

1. What do Lewisham Cyclists do?

Lewisham Cyclists are the local branch of the London Cycling Campaign charity. Lewisham Cyclists' vision is for Lewisham to be a place where people of all ages and abilities can easily make safe and pleasant journeys cycling or walking. We campaign to create safe space for traveling by bicycle and we work with other local community groups to do so. Anyone is welcome to join our monthly meetings, and we also run our own community activities (cycle training, maintenance, route planning, buddy scheme and more on our [website](#)). We recommend our buddy scheme which provides a 1 to 1 service where a 'buddy' cyclist will ride with you along a route of your choice e.g. to your work, along the Quietway 1 etc, to help familiarise people with new routes – email lewishamcyclists@gmail.com for more details.

2. How have you seen Covid 19 make a difference to the cycling community?

We have seen more people travelling by bicycle during the start of lockdown when traffic volumes were low. Many Lewisham residents have rediscovered what its like to be on a bicycle, which is helping to reshape the way we think about our streets.

Lewisham Cyclists exist to encourage the wider community to travel by bicycle, particularly to help people who would like safer streets to cycle on. We've seen people's lives becoming more local during lockdown, and walking and cycling is ideal for local journeys. We think many of our streets should be made safer for children, elderly people and disabled people to feel comfortable to ride a bicycle on.

We are pleased that schemes promoting walking and cycling have been speeded up in Lewisham, such as School Streets, which create a 'no traffic' space outside schools. We are excited for the better quality of life these changes will bring to people in their local area.

In addition, our co-ordinator, Jane Davis, has been fixing bicycles for residents and key workers during lockdown. We are also grateful to residents who have donated their bicycles to us during this time, which we have distributed to key workers. We welcome donated bicycles – please email us at lewishamcyclists@gmail.com

3. Modal filters aren't new to Lewisham, what feedback have you had from businesses and residents where they're already present?

Modal filters stop motor vehicles from using residential streets as short cuts. This creates a safe, low-traffic space for walking and cycling in residential areas. There are some modal filters in Lewisham which have been in place for decades,

as local residents like the effect it has on their street. Most recently in Lewisham, we've seen Prince Street in Deptford transformed from a busy rat run to a walking and cycling oasis with a flourishing local pub (Dog and Bell).

In our experience, it's most often motor vehicle commuters who use residential streets as a short cut (or rat run) who are most concerned about the implementation of new modal filters. It takes time for such changes to become the new normal.

4. How have Lewisham Cyclists been involved with the introduction of the new modal filters around the borough?

Lewisham Cyclists support the principle of modal filters as a key feature of low traffic neighbourhoods, and we have made suggestions like any community group or individual is able to do. We also work with community groups to make suggestions.

5. What are the main impacts of modal filters as Lewisham Cyclists see them?

Modal filters create a low-traffic, low-pollution environment by closing streets to motor vehicles. Such an environment makes walking and cycling more appealing. Importantly, people of all ages and abilities are able to cycle on low traffic streets, such as families with young children, elderly people and disabled people on modified bicycles. Modal filters are a key feature of a safe network for bicycles. Coupled with physically protected space for bicycles on main roads, modal filters facilitate safe cycling for families with young children, disabled people and many others who currently don't feel comfortable cycling in high traffic environments.

The low traffic environment created by modal filters also allow communities to reclaim their streets, enabling neighbours to get to know one another, and creating 'parklets' and green oases for children to play.

6. What does a sustainable future look like to you?

From a transport view, a sustainable future is one where walking and cycling is convenient and appealing, especially for local, shorter trips.

Our vision of the future is one where mums and dads feel comfortable doing their shopping and picking up their children on a cargo bicycle, where older people use electric bicycles to get to the high street, and where 12 year old best friends can cycle to school together.

It is clear that if we are to deal with the transport element of the Climate Emergency, the status quo is not sustainable. To get to low carbon transport we must enable more people and goods to move by bicycle in Lewisham so transport carbon emissions and air pollution can be reduced. To achieve this we

want low traffic neighbourhoods, connected by safe protected space on main roads for all types of cycles, including adapted bicycles for disabled and older people.

We are calling for this transformation to make cycling diverse and inclusive of people of all ages, abilities, and incomes. Cycling can be cheaper than public transport, which benefits people on low income.

We think there are few problems in society today that can't be made better by getting people walking and cycling more. Health outcomes are better, including tackling physical inactivity, air pollution, and mental health. Research also suggests low traffic high streets is better for business.

7. How have Lewisham Cyclists tried to promote the filters within the community?

Lewisham Council has recently installed a number of modal filters across the borough on a trial basis. It will take some time for the impact to be understood, and it is normal for some upheaval in the early stages. We have been working directly with local community groups and businesses by providing information and advice. We recognise this is an emergency response to an emergency situation, and that there will be engagement with residents throughout the trial period. We fully support the Council and recognise they have been under pressure to deliver quickly. We hope to plan a ride through all the newly installed modal filters so keep an eye on our [website](#)...