

Committee(s): Planning & Transportation Committee	Date(s): 30 July 2019
Subject: Wardmote Resolution from the Ward of Farringdon Within / Code of conduct for cycle tour groups using narrow lanes and streets	Public
Report of: Director of the Department of the Built Environment	For Decision
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Summary

At its 18 June 2019 meeting this Committee received a Wardmote Resolution from the Ward of Farringdon Within concerning cycle tour groups using narrow lanes and streets.

It is understood that this is a particular issue on Carter Lane, which cycle tour operators use as a route to St Pauls Cathedral that avoids Ludgate Hill and Queen Victoria Street.

The City of London does not licence cycle tour groups but has engaged with the main tour operators. Operators have shown a willingness to change the way tours are conducted and dismount when necessary.

It is proposed to formalise this approach through a code of conduct. This includes a requirement for cycle tour groups to dismount on Carter Lane, and on any other narrow street in the City which is congested with pedestrians, during week-day lunchtimes (12 -2pm), at peak commuting times (4pm – 6:30pm) and at any other time when the street is observed to be busy with pedestrians.

More generally, officers continue work in partnership with the City of London Police to promote safe and considerate cycling and compliance to the Highway Code through engagement, education and enforcement.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to approve the proposed code of conduct for cycle tour groups.

Main Report

Background

1. At its 18 June 2019 meeting this Committee received the following Wardmote Resolution from the Ward of Farringdon Within.

“This Wardmote notes the dangers caused by cycle tour groups in narrow, semi-pedestrianised areas of the City. Despite discussions with City of London representatives, the operators of such tour groups do not appear to have made any substantial changes. There are reports of cyclists colliding with residents, but such collisions have not been recorded. Cycle convoys are seen to travel at speed through narrow cobbled lanes and have been crossing busy roads at unsafe points with participants, including children, not wearing any safety protection.

There is a risk of serious injury to both participants and pedestrians and the Wardmote therefore urges the Planning and Transportation Committee to undertake an urgent review of the terms of licences for such tour groups and confirm the actions that will be taken to improve safety.

The Wardmote further urges the Committee to work with the City of London Police on enforcement measures against cyclists who contravene the Highway Code, to safeguard the interests of pedestrians and other road users.”

2. It is understood that this is a particular issue on Carter Lane, which is a very narrow, semi-pedestrianised street running parallel to Ludgate Hill. Cycle tour operators use Carter Lane as a route to St Pauls Cathedral, and it can be very busy with tour groups in the summer.
3. The City of London does not licence cycle tour groups but has previously engaged with the main tour operator to ensure they had appropriate health and safety procedures and that full training was provided. The operator also agreed that they would ensure guides were aware of the need to maintain low speeds on Carter Lane, give way to pedestrians and if necessary, dismount and walk.
4. As this has not proved enough to address the issue of conflict between people walking and cycle tour groups it is proposed to take the more formal approach of agreeing a code of conduct with operators as outlined below.
5. Operators note that Carter Lane is used because Queen Victoria Street and Ludgate Hill can be busy with motor vehicles, including lorries, buses and tour coaches, and are considered high risk unpleasant places to cycle. In the longer-term the delivery of the City cycle network as outlined in the Transport Strategy will mean these streets can provide a safe and attractive alternative to Carter Lane.
6. More generally, officers continue work in partnership with the City of London Police to promote safe and considerate cycling and compliance with the Highway Code through engagement, education and enforcement.

Proposals

7. It is proposed to ask cycle tour operators using Carter Lane and to adopt and adhere to the following code of conduct:

Cycle tour companies will avoid riding on busy and narrow lanes and streets where a safe alternative route, that does not compromise the safety and enjoyment of their guests, can be found.

Cycle tour group guides will require their groups to dismount on Carter Lane, and on any other narrow street in the City which is congested with pedestrians, during week-day lunchtimes (12 -2pm), at peak commuting times (4pm – 6:30pm) and at any other time when the street is observed to be busy with pedestrians.

At all times, cycle tour group guides will require guests to cycle considerately and be ready to give way to pedestrians in the City of London.

Safety will be a priority; operators and guides will require all guests to show competence at controlling a bicycle before agreeing to take them on a tour.

8. Following the Wardmote resolution officers have researched the market and contacted all the major bicycle tour operators that currently provide tours in the City.
 - The London Bicycle Tour Company
 - Brake Away Bike Tours
 - Tally Ho Bike Tours
 - Golden Tours
9. We have received positive responses from all four operators, agreeing to adhere to the proposed code of conduct. At the time of writing two operators are already in the process of implementing a change in the way they operate.
10. We will ensure Ward members are aware of the code of conduct and that infractions can be reported to RDR@cityoflondon.gov.uk for follow up with the relevant tour operators. If images can be supplied, the companies will be able identify the guide who broke the code for disciplinary action.
11. To encourage safe and considerate cycling across the Square Mile, officers will work continue to work in close partnership with the City of London Police to engage with people who cycle, educate them about the law and implement enforcement campaigns to ensure compliance with the Highway Code. This includes engaging with City businesses and employees through the Active City Network.
12. Engagement activities will include messaging through the #BeBrakeReady campaign. This encourages everyone who drives and rides in the Square Mile to do so on a way that reflects the crowded nature of the City's streets, expect the unexpected and be ready to stop.

13. A Riders Forum has been established with the City of London Police, the to engage with groups representing City cyclists (and motorcyclists) and consider how best to improve the safety and behaviour of all people who travel on two wheels in the City.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. The proposals support the delivery of the Road Danger Reduction and Active Travel Action Plan and the following Transport Strategy outcomes:

- The Square Mile's streets are great places to walk and spend time
- People using our streets and public spaces are safe and feel safe

Conclusion

15. Cycle tour operators have demonstrated a willingness to make changes to the way they conduct tours in the City to improve safety. It is expected that the code of conduct will be an effective way of addressing the issues of conflict between people walking and tour groups on narrow streets and lanes, such as Carter Lane.

16. Over time, the delivery of improved cycling facilities, together with continued education, engagement and enforcement, will help to create a relaxed cycling culture in the Square Mile, reducing conflict with people walking and the potential for injury.

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