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Support for Southwark Council's draft cycling strategy

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RoadPeace, the national charity for road crash victims, includes amongst its members, families that have been bereaved and injured in Southwark, as well as those who remain at risk through its travel in Southwark.

RoadPeace is also a member of Southwark Council's Joint Cycling Steering Group. RoadPeace works closely with both LCC and Living Streets and its local groups in Southwark. All were involved in organising the recent conference on Road Danger Reduction and Enforcement: how policing can promote cycling and walking, which was hosted by Southwark.

RoadPeace welcomes Southwark Council's draft cycling strategy, in particular Southwark's commitment to:

1. Normalise cycling

Cycling should not be limited to the bold and the brave. We need cycling to be a way of healthy living for all ages than just a way of transport. But in order to get the young, older and less risk taking of our citizens, Southwark's drivers will need to show more respect and consideration to those more vulnerable.

RoadPeace believes this requires the reform of our civil compensation system with the introduction of a presumed liability system whereby drivers are presumed responsible for compensating injured pedestrians and cyclists. This is the civil compensation system that is used in the majority of other countries, including the Netherlands and Denmark. It was recently supported by [Hackney Council in their draft transport strategy](#). For more information on this compensation system, please see our [website](#) and our 2013 briefing [Presumed Liability update](#),

2. Work with the police

Southwark Council cannot make local roads safer on its own and police participation is essential. With the new MPS Roads Transport and Policing Command to be launched in less than two weeks time, this should provide the ideal opportunity to ensure that local police are informed and supportive of Southwark Council's aim to normalise cycling.

RoadPeace is on TfL's Safer Streets for London Steering Group and also its sub group on Enforcement. Our appreciation of roads policing led us to organise the recent conference mentioned above.

RoadPeace looks forward to working with Southwark Council and the new MPS RTPC lead in Southwark to achieve our mutual aims of safer roads for road users, especially our most vulnerable road users. One action requested by RoadPeace and Southwark Cyclists is a community meeting after a cyclist death.

3. Lead by example, including with lorry danger reduction

Most of the cyclist deaths in Southwark are caused by lorry collisions. We have supported several families bereaved by lorry collisions in Southwark who are keen to spare others from this suffering. We appreciate that Southwark has signed the LCC Safer Lorry pledge but as pointed out at our recent conference, more can and should be done to reduce the risk of lorries, including through planning controls.

4. Support those injured in cycle collisions and help them rebuild confidence so they can continue cycling

Southwark Council is to be commended for its concern about injured cyclists and the need for confidence training to keep them cycling. RoadPeace looks forward to working with them on this. RoadPeace also intends to work with the Bike Project when it moves to Southwark and ensure that refugees using this service are informed of post crash procedures as well as tips on how to stay safe.

5. Reduce traffic speed

Southwark Council has been a long term supporter of lower speeds and the evidence continues to mount for their need. Whilst some have argued that 20mph speed limits need to be enforced, RoadPeace believes that an unenforced 20mph is better than an unenforced 30mph limit. Please see our [briefing on 30mph police enforcement in London](#) for how rare this is. Only 300 drivers were given a Fixed Penalty Notice by police for exceeding the 30mph speed limit in Southwark in 2012. So whilst we do welcome the introduction of Community Road Watch in Southwark and look forward to volunteering with this, lack of enforcement should never be seen as a reason to oppose reduced speed limits.

Finally, Southwark Council is to be applauded for its desire to increase cycling and decrease the casualty rate. Cycling poses less danger to other road users than any motorised transport and those cycling deserve to be protected from harm posed by others.