

City of Westminster

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for  
All

# Westminster Walking Strategy 2017-2027

December 2017



# Executive Summary

For many years Westminster City Council has supported walking through its policies, strategies and investments. The Council's first Walking Strategy in 2004 sought to encourage walking by co-ordinating various initiatives and measures. This second, more ambitious strategy covers 2017 - 2027 and will be revised after five years.

The reasons for producing a second strategy is due to London's growth and changing policy context as the city is experiencing fundamental growth in the number of residents, homes, jobs and visitors, and hence pedestrians. This is helped by the strong growth in rail and London Underground passengers due to the opening of the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail 1) in late 2018, tube improvements in the 2020s, and potentially Crossrail 2 in the early 2030's. This growth is causing policies to change, including: the London Plan, the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS), and Westminster's emerging City Plan.

The Walking Strategy also provides an opportunity to enhance Westminster's excellent quality of life and its historic environment. All environmental improvements should make walking easier and more attractive, which can improve air quality and thus the health and lives of residents, workers and visitors and the local economy.

Westminster's City Plan policies prioritise walking and active travel to help accommodate the growing number of people living, working and visiting Westminster. The Mayor of London also recognises that walking has a fundamental role in enabling London to grow economically and sustainably, and can create a healthier and more liveable city. Through his draft MTS he is increasing the priority given to walking and active travel, which will translate into funding through the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) process.

The Council commissioned the consultants, Steer Davis Gleave (SDG), to help develop a draft Walking Strategy. SDG facilitated meetings with officers, residents' societies, landowners, businesses and specialist interest groups that informed the draft strategy and structured it around six objectives, each with corresponding measures and actions.

This process also helped to define: "Westminster's vision for" a world-class walking environment to transform the walking experience for all users, and to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of our residents, workers and visitors."

The target for the Walking Strategy (2017-2027) is to increase the number of walking trips by residents from 84% to 92% of all potentially walkable trips. This is very ambitious, as Westminster's residents would have the highest level of walking in London.





# Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Westminster's Walking Strategy 2017-2027. Westminster has a strong tradition of providing for pedestrians, as can be seen from this completely revised Walking Strategy and the examples, case studies and Action Plan it contains.

Walking is the universal mode of transport because whilst some people travel in Westminster using other modes everyone completes the last leg of their journey on foot. Whether it is walking from a tube or train station, bus stop, river bus pier or parking space to their destination.

More walking will help to create better neighbourhoods for residents, businesses and visitors, that enhances people's health and fitness, and could help to reduce traffic congestion and so air and noise pollution. More walking is better for businesses with happier and healthier staff, and a better retail, hospitality and leisure environment. With higher quality pedestrian environments helping people to enjoy all that Westminster has to offer.

Westminster therefore aims to make walking the mode of choice to enable the city to grow and deliver the many benefits it brings. Thus, Westminster has set a new target to achieve the highest amount of walking in any London borough with 92% of trips by residents being made on foot for journeys that can be walked.

Now is the right time to update our Walking Strategy because Westminster is undergoing a period of strong growth and change, that is magnified by the completion of major transport projects, such as the Elizabeth Line opening in late 2018, increased capacity on the Underground network throughout the 2020s and potentially Crossrail 2. This growth is supported by revisions to Westminster's emerging City Plan, the Mayor's London Plan, Transport and Environment strategies. All these changes have encouraged the Council to fully update its vision, strategy and Action Plan to enhance walking and public spaces in Westminster.

This fully revised Strategy comprises six objectives that were identified by residents, businesses and landowners. These objectives aim to improve conditions for people who already walk, and encourage more people to choose to walk for more journeys in Westminster.

I want to end by thanking all those stakeholders and my fellow Councillors on the Sustainable Transport Task Group who have contributed and helped to develop Westminster's Walking Strategy. Westminster looks forward to continue working with them to make walking a safer, more comfortable and enjoyable and popular way of getting around our city.

