Merton Cycle Campaign

Cycle Survey 2002

FINAL REPORT

Prepared for the Merton Cycling Campaign.

Copies of this document can be downloaded from the website below.

BNR Consulting, 23 January 2003

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Executive Summary

The Study

The Merton Cycling Campaign (MCC) were keen to establish the issues that deter people from cycling in the local area and in particular what cyclists see as the dangers/hazards associated with travel by bicycle in Merton. The MCC commissioned BNR Consulting to assist them in undertaking this study.

10,000 self-completion questionnaires were distributed at various locations within the Merton area. A response rate of 9% has been achieved resulting in a sample comprising of a mix of regular cyclists, irregular cyclists and non-cyclists. 8 out of 10 respondents owned bicycles and consider themselves cyclists. The majority of the cyclists that responded to the survey were regular cyclists, nearly 67% of them cycled more than once per week. Around 10% of cyclists stated that they hardly ever used their bicycles, while about a quarter fell between these two groups. Just over 16% of cyclists were members of the London Cycling Campaign, this proportion fell to 14.6% for the sample as a whole.

Results

The main factors that discouraged cycling by non-cyclists were safety related. Just under 43% of respondents' choices concerned safety, or the speed of other road traffic. There is clearly a perception among non-cyclists that cycling in Merton is dangerous. The next most frequently chosen issue was a lack of provision for cyclists in terms of roadspace, parking etc. This was followed by comfort factors such as the amount of effort required to propel the bicycle, the impact of the weather (the possibility of getting wet and/or having to struggle against the wind) and the need to breath in excessive quantities of pollutants. Cycling to work also appeared to be hindered by employers that insist on rigid dress codes and that fail to make provision for cyclists by, for example providing secure cycle parking, showers and changing facilities for employees.

Nearly 67% of respondents were aware of the London Cycle Network; awareness of free cycling maps and of the London Cycling Campaign was lower: just under 50% of respondents knew of these.

Respondents were asked whether they would support a 20 mph limit in residential areas, in shopping streets and outside schools. Nearly 80% of the sample supported the implementation of such a limit.

Cyclists were asked why they chose to cycle. The main three reasons are (in order) health, for fun/leisure and for convenience. There appear to be two forms of motivation for cycling. Convenience, economy, journey time and lack of a car or public transport all reflect a basic need to cycle as a form of transport . The other factors (health, environment, and fun/leisure) represent additional benefits to the cyclists and to society in general.

Cyclists were asked about the purposes of their trips. The most frequently mentioned trips were shopping, followed by journeys to work and visits to friends. 10.5% of comments related to cycling while on holiday. Only 3.5% of responses concerned trips to school and college by bicycle and several comments were made about the difficulties associated with such trips. This suggests that there may be scope for increasing educational trips in Merton by bicycle.

Cyclists were asked how they chose their routes. The predominant factors in the selection of routes are pleasantness and safety, accounting for over 60% of responses. The next two most important factors are speed and distance. The existence of a route on a cycle map seemed to have only a limited impact on decision making.

Just under 40% of the cyclists that responded to the questionnaire stated that they used the London Cycle Network (LCN) and nearly 35% stated that they did not. Interestingly 26.8% of cyclists did not know whether they used the LCN or not.

Just over 35% of the Merton cyclists sampled did not use any other mode in combination with cycling. As expected rail is the most popular mode to combine with cycling and together with the underground this accounts for over 50% of the multimodal combinations recorded. Car is the third most popular mode and it would appear that, in this scenario, the bicycle is used at non-home trip ends for leisure purposes. A number of comments were made to the effect that the integration between rail and cycling is worse than it need be.

Cyclists were asked to rank a series of possible improvements to cycle routes. The most popular options were the expansion and upgrading of the cycle network (more cycle lanes, segregated lanes, improved existing lanes). The next most important issues relate to the behaviour of other road users: lower speed limits and the enforcement of existing traffic regulations. The final group of features concerned further enhancements to cycle routes. This includes, better cycle signposting, signalled cycle crossings and advance stop lines. Traffic calming was considered the least important of the options and from information elsewhere in the survey it appears that the design of some traffic calming schemes can, have unintended consequences and, actually make life more difficult for cyclists.

Three road junctions in the borough were highlighted as particularly dangerous. The one most frequently mentioned was that outside Wimbledon Station (Wimbledon Hill Road/Wimbledon Bridge/Alexandra Road). The second was that by South Wimbledon Tube Station and the third the roundabouts by the Savacentre.

In an attempt to investigate ways of increasing cycle use, cyclists were asked to outline the factors which discouraged them from cycling. Bad weather was the most important factor - which is unfortunate as nothing can be done to change this. Fast traffic and safety were the next two issues, again illustrating the conflict between cyclists and other road users. The next most common group of issues related to the lack of provision for cyclists (for example: cycle friendly routes, security and parking).

Just over a quarter of the cyclists had experienced theft or vandalism of their cycles. Although not everyone had experienced cycle crime, this was clearly an issue that deterred cycling.

Around 25% of the cyclists interviewed reported having had some form of cycle accident in the last three years in Merton. The most commonly mentioned form of accident was being hit by a motor vehicle, closely followed by accidents caused by poor road surfaces. The third most common accident was caused by drivers or passengers opening car doors in front of cyclists. Collisions with other cyclists and pedestrians were less commonly reported.

Cyclists were asked about the problems that they often encountered while cycling in Merton. The two most common problems were cars obstructing cycle lanes and fast or heavy traffic overtaking too close. The next two issues were vehicles turning across the cyclists path and poor quality road surfaces. The fifth most common difficulty were problematic junctions. These findings point to a conflict between cyclists and other road users, as well as deficiencies in maintenance and the enforcement of traffic regulations.

There would appear to be a troublesome minority of cyclists who are creating a hazard for all other road users, including other cyclists and pedestrians. To some extent this apparent anti-social behaviour may be a response by cyclists to road designs that take little/no account of their needs. They may feel that they have to break traffic regulations for self-preservation in heavy/dangerous traffic or, for example, to short cut the long detours caused by one-way systems. It may be worth investigating areas where there are persistent violations by cyclists to see if this is the case. It may also be necessary to improve cycle training and in some cases to more effectively enforce road traffic regulations to this minority.

Conclusions.

The Merton Cycling Survey has provided a useful insight into the issues that deter people from cycling in the area and what cyclists see as the dangers/hazards associated with travel by bicycle in Merton. Many of the findings are in line with the results of earlier research on cycling and some important local issues have emerged.

A perceived lack of safety, when cycling, has emerged a central factor in deterring both non-cyclists from taking up cycling and in reducing the mileage of those that already use this form of transport. It is of particular importance to ensure that any cycle routes are well maintained and policed to prevent abuse. A cycle lane blocked by parked cars and littered with debris represents a waste of resources.

A lack of provision for cyclists also appears to be suppressing the demand for cycling. At the workplace employers often insist on rigid dress codes and fail to provide facilities such as: secure cycle parking, showers and changing facilities. Local businesses and transport undertakings currently appear to be more focused on customers that arrive by other modes of transport and may be able to generate more custom by increasing facilities for cyclists - sometimes even at the expense of car parking spaces.

Interestingly, even among the non-cyclists that were interviewed, there is strong support for a reduction in speed limits in residential areas, shopping streets and schools - with particular emphasis on the latter. A 20 mph limit near schools may help to increase the low proportion of journeys to school that are currently made by bicycle.

The survey revealed two types of cyclists within the borough. Some use the bicycle as a form of transport; while others use it predominantly for leisure. One way of increasing cycling would be to encourage these occasional pleasure cyclists to make more use of their bicycles as a form of transport. To achieve such a transition it is likely that the perceived level of safety associated with cycling in Merton has to be significantly increased.

Three road junctions in the borough were highlighted as particularly dangerous. The one most frequently mentioned was that outside Wimbledon Station (Wimbledon Hill

Road/Wimbledon Bridge/Alexandra Road). The second was that by South Wimbledon Tube Station and the third the roundabouts by the Savacentre. One way to increase the perceived level of safety would be to investigate the problems encountered by cyclists at these locations and to see if some appropriate modifications could be made.

Contents

1 Introduction

The development of cycling, particularly in urban areas, presents an opportunity to reduce the pressure on other (less sustainable) modes of transport that are no longer able to cope with the increasing demands being put upon them. Cycling's potential can be seen from comparisons with neighbouring European countries. The UK National Cycling Strategy notes that "Cycling accounts for less than 2% of trips in the UK, compared to 10% in Sweden, 11% in Germany, 15% in Switzerland and 18% in Denmark." Although there are differences between the UK and these of states, there is no reason to believe that a significant increase in cycling is an impossible dream - there are already sixteen districts in the UK where more than 10% of journeys to work are made by bicycle (Cycling in Great Britain, 1996).

The Merton Cycling Campaign (MCC) were keen to establish the issues that deter people from cycling in the local area and in particular what cyclists see as the dangers/hazards associated with travel by bicycle in Merton. The MCC commissioned BNR Consulting to assist them in undertaking this study. The design of the survey and the data collection was undertaken by the MCC; while BNR Consulting undertook the data entry, analysis and reporting.

