

Department of Transport

Cycling and walking investment strategy (CWIS)

Response by the Partnership for Active Travel, Transport and Health (PATTH)

About PATTH

The Partnership for Active Travel, Transport and Health (PATTH) is a collaboration of Professional Institutions and other partner organisations drawn from the specialisms of health, engineering, environment, architecture, planning and transport (listed in annex 1 to this evidence). PATTH offers a diverse range of expertise to assist in the development and delivery of effective, efficient planning and transport policies and measures, focused on the potential for improvements in public health.

Summary

PATTH welcomes the opportunity to respond to the cycling and walking strategy. We very much welcome its publication.

The Department and its Ministers clearly recognise the benefits of active travel. This is evident throughout the consultation document and its foreword. However whilst we praise the rhetoric and vision, the proposed level of investment is completely out of scale to deliver this.

The level of investment proposed equates to little more than £1 per person per year¹. Yet if we look at the most successful active travel nations, cycling makes up 19% of trips in Denmark and 27% in the Netherlands, where spending on cycling is around £24 per person annually.

We also know:

- Reducing physical inactivity by just 1% a year over a five-year period would save the UK economy just under £1.2bnⁱ.
- The direct financial impact of physical inactivity to NHS is estimated at £1.06 billionⁱⁱ.
- The largest public attitudes survey on cycling (Sustrans Bike Life surveys of seven cities) showed 75% of respondents across the UK supporting increased investment in cycling, with £26 pcpa the average amount they wanted to see governments invest.
- In England in 2012 45% of women and 33% men were insufficiently active (they did not meet the Chief Medical Officers Recommendation)ⁱⁱⁱ.
- There is a public health crisis from air pollution in our towns and cities, largely as a result of emissions from road vehicles.

1 £316m over the five years of the strategy (April 2016 to 2021), which works out at just £1.38 per person in England outside London.

If Ministers are serious about their stated aims, they must reallocate some of the £15bn motorway and trunk road budget towards cycling and walking. This could help tackle congestion, pollution, physical inactivity and climate change. It would also help the Government deliver their 2015 Election Manifesto commitment to tackle childhood obesity.

There is a wealth of evidence in existence which illustrates that enhancing opportunities for active travel is beneficial on a wide range of levels, often demonstrating large benefit: cost ratios. We commend to the Department the 2014 report of the Active Transport for Healthy Living Coalition^{iv} (which has since become part of PATTH) which details some of this evidence.

PATTH Recommendations:

1. There needs to be a more ambitious programme of investment to achieve transformative change that reflects the importance of walking and cycling as serious transport modes.
2. The level of investment in cycling should be at least £10 per person annually, rising to £20 per person annually, as recommended by the All Party Parliamentary Committee report 'Get Britain Cycling'.
3. Treasury support and commitment to active travel would be potentially transformational. A cross-departmental working group with the aim to promote walking and cycling might provide a useful mechanism for achieving this political support.
4. A credible Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy must include quantifiable targets for walking as there is for cycling. They are both effective ways to reduce traffic congestion, boost local economies and improve the nation's health.
5. The Strategy must set out clear quantifiable targets for both walking and cycling with regular milestones in this CWIS. This should include quantifiable targets for the whole population and for children walking to school.
6. Promoting active travel should be backed up by intervention to discourage short motor trips, particularly in urban areas. The CWIS is a chance to introduce bolder policies that would really make a difference to the places where people walk and cycle including: control of pavement parking; a 20mph default national speed limit; more time to cross at controlled pedestrian crossings; and planning controls to ensure new developments are less car-dependent.
7. Behaviour change programmes are crucial to getting more people to walk and cycle. Capital investment programmes should be married with investment in behaviour change programmes which will yield a high return on investment.
8. The Government should adopt a long term vision for streets free from fatalities and serious injury, with the CWIS containing challenging national quantitative targets for pedestrians killed and seriously injured.

