

# BIKE *life*

2017

Edinburgh







# Forward motion

Our vision for cycling in Edinburgh



As a city, Edinburgh has a strong record of transforming its urban environment to encourage people to walk and cycle for more of the journeys they make every day.

Over the years, the capital has benefitted hugely from the policy and

funding support for active travel provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. The Council has committed to investing 10% of the total Roads and Transport budget into cycling. Its innovative work has meant Edinburgh has repeatedly set the standard for active travel provision in Scotland, and as a result, bike use in Edinburgh is at a record high.

Edinburgh is transforming its public realm street-by-street to make it safer for people to walk and cycle. By the start of 2018, a vast majority of Edinburgh's roads will have a 20mph speed limit. In addition, the continued

creation of the 'QuietRoutes' network of traffic-free and low-traffic routes across the city will allow even more people to cycle in safety.

As more and more people enjoy the rewards of walking and cycling in Edinburgh, the city is also reaping benefits on many levels with improved economic vitality for businesses, and healthier, happier citizens.

The more we leave the car behind in favour of walking and cycling for short journeys, the more we move towards a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable Edinburgh; a place where people can thrive.

I have worked for the last three years on City of Edinburgh Council's Transport Committee, and on behalf of the council, I'd now like to welcome our new Transport Convenor, Lesley Macinnes who will lead and further shape the vision set out in Bike Life Edinburgh. This report helps underline what we can all do to help keep Scotland's capital one of the most liveable cities in the UK.

**Councillor Adam McVey**  
Leader of City of Edinburgh Council

# Introducing Bike Life

Sustrans, the charity making it easier to walk and cycle, is collaborating with seven cities in the UK – Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Greater Manchester and Newcastle – to report on progress towards making cycling an attractive and everyday means of travel.



Bike Life is inspired by the Copenhagen Bicycle Account, and is an assessment of city cycling development including infrastructure, travel behaviour, satisfaction, the impact of cycling, and new initiatives.

This is the second report from Edinburgh following on from the original report published in 2015. The information in this report comes from local cycling data, modelling and a representative survey of over 1,100 residents in Edinburgh conducted by ICM\*.

More details on all seven Bike Life city reports can be found at [www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife).

Our thanks to the people of Edinburgh who took part in the survey and who told us their stories in this report.

## There are substantial benefits to Edinburgh from people cycling

- 15.3 million trips\*\*** made by bike in Edinburgh in the past year
- Saving the NHS £739,000 annually**, equivalent to the average salary of **31 nurses**
- Bicycles take up to **11,762 cars** off Edinburgh's roads each day, equal to a **35-mile tailback**
- £24 million total annual benefit to Edinburgh** from people riding bikes for transport and leisure

## There is huge potential for more people to ride bikes...

- 7.5%** of commuters living in Edinburgh **travel to work by bike**
- 45%** of people live within **125m of a cycle route**
- 46%** would like to **start riding a bike, or could ride their bike more**

## ...and public support to make that happen

Residents in Edinburgh think investing in more street space for cycling, walking and public transport is the best way to keep the city moving, improve people's health, and reduce air pollution.

- 63%** say Edinburgh **would be a better place to live and work** if more people cycled
- 75%** of people would like to see **more money spent** on cycling
- 65%** of people would find **protected roadside cycle lanes very useful** to help them cycle more
- 80%** of residents **support building more protected roadside cycle lanes**, even when this could mean **less space** for other road traffic

\* Survey conducted May-July 2017.  
\*\* 15.2 million trips in 2015, recalculated using improved 2017 methodology.





# Making progress

Provision and levels of cycling in Edinburgh

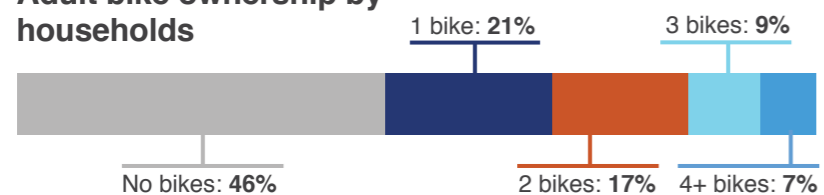
## Bike ownership in Edinburgh

A bike gives people more choice for getting around, helping them to reach jobs and services, and to see family and friends more often.

