

London Greenways Monitoring Report 2010



Transport
for London



Forewords



The last year has seen nothing short of a revolution in cycling in London. The introduction of the Barclays Cycle Hire and Cycle Superhighways schemes, together with the provision of more cycle parking and cycle training and the continued expansion of London Greenways means the Capital's cyclists have never been better catered for.

It is no surprise then that more and more Londoners are taking to two wheels. And there's more to come; the Mayor's Biking Boroughs initiative is gaining momentum and we are soon to see the opening of the new 2012 Games Walking and Cycling Routes.

This latter initiative will leave a lasting legacy well beyond the Games. With our partners in Sustrans, the London Boroughs, the Royal Parks, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and British Waterways we are continuing to develop a London Greenways network that will build on the legacy of 2012 and continue to deliver benefits for London and Londoners for many years to come.

As the cycling revolution gathers pace, London Greenways will continue to encourage new recruits to cycling by opening up attractive, traffic-free routes through parks and open spaces and along rivers and canals. This monitoring report shows the value of investing in this work and the contribution it makes towards meeting the Mayor's ambitions for a healthier, greener, better city.



Ben Plowden
Director, Better Routes
and Places
Transport for London

Since Sustrans first began work on greenways in London 16 years ago, the concept has expanded to become a key component in London's walking and cycling network.

Working with Transport for London (TfL) and other partners we have seen London Greenways develop across the capital. This monitoring report looks at monitoring data and personal experiences to show the ways that London Greenways positively impact on London as a city and on us as individuals.

London has seen growing political support for measures which encourage walking and cycling. Our current Mayor has promoted initiatives which support modal shift towards a greater focus on active travel as part of the wider transport system.

Walking already makes up 24% of the mode share in London and there has been significant growth in cycling over the last few years, but there is still a great deal to do. Just less than three quarters of Londoners consider their city to be good for walking whilst just under a third considers it to be good for cycling.⁽¹⁾

The Mayor has set cycling targets for London and is encouraging more people to walk and to walk more often. Sustrans hopes to push the cycle target even higher. We would like to see an increase in the mode share for cycle trips to 10% and an increase in the mode share for walking trips to 30% by 2031.

London Greenways routes are largely traffic free or on lightly trafficked streets. They play an important role in getting people out and about on foot or by bike whether seasoned

commuters or first-time cyclists, for a whole journey such as a walk to work, a leisure activity with family, a place to meet up with friends or part of a longer journey leading to a train station or bus stop.

London Greenways play a particularly important role in outer London and will complement and support the Biking Boroughs work continuing this year. More than half of all car trips made in outer London are less than two miles in length⁽²⁾ (only 10 minutes on a bike). In outer London there is real potential to reduce car use and congestion by encouraging a shift to travelling on foot or by bike. Measures which increase levels of walking and cycling contribute towards improvements in the health of and reductions in health inequalities between Londoners whilst also contributing towards the mitigation of, or adaptation to, climate change in the UK.

As we build up to London 2012 and consider the legacy potential of the Games, it is vital that we look at incorporating active travel – walking and cycling – into our everyday lives. As you'll see inside, London Greenways are already having a positive impact on London and Londoners.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl Pittam'.

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What is a **greenway**?

Greenways are safe, quiet routes through parks, green spaces and lightly trafficked streets. They are designed to connect people on foot or bike, whatever their ability or purpose, to facilities, parks and open spaces. The routes are free to use and open to all, making them a great way for people to stay fit and healthy while enjoying a breath of fresh air. Greenways should be suitable for use by a novice adult cyclist, a family with young children or a sensible, unaccompanied 12-year-old.

An overview

London Greenways is a collection of projects that seek to create a network of attractive and functional routes for walkers and cyclists. They aim to improve access to and through green space across the capital.

London Greenways has been developed and funded by Transport for London (TfL), Sustrans, the Olympic Delivery Authority, the London Boroughs and others over a number of years.

