

## ▶ London Councils' Response

### ▶ London Assembly Transport Committee: Investigation into London's cycling infrastructure.

London Councils represents London's 32 borough councils and the City of London. It is a cross-party organisation that works on behalf of all of its member authorities regardless of political persuasion.

#### 1) What progress on new cycling infrastructure has been made under Sadiq Khan, and what are his long-term plans?

Without official TfL data on the amount of infrastructure installed (such as physical changes to London's roads, streets and public spaces, cycle super highway installations and bike parking) since the Mayor was elected, it is difficult to assess how much real progress there has been.

Some areas that could suggest progress could be the Mayor's commitment to cycling in the TfL business plan, the appointment of Will Norman as walking and cycling commissioner, the development of the Healthy Streets Agenda and the continuation of the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding stream.

There have also been a number of announcements on a number of largescale projects, such as the re-developments of Highbury Corner, Lambeth Bridge and Waterloo roundabouts. The plans show significant improvements to cycling infrastructure, such as dedicated turning lanes for example.

Recent announcements of a cut to Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding for boroughs is not welcome news, despite the cycling fund actually being preserved, the other elements of LIP funding, such as the corridors and maintenance elements could have negative knock on effects for cycling infrastructure.

#### 2) Has TfL resolved the problems that delayed some cycling schemes under the previous Mayor?

We would argue that some of the main issues related to certain delays with cycling schemes in London have revolved around a potential over-optimism from TfL when announcing plans resulting from a lack of in depth engagement with the other key stakeholders. Due to this, the difficulties of installing new

cycling infrastructure had not been considered in enough detail. We feel that a more collaborative approach to designing specific schemes with the boroughs is needed from the beginning in order to gain a better understanding of the constraints and to gain real buy-in. For instance, even where boroughs were willing and supportive of the increase in cycling infrastructure, many were struggling with resource issues limiting their ability to complete some of the ambitious works in the expected deadlines. Early, direct consultation with key interest groups could potentially have identified local challenges and constraints and reduced delays.

### **3) Has segregation delivered the anticipated benefits on the Cycle Superhighways? How many cyclists are using these routes?**

Anecdotal evidence suggests yes and that more people appear to be cycling the completed routes than had previously been doing so before. TfL's collision map doesn't include data for 2017 yet, but does show a clear drop in collisions along the embankment – which opened in April 2016 from previous years. Again, TfL have not published recent cycling figures to back the anecdotal evidence up. Therefore if it is not currently in place a monitoring regime, both quantitative and qualitative, should be put in place to assess the impact of the routes overall and individual interventions.

Research from examples of segregated cycle lanes in Manchester, Copenhagen and Canada have shown that infrastructure of this nature does encourage increased numbers of cyclists to use them and also improve safety.

### **4) To what extent has segregation had negative consequences for other road users and, if necessary, how can this be mitigated?**

Transport for London statistics show that just two weeks after the capital's two new cycle "superhighways" were opened; both routes were carrying 5% per hour more people than previously, a figure set to rise as more cyclists use them. Having given 30% of the space to bikes, these now comprised 46% of people using the roads. Research does show that cycle lanes can take large numbers of polluting vehicles off the road, with a typical road lane carrying an average of 2,000 cars per hour or 14,000 bicycles.

It is likely that the construction of segregated lanes could cause congestion in the short term, as is often the case with any construction work.

Data from LondonAir shows that there has been no distinguishable trend of increasing pollution on streets where segregated cycle lanes have been installed. A new report from Transport for London shows increased use of the new and protected Cycle Superhighways, with children and their parents among the new users. TfL reports that 4695 cyclists are now using the North–South Cycle Superhighway in morning peak, which equates to 26 people on bikes per minute.

Since the launch of four new routes, there has been more than a 50 percent increase in the number of cyclists using cycleways compared to pre-construction levels, reports TfL. 8,400 cyclists are using Blackfriars Bridge each day in the morning and evening peaks – cyclists now account for 70 per cent of all traffic on the bridge. Ninety percent of cyclists are now choosing to use the protected cycleways rather than the adjacent carriageways.

We know that boroughs find it frustrating to approach TfL with proposals for improving the street environment, including through cycling infrastructure, to be refused by TfL's network management who are mainly concerned about the impacts on bus reliability. We expect TfL to support borough initiatives that are in line with the Healthy Streets approach and will deliver the aims of the MTS.

### **5) Have Quietways delivered their anticipated benefits? How many cyclists are using them?**

Unfortunately there isn't much monitoring data on the Quietway cycle routes as of yet. Anecdotal evidence from the London boroughs suggests that QW1 is very successful but that there is a need to maintain the requisite level of service and quality achieved on QW1 on other routes to ensure the 'brand' is not diluted and therefore the impact reduced.

Data from TfL on QW1 shows that there has been an increase in usage since 2013 although this only covers the part of QW1 that is within the Congestion Charge Zone so doesn't provide a whole picture.

