

# Focus Groups Consultation Review

By Transport for All for City of London

May - June 2025

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this report are based on the participants with lived experience of disability, and local stakeholders. The recommendations listed are also based on their lived experience.

Dates of focus groups:

- Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025
- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025
- Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025

# Contents

Contents .....	2
Introduction.....	3
Method .....	4
Lived Experience: Focus Group Feedback .....	4
Lived Experience: Key Themes.....	4
Lived Experience: Recommendations .....	6
Stakeholders: Focus Group Feedback .....	8
Stakeholders: Key Themes .....	8
Stakeholders: Recommendations .....	9
Comparisons .....	11
Shared Feedback.....	11
Differences in Feedback .....	12
Joint Recommendations .....	13
Summary.....	14
Key Takeaways.....	14
Prioritised Recommendations .....	15
Focus Group Content .....	17
Lived Experience .....	17
Stakeholders .....	26

## Introduction

This report summarises the input from disabled people and external stakeholders; by going over the key themes and points raised in each group to help the City of London understand participants' perspectives. This report will also evaluate the impact of the participants' input and feedback, review the diversity of the participants involved to ensure that they are representative of different experiences, and outline the recommendations that have come from these consultations.

This project with City of London comprised of three different elements to review and evaluate the accessibility of the proposed plans for the cycleway between Aldgate to Blackfriars. This includes:

1. **Focus Groups with Disabled People**, gaining perspective from their lived experience
2. **Focus Groups with External Stakeholders**, engagement with key stakeholders in the local area
3. **Reports**
  - a. Focus Groups Consultation Review
  - b. Accessibility Design Review (see other report)

Transport for All's work is rooted in the Social Model of Disability, understanding that the design of the environment can create barriers that prevent Disabled people to fully access and participate in society. By involving Transport for All to facilitate focus groups during the planning and development, the City of London can understand disabled people's perspectives through their lived experience; ensuring that the city is designed to achieve maximum possible access.

Our vast membership database enables pan-disability research to be undertaken, ensuring that the following eight categories can contribute to the development of accessible transport:

1. Blind or partially sighted
2. Deaf or hard of hearing
3. Dexterity impairment
4. Learning disability
5. Long term health condition / chronic illness
6. Mental health conditions
7. Mobility impairment
8. Neurodivergent

## Method

This project has been designed to maximise the impact of the lived experience to improve the accessibility of the cycleway from Aldgate to Blackfriars.

### Focus Groups with Disabled People

We consulted with 10 people with lived experience of disability, who reviewed the cycleway from a variety of perspectives, taking a pan-disability approach, to understand the intersectional and diverse impacts. Looking through the plans and illustrations, they discussed current and potential barriers in relation to the proposed cycleway between Aldgate and Blackfriars, with their lived experience at the centre of the conversations.

### Focus Group with Stakeholders

Transport for All liaised with key contacts at external stakeholder organisations, to facilitate a focus group and receive additional feedback on the consultation for the cycleway from Aldgate to Blackfriars, ensuring that different perspectives are considered.

## Lived Experience: Focus Group Feedback

The focus groups were conducted to enable perspectives from lived experience to be taken into account and considered. With 1 in 4 people in the UK being disabled, it's essential that accessibility is integrated throughout plans, such as the proposed cycleway from Aldgate to Blackfriars. These were conducted both online and in person, at Guildhall in London.

Participants explored various aspects of cycling infrastructure, including safety concerns, physical barriers, and design preferences for cycleways and pedestrian paths. The participants shared ideas for specific improvements needed for London's cycling infrastructure, such as better signage, clearer lane markings, and more accessible features, while also addressing challenges related to electric bikes (e-bikes) and shared spaces.

## Lived Experience: Key Themes

### Navigation and Wayfinding

- Frequent concern about inconsistent design across different areas.

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- Neurodivergent participants, especially autistic users, find sudden changes in layout distressing and disorienting.
- Strong colour contrast, clear signage, and floor markings were recommended to improve navigation.
- Road and street names need to be implemented at an accessible height.
- Legible London totems are underused due to lack of audio accessibility.

## Physical Design and Infrastructure

- Widespread support for segregated cycleways to separate cyclists from pedestrians and cars.
- Preference varies between bollards, curbs, and concrete separators, but agreement on the need for physical separation to reduce risk and improve clarity.
- Shared spaces were consistently described as unsafe and exclusionary, especially for disabled, blind, or neurodivergent users.
- Strong emphasis on mobility aid users, long-term health conditions, and disabled cyclists needing better infrastructure support.
- Support for adapted cycles and trikes that require wider lanes and level, protected routes.
- Described as particularly unsafe and confusing, especially for those with vision impairment or cognitive disabilities.

## Safety and Risk Mitigation

- Speed and silent operation of e-bikes and scooters were major safety risks, especially for blind/visually impaired individuals.
- Poorly designed junctions and bus stop bypasses increase risk, particularly in shared areas.
- Suggested mitigations included: audible crossings, tactile paving, speed limits, and visual cues for safe crossing.
- Participants want features like countdown timers, better lighting, and safe refuge zones at crossings.
- Requests for:
  - Tactile paving
  - Audible signals
  - Dropped kerbs
  - Consistent layouts
  - Pedestrian priority enforcement

## Public Education and Behaviour

- Multiple references to the lack of public understanding around how to navigate shared spaces safely.
- Participants support education campaigns, especially around bus stop bypasses, cycleway rules, and use of mobility devices in cycle lanes.
- Better signage about who can use cycle lanes (e.g., powered wheelchairs, mobility scooters) was recommended.
- Complaints about cyclists treating cycleways as “racetracks” and not being considerate of pedestrians.
- Participants suggested bike regulation, speed enforcement, and clear user markings.

## Environment and Accessibility Barriers

- Issues with cycle parking, kerbside access, dropped kerbs, and blocked pavements highlighted as recurring barriers.
- Calls for uncluttered pavements, non-slip surfaces, and matte finishes to support safety in varied weather and lighting.
- Inadequate lighting, poor maintenance of tactile paving, and improperly placed greenery were flagged as hazards.
- Concerns about bike parking, especially e-bike rentals, cluttering pavements and obstructing access.
- Participants wanted greener, more pleasant environments, but without compromising clear routes and accessibility.
- Planters, trees, and soft landscaping are welcome if they don’t reduce usable pedestrian space.

