

Transport Committee

Oral evidence: [Active travel](#), HC 1487

Wednesday 23 January 2019

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 23 January 2019.

[Watch the meeting](#)

Members present: Lilian Greenwood (Chair); Jack Brereton; Ruth Cadbury; Robert Courts; Ronnie Cowan; Steve Double; Graham Stringer; Daniel Zeichner.

Questions 74 - 124

Witnesses

I: Roger Geffen MBE, Policy Director, Cycling UK; Joe Irvin, Chief Executive, Living Streets; and Rachel White, Senior Policy and Political Adviser, Sustrans.

Written evidence from witnesses:

- Cycling UK ([ATR0075](#));
- Living Streets ([ATR0062](#));
- Sustrans ([ATR0072](#));
- Bicycle Association, British Cycling, Cycling UK, Living Streets, the Ramblers and Sustrans ([ATR0076](#))

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Roger Geffen, Joe Irvin and Rachel White.

Q74 **Chair:** Welcome, and thank you very much for coming along today. I am sure everyone came by bike or walked, but maybe we will find out. Will you please introduce yourselves?

Joe Irvin: I am chief executive of Living Streets, the charity for everyday walking. This year is our 90th anniversary.

Rachel White: I am senior policy and political adviser at Sustrans, a walking and cycling charity.

Roger Geffen: I am policy director at Cycling UK, a national cycling charity.

Q75 **Chair:** We would like you to start by telling us a little about the organisations you represent and the one key message you want to make sure we hear today on behalf of your members. Joe, shall we start with you?

Joe Irvin: I am happy to begin.

As I said, we are about walking. We used to be called the Pedestrians Association, so that is the thing in which we are particularly interested. I would draw particular attention to the fact that we are part of a group of cycling and walking organisations now calling ourselves the Walking and Cycling Alliance. We are trying to co-ordinate what we are saying and be more effective by working closely together. That will hopefully come across today.

On what we would like to see, thanks to Parliament and a lot of the activity that went on behind it, the Government are now obliged to have a cycling and walking investment strategy, which used not to be the case. That has been published. The big thing missing from it is turning it into action, in particular bringing the finance to bear to make that happen. It does not require an awful lot of finance compared with other things. We would be arguing about a transfer of funding from other types of expenditure within transport. A small amount from that would make a very big difference. That is probably the main point we would make.

Q76 **Chair:** Rachel, tell us a little about Sustrans and its biggest ask.

Rachel White: Sustrans is about walking and cycling and enabling everyday journeys to be done by foot and bike. We do a lot of work in schools with children and local communities; we work in the public realm to improve the spaces for people walking and cycling, to make it the most obvious and convenient choice for those journeys.

I echo what Joe said. The key for us is the rebalancing of funding for cycling and walking to make the CWIS a real success. That will be our No.



1 ask. Completely connected to that is to have a network of protected cycle lanes to get more people cycling.

Roger Geffen: Cycling UK is a national cycling charity and membership organisation. We have about 65,000 members. We have been around since 1878. We were historically a cyclist tourist club, and we finally renamed ourselves to make it clear that we had been doing a lot more than being a club for touring cyclists. We have been advocating for cycling, not just cyclists, for people of all ages and abilities, as well as acting as advocates in supporting local volunteers throughout the UK in pressing local councils, as well as national Governments, to do more to get more people cycling.

We run practical projects to put those principles into practice, focusing particularly on the people who do not fit the UK stereotype of a cyclist. We are running practical projects to get women, people with disabilities and health patients involved. We are doing all that.

Our three organisations are collaborating on a project funded by the Department for Transport to help local authorities to plan good local cycling and walking networks. We will be hearing about local cycling and walking infrastructure plans. Our organisations are helping local authorities, with DFT backing, to make that a reality.

As for top asks, I would echo the point about rebalancing funding to make sure that the cycling and walking investment strategy has the investment it needs to deliver its admirable stated ambition of making walking and cycling the normal choices for shorter journeys. The Department for Transport acknowledged quite recently that its current policies will get it only one third of the way to meet its ambition to double cycling trips by 2025. Therefore, there is a very big question about what the Minister is going to do to boost resourcing for the cycling and walking investment strategy as part of the spending review to make sure it can meet its targets.

My other quick point is on making sure the money is well spent. The Department is working on some cycling design guidance to make sure that the money is spent well. It now needs to make sure that local authorities, Highways England and HS2 follow that guidance so that whatever is spent on cycling delivers good cycling infrastructure, not the worse than useless stuff that has been rather characteristic of cycle planning in the UK up until now.

Q77 Chair: We know from the evidence you have all submitted that there are huge potential benefits in getting more people active—health, physical and mental, as well as wider issues around tackling congestion and improving air quality—but changing the balance of funding and road space and allocating it to pedestrians and cyclists is not easy. What opposition are you facing at either national or local level in making pedestrians and cyclists a high priority?



Roger Geffen: There is very little by way of national organised opposition. Most of it tends to be quite local—small minorities making themselves out to be much bigger than they really are, often dissipating when a local authority shows leadership to go ahead and do something anyway. I think particularly of the Waltham Forest mini-Hollands. There were big protests by local traders, saying, “This is going to kill our local shopping streets.” Vacancy rates have now plummeted to zero and traders who were initially opposed to it are now very happy with what has happened.

We have had rather more entrenched opposition specifically to the cycle super-highway just outside this building. The Embankment super-highway has had organised opposition from the London Taxi Drivers Association and the Canary Wharf Group, but it is a bit of a one-off case. The north-south super-highways have not had anything like the same opposition. That says something about the unusual nature of the Embankment. It is the only major road in inner London, apart from the royal parks, that is not also a bus route.

Q78 **Chair:** That is a piece of infrastructure that exists and there is a campaign against it. To what extent does opposition get traction such that local authorities do not proceed? Do they not proceed because perhaps they are in the wrong or things are not well planned, or sometimes because arguments have gained traction and would have a really good impact, as you described in Waltham Forest?

Roger Geffen: You are right that there is a risk of political leadership being derailed by opposition. It can come from two main sources. Traffic engineers are professionally trained to try to maximise traffic capacity. Therefore, there is an institutional mindset that we cannot lose traffic capacity.

The public, in so far as there is opposition, tend to view it rather differently. People are much more likely to oppose the loss of parking spaces than the loss of road space. Most local politicians know that parking space is a much more contentious issue than loss of road space. When you take away road space the public are fairly supportive. Rachel has figures from the Sustrans Bike Life report showing that the public are pretty supportive of the principle of reallocating road space to cycling.

Rachel White: The Bike Life survey involves people across seven cities in the UK. It is the largest cycling survey, although I have to say that the people surveyed were not just cyclists; they were just people living in those cities. It was found that 78% of the people asked were supportive of making space for protected cycle lanes, even if that meant taking space from motorised vehicles. That is quite a powerful statistic when the perception politically that there is not public support can remove a lot of leadership and support from that.

Q79 **Chair:** Do people support it theoretically when you ask them, but not when you say, “I am going to put a segregated cycle lane on the road



you drive down”?

Rachel White: There is an element of that—it would be dishonest to say there was not—but generally parking spaces cause more of a furore. Quite often, once a project has been put in place you can get over the initial barrier and get leadership to take the project forward. In Acorn Road in Jesmond, Newcastle, there was a public realm project to improve the street, which was full of independent shops. There was opposition from a few of the independent shops because it was taking away 20 car parking spaces; it was changing the road from a two-way road to a one-way road with a contra-flow cycle lane; it involved planting trees, increasing the size of pavements and putting in seating. It was lovely, but there was opposition to the proposal for parking spaces.

What has happened? The shops on that road have seen an increase in business, including retail, and opposition has turned into support. There is an element of getting past that initial opposition and using case studies like that to say, “Look, this has positive impacts, too.”

Q80 **Chair:** This question is to Joe, in the first instance. Sometimes there are tensions between cyclists and pedestrians—pedestrians stepping out without looking or cyclists riding on pavements. To what extent do members of your organisations want the same as Roger’s organisation? Obviously, Rachel is representing both. To what extent are people travelling by foot, bike, scooter or whatever at odds?

Joe Irvin: All of us walk. Most of us drive. Many of us cycle. Most of us use public transport. In some parts of our lives we or the rest of our family are doing all those things. You can come into conflict with others. If you are a pedestrian in a busy street with other pedestrians, or a cyclist where others are going faster than you in a lane, that can cause conflict. It can be cars on cars and other vehicles, so you can get that conflict within any set of road users.

In the vast majority of cases, what is good for cycling is good for walking. A lot of it is about traffic calming and making better public space. If you look at what has happened in some of the big gyratory systems in London that have been converted over the past few years—Archway is a good example—there is better cycling; there is better public transport throughput; and there are better walking facilities. There is a benefit for everybody.

It is constrained through motor traffic. I would go back to what was said before about obstacles. The people who live there do not particularly want loads of people not from their neighbourhood cycling or driving through. That is the way they look at it. They want good space. If you approach it from the perspective of better streets, you will get everybody on board, but in the vast majority of cases what is good for walking is good for cycling, and where there are conflicts you need to design them out. There can be conflicts. For example, members of my organisation and members of the public complain about people cycling on the



HOUSE OF COMMONS

pavement when they should not be, because it is intimidating, but if you do things in a proper way you can design out those problems.

Roger Geffen: If pedestrians and cyclists are being put in conflict, that is a bad cycle facility. It is bad for both groups. We do not want to be put in tension with one another. Every so often, media interviews will put Joe and me, or two others from our organisations, head to head to try to stir up an argument between us. We are on the same side. We are basically saying that reduced traffic and speeds are good for both of our organisations; putting us in the same place with too little space to share it safely is bad for both groups. We are on the same side in all this stuff.