Open and transparent data sharing between the key stakeholders in relation to cycling infrastructure in London is needed to understand the impacts certain interventions have on local communities and London as whole. There has been little information shared with the boroughs on the progress of certain schemes.

### **6) What are the differences in infrastructure between inner and outer London? How can TfL ensure infrastructure in different areas is sufficient and appropriate to the location?**

Infrastructure design shouldn't necessarily be different in inner and outer London. The issues remain the same, for example the safety of cyclists at junctions, so technically the interventions and redevelopments seen in inner London should have the same impact and benefits for road users in outer London. However, the types of trips taken and travel patterns are different in inner and outer London. People who live in outer London are more reliant on their cars, given the reduced provision of public transport. The density of quality cycle infrastructure is also different in inner and outer London. In central and inner London the cycling mode share on particular routes is already high enough in the peak (over 25%) to justify re-allocation of road space away from motorised traffic and creating a network of good quality infrastructure is well underway. In outer London however, where cycle flows on

major routes are in the hundreds rather than the tens of thousands, prioritising road space for cycles when there is a conflict with other modes can be more difficult to justify.

Cycling infrastructure also needs to reflect their local contexts, whilst ensuring safety and ease of access for users. According to research by TfL, 54% of all cyclable trips are in outer London. This shows that more needs to be done to encourage people living in outer London to choose the bike as a mode. Many of the difficulties in outer London revolve around the strategic road network and the severance it creates, particularly for orbital journeys. The desire line for many cycling trips is along the SRN or major roads and finding alternative routes on quieter roads can lead to doubling or tripling of journey times. This issue is complicated due to the poor air quality on and around the SRN making it a poor environment for walking and cycling.

## **7) How will TfL's new 'Strategic Cycling Analysis' help determine where and how to invest in infrastructure?**

The SCA report is a useful evidence base for integrating origin-destination data into decisions and it recognises that outer London differs in that "significant flows are sparser and more disjointed" with more orbital journeys. Most of the routes highlighted are familiar to us however the lack of focus on non-commute and multi-modal journeys means that further evidence is required for a thorough business case. Its value is therefore unfortunately limited.

The lack of proposed routes for Outer South London is a concern. Most routes in this area of London are listed as being 'potential connections beyond 2022'. We are concerned that outer London will only see limited funding post-2022 given that identified corridors are only classed as 'medium priority'. We would therefore like to see an ongoing 'road map' for investment in cycling infrastructure with Borough priorities for extensions taken forward especially where they correlate to the recommended routes in the 2017 SCA.

## **8) How appropriate is the 400-metre target set in the draft Transport Strategy? Can we equate proximity with access?**

We welcome the proposals for a London-wide network of cycle routes and improved infrastructure, bringing 70 per cent of Londoners within 400 metres of a cycle route by 2041, and whilst important, this is a simplification and this should be recognised. Directness of route and perceived safety of it are equally as important in accessing a segregated route such as a superhighway. One example is neighbourhood streets with high levels of parking on both sides of the road which can be difficult for cyclists to navigate safely.

We want the final Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) to define terms like 'cycle network' and 'cycle route' more clearly. For example, are first generation Cycle Superhighways part of the baseline London Cycle Network (LCN)? Cycle Superhighway 7, the majority of which is not segregated from general

traffic on busy roads, is very different to the latest versions such as the east/west and north south routes. If there is no definition to this, then understanding and monitoring the 400-meter target is difficult. The methodology for establishing how permeable the city's streets are for cyclists, as set out in the London Cycling Design Standard (LCDS) provides an alternative methodology to assess progress too.

We are concerned that the 30 per cent of Londoners not within this distance of a cycle route will be in outer London; the very area that the Mayor has identified needs to be focused on in order to reduce the number of journeys taken by car. The text on page 28 of the draft MTS also implies that cycling investment will focus on inner London as this is where it will be easiest to achieve targets. There has been a focus on the 'low hanging fruit' for some time now. In order to significantly increase cycling in outer London, difficult issues such as conflicts with the network management duty and bus reliability need to be addressed. The application of the Healthy Streets Approach detailed in the new MTS may provide a framework to do this effectively.

All of London needs investment in good cycle infrastructure and the proposed new cycle routes in Figure 4 reinforce the radial model of London's transport despite it being well-recognised that London lacks good orbital routes that offer an alternative to the car. We therefore want the final MTS to rethink this approach and give greater consideration for how the proposed indicative cycle network by 2041 can cover far more of outer London and introduce far more orbital routes. The Mayor cannot achieve his objectives for mode shift, especially for outer London, if the quickest way between two district centres is by car.

It should also be remembered that a dangerous, complex or busy junction can act as a severance issue that would discourage those living within 400m of a cycle route from using it. Consideration therefore needs to be given to this aspect of accessibility to cycle routes' and to ensure they are integrated into the wider street network, with emphasis put into feeders and links.

## **9) Is TfL's approach to public engagement working effectively to improve scheme designs and meet stakeholder needs?**

The online consultation pages are on the whole quite positive in that the consultation documents are engaging and provide information in a clear and visually useful way. Whether enough people are able to access these online consultation pages remains to be seen. It is not clear what additional work TfL is doing to engage with different stakeholders on this.

