

Consultation response to Royal Parks regarding the temporary cycling trial on the Broad Walk, Regent's Park

Summary

London Living Streets is opposed to the extension of any form of cycling on the Broad Walk. We believe that conditions for cycling must be improved on the Outer Circle in order to give better provision for commuting cyclists before cycling is permitted on the Broad Walk. We believe that the most dramatic, and potentially quick method of improving amenity for cyclists (and pedestrians) on the Outer Circle is the introduction of an enforced 20mph limit.

If conditions for cycling were to significantly improve on the Outer Circle, we would be prepared to reconsider our view on the Broad Walk.

Background

London Living Streets is part of Living Streets – the national charity campaigning for better streets and public spaces for people on foot.

London Living Streets is made up of our branches and contacts across London. We engage on matters that are of strategic importance to London. The Broad Walk, and more generally the issue of shared use, has been identified as one area of importance.

Living Streets is in the process of developing a policy paper on shared use. Consultation responses are currently being analysed. Consequently these views are those of London Living Streets and may be subject to review once our national policy is finalised.

Main response

London Living Streets welcomes more cycling and more cyclists in London. We have close and improving links with national organisations working in London, like CTC and Sustrans and particularly with the London Cycling Campaign. Cycling has an important role to play in making London a better city for walking – but cycling must not be developed at the expense of people on foot.

We recognise that there are situations where shared use may be appropriate – particularly in places where user (and predicted user) flows are low and where available width is high.

Whilst the Broad Walk is potentially one of the widest paths in London we are concerned that at some times of the week, and certain times of the year, that user flows will be too high to protect pedestrian amenity. Pedestrian amenity does not simply describe people on foot walking from A to B but also situations such as those that occur when families visit the park with young toddlers, who naturally run around and play games.

We recognise that the Broad Walk could be a valuable resource for people learning to cycle – particularly for young children. However the temptation for commuting cyclists to use the Broad Walk will be great and, at times, is likely to result in potential conflict, and most definitely will create situations where pedestrians are frightened. Commuting cyclists are not likely to obey the suggested 5mph speed limit – which we believe is virtually unenforceable anyway.

With this in mind we request that the trial is not extended. Instead we request that immediate measures are made to improve conditions for cycling on the Outer Circle. There is great width on the Outer Circle and many improvement options are possible that would make conditions better for both cycling and walking. London Living Streets would certainly be happy to advise.

Perhaps the most dramatic impact on the Outer Circle could be achieved by implementing an enforced 20mph default. This week PACTS (Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety) recommended that an enforceable 20mph should be the default in all built up areas.

Following PACTS recommendation the Mayor of London seems set to conduct a feasibility study into the implementation of 20mph as a default across the capital, enforced by time-speed cameras. Being linear in nature (if not in actual geography), the Outer Circle is the ideal location to test such equipment and the Royal Parks could be among the first beneficiaries of this new technology in London.

If conditions are improved for cycling on the Outer Circle, so that it becomes established as the preferred route for commuting cyclists, London Living Streets will be willing to review our position in relation to shared use on the Broad Walk.

London Living Streets

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**London Living Streets is a coalition of branches and affiliated groups campaigning for a better public realm
for people on foot across the capital and is part of Living Streets**