



**Progress on the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group's report  
GET BRITAIN CYCLING  
Commons debate, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014, 11.30am**

**A supplementary briefing from CTC, the national cycling charity**

**Introduction**

This briefing is issued in the light of the publication this morning of the Government's long-awaited Cycling Delivery Plan. It complements a briefing for the above debate issued jointly by CTC along with British Cycling, Sustrans, the Bicycle Association and Living Streets. The Plan was released at 9.30am, 3 hours before MPs were due to debate it. CTC saw it under embargo at 7pm the previous evening.

The joint briefing focusses primarily on one key recommendation of the 'Get Britain Cycling' report issued by the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (APPCG) in April 2013 – namely a call to allocate funding for cycling amounting to at least £10 per person annually – rising to £20 per person as cycle use increases – in order to meet the report's proposed targets to increase cycle use from less than 2% of trips at present to 10% of trips (roughly German levels) by 2025 and to 25% of trips (slightly below Dutch levels) by 2050.

The Plan has fallen well short of what the Get Britain Cycling report called for, both in terms of funding and ambition for increased cycle use. The major stumbling block appears to be the Treasury's unwillingness to commit to the funding.

**New research findings – and a call to the Treasury**

CTC has today released an initial finding of a study, which is being undertaken at CTC's request, to assess the benefits to society of meeting the Get Britain Cycling report's targets.

Dr Robin Lovelace (Leeds University) and Dr James Woodcock (Cambridge University) estimate that the health benefits alone would be worth **between £2bn and £6bn** from reaching the 2025 target, and **between £8bn and £25bn** on reaching the 2050 target.

Further work is needed to quantify the added benefits from reduced congestion and emissions.

This finding adds strength to calls for the Chancellor to allocate funding for cycling (see CTC's [www.Funding4Cycling.org.uk](http://www.Funding4Cycling.org.uk) campaign), as he prepares to close a consultation on what to include in his Autumn Statement. This will be made on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, around the time that the Cycling Delivery Plan is due to be finalised.

The Government has earmarked £24bn for road building and £40.6bn for HS2, yet the draft Plan contains no earmarked funding for cycling, let alone any long-term certainty. Investing in cycling would achieve far greater benefits at far lower cost (see CTC's briefing on cycling and the economy [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cycling-and-economy](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cycling-and-economy)).

**Assessment of the draft Plan**

18 months ago, CTC and its allies wrote to the then Transport Secretary outlining 5 "litmus tests" we would use to judge whether to support the Plan. Here is our assessment of the plan against those litmus tests.

**1. Leadership and ambition:** *high-level commitment, together with targets for substantially increased cycling in line with the Get Britain Cycling (GBC) report's recommendations – i.e. to increase cycling from 2% of trips at present to 10% (roughly German levels) by 2025 and to 25% (near Dutch levels) by 2050.*

The Plan's proposed "ambition" is to double the number of cycling stages (i.e. journeys or parts of a journey, including bike rides to a station) by 2025.

However, after taking account of population growth and the expected growth of cycle use in London (where Mayor Boris Johnson has committed to spend £913 million on cycling over the next 10 years), this amounts to an increase of just **74% in cycling trips per person** in England outside London – well short of the GBC report's aims.

**2. Sustained investment:** *A long-term commitment to capital and revenue funding for cycling, again in line with the Get Britain Cycling report's recommendations – i.e. to increase spending from around £2 per person annually to £10, rising to £20 as cycle use increases.*

Dutch spending on cycling amounts to £24 per person annually, while the London Mayor's annual spending commitment amounts to £12.50 per person. The Government claims that annual spending on cycling in England amounts to £5 per person. However this includes substantial spending in London, while also relying on doubtful assumptions about the proportion of councils' Local Transport Plan and Local Sustainable Transport Fund allocations being spent on cycling.

As stated in the draft Plan, *"The Government's aspiration is that – working with local government, and businesses, we can together explore how we can achieve a minimum funding packet equivalent to £10 per person each year by 2020-21 – and sooner if possible"*.

It identifies the Local Growth Funds, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), highways maintenance budgets and funding earmarked for the strategic roads network as potential funding sources to deliver this funding packet. It includes a commitment to *"provide a continuous source of seed funding, up to 2021, to enable Partner Authorities ... to access wider funding opportunities"*. However there is no indication of how much this would be, nor any other commitment to specific sums of earmarked Government funding for cycling.

**3. Consistent high design standards,** *in line with continental best practice, together with mechanisms for ensuring they are followed by highway and planning authorities (including the Highways Agency) in all highway and traffic schemes, new developments, and road maintenance programmes.*

The Plan notes that, "In August 2013, the Prime Minister announced his intention to 'cycle proof' the road network – in other words to ensure that cyclists are considered at the design stage of new and improved road infrastructure..."

The Plan contains some useful commitments to develop and promote best practice in cycle-friendly design in conjunction with a "cycle-proofing working group" (on which CTC is represented), including plans for a "one stop portal" for best practice advice, to complete the introduction of new traffic regulations to improve local authorities' abilities to give cyclists priority at junctions, and to strengthen the requirements for cycle-friendly train design in new rail franchises.

However there is no commitment to develop new design standards or guidance. The Government's current guidance is scattered in several weak and contradictory documents, allowing a great deal of bad practice which cannot be challenged, despite often being manifestly unsafe.

