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# Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

## Research Report



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At **NatCen Social Research** we believe that social research has the power to make life better. By really understanding the complexity of people's lives and what they think about the issues that affect them, we give the public a powerful and influential role in shaping decisions and services that can make a difference to everyone. And as an independent, not for profit organisation we're able to put all our time and energy into delivering social research that works for society.

**Acknowledgements**

# Contents

# Executive Summary

This study was designed to help ensure that lessons are learnt from the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs)[1] in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes what factors led to schemes being more or less successful in order to inform future implementation of LTNs and other similar measures by central government and local councils.

Although some research has been carried out on this issue following introduction of the latest LTNs in 2020, there is limited in-depth understanding of the lived experience of those living in and around LTNs.

Using a deliberative approach, almost 100 people in London and Birmingham who have been affected by LTNs were invited to consider expert evidence to support the sharing of their views and discussions. These are people from all walks of life who use the surrounding roads for different reasons - whether that's doing the school run, commuting to work, or getting to local shops and services. They were carefully chosen to ensure diversity in terms of age, ethnicity, sex, gender, income and disability, and to reflect a wide range of perspectives on LTNs.

The central aim of the research was to understand how measures to promote active travel (and shared/public transport) as an alternative to private car use can be successfully implemented in ways that are acceptable to the public, based on recent experience of LTNs. In order to achieve this, the research sought to:

- Understand the issues experienced when introducing LTN schemes in 2020 and explore perspectives of different groups
- Explore how consensus on implementation can be built
- Produce clear recommendations to inform future LTN implementation

Given the wide range of experiences we anticipated and the competing values we might encounter, we chose deliberative methods as they are particularly valuable for providing insight into public attitudes to policy problems that are contested, complex or uncertain. This approach focuses on uncovering attitudes after participants have been provided with impartial evidence and 'good conditions' to discuss the issues in question (versus traditional methods that seek to understand current viewpoints).

We began the study with a scoping phase where we assessed the broader LTN landscape to identify the three case study areas – Lambeth and Wandsworth in London, and Lozells in Birmingham - which would form the focus of the deliberative work which we report on here. These were areas that had implemented LTNs since May 2020 and that varied in terms of public perceptions towards them. We then conducted an online deliberative workshop in each area and a final, follow-up workshop with a sample of attendees from across each local workshop.

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[1] [What is a low traffic neighbourhood? - Sustrans.org.uk](What is a low traffic neighbourhood? - Sustrans.org.uk)

The key components of these deliberative sessions were:

- Gathering initial insights on LTNs which included levels of awareness, experience of and attitudes to LTNs as well as information sought and received
- Providing an overview of LTNs and the current debate around them through an evidence session given by an invited expert speaker
- Exploring participants' views on the evidence presented in terms of how LTNs impact on different groups and how these differing interests can be balanced
- Examining if and how future LTNs could be implemented in acceptable and successful ways, as well as suggestions for other solutions that could support modal shift and decrease car usage in the local area

In summary, we found that:

↓ What constitutes an LTN and why they were introduced was not fully understood

↓ Participants appreciated the evidence and data presented by the expert speaker on the context for LTNs and how they could help to reduce air pollution, and generally expressed openness to efforts to reduce traffic on our roads

↓ This was connected to concerns about air pollution and the climate crisis and motivated by a desire to live in a clean and peaceful neighbourhood

↓ However, when reflecting on their lived experience, participants felt that "the theory of how LTNs should work" and their benefits had not translated well into their day-to-day reality

↓ Generally, it was found that people who do not drive related strongly to the concerns of those that do, and conversely those who do drive regularly were generally enthusiastic about the rationale behind LTNs, but questioned the implementation of LTNs and whether they were the right way to achieve the intended goals

↓ Consultation of participants demonstrated that they welcomed the opportunity to discuss controversial issues and share constructive points of view

↓ Participants felt that restrictions to driving should be balanced with measures to make the alternatives cheaper and easier to use

Participants across the three area workshops also made the following recommendations for future LTN implementation:

**Consultation and engagement**

1. Local authorities to engage with LTN residents, boundary residents and businesses from the very start, and provide relevant information

2. Any consultation or resident engagement to be on an ongoing basis and ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to all e.g. take account of low literacy in English or digital exclusion

3. A credible rationale for LTNs including an explanation of why they are needed in a particular area and the likely benefits e.g. any evidence for the reduction of traffic and improvement in air quality

**Implementation**

4. Local authorities to provide a map of all the LTNs across their borough and neighbouring boroughs to help residents navigate them effectively. In addition to this, the introduction of LTNs (and any changes to them) to be updated on sat-nav systems

5. LTNs and any new measures to be introduced gradually and include a "grace period" to allow residents time to understand and adjust to new measures, e.g. issuing a warning and not a fine on the first one or two incidents of breaching an LTN

6. Exemptions and resident passes to be available for those who need exemptions under the right conditions e.g. Blue Badge holders

7. Signage and traffic cameras to be clearly visible so that they cannot be missed

8. Barriers and planters to be more flexible to allow access for key groups such as emergency services

**Complementary measures to promote alternatives to car use**

9. Incentivising people to walk by introducing better street lighting, and to cycle by making roads safer and providing more secure on street bike storage

10. Better communications around cycling and walking options within LTNs as well as improved public transport services that are more frequent, comfortable, accessible and affordable.

This study was commissioned by the European Climate Foundation (ECF).

# CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

Participants in the research said any future consultation with residents about active travel schemes must be:

**Informative**
Information on why schemes are necessary

**Evidenced**
E.g. on levels of air pollution

**Inclusive**
Engaging a diverse cross-section of residents

Deliberative **WORKSHOPS**

# DELIBERATION

After taking part in in-depth deliberative workshops, participants reported having a greater understanding of the case for implementing LTNs and greater appreciation for the experiences of other residents.

# IMPLEMENTATION

Participants suggested future LTN implementation should be:
**Well communicated; Integrated; and Flexible.**

For example, residents suggested a "grace period" to allow residents time to understand and adjust to new measures.

**Communicated**

**Integrated**

**Flexible**

# ALTERNATIVES TO CAR USE

LTN implementation must be accompanied by a commitment to making cycling, walking and public transport more affordable, appealing and accessible.

**Walking**
Better street lighting

**Bicycles & e-scooters**
Nearby to everyone's homes

**Public transport**
More frequent, especially at night

# 1 Background

In the UK, LTNs are intended to provide more space for cycling and walking as well as reducing traffic and pollution on residential streets. Many LTNs were introduced in 2020, using funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund. This enabled local authorities to introduce new measures under experimental or temporary provision without a longer statutory consultation process.[2]

LTNs were first introduced in the 1970s in Hackney to make side roads safer for children. Since then, residential areas have been developed with various types of modal filters in place, to prevent through-traffic, attracting relatively little objection from local residents. Then, in 2014 the UK set out to develop more schemes, which were introduced in some parts of Greater London.[3] In May 2020, the Government announced a new £250m Emergency Active Travel Fund for local authorities. The purpose of this fund was to prevent a car-focused recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic by temporarily reallocating road space to walkers and cyclists. The idea was to assess these schemes with a view to making them permanent.[4]

More than 50 councils have now introduced over 200 LTNs, over half of which are in and around London. Many councils have tried to engage residents in a variety of ways including mail-outs, emails and social media. However, due to these LTNs being introduced during the first lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic, in person consultation events would not have been able to take place as usual. As a result, the speed of implementation, combined with the limited consultation, led in some cases to a public and political backlash, and some schemes have been adjusted or removed as a result.