**Councillor Danny Chalkley**  
**Cabinet Member for City Highways**

# Overview

## Westminster's Context

The City of Westminster is a truly unique borough at the heart of a world class city. It is home to London's most prestigious and famous landmarks and institutions, from the United Kingdom's Crown and Parliament, to the West End, Theatreland, national museums and galleries, broadcasters, retailers, the hospitality sector and multinational corporate headquarters.

Like other central London boroughs, Westminster comprises very affluent areas alongside deprived neighbourhoods. Westminster contains many heritage buildings of national importance as well as 56 different conservation areas, all with their own character, which strongly contributes to the attractiveness of the borough. Westminster also has a close mix of residents and businesses and large green spaces and Royal Parks.

Westminster benefits from a very dense public transport network that comprises:

- Quick access to four international airports and the Eurostar train service,
- Four mainline railway termini (Charing Cross, Marylebone, Paddington and Victoria) and in close proximity to six other major train stations;
- Thirty one London Underground stations, with access to all but one tube line;
- Local, national and international bus and coach routes;
- River Bus services; and
- One hundred and seventy London Cycle Hire docking stations.

Westminster also provides:

- About 450 Legible London wayfinding signs.

## Walking in Westminster in numbers

At present, Westminster's residents make the following walking journeys:

- 47% of all journeys are walked, including 21% of journeys to work (Census data 2010). This is helped by more than 50% of resident's working in Westminster.
- Westminster's residents walk for 84% of all trips that can be walked.





Figure 1: Absolute population growth (GLA).

Absolute Population Growth between 2011 and 2041 in Greater London  
based on LTS 7.1, Reference Cases 2011 and 2041

