integrated with spatial and land use planning and economic development. This set out of outcomes is also related to inequalities, with a well-planned and reliable transport system essential to enabling individuals and communities to realise opportunities for work, education and training.

There has been some scepticism around inclusive growth terminology and practice, but investment in necessary upgrades to transport infrastructure and climate adaption provide clear opportunities to create high quality skilled jobs and deliver on the principles of the 'just transition'.^{vii}

NTS2 Priority: Improves Health and Wellbeing

1. Increasing safety of the transport system and meet casualty reduction targets;
2. Implementing measures that will improve perceived and actual security of Scotland's transport system;
3. Ensuring that transport assets and services adopt the Place Principle;
4. Reducing the negative impacts transport has on the safety, health and wellbeing of people;
5. Providing a transport system that promotes and facilitates active travel choices, which help to improve people's health and wellbeing across mainland Scotland and the islands;
6. Embedding the implications for transport in spatial planning and land-use decision making.

The strategy encourages greater collaborative working across transport and planning, with new transport infrastructure focused on reducing the use of private transport and encouraging active travel. Alongside the benefits to population health, encouraging active travel is designed to ensure the longer-term sustainability of Scotland's places and stimulate town centre regeneration.

The health and wellbeing targets explicitly highlight the importance of transport to the Place Principle, adopted by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities in 2019. The Principle which aims to enhance partnership working in place-based regeneration and better combine energy, resources and investments across relevant sectors and stakeholders.^{viii}

NTS2 Delivery

NTS2 will be implemented through a collectively designed Delivery Plan, developed by Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government, and other partners. This will be regularly updated and provide information on how the priorities outlined above will be – and are being – achieved.

End of briefing paper (SURF contact details and references follow)

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SURF CONTACT

SURF Research & Administrative Assistant, Christopher Murray, is coordinating the consultation responses.

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Interviews will be carried out by Christopher and by SURF Policy & Participation Manager, Derek Rankine.

For further information on SURF, please visit: www.surf.scot

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