2 Approach

Approximately 10,000 self-completion questionnaires were distributed at various locations within the Merton area. Freepost arrangements were made for respondents' to post back their questionnaires and a prize draw has been used to further encourage response. The questionnaire was predominantly distributed, at fitness centres, medical centres, shops and cycle orientated venues. A response rate of approximately 10% has been achieved resulting in a sample comprising of a mix of regular cyclists, irregular cyclists and non-cyclists.

The responses from the questionnaires were analysed using standard statistical and spreadsheet software. Initial analysis focused on the response to each question. More detailed analysis was then conducted to see if there is a difference between the attitudes of frequent and infrequent cyclists, enabling an investigation of policies that may encourage infrequent users to make more use of the mode.

3 Results

3.1 Sample Characteristics

The following graphs and tables show the characteristics of the respondents in the survey. The latest figures available from the 2001 Census for Merton are presented alongside to give an indication of the representatives of the sample. In a survey such as this with only limited resources it would be impossible to obtain a perfectly representative sample. Nevertheless the balance between males and females in the sample reflects well the balance in Merton.

Table 3.1. Age Categories of Respondents.

Age	Survey Frequency	Survey %	2001 Census %
Under 15	25	2.9	18.4%
15-19	45	5.1	5.1%
20-24	31	3.5	6.7%
25-29	99	11.3	10.1%
30-34	130	14.9	10.0%
35-39	111	12.7	9.3%
40-44	118	13.5	7.0%
45-49	113	12.9	6.2%
50-54	77	8.8	6.0%
55-59	66	7.5	4.4%
60-64	23	2.6	3.9%
65-69	13	1.5	3.5%
70-74	15	1.7	3.1%
75-79	4	.5	2.7%
80-84	3	.3	1.9%
85-90	1	.1	1.1%
90+	1	.1	0.6%
Total	875	100.0	100.0%

The sample obviously under-represents the very young because of the problems of interviewing young children, although their travel behaviour is determined by those responsible for them. Efforts were made to obtain responses from school age children and the sample therefore appears to be a reasonable representation of the population in terms of age and sex.

Table 3.2. Sex of Respondents

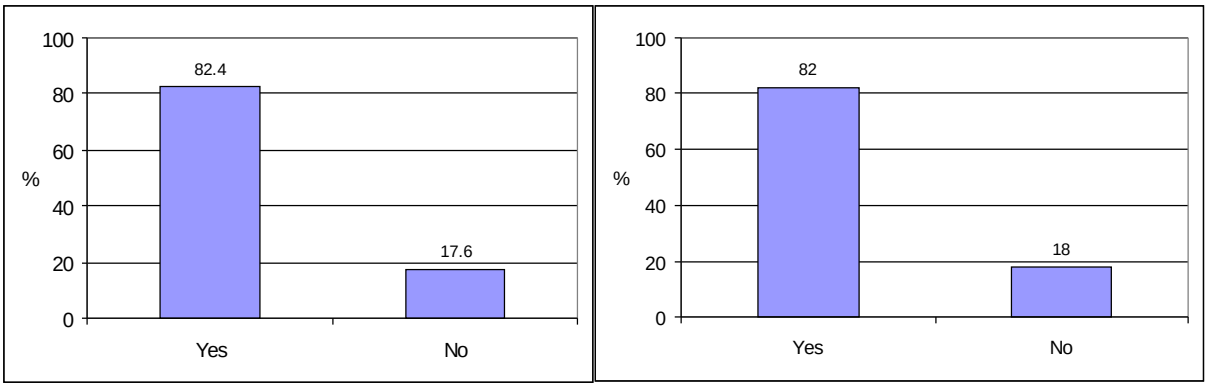
Sex	Survey Frequency	Survey %	2001 Census %
Female	440	50.0	51.3
Male	441	50.0	48.7
Total	881	100.0	100.0

3.2 Cycle Ownership and Use

The histograms below show that approximately 80% of the sample own bicycles and consider themselves cyclists. There is a slight difference between the two figures, as some cyclists mentioned that they were borrowing cycles; while other respondents owned cycles that were no longer in use.

In the London Area Transport Survey for 1991, only 22% of the population aged 5 and over had used a bicycle in the last year. This finding suggests that the Merton Cycle Survey (MCS) contains a significantly higher proportion of cyclists, than the population of Merton as a whole. This high proportion was expected and both the questionnaire and the analysis take account of it. Cyclists and non-cyclists have largely responded to different sets of questions which are reported separately. Where both groups have answered the same questions, the impact of any sample bias is considered in the reporting of each question.

Figure 3.1 (Left) Do You Own A Bike? Figure 3.2 (Right) Do You Ride A Bike?



3.3 Deterrence to Cycling (non-cyclists)

The main factors that discouraged cycling by non-cyclists were safety related. Just under 43% of respondents' choices concerned safety, or the speed of other road traffic. There is clearly a perception among non-cyclists that cycling in Merton is dangerous. Numerous comments were made concerning safety: "*I would cycle, but I think it's far too dangerous on the busy roads and consequently don't enjoy it at all*", "*You feel you are at real risk on a bike", "If it were less dangerous I'd cycle daily*", "*Cycling through Merton is really dangerous. Martin Way is like a death trap in the traffic, the road is wide enough for a cycle lane*".

The next most frequently chosen issue was a lack of provision for cyclists in terms of roadspace, parking etc. This was followed by comfort factors such as the amount of effort required to propel the bicycle, the impact of the weather (the possibility of getting wet and/or having to struggle against the wind) and the need to breath in excessive quantities of pollutants. Just over 7% of comments concerned the risk of cycle theft as a deterrent. A small number of comments (5%) related to respondents' inability to cycle, either due to medical conditions or because the person had never learnt.

Less than 1% of comments related to image problems associated with cycling. The few comments of this type that were made, came predominantly from teenagers. There may be an image problem amongst some sectors of the community, for example one respondent said "*I would like to see cycling regarded as a mainstream activity, rather than just the preserve of lycra clad enthusiasts.*"; but it is unlikely that people would admit to this affecting their behaviour via such a direct question. More detailed research would be required to uncover this.

Where respondents wished, they could make additional comments about issues not covered by the options specified in the question. Just under 40% of these comments concerned the lack of a bicycle. The second most frequent comments reflected a belief that once a car had been purchased people had moved on to a superior form of transport. It is considered far more convenient to jump in the car, especially if the trip involves children or luggage.

Figure 3.3. If You Cannot Ride A Bike, Why Not?
(Non-Cyclists)

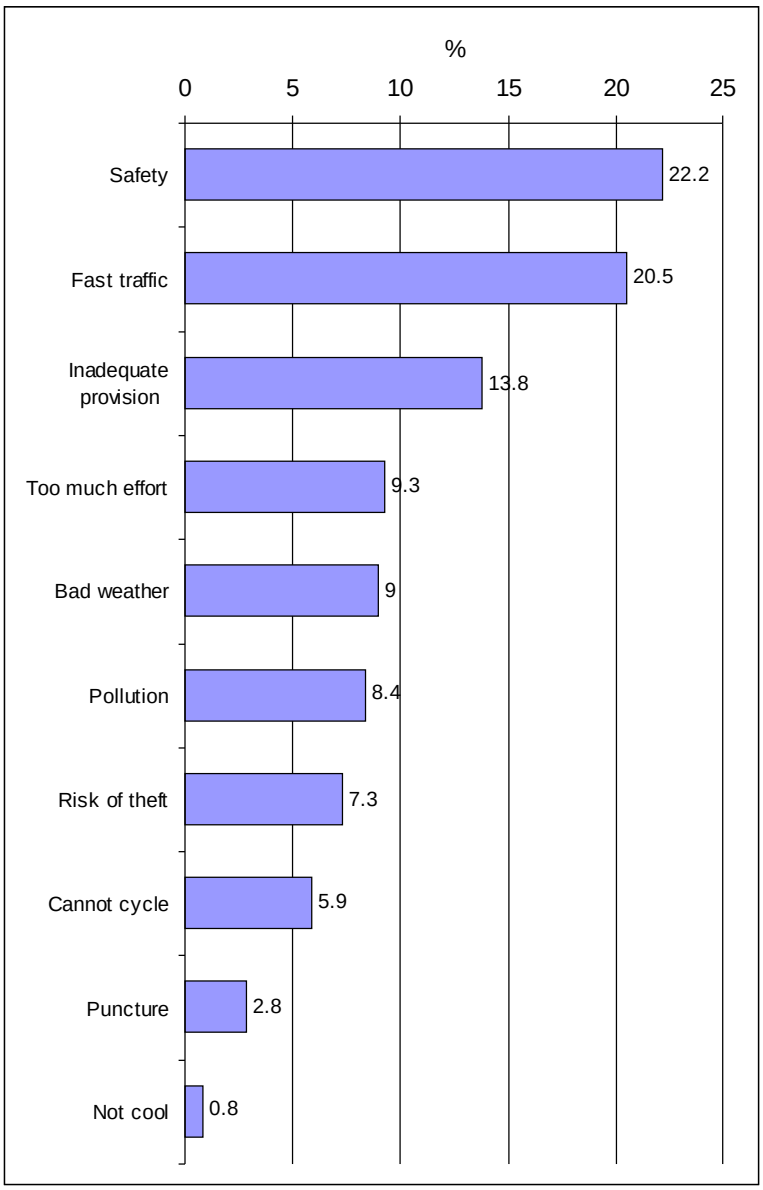


Table 3.3. If You Cannot Ride A Bike, Why Not?
(Non-Cyclists) Additional Issues

Reason	Respondents	%
No bike/broken bike	24	39.3%
Got access to better form of transport	14	23.0%
Poor facilities - parking/storage, changing at work	6	9.8%
Don't want to/don't like it	6	9.8%
Considered too dangerous	4	6.6%
Health/physical impediments	4	6.6%
Not suitable - luggage/children	3	4.9%
Total	61	100.0%