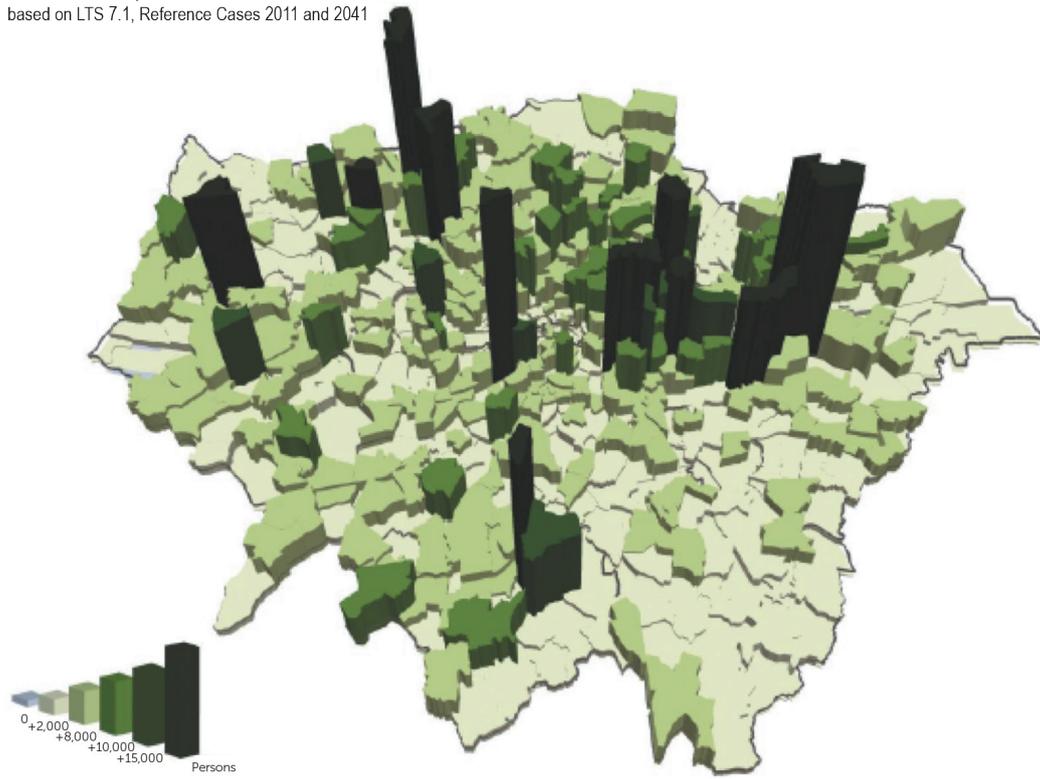
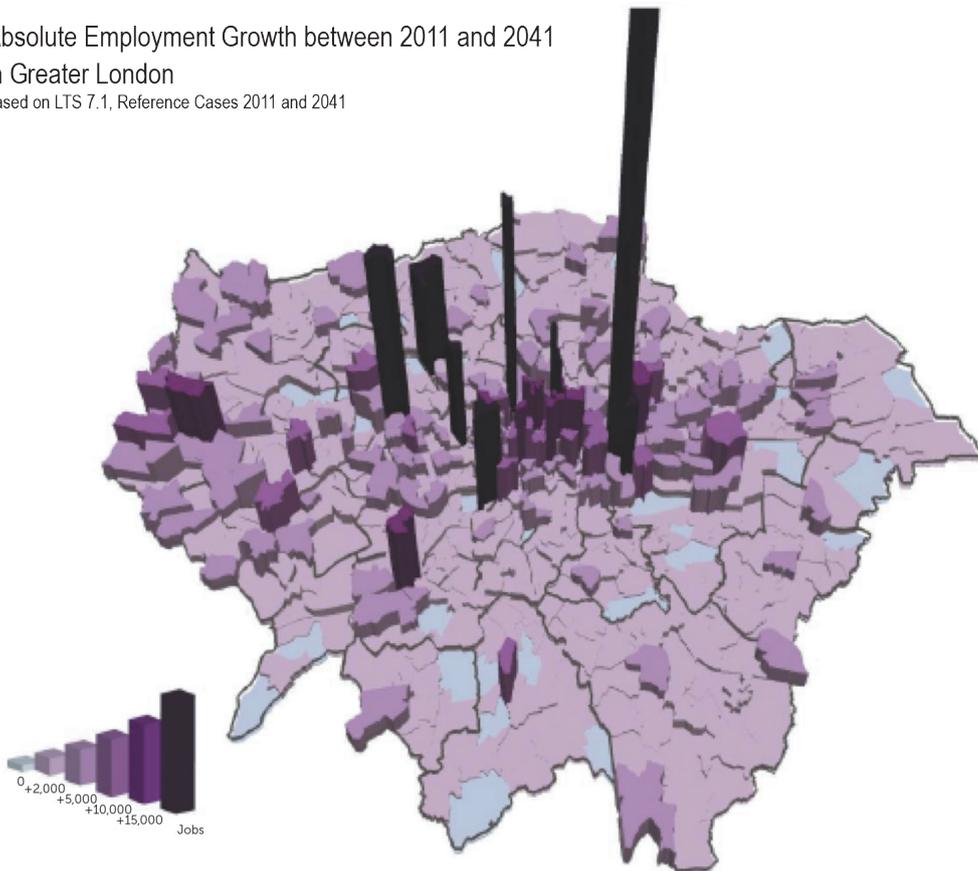


Figure 2: Absolute employment growth (GLA).

Absolute Employment Growth between 2011 and 2041  
in Greater London  
based on LTS 7.1, Reference Cases 2011 and 2041



## Growth in Westminster: Residents

### Westminster is growing

Population forecasts by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and its Central Trend Based projection in 2015 calculated that Westminster will be home to about 247,000 people in 2017, and around 264,000 by 2027, or an additional 17,000 residents in ten year's time (see Figure 1).

