

DRAFT: University of Cambridge – Walking and cycling transport strategy

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on behalf of the Cycling and Walking Working Sub-Group

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By 2028 we shall substantially increase the proportion of journeys made to and within work by Cambridge staff that are made on foot or by cycle. Specifically, we aim to increase the proportion of staff journeys made by walking and cycling within the city by 10% and to increase the proportion of within-city journeys to work made by staff resident in South Cambridgeshire by 20%.

We intend to continue growing the number of staff employed and students enrolled at about one percent a year but must decrease the total number of car journeys that result. Since undergraduates are generally forbidden from keeping cars, almost all improvements must come from staff and graduate students.

Cambridge currently has the highest proportion of journeys by cycling and walking of any UK city, so this is a challenging target. But as Cambridge is nowhere near the top internationally, further improvement is possible. According to the 2017 travel survey, 81% of staff would like to travel sustainably but only 70% do so; 45% want to cycle to work but only 39% do so [10]. This last figure has been roughly stable for some years while the proportion of car journeys has increased, as high housing costs drive more and more staff to live in the surrounding villages. Many staff are willing to cycle in to work from a distance; while historically, planners assumed three miles to be the cycling commute distance, many Cambridge staff cycle from 7–8 miles.

The main factor preventing many people from cycling is safety, and there is more demand for segregated cycle routes than any other improvement (19% say these would be more likely to make them cycle to work versus 11% for showers and lockers at work and 9% for more direct cycle routes). Even nearby villages, such as Histon, Coton and Girton, have dangerous sections in their cycle routes. Significant numbers of staff live in settlements such as Cambourne, Haslingfield and Bottisham from which it would be more convenient (and faster) to cycle than to drive in the morning rush hour – if there were only a safe route!

Cycling is not of course an exclusive option; it would be great if the new Cambridge to Oxford railway had a station in Cambourne, so that a carless morning commute to Addenbrookes no longer took over an hour and a half by public transport. Mixed journeys, made partly by train but with the last mile or two by cycle, count towards our target of 75% sustainable journeys to work. Trains, guided busways and cycle routes are all part of the mix.

There are quick wins available even within Cambridge itself. Improvements to Hills Road doubled the number of cyclists between 2013 and 2016 [7]. Commuting between northwest Cambridge and the southeast (with ARM) is needlessly difficult and dangerous. Safe, convenient, and high quality cycling and walking routes to and across the city are essential for the University to meet this target. We will have to work with the County and City Councils to do so.

1 Streets that don't kill people

University staff, students and our family members are regularly injured or even killed while cycling or walking. While 40 people a year sustain serious injuries while walking or cycling around Cambridge, there's about one fatality a year (eleven people were killed between 2005 and 2016) [1]. Every single one of those deaths left an unfillable hole in a family and a community.

In addition to safety benefits, good cycling infrastructure will also reduce congestion, improve physical and mental health, increase productivity, and reduce air pollution.

Many of the necessary improvements are down to the County Council or City Council but the University has real influence, particularly through the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

The standard of routes within University sites such as West Cambridge or Eddington is also frequently poor; and we will tackle this problem vigorously ourselves by bringing cycle paths and other facilities on the University estate up to standard.

The safety goal is easy enough to state. All cycling and walking routes within the city should be safe for accompanied 4-year-old children and unaccompanied 9-year-old children to use.¹ They should meet or exceed standards such as CROW [5], IAN195/15 [6], and London Cycling Design Standards [8]. The Cycling Level of Service tools are a helpful way of evaluating the quality of a route [4]. Standards and textbooks [9] are helpful for ensuring good design but following standards is no excuse for bad design.²

Here is a summary of key aspects of good design:

- Walking and cycling routes should be physically segregated from motor vehicles and, wherever reasonably practical, from each other. If necessary motor vehicle capacity must be reduced to make way for segregated cycle lanes. This means that where cycling and walking routes follow motor vehicle routes, cycling routes should be physically protected from motor vehicles, just as footpaths are³, except on 20mph no-through roads. In constrained circumstances, 20mph through roads with hybrid cycle lanes may be permitted (e.g. as on Hills Road or Huntingdon Road).
- Where footpaths cross cycle tracks they will be given clear priority (e.g. by zebra markings) and where footpaths or cycle tracks cross roads they will be given clear priority (e.g. a zebra crossing).
- Footpaths and one-way cycle routes will be a minimum of 2.5m wide, while for two-way cycle routes the minimum width will be 3m, rising to 4m for busier routes.⁴
- Shared-use paths should not be used for through routes or where there are more than 25 path users per hour per meter of width [5].
- Bollard use on cycling or walking routes will be minimised, with spacing between bollards at least 1.5m and preferably over 1.8m. Bollards shall be placed away from turning movements, be visible in all lighting conditions, have rounded edges and be made of a forgiving material.
- Chicanes and speed bumps will never be used on cycle routes or footpaths.
- Cycling and walking routes will take priority over side roads and driveways.

¹Unaccompanied children can take themselves to the University of Cambridge Primary school from age 9.

²Regrettably some parts of even the standards listed here are outdated and so care is required when using them.

³Details in IAN195/16 [6, Table 2.3.3].