## Lived Experience: Recommendations

Overall, the participants frequently call for:

- Consistency across all infrastructure
- Physical separation between different modes of transport
- Clear and accessible signage
- Awareness on shared use etiquette for the public
- Enforcement of accessibility design standards
- Improved safety features at crossings and junctions

## Inclusive and Accessible Infrastructure

Make cycleways usable and accessible for everyone:

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- Segregated cycleways and space allocation
- Accessibility for disabled users (e.g. adapted bikes, kerbside access)
- Dropped kerbs, tactile paving, and non-slip, glare-free surfaces
- Consistency in design (important for neurodivergent users)
- Adequate space for wider or adapted mobility aids

## Navigation, Wayfinding and Design Consistency

Ensure people can confidently and independently navigate the area, using their chosen mode of transport:

- Clear, consistent wayfinding and signage
- Strong colour contrast and tactile markings
- Countdown timers and audible crossings (including maintenance)
- Improved lighting and readable, accessible maps (e.g. Legible London totems with audio)
- Consistent layout and markings across the network

## Safety and Separation of Modes

Reduce conflict and improve safety between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles:

- Physical separation (bollards and raised islands / kerbs)
- Managing cyclist speed (especially e-bikes and scooters)
- Avoiding shared paths where possible
- Prioritising pedestrian safety at crossings and junctions
- Creating buffer zones between cycle lanes and motor traffic

## Behaviour, Awareness and Education

Promote respectful, informed use of these areas through public engagement and regulation:

- Public education campaigns (e.g. cyclist behaviour, shared space etiquettes)
- Awareness of rights for mobility scooters and adapted cycles
- Improved cyclist awareness of vulnerable users
- Clarification of permitted uses in cycleways
- Maintain and encourage cycle parking

## Environment, Comfort and Maintenance

Create welcoming, functional spaces that are clean, safe, and pleasant to use:

- Uncluttered, well-maintained pavements

- Accessible, well-contrasted bike parking
- Avoid obstructions (rental bikes, bins, signage)
- Strategic use of greenery without causing barriers
- Ongoing maintenance of tactile features and colour contrasts

## Stakeholders: Focus Group Feedback

This section outlines key recommendations arising from stakeholder engagement on the proposed City of London cycleway project, specifically focused on Queen Victoria Street, Aldgate, Cheapside, and surrounding areas. These recommendations aim to improve infrastructure design, enhance safety and inclusivity, address area-specific challenges, and support the long-term vision of a safer, more accessible and multimodal transport network.

### Stakeholders: Key Themes

#### Cycleway Design and Safety

- Strong emphasis on segregation of cycleways from traffic to improve safety, particularly for disabled cyclists and pedestrians.
- Preference for single-direction cycleways for clarity, though two-way designs are considered necessary in space-constrained areas.
- Concerns over intersection safety, including the importance of yellow box junctions to prevent traffic blockage.

#### Inclusive Infrastructure

- Broad support for bus stop bypasses, which are seen as essential to avoid cyclists mixing with heavy traffic.
- Infrastructure improvements are linked to increased cycling uptake, especially among women, children, and disabled people.
- Discussion of adapted bikes and cargo bikes, highlighting the need for inclusive design and designated parking for rental bikes.

#### Behaviour, Enforcement and Education

- Concerns raised about electric motorbikes using cycleways.
- Support for campaigns promoting responsible road use and enforcement to reduce conflict between road users.



- Mention of a delivery rider conduct charter from Manchester as a model for London.

## Wayfinding and Accessibility

- Support for direct pedestrian crossings and contrasting colours / signage to improve navigation.
- Stakeholders suggest coloured lanes could help deter illegal parking by motor vehicles.

## Area-Specific Issues

- Congestion in Cheapside, Queen Victoria Street, and Aldgate, linked to traffic, deliveries, tourists, and tuk-tuks.
- Concerns about ‘junctions under multiple jurisdictions’, which complicate accessibility challenges.
- Specific challenges in Aldgate, including:
  - Removal of cycle lanes on Landfall Street.
  - Reopening of Bank junction to black cabs.
  - Narrow roads and construction disruption.
  - Poorly designed turns and mixing with large vehicles.

## Urban Environment and Shared Use

- Calls for more greenery and dedicated running lanes.
- Need to balance infrastructure for cyclists, pedestrians, and runners, while accommodating underground utilities and maintaining accessibility.

## Stakeholders: Recommendations

### Cycleway Design and Safety

- Prioritise physical separation between cyclists, pedestrians, and motor traffic to improve safety.
- Implement single-direction cycleways on each side of the road where feasible for improved navigability and predictability.
- Install yellow box junctions at key crossover points to prevent traffic from blocking cycleways (despite current TfL reluctance).
- Use raised surfaces and directional shifts to slow cyclists in shared spaces and improve safety.
- Address safety at route endpoints and jurisdictional boundaries, particularly where accessibility is reduced.

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## Inclusive and Functional Infrastructure

- Extend high-quality, inclusive infrastructure along the full route, benefiting a wide range of users including schoolchildren, women, disabled people, and tourists.
- Support and expand bus stop bypasses, which reduce cyclist exposure to motor traffic and improve safety and comfort for all.
- Ensure infrastructure accommodates adapted and cargo bikes, including designated cargo/rental bike parking to reduce pavement obstruction.
- Balance the needs of all users, including pedestrians and runners, especially where pavement width allows multi-use (minimum 4.4m noted).
- Coordinate infrastructure rollout with local business needs to avoid disruption during implementation.

## Enforcement and Behaviour Management

- Strengthen enforcement against misuse of cycleways, particularly by electric motorbikes and improperly parked rental bikes.
- Collaborate with bike-share companies to manage parking and ensure safe pedestrian access (e.g. clear fire exits, avoid pavement blockages).
- Promote respectful road user behaviour via public education campaigns.
- Explore codes of conduct for delivery riders, similar to Manchester's charter, to address issues like congestion and safety.

## Wayfinding and Accessibility

- Use coloured surfacing and strong contrast to improve wayfinding, visibility, and help deter illegal parking.
- Simplify crossings with direct routes (avoiding two-phase crossings where possible) for improved pedestrian and cyclist flow.
- Improve signage and visual aids to clarify where cycleway layouts change (e.g. two-way to single-lane transitions).
- Incorporate accessible signage and visual cues to better support disabled and neurodivergent users.

## Area-Specific Adjustments

- Manage congestion in high-traffic zones (e.g. Cheapside, St. Paul's, Queen Victoria Street), especially where deliveries, coaches, and tuk-tuks are common.
- Consider regulation or licensing for non-traditional vehicles like tuk-tuks, particularly during peak visitor periods.
- Introduce traffic-free phases at junctions like Canon Street to reduce cyclist-vehicle conflict when cycle signals are active.

- Address safety in Aldgate by revising plans to avoid sharp turns and lane removals that force cyclists into conflict with large vehicles.
- Plan construction timelines carefully to minimise disruption to surrounding businesses and maintain safe cycling conditions during works.

## Comparisons

### Shared Feedback

#### 1. Wayfinding and Visual Design

Participants across both groups identified consistent and accessible wayfinding as a priority. This includes the use of high colour contrast, uniform signage, and visual cues to help all users, particularly those with visual impairments or cognitive processing differences, to navigate safely. Both groups stressed that sudden layout changes or poorly marked transitions within the cycling infrastructure can be disorienting or dangerous.

#### 2. Shared Space and Safety Concerns

There was a strong consensus that shared ‘pedestrian–cyclist’ areas are problematic. Both sets of contributors described these spaces as unsafe, particularly for disabled users who may need more space, time, or clearer boundaries to move safely. Due to this, all participants strongly agreed with the need to install physical barriers to segregate the cycleway from the pathway. The speed of cyclists, lack of awareness of disabled people crossing, and general unpredictability in these areas were also common concerns.

#### 3. Support for Bus Stop Bypasses

Both the lived experience participants and stakeholders supported the continued use of bus stop bypasses. These were seen as an effective way to keep cyclists out of direct conflict with buses and heavy traffic while also maintaining a smoother flow of movement for all users. There was agreement that these features encourage broader participation in cycling, particularly among people who might otherwise be deterred by safety concerns. The only difference being the accessibility of safety for disabled pedestrians, when crossing over (this is discussed later).