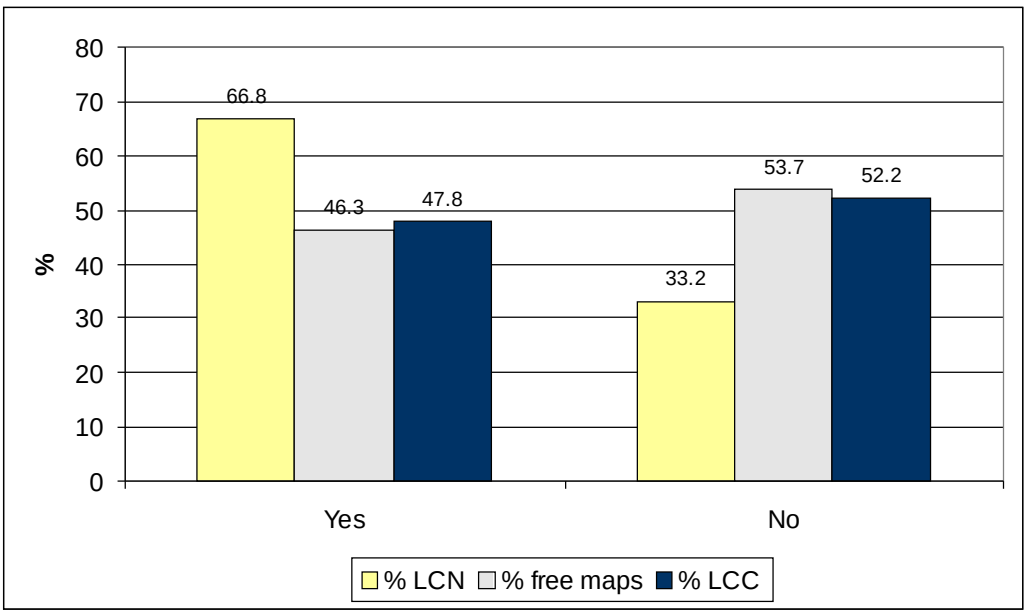
Cycling to work appears to be hindered by employers that insist on rigid dress codes and that fail to make provision for cyclists by, for example providing secure cycle

parking, showers and changing facilities for employees. There were several comments to this effect, "*If there were more places to leave your bike safely and a place to wash and change more people would cycle*".

3.4 Knowledge of Cycling Issues

Nearly 67% of respondents were aware of the London Cycle Network; although one German visitor commented that "*the existing cycle network hardly deserves its name - it merely consists of a few signposts*". Awareness of free cycling maps and of the London Cycling Campaign was lower: just under 50% of respondents knew of these. Across the population as a whole this knowledge is likely to be lower, because of the over-representation of cyclists within the sample. A comparison of the knowledge of the cycling and non-cycling samples in the MCS seems to verify this.

Figure 3.4. Knowledge of Cycling Issues

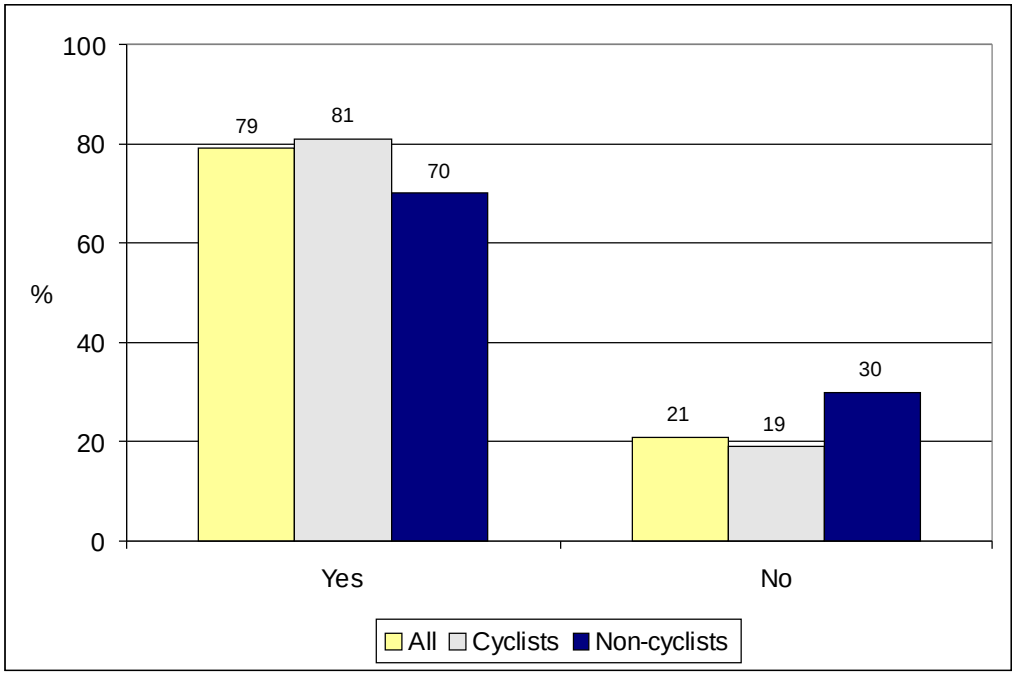


3.5 Support for Speed Limits

Respondents were asked whether they would support a 20 mph limit in residential areas, in shopping streets and outside schools. Nearly 80% of the sample supported the implementation of such a limit. Some of those who did not agree with the proposition left comments on the questionnaire that they would consider 20 mph limits outside school; but not in other areas. This suggests that the support within the sample for a 20 mph limit outside schools is above 80%.

This is the only one of the four questions, answered by both cyclists and non-cyclists, for which the high representation of cyclists in the sample could be expected to have an impact on the results. To test this hypothesis the a Chi-square statistic was calculated which proved significant at 0.003. This suggests that non-cyclists, while still significantly (70.0%) in favour of 20 mph speed limits, are slightly less enthusiastic (80.9%) than cyclists.

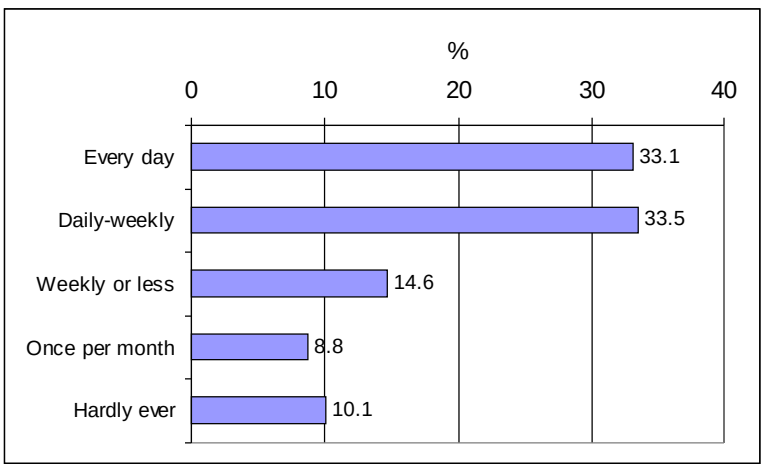
Figure 3.5. Would You Support A 20 Mph Speed Limit In Residential Areas, In Shopping Streets And Outside Schools?



3.6 Frequency of Cycling

The majority of the cyclists that responded to the survey were regular cyclists, nearly 67% of them cycled more than once per week. Around 10% of cyclists stated that they hardly ever used their bicycles, while about a quarter fell between these two groups.

