



# **Cycling Manifesto 2015**

**Cycling: contributing to a  
healthy, vibrant & happy Bristol**

Stronger Economy. Fairer Society.  
**Opportunity for Everyone.**



# Foreward

**The City of Bristol Liberal Democrats adopted this cycling manifesto for the 2015 general and local elections and ahead of the 2016 mayoral and whole council elections. It sets out our ambition to continue to further improve on the investments made when the party ran Bristol City Council and have continued to secure under the coalition government.**

Cycling was a prominent issue in 2012's mayoral election and will likely be so in 2015 and 2016. More people cycle and walk to work in Bristol than in any local authority in England & Wales: numbers doubled between 2001 and 2011. Some 8% of Bristol commuters choose the bike, while nearly a quarter of Bristol's adults in 2012 cycled at least monthly.

Cycling contributes to healthy mobility, reduced congestion, improved air quality and environmental sustainability. The returns from £1 invested in cycling are estimated at £5. Reaching levels of cycling seen in some European countries could save the NHS up to £17 billion over 20 years.

Bristol is a multi-modal transport city. We do not wish to separate cycling policy from other forms of transport, and see cycling policy as a key part of broader transport policy on walking, buses, trains and cars. Driving will continue to have its place, not least for those with mobility issues and those with young families.

We focus on the 'carrots' – of better, more integrated public transport, cycling facilities and walking amenities – rather than 'sticks' to encourage change. We wish to build on previous achievements, make cycling safer, e.g. through segregated facilities and infrastructure improvements, and help people to realise the benefits of cycling where practicable. including with governors and parents, and spread best practice on travel plans and safer routes to schools, periodically reviewed.

# **A record of delivery and the promise of more**

The Liberal Democrats have a strong track record of encouraging cycling. In Bristol, we delivered better facilities and invested heavily in cycle safety. Bristol's UK Cycling City status was secured by the previous Lib Dem administration. It was an important factor in our successful 2015 European Green Capital status bid, the first UK city to receive this accolade.

Nationally, in coalition government the Liberal Democrats have delivered additional funding for cycling. Bristol hosted the [announcement](#) of a three-year £210 million cycling infrastructure fund in November 2014. Bristol and neighbouring authorities [submitted](#) a £19 million bid in January, with £10 million for the Bristol City Council area. In Parliament, the Liberal Democrat MP for Cambridge Julian Huppert chairs the active [All-Party Parliamentary Group on cycling](#). He is a strong advocate for cycling, and led the successful campaign for a legal requirement for a government Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy in the Infrastructure Act 2015.

Among the [five green laws](#) in the 2015 general election manifesto will be a green transport bill which ensures both that new infrastructure developments are designed around cycling, walking and public transport and that progress is made towards implementing the recommendations of the All-Party cycling group's [Get Britain Cycling](#) report.

## **Making space for cycling in Bristol**

We have adopted the broad themes of the national [Space 4 Cycling](#) campaign as the basis for our cycling manifesto for Bristol. One third of the city's current councillors [have signed up](#) to the campaign's principles, the Liberal Democrats being the largest political group among them. We recognise that there will be differing views among cyclists and non-cyclists, and the Space 4 Cycling campaign recognises that local solutions will depend on context. We would look to bring people along with us, as with our original residents' parking proposals.

Our proposals would work towards the achieving the [Bristol Cycle Strategy](#). The [Bike Life](#) accountability project can help to monitor delivery, but ensuring this needs annual delivery plans. But stronger co-ordination across Neighbourhoods, People and Place portfolios and greater awareness of cycling among Council officers will be vital.

We support the idea of a champion role to advocate and drive delivery of the strategy: this could be a councillor or senior officer, though the latter may be more constrained. Coordination across local government boundaries is important: regular meetings of similar advocates from neighbouring authorities could be productive.

We also encourage closer integration of cycling and public health initiatives, and the Health & Wellbeing Board should appoint an 'exercise champion' to include cycling, alongside existing champion roles. Councillors should also have training in public health priorities (such as exercise) to ensure they consider these when examining policy and making planning decisions.

We also want to ensure the significant expertise already available is well-used: listening to officers, cycling groups and local people. We support working through Neighbourhood Partnerships, encouraging best practice is spread. We would focus on incentives to cycle and use public transport and workplace parking levies to be spent only on improving transport. We also support provision of safe cycling training for adults as well as children.

## **1. Protected space on main roads**

Many of our existing cycle lanes are sub-standard and we support badly needed innovation. Our Cycle City proposals included an inner circuit of cycleways along the bus rapid transit route, and we would look at reinstating this.

We support segregation of cycling routes wherever space makes this possible; some narrow streets pose particular challenges. Pilots on key routes that can be shown to work would encourage wider adoption: the cycle contra-flow on Baldwin Street is a useful case study. We would work to secure buy-in from residents and businesses before their introduction. We support greater provision of cycle awareness training for bus and car drivers.

Impact on motor traffic is best addressed through more attractive bus and train alternatives. This will be particularly important with the development plans for Cribbs Causeway/Patchway: working collaboratively with South Gloucestershire Council on encouraging cycling provision of quality cycle and bus routes.

## **2. Reducing motor traffic in residential areas**

We support quiet zones and traffic calming in residential areas where appropriate, and where local residents support this. There are successful examples where disruptive through-traffic has been prevented while maintaining resident and cyclist access, including Kingsdown and Hurlingham Road in St Andrews. This is complemented our 'by consent' approach to implementing safer 20mph zones (see below). Proposed road layout changes should take into account the views of local cyclists, pedestrians and motorists, potentially through Neighbourhood Partnerships and transport sub-groups.