## 4. Importance of Public Awareness Campaigns

Each group acknowledged that infrastructure alone cannot ensure safety or accessibility; public behaviour and understanding also play critical roles. Both groups supported the idea of awareness campaigns to educate cyclists, pedestrians, and other road users about respectful and lawful conduct, especially in shared spaces and areas of transition. There was also support for clarifying who is permitted to use cycleways, such as mobility scooters or adapted cycles.

## Differences in Feedback

### 1. Cycleway Configuration: Single vs. Two-Way Lanes

Stakeholders, particularly the London Cycling Campaign (LCC), express a preference for single-direction cycleways on each side of the road. They argue this improves navigability, predictability, and clarity for cyclists. However, they acknowledge that two-way cycleways may be necessary in space-constrained areas.

In contrast, the Lived Experience section doesn't focus as much on this distinction but raises concerns about layout changes (e.g. switching between one-way and two-way formats) creating confusion, especially for neurodivergent users. Participants called for consistency above all, rather than favouring one configuration over another. This suggests that while both groups are concerned with layout, stakeholders are more focused on efficiency and space constraints, whereas disabled users are concerned with predictability and clarity.

### 2. Physical Separation Methods

Both groups support segregation between modes of transport, but they differ on how this should be achieved. Stakeholders support a variety of separation methods, including raised surfaces, bus stop bypasses, and barriers. Their emphasis is often on functionality and traffic flow.

The Lived Experience participants show a clear preference for low-level physical separators such as curbs or raised islands, which are seen as more visible and less intimidating. Some participants expressed anxiety around bollards, viewing them as obstructive or visually confusing, especially for those using mobility aids or with visual impairments. In contrast, others saw bollards as helpful if properly spaced.

### 3. Design Feature Priorities

Lived experience participants emphasised features like tactile paving, audible crossings, dropped kerbs, non-slip surfaces, and the avoidance of clutter on

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pavements. They shared preferences for low-level separation methods such as curbs or raised islands, rather than bollards, which some found anxiety-inducing. Stakeholders, on the other hand, prioritised broader design issues like traffic signal timing, the inclusion of yellow box junctions, and cycleway continuity across borough boundaries.

#### 4. Environmental Considerations

Both groups discussed the role of greenery and environmental features, but with different priorities. The lived experience groups supported the addition of planters and trees, provided they did not obstruct pathways. Their focus remained on how these features affected wellbeing and comfort. Stakeholders suggested a broader design of urban space, including dedicated running lanes and integration of utility access, reflecting a more holistic urban planning approach.

#### 5. Geographic and Implementation Focus

The lived experience discussions evaluated the full route from Aldgate to Blackfriars, highlighting challenges that could affect anyone navigating that corridor. In contrast, stakeholders focused more heavily on location-specific concerns such as congestion at Canon Street, safety around St. Paul's Cathedral, and construction-related disruption in Aldgate. They also addressed the complexity of managing areas under multiple jurisdictions, which was not a theme in the lived experience feedback.

#### 6. Nature of Disruption

When it came to the impact of proposed changes, the lived experience section focused on how poorly designed infrastructure could undermine independence, increase travel times, or create safety risks for disabled individuals. Stakeholders were more concerned with how the rollout of infrastructure might disrupt business operations, deliveries, or general traffic flow, especially during construction phases.

### Joint Recommendations

From this, several clear priorities emerge. Both groups advocate for segregated cycleways with physical separation from pedestrians and traffic to reduce risk and confusion. They support the use of strong colour contrast, tactile wayfinding features, and consistent signage across the route. Both groups call for improved safety features at junctions and crossings, including dropped kerbs, countdown timers, and audible signals.

There is also mutual support for enforcing responsible behaviour among road users, particularly regarding e-bike use and obstructive cycle parking. Importantly, both lived

experience participants and stakeholders agree that truly inclusive design must consider not just infrastructure, but also public education, maintenance, and long-term policy coordination. These aligned goals provide a robust foundation for moving forward with the cycleway in a way that works for all.

## Summary

This report, commissioned for the City of London and delivered by Transport for All, reviews the proposed cycleway plans between Aldgate and Blackfriars through extensive consultation with disabled people and external stakeholders. It draws on lived experiences from individuals with a range of impairments as well as organisational insights. The objective was to assess the accessibility, usability, and safety of the proposed cycleways and provide actionable recommendations.

Disabled participants contributed feedback based on real-world experiences of navigating London, offering critical insights into barriers posed by shared spaces, inconsistent design, unclear wayfinding and the fast, silent movement of e-bikes. Stakeholders, including the London Cycling Campaign and City River, focused on policy alignment, traffic safety, urban planning, and implementation challenges. Despite differing areas of focus, both groups expressed a shared vision for an inclusive, safe, and accessible transport network.

The consultations underscored that cycleway design must actively account for the diverse needs of disabled people. While stakeholders offered perspectives on traffic management and cycling, the lived experience feedback brought attention to the day-to-day barriers, leading to disabled people to experience exclusion.

## Key Takeaways

- **Consistency is critical.** Neurodivergent and visually impaired users especially emphasized the need for consistent design layouts, wayfinding aids, and tactile and visual cues to reduce disorientation.
- **Segregation of transport modes is essential.** Both groups strongly advocated for physical separation between cyclists, pedestrians, and motor traffic to minimise risk. Preferences differed, with lived experience participants favouring curbs and low-level separators, and stakeholders more open to various methods, including bollards.
- **Shared spaces are a major accessibility risk.** All participants agreed that pedestrian–cyclist shared zones are unsafe, particularly for disabled individuals.

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There was strong agreement with the plans to avoid shared paths, by segregating cycleways, and to prioritise pedestrian safety at crossing points.

- **E-bikes and scooters pose unique dangers.** Their speed and silence create significant hazards for blind and visually impaired people. Participants called for speed regulation, audible cues, and clearer lane usage rules.
- **Crossings are often inaccessible.** Many crossings lack tactile paving, audible signals, dropped kerbs, or sufficient crossing time. These features are essential for equitable access and must be standardised.
- **Cycle parking creates access barriers.** Improperly parked rental bikes often block pavements, kerbs, and crossings, disproportionately affecting disabled people. Stakeholders and participants supported better parking management and coordination with rental providers.
- **Public behaviour matters.** Education campaigns were strongly supported to improve awareness around shared use etiquette, safe cycling speeds, and the rights of disabled road users.
- **Urban greening is welcomed (with caution).** Both groups supported the inclusion of trees and planters to improve environmental aesthetics and mental wellbeing but emphasised that these must not obstruct paths or create hazards.
- **Stakeholder concerns differ in focus.** Stakeholders focused on implementation logistics, jurisdictional challenges, business impacts, and modal integration. Disabled participants focused on usability, independence, psychological safety, and practical barriers.

## Prioritised Recommendations

These recommendations are based on the feedback received during this consultation process. For our specific recommendations, based on the proposed plans, please see the Accessibility Design Review.

1. **Implement fully segregated cycleways** that clearly separate pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles using physical infrastructure such as raised curbs or protective islands.
2. **Standardise wayfinding and visual design** through high-contrast surfacing, consistent lane configurations, readable signage, and tactile markers, especially at transitions and junctions.
3. **Improve crossing accessibility** by adding tactile paving, audible signals, dropped kerbs, countdown timers, and refuge zones across the entire route.
4. **Regulate e-bike and scooter use**, introducing speed limits, clearer lane usage rules, and public education around the safety needs of disabled users.

