

Tower Hamlets

Walking and Cycling Index 2023





Foreword

Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling in Tower Hamlets



The climate emergency is one of the biggest issues we are confronted with today. To play its part, Tower Hamlets is committed to becoming a net zero

borough by 2045 or sooner. Transport is the biggest

contributor towards climate change emissions in Tower Hamlets. It is responsible for almost 40% of all carbon dioxide emitted in the borough. Whilst 80% of all trips in Tower Hamlets are made sustainably, the borough has pledged that 90% of journeys should be sustainable by 2041.

Tower Hamlets is well placed to meet this challenge. It benefits from excellent public transport connections. The new Elizabeth Line, connects Whitechapel and Canary Wharf with direct services to Heathrow Airport, Reading, Shenfield and Abbey Wood. However, more needs to be done to increase levels of active travel in the borough. 23% of local residents aged 19 and above are physically inactive and over 50% of children aged 11 or over are overweight or obese. There is significant untapped potential for increasing cycling in Tower Hamlets. The borough has reached just 8% of its cycling potential. There

could be an additional 200,000 cycling trips possible each day based on data from the Strategic Cycling Analysis Tool for London.

The council's existing 33 temporary School Street schemes will be made permanent to provide the right conditions to help families walk, scoot and cycle to school. To increase cycling levels within the local community, particularly amongst under-represented groups, the council will deliver cycle training to over 500 adults and 1,200 children annually for the next three years. We are working with Transport for London (TfL) to reduce road safety casualties as part of the London-wide Vision Zero programme: expanding 20mph speed limits on TfL's road network, new and upgraded crossing facilities and more space for walking and cycling are all part of this work. The council is also committed to creating more attractive and sustainable street environments making use of parklets, Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) and planting over 1,000 trees within the next 3 years.

Steve Halsey, Chief Executive

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The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index (formerly Bike Life) is the biggest assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling in urban areas in the UK and Ireland.

It is delivered by Sustrans in collaboration with 23 cities and urban areas. Each city reports on the progress made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling more attractive, everyday ways to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years. This is the third report from Tower Hamlets produced in partnership with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The data in this report comes from 2023 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent survey of 1,268 residents aged 16 or above in Tower Hamlets. The survey was conducted from March to June 2023. Social research organisation NatCen conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

Across this report we have included comparisons to 2021 data where available.

Our thanks to the people of Tower Hamlets who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all reports can be found at www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index. For more data, including 2019 figures where available, see the [Index Data Tool](#).



Defining wheeling

We recognise that some people who use wheeled mobility aids, for example a wheelchair or a mobility scooter, may not identify with the term walking and may prefer to use the term wheeling. We use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

i. City is used as a shorthand for Walking and Cycling Index cities, city regions, metropolitan areas and boroughs.

Headlines

Tower Hamlets

Populationⁱ

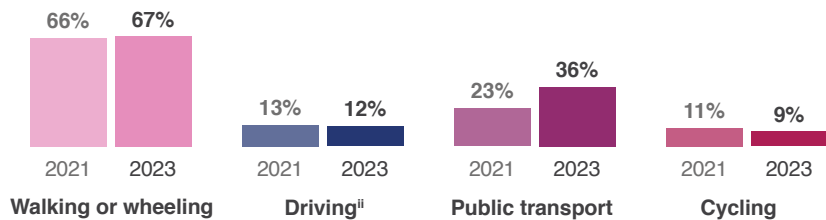
310,231



The impact of the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic had a big impact on travel. In 2021 whilst most restrictions had been lifted, many people were taking fewer journeys and working from home.

Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in Tower Hamlets



Participation in walking, wheeling and cycling on a regular basis is similar to 2021.

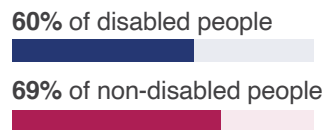
67% of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week
66% in 2021

23% of residents cycle at least once a week
25% in 2021

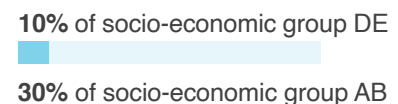
Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

Residents' travel choices and their perceptions of walking, wheeling and cycling sometimes vary widely between different groups.

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

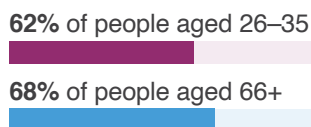


Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

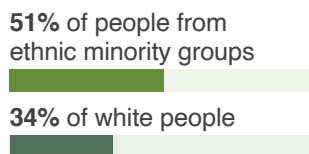


Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

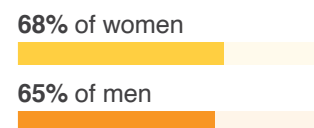
Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety is good



Proportion of residents who think cycling safety is good



Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhoodⁱⁱⁱ



Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

i. ONS Census 2021. This is the most recent available for Tower Hamlets. ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle. iii. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Every day, walking, wheeling and cycling in Tower Hamlets take up to **52,000** cars off the road.^{iv} Each year in Tower Hamlets these three modes combined:



Prevent

413

serious long-term health conditions



Create

£160.5 million

in economic benefit for individuals and Tower Hamlets



Save

9,300 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions

Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more

Percentage of residents who would like to use different types of transport more or less in the future:

12% of residents want to drive less, yet 11% of residents often use a car because no other transport options are available.

Walk or wheel

50% more

4% less

Cycle

47% more

4% less

Take public transport

21% more

17% less

Drive

17% more

12% less

Residents want more funding for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending in their local area:

59% on walking and wheeling

61% in 2021

50% on cycling

52% in 2021

69% on public transport

69% in 2021

24% on driving

27% in 2021

Increased funding would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

Among Tower Hamlets residents:

63% support

18% oppose

more cycle paths along roads, physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

66% agree

15% disagree

that increasing space for people socialising, walking, wheeling and cycling on their local high street would improve their local area

76% support

8% oppose

the creation of more 20-minute neighbourhoods^v

62% support

15% oppose

the ban on vehicles parking on the pavement

64% support

14% oppose

shifting investment from road building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

iv. Based on walking, wheeling and cycling by residents that live in a household with a car. Does not include leisure cycling or leisure walking or wheeling trips.
v. See definition on page 14.



Walking in Tower Hamlets

Walking and wheeling participation, safety and satisfaction

Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Tower Hamlets the number of people walking and wheeling regularly (at least five days a week) has stayed about the same since 2021.

Walking and wheeling are often overlooked in transport. This is despite being an efficient use of space, good for our health and having no environmental impact.

