



House of Commons  
Transport Committee

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**Active travel:  
Government Response  
to the Committee's  
Eleventh Report**

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**Ninth Special Report of Session  
2017–19**

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## Transport Committee

The Transport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Transport and its associated public bodies.

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## Ninth Special Report

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The Transport Committee published its Eleventh Report of Session 2017–19, [Active travel: increasing levels of walking and cycling in England](#), as HC 1487, on 23 July 2019. The Government response was received on 10 September 2019. The Committee's recommendations are in **bold** text, followed by the response from the Government.

## Appendix: Government Response

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### Introduction

The Department would like to thank the Transport Select Committee for its inquiry into active travel and welcomes the Committee's report.

***Recommendation 1 – We recommend that the Government produces an annual report on delivery of its Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS). This should set out progress meeting the targets set out in the strategy, an assessment of whether the targets are still fit for purpose or should be revised, and an assessment of what further actions are necessary to meet the Government's targets. We welcome the then Minister's statement that he intended to publish an update over the summer and expect this to be published by the end of September 2019 at the latest.***

1. The Department plans to publish the first progress report as soon as possible, setting out progress in delivering the actions, aims and targets set out in the strategy. The report will include the latest data from the National Travel Survey (published in July) and Road Safety Statistics (for publication later in September 2019). It will cover the first two years of the strategy, since publication in April 2017 and establish emerging trends. The Department will consider more regular publication, potentially on an annual basis.

2. The Department does not intend to include an assessment of fitness for purpose of the aims and targets or additional further actions to deliver them within the progress report. This work will instead be considered alongside decisions on future funding for cycling and walking in the forthcoming multi-year Spending Review, due in 2020, and as part of developing the next phase of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy post 2020/21 (CWIS 2). This will ensure that work to meet future aims and targets is deliverable and underpinned by a resource-based and funded plan.

***Recommendation 2 – We recommend that the Government revise its Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy with more ambitious targets for increasing levels of cycling and—particularly—walking. A draft revised strategy should be published alongside the Government's first report on its progress towards meeting the objectives set out in its strategy, to be consulted upon in the autumn with a view to a final revised strategy being published early in 2020.***

3. The Government will consider the appropriateness of aims and targets to increase walking and cycling alongside development of CWIS 2. The work will include an assessment of how these interventions contribute to a wide range of Government priorities including health, the environment, economic growth and prosperity.

4. It is not feasible to publish a draft revised strategy later this year alongside the progress report. Revisions to the strategy will need to be based on robust, evidence-based evaluation of key initiatives to identify the most cost-effective set of interventions for the next period. The planned package of evaluation activity being carried out on Cycle Ambition Cities, the Access Fund and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Planning (LCWIP) process will not be completed until next year. Following completion of the multi-year Spending Review, planned for 2020, the Government intends to align CWIS 2 with future spending commitments, expected to cover the period 2021/22 to 2025/26. The Government will consider consulting on elements of the strategy, both formally and informally, as part of the development process.

***Recommendation 3 – We recommend that any revised Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy include targets for getting people to switch from driving to active travel. These targets should be based on the number of journeys made by car, foot or bicycle for journeys of less than 1, 2, 5 and 10 miles. The Government should set modal shift targets for 2025 and 2040, to align with the targets it sets for increasing levels of walking and cycling. These should be at a level that ensures England meets—at the very least—the Committee on Climate Change’s assumption that there will be a 10% transport modal shift by 2050. Local authorities should be encouraged to set local targets for modal shift as part of their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, which we consider in the next Chapter.***

5. Enabling people to choose the most sustainable mode of travel for their journey is vital for reducing emissions from road transport. A broader range of aims and targets will be considered as part of the development of CWIS 2 and other Government transport strategies, which will build on local authority engagement to understand how to best promote active travel at the local level.

***Recommendation 4 – We recommend that, in its response to this Report, the Department for Transport set out a plan for improving how the Government champions and provides leadership on active travel, including plans for working with other departments to improve coordination of cross-government interventions by increasing understanding of the contribution active travel can make to their own objectives and how they recognise this in their own plans and strategies, in order to enhance delivery of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.***

6. The Government provides leadership on active travel by setting a clear strategic direction and by providing significant amounts of funding to enable the delivery of the CWIS. The Department welcomes the work of local active travel commissioners and champions in promoting increased levels of cycling and walking across England, and will continue to work with them to help increase cycling and walking at the local level. The Department will consider what role there is for a national Cycling and Walking champion to work alongside and reinforce the leadership of local commissioners.