It incorporates schemes delivered through the TfL Greenways Programme, the Mayor's Great Outdoors programme, the 2012

Games Walking and Cycling Routes (previously known as the Olympic Cycling and Walking Route Enhancements Programme or OCWRE) and Sustrans' Connect2, National Cycle Network and Greenways for the Olympics and London (GOAL) projects.

To date, 295km of routes have been improved, joined up and opened across London. The continued development of London Greenways is planned to be carried out at a similarly impressive pace.

“Alongside the provision of training and infrastructure to provide reassurance and support, the Mayor will introduce measures to encourage novice cyclists to make the most of London’s wealth of parks, open spaces and river and canal networks. This will include a network of

greenways and activity to promote cycling and walking for leisure purposes as a first step for many. The Mayor will encourage park managers to facilitate cycling and to welcome cyclists to their green spaces.”

Mayor’s Transport Strategy



Achieving **policy** objectives



Emissions and Air Quality

Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, London has the lowest CO₂ per resident of any English region.⁽³⁾ However, air quality is comparatively poor. The 2009 Londoner Survey⁽⁴⁾ found that pollution from traffic was one of the top environmental concerns for Londoners, second only to litter. Poor air quality can cause serious health problems and reduces the quality of life for all of us.⁽⁵⁾ The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy⁽⁶⁾ prioritises continued investment in walking and cycling infrastructure as part of a wider approach to tackling the quality of London's air.

Health

Obesity and related chronic conditions are predicted to cost the UK nearly £50 billion a year by 2050. In 2010, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence issued guidance on preventing cardiovascular disease, calling on

governments to invest in active travel infrastructure.⁽⁷⁾ Of all English regions, London has the highest incidence of childhood obesity and the lowest level of physically active adults.⁽⁸⁾

2012 Legacy

The target for the London 2012 Olympic Games legacy is to help at least two million people to be more active. Monitoring of the London Greenways shows consistently improving levels of physical activity among users.

By helping Londoners, commuters and visitors to walk and cycle more often, the development of the London Greenways network plays an important role as part of wider packages tackling poor air quality and health and ensuring the 2012 Games provides a lasting inspiration for us to be more active.

Achieving **personal** objectives

London Greenways enable more people to make healthy and sustainable journey choices for work, leisure and play.

Showcasing the local environment

Greenway routes often pass through interesting and previously underused parts of the capital. Route development has included the transformation of disused railway lines into a pedestrian and cycle paths and the revamp of underused green space and waterside pathways.

“In Hackney we are fortunate to host part of the National Cycle Network’s Route 1. This long-distance cycle route connects Dover and the Shetland Islands. A more local focus shows that we also have several pockets of green space in the form of parks, but it’s not always been possible to see them as a whole. The Hackney Parks Olympic Route starts in Finsbury Park and passes through Clissold Park, Hackney Downs and Victoria Park. This gives Hackney residents an opportunity to be more active whilst visiting new places in their area.”

Diane Abbott, MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, Hackney Parks Olympic Route

Helping young people get active

Physical activity during childhood has a range of benefits including healthy growth and development, psychological well-being and social interaction. The Chief Medical Officer recommends that children and young people should be active at moderate or greater intensity for at least an hour a day through structured exercise and sport, as well as active games and play.⁽⁹⁾ The 2008 Health Survey for England found that for children aged 2-15, only 33% of boys and 24% of girls in London achieved this the previous week.⁽¹⁰⁾

“The park has loads of space and no cars so you can cycle without bumping into anything.”