97% of all residents walk or wheel **98%** in 2021

67% of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week **66%** in 2021

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

Genderⁱ and sexuality

68% of women

 63% in 2021

67% of men

 70% in 2021

79% of LGBTQ+ people

67% of non-LGBTQ+ people

Ethnicity

60% of people from ethnic minority groups

 59% in 2021

76% of white people

 77% in 2021

Age

63% of people aged 16–25

 66% in 2021

71% of people aged 26–35

 70% in 2021

73% of people aged 36–45

 69% in 2021

71% of people aged 46–55

 61% in 2021

60% of people aged 56–65

 65% in 2021

51% of people aged 66+

 57% in 2021

Disability

60% of disabled people

 57% in 2021

69% of non-disabled people

 69% in 2021

Socio-economic groupⁱⁱ

70% of AB

 72% in 2021

74% of C1

 66% in 2021

52% of C2

 70% in 2021

54% of DE

 55% in 2021

i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' was too low to be statistically significant and therefore is not presented here.

ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C1 is supervisory/clerical and students. Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

62%

of residents think the level of safety for walking or wheeling is good

64% in 2021

43%

of residents think the level of safety for children walking or wheeling is good

45% in 2021

71%

of residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk or wheel

72% in 2021

Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety in their local area is good

Gender and sexuality

64% of women



63% in 2021



62% of men

65% in 2021

60% of LGBTQ+ people



64% of non-LGBTQ+ people

Ethnicity

66% of people from ethnic minority groups



63% in 2021



58% of white people

66% in 2021

Age

61% of people aged 16–25



71% in 2021



62% of people aged 26–35

65% in 2021

66% of people aged 36–45



63% in 2021



57% of people aged 46–55

61% in 2021



63% of people aged 56–65

60% in 2021



68% of people aged 66+

59% in 2021

Disability

54% of disabled people



50% in 2021



64% of non-disabled people

67% in 2021

Socio-economic group

61% of AB



66% in 2021



68% of C1

60% in 2021



53% of C2

68% in 2021



60% of DE

63% in 2021



Shaheda



Walking is great for my health. I love to walk with my neighbours. They come walking when I tell them I'm going – the social aspect of our walks is like magic in keeping away stress and anxiety.

We had 27 that came on one group walk.

We learn about the history and the nature of the places we walk to, which makes it interesting.

The barrier for many of us to walk more is finding the time.



Cycling in Tower Hamlets

Cycling participation, safety and satisfaction

Cycling participation

Overall in Tower Hamlets the number of people cycling has stayed about the same since 2021. Despite a much larger potential for cycling, only **23%** of people cycle regularly.ⁱ

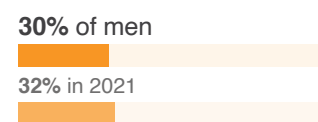
Cycling participation, however, is not equal. Barriers to cycling can be far more pronounced for some people. Safety is the largest barrier to cycling.ⁱⁱ Encouragingly, perceptions of cycling safety have improved since 2021.

45%
of all residents cycle
47%
in 2021

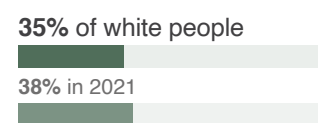
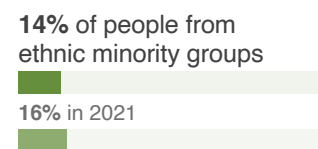
23%
of all residents cycle at
least once a week
25%
in 2021

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

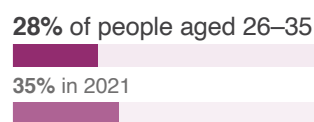
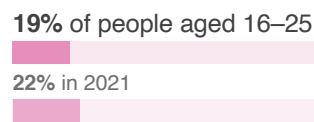
Gender and sexuality



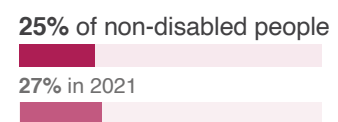
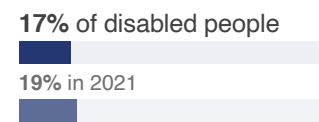
Ethnicity



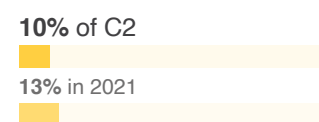
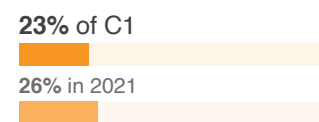
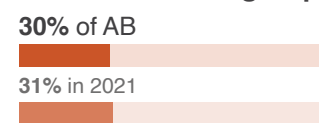
Age



Disability



Socio-economic group



i. Based on people who cycle at least once a week.
ii. See Bike Life 2019 Tower Hamlets report.

Cycling safety and satisfaction

43%

of all residents think the level of safety for cycling in their local area is good

39% in 2021

32%

of all residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good

27% in 2021

49%

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle

48% in 2021

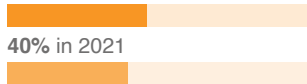
Proportion of residents who think cycling safety in their local area is good

Gender and sexuality

40% of women



46% of men



38% of LGBTQ+ people



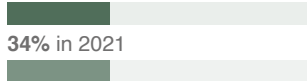
44% of non-LGBTQ+ people

Ethnicity

51% of people from ethnic minority groups

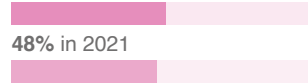


34% of white people



Age

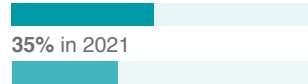
51% of people aged 16–25



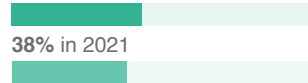
38% of people aged 26–35



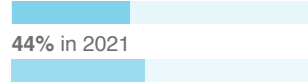
47% of people aged 36–45



43% of people aged 46–55



39% of people aged 56–65



37% of people aged 66+

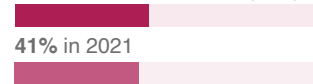


Disability

40% of disabled people

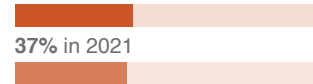


44% of non-disabled people

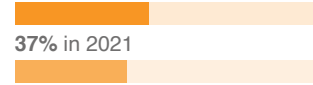


Socio-economic group

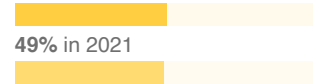
39% of AB



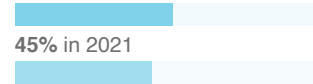
44% of C1



50% of C2



52% of DE



Sahra



I began cycling in 2021 when I came across the amazing Chrisp Street Community Cycle Hub. I was introduced to the hub by a friend, who told me about the free training lessons available.