54% in 2015 In Edinburgh, more than half (54%) of households have access to at least one bike. Over two thirds (69%) of households with children have at least one child's bike.

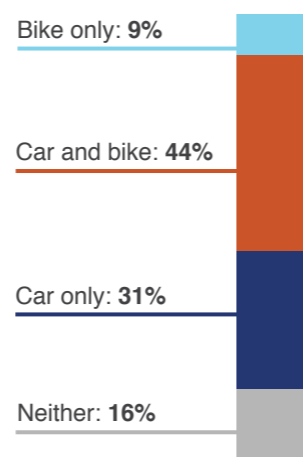
Most households that own a car also own a bike. People use different modes for different journeys.

### Adult bike ownership by households



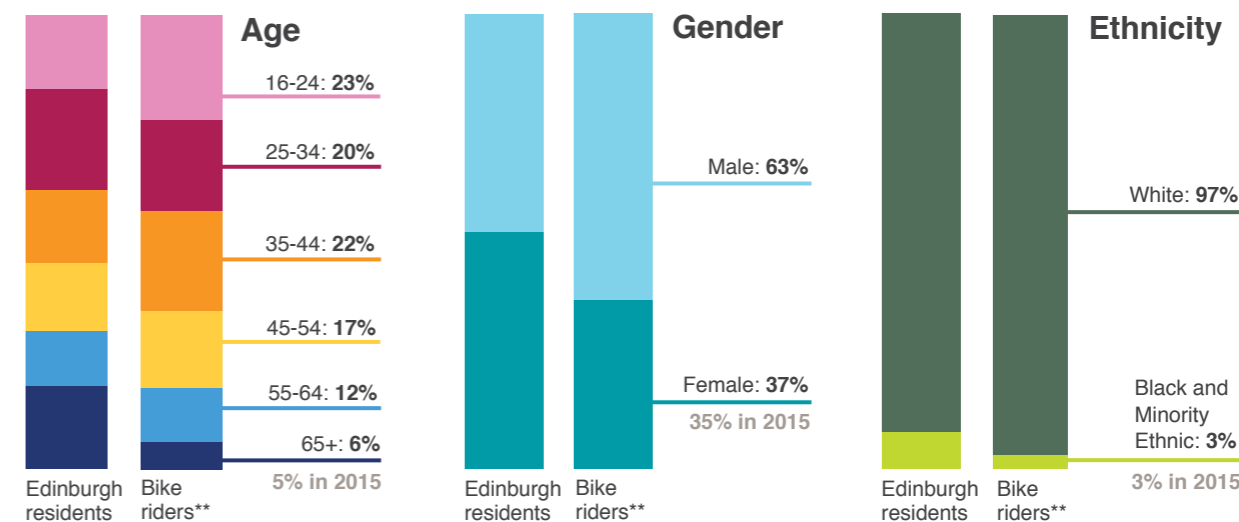
Car and bicycle ownership refers to the percentages of all people living in households that own cars/bikes. Note that census data is normally reported as the percentage of households with given numbers of cars.

### Car and adult bike ownership by households



## Who is cycling?

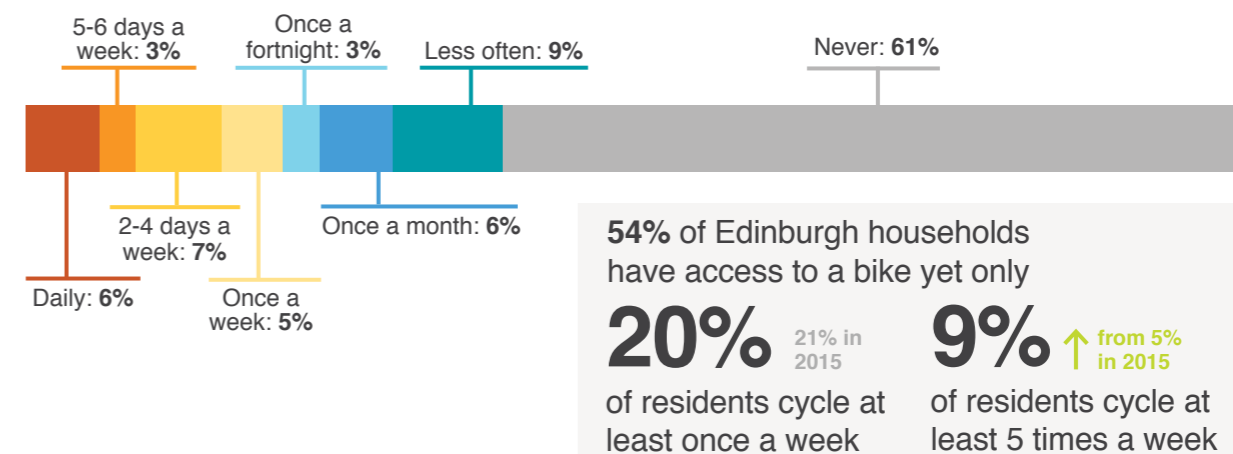
In Edinburgh, black and minority ethnic communities, women and over 65s are under represented when it comes to riding a bike.



