

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Review of Active Travel – 2023/24

Developing recommendations

- Recommendations should be “SMART” and linked to specific evidence. 4-8 is ideal.
- The Committee can form other conclusions and observations to be included in the final report.
 - **S**pecific
 - **M**easurable
 - **A**chievable
 - **R**elevant
 - **T**ime-bound

Conclusion:

- Islington Council should aspire to take a more equal approach to Active Travel and encouraging residents to take a more sustainable approach to travel. These recommendations outline crucial steps for enhancing active travel in Islington. By prioritising pavement maintenance, removing barriers to cycling and walking, fostering inclusivity, collaborating with key partners like TfL, and promoting responsible behavior, we aim to create a greener, safer, healthier and more accessible community.

Theme: Maintenance

- **Recommendation 1:** In recognition of the importance of walking as a key form of active travel which everyone can engage with and the importance of providing a safe walking environment, it is recommended that the council carries out a review of its programme of footway renewal, to ensure that priority is given to the very worst pavement in need of repair.
- **Recommendation 2:** To assist with the prioritisation of repairs and maintenance, the Council should also consider how local residents can report issues with the footway and cycling infrastructure, to ensure that reporting mechanisms are accessible and easy to use.
- **Evidence:** The committee received many presentations that highlighted active travel as a central element of the council's overarching strategy, with a focus on making walking and cycling the preferred choices for local journeys.
- Moreover, the presentation from Public Health stressed the health benefits of active travel and its potential to address barriers faced by certain groups, such as disabled individuals and those from minority backgrounds.
- Additionally, the presentations from Wheels for Wellbeing and JoyRiders highlighted the importance of making cycling accessible to all, including marginalised communities. They emphasised the need for tailored support and inclusive infrastructure to promote equitable access to cycling.
- Furthermore, TfL presented initiatives aimed at diversifying cycling demographics and addressing barriers to cycling uptake, such as road safety concerns and infrastructure limitations.

Theme: Maintenance

- **Recommendation 3:** To encourage cycling and other forms of active travel it is recommended that all transport projects assess the potential to declutter pavements and cycleways by removing unnecessary signs, and remove any barriers to access for cargo bikes, wheelchairs and adaptive bikes.
- **Recommendation 4:** To further declutter pavements, specifically of hire bikes, it is recommended that the designated parking bay scheme for hire bikes should be accelerated towards boroughwide coverage in order to keep the footways clear and better support pedestrian movement, especially of those with mobility restrictions such as visual impairments or wheelchair users.

Theme: Maintenance (cont.)

- **Evidence:** Evidence from the Islington Pensioners Forum highlighted the challenges faced by older individuals, including uneven pavements and the need for social mobility equipment. Improving pavement infrastructure by removing clutter and barriers would directly benefit this demographic, making walking and cycling safer and more accessible for them.
- Presentations from organisations like Wheels for Wellbeing emphasised the need for equitable access to transportation, particularly for disabled individuals. This includes addressing infrastructure barriers such as uneven surfaces and inadequate parking/storage facilities, which can be addressed through decluttering pavements and ensuring accessibility for various types of bikes.

Theme: Equal/Equitable Access to Active Travel and Physical Activity

- **Recommendation 1:** To enable wider participation, it is recommended that the council's active travel webpages are reviewed to provide better links to cycling and walking groups that can help residents more easily access physical activity offered by the council or third party groups.
- **Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that as part of the work the council is doing with Joyriders to support women of all ages and backgrounds to take up cycling, the council should consider how to strengthen this partnership work with Adult Social Care and Children's Services, to encourage wider participation in the scheme.
- **Evidence:** Presentations given to the committee highlighted the importance of making cycling and walking accessible to various demographic groups. Therefore, improving the visibility of cycling and walking groups on the council's webpages would facilitate easier access to resources and support for residents interested in adopting a more active lifestyle and the benefits to mental and physical health this would have.

Theme: Equal/Equitable Access to Active Travel and Physical Activity

- **Recommendation 3:** It is recommended the council works closely with the Public Health team to connect NHS services and GPs with physical activity opportunities offered by the council or third-party groups (such as family rides organised by LCC).
- **Evidence:** Physical activity can significantly reduce the risk of various health conditions. The presentations emphasised the importance of public health interventions in supporting motivation for active travel, raising awareness of its benefits, and providing targeted support to those at higher risk. By collaborating with the Public Health team, the council can identify specific physical activity opportunities, such as family rides organized by LCC, that address these barriers and are suitable for different demographic groups, including families with children.

Theme: Working with external partners

- **Recommendation 1:** Work with TfL and relevant community groups to understand if all crossings in Islington provide sufficient time for people with mobility restrictions to cross at crossings on main roads in the borough.
- **Evidence:** The Islington Pensioners Forum highlighted the challenges faced by older adults and disabled individuals with difficulties hearing traffic signals and crossing roads confidently. These challenges make it essential to assess the timing of crossings to ensure they allow sufficient time for people with mobility restrictions to cross safely.
- Living Streets praised initiatives like People Friendly Streets for promoting walking and wheeling for all residents, including those who are elderly or disabled. This highlights the importance of collaborative efforts to create inclusive infrastructure that addresses the needs of all pedestrians, including ensuring adequate crossing times.

Theme: Relationships between cyclists and pedestrians

- **Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that the council commissions a study into best practice on interactions between cyclists and pedestrians to encourage safe cycling and reduce conflicts. The findings of the study should inform how we design schemes, and if there are any initiatives the council could undertake to successfully tackle areas of conflict, e.g. pavement cycling.
- **Recommendation 2:** That the council work with the Police to secure more enforcement in areas highlighted as experiencing the greatest levels of conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists riding on pavement. Further, to lobby Transport for London and the Department for Transport/Active Travel England to highlight concerns with food delivery drivers riding on pavements, and to secure behaviour change amongst the delivery riders employed by those companies.
- **Evidence:** Both Wheels for Wellbeing and JoyRiders highlighted safety concerns related to interactions between cyclists and pedestrians. Addressing these concerns requires a deeper understanding of the dynamics between cyclists and pedestrians, particularly in areas where conflicts arise, such as pavement cycling.