

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Local Policing Committee – for information Streets and Walkways sub-committee – for information	Dated: 16/09/2025
Subject: Cycling Behaviour in the City of London	Public report: For Information
This proposal: • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Vibrant Thriving Destination
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	City Police Commissioner and Town Clerk
Report authors:	Stuart Ford, Charles Smart

Summary

The sustained increase in cycling in the City has increased concerns about dangerous, anti-social, and nuisance cycling behaviours though, ultimately, City roads are now much safer for cyclists and pedestrians (as measured by injuries and fatalities 'per capita').

Both the City Police and Corporation have in recent years substantially increased work to address poor cycling behaviours, though the very large number of cyclists, prioritisation against other crime and safety issues, and to a lesser degree constraints within national legislation are barriers to wholesale prevention of these issues.

The City Police and Corporation plan to go further on tackling these issues with better data and analysis, more partnership work, better comms, encouraging national action, and assessing scope to increase penalties locally.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

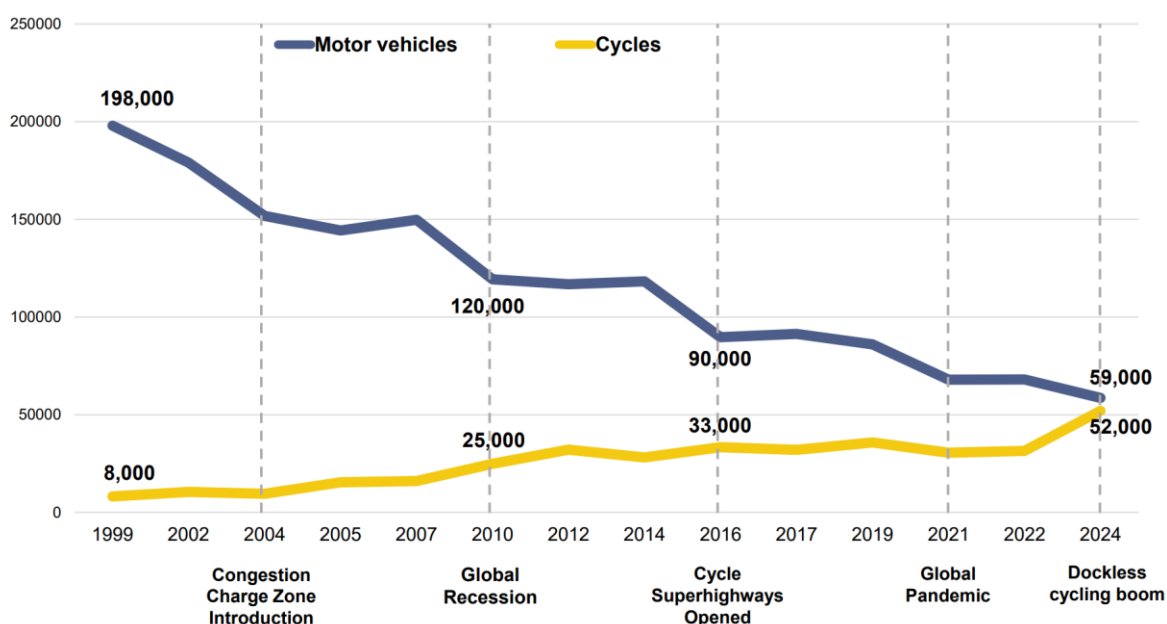
Main Report

Background – cycling in the City and road safety

1. Both the City of London Corporation and wider London governing bodies have in recent decades consistently encouraged more cycling.
2. In the City, this has broadly taken three forms:
 - Significant investment by both the Corporation and Transport for London (TfL) in cycle lane and road safety infrastructure such as at Bank Junction, Aldgate, St Paul's gyratory, and cycleways;
 - Road safety policies and initiatives such as closing Bank junction to non-bus motor traffic during weekdays from 7am-7pm, improving freight vehicle driver safety, and strategies including the most recent Vision Zero plan that aims to eliminate road fatalities by 2040;
 - Other policies and initiatives to improve the 'cycling experience' such as allowing cycling on more City streets and adding more cycle parking and parking bays for dockless bikes
3. As Figure 1 below shows, there has been a large and sustained increase in the number of City cyclists accompanied by a large and sustained fall in use of motor vehicles:

