

Lewisham Cyclists Response to the Cycling Strategy.

Many thanks to everyone for all their hard work on this draft.

Lewisham Cyclists have discussed this at meetings and online and have collated this response from the comments made by many of our members.

We welcome this initiative whole heartedly, and applaud the highlighted targets and commitments to actual changes and actions contained in the Strategy, where they exist and when they are clear and precise indications of what will be done. However, there are a number of issues with the draft strategy that give us cause for concern.

Firstly, many of the targets that involve infrastructure modification have very long time scales set. Whilst we appreciate that time targets have to be realistic, our concern is that by setting long term targets so far ahead effectively makes achieving an increase of modal share to 10%, and halving KSI's by 2021, impossible.

The A21 segregated cycleway is key to increasing cycling journeys and attracting new cyclists, and the quoted time scale for it needs to be brought closer.

On Page 4 there is reference to:

'A better cycle network of signed routes. The introduction of the Quietways and Cycle Superhighways has improved...'

This is presented in the report as though Lewisham's cycle network has been completed, when in fact in Lewisham there are only a few km of Quietway to date. We need a step-change in provision to achieve the Strategy Objectives. There should be some acknowledgement of this.

On Page 8 under heading 'Known other schemes / Changes in Lewisham' Convoys Wharf seems to be missing from the list and that will have a massive impact. Both a major issue with potential traffic growth that needs to be constrained and a great opportunity to dramatically improve public transport, walking and cycling links in North Lewisham.

Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf walking and cycling bridge should also be in this list. There should be a pledge to provide strong political leadership (and, if necessary, financial support) to ensure the Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf walking and cycling bridge is actually built.

Section 5.3 Cycling to School

'We will continue to support schools in the STARS programme.'

With 25 schools not engaged (around 30%) and 40 only Bronze accredited it seems that a more active approach is needed.

In Section 8.2.1 on Quietway, please change references to 'Crofton' to 'Crofton Park'. There is no history or local practice of referring to the area as Crofton. Given the relatively short total length of the routes in Quietway Phases 3, 4 and 5 (25.6km) we would question why the last route is not delivered until 2027. To

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achieve the step-change in cycling sought by the Strategy we would have expected all these routes to be delivered in a much shorter time-frame than this.

In Section 8.2.2 Cycle Superhighways

Deptford Bridge to Creek Road (CS4) seems to be missing from this list.

Catford Bridge Station to the A21 link should start at Catford Hill (not at the station(s)).

Figure 14 is missing the 'Catford link' and the Deptford Bridge to Creek Road Cycle Superhighway along Deptford Church St is incorrectly shown as a Quietway.

Figure 15 is missing the 'Catford link' and the Deptford Bridge to Creek Road Cycle Superhighway along Deptford Church St is incorrectly shown as a Quietway.

Section 10.4 Cycle Hubs

Hither Green station is another potential location for a 'cycle hub'

Section 11. Proposed Projects / Action Plan

To achieve the Strategy objectives we believe more of these projects need to be solidly in the Short/Medium Term rather than Long/Longer. This may require a significant uplift in funding/staffing at LBL but as we are all aware there is potential funding available in several streams from TfL for walking and cycling priority schemes.

'Junction Improvements' are mentioned but there needs to be much more detail on these.

- d) Catford Bridge
- e) Lewisham H
- f) Deptford Bridge
- g) Bell Green Gyrotory

These are major, physical barriers to cycling in the borough.

We'd like to see main road CROSSINGS fully identified as these are also lacking and/or unsafe. The Quietways programme is meant to provide these at junctions.

Rail crossings are also barriers.

Steps with wheeling ramps are a sub standard solution.

In terms of public accountability, another key element that needs to be in the Strategy is regular meetings (3 or 4 a year) between Officers, Cycle Champion and Stakeholder groups, such as Lewisham Cyclists, with feedback on activity on the key cycling (and walking) projects, 'quick Wins' and progress against the Strategy itself. The existence of these meetings would engender positive stakeholder relationships, and give officers opportunities to communicate more effectively with the public, and allow stakeholder groups to build public support for initiatives.

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More consideration needs to be given to filtering out rat-running traffic. We are aware this can engender local opposition, but in many areas, it is absolutely needed, not just for cycling, but to preserve residential areas from becoming even more unpleasant and congested in the future. Many Quietways just won't work to bring those groups who currently don't cycle out on these roads unless the volume of motor traffic on them is substantially reduced.

LBL has done this before, so could adopt the policy again where appropriate.

In all, we are pleased to see the council's growing commitment to increasing cycling in the borough. An awareness that the benefits for the community extend far beyond bringing more bicycles out on the roads is welcome. Reduced pollution, positive effects on public health through enabling people to choose active rather than inactive travel modes, as well as the positive impacts on the quality of the public realm, these are among the associated benefits to the borough. However, this won't happen without a clear emphasis on the need to progress the changes necessary as quickly as possible. Identifying what needs to be done clearly and setting timescales that are challenging yet achievable is absolutely key to the success of the strategy.

Timescales that are too long run the risk of allowing the current unacceptable situation to be prolonged indefinitely. Timescales that are shorter can be reviewed and adjusted if absolutely necessary, but mean that the seriousness and commitment of the council is not in doubt.