

<b>Committee:</b> Streets & Walkways Sub Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 17/01/23
<b>Subject:</b> Dockless Cycles Policy and Legal Powers Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	9
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Executive Director Environment	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Giacomo Vecia, Senior Strategic Transportation Officer	

## Summary

In 2019 Freebike and Beryl ended their dockless schemes in the City and in 2020 new operators Lime and HumanForest were given approval to operate. Since then, City workers, residents and visitors have made over half a million trips using dockless cycles.

In autumn 2022 a review of Lime and HumanForest's operations was undertaken following concerns raised by officers and Members and external complaints regarding dockless cycle hire in the City. Formal review meetings were held with operators and data and metrics were requested to inform the review.

Following these review meetings with operators a series of actions were agreed to further improve parking compliance rates and behaviours. These included enhanced end-of-ride parking image verification processes, revised and enhanced user and in-app messaging and improved clarity and language around warning, fining and banning processes.

Dockless cycle hire schemes fall outside the existing legislative framework and the City Corporation does not have powers to prevent dockless cycle hire schemes from operating in the City.

The Government has stated its plans to introduce controls to enable the regulation of the dockless rental market. This would extend to rental bikes and e-bikes as well as e-scooters. The timetable for the legislative process as not yet been confirmed, but it is expected that new regulations governing the whole micromobility rental market in London could come into force during 2024 or 2025.

Efforts to adopt the pan-London dockless vehicle byelaw are not being progressed. It is therefore recommended to continue formalising individual agreements with

operators to improve dockless cycle hire in the City until the Government introduces planned legislation. This would include reapproving HumanForest's approval status and extending the review period on Lime's approval status until May 2023.

The City Corporation is seeking to install an additional 11 mixed-use rental e-scooter and dockless bike parking bays across the Square Mile alongside considering the allocation of additional resource to undertake a study to identify further sites. All planned bays are located in under-utilised locations on carriageway and no loss of parking space is planned as part of these works. These additional sites will help accommodate the increase in demand for dockless cycle hire across the City and Central London and are expected to help improve parking compliance rates.

### **Recommendation(s)**

Members of the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee are asked to:

1. Agree to continue to approve dockless cycle hire operators in the City, renewing HumanForest's status and extending the review period on Lime's approval status until May 2023 (Option 2, paragraphs 39 to 45).
2. Delegate powers to change the structure of voluntary financial contributions from dockless cycle hire operators to the Executive Director Environment in consultation with the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Planning & Transportation Committee and the Streets & Walkways Sub-Committee.

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. 'Dockless cycle hire' is a generic term for a short-term cycle hire scheme, similar to Santander Cycles, but with no on-street docking infrastructure. Dockless cycle hire has been operating in London since autumn 2017.
2. The fact that no on-street docking infrastructure is required offers users more flexibility and avoids the risk of not being able to end a ride due to a docking station being full. It also represents a challenge, as users of dockless cycle hire can leave bikes anywhere, potentially obstructing pavements.
3. Dockless cycle hire schemes fall outside the existing legislative framework and the City Corporation does not have powers to prevent dockless cycle hire schemes from operating in the City.
4. Following the departure of Freebike from the City in 2019 Members approved a refresh to the City's dockless cycle hire policy to allow operators who satisfied the following conditions to apply to operate in the City:
  - a. Agreement to meet certain SLAs, including but not limited to removing inappropriately parked bikes within agreed time limits and limiting overall fleet size among other requirements
  - b. Evidence of ongoing operations in an adjacent London borough with agreement from the borough

