

Space for Cycling

LCC's 2014 London Elections Campaign

POLICY THEMES



At the Local Elections in London in May 2014, the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) wants to make sure that cycling features on the agenda of incoming ward councillors. Getting the positive changes we've been promised depends on strong political leadership at all levels, from the Mayor to local neighbourhood representatives. So in 2014, we will be calling on candidates across Central, Inner and Outer London to support pro-cycling policies and measures.

LCC's elected Policy Forum has developed a menu of six policy themes - ratified by our 2013 AGM - which form the basis of the pro-cycling measures we'll be calling for. LCC local groups will identify a single policy theme for each ward in their borough.

They are the kinds of measures seen in high-cycling cities and countries. LCC wants to see all these measures consistently applied across London. In a ward context, it's a great opportunity to put the ideas on the table at a local level, and build support for them locally. It's important that we get across the message that these measures will not only be good for people who cycle now (although they will!). They are (a) the kinds of changes we need to make, to start getting the other people on their bikes, and (b) changes that will make our neighbourhoods more pleasant and prosperous places for everyone.

1. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

We call on local election candidates to take action to ensure that children are able to cycle to school in safety.

2. AREAS WITHOUT THROUGH MOTOR TRAFFIC

We call on London local election candidates to turn residential streets into safe spaces for cycling and walking, by creating 'streets without through motor traffic'.

3. PROTECTED SPACE ON MAIN ROADS

We call on London local election candidates to commit to providing high quality, protected space for cycling on main roads.

4. GREENWAYS

We call on London local election candidates to commit to complete, improve, and expand London's Greenway network, a vital resource for all ability walking and cycling.

5. 20mph SPEED LIMITS

We call on London local election candidates to save lives by reducing speeds where people live, work, play, shop and cycle.

6. LIVEABLE TOWN CENTRES

We call on London local election candidates to implement measures to create more liveable high streets, prioritising places for people, walking and cycling.

POLICY THEMES IN DETAIL

1. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL



The Problem

Only 1% of children's journeys to school are currently made by bike in London, although many more children and young people would like to ride. Our national child obesity levels are among the highest in Europe, and many of London's children have relatively little play space at home. The proportion of children cycling to school in London has fallen, even as rates of cycling to work have risen. Unless we do something about this; the Mayor's Vision for Cycling warns; we risk a generation growing up a stranger to cycling. We are trapped in a vicious circle in which parents, unwilling to allow their children to cycle, prefer to load them into a car and drive them to school. The motorised school run is a major contributor to congestion, making walking and cycling less pleasant and further encouraging parents to drive children to school.

The Alternative

But there is an alternative future for our children. They want to cycle. Children are actually more positive about walking and cycling than adults. Cycling and walking to school are good for children's physical and mental health; less driving on the school run will make the streets safer and nicer for all. By creating safe routes, we can ensure current and future generations of children have the freedom to choose to cycle to school. Parents will benefit if they wish be able to enjoy cycling with their children in pleasant and safe environments.

Benefits of Cycling to School

According to the NHS Information Centre, rates of obesity amongst children have been increasing steadily, with the highest rates of increase found in London. The causes are complex, but physical inactivity is an important factor. Increasing opportunities for exercise within the normal routines of daily life, as with regular cycling to school, is a cost effective measure to include in a programme to tackle child obesity.

There will be longer term benefits from enabling cycling to school. Danish research has found that cycling to school improved children's cardio-vascular risk profiles, potentially meaning they are less likely to suffer from heart disease in adulthood. It may even benefit academic achievement: participation in physical activity is positively related to academic achievement in children.

If we create good cycling environments for children, we improve their health, their school experience and their future prospects. Targeted investment in safe routes to school will encourage parents to let their children cycle to school, restoring their health and independence, and helping them achieve their academic potential.

What might this mean for ward level campaigning?

In partnership with your local school, identifying barriers to safe cycling and proposing measures to address these, such as:

- Managing parking effectively and enforcing parking restrictions around schools, to reduce motor traffic danger.
- Closing "rat runs" to through motor traffic, turning them into quiet streets.
- Installing suitable safe crossing places on desire lines to schools that cross busier roads. Often a safe crossing immediately outside a school gate provides benefits to as many as half the children in the school.
- Identifying at least one safe route to every school, publicising it and assisting families in using it.