I signed myself up, and started to learn to ride in a nearby park. But I cycle all over the place and it feels great!

The roads are not always easy but I can cycle to pick up my children.

I have told more friends about the opportunity to cycle, and I also won a bike in a raffle.





Benefits of walking

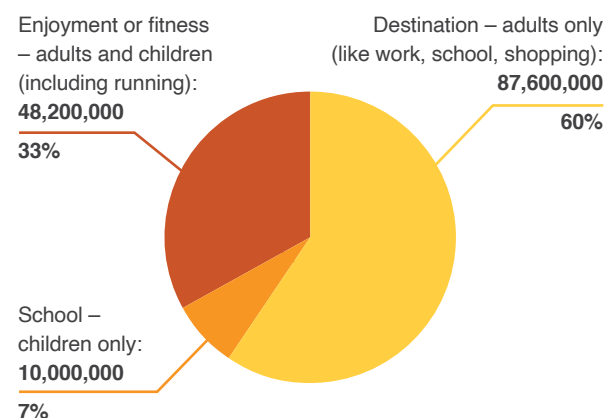
Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

Tower Hamlets residents walk or wheel 14 times around the world every day

Walking and wheeling trips have declined slightly since 2021, when behaviour was more influenced by the pandemic. Children walking to school has stayed the same.

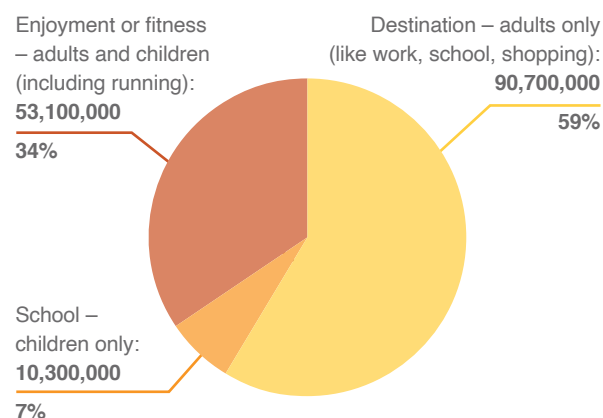
Annual walking and wheeling trips by purposeⁱ

2023:
145.7 million trips



This adds up to
129.4 million miles
= 350,000 miles a day

2021:
154.1 million trips



This adds up to
154 million miles
= 420,000 miles a day

Walking and wheeling benefits residents and the local economy

The Walking and Cycling Index uses a model to understand the costs and benefits of driving and walking. For example travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

£1.05
in 2021

£1.37 is savedⁱⁱ
for each mile walked or wheeled
instead of driven in Tower Hamlets.

Over a year this adds up to

£28 million

from adults with a car in their household
walking or wheeling to work, school
and other destinations.

£24.5
million
in 2021

The total annual economic benefit from all
trips walked and wheeled in Tower Hamlets is

£124.2 millionⁱⁱⁱ

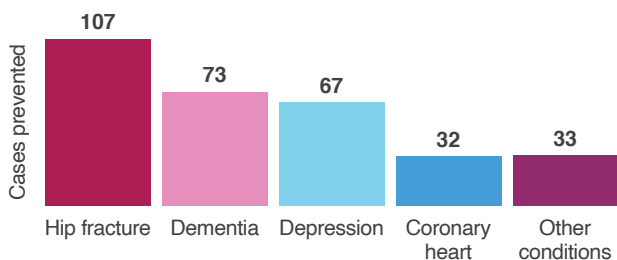
£152.6
million
in 2021

i. Trips for enjoyment or fitness include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). School trips are shown separately for children only. ii. Benefits have increased significantly, mainly because of increased costs of driving and greater traffic congestion. iii. This includes trips walked or wheeled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car.

Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in Tower Hamlets prevents 312 serious long-term health conditions each year

360 in 2021



'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, colorectal cancer.

Saving the NHS in Tower Hamlets

£4.4 million per year

£2.5 million in 2021

83,000 in 2021



equivalent to the cost of

110,000 GP appointments

Based on Sport England MOVES tool which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In Tower Hamlets the physical activity benefits of walking

prevent 95 early deaths annually

92 in 2021

which is valued at

£345 million^{iv}

£304 million in 2021

Please note wheelchair or mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

People walking and wheeling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

15,000 kg of NO_x

20,000 kg in 2021

and

2,100 kg of particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

2,700 kg in 2021

28% of residents agree the

air is clean in their local area

24% in 2021



Walking and wheeling in Tower Hamlets helps mitigate our climate crisis

6,400 tonnes in 2021

5,600 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by walking or wheeling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of



7,800 people in 2021

6,900 people taking flights

from London Heathrow to New York

In 2021 transport accounted for **26%** of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2021 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures

Walking and wheeling keeps Tower Hamlets moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^v This helps to keep Tower Hamlets moving for all road users.

51,000 in 2021

45,000 return walking and wheeling trips

are made daily in Tower Hamlets by people that could have used a car.

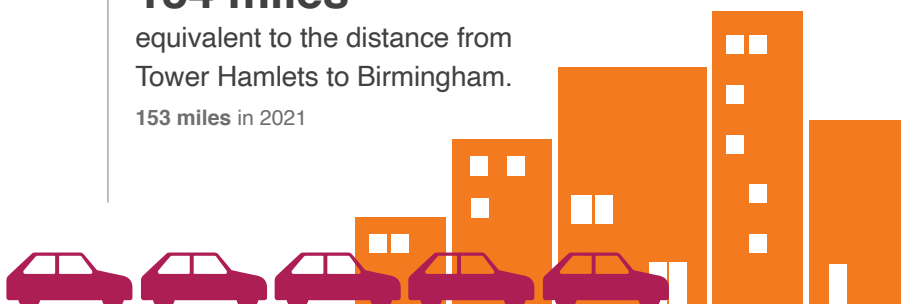
v. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

134 miles

equivalent to the distance from Tower Hamlets to Birmingham.

153 miles in 2021



iv. Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking.



