

Department for
Transport

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Ray Newbigin
Chairman
Joint Local Access Forum
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RN 18 Dec 08

12th December 2008

Dear Newbigin

Thank you for your letter of 7th November to the Secretary of State, which expressed your support for developing public rights of way and improving walking and cycling opportunities. I have been asked to reply on his behalf.

The Department for Transport provides funding for all English local authorities to implement measures identified in their Local Transport Plan. This funding has increased substantially in the last ten years to allow local authorities to deliver their local transport goals.

The funding provided by the Department is not ring-fenced, and local authorities can choose their priorities for spending in accordance with local circumstances and objectives. In determining these priorities, they may wish to select transport improvements identified in their Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP), but are not compelled to do so.

You may wish to discuss this further with your local authority if you feel more investment is appropriate to deliver your local ROWIP. Natural England provides support to local authorities to find further sources of funding for implementing their ROWIPs, over and above that provided by DfT via LTP funding.

The Department also makes considerable investments to support walking and cycling. For example, in January DfT announced a huge increase to

Cycling England's budget to £140m over three years, in order to support improved cycling links, large-scale demonstrations, and training for children.

You noted the Government's efforts to accelerate investment to support the economy. On 25th November the Secretary of State announced that an extra £1 billion will be invested in major transport projects next year to stimulate the economy by accelerating Government plans to cut congestion and significantly increase rail capacity. This includes the £700m fiscal stimulus announced in the Pre-Budget Report to make the most of Britain's rail and road networks, as well as £300m of new Government funding to speed up the delivery of improved transport links to key UK airports and ports.

Yours faithfully,

JOE FINLAY