5. **Ensure the safety and accessibility of bus stop bypasses**, ensuring they are well-marked and designed with disabled pedestrian safety in mind when crossing over them.
6. **Manage cycle parking** by collaborating with bike-share providers to designate parking areas and prevent obstruction of pavements and access points.
7. **Launch public education campaign** that promote awareness around shared space etiquette, cyclist behaviour, and inclusive use of public transport infrastructure.
8. **Coordinate construction plans** with businesses and community groups to minimise disruption during implementation and avoid reducing accessibility during works.
9. **Incorporate inclusive design principles** across the full route, including adequate space for adapted bikes, accessible map signage (e.g. audio-supported Legible London totems), and clutter-free environments.
10. **Incorporate greenery**, in the form of trees and plants, to create a more welcoming environment for all users to explore; ensure these don't clutter or obstruct pathways.

This report highlights the necessity of including disabled people's voices at every stage of planning. By including lived experience, the City of London has an opportunity to set a national standard for inclusive, equitable active transport infrastructure.



## Focus Group: Content

This section contains the specific comments from the participants, as well as diversity and inclusion monitoring for equity. Please note that throughout this part of the report, individual participants will be anonymised to reduce any bias. For example, participant one will be referred to as P1, and participant two will be referred to as P2, etc.

### Lived Experience

During the focus groups, each participant introduced themselves and said how they typically navigate around London, along with their disability, impairment-type and barriers. The City of London then presented the proposed plans, which include segregated cycle lanes and bus stop bypasses. It's important to highlight that the online focus group raised the need for better visual representations and street view mock-ups to help people understand the changes, particularly for those who are neurodivergent. This was taken on board for the in-person focus group, as illustrations and CGI images were shared with participants and helped facilitate further discussion.

### Diversity and Inclusion of Participants

#### **Age Distribution:**

- 18–34: 3 participants
- 35–49: 3 participants
- 50–65: 4 participants

#### **Ethnicity:**

Diverse backgrounds including:

- Asian (incl. Mixed): 4 participants
- Black (incl. Mixed): 3 participants
- BAME (not specified): 1 participant
- White British: 2 participants

#### **Gender:**

- Female: 4 participants
- Male: 6 participants

#### **Sexual Orientation:**

- Bisexual: 1
- Heterosexual: 7
- Prefer not to say: 2

**Disability type (including carer responsibilities - multiple selections possible):**

- Blind or partially sighted: 2 participants
- Long-term health condition or chronic illness: 5 participants
- Mental health condition(s): 7 participants
- Mobility-related impairments: 4 participants
- Neurodivergent: 5 participants
- Parent/carer for a disabled person: 2 participants

**Mobility Aids Used (multiple selections possible):**

- Long cane: 1 participant
- Mobility scooter: 1 participant
- Orthotics: 2 participants
- Walking stick or crutches: 3 participants
- Wheelchair: 1 participant
- No mobility aid use: 4 participants

**Pregnancy or Recent Birth:**

- No: 8 participants
- Prefer not to say: 2 participants

**General thoughts and awareness**

In terms of general thoughts around cycleways in London, participants had mixed views on their impact and accessibility, with some stating the benefits and advantages around having a cycleway to encourage lower carbon emissions when travelling around London, as well as assisting with the flow of traffic. P10 expressed strong support for them as both a cyclist and pedestrian, particularly in London's busy traffic. However, there were also comments from other participants, expressing their concerns around the addition of more cycleways throughout the City of London. Many of these were based on traffic concerns, attitudinal barriers (including cyclists being unaware of the safety of those walking and wheeling on the pavements) as well as a lack of awareness around disability. This will be explored further throughout this report.

Across the focus groups, participants reported a wide range of travel methods. Some cycled occasionally, while others used wheelchairs, mobility scooters, or walked. Several relied heavily on public transport, particularly buses, due to the physical and infrastructural barriers they faced in navigating the area.

The discussion covered various challenges and potential solutions, including the need for better infrastructure, increased awareness, and improved legal frameworks to

enhance safety and navigation for all users. These will be detailed and summarised below.

## Accessibility and Mobility

This section summarises key discussions from participants regarding the accessibility and mobility of London's cycleway infrastructure. Drawing from lived experiences, participants identified both barriers and opportunities for improving how these spaces serve disabled and neurodivergent users, people with long-term health conditions, and those who use mobility aids.

The overarching themes include consistency in design, inclusive infrastructure, signage, physical space allocation, and the interplay between safety and usability in the area.

### Segregated Cycleways and Inclusive Design

Participants across the group agreed that well-designed segregated cycleways can reduce bike riding on pavements, which helps keep pedestrian spaces safer and more accessible, especially for wheelchair users, and blind or partially sighted individuals.

P1 also stressed the value of segregated cycleways and visual aids, highlighting the importance of making public spaces accessible to all, not just cyclists. P2 supported this, noting that cycleways should “not feel like racetracks,” but instead prioritise safety and inclusivity through design. Both participants emphasised that thoughtful design influences whether people feel welcome and safe using a space.

The conversation also addressed bus stop bypasses and the need for better public communication and education around how to safely share space (see [Safety Concerns](#) for more).

### Separation Methods: Bollards vs. Curbs

On the topic of separated cycleways, participants generally supported physical separation from pedestrian areas, provided this was implemented carefully. Many expressed a preference for bollard posts, as they are more forgiving if accidentally contacted by a mobility device.

However, P10 voiced a different view. They stated that bollards caused anxiety due to their height and appearance. Instead, they preferred solid, low-level separation features such as raised curbs or islands, which offer both psychological reassurance and clearer boundaries.

### Consistency and Wayfinding

P1 shared their experience navigating both central and outer London and highlighted a lack of accessible signage and placemaking to support wayfinding. They emphasised

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the need for greater consistency in the design and layout of cycling infrastructure. This was reiterated by P10, who, as an autistic person, stated that consistency is vital for navigating spaces confidently. They noted that sudden changes in layout, such as switching from two-way to one-way cycle lanes, can be confusing and hard to remember, especially for neurodivergent individuals.

All participants agreed that this challenge could be mitigated through accessible visual design features, such as strong colour contrast. For example, colouring the cycleways in a solid, distinctive tone could help clearly differentiate them from adjacent pedestrian and road areas.

### **Street Clutter and Pavement Design**

Participants highlighted the importance of streamlining pavements to reduce street clutter and improve accessibility. This included reducing obstructions like bins, signage, cycle parking (including rental bikes) and excessive greenery, which can impede movement and create hazards, especially for people with visual impairments or mobility aids (see Design Considerations for further detail).

### **Crossings, Junctions, and Kerbside Access**

P3 also raised concerns about poorly designed junctions and shared pedestrian–cyclist areas. In cases where crossings lack tactile paving or dropped kerbs, blind and visually impaired people are at increased risk. Accessibility is limited when infrastructure fails to provide clear and safe ways to cross cycle lanes. They also flagged that disabled drivers or those using taxis often rely on kerbside access. When cycleways occupy former loading zones or accessible parking spaces, this can severely restrict access for those users.

P10 shared that they would like to see more zebra crossings in the proposed plans and stressed the value of countdown timers at traffic lights, describing them as significantly more accessible and beneficial to safety.

### **Modes of Cycling**

Electric bikes were frequently mentioned, with participants raising concerns about the lack of audible cues, which can create a barrier to crossing safely, as well as inadequate cycle parking available. As mentioned above, these bikes are often left in the pathways, create barriers for disabled users trying to navigate the space. It was also noted that some of these bikes are parked too closely in busy areas; creating a lack of space for some disabled people to access them, particularly in peak time when the area is busier.