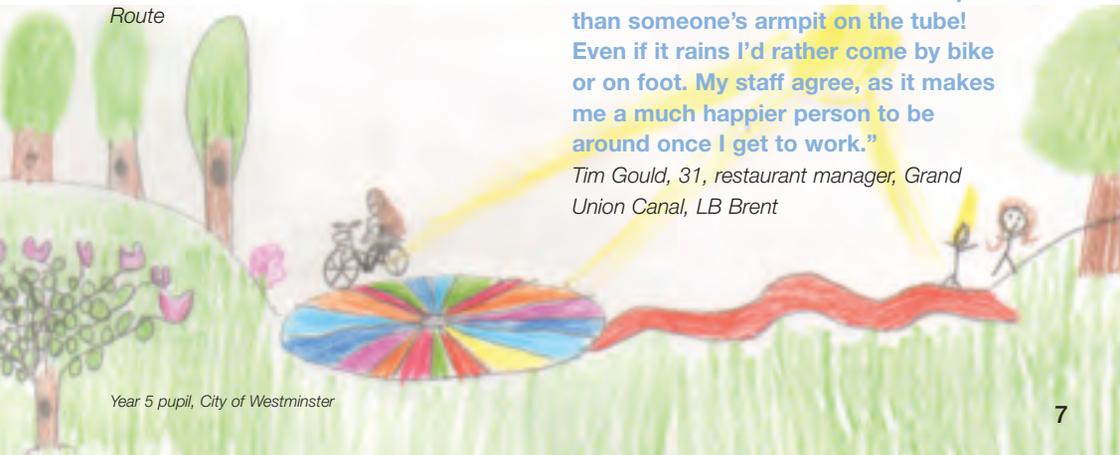
Year 6 pupil, Barlby Primary School, W10

Improving quality of life

Swapping your car for a trip on foot or by bike can seriously improve how you feel.⁽¹¹⁾

“Although I could get the train to work every day, I prefer to cycle. The canal-side routes are a far nicer backdrop than someone’s armpit on the tube! Even if it rains I’d rather come by bike or on foot. My staff agree, as it makes me a much happier person to be around once I get to work.”

Tim Gould, 31, restaurant manager, Grand Union Canal, LB Brent



Achieving **London's** objectives

The Mayor has outlined his intention to make London the best big city in the world: **A World Class City with World Class Plans**. He sets a citywide vision of improvement, developing strategies and policies to realise the vision and is working with a wide range of individuals and organisations to generate the funding and motivation to achieve London's objectives. As the 2012 Games draw closer, so does London's chance to shine on the global stage. Its greenways can help London reach its goals across a number of policy areas and strategic plans.

The Mayor's Transport Strategy

The Mayor's Transport Strategy ⁽¹²⁾ sets objectives for the period to 2031. Its six goals are to:

- support economic development and population growth
- enhance the quality of life for all Londoners
- improve the safety and security of all Londoners
- improve transport opportunities for all Londoners
- reduce transport's contribution to climate change, and improve its resilience
- support delivery of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and their legacy.

The development of the London Greenways network has contributed towards progress on all six goals by widening transport opportunities and providing pleasant routes to walk and cycle. Greenways to the Olympic Park will become strategic parts of the transport system, helping our city cope with the increase in travel demand associated with the Games.

Making walking count 2011

In January, the Mayor confirmed his plans to improve walking conditions in London to encourage more residents and visitors to use their feet.⁽¹³⁾ Greenways provide a safe, enjoyable and legible network of paths which will play an important role in increasing the number of people walking in and around London. London Greenways showcase local green spaces and introduce people to the area they live in or pass through and make a valuable contribution to the Mayor's 'Great Spaces' initiative.

Biking Boroughs

The Mayor and TfL have a target to increase cycling by 400% by 2026 (compared to 2000 levels). To work towards this increase, the Mayor launched his cycling revolution and made 2010 the 'Year of Cycling'. His package of measures includes Biking Boroughs as a focus on outer London where 2.4 million journeys made every day are cycleable. The growing London Greenways network will complement Biking Borough developments by providing safe and attractive routes suitable for complete beginners or well-seasoned cyclists.