For age and gender, the division of Edinburgh residents uses 2015 estimates. For ethnicity, it uses the 2011 census.



## How often are people riding a bike?



## What's available and who's aware?

from 192 miles in 2015 ↑ **204 miles** of cycle routes including

from 123 miles in 2015 ↑ **126 miles** of routes physically separated from vehicles\*

49% in 2015 ↑ **52%** of people are familiar with the traffic-free routes in Edinburgh

45% ↑ from 43% in 2015 of people live within 125 metres of a cycle route

68% ↑ from 33% in 2015 of all streets in Edinburgh have a 20mph speed limit



3,365 ↑ from 2,923 in 2015 public bike parking spaces, equivalent to 35 bike riders per space

461 railway station parking spaces for bikes, equivalent to one parking space for every 80 passengers per day



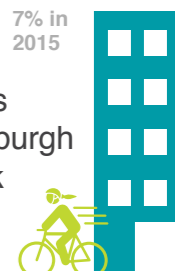
## Where are people cycling?

### Number of trips in the past year



37% of Edinburgh residents' cycle trips are for work or education

7.5% ↑ from 7% in 2015 of commuters living in Edinburgh travel to work by bike



\* Includes protected bike lanes, shared footways and paths away from roads.

\*\* Ridden a bike in the past four weeks when the survey was conducted in May – July 2017. Bike Life Edinburgh 2017



# Developing Bike Life

What's happened in Edinburgh since 2015



The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) has been pioneering in its commitment to active travel and is now leading the way in Scotland for people regularly commuting to work by bike.

Edinburgh's Active Travel Action Plan includes ambitious targets: with **10%** of all residents journeys, and **15%** of journeys to work to be by bike by 2020. Since the first Bike Life report in 2015, the city has taken forward several initiatives that will help achieve these targets and has already seen some significant improvements to cycling provision.

## 20mph - reducing traffic speeds for a people-friendly city

Edinburgh has one of the UK's most ambitious 20mph speed limit programmes, with plans for this limit to apply to **80%** of the city's streets by early 2018. A key aim of the programme is to make Edinburgh feel safer and easier to move around by foot or bike.

## Travel planning

Between 2015 and 2017, CEC engaged with 59 employers (includes multiple employers at Retail Parks during the first year of the programme). This programme offered travel advice, bike maintenance, cycle leader training and travel planning advice for employers and employees alike.

## Street Design Guidance

Edinburgh's new Street Design Guidance puts place making and active travel at the heart of street design, shifting the emphasis away from motorised traffic towards making better places in which to walk, cycle and enjoy.

## Segregated Cycle Lanes

Edinburgh recognises the benefits of investing in high quality bicycle provision physically separated from traffic. The new segregated cycleway on Buccleuch Street and St Leonard's Street, along with a number of cycle crossings along the route, were opened in 2015. They form a key part of Edinburgh's walking and cycling network and the National Cycle Network (NCN).

This link connects routes in the Meadows and the south side of the city centre to the Innocent Railway and on to Duddingston, Brunstane and Musselburgh. It has created a major cycling corridor in the south east of the city without the need for cyclists to dismount or negotiate busy junctions. A previously unwelcoming alleyway was opened up and flanked by two community murals, resulting in a safe and attractive route which has seen a dramatic increase in bicycle use.