P3 discussed how inclusive cycling infrastructure broadens access to active transport for people with long-term health conditions or limited mobility. For many disabled users, adapted cycles, handcycles, and mobility scooters offer a safer alternative to

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walking or driving, particularly when supported by protected cycle lanes. Tricycles and recumbent bikes, which require more space, also benefit from wide, segregated lanes.

### **Construction, Bus Stops, and Travel Times**

P7 shared their personal cycling experience, noting that while the route was generally straightforward, factors like construction and poorly placed bus stops posed challenges. The conversation touched on how visually impaired and disabled users are often impacted by environmental disruptions, and how proposed changes may increase travel time or reduce safety (see [Safety Concerns](#) for more).

### **Importance of Colour Contrast**

Finally, multiple participants emphasised the critical importance of strong colour contrast between pedestrian and cycling zones. This was seen as especially helpful for people with visual impairments and was regarded as a simple, effective measure for improving spatial awareness, safety, and wayfinding across shared urban spaces. It was also suggested that this might improve safety concerns with cyclists, ensuring that they don't move onto the paving.

## **Safety Concerns**

Participants raised several challenges and safety concerns related to both cycling and pedestrian navigation in the area. These discussions highlighted the need for improved infrastructure, greater awareness, and stronger legal frameworks to support safety and accessibility.

### **Cyclist Speed and Lack of Awareness**

P4, P8, and P9 highlighted several key issues affecting safety in the area. These included the high speed at which some cyclists travel, a general lack of awareness among cyclists of pedestrians and other vulnerable users, and the absence of clearly designated spaces for different modes of transport such as rental bikes, scooters, and private bicycles. Speed limits for bikes, including e-bikes, were mentioned as a necessary intervention to prevent accidents and maintain safe flow; alongside the need for increased enforcement around the high speeds of some cyclists.

### **Crossing Safety and Invisibility of Bikes**

P3 raised specific concerns about the safety of pedestrian crossings, particularly for blind and visually impaired individuals. They noted that fast, and often silent, bikes (especially electric bikes) can be very difficult to detect and therefore pose a significant hazard. These risks are increased further in areas without tactile paving, audible crossing signals, or dedicated pedestrian crossings.

Additional conflict points were identified where cycle lanes intersect pedestrian routes without sufficient markings or signage, such as at bus stops bypasses. In these areas, users with visual or hearing impairments may have little or no warning before a cyclist approaches, leaving them with minimal time to react. These risks are particularly high at crossings which are not signalised. Both P4 and P9, who are registered blind, strongly agreed with this based on their personal experiences navigating these environments.

The group expressed openness to a variety of potential improvements. These included installing clearer signage across key parts of the route and introducing audible signals at pedestrian crossings to support blind and visually impaired users. They also supported exploring the use of smart technologies to enhance safety and navigation. Examples suggested included motion detection systems, cyclist-specific traffic lights, speed limit enforcement, designated pedestrian crossings, and a public awareness campaign focusing on pedestrian safety in the local area, potentially led by the City of London. It's important to highlight that the need for consistency with traffic lights is needed; ensuring that audible signals are heard when it's safe to cross, including the maintenance of this.

### **Value of Segregation and Inclusive Design**

Participants expressed appreciation for the cycleway segregation measures that have already been introduced in this area. They noted that shared paths can be particularly unsafe for certain groups. Deaf or hard of hearing individuals may not hear bicycles approaching from behind. People with autism or cognitive impairments may find unpredictable interactions in shared spaces disorienting or distressing. Wheelchair users and those using mobility aids often require clear, unobstructed walking routes and can find shared paths difficult to navigate safely.

The group discussed wider safety issues concerning shared use paths, where both pedestrians and cyclists are expected to navigate the same space. P1 and P2 shared personal experiences relating to the high speeds of cyclists in these areas, which can compromise safety and increase the risk of collisions. Both participants emphasised the need for more visible signage and the installation of tactile paving to support safe and accessible navigation.

In response to these issues, they discussed possible solutions, including the use of physical infrastructure such as concrete cycle segregation units to create clear divisions between spaces designated for pedestrians and those for cyclists. P1 mentioned that they feel significantly safer when cars are slowed or traffic is reduced. P2 highlighted the importance of increased awareness among pedestrians as well and concluded that physical separation using concrete units would help prevent accidents by keeping cyclists and motorists apart.

### **Cycle Lane Configuration and Communication**

P10 raised concerns about the overall design and use of cycle lanes. Their comments focused on the importance of physical safety measures, the regulation of cyclist speed, and the need for improved communication and information for all users.

Participants expressed a preference for physical barriers such as raised curbs or concrete separators rather than relying solely on painted lines to mark out cycle lanes. Additionally, they stated a slight preference for one-way cycle lanes positioned on opposite sides of the road, rather than a two-way cycle lane, which can be more difficult to navigate and predict.

P10 also addressed issues relating to the growing mix of users within cycle lanes, including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorised scooters. They suggested that there needs to be greater clarity and awareness regarding how these lanes are intended to be used, whilst P6 strongly stated their right to use the cycleways with their powerchair or motor scooter. Generally, depending on the features of the powerchair or scooter, the Highway Code currently states the following (this is explored further in the Accessibility Design Review):

“Cycle tracks are separated from the road by barriers or distance. Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs in class 2 and 3 can be driven on cycle tracks.”

P3 identified road junctions, particularly those where cycleways intersect, as one of the most problematic and dangerous areas for disabled people. They explained that when these junctions are not carefully or thoughtfully designed, they become not only confusing but also inaccessible and unsafe for many users.

The group agreed that providing cyclists with better route planning tools would also help improve safety, by reducing unnecessary confusion and ensuring that cyclists remain on appropriate, designated paths.

### **Accessibility and Traffic Separation**

The discussion also addressed important considerations around physical accessibility, highlighting the critical role of dropped kerbs in supporting access for wheelchair users and others with mobility needs.

P10 stressed the need for a minimum distance, ideally at least half a metre, between cycle lanes and moving traffic, to maintain a safe buffer zone. Additionally, they expressed a preference for cycle lanes to be separated from moving vehicles by parked cars, rather than being positioned directly alongside traffic. This configuration was described as creating a more secure and less intimidating environment for cyclists, while still maintaining flow for all road users.

## Design Considerations

Regarding specific design features, participants had a range of ideas to improve the accessibility, and usability, of this area for all users. These have been broken down below:

### Crossings and Wayfinding

#### Audio Cues

Participants agreed that consistent audio cues at traffic lights are vital for the safety of blind and partially sighted individuals. These cues should be regularly maintained to ensure that crossings always remain accessible.

#### Tactile Paving

P4 emphasised that tactile paving is essential in shared spaces, as it offers clear cues to help visually impaired users navigate safely by identifying hazards such as crossings and changes in level. However, they also noted that tactile paving placed around trees or greenery can cause confusion, particularly for long cane users. To be effective, tactile paving must be correctly installed, clearly contrasted and well maintained (there are accessibility guidelines and standards to support with this).

#### Missing Crossing Features

Participants noted that many crossings currently lack vital features, including:

- Tactile paving
- Audible signals
- Dropped kerbs
- Sufficient crossing time
- Safe refuge areas between wide cycle lanes and motor traffic

### Environment Design

#### Adequate Lighting

Ensuring the area is sufficiently lit was a key concern, especially during early mornings and evenings in winter, when many people are commuting. Participants shared that good lighting improves safety and visibility for all users, particularly at crossings and areas with multiple transport modes.