Benefits of cycling

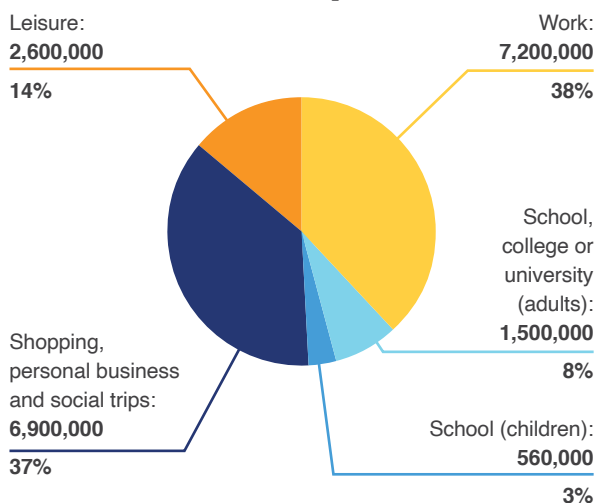
Why everyone gains when more people cycle

Tower Hamlets residents cycle 6 times around the world every day

Cycling trips to work since 2021 have increased, while leisure trips have decreased. This may be related to the pandemic.

Annual cycling trips by purpose in Tower Hamletsⁱ

2023:
18.7 million trips

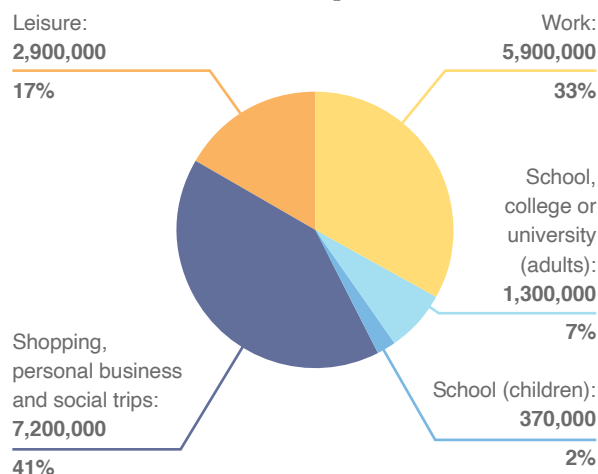


This adds up to

54.4 million miles

= 150,000 miles a day

2021:
17.7 million trips



This adds up to

56.5 million miles

= 150,000 miles a day

Cycling benefits residents and the local economy

The Walking and Cycling Index uses a model to understand the costs and benefits of driving and cycling. For example travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

Over a year this adds up to

£31 million

from adults with a car in their household cycling to work, school and other destinations.

£26.2 million in 2021

The total annual economic benefit from all trips cycled in Tower Hamlets is

£36.3 millionⁱⁱ

£34.8 million in 2021

£2.31 is saved for each mile cycled instead of driven in Tower Hamlets.

£1.94 in 2021

i. Leisure trips include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment).

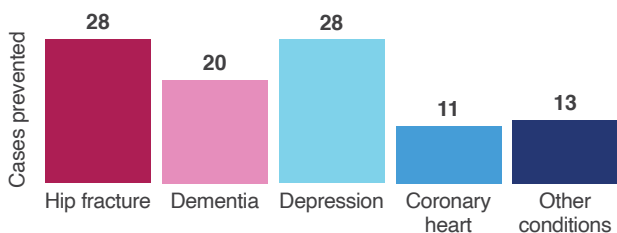
Education trips are shown separately for adults and children. All other trips are just adults.

ii. This includes trips cycled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car.

Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in Tower Hamlets prevents 101 serious long-term health conditions each year

99 in 2021



'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, colorectal cancer.

Saving the NHS in Tower Hamlets £1.5 million per year

£700,000 in 2021

23,000 in 2021



equivalent to the cost of **38,000 GP appointments**

Based on Sport England MOVES tool which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In Tower Hamlets the physical activity benefits of cycling

prevent 14 early deaths annually

11 in 2021

which is valued at **£49.3 millionⁱⁱⁱ**

£37.6 million in 2021

People cycling more instead of driving improves air quality, saving annually:

7,100 kg of NO_x and

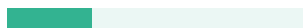
7,600 kg in 2021

1,000 kg of particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5})

1,100 kg in 2021

28% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area

24% in 2021



Cycling in Tower Hamlets helps mitigate our climate crisis

3,700 tonnes in 2021

3,700 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by cycling instead of driving, equivalent to the carbon footprint of



4,500 people in 2021

4,500 people taking flights

from London Heathrow to New York

In 2021 transport accounted for **26%** of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2021 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures

Cycling keeps Tower Hamlets moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^{iv} This helps to keep Tower Hamlets moving for all road users.

6,700 in 2021

6,900 return cycling trips

are made daily in Tower Hamlets by people that could have used a car.

^{iv} Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

21 miles

equivalent to the distance from Whitechapel to Grays.

20 miles in 2021



ⁱⁱⁱ Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of cycling.



Walking solutions

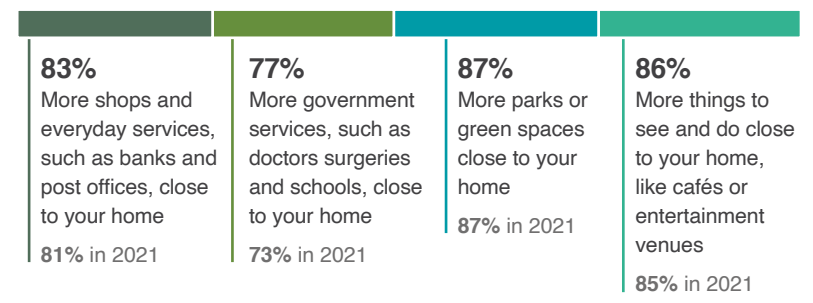
What would help make walking and wheeling easier?

Residents want more services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Ideally, walking or wheeling should be the most attractive option for short journeys. An area can support this by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live. The environment should be safe, comfortable and welcoming.

20-minute neighbourhoods are places where you can walk from your home to many of the things you need on a regular basis. Based on a 20-minute return journey this is around 480 metres each way for the majority of people.ⁱ

What percentage of residents would find more local amenities and services useful to help them walk or wheel more?



