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Independent Workers Union of Great Britain



Open letter to Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Deputy Mayor for Transport Seb Dance and Walking and Cycling Commissioner Will Norman, Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps and Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister Andrew Gilligan.

CC: Chief Executives and Leaders of London Councils, Directors of Public Health in London, Chris Boardman newly appointed Chair of Active Travel England.

Dear Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Secretary of State and other officials,

At a recent meeting of council officers, a TfL official disclosed proposed cost savings - enforced on TfL by the financial settlement with government for the period February to 25th June - that included a proposal to withdraw funding for in-person cycle training with immediate effect. This is part of a package of savings that includes a 25% reduction of TfL staff. We understand that this has not yet been decided upon.

We the undersigned, are strongly opposed to this proposal and urge all parties to find another solution. Cycling Instructors have been battered by COVID with long periods of shut-down and many not eligible for furlough, and facing severely reduced incomes. Local councils have lost LIP funding leading to the total cancellation of adult training across large swathes of London and massively reduced schools' cycle training across the board and a 50% cut in funding for cycle training compared to 2019 for the last two financial quarters and even less for the period to June 2022. The consequence of all this is that the Cycling Instructor workforce cannot survive further cuts to budgets and is at risk of no longer existing as a vital resource to the capital beyond the summer.

It would be a gross economic mistake to attempt to make savings by cutting the cycle training budget for a number of reasons.

Cycle training saves money.

Whether it is short-term, medium term or long term, whether it is for the individual, the council, the NHS or the state, cycle training saves money. Lots of money. Every road fatality costs £2 million in emergency responses, investigations and prosecutions. Congestion, pollution, obesity, costs millions upon millions. Cycling saves petrol, saves time and keeps you off crowded public transport - where you are more likely to get COVID and need time off work.

Cycle training makes money.

Government reports, financial institution reports and council reports all conclude that increased levels of cycling boosts the economy and especially so at a local or micro-local level.

According to TfL's own reports*: every £1 spent on cycling returns £13 to the economy. In 2019 cycling contributed £5.4 billion. Walking and cycling improvements boost consumer spending by 30%. People who

walk and cycle spent 40% more than those that drive. Employees take 1.3 fewer sick days worth £128 million nationally. In London alone, active travel could save the NHS £1.7 billion over 25 years.

According to the government's own reports^{**}: physical inactivity contributes to 1 in 6 deaths at a cost of £7.4 billion to society. Meeting targets for cycling would save £567 million in air quality alone and prevent 8300 premature deaths.

"We want 50% of all journeys in towns and cities to be cycled or walked by 2030." Grant Shapp, Secretary of State for Transport^{****}.

"At its heart is a bold aim for 80 per cent of all trips in London to be made on foot, by cycle or using public transport by 2041." Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London.

"A bold strategy where nobody is afraid to cycle; every child is confident and safe walking or cycling to school; all road users treat each other with mutual respect" UK Government Gear Change report.

"We will ensure that every adult and child who wants it can be trained how to ride a cycle safely" Gear Change.

"Taking up cycling is among the most effective health interventions a person can make" Gear Change.

"If exercise were a pill, it would be one of the most cost-effective drugs ever invented" NHS.uk^{***}

Cycling saves the planet

Cycling is part of almost every single institution in the world's plan to tackle climate change, from the smallest primary school, to the largest workplace, every university and every hospital, every council and government department. They all include increased levels of cycling as part of their plan to tackle climate change and to improve the health and wellbeing of their workers. All the way up to the United Nations itself, where on Wednesday 16th March 2022 - the very day that we learned about the proposed cuts to cycle training - 193 members of the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution promoting cycling as a means to tackle climate change.

Barriers to cycling

There are many barriers to participation in cycling and there are many schemes to reduce the barriers. But there is no single other intervention which has the same lifelong impact that a cycle trainer has on a client that was unable to ride, or was not confident, or had previously had an accident, or never learned and spent 20, 30, 40 years thinking it was not for them. Cycle instructors are a vital resource in the capital's drive for modal shift. We cannot afford to lose them, yet already many have been priced out and many councils cannot resource demand. For those reading that do not already know, cycling instructors deliver Bikeability to primary schools, deliver Safe Urban Driver courses to the freight industry, deliver adult learn-to-ride and commuter training for councils, deliver social prescribing and social inclusion programmes for the NHS, are used by the courier industry as part of their risk management, work with SEND children and vulnerable adults and much more. Cycling instructors are qualified, highly experienced, dedicated and professional.