- c. Agreement to an upfront payment of funds and ongoing maintenance transfers to support dockless-related expenditures in the City
  - d. Evidence of good financial standing and sufficient insurance and indemnity coverage
5. While meeting these criteria makes an operator eligible to apply for approval to operate a scheme in the City it is not a guarantee of operational approval. Consideration is given to the amount of available dockless vehicle parking in the City not currently allocated to other dockless cycle and rental e-scooter operators and the standing of the eligible operator with the City and other London Boroughs.
  6. In 2019 Beryl also ended their dockless hire scheme in the City and in 2020 new operators Lime and HumanForest were given approval to operate schemes in the City following a competitive selection exercise and formal agreement of the criteria listed above.
  7. Since approval statuses were granted Lime and HumanForest dockless bikes have been used for over half a million trips by City residents, workers and visitors and demand continues to grow. This has contributed to both an increase in cycling observed in the City over the last three years and to challenges around inappropriately parked dockless bikes on City streets.
  8. Four operators are now active across London – Lime, HumanForest, Dott and Tier. Table 1 below summarises the agreements operators have with boroughs in Central London.

**Table 1 – Dockless cycle hire operator-borough agreements in Central London**

	<b>Camden</b>	<b>Hackney</b>	<b>Islington</b>	<b>Lambeth</b>	<b>Southwark</b>
<b>Lime</b>	Formal	Formal	Formal	Informal	Informal
<b>HumanForest</b>			Formal	Informal	Informal
<b>Dott</b>				Informal	Informal
<b>Tier</b>			Formal	Informal	Informal

9. Efforts to adopt the pan-London dockless vehicle byelaw are not being progressed and are unlikely to proceed while new national legislation is awaited. Until the Government introduces planned controls, it has therefore been necessary to continue individual agreements with operators to manage dockless cycle hire in the City.

### **Current parking compliance issues and concerns**

10. A number of complaints were received from Members, businesses and members of the public regarding dockless bike schemes in the City in 2022. These complaints included:
  - dockless bikes partially or fully obstructing pavements,
  - dockless bikes parked in front of fire escapes and loading bays,
  - overcapacity dockless parking bays or messily parked bikes,

- inappropriately parked or abandoned dockless bikes on private property,
  - inappropriate riding behaviours and anti-social behaviour
11. Officers also reported inappropriately parked dockless bikes approximately 50 times and informed operators about all complaints received.
12. Audits of approved dockless parking areas were also undertaken to identify parking compliance rates and capacity issues. Multiple audits over the spring and summer months found several approved parking areas were significantly overcapacity and dozens of bikes inappropriately parked or abandoned well outside of bays.

### **City of London approved dockless cycle hire schemes review**

13. In autumn 2022 a review of Lime and HumanForest's operations was undertaken. Formal review meetings were held with operators and data and metrics requested to inform the review.
14. Internal consultation with impacted divisions including City Cleansing and City Solicitors was also undertaken to gather additional data and feedback on dockless scheme operations and viability.

### **Dockless cycle hire scheme operations and compliance data**

15. Lime and HumanForest were asked to provide parking compliance data for their dockless bike schemes in the City. Responses and data analysis can be found in Appendix 2.
16. Overall dockless cycle hire parking compliance rates were lower than those observed in the pan-London e-scooter trial (approximately 90-95% depending on season), highlighting operational differences between cycle and e-scooter schemes and the impact of regulatory powers for e-scooters (and their absence for dockless cycles).
17. Parking compliance data also suggests that thousands of dockless cycles are being parked outside of bays each month, although not all of these will be parked in such a way as to cause an obstruction. The scale of parking outside of bays is due to oversaturation of existing parking places and increased demand for dockless cycle hire services across Central London.

### **Appraisal of the benefits and drawbacks of dockless cycle hire schemes**

18. Dockless cycle hire schemes have been active in the City since 2017. They have created various challenges but opportunities for the City Corporation and Londoners more widely. An appraisal of these challenges and opportunities are presented below:

### **Table 2 – Summary of key challenges and opportunities associated with dockless cycle hire in the Square Mile**

<b>Key challenges</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
Dockless cycles <b>obstruct pavements and carriageways</b> when parked inappropriately, posing significant trip hazards and blocking journey routes for street users	Very High	High	Requesting operators ensure their dockless vehicles end journeys in approved parking areas and educate their users accordingly. Ensuring operators respond promptly to requests to remove bikes parked outside of approved parking areas. Improving bay infrastructure to make locations more visible to users
Poorly parked or fallen-over dockless cycles, even when parked in an approved parking area, <b>appear unsightly</b> and do not meet the City Corporation's cleansing standards	High	Moderate	Requesting operators staff regularly patrol dockless parking areas to rebalance and tidy the bays. Investigating the potential to procure and install dockless cycle parking stands, which contain the areas and are more visible to users
Poor management of dockless cycle hire operations add <b>additional unplanned and unfunded work</b> for the City Corporation's cleansing teams	Moderate	High	Asking operators to make financial contributions while operating in the City to help cover our costs
Poor screening of users leading to inappropriate usage of hire cycles, including <b>unsafe and antisocial behaviours</b>	Low	Very high	Requesting operators monitor user sign-ups and behaviours and ensure account review, warning and banning processes are in place
Dockless cycles <b>obstruct fire escapes and other critical infrastructure when parked dangerously</b> , creating illegal barriers and increasing risk of harm during potential incidents	Low	Very high	Warning operators of illegal obstructions. Prompt responses by operators to remove bikes. Suspending or relocating any nearby approved parking areas.

<b>Key opportunities</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Realisation</b>
Dockless cycles increase travel choices for City residents, workers, students and visitors by providing a novel green, accessible and active mode that complements the TfL Cycle Hire network	High	Cycling rates (including use of TfL Cycle Hire) have been increasing in the City since dockless cycle hire schemes were introduced in London
Dockless cycles provide additional network capacity during planned closures and incidents such as strikes	High	Dockless cycle hire activity increases significantly during periods of network disruption
Financial contributions from dockless operators	Moderate	Dockless cycle hire financial contributions from operators have totalled £25,000 and will continue to increase
Visitors to the City that use dockless cycle hire in other parts of London or in other cities nationally and internationally benefit from also having easy access to schemes in the Square Mile, particularly for users of Lime which operates schemes in more than 30 countries	Moderate	Operators report users from other boroughs and cities also use dockless cycles in the City

### **Summary of the review of statutory duties and powers to deal with dockless cycles on the highway**

19. At the last meeting of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee in November Members asked Officers to seek legal advice on the powers available to the City Corporation to manage and enforce against obstructions and dangers caused by inappropriate parking of dockless vehicles on City streets and public thoroughfares.
20. Legal advice on our statutory powers was provided in 2019 and published as an appendix to a dockless policy report to Planning and Transportation Committee. That review can be found [here](#). An update to this advice has been provided by the Comptroller and City Solicitor and is presented in Appendix 1.
21. This advice confirms the City has a number of duties under relevant legislation to:
  - a. Assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any highway for which we are the authority

- b. Manage our road network with a view to, so far as may be reasonably practical having regard to our other obligations, policies and objectives, securing the expeditious movement of traffic
  - c. Exercise functions conferred to us so far as practicable, to secure the expeditious, safe and convenient movement of traffic, including pedestrians
  - d. Ensure due regard to the need to advance the equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, including through removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
22. It has been stressed by Members and confirmed by the Comptroller and City Solicitor that an unmanaged proliferation of bikes on the highway arising from dockless cycle hire schemes may compromise compliance with the above statutory duties.
23. As noted previously, dockless cycle hire schemes which do not necessitate any infrastructure being placed on the highway fall outside the existing legislative framework and do not need the City Corporation's consent to operate in the City. However, there are some existing statutory powers available where bikes are left so as to cause an obstruction, nuisance or danger.
24. Of particular relevance are powers under Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980 that states "if anything is so deposited on a highway as to constitute a nuisance, the highway authority for the highway may by notice require the person who deposited there to remove it forthwith. In the event of non-compliance, a court order may be obtained authorising the removal and disposal of the offending item. If the highway authority has reasonable grounds for considering the item constitutes a danger (including a danger caused by obstructing the view) to users of the highway and ought to be removed without the delay of seeking a court order it can remove the item forthwith and, ultimately, seek a court order for its disposal."
25. The existing legislative framework and powers listed above present some obvious challenges for enforcing against dockless cycles left outside of approved parking areas given dealing with obstructions requires notice periods and court orders and that only items that constitute a clear danger on City streets can be legally removed with immediate effect.