2. AREAS WITHOUT THROUGH MOTOR TRAFFIC



Areas where motor traffic cannot cut through side streets, while walking and cycling are encouraged. By using bollards, planters, or trees, a residential area can be filtered, so that all parts can still be reached by motor vehicle (for deliveries, or to start or end journeys) but direct routes across quiet zones are only possible by non-motorised modes.

Such areas are more pleasant and liveable for residents, without stopping them reaching their homes by car, if need be. However, when an area is made safer, quieter, and more pleasant, walking and cycling become more attractive choices. You could ask candidates to implement these measures within your ward

The Problem

People are reluctant to cycle or even take their children on foot on streets with significant traffic flows because they are perceived as unsafe, noisy and polluted. Residents of such streets suffer from noise, pollution and limitations on their movement.

The Solution

Most London boroughs include areas made up of residential streets. "Rat-running" may have been reduced by no-entries and one-way streets, but most streets remain open to through motor traffic. This means they are used by motorists who do not live in them as cut-throughs between adjacent main roads. Motorists do this to try to save perhaps very little time, but this turns residential streets into places where motor vehicles dominate and cycling, walking and the ordinary lives of residents take second place.

The solution is to convert these areas into areas in which motor vehicles can reach every address, but cannot drive through. Many areas of London are already free of through motor traffic. Some have come about by chance or by minor reductions on motor vehicle access, others are a result of careful design and strong campaigning to gain local support. The approach uses inexpensive measures such as barriers and no entries that allow cycles and pedestrians through, but not motor traffic.

How to do this

1. Study existing and potential 'rat-running'.
2. Put in enough barriers at carefully chosen points to stop all cut-throughs, but allow people and goods to reach all houses by motor vehicle.
3. The outcome will be one or more zones free of through motor traffic.
4. Car-parking is largely unaffected. While a few spaces may be lost to make room for road barriers and turning places, spaces may be gained elsewhere.

Benefits

Residents enjoy a more liveable space, easier and safer to move about in by foot and by bicycle. Children's play opportunities are expanded, particularly important in London where many homes lack private outdoor space. Traffic noise and air pollution are reduced, and residents no longer have to keep doors and windows closed.

Such areas are usually mainly residential but small parades of shops and cafés are often included, and they may have high streets adjacent to them. While businesses often argue that they get trade from passing motorists, car usage in London is declining and there is evidence that many types of business gain even more from passing pedestrians and cyclists, who are likely to visit several shops in a single trip.

Creating more pleasant shopping environments will benefit many businesses; for example, cafés and restaurants may be able to offer more pleasant pavement seating.

What might this mean for ward level campaigning?

It could mean campaigning for:

- The adoption of a policy under which residential areas should be regarded as 'streets without through motor traffic' - free of motor vehicles that are simply using them for transit.
- The creation of at least one area like this within the ward.
- Removing through motor traffic from a key street within the ward (for example, a local shopping street).

3. PROTECTED SPACE ON MAIN ROADS

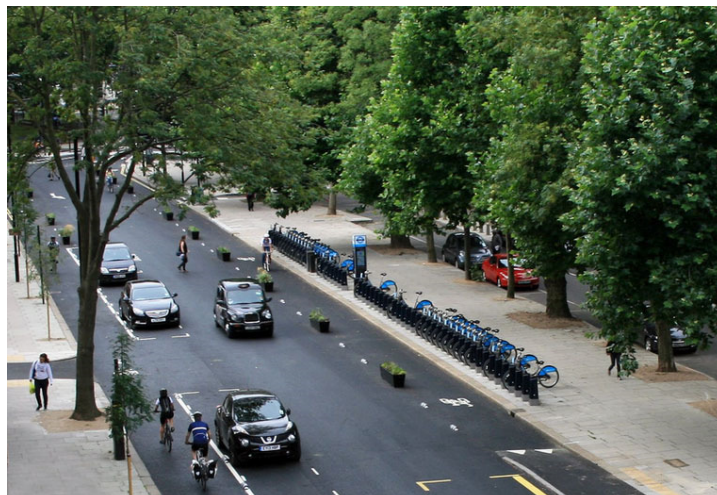
Other measures help keep through motor traffic away from residential streets. But often people will need to cycle along main roads: because that's where shops and workplaces are, or because they are the most direct routes. You could ask candidates to support installing dedicated infrastructure on a local main road, or to support the upgrade of currently inadequate or incomplete provision.

