

# St Helens Road, Leigh Cycling and Walking Scheme

## Frequently Asked Questions & Myth Busting

### What is a bus stop bypass?

A bus stop bypass involves routing the cycle track behind the bus passenger boarding area to maintain the separation of people cycling from motor traffic.



### What is a segregated cycle lane?

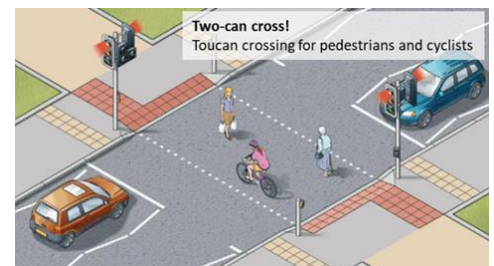
Segregated cycle lanes separate the cycle path from the road by a physical barrier, such as a raised kerb, and stops drivers in motor vehicles entering the space.



### What is a toucan crossing?

A toucan crossing is a push-button signalised crossing that allows both pedestrians and cyclists to cross at the same time, “two – can cross”.

A “green cycle” is displayed next to the “green man” when cyclists and pedestrians are permitted to cross. A red cycle and red man are shown at other times.



### Why have you chosen St Helens Road in Leigh for this scheme.

St Helens Road is a very busy A-road carrying a lot of traffic in and out of Leigh town centre. At peak times over 1,000 cars per hour have been recorded using this route.

There are very few pedestrian and cycle crossing points on this road and the existing cycling facilities are poor.

On busy roads, which are usually the most direct routes between places, it is necessary to provide dedicated space for cycling and the facilities should provide physical protection rather than the current advisory painted cycle lanes.

We are also developing a number of cycling and walking improvement schemes across Wigan, not just this area of Leigh.

For more details visit our website [www.wigan.gov.uk/majorprojects](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/majorprojects) or <https://activetravel.tfgm.com/schemes/wigan/>

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### Why are you building cycle lanes, they're a waste of money!

Cycle lanes are good for business, reduce congestion, are good value for money, get more people cycling, and are what the public wants!

*Cycle lanes move more people in less space and reduce congestion.*

In 2019 UK road users lost an average of 115 hours and £894 a year sat in congestion.

Traffic on our roads has been increasing at an alarming rate for the last 15 years and shows no sign of slowing down. This is due to the inefficient use of road space caused by too many cars carrying only 1 or 2 people.

- Most households now average 2 car ownership.
- Our road network cannot keep pace with the number of vehicles – we don't have the space to build more, and climate change is telling us we need to reduce the number on our roads.

Cycle lanes may take up 20% of the road space (on average), but 70% of those travelling along the road at peak time 'could' do so within those lanes.

If this cycle lane was installed today, it won't be full by tomorrow. Behaviour change takes more than a day. BUT if we provide good quality, safe space, people will use them. And those lanes can move more people more efficiently, in less space.

Building cycle lanes allows people to replace some of their car journeys with active travel, taking some cars off the road, and reducing congestion.

### Where is the money coming from to pay for this scheme?

Wigan Council has been allocated funding through the Department for Transport specifically for walking and cycling infrastructure; to create a safe, attractive environment for those choosing to walk, wheel or cycle for short journeys.

If this allocation wasn't spent in Leigh for this purpose, the money would be spent elsewhere in Greater Manchester.

### No one in Leigh rides a bike so why are you building a cycle lane?

*Build the bike lanes and people will use them!*

We often hear complaints that "no one cycles in Leigh or Wigan", no one will use the new cycle lanes, or they're only used at certain times of the day.

Evidence shows us that across the world, where separated cycle lanes have been built, many more people start to use them. Like the UK, Spain has low levels of people cycling day-to-day, such as

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travelling to work or seeing friends; but in Seville they decide to build 50 miles of cycle lanes in just a few years leading to massive behaviour change and a huge increase in rider numbers.

And for those doubters who say it's different abroad, we only have to look to London (with some of the most congested roads in the UK) to show that isn't true. Where new cycle lanes were introduced, increased cyclist numbers of up to 53% were recorded.

### *The public want more bike lanes.*

We hear objections to new cycle lanes and low traffic neighbourhoods, but that's not truly reflective of what most people want or support. We only ever hear from those with the loudest voices who are in opposition.

## How will emergency services be affected by the scheme? And have they been consulted?

We have presented the scheme proposals at the Council's Traffic Management meeting which the ambulance service, police and fire brigade are all invited to.

Any changes to road layouts need to be consulted on and communicated to all the local emergency services, which we are doing as part of the consultation. Emergency service personnel will have the opportunity to feedback and input into the final designs to ensure they do not impact on access needs.

## Who are you going to consult on the proposed scheme?

We will be doing a letter drop along the proposed scheme to those residents and business directly affected by the scheme. We would also like to hear from other members of the community, especially those living and working in the area.

*The stakeholders we will consult includes:*

- Local residents
- Ward Councillors
- Emergency services (Fire Services, London Ambulance and GM Police)
- Local disability groups
- Local businesses
- Religious institutions
- Waste Collection Services
- Representatives of taxi companies

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### Will the scheme impact access to local shops?

No, access to shops will be maintained but it may be necessary to reallocate some road space from motor vehicles to allow good quality cycle facilities to be installed.

We will engage directly with local traders on the proposals and ask for their input and suggestions on improving the local environment for those visiting by foot or cycle.

#### **Walking and cycling is good for local high streets:**

- People who walk and cycle visit their high streets more often as journeys can be made without having to think about parking or traffic.
- Walking, cycling and public realm improvements increase retail sales.
- People who walk to the high street tend to visit more shops and stay longer.

[The Pedestrian Pound by Living Streets](#) provides research and case studies showing those places that are safe and pleasant, where people walk to and stay longer, are economically vibrant.

### What evidence do you have that people want better walking and cycling infrastructure?

In July, a [YouGov survey](#) revealed that:

- 77% of people support measures in their local area to encourage cycling and walking – that equates to 6.5 people for every 1 against.
- 80% of people who expressed a preference want the UK's streets redesigned to protect pedestrians and cyclists from motorists.
- 51% of people agree they would cycle more if these changes were made.

The data showed that 3.26 people support the view that 'Britain would be better if people cycled more' for every 1 person against.

But when asked what they thought their friends or the general public would think, many overestimated the negativity towards cycling. It seems more people support greener, safer streets, but are being silenced by a very vocal minority.

Those in opposition will argue that we'll never get more people cycling; it's too hilly, the weather isn't great, and culturally, it's not something a lot of people would do. But lockdown proved them wrong, with many more people cycling to get around when the roads looked a felt safer for them to cycle.

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- If we get it right, everyone benefits!
- It's better for our own [health](#)
- It's better for [air quality](#)
- It's better for the [economy](#)
- It's part of the solution to the [climate crisis](#)
- And just makes for friendlier, happier, healthier, and liveable towns, cities and places.

And why wouldn't you want that?