However, the nature of the opposition has been hard to quantify or qualify, with research revealing broad public support for measures that reduce road traffic and promote active travel, including two thirds of the public supporting the reallocation of road space from cars to walking and cycling.[5] Initial analysis indicates that when designed well, these schemes can lead to an increase in active travel and a decrease in car usage and ownership.[6]

In order to ensure lessons are learned from the implementation of the recent LTNs and to inform future similar schemes, the ECF appointed NatCen to conduct research into how the public viewed LTN schemes and what made them more or less successful. The central aim of the research was to understand how measures to promote active travel (and shared/public transport) as an alternative to private car use, can be successfully implemented in ways that are acceptable to the public, based on recent experience of LTNs. In order to achieve this, the research sought to:

- Understand the issues experienced when introducing LTN schemes in 2020 and explore perspectives of different groups

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19#reallocating-road-space-measures

[3] LTNs for all? Mapping the extent of London's new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Possible, November 2020 https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d30896202a18c0001b49180/t/5fb246b254d7bd32ba4cec90/1605519046389/LTNs+for+all.pdf

[4] Stakeholder engagement in an emergency: Lessons from low-traffic neighbourhoods, Local Government Association, May 2020 https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/stakeholder-engagement-emergency-lessons-low-traffic-neighbourhoods

[5] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/934617/DfT-Public-Opinion-Survey-on-Traffic-and-Road-Use-Phase-1-Report.pdf

[6] https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/ebj89/

- Explore how consensus on implementation can be built
- Produce clear recommendations to inform future LTN implementation

The ECF set up a project Advisory Group comprising representatives of organisations with a relevant perspective on the LTN debate. Organisations were invited across the following interest areas:

- Climate change and clean air
- Walking and cycling
- Motoring
- Emergency services
- Small businesses
- Environmental and racial justice
- Local authorities
- Disability and accessibility

The final Advisory Group comprised six individuals from these groups, listed in the Acknowledgements section at the front of this report[7]. The Advisory Group reviewed this report and gave several comments which are reflected herein. They also considered the recommendations emerging from the project, welcoming some of them as constructive new ideas and others as confirmation of the effectiveness of existing approaches.

We have included the reflections offered by members of the Advisory Group and they are presented in chapter 4 of the report.

## 1.1.1 Overview of the Research

The research was undertaken in two phases. The first phase, conducted in August 2021, was a scoping phase of the national LTN landscape, involving a review of key national and local documents and media coverage, as well as identifying and focusing on three selected case study areas. In these areas, interviews were conducted with key council personnel (e.g. those who initiated the schemes and those involved with implementation) to gain a deeper understanding of the status of LTN implementation and debate. We selected Lambeth, Lozells and Wandsworth as our three case studies.

Stakeholder interviews with councillors and officers helped to inform the design and content of the discussion guides for the deliberative workshops, highlighting relevant local information and insights which would help researchers to better understand references to specific modal filters[8] mentioned by participants in their responses.

The second phase involved deliberative workshops with residents in each of the case study areas, and a follow-up workshop which brought together a sample of the participants from across all three case study areas to consolidate ideas and recommendations. This report sets out the key findings of the scoping review and these deliberative workshops.

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[7] The active travel, motoring, emergency services and small business representatives weren't able to commit to the project due to competing priorities.
[8] A modal filter, sometimes referred to as a point closure, is a road design that restricts the passage of certain types of vehicle.

## 1.2    Structure of this report

This is the final report for the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods research, and includes findings based on data collected between 13th – 27th September 2021.

This report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents an overview of the methodology
- Chapter 3 presents the key research findings
- Chapter 4 presents the conclusions and recommendations for future implementation of LTNs

# 2  Methodology

The study had two main phases:

- Scoping phase including a literature review, selection of case study areas and interviews with key council personnel in selected areas
- Deliberative workshops in three locations, each involving ~30 local residents as well as a follow-up workshop with 27 participants drawn from across the three case study areas

## 2.1  Phase 1: Scoping

The main purpose of the scoping phase was to explore and further understand the background to LTNs and identify the three case study areas that would form the basis of the main phase of the research.

A literature review examined key national and local documents and media coverage[9]. The review enabled a broad understanding of the LTN landscape nationally and where and how these had been implemented across the UK. This gave us important context and the ability to identify the key debates surrounding LTNs, which would inform the design of our deliberative phase. These were:

**Impact of LTNs on traffic levels**

- Central to the debate is whether LTNs lead to traffic evaporation or displacement. Most evidence for traffic evaporation comes from international studies carried out over 20 years ago. Studies acknowledge that after road closures, congestion may worsen before it improves, and it can take up to three years for beneficial impacts to be seen.
- London Living Streets (2021) analysed data from four London boroughs that implemented LTNs in 2020. It found that motor traffic levels decreased by average of 45% inside LTNs but increased by average of 4.5% on peripheral roads (range from - 17% to + 44%).
- Studies have recommended that when LTNs are developed, **complementary measures should also be delivered** that work to reduce traffic on nearby main or boundary roads.

**Equity and fairness of impacts of LTNs**

- Critics of LTNs claim that traffic displacement on to the main roads increases air pollution on those roads, which has a harmful impact on residents and pedestrians. They also point to the differing demographic profile of communities living within LTNs and those living on nearby boundary roads, promoting a view that LTNs simply shift traffic pollution from affluent, largely white areas to less affluent, more ethnically diverse areas.
- LTN advocates point to a 2021 study, which found that across London, people in the most deprived quarter of neighbourhoods were almost three times as likely to live in a new LTN compared to those in the least deprived quarter, and members of Black and minority ethnic communities were slightly more likely to live in a new LTN than white people.

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[9] A list of literature review sources is provided in the appendices.

- Transport for All research found that respondents with disabilities reported both positive and negative impacts of LTNs. They suggested ways in which LTNs could be **designed to be more accessible and inclusive**.

**Impact of LTNs on local businesses**

- Concerns have been raised around the impact of LTNs on local businesses located inside LTNs and those located outside LTNs which rely on access to streets inside LTNs.
- Although not specific to LTNs, a summary of evidence produced by Transport for London cites a range of beneficial impacts of increased active travel among retail businesses' customers.
- Evidence of negative impacts of LTNs on local businesses is largely anecdotal and based on case studies.

**Lack of consultation around LTN implementation**

- 2020 LTNs were funded on an emergency footing, leading critics to argue that their implementation was grasping and opportunistic.
- Concerns have been raised that councils are paying lip service to the idea that these are genuine trials.
- There have been criticisms that a select few stakeholders have been granted an active role in the design and evaluation of LTNs.

**Impact on emergency service access**

- There have been concerns around delayed access for emergency service vehicles to properties inside LTN areas. Images and anecdotes of delays to emergency service vehicles have been prominently shared online.
- However, councils appear to have learnt from these earlier experiences, and many of the 2020 LTN schemes allow physical access to emergency service vehicles. It is worth stating that councils are obliged by law to consult the emergency services on any traffic scheme. Some were broadly supportive, citing health benefits[10]. Given this, emergency service impacts were not a main focus of the research, in spite of the claims made online.

The second part of the scoping phase was to identify **case study locations**. We decided that three case study locations would deliver a robust qualitative sample delivering a good degree of variation.

The three case study area LTNs were selected according to the following criteria:

- Timing of LTN schemes: three areas that had implemented LTNs in 2020
- Scheme status: two areas where one or more schemes were adjusted or cancelled and one where schemes remained in place without significant adjustment.

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[10] "*To date, our crews have not reported any detrimental issues caused by the changes to road layout whilst responding to 999 calls. However, should such a situation arise, we are confident that we would work with the relevant council to resolve these. We are supportive of LTNs [low-traffic neighbourhoods] due to the health benefits in the same way as we are a supporter of Birmingham city council's green air zone that is due to come into force this year*." West Midlands ambulance service spokesperson https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/feb/13/covid-bike-and-walking-schemes-do-not-delay-ambulances-trusts-say

- Geographical context: at least one inner city area and one outer urban area with attention paid to proximity to trunk roads and high streets.
- Social diversity: schemes in areas of higher and lower deprivation (using the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and different demographics (for example ethnic composition, age).
- Political leadership: schemes in boroughs run by different political parties.