The Problem

London's main roads are its traffic arteries. They lead to the key destinations; commercial, business, and transport hubs of town centres and Central London, and they are often destinations in themselves. The characteristics that make main roads ideal for general transport - directness and legibility - are as true for cycling as for any other mode of street transport. In fact, the directness and legibility of main roads are of particular value for cycling, because the

bicycle is a human powered vehicle. Guidance from the UK and other countries highlights the importance of directness for cycle routes.

Yet currently on nearly all of London's main roads, cyclists must share the same road space as high volumes of fast-moving motor vehicles, often including large numbers of heavy goods vehicles. The potential for serious and fatal collisions is ever present and tragically this is proving to be the case time and time again. These kinds of cycling environments - intimidating and unsafe - are a major barrier to cycling uptake.



The Solution

Protected space for cycling on main roads gives people of all ages and abilities access to the whole road network by bicycle. It can benefit local communities and economies, helping more people get to shopping parades and other facilities without having to drive.

The promotion and facilitation of cycling in recent years is welcome, but it has become increasingly clear that much of our 'cycle infrastructure' is not fit for purpose and falls well short of international best practice. Main roads require high quality infrastructure that caters for the needs of cyclists. That is, there should be protected space such that a wide range of people feel able to cycle and feel comfortable about using our main roads. There are a variety of ways of achieving this, usually some form of physical measure that separates motor traffic from dedicated cycle lanes, with special attention being given to junctions to ensure that conflicts do not occur, for example, segregated cycle tracks and cyclist-specific traffic lights.

What is Protected Space?

'Protected' is defined in more detail in the Policy Forum document (<http://goo.gl/Z00mMY>). LCC's preferred forms of protected space for cycling are cycle lanes and tracks that are physically separated from motor traffic (e.g. by kerb or through 'semi-segregated' means such as planters - *see picture above right*, Royal College Street in Camden). LCC's policies on when we need Protected Space (passed at the 2013 AGM) can be viewed here - <http://lcc.org.uk/articles/we-define-what-motor-traffic-speeds-and-volumes-are-acceptable-for-mass-cycling-and-what-solutions-can-tackle-problem-streets>

All such infrastructure must be built to the highest quality (Dutch) standards, in particular, protected space for cycling must minimise junction conflicts without creating a time penalty for cyclists. LCC members voted to support a motion at the 2013 AGM stating that London's cycle network should not be designed in such a way as to create a two-tier network, one that trades safety against convenience; rather uniformity of provision should make all areas suitable for everyone.

Why Main Roads?

It may be asked why use main roads at all for cycling? Why not just use residential roads and green spaces? The answer is that, as stated above, main roads provide a direct route to many key destinations, and are easy to follow because of their more direct alignment. Providing other types of cycle routes that use for example residential streets or green spaces are welcome and may be suitable for many types of walking and cycling journeys. However, direct routes, especially for 'utility' trips such as commuting to work, are best provided for along main roads, and that is where much of the recent growth of cycling has occurred (especially Transport for London's Red Routes). Also, main road routes can provide a level of security for cyclists compared to quiet remote routes, particularly during the hours of darkness.

Just as importantly, people have as much right to use a bicycle on a main road as anyone else using any other form of transport. Cycling is a net contributor to our economy and society. Funding used to facilitate cycling is an investment that provides multiple benefits, in particular health benefits from physical activity. Cycle infrastructure can also directly benefit local economies. A recent report from the US found that the first protected bicycle lane there led to increased retail sales of up to 49%, compared to 3% borough-wide, as well as encouraging uptake and improving the perception of cycling.

Some main roads are part of the TLRN (Transport for London Road Network), which is managed by Transport for London. This means that unlike local roads, they are not under the direct control of local councillors. However, changes to TLRN roads are still negotiated locally, and so if councillors are willing to support high quality protected space, this can make a real difference.

What might this mean for ward level campaigning?

It might mean campaigning for:

- Support from candidates for installing high quality protected space for cycling on a local main road
- Support from candidates for upgrading currently inadequate infrastructure on main roads

4. GREENWAYS



The Problem

We know people generally prefer to cycle away from motor traffic. Where riders must mix with heavy and/or fast moving motor traffic, most people vote with their feet and don't cycle, particularly children and older people. So

Greenways are an ideal cycling environment for many people; running through parks, disused railway lines, and waterways, they are away from motor traffic, with relatively little noise and air pollution.