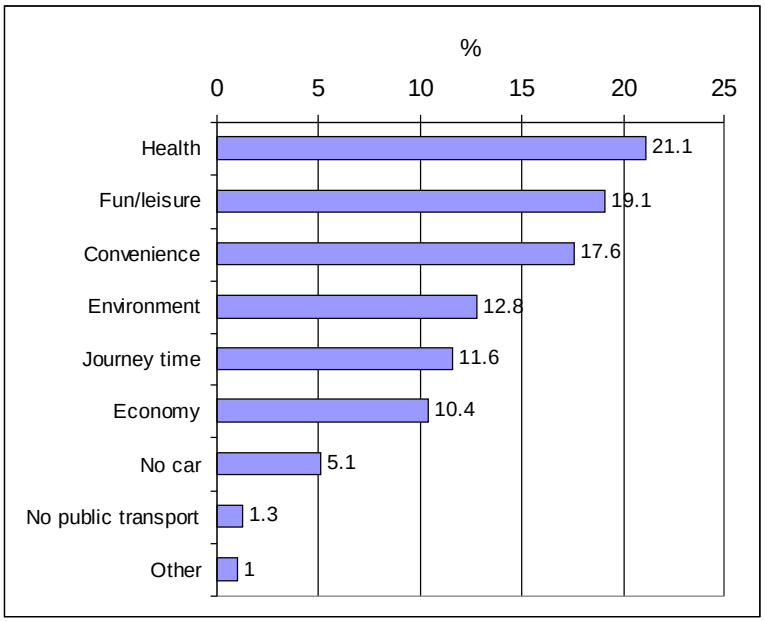
Figure 3.6. How Often Do You Ride Your Bicycle?



3.7 Motivation for Cycling

Cyclists were asked why they chose to cycle. The main three reasons are (in order) health, for fun/leisure and for convenience. There appear to be two forms of motivation for cycling. Convenience, economy, journey time and lack of a car or public transport all reflect a basic need to cycle as a form of transport . The other factors (health, environment, and fun/leisure) represent additional benefits to the cyclists and to society in general. It is interesting to note that just over half of the reasons given for cycling are associated with the latter category. It is therefore clear that cycling is more than just a mode of transport and it may prove useful to take account of this when formulating policies to encourage it.

Figure 3.7. Why Do You Cycle?



3.8 Trip Purpose

Cyclists were asked about the purposes of their trips. The most frequently mentioned trips were shopping, followed by journeys to work and visits to friends. 10.5% of comments related to cycling while on holiday.

Only 3.5% of responses concerned trips to school and college by bicycle and several comments were made about the difficulties associated with such trips. For example, "*Secondary schools don't provide bike stands/sheds*" and "*I wanted my daughter to cycle to school, but both Links and Gorringe Park schools say that it is forbidden!!*". David Hurdle in the School Crawl (April 1999) notes that "*In London, educational escort trips account for 9% of vehicle mileage between 7.00am and 10.00am. Nationally, 20% of cars in the morning peak are on the school run, yet the average home to school distance is one mile*". This information, combined with the findings of the survey, suggests that there may be scope for increasing journeys to school/college in Merton by bicycle.

18% of the responses related to other types of trips and a significant number of these trips are made purely for leisure/fitness purposes, often without a specific destination. It is conventionally assumed that the demand for travel is derived: i.e. that people travel to fulfil a purpose at the end of the journey. This is not always the case for cycling in Merton, cycling itself can be the purpose of the trip. In this context there may be a need for cycle routes to cater for such leisure cycling, with one respondent suggesting "*A full cycle circuit around Wimbledon Common*".

Figure 3.8. Where Do You Cycle?

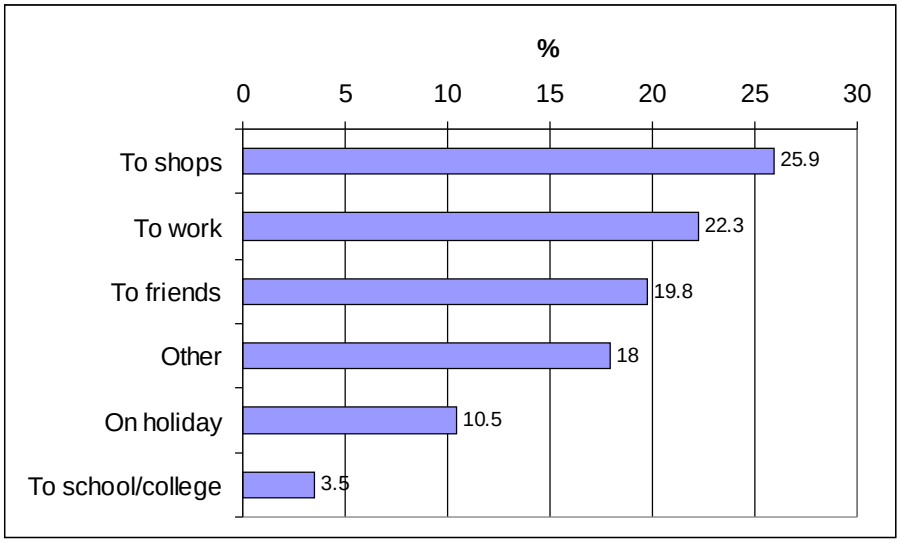


Table 3.4. Where Do You Cycle
(Other)

Location	Count	%
Richmond Park	19	
Wimbledon Common	14	
Off road (other general)	62	
Total off-road	95	33.7%
Fun/pleasure/leisure	59	20.9%
Fitness/training	37	13.1%
To/from rail/tube station	16	5.7%
Anywhere locally	26	9.2%
To allotment	9	3.2%
To other local (non-fitness) activities	40	14.2%
Total Comments	282	100.0%

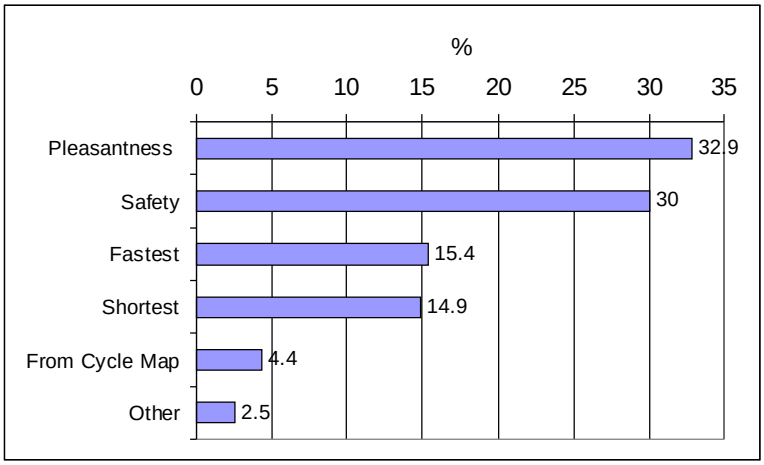
Note: Individual comments can count twice in table.

3.9 Choice of Route

Cyclists were asked how they chose their routes. The predominant factors in the selection of routes are pleasantness and safety, accounting for over 60% of responses. The next two most important factors are speed and distance. The existence of a route on a cycle map seemed to have only a limited impact on

decision making. The avoidance of hills was mentioned by a number of respondents within the other category.

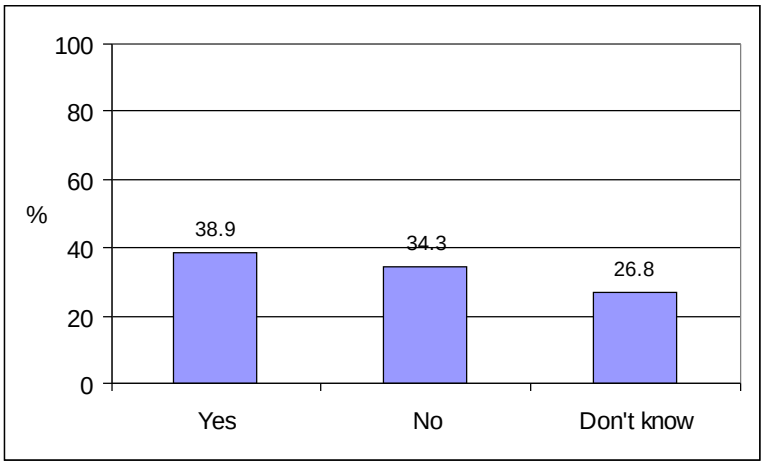
Figure 3.9. How Do You Choose Your Route?



3.10 Use of London Cycle Network

Just under 40% of the cyclists that responded to the questionnaire stated that they used the London Cycle Network (LCN) and nearly 35% stated that they did not. Interestingly 26.8% of cyclists did not know whether they used the LCN or not.

Figure 3.10. Do You Use The London Cycle Network?