Q81 **Ruth Cadbury:** The Chair asked about perceived opposition to proposed schemes that are positive to cycling and walking. To what extent is there a problem with local authorities and developers—the two groups I think of—that do not have a particular agenda on cycling and walking, do not think about it and plans go through? Is there an element of that? Members of Parliament have seen developments being built in their constituencies where no one on either side—the developer or the planning authority—has thought about active travel. Is that an area of concern?

Joe Irvin: The Local Government Information Unit and the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation did surveys—the LGIU was commissioned by the Ramblers—of examples of what you are talking about: planning. It did not find that planners had never thought of access, because it had been in the early permutations of what they were thinking about, but when it got towards the end of a project it was seen as a “nice to have” and was dropped. In particular, in new developments the idea that you should have access to public transport and walking and cycling in a new housing development, for example, out of town is often dropped quite late in the process, because developers see it as an expense and the local authority is not quite keen enough on it to keep it in, so it is sacrificed for other objectives. That is not local opposition, because these are often vacant sites.

Roger Geffen: This echoes my introductory point about the design guidance that the Department for Transport is to produce in the next couple of months. Phil Jones, one of your previous witnesses, has contributed to the writing of it. What are the Government going to do in that design guidance? We have seen drafts and it is looking really good, and we want to make sure that it is consistently applied, not just when designing pedestrian and cycling facilities but in all draft road projects, new developments and when planned road maintenance work takes place. When a road is being resurfaced, that is an opportunity to make it more cycle friendly. Therefore, a question to the Minister is: what is he going to do to make sure that that guidance is consistently applied as soon as it is published?

Q82 **Robert Courts:** I want to pick up Joe’s point about conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. I am a Cycling UK member and I am lucky to



have national cycle network 5, which runs from Woodstock to the centre of Oxford. Outside Oxford, it is a superb facility—full stop. In particular, outside Oxford there is a lot of broad open space and it is almost like a dedicated cycle path, but inside Oxford the broad pavements have been sub-divided into walking and cycling areas. There is no active conflict between cyclists and pedestrians, but there is passive conflict in the sense that pedestrians might not realise they are walking on a cycle path and not look in the same way as they would if they were crossing a road and looking for cars. What would be a good step for local authorities, or national Government, to take to make a cycle path clear and ensure everyone is aware of the different road users using that area of pavement?

Roger Geffen: How to do it depends in part on the setting. Different surface colouring can work well. That was being used in the royal parks but then they redid it and it is now less good. That is not always appropriate in some settings. It depends in part on whether the best approach is to have the pedestrians and cyclists on separate sides of a white line with formal segregation or whether they are best mixed. That is very context- dependent. Where pedestrians are walking purposefully, to separate them generally works; likewise, when there are plenty of cyclists. Any pedestrian will fairly quickly get the message, "The cyclists are over there and you need to be on this side."

In any space where people are going to be looking around and not paying particular attention, why should pedestrians have to pay attention? To be able to relax in a park is very nice. If you expect pedestrians to stay on one side, they will probably not do so. It is better to have signage so that everybody knows it is a shared space and that cyclists have the responsibility to give way to pedestrians. I would argue that the shared use sign should have that legal meaning.

Rachel White: An element we have to consider is the density in each case. If you have a high density of people walking, it is simply not appropriate to share that space with cycling. Even with a different-coloured cycle lane people will spill into the lane, which is perfectly understandable if you have a high density of pedestrians. That is where you have to consider that the infrastructure is not working and is not right for that context. Maybe that is where you need to consider that, if you need to make space for cycling, you should take that space from the road rather than from pedestrians. It should be done case by case.

Joe Irvin: I agree it should be considered case by case. It is a matter of space, volume, throughput and design. For example, you have to think of people with disabilities. That has been a controversial thing with shared use. The person in front of you might not be able to see or hear, and, if there is no indication for them that this is for cyclists and this is for walking, you cannot expect them to get out of the way. You have to design it with all that in mind.

Chair: We ought to look now at some of the obstacles to increasing



active travel.

Q83 Ruth Cadbury: With 60% of journeys between one and two miles long being taken by private motor vehicles, what is stopping these journeys being taken by foot or bike?

Rachel White: There are probably five key obstacles to a person choosing whether to walk, cycle or get in their car: the perception of safety; whether the infrastructure is good and in the right place; convenience; confidence; and perceptions of health.

Perception of safety is still a big issue that prevents a lot of people from choosing to walk and cycle. If you take our bike ride surveys, only 30% of people felt that cycling safety was good in their city.

The next element is poor infrastructure. There are plenty of examples where it is almost impossible to cross a road because there is no crossing, or it is too busy. You have various examples of cycling infrastructure that spits you out into the middle of nowhere, or is simply not taking you to the right place.

That is particularly relevant to gender. We are not building infrastructure that women in particular need when making different types of trips and journeys. Perhaps we will talk about this more later. They make more radial journeys, and we are not building infrastructure that is likely to get more cycling from that angle. We also need protected cycle lanes.

It is about convenience. In a way, this is a softer way of talking about traffic restraint. At the moment, if it is more convenient to drive into the centre of town and park your car, people will probably do it because that is human nature. We need to make it more convenient to walk or cycle, so that goes back to having the right infrastructure. It is also about making it less desirable to drive.

It is about confidence. We need more cycle training generally. It is about putting that base layer in schools and making sure that every primary school child has the opportunity to get those basic skills for cycling but also confidence in crossing the road and generally negotiating streets. It is about working in BAME communities; it is about working more with women to get them to be more confident on a bike and learning those basic skills.

Finally, there is the perception of health. This is quite a specific to cities. You will find that people choose not to walk or cycle because they think they will be more exposed to air pollution, for example, than if they get into their car. That is a common misconception. We all know that the physical activity is far better for your health than any exposure to air pollution, but that is a factor in cities as well.

Roger Geffen: I agree with all that, but it is also worth talking about the barriers of culture, knowledge and habit. People are just not used to it, and there is the perception that, "Cycling is not for people like me." In



part, it backs up your point about the need to do work very specifically, not just to build the infrastructure. Building infrastructure is crucial, but there is a need to overcome some of those knowledge and cultural barriers that deter some groups more than others. It deters women more than men in Britain, not in other countries, people from black and minority ethnic communities and health patients. Some of the people who could benefit most from cycling are those with the biggest barriers to getting started, and that is exactly why some of the behaviour change projects, for which we need revenue funding to complement capital funding to invest in the infrastructure, are so important. It is so important to have projects such as our own big bike revivals, community club projects and some of the work Sustrans and Living Streets do in schools to overcome some of the barriers.

The best hearts and minds campaigns are not just leaflets and information; it is having that targeted opportunity to get on a bike and discover that it is not as dangerous, scary or unfamiliar as you thought it was, and to have someone to help you overcome some of the knowledge barriers. What kind of bike? What kind of equipment? How do I keep my clothes from getting ruffled?

To do that with other people in a group is much more effective than simply being encouraged to take up cycling. You have to work out the answers to all those questions yourself, so those behaviour change projects are very important for broadening the range of people who cycle, not just the numbers.

Q84 Chair: If someone does leisure cycling on holiday on a disused rail line, which we were talking about earlier, does that make it more likely that they will try cycling for everyday journeys, or do we need a quite different behaviour change?

Roger Geffen: Research suggests that it makes a bit of difference but not a huge amount, particularly if the cycling you do is mostly off road. Mountain bikers are perfectly happy to take their mountain bikes off the back of a car at a mountain bike centre. That does not mean they have the confidence and skills to cycle at Hyde Park Corner, even if they are incredibly skilled on a mountain bike, so you do need to do a certain amount of hand-holding.

It is quite interesting that the majority of those who do cycle training in their teens are boys. In adulthood, those who do cycle training are women. There seems to be a cultural resistance on the part of men to admit they do not have the confidence to ride a bike in traffic. Of course they can ride a bike, but cycling is too dangerous. It is about making sure that people have targeted opportunities, at whatever stage in life they are, whether it is because they have a health condition that needs that activity or they have a disability. If you can give people a group setting where they are not on their own in making those discoveries about how to take up cycling, it works so much better than just giving them hearts and minds awareness campaigns.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Joe Irvin: Can I add something on walking, maybe taking the particular case of walking to school? We do lots of work on walking to school. You have to have the schools on board if you are trying to get children to think about it, but the key people to persuade are parents. Our surveying shows that about a third of parents think it is unsafe for their children to walk to school. About half of children do walk to primary school; the other half do not, and 80% of us live within a mile of a local primary school, so lots of short journeys are being driven. We get a success rate when we do work with schools on this, so people can be persuaded—but you have to persuade the parents that it is okay for them to walk to school with their children, for their children to walk with other children or indeed alone.

Q85 **Steve Double:** My experience is that it is far easier to get children to walk home from school than to school. More often than not, parents are dropping them off to school on the way to work and do not have the time to walk their kids to school and then come home and get the car. I would be interested to know whether you have also found that.

Joe Irvin: There is some of that, but half of children already walk to school. There is a Government target to try to get that up to 55%. There is an element of that. We also encourage a scheme where, if parents live further away, or they are dropping them off maybe to go to another school to drop off, or to go to work, we try to arrange what we call “park and stride”. Maybe we will find a supermarket car park 10 minutes away. You can drop off there and the children can walk safely together to school from there. You can overcome it, but you are right that one of the issues is parents being short of time and dropping off on the way, maybe even to another school or to work.

Q86 **Ruth Cadbury:** Still on short journeys, are there differences in perceptions about walking or cycling in different parts of the country, or different areas, or is the issue of short distance relevant across the country?

Roger Geffen: Yes. The differences back up my point about how it is a cultural thing. In cities such as Oxford and Cambridge you of course have students, but the people who live in those towns and have nothing to do with the universities also cycle, because there is the perception that it is a reasonably normal thing to do. The same is true of York.