Former Bristol Lib Dem councillor Jon Rogers delivered national change, such that cycle contra-flows on one-way streets now no longer require Ministerial approval.

## **3. Lower speed limits**

20mph speed zones are safer for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians (especially children). This was originally a Liberal Democrat policy, with zones to be introduced with the consent of residents, and supported by central government funding.

But 20mph should be enforced. We convinced the police to enforce 20mph where local speeding issues have been highlighted. With our encouragement, community speed watch by police-trained local residents began in Bristol.

## **4. Cycle-friendly town centres**

Bristol's city centre has narrow, congested streets. Major roads are often difficult to cross, like Bond Street, creating barriers, while 'shared space' areas often suffer from poor delineation or because pedestrians and cyclists are often put into conflict. The Liberal Democrats delivered additional investment through Cycling City and local sustainable transport funds, as well as the recent £210m package.

Recent proposals and developments show that a cycle-friendly approach is possible. Clearer carriageway and roadside signage

Connectivity with neighbouring areas and major routes is vital. Better cycle parking facilities in central and local shopping areas would also encourage more cycling.

We would propose to go further, and encourage all wards to be cycle-friendly and connected with each other and with the centre. This could start with a small number of pilots, with cycling officers engage with local residents to discuss challenges and solution, working closely with Neighbourhood Partnerships and [neighbourhood cycling](#) representatives, and developing the existing [Traffic Choices](#) website facility to identify improved routes.

## 5. Safer school cycling routes

The Liberal Democrats made major investments in training, working with LifeCycle. We support 20mph zones that make roads safer and cycling a more appealing option for getting to school. Cyclist-friendly traffic calming can also help, as can reducing motor traffic in residential areas. Former Lib Dem councillor Jon Rogers introduced mobile camera enforcement of safe parking restrictions near schools.

But more support will be needed to reach the target of 20% of school journeys by bicycle in the Bristol Cycling Strategy. We would engage with schools, including with governors and parents, and spread best practice on travel plans and safer routes to schools, periodically reviewed.

## 6. Green space routes

We support safe and considerate cycling in green areas. Castle Park and Queens Square are two good examples. We accept that cyclists can occasionally act in aggressive ways in shared spaces (as sometimes pedestrians do). But often the lack of clarity over shared space is a contributory factor. We recognise that cyclists may use non-shared use pavements on occasion for safety reasons, but as former Bristol Liberal Democrat councillor Jon Rogers has long advocated, clearer government guidance on pavement cycling should focus on anti-social behaviour.

We would encourage further rational debate on the issue, and work with local groups on inclusive and considerate road and path shared-use approaches, with council funding to help establish such initiatives.

We would extend 'roads closed days' to include car-free spaces in different parts of the city, encouraging cycle activities especially for children, disabled and elderly people. We support the proposed pilot Downs weekend road closures, and with a Bristol Liberal Democrat councillor on the Downs Committee we will continue to work to ease byelaws restricting cycling.

Key to the colour code:

 **Poor; significant improvements needed**

 **Some improvement seen, but more needed**

 **Real progress seen**

# Councillor & candidate statements

**Cllr Glenise Morgan**, Henleaze and cabinet advisor on neighbourhoods, with particular interest in Public Health:

“Evidence presented at a recent Active Travel and Playing Out conference in Bristol is conclusive: children who walk or cycle to school, especially secondary school, have increased levels of general activity that will promote their long-term health prospects. If they learn the skills and confidence at primary school age, through training such as Bikeability, and practising on closed roads, they will be well equipped to tackle busy roads on their own when older. We need to increase road closures to move from a culture where roads are dominated by the car to one of sharing and should focus on the children. People need to realise that more cyclists on roads means safer roads. I would also like to see more cycling opportunities for the disabled and older people. This is such a liberating experience and an important contributor to their health and wellbeing. We should invest in specially adapted bikes where needed and support voluntary groups who facilitate this.”

**Cllr Christian Martin**, Clifton East:

“I consciously shifted from car to bike for all my journeys around Bristol because I could. I am still young and fit enough and able to afford to upgrade to a decent e-Bike. The net benefit is that I now find it quicker and easier to get around, it is cheaper (no petrol costs), it is easier to park, and it is healthier. In fact I am almost addicted to making myself use the bike. I still have a car, but use it sparingly – for essential travel over longer distances or transportation of myself and others or equipment that I can't quite transport by bike. I also get a huge positive sense in feeling that I am responsibly contributing to cutting emissions. Since I bought my bike in August last year I have done more than 1,100 miles around Bristol alone – that's a quarter of a tonne of carbon. For me, it is a compelling reason and encouragement to cycle more. But at the same time I recognise that there are many who simply cannot do the same.”

**Ian Townsend**, councillor candidate for Cotham ward in May 2015:

“I have cycled to work since 2003, first in London and now back home in Bristol. Cycling is much quicker than walking, cheaper and far more reliable than a bus. I've saved thousands of pounds in transport costs. With waterproofs you can cycle in all of Bristol's weather! Cycling gives you total freedom to go out after work or nip to the shops at lunchtime. It is also low carbon, so great for the environment too. I have a car, but hardly use it, because it is quicker and easier to jump on the bike. I'd recommend it to anyone who is tempted! Bristol's roads have improved, but there are still very scary moments and more to do. I understand people avoid cycling, but it needs to be made safer to bring its joys to more people. That means more welcoming spaces for cyclists and pedestrians too. It's time for less stick and more carrot for drivers – we need to address congestion and make our city an even nicer place to be than it already is.”