Even though around half of the schemes initiated thus far have been implemented in London, it was agreed that we would include Birmingham for schemes rolled out under its Places for People initiative. The advantage of including Birmingham is that it provided a wider range of perspectives and local considerations outside of London.

We therefore proposed two sites in London (Lambeth and Wandsworth), with Lozells in Birmingham as a third.

## 2.1.1 Lambeth

Lambeth Council is a Labour majority led administration and is divided into 21 wards. Of the 63 council seats, 57 are Labour, five are Green with one Conservative member. Lambeth Council's 2019 Transport Strategy included a Low Traffic Neighbourhood Plan, which included proposals for three LTNs. The strategy allocated a budget of £655k between 2019 and 2022 to create LTNs. These plans were accelerated in response to the pandemic and formed part of the Lambeth Covid-19 Transport Strategy Programme. This programme allocated £427,000 for LTNs in Oval, Railton, Streatham Hill and Ferndale. All of these wards are represented by Labour councillors.

## 2.1.2 Lozells

Birmingham City Council is a Labour majority led administration and is divided in to 69 wards. Of the 101 council seats, 65 are Labour, 27 are Conservative, eight are Liberal Democrat with one Green member. The Lozells LTN was initially funded by Department for Transport's Emergency Active Travel Fund as the West Midlands Emergency Active Travel Fund Package in 2020. Birmingham received over £1m in tranche 1 of the pilot for pop-up and temporary interventions, including one-way streets in Lozells. The LTN is made up of four cells containing 13 roads, which all connect to a main road and local shopping strip. Lozells is represented by Cllr Waseem Zaffar MBE who is the Cabinet member for Transport and Environment.

## 2.1.3 Wandsworth

Wandsworth is a Conservative led administration and is divided in to 20 wards. Of the 60 council seats, 33 seats are held by Conservative members, 26 by Labour with one independent. Wandsworth Council secured funding from Transport for London's London Streetspace Plan (LSP) to deliver LTNs across the borough via an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO). The LTNs were implemented from 17th August 2020 on a trial basis. However, following mounting concerns and feedback from emergency services, residents, key councillors and traffic engineers, an urgent evidence review of the pilot LTNs was undertaken in September 2020. This review resulted in a decision to suspend all LTN measures, which was made on 11th September 2020.

The final part of the scoping phase was to carry out stakeholder interviews with relevant council personnel in each of these three case study locations.

These interviews explored their roles in the scheme and their reflections on design, consultation, implementation and the impacts of LTNs locally. There were some challenges in recruiting participants, reflecting the perceived divisive nature of the debate on LTNs. This underscores the need for, and the value of deliberative workshops undertaken in this project, which showed that it is possible for the public to have civil exchanges about this topic.

The scoping phase generated detailed and valuable information specific to each case study area, which was fed into the deliberative workshop design. This included local insights about the number of LTNs and filters, and how the local authorities went about the planning, implementation and consultation processes. This information was valuable for researchers to gain a deeper understanding of each of the case study areas ahead of the deliberative workshops.

## 2.2   Phase II: Deliberative workshops

Deliberative workshops are a form of facilitated group discussions that provide participants with the opportunity to consider an issue in depth, challenge each other's opinions, and develop their views to reach an informed position. Deliberative research focuses on uncovering attitudes after participants have been provided with impartial evidence and an opportunity to discuss the issue(s) in question, in a space where all views are encouraged without any judgement. This is different to more traditional methods that seek to understand current viewpoints. Therefore, deliberative workshops are particularly valuable for providing insight into public attitudes to policy problems that are contested, complex or uncertain.

As a keenly debated and sometimes controversial topic, exploring attitudes towards LTNs lends itself to deliberation. By bringing together residents from areas in which LTNs were implemented, providing them with evidence and information from an expert speaker, and creating a space for debate moderated by skilled facilitators, the conditions for productive and respectful discussion can be created and the issues explored in depth.

## 2.3 Sampling

For each case study area, specialist recruiters engaged and recruited members of the public who either worked or lived in or near the LTN. They did this using a detailed recruitment screening questionnaire. The aim was to ensure a balance of views supporting or opposing LTNs, to encourage meaningful discussions.

The workshops were balanced by age, sex, gender, ethnicity, disability and main mode of travel to ensure diversity and inclusion of participants and be reflective of the case study areas.

Researchers conducted the online workshops in Lambeth, Wandsworth and Lozells between 13th and 20th September 2021.

**Table 1. Number of participants that attended each workshop**

| Workshop | Number of participants |
|----------|------------------------|
| Lambeth | 31 |
| Lozells | 27 |
| Wandsworth | 36 |
| Total | 94 |

A smaller group of participants from across each of the three workshops was then invited to take part in a follow-up workshop, which brought them together to focus on recommendations for future implementation of LTNs. This was conducted on 27th September 2021. 27 participants took part in the follow-up workshop (see Appendix B for the sample composition).
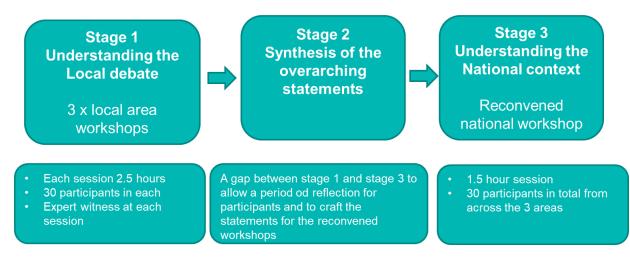
## 2.4 Workshop Design

In designing the workshops, the research team considered:

- The importance of allowing groups to come together to discuss local LTNs and to help identify the local facets of the debate
- Allowing enough time to generate suggestions and recommendations within local case study area workshops
- Ensuring that the same or comparable experts were available for each workshop
- Participants' ability and opportunity to discuss LTNs with people from other areas/different parts of the country to understand alternative views and different contexts
- The time required to elicit insights while avoiding participant fatigue
- Ensuring sessions are not so broad and general in scope that minority voices/opinions remain unheard
- Allowing adequate time for reflection to enhance the deliberative process
- Enabling participants from the three case study areas to come together to share and compare local experiences and agree recommendations

In addition to these considerations, the ECF and members of the Advisory Group were also able to observe the workshops.

The chart below gives an overview of the workshop design and process:

| Stage 1 Understanding the Local debate  3 x local area workshops | Stage 2 Synthesis of the overarching statements | Stage 3 Understanding the National context  Reconvened national workshop |
|---|---|---|
| • Each session 2.5 hours<br>• 30 participants in each<br>• Expert witness at each session | A gap between stage 1 and stage 3 to allow a period od reflection for participants and to craft the statements for the reconvened workshops | • 1.5 hour session<br>• 30 participants in total from across the 3 areas |

The initial workshops were two and a half hours long and used a mix of plenary and smaller group discussions (see Table 2). The smaller group discussions consisted of 8 -10 participants.

At the beginning of each workshop, participants introduced themselves to each other and gave their initial views on LTNs ahead of the expert evidence session and deliberation exercise.

As interaction with experts is a key component of deliberation, to maintain consistency, it was agreed that one expert would be used across all three workshops. As a result, Oliver Lord was invited to give a factual overview of the debate on LTNs and to cover all sides of the issue, including contested aspects as well as the rationale and benefits. The evidence session took the form of a 20-minute presentation. With over 10 years' experience as a transport planner and policy officer in local government, Oliver's presentation was intended to help participants achieve an informed understanding of the rationale behind LTNs as well as the views of residents and interest groups.

