

Lewisham Cyclists (local borough group of the London Cycling Campaign) response to Consultation on Lewisham's Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyle Strategy

31/03/2020

<https://consultation.lewisham.gov.uk/culture-and-community-development/physical-activity-strategy/>

About Lewisham Cyclists

Lewisham Cyclists are the local borough group of the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) with more than 1500 supporters of whom over 700 are fully paid-up members of LCC. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in the London Borough of Lewisham and its adjacent local areas; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

Response to the Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyle Strategy

Lewisham Cyclists strongly support the Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyle Strategy which is in its consultation phase. Although some of our individual members have completed the online survey, we felt a group response would also be helpful.

We welcome Lewisham's ambition to improve the health and well being of its residents through physical activity and the adoption of an active and healthy lifestyle. Too many of the Borough's residents suffer from poor health and a lack of opportunity for accessible opportunities to achieve a healthier lifestyle.

We believe Lewisham should be a place where people of all ages and abilities can easily make safe and pleasant journeys cycling or walking. In every ward we seek low traffic neighbourhoods; school streets; and secure cycle parking. Across the Borough we want to see segregated space for cycling on main roads; safer junctions, and a network of safe direct walking and cycling routes.

This we believe would result in a diverse population of people on bicycles in Lewisham, including more women, ethnic minorities, children, elderly people, and disabled people; and a greater awareness across all communities of the health and well-being benefits of cycling.

The key focus here is on making cycling a complementary part of people's daily lives. In our experience, cycling for commuting, shopping trips, or leisure, is much easier to adhere to than discrete exercise routines, such as visiting a gym. We have countless first hand experiences of introducing people to cycling who renew their confidence, independence and physical and mental health, with this simple and cost effective activity.

The biggest barrier to cycling is the perceived danger of mingling with traffic, especially at main road junctions. Yet we know by redesigning junctions and roads to offer safe space, we can significantly increase the number of people cycling.

Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling should meet Transport for London's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to walk and cycle. All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity.

That is why we urge you to make the connection between this study and Lewisham Council's existing Transport Strategy, Cycle Strategy, and Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, ensuring a joined up approach allowing people to build in healthy physical activity into their daily routines. These existing policies recognise the importance of cycling as active travel and for the need for a safe and connected network across the Borough joining town centres, transport hubs, parks and other destinations.

We support the Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyle Strategy, and would be happy to assist in any way possible, including any further consultation or discussions.

General points:

- Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling meet TfL's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to cycle.
- The Mayor's Transport Strategy relies on a growth in cycle trips to keep London moving. This means infrastructure schemes must be designed to accommodate growth in cycling. Providing space for cycling is a more efficient use of road space than providing space for driving private motor vehicles, particularly for journeys of 5km or less. In terms of providing maximum efficiency for space and energy use, walking, cycling, then public transport are key.
- As demonstrated by the success of recent Cycle Superhighways and mini-Holland projects etc., people cycle when they feel safe. For cycling to become mainstream, a network of high-quality, direct routes separate from high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic is required to/from all key destinations and residential areas in an area. Schemes should be planned, designed and implemented to maximise potential to increase journeys – with links to nearby amenities, residential centres, transport hubs considered from the outset.
- All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people.
- Evidence from TfL and from many schemes in London, the UK and worldwide shows the economic benefits, including to businesses, to be found from enabling a wider

range of people to cycle more. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity, as mentioned above.

- LCC wants, as a condition of funding, all highway development designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with a Cycling Level of Service (CLOS) rating of 70 or above, with all “critical issues” eliminated. Above 2,000 Passenger Car Unit (PCUs) motor vehicle movements per day, or 20mph motor traffic speeds, cycling should be physically separated from motor traffic.