#### Cycle Parking Racks

P9 pointed out that cycle parking racks should be clearly visible to people with low vision. Drawing from an example of their local area, they explained that silver finishes can create glare for them, whilst black finishes may become indistinguishable in low-light conditions. They suggested for racks to be matte and a high-contrast colour, to ensure that they stand out and improve visibility and safety.

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### Well-Maintained Pavements

Participants emphasised the need for non-slip pavements, particularly in wet weather. Surfaces should also have a matte finish to reduce glare and visual discomfort, supporting safe and comfortable movement for all users.

### Greenery

As mentioned earlier in this report, participants expressed that having additional greenery in place, such as planters and trees, would create a more welcoming feel and less like a “racetrack”. This was well supported, provided there is enough space for pedestrians to use the paving without access barriers (i.e. the greenery doesn’t cause any obstructions). The benefits of this would create a welcoming feel into travelling through the area, particularly as more people are starting to walk, wheel and cycle for their mental health and wellbeing.

### Maps and Wayfinding

#### Legible London Totems

P9 and P4, both who are registered as blind, highlighted that Legible London totems are not currently accessible for individuals with visual impairments. An audio option would make these tools more inclusive. In addition, placement of totems should be carefully considered to avoid creating street clutter or barriers on pavements.

P10, on the other hand, praised the usefulness of these maps and recommended that cycleways be included wherever possible.

#### General Signage and Shared Space Improvements

The group discussed overall design features for cycling infrastructure, particularly in shared spaces and at crossing points. They agreed that features such as raised paving, tactile surfaces, and clear markings are important for ensuring safety, especially for disabled pedestrians and cyclists.

P1 specifically suggested that the shared space near Aldgate could be improved with better contrast and signage to make the cycling route more visible. Participants also stressed the need for smooth, even pavements to prevent tripping hazards. They concluded that strong colour contrast and clear, consistent markings would help make all pathways easier to navigate.

#### Floor Markings

Participants suggested using colour-contrasted floor markings to support wayfinding and improve clarity in shared spaces. They also mentioned:

- The potential for solar lighting to enhance visibility

- Surface signage to indicate permitted users, such as wheelchair-friendly cycleways, as Abdul pointed out that their mobility scooter is permitted in cycleways if the speed is over 8mph; however, there is little awareness of this in the public

## **Junction Design and Prioritisation**

### **Complex Junctions**

P3 raised concerns about complex junctions with multiple traffic and cycle lanes, which can overwhelm or disorient individuals with cognitive impairments or vision loss. Without tactile paving or consistent signage, these users struggle to identify where it is safe to cross.

### **Pedestrian Priority and Awareness**

Participants observed that pedestrians often lack clear priority, especially when crossing cycle lanes. Cyclists may not always yield, particularly if the design does not visually or legally prioritise pedestrian movement. This further emphasises the need for an awareness campaign to promote safer behaviours among all road users, including cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists, and how to use these spaces.

## **Cycle Path Features and Separation Methods**

### **Cycleway Improvements**

P10 discussed improvements to cycle paths and shared spaces, suggesting the inclusion of dedicated cycleways on nearby bridges. They stressed the importance of consistency across London's cycle infrastructure.

### **Bus Stop Bypasses and Cyclist Behaviour**

Participants also flagged potential issues with crowding at bus stop bypasses and expressed concern about cyclist behaviour when pedestrians are attempting to cross.

## **Stakeholders**

Two representatives from the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) and the Partnership Director for City River met to discuss and give feedback on the proposed plans for a new cycleway in the City of London. Illustrations, CGI images, and proposed plans were presented. Stakeholders agreed that the plans will play a vital role in improving the infrastructure needed for safe travel through the area. The discussion focused primarily on proposed cycleway designs for Queen Victoria Street and surrounding locations.

## **Accessibility and Mobility**

### **Wayfinding, Accessibility, and Visual Aids**

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When an illustration of St Botolph Street (looking west) was reviewed, showing a crossing that spans from the pedestrian area through the cycle lane and onto the road, stakeholders noted that direct crossings are preferable to designs requiring two sets of lights.

There was further discussion on wayfinding features, such as colour contrast and signage, particularly where the cycleway transitions from two-way to one-way. Transport for All asked whether coloured cycle lanes could aid navigation and deter motor vehicles from parking in them, which received broad agreement.

## Safety Concerns

### Overall Safety Considerations

Safety features in the proposed designs, such as raised surfaces and directional changes, were seen as positive steps to slow cyclists in shared spaces to ensure everyone's safety.

There was discussion around the need for yellow box junctions at crossover points to prevent traffic from obstructing cyclists. LCC noted Transport for London's (TfL) reluctance to implement these for non-motorised traffic. Stakeholders also highlighted challenges at the route's endpoints, especially at junctions under different jurisdictions, which may be less accessible for some users.

### Enforcement and Public Awareness

Concerns were raised about electric motorbikes using cycleways, and stakeholders agreed on the need for stronger enforcement. They supported a public campaign to encourage respectful behaviour by all road users, aiming to reduce conflicts and improve safety.

### Specific Concerns: Aldgate and Canon Street

City River expressed concerns about potential congestion at the Canon Street junction and suggested traffic-free periods when the cycle light turns green. LCC observed that east of Coin Street, traffic levels drop, creating a safer environment for cycling even without dedicated lanes.

Regarding the Aldgate area, LCC raised concerns about the removal of cycle lanes on Landfall Street and the potential rise in traffic following the reopening of Bank junction to black cabs. They criticised the current cycleway plans in the Aldgate corridor as potentially unsafe for new cyclists, particularly due to a proposed sudden left-hand turn and the requirement to briefly cycle alongside large vehicles, including buses and lorries.

Additional concerns about Aldgate Square included narrow road widths, traffic congestion, and ongoing construction works, all of which pose safety risks to cyclists. Stakeholders noted that timelines for implementing infrastructure changes must be carefully coordinated with local businesses to minimise disruption, particularly for customers and deliveries.

## Design Considerations

### Overall Cycleway Design

Participants raised general safety concerns, particularly regarding how cycleways are segregated. There was a focus on the need to ensure accessibility for disabled pedestrians and cyclists, and on maintaining proper separation from motor traffic. LCC expressed a preference for single cycleways on each side of the road for improved directness and navigability. However, they acknowledged the rationale behind two-way cycleway designs in areas where space is limited.

### Infrastructure Features and Inclusive Design

The conversation also addressed the importance of bus stop bypasses and barriers separating cycle lanes from the road. LCC expressed strong support for bus stop bypasses, noting that without them, cyclists are often forced into heavy traffic, discouraging usage among various groups. They emphasised that improved infrastructure, including bus stop bypasses, has boosted the popularity and inclusivity of cycling; especially among women, children and disabled people.

There was a desire for more greenery along routes, and suggestions to incorporate dedicated running lanes. They felt that there was a need to balance infrastructure for cyclists, pedestrians, and runners while addressing utilities and accessibility for all. Due to the pavements being a minimum of 4.4 metres wide, this felt like a possibility.