Segregated cycle lanes offer real protection from vehicles and, as such, are crucial in encouraging more people to travel by bike.

Further roadside segregated cycle paths are being constructed on a section of Leith Walk and are planned to continue into the city centre.



## School Streets

CEC is dedicated to making our streets safer for children, giving parents peace of mind, and reducing congested school runs through training and enforcement measures. Currently **95%** of all primary schools, **15%** of all secondary schools and **8%** of private schools either have a School Travel Plan (STP) or are working to adopt one.

The award-winning 'School Streets' initiative has brought traffic-free streets to nine Edinburgh primary schools at school opening and closing times.

As a result, two thirds of parents and residents agree that the streets with vehicle restrictions felt safer during operating times.

The project was recognised at the 2017 Scottish Transport Awards, winning the Most Effective Road Safety, Traffic Management and Enforcement Project. It is hoped to be extended to more schools on a case by case basis.





# The impact

The health, economic, and environmental benefits to Edinburgh



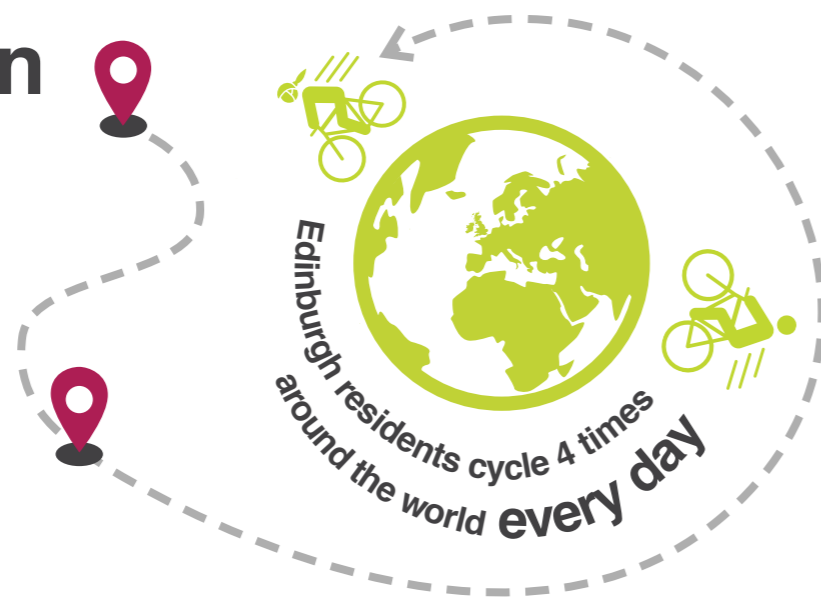
Many people are cycling in Edinburgh

15.2 million in 2015

**15.3 million trips**

made by bike in Edinburgh in the past year which altogether adds up to

**36 million miles**



Benefiting individuals and the local economy

**82p per mile**

net benefit for each mile cycled instead of driven which adds up to

**£16.8 million**

annual benefit to Edinburgh from people with a car choosing to cycle for transport

**£24 million**

benefit to Edinburgh from all trips made by bicycle\*

These figures are based upon monetising the benefits and drawbacks of driving and cycling. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health, congestion, infrastructure, local air quality, noise, greenhouse gases and taxation.



Unlocking significant health benefits in Edinburgh

In Edinburgh, the physical activity benefits of cycling

**prevent 11 early deaths annually\***

valued at

**£35 million\***

based on what people say they would pay to improve their chances of survival, and calculated using the method set by the World Health Organisation.

Cycling also averts **106** serious long term health conditions annually, saving the NHS in Edinburgh

**£731,000 per year**

equivalent to the average salary of

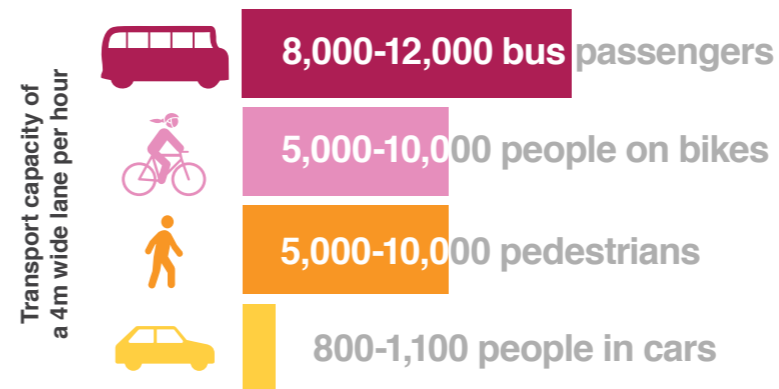
**31 nurses**



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



Keeping your city moving



Studies suggest riding a bicycle rather than driving frees up road space. This helps to keep Edinburgh moving.