Health Inequalities Strategy

The London Health Inequalities Strategy⁽¹⁴⁾ sets out a framework for partnership action to:

- improve the physical health and mental well-being of all Londoners
- reduce the gap between Londoners with the best and worst health outcomes
- create economic, social and environmental conditions to improve quality of life for all

London as a region has particularly low levels of physical activity and high levels of obesity in children.⁽¹⁵⁾ Increasing physical activity not only has potential to help tackle the obesity problem, but would also address many of the other key health problems. The multiple positive effects of physical activity on the range of diseases and conditions have not yet been calculated and may be even greater than the effect of the sum of the parts. The cost of inactivity has been estimated at £8.2 billion per year.⁽¹⁶⁾

“As a member of the London Assembly Health Committee, I am acutely aware of the positive impact which active travel can have on the physical and mental well-being of Londoners and the important role it plays in helping the Mayor achieve a range of policy objectives. London Greenways provide an opportunity for people in London to explore their local area or get to work in a more fulfilling way. The development of London Greenways is an important part of our work aimed to get more people walking and cycling more often.”

Andrew Boff, GLA Member London wide

Who uses London Greenways?

The great thing about London Greenways is that they are accessible to all, as the case studies on the following pages show.

- London Greenways break down barriers to walking and cycling.
- London Greenways help to get you going. Nearly half of users surveyed on the Springfield Park Footbridge said that since using the route, they have started to cycle on the road more often.
- London Greenways help under-represented groups get more active. Monitoring showed that 20% of users on Brent's Proyers path were Indian, and a further 7% were of Asian origin.
- London Greenways help to showcase local environments. Monitoring shows that on average, 72% of greenway users live local to the routes and many use the routes as an alternative to car trips. This not only improves their own quality of life, but also helps to ease the pressures of congestion.
- London Greenways offer alternatives to all sections of the community. Monitoring showed that women made up over 52% of users on Ravensbourne Park greenway.
- London Greenways are open to all ages. On Springhill Footbridge, monitoring showed that over 50% of users were over 55 whilst on Proyers path in Brent, more than 40% of users were under 35.

“It’s strange really. Cycling has now become cool and I plan to cycle in to school every day now.”

Year 11 pupil, Bow Boys School (a Sustrans’ Bike It school), LB of Tower Hamlets

Keeping locals healthy in Rosehill Rec

The greenway in Rosehill Rec links Glenthorne Gardens Recreation Ground in the north to Sutton Town Centre to the south. The traffic-free route through the park, which was previously a landfill site, provides a connection to an indoor tennis centre and sports field and forms part of the South West London Greenways network in LB Sutton.

- **97%** of people surveyed on the greenway in Rosehill Rec either agreed or strongly agreed that using the route for exercise or health was a factor in their trip choice.
- **93%** surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that the surroundings/environment influenced them when considering what factors encouraged them to walk/cycle on this route.
- **88%** surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that feeling safe/secure was a factor in choosing to walk/cycle this route.

When considering the benefits of using the greenway in Rosehill Rec:

- **60%** said they were more active.
- **59%** said they were less stressed.

Monitoring demonstrates that London Greenways provide pleasant and safe environments, preferable to roadside alternatives, which encourage people to change their routine, get active, feel healthier and reduce stress.

Enjoying the great outdoors at Hogsmill River Bridge

This newly installed bridge for cyclists and pedestrians provides a connection over the Hogsmill River between Old Malden and Tolworth. The bridge has been installed adjacent to an older pedestrian footbridge, with approach routes also upgraded as part of the scheme. There is now a greatly improved connection between Old Malden and Tolworth and to Richard Challoner School, located nearby.

Use of the bridge by the under 16s is well above average when compared to last year's report. In 2009, 19% of the Greenway's users were under 16. The 2010 Hogsmill report gives a figure of 37% and nearly 90% of their usage occurred during term time, illustrating the importance of the link with Richard Challoner School.

The proportion of all users using the route to commute has increased between 2009 and 2010, with 13% and 25% of users respectively, travelling for that purpose. This highlights the strategic importance of the bridge as part of the local cycle network, and the improved link provided to Malden Manor station.

A greater proportion of users are also using no form of transport other than walking or cycling for their journey. In 2010 this accounted for 81% of all users, up from 56% in 2009. This further illustrates the importance of the connection provided over the Hogsmill River in the local area.

