# Bristol Walking and Cycling Index 2023

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Bristol City Council

Sustrans

## Foreword

Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling in Bristol

Walking, wheeling and cycling are travel options that simultaneously provide physical health benefits for residents and help deliver a more sustainable present and future for our city. Bristol’s active travel network is a resilient part of our transport system. It keeps people moving through reliable alternatives to driving as we continue to influence behaviour change, improve our air quality and public health, and unlock barriers to inclusive economic growth.

My administration continues working to diversify Bristol’s travel options, helping make active travel methods an easier choice for suitable journeys, while pushing towards the mass transit system that Bristolians deserve. This includes transforming our historic city into a safer space for pedestrians, improving cycle routes and providing the infrastructure that makes walking and cycling safer and more appealing.

The result has been some amazing changes to our city that we can all be proud of. Free active travel offers, new cycle hangars, pedestrianisation of key high streets, and brilliant new segregated cycle paths on key travel routes are all important. Meanwhile, we have opened Bristol’s first new train station in almost a century at Portway Park & Ride, with work underway at Ashley Down and more stations coming across our city. 2023 also saw the reopening of ageing infrastructure including Gaol Ferry Bridge and Redcliffe Bridge, and the start of crucial restoration work on other bridges along the New Cut and beyond.

It’s great to see the impact these changes are having already, but we know there’s still more work to be done. We will continue to develop a city that is well connected, ensuring that we have great quality infrastructure that makes walking and cycling the obvious choice for shorter journeys, and progress towards a mass transit system for Bristol.

**Marvin Rees OBE, Mayor of Bristol.**

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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[[1]](#footnote-2) 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 fifth report from Bristol produced in partnership with Bristol City Council. The data in this report comes from 2023 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent survey of 1,211 residents aged 16 or above in Bristol. 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 Bristol 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](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index). For more data, including 2019 figures where available, see the [Index Data Tool](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/index-data-tool).

Map of the UK and Ireland showing the cities participating in the Walking and Cycling Index: Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Cork Metropolitan Area, Dublin Metropolitan Area, Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Galway Metropolitan Area, Glasgow, Greater Cambridge, Greater Manchester, Inverness, Limerick Metropolitan Area, Liverpool City Region, Perth, Southampton City Region, Stirling, Tower Hamlets, Tyneside and Waterford Metropolitan Area.

### 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.

## Headlines

Bristol

### Population[[2]](#footnote-3)

472,420

### Survey area

Map showing the area covered by the survey with Avonmouth, Blaise Castle, Stoke Park, Clifton Suspension Bridge, Temple Meads, Troopers Hill and Hengrove Park highlighted. The area is approximately 91 square miles.

### 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 Bristol

##### Walking or wheeling

**57%** in 2019

**57%** in 2021

**55%** in 2023

##### Driving[[3]](#footnote-4)

**34%** in 2019

**25%** in 2021

**28%** in 2023

##### Public transport

**11%** in 2019

**6%** in 2021

**8%** in 2023

##### Cycling

**14%** in 2019

**10%** in 2021

**10%** in 2023

Participation in walking, wheeling and cycling on a regular basis has stayed about the same since 2021.

**55%** of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week (**57%** in 2021)

**28%** of residents cycle at least once a week (**28%** 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[[4]](#footnote-5)

**29%** of socio-economic group C2

**60%** of socio-economic group AB

#### Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week[[5]](#footnote-6)

**19%** of women

**38%** of men

### Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

#### Proportion of residents who think walking or wheeling safety is good

**50%** of socio-economic group DE

**62%** of socio-economic group AB

#### Proportion of residents who think cycling safety is good

**43%** of people aged 36–45

**26%** of people aged 56–65

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

**65%** of disabled people

**79%** of non-disabled people

### Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Every day, walking, wheeling and cycling in Bristol take up to **150**,**000** cars off the road[[6]](#footnote-7). Each year in Bristol these three modes combined:

* Prevent **1**,**045** serious long‑term health conditions
* Create **£383**.**3** million in economic benefit for individuals and Bristol
* Save **30**,**000** tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions

### Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more and drive less

**29%** of residents want to drive less, yet **38%** of residents often use a car because no other transport options are available.