**Table 2. Workshop Outline**

| Discussion overview | Session type | Length of time |
|---|---|---|
| Welcome | Plenary session | 10 mins |
| Introductions in small groups and views on local LTNs to:<br>• Meet participants and allow them to introduce themselves to others in the group<br>• Find out about participants' level of awareness of LTNs in their local area<br>• Find out how participants feel about LTNs in their local area | Break out rooms | 20 mins |
| Evidence session from expert speaker to:<br>• Give participants an overview of LTNs including the history of LTNs<br>• Explain to participants the debate around LTNs, including the rationale, potential benefits and contested aspects<br>• Address any questions participants may have about LTNs | Plenary session | 30 minutes |
| Comfort Break | 10 mins | |
| Deliberating on the evidence and bringing lived experience into the discussion to:<br>• Explore the impact of LTNs on different groups<br>• Discuss how different needs and interests can be balanced<br>• Consider what conditions would need to be in place for a future LTN to be seen as acceptable/successful<br>• Surface suggestions for other solutions that could support modal shift and decrease car usage in the local area | Small group deliberation | 1 hour |
| Participants share their reflections across the assembly via the moderators | Plenary | 15 minutes |
| Close/next steps | | 5 mins |

The three deliberative workshops generated a set of overarching statements on LTNs which covered a range of recommendations and suggestions. Following the workshops, the research team gathered and synthesised these, producing a combined set of statements that reflected the views across all three workshops.

## 2.4.1 Follow-up workshop

These statements were then incorporated into a discussion guide for a follow-up workshop. The follow-up workshop took a similar approach of combining plenary and smaller group discussions, but without the expert evidence. In this shorter workshop, which lasted one and half hours, a sub-sample of participants from across Lambeth, Lozells and Wandsworth came together. They discussed the recommendations from the previous geographically specific workshops to see if there were insights that might (or might not) be more broadly applicable.

Specifically, they focused on suggestions around engagement/consultation, implementation, and additional measures to promote alternatives to car use. Within smaller groups participants discussed:

- The recommendations and whether they felt they captured the solutions from their local area workshops and whether anything was missing
- Which solutions listed were essential/should be the top priority to make LTNs and similar schemes more successful in the future, and the reasons for this
- What kind of support participants felt would be necessary for this to become a reality and from whom (e.g. the Government, local authorities etc.)

All workshops took place online and after each workshop, researchers conducted short video interviews with willing participants about their experiences of taking part in deliberative research. Videos were edited to create a short film ahead of the launch event scheduled for January 2022.

## 2.4.2 Pre and Post workshop evaluation

Before and after the workshops, participants were invited to answer a short questionnaire which asked about their opinions on LTNs and whether they would like to see more of them. It was important to give participants an opportunity to express their views outside of a group setting, to allow for private reflection and sharing of opinions. This data is presented in section 3.5.

# 3 Key Research Findings

The following section captures the overarching views and attitudes as well as emerging recommendations from deliberations.

## 3.1 Awareness of LTNs (pre-deliberation)

Participants were first asked to introduce themselves and share their top of mind views on LTNs. This was intended to engage participants in the discussion and establish their pre-deliberated baseline opinions.

This section summarises what participants understood about why LTNs were introduced; as well as what constitutes an LTN and the sources of information they had encountered; their views about LTNs; and the impacts LTNs had on them.

### 3.1.1 Perceived reasons for introduction of LTNs

Before the deliberations, there was mixed understanding amongst participants as to why LTNs were introduced. Generally, people thought that LTNs were introduced to reduce the volume of traffic on roads, in turn reducing air pollution.

> *"I assume [the introduction of LTNs] is to do with low emissions, pollution, the amount of traffic going through and the air we breathe." [Wandsworth]*

> *"I guess the whole goal is to get people to stop driving to cut the emissions. So [LTNs] put people off driving so it makes the air quality better." [Lambeth]*

Participants understood that LTNs were intended to promote active travel, such as cycling and walking, over car use. They discussed their view that this was being done by making car journeys more inconvenient and by making neighbourhoods easier and safer to walk and cycle in. They identified this had a further benefit of reducing road traffic accidents.

As well as promoting active travel to reduce air pollution, it was suggested that walking and cycling was being encouraged to increase exercise levels.

> *"[LTNs were introduced] to encourage more people to walk… because obviously with the pandemic happening – just exercise and stuff." [Wandsworth]*

Another suggestion was that LTNs were introduced because residents had previously complained about the high volume of traffic, noise and air pollution on their streets.

There was some understanding that LTNs were introduced partly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however, reasons behind this varied. One belief was that, during Covid-19, car use rose as people avoided public transport, which increased the need to encourage a move towards active travel. Another view was that LTNs were implemented to replicate the low volume of traffic seen on roads during Covid-19, when people had noticed an improvement in air quality and a greater feeling of safety.

> *"I'm sure I read somewhere that [the introduction of LTNs] was linked to the climate need but also the fact that the streets were really quiet during lockdown. I'm sure there was something about how it was taking advantage*

*of how quiet the streets were and people enjoying quiet streets and a bit more of a feeling of safety." [Lambeth]*

There was some agreement that Covid-19 provided local authorities with the opportunity to implement LTNs quickly, not least because central government gave funding to local authorities, which they otherwise would not have received. It was further suggested that the emergency legislation that came with Covid-19 allowed local authorities to implement such measures without consultation. Some believed that Covid-19 was being used as an excuse to implement these changes.

Another view was that LTNs were introduced by local authorities as a money-making scheme. Some participants believed this to be the case due to the large number of fines incurred from CCTV cameras, the value of which were considered disproportionate to the offence. Participants felt that cameras were not always clearly visible, and some believed they were deliberately hidden in order to increase revenue from fines.

> *"Why I think in this case Lambeth has introduced it, I personally think it's to generate money. Because the charges that you get to go through them is disproportionate to what it is - I think it's like a little bit of a con to extort money from local residents" [Lambeth]*

There were a few participants who said that they had not heard about LTNs until being contacted for this research project. Typically, these participants did not receive official communication about their introduction, lived just outside LTNs or were not car users, meaning they were less likely to come across the new schemes.

## 3.1.2 Understanding of what makes an LTN

Participants' understanding of what makes an LTN varied. Some were unsure which measures in their areas related to LTNs, due to other road works and traffic calming measures that had recently been introduced. For example, confusion arose from the addition of 20mph zones, one-way systems, cycle lanes and the movement of bus stops. This confusion was apparent in the Wandsworth and Lozells workshops, where participants may have experienced other road closures, for example due to preparations for the Commonwealth Games taking place in Birmingham in 2022.

## 3.1.3 Sources of information

Prior to the deliberations, participants told us they had learned about LTNs from a wide range of sources, including: the news, local radio, social media, word of mouth, local community centres, council websites, and leaflets and posters distributed by pro- and anti-LTN groups.

Participants also mentioned receiving communications from their local authorities in the form of newsletters, letters through the door and emails. According to the workshop participants, only residents who lived *within* LTNs in Lambeth and Lozells had received this information. Although the recipients appreciated this communication, some thought that they had not been provided with enough information and others expressed frustration around the lack of consultation.

Participants who lived outside an LTN in Lambeth and Lozells said they had not received information from the local authorities. It is interesting to note that there were some residents who lived within LTNs who also said that they had not received any information from their local authorities, indicating an inconsistency which could explain some of the confusion and frustration around LTNs.

In some of the groups, some participants also cited conspiracy theories about LTNs which they had encountered on social media sites. These included theories about LTNs being introduced to trace vehicle movement during Covid-19 or to help with police chases. One view was that conspiracy theories had arisen as a direct consequence of the perceived lack of information from local authorities.

