



---

Department for Transport

## **Cycling Delivery Plan**

Consultation response

**November 2014**

---

Rebecca Fuller, Policy and Research Manager

**pteg** Support Unit  
Wellington House  
40-50 Wellington Street  
Leeds – LS1 2DE  
0113 251 7445  
info@pteg.net



## Content

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>3. Theme 1: Vision, leadership and ambition</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>4. Theme 2: Funding</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Theme 3: Infrastructure and Planning</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Theme 4: Safety and perceptions of safety</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>7. Governance and Monitoring</b> .....	<b>6</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. **pteg** represents the six strategic transport bodies which between them serve more than eleven million people in Greater Manchester (Transport for Greater Manchester), Merseyside (Merseytravel), South Yorkshire (SYPTTE), Tyne and Wear (Nexus), the West Midlands (Centro) and West Yorkshire (West Yorkshire Combined Authority). This is a joint response, developed in consultation with these bodies.
- 1.2. Bristol and the West of England Partnership, Nottingham City Council, Transport for London and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport are associate members of **pteg** though this response does not represent their views.
- 1.3. The strategic transport bodies plan, procure, provide and promote public transport in some of Britain's largest city regions, with the aim of delivering integrated public transport networks accessible to all.

## 2. Summary

- We welcome the Government's commitment to delivering a step change in cycling levels and the work that has already been done in taking forward the cycling and walking agenda.
- Achieving a step change requires strong leadership, commitment, funding and resources over a sustained period. Whilst incremental progress is being made and the ambitions set are challenging, there is still much to do before cycling levels akin to those seen in countries like the Netherlands can be achieved.
- We would like to see the 'ambitions' to double cycling levels and to increase walking to school transformed into firm commitments.
- Whilst national targets are valuable in providing impetus and focus, it is important to bear in mind that walking and cycling are essentially local activities and that individual areas are therefore best placed to determine appropriate targets tailored to local circumstances.
- More could be done to separate cycling and walking within the plan, reflecting the different issues relating to each. The plan should be renamed the 'Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan' to reflect the equal footing of the two modes.
- The plan should also be co-badged and co-funded by other relevant Government departments to reflect the cross-sector benefits cycling and walking deliver.
- We welcome the opportunity presented in the Delivery Plan to form partnerships with Government where, in return for signing up for a series of actions, local authorities will receive access to supporting tools and incentives. Any such partnerships must be backed by adequate funding and more clarity is needed about the form support will take.
- We are disappointed that no reference is made to the interaction between cycling, walking and public transport in the document. There is a need for more measures to encourage the integration of cycling and walking with public transport, enabling people to make joined-up, sustainable journeys from door-to-door.
- The loss of Cycling England continues to be felt as this body performed many of the tasks that the Delivery Plan sets out, such as providing expert support to local authorities and a one-stop shop for good practice resources.

- Adequate funding is absolutely vital to achieving the Government's cycling and walking vision and the visions that our members would like to achieve locally. Any funding package should provide long-term certainty, support devolution of decision making to local areas and seek to minimise administrative burdens on local government.
- Local government is currently experiencing a revenue funding squeeze. Capital investment in infrastructure should be complemented by revenue funding to maximise the potential for lasting behaviour change as well as to ensure resources are available to design, deliver and maintain infrastructure.
- Safety and – equally - perceptions of safety are rightly identified as major barriers to greater levels of cycling and walking. These must be addressed through a combination of infrastructure and design improvements, traffic speeds and training/awareness-raising for cyclists of all ages and for other road users. Bikeability training is a key tool in overcoming these barriers and a firm commitment should be made to maintain it. The importance of adult cycle training should also be acknowledged in the Plan.
- We welcome the proposals for monitoring progress against the plan, which should help ensure that momentum is maintained.