It is much truer on the eastern half of the country than the western half. You get pockets where nobody cycles and, therefore, to get on a bike would just make you a weirdo, frankly. That is cultural, which is why we have to do some work. Yes, we need to build the infrastructure, but we also need to promote it well.

Joe Irvin: With walking, it is fairly even among income groups; it is the only form of transport that is pretty even among all income groups. It is pretty even around the country. The biggest difference is probably rural versus urban. In cities you will have more walking because the places you



are going to get to are more walkable and public transport is more available, and you walk as part of a public transport-walk journey.

Q87 Ruth Cadbury: Moving on to concern about road casualty issues, the rates are much higher by distance travelled for pedestrians and cyclists than they are for other road users. That is probably not surprising. What are the main sources of danger to pedestrians and cyclists, and how can these be tackled?

Rachel White: To take those statistics, perception of safety is a real issue. If you take the casualty rates between 2011 and 2016 per billion miles travelled, for the car it is three; for someone on a bike it is 33; and for a pedestrian it is 36. That can be quite alarming, and rightly so, but, when you start to think about it, the time it would take you to cycle or walk a billion miles compared with a car is quite different, so it is not very indicative of the time spent doing that. Statistically, if you did it by time you would get something quite different.

That is not to diminish the fact that we need to address safety in this country for people walking and cycling. It is a genuine concern and it leads to increased perceptions of danger. I think that is very well illustrated by looking at Denmark, where 17% of trips are by bike and nine out of 10 Danes own a bike. That compares with 2% of trips here, but their fatality rate is half this country's, so we are doing something wrong.

How do we address this? Denmark has huge networks of protected cycle lanes. The activities of cycling and walking are of themselves not dangerous; they become riskier when they come into contact with motor vehicles. If you begin to address that, you can reduce the risks.

The first thing we need to do is look at putting in protected lanes on many of our busiest roads. If we do that, the risk of a casualty is one tenth that of cycling on the main road.

The second thing we need to address is speed. We all know that if you are hit by a car at 30 mph you are eight times more likely to die than if you are hit at 20 mph. This is equally important if you are walking or cycling. Over 70% of cycle trips are done on 30 mph roads. That is quite a strong argument for reducing speed.

We need to address junctions for walking and cycling. I have a cycling statistic to hand: 75% of cycling accidents occur within 20 metres of junctions, so we really need to address that. We need to address lorry safety. They are 3% of the vehicles on roads but they make up one fifth of cycle fatalities, and it is about half for London.

We need to address passing. I think the DFT is beginning to look at what needs to be done. Close passing is a risky activity for both people on bikes and people on pavements. It also increases the perception of danger; it makes people feel very vulnerable. There are some quite good



HOUSE OF COMMONS

examples. Operation Close Pass in the west midlands is a really good example of where they are beginning to address that, and they are seeing a reduction in casualties because of that work.

Roger Geffen: I agree with all of that. Those are exactly the same barriers I would have identified. The good news is that if you get it right you start to get what we term the safety-in-numbers effect. We did some analysis that partly relates back to the previous question about the differences in cycle use in different parts of the country and indeed pedestrian activity.

The more cycling there is in a particular place, the safer it is. That is probably a two-way causal relationship. Nobody quite knows in which direction it goes. Clearly, if you create safer conditions you are likely to get more people cycling, but there is also a very plausible view that, if you get more people cycling, drivers will become more cycle-aware; they are more likely to cycle themselves and more likely to understand what it is like to be on the other side of the windscreen, and there would be more political support in that place as cycle use goes up for investment in cycling. Therefore, if you start to tackle the barriers that deter and endanger people who cycle, more of them will do it and, when more of them are doing it, it continues to get safer and you have a reinforcing policy spiral once you get going.

Q88 Chair: What was the most critical thing that they did in Copenhagen? They have not always had that sort of statistic. Was it the creation of segregated space?

Rachel White: Yes.

Roger Geffen: Yes, but they also realised that they needed to plan networks, not just individual facilities. Our organisation has been so keen on the whole local cycling and walking infrastructure plan process that is now at the heart of the cycling and walking investment strategy, because it is encouraging local authorities to think about networks, not just isolated, disconnected facilities where there is a bit of spare cash and spare space. To get people from wherever A is to wherever B is for their day-to-day journeys you have to have a good, fine-grained network. That was what the Dutch did after they started building the segregated facilities; they joined them up into networks.

Chair: That brings us nicely on to looking at Government policy and guidance.

Q89 Robert Courts: I want to explore your views on central Government policy and the investment strategies, action plans, cross-departmental working, which we want to see more of, and the Government's recent safety review.

May I start with the cycling and walking investment strategy and the targets? For walking, do you feel they are ambitious enough? Do you feel that the cycling targets are achievable?



Joe Irvin: It is a good thing that there are targets. There are three objectives/targets. The general walking target is to achieve 300 stages per person per year, which you may notice is less than one a day, so it is not terribly ambitious, and a stage is just part of a single journey where maybe you walk to get a bus.

The second is aimed specifically at walking to school. It is aimed at primary schools to try to achieve 55% of children aged between five and 10 walking to school.

The third one is on cycling, which was mentioned by Roger: to double the number of cycling trips from 0.8 billion per annum at the moment.

How are they doing against them? The general walking aim has been exceeded for each of the past three years by a considerable amount. Can I dwell on that for one moment? There are two reasons for that. One is that it was unambitious; it was conservative and cautious in the first place. The second is that the way the National Travel Survey is conducted has been changed. There has been a change in methodology, which is now producing more accurate and bigger figures for short walking journeys. They are the two reasons.

We have written to and engaged with the Minister and departmental officials to ask them to reflect on that and maybe change the figure that they are aiming for in 2025.

Q90 **Robert Courts:** Would you prefer to see targets that are ambitious but may be missed or targets that can be easily complied with and may be exceeded?

Joe Irvin: I prefer to have one that you can just reach, so they are stretching but it is not impossible to achieve it, because that is just demoralising and not worth it. That is the general walking target.

On walk to school, we have been on the way there. It varies from year to year, so you would probably want to look over a series of years. It went up from 49% to 53%, a big leap, and last year it was 51%, so it dropped a bit. More work needs to be put in on walking to school, but there are encouraging signs there.

As for cycling, they are completely away from doing that. As Roger mentioned earlier, the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Safety Review states—I paraphrase—that on current policies the country will get only a third of the way to the cycling target.

There are those who would have liked it to be more ambitious to begin with. If you compare it with other countries, it does not look like a massive amount of cycling, but it is a big increase. It is obviously a little bit ambitious because the Government are so far behind on it.

Therefore, more needs to be done on walking to school to achieve that; a lot more needs to be done on cycling to achieve that; and they need to



HOUSE OF COMMONS

reassess the general walking target because they have changed the methodology, apart from anything else.

Roger Geffen: Your point about the balance between ambitious and achievable does present a dilemma when cycle use in the UK is so low compared with continental Europe. We would like to see ambitious targets, but the important bit is not to go for something that is so ambitious no one will achieve it but to make sure that, having defined your ambition, you allocate the resources to achieve the ambition. Unfortunately, when the Government set that target they had not carried out an analysis of what they needed to do to achieve their target. They have only recently commissioned that piece of work.

The finding that they are now only on course to get to a third of the target they set themselves has come out of that piece of work. I am very pleased they have now commissioned it. I wish they had commissioned it two or three years ago, but better late than never. It is good they are doing it now, and the results will hopefully be out by the time the Minister comes to give evidence to you and you will be able to ask him about the conclusions from that piece of work, and what he will do to fill the gap between the resources and the target.

The target is still quite unambitious in terms of where it will get us to. After allowing for population growth and the fact that an awful lot of the target is going to be met in London, it is less than the doubling of cycle trips per person outside London. We will still be at only about 3.5% of trips, compared with 8%, 9% or 10% in Sweden, Germany and Belgium, let alone 19% in Denmark and 26% and 27% in the Netherlands.

We still have a long way to go, and we need the resources in place. This is exactly why we have said we need to get from about 2% of spending going to walking and cycling at the moment up to 5% very quickly. Do not deluge local authorities with more than they can spend sensibly, but ratchet it up from 5% to 10% over the next five years so we start to get ourselves on track towards continental levels.

Q91 **Robert Courts:** May I ask you to comment on a point I have raised before, which I think is quite important for where resources are directed? We tend to think of local authorities and transport networks, but do we need to be looking at tax breaks for employers to provide washing and changing facilities, secure cycle storage and things like that? It is all very well having a great cycle network if at either end you are not able to make cycling a practical mode of transport. I will come to cross-departmental work in due course, but will you comment on that at this stage?

Roger Geffen: I agree. People have so many cultural and knowledge barriers that you need to do things to knock down every single barrier. You are right about the workplace and the cultural barriers we talked about earlier, as well as the network. There is a whole suite of activities to make sure we remove all the excuses and obstacles people have to



take up cycling. It requires a whole suite of measures, but the big one is the infrastructure spend; that is still the big one financially.

- Q92 **Steve Double:** On targets, in particular comparing the UK with other countries you mentioned—this goes back to your previous comment about the difference across the UK, with cycling being much more popular in the east than the west—how much does topography and geography come into this? Where I live in Cornwall it is impossible to go anywhere for more than a mile without encountering a very significant hill. Many of the countries with much higher rates of cycling are generally much flatter. In Cornwall, you find very few people, other than the very fit, keen or young people, cycling anywhere because it is physically so demanding. How realistic is it for us to compare our level of cycling with much flatter countries?

Roger Geffen: Switzerland is still at 9% and it is not exactly known for being flat, but you are right. There are models of cycle use that have hilliness as a variable; it does affect things, and it is seen as a policy non-dependent variable; in other words, politicians cannot do very much about it.

