

About Lewisham Cyclists

Lewisham Cyclists (LC) are the local borough group of the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) with more than 3000 supporters of whom over 650 are fully paid-up members of LCC. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in the London Borough of Lewisham and its adjacent local parks; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

Our response to the London Borough of Lewisham consultation on the Active Travel Strategy (ATS) July 2025.

<https://consultation.lewisham.gov.uk/highways-and-transport/lewisham-active-travel-strategy/>

Overall we believe this is a well-researched and thorough strategy document and we enthusiastically support the majority of the objectives.

However we have to question whether the Proposed Active Travel Targets in table 5-2 are ambitious enough to deliver the levels of modal shift required to satisfy the Council's and London Mayor's policy objectives and dramatically improve Lewisham's Healthy Streets position.

Detailed observations (by section)

1. OUR VISION

1.7. New Active Travel Corridors

This effectively highlights the main funding sources available to the Council. However, it does fail to mention Capital Funding as part of Climate Emergency Response. We understand that some other neighbouring authorities do invest through Capital spend.

4. WALKING AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

4.1.9. Quality of the walking and cycling environment.

Encouraging that the ATS has recognised the issues with stepped footbridges. In a number of locations across Lewisham these constitute major barriers to Active Travel and plans need to be brought forward to make them accessible.

4.2.2. Our existing walking and cycling routes.

There's no mention of the countless existing London Cycle Network (LCN) routes. Many are very useful, established and direct. They must be taken into account when developing the corridors into 'new' routes.

4.2.7. Contraflow cycling.

This should be the default for all one-way streets in Lewisham unless a Safety Audit determines conversion to be absolutely unsafe.

4.2.8. Healthy Neighbourhoods.

Lewisham has many areas with established restrictions on through traffic which have been implemented over the last 40 years. Healthy Neighbourhoods are not really a new concept but should be seen as a continuation of a long-term policy to restore residential streets to a safe and liveable condition for local residents.

4.2.15. Sustainable streets programme.

Areas that are planned to host significant new developments, which now usually disallow resident car parking, need to have CPZ implemented in advance to discourage new residents from procuring and parking vehicles in the immediately surrounding areas. For example, Catford Town Centre.

4.2.20. On and off street parking.

There are still significant gaps in visitor cycle parking provision across the borough. For example many small supermarkets and pubs don't have adjacent Sheffield stands.

4.2.24. Cycle hangers.

Residents should have access to a facility for suggesting cargo bike hanger locations so the Council can assess demand by location.

4.2.30. Pavement Parking.

LC very much support the removal of legal pavement parking wherever possible and regular enforcement where there is illegal pavement parking. Pavement parking is a massive inconvenience to pedestrians and effectively widens roads encouraging motorists to drive faster than is appropriate in residential areas.

4.2.33. The Equal Pavements Pledge.

We believe the Council should be preventing owners of public-private land from erecting barriers and bollards in contravention of the disabilities access legislation e.g. staggered barriers and bollards with inadequate spacing. The Council should require the removal of such obstructive barriers which prevent passage of adaptive cycles, cargo cycles, mobility scooters etc.

4.2.39. Dockless cycles

Mentions 300 marked bays for dockless bikes, doesn't mention capacity or future plans for additional capacity which will undoubtedly be needed.

4.2.40. Cargo Cycles.

Sadly the LCC cargo-cycle hire scheme is no longer active. We would ask the council to investigate working with third party operators to provide dockless cargo bike hire for businesses and residents.

Table 4-1. Examples of typical active travel infrastructure

No mention of provision of parklets providing greening for the public realm and resting places for people walking.

5. TARGETS

Table 5-2. Active Travel Strategy Targets

Our views on the targets:

T1 - Reduce legal footway parking by 50% by 2030.

Supportive of this target, could be challenging given how extensively this has been enabled in the past.

T2 - Deliver 20km of new or upgraded active travel routes by 2030.