London's Greenways are popular and usage continues to grow. There is a planned network, but it remains incomplete. Much of this network has not been built and so some parts of London have very limited access to it. Some Greenways are poorly maintained and badly connected to each other. Others have barriers that obstruct cycling, even where it is permitted. These barriers are particularly problematic for disabled cyclists and those carrying children and often also obstruct wheelchair users. Similarly some Greenway access points lack step free access or involve steep gradients.

Benefits of Greenways

London's Greenways are popular and usage continues to grow (by 21% between 2010-2011 on five sample sites). Cyclists and pedestrians use Greenways for a variety of purposes, from exercise to getting to work and to the shops. Greenways are vital infrastructure for local city trips. TfL's 2010 monitoring report found that '72% of greenway users live local to the routes and many use the routes as an alternative to car trips.

For Cycling

Investment in Greenways is a cost-effective way to widen participation in cycling. Transport for London's regular monitoring reports provides evidence of substantial increases in use for relatively small amounts of investment. Greenways are vital infrastructure for local city trips. People on bike and on foot use Greenways for a variety of purposes, from exercise to getting to work and the shops. TfL's 2010 monitoring report found three-quarters of users live locally and many use the routes as an alternative to car trips. Greenways also help widen participation. The 2011 monitoring report found that these routes reach out to people who might not otherwise feel able to walk or cycle. They are popular with children, as well as with 'older people, disabled people and minority ethnic groups'.

For Everyone

Those using Greenways - for walking, cycling, or recreation - experience health benefits. By providing both access to green space and opportunities for physical activity, Greenways support the physical, mental and emotional health of urban children and adults. This access to green space can be particularly important for the many Londoners without private gardens, and those less able or less willing to share space with motor traffic while walking or cycling.

Greenways can provide economic and regeneration benefits. London's canal and river network has been regenerated through increased usage by pedestrians and cyclists - only twenty years ago most such routes were shut and/or derelict, while many now are thriving. Burgess Park in South London was only a few years ago notorious for attacks on cyclists. Refurbishment has benefited all park users, part of which involved providing a wide and now well-used cycle track.

Good Example: Mile End Park

Mile End Park has been transformed by its refurbishment at the turn of the century, with improvements carried out in three phases between 1998-2002. A winding pedestrian path and cycleway forms the park's spine, linking seven different, themed zones, featuring leisure, arts, educational and sports facilities. Along the West side of the park, the Regent's Canal towpath is open to pedestrians and cyclists. The park is open twenty-four hours a day with pedestrian and cycle routes lit. The routes provide a year-round alternative to busy Grove Road parallel to the East. Continuing investment in maintenance is important for keeping the park safe and popular.

What might this mean for ward level campaigning?

Depending on the local context, it might mean campaigning for:

- Access through a park for considerate cycling, perhaps as part of a trial
- Removal of barriers that obstruct cyclists' (and often wheelchair users') entry

- Improving facilities e.g. surfacing, lighting and maintaining these facilities
- Infrastructure linking up local traffic-free routes
- Commitment to facilitating Greenway construction where this is planned or there is an existing local campaign

5. 20 MPH SPEED LIMITS

Increasingly it is accepted that 20mph speed limits save lives, and they are being implemented on residential roads across many London boroughs. Where cyclists must share space with motor traffic, reducing the speed differential is important: both for reducing the risk of death and injury, and for creating more pleasant cycling and walking environments. Yet many parts of London are still 30mph; although it's great to see boroughs adopting 20mph limits often it's only on 'residential roads', meaning that local high streets can still carry inappropriately fast traffic.

The Problem

The Transport Research Laboratory has stated: 'It is well established that speed is a contributory factor in a large number of accidents.' Speed significantly increases the chance of being injured in a collision. One of the first studies of pedestrian injury and car impact speed put the chances of being fatally injured at about 3% for a car speed of 20mph, as against about 20% at 30mph. In London, although rates have fallen, over 20% of all road deaths are still linked to excess speeds, with risks particularly high for young drivers.



The Solution

Reducing speed limits to 20mph in residential areas has been proven to reduce road danger significantly for all road users; in particular cyclists and pedestrians, and we would encourage it to be introduced on all non-motorway roads in Greater London. We support the enforcement of speed limits with cameras, including average speed cameras.

