

Feedback from Dr Jonathan Marshall of Stroud, Gloucestershire on CWIS 2

- **Targets.** 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?

The targets are way too low. Aim higher! We really need a root-and-branch overhaul of how we get around actively and healthily.

- **Overall level of funding.** 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?

Look at the targets and actual spending in the Netherlands for an indication. That country only has 17 million citizens, so we can scale it from there for the UK. I believe the NL spends somewhere around £85 per person per year just on maintaining the hugely impressive infrastructure they've built over 50 years. Not content though, they're also developing new cycling infrastructure. That's despite similar spending every year since 1972, and a huge, safe, physically segregated cycling infrastructure of 38 000 kms already in place in that small country. The UK is five decades behind, so we need to spend more than the NL if we want to catch up at all.

- **Capacity.** 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?

Local authorities are virtually bankrupt now, so no. They can't even afford to strim the verges anymore. Our roads are full of potholes, too. So central government needs to stop talking and actually fund infrastructure development. Local governments to implement it with proper standards set nationally.

- **Breakdown of funding.** What should CWIS 2 funding be spent on – i.e. 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?

Local authorities should be given the bulk of the funding, with limits on time in which to use it on WORTHWHILE infrastructure, with proper standards met. No vague painted lines 70cm from a gutter, with broken glass and potholes, for example. Painted lanes just encourage drivers to close-pass people on bikes, as the drivers feel they are not encroaching into the bike lane, but of course, door mirrors and elbows don't know about paint on roads. Connected-up and segregated infrastructure. Reduce space for driving, and remove permeability across areas, by installing bollards. All urban speed limits to 20 mph. The Netherlands has done all this decades ago, with an 18 mph speed limit (30 kmh).

- **Public and political acceptability.** 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?

This is a culture-specific thing. There seems to be a bigger antipathy to active travel in the 'Anglo-Saxon' countries (UK, US, Australia, etc.). Perhaps because of the emphasis on 'getting on' in life and showing our wealth by driving large cars (even if most are on PCP!). For a start, we really do need to stop using the term 'cyclists' immediately. We all have cars, feet, bikes, etc. so there are no 'tribes' created by transport choices on a particular day. Car-ists, bike-ists, foot-ists, van-ists? Really? Then also make it totally unacceptable to write the sort of hate speech that e.g. Toby Young of the Telegraph writes about so-called cyclists, to incite more tribalism and division, in order to drum up sales of the newspaper. Words have consequences. To see how shocking it really is, I recently replaced the word 'cyclists' in his article with 'black

people' and re-read it. That article would have then landed him in deep trouble for racial hate-speech, so why is it acceptable for any other minority 'group'. I've seen people choosing to ride a bike on a certain day instead of their car referred to as 'cockroaches' and 'vermin'. Make it as unacceptable and illegal as hate-speech against other minority groups. Apply this to social media too, as is the case with other types of hate speech already.

- **Behaviour change.** 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?

If we look to the Netherlands as an example of how to do this, we can see that they have made it 1) safe, 2) easy and 3) attractive to walk and cycle for all short(ish) trips. Starting in 1972, they made semi-permeable barriers between different zones and suburbs of all towns and cities. Basically, these are bollards that allow walking and cycling unhindered access to all routes, but make driving less attractive, by having to drive around the long way. The resulting peaceful and safe streets are a joy to use, as I discovered on my holiday in the city of Utrecht (see photo below). That in turn opens up the floodgates of walking and cycling use, because people can see the immediate attraction of it. For physical and mental health, the benefits are enormous. We could save the NHS billions per year with the reduction in all manner of health problems caused by inactivity brought about by active travel. Read Peter Walker's new book 'The Miracle Pill' (it's not a pill actually, but more active lives, which would be the most miraculous 'pill' we could ever prescribe).



- **Wider policy support.** What else do DfT and other government departments need to be doing in order to maximise the impact of CWIS 2?

Acting on it. The time for talking about it has passed! See John Cleese in 'Life of Brian'. The scene where he calls for a new motion, that there be action. Seriously though, if we get walking and cycling levels up to decent levels, we'll need decent parking for bikes. Hundreds of thousands of parking spaces for bikes. You can see examples in the photos above and below how many bikes can fit into a relatively small area, compared to cars.



- **Walking as much as cycling.** 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?

From a pure infrastructure point of view, walking is VERY well served already. The UK has a two-tier system of road infrastructure: one for walking on, the other for driving on. The NL has a three-tier system, with segregated parts for all three modes. So for the UK to promote walking, we need to look at things other than infrastructure improvements. Pedestrianisation of town and city centres will help. If we make driving the least attractive option, by not subsidising it massively via general taxation (which it is now), by making things easier to walk or cycle than to drive, we will get progress. Improved public transport links to town centres, with passengers then completing their journeys on foot. Remove all motor vehicle permeability and make parking very pricey. Driving needs to become an embarrassment, like smoking in public places. In fact, it IS smoking in public places, just with (mostly) invisible fumes that kill 40 000 people a year in the UK alone.

- **Levelling up.** 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?

At the moment, councils that are getting on with active travel get more funding, as they are showing that they're doing the right thing, and so it becomes self-propagating. Those that aren't getting on with it, don't get any funding, and so the story continues. What can be done? This is a difficult one. Perhaps councils lagging should be given minimum targets and dates, to give them the incentive to make a start? Publicise a system that ranks councils on active travel, and gets residents informed about the state of their council's efforts, and involved in putting pressure on their councils to act.

- **Justice and inclusion.** 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?

Oddly, this is something found in even countries with high levels of cycling, like the NL, for example. People in lower socio-economic groups favour owning a car and driving over cycling, while those in higher groups favour cycling. Surveys indicate that it has something to do with the differing perceived status of the two modes. But, to answer the question, perhaps by making walking and cycling the normal, easy, default modes of transport for all shortish trips, the hierarchical view will fade away over a generation. Link this to making driving in urban areas like smoking in public buildings, etc.

- **Decarbonising transport.** 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?

Centrally, is the short answer! This is the only way to decarbonise transport and have all the health benefits of active travel at the same

time. Electric cars will be part of the answer, but the emissions from power generation are just displaced to power stations of course, and electric cars still have people sitting in them, being inactive and developing type 2 diabetes, coronary diseases, early-onset dementia and traffic-jam stress, etc.

- **The relationship between central and local government.** 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?

Clear, achievable, measurable standards with a time scale pre-set. Any council which falls behind to get help and guidance.

- **Programme and project management.** 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?

Make the funding a certainty, with the standards clearly set out for receiving it. Appoint people to permanent positions of implementing active travel plans. Look at Chris Boardman in Greater Manchester. Someone like that for every region and city, with a budget and some political power to implement it.