9. The CWIS should give more priority to traffic law enforcement and justice, with the inclusion of another theme on Better Justice and the relaunch of the Justice for Vulnerable Road User Working Group.
10. Policy and investment programmes should be rigorously monitored and evaluated, so that future attention can be focused on the most effective approaches.

Answer to consultation questions

1. The Government would be interested to hear views on the approach and actions set out in section 8 of this strategy

PATTH supports the establishment on the new Expert Committee and knowledge sharing between Local Enterprise Partnerships, local bodies and the eight Cycling Ambition Cities. However we find it is difficult to support the strategy when the stated investment levels for the strategy are so low. The level of investment in cycling should be at least £10 per person annually, rising to £20 per person annually, as recommended by the All Party Parliamentary Committee report 'Get Britain Cycling'. A walking allocation needs to be considered in addition to this.

There needs to be a national and local cross-government investment plan that sets out the dedicated and potential investment available to deliver the CWIS over the next term of Parliament together with details of how cross-government funding will be secured. This should include securing additional investment from other Government departments and national sources (e.g. Highways England, Department of Health, Sport England).

Regarding the ring-fencing of money to Highways England, it would be more helpful if the Strategy recognises that cycling and walking are features of all highway schemes and that this small amount of ring-fenced funding is for tackling specific issues. The Highway Authorities should be dealing with cycling and walking in an integrated way in all schemes, including maintenance schemes.

There are addition policies and actions that could readily be made at little or no cost with political support. These include: making pavement parking illegal throughout England as it is in London; making 20mph the default national speed limit; providing more time to cross at controlled crossings through the review of the Traffic Signs and General Directions and; working across government and local bodies to encourage walking and cycling through supporting infrastructure and the provision of local services accessible by walking and cycling.

Positive measures to promote walking and cycling should be backed by interventions to discourage short car journeys. These measures should include reallocation of road space to walking and cycling, 20mph default speed limit and the examination of road user charging. We would like to see the reduction of vehicular traffic as part of Low Emission Zones (as proposed in the Government's Air Quality Plans) in designated areas and reallocation of space to walking and cycling, as is being proposed in some of the Mayor of London's Low Emission Neighbourhoods.

The evidence is already clear that the Government should introduce a national default 20mph limit. This would make streets safer and more inviting places to walk, give those driving consistency and reduce costs and bureaucracy for local authorities. Power would remain in the hands of local authorities to have higher speed limits on appropriate streets as they do now.

We would also like to see more priority given to traffic law enforcement and justice including the re-launch of the Justice for Vulnerable Road User Working Group.

The strategy should be more explicit in exactly what the Government will do beyond 'explore opportunities' to promote cycling and walking in franchise specifications for rail operators. The use of the bicycle as an access mode to train travel is relatively underused compared with the rest of Northern Europe. Part of that unmet demand is as a result of policies which do not support as well as they should transport infrastructure owners and operators consistently providing high quality parking at railway stations.

It is not clear whether the existing level of funding for bikeability is sufficient to meet demand. It is recommended that an investigation is carried out concerning the level of unmet demand for bikeability training and any shortfall in funding provision be made good in order to fully satisfy demand.

2. [The Government would be interested to hear views on the potential roles of national government departments, local government, other public bodies, businesses and the voluntary sector in delivering the strategy and what arrangements could best support partnership working between them.](#)

While the DfT and its sector are responsible for the overwhelming majority of the necessary policies and actions, the benefits of more walking and cycling are felt right across Government. Physical activity improves public health and tackles obesity, fewer vehicles mean improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. It is at Treasury level that all the economic benefits of active travel, enjoyed by so many departments, come together, as well as within the Department for Communities and local government. Greater Treasury support and commitment to active travel would be potentially transformational. A cross-departmental working group with the aim to promote walking and cycling might provide a useful mechanism for achieving this goal as political support is essential.

Central government should provide a clear steer that every local authority, health authority and Local Enterprise Partnership is expected to promote and invest in cycling and walking.