## Growth in Westminster: Employment

Each workday in 2017 the number of people in Westminster increased from a quarter of a million to over one million due to an influx of about 753,000 workers and 260,000 visitors and/or tourists. By 2027 the GLA predicts that Westminster's workforce may have risen to 792,000, or an additional 39,000 workers.<sup>†</sup> (see Figure 2)

## Growth in Westminster: Visitors

For many UK and international visitors, a trip to London will almost certainly involve spending time in Westminster for business or pleasure. It is projected that the number of visitors and tourists in London are likely to increase from 32 million to 40 million people annually between 2016 and 2025, which is a rise of 30% and includes almost 50% higher spending, up to £22bn a year.<sup>††</sup>

This visitor growth is reflected in the GLA's projected increases in the total number of nights in London (in Figure 3 below).

## Growth total in Westminster

Therefore the estimated total growth in residents, employees and visitors in Westminster from 2017 to 2027 is about 60,000 people a day.

**Figure 3: The projected number of total visitor nights ('000s), London (GLA)**



(GLA Economics, Projections of demand and supply for visitor accommodation in London to 2050, Working Paper 88, 2017, April).

<sup>†</sup> <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/long-term-labour-market-projections>

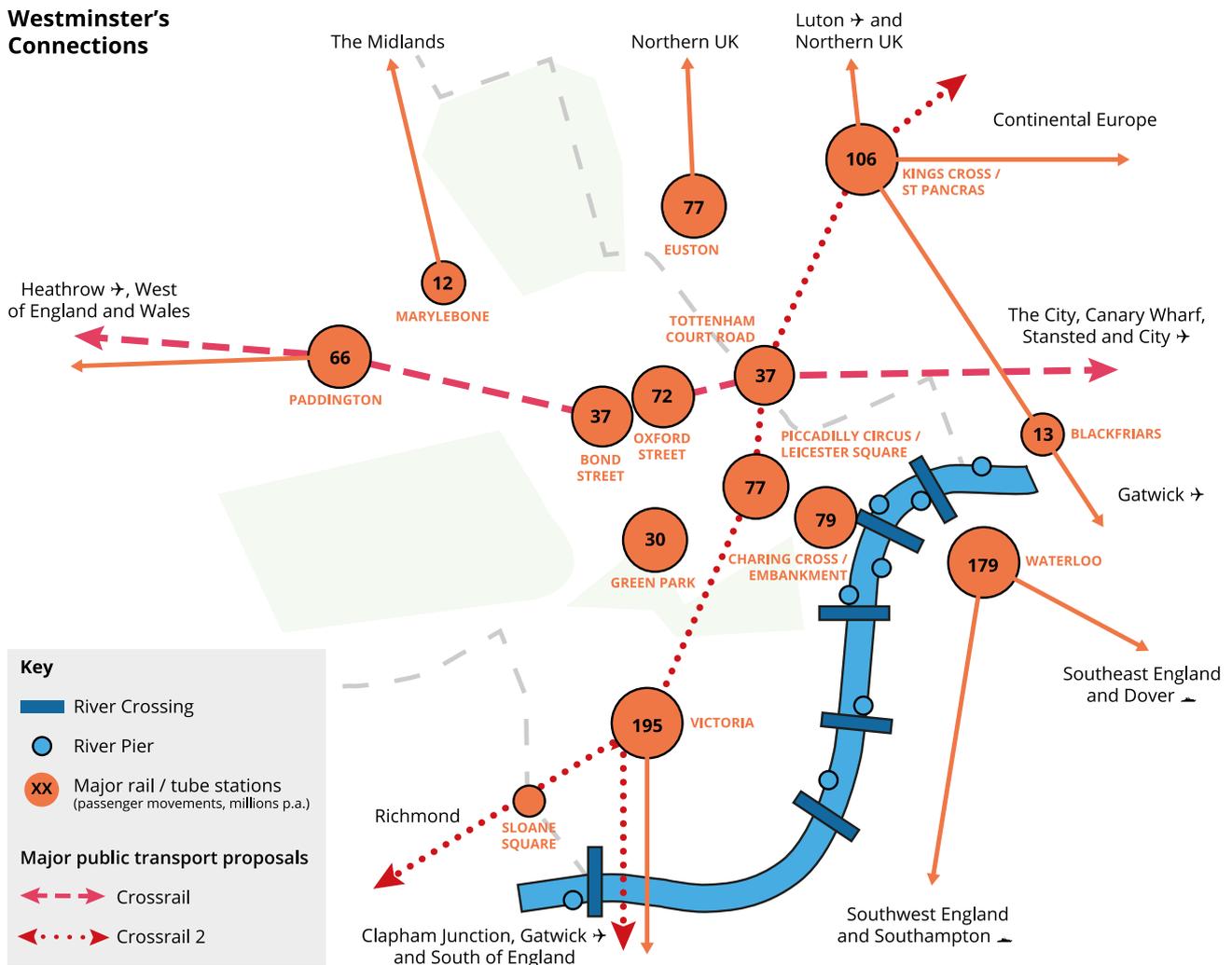
<sup>††</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/united-kingdom/england/london/articles/the-things-londoners-love-about-london/>