Needs to be more ambitious. We think 4km/year is conservative as many of the routes will be 'Quietway' style. This Strategy should make it clear that all will be constructed to current standards (LTN1/20 or LCDS) and safe for ages 8 to 80 cycling.

T3 – Increase the number of secure cycle parking (cycle hangars) to 500 by 2030.

We'd like to see more than this as the suppressed demand is very high. Lewisham have delivered around 300 in 4 years. Would expect to reach at least 600 by 2030.

T4 - Deliver 4 new Healthy Neighbourhoods (HN) by 2030.

Need a faster rollout and 1 per year is not likely to be enough to move into top 10 boroughs on the Healthy Streets Scorecard. We consider 6 new HNs would be a more effective target. There are issues with excessive through traffic in many residential areas across Lewisham which needs to be urgently addressed.

T5 - 50% of Lewisham schools will achieve a TfL Travel for Life (formerly STARS) accreditation, with 20% of those achieving a minimum of 'silver' by 2030.

It's good to see a target for this. Lewisham is starting from a low base so will be a fair amount of effort to achieve this objective.

T6 - 81% of trips to be by taken by sustainable modes in the Borough by 2041

Given Lewisham was at 78% in 2023 would have hoped to go further than this by 2041.

T7 - 71% of the population to be within 400m of the strategic cycling network by 2041

Target looks good, timeframe is quite long. Total corridor length of the 21 priority corridors is around 84km therefore Lewisham need to deliver around 5.3km of Cycleway per year to achieve this objective (see T2). Need to start at a higher rate as initial projects will probably be 'low hanging fruit' e.g. Cycleway 66, so subsequent ones may be harder to implement involving more design and engineering.

T8 - Double the number of cycling journeys by 2030 (from 15,500 in 2022/23)

This target of around 31,000 is disappointing given that the previous Lewisham Cycle Strategy (2017) was aiming for 37,000 journeys by 2021. Possibly a reflection of the hiatus on cycle development work in Lewisham caused by the pandemic. We'd now like to see a more ambitious target particularly mobilising people in the many no-car housing developments happening across the borough.

T9 - Double the number of walking journeys by 2030

Good to see a robust target for increasing walking journeys, we believe a more rapid rollout of Healthy Neighbourhoods will be needed to achieve this and the previous target.

T10 - Move into the top 10 London Boroughs on the Healthy Streets scorecard by 2030

This is going to be very hard to achieve with the targets given as other London Boroughs are moving forward as well. We believe Lewisham would need to significantly expand CPZs, deliver more km of active travel routes and accelerate Healthy Neighbourhood roll-out to achieve this.

Other possible Targets that could be developed and included in the Strategy are:

- A specific number of conversions of one-way streets for contraflow cycling per year.
- Visitor cycle parking provision e.g. Sheffield stands. Define an objective that all shops, pubs, community facilities should have at least two stands within 20m.
- Targets for increasing the proportion of the borough that is covered by Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ).

6. IDENTIFICATION OF NEW ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDORS

Although the various corridors are shown on the maps as going along specific roads in the borough it is important that it is understood that the final routings may not exactly reflect the maps in this document as further feasibility work is done on each corridor.

It would have been useful if the maps also showed existing cycle routes in adjacent boroughs, maybe as dotted lines, which would make it easier to visualise corridor continuity across borough boundaries e.g. linkage to the planned new cycle crossing on Old Kent Road at Ilderton Road (Cycleway 62).

It is notable that there is a significant concentration of recently developed cycle routes (Figs 6-1 & 6-2 in yellow) north of New Cross along key commuting corridors. This highlights the importance of the ongoing development of the Lewisham Spine to link people across the borough to these key established commuting routes.

For the future it's encouraging that the new strategy is taking a more holistic view proposing a grid of routes across the whole borough, not just radial but E-W across the borough as well.

Figure 6-2. Prioritised and existing corridors with 400m accessibility isochrones

Several large residential areas e.g. Brockley (Hilly Fields), Honor Oak Park, Downham are missing out on the 400m isochrones so will be some distance from routes for the foreseeable future. This may be a good reason to prioritise these areas for Healthy Neighbourhood implementations which provide safer walking and cycling environments by reducing unnecessary through traffic without specific routes being required.