### 3.1.4 Views of LTNs

There was general agreement about the need to act to tackle the climate emergency. However, not all participants were convinced that LTNs would play a role in this. LTNs were regarded by some to be ineffective in reducing emissions due to the displacement of traffic. Rather than reducing traffic on roads, it was believed that LTNs displaced traffic to other areas, making journeys longer and ultimately increasing congestion with stationary traffic and producing high levels of pollution.

> *"Although the ultimate goal is to reduce carbon emissions and pollution, you're just moving it rather than removing it. You're just shoving it on one or two streets. The main streets are now getting heavily polluted, there's big traffic jams, it takes twice/three times as long to get anywhere, you use up more petrol, it costs more to get around and there's people like me. I can't walk and I can't cycle, and I don't think anyone's thought of that."* [Lambeth]

This view that traffic might be displaced rather than reduced, already encountered in the scoping phase, informed our decision to ask participants what more can be done to encourage modal shift from private car use to public, shared and active transport.

There was also some cynicism about the amount of money being spent on schemes that some regarded as inconvenient and ineffective.

### 3.1.5 Impacts of LTNs

LTNs appeared to have a negative impact on car drivers, who experienced increased journey times from longer routes and increased congestion. There were also some participants who spoke about being unsure of how to reach their destination due to the LTNs. There was a belief amongst some participants that LTNs have caused drivers to become increasingly impatient and drive more dangerously.

LTNs were also perceived to impact different groups of people to a varying extent. Older people, disabled people and those who are less mobile were highlighted as groups who were negatively impacted by the introduction of LTNs. The impacts of LTNs on different groups is discussed further in section 3.3.

There was a general opinion that LTNs were seen to deliver quieter, safer and more pedestrian and cycle friendly streets. Cyclists and parents spoke about the positive effects of LTNs and feeling safer cycling on roads. These positive impacts were seen mostly for children.

> *"When you have children, you almost feel a little bit safer knowing that there's not so much cars going past."* [Lambeth]

In some of the groups it was observed that people who do not drive related strongly to the concerns of those that do, and conversely those who do drive regularly were generally enthusiastic about the rationale behind LTNs, but questioned the implementation and whether LTNs were the right way to achieve these goals.

Those who were unaware of the introduction of LTNs and tended not to drive did not feel impacted by LTNs in any way.

## 3.2 Deliberating on expert evidence

The expert presentation explained how LTNs work, as well as the challenges they seek to address within the national context. They were described to participants primarily as an initiative intended to reduce traffic on smaller residential roads and promote active travel in urban areas. As well as this, when implemented among wider policy changes, to address the climate emergency; bring down air pollution; and reduce flood risk. The purpose of the expert evidence was to give participants information to deliberate on in order to explore their more informed views and generate recommendations. These recommendations can help local authorities to ensure future public facing communications about LTNs are delivered in ways that are both acceptable and compelling and include the right content such as credible data and rationale for LTNs. This section summarises how participants responded to the expert evidence and to what extent they considered this in coming to their views and judgements.

### 3.2.1 Initial reactions

Participants saw the expert evidence as 'the theory of how LTNs should work'. They generally welcomed the ideal of safer, quieter and cleaner neighbourhoods where everybody uses active travel or public transport to undertake short journeys. The presentation helped some to better understand the rationale for LTNs, especially those who felt their local authorities had failed to adequately explain this prior to implementation.

> "It was really good to have some transparency around LTNs and a little bit more information […] rationale" [Wandsworth]

Participants were particularly interested in the information provided about the effect of cars on air pollution and climate change. They were shocked to learn how much cars and taxis pollute[11], and concerned about the health impacts on children and those with breathing problems. Accordingly, they were supportive of the need to make cities cleaner spaces for active travel.

> "it made me feel a bit like, wow. I'm not taking this [air pollution] seriously enough. I'm a Londoner born and raised […] it's just all I know" [Lambeth]

But while supportive of what LTNs set out to achieve, participants said this was idealistic and not fully reflected in their lived experiences.

> "when it was written out on paper like that it looked like the LTNs made sense but then I guess in practice, from our lived experience, they don't necessarily work in the way that is intended" [Lambeth]

They generally appreciated that effective LTN implementation requires residents to minimise their car usage and rely instead on active travel or public transport. However, for everyone to undertake such a mode shift, they said that LTN implementation must be accompanied by a commitment to tackling the issues that currently make cars the most attractive option. They felt that such issues could have been better identified and

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[11] Expressed in response to the fact that transport was responsible for 27% of UK domestic greenhouse gas emissions in 2019 and, of this, 55.4% came from cars and taxis. Figures taken from: UK domestic transport emissions, 2019 (DfT)

addressed in their areas, had local authorities run a full consultation prior to LTN implementation.

> *"On a piece of paper it looks great […] but they don't live in the reality of the area. It doesn't work in practicality. That's where the lack of consultation is upsetting"* [Lambeth]

The specific issues participants had in mind, and their recommendations to address them, are elaborated on in 'suggestions for future LTN implementation'.

## 3.2.2  Questions that emerged

Though participants felt the ideal behind LTNs was not fully reflected by their own lived experiences, the evidence about why LTNs were necessary was generally well received. Following this, participants were eager to hear from others and gain a sense of the overall effect the LTNs had. It was interesting to note that for a few participants, this was the first time that they had been made aware of the link between air quality improvement and LTNs. However, some participants remained sceptical and thought the deliberative workshop would provide them with evidence about the impact that LTNs were currently having on air quality in their area. Whilst these details were not an element of the workshops, it did demonstrate an appetite for more information – and this sort of data that would show whether LTNs are working or not in terms of reducing air pollution.

> *"what's the difference in the air quality? What's the actual real result of the LTNs, as opposed to what they were expecting based on the idea initially?"* [Lambeth]

# 3.3  Impact of LTNs on different groups

This section summarises participants' reflections about how LTNs impact people differently. They related to mode of transport; location; level of mobility; impacts for businesses; and access for emergency services.

## 3.3.1 Mode of transport

Car users said they experienced increased journey times due to displaced traffic and increased congestion on main roads, with suggested implications on their earnings and day-to-day activities.

Those who depend on public transport to get around, such as young families and older people, also experienced increased journey times due to displaced traffic. Some mentioned that public transport routes were also affected at times, meaning journeys were less direct and people had to walk further to reach bus stops. Some cyclists in the groups mentioned benefiting from an increased level of safety when cycling on quieter residential roads and on main roads with a slower flow of traffic[12].

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[12] During a daily Coronavirus briefing on 3rd June 2020, Secretary for Transport Grant Shapps announced that levels of cycling in the UK had soared by as much as 200% on weekends with a 100% increase on weekdays during lockdown. LTNs likely played a part in promoting this increase in cycling alongside the Covid-19 lockdown (which required the public to stay at home except for essential travel and exercise). https://www.cyclist.co.uk/news/8285/cycling-has-increased-by-200-since-lockdown-government-reports

However, some participants said that cyclists were also negatively impacted by LTNs as they used congested main roads where traffic was displaced to. It was suggested that when cyclists were caught in traffic, they were exposed to even higher levels of pollution than previously.

There was also a perception that the safety of pedestrians was affected both positively and negatively by the introduction of LTNs. On the positive side, pedestrians in LTNs benefited from increased levels of road safety as the threat of speeding cars and the danger of crossing a road was reduced. However, some perceived an increased risk of being victims of crime as a result of quieter streets, especially at night. This safety concern was perceived to be more of a risk in Lozells and Lambeth, and particularly for women and children (in Lambeth in particular, this might be explained by the heightened fears following the abduction and murder of Sarah Everard in Lambeth in March 2021). In these discussions, people consequently felt safer being in a car and so chose travelling by car over walking in the LTN, despite increased journey times.