### **3. Theme 1: Vision, leadership and ambition**

- 3.1. We welcome the Government's commitment to delivering a step change in cycling levels and the work that has already been done in taking forward the cycling and walking agenda. The Government is right to recognise that such a shift is not achievable overnight and requires strong leadership and commitment over a sustained period. We would add that achieving this vision also relies on long-term availability of funding and resources (see next section). The fact that this plan covers a ten year period is a positive step towards the required long-term commitment.
- 3.2. The plan sets out an ambition to double cycling levels between 2013 and 2025. Whilst this is not as high as the target recommended by the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group (APPCG) in their 'Get Britain Cycling' report, it is nonetheless a challenging goal. However, there needs to be a continuing commitment to further increase the journey share of cycling beyond 2025. Doubling cycling levels between 2013 and 2025 would mean that cycling would still only account for 4% of all journey stages, far below the levels in countries such as the Netherlands.
- 3.3. The plan sets out an ambition to increase the percentage of children aged five to ten that usually walk to school by 7% between 2013 and 2025. There would appear to be scope for a more stretching target, given that average primary school journey is just 1.5 miles<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.4. The plans to double cycling levels and to increase walking to school are both described as 'ambitions'. Ambitions are a desire, rather than a commitment, to achieve something. We would like to see these ambitions turned into commitments.
- 3.5. It is also important to note that whilst national targets for cycling and walking can provide impetus and focus at one level, both activities are essentially local. A uniform target, to be applied from rural Norfolk to central Manchester, does not make sense. Each individual area is best placed to determine what an achievable, but stretching, target would be, based on local circumstances and needs.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/change-your-travel/children-and-families/school-run>

- 3.6. We agree that it is natural to extend the cycling commitment to walking, however, it is important to note that some of the issues relating to walking are very different to those relating to cycling. We understand that a separate Walking Delivery Plan is unlikely to be possible, however, more could be done to separate the two modes within the document. The document should also be renamed the 'Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan' to ensure the two modes are placed on an equal footing. Indeed, walking is accessible to more people, given that it requires no additional equipment. It is not true to say, however that 'All of us walk to some extent everyday', as is stated in paragraph 1.2 of the Plan. Throughout the Delivery Plan, it is important to consider how we can make streets accessible to those with disabilities, including those who do not have use of their legs.
- 3.7. Leadership would be further strengthened nationally and locally by cross-sector support and commitment to cycling. The Delivery Plan itself, for example, would be strengthened if it were a cross-departmental, rather than a Department for Transport document, reflecting the wide-ranging benefits cycling and walking offer to the economy, health, social connectedness, communities and the environment. The cross-departmental 'Moving More, Living More' campaign, mentioned in paragraph 1.3 of the plan, demonstrates that this can be achieved. Such an approach could also help to ensure that the actions of other departments do not worsen conditions for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 3.8. Paragraph 1.3 also mentions the Government's commitment to creating a physical activity legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We believe this document should also make reference to building a legacy from the Tour de France Grand Départ which took place in Yorkshire this year. The event captured the imaginations of people nationwide and it is crucial that the resulting momentum and buzz around cycling is maintained and translated into more people cycling, more often.
- 3.9. We welcome the opportunity presented in the Delivery Plan to form partnerships with Government where, in return for signing up for a series of actions, local authorities will receive access to supporting tools and incentives. It vital that any such deals are underpinned by adequate funding to support delivery and enable local areas the freedom to design packages that are appropriate to local circumstances and priorities.
- 3.10. The plan refers to 'priority access to funding' for partner authorities but it is not clear what this will mean in practice. The detailed actions at Annex A also refer to the provision of a continuous source of seed funding, up to 2021, for authorities taking up the partnership opportunity. The long-term nature of this seed funding is positive, but it would be useful to understand more about the scale of the funding pot and what it can be used for.
- 3.11. More clarity is also needed on what shape the support to partner authorities will take, including who forms the Active Travel Consortium, what their remit will be and what resources they will have access to. We regret the loss of Cycling England which formerly provided a high quality, dedicated resource to support policy making and delivery.
- 3.12. The plan mentions that over 13,500 cycle parking facilities have been provided at rail stations and Annex A includes an action to strengthen requirements for cycling and walking in rail franchise specifications and in new and refurbished stations. This is positive, however, we are disappointed that no further reference is made to the interaction between cycling, walking and public transport in the document. There is a need for more measures to encourage the integration of cycling and walking with public transport, enabling people to make joined-up, sustainable journeys from door-to-door.

