

**Transport Panel  
Scotland's Response to the Climate Emergency  
Wednesday 10th June, 9.30 - 13.00**

SLIDE 01 - GET GLASGOW MOVING

Hello everyone, thanks for inviting me here today.

My name is Ellie Harrison and I'm the current chair of the Get Glasgow Moving campaign.

We are a volunteer-run campaign founded in 2016 to **demand better public transport** for everyone in the Greater Glasgow region.

Our region is of course the most populous part of Scotland, which has some of the worst poverty and deprivation in the country...

It has some of the lowest levels of car-ownership, and as a result, has the **highest number of people dependant on buses**.

Yet we have a shambolic and overpriced public transport system, which is completely failing to deliver:

SLIDE 02 – MAYOR OF BOGOTA

It is exploiting the poorest in society with **rip off bus fares** and is leaving many communities stranded.

Improving public transport is essential for **tackling these ingrained inequalities**, building thriving local economies and of course for talking climate change.

Get Glasgow Moving wants to see a fully-integrated and accessible public transport network so that it's easy and affordable for everyone to get around:

To hop from the bus, to the Subway to the train with coordinated timetables, interchanges and **one simple ticket** for use across all modes.

That really just sounds like common-sense doesn't it? And it is in most other developed countries – Switzerland, Germany and Austria are great examples.

The only reason we can't do it here is because all our public transport was **deregulated and privatised** in the 1980s and 1990s, which has seen millions of miles of bus routes cut because they weren't seen as 'profitable', and huge fare hikes on the remaining routes.

This has left us with a completely fragmented system, with so many competing private companies running different buses and trains, that we simply do not have the co-operation necessary to deliver a coordinated service.

Public transport is now run as a business and not a service and that urgently needs to change.

SLIDE 03 – REPORT: BUILDING A WORLD-CLASS BUS SYSTEM

This report [[Building a World-class Bus System for Britain](#)] by Transport for Quality of Life from 2016 shows how re-regulation and public-ownership are necessary to deliver a world-class service which will match up to that of most other European countries.

#### SLIDE 06 - COST SAVINGS FROM REGULATION / PUBLIC-OWNERSHIP

Not only would it enable us to plan and co-ordinate routes to serve our communities' needs, especially those in the most deprived areas, **but it would also save money.**

#### SLIDE 05 - TAKE BACK OUR BUSES

The Scottish Government spends £300 million a year on bus services, but this is a completely inefficient use of public money in the present privatised model with profits being hived off to shareholders. For example, First Bus is part owned by a hedge fund called Coast Capital based in the Rockerfeller tower of New York.

#### **So what so we need to do?**

#### SLIDE 06 – REPORT: A RADICAL TRANSPORT RESPONSE

Fortunately we have a plan laid out in this brilliant report [[A Radical Transport Response to the Climate Emergency](#)] by Transport for Quality of Life published last year.

It begins with this graph highlighting **the scale of the challenge that we face**

#### SLIDE 07 - TRANSPORT EMISSIONS

This is UK-wide data, but it's the same story in Scotland

Where Transport is now the biggest contributor to carbon emissions and air pollution of all sectors of Scotland's economy, and the only one which has increased its emissions since the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

#### SLIDE 08 - REDUCTION IN CAR MILEAGE

This report shows that 'In order to meet the 1.5°C target, car mileage will have to be cut by as much as 60% by 2035'.

To do this, we have to urgently create a situation where everyone can fully participate in society without need or aspiration to own a car. We do this through:

- Universal and comprehensive public transport
- Universal and comprehensive active travel infrastructure
- That is all free to use on a local level
- Paid for with a new Eco-levy on driving which charges drivers per mile

#### **What are we doing?**

It's clear the scale of the transformation required has not been grasped by politicians.

## SLIDE 09 - SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Instead we got the rather pathetic and piecemeal Transport Bill introduced to Parliament in Summer 2018 (which largely copied the Bus Services Act 2017 from England).

It failed to address transport in a holistic, integrated way, to actively **address the inequalities in the system** and to make the obvious connection to climate reduction targets...

## SLIDE 10 - SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

We campaigned for three years for amendments to this Transport Bill to allow for powers for public-ownership of bus services, which we won and are now available to Regional Transport Authorities/Local Authorities in the Transport Act 2019.

## SLIDE 11 - REGULATE OUR BUSES

We need to **continue to lobby for these powers to be used**, which is a continual battle as the private bus companies wield so much power and obviously don't want their profits eaten into.

### **Improving safety after COVID-19**

So I want to finish with the impacts of the coronavirus crisis, which have been a big blow to public transport – with it often being singled out and demonised as a place where you will pick up others' germs.

And with official guidance being for us to make 'essential journeys only' and to avoid public transport if at all possible... and the short-term impacts of this have clearly been severe.

But it's important to take the long-view...

Motorised public transport has been with us for nearly 200 years, and it will continue to be with us for another 200 at least, I'm sure...

Its importance will only become greater in the race to reduce emissions and as urban populations continue to rise.

There are many ways to **improve safety of public transport**, and regulation and public ownership and control are central to delivering them all.

If we own and run the buses and trains then we control the safety for staff and passengers:

- We can deliver more frequent services to reduce overcrowding
- We upgrade the fleet to make them more spacious, with air-conditioning fitted and multiple entrances / exits.
- Fare free buses has also improved safety in London during the coronavirus crisis, meaning people no longer need to have contact with the driver or 'touch in' with their fares.

This time of crisis also provides great opportunity.

## SLIDE 12 - BUYOUT DON'T BAILOUT

It has laid bare the **absurdities of running public transport on a for-profit basis.**

The need to maximise profits from fares clearly is not compatible with current ‘social distancing’ guidance.

The Scottish Government has already granted operators a bailout worth up to £260million (one 25 March 2020).

This is an opportunity **to take all these operations back** so they can be run in the public good in the long term.

#### SLIDE 13 - DEMAND BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT

A world-class public transport system on the scale that we need to build, will provide thousands of new green jobs – and because it is the greatest contributor to climate change it really must be our number one priority.