### **Recently agreed improvements to dockless cycle hire schemes in the City**

26. Following formal performance and compliance review meetings with Lime and HumanForest a series of actions were agreed to further improve parking compliance rates and behaviours.
27. Operators recognised the need for improved operational standards following issues and complaints raised over the summer period and committed to working with the City to ensure they meet the terms and requirements of their operational agreements.

28. Operators were already committed to the following parking compliance actions:
- a. Ensuring all City of London approved dockless vehicle parking areas are marked and highlighted in their apps
  - b. Notifying, warning and/or fining users when they attempt to end a ride outside of an approved parking area
  - c. Reminding users every few rides or days about parking requirements in the Square Mile
  - d. Rebalancing parked dockless cycles to mitigate issues around overcapacity bays and potential impacts on appropriate parking behaviours
  - e. Banning users that repeatedly park inappropriately
29. Operators have also committed to exploring or implementing the following improvements to their schemes as part of the review process:
- a. Enhanced end-of-ride parking image verification processes
  - b. Revised and enhanced user and in-app messaging reminding users of appropriate parking locations and behaviours in the City
  - c. Temporary clean stencilling installed in the City at non-compliance hotspots
  - d. Media activations in neighbouring boroughs to improve London-wide compliance
  - e. Additional behavioural campaigns over the coming months
  - f. Improved clarity around warning, fining and banning processes for inappropriate parking and riding behaviours
  - g. Dynamic parking bay statuses enabling them to prevent users from ending their trips in fully occupied parking areas
30. We are working with Lime and HumanForest to ensure that best practice and innovation introduced by one operator are adopted by the other. We are also working closely with TfL and London boroughs who have agreement with Lime, HumanForest or other dockless cycle hire scheme operators active in London to ensure industry best practice is adopted in the City.

### **Dockless cycle hire scheme approval status recommendations**

31. Three options for dockless cycle hire operations in the City have been considered and are presented below. Officers recommend Option 2.

#### **Option 1: Revoke operational approval statuses for Lime and HumanForest and commence enhanced enforcement of inappropriately parked bikes that pose a danger on our streets**

32. Option 1 acknowledges that HumanForest and Lime have performed below expectations in several key areas of concern and would involve the revocation of their approval statuses.
33. While dockless cycle hire scheme operators would no longer have the approval of the City Corporation to operate in the Square Mile, as noted



previously, operators do not require the consent of the relevant highways authority to lawfully operate a dockless cycle hire scheme. It is anticipated that these operators may choose to continue to operate in the City after their approval statuses have been revoked.

34. As part of this option Members could instruct Officers to begin enhanced enforcement against inappropriately parked bikes that pose a danger on our streets to further disincentivise dockless cycle hire scheme operations in the City. Additional clarification has been sought from City Solicitors around what scenarios dockless cycles obstructing pavements or carriageways may constitute a danger. This is presented in Appendix 1.
35. It is noted however that considerable resource would be required to support enforcement activities, namely: additional Cleansing Team resource to identify, attend, remove and store dangerously parked bikes; additional City Solicitor resource to support any legal challenges and court orders and additional Policy Team resource to oversee and manage enforcement activities and relationships with operators.
36. This approach would also open the City Corporation to legal challenges, likely requiring additional resource to detail and agree a sufficiently robust process for considering and identifying dangerously parked dockless cycles.
37. It is also acknowledged that constructive engagement with operators is better than a fully adversarial position, allowing us to raise issues and discuss potential solutions with them as opposed to complete disengagement. A breakdown in our relationship with operators would also limit our ability to request voluntary financial contributions from operators which to date have generated an additional £25,000 in funding for the wider cycling and dockless portfolio.
38. Given the recent announcement from the Secretary of State for Transport that forthcoming legislation on regulation and additional powers to manage dockless cycle hire has been delayed until at least the 2023 legislative session, it is likely that, should this approach be taken, additional enforcement resource will be required until at least late 2024 or 2025.