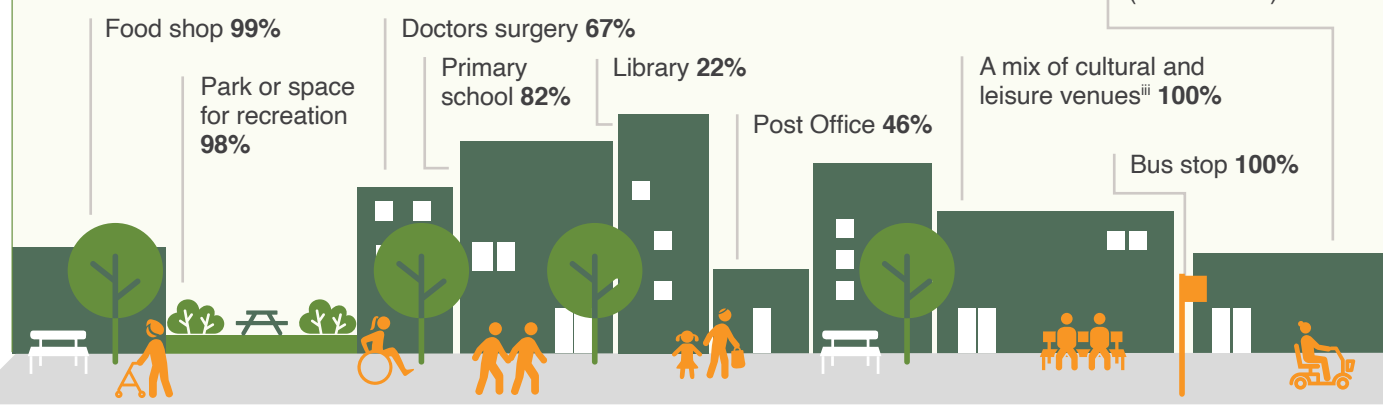
95% of Tower Hamlets households are in neighbourhoods of more than 40 homes per hectare. These are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods. **94%** in 2021

These higher-density neighbourhoods with more people can sustain local businesses and public transport routes.ⁱⁱ

76% agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive **72%** in 2021

Proportion of households within a 400m radius of the following amenities

This is modelled as a straight-line distance, as opposed to the actual walking distance based on street layout which is likely to be longer (approximately equivalent to 480m).

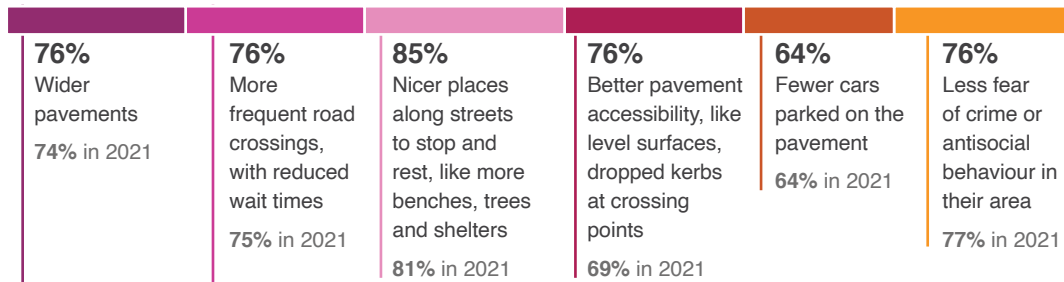


i. Asher et al, 2012. Most older pedestrians are unable to cross the road in time: a cross-sectional study. Age and Ageing.
 ii. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning.
 iii. A minimum of three distinct types of cultural and leisure venues, like cafés, pubs, bingo halls, cinemas, museums.

Residents want better streets

There are many ways to make our streets and neighbourhoods safe, welcoming and comfortable for everyone to walk or wheel in.

What percentage of residents think that these changes would help them walk or wheel more?



In Tower Hamlets:

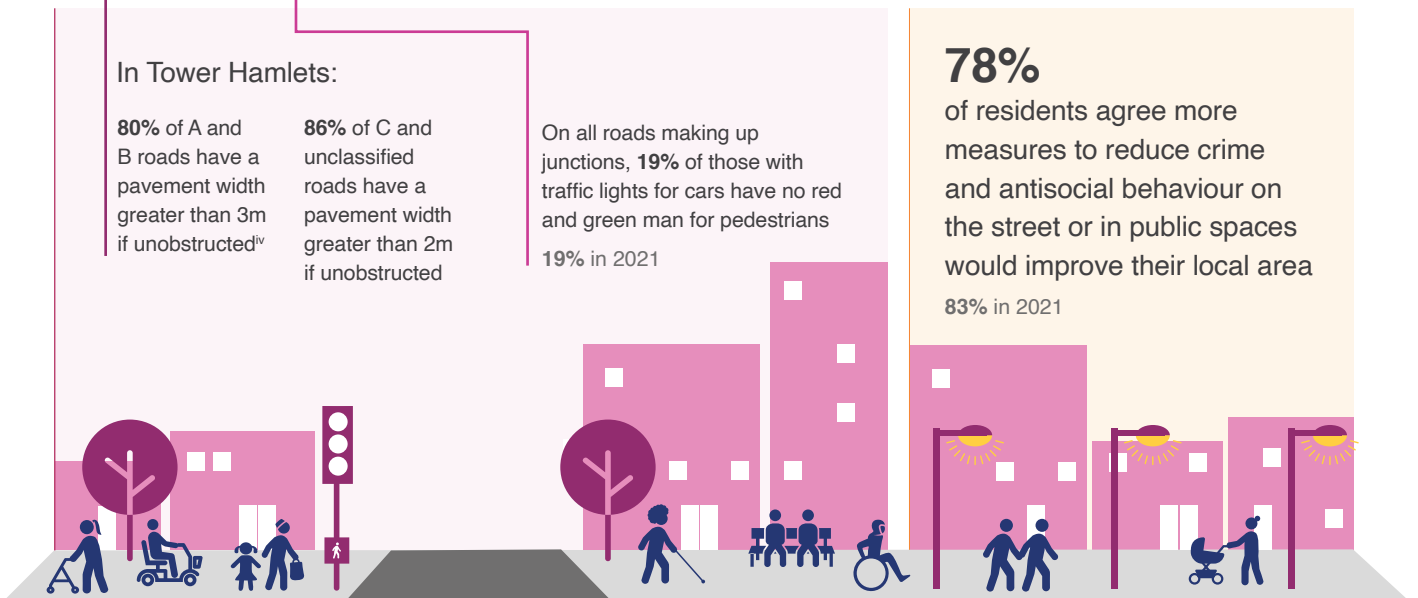
80% of A and B roads have a pavement width greater than 3m if unobstructed^{iv}

86% of C and unclassified roads have a pavement width greater than 2m if unobstructed

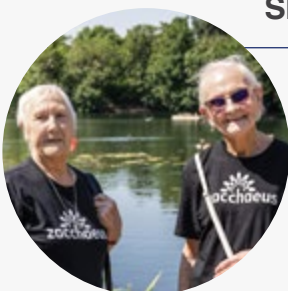
On all roads making up junctions, **19%** of those with traffic lights for cars have no red and green man for pedestrians
19% in 2021

78%

of residents agree more measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the street or in public spaces would improve their local area
83% in 2021



Sheila and Kathy



We love walking because it keeps us physically and mentally healthy. You also learn about the areas you visit.