Transport for London and the Welsh Government have both recently consulted on some generally excellent new design guidance. The Highways Agency is also planning to update its design guidance, and numerous local authorities (e.g. Transport for Greater Manchester and City of Birmingham Council) are doing likewise. However this involves a great deal of duplication (and at times contradiction) of effort between different authorities, while the adoption of different design standards in different parts of the country is in nobody's interest.

CTC believes DfT needs to establish consistent design guidance and standards, based on best practice from the London and Welsh documents. It then needs to work with the professional institutions (e.g. the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation) to promote professional training.

It is also vital to boost road maintenance standards. 12% of the injury claims dealt with by CTC's solicitors are due to road maintenance defects. Potholes cause inconvenience to drivers but can cause very serious injuries, and occasional fatalities, to cyclists.

Planned road maintenance should also be seen as an opportunity. When a road is being resurfaced, local authorities should be encouraged to consider whether the road could be redesigned to be more cycle-friendly at the same time. New York's Department of Transport has delivered some excellent cycle facilities very cost-effectively by this means, and Plymouth City Council is now copying this approach. Councils with cash-strapped road maintenance and cycling budgets should look to achieve these synergies as normal practice.

For more information see CTC's booklet 'Space for Cycling: a guide for decision-makers' [www.ctc.org.uk/blog/chris-peck/space-for-cycling-guide-sets-out-what-councillors-need-to-do](http://www.ctc.org.uk/blog/chris-peck/space-for-cycling-guide-sets-out-what-councillors-need-to-do).

**4. Safety measures:** *in addition to consistent cycle-friendly design, action is needed to address the actual and perceived threats to cyclists from lorries and from irresponsible drivers.*

CTC's Road Justice campaign ([www.roadjustice.org.uk](http://www.roadjustice.org.uk)) seeks to strengthen road traffic law and its enforcement, given that cyclists are disproportionately the victims (rather than the perpetrators) of irresponsible road behaviour. We are concerned at a 29% reduction in road police numbers, a drastic shift in prosecutions and convictions from "dangerous" to "careless" driving offences, and a growing reluctance from the courts to impose driving bans even in fatal cases.

We welcome a restatement in the Plan of a previous commitment to review road traffic offences and sentencing guidance. We nonetheless call for action to strengthen roads policing and the training provided for officers and PCSOs carrying out roads policing duties.

However the Plan is noticeably lacking in any commitments to address lorry safety, other than to "*continue to address cycle safety issues by engaging with other government departments, freight and cycling representatives groups and vehicle manufacturers.*" Lorries are involved in around a fifth of cyclists' fatalities in Britain, and over half of those in London.

Actions needed include the promotion of improved cab design, research into and adoption of safety equipment (e.g. detectors and camera systems), and the promotion of a variety of measures to limit lorry use of busy streets at busy times.

**5. Positive promotion:** *cycling needs to be encouraged and promoted, e.g. through 'Bikeability' cycle training, as a safe and normal activity for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. This will require cross-departmental and cross-organisational action both nationally and locally, involving the public, private and voluntary sectors.*

Although simply promoting cycle use in hostile cycling conditions will not achieve mass cycle use, there is nonetheless very good evidence that “smarter choices” measures are highly cost-effective ways to boost cycle use – with a typical benefit-to-cost ratio of 10:1.

However activities such as cycle training, or the promotion of cycling for health patients, people with disabilities, and others from disadvantaged groups or communities, are dependent on revenue funding. The Plan makes no commitments to secure revenue funding. This is a huge missed opportunity, as promoting cycling would be an extremely cost-effective use of public health budgets. For more information see CTC's 'Smarter Choices' briefing: [www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/smarter-choices](http://www.ctc.org.uk/campaigning/views-and-briefings/smarter-choices).

## Key facts

### *Economy*

- Cycling tackles congestion – a typical road lane can carry seven times as many cycles as cars.
- Making town centres and residential areas cycle-friendly enhances their attractiveness, boosting their retail vitality and desirability as places to live.
- There are also economic benefits due to better health (see below), e.g. reduced health-care costs and absenteeism, and improved productivity.
- Even with Britain's current low levels of cycle use, it is estimated to contribute annual benefits to Britain's economy of around £3 billion.

### *Health*

- People who cycle regularly in mid-adulthood typically enjoy a level of fitness equivalent to someone 10 years younger and their life expectancy is two years above the average.
- A population-wide study in Copenhagen found that, compared with those who cycled regularly to work, people who did not do so had a 39% higher mortality rate, regardless of whether or not they also took part in other physical activities.
- Increased cycle use is associated with improvements in cyclists' safety: the 'safety in numbers' effect. Moreover, cyclists have a very low rate of involvement in collisions where another road user is injured. Hence, more cycling is good not just for cyclists' safety but for other road users too.

### *The environment*

- A person making the average daily car commute of four miles each way would save half a tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> by switching to cycling – 5% of the average UK carbon footprint.
- Doubling cycle use through switching from driving to cycling would reduce Britain's total greenhouse emissions by 0.6 million tonnes, about as much as switching all air travel between London and Scotland to the rail network.
- Cycling is one of the easiest and cheapest ways for individuals to reduce their contribution to climate change on a day-to-day basis.