> *"My issue also is with the safety aspects. Going down those Low Traffic Neighbourhoods… it's quiet. I would not walk down those roads by myself at night. It's supposed to be pedestrian friendly; it's scary to me. Before, you had cars going by, at least you were seen, there were some people around. But when you're walking down those roads… it's not safe at all, it's not safe" [Lambeth]*

Participants in parts of Lambeth and Lozells also explained that perceived fear of crime in general was a deterrent to walking around in their neighbourhood.

> *"If you knew what Lozells was like, you wouldn't be walking." [Lozells]*

## 3.3.2 Location

Participants also thought that LTNs impacted people differently depending on where they lived. The perception of those who lived within LTNs was that they benefited from reduced traffic. They mentioned better quality of sleep from the reduced noise and a greater sense of road safety, preventing road traffic accidents occurring on their streets. However, in some cases, quieter roads weren't always positive, as it was noted that in some areas this has led to an increase in anti-social behaviour, such as street-drinking.

> *"I think other issues have come out of the schemes. So, for instance, even though other areas have become more quieter, I think they've attracted things like anti-social behaviour or people using the public spaces as toilets, or more street-drinkers. I see that in my local area." [Lambeth]*

In contrast, those who lived on the boundaries of LTNs reported that they felt the consequences of displaced traffic, such as increased noise, increased levels of pollution, and a lower level of road safety. Following this, it was suggested by some that those from lower socio-economic groups and ethnic minorities may be more negatively impacted, as they may be more likely to live in areas where traffic is displaced to. There was a sense of unfairness in the differences experienced depending on where people lived.

### 3.3.3 Disabled people

LTNs were regarded as impacting negatively on some participants with a range of disabilities and impairments. They included people with sensory impairment (deaf or blind), neurodiversity or mobility-related disabilities. Older residents also felt impacted in various ways. It was noted that the concept of LTNs – to reduce car usage whilst increasing cycling and walking for shorter journeys – was not a practical or realistic option for these groups of people.

Those with mobility issues also found it harder to get around using taxis, buses and community shuttle buses. While LTNs have been designed so that everyone can reach properties inside them by car, some mentioned that taxis were no longer able to drop-off residents at their front doors, due to the fines they may incur on entering the LTN, or the extra time required to negotiate the access restrictions (such as one way traffic). This meant that participants with mobility issues or disabilities were required to travel further distances to access taxis, causing them difficulties. Participants also experienced increased journey times when using community shuttle buses, for reasons mentioned previously. The unpredictable pick-up and drop-off times were greatly disruptive to users' day-to-day lives.

For those with non-mobility related disabilities (e.g. sensory impairment or neurodiversity), one of the positive impacts of LTNs included being able to do the school run on foot within a quiet environment without many cars around.

### 3.3.4 Impacts on businesses

It was suggested by some participants that businesses within LTNs could be affected by reduced footfall, impacting on sales. Participants further mentioned that LTNs made it harder for businesses to send and receive deliveries as delivery drivers face difficulties accessing places located within an LTN. It was not evident from the workshops that there were any business owners present.

> *"It is working in a way because myself, as a disabled driver, I am not driving down Lozells Road anymore… so getting drivers to avoid the area, that is working. But I think about the shopkeepers down there and it must be quite difficult for them if people are choosing not to visit the area anymore. Where's their footfall traffic? Customers who feel as though it's just too difficult to go down there for your fresh veg or your mutton or fish or whatever. If it's too difficult to access, people will just stay away."* [Lozells]

## 3.4 Suggestions for future LTN implementation

Regardless of whether participants had positive or negative views about LTNs, all the group discussions generated suggestions for how to improve the future implementation of LTNs and similar schemes. There was a greater understanding for those with opposing views, and regardless of their position on LTNs, participants found consensus in wanting consultation and general improvements in implementation.

Following the first round of deliberative workshops, we grouped these recommendations into three main areas: **Consultation and engagement, Implementation** and **Alternatives to car use**. These categories were taken to the follow-up workshop where participants were able to discuss and agree them, to come to a final set of recommendations.

### 3.4.1 Consultation and engagement

Across all three workshops participants suggested that any consultation must be: **Informative; Evidenced**; and **Inclusive.**

**Informative.** Local authorities could demonstrate how the LTN is likely to work and provide information in a simple, easy to understand format (including maps, for example) to residents who live in, near, or travel through a proposed LTN. Consultation should be accompanied by education about why LTNs, and a reduction in car usage, are deemed necessary. Local authorities are more likely to enjoy public support if they demonstrate the positive outcomes for public health, road safety and the environment.

**Evidenced.** Use of evidence (on the extent of air pollution, for example) is important for building support for LTNs and similar schemes, as well as demonstration of how previous LTNs have been successful. Furthermore, without timely and credible evidence from trusted sources, the information void can be filled quickly by misinformation and even conspiracy theories which, once embedded, are then difficult to dispel.

**Representative & Inclusive.** To ensure representation and inclusivity, local authorities could be encouraged to capture the full diversity of local communities. This means consulting a representative cross-section of people who live in, near, or travel to or through the area. It also means optimising the information provided and the channels used to communicate about and engage people on LTNs for different needs and preferences. The suggested consultation channels are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3. Suggested consultation channels**

| Mode | Examples |
|---|---|
| **Digital** | Social media; Zoom; local TV and radio; text messaging |
| **Paper-based** | Information leaflets; newsletters; public advertising |
| **Canvassing** | Street stalls; door to door knocking; and public meetings in libraries, schools, English language classes, community and faith centres |

Any consultation must be also accessible to those for whom English is a second language. For example, depending on the area and the diversity of languages, translators could be hired from the community to do this work.

Making consultations inclusive means that material must be available in accessible formats, such as British Sign Language, Easy Read, Braille and text-only[13].

Implementation is less likely to be perceived as something imposed from the outside if consultation is first championed by local MPs, community leaders and resident groups. Finally, consultation must be ongoing, with continual opportunities to provide feedback and regular progress updates to those affected by the scheme.

## 3.4.2 Implementation

When discussing the implementation of LTNs, participants focused on practicalities they considered necessary, to ensure that traffic calming measures do not go unseen or ignored. They suggested that signage could be improved by making signs and cameras permanent, obvious and thoughtfully placed, and by ensuring that drivers are given more notice as they approach traffic calming measures. It was also suggested that colouring signs and cameras more brightly would make it as clear as possible to drivers what infrastructure had been implemented, and what rules surround them.

Participants suggested implementation should be **well communicated; gradual; integrated**; and **flexible**.

**Well communicated**. To avoid confusion, implementation should take place with several months' notice, ample explanation and a gradual adjustment period. Traffic calming measures should be clearly marked on GPS devices. If fines are to be issued, the local authorities should clarify why this is necessary and provide full transparency on how the money generated will be used. Fines were considered more acceptable if spent within the LTN e.g. to subsidise green installations or public transport.

**Gradual.** They should only issue warnings (rather than fines) to first time offenders during a 'grace period', and take the opportunity to educate them about LTNs.

**Integrated**. LTN implementation should be carefully and harmoniously integrated with any simultaneous changes to transport infrastructure. For example: major road works, expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) or the introduction of a bordering LTN.

**Flexible**. LTNs should enable easy access for those who have no option but to use a car (e.g. disabled residents and service vehicle drivers), or those disproportionately inconvenienced (e.g. those living by schools). For example, barriers should be flexible (e.g. timebound) and resident passes should be provided to those who need them.

## 3.4.3 Alternatives to car use

To facilitate mode shift, LTN implementation must be accompanied by a commitment to tackling the issues that currently make cars the default option for many.

> *"It's nice in theory but in reality we don't have all the other measures to go with it that would actually improve how we're going to get somewhere"*
> *[Lambeth]*

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[13] One Advisory Group member also advocated that engagement with disabled residents should be active (i.e. focus groups, walk/wheelarounds etc…) with participants remunerated for their time.