We walk a lot, but on Mondays we go on a group walk led by Graham Barker from Walk East, who shows us interesting places. Walk East is a not-for-profit social enterprise, based in Tower Hamlets.

Walk East shares the pleasures and benefits of walking – for discovery, health and wellbeing, and community – with East London residents and visitors.

We like walking along the canals and the River Thames.

More free guide books would help us lead walks more easily.

iv. OS source measurement now excludes grass verges, so is more accurate than in the 2021 report. A and B roads are main roads. C roads and unclassified roads are more minor roads and often residential streets.



Cycling solutions

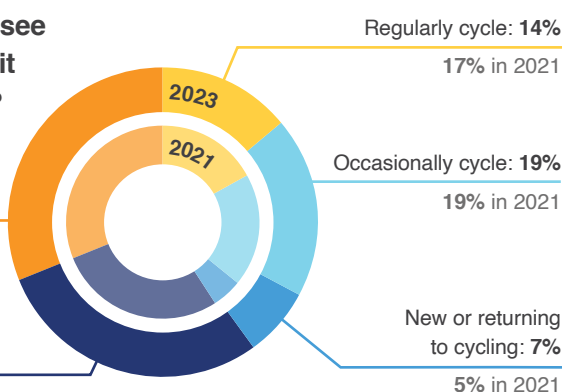
What would make cycling better?

Many Tower Hamlets residents want to cycle

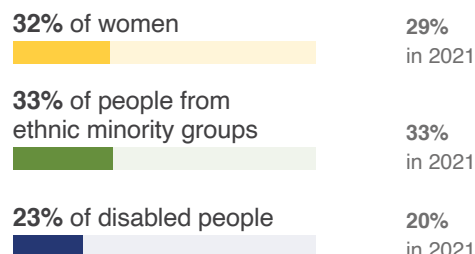
How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

Do not cycle and do not want to: **31%**
31% in 2021

Do not cycle but would like to: **29%**
28% in 2021



What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'?



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

What percentage of residents would be helped to cycle more by better facilities?

72%
More traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways
71% in 2021

70%
More cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians
70% in 2021

68%
More signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets
68% in 2021

74%
Better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations
73% in 2021

There are **494** cycle parking spaces across all **32** railway, underground and DLR stations in Tower Hamlets
496 in 2021

Tower Hamlets has:

12 miles
of traffic-free cycle paths away from the road
12 miles in 2021

8 miles
of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians
8 miles in 2021

7 miles
of signposted routes along quieter streets
7 miles in 2021

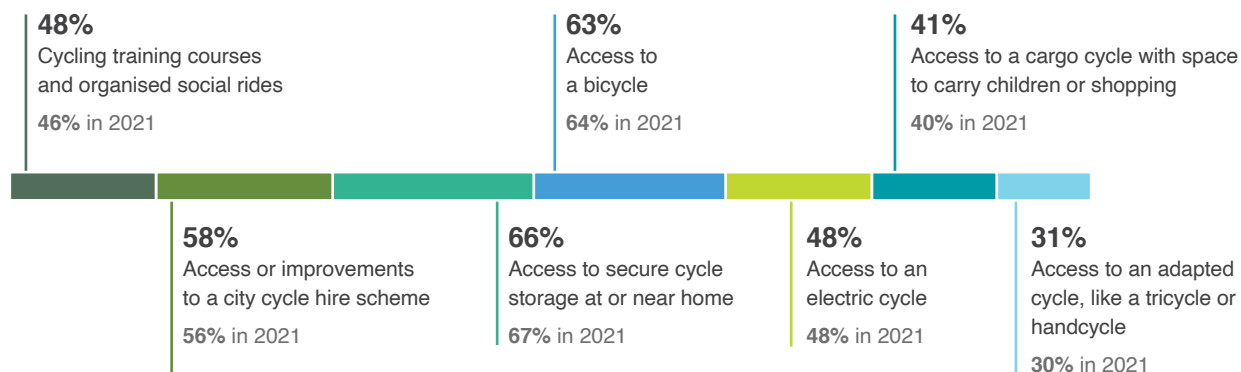
37%
of households within 125m of these routes
38% in 2021

63%
of residents support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic
59% in 2021



Residents want more support to cycle

What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them cycle more?



Tower Hamlets cycle hire schemeⁱⁱ

1,884
hire cycles
1,914 in 2021

119
cycle hire stations
120 in 2021

2,488,932
annual trips
2,851,544 in 2021

Reported cycle thefts

There were **1,319** reported cycle thefts in Tower Hamlets in 2022/23.
1,837 in 2021/22

For every **90** people who own an adult cycle in Tower Hamlets, there was **1** reported cycle theft in the past year.

Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle

47% of residents
42% in 2021

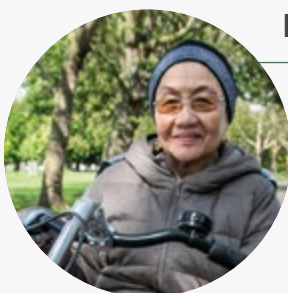
32% of socio-economic group DE
37% in 2021

52% of socio-economic group AB
48% in 2021

59% of residents support financial discounts for people on low incomes or not in employment to help them buy a cycle

79% of households are within 800m of a cycle shopⁱⁱⁱ

There is a public cycle parking space for every **17** people who cycle in Tower Hamlets. 19 in 2021



Khadijah



When I was younger I used to ride the bike a lot, to get around and to play. I find it more difficult to do this now that I'm older, so it's nice to get on the free bicycle taxi provided by Bikeworks and enjoy.

It's handy to have the bicycle to pick me up when I need it.

The first thing when you are on the bicycle you get to go to the park, enjoy the weather. You have company with you and you don't have to walk. I live in a flat so no space for a bicycle.

Tower Hamlets is alright as it is to cycle with the taxi, but maybe we can have more time with it and stay in the park have something to eat and then come back.

ii. 2023 data covers July 2022–June 2023. 2021 data covers July 2020–June 2021.
iii. Credit to the Association of Cycle Traders (ACT) for their assistance with cycle shop locations and services offered.