Source: Litman, 2017. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

**11,762 return cycle trips** are made daily in Edinburgh by people that could have used a car.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back **35 miles**



If these cars were to be parked they would take up the space of **Princes Street Gardens**.



More people riding bikes has environmental benefits

**6,164 tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions saved annually

equivalent to the carbon footprint of **1,258 people**.

More people riding bikes improves air quality:

**12,320 kg of NOx** and **1,347 kg of particulates** saved annually.

In Edinburgh **205 early adult deaths** occur each year where long-term exposure to air pollution (PM2.5) is deemed to be a contributory factor.



Based upon Public Health England, 2014. Estimating Local Mortality Burdens associated with Particulate Air Pollution. Adults = 25 years+.

\*The value of £24m is made up of £16.8m plus the value of purposeful trips cycled by people without access to a car, plus the value of leisure cycle trips made by everyone.

\* 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.





## Stories from our city

What cycling means to people



**Yaman Tawalkn, Baker and studying Business Administration and Marketing**

I am originally from Syria but now live and work in Edinburgh. I use my bike to get around the city from my home in Fountainbridge to my work on Leith Walk and to my college in Tollcross. For lots of journeys, even shopping, I use my bicycle.

When I arrived in Edinburgh I found a bike on Gumtree, but it was really damaged. I took the bike to a shop to get it fixed, then I phoned a friend, Steven, to ask if he knew someone who could fix a bike cheaply. He told me his friend could fix it or give me a bike for free. After finding me a bike, Steven decided to set up Bikes for Refugees to provide free bikes to refugees, families and those seeking asylum. Refugees have only very limited funds available so having a bike can help people like me access employment and their local community.

If everyone is cycling, it would be better. The atmosphere is dirty from the cars and traffic jams. Cycling is nice and is good for health. I'd like to say to everyone: if you have a short journey, don't use your car!



**Verity Leigh, Festival Programme Manager**

Edinburgh has a very compact city centre, making cycling the most fun and efficient way to get around. We have some really good initiatives in the city, like the network of off-road paths, the 20mph limit and the current work to 'join up' bits of provision to create more of a network.

However, there should be investment in on-road dedicated cycle lanes, protected from motor traffic, that get people to where they want to go directly and efficiently. Cycling has to be the way forward for Edinburgh - it's a city which wasn't designed for cars.

With a change of mindset, which starts with cycling and walking rather than trying to fit them in around motorised transport, more people would be able to choose cycling as their everyday form of transport.

That would make the city less polluted, more people-friendly and a nicer place to visit. I just hope that our politicians have the vision and energy to make that change.



**Matt Kruczynski, Bus Driver for Lothian Buses**

Cycling is getting more and more popular in Edinburgh, especially in terms of commuting, and that's a great sign and huge benefit for the entire city. I myself cycle everyday to work and find it very enjoyable and relaxing. Lothian Buses has been supportive of myself and other cyclists. They are now looking to improve facilities to encourage more staff to cycle to work as they are keen to promote the health benefits of regular exercise.

From my personal experience, both as a cyclist and bus driver, I would love to see more awareness and cooperation on the busiest streets between cyclists and drivers.

On the whole I think that we are lucky in the capital - it's a beautiful place to cycle around. The only challenge can sometimes be that it was built on the side of a volcano, and as a result there are some steep hills!





