

Lewisham Cyclists' Response to Lewisham Council 'Lewisham 2030' Survey

<https://consultation.lewisham.gov.uk/lewisham-strategic-partnership/lewisham-2030/>

Response to individual questions:

You and Lewisham

1 Which of the following best describes you?

We are volunteers with 'Lewisham Cyclists' which is the local borough group for the London Cycling Campaign. We all live and/or work in the Borough of Lewisham.

2 What is your postcode?

N/A

3 If you were describing the Borough of Lewisham to someone who had never been here, what would you say about it?

An inner London Borough that is a great place to live but sadly suffers from heavy traffic on main roads and in many residential streets. It doesn't have a sufficiently connected safe active travel network meaning many residents resort to using their car for local journeys. A Borough that despite issuing many policies and plans on the Climate Emergency, health and transport, is falling behind comparable inner city boroughs on 'Healthy Streets' scores: (<https://lcc.org.uk/campaigns/healthy-streets-scorecard/>).

4 What do you like about the Borough of Lewisham?

Plenty of shops and schools within an easy potential bike ride or walk. Unfortunately active travel access to these is blighted by dangerous main road junctions, discontinuous quieter cycling routes often lacking safe main road crossing points and railway bridge pinch points. Good public transport links are the ideal location for potential cycling hubs. The demographic change towards more metro singles and students in the north of the Borough could bring a significant shift towards active travel if local infrastructure was further improved. Amazing open spaces and surprising access to nature which could easily be further adapted as active travel routes.

5 What matters most to you at the moment?

What matters most to respondents:

- Climate change
- Staying healthy
- Spaces like parks

6 What are your hopes for 2030?

That there is a joined up network of connected safe routes for cycling and walking.
That Lewisham Council continues to show leadership on the climate crisis and acts more decisively on issues like traffic reduction and pollution.
Also that it works alongside developers to ensure they contribute more to improve community services, and a sense of place.

That the Council engages meaningfully with its communities, ideally through citizens assemblies and expanded engagement with community groups, rather than relying on Commonplace surveys which seem to touch the surface rather than uncovering underlying issues and arriving at a workable consensus.

7 What does a good future look like for you?

- Thousands cycling daily get around Lewisham quickly and safely with minimal use of carbon, reducing pollution, congestion, and feeling healthier and happier.
- A joined-up network of safe cycle routes so every Lewisham resident can readily cycle from their home to anywhere in the Borough.
- The Lewisham 'Spine' segregated cycle route connects north and south of the Borough transforming this space into an active travel corridor.
- Quietway cycle and walking routes improved and enhanced making better use of green spaces.
- Dangerous road junctions made safe for people on bicycles and pedestrians.
- Cycle Hangers on every street where there is identified demand and outstanding requests.
- School Streets for all Lewisham schools with complementary safe routes to these schools to encourage families to walk and cycle, leaving the car at home.
- All one way streets converted to two way cycling unless impractical and potentially unsafe.
- London Hire bikes widely available in the north of the borough and dockless hire bikes properly provisioned across the rest of the borough.
- Car use and ownership are declining as local residents switch to easily accessible public transport and active travel options.
- Lewisham moving up the Healthy Streets scorecard and residents enjoying better health and well being. .

8 What do you think needs to change in the Borough of Lewisham to help you achieve this?

The Council needs to take more action on the Climate Emergency it declared several years ago, building on its initial initiatives in the transport arena like the Sustainable Streets project. Cycling, walking and public transport need to become the options of choice in moving around on shorter journeys, rather than the current default for many of the motor car, also bearing in mind that around 50% of residents do not have access to a car.

The Council needs to be much more proactive in this area targeting a significant reduction in motor vehicle mileage. They need to assess the positive progress that is being made in neighbouring boroughs with Liveable Neighbourhood initiatives and adapt their approach accordingly. Fostering shared responsibilities among groups committed to Climate Action and Active Travel for these potentially controversial issues would be a massive step forwards as it's unlikely any organisation can achieve these working on their own.

9 What role could you play in making this happen?

Respondent role in making change happen:

We are local volunteers with Lewisham Cyclists and part of the London Cycling Campaign. We regularly liaise with Councillors & Officers to show them what's possible in terms of improving Active Travel infrastructure. Much of our thinking has already been adopted by the Council in many policy documents including the Cycling Strategy, the Air Quality Action Plan, Lewisham Local Plan, Physical Activity and Lifestyle Strategy and various local and regional master plans and other planning guidance. However, to be successful by any measure

Lewisham needs to progress from strategies to actions. Currently Lewisham are falling behind their comparator authorities in London, and their ranking as an Active Travel Borough is slipping behind our near neighbours. As ever we are happy to discuss any scheme with Council colleagues as long as there is genuine commitment to increase the pace of change. Although it's hard for us to comment on the "how" the Council should run this aspect of its services, we feel the Council needs to continue to expand its team focused on Active Travel and further develop the 'pipeline' of projects ready for funding either through the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) or from Development funding (S106 or NCIL). We are always happy to contribute detailed ideas for consideration, constructively criticise plans and give examples of good practice elsewhere. This brings to bear our widespread local knowledge of schemes of all types and classification - subject to the Council being open to this type of collaboration...

Compiled and submitted by Brian Turpin on behalf of Lewisham Cyclists 24/10/23