



**London Cycling Campaign response to National Infrastructure Commission  
Second National Infrastructure Assessment call for evidence.**

**(To: NIA2.CfE\_Responses@nic.gov.uk)**

**3 February 2022**

The London Cycling Campaign welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the National Infrastructure Commission's Second National Infrastructure Assessment. We trust the information, references and data below contributes to the Commission's work, and we stand ready to provide further information if requested.

**About LCC**

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 20,000 supporters, of whom more than 11,000 are fully paid-up members. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in Greater London; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

**Introduction: "Reaching Net Zero"<sup>1</sup>**

A declared aim of both the National Infrastructure Commission and the government is to reach net zero emissions.

Road transport emissions account for around a quarter of all UK carbon emissions and have been flat (aside from the Covid period) even as other sources of emissions have recorded significant falls. As the Commission states in its first baseline assessment:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://nic.org.uk/studies-reports/national-infrastructure-assessment/>

*“The transport sector is the biggest single contributor to UK carbon emissions as well as emitting other harmful airborne pollutants like nitrogen oxides and particulate matter.”*

In its report for the second baseline assessment the Commission re-affirms the problem:

*“emissions from transport have not been declining, despite improvements in engine efficiency”*

Government data notes that while transport emissions declined during lockdown year (and cycling increased by 46%) they still accounted for 24% of all emissions.

**Our response** to the Commission’s call for evidence for its second baseline assessment **addresses this existential challenge and highlights the key role active travel, and micro-transport in general, must play in not only cutting emissions but also addressing the other challenges set by the Commission of reducing congestion and considering demand management measures.**

The currently low level of cycling in the UK overall must not marginalise or overlook the mode in future planning. Quite the opposite, the growth potential, to Dutch or Danish levels or even those of Hackney or Cambridge, demonstrates its significant role in addressing both climate change and public health.

LCC commissioned and produced a comprehensive report, [Climate Safe Streets \(LCC 2019\)](https://www.lcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LCC-Climate-Safe-Streets-Report-2020.pdf) on the measures required to address climate change in the transport sector focusing on London and we commend the report to the Commission: <https://www.lcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LCC-Climate-Safe-Streets-Report-2020.pdf>

Its key recommendations were (the document includes a timeline and full details):

- *Expansion of the Strategic Cycling Network, at the highest quality*
- *Coordinated expansion of easy access to low-carbon shared mobility services*
- *Development and implementation of a London-wide Smart Road User Charging System*

- *Expansion of coverage of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, to make walking, cycling and scooting the natural choice for short journeys*
- *Expansion and optimisation of a network of conventional and demand-responsive zero-emission bus services*
- *Proactive support for transition to low-carbon freight transport*
- *Enabling shift to low-carbon vehicles*
- *Enabling of car-free planning*

In 2020 we produced a follow up to the report, Climate Safe Streets One Year On (LCC 2020), which provided additional updated recommendations in the light of Covid-19 developments and wider recognition of the climate crisis : <https://www.lcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LCC-Climate-Safe-Streets-one-year-on-2.pdf>

### **National and local government active travel targets**

We note that LCC is not alone in promoting the role of active travel in reducing emissions, congestion and ill health. The government’s ground-breaking report Gear Change (DfT 2020) with an introduction from the Prime Minister, ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf)) makes the case for increased cycle use at national level stating:

*“We want – and need – to see a step-change in cycling and walking in the coming years. The challenge is huge, but the ambition is clear. We have a unique opportunity to transform the role cycling and walking can play in our transport system, and get England moving differently.”*

Gear Change - one year on (DfT 2021) further strengthens the case made in the original document.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1007815/gear-change-one-year-on.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007815/gear-change-one-year-on.pdf)

We commend both reports to the Commission.

We also note that the government has recently set up Active Travel England with Chris Boardman as chair. We trust the Commission will liaise with and collaborate with this organisation.

In **London**, the Mayor, in both his Transport Strategy (<https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>) and the London Plan ([https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the\\_london\\_plan\\_2021.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf)), the latter approved by the Transport Secretary, sets a goal of increasing public transport use, walking and cycling from 63% of trips in 2018 to 80% by 2041. The two cited documents lay out the measures required to achieve this goal.

We note that in more recent guidance for the implementation of the London Plan ([https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sustainable\\_transport\\_walking\\_and\\_cycling\\_london\\_plan\\_guidance\\_0.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sustainable_transport_walking_and_cycling_london_plan_guidance_0.pdf)) the Mayor sets out the requirements for safeguarding land to enable the significant increase in active travel. Without such safeguarding of land for walking and cycling routes as well as for storage of cycles, provision of locations for shared used vehicles, mobility hubs and last mile delivery centres the required modal switch to sustainable modes will not be achieved.

### **Commission's questions**

**Question 1:** *Do the nine challenges identified by the Commission cover the most pressing issues that economic infrastructure will face over the next 30 years? If not, what other challenges should the Commission consider?*

As noted above, we think the challenge of a major increase in active travel should be explicitly recognised in the Commission's publications and aims. Relying on electric cars to deliver a zero emission target for transport without significantly reducing car use and providing the infrastructure for alternative modes is not realistic. The production of cars generates far higher emissions than that of smaller transport modes and the emission of other 'harmful airborne pollutants' remains a problem:

"Electric vehicles offer an opportunity to improve air quality, but even these produce harmful emissions from brake, tyre and road wear: non-exhaust processes contribute approximately half of coarser PM10 and a quarter of finer PM2.5 road traffic emissions. Manufacturing cars, and in particular batteries,

also has a significant environmental impact. The best way of improving air quality is to reduce overall vehicle usage.”

*Centre for London - Green Light: Next generation road user charging for a healthier, more liveable, London. 2019, Chapter 1*

Focusing on electric charging points and hydrogen supplies (another of the Commissions challenges) without considering the role of active and micro travel risks allowing the UK simply switching from internal combustion engines to electric ones and not reaping the benefit of an urban transport structure typical of cities in the Netherlands or Denmark where up to half of trips are cycled.

**Indeed, the single biggest thing needed in terms of national infrastructure the government can deliver, in order to rapidly reduce emissions, is to stop planning transport infrastructure around maintaining or increasing capacity for private motor vehicles (including electric and hydrogen ones) and start instead planning changes to infrastructure to rapidly reduce dependency on, and demand for, such vehicles in favour of other modes notably rail, boat, walking, cycling and public transport.**

***Question 16:** What evidence is there of the effectiveness in reducing congestion of different approaches to demand management used in cities around the world, including, but not limited to, congestion charging, and what are the different approaches used to build public consensus for such measures?*

LCC’s Climate Safe Streets report provides information about smart road user charging in the context of a move to sustainable transport for the large majority of journeys.

The [Green Light report](https://www.centreforlondon.org/reader/green-light/) (https://www.centreforlondon.org/reader/green-light/) from the Centre for London provides both specific recommendations on a smart road charging system for London and international comparative data on charging systems, such as that in Singapore, that are in place. We commend it to the Commission.