Inclusive cycling infrastructure, such as support for adapted bikes and cargo bikes for business use, was also discussed. City River noted the challenges of accommodating cargo bikes in tight spaces and the need for designated parking for rental bikes. LCC referenced a recent charter in Manchester for delivery rider conduct, suggesting it could be adapted for London. The group agreed on the importance of working with bike-sharing companies to ensure proper parking and prevent obstruction of pavements and fire exits.

### Area-Specific Issues

City River highlighted congestion issues in Cheapside and Queen Victoria Street, especially around St. Paul's Cathedral. They raised concerns about managing interactions between traffic, cyclists, pedestrians, and deliveries, including those from evening food services and tourist coaches. The increasing presence of tuk-tuks in the

City of London, especially on weekends, was also mentioned. Stakeholders briefly discussed the potential for future licensing regulations for these vehicles, and whether this could be a possibility.

# Accessibility Design Review

By Transport for All for City of London

June 2025

# Contents

Contents .....	2
Introduction .....	3
Overview .....	3
Aldgate to Blackfriars Cycleway 01 .....	4
Areas of Good Practice .....	4
Areas for Improvement.....	4
Recommendations and Actions .....	5
Aldgate to Blackfriars Cycleway 02.....	5
Areas of Good Practice .....	5
Areas for Improvement.....	5
Recommendations and Actions .....	6
Aldgate to Blackfriars Cycleway 03.....	6
Areas of Good Practice .....	6
Areas for Improvement.....	7
Recommendations and Actions .....	7
Best Practice Considerations.....	8
Summary.....	9
Prioritised Recommendations .....	10

## Introduction

This report summarises our feedback of the proposed plans for the cycleway between Aldgate and Blackfriars, as part of the consultancy project commissioned by the City of London. The project comprised of three different elements to review and evaluate the accessibility of the proposed plans for the cycleway between Aldgate to Blackfriars. This includes:

1. **Focus Groups with Disabled People**
2. **Focus Groups with External Stakeholders**
3. **Reports**
  - a. Focus Groups Consultation Review (see other report)
  - b. Accessibility Design Review

Transport for All's work is rooted in the Social Model of Disability, understanding that the design of the environment can create barriers that prevent Disabled people to fully access and participate in society. By involving Transport for All in this project, the City of London can understand disabled people's perspectives through their lived experience; ensuring that the city is designed to achieve maximum possible access.

## Overview

This report, the **Accessibility Design Review**, assesses the proposed plans of the cycleway and comment on design considerations, from a pan-disability and accessibility point of view, alongside making recommendations for the City of London.

Focusing on accessibility, safety, and inclusivity, this review follows relevant UK legislation and best-practice guidance, including the Equality Act 2010, Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20, Inclusive Mobility (Department for Transport), the Highway Code and BS 8300. These frameworks ensure that infrastructure is inclusive and accessible to all, including disabled people and older adults.

Overall, the plans introduce:

- New two-way and protected cycle lanes
- Improved pedestrian crossings
- Changes to pavements and vehicle lanes
- Relocations of parking / loading bays and bus stops
- Traffic calming and safety features like raised tables and cycle gates



# Aldgate to Blackfriars Cycleway 01

## Queen Victoria Street West

Cycleway Plan 01 covers the area along Queen Victoria Street, near Blackfriars. It includes new two-way cycle tracks, protected lanes, bus stop bypasses with raised tables, relocated disabled parking, new pedestrian crossings and improved junctions.

## Areas of Good Practice

- **Protected Cycle Lanes**
  - Segregated cycle infrastructure supports the needs of various cyclists, including those using adapted cycles. This aligns with the modal separation principles set out in LTN 1/20 and accessibility requirements in BS 8300.
- **Bus Stop Bypasses**
  - Raised tables at bypasses slow cycle traffic and facilitate safer pedestrian access to buses. This feature is consistent with Inclusive Mobility (DfT, 2021) guidance on pedestrian-level continuity and LTN 1/20 guidance on bus stop interactions.
- **Tactile Paving**
  - Present at key crossing points, aiding visually impaired users. This follows recommendations from Inclusive Mobility and BS 8300 for tactile indicators at crossings.
- **Relocated Disabled Bays**
  - Ensures continued access for people with mobility impairments. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010 and BS 8300 standards for accessible parking proximity and gradient.
- **Cycle Gates and Junction Improvements**
  - Improve clarity and safety at intersections. These features are encouraged in LTN 1/20 to enhance cyclist priority and reduce conflict.

## Areas for Improvement

- **Bus Stop Bypasses**
  - Lack of clear separation between pedestrian waiting zones and cycle paths could pose hazards to visually impaired people. BS 8300 and Inclusive Mobility recommend distinct surfaces and tactile paving.
- **Crossing Detail Omitted**
  - Plans do not specify whether new crossings will include audible signals, sufficient crossing times, or dropped kerbs with appropriate tactile

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paving. These are required features under Inclusive Mobility and the Highway Code for pedestrian crossings.

- **Coach Parking Bays**
  - Relocated bays should not obstruct pedestrian sight lines or pathways. This aligns with BS 8300 recommendations to avoid street furniture blocking accessible routes.

## Recommendations and Actions

1. Provide tactile paving and signage at bus stop bypasses.
2. Include audible signals, dropped kerbs and tactile paving at crossings.
3. Assess relocated coach parking for obstruction risks.

## Aldgate to Blackfriars Cycleway 02

### Queen Victoria Street East

Cycleway Plan 02 continues the route toward Mansion House, including protected eastbound and westbound lanes, widened pavements, cycle gates, coach parking adjustments and improvements to pedestrian infrastructure.

### Areas of Good Practice

- **Protected Eastbound and Westbound Cycle Lanes**
  - Aligns with LTN 1/20 recommendations for modal separation and accessibility to ensure safe use by a range of cyclists, including disabled cyclists.
- **Widened Pavements**
  - Provide more space for pedestrians, improving accessibility for wheelchair users and those using mobility aids. This meets the minimum footway recommendations in Inclusive Mobility.
- **Cycle Gates**
  - Improve safety and reduce conflict at key junctions. These features are encouraged in LTN 1/20 to support safer cycling infrastructure design.
- **Cycle Lane Crossover Access**
  - Facilitates easier transition for westbound cyclists. This feature supports connectivity and consistency in design as recommended by LTN 1/20.

### Areas for Improvement

- **Wayfinding and Seating**

- The plans do not include accessible signage or rest areas, which are essential for older users and those with fatigue.
- These are highlighted as critical under Inclusive Mobility and BS 8300 for accessible street environments.
- **Crossing Infrastructure Details**
  - Like Plan 1, lacks clarity regarding tactile paving, audible cues, or signal timing adjustments for accessibility.
  - These elements are necessary under Inclusive Mobility and the Highway Code.
- **Coach Parking Relocation**
  - Like Plan 1, this requires assessment for impacts on pedestrian movement and visual lines.
  - This is consistent with BS 8300 requirements for unobstructed pedestrian environments.

## Recommendations and Actions

1. Add accessible wayfinding signage and provide seating at regular intervals.
2. Ensure new crossings meet Inclusive Mobility standards (tactile, audible, timed).
3. Audit coach bay locations for pedestrian impact and visibility.

## Aldgate to Blackfriars Cycleway 03

### Aldgate Area to Aldgate High Street

Cycleway Plan 03 focuses on the Aldgate area and includes new and retained protected cycle lanes (both eastbound and westbound), cycle gates, raised table crossings, a shared walking and cycling space, and improved access to Aldgate Square's two-way cycle track. Key features include protected lanes using flexible posts, new zebra crossings and multiple raised table crossings designed to slow traffic and enhance safety.