**Option 2 (recommended): Continue to approve dockless cycle hire operators in the City, renewing HumanForest's status and extending the review period on Lime's approval status until May 2023**

39. The approach outlined in Option 2 acknowledges current concerns with cycle hire operations while recognising the need for continued engagement and collaboration with the dockless cycle hire industry.
40. HumanForest would have their approval status renewed unconditionally. Lime would have their review period extended until May 2023. Lime will be asked to develop a plan for ongoing operational improvements and provide monthly compliance data updates with an aim of demonstrating a clear improvement in their parking compliance and maximum fleet size metrics.

41. A long-term goal of bringing dockless cycle compliance rates in line with those observed in the pan-London rental e-scooter trial would also be set for both Lime and HumanForest.
42. Should a clear improvement not be achieved by the end Lime's extended review period a recommendation to end Lime's approval status will be brought to this Committee.
43. It is proposed that both operators will be asked to make new voluntary financial contributions in January following the finalisation of a new structure for determining the level of these contribution.
44. This approach continues our formal relationships with operators, allowing us to continue to work constructively with them to raise issues and discuss potential solutions while recouping some of the costs associated with mitigating the impacts of dockless cycle hire in the City.
45. The City Corporation is also seen as an important dockless vehicle policy knowledge base both within London and nationally. Continuing our engagement with operators in London and the dockless industry more widely will help us maintain and elevate that status and the leverage it affords the City Corporation in influencing wider policy and legislation.

**Option 3: Continue to approve dockless cycle hire operators in the City, renewing HumanForest's status and revoking Lime's status, alongside initiating a new procurement exercise to potentially award approval status to a new operator in place of Lime**

46. The approach outlined in Option 3 takes elements from both Options 1 and 2 to permit dockless cycle hire operations in the City while revoking Lime's approval status in light of their review results.
47. As stated in Option 1, while Lime would no longer have the approval of the City Corporation to operate in the Square Mile they do not require our consent to lawfully operate a dockless cycle hire scheme. It is anticipated that Lime may choose to continue to operate in the City after their approval statuses have been revoked.
48. Lime also operates in several neighbouring boroughs, including areas not covered by TfL Cycle Hire. As such they maximise the availability of dockless cycles for City workers, residents and visitors.
49. Thus, given the challenges and reasons outlined in Option 1 this option is not recommended by Officers.

**Cleansing and enforcement arrangements**

50. Our current approach to enforcing against inappropriately parked dockless bikes consists of reporting issues and incidents directly to operators and, if

possible, immediately moving or relocating bikes to more appropriate locations. We do not currently undertake significant legal enforcement action against dockless cycle hire schemes.

51. While City Corporation staff are unable to unlock dockless cycles to relocate them to approved parking areas, they will attempt to lift bikes (which can weigh up to 20kg) while they are locked to move them to more appropriate nearby locations. The relocation is limited to the nearest safe location, as bikes are heavy and locked, needing two people to move them. These bikes are then reported immediately to the responsible operator to attend to.
52. As detailed in Appendix 1 the City Corporation has limited powers to enforce against dockless cycles that pose nuisances, obstructions or dangers on City streets.
53. Enforcing against dockless cycles that pose an obstruction involves notifying operators of any obstructions and providing them a reasonable timeframe for removing the obstruction. If the obstruction is not removed in a reasonable timeframe the City Corporation can seek a court order to enable us to remove the obstruction ourselves.
54. Any dockless cycles that pose a danger on our streets may be removed immediately. While no standard definition of how dockless cycles may constitute a danger on UK highways exists, potential scenarios have been identified as part of the legal advice in Appendix 1.
55. Officers have not regularly enforced against bikes that pose a danger due to:
  - a. Limited secure storage for removed bikes due to changes at Walbrook Wharf
  - b. Updated costs associated with enabling the IDOX cleansing system to facilitate dockless cycles removals
  - c. Limited cleansing staff resource
  - d. A lack of formal legal and policy guidance on how to appraise whether an inappropriately parked dockless bike constitutes a danger or an obstruction
  - e. Concerns around legal challenges should operators wish to challenge our definition of dangerously parked dockless bikes
  - f. Awareness that most bikes are re-hired or removed before City cleansing staff are able to attend to sites with inappropriately parked bikes with the necessary removal vehicle and teams
56. Given these reasons we are not recommending commencing enhanced enforcement activities against dockless bike providers and instead continue to report inappropriately parked bikes to operators, move those bikes ourselves when possible and work with operators to improve their compliance and response times.
57. Should Members wish to instruct City officers to commence enhanced enforcement it is likely that considerable additional resource and budget