We cannot allow the political gamesmanship of high offices, the battle between the treasury and TfL over funding, to cause the further decimation of the instructor workforce.

Nor can we allow the vulnerable employment status of instructors be used to balance the TfL books just because they seem a soft target for cuts. That funding for cycle training outside London has increased from £12m, to £18m to £20 million[^] under this prime minister, but that the opposite is true for the capital reflects badly on both the treasury and TfL.

We demand that TfL immediately revoke the threat of halting cycle training and we demand that TfL and the treasury produce a long term funding budget to resource the professional delivery of cycle training in London.

The cost of living crisis is now, the fuel crisis is now, the climate crisis is now, the health crisis is now, the congestion crisis is now, modal shift is now. If you want a cycle instructor workforce beyond the summer of 2022, now is the time for investment not for cuts.

Signed on behalf of the IWGB Cycling Instructors Branch

Michael McSherry, Chair
Suami Rocha, Secretary

And co-signed by the following NSI/Bikeability cycling instructors:

Mariam Draaijer	George Morrisb	Philip Benstead
Louie Lister	Nikki Ray	Nadjie Butler
Shabiha Kothia	Hannah Horsfall	Steve Davis
Michael McSherry	Eddie	Marlis Haase
Wilson Sobrinho	Andrew Norris-Sherborn	Laura Shelton
Michal Kloucek	Michael Swietochowski	Earlyna Edwards
Danny Ward	Esher	Andrejka Eastwood
Nigel Brook	Rick Ross	Will Melling
Sean Gooch	Patrycja Ozog	Sam Parkes
William Embliss	Barnaby Eager	Mark Surrey
Richard Tarrant	Roy Ashman	Catherine Al Jibouri
Jon Pook	Perunika Petkova	Thomas Leslie
Ben House	Joe Adolph	Charlie Cornwall
Peter Bancroft	Gavin Davies	Diego Marando
Alex Lively	Emma Pajarillaga	Ben Pitt
Andrea Vladova	Paul Murray	Emma Budgen
Tiago Santoian	Sean Naylor	Nick Barrett
Laurence Ferguson	Dominic Spitzer-Wong	Andrew Castiglione
Virginia Cleugh	Barnaby Stutter	Rupert Gardner
Philippa Robb	K Li	Erika Severini
Daniel de Brett	Selina Rice	Sarah Javaid
Kotu Moyenda	Paola Cavallin	Ellen Ridgway
Eamonn Stack	Paul Smailes	Scott Weddell
Mario López-Goicoechea	Jonathan Buckley	David Behar
Miles Gouch	Neville McKay	Rogan Macdonald
Thomas Wheeler	Elisabetta	Peter Kanssen
David Saunders	Brian Evans	Peter Kanssen
Vincent Walsh	Dafydd Walters	Lois Povey
Stuart Taylor	Simon Akhigbe	Maria Domènech Serrano
Rukaiya Moola	David Hilliard	Thomas Brandi
Seema Vawda	Jozef Kanyicska	Nick Hamilton
Emma Capello	Elaine Owen	Matthew Styman
James Holloway	Salma Rahman	Michael Parker
Peter May	Janine Eagling	Gill Hale
Simon Falush	R Hunter	
Syed Nabi	Josie Warshaw	

And co-signed by the following cycling and cycle training provider leaders and groups:

Jim Blakemore, CEO of Bikeworks
Gerardo Del Guercio, Director of Cycling Instructor Ltd
Dr Ashok Sinha, CEO of the London Cycling Campaign
Yashmin Harun BEM, Founder and Chair of Muslimah Sports Association
Vieve Ford, Director of JoyRiders Britain CIC
Derek Mullan, Owner & Manager at Cycle-Folk
Anthony Dawodu, The Hope of Childs Hill
Cycle Sisters Muslim Womens' Cycling Group

And co-signed by the following health professionals, policy experts, environmental campaigners, service users, cyclists, trade unionists, researchers, and members of the public:

Jo Rigby, Earlsfield Councillor	Anup	Hazera
Christian Wolmar, writer	Laura Dekker	Natalia Drummond
Waltham Forest Cycling Campaign	Parus Shah	Nadine Daly
Arja Taaveniku, JoyRiders	Sarah Huntley	Marcin Wawrzyn
Mieke Evans, JoyRiders	Karen	V. Sarah
Kerena Fussell, JoyRiders	Oliver Elgie	Carolyn Axtell
Sarah Tomlin, JoyRiders	Alexis	Esther Sullivan
Sabeha Miah, Cycle Sisters	Helen Hunte	Humberto Hernandez
Tracey, Cycle Sisters	Sylvia Gauthereau	Menchaca
Kate Hollis, Clean School Air	Frances Cherry	Shaheda Sayed
Rajith Perera, Chair of Enfield & Haringey COP26 Coalition	Karoline Bauer Toba	Junaid Ibrahim
Nick Butler, LCC	Oliver Lewis	Jaymie Benka-Davies
Carla Francome, LCC	Tracy Fairbrass	Tiffany Lam
Richard Hearne, PRiDE OUT	Pete Bundock	Sumaiya Khan
Joe Lindsay	Adrian Day	Fiona Jackson
Fergus Nicom	Asif Haque	Ian Bradler
Nevin	Jenny McCurry	Ahsana
Sue Christoforou	Ikram Hirse	David Ewen
Aidan Harper	Dawn Allott	Yasmin
Alex Marshall	Ruma Parvin	Misbah Choughtai
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Lynda	Ijeoma Ajufo	Leo Murray
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Helen Jones	Sabiha	Sheeba Islam-Boyce
Grattan Hooey	Ian Saville	Andrew Pendleton
John Chamberlain	Natasha Hayes	Martin Cottington
Gloria Bertussi	Yvonne Brown	Kim Roberts
Mohan Gandhi	Katerina Allalou	Emma Brodrick
Simon Saville	Shahana Khanom	Eilidh Murray
Cathy	Charlie Fernandes	Merel Krediet
Casey Abaraonye	David Wood	Zayneea
Sally Haywill	Dr Susie Morrow	Dave Ford
Kate Laing	Philip Jacobs	Louise Wass
Jason Warner	Asa Thomas, researcher	Gemma Freedman
Kylie ap Garth	Oliver Lord	Steven Edwards
Ann-Marie Wong	Dinah Rahman	Rakel Perez
	Nicholas Tromans	Veronica Chamberlain
	Gloria Kelly	Hannah

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Geoff Stilwell
Graeme Tong
Jack Driver
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Daniel Moore-Oats
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Robert Hansell
David Treadwell
Brando Posocco
Myles Barrell
Jason Browne
Ruth Mayorcas
Helen Chauncy
Soriaya Choudhry
Emma Webb
Andrew Britt
Rabia Ali
Neil Webster
Sam Jenkins
Jacqueline Lampon
Paul Crompton
Lachezar Kozhuharov
Yasmine Lahreche
Deborah Adolphe
Colin Fancy
Paul Brown
Robert Pragnell
Julia Shmotkina
Mark Ostheimer
Kelly Price
Genevieve Davies-Borges
Natalie Johnson
Carlene Fantuzzi
Nikita Crocker
Beatrice Goater
Jonathan Goater
David Wilkins
Aimee Kyffin
Peter Darch
Amanda Foley
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Mel Mehmet
Trina Lynskey
Brian Turpin
Joanne Kitching
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Karina Fernandez
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Fatima Jogyat
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Annie
Ken Clay
Elsa Pekmez Atan
Tina Grace
Terry Hughes
Catherine Barham
Matt Drinkwater
Dave Treweek
Matt Hill
Claire Challice
Lynne Cornfield
Peter Nguyen
Surajit Kar
Hayley Nash
Nadia Higham
Mark Philpotts
Tim Stout
Elton Ewen
Ayesha
Claire Kelly
Dawn Sariko
Andre Chambers
Jeff Stafford
Jessica Rimmington
Matthew King
Sue Connew
Caroline Hinz
Khaleada Khan
Mohammed Murshed
Richard Evans
Sam Spinks
Celia Duncan
Thomas Ginty
John Grantham
Ryan Davies
Anton Peterson
Victoria Pite
Benjamin Knowles
Maria Grandi
Damon Davies
Calum Rogers
A Thomas
Caio Aguiar
Bridget Wilkinson
Alexandra Milenov
Karen Byrne
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Marie Leary
Tristram Wyatt
Nigel Hosking

Jon Marks
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Andrew Telling
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Sultana Hussain
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Naomi Hodges
Pat Jones
Sadia Moaeed
John Hayashi Kirk
Richard Earis
Cleo Kenington
Brian Coleman
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Abi Spinks
Jackie Duckworth
Thomas Farines
Michael Frearson
Luke O'Rafferty

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*** [Source: nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-health-benefits](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-health-benefits)

**** <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carltonreid/2021/02/03/half-of-all-urban-journeys-must-be-cycled-or-walked-within-ten-years-confirms-uk-government/?sh=75f2c491551a>

^ [Bikeability receives record £20 million government investment to improve access to cycle training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)