7. The Government is engaging with cycling and walking stakeholders to identify ways to improve the effectiveness of behaviour change campaigns that promote active travel. The Department hosted a workshop in July 2019 with behaviour change and communications professionals from a range of third sector organisations, local authorities and Public Health England, to explore ways of increasing the effectiveness of behaviour change campaigns to promote walking and cycling. The Department is also working with

the charity Business in the Community to engage with large employers and encourage them to support more active forms of travel for employees, particularly when commuting to and from work.

8. The Department works with a range of other Government Departments to ensure that the strategic aims of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy are incorporated into wider government initiatives, for example Prevention is Better Than Cure, Childhood Obesity Plans and the Sports Strategy. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights the importance of considering provision for pedestrians and cyclists at the earliest stages of development planning and this is being reinforced in appropriate Planning Practice Guidance. Departmental officials also contribute to work across Government to assess bids for new transport and infrastructure investments to ensure appropriate consideration is given to active travel.

9. The Government is considering how to improve delivery of the wider portfolio of initiatives aimed at increasing physical activity, building on the work of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Healthy Living. This work, in particular, involves the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Sport England, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Public Health England (PHE) and the Department for Education (DfE). Options being considered include joint programme management arrangements across Government, co-located and/or virtual joint teams, and/or joint delivery of complementary initiatives in local areas, for example Sport England Local Delivery Pilots and LCWIP initiatives.

***Recommendation 5 – We recommend that the Government assess how successful the LCWIP pilot has been in helping local authorities develop plans that will ensure the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy is delivered. If LCWIPs have helped local authorities prioritise active travel and develop plans for increasing walking and cycling at a local level, in a way that represents good value for money, then the Government should be clear that it expects all local authorities to develop these plans, and should commit to providing technical support to help all local authorities in England develop their LCWIPs.***

10. The Department will shortly commission an evaluation study of the LCWIP support package that has been piloted with 46 local authorities. The initial feedback we have received from local authorities via our workshops and other engagement with authorities has been positive. Technical guidance provided on the LCWIP process has been well received and authorities understand the value of following the LCWIP process to plan future schemes. However, local authority capacity to produce and finalise LCWIPs is a challenge in many areas. Most if not all authorities are making good use of the Propensity to Cycle Tool to identify key routes and networks. The best practice study tours have been particularly effective at providing local authority leaders and officers a first-hand experience of some of the best schemes around the country.

11. Development and expansion of the LCWIP support programme will be considered as part of the forthcoming Spending Review. Following evaluation of the scheme, and subject to appropriate funding being available, the Department intends to offer support to all highway authorities (and relevant Combined Authority Transport Bodies) outside London with an enhanced package of support in response to the learning from the pilot

scheme. In particular, the Department is considering how to facilitate development of pipeline projects prioritised in plans so that there is a clear route from network design, through feasibility studies and business case development, to construction of schemes.

***Recommendation 6 – We recommend that, as part of the process for reporting on progress delivering the CWIS, the Government set out plans for monitoring and reporting on delivery of LCWIPs, including an assessment of the contribution they have made to the delivery of the Government’s Strategy.***

12. The Department intends to monitor delivery of network plans and pipeline projects prioritised in LCWIPs as well as delivery of agreed LCWIP documents themselves. The monitoring framework will be developed as part of future development and expansion of the LCWIP programme. In order to qualify for future funding, the Department would expect scheme promoters to apply appropriate metrics for monitoring and reporting in accordance with the CWIS objectives, such as the change in cycling and walking levels in local areas.

***Recommendation 7 – We recommend that the Government bring together the funding it expects to be invested in active travel into a dedicated funding stream for local authorities to deliver improvements—such as those set out in Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans—that will increase levels of walking and cycling. This new funding stream should make money available for resource as well as capital spending to both develop and maximise the benefits of infrastructure improvements. Creating a single fund for active travel will make it easier for local authorities to apply for funding and would give them the confidence to prioritise active travel, in the knowledge that bids for these funds would not be in competition with bids for other purposes.***

13. The Government is committed to delivering the aims and ambitions set out in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, and to ensuring that sufficient funding is available for this. Decisions on future funding for cycling and walking will be made as part of the multi-year Spending Review, now planned for 2020. This will consider not only the total amount of funding which should be made available, but also the appropriate balance between ring-fenced and non-ring-fenced funding, and how this may be distributed.

