

## **CycleSheffield Response to the Sheffield Outdoor City Consultation**

Written by Emma Metcalfe (Secretary) on behalf of CycleSheffield, [info@cyclesheffield.org.uk](mailto:info@cyclesheffield.org.uk)

### **About CycleSheffield**

For over 20 years Cycle Sheffield has campaigned to create a cycle-friendly Sheffield, where everyone has the choice to make daily journeys by bike. Our vision is a cycle friendly and people friendly city where people of all ages and abilities have the freedom to ride a bike – not only the young, quick, fit and brave. We are a constituted organisation with over 550 paying members.

### **Our response**

We believe a well-planned high quality cycle network is the most effective way to meet Outdoor City aims of attracting talent and businesses to the Sheffield, making the most of our natural assets and leaving a legacy of increased participation in sport and recreational activities. A high quality cycle network will connect the places residents live, and the places where visitors to Sheffield are staying, with the outdoor activities of their choice.

### **Big businesses want better cycle infrastructure**

A recent consultation about the London Cycle Superhighways received responses from businesses with a combined number of employees in the tens of thousands. It included responses such as the one below from Unilever PLC (1,200 London staff and €50 billion turnover). You can read them all at [cyclingworks.wordpress.com](http://cyclingworks.wordpress.com).

*'We have tragically lost employees in the past who have been killed while trying to cycle to or from work. We do not want to lose any more. Our sister head office building in Rotterdam is surrounded by cycle lanes and an efficient urban tramway system. We see the benefits to urban mobility and quality of life.*

*We value employee satisfaction, health, and wellbeing and that's why we proudly endorse the plans outlined by TfL to create new segregated routes through the heart of the city. Both the proposed north-south and east-west routes will help us attract and retain the employees our business needs to continue to thrive. These plans are good for business, for London, and for all Londoners whether they cycle or not.*

*We believe the proposals will make London a more attractive place to build a business, to work, and to conduct business. We also note strong evidence from cities around the world that more cycling increases spending in local retail businesses and lowers air pollution levels. We support the plans and hope they can be delivered as soon as possible.'*

Doug Baillie, Chief Human Resources Officer, Unilever  
(1,200 London staff, €50 billion turnover)

It is clear that to create the environment of 'urban mobility and quality of life' which is so attractive to businesses such as these we must improve our city environment. We must make spending time outside a normal part of people's daily lives through the creation of a high quality cycle network.

### **A quality environment for cycling & walking boosts local businesses**

Since it was closed to through motor traffic in 2007 80% of businesses on New Road in Brighton felt that the scheme had had a beneficial impact not just on their financial turnover, but also on their prestige and general feelings of wellbeing.<sup>i</sup>

Footfall has increased by 160% and an Urban Design Officer from Brighton & Hove City Council says "...it's now popular throughout the year as a place to sit, to shop, to eat, to people watch or just to walk through. .. New Road is now a tourist destination in its own right..."<sup>ii</sup>

Closer to home, an evaluation of the public realm improvements to the Peace Gardens in Sheffield reported a 35% increase in footfall in the city centre and a net increase in spending of £4.2m.<sup>iii</sup>

## **A high quality cycle network brings lucrative cycle tourism opportunities...**

Cycle tourism is now worth up to £2.4bn per annum to the UK economy made up of 1.23 million overnight trips and 149 million day trips. Despite the economic downturn across the UK and Europe, cycle tourism trends suggest that the sector is continuing to grow.<sup>iv</sup>

"Visiting cyclists spend an average of £25 per day on locally provided food and services, compared to car-borne visitor's £7.30. Car users bring what they'll need with them, whereas cyclists can't."<sup>v</sup>

A high quality cycle network would mean that cyclists attracted to the Peak District may choose to also visit Sheffield, or to overnight in Sheffield. At the moment there is no real incentive for them to do so, big fast roads mean riding between Sheffield and the Peak District is a hostile and unpleasant experience.