One important thing can be done to overcome the hilliness barrier, which is to invest in much better support for e-bikes. Giving people that option of a bit of energy boost can overcome a major barrier, not just for health patients, older people and people with disabilities, but people making slightly longer journeys than they would otherwise make, particularly to overcome hilliness.

There are hilly cities. Sheffield and Edinburgh are both hilly and in UK terms both have quite high cycle use, so it is not insurmountable, but, if you really want to broaden it so that older people can cycle in a hilly city, e-bikes are the answer.

- Q93 **Chair:** If one is walking, does it make any difference whether somewhere is hilly?

Joe Irvin: It does, but not such that it is discernible from place to place. It is obviously harder to walk up a hill, is it not? Nottingham can be a bit hilly, can it not? But people do walk quite a bit in Nottingham. There are not big differentials. For example, there is not an east-west differential; the big difference in walking is more to do with density and urban versus rural.

- Q94 **Ruth Cadbury:** What about the lack of pavements? In villages I see areas where people would walk yet there is no pavement, so it becomes really scary. For example, schools are on the edge of a village and there is no pavement.

Joe Irvin: People in rural areas have said to me, "I would love to walk with my child to school, but there is no pavement and it is a pretty busy road." Sometimes these are 40 or 50-mph roads. It is a particular issue



in rural areas, but not only in those areas. It is a deterrent because it feels unsafe and it is unsafe.

Rachel White: A lot of rural pathways are not very well maintained. It is quite difficult for local authorities to keep them well maintained because a lot of them are privately owned, and it is hard for them to monitor it. This creates huge problems because it forces people out on to the streets and then they say it is not safe for them to walk and they get in the car. It is another connected issue.

Q95 **Robert Courts:** From some of the views expressed already, particularly by Roger, do you feel that the strategy should be revisited now or in years to come, and what should be done by Government to inform that strategy?

Rachel White: We all agree that the strategy needs to be revisited right now. It is a good time to revisit the strategy because there is supposedly a spending review at the end of the year. One of the big things missing from the strategy is funding to push out projects across the nation. We have the targets we have already talked about and we may need to revisit one of them.

If we even have a chance of meeting the other two by 2025, we need a sustained increase in investment in the CWIS. They are already talking about CWIS2. It is the same period: 2020 to 2025. We need a CWIS2, so to speak. We are not talking about a complete rewrite; we are talking about taking the targets and setting CWIS, revisiting one of them and saying, "We are a long way from achieving them. What do we need to do now to make the changes?" One is funding and the other one is taking the LCWIP process and rolling it out in a much bigger and supported way across the country.

Roger Geffen: In the context of the spending review, we also have a Minister who is keen to use that spending review to boost the resources of the cycling and walking investment strategy. That is exactly why the study I mentioned earlier is now looking at what resources were needed to meet the targets. It is very tiny. The DFT officials intend to use that piece of work to help frame their bid to the spending review with the aim of strengthening investment in the cycling and walking investment strategy. This is absolutely the right time to be holding this inquiry and exactly why I am suggesting that when the Minister comes to give evidence—I hope that piece of research will be out by then—you will ask him about it and what he is going to do to use that piece of evidence to strengthen the cycling and walking strategy looking ahead.

You said you would come to questions about cross-departmental working. I will hold off on that point and come to that in a moment, if I may.

Q96 **Robert Courts:** May we look for a moment at the delivery mechanism for the cycling and walking investment strategy? We are told that the cycling and walking infrastructure plans are expected to be the main



HOUSE OF COMMONS

vehicle for delivery. Is this the right approach? Are there other measures you would like to see Government take?

Rachel White: We are generally supportive of the local cycling and walking infrastructure plans, or the LCWIPs, as I will now call them. Generally, they are a very good approach because they allow local authorities to make network plans and put in priority schemes. That is really important because it allows them to plan for multiple years in advance; it allows them to look at new developments and think about what cycling and walking infrastructure will be needed, because we know of many examples currently of developments that do not incorporate that. It also allows local authorities to put in long-term planning. It is potentially a very strong way of doing that.

All of our three organisations are involved in supporting local cycling and walking infrastructure plans and providing advice and case studies to local authorities and highway engineers, so we are involved in it. But at the moment there are two major weaknesses with LCWIPs. The first is that they have funding to produce these plans for priority schemes and networks. There is currently no funding available to put in place the priority schemes, which means there is a huge risk that these become documents that sit on the shelf and gather dust. There is also a risk of undermining the LCWIP process if they are not taken forward.

If you have funding in place to put forward those priority schemes, you are far more likely to get interest by other local authorities in producing their own LCWIPs and broaden that interest across the country. At the moment there are only 48 local authorities, so it needs to be in place much more broadly. Therefore, there is an element of: what is the next stage? They need support in rolling out those schemes.

The other weakness is that we need to make sure there is some sort of quality and standard in place, because if they are putting in place walking and cycling infrastructure that is sub-standard it will undermine the legitimacy of the LCWIP process and the users of LCWIPs—those using the walking and cycling networks. We need to make sure that what is put forward is of the right standard and quality to pave the way for other local authorities in future.

Q97 **Robert Courts:** You talked about 46 or 48 local authorities.

Rachel White: It is 48.

Roger Geffen: There are 44 authorities or groups of authorities. I cannot remember the total number of authorities when you take account of groups. Some of them are doing combined LCWIPs.

Q98 **Robert Courts:** Therefore, just under 50 local authorities are being supported by Government. What about those that are not? Are they at risk of being left behind, and is this enough to deliver on the targets we discussed earlier?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Rachel White: The short answer is no at the present time. There is a risk of them being left behind. Ideally, we would want to see the LCWIP process open to any local authority that would like to put in cycle and walking infrastructure. We would also like to see that incentivised. Local authorities are under immense pressure at the moment to make cuts. Cycling and walking are not always seen as a priority investment, so there needs to be some incentivisation in place to say, "This can help you solve a number of policy issues in your local area. We think you should be looking at this. Here are a number of things that you can apply for to roll out these processes."

Roger Geffen: It is worth saying that part of our organisations' motives for getting involved in that LCWIP support project was to help local authorities out of a Catch-22. If they do not have funding they do not recruit and train the staff to develop the schemes, and if they do not have some schemes in their bottom drawer it is difficult for them to apply for funding. You have to have the plans to apply for funding, and it is only when you get the funds that you can employ and retain the people to develop further plans.

This is one of those Catch-22s that they need to get out of at least by getting some plans in place. Even as things stand, they are better placed to start making applications for funding from local enterprise partnerships, local growth funds and whatever bits of funding are tactically brought to their attention. However, the fact is that they still have to be quite tactical; even DFT officials have to be quite tactical and say, "Oh, we've found some funding for walking and cycling from the future high streets fund and transforming cities fund."

Local authority planners still do not have any certainty that there will be dedicated, earmarked funding for implementing their local cycling and walking infrastructure plans. It is that certainty they need to be able to retain the staff and build up a bank of schemes so that, if one scheme is delayed because of whatever, they have another one they can bring forward. Then they can plan with confidence not just individual schemes but networks, knowing they will be able to deliver those networks because of certainty of funding in future years.

Q99 **Chair:** You refer to 48 local authorities. I presume these are unitaries and counties. What proportion of the population is covered by an LCWIP? Is it half of them?

Roger Geffen: It is half the population of England outside London.

Q100 **Robert Courts:** May I ask a niche question about the delivery and identification of networks? Disused railway lines have wonderful potential for cycling, in the sense that they are flattish and the surface is prepared. In many parts of the country some great cycle paths have been laid out on disused railway lines, but by no means is it universal. I think of my own constituency and the Witney branch line where in many places the track bed is extant but unused, and sometimes it has been built on.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

I understand that in the United States there is a policy whereby track beds are kept in public ownership and can be reclaimed to lay railway lines upon them, but in the meantime they are used for cycle paths.

It seems to me there might be some potential there. Will you share your thoughts on what we can do to use old railway lines, which in many ways seem perfect for conversion, at least temporarily, for commuting and leisure routes?

Rachel White: I would probably need to come back to you on that. As an organisation we have been supportive of it. We have been involved in a lot of disused railway lines. That was how we started, with the disused Bristol to Bath railway line.

Q101 **Robert Courts:** That was what I was thinking of.

Rachel White: And the Monsal trail. We have been involved in all sorts. We have been very supportive of taking as many disused railway lines as possible and turning them into walking and cycling networks where they are in places that people want to use them, whether that is utility or recreational. We are generally supportive of that. I would have to come back to you on the mechanisms for doing that in this country.

Q102 **Robert Courts:** There is still an issue of ownership, is there not?

Rachel White: Yes, and we would need to address that to gain access to a lot of them.

Roger Geffen: Your point about planning policy is absolutely right. In order to retain them you need to protect the alignment so they do not get built on. There are a number of disused railway lines where housing development has gone ahead, which means that the whole route then becomes unusable without spending a lot of money to rectify it, so the planning protection point is a very good one.

I want to start on one cross-departmental point that is also relevant. This is a link across to the Department for Environment's Agriculture Bill. The Environment Secretary is now promising that one of the outcomes of that Bill is public goods for public subsidies.

One of the factors we are very interested in is public access as one of the public goods that that Bill could help fund. Where is the funding most needed for improved off-road access to give people those opportunities to take out the kids and all that stuff? Disused railway lines provide an opportunity to have quite high levels of cycle use because the conditions are great. They need decent surfacing. The mountain bikers do not want decent surfacing, but families and kids do and that is where the funding is most needed to take up those opportunities.