## Growth in Westminster: Public transport

Public transport capacity is also growing, which helps to stimulate some of this population, employment and visitor growth. From August 2016 different Underground lines started running Night Tube services on Friday and Saturday nights. From 15th of December 2017 London Overground will run on Friday and Saturday nights. From December 2018 the Elizabeth Line opens, and in 2019 extend westwards and eastwards out of London. It will enable an additional 1.5 million people to be within 45 minutes of central London. Throughout the 2020's various London Underground capacity improvements are planned. In the early 2030's Crossrail 2 could open, if it is allocated funding soon. The result of all these upgrades is an increasing number of passengers using tube and train stations and hence Westminster's streets (see Figure 4 below).

**Figure 4: Westminster's Connections plan showing the millions of passengers per annum using stations after the construction of the Elizabeth Line and Crossrail 2 (Westminster City Plan 2016, Fig 51)**

### Westminster's Connections



## Reasons for producing the Westminster Walking Strategy

The growing number of people and passengers is changing Westminster and London. Westminster is responding by revising its Walking Strategy and its City Plan. The Mayor of London published a new draft Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) on 21st June 2017 and a new draft London Plan in December 2017.

## The engagement process for the Walking Strategy

This Walking Strategy was produced after extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders that included: resident's, landowners, Business improvement districts (BIDs), developers, transport stakeholders and interest groups. This engagement helped to identify the vision, chapters, principles and six key objectives, which form the basis of this Walking Strategy:

### Westminster's vision

Westminster's vision is for a world-class walking environment to transform the walking experience for all users, and to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of our residents, workers and visitors.

### Westminster's target

To increase the number of walking trips by residents for all potentially walkable trips from 84% to 92% by creating a world-class walking environment in Westminster (2017-2027). This is ambitious as it encourages Westminster's residents to have the highest number of walking trips in London.

## Principles of this strategy

The engagement process identified several principles to guide the Walking Strategy, to:

- Invest in walking as a main mode of transport;
- Improve the attractiveness and safety of Westminster's streets;
- Encourage walking in balance with all other users of our public space and roads (including cycling, public transport, freight, disabled blue and white badge parking and emergency services) in Westminster; and
- Make any walking improvements with the support of the community.

## Objectives in the Walking Strategy

- 1) To provide the capacity to support current walking demand and to accommodate future growth.
- 2) To improve the quality of the walking environment and the public realm to make walking more comfortable.
- 3) To make walking more intuitive by increasing legibility and permeability.
- 4) To ensure walking is a safe option for everyone.
- 5) To make the pedestrian environment more accessible for everyone.
- 6) To encourage behaviour change to realise the potential of walking.