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

##### Walk or wheel

**49%** more

**2%** less

##### Cycle

**49%** more

**3%** less

##### Take public transport

**35%** more

**9%** less

##### Drive

**13%** more

**29%** 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:

**64%** on walking and wheeling (**55%** in 2021)

**58%** on cycling (**61%** in 2021)

**83%** on public transport (**74%** in 2021)

**23%** on driving (**23%** in 2021)

### Increased funding would help support more liveable neighbourhoods

#### Among Bristol residents:

**70%** support, while **14%** oppose, more cycle paths along roads, physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

**65%** agree, while **16%** disagree, that increasing space for people socialising, walking, wheeling and cycling on their local high street would improve their local area

**80%** support, while **7%** oppose, the creation of more 20-minute neighbourhoods[[7]](#footnote-8)

**65%** support, while **15%** oppose, banning vehicles parking on the pavement

**66%** support, while **13%** oppose, the creation of more low‑traffic neighbourhoods[[8]](#footnote-9)

**66%** support, while **11%** oppose, shifting investment from road building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

## Walking in Bristol

Walking and wheeling participation, safety and satisfaction

### Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in Bristol 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.

**95%** of all residents walk or wheel (**96%** in 2021)

**55%** of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week (**57%** in 2021)

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

##### Gender[[9]](#footnote-10) and sexuality

**55%** of women (**59%** in 2021)

**57%** of men (**57%** in 2021)

**58%** of LGBTQ+ people

**53%** of non-LGBTQ+ people

##### Ethnicity

**51%** of people from ethnic minority groups (**48%** in 2021)

**56%** of white people (**59%** in 2021)

##### Age

**61%** of people aged **16**–**25** (**57%** in 2021)

**62%** of people aged **26**–**35** (**58%** in 2021)

**54%** of people aged **36**–**45** (**61%** in 2021)

**52%** of people aged **46**–**55** (**61%** in 2021)

**49%** of people aged **56**–**65** (**59%** in 2021)

**49%** of people aged **66**+ (**52%** in 2021)

##### Disability

**47%** of disabled people (**48%** in 2021)

**59%** of non-disabled people (**61%** in 2021)

##### Socio-economic group[[10]](#footnote-11)

**60%** of AB (**65%** in 2021)

**59%** of C1 (**57%** in 2021)

**29%** of C2 (**55%** in 2021)

**50%** of DE (**44%** in 2021)

### Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

**62%** of residents think the level of safety for walking or wheeling is good (**70%** in 2021)

**42%** of residents think the level of safety for children walking or wheeling is good (**48%** in 2021)

**67%** 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

**62%** of women (**69%** in 2021)

**62%** of men (**72%** in 2021)

**68%** of LGBTQ+ people

**61%** of non-LGBTQ+ people

##### Ethnicity

**62%** of people from ethnic minority groups (**77%** in 2021)

**62%** of white people (**70%** in 2021)

##### Age

**63%** of people aged 16–25 (**63%** in 2021)

**65%** of people aged 26–35 (**70%** in 2021)

**63%** of people aged 36–45 (**73%** in 2021)

**62%** of people aged 46–55 (**75%** in 2021)

**51%** of people aged 56–65 (**75%** in 2021)

**57%** of people aged 66+ (**71%** in 2021)

##### Disability

**59%** of disabled people (**59%** in 2021)

**63%** of non-disabled people (**74%** in 2021)

##### Socio-economic group

**62%** of AB (**75%** in 2021)

**67%** of C1 (**69%** in 2021)

**55%** of C2 (**70%** in 2021)

**50%** of DE (**61%** in 2021)

### Quote from Steve, Bristol Walking Alliance and Bristol Sight Loss Council

I savour every opportunity to walk in Bristol’s beautiful parks, usually walking with a sighted guide who helps me navigate the open spaces while describing the natural world to me.

As a visually impaired person it is often a challenge for me to walk around the city independently.

The introduction of e-scooters has created more unexpected obstacles for me to have to negotiate. This could easily be solved by creating clearly marked scooter parking spaces, ideally on the roadway.