Figure 1¹ – Cycling and Motor Vehicle usage in the City, 1999 to 2024

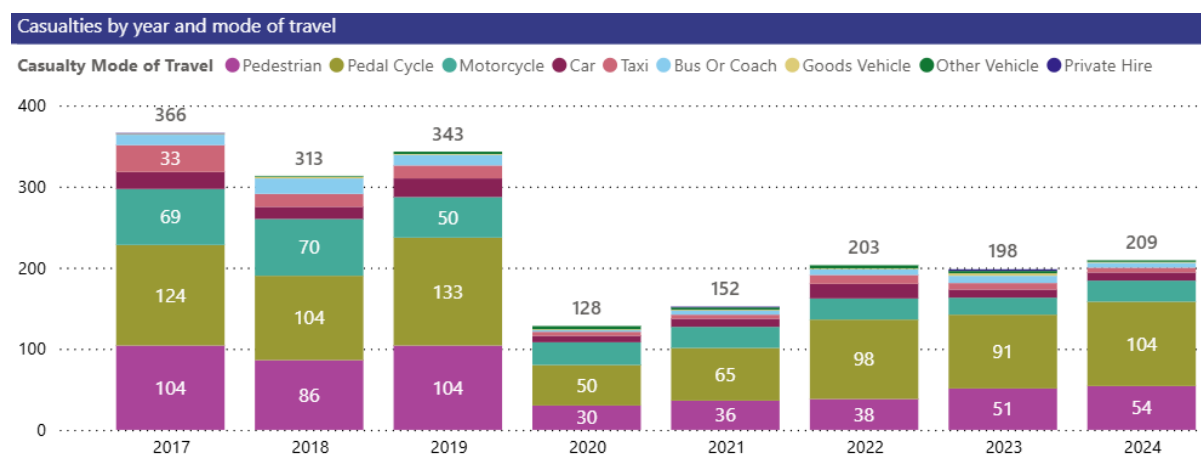
The number of people cycling in the City is six times higher than in 1999 while the number of motor vehicles has declined by 70% over the same period.



¹ Source: [City Streets Summary Report 2025](#)

4. While cycling has increased, cyclist casualties (i.e. injuries) and fatalities on City roads have not. As Figure 2 below shows, though cyclists still make up the largest proportion (c. 50%) of City road traffic casualties, incidents are below pre-Covid levels and given the increase in cyclist numbers this represents a significant (c. 45% since 2016/17) reduction in “casualties per cyclist”.

Figure 2² – City road traffic casualties by year and mode of travel, 2017 to 2024



Current Position

Cycling behaviour in the City and the response to date

5. Setting aside the use of (e-)cycles to commit crime (such as phone snatches), which is not the subject of this report, there are several concerns about cycling behaviour in the City. These can be summarised as: dangerous cycling including running red lights (often at busy junctions), the more specific dangerous use of (sometimes illegally-modified) e-bikes, and ‘other’ illegal / nuisance cycling (mainly riding on pavements and pedestrianised areas, including the Barbican estate walkways).
6. It is not possible to make a robust estimate of the volumes of such incidents or how they have changed over time (due to technicalities of police recording practices, see paragraph 13 below) but it is likely these represent amongst the commonest forms of anti-social behaviour seen in the City – while recognising that the majority cycle safely and in accordance with the Highway Code.
7. An indication is provided by police engagements: in its initial 9 months of activity (July 2023 to March 2024), the City Police Cycle Team issued nearly 1,000 fixed penalty notices to cyclists with advice and guidance given to 8,663 people.
8. In July 2023, responding to both crime committed using bikes and (e-)cycle offending and ASB, the City Police re-established its Cycle Team which now numbers 1x Sergeant and 10x Police Constables. Under *Operation Lewis* the

² Source: [TfL Road danger reduction dashboard](#) – note that 2024 data is provisional

Cycle Team employs a '3 E' approach of 'Engage, Educate, Enforce' with daily visible operations alternating at busy junctions during rush hour (including issuing advice and, where relevant, fines), increased partnership working on education and intervention, regular engagement events, and increased activity against illegal e-bikes (including seizures). This has resulted in significantly increased enforcement and interventions against poor cycling behaviour and, more broadly, established the City at the forefront of areas responding to these issues.