Suggestions focussed on improvements to: **walking; bicycles and e-scooters; public transport**; and **driving**.

**Walking**. LTNs can be made pleasanter to walk in with the introduction of pedestrianised roads and crossings, planters and more seating. Wholly car free zones should be considered around schools, and local authorities could do more to prevent on-pavement parking. Additionally, in some areas, neighbourhoods were not felt to be safe unless there are well-lit roads and commitments to reducing crime (e.g. bicycle theft, knife crime and drug-related activity).

> *"cars make you feel like ok well, if something happens to me, someone in that car would see it. If you take away the cars on a not well-lit street actually that could fear some people walking down it"* [Lambeth]

**Bicycles & e-scooters[14]**. Residents would like to see bicycles and e-scooters (and supporting infrastructure) provided within proximity of everyone's homes. Greater provision of continuous cycle paths, lower speed limits and fixed potholes would improve road safety, and more secure parking facilities should be provided on both public and residential streets to prevent bicycle theft and damage. Cycling and e-scooter schemes should be provided publicly (i.e. not just through work), be better advertised, and subsidised or discounted to those on lower incomes.

> *"if the purpose of the LTNs is to create more cyclists, more pedestrians […] actually creating safe cycle routes is the way to get people to cycle round […] it's scary cycling in London if there's no cycle path"* [Lambeth]

**Public transport**. Services should be more frequent, especially at night, and available across a wider area. Public transport should be comfortable and accessible to those with mobility-related needs. It should also be made affordable, either through direct subsidisation or incentivisation (e.g. bus passes or council tax reductions). Free school buses should be provided to all students who cannot easily walk to school.

**Driving.** In addition to making alternatives to driving cheaper and more convenient, some residents also proposed alternative measures to make driving more expensive and inconvenient. It was proposed that local authorities should deter drivers by issuing fines more effectively, increasing the presence of traffic wardens and taxing drivers based on their petrol usage. However, walking, cycling or taking public transport is also not a realistic option for all people or for all journey types. For example, for older and disabled residents or for bulk shopping trips (although e-bikes, for both passengers and cargo, could play a role in making cycling a more accessible solution for these use cases).

> *"for a lot of people that's not practical because they've got mobility problems perhaps and so they are not going to be walking very far and certainly not going to be cycling"* [Wandsworth]

Participants wanted to see accommodations made for those who cannot change their habits. For example, the Government should provide an integrated and subsidised car-pooling service, as well as more disabled parking and car charging points for those who need them.

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[14] Important note: Currently e-scooters are not a legal form of transport outside of the areas where they're being trialled.

# 3.5 Evaluation exercise

Before and after taking part in the deliberative workshops, participants were asked questions to gather their personal reflections on LTNs, including their views on the introduction of LTNs in their area, the wider implementation of LTNs across England and whether they had changed their views after the discussions. Some participants agreed to answer the questions, and a summary of responses is provided in the tables below. The same questions were asked before and after the workshops. It should be noted that this was a voluntary exercise so the numbers taking part before and after vary. A total of 94 participants responded to the questions before the deliberative event, while 75 participants responded after the event. Out of the 75 participants who provided feedback after the workshops, not all provided answers to every evaluation question, meaning sample sizes vary. Given this, these results are indicative rather than conclusive, but do give us some sense of the levels of understanding around LTNs.

**Evaluation summary**

Our analysis indicates that views tended not to change much after the workshop, with those initially supportive of LTNs remaining supportive, albeit with a greater understanding of the barriers to acceptance for some.

Those who opposed LTNs before taking part also tended to stay opposed afterwards, although they gained a greater understanding of the environmental case for the introduction of LTNs.

When asked about how local authorities can support walking, cycling and public transport in a way that works for them, the responses for those both supportive and opposed to LTNs show a general desire for more information and data to show whether or not LTNs are having the desired effect and improving air quality in their area.

**Support or oppose the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods**

Before taking part in the workshops, 52% of respondents supported the introduction of LTNs in their local area, while 36% opposed their introduction. While fewer participants completed the post workshop evaluation questionnaire, out of 75 participants, 52% said they were supportive of the introduction of LTNs in their local area, while 47% opposed their introduction.

| Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the introduction of 'low traffic neighbourhoods' ……? | | |
|---|---|---|
| | All Case study areas | |
| | Pre-workshop (n=94) | Post-workshop (n=75) |
| | % | % |
| Support | 52 | 52 |
| Oppose | 36 | 47 |
| Don't know | 12 | 1 |

The main reasons given for changing their views were that participants became more informed about the reasons behind the introduction of LTNs and more aware of the environmental, health and safety benefits of LTNs.

That said, participants mentioned that even though they were more supportive of LTNs, they still recognised various issues associated with them, such as the displacement of traffic, and that future implementation would have to take a different approach.

> *"After taking part last night I feel a lot more educated about LTNs and their purpose. I think they can really help the local community, reduce pollution, asthma in younger children and make the streets and roads nearby to me more safer for everybody. I fully support LTNs in my area and other areas but it has to be a coordinated effort, so all the different London boroughs come [together] to get LTNs working properly."* [Wandsworth]

The main reason participants gave for opposing LTNs to a greater extent after taking part in the workshops was that through the deliberative process, participants who had been previously supportive of LTNs became aware of how they impacted other people, including residents living outside LTNs, local businesses and more vulnerable residents. Through listening to other people's perspectives, participants understood more and became aware of factors they had not considered before, such as the impact on personal safety when walking in an LTN at night.

> *"Yes [my views have changed], I was completely supportive of LTNs before this session but now understand from other participants that there are negative impacts of LTNs for some residents who live in the surrounding area."* [Lambeth]

Three participants who previously opposed LTNs said their opposition was further strengthened as a result of the workshops. Reasons for this included: the perception that consultations were merely a box ticking exercise and would have no impact on the decision to introduce LTNs; the view that the reasons for introducing LTNs did not make sense as they did not help to reduce emissions; and hearing about the wide range of negative impacts that LTNs had on other people.

The main reasons that participants who were supportive of LTNs gave for not changing their mind, was that the information provided in the workshops confirmed views they already had about LTNs, and that they would always be supportive of schemes reducing pollution and improving people's health.

A common view was that although participants supported the concept of LTNs, the appropriate infrastructure would need to be in place before being able to implement them and consultation was important.

> *"No [my views haven't changed] - I still believe fundamentally [that] LTNs are a good idea, just the council needed to consult the residents and wider community better."* [Lozells]

For those who opposed LTNs before the workshop, the main reasons they gave for not changing their views were that they felt that LTNs brought no benefits to the area, and that even though they may have agreed in principle with the concept of LTNs, the infrastructure needed to implement them was not in place. Some participants felt that their main concerns, such as the displacement of traffic, had not been addressed and so were unable to change their views. Several participants noted that even though their views had not changed, they felt more informed as a result of the deliberative workshops.

> *"I now have a better understanding of LTNs however my view has not changed completely about introducing them. I believe other measures should be implemented before LTNs particularly in urban areas. I still believe the inconvenience and disruption does not outweigh the benefits at this time."* [Wandsworth]

Finally, participants were asked about how local authorities can support walking, cycling and public transport in a way that works for them. Suggestions included:

- Making public transport (e.g. buses, trains and tubes) more frequent, reliable, quicker and cheaper so it is a viable alternative to driving.

- Introducing more cycle hire and e-scooter hire facilities[15]. These schemes could be made cheaper and the number of docking stations could be increased. Incentives for using these schemes could also be introduced.

- Introducing more cycle lanes and routes, which are wider and separate from the main roads.

- Providing more secure on street bike storage.

- Making roads safer for cyclists by limiting HGV access between certain times, increasing the number of speed cameras and fixing the roads.

- Making streets safer for pedestrians by introducing better street lighting, reducing street crime and increasing CCTV and police presence on the streets.