## Cycling in Bristol

Cycling participation, safety and satisfaction

### Cycling participation

Overall in Bristol the number of people cycling has stayed about the same since 2021. Despite a much larger potential for cycling, only **28%** of people cycle regularly.[[11]](#footnote-12)

Cycling participation, however, is not equal. Barriers to cycling can be far more pronounced for some people. Safety, including road safety and personal safety, is the single largest barrier to cycling.[[12]](#footnote-13) Perceptions of cycling safety have stayed about the same since 2021.

**47%** of all residents cycle (**49%** in 2021)

**28%** of all residents cycle at least once a week (**28%** in 2021)

#### Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

##### Gender and sexuality

**19%** of women (**21%** in 2021)

**38%** of men (**34%** in 2021)

**26%** of LGBTQ+ people

**30%** of non-LGBTQ+ people

##### Ethnicity

**25%** of people from ethnic minority groups (**14%** in 2021)

**29%** of white people (**30%** in 2021)

##### Age

**18%** of people aged 16–25 (**23%** in 2021)

**34%** of people aged 26–35 (**37%** in 2021)

**41%** of people aged 36–45 (**31%** in 2021)

**35%** of people aged 46–55 (**31%** in 2021)

**29%** of people aged 56–65 (**28%** in 2021)

**10%** of people aged 66+ (**12%** in 2021)

##### Disability

**18%** of disabled people (**15%** in 2021)

**32%** of non-disabled people (**32%** in 2021)

##### Socio-economic group

**39%** of AB (**33%** in 2021)

**24%** of C1 (**26%** in 2021)

**15%** of C2 (**22%** in 2021)

**14%** of DE (**20%** in 2021)

### Cycling safety and satisfaction

**36%** of all residents think the level of safety for cycling in their local area is good (**37%** in 2021)

**27%** of all residents think the level of safety for children cycling is good (**24%** in 2021)

**42%** of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle (**43%** in 2021)

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

##### Gender and sexuality

**35%** of women (**35%** in 2021)

**37%** of men (**40%** in 2021)

**39%** of LGBTQ+ people

**35%** of non-LGBTQ+ people

##### Ethnicity

**48%** of people from ethnic minority groups (**42%** in 2021)

**33%** of white people (**37%** in 2021)

##### Age

**39%** of people aged 16–25 (**38%** in 2021)

**36%** of people aged 26–35 (**36%** in 2021)

**43%** of people aged 36–45 (**42%** in 2021)

**38%** of people aged 46–55 (**38%** in 2021)

**26%** of people aged 56–65 (**40%** in 2021)

**31%** of people aged **66**+ (**31%** in 2021)

##### Disability

**36%** of disabled people (**28%** in 2021)

**36%** of non-disabled people (**41%** in 2021)

##### Socio-economic group

**35%** of AB (**37%** in 2021)

**43%** of C1 (**36%** in 2021)

**24%** of C2 (**32%** in 2021)

**28%** of DE (**45%** in 2021)

### Quote from Alexandra, University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust

I used to cycle a lot when I was younger but after being diagnosed with leukaemia, and numerous complications since, I lost a lot of strength and mobility. I’d been talking about getting an e-bike for years and finally bought one.

My e-bike allows me to make journeys I wouldn’t attempt on a standard bicycle, and I now cycle to work, as well as to visit friends and family.

I enjoy cycling as a way of incorporating exercise into my day, although I do worry about safety and pollution. I wish there was more infrastructure solely dedicated to cycling and walking.

## Benefits of walking

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel

### Bristol residents walk or wheel 22 times around the world every day

There has been an increase in trips by adults to destinations such as schools, workplaces and shopping areas but a decrease in walking and wheeling by children for school.

#### Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose[[13]](#footnote-14)

##### 2023: 192.9 million trips

Destination – adults only (like work, school, shopping): **113**,**000**,**000** or **59%**

School – children only: **10**,**700**,**000** or **6%**

Enjoyment or fitness – adults and children (including running): **69**,**300**,**000** or **36%**

This adds up to **197**.**6** **million** miles = **540**,**000** miles a day

##### 2021: 191.1 million trips

Destination – adults only (like work, school, shopping): **109**,**400**,**000** or **57%**

School – children only: **12**,**900**,**000** or **7%**

Enjoyment or fitness – adults and children (including running): **68**,**800**,**000** or **36%**

This adds up to **195**.**4** **million** miles = **540**,**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.