9. The Corporation's *Vision Zero* strategy, published in 2024, sets out multiple commitments on increasing use of powers to tackle illegal and anti-social cycling and promoting safer cycling behaviours, alongside many wider measures on improving road safety (across safe streets, speeds, vehicles, behaviours and post-collision learning, analysis and support).
10. Underlying both the City Police and Corporation approaches is a priority to protect vulnerable road users from harm. As set out in the previous section, the medium-term trend is of better safety (/fewer casualties and fatalities) "per cyclist" and as Figure 2 also shows, pedestrian road traffic casualties are now about half their pre-Covid volumes.

Options

Barriers to 'going further'

11. Before setting out plans and options to go further on tackling poor cycling behaviour, it is important to note some barriers and 'structural' factors:
 - The first is to recognise there are many more cyclists on City streets: double the number in 2010 and six times the number in 2000. It is challenging for the City Police's 11-strong Cycle Team to undertake comprehensive enforcement and behavioural intervention against tens of thousands of daily cyclists (and see below on the question of trade-offs).
 - The second is that certain poor behaviours may be a by-product, in part, of the success of wider safety measures. The reductions in City vehicle traffic, the City-wide 20mph speed limit, and closing of Bank Junction to private motor traffic all mean it is now significantly less risky (to personal safety) for City cyclists to run red lights and otherwise cycle dangerously.
 - The third is the limits of what is feasible within current national legislation. The value of Fixed Penalty Notices for dangerous cycling is fixed in national legislation at £50 as are the thresholds at which these can be issued (though see *Proposals* below on penalties), and addressing the wide availability of illegal e-bikes and modification kits would also require restrictions at the national level (as these are generally purchased online).
 - Related to #3, the fourth is the increasingly large numbers and use of illegally-adapted e-cycles in the City (linked, in significant part, to the very high volume of food delivery in the City – i.e. orders by City workers). Since the Cycle Team's establishment in July 2023 it has seized 687 illegal bikes/scooters, but

(related to point #1 above on capacity) is still seeing more than can be dealt with on the street. Note that the City Police has been involved in advising work in both the House of Commons and Lords on reviewing current laws around cycling and EAPC's (e-bikes).

12. Lastly, it should be noted that tackling dangerous and anti-social cycling is not a priority objective under the City Police's 2025-28 Policing Plan. In this context, re-directing resources and organisational focus towards cycling issues means taking them away from agreed priorities – such as tackling theft and violence. As above, the City Police has already made a significant investment in re-establishing the Cycle Team and the City Corporation has invested several £millions in total in cycling infrastructure and safety schemes.

Proposals

Plans to go further

13. The following are areas that the City Police and Corporation plan to pursue to tackle poor cycling behaviour, in addition to already-announced work:

- *Better data and analysis* – Hitherto, volumes of dangerous and ASB cycling have been difficult to track because, as minor offences (or indeed cautions or advice given), they are not recorded as standard on City Police systems (which also precludes identification of 'repeat offenders' as a cycling offence does not generally confer a criminal record). The City Police are now working on a new reporting and recording system specifically for cycling-related issues. This will give a clearer indication of volumes and hotspots (time and location) which will in turn provide a better evidence base for specific geographical interventions and tasking, provide the public with clearer reporting pathways, and allow for tracking of repeat offenders.
- *Higher penalties for repeat offending* – Linked to the above, the City Police are also exploring scope to use Community Protection Warnings and Notices (CPW, CPN) for repeat cycling offenders. This would offer more serious sanctions than the standard £50 Fixed Penalty Notice for individual traffic offences - including potential prosecution - under an 'escalation pathway' like that already in use in the City for persistent begging (where sanctions increase with the number of repeat offences). If implemented, this would provide a more effective deterrent to continued offending.
- *More partnership working and external engagement, including with dockless bike operators and delivery companies* – The City Corporation intends to increase the local Road Danger Reduction Partnership's focus on cycling behaviour and add dockless bike operators to this group³. Both the City Police and Corporation are also increasing their engagement with principal food delivery companies in the City (Deliveroo, JustEat, UberEats).

