

# Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2

## Living Streets' response to the Cycling and Walking APPG call for evidence July 2021

### Introduction

1. We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. We want a nation where walking is the natural choice for local everyday journeys, free from congested roads and pollution, reducing the risk of preventable illnesses and social isolation and making walking the natural choice. We believe that a walking nation means progress for everyone. Our ambition is to get people of all generations to enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings and to ensure all our streets are fit for walking.

We have 33,666 active supporters and 55 local groups.

### Summary

2. Transport is integral to our lives, and our daily habits are often dependent on the transport available to us. To cut carbon emissions and make active travel and public transport the natural choice for daily activities, walking and cycling must be convenient, easy, and safe. The second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) must build on the strong foundations of the first CWIS by:

- increasing the target number of walking stages from 300 stages to 365 (or more) stages per person per year by 2025
- ensuring long-term, stable funding for walking and cycling over the course of the Spending Review, building on the £2bn already announced by the Prime Minister
- balancing capital and revenue funding appropriately – ideally with 30% revenue funding – both to support long-term behaviour change programmes to embed walking and cycling into communities, and to help build capacity in those local authorities needing to invest in technical skills.

**Question 1. Are the existing targets for cycling and walking consistent with getting transport on course to reach net zero by 2050? More specifically, do we need a new walking target for 2025, and do any other targets need to be revised or added?**

3. It is vital for Government to move swiftly to reduce demand for carbon intensive transport modes. Accelerating the shift to zero emission vehicles must take place alongside behaviour change towards active and sustainable transport modes. In 'Gear Change: a bold vision for walking and cycling' the

Government says it wants to see a future where half of all journeys in towns and cities are cycled or walked. The lion's share will be met through walking (currently 27% of journeys are walked and 2% are cycled). We do not believe that existing targets for walking and cycling are ambitious enough to help bring transport on course to reach net zero by 2050.

4. There are two walking targets in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy to: increase the number of walking stages to 300 stages per person per year by 2025, and, increase proportion of primary school children walking to school to 55% by 2025. The 300 stages per person per year target has been met in nine of the last ten years. We want to see this increased to at least 365 stages per person per year – one stage per person per day seems very achievable and could be seen as justification to even further.

5. The Walk to School target is still relevant, helping to establish healthy walking habits early in life. However, there is more work to be done to reach it. In 2019, only 46% of children walked to school. We know that this is much higher in the schools we work with through our Walk to School Outreach programme – we are able to get 23% more children walking some or all of the way to school after 5 weeks, resulting in 30% fewer all the way car journeys. This shows the power of targeted interventions.

**Question 2. What level of funding is required to meet the Government's targets for increased cycling and walking by 2025 and 2030, and/or any new targets we may propose?**

6. The announcement of £2bn investment in walking and cycling in 2020 was very welcome and long overdue. We look forward to seeing this confirmed in the Spending Review later this year and then in CWIS2. As is the largest ever settlement for active travel it demonstrates the Government's commitment towards increasing levels of walking and cycling. However, this is a fraction of the £27bn allocated to the second Roads Investment Strategy.

7. The fact that CWIS2 is a multi-year settlement is very important because it allows local authorities (and the organisations that they work with) to plan with certainty and to retain active travel skills and expertise. CWIS2 must also ensure the appropriate balance of capital (70%) to revenue funding (30%) – revenue funding is critical to the delivery of behaviour change programmes and increasing skills across the industry.

8. The Government should also look to build on this investment in the future. If we are to meet the goals set in the original CWIS, and spread benefits more equitably across a wider range of places and demographic groups, a far greater investment will be needed in the future, again balancing both capital and revenue funding appropriately.

**Question 3. Do local authorities and other bodies have the capacity and skills needed to spend the funding allocations required to meet the Government's targets (or any new ones)? If not, how can this capacity be boosted, and how quickly can CWIS spending be ramped up? What should be the role of Active Travel England? What resources will it need to fulfil this role?**

9. There is a need for a boost in skills and expertise. Both the training of highways engineers and continuing professional development (CPD) should provide greater emphasis on design guidance for active travel (and inclusive design) and community consultation. The role of Active Travel England will be as a statutory consultee, to hold local authorities to account and to act as a repository of best

practice. It could, therefore, also provide training and accreditation for local authority highways departments and officers. This should be supported by engagement with professional institutions.