**50p** is saved[[14]](#footnote-15) for each mile walked or wheeled instead of driven in Bristol (**5p** in 2021)

Over a year this adds up to **£27**.**1** million from adults with a car in their household walking or wheeling to work, school and other destinations **(£2.7 million** in 2021).

The total annual economic benefit from all trips walked and wheeled in Bristol is **£252** **million**[[15]](#footnote-16) (**£202.5 million** in 2021).

### Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

#### Walking in Bristol prevents 726 serious long-term health conditions each year (684 in 2021)

##### Cases prevented

Hip fracture: **278**

Dementia: **207**

Depression: **95**

Coronary heart disease: **77**

Other conditions: **69**

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

Saving the NHS in Bristol £9.3 millionper year(**£4.6 million** in 2021)**,** equivalent to the cost of 230,000 GP appointments (150,000in 2021)

These figures are based on Sport England MOVES tool which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In Bristol the physical activity benefits of walking prevent **188** early deaths annually (**174** in 2021) which is valued at **£681** **million**[[16]](#footnote-17) (**£573** **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:

**36**,**000** **kg** of NOx (**41**,**000** **kg** in 2021)

And

**5**,**200** **kg** of particulates (PM10 and PM2.5) (**5**,**800** **kg** in 2021)

**33%** of residents agree the air is clean in their local area (**30%** in 2021)

#### Walking and wheeling in Bristol helps mitigate our climate crisis

**15**,**000** **tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by walking or wheeling instead of driving (**15**,**000** **tonnes** in 2021), equivalent to the carbon footprint of **36**,**000** people taking flights from Bristol to Tenerife (**35**,**000** people in 2021)

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 Bristol moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.[[17]](#footnote-18) This helps to keep Bristol moving for all road users.

**120**,**000** return walking and wheeling trips are made daily in Bristol by people that could have used a car (**120**,**000** in 2021).

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back **356** **miles** equivalent to the distance from Bristol to Scotland (**346** **miles** in 2021).

## Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle

### Bristol residents cycle 14 times around the world every day

Since 2021 there has been an increase in all types of trips except children cycling to school.

#### Annual cycling trips by purpose in Bristol[[18]](#footnote-19)

##### 2023: 34.1 million trips

Work: **13**,**200**,**000** or **39%**

School, college or university (adults): **2**,**500**,**000** or **7%**

School (children): **1**,**200**,**000** or **4%**

Shopping, personal business and social trips: **11**,**500**,**000** or **34%**

Leisure: **5**,**700**,**000** or **17%**

This adds up to **125**.**2** **million** **miles** = **340**,**000** **miles** a day

##### 2021: 24.5 million trips

Work: **8**,**400**,**000** or **34%**

School, college or university (adults): **1**,**200**,**000** or **5%**

School (children): **1**,**300**,**000** or **5%**

Shopping, personal business and social trips: **9**,**300**,**000** or **38%**

Leisure: **4**,**400**,**000** or **18%**

This adds up to **86**.**3** **million** **miles** = **240**,**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.

**£1**.**44** is saved for each mile cycled instead of driven in Bristol. (**94p** in 2021)

Over a year this adds up to **£78**.**8** **million** from adults with a car in their household cycling to work, school and other destinations. (**£34**.**5** **million** in 2021)

The total annual economic benefit from all trips cycled in Bristol is **£131**.**3** **million**[[19]](#footnote-20) (**£66**.**5** **million** in 2021)

### Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

#### Cycling in Bristol prevents 319 serious long-term health conditions each year (232 in 2021)

##### Cases prevented

Hip fracture: 98

Dementia: 79

Depression: 62

Coronary heart disease: 39

Other conditions: 42

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

Saving the NHS in Bristol £4.4 millionper year (£1.6 millionin 2021), equivalent to the cost of 110,000GP appointments (52,000in 2021)

These figures are based on Sport England MOVES tool which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity.