7. DEVELOPMENT AND RANKING OF ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDORS

7.3. Corridor Scoring

Table 7-2. Corridor Scoring - Cycling

We would query these costs for Cycleways ranging from £662 to £3,177 per metre. With recent experience of constructing main-road segregated Cycleways (Cycleway 4 and Deptford Church Street) we imagine those costs are the correct order of magnitude. However, for residential road Quietway style routes we feel they are overstated. We would expect initial costs to establish the quieter routes to be firmly at the lower end of these estimates. However optional public realm measures could ultimately contribute to higher costs. We are concerned that these high estimated costs may inhibit the implementation of future routes by making them appear to be not cost-effective.

7.6. Quick Wins

Table 7-4. Quick win measures to improve walking and cycling conditions

We are supportive of all these Quick Wins projects.

We were surprised at the absence of the 'Canal Approach' project which was originally part of the Deptford Parks Liveable Neighbourhood. Now that the Neptune Wharf development is open it's plain to see the benefits of this proposed walking and cycling link to the Thames Path via Canal Approach and Dragoon Road

An ongoing programme of one-way street conversions to two-way cycling probably should be included in the Quick Wins section. We have previously provided Lewisham Council Officers with a list of our priorities for conversion.

APPENDIX A: MAPS OF CORRIDORS IDENTIFIED

Maps - PROPOSED ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDORS & PROPOSED ACTIVE TRAVEL CORRIDORS PRIORITY AND LOW PRIORITY

Corridor 7 - Elverson to Blackheath. Uses Lewisham Hill (lots of traffic) rather than the direct, and established route via Morden Hill.

Corridor 15 - Catford to Forest Hill via Elm Lane seems to have been deprioritised even though it originally ranked 8th. We would argue that this quiet corridor is very important to take forward given its proximity to several schools and its ability to improve access to shops and services in Forest Hill and Catford Town Centres.

Corridor 17 – Forest Hill to Catford. Segregated cycling provision on the South Circular is a positive aspiration as well as Corridor 15. However, it would be costly and may prove to be beneficial to only a subset of users i.e. cycle commuters, rather than local families.

Corridor 18 - Crofton to Lower Sydenham – the section of LCN22 through Ladywell Fields to Catford Bridge & the Waterlink Way has disappeared from the prioritisation map even though it is currently a very busy section of LCN22 which ultimately links to Cycleway 35 coming from Brockley Way.

Corridors 28 & 33 - covering Catford to Elverson Road which were being developed as Cycleway 18 have been de-prioritised. Improvements are still needed along this route e.g. Marsala Road filtering.

Corridor 29 - Hither Green to Catford A which is part of a very useful route from Crofton Park via Ladywell Fields via Mt Pleasant Rd (with a new Toucan crossing over A21) to Hither Green has been wrongly deprioritised in our view.

Corridor 24 (Cold Blow Lane) and Corridor 3 (Hatcham Park Road/Besson St) could also be linked via Briant St and Monson Rd. And onward using the existing Toucan Crossing over Queens Rd to Waller Rd for access to Telegraph Hill.



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Corridor 24 (Cold Blow Lane) doesn't show the school symbol for Hatcham Primary on any maps; the school is just beside Cold Blow Lane. The presence of the school there is crucial, this is one of the key reasons why Cold Blow Lane has recently been filtered.

The extant walking & cycling route (currently closed) from Molesworth St via the Sculpture Park and Ravensbourne riverbank to Wearside Road is not identified on the maps but could provide a very useful traffic-free link between Ladywell and Lewisham. It has been highlighted in previous studies e.g. the A21 Corridor Framework.

We look forward to further discussions with Lewisham Councillors and Officers in Strategic Transport regarding the Active Travel Strategy objectives and taking them forward to implementation.

LC Committee 10/7/25