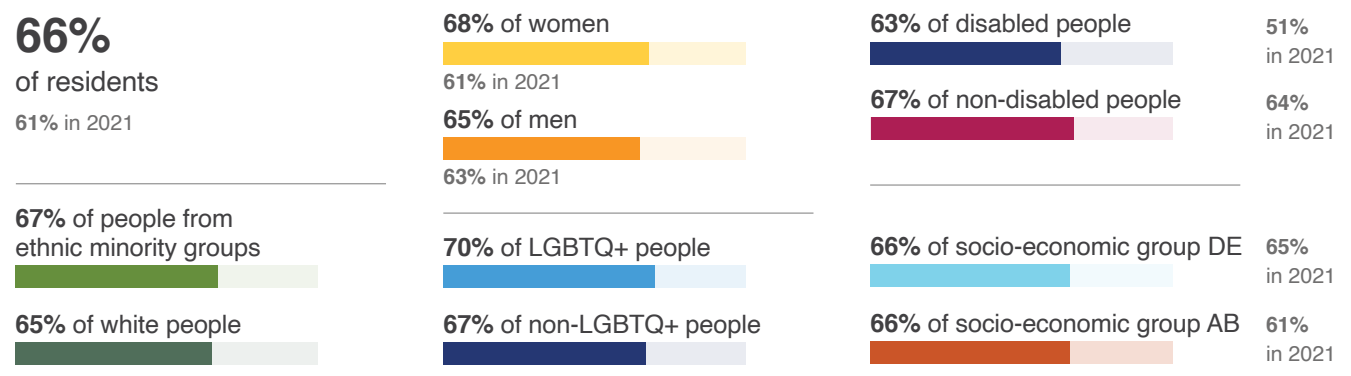


Neighbourhood solutions

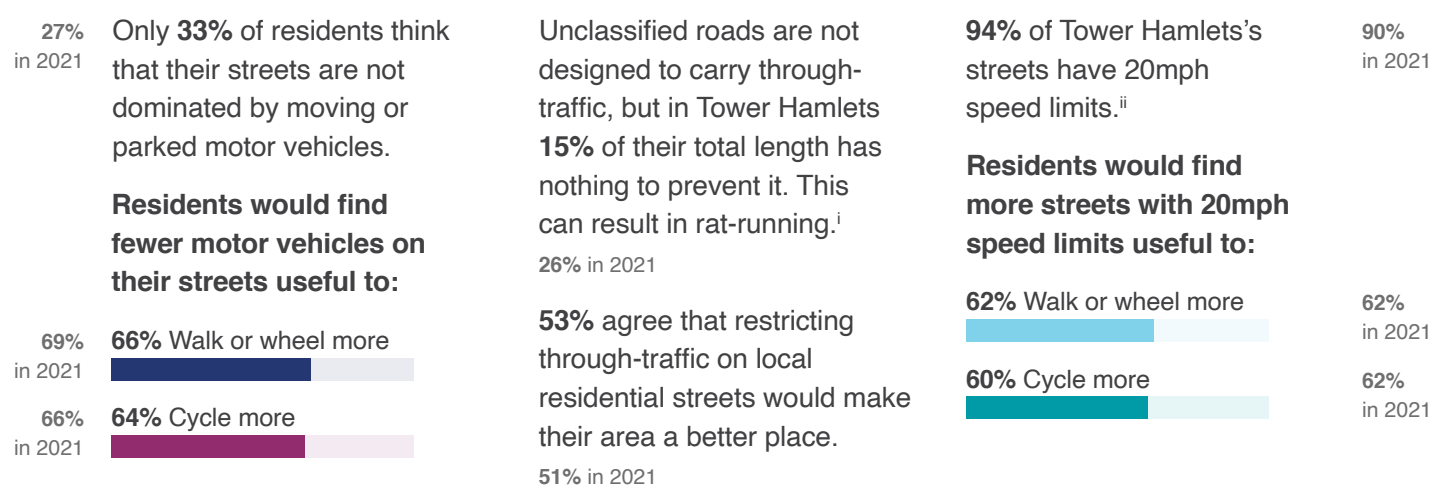
What would help make neighbourhoods better?

All residents should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents that feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood

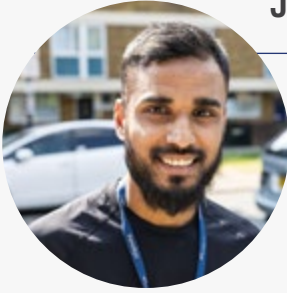


The dominance of motor vehicles can discourage walking, wheeling and cycling



Residents want local streets to be better spaces for people to spend time in





Jakir Hussain, Teacher



Bike It is a service provided by Sustrans which supports my school in enabling children to cycle.

The Bike Club have given me 30 bikes for Tower Hamlets schools, which has been amazing for the young people.

Children in this area face a lot of barriers to cycling, like their parents being unable to afford a bike, and fears of safety and theft.

So having the Bike It team come in and help with free bikes, cycle training and fixing up kids' bikes has really made a difference.

Neighbourhoods must be designed with children in mind

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive. Increasing independence, providing space to play and socialise, and improving the journey to school are all important.

If we design neighbourhoods with children in mind they will then work better for everyone else too.

13 years old

average age when people living with children would let them walk, wheel or cycle independently in their neighbourhood.

13 years old in 2021

80% of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school.ⁱⁱⁱ

51% of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play



49% in 2021

93% of households are within 400m of a children's playground



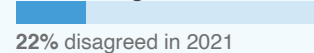
Among Tower Hamlets residents:

46% agree



43% agreed in 2021

23% disagree



22% disagreed in 2021

closing streets outside local schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area

These are known as 'School Streets'.

9 schools

in Tower Hamlets have School Streets schemes^{iv}

0 schemes in 2021



iii. Children's Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015. iv. Figure given is correct as of 31 May 2023.



Developing Tower Hamlets

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

Since the previous Walking and Cycling Index Report for Tower Hamlets in 2021, continued progress has been made on both developing infrastructure and supporting the community to walk, wheel and cycle. By late 2023, Tower Hamlets Council had made 33 School Streets permanent following a successful 18-month trial. Over 1,500 children are benefitting from the removal of through traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. Taking motor traffic off the roads improves air quality, reduces congestion and creates more attractive conditions for walking, cycling and wheeling to school. In another example of how the council is helping more people to travel actively, the Wapping Low Traffic Neighbourhood has also been made permanent. A bus gate stops through traffic entering the area at set times each day. The council made the bus gate permanent during 2022, after an 18 month trial.