Rachel White: It is maintenance as well. It is all very well managing to build these things, but if you do not have access to be able to maintain them they fall into disrepair and usage goes down. We have seen that issue with our national cycle network. We have recently reviewed it and



HOUSE OF COMMONS

been quite honest about the state of some elements of the network, but we own only 0.5% of it.¹ We are honest about being custodians of it and the work that needs to happen, but it is about working with stakeholders and others who own the land, which is the sticking point. That is the same for disused railway lines as well; it is about getting access to begin with and then maintaining them.

Q103 Robert Courts: Maybe I can explore that offline, as it were.

Let us turn to the cross-departmental piece now, which we have been dancing around for the past few minutes. Which other agencies or Departments should the Department for Transport be looking at? Can you give us any helpful examples of good practice anywhere else in the UK, or the world for that matter?

Roger Geffen: We have identified quite a number of key Departments. One of the great benefits of walking and cycling is that they tick so many policy boxes, as the Chair said in her introduction, yet maximising those benefits requires cross-departmental collaboration. We know that joined-up government is one of those things that is easier said than done.

One of the other weaknesses of the first iteration of the cycling and walking investment strategy was that at the time the Department for Transport did not manage to get very much buy-in from other Government Departments. I know that the Minister wants to rectify this with the next iteration to get much more input from the Departments of Health and Culture, Media and Sport in particular—relatively revenue-rich Departments—to help fund the behaviour change programmes and complement the Department for Transport's capital funding of the infrastructure in order to get that balance we talked about earlier: the need for a complementary relationship between behaviour change and infrastructure. The Departments of Health and Culture, Media and Sport could help enormously with those behaviour change programmes.

There is a link with Housing, Communities and Local Government around the integration with planning policy, which goes back to Ruth's earlier question about making sure walking and cycling infrastructure is integrated into new developments, particularly all the new housing developments coming on stream at the moment. That is a crucial role for HCLG.

There are roles for the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice around strengthening road traffic law enforcement to reinforce good behaviour on our roads.

There are roles for the Department for the Environment in relation to both off-road access that I have talked about and integration into air quality policy. There are two areas in which the Government are very

¹ Witness correction: Rachel White said that Sustrans owns 0.5% the national cycle network, but they actually own 1.5% of the network.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

conspicuously failing. One is air quality, where they are consistently being dragged back to court; not tracking road transport is one of their key failings. We need a much more joined-up approach to maximising the opportunities for walking and cycling to contribute to the Government's air quality strategy.

As for their climate change and clean growth strategies, business, enterprise and industrial strategy need to recognise the potential for walking and cycling to contribute to the Government's targets, particularly maximising the role of e-bikes, to pick up an earlier point. If you simply switch short journeys, you make a big difference to congestion and air quality but less difference to climate change. Once you start factoring in e-bikes you can make much more of a dent in the climate change targets.

The other thing to help climate change is the integration of cycle and public transport for longer-distance journeys.

All those things cut across different Government Departments. Apart from funding, it is that cross-departmental working that really needs to be strengthened in the next round of CWIS2.

Joe Irvin: If I could add a specific point in illustration, the Department of Health, Public Health England and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence have brought out lots of stuff about the benefits of physical activity to health and the savings that can be made. The public benefits are huge. There was certainly input into the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy from a target for walking to school. There was big support from that from the Department of Health because of the childhood obesity strategy. Children's health was thought to be an important factor in having that specific target, but there is very little by way of actual financial support from the Department of Health or Public Health England for this sort of activity.

It is one of those dilemmas where we are asking the Department for Transport to spend money and the benefits might accrue to another Department. It is particularly frustrating because, as Roger said, the Department for Transport is very capital-rich and revenue-poor, and health is the reverse. Small amounts put towards improvements in this area, particularly behaviour change activities, would have big pay-backs for health.

Q104 **Robert Courts:** I want to ask about the Government's recent safety review of walking and cycling. Would you share your thoughts on that? What changes would you like to see from the upcoming review of the Highway Code?

Joe Irvin: I have been leading some work on that. We are very pleased that the safety review is taking place and that it is so wide-ranging. If you think about its origins, a very narrow area could have been looked



HOUSE OF COMMONS

at. I think that this Minister of State in particular deserves a lot of credit for taking this so seriously.

There are about 50 proposals for action from the Government, but let me concentrate on the Highway Code, which was one of the things we were specifically asked about. There are two main areas. First, the Government are minded to reassert, if you like, the hierarchy of road users in terms of responsibility and vulnerability under the Highway Code. They are prepared to say that under the Highway Code pedestrians are at the top of that hierarchy as the most vulnerable, followed by cycling, horse-riding and motorcycling. That is set out in the Government's response, and we are looking to flesh it out and make sure it is consistently applied throughout the Highway Code.

The second big area, as the Government's report suggests, is re-emphasising the priority for pedestrians and cyclists at junctions, particularly priority junctions. As Rachel said earlier, the hotspots for collisions are junctions. In changing the Highway Code we are not changing the law itself; it reflects the law, but we just want that reflected properly. For example, at the moment in different parts of the Highway Code it is slightly contradictory. If I am a pedestrian and I want to cross a side road and a car or lorry is turning in, I have right of way, but it is unclear whether I have to step out into the road to assert that right of way, or whether the driver should not have to stop if I am not stepping into the road. We just want to keep it consistent and very clear so that, if you are walking or cycling in one direction and a motor vehicle is turning, the vehicle allows you to carry on. We are looking at a whole series of ways throughout the Highway Code to re-emphasise that.

There are a number of smaller points—for example, the clothing you are required to wear if you are cycling and new types of roundabouts. We will bring forward all those suggestions at a later date, but those are the prime things.

When we have done all that, the most important thing is that it is communicated thoroughly. I am old enough to remember when seat belts were introduced in motor vehicles. There was a very big campaign to make people aware of that and it was very successful. When it started not everybody was aware of it; a lot of people thought, "I don't want to do it." Nowadays, there are, as you know, one or two people who do not like to put on their seat belts, but, generally speaking, it is quite a well-observed law because people are aware of it and understand why it is important. Therefore, backing up any changes you make to the Highway Code so that people are aware of them is equally important.

Roger Geffen: Can I step back from the Highway Code—that is well covered—to the wider point about the safety review? Yes, the Highway Code is undoubtedly the most important thing that has come out of the review. It is very welcome that it has done so, but can I just go to the rest of the review process?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

It is a welcome step. There were quite a number of other things we would like to have seen that did not make their way in. We will keep pushing for them. We know that the Minister is still looking for the resources to be able to do more than he is currently able to do.

We would have like to have seen the point that I touched on earlier about what the Government will do to make sure that highway authorities consistently apply the new design and guidance.

We would like to see more on 20 mph speed limits becoming the norm.

From a cycling point of view, we would like to have seen more action on lorry danger and what can the Government do to make sure that lorry cabs are more safely designed. If you think about why lorries kill cyclists and buses do not, it is mostly down to the design of the cab. The lorry driver is sat high up and is surrounded by a lot of metal, but bus drivers are more likely to be sat quite near street level and are able to see out of the window and the transparent door alongside them.

Dustcarts are beginning to have that same kind of transparent concertina door that allows them to see cyclists much more easily. That design of lorry cab needs to be much more normal. We need to see the Government taking leadership in using that safe lorry design in its own national contracts—for instance, on HS2 and on Highways England's contracts—and encouraging local authorities to use them for local authority procurement. That would really drive the market and the construction industry towards procuring safe lorries. There is a whole load of things that could have been done on safe lorries.

Finally, there is the point on road traffic law enforcement. It is not just the Highway Code. The Highway Code review is very welcome, but we have long been calling for a much wider review of road traffic law enforcement. We are aiming to clarify that distinction that keeps bedevilling court case after court case, where driving that has caused obvious danger and may well have killed or maimed somebody is dismissed as merely carelessness, with derisory sentences as a result. That is one problem.

To complement that, we need much greater use of driving bans rather than assuming that someone who has caused danger should be locked up. The fact that the law assumes that they are going to be locked up tends to mean that juries are reluctant to convict in the first place. If we made greater use of driving bans, I suspect we could make that distinction in the legal framework between careless and dangerous work more like it was meant to do at the outset.

We need to stop convicted drivers being able to use the exceptional hardship loophole, whereby if they are threatened with a driving ban they routinely claim exceptional hardship, to the point where it is no longer exceptional. We have to make sure that that does not happen because far too many drivers who should have been banned then go on to kill.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

We have to tighten up the law on dangerous car dooring. There are far too many cases where cyclists have been killed and the maximum penalty is merely a grand. It is merely seen as a construction and use offence and not a serious infringement of road traffic law.

Similarly, for leaving the scene of a crime it is only a grand maximum penalty for that specific element. That might be reasonable if you have just grazed another car in a car park, but, if you have left somebody to die, fleeing the scene needs a very serious penalty. Those areas need to be tightened up.

Bearing in mind that this safety review started off as a result of a question at Prime Minister's questions about what we are going to do about one admittedly really terrible cycling offence, it is good that it is broadened, but we still need that review of wider road traffic law enforcement and not just a review of cycling offences and penalties. There is nothing wrong with looking at cycling offences and penalties, but to neglect the bigger picture would be horrendous.

Rachel White: I completely agree with what Roger is saying, but I would go back to what Joe was saying. It is really important to reiterate the point about getting this into behaviours and actually spreading awareness of these changes. If we are being honest, most people will only look at the Highway Code when they are learning to drive for a test. That is not to take the value of updating the Highway Code away, but we need to be honest about what reach that will have unless we embed that into the theory test, the driving test and into lessons, particularly the Dutch reach. It is literally about embedding that behaviour into crossing over to open doors. That is all that is, and also having campaigns to back that up. I think it is worth reiterating that point because it is so important to create a change.

Chair: Very quickly, Joe, because I am conscious that we have quite a lot of ground to cover and not as much time as we might like.

