

Southwark Cyclists' Comments on the Draft Cycling Plan, July 2005

1. We have commented on this plan in the light of the comments we submitted on the pre-release draft in February 2005. We recap on our previous suggests and make any additional comments in the light of changes you have made. Overall we think this is a good plan. We welcome LBS's commitment to improving the opportunities for everyone to cycle safely and ensuring citizens perceive that they can cycle safely.
2. We said we felt the plan could have more vision. We think that Richard Thomas' ambition to make cycling 'ordinary' is a good concept – we said the 'swiss army knife of travel'. We welcome the inclusion of the transport hierarchy. However, we think that you lack ambition in terms of targets. You support the London Cycling Action plan of increasing cycling levels by 80% on 2010 levels. Cycling has increased by over 60% in the last 3 years already. We think LBS could do better
3. We said that the action plan needed firming up. You've made good advances on this. We think if anything, there should be better prioritisation. There's too many, some of them overlap (eg 1.3/1.7/ 2.6 & 2.10/4.5 & 3.12/3.4). We recognise that resources are limited. For us the priority actions where we would like to start seeing progress over the next year are:
 - 1.7 Cycling infrastructure within a planning obligation strategy
 - 1.10 ensuring traffic engineering takes full account of cycling
 - 1.11/1.12/1.14 – infrastructure improvements
 - 4.2 training – particularly in schools
 - 5.4/5.5 Baseline current cycle use to enable measurement

We think that there are a number of measures which whilst valuable, could distract from the main objectives eg 2.9 lobbying met police re expanded bike squad, 2.2/5.1 – there's loads of best practice out there already – we need to do it, not carry out more research
4. We recommended that you give further priority to the basics of cycle infrastructure. You've responded with good strong commitments on ASLs, contraflows and left hand turns. However, you still haven't recognised the importance of maintaining high quality surfaces. Potholes are a major source of danger and annoyance. We would like a stronger statement on this.
5. We would like more emphasis on bike stand implementation. We understand that LBS's cycling officer is commissioning an audit of cycle provision at all public buildings (libraries, housing offices, health centres) in the borough. This should be reiterated here and given a deadline. With regards to domestic parking, "secure bike parking" must mean more than Sheffield stands. We would like lockable and ideally individual cycle sheds, in-dwelling parking space should be enforced
6. We said more emphasis needed to be placed on the 'streets for all' concept in terms of traffic calming. The action plan provides extra support for the 20mph, promises an audit of speed reduction methods for cycle safety, promises to roll out innovative traffic calming measures piloted in the Walworth Road to Elephant and Castle and Canada Water projects. This is excellent. We think however you need to:
 - Provide a date by which the audit of street calming methods will be complete

- Formally take note of Southwark Cyclists views on the merits of different traffic calming methods. This is stated in the attached policy document which was circulated to all Southwark Cyclists earlier this year.
 - Make a specific commitment to removing street-side railings that encourage faster motor-traffic. LBS is behind leading boroughs like RBKC on this.
7. We said we welcomed the proposal to enforce legal requirements which create safer roads and streets (eg drivers in ASLs, pavement cycling etc). We continue to support your actions on this but we emphasis that this must be even handed. Cyclists are much more vulnerable than motor vehicles.
 8. We said we needed more confidence that LBS would give sufficient priority to this at a senior level. We recommended that the Traffic Manager under the new traffic manager act should be given specific responsibility to drive forward this policy. We maintain this point and as a minimum believe that further clarity is required on where corporate responsibility for delivering the plan lies.
 9. We think that the commitment to infrastructure also needs to extend to working more forcefully with TfL on the quality of the bridges. We look to LBS to lobby strongly to improve conditions on bridges which reach the boundaries of the borough: London Bridge, Southwark Bridge, Blackfriars and Tower Bridge. LBS should be working hard to reduce the speed limits on this bridge and ban all parking. We recommended you include commitments to supporting the concept of a cycle interchange. You commit to promoting Elephant and Castle as an interchange. This is excellent. We think that you should also promote key mainline stations as interchanges. This would include London Bridge, Canada Water and Waterloo.
 10. We said you needed to get the planning policy right to provide a context for delivering change through new developments. We criticised the earlier draft for not doing enough to promote cycling to work. In particular we termed the planning policy requirement for bike spaces in offices '*derisory*'. We note as well that a number of recent major office and retail developments such as More London have not implemented cycle parking despite planning policy and would like a greater emphasis on the monitoring of planning conditions.
 11. We continue to think that planning policy is an important lever to get change happening in new developments. So we welcome the number of actions in this area. In particular, the Plan commits LBS to a stronger policy framework with actions to produce an SPD for travel plans (1.2) and to develop a planning obligations strategy which will include a strategy for negotiating cycle infrastructure (1.7). This is helpful and we wish to be involved in this work. We think you should also use the opportunity of the new LDF to raise the cycle parking requirements in commercial developments
 12. We said the Council needed to lead by example through having a strong travel plan of its own. We hope that the Council can tackle a very car-dependent culture within the authority. You have committed to do this by September 2005 (3.5). We welcome this and look forward to seeing the monitoring reports of how effective this plan is and the resulting modal shift. We welcome the extension of this to the PCT too.
 13. We welcome your commitment to promoting cycling but point too to the contribution of groups like Southwark Cyclists. We run hundreds of rides a year and undertake much work that raises the profile generally.
 14. We are extremely pleased by your commitment to training in schools. We think that in section 5, you should emphasise that training is available for all. So, the first line should say

“Southwark provides *training to all ages with all levels of experience of cycling* through Cycle Training UK” Cycling is and should be promoted as an inclusive mode of transport

15. We welcome your commitment to review progress against the plan annually (5.2). This needs to be a formal process, supported by a collation of the relevant evidence. This doesn't need to be a time consuming and glossy report but it is important to be clear on what has been achieved. We would expect progress to be reported annually to a Southwark Cyclists meeting and are happy to work with you to organise this. The need to report annually provides an additional reason to be more focused in the action plan.
16. In the section on working with partners, we believe you should specifically mention Southwark Cyclists and the Burgess Park Bike Track, as a regeneration exemplar.
- 17.

In summary, a good, meaty strategy with real commitments by the LBS. It is to be commended. We look forward to your response to our comments and to working with you in support of the initiatives contained within the plan