Cycling infrastructure in the borough has been expanded too. Protected cycle lanes along Mansell Street in Aldgate were installed in 2022 by Transport for London(TfL). They provide a key link between Cycleways 2 and 3 and are used by over 3,000 cyclists every day. To make cycling possible for more Tower Hamlets residents, the council has delivered 140 new secure cycle parking spaces. These are in the form of individual lockers on residential estates and on-street cycle hangars.

Over 2,200 children have benefited from the council's cycle training Bikeability programme. More than 800 adults have taken part in cycle training sessions since 2022 and 250 residents with physical and learning disabilities have taken part in the award winning All Ability Cycling Club programme based in Victoria Park. To break down barriers to cycling amongst under-represented groups we have expanded our network of community cycling hubs with housing association Poplar HARCA and trialled a bespoke cycling project with refugees and asylum seekers.



Taking motor traffic off the roads improves air quality, reduces congestion and creates more attractive conditions for walking, cycling and wheeling to school.



Chrisp Street Cycle Hub

This busy cycle hub at Chrisp Street Market in Poplar continues to serve a wide range of people, providing free cycle loans, training, maintenance and social rides. Since opening in 2021, the cycle hub has engaged more than 3,400 people. Across 220 activities they have had more than 1,350 participants, predominantly women and their families from the local Bangladeshi and Somali communities. The hub employs two local female instructors and has trained 5 female participants to become ride leaders, with more training planned.

In addition to women-only group learn to ride sessions, they now offer bookable 1-2-1 family sessions so whole families can learn to cycle and improve their skills together. Dr Bike visits monthly and will offer some basic maintenance sessions, empowering people to feel more confident to tackle small repairs on their own cycles.

Run by housing association Poplar HARCA, funding for this year has been provided by The London Marathon Charitable Trust, with in-kind project management support from Poplar HARCA. Telford Homes has leased the space on a 'peppercorn' rent and the project has many other partners including London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Bikeworks, London Cycling Campaign and Joyriders.



Medina Bazaar – Chrisp Street Delivers

I've always offered a delivery service to my customers due to the nature of my trade.

So, when Zedify, Poplar HARCA and Tower Hamlets Council set up this free cycle delivery service for my customers, Chrisp Street Delivers, I signed up to use it as a service.

I wanted to provide a greener delivery service to my customers, I also wanted my customers to receive their delivery during the day rather than me delivering to them after work, which can be very tiring and end up delivering very late to customers.

My customers are very happy with the service, especially when they are receiving their delivery during the day within working hours.



Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

Tower Hamlets Council is committed to its 2019 Transport Strategy pledge that 90% of journeys in the borough will be made by walking, cycling and public transport by 2041.

The borough is now benefiting from the transformational improvements delivered by the completion of the Elizabeth Line in 2022. Stations at Canary Wharf and Whitechapel provide fast, frequent and fully accessible new services into Central London, Heathrow Airport and out to Reading and Shenfield (Essex). Wider benefits of the Elizabeth Line for the borough's network include shorter journey times for trips involving interchanges with the route.

Tower Hamlets is set to benefit from substantial investment in the London bus network. New, frequent orbital routes due to be delivered over the next 18 months will connect the borough with South-East London and beyond as part of the new Superloop express bus network. The Docklands Light Railway (DLR) upgrade scheduled for 2024-26 will further improve Tower Hamlets' connectivity. There will be more trains and new rolling stock will bring greater reliability and accessibility on DLR routes serving Tower Hamlets. The interchange between Poplar DLR and Canary Wharf Elizabeth Line station will also be improved.

Although the entire borough has benefited from the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) since 2021, Tower Hamlets has the fifth worst air quality out of all the London Boroughs. More work is required to address air pollution hotspots where it exceeds World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. Tower Hamlets Council has already invested substantially in a network of over 300 electric vehicle chargers to date. The council has an ambitious programme to deliver a further 1,000 chargers over the next four years. The borough's 33 School Streets will continue to operate permanently to help sustain improvements in air quality around schools. They will also improve road safety and encourage more families to walk, wheel and cycle

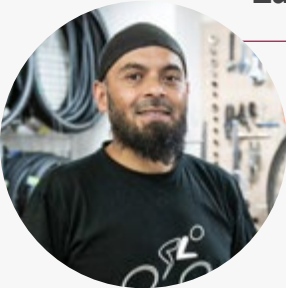


The borough's 33 School Streets will continue to operate permanently to help sustain improvements in air quality around schools.

to school. School Air Quality Audits will continue to be rolled out across Tower Hamlets. These will enable to the council to assess the impact of the measures they put in place to cut air pollution and identify further improvements.

Tower Hamlets Council is working closely with stakeholders to further develop new cycle infrastructure in the borough. Work with the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) on protected routes serving new neighbourhoods is taking shape in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The Canal & River Trust London is working on upgrades to canal towpath surfaces, enhancing the borough's off-road walking and cycling network. The council will continue its work to make its town centres and transport corridors more accessible so the borough is as safe and as easy as possible for all residents to travel around.

East End Cycles



With a passion for cycling, a group of cycling enthusiasts born and raised in the East End came together with the idea to provide an affordable repair service for all cyclists within their budget in East London.

Our mechanics equipped with many years of experience and professional qualifications, ensure no bike leaves our workshop without having the highest level of work carried out on each individual bike so all our customers are happy and feel safe on their journey.

We are located on the busy Mile End Road, which has a quality cycle path running alongside.

We are keen to be part of growing cycling in Tower Hamlets and beyond.

Notes on methodology:

The attitudinal survey was conducted from March to June 2023 by independent social research organisation NatCen.

The survey is representative of all Tower Hamlets residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

2021 survey data was collected from June to August 2021, also by NatCen, following the same methodology.

All other data is sourced from our city partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Sustrans.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Sustrans. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys travelled by journey purpose.

Rounding has been used throughout the report. In many cases we have rounded to the nearest whole number. Rounding is avoided where this may cause confusion, for example with modelled estimates shown in the summary and benefits sections.

More information and a detailed methodology are available at www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index

Sustrans makes it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

Sustrans is a registered charity in the UK No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)

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Thanks to Open Route Service for their support with their isochrone plugin in QGIS.



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TOWER HAMLETS

The logo features the word 'sustrans' in a lowercase, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a white icon of a square with an arrow pointing upwards and to the right. Below the main text, the tagline 'JOIN THE MOVEMENT' is written in a smaller, uppercase font.

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