In Bristol the physical activity benefits of cycling prevent36early deaths annually (23 in 2021) which is valued at £131 million**[[20]](#footnote-21)** (£77.2 millionin 2021)

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

27,000 **kg** of NOx (19,000 **kg** in 2021)

and

4,200 **kg** of particulates(PM10 and PM2.5) (2,900 **kg** in 2021)

33% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area (30%in 2021)

### Cycling in Bristol helps mitigate our climate crisis

**15**,**000** **tonnes** of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) saved annually by cycling instead of driving (**10**,**000** **tonnes** in 2021), equivalent to the carbon footprint of **37**,**000** people taking flights from Bristol to Tenerife (**25**,**000** people in 2021)

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 Bristol moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.[[21]](#footnote-22) This helps to keep Bristol moving for all road users.

**30**,**000** return cycling trips are made daily in Bristol by people that could have used a car. (**20**,**000** in 2021)

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back **90** **miles** equivalent to the distance from Bristol to Birmingham. (**61** **miles** in 2021)

## 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.[[22]](#footnote-23)

**63%** of Bristol households are in neighbourhoods of more than 40 homes per hectare (**62%** in 2021). These are or can become 20-minute neighbourhoods.

These higher-density neighbourhoods with more people can sustain local businesses and public transport routes.[[23]](#footnote-24)

**60%** agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive (**63%** in 2021)

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

**77%** More shops and everyday services, such as banks and post offices, close to your home (**78%** in 2021)

**72%** More government services, such as doctors surgeries and schools, close to your home (**70%** in 2021)

**82%** More parks or green spaces close to your home (**82%** in 2021)

**78%** More things to see and do close to your home, like cafés or entertainment venues (**79%** 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).

Food shop **82%**

Park or space for recreation **97%**

Doctors surgery **31%**

Primary school **61%**

Library **21%**

Post Office **34%**

A mix of cultural and leisure venues[[24]](#footnote-25) **89%**

Railway station (within 800m) **27%**

Bus stop **99%**

### 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?

**71%** Wider pavements (**69%** in 2021)

**71%** More frequent road crossings, with reduced wait times (**70%** in 2021)

**74%** Nicer places along streets to stop and rest, like more benches, trees and shelters (**78%** in 2021)

**72%** Better pavement accessibility, like level surfaces, dropped kerbs at crossing points (**67%** in 2021)

**69%** Fewer cars parked on the pavement (**66%** in 2021)

**62%** Less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in their area (**64%** in 2021)

#### In Bristol:

**62%** of A and B roads have a pavement width greater than 3m if unobstructed[[25]](#footnote-26)

**65%** of C and unclassified roads have a pavement width greater than 2m if unobstructed

**76%** of residents agree more measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour on the street or in public spaces would improve their local area (**75%** in 2021)

### Quote from Sophia, Bristol Steppin Sistas

Walking is my main way of getting around unless I’m working, then I take the bus and walk. You don’t miss things when you walk.

I started Bristol Steppin Sistas during lockdown to see how many people I could get out enjoying the benefits of walking.

25 people came to the first one around the harbourside, and now we walk four times a month and have more than 1,600 members online.

One woman from the inner city who suffered from insomnia slept properly for the first time in seven years after just two walks with us in the countryside.

As women of colour, we can share life experiences without being judged. We can open out about personal feelings in a safe space.

## Cycling solutions

What would make cycling better?

### Many Bristol residents want to cycle

#### How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

Regularly cycle: **20%** (**21%** in 2021)

Occasionally cycle: **19%** (**19%** in 2021)

New or returning to cycling: **5%** (**6%** in 2021)

Do not cycle but would like to: **23%** (**26%** in 2021)

Do not cycle and do not want to: **33%** (**28%** in 2021)

#### What proportion of residents said they ‘do not cycle but would like to’?

**26%** of women (**28%** in **2021**)

**33%** of people from ethnic minority groups (**45%** in 2021)

**21%** of disabled people (**27%** in 2021)

### Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

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

**74%** More traffic‑free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways (**75%** in 2021)

**75%** More cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians (**75%** in 2021)

**70%** More signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets (**72%** in 2021)

**72%** Better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations (**67%** in 2021)

There are **660** cycle parking spaces across all **12** railway stations (**584** in 2021) and **0** cycle parking spaces at the bus station in Bristol (**0** in 2021)