Joe Irvin: Just to reinforce the Highway Code changes, we will be looking for some changes to traffic designs and, in particular, that you put what are sometimes called "elephant's feet" alongside cycle lanes, indicating to a driver that you should not be turning in there or that you should be careful and cautious before you turn.

If you talk to Chris Boardman or other people in Manchester, one of the things they are proposing—which they call "beelines"—is like a mini zebra crossing across side streets. It is a bit of a contentious issue with the DfT at the moment, but people who drive along and see that do observe it. It just makes you think twice and gives a bit more priority to the pedestrian. We think that would be a very good thing.

Q105 **Chair:** I had that discussion with Chris in Manchester. On the cycle route alongside the Nottingham ring road we have green boxes that indicate that priority is for cyclists across side roads. Chris wants to use indicative



zebra crossings without the full belisha beacon mix, which is super-expensive. Is there evidence that suggests that is a safe thing, because that seems to be the DFT's objection?

Joe Irvin: It is a bit hard to do when the DFT objects to it and stops you doing it, but some local authorities have put them in. I have not seen any evidence that they are dangerous. In fact, I think they will add to safety. Whether you read the Highway Code or not, the idea of a zebra crossing is embedded enough into all of our minds that we will respect it a bit more.

Q106 **Chair:** So you strongly support it.

Joe Irvin: I support it. It is cheap and cheerful, so you can do a lot of it.

Chair: We want to move on to some questions about funding for active travel. We have already started to touch on it, but obviously it is a key issue.

Q107 **Daniel Zeichner:** We have inevitably already touched on some of the funding issues. Looking back to when the CWIS was finally dragged out of the Department—it was quite a long process—the funding issues have always seemed a bit vague. Trying to disentangle how much is actually being spent is extremely difficult. I think the Government said that £1.2 billion may be spent on cycling and walking between 2016 and 2021, and have subsequently indicated that almost £2 billion is projected.

Do you have any clarity on how much the Government is actually spending on active travel?

Roger Geffen: No. DFT officials themselves have been trying to work this out too. Part of me admires the fact that they are trying to boost the figure up, but they are having to do it very tactically. As I said earlier, they are tapping into other funding streams rather than having funding that is earmarked for walking and cycling.

This is why we have this confusion. There is what is earmarked for walking and cycling and what is potentially available for walking and cycling. So far the latter is much bigger than the former. To go to my earlier point, that is exactly what gives the local authority walking and cycling plans the lack of certainty that they will be able to plan their walking and cycling networks for the longer term.

I have no reason to doubt the Department for Transport's future projections around what funding might be spent over the coming years on walking and cycling, but the fact that it is still very tactical rather than planned and strategic is still a big problem. Local authorities would like that certainty: a dedicated funding stream to implement their walking and cycling infrastructure plans, which they are being asked to do. That is the bit of certainty that we really need.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

At the moment the earmarked funding is set to nosedive, even though the Department seems to be managing to find little tactical ways of boosting the un-earmarked element.

Q108 Daniel Zeichner: I was astonished to find that the local enterprise partnerships were charged with some of this. It is no criticism particularly, but I had no sense that my LEP knew much about cycling. Do we need a much clearer account? We had the arguments about £10 per head and all the rest of it. Given that nobody knows how much is being spent, it makes it a rather curious discussion.

Roger Geffen: You are absolutely right. We do not know what is really being spent on walking and cycling. Given that so much of this is money that is coming through from local growth funds and local enterprise partnerships, we also do not know how well it is being spent. We know that local authorities—perfectly understandably given their funding shortages—are coming up with all sorts of ways. They are just getting away with doing routine bits of pavement maintenance, as if that was investment in walking and cycling. No self-respecting continental country that takes walking and cycling seriously would call that earmarked cycling and walking funding. That is just the day job—run-of-the-mill business. The investment should be the new stuff.

We are looking into this. We are doing a bit of work at the moment to try to find out not just how much is being spent but how well it is being spent. Even if it is true that the amount of money that is now projected to be spent could get them a third of the way to their target, it will not necessarily actually get them a third of the way to their target if it is not well spent. That reinforces the point about not just more funding but the design guidance and the consistency of application of that design guidance to make sure that whatever is spent on walking and cycling, whether earmarked or otherwise, is well spent.

Joe Irvin: I would not like to think that every single penny that goes to local authorities—this might be controversial for colleagues—is absolutely earmarked for walking and cycling and is going to be spent on that. I do think that local authorities have to have some discretion.

However, as you say, a consequence of this is a lack of clarity about what is being spent. There are also mixed messages on incentives. At a time when local authorities are really under the cosh financially, which everybody recognises, they are going to concentrate on their statutory obligations first. Lots of things are going to get in the way of doing this.

Unless central Government provides some sticks and carrots, and some incentives, not an awful lot will happen, unfortunately. I do think they do need to take a lead.

If there is one big thing to take away from us today, it is that we are looking to increase the proportion of DFT funding that is spent in this area from 5% rising to 10%. That is the level that is being spent in



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Scotland: 10% of the transport budget is now earmarked for active travel in Scotland by the Scottish Government.² We would like to see a move towards that. At the moment it looks like about 2% of the DFT budget is going to this area. We would like it to move up to 5% and 10%.

There are very large sums being earmarked for roads, as you know. A tiny proportion of those in this area would, we think, pay back enormously.

Q109 Daniel Zeichner: But there is a concern—and you have already touched on it, Roger—that at the moment the likelihood is that it is going down rather than up. Is that the sense of all three of you?

Roger Geffen: Certainly the earmarked funding is set to decline very markedly. As I say, the fact is that that then leaves you with this real lack of certainty.

On the funding lines in the original cycling and walking investment strategy, there was the cycle city ambition grant programme, a funding line for Highways England, Bikeability cycle training and the Access fund. Of those, only the Highways England fund was built to last for the five years of the original cycle and walking investment strategy. Everything else that has come along has been top-ups from other funding sources and is not earmarked for walking and cycling.

It is great that the Minister is finding those additional bits of funding, but they are not giving local authorities the long-term certainty.

Joe Irvin: There are in almost all cases capital funds; there is not revenue funding.

Roger Geffen: There is a point about capital funding balance as well; that is worth saying. There is this discussion about what should the balance be. We think that the appropriate balance starts off at about 70% capital to 30% funding. As the total amount grows and as the total cake gets bigger, you get towards 80% to 20%. That is not because you reduce the revenue; it is because you increase the capital bit more rapidly than the revenue bit.

The capital funding takes longer to plan how to spend it well. You have to recruit and train staff. You have to build up your schemes. You have to consult. You have to do the traffic regulation orders. Turn on the capital funding tap and things only start to flow out at the far end about two years later, whereas with the revenue funding tap—all the behaviour change projects—you recruit somebody and they are delivering within about three months.

You start with your revenue. You start overcoming some of those cultural barriers to getting people cycling, but giving them the good infrastructure takes a little longer. You can ratchet it up more rapidly over time.

² Witness correction: See clarification in supplementary evidence from Living Streets.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Q110 Daniel Zeichner: While we are on balance and this vexed question of whether resources should go to the areas that already have a cultural affinity with cycling, so you have the possibility of more lift, or to other parts of the country where it is very low, what is your view on that? It is a very difficult question, I think.

Roger Geffen: You are right; it does raise a dilemma. I think the answer is that the places that have already built up a bit of a head of steam and have built up that number of schemes can probably spend more at an 80:20 ratio. The places that are just getting started are more likely to be spending at a 70:30 ratio. They are going to take a little while before they can really start delivering good infrastructure, but they can at least get to work on the behaviour change programmes.

They are often the more disadvantaged areas. They are often the places where those cultural barriers that we talked about earlier are most acute. They are areas of deprivation, areas with high ethnic minorities and with high levels of health inequality. The behaviour change programmes can be very cost-effective at just getting started.

That is not to say that you are suddenly going to have huge levels of cycling, because you still need the infrastructure to give those people the confidence to take up cycling for day-to-day journeys, particularly the longer-distance journeys into the town centre or whatever.

The infrastructure is needed for that to start to happen, but the revenue can still start building up the cultural receptiveness to start taking up cycling in those areas that are further behind.

Q111 Daniel Zeichner: Given that we are likely to see quite some transformation in many of our areas as we move towards autonomous vehicles, which will need much clearer road markings and all the rest of it, is this an opportunity for more imaginative thinking about how we do things? Do you think the balance in road space for pedestrians, cyclists and new vehicles has been fully captured in the Government's thinking?

Joe Irvin: I do not think it is the autonomous vehicles that give an opportunity. I think we should be using all the technology available to us and think more clearly about it. I do not think we are actually being very clever about how we are thinking about autonomous vehicles.

I do not want to dwell too much on it, but I remember that in 1970 I got a newspaper and it said that in 10 years every house would have a robot to do the housework. Why that was so stupid and wrong was because it was trying to imagine that you were caught within the limits of your imagination, which was probably from the '50s, which was, "What would do all this housework? A servant." So you have a mechanical servant. Actually what we got was labour-saving devices that looked nothing like that—dishwashing machines and so on.

Thinking that autonomous vehicles are just like taxis is a really incredibly limited way of thinking about using that technology. A much better



starting point is thinking, first, about where we want to get to, how we want to live and what sort of places we want to live in. Many people around the world, particularly in cities, are doing that by imagining what cities and urban areas in particular could be like in the future, and starting without the preconception that we are going to just have Uber without drivers.

Technology is giving us massive pause for thought and has possibly fantastic advantages and great pitfalls. We should be taking that on board and trying to build around a human society what the best and most modern cities would be doing. Many people around the world are starting to do that.