## 4. Theme 2: Funding

- 4.1. Paragraph 2.1 of the Plan notes that funding for cycling is steadily increasing and is currently around £5 per person, per year. This figure is rather misleading as it will be heavily skewed towards the higher levels of cycling investment in London. England outside the capital still spends less than £2 per head on cycling, according to the APPCG report. This should be reflected in the final version of the plan.
- 4.2. Adequate funding is absolutely vital to achieving the Government's cycling and walking vision and the visions that our members would like to achieve locally. Further details are required on how the £10 per head investment will be achieved, sustained and built on over the long-term.
- 4.3. Long-term funding certainty is key to delivering ambitious plans for walking and cycling, enabling local government to make steady progress against overarching, coherent visions for transformation. This includes developing the 'planned and funded cycling and walking investment programmes' envisaged in paragraph 1.6 of the Plan. Long-term funding certainty also allows local government more time to develop schemes and have them 'shovel ready' in advance of funding being released.
- 4.4. However the funding is provided, we believe that local government is best placed to decide where and how it should be spent, drawing on their knowledge of local needs and underpinned by leadership at national level. In addition, as the detailed actions in Annex A acknowledge, efforts should be made to reduce the administrative burden on local authorities in bidding for funds.
- 4.5. The long-term funding streams identified in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.7 of the Plan are welcome, but is unclear how much these will contribute to the £10 per person target.
- 4.6. There are questions as to whether the Local Growth Fund (LGF) presents a reliable source of funding for cycling and walking. Analysis of the Strategic Economic Plans submitted by Local Enterprise Partnerships as bidding documents for the LGF found that half requested capital funding for dedicated walking and cycling schemes<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, some of these schemes were unsuccessful in gaining funding from Government, potentially raising questions as to the likelihood of cycling and walking schemes succeeding within the appraisal framework used. We welcome the reference in paragraph 2.4 of the Plan stating that national support for cycling and walking will include advice on engaging LEPs, businesses and charities.
- 4.7. Paragraph 2.5 of the Plan mentions ensuring 'a fair share' of highways maintenance funding goes to cycling and walking. More clarity is needed as to what a 'fair share' means and how it will be allocated in a way that ensures highway authorities retain the freedom to decide how best to use their funding to meet local priorities. Annex A makes reference to 'potentially' using the Highway Maintenance fund to support cycling and walking which varies from the wording used in paragraph 2.5. The Plan should be consistent in whether this is a definite or a potential funding stream.
- 4.8. Overall, the funding streams identified in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.7 of the Plan appear to relate either to investing in capital schemes to make infrastructure improvements or to providing advice and support. These are welcomed but revenue funding is also needed to support

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/%C2%A32bn-local-growth-plans-ignore-smarter-travel-choices>

delivery on the ground. This is important, for example, in ensuring resources are available to maintain new and existing infrastructure and to deliver the marketing, training and behaviour change activity that helps to ensure people make use of it.

- 4.9. Revenue funding is currently in short supply among transport authorities as a result of three key trends:
- A general preference from Government for capital funding (e.g. for large infrastructure projects) rather than for revenue funding, which behaviour change measures rely on.
  - Cuts to Department for Communities and Local Government funding for local government.
  - Local transport spending outside London losing out to London, national roads and national rail in Department for Transport spending plans since 2010.
- 4.10. As the Government continues to explore funding options, it would make sense to identify which other departments benefit from investment in cycling and walking (e.g. the Department of Health) and look at whether additional funding can be secured from these departments in recognition of these benefits. The £1 million secured from the Department of Health for walking initiatives is a positive first step, but is a long way from fully reflecting the benefits which cycling and walking bring to health. A cross-departmental funding approach is needed to reflect the cross-sector benefits cycling and walking deliver, as recommended in the APPCG report.