3.11 Multimodal Trips

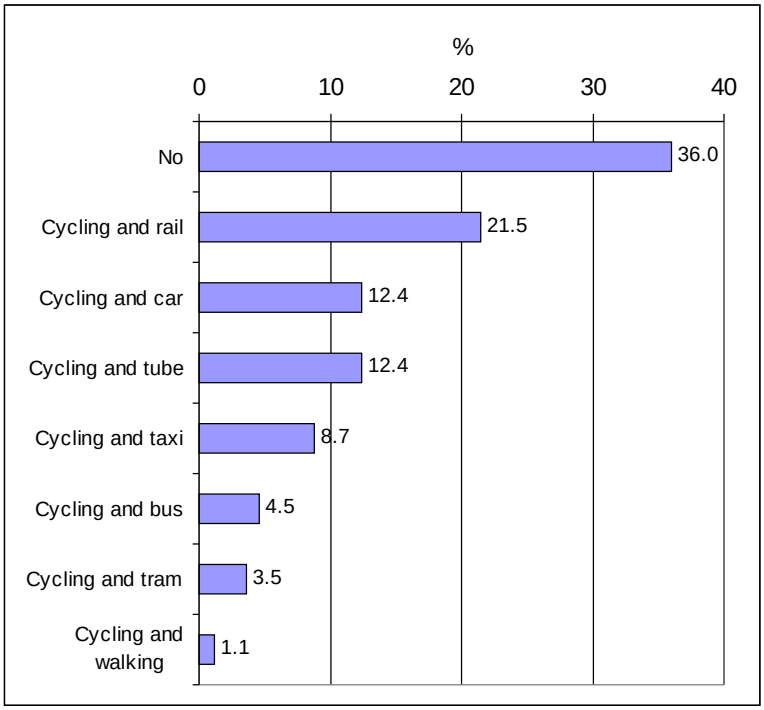
Cycling can be usefully integrated with other modes of transport and can make public transport more accessible, as it can reduce access times to terminals compared to walking. The European Commission noted in 1995 that "Measures which better

integrate the use of bicycles with public transport are particularly important as they significantly extend the distance which can be travelled".

Cycling can complement rail, in particular, because of the greater distances to rail terminals. It is also normally possible to provide parking for bicycles at stations and the large size of rail vehicles, means that cycles can sometimes be carried within the vehicles to the destination where they can be used at the other end.

Just over 35% of the Merton cyclists sampled did not use any other mode in combination with cycling. As expected rail is the most popular mode to combine with cycling and together with the underground this accounts for over 50% of the multimodal combinations recorded. Car is the third most popular mode and it would appear that, in this scenario, the bicycle is used at non-home trip ends for leisure purposes.

Figure 3.11. Do You Ever Combine Cycling With Other Forms Of Transport?



A number of comments were made to the effect that the integration between rail and cycling is worse than it need be. This is particularly so when compared to continental Europe. According the European Commission "in the Netherlands there are bicycle centres at 80 railway stations. Operated by Dutch railways, these centres provide guarded parking, bicycle hire, repair, and sales". It may be that the promotion of cycling by the rail authorities could be to their financial advantage. More (secure) cycle parking at stations may help to increase both cycling and rail journeys, as would the capability to carry more cycles on trains in the off-peak. Where land is at a premium, it may be financially beneficial to replace car parking spaces with a greater number of cycle parking spaces.

3.12 Ways of Improving Cycle Routes

Cyclists were asked to rank a series of possible improvements to cycle routes. The figure below shows the popularity of the ten options available. The results have been looked at in two ways: comparisons have been made between the mean ranks of each option (with the lowest mean representing the most important) and consideration has also been taken of the number of times an option was ranked first.

Figure 3.12. How Could The Cycle Routes That You Use Be Improved?

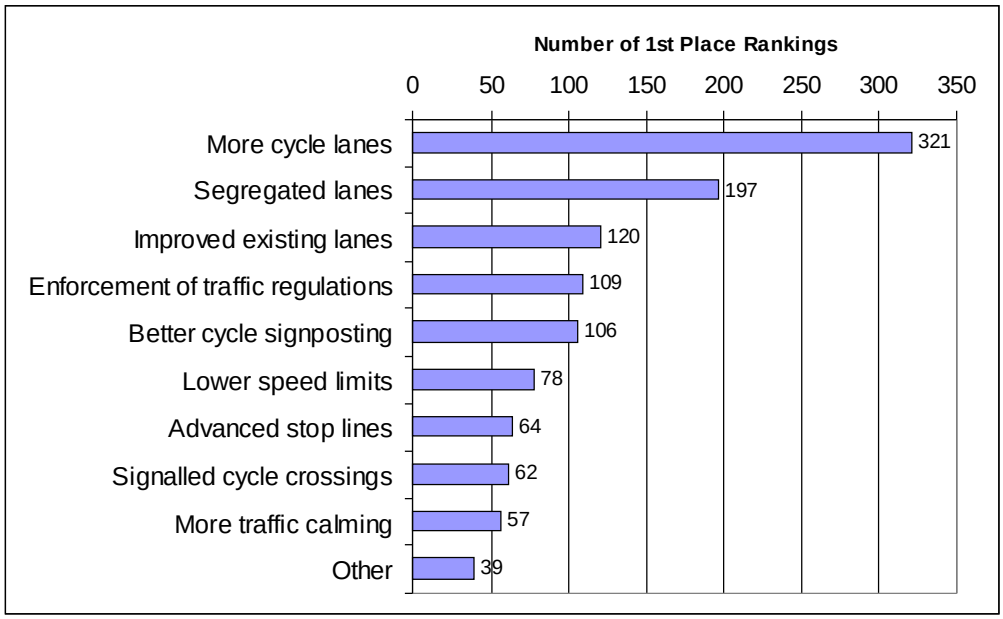


Table 3.5. How Could The Cycle Routes That You Use Be Improved?

Improvement	N	No Of 1's	Mean*	Order
More Cycle Lanes	512	321	1.74	1
Segregated Lanes	390	197	2.25	2
Improved Existing Lanes	360	120	2.59	3
Enforcement Of Traffic Regulations	303	109	3.23	4
Better Cycle Signposting	304	106	3.56	5/6
Lower Speed Limits	263	78	3.55	5/6
Advanced Stop Lines	227	64	4.15	7/8
Signalled Cycle Crossings	232	62	4.01	7/8
More Traffic Calming	210	57	4.39	9
Other	159	39	7.09	10

*Note. A lower mean score is more important

The most popular options were the expansion and upgrading of the cycle network (more cycle lanes, segregated lanes, improved existing lanes). It is clear from the additional comments made by cyclists that cycle lanes can have a significant impact. For example, "*I think more people would cycle if there were more cycle lanes.*", "*we need a cycle lane across Mitcham Common and I would be able to cycle to working Croydon instead of the train*", "*the improvements really do make a difference cycle lanes, cycle parks etc. I find it easier and more convenient to use my bike instead of*

the car". There is a distinct preference for segregated routes, rather than lanes that are a part of the main highway.

The next most important issues relate to the behaviour of other road users: lower speed limits and the enforcement of existing traffic regulations. These issues also reflect the inherent conflict between the vulnerable slow moving cyclist and faster moving motor vehicles. There appears to be a perception among some cyclists that motor vehicles are receiving preferential treatment.

The final group of features concerned further enhancements to cycle routes. This includes, better cycle signposting, signalled cycle crossings and advance stop lines.

Traffic calming was considered the least important of the options and from information elsewhere in the survey it appears that the design of some traffic calming schemes can, have unintended consequences and, actually make life more difficult for cyclists. "*Introduction of various traffic calming leads motorists to make unpredictable changes in direction and takes their concentration away from observation*", "*road humps - not the cyclists friend*".

3.13 Most Hazardous Junctions

Cyclists were asked to note which, in their view, was the most hazardous junction for cyclists in Merton. Table 2.14 shows the junctions that were mentioned five or more times in descending order.

Table 3.6. What In Your View Is The Most Hazardous Junction For Cyclists In Merton?
(Mentioned Five Or More Times).

Location	Frequency
Wimbledon Hill Road/Wimbledon Bridge/Alexandra Road	51
By S Wimbledon Tube	41
By Savacentre/Tandem Centre roundabouts	40
Wimbledon Town Centre	17
Gap Rd/Durnsford Rd/Plough Lane	12
London Rd/Streatham Rd	11
Bushey Rd/Grand Drive	10
A3/Burlington Rd	8
Cedars Ave roundabout	8
Dorset Rd/Kingston Rd	7
London Rd/Morden Hall Rd	7
Morden Rd/St Helier Ave	7
By Colliers Wood Tube	6
Wimbledon Broadway	6
Grand Drive/Hillcross Ave/Tudor Drive	5

The most hazardous junction appears to the crossroads outside Wimbledon rail/underground station (Wimbledon Hill Road, Wimbledon Bridge, Alexandra Road and St Georges Rd) which was mentioned 51 times. Second most hazardous is the junction outside South Wimbledon Underground station (Kingston Road, Merton High Street, Merton Road, Morden Road). Third were the roundabouts at the SavaCentre - the junctions at the nearby Tandem Centre were also considered hazardous. Wimbledon Town Centre was considered the fourth most hazardous place and was mentioned 17 times. Problems with roundabouts in general were mentioned 13

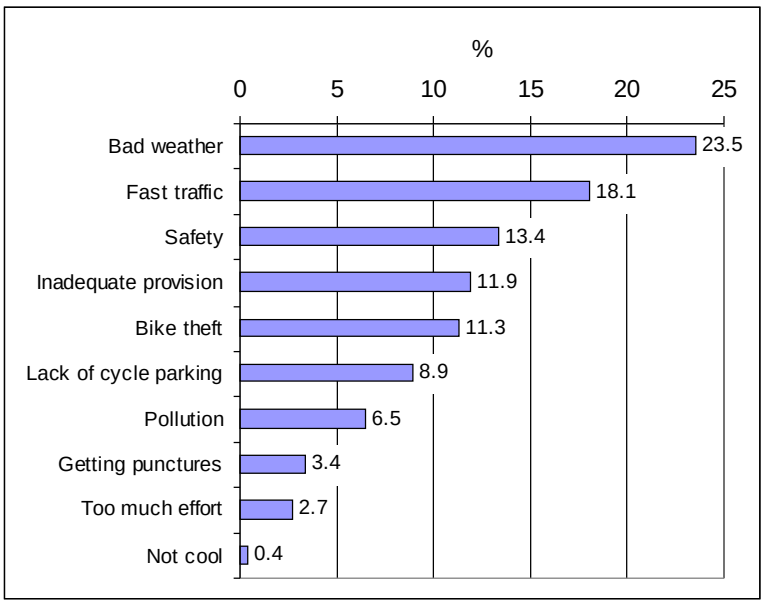
times and one way systems 7 times. More than 10 other junctions were mentioned five or more times. The frequency with which some of the junctions appear in the table suggests that there may be a serious problem at some of the junctions in the Borough.