**Question 4. What should CWIS 2 funding be spent on? What programmes or initiatives should be funded? How much capital and how much revenue? How much of this capital and revenue should go to transport/highway authorities, to Active Travel England, to the voluntary sector, to Highways England and HS2 Ltd, etc, and how much should be spent by Government directly? How can Government maximise the opportunities for its funding allocations to leverage in additional funding from other sources?**

10. The first priority is to spend CWIS2 funding on high quality infrastructure – it is essential to do it properly or not at all. For walking the emphasis should be investing in, for example, low traffic neighbourhoods, major road crossings, school streets and other public realm improvements. Second, funding should be used to support revenue programmes in schools (see box), workplaces and community settings, community engagement, and capital programmes, such as planned street maintenance, wayfinding and integrating information on walking routes as part of longer multi-modal journeys. Our third priority is to invest in building local authority capacity.

11. As discussed above, revenue funding is critical to changing behaviour for the long term and building skills across industry. We are calling for 70% capital funding and 30% revenue funding. A balance needs to be struck between flagship Department for Transport schemes (e.g. Walk to School Outreach) and local authority schemes to encourage walking to school, to workplaces and within communities. Special attention should be paid to ensuring that this reaches diverse communities.

12. Funding should be put in place for all local authorities and combined authorities in order to ensure that over time technical capacity, plans and leadership can be built for the delivery of good quality walking and cycling programmes.

**Question 5. The extensive and widely reported opposition to schemes such as low-traffic neighbourhoods emphasises that interventions promoting walking and cycling are often controversial. How can consensus be built both nationally and locally to support the action required?**

13. The rapid deployment of social distancing measures and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in response to the pandemic utilising £250 million Emergency Active Travel Funding (EATF) has raised the importance of communication. In some cases (e.g. reallocating carriageway space for walking) it caused problems for people with visual and mobility impairments. The DfT's network management guidance in response to Covid19 was amended to emphasise: the importance of engagement and consultation, that accessibility requirements apply to all schemes and to remind local authorities to consult with groups representing disabled people and others with protected characteristics as early as possible. People often do not like change (even if they like the result once they are used to it) or change that happens to them. Community consultation allows communities (and representative groups) to be a part of the solution and is essential to building support for the action required.

**Question 6. The pandemic has shown how flexible people's travel behaviour is in certain circumstances. What combination of schemes and policies will provide the basis for a substantial and lasting shift towards active travel?**

14. Active and public transport are central to a green recovery<sup>1</sup>. We should be talking about how we use our finite road space in built up areas for active *and* sustainable modes of transport. Covid19 has also shown what Government can in a very short space of time to reallocate road space for walking and cycling. Such as:

- widening of pavements through, for example, reallocation of road space;
- widening pavements and pedestrianised zones in towns and cities to support physical distancing;
- reclaiming of parking spaces in town centres and residential areas and creation of seating, parklets and activity spaces;
- creation of school streets to prevent through traffic and parking near school and alleviate the possible congestion caused by a greater number of car drop offs as schools return;
- introduction of 20mph limits / creation of 20mph zones in town and city centres to reduce danger for those forced into the road through lack of pavement space.
- use of low-cost modal filtering including bollards and planters, to create Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

15. Living Streets supports policies promoting a significant reduction in traffic mileage. In addition to improving the conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, it is essential to:

- make public transport more affordable, accessible and reliable
- give more weight to the planning system; master planning is crucial to identifying and providing the infrastructure for sustainable journeys
- Consider harder measures to constrain traffic growth, such as road charging and workplace parking levies.

16. A convenient, cost-effective and coherent public transport network – in particular buses – needs space. It is generally accepted that cars are parked at least 92% of the time and typically about 96% of the time<sup>2</sup> with many privately owned vehicles occupying public highway (more than a third of households have no off-street parking<sup>3</sup> and 35% of households in England own two or more cars/vans<sup>4</sup>).