### Areas of Good Practice

- **Protected Cycle Lanes**
  - The continued use of protected lanes with flexible posts supports safe travel for all cyclists, including those using adapted or non-standard cycles. This complies with LTN 1/20 and the inclusive design objectives outlined in BS 8300.
- **Raised Table Crossings**

- These improve safety for all users by slowing motor traffic and providing level surfaces, enhancing comfort and accessibility. This aligns with guidance from Inclusive Mobility and BS 8300.
- **Cycle Access to Aldgate Square**
  - Provides dedicated access to the two-way cycle track, promoting route continuity and user safety. This supports LTN 1/20 guidance on continuous and connected cycle networks.
- **Cycle Gate Retention**
  - Helps manage interactions between cyclists and vehicles at junctions, supporting safer navigation. These design features are recommended by LTN 1/20 for safer crossings and junction transitions.

## Areas for Improvement

- **Shared Walking and Cycling Space**
  - Shared surfaces can create conflict, particularly for visually impaired users. Separation or clearer delineation would improve accessibility. This recommendation follows the standards set in BS 8300 and Inclusive Mobility, which discourage shared space without clear tactile and visual separation.
- **Signage and Wayfinding**
  - No mention of directional signage or wayfinding tools, which are crucial for inclusive navigation. This omission highlights the need to align with Inclusive Mobility and BS 8300 standards on accessible information systems.
- **Lighting and Contrast**
  - The plan does not reference lighting enhancements or high-contrast surfacing, both essential for safety, especially in poor visibility conditions. Both BS 8300 and Inclusive Mobility recommend these measures for user confidence and navigation.

## Recommendations and Actions

1. Clearly specify shared walking and cycling spaces with tactile indicators and visual contrasts.
2. Introduce accessible signage and wayfinding at all key decision points.
3. Ensure surface materials are high contrast and slip-resistant, particularly at crossings and transitions.
4. Provide consistent lighting to improve safety and visibility along all cycle routes.

## Best Practice Considerations

To ensure the proposed plans are accessible and inclusive for all users, the following best practice design considerations should be incorporated. These align with national standards and guidance:

- **Wayfinding and Signage**
  - Incorporate clear, legible and ideally tactile or audio-enabled signage to aid navigation (Inclusive Mobility, BS 8300)
- **Street Names and Directional Markers at Accessible Heights**
  - Ensure these are visible from both seated and standing positions (BS 8300)
- **Consistent Infrastructure Design**
  - Uniform use of tactile paving, signage and materials throughout the route reduces user confusion (Inclusive Mobility)
- **Cycleway Maps and Orientation Aids**
  - Include local cycle network maps at key junctions and entrances (LTN 1/20, BS 8300)
- **Cycleway Separation**
  - Use of kerbs or flexible posts to physically separate cycleways from pedestrian areas (LTN 1/20)
- **Contrasting Surface Materials**
  - Ensure cycleways, footways, and crossings use visually contrasting materials with non-slip properties (BS 8300, Inclusive Mobility)
- **Access Features and Entry Gates**
  - Install gates near crossings that do not obstruct wheelchair or scooter access and are aligned with tactile paving (Inclusive Mobility)
- **Lighting**
  - Provide consistent, shadow-free lighting for all travel paths (BS 8300)
- **Tactile Maps and Audio Information Points**
  - Support those with visual impairments or cognitive disabilities (Inclusive Mobility)
- **Crossing Infrastructure**
  - All crossings should include tactile paving, dropped kerbs, audible signals and clear visual indicators (Inclusive Mobility, Highway Code)
- **Floor Markings**
  - Use floor guides or painted lines for navigation in shared or complex areas (Inclusive Mobility)
- **Cycle Racks and Bollards**

- Use high-contrast colours and avoid black or silver finishes to improve visibility (BS 8300)
- **Tactile Considerations for Mobility Aids**
  - Ensure continuous, stable surfaces that support the use of walking sticks, canes and mobility scooters (Inclusive Mobility)
- **Pavement Condition**
  - Maintain surfaces to be free of trip hazards and slip-resistant in wet conditions (BS 8300)
- **Cycleway Safety Measures**
  - Design for speed moderation through layout and geometry and consider visibility enhancements such as cat's eyes or surface markings (LTN 1/20)
- **Awareness and Education**
  - Complement cycleway plans with public campaigns to encourage considerate behaviour (LTN 1/20)
- **E-Bike and E-Scooter Visibility**
  - Investigate enhancements such as sound systems or visibility aids for any electric-based vehicles (Highway Code)

## Summary

The Aldgate to Blackfriars cycleway proposals demonstrate a clear intention to promote active travel through the introduction of protected cycle lanes, improved junction design and redesigned street spaces. However, to ensure that these designs are not only sustainable but also equitable, it is essential that accessibility and inclusivity are embedded consistently across all stages of planning, design and delivery.

This review has identified both strengths and areas needing improvements, particularly concerning crossing accessibility, wayfinding, surfaces and the clarity of separation between pedestrian and cyclist movements. While the proposals incorporate several good practices aligned with national guidance such as LTN 1/20, Inclusive Mobility and BS 8300, further changes are required to meet the needs of disabled people and ensure inclusive design.

By implementing the prioritised recommendations and best practice considerations outlined in this report, the City of London can ensure that the cycleway is usable, safe and welcoming for all. This will uphold the legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and serve as an example of accessible environments to support independent mobility, sustainable transport and social inclusion across the city.

## Prioritised Recommendations

To align the cycleway infrastructure with inclusive design standards and best practice, the following prioritised recommendations are proposed:

1. **Maintain a minimum 2m unobstructed footway** on all pavements.
  - i. Inclusive Mobility, BS 8300
2. **Ensure all pedestrian crossings include:**
  - a. Tactile paving
  - b. Dropped kerbs
  - c. Audible signals
  - d. Adequate crossing times for slow-moving pedestrians
    - i. Inclusive Mobility, Highway Code, BS 8300
3. **Clearly separate cycle and pedestrian areas** at bus stop bypasses using tactile delineators and surface contrast.
  - i. BS 8300, Inclusive Mobility, LTN 1/20
4. **Introduce accessible wayfinding and rest features**, including:
  - a. Tactile or audio signage
  - b. Regular seating
  - c. Tactile maps and / or floor guides
    - i. Inclusive Mobility, BS 8300
5. **Audit relocated coach bays** to ensure they do not obstruct pedestrian routes or reduce visibility at crossings.
  - i. BS 8300
6. **Ensure cycleways accommodate Class 2 and Class 3 mobility scooters and wheelchairs**, including:
  - a. Appropriate surface width and quality
  - b. Step-free access
  - c. Safe transitions and gradients
    - i. Highway Code, Inclusive Mobility
7. **Implement additional best practice accessibility features:**
  - a. High-contrast markings and non-slip surfaces
  - b. Shadow-free lighting
  - c. Consistent design elements across the route
  - d. Visibility enhancements (e.g. colour-contrasted cycle racks and bollards)
    - i. BS 8300, LTN 1/20, Inclusive Mobility

These recommendations are important to ensure the proposed plans meet the accessibility, safety, and inclusivity standards in the UK and best practice guidance. These will also promote inclusive, sustainable and active transport, upholding equity and safety for all.

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