

Written evidence submitted by London Cycling Campaign

Introduction

1. LCC is a charity and advocacy organisation which seeks to improve conditions for cycling and also promotes cycling through a range of activities. We work with local authorities, including Transport for London, to help develop the capital as a place where everyone who wants to can cycle in comfort and safety. We have 20,000 supporters of whom 11,000 are paid-up members.

2. In the past two decades cycle trips in London have increased from 300,000 per day to 1.2 million per day. This has been achieved by a combination of improved infrastructure, congestion charging, road danger reduction, education and promotion. The Mayor of London has a target of increasing trips by public transport, cycling and walking from 63% in 2018 to 80% by 2041 to reduce congestion and carbon emissions as well as improving the health of Londoners. The Mayor has also commissioned a report on 'net zero' that says that to achieve his aim of a net zero London by 2030, motor vehicle mileage in the capital will need to drop 27% by then.

3. This response covers the positive developments in London that we consider could benefit the England-wide active travel programme if adopted more widely – given that England also has significant targets on roads transport set by the government and the Climate Change Committee.

4. While the delivery of infrastructure and behaviour change programmes is largely in the hands of local authorities and standards bodies LCC contributes actively to this work through reports, consultations and promotion.

5. For further details of the measures listed below we strongly recommend that the Transport Committee contacts Transport for London or the relevant organizations (e.g. CLOCS, FORS – see below).

London measures to boost active travel

6. An active cycling lobby

6a. As the Pucher and Buehler studies¹ in the United States have demonstrated, cities with active cycling advocacy groups show greater progress in terms of active travel than those which don't have such a lobby.

6b. London has benefitted from the continuing activities of the [London Cycling Campaign](#) and its 11,000 members who inform local authorities about progress with active travel, or lack of it; feedback on traffic schemes and other programmes; generate cycling activity at the local level through rides, [Cycle Buddy schemes](#) and events; share information on best practice and actively support measures that help promote active travel and reduce carbon emissions².

6c. Recommendation:

¹ Alliance for Walking and Cycling: 2014 Benchmarking Report
<https://bikeleague.org/sites/default/files/2014BenchmarkingReport.pdf>

² Changing the politics of urban cycling – the London example, Tom Bogdanowicz 2018 in Proceedings of the International Cycling History Conference 2018

- Local authorities to engage with and foster the development of local active travel organisations, with the aim of forming ‘critical friend’ relations with such organisations as trusted external stakeholders

7. Road danger reduction

7a. The primary danger to active travel on the roads are motor vehicles, and larger motor vehicles in particular. HGVs typically account for half of cycling fatalities and 20% of pedestrian fatalities in London. These grim statistics show some signs of falling following the introduction of key safety standards, some obligatory and some voluntary. Road users in London benefit from three key safety standards relating to lorries and construction sites in the capital:

1. Fleet Operators Recognition Scheme ([FORS](#))
2. Construction Logistics and Community Safety ([CLOCS](#))
3. Direct Vision Standard ([DVS](#)) / [HGV Safety Scheme](#)

7b. The London Cycling Campaign has lobbied strongly for these standards to be adopted and we welcome the fact that large sectors of the construction industry and numerous HGV fleet operators subscribe and adhere to these standards. We are currently encouraging all London boroughs to specify these standards in their procurement terms and planning controls, as Transport for London and some boroughs have done already, and we believe it would be beneficial for road danger reduction if local authorities across the country would adopt such terms in their procurement and planning controls.

7c. We note that the Government’s definitive document on cycling strategy, Gear Change (2020), stated:

7d. *“We will mandate higher safety standards on lorries*

7e. A highly disproportionate number of cyclists are killed and seriously injured by lorries. We will review the latest vision standards introduced in London in 2015 and consider whether any elements can be extended to the whole of the GB. We will amend domestic regulations in 2021 to require sideguards fitted to HGVs when new are retained and adequately maintained. We will consider the potential of introducing an independent star rating scheme through the Euro NCAP consumer information programme to encourage HGV designs which are safer for vulnerable road users.”³

7f. As far as we are aware, the Government has not yet released the review mentioned above.

7g. We do not profess to be the experts in the design of the standards adopted in London and we strongly recommend that the Transport Committee call upon experts from FORS, CLOCS, TfL and the University of Leeds (who conducted the research into DVS) to provide evidence of their application and effectiveness.

7h. We note that TfL reports that FORS members report fewer road traffic incidents following application of the standard, and that the initial study of the DVS standard (March 21 – March 22) that commenced in March 21 indicates that fatal and serious collisions in the capital relating to driver blind spots have fallen.

7i. Recommendation:

- Advise local authorities to incorporate FORS, CLOS and DVS in their procurement terms and planning controls.

8. Cycle parking

8a. London's cycle parking standards for new developments⁴ are ahead of those in most cities bar Cambridge. Even London's standards need updating in the light of heavier e-bikes becoming more common. The quality and dimensions of the parking needs to be specified to prevent sub-standard installations. The Bicycle Association cycle parking standard⁵ is currently the most forward-looking document but its suggested figures for the number of cycle spaces per development may not suffice for high cycling cities (the London Plan sets higher minimum standards).

8b. Recognising the difficulty of storing cycles in smaller homes, London boroughs pioneered Dutch-style cycle hangars for residential cycle parking. Some boroughs now have several hundred installed but demand continues to outstrip supply and demand for hangars to accommodate larger cycles (all ability cycles and cargo bikes to carry children) continues to increase.

8c. Recommendation:

- Advise local authorities to meet demand both for hangar-type and on-street cycle parking. This should cater for, as a minimum, the current government targets to double cycling levels.