Showcasing local space on the Ravensbourne Greenway

This greenway passes through Summerhouse Fields, adjacent to Beckenham Place Park in the south of LB Lewisham. The new path is just under 1km long and provides a connection between Ravensbourne Avenue and Beckenham Hill, adjacent to the Ravensbourne River.

The greenway improves access to Beckenham Place Park, a large and popular green space in the local area. The attractiveness of the surroundings may account for the high proportion of leisure users, 94%, with only 4% of journeys for commuting. This compares with an average of 30% commuting from the 2009 London Greenways Monitoring Report.

- **80%** of users are pedestrians
- **10%** are cyclists
- **10%** are joggers or runners

In surveys an average 42% of London Greenway users said that no other form of transport could have been used for the journey stage they were making. For the Ravensbourne Greenway this was much higher at 70%, illustrating the importance of the connection locally.



Getting to know your neighbours in Haringey

London Greenways partners have been working with Haringey council and local residents, enabling the community to redesign their streets so that they can function as lively public spaces that are safe, attractive to play and socialise in and to travel through. Working together to develop high quality but low cost solutions to the problems they face on their street generates opportunities for local residents to access greenways routes from their front door.

By making it possible to access London Greenways from home, the project works towards making walking and cycling everyday activities rather than special events.

“I think that the residents of Turnpike Lane/ West Green are doing a fantastic job in helping to determine the future of their neighbourhood through the DIY Streets project. I have been following this Sustrans initiative for the past six months and I am excited to continue doing so over the coming year. I have no doubt that the project will put a sense of community back into the neighbourhood, while making it a safer place for residents to walk and cycle”.

David Lammy, MP for Tottenham

“This is an exciting project that is seeking to consult from the bottom up, rather than the top down. I would encourage everyone to participate in the project so that we can build our neighbourhoods together.”

Joanne McCartney, GLA Member for Enfield and Haringey, commenting on the Turnpike Lane DIY Streets scheme.



Greenways to the Olympics

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), along with HM Government, Greater London Authority (GLA), British Olympic Association (BOA) and British Paralympic Association (BPA) are all signed up to the 2012 Sustainability Policy.⁽¹⁷⁾ The policy aims to support a number of legacy goals including a commitment to inspire a new generation of young people to take part in local volunteering, cultural and physical activity and to make the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park a blueprint for sustainable living.

Based on monitoring data, it is already possible to see an increase in the usage of the Olympic greenways. Increasing levels of physical activity across London will not only help the Mayor achieve his sporting legacy plans,⁽¹⁸⁾ but will contribute more widely to the sustainability goals for 2012. All eight Olympic greenways will be substantially complete by summer 2011.

“It is so important that London 2012 is used as an opportunity to achieve a wide range of goals for British people. The Games can inspire people to be more active and will help break the sedentary habits we’ve formed and passed on to our children.

The London Greenways network is a great example of how we can tap into the opportunities and energy that the Games bring.

It’s fantastic to see so many children and young people already using them to get around and I can’t wait to see the hoards of cyclists and walkers using the greenways to get themselves to the Games!”

Steve Parry, Olympic Medallist

Innovation in Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets' Ocean Estate community achieved a 56% increase in the number of participants who walked on five to seven days a week, greatly exceeding the target of a 10% increase in active travel. This is the result of dedicated travel planning, plus having accessible routes.