#### Bristol has:[[26]](#footnote-27)

**51** **miles** of traffic‑free cycle paths away from the road

**2** **miles** of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

**16%** of households within 125m of traffic-free or physically separated paths

**10** **miles** of shared use footway

**70%** of residents support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic (**68%** in 2021)

### Residents want more support to cycle

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

**38%** Cycling training courses and organised social rides (**39%** in 2021)

**47%** Access or improvements to a city cycle hire scheme (**47%** in 2021)

**57%** Access to secure cycle storage at or near home (**56%** in 2021)

**51%** Access to a bicycle (**49%** in 2021)

**45%** Access to an electric cycle (**42%** in 2021)

**35%** Access to a cargo cycle with space to carry children or shopping (**28%** in 2021)

**22%** Access to an adapted cycle, like a tricycle or handcycle (**16%** in 2021)

#### Public cycle parking

There is a public cycle parking space for every **27** people who cycle in Bristol. (**27** in 2021)

#### Reported cycle thefts

There were **1**,**468** reported cycle thefts in Bristol in 2022/23. (**1**,**536** in 2021/2022)

For every **167** people who own an adult cycle in Bristol, there was **1** reported cycle theft in the past year.

#### Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle

**63%** of residents (**65%** in 2021)

**37%** of socio-economic group DE (**50%** in 2021)

**74%** of socio-economic group AB (**75%** in 2021)

**67%** of residents support financial discounts for people on low incomes or not in employment to help them buy a cycle

**58%** of households are within 800m of a cycle shop[[27]](#footnote-28)

### Quote from Nicholas, Life Cycle Volunteer, Two’s Company Tandem Rides

In 2005 our car needed changing but we decided not to, so I started cycling to work and using a car club when needed. I had cycled when younger but not for decades.

Initially the motivation was mostly financial. I guessed I was saving £150 per month in travel costs and lost a stone and a half in weight.

After seeing flyers for Two’s Company in my local bike shop, I decided to apply.

Cycling had done me a lot of good and I wanted to share the love.

As a front rider on a tandem, I’ve enjoyed cycling with people who wouldn’t usually be able to ride solo, including visually impaired people, autistic people, and people with impaired balance.

## 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

**75%** of residents (**72%** in 2021)

**79%** of people from ethnic minority groups (**73%** in 2021)

**74%** of white people (**73%** in 2021)

**73%** of women (**70%** in 2021)

**76%** of men (**76%** in 2021)

**71%** of LGBTQ+ people

**75%** of non-LGBTQ+ people

**65%** of disabled people (**58%** in 2021)

**79%** of non-disabled people (**78%** in 2021)

**64%** of socio-economic group DE (**60%** in 2021)

**79%** of socio-economic group AB (**80%** in 2021)

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

Only **22%** of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles. (**19%** in 2021)

#### Residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:

**66%** Walk or wheel more (**68%** in 2021)

**66%** Cycle more (**67%** in 2021)

Unclassified roads are not designed to carry through-traffic, but in Bristol **32%** of their total length has nothing to prevent it (**31%** in 2021). This can result in rat-running.[[28]](#footnote-29)

**53%** agree that restricting through-traffic on local residential streets would make their area a better place. (**50%** in 2021)

**80%** of Bristol’s streets have 20mph speed limits.[[29]](#footnote-30) (**80%** in 2021)

#### Residents would find more streets with 20mph speed limits useful to:

**52%** Walk or wheel more (**50%** in 2021)

**52%** Cycle more (**53%** in 2021)

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

**65%** agree increasing space for people socialising, walking, wheeling and cycling on their local high street would improve their local area (**65%** in 2021)

**47%** agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello (**52%** in 2021)

**66%** support low‑traffic neighbourhoods (**66%** in 2021)

### Quote from Jenny, Principal, Minerva Primary Academy

Historically our school served mostly families on the local estate but as our catchment has grown so has the volume of car traffic.

People rushing to do the school run and get to work on time were driving up on to the pavements outside school, zig zags and speed restrictions ignored, and residents were becoming increasingly frustrated with blocked driveways.

Despite endless support from our local Police Community Support Officers there was a growing feeling that something had to be done. School Streets was the solution.

We have worked together to overcome challenges that include changing the street to one way and we now see people arriving smiling and chatting, enjoying a ‘good morning’ nod with school staff.

Our school community has been incredibly supportive and value the opportunity to safely walk, cycle or scoot to school.