9. Land safeguarding

9a. London now has formal London Plan guidance on active travel⁶ that seeks to ensure that local authorities safeguard land for active travel, whether cycle route networks or cycle parking or walking routes. According to the guidance local authorities must define their future cycle networks and must not permit future developments to encroach on such networks.

9b. In LCC's view such land safeguarding should extend to include land for parking of shared mobilities, last-mile delivery hubs and consolidation centres in order to help minimize the number of car and freight journeys.

9c. Recommendation:

- Local authorities to develop their own land safeguarding policies to ensure active travel is not obstructed by new developments
- Land safeguarding should extend to include land to the use of parking of shared mobilities, last-mile delivery hubs and consolidation centres

10. Active travel infrastructure

10a. LCC has campaigned consistently for higher infrastructure standards and has advocated those used successfully to promote cycling in the Netherlands. We were pleased to see first the London Cycle Design Standards and then DfT's Local Transport Note 1/20 adopted by local highway authorities. In London, TfL has adopted a new Cycle Route Quality Criteria for funding, while the government's Gear Change has arguably more stringent criteria for funding.⁷

⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

⁵ <https://www.bicycleassociation.org.uk/parkingstandard/>

⁶ <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/A%20Sustainable%20Transport%20Walking%20and%20Cycling%20LPG.pdf>

10b. Despite the existence of such standards it is regrettable that sub-standard schemes are still implemented. Measures such as 1-meter wide painted cycle lanes have no place on our roads.

10c. The rollout of safe active travel routes must be rapid in order for active travel to play the role the Climate Change Committee and every transport study and expert suggests it must in mode shift away from motor vehicles. But as well as rapid it must also be to an appropriate quality to avoid wasting funding and opportunity.

10d. The government and DfT are to be commended for creating and staffing Active Travel England (ATE), but now must ensure that not only are all transport decisions going forward, not just specifically cycle route-related ones, done with a lens on 'future generations' and a zero carbon roads transport system but also that funding is applied that enables that mode shift across the UK, and rapidly. While London enjoys circa £9 per capita per annum funding for 'active travel', Transport Action Network suggests England as a whole, while spending £27bn on roads in the current budget, spends £1 per head on active travel, Wales spends £23 per head per annum on active travel and Scotland £58⁸.

10e. Recommendation

- DfT and local authorities must ensure that all new road traffic schemes meet LTN 1/20 criteria as a minimum and these standards should be updated on a regular basis
- Funding for roads/driving and active travel are set to achieve a net zero roads transport system, with similar levels of spending per head per annum in England as Wales and Scotland ringfenced for active travel, and with all local authority transport spending tied to achieving active travel provision.

11. Diversification

11a. Women and ethnic minorities are underrepresented in UK cycling, whereas women account for more than 50% of cycle trips in the Netherlands. A detailed LCC survey of more than 1,000 women will not be published until the autumn, but provisional findings show that a lack of high quality cycle infrastructure is a significant barrier to women taking up cycling or cycling more of their journeys. Like the University of Westminster Near Miss Project⁹, it showed that a high proportion of women cycling in London experience aggressive driving and abuse from other road users, that unlit, socially isolated cycle routes do not enable women to cycle, and that a safe local cycle network is more important for women's journeys than routes into the city centre (see also Lucy Marstrand-Taussig¹⁰ on inclusive cycle access).

11b. Addressing these barriers is critical to ensuring equitable access to cycle use.

11c. We note that cycling by children is also an area where England lags behind other countries. In the UK just 2% of trips to school are by cycle¹¹, and in London the percentage is even lower, whereas in the Netherlands it is near 50%. Since the introduction of School Streets (timed restrictions on motor traffic) and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (restrictions on through traffic in residential areas) in

⁷ <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/cycling>

⁸ <https://www.highwaysmagazine.co.uk/Active-travel-funding-cut-faces-court-challenge/12316>

⁹ <http://rachelaldred.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Nearmissreport-final-web.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/evolution/news/69199/do-inclusive-transport-strategies-really-consider-the-needs-of-all->

¹¹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/transport-planning-cycling-school-bicycle-a8831561.html>.

Note the authors of this article are all academics.

London there has been growth in localised cycle and scooter use. Further research on the impacts of such measures on child cycling and scooting would assist with the case for adopting them in other cities.

11d. Recommendations:

- Study and address the low levels of cycling to school
- Study and address the low levels of cycling by women

12. Advertising and role models

12a. A weakness of all cycling promotion programmes is that they face overwhelming competition from the motoring sector which can afford to promote car ownership and use through mass advertising and targeted product placement. Insider Intelligence estimated that the UK automotive sector would spend more than £2bn on digital advertising in 2020¹². That is approximately equivalent to the total turnover of the cycle industry in the UK.

12b. Celebrities, footballers, broadcasters, musicians, influencers and politicians all serve as role models for the choice of ‘aspirational’ transport modes for many in society, from children up. In addition to the much-publicized car collections of prominent footballers and media personalities, the auto industry offers fee loan of vehicles (invariably ones that are both large and expensive) to even minor celebrities and journalists to advertise their particular brands. The detrimental impacts of tobacco advertising in past decades are well known.

12c. While cycle use is seen as a neutral transport choice in the Netherlands (where the royal family rides bikes) this is not the case in the UK where cycling continues to be associated with a lack of financial success, low professional standing and even scofflaw behaviour.¹³

12d. Recommendations:

- Restrict advertising of larger vehicles in particular
- Encourage use of cycles and public transport by MPs and other prominent figures
- Issue guidance to councils and other large bodies (NHS trusts, large employers etc.) to reduce car parking and commute by motor vehicle and enable alternatives

July 2023

¹² <https://www.insiderintelligence.com/content/brexit-impact-on-the-uk-auto-industry-means-a-drop-in-digital-ad-spending>

¹³ <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/cycling-potential-in-londons-diverse-communities-2021.pdf>