14. Cycling and walking projects contribute to a wide range of Government priorities including health, the environment, economic growth and prosperity, and the Spending Review will allow the Government to take a holistic and joined-up view of funding opportunities for them. Many broader capital funds, such as the Housing Infrastructure Fund and Transforming Cities Fund, will continue to be available for a variety of infrastructure projects, allowing local authorities to identify and bid for funding in line with local priorities and needs.

15. Subject to appropriate levels of funding being made available through the Spending Review, the Department intends to develop an integrated, long term, capital and revenue fund for local authorities as a successor to the current Access Fund (for behaviour change) and Cycle Ambition Cities programme (for capital investment). One of the key purposes of the fund will be to enable delivery of high value for money projects identified within agreed LCWIPs and ensure that synergies are maximised between capital and behaviour change initiatives. The fund will be appropriately scaled to be able to facilitate delivery of

the 2025 aims and targets. However, it will not be the only funding source available to local authorities, who will still be able to access a range of wider Government infrastructure funds.

***Recommendation 8 – We recommend that, as part of the annual progress report on delivery of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, the Department publish figures on the proportion of each local authority's transport infrastructure budget which is spent on active travel. This would show that the Department is monitoring local authorities, and it would provide a basis for those local authorities who are not meeting this target to be held to account.***

16. As part of the progress report on delivery of CWIS, the Department plans to publish a summary of all ring-fenced funding provided to local authorities since the beginning of the current Spending Review period (2016/17) alongside details of wider highways funding that is utilised for cycling and walking initiatives.

17. The Department does not hold detailed information on each local authority's transport infrastructure budget and the proportion utilised on cycling and walking projects, but a survey to collect this type of information from a subset of authorities was piloted over the summer and options for collecting this information from all local authorities will be considered next year.

***Recommendation 9 – We recommend that the Department review its WebTAG guidance by the end of the year, with a view to improving its usefulness to local authorities in assessing walking and cycling schemes.***

18. The Department's Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) recommends that all significant benefits and dis-benefits should be taken into account when making transport investment decisions including the value of improved journey experience of users and external dis-benefits of car use, such as air quality, congestion, accidents and emissions impacts. Various other benefits of active travel are also taken into account such as impacts on mortality and absenteeism.

19. The Department has already published several tools to enable promoters of active travel schemes to reduce the time and cost of appraisals such as the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit and the Propensity to Cycle Tool.

20. The Department is continually improving TAG appraisal methods. An Appraisal and Modelling Strategy was consulted on and published recently that identified various priorities for developing appraisal methods and evidence for active travel. Identified areas of future research include updating our evidence for the journey quality benefits of segregated cycle lanes, broadening the range of health impacts which can be appraised, and providing guidance to forecast the increased uptake in cycling and walking from proposed interventions.

21. The Department continually updates the evidence base and tool set to keep them robust and up-to-date. For example, the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit is currently being reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose, to develop more comprehensive user guidance to support the toolkit, and potentially to broaden the range of impacts it captures.

***Recommendation 10 – We recommend that the Government increase funding for active travel in future Spending Review periods. The Department for Transport should propose a long-term funding settlement for active travel, increasing over time. This would give the signals necessary to local authorities to make active travel a priority. The Department for Transport should seek appropriate funds from the Treasury to ensure the delivery of new, ambitious targets in the revised Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy that we have called on the Department to adopt.***

22. The Department has developed a number of investment models in order to ascertain the funding required to meet the 2025 aims and targets set out in CWIS. These models will also be used to understand the costs and benefits for increasing levels of ambition and therefore underpin future Spending Review proposals.

23. The Department plans to negotiate for a long-term funding settlement for cycling and walking in line with funding requirements projected through scenarios developed within the investment models. Funding levels will differ depending on priorities for investment, for example to maximise health outcomes or to provide geographical equity. Interim results from the investment models indicate that annual investment per head in England is likely to need to at least double if the cycling aim is to be achieved in 2025.<sup>1</sup> This investment will continue to come from a number of sources, including DfT funds, wider Government infrastructure funds, local funding (eg from local authority revenues and developer contributions) and private funding (eg sponsorship of bike hire schemes). A significant proportion of these funds will need to be provided by the Department in order to fund essential training and behaviour change initiatives and for core network development in order to maximise the impact of wider capital investment.