### **Question 7. What else do DfT and other government departments need to be doing in order to maximise the impact of CWIS 2?**

17. The Department for Transport need to spend less on strategic roads and more on the maintenance of the local roads and footways – especially in cities, towns and villages – which account for more than 90% of the roads network and carries two thirds of the traffic<sup>5</sup>. It should announce what enforcement action Government will take to remove barriers to walking, such as cars parked on pavements and people using e-scooters or bicycles on the footway. We are looking forward to an announcement following the review of the Highway Code to strengthen protection for people walking (as well as people cycling and horse-riding).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/news-and-blog/press-media/walking-cycling-public-and-shared-transport-are-central-to-a-green-and-inclusive-recovery>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reinventingparking.org/2013/02/cars-are-parked-95-of-time-lets-check.html>

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 2.6

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/878642/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878642/decarbonising-transport-setting-the-challenge.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> NTS9902 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/nts99-travel-by-region-and-area-type-of-residence>

<sup>5</sup> Department for Transport (2019). Road Conditions in England to March 2019. [Road Conditions in England to March 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878642/road-conditions-in-england-to-march-2019.pdf)

18. All Government departments (e.g. for Transport, Communities and local Government, Health and Education) should be working together to reduce the number of private vehicles on UK roads. People's transport decisions are determined by the availability of transport choices and the location of community facilities and employment. Housing, hospitals and schools should be in locations with good public transport services. Planning is key. Development that encourages further car dependency should not be receiving consent, but the current planning system is doing just that. The National Planning Policy Framework should be clear that making effective use of land in urban areas includes public transport assets as well as community and commercial facilities.

**Question 8. The differences between the two modes are significant and cycling has been shown easier to “cater to” than walking. How can CWIS 2 exploit the shared characteristics of walking and cycling whilst at the same time ensuring that both modes receive appropriate attention and emphasis?**

19. In many cases what is good for cycling is good for walking too. Many interventions support both modes – such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, school streets or 20mph zones – by slowing traffic down, reducing the number of vehicles and reducing air pollution to the benefit of the health and safety of all road users. However, the needs of pedestrians are often overlooked. If we are to meet the Gear Change target of 50% of trips in towns and cities being walked or cycled, then walking will play the major role. It is more accessible, more widely undertaken and more important in so many ways. It is essential to continue supporting behaviour change initiatives. For example, Living Streets Walk to School Outreach has been shown to increase the number of children walking some or all of the way to school by 23% after 5 weeks and results in 30% fewer all the way car journeys.

**Question 9. How can CWIS 2 assist with the delivery of the levelling-up agenda? In particular, what can be done to correct the pattern that councils with a strong track record in active travel receive disproportionately large shares of the funding?**

20. There is a clear need for CWIS2 to help deliver the levelling-up agenda. England's poorest people and people from ethnic minority groups are disproportionately affected by the cost of car dependence and by the impacts of having to live, work and walk next to busy, dangerous, noisy and polluted streets. Deprived ethnic minority (excluding white minority) pedestrians are also more than three times more likely to be a casualty on Britain's roads than white non-deprived pedestrians. Deprivation more than doubles the risk of becoming a pedestrian casualty; people are more likely to walk and less likely to own a car<sup>6</sup>. People from an ethnic minority (excluding non-white minorities) are 25 per cent more likely to be a casualty than white pedestrians<sup>7</sup>.

22. Walking infrastructure in deprived areas can be improved by:

- planning walking networks particularly outside of town and city centres – and ensuring that dropped kerbs and tactile paving are in the right place.
- focusing on the integration of walking networks with green spaces and public transport, particularly the bus.
- reducing speed limits in residential areas and on through roads.

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<sup>6</sup> Agilysis and Living Streets (2021). 'Road Traffic Injury Risk in Ethnic Minority Populations'. [Deprived and ethnic minority pedestrians three times more likely to be injured on Britain's roads | Living Streets](#)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

- providing more signalised crossings across busy roads, consider if regular (older, younger or less able) users will need more time to cross<sup>8</sup> and reduce unnecessary waiting times<sup>9</sup>.
- address safety fears through good management and maintenance of walking infrastructure (e.g. cleansing of pedestrian underpasses and provision of street lighting)
- remove street clutter and obstructions – it is time to ban pavement parking!