- Incentivising people to walk and cycle. This was said to work particularly well for young people and in more socially deprived areas, such as Lozells.

- Increasing education campaigns and information provided to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use. This could include information on the environmental and health benefits of walking and cycling, steps on how to transition to low/no carbon forms of transport and providing residents information on how they contribute individually and as a borough to combatting climate change and pollution.

In addition to these suggestions, Advisory Group members also thought the following would be important to consider:

o The fear of crime cited in reservations about walking in LTN areas isn't just as a result of people behaving badly. These areas have been historically underfunded in opportunities, jobs, youth centres, care centres, access to healthy food, green spaces, healthcare and community infrastructure and so represents as much a socio-economic problem as an environmental one. LTNs are an aspect of a 'just transition', and in order for us to see a major societal shift, local councils have a responsibility to address other social aspects like proximity of services (public and private), employment and community infrastructure that would impact car usage.

o Establishing LTNs or any solutions to air quality and the climate crisis should not replicate modes of oppression that leave marginalised people facing the brunt of climate change or the biggest fallout. For example, disabled people, people from lower socio-economic groups and/or ethnic minorities and their areas of living do not become 'sacrifice zones'[16] for climate solutions to work.

o A responsibility on local councils to provide a 'vision' for the next couple of years, shaped with the local communities they represent. For example, if the priority from communities is 'we do not want bad air quality to shorten life expectancy by five years and exacerbate cardio-vascular issues', the local council vision might reflect this by saying 'In five years, we are working towards cleaner air, accessible green

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[15] As mentioned before, e-scooters are only legal to use in the trial areas.

[16] "Sacrifice zones," (a predominantly American term) are communities located near pollution hot spots that have been permanently impaired by intensive and concentrated industrial activity, such as factories, chemical plants, power plants, oil and gas refineries, landfills and factory farms. https://independentmediainstitute.org/sacrifice-zones-how-people-of-color-are-targets-of-environmental-racism/

spaces, local produce and support for alternative transport - we want 80% of those who can cycle to cycle'.

- o Tackling the prevalent misinformation on social media and Whatsapp. That local councils hire or put capacity into their communications and social media and find ways to reach all audiences e.g. with text, printed information for community centres, emails, TikTok posts, Instagram graphics, Twitter threads, videos on their website, and being active online to correct misinformation as it appears.

- o For local authorities to compare the consultation approaches and materials they have in place with residents' experiences of them. People do not always open mail from their local council, look at consultation material or attend public meetings, although they are available and local authorities may feel they have successfully consulted. It would be useful to identify ways to make these strategies more effective.

- o For consultations to be inclusive, material must be available in accessible formats e.g. British Sign Language, Easy Read, Braille, text-only. Where possible engagement with disabled residents should be active (i.e. focus groups, walk/wheelarounds, etc) with participants remunerated for their time.

- o A huge barrier to walking is the inaccessibility of the street space (i.e. pavements, walkways). Cycling infrastructure must be inclusive and designed to accommodate non-standard cycles (e.g. handcycles), and the financial barriers to cycling (non-standard cycles are very expensive) need to be addressed.

- o Public transport should be accessible to all disabled people across the impairment groups, not just those with mobility-related impairments.

# 4 Conclusions

The deliberative workshops generated considered and thoughtful debate on an issue that continues to animate communities in parts of Lambeth, Lozells and Wandsworth. For many, this was the first time they had seen evidence about LTNs presented independently and contextualised in terms of both the rationale and the wide range of stakeholder perspectives. While everyone left the groups feeling better informed, some gained more understanding of those who expressed their annoyance with LTNs. And while some determined that LTNs were a good thing, others remained sceptical.

In terms of recommendations, participants agreed that local authorities can improve the future implementation of LTNs by better explaining what they are and presenting more compelling evidence about why they are necessary. They also agreed that local authorities could better demonstrate the positive outcomes LTNs can bring to the area (when accompanied by an uptake in active travel).

Before implementing an LTN, participants suggested that local authorities could consider running a comprehensive consultation that fully captures the needs of *all* the different groups who will be impacted. Whilst local authorities may already feel they are engaging with communities, our research indicates people felt there was more to do.

Local authorities could also try to establish exactly what is necessary to facilitate a mode shift away from car usage. They could increase their chances of success if they listen to these needs and address the issues that currently make private car use the go-to option. It is worth noting that many of these recommendations have been addressed more recently by local authorities, demonstrating an alignment of approach by residents and local authorities. For example, consultation is now a pre-requisite of funding, as local authorities are no longer introducing LTNs directly in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In conclusion, these are the key recommendations agreed by participants to ensure LTNs can be introduced in a way that is acceptable to them:

**Consultation and engagement**

1. Local authorities to engage with LTN residents, boundary residents and businesses from the very start, and provide relevant information

2. Any consultation or resident engagement to be on an ongoing basis and ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to all e.g. take account of low literacy in English or digital exclusion

3. A credible rationale for LTNs including an explanation of why they are needed in a particular area and the likely benefits e.g. any evidence for the reduction of traffic and improvement in air quality

**Implementation**

4. Local authorities to provide a map of all the LTNs across their borough and neighbouring boroughs to help residents navigate them effectively. In addition to this, the introduction of LTNs (and any changes to them) to be updated on sat-nav systems

5. LTNs and any new measures to be introduced gradually and include a "grace period" to allow residents time to understand and adjust to new measures, e.g. issuing a warning and not a fine on the first one or two incidents of breaching an LTN

6. Exemptions and resident passes to be available for those who need exemptions under the right conditions e.g. Blue Badge holders

7. Signage and traffic cameras to be clearly visible so that they cannot be missed

8. Barriers and planters to be more flexible to allow access for key groups such as emergency services

**Complementary measures to promote alternatives to car use**

9. Incentivising people to walk by introducing better street lighting, and to cycle by making roads safer and providing more secure on street bike storage

10. Better communications around cycling and walking options within LTNs as well as improved public transport services that are more frequent, comfortable, accessible and affordable.

# Appendix A. Literature Review Sources

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# Appendix B.   Sample Breakdown

| Primary criteria | Characteristics | Lambeth (n=31) | Lozells (n=27) | Wandsworth (n=36) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Female | 20 | 15 | 20 |
|  | Male | 11 | 12 | 16 |
| Age | 18-34 | 15 | 11 | 12 |
|  | 35-54 | 11 | 12 | 18 |
|  | 55+ | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Disability (some participants cited more than one disability so appear multiple times) | Disability or long-term health condition | 9 | 5 | 10 |
|  | Chronic illness / long term health condition | 3 | 4 | 7 |
|  | Mental health condition | 2 | - | 1 |
|  | Mobility | 3 | 1 | 1 |
|  | Neurodivergent / cognitive impairment / learning disability | 1 | - | - |
|  | Visually impaired / blind | 1 | - | - |
| Ethnicity | White British | 12 | 6 | 19 |
|  | Asian or Asian British | 5 | 13 | 4 |
|  | Black or Black British | 10 | 6 | 6 |
|  | Other [17] | 4 | 2 | 7 |
| Main mode of travel | Cycling or walking | 9 | 6 | 14 |
|  | Driving (cars including taxis) | 11 | 17 | 13 |
|  | Public transport (buses / trains / trams) | 11 | 4 | 9 |
| Whether supports or opposes LTNs | Strongly support | 8 | 3 | 5 |
|  | Tend to support | 10 | 10 | 13 |
|  | Tend to oppose | 4 | 6 | 10 |
|  | Strongly oppose | 7 | 2 | 5 |
|  | Don't know | 2 | 6 | 3 |

Table 4. Sample composition across Lambeth, Lozells and Wandsworth workshops.

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[17] Includes any other White background; mixed or multiple ethnic groups and other