## The consultation process

This engagement process enabled the Westminster to consult on a draft walking strategy for four months during the summer of 2016. Seventy-six responses were received, containing about 450 individual comments, which were assessed and where appropriate used to shape this Walking Strategy and the Action Plan.

# Walking Strategy Objectives

1	Provide capacity to support current walking demand and accommodate future growth
Current Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of people in Westminster is increasing. Westminster's population is about 247,000 in 2017, and is estimated to be about 264,000 by 2027. Westminster currently receives about 753,000 workers each day, which is predicted to increase to about 792,000 workers in 2027. Tourists and visitors are estimated at about 260,000 daily. This results in Westminster having a day time population of about 1.1 million.</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth: An additional 17,000 residents and 39,000 workers by 2027. A potential 30% rise in tourists and visitors and possible 50% increase in spending in London between 2016 and 2025.</li> <li>Existing and future constraints on pedestrian space around key transport hubs and destinations in Westminster (eg the West End).</li> <li>Growth is stimulating a significant rate and scale of development within Westminster creating opportunities for developers to enhance the public realm.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The construction of the Elizabeth Line, tube improvements, Crossrail 2, and other major transport investments.</li> <li>Council mechanisms for securing third party funding such as the Section 106, Section 278, Community Infrastructure Levy and other landowner contributions.</li> </ul>
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design, consult and implement the City Council's capital programme and TfL's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funded schemes to improve streets and spaces.</li> <li>Guide new developments to improve the public realm for pedestrians.</li> <li>Work with partners to create new routes and public spaces, and enhance existing streets.</li> <li>Allocate highway to increase space for pedestrians according to use and need, whilst balancing the needs of other road users.</li> <li>Encourage the use of parallel walking routes.</li> <li>Construct new and enhance existing formal crossings and informal crossings, especially at signalised junctions.</li> </ul>

2	Improve the quality of the walking environment and the public realm to make walking more comfortable
Current Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Westminster and its partners, including TfL, business improvement districts (BIDs) and developers, have undertaken significant public realm improvements to encourage walking. These range from the Oxford Circus diagonal crossings to transforming local streets.</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making best use of street capacity without inhibiting economic activity.</li> <li>Improving poor air quality by encouraging walking instead of using motor vehicles.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth is stimulating a significant rate and scale of development within Westminster creating opportunities for developers to support and deliver high quality public realm improvements.</li> <li>Joint working / funding opportunities and initiatives with TfL and other partners on schemes, such as the Marylebone Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN) to improve walking and air quality.</li> </ul>
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore further opportunities to de-clutter streets of unnecessary street furniture, including working with TfL and the government.</li> <li>Create resting places in the public realm.</li> <li>Continue to support greening of the streets.</li> <li>Introduce pocket parks and parklets.</li> <li>Support residents who want to introduce play streets.</li> <li>Explore with partners opportunities to manage pedicabs.</li> </ul>

3	Make walking more intuitive by increasing legibility and permeability of walking routes
Current Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents are walking 84% of trips that can be walked in Westminster.</li> <li>Westminster is well provided with Legible London signs, which are used up to 300 times an hour.</li> </ul>
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many people are unfamiliar with walking routes in Westminster.</li> <li>Main roads tend to be the most direct routes, but have poor air quality.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase awareness and understanding of routes and distances.</li> <li>'Open up new routes and streets' around and / or parallel to key transport interchanges and junctions, especially in the West End, and encourage their use.</li> </ul>
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve parallel routes.</li> <li>Support improvements to Legible London.</li> <li>Improve alternative walking routes around temporary utility work sites and major scheme works.</li> </ul>