would need to be identified to resolve the challenges and limitations listed in above.

### **Future legislation**

58. The Government has stated its plans to introduce controls to enable the regulation of the dockless vehicle rental market. This would extend to rental bikes and e-bikes as well as e-scooters.
59. The Secretary of State for Transport confirmed in early December that legislation on e-scooters and micromobility would not be introduced this session (before May) and a timetable for the legislative process has not yet been confirmed. It is hoped that new regulations governing the whole micromobility rental market in London could come into force during 2024 or 2025.
60. Until then it will likely be necessary to continue individual agreements with operators to manage dockless cycle hire schemes in the City given our limited powers and controls over dockless cycle hire operations.
61. While awaiting future legislation we intend to intensify discussions with neighbouring boroughs to seek further alignment on dockless cycle hire policy and operations, including on potential future dockless scheme operator selection and/or procurement exercises, enforcement and equality impact assessments and mitigations.
62. We will also continue to support and lobby for the updating of the London Dockless Cycle Hire Code of Practice to include lessons learned since the last version was published in 2018. We will also seek to engage with TfL and the DfT on the drafting and development of future micromobility regulations and legislation.

### **Funding arrangements for dockless hire scheme infrastructure and maintenance**

63. Dockless cycle hire operators were asked to make a voluntary one-off financial contribution to the City Corporation in 2020 ahead of formally launching in the City to aid in the delivery of the dockless vehicle policy portfolio. Those contributions totalled £25,000.
64. Operators were also notified that additional voluntary financial contributions may be requested in future years.
65. It is proposed that the structure of any voluntary financial contributions be changed to better align with the charging structure used in the pan-London rental e-scooter trial. A quarterly request for contributions is being considered where an operator will be asked to contribute a set amount dependent on the size of their permitted fleet in the City. Both Lime and HumanForest currently have a permitted fleet size of 150.

66. It is proposed that powers to permit changes to the structure of voluntary financial contributions by dockless cycle hire operators be delegated to the Executive Director Environment, in consultation with the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the Planning & Transportation Committee and the Streets & Walkways Sub Committee.

### New dockless vehicle parking bays

67. Should Option 2 as recommended above be adopted by Members the City Corporation will seek to install an additional 11 mixed-use rental e-scooter and dockless cycle parking bays across the Square Mile (this provides additional capacity for approximately 75 dockless/e-scooters to park). All planned bays are located in under-utilised locations on carriageway in accordance with our current policy for locating new dockless parking bays. No loss of paid parking space is planned as part of these works.