Rachel White: It is absolutely essential. The issue with autonomous vehicles is that they could, and should, eventually be safer and make fewer mistakes than a human. That is great, but in the interim they are probably going to make some mistakes. There is a level of “what is acceptable,” but there is also a danger of being risk averse to that and then making it so that you can only cross at specific places and putting up barriers between pavements and roads to ensure that you avoid that collision between an autonomous vehicle and a pedestrian.

There is a danger of that just creeping in if we are not thinking holistically about it and saying, “We do not want to put up barriers; we want to build streets around people.” Thinking about that holistically from the start needs to happen, and I am just not sure that is happening at all at the moment.

Q112 **Daniel Zeichner:** Finally, to go back to funding again, what would you say to the point that is sometimes made that motorists make contributions through vehicle excise duty and rail passengers from fares, so shouldn’t some contribution be made by cyclists and pedestrians, other than through general taxation?

Roger Geffen: We see no reason to do that. First, cyclists and pedestrians are all taxpayers and most roads, including road maintenance, are paid for by general taxation. It was only quite recently that the previous Chancellor started hypothecating specifically vehicle excise duty for the trunk and motorway network.

Most adult cyclists—90% of Cycling UK’s members—do also drive, so cyclists are also paying for the roads. Conversely, the cyclists who do not drive are still contributing through their taxes to all the motorways—the really expensive roads that they do not get to use. There is the idea that you only get to use something that you are paying for. With hypothecated taxes, if we did that with hospitals, smokers would get prior use of the hospitals and nobody else would get to use them. It is a nonsense argument. We need to recognise that getting people cycling is good, not just for the cyclists but for everybody in society. It tackles all the problems we have talked about: congestion and climate change.



Yes, we subsidise the railways and buses because they help society function better. They are not just beneficial to the people who use them. There is a very clear argument in terms of public economics and the economics of public goods that we should be encouraging people and providing for people to do that. That is what we have done for roads and indeed for pavements all along. I am not sure why anything needs to change.

Daniel Zeichner: Thank you. Given the time constraints I will leave it there.

Chair: We have a couple of further questions, particularly around best practice. We have covered quite a lot of the ground that we were going to pick up, but Ronnie has some further questions.

Q113 **Ronnie Cowan:** I am still curious about the approach. I believe it is all about behavioural change. This idea that if we build it they will come does not always work. Bristol, Brighton and Cambridge all seem to have a very good reputation for doing things properly. Is there a consistent basis for those three places, or did they come to it from a different angle?

Roger Geffen: To some extent Cambridge has the advantage of being an historic city that did not get knocked down in the 1960s.

Ronnie Cowan: Some bits did.

Roger Geffen: Yes; some bits did. That does give it in-built traffic restraint. If you knocked down your city and built an awful lot of road space, that puts your city at a major disadvantage. Birmingham and Glasgow are still having to deal with the consequences of all the motorways they put into the heart of their cities back in the 1960s.

In terms of what they are getting right, though, the key lessons so far are the points about planning networks and delivering quality. We have had an ongoing debate about whether you get a comprehensive network into low quality or do you concentrate on a few high-profile good schemes. It is still a balancing act. One or two really good schemes are a very strong statement of intent as well as providing practical benefits for cyclists who can use that corridor, but they are also a statement of what you then want to do everywhere else when you cannot get up to that level straight away.

Q114 **Ronnie Cowan:** I am still not clear. Are they doing the same things well, or are they all doing different things that have to work for their environments?

Roger Geffen: There is no consistency in what people are doing, particularly around the behaviour change programmes. Some people are concentrating on ethnic minorities, and to some extent the variability of behaviour change programmes does reflect the different demographics of different places. If you have an elderly population, you need to reflect that. If you are Leicester, you need to do quite a lot of work to take



HOUSE OF COMMONS

cycling out to Asian women. Leicester has done very well on that. Yes, behaviour change is more variable around situations.

The disadvantage, from our organisation's point of view, is that when you are doing different behaviour change programmes in different places it is far harder to get good monitoring of what is working because you do not deliver behaviour change programmes at the sort of scale where you can really say, "Do this and you will get that outcome."

Yes, we probably do need a certain amount of local variation in what behaviour change programmes get delivered, but we also need better support for the monitoring to make sure we really know what is working.

Q115 Ronnie Cowan: Are there any other views?

Rachel White: It is different on behaviour change programmes. If you take Bristol, for example, 40% of the trips in Bristol are made by women because they have made a conscious effort to engage women in cycle trips. Women are teaching other women in Bristol's BAME communities, working with them to increase their confidence on a bike. It is simple stuff. It is maintenance at Bikeability level one, which is basically being confident enough to cycle on a quiet road.

Cambridge is very different again. We have talked about the student background. Cambridge has a lot of good infrastructure now, but it did not always have good infrastructure. It almost had high cycling levels despite its infrastructure rather than because of it.

There are definitely cultural aspects that create a difference in these areas. When it comes to what actually works in these areas—the capital side of things—the same schemes show a good return again and again. You are talking about protected cycleways on busy roads. You are talking about public realms and looking at things holistically.

Joe will probably talk more about this, but "The Pedestrian Pound" report that Living Streets did is excellent at highlighting that. When you invest in your public realm, you are increasing footfall by 30% in a lot of the shops in the area and increasing business vibrancy. There are a lot of really positive statistics around what happens when you think about a space holistically. You also look at the needs of that space.

Joe Irvin: In answer to your question about whether those places are doing it well or are doing something different, I think they are doing it on a different scale. I do not think you can go to Oxford and Cambridge and say, "Right, that is the blueprint for everywhere else, so let's go and take that everywhere else," because they are quite specific. Other places like Nottingham and Manchester, with what they are doing, as well as Glasgow in the plans they have, have got really great ideas. I think you will find that you can copy those ideas. There are consultants who will look across the board.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Arup did a very good survey of walking cities worldwide taking the best examples from South America, Asia and everywhere else. I would say that you can pass on knowledge like that. Everywhere local is different and you want your local people to buy into it, but there are principles that work and principles that are less effective in design standards and everything else. Roger was talking about that.

I would urge you to do that. "The Pedestrian Pound" was aimed at looking at improvements that had an economic benefit, but actually they had an economic benefit because they were successful. So, from Waltham Forest to Leicester and to other places that have done that type of work, if you improve the public realm, you will have more people walking and it turns out that people who walk spend more in the shops.

Q116 Ronnie Cowan: My local constituency has come at it from a different approach. We are giving people free bikes, which creates the next generation of activists, because people then start saying, "But the cycle tracks are rubbish," and they start writing to councils and politicians saying, "What are you going to do about cycle tracks?" Sustrans is now going to fund a cycle track right the way through Inverclyde, but we started at grassroots by getting people back and engaged with cycling.

Why is it so hard to get women into cycling?

Rachel White: There are a number of different reasons. I am generalising here, so bear that in mind, but generally women's perceptions of safety are a lot more acute. They generally fear cycling in particular a lot more.

We are also just not being catered for. Of those who work in transport policy, only 22% are women. The needs of women are not being addressed, and actually they are different from men in a lot of cases.

I briefly mentioned earlier that there is still a great difference in the way we travel around. We are far more likely to trip train and far more likely to do radial trips. You need to get people from A to B, and that is the most successful infrastructure. It is protected; it is on main roads and it gets people quickly from A to B. That is where you see the biggest uptake in cycling.

You also need to connect that to those different neighbourhoods and you need space within those neighbourhoods to move around for people who maybe are not going in and out of city centres. Maybe they are going to school and then the shops, and then somewhere else.

We are not addressing those different needs in actual transport policy, but a lot of the things that would be good for women are just good for everyone. We are just not really doing them yet.

Roger Geffen: There is one other thing about women's cycling that came out of some work that Rachel Aldred did—she gave evidence here in a previous session. She did a near-miss study, where people recorded



HOUSE OF COMMONS

near misses and how scary they felt they were. What she found was that the explanatory factor that most explained how many scary near misses people recorded was their speed of cycling. If you cycle more slowly, you have more scary experiences.

Why is that? This is now going into a hypothesis and a bit of a generalisation, but it came out of a piece of work that was done in Oxford and Cambridge. It was found that women were more likely to say that they found it hard to look over their shoulder, and they were also more likely to be hit from behind.

Why do women find it hard to look over their shoulder? No one has ever suggested that they have stiffer necks. It is actually more likely to be, as a generalisation, that they ride more slowly. That is very definitely a generalisation. If you are riding more slowly, to know whether it is safe to pull out when you need to turn a corner or to overtake a parked car, you need to look further to know whether it is safe than if you are riding more quickly, and closer to the speed of the traffic alongside you. That is possibly why women—

Ronnie Cowan: That is what I am doing wrong.

Roger Geffen: This may also explain why it is that women are more likely to be killed by the left-turning lorry in London. They are more likely to stick close to the kerb than men, who as a generalisation are more likely to ride more quickly and therefore to be more confident about pulling away from the kerb when they need to do so.

The answer to that is not to try to speed up the women and the older people. That is not going to work. You need to provide them with protection so that they can cycle despite their fears, rather than somehow magically suggesting that if only you gave them good cycle training their fears would disappear. You have to provide them with protection if those fears are going to be overcome.

Rachel White: They have done studies in the USA. Where protective cycleways have been put in, they have seen a far greater proportion, compared to men, of women cycling. Proportionally it makes a bigger difference to the women.

Q117 **Chair:** I want to ask a quick question to follow up. Joe, you were talking about sharing learning. You said that Arup had produced some collective of what has been really effective. You talked about the role of consultancy and about different places doing different things depending on their population. What is the best way of sharing learning, and is it happening effectively at the moment so that people do not have to reinvent the wheel, albeit they have to pick and choose what is going to work best given what their city or town is like?