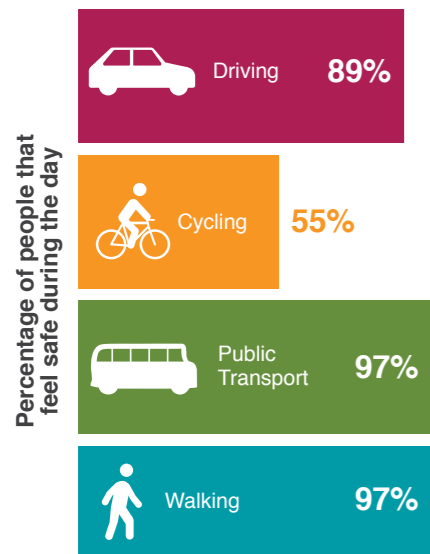
# Barriers and potential

What needs to change to make cycling commonplace



Safety and security continue to be a significant concern

Riding a bike feels less safe than other ways of travelling



A cycling injury occurs once every 166,000 miles pedalled around Edinburgh



Whilst almost half (45%) of people think Edinburgh is a good place to ride a bike overall, when you dig deeper there are clear concerns about safety. ↓ from 52% in 2015

**only 25%**

↓ from 33% in 2015

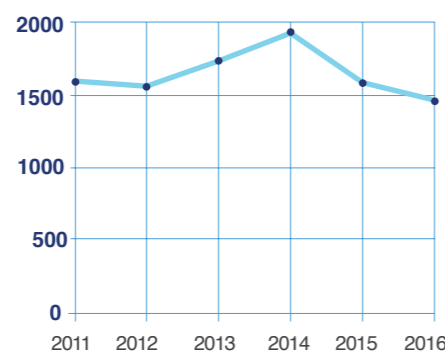
of people think **cycling safety** in Edinburgh is good.

**only 19%**

24% in 2015

think **safety of children's cycling** is good.

## Reported bike thefts



There were **1,450** reported bike thefts in Edinburgh in 2016.

This equates to a **1.2%** chance of a bike rider in Edinburgh having their bicycle stolen in the past year.

**19%** of people think the security of bicycle parking is good. ↓ from 25% in 2015



Tom Forster, Summerhall, Edinburgh

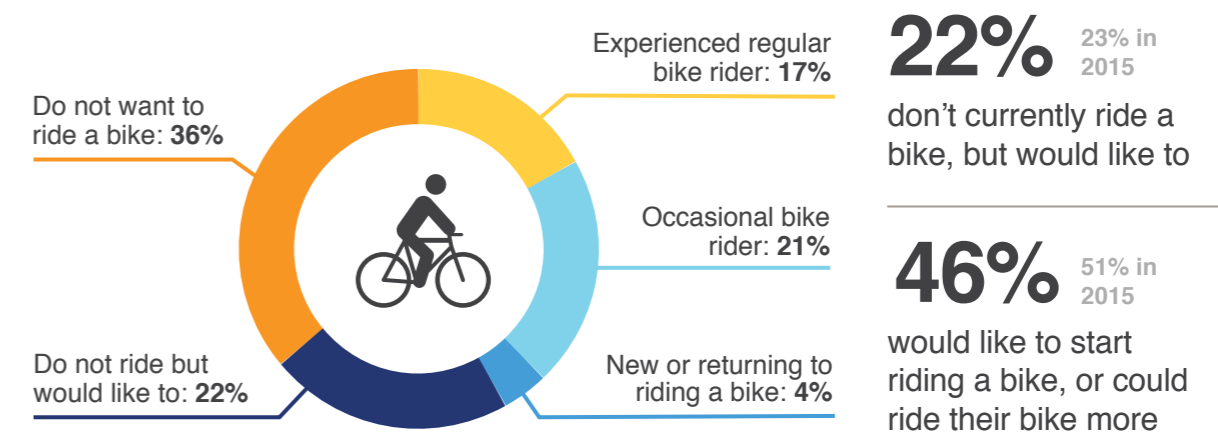
I find cycling OK in Edinburgh. I'm a confident cyclist but I can see how someone less confident would be intimidated by the traffic.

The new Leith Walk cycle route is superb! If more could be done throughout the city like Leith Walk it would be great.

Cycling always seems to be an afterthought, why can't it be integrated into planning? The good thing about Edinburgh is that while there's more to be done, there's a market for it here. Lots of people are cycling.



How do people see themselves when it comes to riding a bike?



