



Cycle Lewes Response to consultation: Transport for the South East (TfSE): Draft Transport Strategy

While Cycle Lewes welcomes the objectives of the Strategy which includes shifting the approach from vehicle based planning to people and places based planning and developing sustainable transport systems the challenges and solutions it proposes have a number of flaws.

It is therefore difficult to see how a real change from investment in roads for motorised vehicles to more sustainable means such as cycling, buses and trains will be achieved in the time that is needed to reduce congestion, improve health, reduce air pollution and enable a greater proportion of the population to make the shift in how they travel for work, to study and other reasons. And, make the 2050 net zero carbon target the Strategy states it will achieve to address the Climate Emergency.

We are concerned about:

- the lack of urgency in making real and serious changes to achieve the ‘modal shift’ and traffic reduction needed - we can’t carry on building roads and putting off making changes for 5-10 years
- the need for a greater focus on seamless integration between sustainable travel modes
- the appraisals that underpin the current strategy and its preferred scenario which would see an 8% increase in traffic and a **13% DECREASE** in active travel such as cycling and walking over today’s levels!
- the need to redefine ‘strategic’ to include the important of local connectivity and greater promotion and funding of **active travel** (including cycling) and **road safety**

Specifically:

1. There is too much emphasis on long-distance travel and solutions that improve roads between towns and cities (radial and orbital journeys) - these are not the majority of journeys people take daily
2. Highway/Road improvements hardly ever bring the benefits they originally propose and often cost more than planned. The Department of Transport’s own

research shows that can't build your way out of congestion; the only way to reduce congestion is to have fewer cars on the road.

3. The strategy does not recognise that 56% of journeys are under 5 miles (Department for Transport, Walking and Cycling Statistics, 2018). These journeys should be prioritised, are likely to require lower funding, and can bring benefits to a greater number of people.
4. The UK public say they want more funding for cycling in a range of surveys undertaken over past 2 years
5. The draft Strategy states that '*most urban areas of the South East are well served by footpaths and cycleways*' - we do NOT believe this to be an accurate description
6. 62% of UK adults say it is too dangerous to cycle on the roads (Department of Transport, 2018). Current road conditions dis-proportionately affect women, children and older people (British Cycling). The draft Strategy recognises this - but does not address changing this in its solutions
7. Up to one-quarter of the traffic on the roads at peak times is "doing the school run". 34% of UK children are transported to school by car. If transport to and from schools was easier and safer, there would be less need for cars and often 2 cars.
8. The draft Strategy mainly mentions cycling as a leisure activity. It should have more focus on utility cycling. Cycling is fundamental to short distances and linking up from the home, work, school, place to other places or to transport hubs (e.g train stations). It is also the best way of enabling people to get regular exercise.
9. We need a massive step change with greater investment in infrastructure for safe cycling: both shared and segregated routes within and between towns and villages - continuous networks
10. Electric cycles have great potential. They enable people, including those with mobility issues, women, older people and less confident people to travel more easily. Other countries have increased their uptake of electric-bikes and some of these journeys have replaced car journeys. Given right conditions E-bikes could replace 1 in 4 trips.
11. Active forms of travel such as walking and cycling are associated with a range of health benefits: mental health, reduce risk of premature death from coronary heart disease, dementia etc.
12. Pollution from tyres, brake and road wear means that even electric and alternative fuelled vehicles can never be emission free at point of use (Frank Kelly, European Respiratory Journal, 2018)
13. From the evidence now available the impact of pollution on health by continuing with more investment in roads to reduce congestion and decrease journey times is potentially massive
14. More people would use sustainable transport options if they were joined up, **affordable** and reliable. Investment in these sustainable forms of transport (public buses and trains) could transfer people who currently have to travel by

car to make the shift needed and/or make part of their journey by cycle or e-bike. This would all free up 'road space'.

Cycle Lewes believes that organisations such as Sustrans, Cycling UK and Living Streets ¹ must be represented in the various Forums and Working Groups who are involved in the development and implementation of the Strategy and its associated plans. This must happen to ensure that cycling alongside other forms of sustainable transport are given the priority they deserve in both the short, medium and long term.

An Example:

Lewes is a pleasant small town with an historic centre and many narrow roads; distances within the town to the main shopping areas and the station are within approximately 2/3 miles. There are increasing problems with speeding traffic, congestion and through traffic (including heavy goods vehicles).

By re-designing Lewes's streets to make them safer for cyclists and pedestrians by for example: wider pavements, cycle lanes (signed and segregated), improved signage and priority signalling (and other cycle friendly design features along with enforcement of speed limits to 20mph across the whole town would encourage more people to cycle to work; (whole or part of their journey), to shop and to get to a range of public and other services.

Creating new routes out of town to the North, to Offham, Cooksbridge and beyond, and extending the Ringmer cycle path towards Uckfield could encourage greater levels of cycling, especially with e-bikes.

Upgrading the current cycle routes alongside the A27 towards Falmer and east to Firle (to connect with the new Firle-Polegate section) are further examples of where investment in cycling infrastructure would have the potential to decrease car use. Completing the Egret's Way from Lewes to Newhaven would have similar benefits.

A greater proportion of investment must be made in sustainable transport and be directed at towns like Lewes throughout the South East to encourage cycling and greater use of public transport to reduce congestion and pollution and give everyone a real alternative to car use.

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¹ These organisations currently work together at a national level, similar representation is needed to guide the development and delivery of the TfSE Strategy and ensure it is inclusive of ALL forms of transport and specifically sustainable forms. Cycling and walking are the most sustainable forms.