Joe Irvin: There is probably not one simple answer to that. What we are trying to do through the LCWIP support stuff we were talking about before is going to local authorities themselves. The DfT is paying for



them to buy professional consultant support. That is quite a good way to try to share good practice and hold the hands of local authorities, many of whom have dispensed with their own staff, who were capable of doing this sort of stuff for themselves.

The second thing is the design standards and the publicity for them. There is a Manual for Streets. You can go and look up what is good practice for designing your street. That exists, but, as I say, I think there is a specific problem right now in that a lot of the recipients—a lot of the people that was aimed at—have disappeared. Their posts have been cut out of local government.

Those are the ways of doing it.

Q118 Jack Brereton: Following on from some of the questions about encouraging that modal shift, what do you think needs to be done? How can we encourage cyclists and walkers, and what needs to be done to discourage and make car usage less attractive?

Roger Geffen: The Dutch have found it is that balance of journey time and convenience. If you make driving quick and convenient, even if you design a very good cycle-friendly network—as happened in Stevenage, Milton Keynes and some of the other new towns—but you also have a high-capacity road network and plenty of parking space so that driving is convenient, people will choose to drive. It is the balance of convenience that needs to be redressed.

This is clearly one of those things that you are at risk of being asked: “Are you being anti car?” There are not a lot of people who want to live in a world that is increasingly car-dependent. Most people want to live in a world where there is less traffic. They just want better options. Most people would choose alternative options if they are as safe and as convenient.

You have to get the balance of the carrot and the stick. The best policy is a carrot-shaped stick, which does both at once. This is where the reallocation of road space is so important. If you can say, “This bit of road space is now being freed up to allow more people to get along it more safely, more conveniently and more enjoyably than sitting in a traffic jam,” most people will buy it. There will still be that vociferous opposition that we talked about at the start of the session, but most people can see that that is a reasonable thing to do.

The same is true of getting the funding right. If you are trying to put in place congestion charging and pollution charging, but you are able to say to the public, “This is what it is going to be spent on; you will benefit even if you continue to drive because there will be fewer other people in cars,” you can still sell that as a good balance of sticks and carrots.

Q119 Jack Brereton: How do you think we can sell those policies and changes to the public and politicians to make them feel that they are realistic



alternatives?

Roger Geffen: It is partly about sharing the good practice where it has worked. It relates to what Rachel was saying earlier about the opposition that you get when you propose something. People can see changes and they do not like the idea that they are going to have to change their habits, but once it has been done most people come around to thinking, "Actually, that was a pretty good idea." We just need to build up those case studies to say, "You might be wary of it now, but look at these places that have done it and where it worked." I think this is why the previous questions about the importance of case studies were absolutely spot on. We need to build on the case studies we have and replicate them.

Q120 **Jack Brereton:** Do either of you have any other views on that specific question?

Rachel White: Not really. I think Roger has covered everything I would say.

Joe Irvin: The thing I would say is that it is a chilling reminder, because I went and looked this up. In 1970 we had 15 million motor vehicles on British roads. We now have 37 million. We have gone from 15 million to 37 million. It is not really surprising that we have congestion and we have problems. You can see what the main cause is; it is not cycle lanes but more traffic.

We have to address that. The days when we used to think that we will just build more urban motorways to accommodate it have gone. That definitely will not work. With a limited amount of space we do have to have less traffic, so we have to think about that.

I would just point out another big factor. We talked about autonomous vehicles earlier, but electric vehicles will make a big difference. At the moment fuel duty is one of the main charges on motor vehicles to cover a lot of the external costs. We talked about external costs versus public goods before. The Government have set a date when they will stop the manufacturing here of cars that use fossil fuels, so something has got to give.

Perhaps now is the time to start thinking about another way of per mile charging for road pricing. It could be set high or low, if we could find a reasonable standard. With modern technology you could perhaps do that in a sophisticated way. You could have it lower in less congested, rural areas and higher in central city areas with a high congestion factor. All those things are possible with technology. Perhaps now is the time to get our minds thinking about road pricing again because we are going to have a big gap when fuel duty goes.

Q121 **Jack Brereton:** Earlier one of you touched on disability issues and encouraging and ensuring that we do not have that conflict with people who have an issue with partial sight or some other disability. How will we



make sure that any improvements that are made are not to the detriment of those road and pavement users? Do you think there is a balance to be struck?

Joe Irvin: I would say that there is a balance to be struck in every single area. You do have to take care to make sure that you are covering the most vulnerable people with impairments such as you have mentioned.

Perhaps I should have mentioned before the approach that has been used in London, which is called Healthy Streets. Any sizeable project has to be assessed for its effect on the healthiness of the street. There are about a dozen factors that will be measured. If you measure those from the outset instead of trying to do them retrospectively, you will get a better result. That toolkit exists and it is being looked at by other local authorities outside London. Being mindful of people's impairments is really important. With an ageing society it is probably even more important.

We found, for example, when we had a campaign, that, with the standard time to cross at a light-controlled pedestrian crossing, people do not walk as fast as the Department for Transport assumed. An increasing number of people cannot get across in the time that is given by the green light to cross. We should take those sorts of things really seriously.

Pavement parking is another big issue with regard to disability. We need to build it in from the beginning and talk to groups who have disabilities or represent a group of people with disabilities. You will probably get it right first time instead of expensively trying to sort it out retrospectively.

Rachel White: It is a vastly complex area. With the national cycle network it is a bit misleading, because 52% of journeys on it are actually walked, but what we are trying to do is to make it a path for everyone. It is incredibly difficult because we want to remove 16,000 barriers, which at the moment make it really hard for people on adapted bikes—they may have disabilities that need adapted bikes—trikes and people with pushchairs and prams to use the network.

It is great that we are tackling one area, but by doing that we also need to address the fact that some of those barriers prevent people from walking out into oncoming traffic and things like that. That would have a negative impact on visually impaired people, for example. It is really complex. One activity may help one disability group but hinder another. We need to be honest about the fact that sometimes we do not always get it right, and it is complex.

Roger Geffen: It is worth bearing in mind that a surprisingly large proportion of our members who cycle have disabilities and use cycles—not necessarily bicycles—as mobility aids. That is exactly why Rachel is absolutely right about needing to deal with barriers.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

We have worked very hard on trying to make sure that we get this right, particularly when designing segregated lanes on busy main roads. One of the key issues is how you then get that segregated lane past a bus stop. Transport for London, to its credit, had a very good working group with the disability groups to try and come up with a design, and with trials, that they could live with. The blind groups were shown Powerpoint presentations. They had to point out that they could not even see the Powerpoint presentations, so Transport for London had to go away and make a little tactile model of how the bus stop bypass trials were going to work. It was really interesting just seeing how they understood the built environment, even before the trial was conducted, let alone seeing the results of the trial.

I think we have now come up with a solution for the bus stop bypass that they can live with. I have seen a blind person crossing a bus stop bypass on a cycle lane in Manchester. He took a bit of time, but he found his way off. It is never going to be ideal, but Transport for London has worked really hard to get that right. I think it is absolutely the right thing to do that we keep exploring, keep this issue open and do not convince ourselves that it is difficult. We are going to have to work it through.

Q122 Jack Brereton: Moving on to new technology, you have already mentioned quite a bit about autonomous vehicles, but obviously there are other technologies such as e-bikes, e-scooters and others. Do you think they will help to encourage more people to leave their cars at home? What infrastructure do you think needs to be planned and changed to make those a better alternative?

Roger Geffen: There is plenty of experience and evidence from other countries that e-bikes are incredibly good at getting people to cycle and to broaden the demographics of who will cycle and the lengths of the journeys they will make by cycle. It is one of the clearest areas of evidence of a cycling project that can demonstrably reduce car use and not just increase cycle use. The mode shift benefits of e-bikes have been demonstrated by plenty of evidence from elsewhere around Europe.

That has been built into a Department for Transport model, the "Propensity to Cycle Tool," which local authorities are now using to plan their future cycle networks. It has various different future scenarios. The local authority can be more or less ambitious depending on what funding it thinks it has, but the most ambitious scenario is where you not only get to Dutch levels of cycle use but add in e-bikes. Then you start to see some really quite long distance routes appearing on the proposed network maps that this model generates.

Does that need different infrastructure? We would argue probably not, as long as we retain the distinction between an electric assisted pedal cycle and an e-motorbike. E-motorbikes might help reduce car use, but the idea that faster electric cycles—things that are more like e-motorbikes—can start sharing shared-use pavements is something that Joe would have a few reservations about, and so would we, frankly.



It is important to maintain the distinction between the kinds of bikes for which you do not need a licence or a helmet and which can share space with pedestrians because they are speed limited, power limited and can stop reasonably easily and quickly. Therefore, the distinction is an important one. That is not to dismiss the idea that electric motorbikes might have a useful role in wider environmental policies, but they should have distinct space.

Q123 **Jack Brereton:** Does anybody else want to add anything to that?

Rachel White: I would just add that with electric vehicles, which you mentioned, we do not yet know the effect of tyre and brake wear on air quality. Moving people from one metal box to another is not going to address that. I think they are a very important part of where we are going in the transport mix, but I would really like to reiterate that going forward we need to be looking at e-bikes and what we want transport, particularly in our towns and cities, to look like rather than just thinking, "They are the answer."

Q124 **Chair:** Thank you very much. It has been a really useful session. Before I close, is there anything you wanted briefly to say that you do not feel you have had the opportunity to, or have we covered it all?

Joe Irvin: I would only reiterate that what we would like to see in funding is 5% rising to 10% of the transport spend, as has happened in Scotland.³ That would be a really helpful thing to move forward on.

Chair: I think that the message on long-term certainty of funding in capital and revenue has come over loud and clear. Thank you very much.

³ Witness correction: See clarification in supplementary evidence from Living Streets.