Although outside of the scope of the survey, the Rosehill roundabout, which is just outside of Merton, drew a significant number of comments, suggesting that there may be a significant problem at that location.

3.14 Deterrents to Cycling

In an attempt to investigate ways of increasing cycle use, cyclists were asked to outline the factors which discouraged them from cycling. Bad weather was the most important factor - the negative impact of the which could perhaps be slightly reduced, if facilities (for example, changing facilities at workplaces, covered cycle parking and improved cycle routes) were improved. Fast traffic and safety were the next two issues, again illustrating the conflict between cyclists and other road users.

Figure 3.13. Do Any Of The Following Ever Put You Off Cycling?



The next most common group of issues related to the lack of provision for cyclists (for example: cycle friendly routes, security and parking). Improvements to cycle parking could help to reduce security concerns The provision of parking may even be to the financial benefit of the companies providing it, "*I would like to see more parking outside Sainsbury's... it is not always possible to park cycles there*". This suggests that improved routes and facilities for cyclists could increase cycle use. Any quantification of such an increase would, however, require more detailed study.

Respondents were able to specify additional issues that they considered to be important deterrents to cycling and these are shown in the table below. A quarter of the comments referred to the behaviour of other road users. It was noted that drivers could cause problems by being either inattentive or overly aggressive: several

comments were made to this effect including "*car drivers are not considerate*" and "*sometimes I feel invisible*".

Nearly 20% of the comments concerned physical problems on the routes used by cyclists. If routes for cyclists are to be provided it is important that they are well maintained and traffic regulations are enforced. Lack of facilities, in particular at the workplace were also mentioned as impediments to cycling.

Finally there are some people who are used to the levels of comfort afforded to them by motor vehicles which they are simply unwilling to lose. Nevertheless decisions tend to be based on more than one factor and if cycling can be made more attractive in other ways it could, on balance, still be chosen.

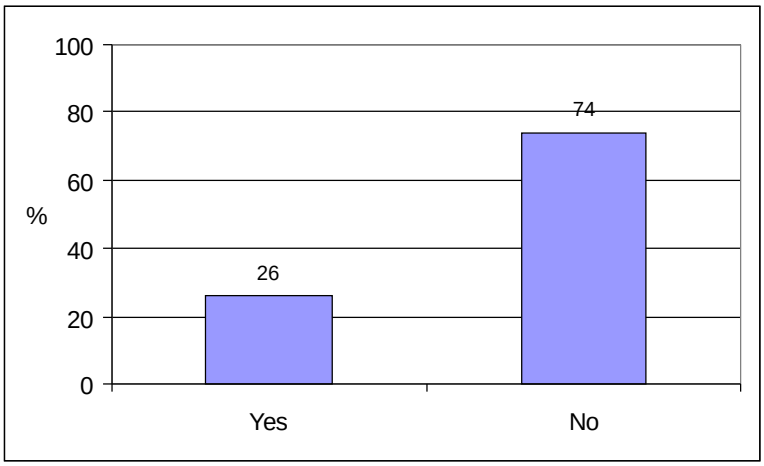
Table 3.7. Do Any Of The Following Ever Put You Off Cycling?
(Other Issues)

Issues	N	%
Behaviour of other road users inc. cyclists	13	24.1%
Physical problems with routes (obstructions, poor surfaces etc.)	10	18.5%
Lack of facilities (secure parking, changing facilities at work)	8	14.8%
Not comfortable (too far/too hard/weather)	8	14.8%
Too much luggage	5	9.3%
Cannot take bike on train/bus	3	5.6%
Other	3	5.6%
Concerned about theft/vandalism	2	3.7%
Safety	2	3.7%
Total	54	100.0%

3.15 Cycle Crime

Just over a quarter of the cyclists had experienced theft or vandalism of their cycles. Although not everyone had experienced cycle crime, this was clearly an issue that deterred cycling. Some cyclists, in particular, felt that a lot more could be done in terms of cycle security, "*there is too much bike theft in Merton and nothing is ever done about it*". More secure cycle parking, perhaps with CCTV, could help to reduce the impact of this issue.

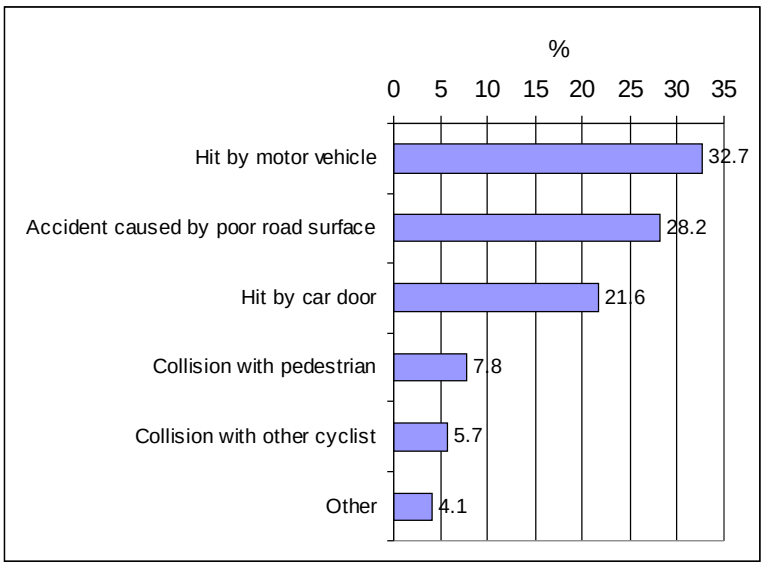
Figure 3.14. Have You Ever Had Your Bicycle Stolen Or Vandalised In Merton.



3.16 Cycle Crashes

Around 25% of the cyclists interviewed reported having had some form of cycle crash in the last three years in Merton. The most commonly mentioned form of crash was being hit by a motor vehicle, closely followed by crashes caused by poor road surfaces. The third most common crash was caused by drivers or passengers opening car doors in front of cyclists. Collisions with other cyclists and pedestrians were less commonly reported.

Figure 3.15. Have You Ever Had A Cycling Collision In The Last 3 Years In Merton?



If a crash was not covered by the categories on the questionnaire, respondents were able to describe the cause of their crash/es. The majority of these other crashes were caused by cyclists riding into obstacles in their path, for example rubbish/debris and overgrown vegetation.

Table 3.8. Have You Ever Had A Cycling Collision In The Last 3 Years In Merton? (Other Causes).

Cause	N	%
Obstructions/debris	5	33.0
Other cyclists	2	13.0
Pedestrians	3	20.0
Self caused accidents	4	27.0
Other	1	7.0
Total	15	100.0%

One of the major concerns for both current cyclists and potential cyclists is safety and so it is important to address the causes of accidents if the role of cycling in the urban environment is to be expanded. More than half of the responses concern the actions of motor vehicles; but it is of some concern that cycle accidents still seem to occur on cycle routes because of inadequate maintenance and a lack of enforcement of traffic regulations.

3.17 Problems Encountered

Cyclists were asked about the problems that they often encountered while cycling in Merton. The two most common problems were cars obstructing cycle lanes and fast or heavy traffic overtaking too close: each of these accounted for just under 20% of the total. The next two issues were vehicles turning across the cyclists path and poor quality road surfaces: each accounting for just under 15% of the total. The fifth most common difficulty were problematic junctions accounting for approximately 10% of the total. These findings again point to a conflict between cyclists and other road users, as well as deficiencies in maintenance and the enforcement of traffic regulations.

Cyclists were able to indicate any other problems that they had encountered in Merton and these are shown in the table below. The most common problem was a conflict with other road users, accounting for just over 30% of the responses.

The poor design or lack of cycling facilities was second (18.8% of the responses), closely followed by debris on routes and/or inadequate maintenance. A string of comments were made concerning the design and upkeep of cycle routes. "*Signposting of cycle routes in Merton has improved, but it is still not adequate for navigation on an unknown route without a map.*", "*One problem I encounter is the gaps between cycle lanes are often in dangerous areas.*", "*I would cycle more if cycle lanes were more direct and by-passed one-way systems (e.g. Wimbledon Town Centre).*".

