

London light freight walking trial

Trial highlights significant potential for walking freight in central London

Challenge

- To understand the potential of walking freight couriers as a sustainable alternative for last-mile deliveries in high-density areas and pedestrianised zones
- Cross River Partnership (CRP) led a 10-month trial with The Fitzrovia Partnership, London Borough of Camden, UPS and Heals to test the feasibility of walking freight couriers with electric assisted trolleys (e-walkers) to support low-emission last-mile deliveries in the London Borough of Camden

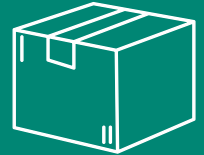
How it worked

- Parcels were delivered to Heal's underground car park by an electric UPS delivery vehicle
- Deliveries were made in the Fitzrovia area using an e-walker on pavements
- Operating for approximately five to six hours per day, depending on the number of parcels, the UPS e-walkers were replenished twice a day
- Once all deliveries had been made, the e-walkers returned to the car park to be stored and charged overnight
- The electric UPS delivery vehicle returned to the depot for charging and re-loading with parcels

Results

12,000

parcels delivered within a 2km radius over 10 months



Low

running costs and no maintenance issues compared to larger vehicles

More

efficient deliveries made in dense urban areas, reducing time lost to parking and congestion



Easier

deliveries and less stress reported by UPS drivers





E-walkers like the Fernhey model used in this trial can carry loads of up to 150kg

The details

Funded by Defra, the trial ran from March 2023 to May 2024, and was the first walking freight trial on public land for UPS, building on the framework developed through the TfL Freight Innovation Challenge.

There was positive feedback from UPS couriers, who found it easier to deliver goods on foot in dense and often challenging urban environments.

The trial demonstrated the potential of walking freight as a practical supplementary delivery option alongside traditional delivery vehicles and showed that walking freight can integrate with UPS's existing delivery network.

The data gathered on efficiency and scalability will be used to promote wider adoption of walking freight as a viable option for making sustainable deliveries.

‘The e-walker is definitely one of a range of solutions for delivering in congested city centre areas as it provides more flexibility and manoeuvrability than a traditional delivery vehicle.’

Kentish Town depot management, UPS

Further information is available from the Cross River Partnership:

[The London Light Freight Walking Trial](#)

[Walking Freight Feasibility Study](#)