In 2008, a report to the London Road Safety Unit confirmed the findings of earlier work, that London's 20 mph zones have had an effect on reducing casualties. Following this, we're seeing 20mph limits implemented across many London boroughs, although often this is only on 'residential roads'.

Where cyclists share space with motor traffic, reducing the speed differential can help both in reducing the risk of death and injury, and in creating more pleasant cycling and walking environments. However, many parts of London are still 30mph, meaning roads such as local high streets can still carry inappropriately fast motor traffic. Elsewhere, 20mph limits may not always be respected.

There is a distinction between 20mph *limits*, and 20mph *zones*. 20mph limits are areas where the speed limit has been reduced to 20 mph but there are no physical measures to reduce vehicle speeds, only repeated signs to remind drivers of the speed limit. Guidance suggests this is most appropriate for roads where average speeds are

already below 24mph, and for roads which give the impression that a 20mph speed or below is the most appropriate.

20mph zones use traffic calming measures to slow vehicles down to 20mph and below, meaning that the zone should be 'self-enforcing'. This can include speed humps, chicanes, road narrowing, trees or planters. It is important that such measures do not discourage cycling or put cyclists at risk. Badly designed chicanes can encourage close overtaking, while traditional speed humps can be uncomfortable and potentially hazardous. Better solutions exist: for example, high quality cycle bypasses around road narrowings and sinusoidal humps.

What might this mean for ward level campaigning?

You could campaign for measures such as:

- A 20mph limit or zone across the local ward
- The extension of 20mph to a local high street
- Where 20mph exists locally, enforcement where needed
- Where needed, upgrading traffic calming measures so they discourage speeding motorists without causing problems for cyclists

6. LIVEABLE TOWN CENTRES



The problem

Whilst there are pockets of affluence in London, many high streets and town centres have become run down. Unfortunately many high streets are also through roads, which can be choked with traffic or create barriers, making them unpleasant.

The economic decline of the high street and town centre has become a prominent issue in recent years, along with a realisation of their social worth to local communities. But many have been caught between a trade-off between motor traffic and a people-friendly environment, usually to the detriment of the latter. This has meant local businesses have suffered, with a knock-on effect on the locality as a whole.

The role of the Internet in transforming shopping habits makes it ever more important that our high streets are full of life. Town centres and high streets need to be more than simply shopping centres. They need to be places where people want to spend time, meet friends and acquaintances, enjoy social activity and have access to a variety of services.

The Solution

To build liveable town centres, we need to prioritise people over motor traffic, creating space that can be enjoyed by the local community and that encourages walking and cycling. This can create lively, pleasant places that are economically viable and socially vibrant.

Achieving a liveable high street or town centre

The first step to creating liveable high streets is to see them as 'places' rather than 'routes'. This means the priority formerly given to the throughput of high volumes of traffic is subordinated to the requirements to make a high street a pleasant and attractive place to spend time. High streets are destinations where people will spend time and the allocation of space needs to be proportionate.

There should be plenty of amenity space (such as café culture on the pavement) and space for easy walking and cycling. Liveable high streets and town centres are places that encourage people to visit by foot and by bike, as the prioritisation of walking and cycling over motor traffic is part and parcel of the solution to making them better places to be. Many reviews and studies have demonstrated that people who walk and cycle to high streets have a significant and often underestimated economic impact for local traders.

Benefits of liveable high streets

Vibrant high streets improve quality of life, support the local economy and enhance the environment by reducing the need for travel. Creating more pleasant shopping environments will benefit many businesses; for example, cafés and restaurants may be able to offer more pleasant pavement seating. Many businesses will benefit from the additional passing trade from cyclists and pedestrians while an Australian study recently found that allocating space to bike parking rather than to car parking generates a higher economic return per square metre.

What might this mean for ward level campaigning?

Depending on the current situation and the type of high street, it might mean campaigning for:

- Making the town centre a 20mph zone
- On high streets that are also main roads, with high motor traffic volumes, introducing protected space for safe cycling.
- Removing through motor traffic from a local high street where there is an alternative route
- Replacing motor traffic space with amenity space, such as café tables on pavements

You can read more about all the Policy Themes online: <http://lcc.org.uk/pages/current-projects>. These are live documents which continue to be updated by LCC's Policy Forum.

You can also find a PDF version of this document and the latest Policy Information on our website www.lcc.org.uk/activist-pack