Figure 3.16. Which Of The Following Problems Do You Encounter Often?

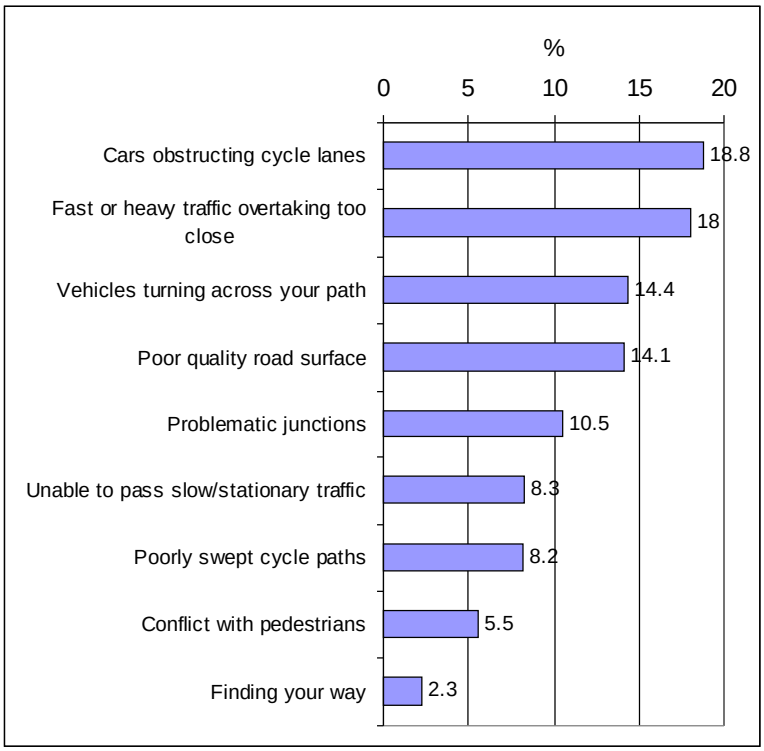


Table 3.9. Which Of The Following Problems Do You Encounter Often? (Other).

Problem	N	%
Conflict with other motorised road users: poor/inconsiderate driving, opening car doors, fumes,	25	31.3%
Lack of or poorly designed cycling facilities	15	18.8%
Debris on route and/or inadequate maintenance	13	16.3%
Obstructions on route: parked cars, pedestrians etc.	10	12.5%
Behaviour of other cyclists	8	10.0%
Traffic calming measures	6	7.5%
Lack of parking for cycles	2	2.5%
Other	1	1.3%
Total	80	100.0%

A lack of enforcement of traffic regulations with regard to cycle routes was also a hot topic. "*Often cars park in cycle lanes which is very annoying and defeats purpose of cycle lanes*", "*Why cars belonging to garages in West Barnes Lane are allowed to park across cycle lane without anyone from traffic offence department objecting.*", "*Can we have more cycle police officers or traffic warden to police bus/cycle lanes*".

Interestingly the behaviour of other cyclists came fourth, accounting for 10% of comments. There would appear to be a troublesome minority of cyclists who are creating a hazard for all other road users, including other cyclists and pedestrians. "*Discourage cycling on pavements*", "*Cyclists as a whole are a law breaking danger to themselves and others*", "*I think cyclists take advantage which can make car*

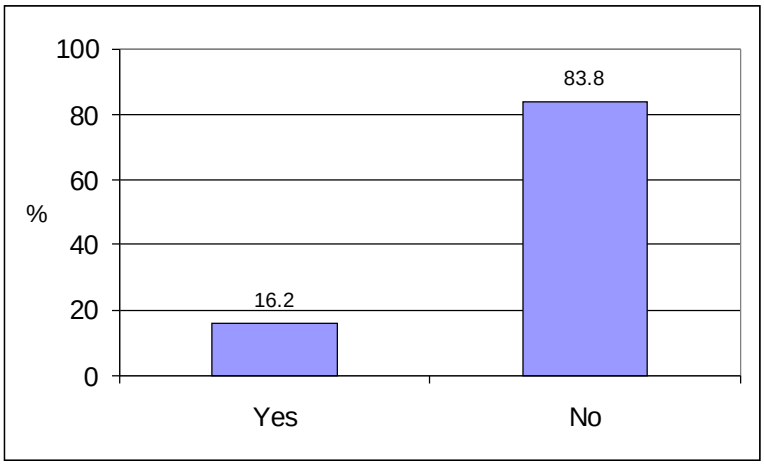
drivers angry", "*I also think that many cyclists get us a bad name by cycling on pavements, excessive speed, not stopping at traffic lights etc*".

To some extent this apparent anti-social behaviour may be a response by cyclists to road designs that take little/no account of their needs. They may feel that they have to break traffic regulations for self-preservation in heavy/dangerous traffic or, for example, to short cut the long detours caused by one-way systems. It may be worth investigating areas where there are persistent violations by cyclists to see if this is the case. It may also be necessary to improve cycle training and in some cases to more effectively enforce road traffic regulations to this minority.

3.18 Membership of LCC

Just over 16% of the 680 cyclists that responded to this question were members of the LCC, this proportion fell to 14.6% for the sample as a whole.

Figure 3.17. Are You A Member Of The London Cycling Campaign?



3.19 Differences between Regular and Irregular cyclists

One of the most successful ways to increase the level of cycling in Merton may be to target infrequent cyclists. Infrequent cyclists already have bicycles and have shown at least a basic inclination to cycle - unlike non-cyclists. It may be that for infrequent cyclists certain issues assume greater importance than for frequent cyclists and to pick this out further analysis has been undertaken so that the responses of the two groups can be compared. The detail of this analysis is presented in Appendix One.

The infrequent cyclists in the sample were more likely to cycle for pleasure than to use their bicycles as a form of transport. They tend not to see cycling as valid practical alternative to other modes of transport and are probably most likely to use their bicycles on holiday, or to cycle around local parks.

Frequent cyclists in the sample are slightly more concerned with speed and distance when selecting their route. Where cycling itself is the purpose of the trip, pleasantness and safety assume a higher level of importance.

Safety related issues (fast traffic and perception of danger) and the apparent effort required during cycling appears to have a slightly greater impact amongst the irregular cyclists that responded to the survey.

Concerning the problems encountered while cycling and the courses of action that should be taken there appear to be little substantial difference between the two groups. The order of importance for the top 5 improvements remains the same for both samples.

4 Conclusions

The Merton Cycling Survey has provided a useful insight into the issues that deter people from cycling in the area and what cyclists see as the dangers/hazards associated with travel by bicycle in Merton. Many of the findings are in line with the results of earlier research on cycling and some important local issues have emerged.

A perceived lack of safety, when cycling, has emerged a central factor in deterring both non-cyclists from taking up cycling and in reducing the mileage of those that already use this form of transport. It is of particular importance to ensure that any cycle routes are well maintained and policed to prevent abuse. A cycle lane blocked by parked cars and littered with debris represents a waste of resources.

A lack of provision for cyclists also appears to be suppressing the demand for cycling. At the workplace employers often insist on rigid dress codes and fail to provide facilities such as: secure cycle parking and changing facilities. Local businesses and transport undertakings currently appear to be more focused on customers that arrive by other modes of transport and may be able to generate more custom by increasing facilities for cyclists - sometimes even at the expense of car parking spaces.

Interestingly, even among the non-cyclists that were interviewed, there is strong support for a reduction in speed limits in residential areas, shopping streets and schools - with particular emphasis on the latter. A 20 mph limit near schools may help to increase the low proportion of journeys to school that are currently made by bicycle.

The survey revealed two types of cyclists within the borough. Some use the bicycle as a form of transport; while others use it predominantly for leisure. One way of increasing cycling would be to encourage these occasional pleasure cyclists to make more use of their bicycles as a form of transport. To achieve such a transition it is likely that the perceived level of safety associated with cycling in Merton has to be significantly increased.

Three road junctions in the borough were highlighted as particularly dangerous. The one most frequently mentioned was that outside Wimbledon Station (Wimbledon Hill Road/Wimbledon Bridge/Alexandra Road). The second was that by South Wimbledon Tube Station and the third the roundabouts by the Savacentre. One way to increase the perceived level of safety would be to investigate the problems encountered by cyclists at these locations and to see if some appropriate modifications could be made.

5 References

THE CITIZENS' NETWORK - Fulfilling the potential of public passenger transport in Europe. European Commission Green Paper (1995).
London Area Transport Survey for 1991. UK Department if Transport (1991).
The National Cycling Strategy. UK Department for Transport (23 September 1996).
Cycling in Great Britain, UK Department of Transport (1996).
The School Crawl by David Hurdle in Transition No 7, Centre for Independent Transport Research in London (April 1999).