## **5. Theme 3: Infrastructure and Planning**

- 5.1. Measures to consider the most vulnerable road users first in planning and improving infrastructure are welcome. However, to maximise effectiveness, these must be combined with softer measures to encourage people to make use of the infrastructure. This could include cycle training, marketing and bike maintenance schemes, for example.
- 5.2. As well as affecting the ability of local government to lock in behaviour change, the revenue funding squeeze described in the previous section also affects the capacity of local government to design, deliver and maintain capital infrastructure projects due to a lack of staff resources to support work programmes.
- 5.3. Paragraph 3.2 of the Plan lists a number of areas that the Government, through its Cycle Proofing Working Group, will address. Again, the loss of Cycling England is regrettable, given that it previously performed many of the tasks listed. For example, the Cycling England website provided (and still provides, albeit in an archived format) a single point of information about best practice for creating and designing cycle-friendly streets. Cycling England also had an expert support team dedicated to engineering and planning and tasked with working with local authorities and other organisations.
- 5.4. The Cycle Proofing Working Group should have direct links to, and take account of the outputs from, the Cycle Cities Working Together Group which is involved in refining and testing innovative cycle infrastructure.
- 5.5. Consideration should also be given to how cycle proofing might be undertaken at local level for roads outside of the strategic network, given questions around how far the LGF can be relied upon to allocate funding for cycling and walking (see paragraph 4.6 of this response).

## 6. Theme 4: Safety and perceptions of safety

- 6.1. The Delivery Plan is right to identify safety and - equally - perceptions of safety as a major barrier to greater uptake of cycling and walking among people of all ages. As well as tackling the physical safety of streets and roads, this also requires softer measures such as training and marketing.
- 6.2. Teaching children from a young age about how to travel safely on foot and by bike helps to establish sustainable travel habits for life. Bikeability training is a key tool in this education process and one which we believe should form part of the National Curriculum as an essential skill for an active lifestyle. Paragraph 4.3 of the Plan stops short of committing to continue funding for Bikeability post 2015/16. We would like to see a strong commitment to maintain this vital programme.
- 6.3. Annex A includes an action to 'increase awareness of cycle training for children and adults', however, there is no mention of the importance of training for adults in the body of the document. Adult cycle training is important in getting more people to cycle, more often and consideration should be given as to how this might be supported and funded.
- 6.4. This section contains no reference to what can be done to address the behaviour of other road users and its effect on cyclists and pedestrians. Annex A contains reference to the legal process for traffic offences and pledges to work with freight groups and vehicle manufacturers, but no mention is made in the document of the need to educate other road users in how to safely share the road with cyclists and pedestrians. The document would benefit from more emphasis on the need for training and awareness-raising for these other road users, alongside that provided for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 6.5. The Plan should also make direct reference to, and seek to address, other factors that contribute to safety and perceptions of safety, such as road and vehicle design and traffic speeds. Aside from a reference to establishing safe routes to and around schools, Annex A contains no specific actions relating to these important issues.

## 7. Governance and Monitoring

- 7.1. We welcome the Government's continuing recognition of the importance of cycling and walking in achieving policy goals across a range of departments. Paragraph 5.1 of the document describes the Cycling Delivery Plan as a cross-government plan, we feel that this could be reflected in the way the final document is badged. Currently it is presented as a Department for Transport document but could be strengthened if the logos of other departments, or the HM Government logo, were used on the front cover. This united approach could also be reflected in the foreword and introduction to the finalised document.
- 7.2. The proposed mechanisms for monitoring progress appear appropriate in ensuring that momentum is maintained. It is positive that the biennial review process will include the opportunity to strengthen and create additional actions, demonstrating a flexibility of approach.