68. A map of these locations is shown in Figure 1 below.

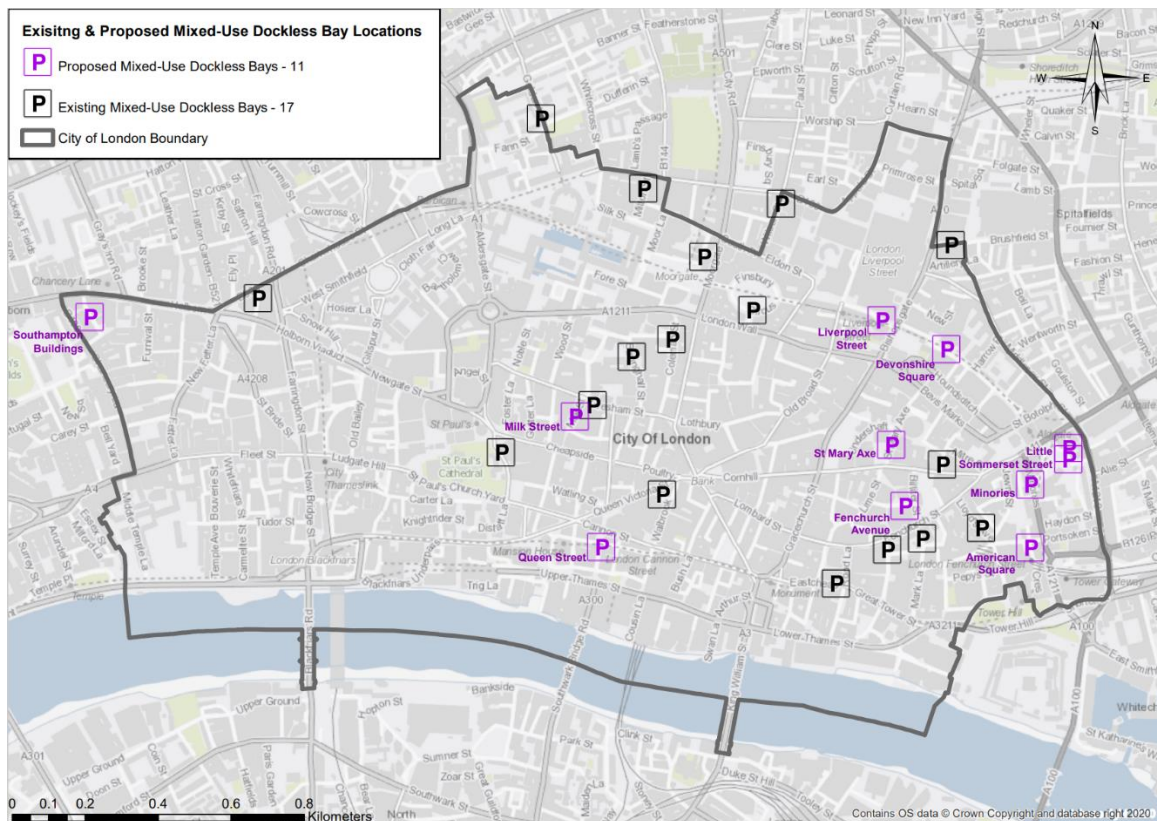


Figure 1 – Existing and proposed mixed-use dockless vehicle bay locations

69. As part of these works we will also seek resource to undertake a study to identify additional potential dockless parking bay sites across the City. These sites will help accommodate the increase in demand for dockless cycle hire across the City and Central London and are expected to help improve parking compliance rates. We are also investigating improvements to bay markings and wayfinding.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

70. Dockless cycle hire supports the delivery of Corporate Plan Outcome 9: We are digitally and physically well-connected.
71. The City of London Transport Strategy (Proposal 28) sets out our approach to improving cycle hire in the Square Mile. The need for designated parking areas is also included in Proposal 17: Keep pavements free of obstructions.
72. Dockless cycle hire and other forms of innovative micromobility help inform the Future City Streets Programme (Proposal 42).
73. Dockless cycle hire also supports our Climate Action Strategy through providing a potentially zero emission alternative to short car, private hire and taxi trips.
74. Dockless cycle hire contributes to activities to deliver the Recovery Taskforce recommendation to pilot and scale innovative solutions.
75. There is a possible reputational risk to the City Corporation if innovative approaches to increasing sustainable and healthy transport modes are not carefully considered. There are also possible reputational risks if potential adverse impacts of dockless cycle hire operations are not carefully managed.