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# 4

## Ensure walking is a safe option for everyone

<b>Current Situation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2015 there were 1,808 casualties on Westminster’s roads with 471 (26%) involving pedestrians.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential walking trips not made due to real and perceived safety risk, especially to children and the elderly.</li> <li>Tourists and people who are unfamiliar with London are likely to be especially at risk of being injured by motor traffic.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make walking safer by reducing the rate of traffic collisions.</li> <li>Make walking safer by improving pedestrian crossings.</li> <li>Improve safety among tourists and visitors and the perception of safety in London.</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to review data to identify streets with the highest collision rates that need to be redesigned to reduce the number of casualties to achieve the Mayor’s road safety target(s).</li> <li>Learn from Westminster’s 20mph limits trial starting in 2017, and other borough’s measures, to help improve the design of the city’s streets.</li> <li>Design and deliver safer highway’s schemes with greater benefits for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.</li> <li>Reduce the number of delivery and servicing vehicles on Westminster’s streets by 10% by 2026 (in line with the draft MTS) by encouraging Delivery and Servicing Plans and freight and waste consolidation. Support TfL’s introduction of Direct Vision Vehicle safety standards, which provide better visibility of pedestrians to help reduce collisions.</li> <li>Develop road safety campaigns with neighbouring boroughs and vulnerable groups like visitors.</li> <li>Improve the personal safety and comfort of spaces for pedestrians.</li> </ul>

# 5

## Make the pedestrian environment more accessible for everyone

### Current Situation

- Westminster's population is getting older and more people have long term illnesses and conditions.
- Many streets require improvement to the latest accessibility standards so that Westminster's residents and visitors can live more independently.

### Challenges

- The impacts of the public realm on people with sensory / mobility impairments.
- Design footways and public spaces that are better for all users, ie are inclusive for everyone.
- Crowded streets and junctions which require improvements outside transport interchanges and parallel routes around key junctions.

### Opportunities

- Growth is stimulating a significant rate and scale of development within Westminster creating opportunities for developers to deliver high quality public realm improvements.
- Develop and improve designs by the Council, TfL and BIDs to enhance footways and the public realm.
- The opening of the Elizabeth Line, tube improvements, Crossrail 2, and other major transport improvements.

### Measures

- Seek better powers to de-clutter streets and rationalise street furniture.
- Seek stronger powers for the enforcement of new types of motorised vehicles that use the highway and footway, such as scooters, hoverboards, etc.
- Seek to increase pedestrian space and crossing points, extend any proposed accessibility measures wherever possible, ensure the highest quality designs, and review all Traffic Management Orders.
- Involve recognised mobility impaired and older people's groups in any amendments to public realm design standards.

# 6

## Encourage behaviour change to realise the potential of walking

<b>Current Situation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieved 100% coverage of School Travel Plans in December 2016.</li> <li>• Residents are already walking for 84% of trips that can be walked in Westminster.</li> <li>• TfL has suggested that there is greater potential for walking in Westminster.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of residential car parking in some areas can make driving attractive.</li> <li>• Parts of the population are inactive and have high levels of obesity.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch behaviour change messages in association with other measures to maximise their effect.</li> <li>• Support schools, parents / guardians and pupils with a range of behaviour change messages, activities and training to encourage walking and good road safety in young people.</li> <li>• Support community initiatives and residents to walk, report maintenance issues, and health and sports events.</li> <li>• Support travel demand management measures by developers and businesses. Including area-wide travel planning, providing fewer off- and on-street parking spaces by reviewing parking policies in the City Plan and planning application process, and by promoting walking.</li> <li>• Carry out more travel planning work with large employers and BIDs.</li> </ul>
<b>Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek joint opportunities for behaviour change campaigns closely linked to the delivery of pedestrian schemes.</li> <li>• Continue to support the school crossing patrol service, pedestrian safety training and School Travel Plans.</li> <li>• Continue to explore new ways to deliver pedestrian safety training, education and publicity for residents and visitors.</li> <li>• Help to establish 'Physical Activity, Leisure and Sports (PALS) Champions' with the Council's Public Health and Sports and Leisure teams.</li> </ul>

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