**22%** 23% in 2015  
don't currently ride a bike, but would like to

**46%** 51% in 2015  
would like to start riding a bike, or could ride their bike more



Perceptions of cycling are positive

**66%** say they generally think positively about people riding bikes

say things would be better if people in general cycled more **73%** 72% in 2015

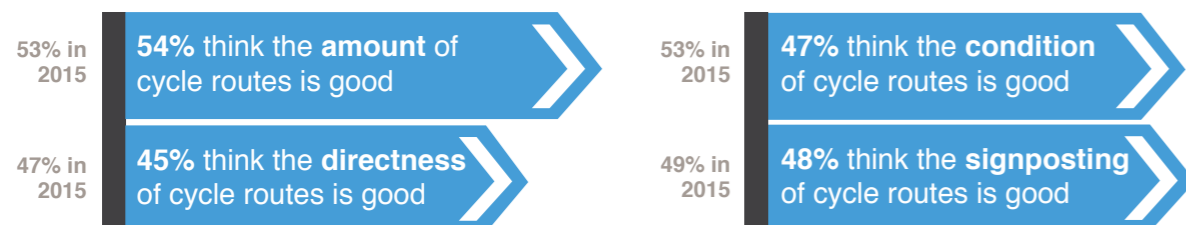
62% in 2015 say Edinburgh would be a better place to live and work if more people cycled **63%**

**56%** say things would be better if their friends and family cycled more 58% in 2015

feel they should ride a bike more **48%** 54% in 2015



How do residents rate Edinburgh's cycle routes?





# What the public want

Investment, safety and dedicated space



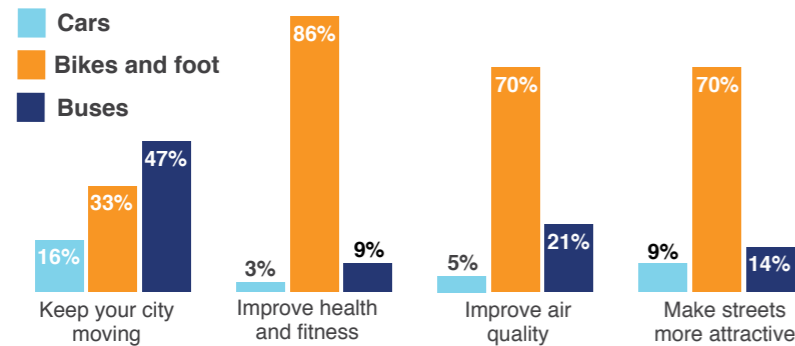
# Bike to the future

Our ambition and plans to make it happen



## Prioritising investment in cycling and walking

Overall, residents in Edinburgh think more space for cycling, walking and public transport, as opposed to additional space for cars, is the best way to keep the city moving, improve people's health, reduce air pollution and make streets more attractive.



**75%** 

of residents would like to see more investment in cycling in Edinburgh

74% in 2015

This includes **63%** of those aged over 65, those least likely to ride a bike

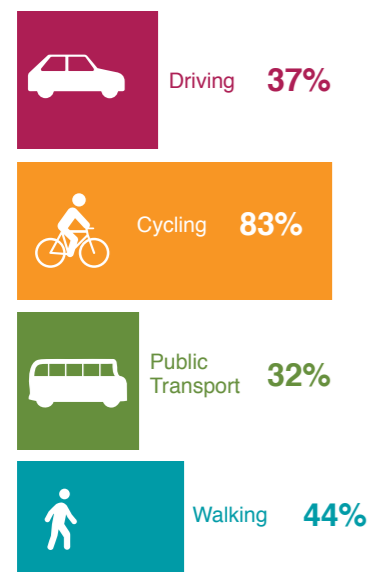
62% in 2015



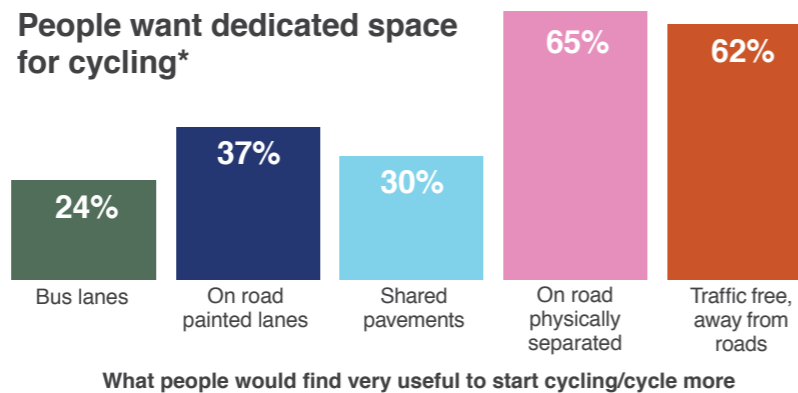
## Improved safety and space for cycling