## **...But only if Sheffield's reputation as a cycling city improves**

Sheffield may benefit from its proximity to the Peak District but its attempts to build a reputation as a sporting city have been tarnished by low levels of urban cycling and damaging national publicity. Sheffield's Brook Hill roundabout was named as one of the worst roads in the country for cycling by the Times newspaper<sup>vi</sup> and subsequently our roads were named as the worst in the country by the DFT<sup>vii</sup>.

Sheffield has been ridiculed in the national cycling press for being the only core city not to submit a bid for Cycle City Ambition funding<sup>viii</sup> and was also ranked bottom of all the core cities for supporting the Space for Cycling campaign<sup>ix</sup>. National newspapers have also recently covered stories involving hit and run incidents involving cyclists.<sup>x xi</sup>

Sheffield must take positive action to address its image problem. While Leeds<sup>xii</sup>, Manchester<sup>xiii</sup> and Nottingham<sup>xiv</sup> have significant cycling infrastructure projects under way, there has still been little positive noteworthy progress in Sheffield. This must be addressed for an 'Outdoor City' to have credibility and avoid being used as a parody term if tourists come to Sheffield for an outdoor experience and instead find poor cycle infrastructure.

## **A true 'Outdoor City' creates a lasting legacy for its people**

A high quality Cycle Network means that people spend time outdoors without even thinking about it. Moving around by bike is something that is accessible to everyone given a network of routes which are safe, feel safe and take you where you need to go. "[Cycling] is accessible and appealing to population groups that often have low levels of participation in sport and other forms of leisure-time physical activity (Buehler et al, 2011)."<sup>xv</sup>

To raise local participation long term we need to make exercise part of people's daily routine by enabling them to make daily journeys (such as the school run or commute) by bike. A focus on recreation and sports cycling alone will not be enough to enable Sheffield to meet its own target of increasing the percentage of journeys made by bike from 0.8% now to 10% by 2025.<sup>xvi</sup>

We support the creation of a Sheffield Strategic Cycle Network as the most effective way to increase the number of journeys made by bike in Sheffield. In order to give large numbers of people the freedom to travel by bike the Sheffield Cycle Network must be a comprehensive, joined-up, convenient network of routes which provide protection from motor traffic. This means providing physical separation at junctions and on major roads and removing through-traffic from residential roads and high streets.

The Cycle Network must provide safe routes between residential areas and key destinations, both in the city itself and in the surrounding countryside. The Cycle Network should include places to go for recreation and sport, but crucially must encompass day to day destinations such as workplaces, shops, hospitals and schools. The people of Sheffield and the city as a whole could see huge benefits by replacing journeys to school made by car with journeys made by bike or on foot. This reinforces the message that physical activity should be part of daily life in a true Outdoor City. Outdoor 'Zones' can be enjoyed, but being outdoors and travelling on foot and by bike should not be anything unusual in a true Outdoor City.

## **Provide fair and equal access to the countryside without reliance on a car**

Sheffield can become a city where all people have equal access to the beauty of the countryside by extending the Sheffield Cycle Network into the Peak District and surrounding areas. This will make it possible to go for a bike ride without the need to drive somewhere first. (Something currently done by many people, but not an option open to the one third of Sheffield households who do not have access to a car.<sup>xvii</sup>)

More people, and a wider range of people can benefit from spending time outdoors by enabling the carrying of cycles on public transport, including buses, trams and trains.

However, access to the Peak District should be the cherry on top of the cake for people living in and visiting Sheffield: the city itself must become a place where spending time outside is enjoyable, normal and open to everyone. The way to achieve this is a high quality Sheffield Cycle Network.