23. In order to ensure that funds are spent well investment should be prioritised in towns and cities with the political will and proven capability to deliver active travel projects. Part of the levelling-up agenda must be to build capacity and an ‘active travel mindset’ in councils in deprived areas. Living Streets’ Walk to School Outreach project, which is directly funded by the Department for Transport, employs coordinators to work with over 500 schools and their respective local authorities in some of the most deprived communities in England – for example, by supporting School Streets and conducting school route audits. In 2020-21, the project generated 2.6 million new walking trips and removed 400,000 car km from the road.

**Question 10. Walking and cycling are the most accessible modes of transport but the profile of those travelling by these modes does not reflect this. How can the priorities of justice and inclusion be “baked in” to CWIS 2?**

24. Under the Equality Act (2010), it is against the law to discriminate against ‘protected characteristics’ such as age, disability, gender, race, pregnancy and maternity. Public authorities, such as local councils must also comply with the public sector equality duty. It requires them to think about how their policies or decisions (e.g. making changes to the way street layouts) will affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.

*“The ability to access, and use the public realm—to do things as basic as using shops and meeting up with people outside your home—is vitally important to people’s ability to be, and to feel, active members of society”*

25. Everyone should have the same right and expectations of our public spaces regardless of their characteristics or economic circumstance. Living Streets is an advocate of place-making. CWIS2 should ‘bake in’ the principle that communities and communities of interest are included in the development, monitoring and evaluation of transport initiatives and public realm improvements. Streets should be fit for walking for everyone from age 8 to 80. However, the only long-term solution to remove conflict and encourage more people to walk (or cycle) is to transform our streets and neighbourhoods by taking space away from private vehicles.

**Question 11. Given the extraordinary contribution active travel can make to tackling the climate emergency, how should CWIS 2 be positioned within transport and wider climate policy? More specifically, how should CWIS 2 fit with the anticipated transport decarbonisation plan?**

26. CWIS2 should be given much higher priority and be set over a 5 year period to put an end to ‘stop-start’ funding. What is needed is sustained investment in walking and cycling at a significantly increased level, together with budget specifically aimed at reducing the volume of traffic on our roads. Transport schemes should be assessed against their contribution to wider public policy goals,

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<sup>8</sup> Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs and General Directions Traffic Signs Manual allows the assumed walking speed to be adjusted from 1.2 m/s to 1 m/s on a case by case basis.

<sup>9</sup> See London Living Streets Fairer Crossings Project [London Living Streets Fairer Pedestrian Crossings project update – London Living Streets](#)

in particular the reduction of carbon emissions and benefit to public health, to reflect a broader definition of value for money. Road transport policies need to move beyond predicting and providing capacity for private motorised vehicles, to “decide to provide” the road space and investment for active travel.

**Question 12. Given that most “on the ground” delivery will fall to local government whilst funding and oversight will lie at the centre, how can CWIS 2 provide successful mechanisms to support this? What can be done to support transport/highway authorities that may not have a strong record in promoting walking and cycling?**

27. As discussed above CWIS2 funding needs to cover three objectives: delivering high quality infrastructure, supporting a mix of capital and revenue programmes (70% to 30%), and building capacity in local authorities. There are a number of ways that CWIS2 could help highways authorities to promote active travel, for example:

- providing a support package to address lack of technical capacity within local authorities, setting training and skills development as a precondition for further funding.
- build a skills supply chain (e.g. consultants, developers and organisations like Living Streets)

What is important is to change how transport and highways authorities think about transport, especially the idea that walking is also a mode of transport and walking infrastructure requires continuous investment and maintenance. Knowledge of ‘what good looks like’ is well established for cycling (LTN 1/20), but there is still a gap for walking. The revision of Manual for Streets and LCWIP support guidance will help, but we look to Active Travel England to address critical issues, such as network planning to build walking routes outside of town centres.

**Question 13. Complex programmes require skilled management and certainty about funding. How can CWIS 2 help to create a culture of successful planning and delivery of investment?**

28. As discussed in response to question 2, the fact that CWIS2 is a multi-year settlement is very important because it provides a base from which local authorities (and the organisations that they work with) can build and retain active travel expertise, and plan for the future. We would like CWIS2 to be a five year plan like the Roads Investment Strategy. This would send a clear message about the importance of active travel to creating a more sustainable carbon neutral transport sector in England.

**For further information please contact:**

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