With DfT's limited capital budget, it will be essential that mechanisms are in place to encourage Local Enterprise Partnerships to follow best practice and invest in better places to walk and cycle. However we have concerns that Local Growth Funds that are allocated through Local Enterprise Partnerships are unaccountable. It has been found that most LEP transport allocations have funded roads, with only 2 of the 39 LEPs making any significant funding allocations to cycling. Local campaigners have complained that LEP funding supposedly for cycling schemes are in fact spent on worsening cycling conditions.

It is fortunate that a wide range of bodies, working on transport, quality of life, public health and environment in particular, are committed contributors to active travel policy and practice.

Past experience, such as the major Sustrans programmes and the work of the Active Travel Consortium, suggests that these organisations can work very well with government and deliver high levels of return on investment. Living Streets has been running innovative and effective behaviour change programmes regularly updated over the past 20 years. Behaviour change projects like these backed by proper investment in our streets and places are effective ways to increase walking and cycling.

3. [The Government would be interested to hear suggestions and evidence of innovative projects and programmes which could be developed to deliver the objectives outlined in Section 4.](#)

London has traditionally high levels of walking and public transport use and could act as a pathfinder for the rest of England and the UK. As devolution progresses, other devolved cities should be rewarded for their progress on the promotion of active travel, as indeed should smaller cities and towns. However London benefits from a comprehensive transport system, strong political support and substantial levels of investment and it is unlikely the same benefits can be achieved without this. Transport for London's research^v in the development of innovative solutions for cycle traffic should be referred to.

The Government should identify evidence gaps and continuously benchmark progress against other European countries and look to learn from best practice elsewhere. For example car free days in city centres are being established elsewhere, particularly during smog episodes.

The Government should react positively to what it hears from those who are designing and constructing schemes for cycle traffic and pedestrians about the limitations placed on them under current guidance and regulation by developing research programmes and innovation trials. It should begin to develop this research and trials programme as soon as possible via the Cycle Proofing Group, the Cycling and Cities Group and the Expert group proposed.

4. [The Government would be interested to hear your views on how to increase cycling and walking in typically under-represented groups \(for example women, older people, or those from black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds\).](#)

To achieve the population-scale behaviour change we need will require area-wide infrastructure and cultural changes rather than programmes targeted on specific social groups. However, people in deprived environments are disproportionately affected by the poor quality of their street environment, for example children from the lowest socio-economic groups are more likely to be killed in traffic incidents and suffer the effects of poor air quality.

It is well understood however that many of the interventions which should be prioritised, such as restraining and reducing urban motor traffic, will be automatically beneficial to the most deprived communities, which currently bear an unfair burden of road danger, child casualties, air pollution and noise. These benefits should be measured and their economic value calculated.

With an ageing population more thought and effort needs to go into street design to be amenable to people with disabilities and older people, for example with more time to cross at controlled pedestrian crossings and restrictions on pavement parking.

5. The Government would be interested to hear views on what type of assistance Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships would find beneficial to support development of ambitious and high standard Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

This question is not applicable to PATTH members so we have chosen not to comment.

Annex 1. Membership of PATTH

Members of PATTH are taken from the following organisations. Their naming below does not constitute formal approval of this response in every instance.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA)

The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)

The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT)

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)

The Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH)

The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA)

The Transport Planning Society (TPS)

The Transport and Health Study Group (THSG)

The Faculty of Public Health (FPH)

The British Medical Association (BMA)

British Heart Foundation (BHF)

British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health

MacMillan Cancer Support (MacMillan)

UK Health Forum (UKHF)

Sustrans

Living Streets (LS)

New London Architecture (NLA)

Insall & Coe

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- i UKactive. 2014. Turning the Tide of Inactivity
 - ii NICE. 2013. Physical activity: brief advice for adults in primary care
 - iii Health and Social Care Information Centre. 2014. Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet – England 2014.
 - iv The case for action by the Active Transport for Health Coalition. 2014. <http://www.ciwem.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Active-Transport.pdf>
 - v TRL for Transport for London. Safer cycling innovations. <http://www.trl.co.uk/solutions/sustainability/cycling/safer-cycling-innovations/>