⁴Details in IAN195/16 [6, Table 2.2.11].

To achieve its aim of streets that don't kill people the University will:

1. Lobby the County and City Councils⁵ in collaboration with other stakeholders such as local firms and activist groups to ensure that gold-standard cycling and walking routes to and within the city are prioritised. The University will actively promote the expansion of the Greenways program to reach more villages.
2. Not accept dangerous highway designs such as those built at the junctions of Eddington Avenue but instead show leadership by insisting on safe designs.
3. Ensure that all new or improved routes on University sites are excellent. We will actively seek review of proposals from West Cambridge Active Travel, Camcycle or other expert stakeholders to ensure this.
4. Identify and improve all University travel infrastructure that is below standard. As part of this process, the Cycling and Walking Working Sub-Group will accept suggestions of potential improvements on a rolling basis and actively solicit them annually.
5. Continue to support the Cambridge Construction Logistics and Cycle Safety initiative (Cambridge CLOCS).⁶
6. Support the expansion of park and cycle facilities at park and ride sites.

2 Sites that welcome people

University sites should welcome people in and be pleasant places to work and visit. Green spaces and benches help with this but if a site feels like a car park then it has failed.

Sites should have easy-to-use wayfinding signage, while websites giving directions to buildings should prioritise access by cycling, walking, and public transport.

All sites shall provide enough quality cycle parking for peak demand, and must follow local planning car and cycle parking standards, which include one cycle parking space for every two members of staff, where practical in a covered, secure location [2]. There must also be visitor parking close to the entrance, covered by natural surveillance or CCTV, and conflict between car and cycle parking must be minimised. Where possible the Camcycle cycle parking guide will be followed [3] with 10% of spaces being designed for larger cycles.

Enough secure cycle parking shelters, showers and lockers shall be provided for staff (including research and assistant staff). In addition to staff, students on a site will be able to access such a facility where they have a case (e.g., graduate students living at a distance who would otherwise drive). Cyclists travelling larger distances benefit disproportionately from such facilities. Where an individual building cannot host such facilities internally, there will be an explicit sharing arrangement with a nearby building which does have such facilities.

All large cycle parking areas will have a cycle repair station.

We will do what is reasonably practical not just to prevent cycle theft, but to deter it. The Cambridgeshire Constabulary refuse to investigate most cycle thefts. CCTV of cycle parking will

⁵and other bodies as relevant including the Greater Cambridge Partnership, the Highways Agency and the Secretary of State for Transport

⁶<https://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/what-are-we-doing/travel/get-cycling/cambridge-clocs>

be designed to produce evidential-quality footage; the University will evaluate CCTV footage itself and press the police to investigate any thefts with a good chance of prosecution.⁷ We will also continue to support and develop evidence-based complementary strategies such as cycle marking, registration, and tagging.

We will encourage and work with grass-roots special interest groups for active travel, and consult them on site design and implementation as early as possible. We will also consult them before responding to public consultations around travel. West Cambridge Active Travel (WCAT) and CBC Bicycle User Group/Walking Action Group (CBC-BUG-WAG) already exist, but Sidgwick and central sites presently lack groups so we will try to establish them.

3 Policies that encourage people to travel actively

The travel coordinators for each site/building will develop action plans for that building/site in consultation with site users and active travel groups. They will consult with colleagues, identify problems, and feed the resulting requirements (e.g., path improvements, parking improvements, and requests for showers or drying rooms) to the Cycling and Walking Working Sub-Group which will marshal these requirements, prioritise them and feed them to Estates / Health & Safety as appropriate for action.

University nurseries in particular shall provide parking for child trailers so that parents don't have to pull empty trailers round with them all day.

We already provide free 2-hour training on safe cycling to all staff, as well as cycle maintenance workshops. We will extend these sessions to both graduate and undergraduate students who want them.

University pool cycles will continue to be rolled out across the estate and will include adapted cycles such as cargo cycles and e-cycles for the disabled. Users will be able to keep pool cycles overnight and longer loans will be investigated.

We will support zero-emission delivery and last-mile-by-cargo-bike options such as Zedify⁸ where practical. We will also prefer (e)(cargo) cycles over vans or cars for travel at work where practical.

We will make special efforts to support new arrivals, as the best time for nudging employees to use sustainable transport is when (or before) they first arrive, before any bad habits have formed. In information given to new employees, the University will outline transport options.

Information will be sent out with job offers so that new staff can consider their options at an early stage – before they start looking for accommodation. We will stress to new arrivals that Cambridge is a cycling city and that they should explore their cycle-to-work route using their favourite online map service before they commit to renting or buying a home. Once they have decided where to live, we may offer a bike buddy service to help them with that route. Bike buddies will be provided by site with volunteers from site active travel groups.

4 Review and consultation

This strategy will be reviewed annually by the cycling and walking working sub-group (CWSG) which will consult with University site active travel groups and Camcycle.

⁷The Department of Computer Science and Technology obtained a successful prosecution on the basis of CCTV imagery: https://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~mgk25/only-cam/Cycle_shed_n_2017-07-04_15_23_45_570.jpg

⁸<https://www.zedify.co.uk/>

References

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