## **10) Are Londoners sufficiently aware of the cycling infrastructure available to them, and how can awareness be increased?**

Recent public polling by London Councils shows that 35 per cent of those questioned cycle and 65 per cent of Londoners don't cycle at all. A further breakdown of the results can be found below:

- Of those that do cycle 16% of our sample cycle as part of their commute, while more cycle for pleasure (23%). These cycle commuters are more likely to be male, younger and living in inner London.
- Perhaps unsurprisingly, younger people (16-44) cycle more.
- More people cycle in Inner than Outer London (40% to 32%).
- Those who use public transport are much more likely to cycle as well (40% compared to 13% of respondents who don't use public transport).

We also asked whether people felt safe cycling in London, to which 52% said they did feel safe, while a quarter said they didn't.

When asked what would encourage them to cycle more, 40% of the respondents to the survey said less cars on the road, while a third of people said they would cycle more if there were more segregated cycle lanes, and nearly a third said nicer streets and roads would encourage them to cycle more.

Nearly half of those asked whether they would be willing to do something different to improve air quality in London (47%) said they would walk/cycle more, followed by using public transport more, and choose a cleaner model of car. This research would suggest that more needs to be done to raise awareness of different cycling infrastructure available as well as installing more infrastructure that will help encourage mode shift to cycling.

There needs to be much better signage of segregated cycle infrastructure so that cyclists are more aware of how to access it and where it will take them. Online integrated travel apps that show cycling routes and segregated infrastructure have a role to play in this.

## 11) How is TfL using infrastructure to attract a more diverse range of people to cycle in London?

The Mayor published his draft Transport Strategy (MTS) in the summer of 2017. In this there are a number of policies that are intended to promote walking and cycling. For example, Proposal 8 in the draft MTS encourages street closures on a one-off, trial and regular basis. This could allow a more diverse group of people to cycle, for example those who aren't as confident or elderly people. There is a lack of specific focus on encouraging a more diverse range of people to cycle in London in the draft MTS, and there should be a greater focus from TfL on targeting more diverse participation in walking and cycling in London. We want to highlight that street closures require boroughs to assess the streets suitability and consider issues such as safety and displacement of traffic. Street closures should continue to be at the discretion of the borough.

Research commissioned by TfL and conducted by Steer Davies Gleave in October 2017 provides a breakdown of the demographics using QW1. Surveys were used to gain the information, so may not completely reflect the demographics of users, but they do show that 94% of the survey's respondents

were white. The report also shows that 65% of respondents were male. While this needs to be seen through the methodology used, it does not reflect the diversity of London. More needs to be done to encourage a wider range of people to cycle for commuting and exercise.

The London Plan however, does provide some minimum standards for bike parking provision which does include a specific mention of bike parking for disabled people, which is welcomed. It might be necessary for the Mayor and TfL to do more to engage with communities on cycling and advertise the routes available in different areas of London more prominently.

## **12) Is there sufficient cycle parking in London, and is it in the right locations?**

We support the provision of cycle parking and the need for developers to contribute to on-street facilities through the CIL process. We welcome the London Plan setting out cycle parking provision standards. We would like the London Plan to directly reference the London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS) as the standards that should be followed.

Outside of the planning system, there is still a need to encourage existing destinations, for example employers, that do not have secure, covered facilities. Another area requiring investment is on street cycle parking for residential streets since properties such as Victorian conversions may have limited space for bike storage.

## **13) How are the lessons of the Mini-Hollands and other previous cycling schemes being applied elsewhere?**

A series of case studies similar to Better Streets Delivered would be useful to enable other boroughs to learn the lessons from these schemes.

## **14) Should cycling infrastructure be oriented toward longer-distance commuting journeys, or more localised trips?**

We are agnostic about which approach should be taken, although ideally it would be both. The approach taken should be one that enables the most amount of people to start cycling. There is a balance between improving infrastructure for localised trips as these could be seen as more accessible trips to non-cyclists (helping to appeal to demographics that are underrepresented in cycling – women, BAME and older and younger people [rather than 16-44]). This should be backed up by safe radial cycle routes unlocking the potential for more people to travel into central London as well.

Cycling should be better integrated as a mode into TfL's travel planning and given more weight, where appropriate, when the installation of infrastructure could impact on other modes, such as buses. Whilst improving bus reliability on radial routes is important, rapid orbital bus routes are desperately needed to properly connect town and district centres in outer London and parts of relatively disconnected inner

London and reduce car usage because public transport links are so poor. Whilst we otherwise support the proposals in proposal 54 in the draft MTS, TfL needs to recognise that the construction of Healthy Streets and Liveable Neighbourhoods works may delay bus times; but the long-term benefits (for example safer cycling or more walking due to better crossings) outweigh the short-term costs (delays to bus journeys during works). In the same way the most ambitious Healthy Streets projects may not involve buses, and we expect TfL to work constructively with boroughs and not prevent these schemes coming forward.