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<sup>i</sup> UK Healthy Cities Network, Designing Streets for Different users - New Road, Brighton and Hove, [www.healthycities.org.uk/uploads/files/010\\_designing\\_street\\_for\\_different\\_users\\_brighton\\_and\\_hove.pdf](http://www.healthycities.org.uk/uploads/files/010_designing_street_for_different_users_brighton_and_hove.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> Living Streets, Case Study: Making a Place out of a Link on New Road, Brighton – [www.livingstreets.org.uk/professionals/better-street-design-and-management/recreate-the-street/case-study-making-a-place-out](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/professionals/better-street-design-and-management/recreate-the-street/case-study-making-a-place-out)

<sup>iii</sup> Living Streets, The Pedestrian Pound, [www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/PedestrianPound\\_fullreport\\_web.pdf](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/PedestrianPound_fullreport_web.pdf)

<sup>iv</sup> Cumbria and The Lake District Cycle Tourism Toolkit, <https://nurtur Lakeland.org/uploads/GLT-CycleToolkit.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> European Cyclists Federation, Cycling Facts and Figures, [www.ecf.com/press-corner/cycling-facts-and-figures](http://www.ecf.com/press-corner/cycling-facts-and-figures)

<sup>vi</sup> The Times Newspaper, Cyclists' Horror Stories, [www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/cyclesafety/article3392986.ece](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/cyclesafety/article3392986.ece)

<sup>vii</sup> The Star Newspaper, Sheffield Roads are Worst in the Country, [www.thestar.co.uk/news/sheffield-roads-are-worst-in-the-country-1-4621138](http://www.thestar.co.uk/news/sheffield-roads-are-worst-in-the-country-1-4621138)

<sup>viii</sup> Road.CC, Green Party Questions Sheffield's Commitment to Cycling After City Misses Out on Government Funding, <https://road.cc/content/news/137257-green-party-questions-sheffield%E2%80%99s-commitment-cycling-after-city-misses-out>

<sup>ix</sup> Bike Radar, English Cities Ranked by their Support of Cycling, [www.bikeradar.com/commuting/news/article/english-cities-ranked-by-their-support-of-cycling-43009/](http://www.bikeradar.com/commuting/news/article/english-cities-ranked-by-their-support-of-cycling-43009/)

<sup>x</sup> Daily Mail, Widow of Cyclist Mowed Down by Speeding Drunk Driver Slams the Sentence that Means his Killer 'Will be allowed out on shopping trips next month', [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3143025/Widow-cyclist-mowed-speeding-drunk-driver-slams-sentence-means-killer-allowed-shopping-trips-month.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3143025/Widow-cyclist-mowed-speeding-drunk-driver-slams-sentence-means-killer-allowed-shopping-trips-month.html)

<sup>xi</sup> Huffington Post, Sheffield Teen Cyclist Taron Stead Hit By Car Told 'Sorry, I Can't Stop, It'd Upset My Kids' [www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/03/12/sheffield-cyclist-taron-stead\\_n\\_6853772.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/03/12/sheffield-cyclist-taron-stead_n_6853772.html)

<sup>xii</sup> Leeds City Connect, <http://cyclecityconnect.co.uk/introduction-cc.php>

<sup>xiii</sup> Velocity 2025, <http://cycling.tfgm.com/Pages/Velocity.aspx>

<sup>xiv</sup> Nottingham Cycle City, <http://transport2.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/cycle/>

<sup>xv</sup> John Pucher & Ralph Buehler, City Cycling, The MIT Press, 2012

<sup>xvi</sup> Sheffield City Council, Cycling Inquiry: Our Vision, [www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/council-meetings/scrutiny-committees/cycling-inquiry.html](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/your-city-council/council-meetings/scrutiny-committees/cycling-inquiry.html)

<sup>xvii</sup> RAC Foundation, Car Ownership Rates Per Local Authority in England and Wales, [www.racfoundation.org/assets/rac\\_foundation/content/downloadables/car%20ownership%20rates%20by%20local%20authority%20-%20december%202012.pdf](http://www.racfoundation.org/assets/rac_foundation/content/downloadables/car%20ownership%20rates%20by%20local%20authority%20-%20december%202012.pdf)