³ There is scope as part of this to engage on issues around poor parking of e-bikes, but Members should note that this is not (in most cases) law-breaking behaviour so would not involve City Police in enforcement

- *More and more prominent campaigns and messaging* – The City Police and Corporation will look at how best to amplify existing campaigns and initiatives (such as the ‘Exchanging places’ road safety scheme and ‘Respect the Red’ red-light initiative), are working with TfL on a forthcoming behaviour change campaign, and will explore scope for new campaigns (for example, public education on legal/illegal e-bike design).
- *Encouraging national action* – The City Police have already been involved in informing Parliamentary work on e-bikes and will work with the Corporation on scope to encourage legislative change in other areas: for example, fine levels for dangerous cycling and restrictions on e-bike modification kits.

A note on ‘crushers’

14. Members have previously expressed interest in crushing ‘offending’ e-bikes as a deterrent to illegal use or modification. This does already occur at the end of the seizure process: people have 14 days to reclaim a bicycle or e-bike if seized by the police, and if this doesn’t happen then the bike is crushed or otherwise disposed of.
15. In May, the Home Office launched a consultation on reducing this period to 48 hours in certain circumstances. If introduced, the City Police and Corporation will consider opportunities to make use of (and communicate) these new powers as a deterrent, however the shorter timeframe is in practice unlikely to alter the number of bikes ‘crushed’ in the City.
16. This is because it is already, typically, impossible to meet the criteria for an illegal e-bike to be returned: if it doesn’t conform to the relevant regulations⁴ it is in effect a moped or motorcycle and so requires a valid driving license and vehicle insurance. As one cannot have valid insurance for an illegal e-cycle, such ‘vehicles’ can’t be reclaimed. As above, the City Police and Corporation will explore more public education about the law on e-bikes, including the likelihood of illegal, seized, bikes being crushed.

⁴ Electrically-assisted pedal cycle (EAPC) regulations – which in summary require such bikes to a) have pedals capable of propelling it and not have a throttle, b) not have a motor exceeding 250 watts (of ‘maximum continuous rated power’), c) cut off electrical assistance above a speed of 15.5 mph (NB –e-cycles may travel faster than 15.5 mph, but the motor cannot be working beyond this speed)

Summary of issues and responses

Cycling behaviour issue	Causes	Specific responses	Cross-cutting responses
Dangerous cycling, including at busy junctions	Increased number of cyclists Increased safety and cycle-accessibility of City streets and junctions (Potentially) relatively light sanctions	More and more prominent campaigns and messaging (Potentially) specific interventions in hotspot areas, following better analysis (Potentially) encouraging national changes on sanctions	More City Police engagement, education and enforcement Corporation work to promote safe behaviours and increase use of powers
Dangerous (mis)use of (illegal) e-bikes	Increased use of e-bikes Increased availability of illegal e-bikes and modification kits (Potentially) low public awareness of the law	More engagement with dockless bike companies (Potentially) encouraging national changes on illegal e-cycle availability (Potentially) more public education on the law	Better data and analysis, aided by new reporting system (Potentially) Higher penalties for repeat offending
Other illegal/ nuisance cycling including riding on pavements and City walkways	Increased number of cyclists Nature of City's urban landscape (much pedestrianised space)	More engagement with delivery companies	

Conclusion

17. The plans set out in this report will give the City Police and Corporation a clearer evidence base on cycling behaviour issues, improve partnerships, and enhance engagement and messaging, with the potential to increase penalties in future.
18. These build on the significant increase in resource that the City Police has already committed to tackling cycling-related issues (its Cycle Team) and the wide range of work the City Corporation has done, and will do, to promote safer cycling through infrastructure investment, roads policy, and wider road and cycle safety initiatives (including the recent Vision Zero strategy).
19. The basic shared aim underpinning this work is to improve public safety, and in particular that of more vulnerable road users. As the first section of this report demonstrates, indicators of this are moving in the right direction – overall road traffic casualties in 2024 were over a third lower than the 2017-19 average, pedestrian casualties have fallen by half, and ‘casualties per cyclist’ have also fallen significantly.

Appendices

- None

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