6 Appendix One - Differences between Regular and Irregular cyclists.

One of the most successful ways to increase the level of cycling in Merton may be to target infrequent cyclists. Infrequent cyclists already have bicycles and have shown at least a basic inclination to cycle - unlike non-cyclists. It may be that for infrequent cyclists certain issues assume greater importance than for frequent cyclists and to pick this out further analysis has been undertaken so that the responses of the two groups can be compared.

Table A1.1. Why Do You Cycle

Cyclist	Convenience	Economy	Health	Journey Time	Environment	Fun/Leisure
Frequent	400	237	452	267	287	364
	18.5%	11.0%	20.9%	12.3%	13.3%	16.8%
Infrequent	31	16	61	13	25	98
	11.6%	6.0%	22.8%	4.9%	9.3%	36.6%

Cyclist	No Car	No Public Transport	Cycling and Tram	Other	Total
Frequent	106	26	38	24	2163
	4.9%	1.2%	4.3%	1.1%	100.0%
Infrequent	16	7	3	1	268
	6.0%	2.6%	1.8%	0.4%	100.0%

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

The infrequent cyclists in the sample were more likely to cycle for pleasure than to use their bicycles as a form of transport. They tend not to see cycling as valid practical alternative to other modes of transport and are probably most likely to use their bicycles on holiday, or to cycle around local parks (most "other" trips appeared to be leisure orientated).

Table A1.2. Where Do You Cycle

Cyclist	To Work	To School/ College	On Holiday	To Shops	To Friends
Frequent	330	48	132	355	272
	24.4%	3.6%	9.8%	26.3%	20.1%
Infrequent	13	7	30	43	34
	6.8%	3.7%	15.7%	22.5%	17.8%

Other	Total
215	1352
15.9%	100.0%
64	191
33.5%	100.0%

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

As would be expected from the earlier findings, the frequent cyclists in the sample are slightly more concerned with speed and distance when selecting their route. Where cycling itself is the purpose of the trip, pleasantness and safety assume a higher level of importance.

Table A1.3. How Do You Choose Your Route

Cyclist	Fastest	Pleasantness	Shortest	Safety	From Cycle Map	Other	Total
Frequent	172	339	160	302	48	20	1041
	16.5%	32.6%	15.4%	29.0%	4.6%	1.9%	100.0%
Infrequent	19	70	23	70	7	10	199
	9.5%	35.2%	11.6%	35.2%	3.5%	5.0%	100.0%

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

The infrequent cyclists in the sample are generally much less likely to combine cycling with other modes; the one exception to this is their uses of cars. Cars are presumably used to enable them to access areas that are attractive for leisure cycling.

Table A1.4. Do You Combine Cycling With Other Modes

Cyclist	Cycling and Bus	Cycling and Rail	Cycling and Car	Cycling and Taxi	Cycling and Tube
Frequent	49	243	121	102	122
	5.6%	27.6%	13.8%	11.6%	13.9%
Infrequent	5	21	31	5	26
	3.0%	12.6%	18.6%	3.0%	15.6%

Cyclist	Cycling and Walking	No Other Modes	Total
Frequent	11	193	879
	1.3%	22.0%	100.0%
Infrequent	2	74	167
	1.2%	44.3%	100.0%

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

With regard to improvements to cycle routes, there appears to be little substantial difference between the views of the two samples with regard to improvements to cycle routes. The order of importance for the top 5 improvements remains the same for both samples with traffic calming appearing to be marginally more popular with the irregular cyclists.

Table A1.5. How Could Cycle Routes Be Improved.
(Lower Score Is More Important).

Cyclist	More Cycle Lanes	Improved Existing Lanes	Segregated Lanes	Signalled Cycle Crossings	Advanced Stop Lines	Better Cycle Signposting	Lower Speed Limits
Frequent	1.8	2.6	2.3	4.0	4.1	3.6	3.6
Order	1	3	2	7	8	5=	5=
Infrequent	1.6	2.6	2.2	4.3	4.9	3.3	3.4
Order	1	3	2	8	9	5	6

Cyclist	More Traffic Calming	Enforcement of Traffic Regulations	Other
Frequent	4.5	3.2	7.1
Order	9	4	10
Infrequent	3.9	3.1	7.0
Order	7	4	10

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

Safety related issues (fast traffic and safety) and the effort required during cycling appears to have a slightly greater impact amongst the irregular cyclists that responded to the survey. A greater proportion of regular cyclists were put off by the weather, inadequate provision and lack of cycle parking.

Table A1.6. Do Any Of The Following Put You Off

Cyclist	Bad Weather	Bike Theft	Fast Traffic	Not Cool	Too Much Effort	Pollution
Frequent	370	171	263	2	32	100
	24.7%	11.4%	17.5%	0.1%	2.1%	6.7%
Infrequent	87	49	90	5	20	28
	19.2%	10.8%	19.9%	1.1%	4.4%	6.2%

Cyclist	Safety	Getting Punctures	Inadequate Provision	Lack Of Cycle Parking	Total
Frequent	192	47	187	137	1501
	12.8%	3.1%	12.5%	9.1%	
Infrequent	71	18	48	37	453
	15.7%	4.0%	10.6%	8.2%	

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

Again there seems to be little substantial difference between the views of the two samples with regard to problems encountered while cycling in Merton. The frequent cyclists in the sample seemed to encounter more problems with vehicles turning across their paths and slightly less difficulties with fast or heavy traffic overtaking too close.

Table A1.7. Problems Encountered.

Cyclist	Cars obstructing cycle lanes	Conflict with pedestrians	Problematic junctions	Finding your way	Vehicles turning across your path	Fast or heavy traffic overtaking too close
Frequent	419	122	226	46	328	388
	19.0%	5.5%	10.2%	2.1%	14.9%	17.6%
Infrequent	68	20	46	14	46	79
	17.6%	5.2%	11.9%	3.6%	11.9%	20.4%

Cyclist	Unable to pass slow/ stationary traffic	Poor quality road surface	Poorly swept cycle paths	Total
Frequent	186	311	182	2208
	8.4%	14.1%	8.2%	
Infrequent	29	54	31	387
	7.5%	14.0%	8.0%	

Percentages and counts based on numbers of respondents

7 Appendix Two - The Survey Form.

Merton Cycle Survey 2002

1. Do you own a bike? Yes No
2. Do you ride a bike? Yes No
3. If you don't ride a bike, why not? Tick any that apply.
   I cannot cycle not "cool"
   bad weather risk of bike theft fast traffic
   pollution safety getting punctures
   inadequate provision for cyclists
   it's too much effort other
4. Do you know about the London Cycle Network?
   Yes No
5. Do you know that free London and Merton cycle route maps are available?
   Yes No
6. Do you know about the London Cycling Campaign? Yes No
7. Would you support a 20 mile an hour speed limit in residential areas, in shopping streets and outside schools?
   Yes No

If you do not cycle, please now go to question 21.

Questions for cyclists only

8. How often do you ride your bicycle?
   every day more than once a week
   once a week or less
   about once a month hardly ever
9. Why do you cycle?
   convenience economy health
   journey time environment fun/leisure
   no car no public transport
   other
10. Where do you cycle?
    to/from work to/from school or college
    on holiday to the shops to friends
    other (please specify)
11. How do you choose your route? Tick up to two.
    fastest route pleasantness
    shortest distance safety
    from a cycle map other
12. Do you use the London Cycle Network?
    Yes No Don't know
13. Does your journey involve other forms of transport?
    bus rail car tram
    tube walking taxi
14. How could your route could be improved? (number 1,2,3 etc. in your order of preference, 1 = first choice)

- more cycle lanes
- improvement to existing cycle lanes
- segregated cycle lanes
- signalled cycle crossings
- advanced stop lines at traffic lights
- better signposting of cycle routes
- lower speed limits
- more traffic calming
- enforcement of traffic regulations
- other
- no improvements needed

15. What in your view is the most hazardous junction for cyclists in Merton?

16. Do any of the following ever put you off cycling? Chose up to three.
    bad weather risk of bike theft fast traffic
    not "cool" it's too much effort
    pollution safety getting punctures
    inadequate provision for cyclists
    lack of cycle parking other
17. Have you ever had your bicycle stolen or vandalised in Merton? Yes No
18. Have you had a cycling crash in the last 3 years in Merton? If so what was the cause?
    hit by motor vehicle car door opening
    pedestrian other cyclist
    bad road surface other (please specify)

19. Which of the following problems do you encounter regularly?

- cars obstructing cycle lanes
- conflict with pedestrians
- problematic junctions
- finding your way
- vehicles turning across your path
- fast moving or heavy traffic overtaking too close
- unable to pass slow or stationary traffic
- poor quality road surface
- poorly swept cycle paths
- other (please specify)

20. Are you a member of the London Cycling Campaign? Yes No

Other information (optional)

21. What is your age? …… years
22. Are you: female male
23. What is your ethnic background?

24. Are there any other comments you would like to make?
25. Would you like to receive more information about:

- Merton Cycling Campaign
- The results of this survey

If so, please write your name and address in the space below. (Please note that to enter the prize draw you must complete this section)

Thank you very much for participating