## **Legal implications**

76. The City Corporation has no jurisdiction over the legality of dockless cycle hire schemes.
77. Data collected from dockless cycle hire operations will help inform Corporation policy and possible representations on and consultations to future legislation to regulate the dockless hire market.

## **Financial implications**

78. It is proposed that approved dockless cycle hire operators be asked to make voluntary financial contributions to support the dockless policy portfolio and enable works to implement additional parking bays, reducing the impact on internal budgets.
79. Additional costs will be incurred if the City Corporation has to relocate or remove dockless bikes deemed to be causing a danger from the streets in default of the operator removing them. Removal and storage costs would be incurred in these circumstances and will be recovered through charging operators for removal.
80. There will be some additional impact on cleansing teams as in some locations when dockless parking areas are full it is more difficult for cleansing team to access the area. This is an issue for any vehicle parked areas if occupied whilst cleansing operatives are carrying out work.

## **Health Implications**

81. Well managed dockless cycle hire schemes have the potential to reduce the number of car journeys within central London, and potentially shift journeys from short car, taxi, private hire and public transport trips, with associated benefits to air quality and public health.

## **Equality Implications**

82. A detailed Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken in consultation with internal and external stakeholders on a similar scheme – the City of London’s rental e-scooter trial. Lessons and mitigations from that EQIA have been taken into consideration wherever appropriate and related to dockless cycle hire.
83. Dockless cycle hire activity in the City is being monitored to understand impacts on vulnerable road users (e.g. visually impaired, wheelchair users). This is consistent with the public sector equality duty.
84. The City of London rental e-scooter trial EQIA identifies a number of issues, particularly around safety of e-scooter users and other road users, which can help better understand and develop mitigations for dockless cycle hire schemes, including:
- Speeding and irresponsible riding behaviours
  - Irresponsible parking leading to dockless cycles being abandoned and becoming street litter that could causing obstructions or injury
  - Increased fears for people’s safety and wellbeing on the City’s Streets
  - Increased risk of collisions for those riding dockless cycles
  - Increased risk to people walking on our streets, due to dockless cycles not being seen or heard, dockless cycles speeding in shared use areas, and/or illegal or poor rider behaviour
85. Engagement and enforcement against illegal and unsafe use of dockless cycles will be undertaken in partnership with City of London Police.
86. In summary we have concluded that the application of mitigation measures and the benefits from safe use of a dockless cycles outweigh the negative impacts, or potential impacts of those in protected characteristics groups.

## **Conclusion**

87. Dockless cycle hire expands the range of zero emission and space efficient travel options available to City residents, workers and visitors. Despite the City Corporation’s longstanding requirement for bikes to be parked in designated bays, there are significant issues with bikes being left outside of designated parking areas, which can result in an obstruction.
88. Dockless cycle hire schemes fall outside the existing legislative framework and the City Corporation does not have powers to prevent dockless cycle hire schemes from operating in the City.
89. It is recommended that the City Corporation continue to approve dockless cycle hire operators in the City, renewing HumanForest’s status and extending the review period on Lime’s approval status until May 2023, to allow them time to improve levels of parking compliance (Option 2).
90. The approach acknowledges current concerns while recognising the need for continued engagement and collaboration with the dockless cycle hire industry. It allows us to continue to work constructively with operators to raise issues and discuss potential solutions while recouping some of the costs associated with mitigating the impacts of dockless cycle hire in the City.

91. Irrespective of the option selected by Members in this report we will continue to engage with Lime, HumanForest and all other active dockless cycle hire operators in London to raise issues and seek solutions regarding their operations in the City.

### **Background Papers**

- [London rental e-scooter trial and dockless vehicle update -19 July 2022](#)
- [Pan-London rental e-scooter trial extension – 1 November 2022](#)

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Legal advice on obstructions/dangers

Appendix 2 – Dockless cycle hire operator compliance data (Non-public)

Appendix 3 – Dockless cycle hire operator review findings (Non-public)

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