Residents think cycling safety needs to be improved

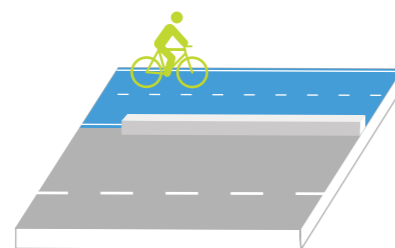
Percentage of people that think safety needs to be improved



People want dedicated space for cycling\*



What people would find very useful to start cycling/cycle more



**80%**

of residents support building more protected cycle lanes, even when this can mean less room for other road traffic

Bike Life Edinburgh shows us that attitudes towards cycling have become even more positive since 2015 and a clear majority of people support more investment and provision for high quality cycling facilities.

Edinburgh's Active Travel Action Plan (ATAP) aims to make work and leisure journeys on foot and by bike as easy, convenient and enjoyable as possible. Through the delivery of this plan, the people of Edinburgh will have access to more, and better, cycle facilities.

## Edinburgh's Active Travel budget

The City of Edinburgh Council has been a pioneer in its commitment to invest in cycling. It is committed to spending 10% of the entire Roads and Transportation budget on cycling over the five years of the current Council administration. Well over a million pounds of investment is secured for various projects that are at design, feasibility and construction stages for 2017/18, with match funding through Sustrans Community Links grant programme.

## Delivering the QuietRoutes network

A key focus of Edinburgh's cycling investment over the next few years will be delivering the QuietRoutes network, an integrated package of off-road paths, quiet streets and segregated on-street cycle tracks. This delivery programme has just received a major boost with the awarding of match funding from

the Scottish Government through Sustrans Scotland's Community Links Plus programme to the 'West Edinburgh Active Travel Network' and 'Meadows to George St' projects. Many upgrades are planned across the city. Three of the key projects are:

### City Centre West to East Link (CCWEL):

This vital connection will be protected from busy traffic and integrated with public realm improvements. It will link large existing sections of the QuietRoutes network in the north and west of the city to many key destinations in the centre.

**Meadows to George Street:** This scheme proposes to transform the quality of cycling, walking and public realm along a series of major streets connecting existing routes south of the city centre into the heart of the city to connect with CCWEL.

**West Edinburgh Active Travel Network:** This project aims to facilitate cycling and walking to, and within, one of Scotland's most significant business parks, to create an exemplar, people-friendly place with high quality active travel links to surrounding communities and destinations.

## Scottish Active Travel budget

In September 2017, the Scottish Government announced a doubling of its active travel budget, with the ambition of helping Scotland become an Active Nation. Through investment in, and support for, active travel, the City of Edinburgh Council aims to be at the heart of making that happen.

\* The equivalent graph in the 2015 report showed 'very useful' and 'fairly useful' responses combined.



## Notes on terminology and methodology:

The attitudinal survey was conducted May to July 2017.

Due to the rounding up or down of individual figures, the percentages on charts may not total 100% exactly.

Survey results have been tested for change between 2015 and 2017. The level of significance has been set at 0.01 but these should be seen to be indicative only, as they have not been corrected for multiple comparisons. Where a survey result is shown as a change from 2015 this was a statistically significant result at this level.

Note that some values published in 2015 have been recalculated using improved methodology in 2017.

Further details are available at [www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife)

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute. Join us on our journey. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

Sustrans is a registered charity in the UK No. 326550 (England and Wales) SCO39263 (Scotland)

© Sustrans October 2017  
© Photos: Tony Marsh/Sustrans, Colin Hattersley/Sustrans



Printed with 100% renewable energy using an alcohol-free process and vegetable-based inks

For further information contact [cycling@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:cycling@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Bike Life Edinburgh has been funded by The Freshfield Foundation and City of Edinburgh Council. The project is co-ordinated by Sustrans.