***Recommendation 11 – We recommend that, as soon as possible, the Department for Transport review its existing suite of infrastructure design and planning guidance for local authorities, and how it supports the sharing of good practice, to ensure that local authorities are not unnecessarily inhibited from making the changes they need to in order to deliver their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. This review should cover:***

- ***interventions aimed at increasing levels of walking;***
- ***measures to ensure that new housing developments have adequate provision for pedestrians and cyclists;***
- ***an assessment of how to make the case for local infrastructure improvements to local representatives and the public, and***
- ***measures necessary to ensure that infrastructure improvements for pedestrians and cyclists do not adversely affect other road users, and in particular disabled people.***

24. The Department's Local Transport Note 2/08 provides detailed advice to local authorities on the design of cycling infrastructure. Much has been learned since its publication in 2008 and the Department will publish an updated version shortly. This has been informed by international design guidance and guidance within the UK including the London Design Standards and Active Travel Design Guidance in Wales.

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<sup>1</sup> Jesse Norman, former Minister of State for Transport, statement to Transport Select Committee (1 May)

25. The update has been led by industry expert Phil Jones in collaboration with a reference group made up of a range of stakeholders representing local bodies, private organisations, third sector organisations, the devolved nations and accessibility groups. The advice is being reviewed to ensure that practitioners can consider how to design and use their streets in a way which reduces the barriers for people choosing to cycle and to reflect recent experience and best practice in design, especially in terms of safety and inclusivity for disabled cyclists and pedestrians.

26. The Department has also agreed to create a new Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Group to consider both cycling and walking infrastructure design. The expert group will advise DfT and highway authorities on good practice and identify and help disseminate high quality local guidance and exemplar projects. It will also advise on ways to upskill highways engineers and planners to take into account the latest best practice.

27. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has recently been updated to underline the importance of considering provision for pedestrians and cyclists at the earliest stages of development planning, and to encourage incorporation of LCWIPs within local plans where these are in place. The Department is also working with MHCLG to update underpinning planning practice guidance.

28. Through the LCWIP pilot programme the Department is already working with a consortium of expert organisations (Sustrans, Living Streets and Cycling UK) to deliver a comprehensive programme of strategic support to local authorities in order to address specific barriers to the delivery of LCWIPs. The strategic support package brings together targeted support to help authorities make the case for investment at the local level, including with the public and local stakeholders. It includes advice on presenting the economic evidence, drawing on case studies, as well as stakeholder mapping to improve consultation with local communities.

***Recommendation 12 – We recommend that the Department for Transport consult with local authorities on what additional powers might help them implement Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. We also reiterate the recommendation, made most recently in our May 2019 Report on Bus Services in England outside London that the Government implement Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to decriminalise moving traffic offences so that they can be enforced by local transport authorities.***

29. Local authorities have a wide range of powers available to them to manage their road networks, through various traffic management measures. The Highways Act 1980 gives them general powers to improve their roads, including through the provision of cycling and walking facilities. Traffic Regulation Orders are widely used to implement measures that can enhance the environment for cycling and walking.

30. Local traffic authorities are responsible for setting speed limits on local roads. They have the flexibility to set local speed limits that are appropriate for the individual road, reflecting local needs and taking account of local considerations. The Department for Transport issued guidance to local highway authorities on setting local speed limits in 2013.

31. There has been a shift in recent years towards street design measures that rebalance streets to reduce the dominance of motor traffic. Design approaches such as those set out

in the Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2, which put pedestrians and cyclists at the top of the hierarchy of provision, can help increase levels of active travel and deliver a range of health and other benefits.

32. The Department has also encouraged local authorities to temporarily close appropriate roads for children's play. DfT Ministers wrote to all English local authorities in June 2019 to outline a simplified process for closing roads on a temporary basis by using Section 16A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act.

33. Local authorities involved in the LCWIP pilot have identified implementation of Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act, and the consequential additional powers available to local transport authorities for proportionate enforcement, as a helpful tool for encouraging higher levels of cycling. The Department notes the Committee's recommendation on implementation of Part 6 and will consider this carefully alongside wider measures to improve safety for cycling and walking.