### 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.

**12** **years old** average age when people living with children would let them walk, wheel or cycle independently in their neighbourhood. (**11** **years old** in 2021)

**80%** of seven-year-olds in Germany are allowed to go alone to places within walking distance, other than school.[[30]](#footnote-31)

**49%** of residents agree there is space for children to socialise and play (**56%** in 2021)

**55%** of households are within 400m of a children’s playground

Among Bristol residents:

**48%** agree, while **21%** disagree, closing streets outside local schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times would improve their local area (**42%** agreed, while **24%** disagreed in 2021)

These are known as ‘School Streets’.

**7** **schools** in Bristol have School Streets schemes[[31]](#footnote-32) (**0** schemes in 2021)

## Developing Bristol

Recent walking, wheeling, cycling and neighbourhood changes

Bristol’s first Liveable Neighbourhood pilot is being developed in east Bristol, with the aim of making local communities safer and healthier by working alongside people who live, work, study and travel in the area to design more people-friendly streets. The scheme will be trialled in Barton Hill and parts of Redfield and St George with measures to reduce through-traffic on residential streets, encouraging people to walk, wheel, and cycle more. A second Liveable Neighbourhood pilot is also being developed for south Bristol and, like the east Bristol project, it will take a co-design approach. This approach aims to increase ownership and buy-in from local residents and organisations by engaging them at every stage of the design process, from the co-discover phase (identifying the challenges and opportunities in an area) through to the co-design of measures.

Pedestrianisation schemes are another way that Bristol is looking to improve and repurpose streets to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling and create ‘spill out space’ for local businesses. Cotham Hill and Princess Victoria Street were both pedestrianised during the Covid-19 pandemic and, with local support, are being made permanent. The schemes have transformed streets that were dominated by traffic and parking into places that are accessible, attractive and more vibrant. These examples are important local case studies highlighting what can be achieved through road space reallocation and will serve as examples to other local high streets in the city.

Other significant walking and cycling improvements include Castle Street and Bristol Bridge junctions, a series of new School Streets projects, developer schemes, such as Counterslip, and the refurbishment of critical infrastructure through the New Cut bridge repair programme and restoration of Gaol Ferry Bridge.

### Bristol cycle hangars

Thirty-one cycle hangars were installed on council-owned land next to tower blocks to provide safe, secure storage for cycles at 21 sites across Bristol.

#### Quote from Antonio, resident:

I’ve lived here for nine years and never bought a bike because I didn’t have anywhere to store one. My flat is small, especially now that I have two young kids as well.

As soon as I got my keys to the hangar it only took me a week or so before I went out and bought a bike.

Having the hangar has had a massive impact on me as I can now cycle to work in Cabot Circus every day.

The best thing about cycling is that you don’t have to queue. Congestion is unbearable in the city centre, the bus takes too long, and walking takes a lot longer too.

I used to spend 40 minutes a day walking to work and back, which is 40 minutes of my day that I’m not spending with my family. With a bike it’s roughly 20 minutes. I know it’s only 20 minutes difference, but over the week that’s 100 minutes that I can spend with my family instead.

### Go Jauntly Bristol app

Bristol City Council’s sustainable travel team worked with Go Jauntly to successfully enhance and launch their app in Bristol. It features more than 90 local walks that raise awareness of local nature spots, historic points of interest and green routes across the city. The app aims to help improve the health and wellbeing of residents through the promotion of local historic, green and cultural assets. The enhanced tranquil route function (journey planner) uses metrics, including tree cover, traffic, pollution and satellite data, to reduce exposure to pollution and noise while increasing exposure to green and blue space. Alongside the team from Go Jauntly and Tranquil City, the council won the John Connell Local Authority Award which recognises innovative services, campaigns, products and programmes that are examples of community co-operation, education and creative solutions to solve noise pollution problems and improve soundscapes.

## Looking forward

Better streets and places for everyone

Bristol City Council is developing plans to improve several key active travel routes set out in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This includes Concorde Way, Filwood Quietway, Malago Greenway, Old Market Quietway, Deanery Road and Portway.

As outlined in the draft City Centre Development and Delivery Plan, the city centre will be reconfigured to improve safety and accessibility, support sustainable patterns of travel and reduce the impact of vehicles on the public realm. This includes creating more pedestrian priority spaces on streets, improving cycle infrastructure and reducing the severance created by busy roads.