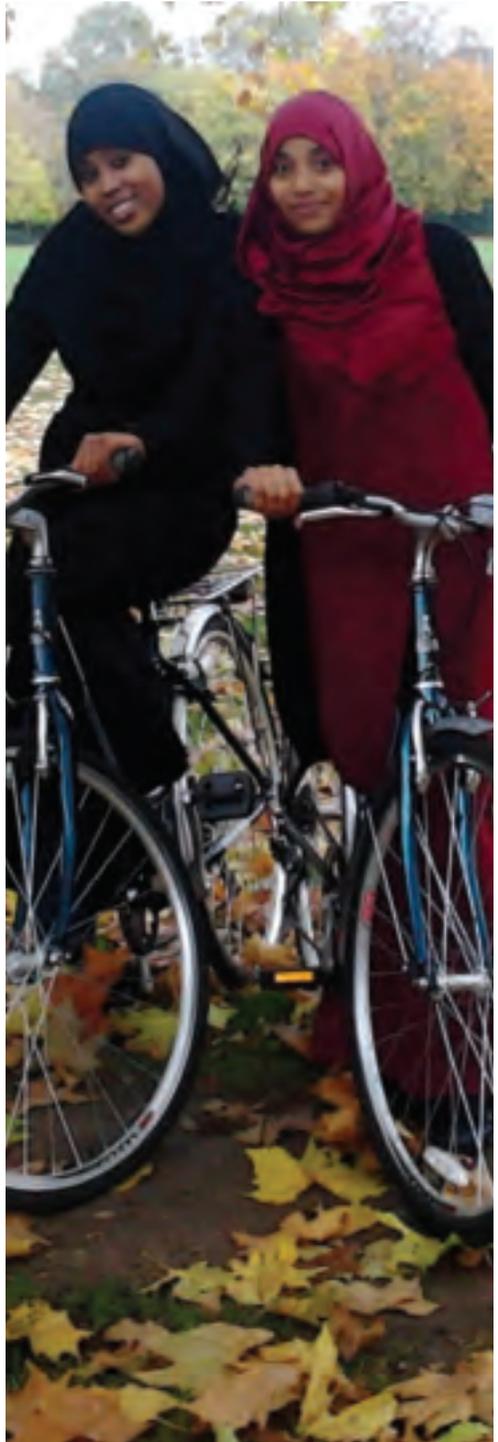
This unique Sustrans' project combined a range of approaches such as health walks, led cycle rides and cycle training, to increase active travel and sustainable transport use. Sustrans' travel advisors complimented this, giving people practical advice and tools to increase their active travel.

Having access to local Greenways meant that route planning could easily avoid busy roads. As such, the residents of this largely Bengali Muslim community felt more relaxed about giving walking and cycling a try and had fewer barriers to confront.

The project was funded by NHS Tower Hamlets and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, as part of the Healthy Borough Programme. Tower Hamlets is London's only 'Healthy Town', awarded by the Government's Change 4 Life initiative.

"I want to go out and I don't want to take my car. This project has given me the confidence to ride and now I want to take the next step, to get on the roads. That's the best thing; the fact that I've learned a new skill. I can teach my son now, which is the whole reason I went. His dad can already ride, and I didn't want to be the one who couldn't join in the activity."

Resident, Ocean Estate, Tower Hamlets



Methodology

The case study data shown in this report are derived from route user surveys conducted on London's Greenways in 2010.

The route user survey methodology has been used widely by Sustrans over the past ten years on the National Cycle Network and other local walking and cycling routes in the UK. Six of the seven monitoring sites surveyed for the London Greenways programme in 2010 were monitored by Sustrans.

These sites are included in the overall analysis. Survey response data is weighted on the basis of concurrent local user counts, with annual usage estimates produced.

The data featured in Case Study 5: Greenways to the Olympics was derived from manual count data drawn from 17 locations along the London Greenways network. The counts were taken on a

weekend day in September 2009 and repeated in September 2010.

Sustrans would like to thank its partner, Transport for London, for support in delivering this report. Thanks to Olympic Delivery Authority for providing user count data for the purpose of this report. Thanks also to the following organisations for providing data for input to the report, which was unfortunately not used due to methodological differences: British Waterways, LB Waltham Forest, Brent Council, LB Ealing, and LB Kingston.

For further information on the methodology please contact
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London Greenways Map



Map key

-  Open
-  Proposed

About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. Our work makes it possible for people to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices.

Make your move and support Sustrans today.

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