Working with the West of England Combined Authority, Bristol will be trialling mobility hubs. The trial will bring together established forms of transport with new ones, such as e-scooters, e-cargo bikes, and demand responsive bus services. By bringing different transport services together at these one-stop hubs, it will be easier for people to switch between different forms of transport. This will improve connections and make journeys easier while at the same time provide an opportunity to improve public spaces in a way which meets local community and business needs.

Across the region, allocated funding will go towards installing cycle hangars in local neighbourhoods in Bristol. The project aims to provide secure storage units on residential streets to allow people to safely store their cycles. It follows the installation of 31 cycle hangars at social housing sites across the city, a project that encourages more residents to access the health benefits from cycling.

### Councillor Don Alexander, Cabinet Member for Transport

We all have a part to play in getting clean air for Bristol. Our e-cargo cycle trial aims to raise awareness of e-cargo cycles and make a positive impact across the city by helping to reduce pollution caused by motor traffic, improve the city’s air quality, and cut congestion.

The trial encourages local businesses and organisations to reduce their carbon footprint by shifting to more sustainable delivery methods.

It is open to a wide variety of people, including sole traders, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), charities and voluntary sector organisations operating within Bristol’s boundaries.

You can trial an e-cargo cycle for up to three months to decide if they are the right fit for your unique business needs.

The council takes care of all the logistics, including providing accessories, maintenance, and two hours of free training.

### Quote from Simon, Managing Director, Zedify Bristol

There’s still a misconception that cycles and delivery trikes can’t deliver the same volume of parcels that vans traditionally have.

Vans have a larger carrying capacity, but cycles and trikes have speed and efficiency, beating the traffic, and can deliver direct to the doorstep rather than wasting time trying to find a parking space.

We do have an electric van as part of our fleet, but 95% of our deliveries are pedal powered using 17 electric cargo cycles and trikes.

We’re partnered with a large national logistics company, and on any given day we have 10 riders out covering 12 delivery rounds in the central Bristol Clean Air Zone, delivering between 850 and 1,400 parcels a day.

In the past those deliveries would have been made by cars or vans, so we’re removing those polluting vehicles from the streets of Bristol.

We have proved that using cycles and trikes is a credible alternative to a van delivery service, and they have the benefit of zero tailpipe emissions.

We’ve got to get larger and more polluting vehicles off our streets.

I would love to see more consolidation of delivery and we’re keen to open more micro hubs around Bristol, helping create a less congested, less polluted, and more liveable city.

## 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 Bristol 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](https://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](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/)

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1. City is used as a shorthand for Walking and Cycling Index cities, city regions, metropolitan areas and boroughs. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. NOMIS mid-year 2019 population estimates. This is the most recent available for Bristol. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle. In 2019, questions did not include traveling by motorcycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. See definition in Walking solutions. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. For definition see [Methodology document](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/walking-cycling-index). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Based on people who cycle at least once a week. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. See Bike Life 2019 Bristol report. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Trips for enjoyment or fitness include adults and children (with and without adult accompaniment). School trips are shown separately for children only. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Benefits have increased significantly, mainly because of increased costs of driving and greater traffic congestion. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. This includes trips walked or wheeled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. This includes trips cycled for enjoyment or fitness, and trips to destinations by people with and without a car. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Asher et al, 2012. Most older pedestrians are unable to cross the road in time: a cross-sectional study. Age and Ageing. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Sustrans, 2017. Linking Active Travel and Public Transport to Housing Growth and Planning. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. A minimum of three distinct types of cultural and leisure venues, like cafés, pubs, bingo halls, cinemas, museums. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. To ensure comparability, these figures are correct as of 31 May 2023 for all city reports. Classifications have been tightened up since 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Credit to the Association of Cycle Traders (ACT) for their assistance with cycle shop locations and services offered. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Based on analysis by CycleStreets [www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org](https://www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org/). Unclassified roads are all public roads that are neither motorways, A, B nor C roads. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. Excludes motorways. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. Children’s Independent Mobility: an international comparison and recommendations for action, 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. Figure given is correct as of 31 May 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)